

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

**Eightieth Session  
March 12, 2019**

The Committee on Government Affairs was called to order by Chair Edgar Flores at 8:42 a.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, in Room 4100 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at [www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/80th2019](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/80th2019).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Chair  
Assemblyman William McCurdy II, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Alex Assefa  
Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod  
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo  
Assemblywoman Bea Duran  
Assemblyman John Ellison  
Assemblywoman Michelle Gorelow  
Assemblyman Gregory T. Hafen II  
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy  
Assemblyman Glen Leavitt  
Assemblywoman Susie Martinez  
Assemblywoman Connie Munk

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**GUEST LEGISLATOR PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Michael C. Sprinkle, Assembly District No. 30



**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst  
Asher Killian, Committee Counsel  
Connie Jo Smith, Committee Secretary  
Trinity Thom, Committee Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Charles Donohue, Administrator, Division of State Lands, and State Land Registrar,  
State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Allen Biaggi, representing Tahoe Fund  
Kyle Davis, representing League to Save Lake Tahoe; and Nevada Conservation  
League  
Steve K. Walker, representing Truckee Meadows Water Authority  
Tobi Tyler, Executive Committee Member, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club  
James R. Lawrence, Member, Governing Board, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
Brian McAnallen, representing City of North Las Vegas  
John J. Lee, Mayor, City of North Las Vegas  
Delen Goldberg, Chief of Staff, City of North Las Vegas  
Ryann Juden, City Manager, City of North Las Vegas

**Chair Flores:**

[Roll was taken. Committee rules and protocol were explained.] We are going to take the agenda slightly out of order, with apologies to North Las Vegas. I see Assemblyman Sprinkle here, so I will open the hearing for Assembly Bill 220. I anticipate the bill hearing to be short, then we will return to North Las Vegas.

**Assembly Bill 220: Requires the issuance of bonds for environmental improvement projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin. (BDR S-435)**

**Assemblyman Michael C. Sprinkle, Assembly District No. 30:**

Assembly Bill 220 requires the issuance of bonds for environmental improvement projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin. This was a recommendation submitted by the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System, which I chaired during the 2017-2018 Interim. On August 28, 2018, the Committee voted unanimously to request the drafting of a bill to release the next phase of bonds in an amount of \$8 million to carry out Nevada's portion of the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) for the 2019-2021 Biennium.

The 2009 Nevada Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 18 of the 75th Session which authorized the issuance of not more than \$100 million in general obligation bonds for the state's apportioned share of the cost for the second phase of the Lake Tahoe EIP between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2020. Assembly Bill 18 of the 75th Session was structured so that each legislative session the Division of State Lands, State Department of Conservation and

Natural Resources, would return to request legislative authorization for each installment of those bond sales.

I am going to turn this presentation over to Charles Donohue and let you get more details about what we are requesting today.

**Charles Donohue, Administrator, Division of State Lands, and State Land Registrar,  
State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources:**

It is my pleasure to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bill 220, which provides for the issuance of bonds for the continuation of the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program, commonly referred to as EIP. I would like to thank Assemblyman Sprinkle and the Lake Tahoe interim committee for sponsoring this important legislation.

The Division of State Lands has been the lead coordinating agency for the Nevada share of the EIP since 1999 and, as you heard from Assemblyman Sprinkle, Nevada's participation in the EIP continues to be a success. The Environmental Improvement Program is a well-coordinated partnership ([Exhibit C](#)) of federal, state, and local agencies, the Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada, and the private sector. The partnership carries out projects to protect and improve the Lake Tahoe environment and has become a national model for collaborative leadership. Nevada is a key member whose commitment to EIP has funded 139 projects in focused areas of watershed, habitat and water quality, forest management, and recreation. The EIP is the primary program to achieve environmental gain in the Lake Tahoe Basin. As many of you may know, the Division of State Lands submits semiannual reports to the Interim Finance Committee. The most recent report submitted in January highlighted a successful field season with a number of high-profile projects. The Spooner Landscape Resilience Project, located in the Spooner unit of the Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, is contributing to the health of the forest and mitigating wildfire risk through the removal of over 5,000 trees which were flown by helicopter from the project site to a landing and then transported to a mill for processing. Additionally the Division, in coordination with the Division of State Parks, continued efforts to address the invasive Asian clam population at Sand Harbor through the deployment of rubber barriers to smother any reproductive capacity of the existing population. Also, the Division continues to engage in grant partnerships with the local jurisdictions for stormwater treatment projects.

As the agency has done in many of the previous legislative sessions since the start of the Environmental Improvement Program, the Division of State Lands is requesting bond authority for the next round of Nevada's projects. Specifically, A.B. 220 provides the authority to sell \$8 million in general obligation bonds for the continuation of these projects. The activities listed in A.B. 220 will continue to focus on the main areas of improving water quality infrastructure at Lake Tahoe, continue forest health improvement to reduce the risk of wildfire and improve wildlife habitat, and improve state-owned recreational facilities. In addition to improving the Lake Tahoe environment, these are active capital improvement projects which contribute to a strong local economy. Passage of A.B. 220 allows the state to build upon the success of our past projects and continue to work with our EIP partners in

protecting and restoring the Lake Tahoe Basin. I would also like the Committee to know that this request is in the Governor's capital improvement program budget.

With that, I would be happy to take any questions.

**Assemblyman Leavitt:**

This funding is only for capital projects, correct? It is not for any maintenance or continued maintenance on any current projects.

**Charlie Donohue:**

That is correct. These are for capital improvement projects. Maintenance would be covered through the Division of State Park's traditional budget. I would put a caveat on that, however, in terms of forest restoration. You might consider that we are out there ensuring that the forest is being maintained appropriately, in terms of project units throughout the state park.

**Assemblyman Hafen:**

The bonds for the capital improvement projects, how are those paid back?

**Charlie Donohue:**

The bonds are sold and managed by the State Treasurer. I would have to do some research in terms of providing you a thorough answer for that, which I can do.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

My question also concerns the bonds, and I would like to know that prior, if I could. It is good to see that you are pruning the trees. We do not need another California fire in Nevada, if we do not do that. It looks like you are still having some problems. I do not know if it is beetles or if it is just gas from autos along the highway, but you can sure see a lot of dead trees. Could you answer that?

**Charlie Donohue:**

The Nevada side has been fortunate in terms of not having the vegetative stress that has happened in a lot of the Sierra Nevada. However, you see some stress associated with trees along the roadways. There is some thought that some of that has to do with the materials that the Department of Transportation puts down. The Nevada Department of Transportation manages those. What you do not want to have is a tree dying on the side of the road because of the public safety hazard, as well as the tree getting infested by bark beetle and becoming a host tree to start having those bark beetles or other invasive species spread.

**Chair Flores:**

Committee members, are there any additional questions? [There were none.] At this time, I invite those wishing to speak in support of Assembly Bill 220 to please come forward.

**Allen Biaggi, representing Tahoe Fund:**

I am vice chairman of the Tahoe Fund's board of directors. The Tahoe Fund was founded in 2010 and is a registered nonprofit in Nevada and in California. Its purpose is to generate private funding for projects in and around the Lake Tahoe Basin with an emphasis on conservation, education, and recreation. We seek to create a sustainable future for this natural treasure now and into the future. The Tahoe Fund is in strong support of A.B. 220 to continue the efforts for the protection, preservation, and enhancement of Lake Tahoe.

One of the strongest aspects of the Environmental Improvement Program is the partnerships that are created. No one entity can undertake all of the work needed in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Instead, on-the-ground projects are accomplished through the cooperation of federal, state, and local governments, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. This is where the Tahoe Fund comes in. We provide private dollars to fund projects, provide match, and help make these efforts a reality.

The Tahoe Fund has been a partner with the State of Nevada and others on a variety of diverse projects, including the soon-to-be-completed bike and hiking path from Incline Village to Sand Harbor; the development and operation of the only bistate park in the U.S., Van Sickle Bi-State Park on the south shore; the Rabe Meadow Bike Path; and the treatment of aquatic invasive species, to name a few.

With the passage of A.B. 220, we stand ready to ensure the private sector has a meaningful role in the Environmental Improvement Program and does its part in protecting, preserving, and enhancing the natural gem that is Lake Tahoe. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

**Kyle Davis, representing League to Save Lake Tahoe; and Nevada Conservation League:**

We are also in support of A.B. 220 and are happy to be here supporting this bill today. You have already heard all the benefits that come from the Environmental Improvement Program and the importance of that program to the natural environment in the Lake Tahoe Basin. We urge the Committee's passage.

**Steve K. Walker, representing Truckee Meadows Water Authority:**

The top six feet of Lake Tahoe is a reservoir that provides water downstream to the Reno-Sparks area and to the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District. The state's effort at keeping that water clean is applauded by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority and all the people who drink the water. We would like to support the bill and thank them for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

**Tobi Tyler, Executive Committee Member, Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter:**

The Toiyabe Chapter represents more than 30,000 members and supporters in Nevada and strongly supports A.B. 220 and urges the Government Affairs Committee to support and pass this bill ([Exhibit D](#)). As a Lake Tahoe resident and former employee of the Lahontan

Regional Water Quality Control Board, I have seen firsthand how projects accomplished under TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program have restored watersheds and provided stormwater treatment to improve Lake Tahoe's clarity. The EIP is a program whereby numerous agencies in Nevada and California collaborate to implement critical restoration projects. This aspect makes the EIP one of the most important programs toward achieving environmental preservation and restoration at the lake. With ever-increasing threats from climate change, for example, rain on snow events and growing pressures from tourism and development, the passing of this bill is critical to continuing the work to save Lake Tahoe.

**Chair Flores:**

Is there anyone else wishing to speak in support of A.B. 220?

**James R. Lawrence, Member, Governing Board, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency:**

I serve as the deputy director for the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, but here I am wearing the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency hat. I have the pleasure of serving on the TRPA Governing Board. You heard the testimony about what a great program this is. It is how environmental gain is achieved at Lake Tahoe. It is a partnership between the two states, the federal government, local governments, and the private sector. With that, we are also in support of A.B. 220.

**Chair Flores:**

Is there anyone else wishing to speak in support of Assembly Bill 220? Seeing no one, is there anyone wishing to speak in opposition to Assembly Bill 220? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in the neutral position for Assembly Bill 220? [There was no one.] If our bill sponsors could return to the table for any closing remarks you may have.

**Charlie Donohue:**

I want to thank you for the opportunity to have this bill heard before your Committee today. I respectfully ask for your support.

**Chair Flores:**

We will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 220. Next, we have a presentation by the City of North Las Vegas, if you could please come up.

**Brian McAnallen, representing City of North Las Vegas:**

It is my honor to represent the City of North Las Vegas during this legislative session. With me at the table is Ryann Juden, our city manager; Mayor John J. Lee of the City of North Las Vegas; and Delen Goldberg, our city's chief of staff. We would like to thank you and your staff for allowing us the opportunity to present today. I think you will hear a story of a turnaround for a city that was hit hardest by the recession. Those of you who have served here will remember those fiscal challenges that the city faced and the support we received from the Legislature and other communities to address those challenges. The people sitting with me are the individuals who led the city through that difficult time. With that, it is my privilege to introduce Mayor John Lee, a face that is very familiar to the Legislature, having served in the Assembly as well as the state Senate.

**John J. Lee, Mayor, City of North Las Vegas:**

Thank you. I am excited to be here today, and yes, it does bring back memories. You are the hardest working Committee. I know the number of bills you get, and you do not get the credit for it, but you are a committee that makes a huge difference to everyone in the state of Nevada. From the people before you to the people after you, you make a big difference. I was vice chairman of Government Affairs for six years in the state Assembly, and then eight years in the Senate. I was chairman of Government Affairs, and this was my favorite committee. I loved it.

I am here today to tell you a little about North Las Vegas. When I was considering becoming mayor, North Las Vegas was going down the maelstrom. It was going out of business, and you cannot go bankrupt when you are a city. You have to turn your charter back into the state. That was a very sad day for a gentleman who grew up in North Las Vegas. Can you imagine your hometown, your high school, your university, your church, or something that meant so much to you, failing? I looked around and there was nobody else who could really do anything to make it work. In recognizing that I served with two members of this Committee in my Senate session, I knew I had a lot of experience. So I told my wife, I am thinking about doing it; I think I can do this. I am "skeptimistic" whether I can make it work or not: skeptical, but optimistic that I am a positive guy—that I could do this. She said, No, we have spent enough time in the Legislature. You have done enough public service. You need to stay at home with me a little bit. I woke up the next morning and said, Would you be the first person I ask to vote for me, because I have to do this. There were many conversations that went on between the state and me as we were going forth, and I won the primary election. I can tell you right now that the state was scared to death that North Las Vegas was going to go under. If you have ten dollars in your wallet or ten dollars in your purse, you have ten more dollars than the state of Nevada has, you know that. There was no way that the state could come in and just take over North Las Vegas. It is not so much "take over," but the city and the county wanted to split North Las Vegas because of all the land, but they did not want the debt. You could not assume the debt, it was just too big.

After I got elected, I needed to see if I could not pull the city out, what effect would it have? So I made a call to Detroit, and I said, Is there a city next to you that has 250,000 people? That is the size of North Las Vegas. When Detroit went bankrupt, how did that affect the cities around them? I was thinking about Henderson; I was thinking of Boulder City; I was thinking of Las Vegas. I wanted to know—if I cannot pull this out, what effect would it have? I did not even get to talk to the Mayor of Detroit because the secretary answered my question. She said, Just to let you know, you are asking the wrong question. How did Detroit's bankruptcy affect the three states around it and southern Canada? It was a huge financial tsunami. So everything that happens in Nevada or Las Vegas, stays in Las Vegas, would have been gone. We would have been the Detroit of the West. With that information, it was time to get to work. I was able to hire some brilliant people who came to work for me. As smart as I think I am about a lot of things, there are so many areas I lack in finance and some other areas. We were able to get some very intelligent people into some very serious positions to help.

My goal in North Las Vegas is not to do anything more than to make sure the next time there is a recession, the next time an airplane hits a building in New York, I do not want everyone in North Las Vegas to get laid off again. We were all in the gaming, tourism, and hospitality industries, or we were in construction. We have always been that bedroom community. North Las Vegas is no longer going to be a bedroom community. We are going to be in charge of our own future. We have been building North Las Vegas to make sure that we are recession-proof again. We are handling our finances in such a way that our bond ratings are up 12 levels. I did not know you could even stay in business having junk, junk, junk status. It was horrible.

Our opportunity in North Las Vegas is to turn this city into a revenue-producing community that will enhance the county and bring more benefit to what you guys are doing here with state revenues. I have two major goals as mayor, even though a lot of good things are happening because of the efforts of our community. My goal is to see that we diversify the incomes of the families in North Las Vegas. Instead of your wife maybe working at Caesars Palace dealing cards, and that is a good job, and you are at Treasure Island in engineering—that is another good job—as I said, the next time an airplane hits a building, we get laid off again. I am trying to build a new income base in North Las Vegas: new manufacturing, new huge things so that if one person is laid off, we do not lose our homes anymore. We pay our water bills. The recession was very, very hard on North Las Vegas. In 2008, you probably lost your job. In 2009, if you had a company, you lost that and your house. In 2010, a lot of divorces happened. It was a sad time for a lot of families during the recession. My job as mayor is to make sure that we do not go through that again.

Once again, I am very excited to be here today. I think I found an opportunity in the Legislature for my years that you guys helped me through this. We had some bills that had to happen so that North Las Vegas could stay afloat. The Legislature has been our partner. We worked hand in hand with the Committee on Local Government Finance, making sure all along that our finances were being monitored by them.

I am here today to tell you that North Las Vegas is solvent; we are strong; we are refinancing bonds that we had. We just refinanced a bond worth \$40 million that would have gone on to the Wall Street people. Now it stays in North Las Vegas. That money the interest repays is a lot cheaper. We are doing very smart things over there, but then again, in running a successful community you have to have a successful legislature to work with. We are here today to give you a presentation about who we are and what we are. You will hear a few bills here concerning North Las Vegas this session. If you have any questions, we have a great staff or you can call me personally, and I will make sure you get the answers you need to make the best decisions you can that not only help us but can help other communities too. With that, Mr. Chair, I will turn the presentation over to the professional staff. I am going to get out of here before you ask me any hard questions.

**Delen Goldberg, Chief of Staff, City of North Las Vegas:**

I will go through the PowerPoint ([Exhibit E](#)) a bit quickly, but if you have any questions, I am more than happy to answer them. Our city is growing fast. We are 104 square miles



[page 2, ([Exhibit E](#))], and we are now the third-largest city in Nevada with 252,000 residents. I think it is also important to note that we are the largest minority-majority city in Nevada. We are very proud of our diversity that we embrace and encourage. Also important to note: half the developable land in Clark County is in North Las Vegas. Only 50 percent of our city has been developed, and that presents great opportunities. We have the land that developers and big global brands are seeking, and we have made the processes easy for them to come to North Las Vegas, to create jobs, and to diversify our economy.

We have five city council members [page 3]. You met Mayor Lee and we also have four council members who are elected in their wards. We have a mayor pro tem who changes annually. This year it is Councilwoman Pamela Goynes-Brown. Page 4 shows you a snapshot of our different wards. We have a city council-manager structure of government [page 5]. The city council and the mayor set policy, and our city manager is the day-to-day chief executive officer. He oversees staff, budget, and operations of the city.

Page 6 displays our organizational charts. Our budget for this year is \$601.2 million [page 7]. This shows an overview of our resources and the government functions we provide. I think the most important thing to note, especially in light of what you just heard from the Mayor, are the bottom numbers: \$601.2 million on both sides. We are fully balanced and in much better financial shape than we were just a couple of years ago, thanks to the hard work of our mayor, council, staff, and your help.

This page [page 8] is a picture of where we were. As the Mayor said, we were a very different city five years ago. Through the work of the team that the Mayor brought in, we have transformed North Las Vegas. I am going to let our City Manager, Ryann Juden, tell you about that transformation.

**Ryann Juden, City Manager, City of North Las Vegas:**

As many of you know, North Las Vegas has had a significant rebound. What we inherited in 2013 was a \$152 million structural deficit that we had to solve [page 8]. We knew we had a \$17 million budget deficit for the next year. Within a couple of months, we realized there was actually a \$7 million hole in the budget that had just, per law, been passed in June and was graciously given to us by the previous mayor and council. We had all these things and started to move trying to solve those challenges, and then we had a couple of large court cases. One was with our bargaining groups that the previous mayor and council had suspended, the collective bargaining contracts. I am sure you know how that goes over—not very well. That ended up in court. Then after about six months on the job, we received a judgment from the court that said in fact you cannot breach contracts, which is not news to anybody in this room. We had to solve that. We also had a lot of difficulty with staffing levels. When you see cities that go bankrupt, it is not really a bankruptcy as you would think of a personal bankruptcy where it is lack of funds. It is actually a service-level insolvency. As a local government, there are a lot of services we provide to our residents. Whenever you are not able to attain the proper staffing levels in order to provide those services, there is a service-level insolvency. That is generally what leads to the crisis in local governments.

Then we experienced a turnaround [page 9, ([Exhibit E](#))]. Within 20 months of being in North Las Vegas, we saw from Wall Street the first glimmer of hope where they essentially affirmed, not a great glimmer of hope, but they said, We downgraded you last time, we are going to affirm that downgrade. So at least we did not get downgraded again. They said okay. If you think about this on a personal level for personal credit, and I do not know how low personal credit can go, maybe 300—that is about where we were. What the bonding and Wall Street said is, We are going to affirm that is where you are. The bleeding was stopped.

What I think is really important for this body, and one of the clear messages I want to make sure is delivered today, is two years ago we came to the Legislature and we said, We have an issue with the legislation that was passed in 2011. There was a transfer of utility funds being transferred into a general fund in order to balance the budget. In 2011, it was very prudent for the Legislature to say, You cannot do that. If you are collecting water bills, they need to pay for water. You have to be honest. My mom says there are a few things that do not lie: a baby, a drunk, and leggings. You have to be honest with people; you cannot fudge things. We knew that we needed to be honest with residents. We stopped that process, but the problem was we were using about \$32 million of that a year in order to balance the budget. The Legislature had said that we had to be off that by 2021, so we received a 10-year grace period. We knew that was impossible for us to do. Wall Street knew that was impossible for us to do.

We came to this body last session and told you that this is what is happening. Because of this fiscal cliff that is happening in 2021 that we were unable to solve, Wall Street has increased our bonding a little bit, but they still see this big warning sign: How is North Las Vegas going to fill this \$32 million hole? I can say how much I appreciate the Legislature. It started in this Committee having faith in North Las Vegas when we said, If we can create some kind of alternative path where we will decrease the amount of reliance on these utility funds, but it is not going to be able to be done because no one knew the depth or seriousness of the recession. We were not going to be able to do it in the time frame that had been allotted in 2011. So once that legislation was passed, I am happy to report to this Committee, as the Mayor indicated, we saw increases in our bond level. We are now investment grade. As was promised to this body two years ago, whenever we were investment grade we were able to go back to the market and refinance some of our bonds, and that is a net result of about \$40 million that is not going to Wall Street in principal payments. It is staying so that we can provide services to our residents. That is just the first of many bonds that we expect to be able to refinance and work on.

The Mayor was right when he said, This body and the Legislature have worked hand in hand with the City of North Las Vegas as we resolve these challenges. As you see [page 9, ([Exhibit E](#))], we have talked about it often as if it were a plane. When we inherited the city, it was like the plane was in a nosedive, heading for the ground, spiraling out of control. We got in the cockpit, pulled back on the yoke, and got the plane so that it kind of touched the runway. Our finance director likes to say the wheels were out, they skimmed the runway, and you saw the smoke. As the plane leveled off, we had things we had to clear. We had trees, houses, mountaintops, and we needed to have a little bit more of a runway. This body

effectively moved those mountain tops so that we were able to clear them, and the City of North Las Vegas is in a much better position than it was before. We had very limited tools coming in. We had a small amount in our capitalization rate that we could increase our taxes, but that would have been a highly regressive tax if we decided to do that because it would have only affected those residents. They were not protected by the property tax caps, so it would have been residences that had property home values around \$65,000 and less, so it would have been extremely regressive, and we elected not to do that. We worked with this body and others in order to solve the challenges in North Las Vegas.

As you can see on page 10 ([Exhibit E](#)), we have had the transformation from the capital improvement investment in 2018. We have issued 32,000 permits worth \$2 billion. One of the things we did was talk to stakeholders to try and understand what was preventing them from growing in North Las Vegas or keeping them from coming to North Las Vegas. We went into the things that we could control at the city level. Economic development is always one of these nebulous things that is sometimes difficult to get your arms around. How do you induce a company to come? We knew what we could control. We could control what experience they would have when they arrived. We took the "If you build it, they will come" attitude, and we knew we needed to build it really well and make sure people knew how well the system was built.

We took permitting processes that would take six months and turned them into weeks. If you are a developer, that is just holding costs. That is money you are paying to the bank in interest while you are waiting from the time you purchase a property until you get it titled and you are able to build on it. Some processes would take two or three months, and they are over the counter now. This has done nothing to impact the safety of residents. It has done nothing detrimental to the business community other than we took some processes where it went from one desk, then it went up to the third floor, and it was on that desk, and once it gets to a desk, it goes to the bottom of the pile. It moves up to the top and it goes from that desk and once it is approved, it goes to another desk. We cross-trained employees so they were able to stamp the things across and make sure that, when plans came into the city, those plans were able to move through the process rapidly. We heard immediately from developers that they were able to continue building speculation and building in North Las Vegas because the processes were so quick. In fact, one developer was doing one project in North Las Vegas and looking to do a second project between us and Phoenix, and they decided to go to North Las Vegas because the savings were over \$700,000 in interest payments to the bank because of how quickly we were doing processes in North Las Vegas.

As we took care of business and how we did things in North Las Vegas, it allowed us to start attracting different businesses [page 11]. We have become a hotbed for e-commerce where we have attracted Fortune 500 companies from Amazon to Sephora to Fanatics to The Honest Company, Bed Bath & Beyond, and others. We currently have a bunch of different home projects: two planned communities and a lot of infill projects that are being developed. This is important for the city—making sure we are providing housing at all different levels. The Mayor likes to say that if you have a starter house in North Las Vegas, as you mature and your income matures and you have growth in your job, you should be able to buy your

next home in North Las Vegas, and then your next home in North Las Vegas, so that people who go to school in North Las Vegas can stay in North Las Vegas. They can live out their lives in North Las Vegas.

As mentioned, we have a new management team that was successfully able to implement the plan [page 12, ([Exhibit E](#))]. There are a group of us who came from the private sector who looked at this as a challenge. We were willing to come in and embrace the opportunity to see what we could do and how these changes would have an impact. Lots of times people will make promises as far as the return that government provides for the investment on residents. I can say wholeheartedly that North Las Vegas has had a great return on investment for the residents of North Las Vegas. We very much have a lock-in type theory—believe in the social contract, believe the residents are paying for certain services, and then we need to do all we can to provide those services for them. It is something that we find to be the hallmark of what we do in the city.

We have aggressively recruited new businesses and developers. We have been steadily working on repairing the city's image with stakeholders and with relationships within the region [page 12]. We also developed a strategy this past year to invest and reinvest as we start to see growth. As you can imagine, even though we have attracted some of these companies, when you go to the Clark County Assessor's page, it still shows some of them as raw land. It takes a little while for these properties to do what we know we need them to do, which is solve the revenue challenge in North Las Vegas that we inherited.

As we work with our bargaining groups and work with our residents, it is helping them understand that yes, while you see the growth, and yes, while there are a ton of cones and building and different things going on, it takes a while for some of that to hit the general fund. As we work with them to control these expectations, we have implemented invest and reinvest, which is reinvesting in our existing employees, but at the same time, providing the funds that are necessary to invest in new employees. When we came to the city, over half the workforce had been laid off. And that does not mean, necessarily, that to right side the ship you need to bring half the workforce back. I think there was probably some waste in there. We have streamlined some processes where maybe you do not need to have the same levels of employees as you had before. That is something we constantly work on at the management level, especially with new technologies and different things that we can bring back and implement as we are growing and looking for critical needs within the city as we make new hires.

Page 13 ([Exhibit E](#)) provides a map that shows the five priority areas that were designated almost one year before the Mayor was sworn into office. There was a plan that was put together on how North Las Vegas could be saved. This was not done by accident. In that plan, we had specific legislative priorities. In fact, the priority we passed last session was something that we originally thought we would be doing either at this session or the next session. But because of the acceleration in growth that we had in North Las Vegas, we were able to bring that legislative priority earlier to this body.

One of the things we wanted to do was leverage the natural assets of North Las Vegas and align those with the economic development package that the Legislature had passed and signed into law in 2011 by then-Governor Sandoval. We took those seven sector areas and identified specific areas that we wanted to focus on so we could make sure that whatever we were able to attract would be something that would be in line with what the Legislature believed the state needed to focus on. This map highlights some of those areas including the veterans hospital, which sits out there alone. There is nothing around it except for tortoises and a lot of dirt. How could you take that asset, which the federal government, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, calls the jewel of their system, and leverage it and attract research and development and other things beside it? One of the seven sectors is health medical services. How can you take Apex, considering its significance, as well as Interstate 11 (I-11) and the alignment of I-11, and now you have this natural corridor coming through that aligns very well with the state's priority of light manufacturing in logistics—something we knew we could target there. Naturally, Nellis Air Force Base is something that is growing significantly and is a wonderful asset in southern Nevada—is a huge economic engine—but taking that and leveraging it to go after one of the other sectors, which is the defense industry?

Taking a look at what the natural things were, the natural assets, and leveraging those and looking for opportunities, here [page 14, ([Exhibit E](#))] is an example of the latest Amazon project. This is the third of a three-part installment; it is 2.4 million square feet. If you look at the plans to permit, it only took 28 days [page 14]. That is something Amazon discussed nationally. I think there are probably other cities that do not like North Las Vegas because we were able to do this. Whenever they say, Well, North Las Vegas could do it, then they say what we want to hear, which is, Well, then, you will have to go to North Las Vegas. Perfect! If you look at the time in which this was completed—11 months from plans to occupancy—that is kind of unheard of. California is one of our best business partners because of the fact that people just cannot do business there, so they come to Nevada. In California, I do not think you would get past the first survey for some kind of random fish or butterfly before you could even get close to permitting—it takes years and years to get to this point. Being able to do that has been significant.

Apex continues to be something that we focus on in North Las Vegas that really is a jewel for all of southern Nevada [page 15]. It is one of the only places in southern Nevada where you can have high industrial use. Apex was created by the U.S. Congress after the Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada chemical plant explosion, for those of you who were in southern Nevada at the time. My wife talks about how the windows shook and they went outside. There was a big mushroom cloud. Las Vegas was growing, and it is probably not a good idea that we had a rocket fuel place sitting by houses. Apex was created. As you would expect, a federal government located thousands of miles away is going to locate an industrial park that might not work very well. That is what they did. Apex looks great on paper, but when you look at the practicalities of how you get infrastructure to it, how you get water, sewer, and power to Apex so that businesses can go out there, it is a whole different situation. I am sure no one in this room is surprised that the federal government might have messed up on where they located it or how the plans of locating businesses out



there was something that they left us to try and figure out. It has been an almost two-decades-long challenge of how to provide infrastructure out there. We knew the significance of Apex being able to provide opportunities for the entire region. We had Brookings Institute do research on it to figure out what opportunity it would provide.

I come from a small town in southeast Missouri. I grew up there and it is something that farmers did when they were deciding what they were going to plant. To help decide, they would look at what the yields are, what product is bringing in certain dollars. They would pay attention to what they had planted there before, what nutrients were taken out of the soil. The first way we approached Apex was looking to see what it could yield, and that report came back that it could potentially provide over 116,000 jobs for southern Nevada. The economic impact would be over \$200 billion. When you look at these numbers, that is when the Mayor started calling it the breadbasket of southern Nevada. It really was the future of southern Nevada. We continue to work on it. We have deployed a two-part strategy where we look at Apex as a southern and a northern area and consider how to provide utilities for those two areas, hoping they will unify at some time. In the south, we are moving the pipeline. We have a creative agreement with a company that was coming in. They wanted to develop and put in a pipeline. We said that we needed a pipeline there, too; let us do an oversize agreement. They only needed an 8-inch pipe, but we needed a 32-inch pipe. We worked on an oversize agreement with them to start the first trench of pipe moving.

There is water in the north, but it is groundwater, so it relies on wells. It is not sufficient water for large projects. You still need to have surface water, which is water that comes in by pipeline. They have the water, but their challenges are they do not have enough water through wells that you can actually do fire suppression. We are building what you might see on the East Coast, large water towers. We are building a \$4 million water tower on the side of the mountain that will provide the pressure that is necessary in order to check the box—that one issue is preventing some of the companies from coming there—so the fire flows can now be supported. If you look at that, Apex continues to be something we focus on.

The final page is the partnership we have had with the Legislature [page 16, ([Exhibit E](#))]. You can see the different priorities we have had from working with then-Assemblywoman, now Chairwoman Kirkpatrick of the Clark County Commission, on bills in the 2015 Session and the special sessions. This is an outline of how very critical this body has been to helping North Las Vegas and being a part of this story.

I like to read biographies. I always have one on my nightstand. Look at biographies for this body, for example, Abraham Lincoln. Maybe you have said this to your spouse or if you have ever lost a political race, you thought, Abraham Lincoln lost about ten—you always hear that story. Abraham Lincoln was a successful legislator, just like you. One of his primary bills was an infrastructure package for roads, canals, and bridges. There was a recession that hit Illinois. That left these half-done projects littered around the state. It put him in such a state of depression that doctors in Springfield contemplated putting him in an institution. His friends, colleagues, in fact, his law partner said they needed to remove sharp

objects from his room because they thought he might be suicidal. Then Abraham Lincoln came roaring back. He retired, left the legislature, then came back later, and he is now considered one of the five best presidents in the United States. He shares Mt. Rushmore with Teddy Roosevelt, who had similar issues. When his first child was born, he received a telegram in Albany that the child was born. He was so excited. But then he received a telegram that his mom was sick, so he rushed back to New York. His 49-year-old mom died hours later. Just a few hours later, his 26-year-old wife passed away, and he wrote in his journal that night, "The light has gone out of my life." He left public office. He did not want to be in public office anymore, but he came roaring back.

I think North Las Vegas has this story of coming back. I think this body has played a critical role in North Las Vegas's success. We are very thankful for that. We are thankful for the piece of the story that the Legislature has played in the City of North Las Vegas. We have a bill that we will be bringing before you later this session. It is something that is important for North Las Vegas and a bit of cleaning up on our charter. A lot of the hard work has been done. Thank you all for your efforts.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

I served with Senator Lee when he was here at the Legislature. He left a legacy like no other. He always had an open door policy, and he would work with the people on a day-to-day basis. I thought he was one of the best legislators in the building. When he came back and went to the City of North Las Vegas and said, Look, we have a problem, and we are going to take this on as a challenge, I think everybody was scratching their head thinking, how are they going to pull this out? Boy, did they prove everybody wrong, and they did—and you have. It is amazing what you have accomplished in the last few years. I went through some of the old parts of North Las Vegas, down by the race track, and looked around down there. You have done an amazing job. My hat is off to you. I think you have done a great job with the way North Las Vegas is growing and what you are going to do to expand. You are not going to be the number three city in the state of Nevada. You are going to be number two pretty quickly. I can see it. What you have done is leave a legacy that nobody is going to match for a long time.

**Assemblyman Leavitt:**

I have a friend who was made an honorary member of North Las Vegas, and it has bugged me for a long time. Could you bestow that on us as a Committee and make us honorary members of North Las Vegas? I would appreciate that.

**John Lee:**

We are really broke. People come in and they do anything to help North Las Vegas and I can pat them on the back. But I had a T-shirt made from small to triple 3X. I say to them, I do not know where you live. I know your mayor does not love you as much as I do right now. So I have the T-shirt that says, "Friend of Mayor John Lee." On the back it says: "Honorary Citizen, North Las Vegas." These are millionaires, big important people in their industries. You ought to see them melt getting that T-shirt. If we are successful, Mr. Chair, because I do not want to bribe you, I might send you a T-shirt. But I will tell you that without the

Legislature, North Las Vegas will not be able to continue. We need to make changes. If you see any bill from North Las Vegas, I want you to know it is well thought out. It has an economic benefit for you by helping us. I promise you more money will be made in North Las Vegas, more jobs will be produced in southern Nevada in North Las Vegas than anywhere else in the valley. You are investing in your future. I have every one of your sizes in T-shirts.

**Ryann Juden:**

If we get the wrong size, please do not be offended. We will send them, and you can be the one who decides who is the large and who is the small.

**Chair Flores:**

Are there any additional questions? [There were none.] I am not sure we are allowed to accept gifts, but we appreciate the spirit of that commentary.

**Assemblyman Assefa:**

Thank you for the hard work that you do, for turning the city around, and for continuing to do that. I want to ask you about what plans the city has for crime prevention and gang activities in North Las Vegas. Maybe you touched on this, but I was extremely distracted by the use of aircraft in your presentation, especially right now. It is startling. You could have used a different illustration to make your point, charts, trend demonstrations of any type. I get what you are trying to do; I understand the point. I think given what we went through post-9/11, and only 72 hours ago, 157 people died as a result of an aircraft that was nose-diving into terrain. I think that was a bit insensitive. The traveling public is very unsettled and unassured. Members of this Committee, except for a couple of us, all fly on 737s every week between here and Las Vegas. Every now and then, we see this particular type of aircraft on that line. With the emotion aside, I am a pilot. This stuff is not very simple for me.

It is only a couple of months ago I saw in the news that members of a particular gang showed up in North Las Vegas, peppered a house with bullets, terrorized a family, and an 11-year-old girl was killed. This stuff exists in your city. What plan do you have? What is being done to mitigate some of these things? What resources are being allocated?

**Ryann Juden:**

I apologize for the insensitivity in any illustration. That is something we have used for a while, but your comments are duly noted on something that we should probably change. I can do nothing but apologize. There was nothing intentional.

Regarding the specific question on some of the things that happened in our community towards the end of the year, you are correct with respect to the incident that happened with the 11 year old. It is a regional challenge that we have. We work closely with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) and other jurisdictions. Those were not North Las Vegas residents. Those were folks from a neighboring jurisdiction who came in to inflict gang violence. The wrong home was targeted. It is something that North Las Vegas cannot



solve on its own. We work closely with other jurisdictions on crime prevention of gangs, and it is something that is really difficult. We had several young victims. How do you address that?

We have a new police chief—she is wonderful. She has been on the job since November. The police department had a "good old boys" network for a while. One of the things I wanted to do as city manager was change that culture and make sure that the best people were being promoted throughout the ranks. You have the chief, and below the chief there are five captains. When we had an outgoing chief, I met with the captains to talk with them. I was a little troubled that our outgoing chief, as he went through the different captains, talked about some of them not being qualified to be chief. That was startling to me, because I think every captain should be able to be a chief.

I talked with our command team to see how the captains were selected. Within a few interviews I realized that it is all over the board. They all understood different ways they were selected. I knew right then there needed to be a process put in place that made sure that we were advancing the right people. Management sat down with command staff, and we conducted interviews with them in order to make sure we were promoting people not because of their religion, not because they made good barbeque, or they were in a certain class at the academy with people and command staff, but the 13 or 14 who applied, every single one of the minorities who applied for that position thanked our committee at the end—every one of them, without fail—for having a process they could be a part of. She has now built herself a command team. She has reorganized some different assets within the city. There is a problem-solving unit, which is one of the things that was great to be able to interview these 13 or 14 people for—to be in a leadership position. You were able to see common themes in their interviews, and no one knew what the police support unit was doing. Our new chief has taken that unit and deployed them to hot zone areas. We are working with Commissioner Kirkpatrick. The county has been very effective in targeting specific hot areas with ShotSpotter and other things.

We are investing on the technology front. We are investing on the people front. We are deploying resources in different ways. We are working with our other jurisdictions because it is a regional problem. I tease Henderson, sometimes, that if people in Henderson just would not come to North Las Vegas and commit crime, we would be okay. But the reality is, that is not entirely what happens. People come from multiple jurisdictions, so it is very important that law enforcement works together. Metro does a tremendous job in coordinating efforts among jurisdictions to make sure we are working together on this. Gangs and people who want to commit violence do not pay attention to jurisdictional boundaries. Those are three of the things we are doing.

We are also working with different churches and communities. I think we have a command staff that looks like our community, and they are more accessible to our community. I am very proud of the work that our chief has done in just a short quarter to be able to resolve some of those concerns. I wish I could tell you that it will not happen. I sit there as a city manager not knowing the first thing about how to handcuff somebody. All I can do is make

sure I have hired the people and recommended people who are good at doing their jobs, good at connecting with the community, to the mayor and council. I think Chief Ojeda is doing a tremendous job, and I hope to see the trend continue in a positive way.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

If you will, I would like to go to page 7. I would like for you to expound on some of the types of licenses and fees you have, because I see that there are about \$116.5 million that you have allocated for the 2019 budget. Can you explain to the Committee what that is and what it looks like? From there, I would like to ask what the "miscellaneous" category entails with the \$23 million. Then, we will move from there.

**Ryann Juden:**

I will go through some of this. For the granularity, if there is more information you need, we will provide that to you and the Committee. At a high level, a lot of the fees that local governments and the City of North Las Vegas are receiving, we have seen an increase in our building and in our hookup fees for utilities. This highlights a very important factor of what we have changed in the City of North Las Vegas. During periods of growth everything is cyclical, the economy is cyclical, and as far as our business licensing fees we are collecting, the permit fees and hookups for utilities. One of the big challenges and errors that North Las Vegas possibly committed in the past is that they would look at these fees that were coming in and they would think of them as reoccurring, when they are not really reoccurring. You can drive down the Strip and see large buildings that are just there. They have stopped construction on them and are no longer building them. The private sector could start pulling the plug on different projects at any time. We have been very careful and looked at our recurring revenues and onetime revenues. Some of the revenues you see represented here are representative of the growth we have had. We want to make sure that we are not committing those revenues or not hiring people because of those revenues. When those revenues stop, then you have to lay people off. You have to make cuts, so we are very cognizant of some of these revenues.

One big line revenue is some of the licensing, which, for example, is marijuana. I am not sure where the trend line is on that. We have not yet incorporated that into our decision-making process for management as far as what is reoccurring and what is one time. Some of those are onetime fees for licenses; those are very clearly delineated in the budget as far as our decision-making processes. We are not sure, for example, what kind of impact we will have with the five new marijuana dispensaries. When finance came and started talking about their growth projections and management said, We are not going to take these five new dispensary licenses and project growth in the market. I do not know, I am not involved in that market, but it seems to me that market share is not going to change dramatically just because you increased dispensaries. You are just going to see a diffusion of business within the dispensaries. We have been careful in the decisions we have made when we look at the budget.

As far as miscellaneous, we will get back with you on what specific items they have in miscellaneous. I think it is probably some of those onetime fees for licensing, for marijuana, for example. This past round of five generated a little over \$3 million in onetime fees, so that is what some of those are.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

If you will, please send that to the entire Committee as far as what those miscellaneous fees are. While we are on the topic of marijuana licenses and how they have been allocated, could you tell me what the diversity looks like—the dissemination of those licenses, being that North Las Vegas is one of the most diverse cities in the southern Nevada area?

**Ryann Juden:**

It is the most diverse city in the entire state. It is one of the largest minority-majority cities in the country. Regarding your question on marijuana, one of the things North Las Vegas did right away, and if you recall when we had medical marijuana, there were licenses that were given to each jurisdiction that remained out of court in that process. The reason why we did that is because we let the state rank them, as the regulations that were passed by this body suggested. Once we received the state rankings, we took the top four. We did not think outside the box; we had enough things to think about. Everybody who was anybody was lobbying the mayor and council. We figured that the Legislature and the state had put together a fair and equitable process, and we were not going to be arbitrary and capricious in how we selected people, so we went right down the line. Whatever diversity requirements that you put into the regulations at the state level, however that was applied, and I believe the state gave us 19 people who were ranked for four spots, we took 1, 2, 3, and 4. When it comes to the recreational, we have five licenses. The state only sent us the top five. Our intent was to go right down the line and pick the top five. We currently have a moratorium on that just because of all the legalities that are going on.

I believe there was another lawsuit, the fourth or fifth lawsuit that was done yesterday by the grows. In North Las Vegas, due to the amount of land that we have, a lot of the businesses we receive within that sector are in the grow area. It became somewhat concerning for us whenever we started to see that these licenses for the recreational marijuana were consolidated in the market. Given the diversity we have of grows in North Las Vegas, any kind of perceived or real monopoly that could have happened in the market would have been detrimental to our grows because they are the supply chain for the dispensaries. Because of that, even though we do not have a lot of dispensaries, in a word, to protect the grows to get an understanding of it, and I believe that is something that taxation and the Office of the Governor and possibly you are taking up, the process is something we are concerned about. We have submitted a request to the state for information regarding taxation on the process to get a better handle on it because of how we want to make sure we are protecting our grows.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

To ensure that I am hearing you correctly, what I am hearing is that the City of North Las Vegas did not and was not intentional with looking at diversity as it relates to issuing licenses. Is that correct?

**Ryann Juden:**

That is correct. We took them however the state ranked them, figuring you had done your due diligence, and we went right down the list.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I would definitely encourage the City of North Las Vegas as it relates to issuing licenses to make sure that we look at diversity and how those licenses are being awarded with the intention of making sure that we are as diverse as possible with that.

If we could go to page 12. How are we doing in relation to being at maximum staffing levels? What would that look like for the City of North Las Vegas? Secondly, how many vacancies do we have within the City of North Las Vegas? The reason for my question is that I would like to know if the citizens of North Las Vegas are missing out on services that they could be receiving from the city had those positions been filled. If those positions are not being filled and there is no intention for those to be filled, what plans do we have to ensure they are filled at a future date?

**Ryann Juden:**

Those are great questions. It is something we look at a lot because what are correct staffing levels? I do not believe it is what North Las Vegas was before. We have seen that. We have seen that there was a bit of fat, maybe a lot of fat. Maximum staffing levels are something that we work on with the departments. One of the things we did this year is update what we call a five-year staffing plan. It allows each of the departments to come to management and let us know what the different positions are that are needed this year and next year in that five-year plan.

Whenever we came to the city, we worked very closely with the City of Las Vegas, in what was called a "shared services committee" to look for ways we could share services and how we could provide a better return for taxpayers. There were several things that came from that, including shared services that continue to this day. There were also some practices that we adopted from the City of Las Vegas, which were adopted from the City of Henderson.

One of the things we have is a critical justification committee. What this does is put together an executive team that goes over both the new hiring as well as any promotions within the city to make sure it is vetted and that we are looking at the critical needs of the entire city and not just the critical needs of the department. One thing that is interesting is that last year we freed up about \$3 million in our budget which was going to allow us to hire around 30 people. We were able to hire 29 people into critical positions. What was interesting about this is that I brought together all the different directors and they had all made different staff requests of what they needed and what they thought was critical. Instead of having our smaller executive team, I made a very large critical justification team with every department director who was asking for a position. As the meeting progressed, I had one particular department that had some critical needs that anybody could see. I had them go first and explain their critical needs and why they needed them. I started receiving texts from different directors saying, My positions are not as critical. I do not want to talk to my

colleagues about my positions or why I thought I needed this. It became a very collaborative approach at the director and management levels to make sure we were filling these positions.

If we are looking at vital services to the city, aside from public safety, we have a library system that is still not open all the time. That is something that is a challenge and particularly unique to the City of North Las Vegas. We are the only city in the entire state that does not receive a consolidated tax distribution (CTX) for our libraries. I am not sure why the brainiacs decided to make that decision at the City of North Las Vegas in the past, but they did. We have had to build our libraries with general fund dollars. This year is a remarkable year for the city because the bonds that were used to build two of our libraries have now been satisfied by the city, so the library is finally having some of those revenues that they had to put toward other things that other cities did not have to do.

It is a challenge that we have not come to this body to talk about how we need to change CTX. It is not fair. Those were kind of a clarion call in the past for the city. We said here are the tools we have. How are we going to make this work? Those bonds are being satisfied so now we start seeing that in our libraries. Next year, we are opening another library downtown. We are starting to see staffing levels come up, so we are able to have some of these libraries open. We have different focuses that we are looking at specifically.

Going to the Assemblyman's question on crime, one of the ways you can prevent crime is to make sure there are things for kids to do. If you look at crime levels, they increase in the summer, and it is not because ice cream sales increase. It is because kids are out and they want things to do. Making sure we have parks and libraries and places for them to go has been something the Mayor and council have been focused on. As management, we have tried to respond to it, but we still have the realities of revenues and making sure that we can only hire so many.

One of the things you can observe at a high level at the City of North Las Vegas, reductions in force or layoffs are necessary to balance a budget, but one of the long-term impacts you have with that, especially in an environment in this city where we have collective bargaining, is many times those are done by seniority. Because of that, your more senior members make more, and you are laying off folks who make less. The net result of that is fewer full-time equivalents.

We are also coming to a period in the city where we have a lot of folks who are approaching retirement age. The budget consequences to having them leave are that I might have someone who has been with the city for 20 or 30 years and because of that they are topped out at their salary range. They might be making \$120,000 a year, and now I can replace them with someone who is making \$50,000 per year. I can start to replace people with more people, so you are starting to see that net result. At the same time, we are dealing with some challenges that we inherited. During the time when the city could not provide salary increases to employees, they would offset that by increasing the bankable hours they would have in their different time banks. What it was doing was moving an obligation and shifting it to the future. We are now getting close to the future, and we have to address those

necessary decisions made by our predecessors. We have to address those because you have this wave of folks who will be retiring. We have to satisfy their banks. Those are challenges we have.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

That is encouraging, and I am really happy to hear the progress. What is the total number of current vacancies at the City of North Las Vegas?

**Ryann Juden:**

I can tell you that whenever the directors put together their five-year staffing model plans, there were 478 requests for positions. Of those requests, even as we go through them, we go through the budgeting process. For example, we had one request by one of the departments. They wanted another business auditor, and they wanted it in Year Three. Management looked at that and asked, Why do you want this person in Year Three? Why not Year One? How is the current auditor we have doing? Because what this person does is go to businesses and make sure the business is paying its fair share. We found out that the auditor is making her salary three times over. So we shifted that request which was in Year Three to Year One. They just hired that individual, and they have already found a business, for example, that is delinquent over a quarter of a million dollars in past fees. That business is bringing a check to the city this week. They have an obligation that is about \$75,000 that they have to pay that goes into our budget, so that pays for that position. The request from the departments, while they are 478, I think they started to narrow that down, and that is the five-year projection. We are hoping this year that we will be able to add another 30 positions, and we will keep incrementally growing positions. We have that critical team that looks at the needs of the city and not just the departments.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I am happy to hear that we are making strides toward progress. As you know, I represent Assembly District No. 6, right at the line. A portion of my district is in North Las Vegas. I have family living in North Las Vegas. I hear a lot of concerns, and I appreciate your willingness to allow me to ask a few more questions.

To touch on what Assemblyman Assefa brought forward as it relates to crime and a lot of our youth losing their lives, there have been a lot of concerns at our campuses in North Las Vegas. If you will, could you describe to the Committee what some of those plans are in coordination with the school district to provide some sense of security to the parents who are in that area? Could you talk a little to that? I think you know what I am talking about, correct?

**Ryann Juden:**

Yes, sir. It is a big concern for us. The Mayor has had several meetings with the Clark County School District's (CCSD) chief of police. I am not sure if you were on the committee; I know the Assemblyman was. I remember his comments because I was watching him from afar, whenever they came and presented the different plans necessary for safety. This body has helped Nevada with more police officers and different things. What is

interesting is the Clark County School District has not been a part of that. While we have received dedicated revenues that go to our police forces, they are not for CCSD. I think that is something that could be very beneficial for CCSD to have their own line item. At budgeting time when we have that, we have general fund dollars, and then we have these other fund dollars that are specifically through the different cop bills that we are able to use and dedicate specifically for our police forces. I think Chief Ojeda has done a great job in talking with the different resource officers and the police and providing the resources she has for any issues they have. Just as the approach to crime in southern Nevada is not something that is jurisdictionally based, it is something that is across the entire region, a collaborative approach is required. We provide policing services to residents. We provide assistance to CCSD. There is a committee that meets regularly to assess different things. We do training procedures and similar things with them. I think that is a typical revenue challenge we have.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

While we as a committee are very aware that this is not exclusive to the City of North Las Vegas, I was only asking about what the City of North Las Vegas is doing with their portion of the problem. That was my intention for the question. What are we doing about homelessness? We are aware that is not exclusive to one jurisdiction, but it is going to require all of our municipalities to step up to the plate, communicate with one another, and be intentional in our approach to address this. If you will share with the Committee, what is the City of North Las Vegas doing?

**Ryann Juden:**

What I can do is have command staff and the police department put together a more granular response to specifically what they are doing. As far as their day-to-day operations with CCSD, they would be better equipped to answer that question. We will also get that information for you. When it comes to homelessness, I can approach it at a high level, but we also have a team of four individuals in an office, and that is one of their many tasks. So I can get a deeper, detailed response for you on that. As far as regionally, the City of Las Vegas has really led out on this. They recognize the problem. It is a problem that is really on our border with them where a lot of the services have been pushed for that border. I think Commissioner Kirkpatrick is doing an incredible job in identifying the issue and how she is able to identify and get so in depth on this one issue, given all the different things she is doing. She looks at it as a need for a regional approach where we are not just focusing on one area. Listening to Councilman Cedric Crear in a meeting with some legislators earlier, he talked about how in Los Angeles and other places when you try to force it all into one area, where they have Skid Row, it does not necessarily result in the net changes that are necessary.

I will say this as far as homelessness, and I have talked to the Mayor and council about this several times because as city managers in the region, it is very difficult. We have some regional boards that look at it and they work on it. It is very clear that the way one solves homelessness, it is a housing problem. A great example we have is Rose Garden. This was a senior center, and now the second Rose Garden has been built. All the seniors from the old center have been moved to the new facility. You have this former senior center that is just

sitting there. It was an older building and had its challenges, but it is still there. It is something that could provide real opportunity. We have talked to different groups about it, saying we have a potential solution to part of this. As you start to address these solutions at city councils there is a lot of, Okay, you want to solve it, but it is not going to be in my backyard. What is happening now is not sustainable. I applaud Mayor Goodman and her team and Las Vegas City Manager Scott Adams and his team for trying to do something. I know there are probably some parts about what they are trying to do that are challenging to folks in this body, but they identified that there needs to be revenue that goes to it.

Previously in my career I worked with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and one of the things that we did is say, Instead of the state creating something, whether that is state or local government, you could go into providers within that arena and provide them several dollars. Folks would say, Well, you have separation of church and state. With those folks you could say, No, it is okay for the federal government to provide resources to nonprofits or community groups that are providing a service that is providing a social good, regardless of the religious affiliation. I think that we have nonprofits in southern Nevada that are doing really well. One thing that I would suggest from my position is, while I applaud Las Vegas, you have to grab the bull by the horns and do it sometimes. Maybe we should look very closely at nonprofits that are providing this service. You had examples where the federal government would build soup kitchens and homeless shelters in Chicago, but the homeless would rather go to the Catholic Charities USA's shelter because that is what they recognize. It became difficult for Catholic Charities USA because they lost their director and some of their key people to the federal one across the street, even though the homeless people did not want to use that. It is a big challenge that is regional. We have elected officials who sit on various boards that are addressing it. Councilman Scott Black is working on that with the regional housing authority, but you solve homelessness by providing homes. There have got to be wraparound services that are able to provide the services that are necessary for these folks. It is a challenge—a challenge that is very difficult.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I am really happy to hear about some of the suggestions you have. Again, I want to point out that we are here to serve. We want all of our municipalities to be successful. If you have ideas or suggestions on how we can better serve you for you to accomplish what you need to in your jurisdiction, please let us know; utilize us as a resource. The reason for this is because I am in the North Las Vegas jurisdiction. There is not a high level of communication, which we have to address. But other than that, I know there were a few projects that the City of North Las Vegas was engaged in. The first that I would like to speak to is on Cheyenne Avenue and Commerce Street. What is the status of that project? What is going on? I would then like you to talk a bit about what the City of North Las Vegas is doing as part of their redevelopment agency. How are you promoting historic west Las Vegas, which is nested in the North Las Vegas jurisdiction? Please start with the project on Commerce and Cheyenne, then we can get to what your redevelopment agency is doing to promote historic west Las Vegas.



**Ryann Juden:**

On communication, I agree. You had mentioned earlier that residents contact you with concerns. I think you have my cell number. At any time, and this goes for anyone on the Committee or colleagues, if you receive questions from constituents, consider that you get to pass it on. I remember when I worked on Capitol Hill in the House of Representatives, and we would get a call from somebody and tell the caller, We are not your congressman. We loved to pass it off. Embrace it, love to pass it off.

Please give me your concerns if you receive any from residents. We will roll out the red carpet and address those concerns and help you through it. And if you want us to provide the answers for you, we want to be able to address those concerns. Many times residents are not sure on things. We get all kinds of questions about CCSD and what is going on, even though it is not within what we do. But the Mayor has made it very clear that if it happens within the corporate boundaries of the City of North Las Vegas, we do not just pass it off. We find the solution. We find the answer to the question and we help the residents.

As far as Cheyenne and Commerce, that is a project called Huanghai. It is still progressing. They were, maybe two months ago, submitting some plans. I am not sure why it is taking the time it is taking them, but they are still following all the rules and guidelines that the city has. I believe one of the challenges when the project was started, it is a Chinese company, and their funding mechanism was through, and I cannot remember the name of the visas.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

The EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program.

**Ryann Juden:**

Yes. China is much different than what it was when the project was started. They have a president for life, and there has been a big change within the country as far as dollars leaving. We have had tightening of direct foreign investment in the United States with the current administration. So I think a lot of those things have created unexpected hurdles for them on their project, but they are still progressing through with their permitting and things like that.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

We hope they can continue with that project.

Back to the redevelopment agency, you are a redevelopment agency, and what they are doing to promote historic west Las Vegas, which is nested in my assembly district, which is also nested in the North Las Vegas jurisdiction, if you could describe for the Committee what you are doing in that regard.

**Ryann Juden:**

The Historic Westside is in your assembly district but it is not in the City of North Las Vegas. There is a portion of it that comes in—the root of a lot of the work that has been done. One of the things our director is doing, and both Councilman Barron and

Councilwoman Goynes-Brown have been working on this effort, is making sure that opportunities are worked on collaboratively with the City of Las Vegas because of the fact that it is a shared asset and a shared historic area. Our redevelopment areas and our downtown core are things where we have a lot of exciting projects going on. We have a presentation that I will send to you and to the Committee. For example, we are taking the historic Jefferson School and converting it into a library—preserving the school. There will be a library that is like a normal library with books and kid's sections, things like that. It is really focusing on jobs—and finding jobs. I think the direct answer to the question is that this is something that, as you have these redevelopment areas that connect—and I do not know if there is anything legislatively that could be done—but it is very important to make sure there is a modicum of consistency throughout the area, especially the Westside, the majority of which is in Las Vegas. We have the gateway, the entryway to it in North Las Vegas. There is collaboration so you have consistency from design standards to different things you want to have come into there. It is a collaborative effort.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

One final point of clarification: as a part of the over 400 vacancies that are in North Las Vegas, how many of those are fire or police?

**Ryann Juden:**

We have been hiring police and fire. A lot of that is through attrition and making sure we are able to support those levels. Some of the growth we are seeing in North Las Vegas, such as the building, how it hits the city is that it hits at the very beginning, at the counter and building. You have to have enough staff to make sure you are able to move new businesses and new homes through the process. As those projects mature after a couple years, that is when you have to start making sure you are providing police and fire protection for them. We have a new fire chief in our fire department, but 87 percent of that work is handling ambulance calls. Because of building codes and things like that, there is a limit on the number of fires the department deals with. They answer a lot of fires at recycling plants. Sometimes I tease them about that probably being their job security: they have these recycling fires lots of times.

I can get you the specifics on that. I believe the number was 12, but it is a growth model that is different. We have been able to keep staffing levels and increase them.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

Is that 12 between the two?

**Ryann Juden:**

No, that was fire. Regarding police, there are a couple of changes they need, not line officers but, for instance, there is a request for two detectives in this budget. That is important, because our detectives are overwhelmed. We brought in a colleague of yours, Tom Roberts, before he came to this body. I think he was between elections, so we were not sure if he was going to be on this body or not, and I know you tried to not get him on this body, but here he is. He worked with us to put together a great example of the residents getting a good bang

for their buck. He did a tremendous job interviewing and got down to the root and made several recommendations. The large percentage of his recommendations have already been implemented by the department. He specifically identified the detectives and the workload they have compared to other detectives because that is one of the things a person needs to be able to do is solve the crimes, put bad guys away, and make sure they are not recommitting crimes. We added a detective three months ago, and we have two more detectives slated for this year. We will probably add one, and we are continuing to grow.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I just want to make sure I heard you correctly regarding Assemblyman Roberts, who I believe is a fine man. You said, I tried to have him not be here, is that what I heard?

**Ryann Juden:**

I was referencing the other hat that you wear. I was teasing. Assemblyman Roberts is a great guy, and what I was referencing is the fact that he was working with the city prior to his electoral victories. He might still be working with the city in some capacity, but here he is, and he provided a great report for us.

**John Lee:**

I want you to understand that these questions you get are from a willing partner. He is very involved in our community, and we appreciate working with him. We do not mind being monitored. Questions mean you care. They are not "gotcha" questions; these are very good questions. It brings up some interesting points. I have two speeds: fast and faster. I get somewhere as fast as I can or faster than somebody else can get there. I usually end up winning because of my work ethic. I am building a city at the same time we are running a city. So we have long-term goals. You pay me to know where North Las Vegas will be ten years from now. At the same time, you pay to make sure that you live in a very safe community. We wear two hats in this business.

You brought up homelessness. We have been meeting with Deacon Tom Roberts of Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada. We understand that it is a mental illness issue. We do not have a lot of authority or money to work with that. We come to you as a partner. If you are able to do anything at all regarding homelessness to support mental illnesses a little bit, we would use those facilities greatly.

In North Las Vegas, if you add all the things above the ground, all those streetlights, the roads, the curbs, the gutters, sidewalks, houses, land—everything—then you go below the ground, the millions and millions of dollars of infrastructure, flood control, Internet, all the cables and everything, we are running a \$27 billion business in North Las Vegas. We bring in \$601 million. We spend \$601 million. We run a balanced budget. We take a building on a piece of land—there is a difference between land and real estate. Real estate is the stuff you buy, you sell, you build a building on it, it employs somebody, it becomes an asset to the community; land is that stuff that holds the planet together, stuff between here and California, Arizona, and Utah—we have a lot of beautiful real estate in North Las Vegas.

Our situation is, if you take a straw, and you put that project in the straw; and, oh, we just finished another big project; put that in the straw. Here is another, the Amazon project. We put them in and they start moving, but it takes so long to come out the other side because the assessor has to go there and assess the property. The treasurer then has to go out there and figure out what the value will be. Then that person pays property tax. We somehow need to speed up the system, because it can be two years for some people who are there and the land is still showing as open land—desert. But for two years, the business has been there making great money and doing a great thing for the community. But the city, the money that you need to work on these projects along with me does not matriculate for two to three years sometimes. We would love to have you look at how fast we can get the revenue generated, land in the coffers of the city so the city can invest those funds in the areas that need it.

With that, thank you for your time, and I will answer any questions you have. We are very appreciative of the Legislature. I grew up here. I never got to go to college. You are my education, and you made me the mayor I am today. The system made me the mayor I am today.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I want to recognize that you recognize these questions come from a place of concern and compassion for the residents of North Las Vegas.

In regard to you asking the Committee if we have suggestions or ideas, I would like to give it back to the City of North Las Vegas and ask, What proposed legislation have you brought to the body that would help alleviate some of the concerns that we see and share?

**John Lee:**

We can give you, not in bill form, but in amendment form, amendments that could go on bills because we are not the county. It is hard to put a bill in to make the county do something when you are North Las Vegas. We have ideas, Assemblyman McCurdy. I will be looking forward to sending you some good ideas that I know would help local government.

**Chair Flores:**

In all fairness, I did not send you any questions ahead of time. I am going to make a request, though. Could you send an email to the Committee with just a breakdown? We talked about 478 positions. If we could break down by race and gender what that looks like, if we have that data, so that we can get an idea of who we are hiring and that we are staying true to the spirit of the DNA of your city, specifically as we address the homelessness issue. Again, I think you are very astute, and I understand how complex and difficult it is. I think you did a great job explaining to us how difficult of a challenge it is. If you could say, Here is how difficult a challenge it is, and here is what we are doing—that would be very helpful to us. That way we can see that the City of North Las Vegas is doing this. While we know that no city or county or anybody is doing enough, because we all know we need more resources, at a minimum we have an understanding. Here is the direction we are walking. Here is what we are doing. Then that allows us to see what you are doing and when we talk about wraparound services, we can then engage in that conversation.

The same thing is true for redevelopment. I think Vice Chair McCurdy did a great job in going into that conversation with you. North Las Vegas has been able to put some huge wins on the table, and you highlighted those in a great way. But if you could help us look at it through a small business perspective, here is what we are doing to encourage small business owners. Here is how Edgar's mom who wants to open a restaurant on the corner of whatever street and whatever street, here is how we are encouraging that. Here are the benefits of doing it. Here is how we are capturing those individuals. On top of that, we understand that bringing in huge multimillion dollar corporations, we need that as well. But at the same time, we want to make sure we are helping the local, small mom-and-pop place. It is not fair for me to put this on the table and then make you answer it now, because I did not give you an opportunity to research all that data. If you could send that information to the whole Committee, that would be incredibly helpful to me and to the rest of the team.

**Assemblyman Hafen:**

It is good to see part of my district up here. Apex is part of my district so I am happy to have you here. I am going to touch on something, and I think what you have done in North Las Vegas is excellent. The Great Recession was very difficult on you. The turnaround that you have done has been excellent. Have you considered writing a book on how the turnaround took place? I hope it never happens again, that we never go through another recession like we did, but I think it is cyclical. We have gone through a great depression, a great recession, and sometime in the future it will happen again. Personally, I think it would be very helpful for, hopefully not the state of Nevada, but other municipalities throughout the nation to see what it is that North Las Vegas did to pull themselves out. Maybe I am just planting a seed; maybe you never thought of it. Hopefully, you will consider putting it in writing so that in the future, people will know how you were able to succeed.

**Ryann Juden:**

I appreciate that suggestion and, in fact, it is something we tease about. One of the things that has been professionally rewarding for me is that we have a number of cities, not just in the United States but throughout the world, that have contacted us asking questions. The Pew Research Center in Washington, D.C., has asked us questions to figure things out. When we had our last bond increase, usually what happens is you have these bond calls with people on Wall Street. They flew their team to North Las Vegas to try and understand what it is that we are doing because they wanted to share it with other clients that they work with from other cities. It is rewarding to be able to talk with other folks. We have two chapters in a national publication by the Brookings Institute on some of the specific ways we have been able to do things. We will continue to do that. I joke with the team that I have the rights to it, and when I write it, I will not include my bad joke that I tried to make to Vice Chair McCurdy on party affiliation and how politics work—that will be out. We have some very colorful labor leaders whom I love. One of them, I have saved some of his voice mails because they are so great, and they will be in the book one day. They go from an unimaginable amount of cursing to, Okay, have a great holiday with your family. We will talk later. Bye bye. It is a great story, and I think there are some things we have done in injecting some private sector thought. It is something that can be replicated in other places, and we are working on that to address Chair Flores' question.

I want to make it clear: those 400 positions are future positions that we are hiring. I do not have the demographics on them. One thing I can say is hiring is one of the most critical steps we have now in the City of North Las Vegas—that is the future. It is the future of the services that are being provided to your vice chair's constituents and others. Building our human resources (HR) department to be a world-class department to make sure we are hiring the right people was our first step. That was the first hire I made as city manager. I can tell you we interviewed a lot of people and had a lot of discussions on who we should bring in as an HR director. We hired a tremendously qualified person. She is one of the most qualified HR directors we have had in the City of North Las Vegas. She just happens to be African-American. She was hired because of her qualities, and that is what we will continue to do in the City of North Las Vegas. She has put together a great team that is diverse, that represents our community, from our lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, and questioning community—from our community of diversity. She has a great team that she has assembled, and I think they will continue to make these choices as they work with the departments to make sure that we have hires who represent our community.

**Chair Flores:**

Thank you for that clarification.

**Assemblywoman Gorelow:**

We were talking about homelessness and affordable housing, which are big issues throughout the state. You mentioned that you have two planned communities going in North Las Vegas. Do you have an idea of what the price range is of those homes?

**Ryann Juden:**

I can get you what I believe are the sales sheets from those communities. They go from \$250,000 to \$700,000, if I am recalling one of them correctly. The \$250,000 homes are a condo-type product they provide. The second area is the Villages at Tule Springs. It is five different phases, and I can get you the information for phase one. Phase two is an age-restricted community. We also have a lot of infill projects, so we will put together some information for you.

One other project we are excited about, not so much for the housing part of it, but if you know the City of North Las Vegas, we had a pig farm in the middle of it. That was one of the things we circled. We said, We cannot have a pig farm in the middle of the city. I know it is part of the city's roots. I was surprised, when we moved the pig farm to an area where a pig farm would be more welcome, there were a lot of residents who were upset by that. Often we hear from those who are upset and not those who are tickled. What we do know is, in the two-mile-radius of that pig farm, there were odor nuisances that were recorded on all the deeds of the properties. Those are being removed as they sell those properties. You see homes that were the exact same home, exact same builder, exact same model that were built outside that two-mile radius selling from 22 percent to 28 percent more. We believe from the presentations from the groups, that there is about a 17 percent increase in property valuations in that area. So we are glad the pig farm is gone. I can get you the information on the Sedona Ranch housing development also.

**Chair Flores:**

I would like to modify my request slightly and ask that you speak with your HR director. If she could look at who we have now on the team and give the Committee the DNA breakdown, that would be helpful.

Your constituents are ours at the end of the day. Every single issue that impacts you should impact us the same exact way. We should be as committed to this fight as you are, so we appreciate all you do. We are here as an ally to try and work with you in every way we can and to try and tackle some of these very difficult conversations that we do not always have the answers to. I appreciate your presentations.

I will close the presentation and invite anyone forward who is here for public comment.  
[There was no one.]

Having no further business, this meeting is adjourned [at 10:35 a.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Connie Jo Smith  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is a letter dated March 10, 2019, to Chair Flores and members of the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs, from Steve Teshara, Principal, Sustainable Community Advocates; Darcie Goodman-Collins, Ph.D., Executive Director, League to Save Lake Tahoe; Julie Regan, Chief of External Affairs/Deputy Director, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, in support of Assembly Bill 220, on behalf of the Lake Tahoe Partnership.

[Exhibit D](#) is a letter dated March 12, 2019, presented by Tobi Tyler, Executive Committee Member, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club, in support of Assembly Bill 220.

[Exhibit E](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Nevada Legislature Assembly Committee on Government Affairs, City of North Las Vegas," dated March 2019, presented by John J. Lee, Mayor, City of North Las Vegas; Ryann Juden, City Manager, City of North Las Vegas; and Delen Goldberg, Chief of Staff, City of North Las Vegas.