

**CARSON VALLEY TRAILS ASSOCIATION**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2009-2019**

***Communities connected to nature through a  
system of trails.***

***PREPARED BY:***

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Thank you to all who participated in the creation of this very important planning document. Sheryl Gonzales deserves much of the credit. Without her expertise and skillful guidance, a Strategic Plan for the Carson Valley Trails Association would not be a reality. Special thanks also to our stakeholders and other members of the public for their input.

Now it is our job, as an organization, to use this wonderful tool and follow its guidance for the next ten years and beyond. As the population of Douglas County has grown, so has the need for more access to public land for recreation. This Strategic Plan will be our roadmap as we work to enhance the quality of life in Douglas County. Working to complete a trails system in Douglas County is our legacy for future generations.

*Kerstin Wolle, President*  
Carson Valley Trails Association

## **CARSON VALLEY TRAILS ASSOCIATION HISTORY**

### **Celebrating our accomplishments.**

The Carson Valley Trails Association was formed in 1994 by a group of local citizens who saw the old ranches being sold on the west side of the valley for development. These new developments would block the trails into the Carson Range that had been used by locals for many years. The original name of the group was “Carson Valley Community Access”.

They became a non-profit and began working with Douglas County, USFS, BLM, developers, and private land owners to gain legal accesses into the Carson Range. In cooperation with all government agencies, the mission of the Carson Valley Community Access was to gain accesses to public land. They would promote the planning, construction, use and maintenance of a trail system in and around the Carson Valley with their main focus on the west side. They would promote trails for hiking, biking, and equestrian uses.

The first big accomplishment of The Carson Valley Trails Association was the Fay-Luther Trailhead. The Trails Association, along with the American Land Conservancy, was the group responsible for purchasing and developing the Fay-Luther Trailhead. The group worked with the USFS, BLM and Douglas County for five years before it became a reality.

CVTA was also the group responsible for getting a required trails plan adopted by Douglas County as mandated in our County Master Plan. Work on the plan began in the fall of 2002. It took nine months, and was adopted by the County Commissioners in June 2003. With this Comprehensive Trails Plan/Map in place, developers now have a guide to give them direction about required trailheads, trails, bikeways and walkways. This plan demonstrates Douglas County's commitment to a recreational trail system in Douglas County and creates funding opportunities for groups like CVTA to apply for grants and other monies specified for recreation.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## MISSION STATEMENT

This statement represents our role and purpose, by which we intend to serve our customers and community. It describes who we are, what we provide, how and why we provide our services, for whom we provide these services and what makes us unique.

*The Carson Valley Trails Association is a nonprofit, volunteer based organization working with partners to provide access to public lands through a recreational trail system for present and future generations to enjoy.*

*"The ultimate test of a mission statement is not its beauty. The ultimate test is action."  
Peter F. Drucker*

## VISION STATEMENT

The Vision statement is what the Strategic Plan intends to achieve when it has been completed by the year 2019. The Vision incorporates our collective understanding of the nature of the Carson Valley Trails Association goals and uses this understanding to move us towards the future.

***Communities connected to nature through a system of trails.***

*“Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”  
Andrew Carnegie*



## VALUES

The values that form the foundation upon which Carson Valley Trails Association, its members and associated partnerships commit to and operate from include:

**Honor and Celebrate:** *We honor and celebrate our volunteers who are the heart and soul of our organization.*

**Collaboration:** *We work with the Carson Valley community and respect its people, their cultures, and private property rights. We recognize the importance of partnering with agencies and organizations with similar missions. We aim to increase our capacity by continuing our current collaborations and identifying new partners.*

**Efficiency and Integrity:** *We apply common sense and good judgement to our work. We use contributions and resources to effectively and efficiently achieve our goals. We ensure accountability to our stakeholders by measurably demonstrating our accomplishments.*

**Stewardship:** *We are committed to planning and caring for our trails and our organization for the benefit of all. We aim to build greater community involvement through education and publicity.*

## **STRATEGIC ISSUES**

The Strategic Issues were developed in Phase I of the process. This phase was focused upon public input through a community outreach process that helped to build consensus on the most important issues facing the Carson Valley Trails Association. Identification of the issues became the foundation upon which the Strategic Directions were created. The issues included:

### **1. Access/Trails**

- Shrinking opportunities for gaining public access due to pressures of development
- Growing need to increase linkage of trails throughout the valley
- Lack of trails and trail heads
- Limited use of existing trails

### **2. Marketing/Publicity**

- Lack of public awareness
- Lack of support/advocacy
- Lack of donor awareness of our accomplishments as a result of their financial support
- Need for expanded volunteer base
- Need to influence public policy at highest levels of government – local, county wide, statewide

### **3. Programs/Education**

- Promote need for expanded volunteer base
- Increase awareness and create stewards of the trail system
- Involve and enlist the enrollment of others through activities
- Partner with the health and wellness community to promote active lifestyles through trail activities

### **4. Resources**

- Need for funding programs
- Need to hire an executive director
- Need to expand partnerships, to expand capacity
- Need to expand volunteer base

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

The strategic directions are broad goals that will guide the Strategic Plan towards achieving the Carson Valley Trails Association Vision and Mission.

### **Strategic Direction I – ACCESS/TRAILS**

*Facilitating a connected system of trails that access the public to the environment*

### **Strategic Direction II – MARKETING/PUBLICITY**

*Building support through increased knowledge of Carson Valley Trails Association*

### **Strategic Direction III – EDUCATION**

*Educating and engaging the public through programs and services*

### **Strategic Direction IV – RESOURCES**

*Expanding capacity to achieve the vision and mission through partnerships, funding and volunteers*

## **TIMELINE**

PHASE I – 1 TO 3 YEARS  
PHASE II – 4 TO 7 YEARS  
PHASE III – 8 TO 10 YEARS

**CARSON VALLEY TRAILS ASSOCIATION  
A 10 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN  
2009-2019**

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION I ACCESS/TRAILS**

***Facilitating a connected system of trails that access the public to the outdoor environment***

### **GOAL I.1**

Ensure the Douglas County Comprehensive Trails Plan/Map is followed.

#### **Objective I.1.1**

**ONGOING**

Follow the content and intent of the Plan in all current and proposed projects.

##### ***Activity I.1.1.1***

Thoroughly review the Plan by selected members of the Board to ensure actions do not deviate from the general content of the Plan.

##### ***Activity I.1.1.2***

Meet regularly with Douglas County staff to ensure current and proposed projects coincide with the Plan for approval and support.

#### **Objective I.1.2**

**ANNUALLY**

Regularly review and update the Plan as a part of the annual work plan..

##### ***Activity I.1.2.1***

Remain involved as a key stakeholder to Douglas County in their scheduled reviews and updates to the Plan.

##### ***Activity I.1.2.2***

Provide Plan suggestions or proposals for Douglas County to amend any recommended changes based on CVTA planning and public input.

### **GOAL I.2**

Increase recreational trail access opportunities.

#### **Objective I.2.1**

**ONGOING**

Maintain awareness and involvement with current and future USFS, BLM and Douglas County management and planning documents to gain access to public lands.

**Activity 1.2.1.1**

Collaborate with the USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, USFS Carson Ranger District and the Tahoe Rim Trail Association on project planning within the Carson Range.

**Activity 1.2.1.2**

Provide input on designated trails and access within the BLM's Pine Nut Mountains Management Plan.

**Activity 1.2.1.3**

Collaborate with Carson City and Alpine County officials on any connecting trail and access projects.

**Objective 1.2.2**

**PHASE II**

Establish the Carson Valley Loop Trail as the centerpiece for future trail linkage and trail access locations on both sides of the Valley.

**Activity 1.2.2.1**

Follow through with and promote the linkage of existing Foothill Trail access and associated trail plans for the Faye-Luther, Jobs Peak Ranch, Genoa and Clear Creek locations, and other possible locations.

**Activity 1.2.2.2**

Increase vigilance and support for providing trail access opportunities within the BLM foothills along the eastern half of Carson Valley.

**Objective 1.2.3**

Work on accesses for Cross Valley Trails.

**Objective 1.2.3**

**PHASE I**

Research the key existing and potential trail and access locations within and surrounding the communities of Carson Valley.

**Activity 1.2.3.1**

Identify, research, map and document specific, desirable trail and access locations in relation to the Douglas County Comprehensive Trails Plan/Map.

**Activity 1.2.3.2**

Promote specific location findings to Douglas County, the general public, and relevant state and federal managers.

**Activity I.2.3.3**

Identify current and potential high-use areas to expand urban connections to the greatest number of people.

**Activity I.2.3.4**

Define the recreational trail experience to be achieved between each urban trail segment including trail type, use, difficulty, and urban versus rural qualities.

**Objective I.2.4**

**ANNUALLY**

Plan, design, build and maintain trails to determining specific strategies or areas of focus as a part of the Annual Work Plan.

**Activity I.2.4.1**

Establish annual trail building and maintenance calendar by April of each year.

**Activity I.2.4.2**

Create Task Charts of responsible individuals which list specific projects, timelines, and responsibilities for trail maintenance and building.

**Activity I.2.4.3**

Establish human resource teams of designated volunteers who are knowledgeable and trained in the science and craft of trail maintenance and building.

**Activity I.2.4.4**

Trail building tools and materials will be purchased, stored, and made available to work teams as projects are implemented.

**Activity 1.2.4.5**

Continue the trails clean-up program.

**Objective I.2.5**

**ANNUALLY**

Develop strategic opportunities for meetings and projects with private landowners when developing the Annual Work Plan.

**Activity I.2.5.1**

Review potential areas desirable for cooperative agreements focusing on Carson River access and Carson Valley Loop Trail locations.

**Activity I.2.5.2**

Create trail opportunities on private lands for those landowners who are already willing and enthusiastic about engaging in cooperative agreements.

***Activity 1.2.5.3***

Working with the annual publicity plan, work toward publicizing the willingness of CVTA to review any voluntary potential donations and easements of public trails and access on private land and private land projects within the Carson Valley and surrounding foothills.

***Activity 1.2.5.4***

When requested, become available to assist in community land development projects seeking to incorporate trails planning and open space projects.

**Objective 1.2.6**

**ONGOING**

Assist in making the Valley a safe, walk-able and bike-able community

***Activity 1.2.6.1***

Promote CVTA as a willing partner and resource to work with city and county officials on urban recreational trail planning, design and layout.

***Activity 1.2.6.2***

Seek out and prioritize input from schools, businesses and existing recreation facility managers on how to provide safer access to their locations.

**Objective 1.2.7**

**ONGOING**

Establish trails that provide opportunities to many different user abilities and interests.

***Activity 1.2.7.1***

Encourage and provide accessibly designed trails to accommodate families and persons of all abilities.

***Activity 1.2.7.2***

Provide trail opportunities to different non-motorized user groups including walkers, dog walkers, hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers.

***Activity 1.2.7.3***

Partner with motorized trail users where common goals and objectives exist.



**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2**  
**MARKETING/PUBLICITY/VISIBILITY**

***Building support through increased knowledge of Carson Valley Trails Association***

**Goal 2.1**

Increase knowledge of CVTA.

**Objective 2.1.1**

**PHASE I**

Develop and implement an annual publicity plan.

***Activity 2.1.1.1***

Publicity plan should promote the benefits of being a CVTA member.

***Activity 2.1.1.2***

Publicity plan should promote the ways by which the community benefits from CVTA's accomplishments.

***Activity 2.1.1.3***

Publicity plan should include media lists, a current/updated membership brochure and targeted plans on how to distribute publicity.

***Activity 2.1.1.4***

Publish a CVTA newsletter, distributed at a minimum of twice per year and a maximum of quarterly.

***Activity 2.1.1.5***

Expand the CVTA website to include trail maps, a schedule of CVTA activities, links to partner organizations, a thank you page for volunteers, members, donors, etc., and the CVTA newsletter.

***Activity 2.1.1.6***

Associate with like organizations that share common missions through targeted memberships.

**Objective 2.1.2**

**PHASE I**

Develop and/or participate in programs that educate and engage the membership and public at large.

***Activity 2.1.2.1***

Develop the annual meeting as an opportunity to promote and celebrate CVTA. Include as a part of the program CVTA's accomplishments from the previous year, introduction of new board members, celebrate the contributions of others and enlist the participation of members in the various planned activities for the next year.

**Activity 2.1.2.2**

Participate in various events throughout the year that advance the mission of CVTA, such as health fairs, sustainable living events, natural resources or environmental awareness activities, etc.

**Activity 2.1.2.3**

Develop orientation materials to send to new members, that would include trail maps, a fact sheet about trail design and building, profiles of board members, and history of CVTA.

**Activity 2.1.2.4**

Work with Fund Development Committee and Annual Auction Chair to publicize and plan for the annual auction, promoting the benefits of CVTA and the ways in which funds from the auction are utilized.

**Objective 2.1.3****ONGOING**

Partner with like organizations that share common missions.

**Activity 2.1.3.1**

Become a member with organizations that will be a win-win for CVTA and the organization.

**Activity 2.1.3.2**

Build a sense of community with existing and potential partners by including them as a part of all of CVTA's activities.

**Goal 2.2**

Build advocacy for CVTA.

**Objective 2.2.1****PHASE I**

Ensure elected and appointed officials are aware of the benefits enjoyed by the community as a result of CVTA and its accomplishments.

**Activity 2.2.1.1**

Send CVTA newsletter to elected and appointed officials.

**Activity 2.2.1.2**

When appropriate, invite elected and appointed officials to CVTA meetings, events or other activities important to creating advocacy with these key stakeholders.

**Activity 2.2.1.3**

Have board members or key CVTA leaders meet with elected or appointed officials when appropriate.

**Objectives 2.2.2****PHASE I**

Continue to be informed, updated and prepared to act on various local, state or national activities that can benefit or impact CVTA.

***Activity 2.2.2.1***

Select board members or key CVTA leaders be responsible for being current on important trends or legislative activities through publications, the media and the Internet.

***Activity 2.2.2.2***

As a part of the annual work plan, include a presentation or report regarding trends or important legislative activities.

**Objectives 2.2.3****PHASE I**

Develop message points or elevator speeches for board members and key CVTA leaders to present when opportunities arise.

**Objective 2.2.4****PHASE II**

Develop presentations for board members or key CVTA leaders to present that will promote CVTA, its mission, vision and accomplishments.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3**

## **EDUCATION**

### ***Educating and engaging the public through programs and services***

#### **GOAL 3.1**

Trail building and maintenance program is strengthened and expanded.

##### **Objective 3.1.1**

**ONGOING**

Maintain and expand relationships with governmental agencies and other trail based organizations.

##### ***Activity 3.1.1.1***

Continue and sustain the trail building team composed of individuals who have trail building and maintenance knowledge.

##### ***Activity 3.1.1.2***

Liaison with the Tahoe Rim Trail leadership in cooperative trail building, training opportunities and maintenance projects.

##### ***Activity 3.1.1.3***

CVTA will provide assistance and partnership with Douglas County Staff in the implementation of the Douglas County Comprehensive Trails Plan/Map.

##### ***Activity 3.1.1.4***

Build relationships with equestrian, mountain biking and hiking groups with shared boundaries.

##### ***Activity 3.1.1.5***

Build relationships with motorized groups such as the Pine Nut Mountain Trails Association.

#### **GOAL 3.2**

Develop a trail educational program.

##### **Objective 3.2.1**

**PHASE I**

Develop a trail docent program.

##### ***Activity 3.2.1.1***

Docents will be recruited and developed from the membership of the CVTA.

##### ***Activity 3.2.1.2***

Establish a docent committee chairperson.

**Activity 3.2.1.3**

Establish a standardized in-service training program for all docents with written curricula with specific educational components that are common yet unique for each of the Douglas County Trails.

**Objective 3.2.2****PHASE II**

Develop family oriented hiking programs.

**Activity 3.2.2.1**

Develop a Snowshoe Thompson program partnering with the Greater Genoa Business Association (GGBA), Town of Genoa and the Snowshoe Thompson Committee. This event will be calendared to coincide with Snowshoe Thompson's birthday in March of each calendar year. Review a possible fundraising event for snowshoeing up and down the Sierra Canyon Trail.

**Activity 3.2.2.2**

Develop the annual Hike for Health family hiking celebration that will coincide with the National Trails Day in June. This event will be the culmination annual Hike for Health Auction and hiking opportunities.

**Objective 3.2.3****PHASE II**

Develop school aged educational and youth hiking programs.

**Activity 3.2.3.1**

Interface with Superintendent's office of Douglas County Schools to establish an education classroom program.

**Activity 3.2.3.2**

Support the health, physical education, and science curricula at the Douglas County Elementary and Secondary Schools. (This Curriculum will be developed in cooperation with the DC Schools Education and Curriculum Department with review and approval by the DC Board of Education).

**GOAL3.3**

Develop and maintain trail information.

**Objective 3.3.1****ONGOING**

Maintain trail and trailhead information.

**Activity 3.3.1.1**

Designate committee member(s) to keep posted updates and brochures stocked at trailheads.

***Activity 3.3.1.2***

Designate committee member(s) to monitor, maintain and review purchasing options for directional, informational and interpretive signage on trails.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4  
RESOURCES**

*Expand capacity to achieve the vision and mission through partnerships, funding and volunteers.*

## **Goal 4.1**

Practice and demonstrate efficient and effective management of the Carson Valley Trails Association, promoting sound business decisions and accountability to the membership, partners and supporters.

### **Objective 4.1.1**

#### **PHASE I/ANNUALLY**

Develop an annual work plan with measurable goals and objectives that reflect the Strategic Plan.

#### **Activity 4.1.1.1**

All CVTA committees will operate and plan their activities with measurable goals and responsibilities, reporting to the Board.

#### **Activity 4.1.1.2**

Designate one General Membership meeting and one Executive Board meeting (to coincide with the start of the fiscal year) as the Annual Work Plan meetings.

### **Objective 4.1.2**

#### **PHASE I/ANNUALLY**

Develop an annual budget based on the work plan.

#### **Activity 4.1.2.1**

Establish a Finance/Fund Development Committee(s) to develop the annual budget for review and approval by the Executive Board. This committee will meet a minimum of four times each calendar year to review and track the progress of the budget.

#### **Activity 4.1.2.2**

The Finance/Fund Development Committee will develop long-term financial goals for the life of the Strategic Plan.

#### **Activity 4.1.2.3**

All CVTA committee chairs will work with the Finance/Fund Development Committee to develop and monitor their respective program budget(s).

### **Objective 4.1.3**

#### **PHASE I**

Assess progress of Strategic Plan and Work Plan through ongoing evaluation.

#### **Activity 4.1.3.1**

Develop a standard Work Plan progress reporting format for all program areas working with committee chairs and the Board.



**Activity 4.1.3.2**

The Board will conduct reviews of Work Plan progress and advise committees.

**Goal 4.2**

Expand capacity of organization through increased membership and volunteer support.

**Objective 4.2.1**

**PHASE II**

Develop and attract individuals with skills, knowledge and experience that share the values and commitment of CVTA mission and vision.

**Activity 4.2.1.1**

Interface with the publicity chair in the development of the publicity plan to ensure information is distributed on how people can be involved with CVTA and the benefits associated with that involvement.

**Activity 4.2.1.2**

The Board is actively involved in recruiting others to be involved with CVTA, including current members and partners that otherwise may not be involved.

**Activity 4.2.1.3**

Establish a Youth Board Member positions.

**Activity 4.2.1.4**

Participate in public events in Carson Valley and beyond with the purpose of increasing membership, community involvement and support.

**Activity 4.2.1.5**

Identify key individuals of the Board and membership to participate in established local and regional events such as Sustainable Living and Renewable Energy Roundup, local Farmer's Markets, Carson Valley Days, TRT events.

**Activity 4.2.1.6**

Utilize existing events to attract the involvement of current and potential members.

**Objective 4.2.2**

**PHASE I**

Identify and engage opportunities to recognize the contributions of others and how that has advanced the mission of CVTA.

**Activity 4.2.2.1**

Work with the publicity and membership chair to develop an annual recognition program that coincides with the Annual Meeting to celebrate the contributions of others.

**Activity 4.2.2.2**

Communicate, in a timely fashion, the achievements of CVTA that are directly linked to the contributions of volunteers, donors, partnerships and grants.

**Activity 4.2.2.3**

Develop a donor recognition and benefits program that recognizes donors as it relates to their level of contribution.

**Goal 4.3**

Increase and diversify organizational funding.

**Objective 4.3.1**

**PHASE II**

Establish a Fund Development Committee responsible for fundraising and grant writing, meeting a minimum of six and no more than ten times annually.

**Activity 4.3.1.1**

Develop an annual fund development plan.

**Activity 4.3.1.2**

Board Members participate in the fund development plan and its implementation.

**Activity 4.3.1.3**

Community based fundraising continues with specific goals that advance the Strategic Plan.

**Goal 4.4**

Devise and implement a management structure to ensure that CVTA remains a healthy and viable nonprofit organization into the future.

**Objective 4.4.1**

**PHASE II**

Develop an organizational development plan that includes long- and short-term measurable goals which would include the establishment of offices, staff, and professional services (grant writing, fund development, marketing).

**Activity 4.4.1.1**

Review and revise the bylaws annually; include as a part of that annual review the term limits of the officers.

**Activity 4.4.1.2**

Identify management and operational skills needed and develop a database of skill needs, prerequisites, and responsibilities.

## **APPENDIX**

## **Report Summaries**

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

## **Hiker Intercept Surveys**

## **Community Organizations Surveys**



## **Public Workshops**

## Trends

## **Glossary**