

# SIERRA REGIONAL Economic News

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THE PEAKS, HILLS AND VALLEYS OF THE FRONT RANGE OF THE SIERRA NEVADA  
WHERE THE CLIMATE FOR BUSINESS IS PERFECT

## A Regional Toolbox .... Business Resource and Innovation Center



**Rob Hooper, NNDA  
Executive Director**

In the Sierra region, small businesses are vital to the financial well-being of our economy. Entrepreneurs, innovators and small business owners represent a diverse group and will continue to play an even larger role in forwarding a productive economy

in the Silver State. The national economic crisis has critically weakened Nevada's economy in the last three years, resulting in a statewide unemployment rate of more than 14% in some areas and the highest foreclosure rates nationwide.

Carson City is putting its best business-foot forward for the region within what's become an 8,000 square foot business-focused toolbox in downtown Carson City. The Business Resource and Innovation Center (BRIC) leverages powerful resources together – neatly packaged in an environment conducive to productivity and available to everyone.

With programs designed to accelerate business growth, an array of business support services and resources are orchestrated by the library and office of business development management and delivered to the clients they serve. Unlike many business assistance programs, to access the BRIC program clients need only walk in the door ... well, with a library card of course.

BRIC services include:

- Professional development
- Strategic advise
- Financing referrals
- Marketing and public relations support
- Mentoring
- Turn-key meeting space
- Links between businesses, education & government

This business toolbox also includes access to librarian services that can guide patrons to everything from business focused books and AV materials, to business research and market demand data bases, to counseling, mentoring, seminars, networking, and self-study programs; plus provide access to public computers, a copy and fax center and meeting spaces – all available 40 hours per week at no cost

These services, combined with the licensing, permitting, planning and regulation entities located on the second floor create real-time, progress-driven outcomes that help business succeed. Without question, this groundbreaking partnership stands as a significant achievement in cooperation within the region.

Libraries are trusted places of learning and information, and to marry these tools within the same space as local government regulatory functions and responsibility is not only unique and proactive, but also fiscally responsible. It helps people help themselves.



## Nevada's model moving forward

"Whether a new library becomes a part of a redeveloped downtown or not, the Carson City Library's value to the community as a resource is invaluable," said Hop and Mae Adams Foundation Trustee Steve Neighbors. "We understand this is as much about today's needs as it is tomorrow's opportunities and we are committed to helping bridge divides that exist in Carson City between people with real opportunity to and access to essential tools using state-of-the-art equipment, and those without that same opportunity."

The partners working to accomplish the BRIC's mission and goals aim to save jobs and add to the region's employment base to help turn around our local economy and also help secure a long-term, healthier future for the entire community.

Those partners include:

- Carson City – combining library services and business development, a permit center, the building, planning and engineering divisions – all pulling together to offer hands on help.
- Hop & Mae Adams Foundation – has provided more than \$175,000 cash (matching funds) required to apply for State and Federal grants that have supplied the BRIC's technology,

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and technology upgrades, to the main library.

- University of Nevada, Reno – College of Business, Center for Regional Studies and Small Business Development Center.
- Northern Nevada Development Authority – the Sierra region's economic development partner working to marry area resources with new industry.

This collaborative strategy will result in improved economic performance of businesses and job quality, vital to long-term sustainability. Targeted actions should lead to local business

growth, support for emerging entrepreneurs, and creation of living-wage jobs.

Success will position our region to compete for diverse funding sources that require regional partnerships and collaborative economic strategies, especially those emphasizing opportunities to capitalize on the emerging industries and targeted clusters. The private/public sectors must support growth and success through investments in education, workforce skills, research and technology, infrastructure, and regulation.

"We live in a world where working together to solve problems will be the best way for communities to civically and economically prosper," stated Rob Hooper, executive director at NNDA. He added, "NNDA is proud of how we are organized and positioned to do just that. We can leverage our tools and our assets to build a region where private/public partnerships will meet our current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

This collaborative approach will deliver the solutions to many of our greatest challenges ahead. Stop by the BRIC at 108 East Proctor Street, located across from City Hall, and take in YOUR Knowledge and Discovery Place.

For more information about NNDA, please call 775-883-4413 or email us at [nnda@nnda.org](mailto:nnda@nnda.org).

