

WASHOE COUNTY

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Finance DN

DA _____

Risk Mgt. N/A

HR N/A

Other N/A

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: June 9, 2015

DATE: May 15, 2015

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Trevor Lloyd, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Division
Community Services Department 328-3620, tlloyd@washoecounty.us

THROUGH: William H. Whitney, Division Director, Planning and Development
Community Services Department, 328-3617, bwhitney@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Discussion of pending draft amendments to Washoe County Development Code, Chapter 110 Division 5, and related provisions in Article 505, dealing with billboards and with certain potentially larger and/or illuminated signs that would be known under the proposed amendments as Regional Recreation Travel and Tourism [RRTT] signs, and possible direction to staff on whether to change the definition provisions for billboards and whether to take additional steps regarding RRTT signs, including whether staff should recommend removal of or changes to the provisions for that category of sign in the proposed amendments. (All Commission Districts.)

SUMMARY

On April 28, 2015 staff requested direction from the Board of County Commissioners (Board) relating to Regional Recreation Travel and Tourism (RRTT) signs in order to receive further clarification that was provided by the Commissioners on August 26, 2014 regarding the potential amendment of Article 500, Signs, of the Development Code (Chapter 110) of the Washoe County Code.

At their April 28, 2015 meeting, the Board staff to return and report back with clear definitions for "billboards" and "large scale projects" as they relate to Regional, Recreation, Travel and Tourism signs. Staff is nearing completion of the update and is seeking direction from the Board in regards to signs for RRTT uses. Staff is proposing the following changes in response to the direction provided by County Commission:

- 1) Limit the size of RRTT signs to 450 square feet maximum. Setting a maximum size will allow for the establishment of a definition of billboards based on the size of a sign.
- 2) Change the definition of the RRTT use type to include large scale entertainment uses that are intended to attract crowds of 1,000 people or more per event. This language provides for a clear and identifiable threshold for the establishment of an RRTT use type.

- 3) Change the definition of a “billboard” to include any sign larger than 450 square feet in size. *The establishment of a maximum size limitation allows for the clear definition of a billboard based on the size of a sign.*

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Supporting Development of the Regional Economy and Jobs.

PREVIOUS ACTION

On April 28, 2015, the Board was asked to provide direction to staff with regard to the RRTT signs. The Board asked staff to prepare better definitions for “large scale projects” and “billboards” and return to the Board for further direction.

On August 26, 2014, the Board acknowledged receipt of an update on the status of the Washoe County’s sign code amendment process (Washoe County Code Chapter 110, Article 502, Billboard Regulations and Article 504, Sign Regulations).

BACKGROUND

On August 26, 2014, staff of the Planning and Development Division brought an informational item to the Board regarding the possible amendment of Article 500, Signs, of the Development Code (Chapter 110) of the Washoe County Code. At that meeting the Commission expressed concern that there was not specific language allowing certain kinds of business to have signs that could be larger and commensurate with the sizes allowed in adjoining jurisdictions, such as the City of Sparks. The Commission further directed that approval of such a sign as well as the height and size should be the purview of the County Commission on a case by case basis. (Refer to Exhibit A for the excerpt of this discussion from the August 26, 2014 meeting). Planning and Development staff has made significant progress towards a final draft of a new sign code. Staff has hosted a total of 16 meetings with the sign code working group (comprised of representatives from the sign industry, the real estate industry, the planning profession, Scenic Nevada, the Citizen Advisory Boards and the Planning Commission), has presented the draft to CABs for their comments and have attempted to implement the direction of the Board, as understood by staff, by proposing to create standards for a new principal use type, Regional Recreation Travel and Tourism [RRTT]. The proposed definition and provisions for signage for that principal use are as follows:

Table 505.1 Permanent Sign Regulations by Principal Use Type of Sites

Principal Use Type of Sites ⁽¹⁾	Freestanding Signs				Building Signs	
	Max Number per Site	Max Height	Max Size per Sign	Max Sign Area per Site	Max Number per Site or Business Frontage	Max Sign Area per Business Frontage
Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism	1 per site frontage	20 feet or Up to 45 feet with SUP ⁽³⁾	120 sf or up to 300 sf with AP or larger than over 300 sf to 450 sf with SUP ⁽³⁾	1 sf for each foot of LSF or as approved by SUP	2 per BF up to 4 for any single business or occupant.	5 sf for each foot of BF

GFA = Gross Floor Area; LSF = Linear Site Frontage;; BF = Business Frontage s.f. = square feet. AP = Administrative Permit; SUP = Special Use Permit; ⁽¹⁾The principal use types are defined in Section 110.505.20 ; ⁽²⁾Administrative Permit required pursuant to Section 110.505.40. ⁽³⁾Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism uses may apply for a Special Use Permit for a freestanding sign that exceed the size limits of this table following the provisions of Section 110.505.40

Section 110.505.20 Principal Use Types of Sites. These principal use types only apply to Article 505:

- (f) Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism: “Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism” refers to ~~large-scale lodging or~~ large-scale entertainment uses **intended to attract crowds of 1,000 people or more per event and also includes unlimited gaming facilities** that attract large numbers of visitors from both inside and outside of the immediate region of Washoe County. Such use types may include: **Casinos with Unlimited Gaming**, ~~large Destination Resorts,~~ and large Outdoor Entertainment venues.

Section 110.505.40 Permits and Enforcement.

- (c) Special Use Permit for Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism Signs. A Special Use Permit pursuant to Article 810, Special Use Permits, of this Code may be granted by the Board of County Commissioners to increase the size and height, as is otherwise allowed in Table 505.1, for one freestanding sign, for each “Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism” development. Before granting a special use permit, the Board of County Commissioners shall make all the findings required by Article 810 and all of the following findings:

- (1) The freestanding sign is located immediately adjacent to an interstate highway having at least four travel lanes.
- (2) The freestanding sign is located within ¼ mile of an exit providing access to the Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism or Unlimited Gaming development from the interstate highway.
- (3) There is only one freestanding sign exceeding 300 square feet within ¼ mile of any exit providing access to a “Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism” development, from the interstate highway.

- (4) The freestanding sign is located on the same parcel of land or a parcel of land directly adjacent to the "Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism" development.
- (5) That the parcel upon which the freestanding sign is located has a regulatory zone of Industrial, General Commercial or Tourist Commercial.
- (6) That all other applicable sections of the Development Code and this Article are met.
- (7) The special use permit has been conditioned to require removal of the freestanding sign upon discontinuance of the "Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism" principal use type.
- (8) That approval of the special use permit for the enlarged sign will benefit the general welfare of citizens of Washoe County.
- (9) The freestanding sign shall not be located within 500 feet from any residential regulatory zone.

Section 110.505.65 Billboards. All billboards A Billboard is a sign that is larger than 450 square feet in surface area or a sign that is that identified on the most current billboard inventory as adopted by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners and maintained by the Community Services Department, Planning and Development Division. Signs on the billboard inventory are legal nonconforming billboards as these billboards do not comply with the standards established in table 505.1 of this Article. Additionally, all such billboards shall comply with Sections 110.505.45, 110.505.50 and 110.505.55 of this Article. The Director of the Planning and Development Division shall maintain and modify the approved billboard inventory to reflect changes in jurisdictions (i.e. annexations, rollback of sphere of influences, etc.) and removed billboards.

Section 110.505.70 Definitions.

Billboard. "Billboard" means any sign larger than 450 square feet in surface area or any sign identified in the most current billboard inventory list as maintained by the Washoe County Community Services Department. The total number of permitted billboards is determined by the most current billboard inventory adopted by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners and maintained by the Washoe County Community Services Department.

Staff has also attempted to follow the direction of the Board in ensuring, to the greatest practical extent, that the proposed code is content neutral, meaning signs are regulated without regard to the content of their message. Signs are protected under the First Amendment "Free Speech" clause of the United States Constitution. So-called "content-based" regulations have generally been reviewed by state and federal courts under the "strict scrutiny" judicial standard. Strict scrutiny means that the Code must further a compelling governmental interest and must be narrowly tailored to achieve that interest in order to regulate the content of signage.. Many sign codes throughout the Country that have been determined to be "content-based" have been found to be unconstitutional under that standard Thus although there is case law in this jurisdiction that has upheld ordinances against First Amendment challenge even though they distinguish between on-premise and off-premise commercial signs, a more conservative content neutral approach is proposed in the hopes of reducing the risk of a successful constitutional challenge. For this reason, there are many standards and findings which must be made in regards to a

Regional Recreation Travel and Tourism [RRTT] sign under the proposed code, but no mention of the message that such a sign might display.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners hold a discussion and possibly provide direction to staff on potential amendment of Development Code provisions relating to signage, particularly signage for Regional Recreation Travel and Tourism [RRTT] uses.

POSSIBLE MOTION

“Move to direct staff to continue to proceed with the sign code amendments with the policy directions as provided during this meeting.”

Attachments: Exhibit A – Excerpts of the August 26, 2014 County Commission meeting

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA

EXHIBIT A

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

AUGUST 26, 2014

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson*
Marsha Berkbigler, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner
Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner

Nancy Parent, County Clerk
John Slaughter, County Manager
Paul Lipparelli, Legal Counsel

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:03 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

14-0762 AGENDA ITEM 19 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

Agenda Subject: “Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of an update on the status of the Washoe County’s sign code amendment process (Washoe County Code Chapter 110, Article 502, Billboard Regulations and Article 504, Sign Regulations)--Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)”

Trevor Lloyd, Senior Planner, said the Board gave staff direction to move forward with amending the Code regarding signs, but required the Code amendment to be content neutral, to allow for signs on vacant properties only under limited situations, to regulate electronic-message displays under discretionary review, to allow for special treatment for election-period signs, and to not allow new billboards. He stated there had been seven meetings since then of the Sign Code Working Group, which was made up of representatives from the real estate industry, the Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs), a Planning Commissioner, the development community, Scenic Nevada, and County staff. He said there had been many revisions to the draft as a result of those meetings, but it was finally ready to be put out to the Working Group and was close to being taken to the community. He said a meeting with the Planning Commission was scheduled to initiate the amendment and, after holding several community workshops, the goal was to have the amendment adopted by end of the year. He said the draft Code was written in plain English, because there had been comments about the current Code being confusing. He stated the draft code was a fraction of the size of the current document and, besides being friendly to the public, it was also friendly from the enforcement standpoint.

Commissioner Hartung said his concern was there was not specific language allowing certain kinds of businesses to have signs that could be larger and commensurate with the adjoining jurisdictions, such as the City of Sparks. He said he wanted to make sure the sign had to be on the applicant’s property. He stated there was the potential for a casino to be built in Wadsworth, and allowing the casino to have an 8.5 by 11 foot sign on I-80 would not make sense with the 70 mph speed limit that was posted in that area. He stated the Wild West Motor Sports Park could not have signs on I-80 to help people get in and out of the Park, which made it very difficult to find. He stated that was a great venue, and he thought the County was missing the mark. He said it was not about littering the highways with signs, but was about economic activity. He stated he wanted to make sure there was specific language in the Code to address those types of instances.

Commissioner Jung said she remembered staff being given that direction by Commissioner Hartung, and she agreed with his comments about the lack of signs directing people to the Wild West Motor Sports Park. She felt it was very dangerous getting out of the Park at night. She said the Park provided a tremendous economic impact to the area and it needed big signs. She felt signs belonged in some places, but not in others. She said as a child coming into town from the west, the most exciting part for her was the big signs. She stated she did not want the area to look like Las Vegas, which had too many signs. She said a tremendous amount of economic activity was occurring on the east side of the County and the County needed to accommodate that economic development, which had been the Commission's number one mission and priority since 2008. She felt there had to be a way to preserve the beautiful open space, while also acknowledging there was some real density there.

Mr. Lloyd said the Board was clear in November that no new billboards would be allowed. He stated when there was discussion about the size of a type of sign, Commissioner Hartung talked about mirroring the size of a billboard. Commissioner Hartung said it needed to be remembered what the speed on I-80 was and, if a sign was small, someone going 65 or 70 mph would not be able to see it. He stated when a sign would be connected to a business that was there, he felt it would be appropriate to have a large sign. He suggested that might require a Special Use Permit (SUP) or some mechanism in the Code to look at those items individually. He said the decision might have to rise to the level of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) rather than being decided at the Board of Adjustment level.

Commissioner Hartung said the Sign Code for the City of Sparks was completely different than the County's, which meant it would be a disadvantage for a business located in the County if the County did not allow a particular size sign and that might cause the business to move to the City of Sparks. He felt there should be some consistency with respect to the areas adjacent to the Cities of Sparks and Reno.

In response to the call for public comment, Garth Elliot said staff had been in touch with the Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs), but Sun Valley did not have a CAB; and he did not believe there had been an attempt to come before the Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID). He said he became aware of the update because of wanting to replace the rusty sign at the pool, which was put up by the County. He stated he was told the County was going to revise the Sign Code, which would require the sign to be shorter. He said the problem with that was the sign suffered a lot of damage from rocks because it was easily reached, and making it smaller would increase the amount of vandalism occurring. He thought things like that needed to be incorporated into the Sign Code. He stated if the sign was moved one mile to the south, it could be put up much higher; but he thought moving it would compromise the effectiveness of the sign. He agreed the Sign Code needed to be updated, but he felt there should have been an opportunity for the Sun Valley community to comment regarding the amendment through their GID.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Berkbigler, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 19 be acknowledged.



Scenic
Nevada

June 8, 2015

Board of County Commissioners
1001 E. Ninth Street
Reno, NV 89520

Re: County Sign Code Update

Dear Commissioners,

Staff has declined to produce a draft code that would rule out the possibility of traditional and digital billboards, despite Scenic Nevada's repeated requests and an outcry from the public against billboards and big digital signs.

The change in direction we were seeking has not been submitted to you for the June 9 meeting on the sign code update.

Instead of presenting a proper definition of billboards, staff has side-stepped the issue and re-defined billboards as all signs over 450 square feet. Staff then limits the RRTT category to 450 square feet. The result is anyone can put up a billboard as long as the size is within this new arbitrary limit. And Norm Dianda can erect a 450 square foot digital sign, flashing billboard ads every 20 seconds, 24/7 in East Truckee Canyon, where billboards are not compatible according to the master plan.

The Scenic Nevada Board of Directions believes the fatal problems with the current draft sign code will not be corrected until a proper definition for billboards is restored to the draft and the RRTT category is eliminated.

Because of adopting a flawed legal premise not consistent with First Amendment law, the draft code eliminates the distinction between on- and off-premise signs. The result is the draft would leave county residents with a far-fetched set of regulations allowing all signs the potential of becoming billboards. And it provides special treatment, benefitting one property owner in Washoe County, under the guise of encouraging economic development.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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West Reno
Huntington Learning Center

Brian S. Dean, vice president
Northern Nevada
Certified Consulting Arborist

Lori Wray, secretary/treasurer
Southwest Reno
Law Offices of Mark Wray

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Marilyn Naylor
Washoe Valley
Washoe County School District,
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Law Offices of Mark Wray

Peter Chase Neumann
Law Offices of
Peter Chase Neumann

W. Chris Wicker
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info@scenicnevada.org
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A 6/9/15 #31, more

Again, below is an outline of our main concerns.

Problems with the draft sign code:

- Dianda exemption - Allows exceptions for digital billboards
- So-called content neutral approach - Eliminates the billboard definition; removing the distinction between on- and off-premise signs
- Sign brightness - Includes weak brightness controls pushed by the sign industry

Result: New traditional and overly bright digital billboards will be permitted

Solutions:

- Remove references providing for digital billboard exceptions (Sect.110.505.40 (c), page 505-14)
- Remove Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism principal use type (Chart on 505-1, pg. 505-9) and definition of RRTT (Sect. 110.505.20 (f), pg. 505-11)
- Restore the billboard definition from Article 502 (Off-Premise Sign or Outdoor Advertising Structure [Billboard], pg. 502-3)
- Replace industry brightness standards with study recommendations submitted by Scenic Nevada and under consideration by NDOT

RRTT (Dianda Exemption) Facts:

- Allowing a digital billboard in East Truckee Canyon is not meant to advertise or light the way for the outdoor entertainment venue, Wild West Motorsports Park
- East Truckee Canyon property owner said that a digital billboard will be used to earn income from selling off-premise advertising along Interstate 80 in East Truckee Canyon
- No evidence presented during 13 months of stakeholders meeting that a digital billboard will support economic development and diversification – the supposed “Strategic Objective” used to justify permitting a digital billboard for one property owner
- Elevates one property owner above all others by granting permission for an income stream that will be denied to others similarly situated
- Benefits one property owner, violating a state law on ethical standards
- Contrary to Commissioners’ direction to prohibit new billboards
- Conflicts with area plans, specifically the Truckee Canyon Area Plan as to off-premise signs and protecting scenic beauty
- Exposes county to risk of lawsuits on due process, equal protection and first amendment claims for a county code that allows one property owner a digital billboard to the exclusion of all others
- County staff are concerned about the Dianda rule and some stakeholders are not in favor
- Staff did not make the public aware of the above facts at public meetings

Content Neutral Facts:

- There are certain elements required for a content neutral code and eliminating the on- and off-premise distinction is NOT one of them
- There is no benefit to eliminating on- and off-premise distinction; only harm
- U.S. Supreme Court and the Ninth Circuit Courts (which include Nevada) have said codes that distinguish between the two do not violate First Amendment rights and are content neutral
- Nevada and federal laws define and regulate on- and off-premise signs the same way as the county code does today

- Nationwide jurisdictions, overwhelmingly, distinguish between on-and off-premise signs just like the county code does today
- Neither the county's sign code nor Nevada state law has been challenged on content neutrality
- Without this distinction, anyone can erect a sign and collect ad revenue or lease space on their property to a billboard company for off premise advertising; i.e., a new billboard
- Without an on- and off- premise distinction, all signs are potential billboards
- Almost impossible to reverse; imposing the distinction in the future will create a takings argument
- Creates an incentive to erecting signs as billboards, increasing clutter and blight

Citing commission direction, staff refuses to make the adjustments that we have been asking for the past several months. If this is the case, please give staff direction to restore the proper definition of billboards to prohibit these signs along with digital billboards. We believe many in the community support our position, based on the comments left in the county's website and recent events in the Truckee Meadows regarding billboards and large digital signs.

We think our solutions to the flaws in this draft will benefit all county residents now and in the future. We hope you discard staff's latest attempt and direct them to do the right thing for all of us.

Sincerely,

The Scenic Nevada Board of Directors
John Hara, President
Brian Dean, Vice president
Lori Wray, Secretary/Treasurer
Marilyn Naylor/Director



The attached document was submitted to the
Washoe County Board of Commissioners during
the meeting held on June 9, 2015.
by Trevor Lloyd
for Agenda Item No. 31
and included here pursuant to NRS 241.020(7) as
amended by AB65 of the 2013 Legislative Session.

Washoe County Commission
June 9, 2015

...our conversation today...

Sign Code Amendment – Regional Recreation Travel and Tourism (RRTT) Signs



BCC Direction

On April 28th the Board asked staff to return with more specific language to help better define “billboards” and “large entertainment uses”.



Proposed Definition of “Billboard”

Section 110.505.65 Billboards. All billboards are signs larger than 450 square feet in size and/or are identified on the most current billboard inventory as adopted by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners and maintained by the Community Services Department, Planning and Development Division. Signs on the billboard inventory are legal nonconforming billboards as these billboards do not comply with the standards established in table 505.1 of this Article. Additionally, all such billboards shall comply with Sections 110.505.45, 110.505.50 and 110.505.55 of this Article. The Director of the Planning and Development Division shall maintain and modify the approved billboard inventory to reflect changes in jurisdictions (i.e. annexations, rollback of sphere of influences, etc.) and removed billboards.

Section 110.505.70 Definitions.

Billboard. “Billboard” means any sign larger than 450 square feet and/or identified in the most current billboard inventory list as maintained by the Washoe County Community Services Department. The total number of permitted billboards is determined by the most current billboard inventory adopted by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners and maintained by the Washoe County Community Services Department.



Existing Definitions

Section 110.502.05 Definitions. Off-Premise Sign or Outdoor Advertising Structure (Billboard).

“Off-premise sign or outdoor advertising structure” means any sign, display, billboard or other device that is designed, intended or used to advertise or inform readers about services or goods produced or sold on property other than the property upon which the sign, display, billboard or other device is erected.

Section 110.504.10 Definitions. Off-Premise Sign (Billboard).

“Off-premise sign” (billboard) means any sign which identifies, advertises or directs attention to a business, activity, product, service or interest of any person not located on the premises where the sign is located and that is regulated by Article 502, Billboards.

Section 110.902.15 General Definitions. Billboard.

“Billboard” means an outdoor advertisement making a material or services known, such advertisement being remote from the point of sale of such material or service.

Section 110.504.10. Definitions. On-Premise Sign.

“On-premise sign” means any sign which identifies, advertises or directs attention to a business, activity, product, service or interest of any person located on the premises where the sign is located.



Definition

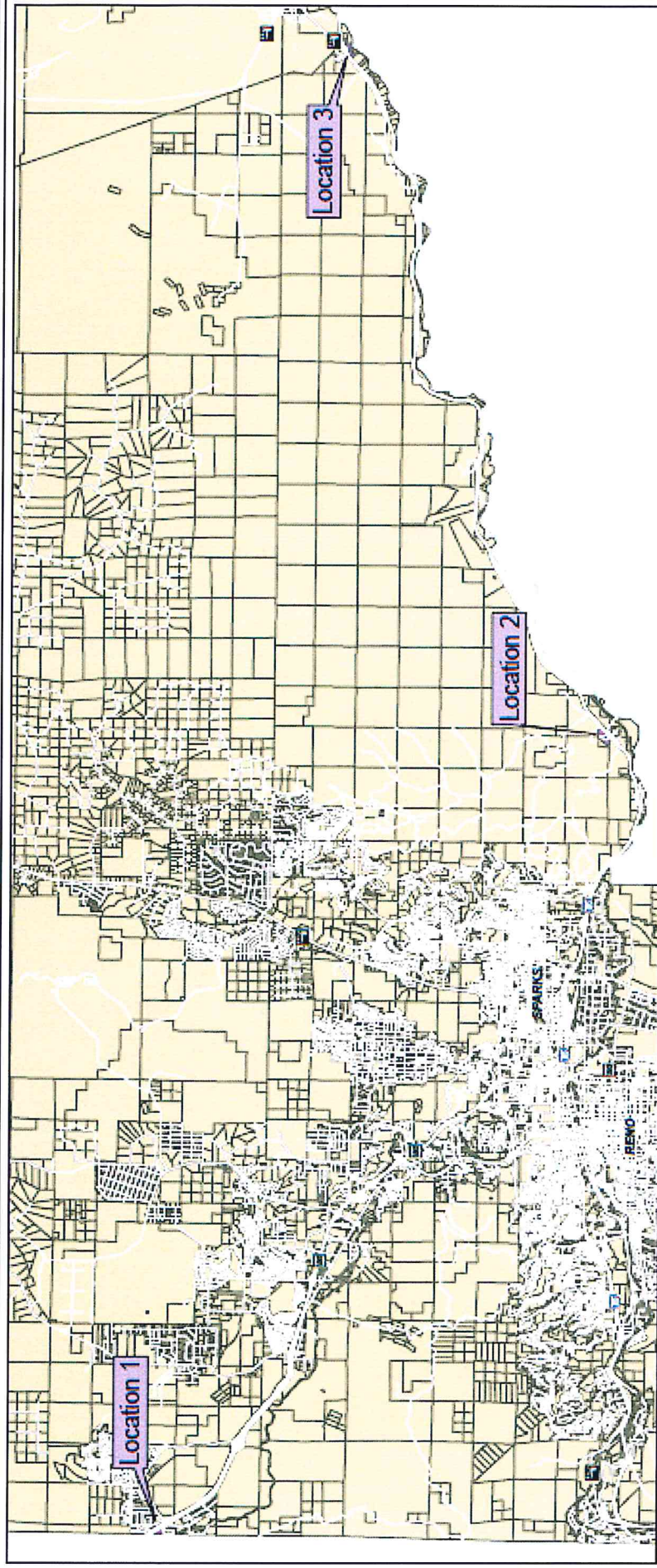
Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism: “Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism” refers to ~~large-scale lodging or~~ large-scale entertainment and uses **intended to attract crowds of 1,000 people or more per event** and also includes unlimited gaming facilities that attract large numbers of visitors from both inside and outside of the immediate region of Washoe County. Such use types may include: Casinos with Unlimited Gaming; ~~large-Destination-Resorts;~~ and large Outdoor Entertainment venues.

Principal Use Type of Sites ⁽¹⁾	Freestanding Signs				Building Signs	
	Max Number per Site	Max Height	Max Size per Sign	Max Sign Area per Site	Max Number per Site or Business Frontage	Max Sign Area per Business Frontage
Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism	1 per site frontage	20 feet or Up to 45 feet with SUP ⁽³⁾	120 sf or up to 300 sf with AP or larger than over 300 sf to 450 sf with SUP⁽³⁾	1 sf for each foot of LSF or as approved by SUP	2 per BF up to 4 for any single business or occupant.	5 sf for each foot of BF

GFA = Gross Floor Area; LSF = Linear Site Frontage;; BF = Business Frontage s.f. = square feet. AP = Administrative Permit; SUP = Special Use Permit; ⁽¹⁾The principal use types are defined in Section 110.505.20 ; ⁽²⁾Administrative Permit required pursuant to Section 110.505.40. ⁽³⁾Regional Recreation, Travel and Tourism uses may apply for a Special Use Permit for a freestanding sign that exceed the size limits of this table following the provisions of Section 110.505.40

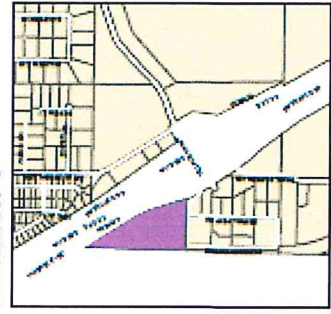


Potential RRTT Sign Locations

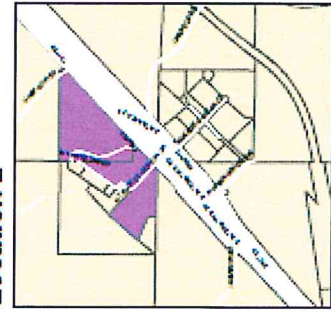


Potential Regional Recreational, Travel and Tourism Sign Locations

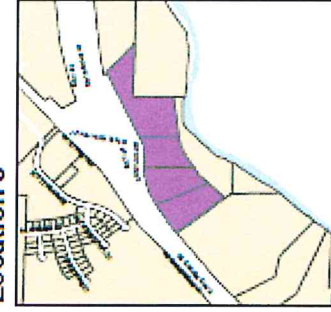
Location 1



Location 2



Location 3



1 inch = 800 feet

NOTE: THE SCALE AND ACCURACY OF THIS MAP IS UNWARRANTED. WASHOE COUNTY AND THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS. THE INFORMATION IS PROVIDED AS IS WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND. WASHOE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT.



1 inch = 6,000 feet

WASHOECOUNTY.COM | 775.335.3600

**Community Services
Department**

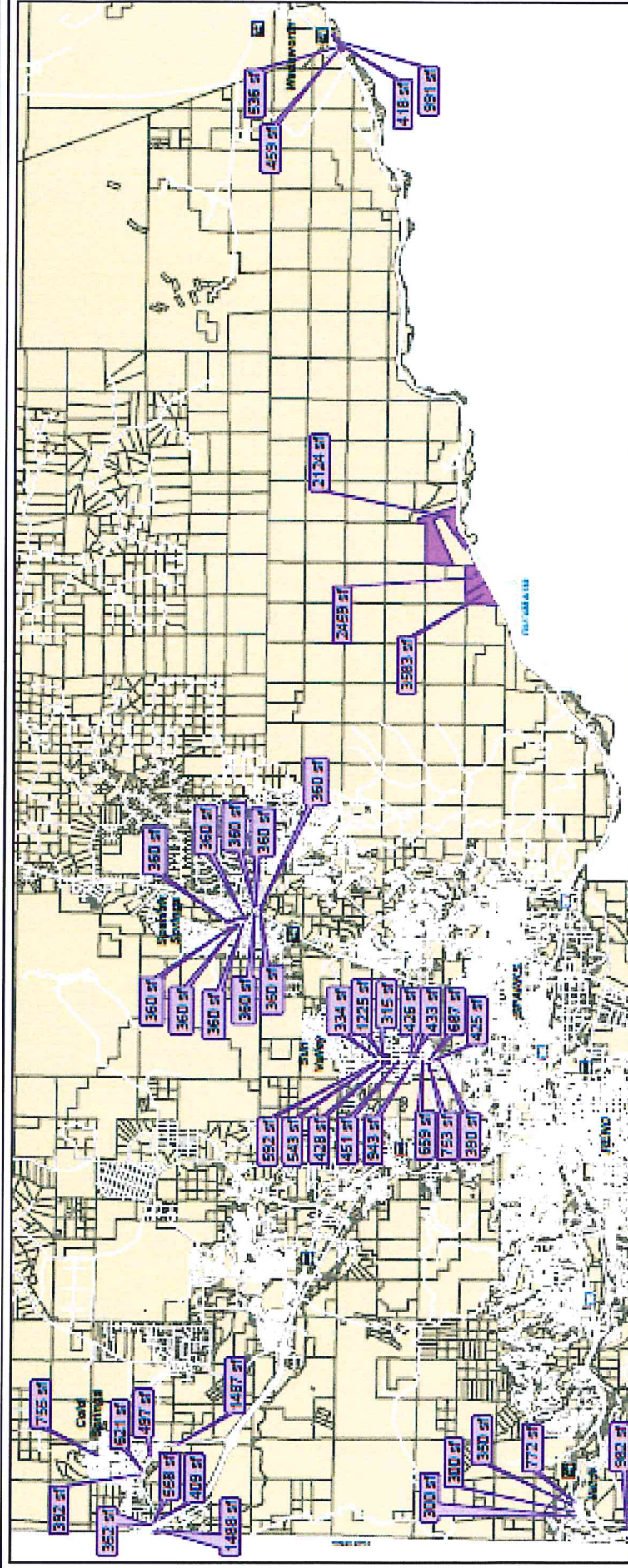
**WASHOE COUNTY
NEVADA**

Post Office Box 11120
Reno, Nevada 89503

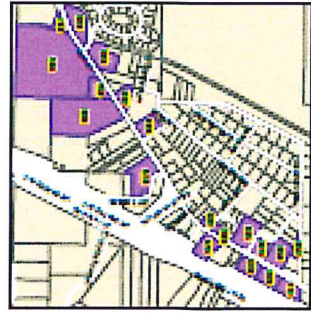
April 2015

(775) 335-3600

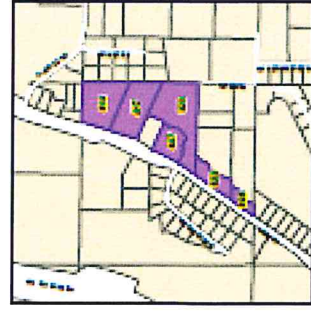
Existing Code – Sign Potential



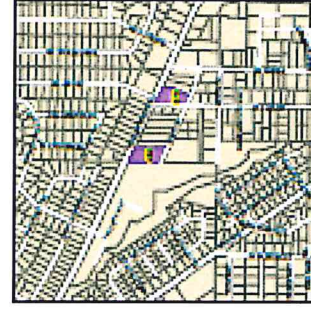
Potential Locations For Signs Over 300 s.f. (Allowed by Current Washoe County Sign Code)



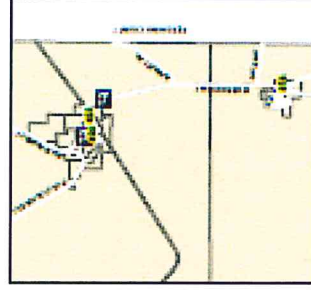
South Valleys
1 inch = 1,000 feet



Pleasant Valley
1 inch = 800 feet



Gieger Grade
1 inch = 800 feet



Gerlach and Empire
1 inch = 8,000 feet

NOTE: THE 2014 SIGN REGULATIONS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE 2014 SIGN REGULATIONS OF WASHOE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT ARE APPLICABLE TO ALL SIGNAGE IN WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA. THIS MAP IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT REPRESENT THE CURRENT SIGNAGE REGULATIONS OF WASHOE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

1 inch = 6,000 feet

**Community Services
Department**

**WASHOE COUNTY
NEVADA**

900 W. 20th Street, Suite 1122
Reno, Nevada, 89502

April 2018

PT18-028-1002

Possible Options

1. Support the RRTT provisions as currently proposed.
2. Remove all RRTT provisions from proposed Code.
3. Allow for RRTT signs, but limit the allowable size and height of the sign,
and provide size and height to Staff for inclusion in the proposed Code.
4. Allow RRTT signs on a temporary basis only.
5. Provide other direction to Staff.



Possible Motion

“Move to direct staff to continue to proceed with the sign code amendments with the policy directions as provided during this meeting.”



The attached document was submitted to the
Washoe County Board of Commissioners during
the meeting held on June 9, 2015.
by Manager's Office
for Agenda Item No. 31
and included here pursuant to NRS 241.020(7) as
amended by AB65 of the 2013 Legislative Session.

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

All Statements sorted chronologically

As of June 8, 2015, 4:56 PM



As with any public comment process, participation in Open Washoe County is voluntary. The statements in this record are not necessarily representative of the whole population, nor do they reflect the opinions of any government agency or elected officials.

-BCC 6/9/15 #31
manager's office
BCC
A- 6/9/15
more #31

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

As of June 8, 2015, 4:56 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 160

All Statements: 50

Hours of Public Comment: 2.5

This topic started on May 20, 2015, 12:13 PM.

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

Name not shown in District 2 (on forum)

June 8, 2015, 2:29 PM

Please uphold the current voter-supported ban on new billboards in the unincorporated Washoe County. There are already enough. Our scenery is some of the best the nation has to offer and it is being obscured by digital and static clutter from these signs. Please do not let monied special interests trump the law. Thank you

Nathan Daniel in District 3 (on forum)

June 8, 2015, 11:42 AM

On the grounds that they degrade the natural beauty of our community and are not in the best interests of the County, I oppose any change to WC Code allowing new billboards or signs of any kind.

Name not shown in District 2 (unverified)

June 8, 2015, 10:10 AM

Please do not allow any additional billboards, digital or other, in Washoe County. Please preserve our scenic Nevada.

Paul McClintock in District 2 (on forum)

June 8, 2015, 8:41 AM

Please don't allow any more billboards (digital or otherwise) to destroy our beautiful scenic Washoe County.

Name not available (unclaimed)

June 8, 2015, 6:54 AM

Protect NV Landscape and beauty--NO BILLBOARDS!!!

Marilyn Naylor in District 2 (unverified)

June 7, 2015, 8:32 PM

It is my understanding that, due to lack of funding, sign code enforcement is initiated by citizen report rather than monitored regularly by Washoe County officials. The U.S Dept. of Transportation Federal Highway Administration: "Outdoor Advertising Control" includes the following requirement and objectives. Please include it in the Washoe County Code with an assigned inspection routine.

- "1. Surveillance - routine route inspection and an adequate reporting system are critical for effective control. A surveillance routine utilizing an accurate inventory will result in:
- The discovery of new illegal signs.
 - The detection of unlawful expansion of nonconforming signs, such as addition of lighting, addition of panels, tack-ons, etc.
 - Starting the "clock" on the "blank sign" rule.
 - Assurance that permits are current and that new signs are erected in the proper location, etc."

Sign regulations

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Thank you,
Marilyn Naylor

Name not shown in District 3 (on forum)

June 5, 2015, 6:04 PM

Billboards and all permutations are obsolete, ugly and unwelcome in beautiful Nevada. I would like to see them regulated right out of existence.

1 Supporter

Harry Thomas in District 2 (on forum)

June 5, 2015, 5:23 PM

No electronic signage in Washoe Valley, particularly at night!

1 Supporter

Name not available (unclaimed)

June 5, 2015, 7:54 AM

Signage is a very broad issue. Regarding business advertisements, I personally do not like to see signs promoting sexually related material, services or other related items. With regard to alcohol, tobacco and related products, again, I find it disturbing to see these advertisements or any sort. This advertising is neither healthy or positive for our young people when we as a society are trying to eliminate these issues. Signage related to political campaigns; well, it is what it is and those who are running for office need to get their information out to the public. I would like to see a little more policing of those signs however in order to maintain their appearance while posted in the various locations. They do have a tendency to get ragged after a while. Signs related to real estate, garage sales and things of the nature where those signs will only be up for a day at a time I see no issue with as long as the signs are not nailed to electrical posts, deface property or cause a traffic problem.

Name not available (unclaimed)

June 3, 2015, 7:38 PM

I think this is a bad idea. This will have a negative impact on the area. Need better controls.

Sue Smith in District 5 (on forum)

June 3, 2015, 2:06 PM

I agree with all of these remarks. Our community has changed and billboards are not compatible with what we are trying to become. Also the times have changed and billboards that take your attention off your driving and destroy the scenery should not be allowed. I hope that you will take this vote very seriously and consider what you are doing! The billboard industry is a very strong lobby and try to make you think this type of advertising is good for business. That is just wrong thinking!

Sign regulations

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1 Supporter

Name not available (unclaimed)

June 3, 2015, 12:46 PM

Having digital billboards in the county would be a mistake. They are distracting and therefore dangerous to motorists, especially at night. Let's keep our county a beautiful place to live.

Eric Scheetz in District 2 (on forum)

June 3, 2015, 12:19 PM

Unfortunately signage, and especially electronic lighted signage, just like a laser being pointed into a pilots eyes or smoke being blown in your face can be a nuisance. With that said, I adamantly believe one should be able to do with their property as they will as long as they don't hurt others. I think there are times and places for signage- ie the olds harolds club signs that paid farmers to paint the sides of a barn. The Harolds Club ads were designed for rural areas and were not raised up on poles to be part of the horizon. They also were not a huge literally flashing tv screen (much as a casino or strip club neon light) that is designed to purposely catch everyone's attention- especially at night. The place for those neon signs was on the casino not in the rural area or even the rest of the city- it was just for casino property. I also agree- maybe the better way is to have a town app that as a town we provide coupons and ads to whoever drives in and wants to see the ads on their phone. Heck maybe the casual tourist is curious to learn more about our beautiful town and also wants a good deal???

Name not shown in District 1 (on forum)

June 2, 2015, 6:54 PM

Once upon a time, planners wanted to rewrite the sign code in a beautiful village at the base of the mountains. The local rulers said, "Ok, but don't allow giant electric signs because it's so beautiful here and we're proud of protecting that for future generations".

So the planners gathered a bunch of everyday villagers and spent months revising the sign code to keep the area beautiful and business happy. But sadly, months into all their hard work, a more important villager went to a ruler and said, "I want to make a ton of gold with a giant, bright electric sign that advertises 24/7, it'll be good for us, and by that I really mean me (or something like that)." So, this ruler told the planners to make it so "...cause we owe this important villager for all his good deeds and other villagers always complain, but they don't open their purses."

The planners were stumped at first, but they stretched logic, spun wool, and proclaimed truths. Viola! They did it quickly and with a lot of assurances the new code was passed. It allowed the important villager to get his giant, bright sign in the beautiful canyon across from the newly restored river. All the rulers who originally didn't want any electric giant signs, went along with the one ruler, cause, well, it wasn't like he had a good argument as much as he was so darn adamant. And, after all, it was only one electric sign. What's the harm? And we mean well.

Everything was swell in the beautiful village until the exact second the important villager finally turned on his giant, bright, electric advertising sign. In that instant, when the canyon was forever lit with flashy

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advertisements 24/7, it suddenly dawned on a bunch of other villagers and the sign guy that they too deserved to make a ton of gold off bright electric signs. The sign guy, who watched the code like a hawk, exclaimed, "Hey, get this! They've codified stupid (or something like that). The new sign code says that every last one of you normal villagers can also make money off bright, flashy advertising signs just like the important villager". The normal villagers gasped, "Really, just like him?!" "Nah" the sign guy said laughing "Who are you kidding? Your bright electric signs can't be giant".

And with that, everyone laughed as one bright electric sign in the village became 5, which became 100, which became every sign in the village. Which is why, to this day, the grandchildren from the village at the base of the mountains are called daylight change deniers.

The End (or something like that)

1 Supporter

Name not shown in District 2 (on forum)

June 2, 2015, 8:06 AM

Reno is a beautiful place, but we do not present ourselves well. More signage is certainly not going to enhance our image. Electronic signs are an absolute "no, no". Signs in the unincorporated areas are unacceptable as well. Consider carefully as this will impact our county in an unacceptable way for years to come if more signage is approved.

Name not available (unclaimed)

June 2, 2015, 7:53 AM

Please, no signs in the unincorporated areas! I am not certain I understand all the provisions of the proposal, but I am not for more signage anywhere, but less! And certainly no electric signage. That is awful! We have a beautiful area. Let's clean up the existing signage and improve our image. Reno is a beautiful area, but we do not present ourselves well.

Mark Wray in District 3 (on forum)

May 31, 2015, 1:05 PM

The draft regulations the county staff is proposing would remove the current definition of "billboard" and allow every sign in the county to become an outdoor advertising structure. This is a legal mistake and a huge fiscal mistake. The county would become liable to pay the owner for any sign that ever has to be removed. The commission should restore the definition of a billboard that is in the existing county sign code, which is important to preventing every sign in the county from becoming a billboard.

1 Supporter

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

May 31, 2015, 7:51 AM

I very much support keeping the reduction of sign clutter and the regulation of digital signs(They are very distracting when you are driving.)

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

1 Supporter

Name not shown in District 4 (on forum)

May 30, 2015, 5:24 PM

making sure we don't have more of the extremely bright, changing, distracting lighted signs is important

Name not shown in District 2 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 6:28 PM

Reno Sparks is a casino cesspool. Let's turn this place into a clean high tech town. Remove all the signage.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 6:21 PM

I am not up on what the current regulations require but I am certainly against any new regulations which would permit further degradations of our beautiful Truckee Meadows.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 6:10 PM

I m not up on what the current regulations require but I am certainly in favor of strong control over any regulations which would permit the degradation of the beautiful Truckee Meadows more than it has already has been.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 4:01 PM

I would advocate that there be no more billboards added to the ones currently approved. Let people enjoy our outstanding scenery.

Name not shown in District 2 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 3:56 PM

Washoe County's Vision Statement from the mid-2000s stated, "Our vision is that by preserving and enhancing our high quality of life, Washoe County will remain a healthy, safe and compelling place in which to live, work, recreate, visit and invest." Where does sign and billboard blight fit in to preserving and enhancing our high quality of life? Visual blight from signs cheapens our community and tells the world that we are a backwards 20th Century town in a 21st Century world. Every person traveling through Washoe County carries a sign, billboard and advertiser's gold mine wherever they go...it's called a smart phone! Our previous Washoe County Mission Statement included, "Preservation of our natural resources, open spaces, and magnificent natural landscape." Just where do more signs and billboards fit in? They don't! Please follow the wishes of the voters in your community, and the wise words from your own Washoe County Organizational Values statement: "We value...PROGRESSIVE THOUGHT: We value innovation and creativity, and support an orientation for change

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

and intelligent decision making." Please heed your own words. It's time for change and intelligent decision making. Say no to these archaic 20th Century advertising methods that destroy our scenic natural landscape. Our community will be a better place.

4 Supporters

Lori Wray in District 3 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 1:59 PM

It's disappointing that the "highlights" included here don't provide one of the major impacts of this draft code. And that is, it will allow billboards in the unincorporated county areas for the first time in 13 years. This draft will also allow digital billboards with a special use permit, something that county commissioners said they were against allowing. Please make changes to this draft that will define billboards properly; prohibit all new billboards, including the digital variety and change the brightness standards for the other digital signs. Protect the scenic beauty of Washoe County from the negative impacts of digital signs and billboards by changing this draft to prohibit all billboards, no matter what size they are.

4 Supporters

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 12:36 PM

What do I think of draft signs? I don't think I understand what you are asking.

Ann Owen in District 4 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 9:07 AM

I'm not in favor of these types of signs especially on the Interstate. They are a real distraction when driving especially at night.

1 Supporter

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 9:05 AM

Businesses SHOULD be allowed to have a sign.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 9:04 AM

Please no electronic signs. Do not make Washoe into Clark county.

Margaret Reinhardt in District 5 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 9:01 AM

NO MORE BILLBOARDS. Please, there are already too many and they look gaudy and trashy.

Name not shown in District 2 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 7:59 AM

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

No more billboards, period!

4 Supporters

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 7:35 AM

Signs can interfere with driving and are ugly. Regulate as much as possible or better yet eliminate entirely.

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 7:22 AM

First, public opinion is unreliable when limited to those people who can access and respond to an online survey. Second, even if private land exists, how high does that private right extend, 20 ft. or 100 ft? Billboards cheapen the visual scene and document a lack of interest in either the driver or the scenery. Eliminate signs where possible.

1 Supporter

Name not shown in District 4 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 7:08 AM

I have to agree with others, we really do not need more billboard signs. The signs just clutter up the scenery and do not really have that much impact on businesses. Electronic signs should be left to baseball fences and not visible to road traffic. They seemed to distract driving with the flashing colors. No billboards, please.

1 Supporter

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 29, 2015, 6:42 AM

Billboards in general, particularly along highways, are a distraction; electronic ones seem to be more of a distraction as the imagery can be eye-catching, but also has a tendency to slow traffic, as people try to catch the visuals; changing signs are more of a hazard in my opinion. I'd love to see fewer to NO signs along our highways!

Patrick Doyle in District 5 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 6:16 AM

Some large digital signs are severe traffic hazards when there is a significant amount of INSTANT white; i.e. the GSR sign facing I-580. It is literally blinding at those times. The Silver Legacy sign on 4th and Virginia is as bad but not as much traffic and certainly not flowing at 80MPH. Other than that, they are simply modern billboards and any regulation should equally apply.

1 Supporter

Name not shown in District 3 (on forum)

May 29, 2015, 6:03 AM

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

Billboards bring areas down the same as chain link fences in front yards. Electronic billboards are dangerous near freeways and roads as they can blind the driver from seeing. I have written to the City of Reno and the Indian tribe to take down the electronic billboard on the 395 - to no avail. Electronic billboards look like strip club decor.

1 Supporter

Name not shown in District 4 (on forum)

May 26, 2015, 8:37 AM

I urge the county commissioners to leave the regulation alone (do not modify the definition of "billboards" to larger than 450 sq. ft.) AND do NOT grant exceptions, i.e. special use permit to Mr. Dianda. Please keep the voters' decision of NO MORE BILLBOARDS in the forefront of your thinking.
Thank you.

1 Supporter

Janice Flanagan in District 1 (on forum)

May 26, 2015, 7:58 AM

Washoe County needs a restrictive signage code. No more billboards/digital signs, or whatever you choose to call them to get around the ban that our voters approved by a wide margin. I understand that business owners want the public to know their location, but there are other ways to do this. If the owner of the speedway who wants digital signs needs to let people know its location, he can have concerts every weekend for a year, and I guarantee every Nevadan/Northern Californian will know where the speedway is located. He can place informational signs at exits which is what other businesses do. Please do not allow any more billboards/digital signs to be constructed in Washoe County. Thank you.

1 Supporter

Howard Goldbaum in District 3 (on forum)

May 26, 2015, 7:56 AM

Please preserve what is still special about our county and maintain the regulation to prohibit all new billboards, regardless of size. The future will thank you!

George Rapp in District 2 (on forum)

May 25, 2015, 4:33 PM

Please consider not allowing any new billboards, including digital billboards. Allowing a digital billboard based only on property use and not zoning is a very slippery slope to go down. Anyone could plead that they need this billboard to improve or advertise their business. By ignoring the zoning rules all bets are off. Thus any property owner could rightfully claim a need for a digital billboard, or any billboard. The voters were asked many years ago about billboards, and the resounding answer was NO. What part of no can't the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners understand? We love northern Nevada because of its dark skies and beautiful UNOBSTRUCTED views. Lets work really, really hard to keep the skies dark and the scenic highways and biways as scenic sites and not allow commercialism to rule.

Sign regulations

What do you think about the draft regulation of signs? Your comments will be collected and provided to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners before their meetings.

3 Supporters

Sherida Rapp in District 2 (on forum)

May 25, 2015, 4:12 PM

Please obey the will of the people that have already voted to deny ANY NEW BILLBOARDS Anywhere in Washoe County. This seems to come up every time some business wants to super advertise their property or service, and then commissioners want go down the road of no more scenic views, no more designations of scenic highways and no more being able to advertise to any traveler that Nevada is a beautiful and uncluttered space with natural beauty. Instead we can advertise that we have the most brilliant digital billboards back to back along all our scenic highways, ie: Mt Rose corridor. We can also claim that Reno will be brighter than Las Vegas. All billboards, especially digital are distractions - remember our new saying in Nevada - no more distractions while driving? I never use billboards, instead I use my cell phone, computer and the unimposing blue signs that tell me that there is food, lodging, shopping or gas at this exit. If these business advertise correctly, everyone knows where they are, Washoe county is not that big. Please do the correct thing and vote to stop ALL new billboards, including digital, from ever being built and destroying our views and lives in Nevada.

3 Supporters

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 25, 2015, 3:32 PM

It is aesthetically appalling, for Washoe County to change sign regulations to allow more billboards (plus digital ones!) in unincorporated areas. This is also a FINANCIAL DISASTER in a region desperately trying to ramp up tourism ... visitors won't see Peavine, the Sierra, nor our beautiful Western skies. Instead, they'll think they're on dangerous, ugly freeways in Fresno or Los Angeles.

Alan Power in District 2 (on forum)

May 22, 2015, 2:04 PM

My residence is a single family house located on a one acre lot. I fly a 6'x10' American flag on a 30' flag pole. The proportions are perfect. I fly my flag every day, weather permitting. I am proud of my flag and my country and want to share my flag with my neighbors and passers-by. A 20' flag pole would not make that possible. Also, it would be legal for someone to build a 35' tall house next to me and block my view and my flag. What is far about that. My head wants to explode every time I read about some HOA restricting the display of an American flag. Lets not go down this road.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 22, 2015, 1:32 PM

My situation is single family residential on a one acre lot. I currently fly a 6'X10' American Flag every day, weather permitting. It is attached to a 30' flag pole located in my backyard. I am proud to fly my flag and want others to enjoy it. The proportions of the flag size and height are perfect. I have trees in my yard that are much taller than 30'. Also, a neighbor could build a house next to me that legally could be 35' tall. I think you would agree that would be much more of an eyesore than my flag.

Sign regulations

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A 20' limit on residential flag poles is not reasonable.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 20, 2015, 10:34 PM

I do not feel digital signs should be put on I-80. They are distracting especially at night.

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 20, 2015, 10:22 PM

I do not think digital sign's should be allowed on I-80.
They are distracting especially at night.

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

May 20, 2015, 2:45 PM

Our county should have fewer signs, not more. They are an eyesore and tend to take our eyes off the road when driving. We do not need any more signs and should reduce the number currently allowed. Let's enjoy the beauty of Nevada, not billboards for fast-food restaurants.

5 Supporters

Name not available (unclaimed)

May 20, 2015, 2:41 PM

Our county needs fewer signs rather than more. Why the county wants to allow more junk signs to take our eyes off the road is beyond me. Nevada is beautiful with less signs.

Bob Tregilus in District 1 (on forum)

May 20, 2015, 2:13 PM

The County should contract with, or have a landscape photographer on staff, to evaluate placement of all outdoor signage. It's unbelievable how many potentially great photos can't be shot because there's a stupid sign in the way.

3 Supporters

6/8/2015

RT Ticket # : 4146

Queue: Comments for the Washoe County Commission

Full Name: Susan Pitts

Original Message: In reference to agenda item 31 for the June 9th meeting - Please continue prohibiting billboards and eliminate the special exceptions for digital billboards.