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## DEPARTMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

### **Mission**

Develop and implement plans and programs for a diverse, vibrant community.

### **Description**

The Department of Comprehensive Planning is responsible for a variety of programs to meet the current and long-range planning needs of the residents of Clark County. The planning department is involved in developing and administering planning programs to address the impacts of the County's continued significant growth and development. Planning programs are underway to promote "sustained managed growth," and to develop and preserve the quality of life treasured by Southern Nevadans. Comprehensive Planning administers programs that focus on issues such as land use, transportation, airport environs, affordable housing and demographics.

### **Land Use Plans**

A Land Use Plan is a document that is used to plan future development in a specific area. It is a portion of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan for smaller portions of the County: either a town or planning area. The Land Use Plan brings together a variety of information about area resources and contains recommendations for future land uses in that area.

A Land Use Plan provides a framework for decision making by the Town Advisory Boards (TABs) and Citizen Advisory Councils (CACs). While it is to be used by policy makers to guide their directions, it also serves as a reference for the private sector in making informed decisions. Each land use plan contains a series of goals and policies used to guide development standards, guide public investment, and public and private decision making.

The Clark County Board of County Commissioners has made a commitment to produce and update Land Use Plans for all of the unincorporated towns and areas in Clark County. This is a major endeavor since Clark County covers 7,900 square miles and is characterized by strong growth and diverse communities. Land Use Plan status and the staff team leaders responsible for the planning areas are listed on the attached table.

Preparation of Land Use Plans is structured around an established public process. In order to develop a practical land use plan, the planning process employs an extensive public outreach program where public participation is maximized. This commences through the use of one or two workshops (depending on the planning area), a Planning Advisory Group (again depending on the planning area and the level of citizen interest), and at least one meeting at the appropriate Town Advisory Board and Citizen Advisory Council. Once a draft Plan is acceptable to the TAB or CAC, public meetings continue at the Clark County Planning Commission. Ultimately, the Plans are adopted by the Clark County Board of County Commissioners.

The Community Planning Team is responsible for preparation of draft Plans. Most importantly,

the team works with the Town Advisory Boards, Citizens Advisory Councils and community residents to develop a Plan that meets the needs of the local community.

Most Plans takes a year from the beginning stages to adoption. Much of this period is used to hold workshops, open houses, public meetings and hearings to ensure that community residents have ample opportunity to participate in the planning process.

**Clark County Department of Comprehensive Planning  
Land Use and Development Plan Status**

<b>Planning Area</b>	<b>Guide Status Year adopted</b>
Urban Areas	
Enterprise	Adopt Update 9/2009
Lone Mountain	Adopt Update 9/2008
Spring Valley	Adopt Update 10/2009
Sunrise Manor	Adopt Update 10/2010
Winchester/Paradise	Adopt update 8/2010
Whitney	Adopt update 3/2007
Laughlin	Adopt update 5/2007
Northeast County	Adopt Update 9/2006
- Bunkerville	- Moapa
- Glendale	-Moapa Valley (Includes Logandale & Overton)
Northwest County	Adopt update 11/2007
- Indian Springs	- Cactus Springs
- Mount Charleston	- Mountain Springs
- Corn Creek	- Cold Creek
- Kyle Canyon road Area	- Trout Canyon
- Hidden Hills	- Mobile Canyon
- Red Rock (Includes Blue Diamond & Calico Basin)	
South County	Adopt update 8/2008
- Goodsprings (1994)	- Nelson
- Jean(1994)	- Sloan
- Sandy Valley(1994)	- Cal-Nev-Ari
- Searchlight	- Palm Gardens
- Primm(1994)	

## **DEPARTMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS**

The Clark County development review process usually requires only one public hearing per application. Some types of applications, such as zone change requests which do not conform to the Land Use Plan, require hearings before both the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. There is only one public hearing before the Board of County Commissioners for zone change applications which conform with the Land Use Plan and only one public hearing before the Planning Commission for design reviews, most special use permits and waivers of development standards unless appealed to the Board of County Commissioners.

The role of town advisory boards and citizens advisory councils in providing input on these matters is an integral part of the public participation process. Input from town advisory boards and citizens advisory councils on these matters is provided directly to the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning Commission, along with the required departmental review and recommendations on the technical, legal, and compliance aspects of such applications.

### **ZONING DEFINITIONS**

#### **Unified Development Code:**

The purpose of the Unified Development Code (Title 30 of the Clark County Code) is to:

- promote the general health and welfare;
- preserve air and water quality;
- protect natural and scenic resources from unreasonable impairment;
- ensure that development is commensurate with the character and physical limitations of the land; and develop a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement of transportation and public facilities and services.

To accomplish all of the above, the County is divided into different types of districts where specific detailed land use regulations apply. The Unified Development Code generally regulates types of land use (commercial, residential, and industrial) and property development standards (size of lot, height of buildings, setbacks, etc.).

#### **Zone Boundary Amendment:**

A zone boundary amendment is an application to amend the boundaries of a zoning district. If a developer wants to build a gasoline station on land zoned for residential purposes, it would be necessary to rezone the property to allow commercial uses. Commercial types of land use with commercial development standards would then be permitted on that property. Zone boundary amendments are presented to the Planning Commission if the request does not conform to the Land Use Plan, otherwise they are presented only to the board of County Commissioners.

#### **Special Use Permit:**

A special use permit is an application to allow a certain use that may be compatible in an area if it is developed appropriately. This type of application allows the Commissioners to look at each

use with its specific plans for development and on a case-by-case basis, approve the use and plans, approve them under certain conditions, or deny them. For instance, a library may be appropriate in a residential area if adequate street improvements and parking are provided, proper setbacks from surrounding properties are maintained, the signage is appropriate, etc. Most special use permit applications are final action by the Planning Commission and do not usually go on to the Board of County Commissioners unless the Planning Commission decision is appealed.

**Waivers of Development Standards:**

Since not all similarly-zoned properties are identical, Title 30 allows for exceptions to be made if a developer would like to waive certain development requirements. Staff usually requests that the developer offer some other alternative in lieu of the specific code requirement. For example, if a parking lot is small and will not allow for the required landscaping islands, a developer could request that this requirement be waived, but agree to provide more landscaping along the right-of-way. Applications for waivers of development standards are presented to the Planning Commission and do not usually go on the Board of County Commissioners unless the Planning Commission decision is appealed.

**Design Review:**

Unlike zone changes, special use permits and waivers of development standards, public hearing notices to the surrounding property owners are not usually sent out for applications for design reviews. In a design review application, the final detailed development plans are presented to the Commission for approval. A design review application would not be required if the Commission has already approved the final plans through another form of application. Design reviews are normally presented only to the Planning Commission and do not usually go on to the Board of County Commissioners unless the Planning Commission decision is appealed.

**Text Amendment:**

This is a process allowing an applicant to request a change to Title 30. The TAB/CAC's will receive the request, along with staff comments, and are requested to provide input to forward to the Board of County Commissioners. These items are not site specific. They will be heard by all TAB/CAC's; however, an applicant may not be present to represent the item. If the text amendment is approved by the Board of County Commissioners, a follow up ordinance will be processed by staff with final approval by the Board of County Commissioners to change the Title 30.

**Administrative Design Review:**

An Administrative Design Review allows for staff approval of items such as non-residential building additions under 10,000 square feet, pads within shopping centers and certain communication tower facilities. If the applicant does not agree with the conditions attached, appeal may be made to the Board of County Commissioners by filing an APPEAL FORM within five (5) business days of the date on the letter notifying the applicant of the Zoning Administrator's decision.

**Vacation and Abandonment:**

To vacate and abandon property is the process by which the county relinquishes all interest in a dedicated street or easement. Once interest is relinquished, then the property is deeded to the adjacent owners on both sides of the property. Vacation and Abandonment applications are approved by the Planning Commission, whose action is final unless appealed to the Board of County Commissioners.

**Street Name Change:**

The street name change process allows an individual or group to change the name of an already established street. Street Name Change applications are presented to the Planning Commission, whose action is final unless appealed to the Board of County Commissioners.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

An applicant submits plans to Comprehensive Planning to be processed. Planning staff will schedule the item for a TAB/CAC meeting prior to the Commission meeting.

Comprehensive Planning processes the application, notifies County departments (including the Development Services (Building), Public Works, Fire Departments, etc.), TAB/CAC’s, surrounding property owners (if public hearing notices are sent), and others of the proposal. Staff will prepare a staff report and makes a recommendation to the Commission based on their research and the input from others.

The Town Advisory Boards and Citizens Advisory Councils hold meetings regarding the land use (zoning) applications and make a recommendation on each matter. The recommendations are forwarded to Comprehensive Planning and presented by Comprehensive Planning to the Commission.

In addition to the TAB/CACs and abovementioned departments, the following agencies are also given the opportunity to review land use applications, and their comments are forwarded to the Planning Commission or Board of County Commissioners.

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Clark County Water Reclamation District | Metropolitan Police Department      |
| Las Vegas Valley Water District         | NV Energy                           |
| Southwest Gas Corporation               | CenturyLink                         |
| Nellis Air Force Base                   | Southern Nevada Health District     |
| Regional Transportation Commission      | Clark County Department of Aviation |
| Air Pollution Control                   | Nevada Department of Transportation |
| Clark County Parks and Recreation       |                                     |

**TOWN ADVISORY BOARDS/CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCILS**

When appearing before the appropriate board or council representative, applicants should be prepared with the following information: application number(s), a copy of the staff report, the location of the property the applicant is proposing to develop, site plan, and pictures or building elevations.

## **TAB/CAC RECOMMENDATION GUIDELINES**

### **Zoning Items Consideration:**

- The characteristics of the neighboring properties, including existing uses, existing zoning, mater plan (future uses), flood issues, etc.;
- The compatibility of the proposed use with the neighboring properties including the type and intensity of uses;
- The availability of services including water, power, sewer, police and fire protection, and street improvements;
- The legitimate concerns of area citizens regarding the immediate and long-range impacts of the use; and
- The physical limitations of the land in relation to the proposed use.

### **TAB/CAC Recommendations:**

TAB/CACs typically recommend one of the following options: Approval, Approval with conditions, Denial, or Hold

If the recommendation is for approval with conditions, the conditions must be clearly described. Conditions of approval sometimes include:

- Time limits, if appropriate - one year for review; six months to remove, etc.;
- Special setbacks - 50 feet from street; 20 feet from neighbor's property line, etc.;
- Block wall or screening requirements;
- Landscaping requirements - special type of plant or tree, berms, etc.; and
- Other special conditions that might apply to the particular case that will satisfy any special concerns.

If the recommendation is for denial, the Commission prefers that the TAB or CAC include the reasons for objection so that it has a better understanding of the situation. Concerns and compatibility issues should be specific and explained thoroughly. Some typical reasons for denial include:

- Neighbor protest and/or concerns;
- Not compatible with the surrounding area;
- Contrary to Land Use Plan; and
- Proposed use too dense or intense for the area.

If the TAB/CAC would like to have an item held, the recommendation should indicate the reason for the "hold" request and the date the item will again be heard by the TAB/CAC. The Commission is not required to "hold" items for TAB/CAC input. If the item is, then it is the TAB/CAC Secretaries' responsibility to place the item back on the agenda.

### **Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission Notification of**

## **Recommendation:**

Recommendations should be faxed to Comprehensive Planning as soon as possible so that they are received in time for the next Commission meeting and briefings. Recommendations are to be submitted on TAB/CAC recommendation form to be faxed to Comprehensive Planning. Comprehensive Planning presents TAB/CAC recommendations along with staff recommendations for each item to the appropriate commission. **Comprehensive Planning Fax No.: 382-0412**

## **Zoning Agenda Cover Sheet - Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission**

### **General Order of Proceedings:**

For consent agenda items, the Staff and Planning Commission's recommendations are considered in one motion at the beginning of the meeting. Anyone wishing to have a consent agenda item heard separately should indicate their preference to the Commission when directed.

- Staff presents the application and recommendation.
- Chairman opens the public hearing.
- Applicant comments.
- Others voice approval or objections.
- Applicant is given opportunity to respond.
- Commissioners ask questions of applicant and others.
- Chairman closes the public hearing.
- Commissioners vote on the application.

### **Rules of Procedure:**

1. The applicant or representative and all other persons wishing to speak for or against any particular agenda item should come to the podium as soon as the application number is announced.
2. The applicant and all other persons wishing to speak should, upon recognition by the Chairman, give their name and address for the record and then briefly state their views.
3. When a group of citizens of common interest is present to speak on an item, a spokesperson should be selected by the group to present common opinions. Sometimes a show of hands is taken to see how many audience members the speaker represents.
4. Anyone may be recognized if s/he has something new to add to the discussion of an item.

5. All persons wishing to speak on items forwarded from the Planning Commission to the Board of County Commissioners should be aware that the Commissioners are considering the Planning Commission's recommendation on the matter. Conditions recommended by the Planning Commission are part of the County Commission action unless otherwise specified by the County Commission's motion.