

Dear Washoe County Residents,

Reflecting on 2016 and my 2015 term as Washoe County Chair, I am impressed with Washoe County's continued focus on customer service, economic development, support for growth and prosperity in our region. I'm proud to say we have had several successes this year.

The Reno Aces Baseball Settlement allowed Washoe County and partnering agencies to bring \$1.9 million in available funds to local government and to support a previously unfunded Stadium Authority. The decision avoided costly legal battles and provided continued growth of our community. The agreement also paved the way for a professional soccer team to begin playing at the Aces Ballpark in 2017.

We are focusing on both the homeless and veterans as well as seniors to make sure the most vulnerable of our community continue to be protected. Our Senior Services programs provide 405,000 meals to homebound seniors in our community, an increase of 17 percent from the previous year, thanks to a new partnership with Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada.

Partnerships have been pivotal in the County's recent success. Teaming up with the Regional Transportation Commission and Access to Health Network increased transportation services for disabled residents who do not have access to public transit outside of the McCarran Loop. We are working with both Sparks and Reno to resolve outstanding issues related to the homeless shelter and will continue to work on the possibility of increasing available beds. Washoe County has increased the number of beds available in our integrated Crossroads program.

The Board of Commissioners also sits as the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Board of Fire Commissioners. I am most proud of the efforts of the fire district to implement an automatic aid agreement with the City of Reno to assure the closest fire company can respond to every fire protecting all residents in the Truckee Meadows despite jurisdictional boundaries. Two new structural fire engines placed into service at Sun Valley and Spanish Springs Fire Stations; and three new wildland/brush engines were placed into service at Sun Valley, Spanish Springs and Cold Springs Fire Stations. The District replaced all of its two way radios to meet new FCC standards for communications and interoperability to better prepare firefighters for significant emergencies and make statewide communications possible.

The past two years, Washoe County has reviewed our ordinances regulating animal services provided by County Regional Animal Services. We are committed to improving protection of animals throughout our County as well as assuring that providers of animal services have clear guidance through the law on protecting our animal friends. We have resolved outstanding issues related to feral cats and hopefully these changes will ultimately protect animals and residents.

In this past year, we have improved services to residents by adding 60 new key positions supporting public safety, community services, courts and more. Of the new positions, the Washoe County Business Facilitator coordinates efforts between our business community, planning and development allowing Washoe County to improve our response to new developments and prepare for future growth throughout the County.

Please continue to share your ideas, thoughts and suggestions with myself or your Commission representative. Please join me in supporting our new County Chair, Kitty Jung, in implementing our strategic goals in the new year.

Sincerely,

Marsha Berkbigler

2015 County Commission Chair

County Commissioner, District 1