

Innovation

We welcome new ideas and new ways of doing things that contribute to our community in positive ways. Creative people attract knowledgeable workers and drive economic growth through creative problem solving, as well as coming together around new ways to address community issues.

21. Renewable energy

Renewable energy sources and the amount of renewable energy bought back from utility customers directly impact the health of our economy and environment, and provides natural resource stewardship for future generations.

Renewable energy sources¹

In 1997, Nevada lawmakers moved to require the state's largest electric utilities to acquire power from renewable resources, such as geothermal, wind, solar, biomass, landfill gas, and waste heat recovery. Originally the goal was for 1% of the energy they sell to customers to come from these sources by 2010. In 2001 the state toughened the standard significantly, making the requirement 15% by 2013, and in 2005 lawmakers raised the bar again, requiring 20% by 2015. The Renewable Portfolio Standard has been fully supported by Sierra Pacific Resources as a responsible move for this growing state. Sierra Pacific Power currently lists 579 megawatts generated from 36 renewable energy sources (2006 peak load was 1,701 megawatts). As of July 2007, 20.97% of their average fuel mix was from renewable sources.

Nevada is expected to rank first in the nation in solar watts per capita and solar as a percentage of retail sales in 2008, with the Nevada Solar One 10-megawatt project at Nellis Air Force Base, the largest solar-photovoltaic project in the country. Sierra Pacific also participates with the Desert Research Institute to provide GreenPower solar and wind generators at 15 schools participating in the program. Efforts will be made to report the amount of renewable energy used by customers in the future, as well as what customers are selling back to the utility.

22. Technology infrastructure & engagement

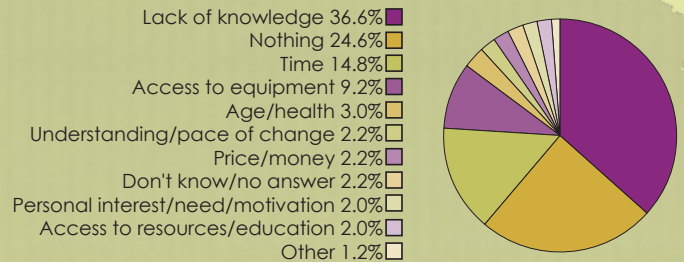
Having the right technology for your life needs, as well as the knowledge to use that technology, denotes the ability to access and use new technology for productivity, advancement, enrichment, and innovation.

Technology engagement

Technology offers tools that allow us to communicate and do our jobs more effectively, in addition to enhancing life at home. In TMT's December 2007 community survey of Washoe County residents,

74.2% responded being satisfied about having the technology they need in their life right now vs. 7.2% reporting being unsatisfied. When asked to rate their skills and knowledge in being able to use this technology, 55.8% reported being satisfied vs. 12.4% unsatisfied.

What's your biggest barrier to using technology more effectively today?



Source: MarkeTec phone survey for TMT, December 2007

Innovation economy index

The Mississippi Technology Alliance compiles an Innovation Index, linking innovation and technology with the many activities that government, academia, and the private sector provide to support innovation and economic development. The index is based on the following factors:²

- Wealth creation
- Tech business development



1. Source: http://www.sierrapacific.com/company/renewables/images/PUCN-renewables_2007-09-07_utilities.pdf

2. Source: <http://www.innovationindex.ms/default.htm>

Innovation

- Statewide research capacity
- Industrial productivity
- University R&D
- Tech workforce development
- Business R&D
- Investment capital

In terms of R&D investment, Nevada ranked 41st in the nation in 2004 with \$417 million in private industry R&D and \$164 million in university and college R&D.³

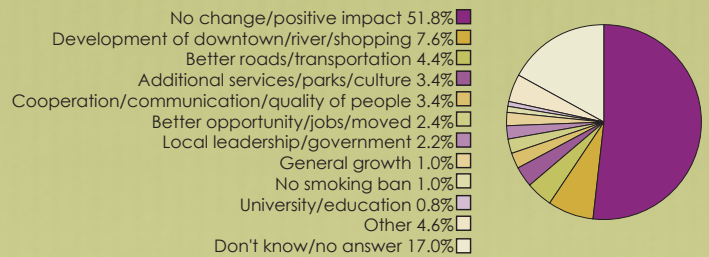
Wireless access

Intel conducts the most unwired cities survey, most recently in 2005. Survey findings are based on the number of commercial and public or “free” wireless Internet access points (hotspots), airports with wireless Internet access, and broadband availability. The survey also included community wireless Internet access points, local wireless networks and wireless e-mail devices. The metro areas included in the survey were the 100 largest MSAs in the United States. Although the Reno-Sparks MSA wasn’t large enough for the study, Las Vegas ranked 42nd in 2005 for wireless Internet accessibility.⁴

23. Transformative community initiatives

Surveying what major community transformations have made a positive impact in your life, living, and working in the region, suggests new or innovative programs that improve the community and contribute to the long-term viability of the economy, while also removing barriers to greater creativity for responsible citizens building vital communities.

Think about living and working in this region for the last year, what major community change, if any, has made a positive impact on your life? (2007)



Source: MarkeTec phone survey for TMT, December 2007



Courtesy Sierra Pacific Power

3. Source: The National Science Foundation/Division of Science Resources Statistics, Survey of Industrial R&D, Survey of R&D Expenditures at Universities and Colleges, and Survey of Federal Funds for R&D. Tables for FY2004 R&D Expenditures were provided by Brandon Shackelford, Science Resources Analyst, National Science Foundation.

4. Source: http://alt.coxnewsweb.com/statesman/pdf/advertising/media_kit/market/Intel%20Ranks%20the%20100%20Most%20Unwired%20US%20Cities.PDF