

Washoe County AI Journey



Washoe County: What Challenges Are Gov Leaders Facing Today?



Workforce: Retention and Attraction.

Jurisdictions in metropolitan areas are competing for talent between other metro areas. Rural communities are challenged to attract quality candidates due to pay competitiveness, housing limitations and resource limitations.



Financial / Budgetary Constraints.

Federal funding is becoming more limited and local government stimulus funds have been expended. An increased interest rate environment and the threat of eliminating tax-exempt financing options.



Technology Integration into Service Delivery.

Jurisdictions are having to continually upgrade technology to address data retention, cyber security, and increased digital accessibility. Expected demands for on-demand services and instant responsiveness to questions or concerns.



Aging Capital Infrastructure.

Jurisdictions are having to deal with significant cost escalation related to repairing or replacing of public buildings, utilities, and roads.

1

Can AI help us be more efficient and reduce cost?

There are opportunities we can tackle, like expediting housing permitting and reducing/automating administrative tasks.

2

Will AI help with data-driven decisions?

AI can begin to help us tackle items like Capital Improvement predictive maintenance and transportation mobility/reducing congestion.

3

Can AI improve citizen self-service and engagement?

Chatbots and Virtual assistants for here for citizen self-services.

Our journey here started with this vision.



**Imagine if
you could
use AI to...**

Increase the capacity of staff and empower greater productivity by reducing more menial tasks like data gathering.

Retain the institutional knowledge that is leaving our industry every time a public servant retires.

Give time back to our staff and electeds to focus on higher and more impactful work

What if AI could save you 5 hours a week on repetitive tasks?

Think asking/answering questions, summarizing documents or previous actions, and drafting repetitive, time intensive reports.



Washoe County saved ~246 Staff Hours in the Last 30 Days

For Research

95

30 Day Active Users

266

Number of
Searches in 30 Days

.5

Number of Staff Hours
Saved Per Search

130

Hours Saved in 30 Days

For Staff Reports

21

30 Day Active Users

29

Number of
Reports in 30 Days

4

Number of Staff Hours
Saved Per Search

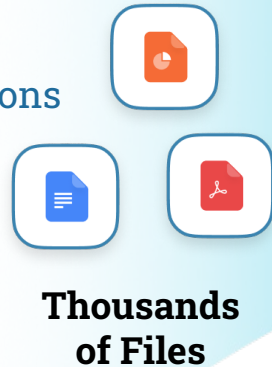
116

Hours Saved in 30 Days

Washoe County Knowledge AI

Decades of Policy, Plans & Law

- Agenda Packets
- Meeting Minutes
- Board Presentations
- Ordinances + Resolutions
- Strategic Plans
- Master Plans
- Budgets/ACFRs
- Municipal Code
- State Law
- +More



Built for
**Managers, Clerks, Electeds,
and Dept. Leaders**

AI Assisted Workflows

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Draft Staff Reports | Comparable City Research |
| Voting History | Admin. Policy Lookup |
| Draft Ordinance | Draft Goals/KPIs |
| Code Lookup | Create a Timeline |

Purpose-Built Outputs

- Historical Action Timelines
- Board Briefings
- Staff Reports
- Draft Ordinances
- Policy Analysis
- Budget Narratives
- Meeting Re-Caps & Minutes
- +More

Open Internet
Enabled

OpenAI
No access

Framework for AI in Local Government



AI transformation is 30% tech, 70% is organizational.

Big, Bold Vision for Your Community

AI Governance

Proactively lead and guide this transformation.

AI Policy | AI Guiding Principles | AI Governance Committee

Everyday AI

Cutting the Bureaucratic Burden

Be more efficient with common, repetitive tasks.

Transformative AI

Impacting More Citizens

*Reinvent how you serve citizens.
(w/ current or less resources)*

Organizational Enablement

Courageous Leadership | Role-Based Training | Collaboration Connects

Guidelines We Used



- **We will protect institutional knowledge** by using the public record because it is a clean data source.
- **We will NOT access private data.**
- We will look at using AI for **government workflows with repeatable patterns.**
- We will **NOT build on top of “systems of record”.**
- We will focus on **areas where we can immediately realize efficiency.**
(aka solving problems that need to be solved)

AI is Not Without It's Challenges



Privacy & Security

AI systems may compromise sensitive data or be misused for malicious purposes, raising privacy and security risks.



Ethical Dilemmas

The development and deployment of AI raise ethical questions about fairness, accountability, and potential biases.



Job Displacement

AI automation could lead to job losses in certain industries, requiring workforce retraining and adaptation.



Lack of Transparency

Many AI systems operate as 'black boxes,' making it difficult to understand their decision-making processes and ensure accountability.

7 Lessons [From the Trenches]



1

It's being used, whether you like it or not.

Of course, AI is already being utilized in various ways by employees, teams, and departments, even if it's not officially sanctioned or regulated.

2

Always start with the problem.

Clearly define the specific problem or challenge you're trying to address to ensure a focused and purposeful implementation.

3

Individual & organization-wide approach.

Adopt a dual strategy: empower individuals with AI tools for their personal workflows while also identifying opportunities for broader, organization-wide AI initiatives.

4

Recognize there will be limitations.

Understand the limitations of AI models and their potential for errors, biases, or inaccuracies, necessitating human oversight and validation.

5

Data quality is crucial.

The quality and integrity of your training data significantly impacts the performance and reliability of AI models, making data governance and curation essential.

6

Changing behavior is co-equal with right tech.

Successful AI adoption requires addressing both the technological aspects and the human factors, such as change management, training, and user adoption.

7

Start small. Pilots. Pilots. Pilots.

Begin with small-scale pilot projects to learn, iterate, and build confidence before scaling AI initiatives across the organization.

Tips on Moving Forward

- Executive Leadership needs to be a Champion
- Form a Cross-Departmental Working Group to determine Roll-out
- IT Department member of the Working Group but necessarily leading Roll-out
- Consider developing a Usage Policy Document (mitigate concerns of data privacy)
- Try a few small projects.
- Think in two levels > individual tools (Co-Pilot) and enterprise-wide tools (many vendors here).
- Pick use cases where data is already clean. (Don't reinvent the wheel)
- Use purpose-built local government AI tools.

Set your intentions first – what is the specific goal?

Save employee time?

Faster response time?

Research?

Generating insights?

Thank you

