

WASHOE TRIBE OF NEVADA AND CALIFORNIA



Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Introduction	03
Section 2: Envisioning our Future	09
Section 3: Achieving our Future	14
Appendix	47



850.696.1559



www.fsa-ag.com



Alabama | Florida | Washington | California

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

About the Washoe Tribe

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California is a sovereign nation whose ancestral lands span the Lake Tahoe Basin and surrounding areas in Nevada and California. The Washoe people are the original stewards of this region, with a deep spiritual and cultural connection to the land, especially Da'ow (Lake Tahoe), which remains central to Washoe identity and traditions.

For thousands of years, the Washoe lived sustainably in the Sierra Nevada region, moving seasonally to gather food, hunt, and maintain vital relationships with the environment. Unlike many other tribes in the region, the Washoe language is a linguistic isolate, emphasizing the Tribe's unique cultural heritage.

Following European-American contact in the mid-1800s—spurred by westward expansion and the California Gold Rush—the Washoe people faced significant disruptions, including loss of land, resources, and autonomy. Despite these challenges, the Washoe Nation has persevered through resilience, cultural preservation, and self-determination.

In 1935, the Washoe Tribe achieved federal recognition under the Indian Reorganization Act. The modern Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California is composed of four communities: Carson Colony, Dresslerville, Stewart, and Woodfords. The Tribe is governed by an elected Tribal Council and works actively to preserve its culture, protect its lands, and provide vital services to its citizens.

This strategic plan builds upon the Tribe's enduring strength and vision, aligning our cultural values with long-term goals for governance, economic development, health, education, land stewardship, and cultural revitalization. Rooted in ancestral wisdom and driven by a commitment to future generations, this plan serves as a roadmap for continued growth and sovereignty.



About the Washoe Tribe

WASHOE TRIBE VISION STATEMENT

Preserving, reviving, and living the Washoe culture and traditions where respect for one another and tribal values promote our spiritual, physical, and environmental wellness; educational opportunities are available for all tribal members and descendants; a solid economic foundation ensures self-sufficiency for tribal success; responsive government promotes teamwork, professionalism, and accountability on safe and secure ancestral homelands.

WASHOE TRIBE MISSION STATEMENT

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California's mission is to achieve and sustain a way of life in balance with our ancestral homelands, community, traditions, and values—promoting health and wellness for all generations of Washoe.

INCORPORATING OUR VISION & MISSION INTO THE PLAN

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California's Strategic Plan is rooted in and guided by our vision and mission—both of which reflect our enduring commitment to the wellness, sovereignty, and cultural integrity of our people. This plan serves as a living framework that transforms our values into action and aligns our collective efforts across governance, community development, cultural revitalization, economic sustainability, and environmental stewardship.

Our vision—to preserve, revive, and live the Washoe culture and traditions while promoting wellness, education, self-sufficiency, and responsive governance—has shaped every objective and priority in this plan. The strategies identified support a future in which respect for one another and tribal values are the foundation of community life, and where safe, secure tribal lands enable our people to thrive.

In alignment with our mission, the strategic plan advances a way of life that honors our connection to the land, our community, and our traditions. We aim to ensure that every program and initiative promotes health and wellness for current and future generations, reinforcing our commitment to holistic sustainability—spiritual, physical, cultural, and environmental.

This plan is more than a set of goals—it is a declaration of our sovereignty, a reflection of our heritage, and a guide toward a vibrant future where Washoe values are not only preserved but lived every day.

Strategic Planning Process

Overview of Planning Process

In 2024, the Washoe Tribal Council identified the development of a Strategic Plan as a top priority to guide the Nation's growth, strengthen self-governance, and align programs and services with community needs and values. The strategic planning process officially launched in September 2025 and was grounded in a commitment to inclusive participation, transparency, and long-term visioning.

A central principle of the planning process was active engagement from all levels of tribal leadership and the community. Every elected member of the Tribal Council, all members of the Government Management Team, and each department leader participated in individual interviews –37 in total. These one-on-one conversations provided deep insight into both organizational and community needs and surfaced seven key priority areas. To ensure the voices of tribal citizens were equally reflected an online community strategic planning survey was distributed in December 2024. These areas served as the foundation for shaping the next phase of planning.

In April 2025, the Tribal Council convened for a focused workshop to dive deeper into the priority areas that came from the first phase of the project, followed by in-person meetings in each Washoe community and a virtual session for off-reservation members. These discussions enabled community members to express their perspectives, help shape the goals, and affirm the importance of cultural values, environmental stewardship, and economic self-sufficiency.

Based on input from interviews and community sessions, a draft strategic plan was developed. Short-term goals (to be achieved within two years) were identified by the frequency and urgency of issues raised across community meetings. Long-term goals (within eight years) reflect broader aspirations that require sustained effort and investment. Each goal is firmly rooted in the collective input of elected leaders, tribal members, and government employees, ensuring that the plan reflects the diverse voices and shared vision of the Washoe people.

This collaborative approach has resulted in a strategic roadmap that not only addresses current challenges but also sets a strong foundation for future generations. It reflects the Washoe Tribe's commitment to sovereignty, unity, and responsible leadership.

Strategic Planning Process

Overview of Priority Areas

The Washoe Tribe's Strategic Plan is built around seven core priorities, each reflecting essential responsibilities of tribal governments. These are not isolated goals—they are deeply interconnected, and together they form the foundation of a healthy, sovereign, and forward-looking Nation. When any one area is under-resourced or neglected, it creates imbalance across the entire tribal system.

This plan is about restoring Washoe balance—

- Between tradition and progress
- Between leadership and listening
- Between government and the governed
- Between the land and the people

Only by honoring, resourcing, and advancing all seven priorities can the Washoe Tribe fulfill its collective vision for the future.

1. Government

Strong tribal governance is essential for exercising sovereignty, protecting rights, and ensuring accountability. This priority focuses on building effective leadership structures, clear decision-making processes, and transparent communication between elected leaders, employees, and citizens to create trust and ensure good governance.

2. Service Provider

As a primary provider of health, education, housing, and social services, the tribal government must ensure that all programs are high quality, accessible, and responsive to the community's needs. Investing in services is an investment in the well-being and future of the Washoe people.

3. Employer

The Tribe is one of the largest employers within its communities. This role comes with the responsibility to support a skilled, supported, and respected workforce. Prioritizing employee development, fair wages, and workplace culture strengthens not only the government but also local families and economies.

Strategic Planning Process

4. Preserve Language

Language is a cornerstone of identity. Revitalizing and preserving the Washoe language is vital for cultural survival, intergenerational connection, and the transmission of traditional knowledge. Language work ensures that the Washoe way of life endures.

5. Preserve Culture

Cultural practices, values, and teachings guide decision-making and strengthen community bonds. This priority protects sacred knowledge, ceremonies, arts, and customs that define who the Washoe people are—and who they will continue to be.

6. Stewards of Land & Water

The Washoe people have an ancient and sacred relationship with their homelands. Stewardship of land, water, and natural resources is not just environmental work—it is cultural, spiritual, and political. This priority centers on restoring and protecting ancestral lands for future generations.

7. Generate Revenue

Self-sufficiency and sovereignty depend on strong economic foundations. By building businesses and generating sustainable revenue, the Tribe can fund its own priorities, reduce reliance on external sources, and invest in long-term prosperity.

Together, these priorities reflect the full scope of what it means to be a modern tribal government rooted in traditional values. They form a unified vision—where governance is ethical, services are strong, culture is alive, the environment is protected, and the people are empowered.

This is the path toward a sovereign, united, and thriving Washoe future.



SECTION 2: ENVISIONING OUR FUTURE-

Our Desired Future

During the Strategic Planning process we examined the current state of the tribe and envisioned what the future will look like. We first did this on a tribal-wide level by discussing current capabilities, capacities, and constraints, incorporating culture, and defining successful completion of the proposed action items in the strategic plan. The discussion allowed the community and Tribal Council to see the big picture and hone in on things the tribe is doing well and potential areas of improvement. The discussion is summarized in this section of the plan.

As we moved forward in the planning process to detailed discussion on each priority area, we discussed the current state of each priority, the desired future state, and started to brainstorm action steps to achieve the goals of each priority. Details on the priority areas are found in Section 3 of the Strategic Plan.

Review of our Capabilities, Capacities, Constraints, Culture, and Completion

	CAPACITIES	WHAT ARE WE DOING WELL?
	CAPABILITIES	WHAT COULD WE BE DOING BETTER?
	CONSTRAINTS	WHAT ARE FACTORS THAT LIMIT US?
	CULTURE	HOW ARE WE INCORPORATING OUR CULTURE INTO EVERYTHING WE DO?
	COMPLETION	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Our Desired Future

 CAPACITIES	 CAPABILITIES
<p>WHAT ARE WE DOING WELL?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LISTENING TO TRIBAL MEMBERS• COLLABORATING WITH MORE PARTNERS• WASHOE NAME PLACING IN HOMELANDS• WDC - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT• NEW HOMES• HEALTH CARE• WINNING GRANTS• SHOWING UP & WORKING TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE• SHOWING TRIBAL MEMBERS HOW TO GET HELP• OFFERING LANGUAGE CLASSES & ENHANCING CULTURE• ENGAGEMENT OF TRIBAL MEMBERS• COMING TOGETHER IN-PERSON SINCE COVID• TRAINING EMPLOYEES• RESPECTFUL EMPLOYEES• IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY FROM TC IN LAST 10 YEARS (COULD IMPROVE)• TAKING LEAD ON LARGE EFFORTS• LARGE VARIETY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE TRIBE FOR MEMBERS• OPEN DOORS FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS• SECOND LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE CARSON VALLEY (>320 EMPLOYEES)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ LEADING BENEFIT PROVIDER◦ DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK	<p>WHAT COULD WE BE DOING BETTER?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TRIBAL COUNCIL NEEDS TO BE FULL-TIME.• ENHANCED COMMUNICATION WITH TRIBAL MEMBERS.• EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEES – LESS THAN THOSE OUTSIDE OF THE TRIBE• RESTRUCTURING OF TRIBAL ORGANIZATION, ESPECIALLY SINCE COVID.• FIND MORE HOUSING• MORE FREQUENT LANGUAGE CLASSES• MAINTAIN OPEN DOOR POLICY FOR ALL TRIBAL MEMBERS & STAFF• MAKE EMPLOYEES COMFORTABLE• FASTER ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS• ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO BE INVOLVED IN EDUCATION• PROGRAMS AT HEALING CENTER• CROSS-TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT• HIRING YOUNG TRIBAL MEMBERS & DESCENDENTS FOR ENTRY LEVEL POSITIONS• MORE DATA• IMPROVED PHYSICAL SPACE• EMPHASIS ON HIGHER-EDUCATION• IMPROVED INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING• DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE & CULTURE APP• USING MODERN TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY TO REVITALIZE CULTURE AND LANGUAGE• TRIBAL ADMINISTRATION SHOULD BE ENVELOPED IN WASHOE CULTURE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THEIR WORK – WASHOE CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING ON AN ANNUAL/RECURRING BASIS.• TRIBAL LIBRARY/MUSEUM SO THAT MEMBERS CAN HAVE ACCESS TO THEIR HISTORY• PAY TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS• HONORARY TRIBAL MEMBERS CELEBRATED WITH CEREMONY

Our Desired Future



CONSTRAINTS

WHAT FACTORS LIMIT US?

- "COLONIZED" SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL CHALLENGES OF TRULY PROVIDING FOR TRIBAL PEOPLE.
- MISINFORMED MEMBERS & NEGATIVE COMMENTS.
- FOCUS ON COMMUNITIES VS. TRIBE AS A WHOLE
- HISTORICAL & INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA LEGACY WITHIN MEMBERSHIP
- LACK OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
- LIMITED PARTICIPATION BY MEMBERSHIP
- GEOGRAPHIC SEPARATION OF THE COMMUNITIES & TRIBE AS A WHOLE.
- HIGH-COST OF LIVING AND DIFFICULT TO FIND HOUSING FOR EMPLOYEES
- DO NOT HAVE FUNDING TO RAISE SALARIES TO SUPPORT COST OF LIVING
- INCONSISTENT LEADERSHIP - TURNOVER OF TRIBAL AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS
- PRIORITY OF HIRING TRIBAL MEMBERS- MAY BE UNDERQUALIFIED, RESULTS IN LESS SUCCESSFUL POSITIONS/PROGRAMMING
- LACK OF FUNDING
- TOO RELAXED WITH DIRECTIONS
- NOT KNOWING ASPECTS OF SCOPE OF WORK
- UNABLE TO HIRE EMPLOYEES WITH CRIMINAL BACKGROUND WHO HAVE TURNED LIFE AROUND
- GATEKEEPING CULTURE & LANGUAGE
- TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENT THEIR COMMUNITIES FIRST- NEED TO BE MORE EMPHASIS ON COMING TOGETHER AS ONE NATION.



CULTURE

HOW ARE WE INCORPORATING OUR CULTURE INTO EVERYTHING WE DO?

- EVOLVING CULTURE AND CHANGING EXPECTATIONS OF WHO IS A TRIBAL AND CULTURAL LEADER.
- MISUNDERSTANDING OF CULTURE – VIEW OF CULTURE AS STAGNANT VS EVERCHANGING
- LANGUAGE IS IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY – STRONG LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT BUT CAN BE DOING MORE (UNDERSTAFFED)
- SIGNAGE WRITTEN IN THE WASHOE LANGUAGE
- DRESSLERVILLE INCORPORATES LANGUAGE INTO COMMUNITY COUNCIL AGENDAS
- FOCUS ON ELDERS AT CENTER OF COMMUNITY, LEAVING OUT YOUTH
- DRESSLERVILLE YOUTH COUNCIL TO INVOLVE YOUNGER GENERATION INTO TRIBAL DECISION MAKING.
- DISCUSSION TO BRING LANGUAGE CLASSES INTO THE WASHOE TRIBAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- DIGITAL ARCHIVE

Our Desired Future

 **COMPLETION**

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- **AS AN EMPLOYER:**
 - 85% OF TRIBAL EMPLOYEES ARE WASHOE TRIBAL MEMBERS.
 - LESS TURNOVER
 - BECOME PREFERRED EMPLOYER
 - DEVELOP WORKFORCE HOUSING
 - IMPROVED CUSTOMER SERVICE
- **AS A SERVICE PROVIDER:**
 - FASTER RESPONSE TIME
 - EXPANDING SERVICE AREA
 - ENHANCED CAPACITY
 - OUTREACH MATERIALS
- **AS A GOVERNMENT:**
 - DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH COUNCILS ACROSS COMMUNITIES & TRIBE AS A WHOLE.
 - TRAINING/OBOARDING FOR NEW TRIBAL/COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
 - TRIBAL COUNCIL HANDBOOK
 - CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE
 - CONSISTENT COUNCIL MEETINGS
 - ENGAGED TRIBAL MEMBERS AT CULTURAL & GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL
- **AS STEWARDS OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND LAND:**
 - FULL ACCESS TO LANGUAGE AT ANY TIME – LANGUAGE APP
 - 50% FLUENCY ACROSS TRIBE
 - TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETINGS SPOKEN IN WASHOE
 - WASHOE TRIBAL WATER RIGHTS
 - ESTABLISHING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL LOCATIONS
 - ESTABLISH WASHOE ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE



SECTION 3: ACHIEVING OUR FUTURE-

Priority Areas: An Overview

Understanding the Structure of the Plan

The Washoe Tribe's Strategic Plan is organized around seven foundational priority areas that reflect the core responsibilities of all tribal governments:

1. Government
2. Service Provider
3. Employer
4. Preserve Language
5. Preserve Culture
6. Stewards of Land & Water
7. Generate Revenue (Economic Development)

These priority areas emerged not only from the inherent responsibilities of tribal governance but also from extensive feedback gathered throughout the strategic planning process—including 37 one-on-one interviews, an online community survey, and in-person and virtual meetings with citizens and leaders. The feedback confirmed that each of these areas is essential to the Washoe Tribe's future and deeply interconnected—none can be fully effective if the others are neglected.

Goals Within Each Priority Area

For each of the seven priority areas, goals were developed to reflect the specific aspirations, needs, and challenges raised by community members, employees, and leadership. These goals provide direction for where the Tribe wants to go and what success will look like in each area.

To ensure relevance and feasibility, the goals have been categorized by timeframe based on the level of urgency and frequency of mention during community engagement:

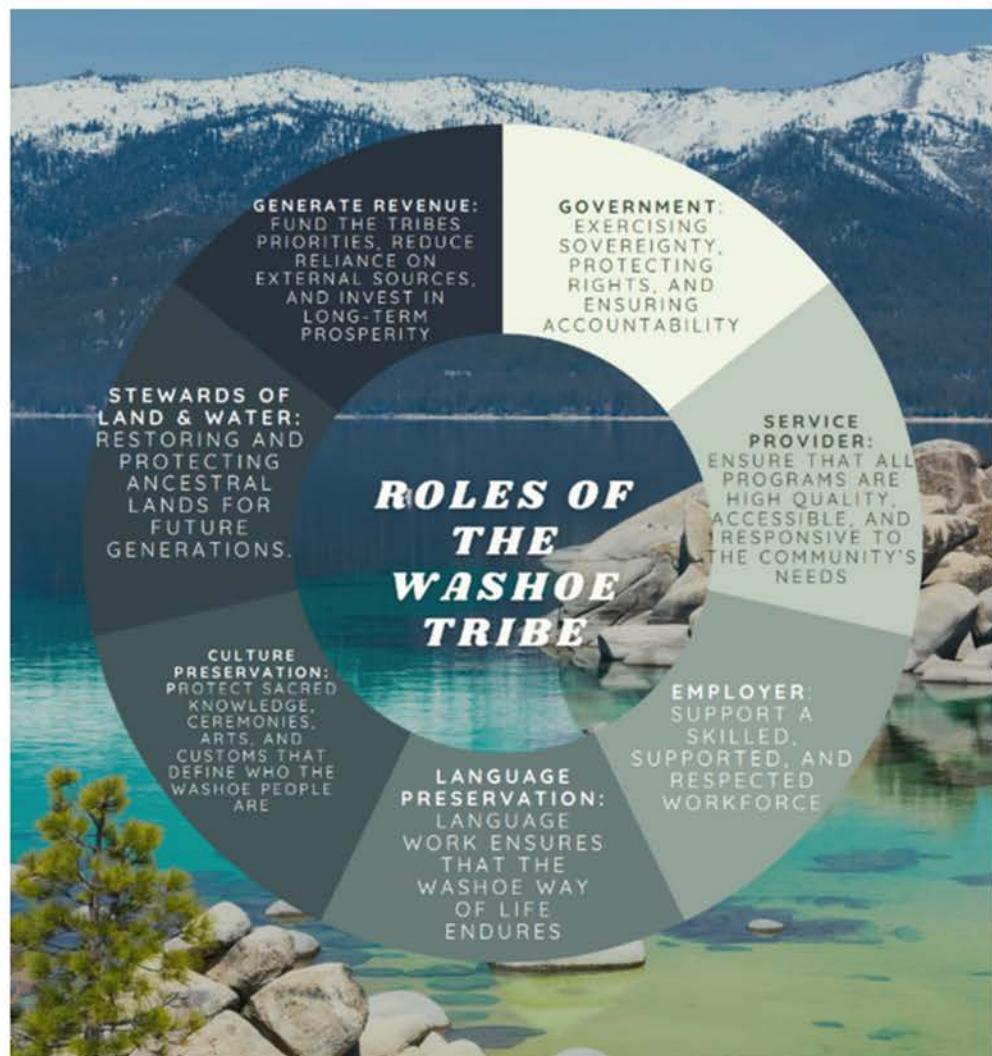
- Short-Term Goals (within 2 years): These goals were mentioned most often in community meetings and surveys and represent high-priority issues that the Tribe is prepared to act on immediately.
- Long-Term Goals (within 8 years): These goals are still important but may require more time, resources, or foundational steps before they can be fully achieved.

Priority Areas: An Overview

Action Items to Drive Progress

Each short-term goal is accompanied by action items—specific steps to be taken within the next two years to move the goal forward. These action items provide clear direction, identify starting points, and help measure progress. They also allow departments, leadership, and the community to track implementation, stay accountable, and adjust strategies as needed.

By organizing the plan in this way—from priorities, to goals, to action items—the Washoe Tribe is creating a roadmap that is strategic, community-driven, and achievable. This structure ensures that the work ahead is grounded in the values and voices of the Washoe people, while also providing the flexibility to adapt as progress is made and new challenges arise.



PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

A strong tribal government ensures representation, rule of law, and strategic direction. By separating and strengthening its Legislative, Executive, and Judicial functions, the Tribe creates a foundation for policy, accountability, and justice. Without this, programs become fragmented, communication breaks down, and decision-making loses integrity. ***Balance requires governance rooted in transparency, culture, and community voice to create trust.***

Proposed Short-Term Goals (within 2 years)

Goal 1.1 – Constitution Reform

The Washoe Tribal Council will lead a community-driven effort to modernize and reform the Washoe Constitution, ensuring it reflects our sovereignty, traditional values, and the needs of future generations. This process will center community voice, respect traditional forms of governance, and establish a strong foundation for self-determination.

Action Items-

By October 2025:

1. Tribal Council will adopt a detailed roadmap for Constitution reform, outlining timelines, roles, and methods of community engagement.
2. Secure key partnerships with legal experts, the Native Nations Institute, and constitutional scholars to support the process.

By December 2025:

1. Form a Constitution Committee made up of Tribal citizens, elders, legal advisors, and cultural leaders to collaborate with Tribal Council throughout the process.
2. The Committee will begin work with the following focus areas:
 - Governance: Research and incorporate traditional Washoe governance principles.
 - Sovereignty: Remove references to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and reinforce self-governance.
 - Enrollment: Review and propose changes to blood quantum requirements and consider a move to descendancy-based enrollment.
 - Council Structure: Evaluate changes to Council terms, eligibility, qualifications, inclusion of an Elder seat, community participation requirements, and a rotating Vice Chair model.
 - Language and Culture: Explore requirements for elected officials to be active in Washoe language and cultural learning.

By January 2027:

1. Release a draft Constitution and launch community engagement sessions across all Washoe communities to gather input and build consensus.

By April 2027:

1. Finalize the revised Constitution based on community feedback.
2. Launch an educational campaign to raise awareness and encourage full community participation in the vote.

By June 2027:

1. Hold a tribal-wide vote on the new Constitution.

This reform process reflects our Nation's commitment to cultural revitalization, self-determination, and building a Constitution that empowers current and future generations of Washoe people.

PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

Goal 1.2 – Tribal Council Handbook

The Washoe Tribal Council will develop and implement a comprehensive Council Handbook to ensure consistency, transparency, and accountability in tribal governance. The Handbook will strengthen institutional knowledge, clarify Council roles and responsibilities, and provide foundational tools to support ethical and effective leadership rooted in Washoe values and sovereignty.

Action Items-

By December 2025:

1. Form a working group including Tribal Council members, administrative staff, legal counsel, and cultural advisors to lead development of the Handbook.
2. Review current Constitution, laws, administrative policies, and past governance materials to identify key content areas.

By March 2026:

1. Draft core sections of the Handbook, including:
 - Overview of Tribal government structure and Constitution
 - Roles, duties, and responsibilities of Tribal Council members and officers
 - Code of ethics and conflict of interest policies
 - Description of Council committees and their focus areas (e.g., Housing, Education, Economic Development)
 - Expectations for community engagement and communication
 - Overview of administrative departments and their functions

By June 2026:

1. Develop supplemental content:
 - History of Washoe governance and self-determination
 - Key tribal laws and ordinances
 - Parliamentary procedures, including Robert's Rules of Order
 - Meeting protocols and decision-making processes

By September 2026:

1. Conduct a review process with full Tribal Council, legal advisors, and selected community leaders to refine the draft Handbook.
2. Solicit input from former Council members for lessons learned and best practices.

By December 2026:

1. Finalize and adopt the Handbook by Council resolution.
2. Launch training sessions for current and incoming Council members on how to use the Handbook as a governing tool.

By March 2027:

1. Integrate Handbook use into Council orientation processes and evaluate its effectiveness for continuous improvement.

This Handbook will serve as a living document that supports Council accountability, educates future leaders, and affirms the Tribe's sovereign governance grounded in both traditional knowledge and modern best practices.

PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

Goal 1.3 – Tribal Council Training

The Washoe Tribal Council will establish a comprehensive training program that supports effective, ethical, and culturally grounded leadership. This program will include structured onboarding for new Council members and ongoing training opportunities to build capacity in governance, strategic planning, and community representation. The goal is to ensure every Council member is prepared to serve with clarity, confidence, and accountability.

Action Items-

By December 2025:

1. Develop an onboarding framework for newly elected Council members to be implemented immediately following elections.
2. Identify core training areas for onboarding, including: Overview of the Constitution and Tribal governance structure, Budget and financial management, Ethics and conflict of interest policies, Tribal strategic plan and goals, Cultural protocols and Washoe values in governance, Administrative structure and department overviews

By March 2026:

1. Deliver onboarding training for all newly elected Council members using the finalized framework.
2. Assign mentors or peer support from experienced Council members to assist with the transition.

By June 2026:

1. Develop an ongoing training calendar with at least 2–3 sessions annually, open to all Council members.
2. Include external partners and experts to offer trainings in:
 - Advanced governance and policy-making
 - Strategic planning and implementation
 - Intergovernmental relations and advocacy
 - Cultural and language education

By September 2026:

1. Conduct a mid-year evaluation of onboarding and training effectiveness; gather feedback to refine content and delivery methods.

By December 2026:

1. Institutionalize the training program as part of Council operations, including a designated budget line and staff or contractor support to manage logistics and coordination.

By March 2027:

1. Launch an annual “Council Leadership Retreat” that includes a review of the strategic plan, community input priorities, and cultural grounding activities.

This Tribal Council Training Program will ensure that every elected leader is well-prepared to uphold their responsibilities, represent their communities with integrity, and strengthen the Washoe Tribe’s sovereign governance for future generations.

PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

Goal 1.4 Youth Councils for Tribe and in all Communities

The Washoe Tribal Council will establish community-specific Youth Councils that reflect the structure of Tribal governance and foster intergenerational leadership. These Youth Councils will provide mentorship opportunities, cultivate civic engagement, and empower the next generation of Washoe leaders. In partnership with organizations like UNITY, the initiative will ensure that youth have a structured platform to learn, lead, and contribute to the future of the Washoe Tribe while staying grounded in cultural values and community priorities.

Action Items-

By October 2025

1. Appoint a Youth Council Development Lead to oversee coordination and planning.
2. Engage with UNITY to explore partnership opportunities.
3. Identify key stakeholders to form a working group for design and outreach.

By January 2026

1. Hold community forums in each Washoe community to gather input on structure, priorities, and interest in Youth Councils.
2. Draft Youth Council Framework, including: Council structure and roles, age eligibility and application process, and meeting frequency and protocols

By April 2026

1. Present draft Youth Council Framework to Tribal Council for feedback and approval.
2. Recruit adult mentors to support Youth Council activities.
3. Develop recruitment materials for youth (flyers, social media, school outreach).

By July 2026

1. Open applications and conduct outreach for youth members in each community.
2. Select inaugural Youth Council members and hold orientation retreats/workshops grounded in Washoe governance, culture, and values.
3. Launch Youth Councils with formal recognition at a Tribal Council meeting.

By October 2026

1. Begin regular Youth Council meetings in each community.
2. Assign mentors from Tribal Council and staff to attend meetings and offer support.
3. Host intergenerational events to connect youth and elders

By January 2027

1. Develop community service projects led by Youth Council members.
2. Coordinate a Youth Leadership Workshop in partnership with UNITY or a similar org.
3. Document successes and challenges with staff support.

By April 2027

1. Organize a Tribal Youth Summit for all Youth Councils to gather, share experiences, and propose ideas to the Tribal Council.
2. Youth Council presentations to Tribal Council with recommendations or feedback from their communities.

PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

By June 2027

1. Evaluate the first year of Youth Councils with input from youth, mentors, parents, and staff.
2. Update framework and process based on feedback.
3. Plan for Year 3 growth (e.g., scholarships, youth participation in national conferences, regional partnerships).

Youth councils are vital to the strength and future of a tribe because they cultivate leadership, connect young people to cultural values, and encourage civic engagement. By giving youth a voice in tribal affairs, councils build confidence, a sense of purpose, and a deeper understanding of governance and community responsibility. They also create mentorship opportunities, support healthy development, and serve as a pipeline for future leaders and workforce development—ensuring that the next generation is prepared to carry the tribe forward with knowledge, integrity, and cultural grounding.

Goal 1.5 Develop Proposal around potential pay for Tribal Council positions

The Washoe Tribe will develop a structured proposal to provide fair compensation to Tribal Council members in recognition of the time, responsibility, and leadership they dedicate to the Nation. Currently serving in a voluntary capacity, Council members manage significant governance duties, participate in community engagement, and represent the Tribe in critical intergovernmental relationships.

Action Items-

By September 2026

1. Gather information from other tribal nations that compensate their council members:
 - Identify pay structures, expectations, hours of service, and funding sources.
 - Examine models from tribes of similar size and structure.
2. Review existing Washoe governance documents to understand what changes, if any, would be needed to authorize compensation.
3. Assess Council workload to define responsibilities, time commitments, and expectations.

By December 2026

1. Facilitate discussions with community members to explain the intent and gather feedback.
2. Host listening sessions to understand public perspectives on compensating elected leaders.

By February 2027

1. Work with Finance to assess current unrestricted revenues and explore funding options.
2. Develop cost scenarios (e.g., stipends vs. salaries; part-time vs. full-time roles).

By April 2027

1. Outline justification for compensation grounded in governance effectiveness, increased availability for tribal priorities, and alignment with strategic goals.
2. Define expectations and deliverables for compensated roles.
3. Include financial models and proposed implementation timelines.
4. Address potential updates to governing documents, if necessary.

PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

By June 2027

1. Consult legal counsel to ensure compliance with tribal and federal regulations.
2. Prepare necessary amendments or resolutions if changes to existing policies or documents are required.
3. Share draft proposal with Tribal Council for review and feedback.
4. Present to the community for transparency and final input.

By August 2027

1. Incorporate feedback and finalize the proposal.
2. Bring to vote by Tribal Council (and community, if constitutionally required).
3. Adopt implementation plan, including timeline, communication strategy, and policy adjustments.

Compensating Council members will enable them to more fully dedicate their time and energy to advancing priority initiatives—such as economic development, youth leadership, cultural revitalization, and long-term strategic planning. It will also allow for greater participation on local, regional, and national boards and committees, enhancing the Tribe's visibility and influence.

Proposed Long-term Goals (within 8 years)

Goal 1.6 Enhance Law & Order Code

The Washoe Tribal Council will lead a comprehensive update of the Law and Order Code to ensure it reflects Washoe cultural values, strengthens tribal sovereignty, and promotes a fair, effective, and culturally grounded justice system. This effort will incorporate restorative justice practices, reinforce protections for Washoe women, align law enforcement with the tribal court and Healing Center, and address mental health through new legal provisions. The revised Code will integrate traditional conflict resolution methods, strengthen the Tribal Advocate Program, and ensure compliance with federal laws such as VAWA and TLOA, while upholding community expectations for accountability, transparency, and justice.

Goal 1.7 – Government Reorganization

The Washoe Tribal Council will lead a strategic reorganization of the tribal government to ensure that its structure, staffing, and physical office space align with the Nation's current and future service needs. This effort will include a comprehensive workforce needs assessment for succession planning, an audit of departmental workloads and staffing expectations, and a reallocation of resources based on operational effectiveness. The reorganization will also explore use of 105(l) leases to optimize office space and support long-term sustainability, accountability, and improved service delivery to the Washoe people.

PRIORITY AREA: GOVERNMENT

Goal 1.8 – Representation on Area Boards

The Washoe Tribal Council will strengthen the Nation's influence and advocacy at the local level by securing designated Washoe seats on key boards and committees, including school boards, health advisory groups, and county governance bodies. A formal appointment process will be established in collaboration with local partners to ensure consistent and qualified representation. Participation may be a required duty for paid Tribal Council members to enhance government-to-government relationships and advance the interests of the Washoe people across all jurisdictions.

Goal 1.9 Technology Enhancement

The Washoe Tribe will enhance its technology infrastructure to improve data systems, streamline service delivery, and support effective governance. This effort will include evaluating cost-effective upgrades, providing staff training on current technology tools, and ensuring all departments remain up to date with advancements. A key component of this initiative will be the development of a secure Tribal Member Portal on the Tribe's website to provide access to sensitive information, forms, and services in a confidential and user-friendly manner. By investing in secure, efficient, and accessible systems, the Tribe will strengthen its capacity to serve the Washoe community with accuracy, responsiveness, and innovation.

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

PRIORITY AREA: SERVICE PROVIDER

Tribal governments have a sacred duty to serve their citizens—on and off reservation. Whether it's education, social services, policing, or mental health, service delivery builds trust and wellbeing. Without strong service systems, community members suffer, and the credibility of the government erodes. ***Balance requires the ability to meet the everyday needs of all Washoe people—equitably and respectfully.***

Proposed Short-Term Goals (within 2 years)

Goal 2.1 - Improve Communications

The Washoe Tribe will improve internal and external communications to promote a safe, transparent, and well-informed government culture. By investing in dedicated communications infrastructure, platforms, and staffing, the Tribe will ensure consistent, timely, and culturally grounded information reaches all tribal citizens, employees, and community partners. This effort will strengthen trust, engagement, and unity across all communities.

Action Items-

By September 2025:

1. Hire a Communications/Media Specialist by developing a job description and hire a dedicated staff person responsible for newsletters, social media, press releases, and website content.

By November 2025:

1. Begin distribution of a unified monthly tribal-wide newsletter (digital and print), including updates from Tribal Council, departments, and communities.

By December 2025:

1. Develop and publish a centralized calendar (online and in print) to track Tribal meetings, events, cultural activities, and deadlines.

By February 2026:

1. Roll out a secure, centralized email system for all citizens who wish to subscribe to receive official updates and alerts.

By April 2026:

1. Redesign the website for easier navigation and accessibility, and include a secure members-only portal for sensitive Tribal information.

By May 2026:

1. Formalize and publicize open office hours and feedback channels for Council members and department leadership to engage with Tribal citizens.

By July 2026:

1. Establish protocols for press outreach and public statements, and build relationships with local and regional media to elevate Washoe stories.

PRIORITY AREA: SERVICE PROVIDER

By September 2026:

1. Host sessions in each community and with Tribal departments to build buy-in for communication systems and gather feedback on improvements.

Clear, consistent communication builds trust, strengthens community engagement, and supports accountability at all levels of Tribal governance. By improving how information is shared and received, the Washoe Tribe will empower citizens to participate more fully in decision-making, stay informed about available services, and foster a more unified and resilient Nation.

Goal 2.2 - Customer Service Enhancement

The Washoe Tribal Council will lead efforts to improve the quality and consistency of customer service provided to citizens across all departments and communities. This includes setting expectations for respectful, timely service; creating tools and training to support staff; and ensuring that all citizens feel welcomed, heard, and served.

Action Items-

By October 2025

1. Tribal Council will adopt a “24-hour response” standard for returning citizen inquiries (calls, emails, messages) and communicate expectations to all departments.

By December 2025

1. Launch a Navigator Pilot Program to assist citizens with navigating services, completing forms, and getting directed to the appropriate department.
2. Begin quarterly departmental staff meetings focused on customer service challenges and solutions.

By March 2026

1. Conduct a customer service and communication training for all Tribal staff, covering de-escalation, conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity, and service coordination.
2. Distribute a community survey to gather feedback on service quality and wait times, including specific issues raised in each community.

By June 2026

1. Complete department-level assessments of customer service effectiveness and identify top service needs and bottlenecks.
2. Develop a formal incident report process that allows citizens and staff to report customer service issues and track resolutions.

By September 2026

1. Evaluate alternate scheduling options for departments that serve the public (e.g., extended hours or 12-hour shifts) and implement pilots where feasible.

PRIORITY AREA: SERVICE PROVIDER

By December 2026

1. Use technology improvements (e.g., online forms, virtual assistance) to streamline common services and reduce wait times.

Every interaction with a Tribal department shapes how citizens feel about their government. Ensuring responsive, respectful, and culturally grounded service strengthens community trust and reinforces the Tribe's values of accountability and care. By improving communication, training, and systems, the Washoe Tribe can deliver services in ways that honor citizens' needs and uphold a high standard of excellence.

Proposed Long-Term Goals (within 8 years)

Goal 2.3 - Enhance Developmental Capacity

The Washoe Tribal Council will lead a comprehensive effort to strengthen the capacity of Tribal departments to meet community needs efficiently and sustainably. This includes evaluating staffing levels in high-volume areas, aligning departmental growth with strategic goals, and equipping staff with tools, training, and models that improve service delivery and self-governance.

Goal 2.4 - Enhance Core Services

The Washoe Tribal Council will strengthen and expand core services to better support the health, safety, and well-being of all citizens, with a focus on accessibility, cultural relevance, and equity. Priorities include expanding behavioral health and substance misuse services through the Healing Center, improving case management and housing resources, strengthening culturally competent law enforcement, developing a reintegration-centered probation system, enhancing elder programming, and ensuring all services are accessible to vulnerable populations and citizens living outside of the service area. (See list on next page capturing feedback from community survey and in-person meetings)

Goal 2.5 - Promote Lifelong Learning & Educational Advancement

The Washoe Tribal Council will expand and strengthen educational opportunities for tribal citizens by developing robust scholarship, internship, and mentorship programs that support academic success and career readiness—from early education through advanced degrees, including master's, doctorate, and specialty programs. This effort will include partnerships with schools and higher education institutions to create culturally informed curricula, support systems for parents, and accessible educational resources. By investing in both youth and adult learners, the Tribe will build a strong foundation for future generations grounded in cultural identity and academic achievement.

PRIORITY AREA: SERVICE PROVIDER

Community Feedback on Services Needed

- New administrative offices
- Burial services
- Elder centers provide services to all elders regardless of mobility
- Community gardens
- Enforce laws regarding homes
- Elders distribution payment
- Elder housing repair
- Tiny elder homes
- Mental health services
 - Washoe specific curriculum
 - In communities
- Mentorship programs for youth
- Youth prevention programs
- Yardwork help for elders
- Transportation services
 - Bus for elders for events
- Homes and programs for disabled
- Community Watch programs
 - Neighbors helping each other
- Down payment assistance
- Rehab facilities
 - After care programs
- More educational opportunities and on the job training programs
- Safety enhancements for all communities
 - More capacity for law enforcement

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

PRIORITY AREA: EMPLOYER

The Tribe is one of the largest employers in the region. With this comes the responsibility to build a healthy workplace, support professional growth, and hire from within the community. Workforce development ensures the Tribe has the capacity to govern and that youth see a future in tribal careers. ***Balance requires investing in people and cultivating a workforce grounded in sovereignty and pride.***

Proposed Short-Term Goals (within 2 years)

Goal 3.1 - Become Preferred Employer

The Washoe Tribal Council will lead efforts to position the Tribe as a preferred employer by fostering a supportive, inclusive, and growth-oriented work environment. This includes strengthening employee benefits, improving human resource practices, supporting professional development, and creating a workplace culture grounded in equity, wellness, and cultural values.

Action Items-

By October 2025:

1. Conduct a comprehensive employee satisfaction and needs assessment, including focus groups and surveys, to identify key retention factors and areas for improvement.

By December 2025:

1. Update HR policies to reflect best practices in flexible work schedules, wellness leave, telework options, and cost-of-living compensation adjustments.

By April 2026:

1. Research a housing stipend or down payment assistance program for employees, prioritizing high-need staff and essential positions.
2. Launch an introductory Washoe Cultural Training for all staff to strengthen cultural competency and workplace values. This training will be expanded further in a future goal.

By December 2026:

1. Implement a structured mentorship program for new employees and first-time supervisors to build internal leadership capacity and reduce turnover.
2. Develop and roll out a performance-based reward and recognition system to highlight exemplary work and foster morale.

By September 2027:

1. Enhance recruitment strategies with a focus on recent graduates, skilled professionals, and citizens living outside the area, including updated outreach materials and job fairs.

Becoming a preferred employer ensures the Tribe can attract and retain talented, mission-driven staff to deliver high-quality services to citizens. A strong workforce rooted in Washoe values creates a stable foundation for self-determination, innovation, and community well-being.

PRIORITY AREA: EMPLOYER

Goal 3.2 - Employ More Tribal Members

The Washoe Tribal Council will take steps to increase the employment of Washoe tribal members and descendants within the tribal government, with a target of 80% representation in the workforce. This effort will include revising policies, expanding workforce development programs, creating second-chance opportunities, and preparing the next generation of Washoe professionals through mentorship and training.

Action Steps-

By October 2025:

1. Review and revise tribal preference hiring policies to align with the 80% tribal member/descendant employment goal and ensure clarity in implementation.

By January 2026:

1. Conduct a workforce analysis to determine current tribal member employment rates, skill gaps, and opportunities for advancement.

By April 2026:

1. Revise job descriptions to eliminate unnecessary barriers and focus on essential skills, experience, and willingness to be trained.
2. Launch a Tribal Workforce Development Program that includes:
 - Apprenticeships and internships for tribal youth
 - A management training program for current employees
 - Provide one-on-one support for tribal members with special needs for employment such as prior justice system involvement

By December 2026:

1. Host at least two tribal job fairs (including youth-focused) and build partnerships with Native colleges and technical schools for recruitment and pipeline development.

By April 2027:

1. Develop succession plans and training strategies for every tribal department, ensuring long-term opportunities for tribal member advancement.

Employing more tribal members strengthens the Tribe's sovereignty, invests in the community's future, and ensures that programs and services reflect Washoe culture and values. It creates a sustainable tribal workforce built on shared purpose, trust, and pride.

PRIORITY AREA: EMPLOYER

Goal 3.3 Improved Workforce Onboarding Experience

The Washoe Tribe will strengthen its employee onboarding process to ensure all new hires gain a deep understanding of the Tribe's history, values, and governance. The updated onboarding will include training in Washoe history, ethics, and critical thinking, and will integrate individualized development plans, job shadowing, and mentorship to prepare staff for success and long-term engagement.

Action Items-

By September 2025

1. Form an Onboarding Task Force with representatives from HR, Tribal leadership, cultural preservation, and key departments.
2. Assess current onboarding practices and identify gaps in cultural education, staff preparation, and long-term support.
3. Define onboarding goals and learning outcomes, including understanding of Washoe history, values, governance, and employee expectations.

By November 2025

1. Develop a Washoe Cultural Orientation module covering:
 - Washoe history, values, and governance structure
 - Language elements and key cultural protocols
 - Contemporary Tribal priorities and strategic goals
2. Create ethics and critical thinking training that reflects the Tribe's values and encourages responsible, informed decision-making.
3. Design a template for individualized development plans (IDPs) for all new hires, aligned with job expectations and growth goals.
4. Establish a job shadowing process with department leads for new employees to observe operations across departments.

By February 2026

1. Pilot the new onboarding program with a small group of new hires and collect feedback.
2. Train department supervisors and mentors on how to support onboarding.
3. Assign mentors to new hires for the first 90 days of employment to support transition.

By June 2026

1. Launch the new onboarding process Tribe-wide for all new employees.
2. Create a feedback loop using surveys and supervisor input to assess onboarding effectiveness and identify improvement areas.
3. Review IDPs at 30, 60, and 90 days to ensure new staff are supported in achieving early success and engagement.
4. Update onboarding materials annually to reflect new Tribal priorities, changes in governance, or cultural content enhancements.

PRIORITY AREA: EMPLOYER

Proposed Long-Term Goals (within 8 years)

Goal 3.4 Employee Leadership Training Programs

The Washoe Tribe will develop and implement a structured leadership training program to strengthen internal capacity, support employee advancement, and prepare tribal members and staff for supervisory and managerial roles. The program will reflect Washoe cultural values and include training tracks focused on professional skills, cultural intelligence, and effective team leadership.

Goal 3.5 Invest in Our Next Generation

The Washoe Tribe will invest in the next generation of leaders by expanding youth employment programs such as WEX, launching job-readiness and career exploration initiatives, and hosting tribal career fairs. These efforts will build a strong pipeline from youth engagement to full-time tribal employment, ensuring that young Washoe citizens are prepared, supported, and inspired to serve their people through meaningful careers within the Tribe.

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

PRIORITY AREA: PRESERVE LANGUAGE

Language is more than communication—it's a vessel of worldview, identity, and spirituality. The Washoe Tribe carries the responsibility to revitalize and protect the Washoe language. If language disappears, a piece of the people's soul and understanding of the world goes with it. ***Balance requires language to be spoken, taught, and honored across generations and systems.***

Phased Approach over 5 years

Goal 4.1 - Increase Fluency Rate of Washoe Language

The Washoe Tribe will revitalize and sustain its language by creating widespread, accessible, and culturally grounded learning opportunities. Our goal is 100% fluency and while we recognize that achieving this is an ambitious goal, striving for it reflects our deep dedication to the survival and vibrancy of our language. This commitment honors our ancestors and ensures future generations carry forward our identity, values, and ways of being. By fostering respect for both learners and fluent speakers, and by making the Washoe language a visible and active part of daily life, governance, and education, we aim to create a community where language lives in every home, school, and gathering.

Action Items-

Year 1 – Foundations of Language Learning (July 2025 – June 2026)

By December 2025:

1. Launch Washoe language courses in tribal Head Start programs.
2. Begin Washoe language instruction in all youth and afterschool programs.
3. Offer weekly in-person classes in each community at varying times to support access.

By March 2026:

1. Develop a Washoe Language App with games, videos, and a digital dictionary.
2. Create digital and print learning materials (children's books, phrasebooks, workbooks).
3. Establish a respectful, judgment-free learning environment with a rewards system.

By June 2026:

1. Require Tribal Council and staff to begin using Washoe in meetings and signage.
2. Launch a mentor program pairing fluent speakers with learners.
3. Begin incorporating Washoe into signage and communications in all tribal facilities.

By September 2026:

1. Host the first Annual Washoe Language Celebration.
2. Launch a virtual help desk or language hotline for learners.
3. Conduct the first community-wide evaluation of participation and learning.

PRIORITY AREA: PRESERVE LANGUAGE

Year 2 – Normalize Daily Use of Washoe (July 2026 – June 2027)

By June 2027

1. Expand language learning into adult education and workforce training programs.
2. Include Washoe greetings and common phrases in all tribal department interactions.
3. Launch "Language in the Home" program with family kits and parent-child activities.
4. Begin short Washoe language videos on social media and tribal communications.
5. Train tribal staff to provide basic services in Washoe (e.g., greetings, check-ins).
6. Develop signage standards to incorporate Washoe in all new tribal buildings.

Year 3 – Strengthen Learning Pathways and Proficiency (July 2027 – June 2028)

By June 2028

1. Establish multi-level language proficiency tracks (beginner, intermediate, fluent).
2. Offer intensive language immersion weekends for families and adult learners.
3. Partner with local colleges to offer credit-bearing Washoe language courses.
4. Expand youth programming to include full-day summer language camps.
5. Launch youth-led content (videos, podcasts, comics) in Washoe to promote relevance.
6. Publish a community progress report on fluency growth and engagement.

Year 4 – Intergenerational and Public Use Expansion (July 2028 – June 2029)

By June 2029

1. Host second Annual Language Celebration, with youth competitions and elder honors.
2. Require Washoe use at official public events (welcomes, blessings, naming ceremonies).
3. Launch Elder Speaker Corps to deliver public language and storytelling events.
4. Begin development of a Washoe Language Certification Program for educators and staff.

Year 5 – Institutionalize and Sustain (July 2029 – June 2030)

By June 2030

1. Open a permanent Washoe Language Resource Center (physical or virtual).
2. Establish a Washoe Language Endowment or permanent fund for long-term revitalization.
3. Integrate language into community signage, street names, and public space design.
4. Evaluate progress toward the 100% fluency goal and update 10-year strategic plan.
5. Celebrate the 5-Year Milestone with a community-wide summit on language and culture.

The Washoe language holds the stories, values, and worldview of our people. By actively integrating it into our homes, schools, governance, and community spaces, we ensure that future generations remain rooted in Washoe culture and identity.

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

PRIORITY AREA: PRESERVE CULTURE

Culture connects the past to the present and guides how the Tribe walks into the future. From song and story to protocol and land-based knowledge, the preservation and transmission of Washoe culture is a sacred trust. Without it, sovereignty is hollow.

Balance requires cultural expression to be protected, lived, and passed on daily—not just symbolically.

Phased Approach over 5 years

Goal 5.1- Preserve, Revitalize, and Promote Washoe Culture for Present and Future Generations

To sustain and strengthen Washoe cultural identity, knowledge, and practices by empowering cultural leaders, embedding cultural teachings into community life, enhancing intergenerational learning, and leveraging technology, partnerships, and resources—ensuring all generations are equipped and inspired to carry Washoe ways forward.

Action Items-

Year 1 – Laying the Foundation (July 2025 – June 2026)

By September 2025:

1. Identify and recognize cultural leaders (ceremonial, land-based, spiritual)
2. Begin planning stipend/grant-based mentorship program
3. Launch "Washoe First" Culture Campaign emphasizing traditional values

By December 2025:

1. Partner with schools to integrate cultural values
2. Pilot youth cultural classes and host first intergenerational storytelling event

By March 2026:

1. Begin collecting and digitizing oral histories from elders
2. Host community campout with traditional teachings (hunting, harvesting)
3. Launch tribal cultural calendar with seasonal ceremonies

By June 2026:

1. Formalize cultural mentorship pairings (elders with youth)
2. Offer regular in-person and online cultural classes
3. Develop evaluation process for community cultural participation

Year 2 – Building Access and Participation (July 2026 – June 2027)

By September 2026:

1. Open the Washoe Library and digital archive space
2. Host seasonal traditional events (pine nut dance, rabbit drive, roundhouse)
3. Require youth participation in cultural learning via tribal education programs

PRIORITY AREA: PRESERVE CULTURE

By December 2026:

1. Launch first volume of the Washoe Book of Oral History
2. Begin repatriation efforts for baskets and ceremonial items
3. Require Tribal Council to attend at least four cultural events annually

By March 2027:

1. Provide stipends and support to cultural teachers and knowledge keepers
2. Expand intergenerational cultural events across all communities

By June 2027:

1. Add cultural signage in tribal buildings
2. Update tribal policies to include cultural integration in services

Year 3 – Institutionalize Cultural Learning (July 2027 – June 2028)

By December 2027:

1. Fully embed cultural practices into departments and community programs
2. Launch formal youth cultural requirement in school and youth services
3. Develop and distribute printed/online cultural learning materials

By June 2028:

1. Hold annual Cultural Leaders Summit for planning and cross-generational input
2. Expand mentorship program into a formal Cultural Leadership Academy
3. Establish annual Washoe Cultural Week celebration

Year 4 – Infrastructure and Visibility (July 2028 – June 2029)

By December 2028:

1. Finalize museum/cultural center site plan and secure initial funding
2. Install cultural signage and Washoe values messaging across all government buildings
3. Integrate cultural elements into all official tribal communications

By June 2029:

1. Launch permanent food sovereignty program: community gardens, traditional harvesting
2. Establish a digital cultural media platform (video lessons, virtual tours, podcasts)
3. Offer regional cultural exchange events with other Native communities

Year 5 – Long-Term Sustainability (July 2029 – June 2030)

By December 2029:

1. Open Washoe Museum and Cultural Center (if feasible)
2. Expand staff and funding for cultural programming
3. Develop cultural preservation endowment or long-term fund

PRIORITY AREA: PRESERVE CULTURE

By June 2030:

1. Host tribal-wide cultural summit to assess progress and renew goals
2. Document and share best practices for revitalization with other nations
3. Publish updated Washoe Cultural Strategic Plan for the next 10 years



Washoe culture—its ceremonies, stories, and traditional knowledge—is a cornerstone of tribal identity and sovereignty. When culture is strong, the community is strong. Revitalizing these practices ensures the survival of the Washoe Nation as a distinct people, with values and lifeways that predate colonization and continue to guide future generations. Cultural knowledge gives tribal members a sense of pride, purpose, and belonging. Reconnecting with traditional practices, stories, and ceremonies helps individuals understand who they are, where they come from, and what they carry forward.

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

PRIORITY AREA: STEWARDS OF LAND & WATER

The Washoe people have always had a sacred relationship with the land, especially Lake Tahoe. Stewardship of the land and water is not optional—it is embedded in Washoe identity. The Tribe must protect its homelands, restore traditional spaces, and ensure environmental justice for future generations. ***Balance requires a return to the land, ecological healing, and respect for water as life.***

Proposed Short-Term Goals (within 2 years)

Goal 6.1 - “Return to our Ancestral Home”

The Washoe Tribe will advance land reclamation, housing, cultural access, and environmental stewardship in the Lake Tahoe Basin. By restoring our physical, cultural, and spiritual presence on ancestral lands, including access to water, ceremony, and traditional territory, we honor our responsibility to Tahoe as a living entity and reestablish our rightful role as caretakers of the land.

Action Items-

By December 2025

1. Draft and adopt a resolution declaring the Tribe’s commitment to reestablish a permanent presence in the Lake Tahoe Basin.
2. Identify and prioritize potential parcels for land acquisition or land-back opportunities (in coordination with tribal and environmental staff).
3. Begin discussions with federal, state (California and Nevada), and local governments on:
 - Land-back efforts
 - Water rights and stewardship roles
 - Guaranteed free access to all state parks within the Tahoe Basin
4. Form a Tahoe Return Working Group, including Tribal Council, elders, youth, and technical advisors.

By March 2026

1. Begin cultural site planning for designated ceremonial use at Lake Tahoe (designate location and traditional protocols).
2. Secure funding for a feasibility study on housing development in or near the Tahoe Basin.
3. Submit formal applications or expressions of interest for land acquisition, land transfer, or co-management agreements with public agencies.
4. Launch public awareness campaign: “Washoe Back to Tahoe” including history, rights, and vision for the future.

By June 2026

1. Complete housing feasibility study, including infrastructure, cost analysis, and environmental impact.
2. Host a tribal and community ceremony at Tahoe to reaffirm cultural ties and honor Tahoe as a living entity.

PRIORITY AREA: STEWARDS OF LAND & WATER

3. Begin design of a Washoe Cultural and Ceremonial Site at Lake Tahoe, with input from traditional practitioners.

4. Conduct community input sessions on desired features of a Lake Tahoe housing area (e.g., elder housing, eco-village model).

By December 2026

1. Identify and begin negotiations for land purchase or donation (private, nonprofit, or government-held land).
2. Submit proposals to federal and philanthropic funders to support land acquisition, cultural site development, and housing.
3. Finalize architectural and site plans for initial ceremonial space or housing project, pending land acquisition.
4. Host second annual community gathering at Lake Tahoe, highlighting advocacy progress and cultural visibility.

By June 2027

1. Secure at least one land parcel in the Tahoe Basin (purchase, land-back, or easement) for cultural, ceremonial, or housing use.
2. Finalize intergovernmental agreements (MOUs) for free access to Tahoe state parks for all Washoe citizens.
3. Develop a 5-year plan for full Washoe reintegration into the Tahoe Basin, including housing, stewardship, education, and ceremony.

Lake Tahoe is of deep cultural, spiritual, and historical importance to the Washoe people—it is the heart of their ancestral homeland and a living, sacred being in Washoe tradition.



Proposed Long-Term Goals (within 8 years)

Goal 6.2 - Washoe Traditional Ecological Knowledge & Stewardship

The Washoe Tribe will lead the restoration, protection, and respectful use of our ancestral homelands by combining traditional ecological knowledge with contemporary environmental practices. Through education, land restoration, governance, and advocacy—such as seeking legal personhood for Lake Tahoe—we will ensure the land, waters, plants, and animals are treated as living relatives, not resources. Our goal is to honor and care for the land in a way that strengthens cultural connection, sustains biodiversity, and ensures future generations can access and use Washoe lands for ceremony, hunting, medicine, and healing.

PRIORITY AREA: STEWARDS OF LAND & WATER

Goal 6.3 - Preserve Traditional Cultural Locations

The Washoe Tribe will identify, map, and protect sacred sites across our ancestral homelands through collaboration with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO), cultural advisors, and community knowledge holders. These places—woven into our stories, ceremonies, and identity—hold spiritual, historical, and cultural significance. By creating digital records, physical protections, and legal safeguards, we will ensure these sacred spaces are respected, preserved, and passed on to future generations in accordance with Washoe values and protocols.

Goal 6.4 - Protect Water Rights

The Washoe Tribe will assert and protect its inherent rights to water by documenting traditional and contemporary water usage, restoring access to sacred and sustenance waters, and strengthening relationships with state and federal partners. Water is not just a resource—it is a relative and a life-giver. By combining legal advocacy, data collection, and traditional stewardship practices, the Tribe will ensure that Washoe people have access to clean, sacred, and sovereign waters for drinking, ceremony, agriculture, and ecosystem health.

Goal 6.5 Protecting Existing Lands of the Washoe Tribe

The Washoe Tribe will protect and responsibly manage its existing lands to ensure they are preserved for future generations and developed in alignment with the needs, values, and priorities of the Tribe. This includes enforcing environmental protections, improving land stewardship practices, addressing land assignment and usage issues, and ensuring that development supports housing, cultural, economic, and community goals. By honoring the sacred relationship between the Washoe people and the land, we will ensure our territories remain healthy, sustainable, and reflective of our sovereignty.

Goal 6.6 - Beautifying Tribal Lands & Communities

The Washoe Tribe will enhance the appearance, accessibility, and spirit of our lands and neighborhoods through clean-up efforts, trail development, culturally meaningful signage, and community-driven design. These initiatives will reflect Washoe identity, promote wellness, and foster pride in our shared spaces. By investing in beautification rooted in traditional values and community input, we will create environments that uplift the spirit, honor the land, and inspire future generations to care for their home.

PRIORITY AREA: STEWARDS OF LAND & WATER

Goal 6.7 - Revitalization of the Pinon

The Washoe Tribe will revitalize the cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance of the piñon by protecting and restoring traditional pine nut gathering areas and practices. As a sacred food source and cornerstone of Washoe identity, the pine nut tree holds deep historical and cultural value. This goal includes efforts to protect piñon groves from environmental threats, advocate for Tribal gathering rights, and pass on traditional knowledge through intergenerational teaching and seasonal harvesting. By strengthening our relationship with the land and the piñon, we reaffirm our commitment to cultural resilience, food sovereignty, and environmental stewardship.

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

PRIORITY AREA: GENERATE REVENUE

Economic sovereignty is foundational to tribal sovereignty. The ability to generate revenue, support entrepreneurship, and approve businesses aligned with Washoe values ensures the Tribe does not rely solely on federal programs. Long-term sustainability requires an economy that reflects cultural values and uplifts the community. ***Balance requires the power to fund our future without compromising who we are.***

Proposed Short-Term Goals (within 2 years)

Goal 7.1 - Create Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Tribal Members

The Washoe Tribe will strengthen its local economy by supporting tribal entrepreneurs through expanded business funding, improved access to markets, and revised procurement practices that prioritize qualified tribal firms. By investing in business development programs, simplifying incorporation on tribal lands, and celebrating tribal artisans and professionals, the Tribe will foster economic independence, creativity, and sustainable prosperity rooted in Washoe values.

Action Items-

By December 2025:

1. Expand the Washoe Business Fund with increased capital and updated eligibility guidelines for startups, artisans, and small businesses.
2. Begin development of a Washoe Vendor Registry to list qualified tribal businesses, professionals, and artisans.
3. Draft amendments to tribal procurement policies to formally prioritize purchasing from tribal-owned businesses.
4. Launch a marketing and outreach campaign to promote the Washoe Business Fund and upcoming entrepreneurship support services.
5. Host two entrepreneur info sessions in-person and virtually to explain how to apply for funds and navigate tribal business regulations.
6. Finalize and approve procurement policy updates through Tribal Council.

By June 2026:

1. Launch a business incubator series (6-month program) with workshops on incorporation, licensing, marketing, finance, and e-commerce.
2. Provide technical assistance to make it easier for members to incorporate and operate on tribal lands.
3. Create a step-by-step business startup guide tailored to tribal lands and sovereignty considerations.

PRIORITY AREA: GENERATE REVENUE

By June 2026:

1. Open an online Washoe Vendor Registry to all tribal departments and the public to encourage hiring and purchasing from tribal members.
2. Host the first Washoe Tribal Procurement Fair to connect tribal entrepreneurs with tribal departments, nonprofits, and external partners.
3. Begin a “Purchase from Artisans” initiative in tribal gift shops, visitor spaces, and tribal-run events.

By September 2026:

1. Offer one-on-one business coaching and mentorship pairings with experienced Native entrepreneurs.
2. Provide micro-grants for tribal artists to scale production and online sales.

By December 2026:

1. Host the first annual Washoe Native Business Showcase, featuring food vendors, artists, and service providers.
2. Evaluate the success of the Business Fund, Registry, and Procurement Fair; collect participant feedback and adjust programs for Year 2.
3. Launch promotional campaign: “Support Washoe-Owned” highlighting success stories.

By June 2027:

1. Institutionalize entrepreneurship support by embedding it into tribal economic development programming.
2. Publish a Washoe Business Directory and distribute it to all tribal departments and local partners.
3. Develop an online application portal for business funding, registry sign-up, and procurement resources.

Supporting tribal entrepreneurs is essential for fostering self-sufficiency, creating local jobs, and strengthening the Tribe’s economy through culturally grounded, community-driven innovation.

Goal 7.2 - Complete a Comprehensive Market Analysis

The Washoe Tribe will complete a comprehensive market analysis to better understand which types of businesses are economically viable within tribal lands, surrounding areas and beyond. This analysis will inform strategic decision-making by identifying opportunities that align with tribal values, meet community needs, and provide meaningful employment for tribal members. By grounding economic development in both data and cultural priorities, the Tribe can pursue growth that is sustainable, respectful, and beneficial to current and future generations.

PRIORITY AREA: GENERATE REVENUE

Action Plan-

By October 2025-

1. Appoint an Economic Development Lead or Working Group to manage the project.
2. Define the scope of the market analysis, including:
 - a. Target geographies (e.g., tribal lands, nearby communities, areas beyond current borders)
 - b. Business sectors of interest (e.g., tourism, retail, food, cultural arts)
 - c. Key criteria (alignment with tribal values, employment potential, sustainability)
3. Secure funding to support consulting or research services.

By January 2026-

1. Identify and hire a qualified market research firm or consultant with experience working with tribal governments.
2. Review tribal values and priorities to develop a framework for evaluating potential businesses.

By April 2026-

1. Conduct demographic, labor force, and economic data analysis (both internal tribal and external regional data).
2. Assess existing tribal enterprises and local market gaps to avoid duplication and identify unmet needs.
3. Map out infrastructure and capacity (e.g., land availability, utilities, workforce readiness).

By July 2026

1. Present initial findings to Tribal Council and key departments for feedback and direction.
2. Host community forums to review and validate findings, ensuring community voice is included in priorities.

By October 2026

1. Identify top 5–10 business opportunities that meet key criteria: Financial feasibility, Cultural alignment, Job creation potential, Environmental sustainability
2. Conduct SWOT analyses for each opportunity to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, risks, and benefits.

By January 2027

1. Develop recommendations for potential business ventures, including:
 - Startup costs and funding options
 - Space and land requirements
 - Training or workforce development needs
2. Outline how each opportunity aligns with tribal values and community goals.

By April 2027

- Present final market analysis report to Tribal Council with clear, actionable recommendations.
- Prioritize top opportunities for further planning or implementation.
- Align recommendations with broader strategic and economic development plans.

PRIORITY AREA: GENERATE REVENUE

By June 2027

1. Develop preliminary business plans or feasibility studies for top 1–2 ventures.
2. Create an implementation roadmap for the selected opportunities.
3. Share results with the community and build momentum for next-phase development.

Economic development is not just about money—it's about strengthening sovereignty, resilience, and identity. When done thoughtfully, it becomes a powerful tool for building a thriving, self-sustaining community grounded in tribal values.

Proposed Long-Term Goals (within 8 years)

Goal 7.3 - Structure Business Entity on Tribal Lands

The Washoe Tribe will establish a structured and transparent business entry framework on tribal lands to support sustainable economic growth while upholding tribal sovereignty. This includes developing and implementing a standardized business permitting and approval process with clear application templates, defined fee structures, and predictable timelines to ensure consistency, accountability, and accessibility for both tribal and non-tribal entities. As part of this effort, the Tribe will also review the need for additional Section 17 business entities to create new economic opportunities, enhance flexibility in enterprise development, and expand the Tribe's capacity to manage and grow tribal businesses.

Goal 7.4 - Council Role in Business Approval

The Washoe Tribe will establish a clearly defined and transparent role for the Tribal Council in the business approval process to ensure that all economic ventures align with tribal values, uphold legal and ethical standards, and reflect the interests of the community. In addition, the Tribal Council will develop a policy to guide the use of funds transferred to the Tribe through economic ventures—ensuring a thoughtful balance between supporting the operational needs of tribal government and addressing the priorities of tribal members.

Goal 7.5 - Expand Culturally-Aligned Businesses

Promote the development of culturally aligned tribal businesses that reflect traditional values, support community well-being, and steward tribal lands, with targeted growth in key markets such as Tahoe, Reno, and Las Vegas. This goal focuses on supporting business ventures rooted in Indigenous knowledge and practice—such as ecotourism, artisan goods, land stewardship, and tribal marketplace development—that honor tribal identity and generate sustainable economic returns. By cultivating businesses that are both economically viable and culturally meaningful, the tribe will strengthen its visibility, share its heritage with broader audiences, and create new opportunities for tribal citizens.

PRIORITY AREA: GENERATE REVENUE

Community Feedback on Business Ventures

-Food industry

- Cattle
- Crops

-Lease tribal lands

-Smokeshops

-No smokeshops

-Gas stations

-Tahoe tourism business

-Farmers Market

-Diverse business profile

-All projects should be in consideration of Washoe values

-Industry study/research for the area

-WDC provide more updates to members

-Each community have its own economic endeavor

-Keep business separate from government

-Don't use casino for admin building, use for business

-Allow private businesses on tribal land

-TERO tax revenue

These goals capture priorities from Washoe membership, Tribal Council, and employees of the tribe.

Working Together to Succeed

The success of the Washoe Tribe's Strategic Plan depends on a shared commitment and collective effort from Tribal Council, community members, and employees. Each group plays a vital role in bringing the vision to life and turning our priority goals into tangible results.

Tribal Council brings leadership and decision-making authority that sets the tone for implementation. We recognize that Council members carry a heavy workload and are often balancing many urgent needs. As such, this plan is designed to support thoughtful, informed decisions—particularly when it comes to allocating unrestricted revenue. Strategic investment in key areas will be essential to move our priorities forward.

Community members provide the insight, lived experience, and cultural grounding that ensures the plan remains aligned with the values and needs of the Washoe people. Your continued engagement and feedback will keep us accountable and responsive to the Tribe's evolving priorities.

Employees are the backbone of implementation. From program design to service delivery, workforce capacity directly affects our ability to execute the plan. We must acknowledge our current staffing levels, internal resources, and funding limitations as we sequence and pace our efforts.

Ultimately, achieving the goals in each priority area—whether improving governance, enhancing services, preserving language and culture, or generating revenue—requires trust, communication, and cooperation. By working together, and being mindful of the real constraints we face, we can take meaningful, manageable steps toward a stronger future for the Washoe Tribe.



APPENDIX

Appendix Overview

The Appendix includes all supplementary materials to the Strategic Plan.

Implementation Plan:

The implementation plan is a guide that outlines how the priority areas in the plan will be accomplished. It is imperative to have someone who is leading the effort. The implementation plan includes timeframes for reporting to Tribal Council and citizens so that there is oversight and accountability around the Strategic Plan.

Supporting Documents:

The appendix will include a list of documents that support the action items listed in the plan.

Attachments:

All documents that have been developed as part of this plan such as the Strategic Plan Rubric will be included in the attachments.

Implementation Plan

1

IDENTIFY A LEADER FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Tribal Chairman will lead the plan and delegate to tribal employees as identified to lead the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This will be a major job duty for the Chairman.

2

QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The Chairman will facilitate a quarterly meeting with everyone designated as a lead in the Strategic Plan to get updates on the Action Items outlined in this document and the Strategic Plan Rubric.

3

YEARLY EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Tribal Council will participate in a yearly planning meeting to discuss progress and needed tweaks to the goals in the plan. The Chairman will communicate this feedback to the leads identified throughout this plan.

A yearly report will be created for citizens to understand the progress made on the goals in the plan.

Supporting Documents

While the Strategic Plan sets the overall vision and direction for the Washoe Tribe, it must be supported by other planning documents that provide detailed guidance in specific areas. Documents such as department work plans, economic development strategies, land use plans, cultural preservation plans, and language revitalization roadmaps help translate broad goals into focused, actionable efforts. These supplemental plans ensure alignment across departments, support long-term implementation, and allow the Tribe to respond effectively to changing needs and opportunities—making the Strategic Plan a living, working document rather than a standalone effort.

Examples include:

- Yearly Department Goals Worksheet
- 2008 Integrated Resource Management Plan
- 2008 Development Planning System
- Washoe Development Corporation Planning Documents
- Washoe Housing Authority Planning Documents

Attachments

Visual Strategic Planning Rubric

A visual strategic planning rubric is a critical tool for turning vision into action. By clearly identifying lead staff, necessary resources, key partnerships, and funding estimates for each goal, the rubric brings clarity and accountability to the implementation process. It ensures that everyone understands their role, what support is needed, and what success will require. This level of transparency strengthens coordination across departments, helps prioritize limited resources, and supports informed decision-making by leadership. Most importantly, it transforms the strategic plan from a static document into a practical, trackable roadmap for progress.

See attached rubric.

VISUAL RUBRIC

LEAD	RESOURCES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
==	==	==	==
==	==	==	==
==	==	==	==