



Carson City Master Plan Update Round 2 Outreach Summary

October 2024

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER OUTREACH OVERVIEW

As part of the Master Plan update process, the project team hosted a series of community outreach events to discuss proposed changes included in the draft of Carson City's updated Master Plan. Both in-person and online input opportunities were provided, as described below.

- **In-person Meetings.** Multiple meetings were held in Carson City on August 28 and 29, 2024. Input opportunities included a Planning Commission workshop at Adam's Hub, a community meeting at the Staybridge Suites Hotel, a roundtable event (Land Development Round Table), and two focus group meetings (one with Carson City Department heads and another with Carson City business leaders). Approximately 73 people participated in these meetings.
- **Virtual Meeting.** One additional community meeting was hosted virtually on the night of September 5. Approximately six people attended the virtual meeting.
- **Online Comment Period.** A copy of the draft Master Plan was provided on the project website and open to the public for review and comment for four weeks. During that time period, the document received 1,104 views and eight participants left 223 comments.

This document includes a summary of key themes that emerged from these input opportunities.

WHAT WE HEARD – SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

OVERVIEW

A public work session was held on the afternoon of August 28 to allow Planning Commissioners to comment on the first draft of the updated Master Plan. Four Planning Commissioners and approximately 10 community members participated in this event.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- **Growth management.** Commissioners and community participants were supportive of the addition of the Urban Services Boundary (USB) to the Land Use Map. Both Commissioners and community participants requested that additional information be added to the Master Plan to address when, and how, the USB may be adjusted over time (e.g., review criteria). Planning Commissioners also expressed a desire to see more information about the role of the Growth Management Committee incorporated into the Master Plan.
- **Master Plan language.** Commissioners were generally supportive of the goals and policies included in the updated Master Plan, and the overall direction of the draft. Both Commissioners and community participants were interested in modifying the narrative at the beginning of the document to make the document feel more energetic, and to focus more on opportunities as opposed to challenges. Multiple people agreed that the (2006) vision statement felt dated and should be reworked.
- **Development.** Community participants expressed concern about the influence of the development community on Master Plan policies, the potential height of buildings in the Downtown area (primarily within the ‘Urban Mixed-Use Character Area,’ and the growth projections used as part of the Master Plan update process.
- **Priority action: Title 18 rewrite.** Mixed feedback was provided regarding the timing of rewriting Title 18 (the City’s zoning ordinance) – whether the rewrite should occur before, in tandem with, or after adoption of an updated Master Plan. Staff noted that the Title 18 rewrite is already underway, but would need to be revisited following the adoption of the updated Master Plan.
- **Priority action: Economic development champion.** Planning Commissioners generally expressed support for the recommendation as a way to spark reinvestment in Carson City, while a community participant voiced concern for expanding the size of City government to hire economic development staff.

LAND DEVELOPMENT ROUND TABLE

OVERVIEW

Members of the project team gave a presentation and hosted a discussion with members of the development community that frequently work in Carson City. Approximately 20 builders and developers participated in this event.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- **Infill development.** Participants expressed concern that the proposed adjacency standards may “kill” infill development projects by requiring larger lots adjacent to existing homes. Mixed feedback was provided regarding the impact of additional design standards – one participant noted that adding design standards may impact housing affordability while another participant supported contextual design requirements for infill projects.
- **Land Use Plan.** Participants were vocal about the need to provide flexibility in the Land Use Plan, especially for non-residential land uses categories. One participant noted that the new residential land use category titles (Rural, Suburban, and Urban) might be too subjective. Another participant expressed a desire to discern between social service uses that may be permitted in the Downtown Mixed-Use category.
- **Community spaces.** Participants discussed the possibility of creating places outside of work and the home for community members to congregate/spend time.

DEPARTMENT HEADS FOCUS GROUP

OVERVIEW

Representatives of Carson City Departments were invited to join the project team for a presentation and discussion about the updated Master Plan draft. Approximately 17 City employees participated in this meeting.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- **Housing.** Department representatives shared examples of employees who struggled to find housing in Carson City (either because they couldn’t find the type of housing to fit their needs, or because they couldn’t afford housing within the city), and that in some instances, potential applicants were forced to withdraw their applications and that positions sometimes remained unfilled as a result of housing challenges. Several participants were supportive of policies geared toward increasing the diversity of housing options available in Carson City.
- **Recreation and open space.** Strong support for protecting open space and expanding recreational opportunities. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space representative shared that recreation programs are well attended and that they are hoping to update the Parks plan following adoption of the updated Master Plan.
- **Collaboration.** Department representatives expressed a need to collaborate with local agencies (Western Nevada College (WNC), State of Nevada, federal agencies, etc.) to meet the needs of current and future residents.
- **Community spaces.** Several participants expressed a need to provide more activities for families in Carson City. Multiple department representatives noted that families will drive to neighboring communities for weekend activities, even if the same activity can be done in Carson.
- **Economic vitality.** Participants expressed a need to diversity Carson City’s economy to make the community more resilient to economic downturns. Multiple participants supported the

creation of incubators to support and grow small businesses. Department representatives would like to see more employment training programs provided by WNC.

- **Priority action: Economic development champion.** Generally, department representatives were supportive of creating an economic development champion within Carson City, but some were expressed potential concerns about funding and the overall need for sustaining a full-time employee in that position.

BUSINESS LEADERS FOCUS GROUP

OVERVIEW

Members of the project team gave a presentation and hosted a discussion about the updated Master Plan draft with representatives from local businesses. Approximately 10 people participated in this meeting.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- **Housing.** Business leaders expressed a need for more diversity of housing types across the board (needing both larger, higher-end homes and smaller, affordable homes). Several participants cited housing as a barrier to attracting and retaining employees. Many of the employees of major employers live in nearby communities. A representative from Western Nevada College noted that the college has explored the idea of building student housing (and has land available), but is hesitant to get into the development and housing business (would prefer a developer construct the housing units and rent them to the college).
- **Economic vitality.** Several participants shared a desire to see more event spaces created in Carson City, especially a higher-end conference center and more private event spaces. Multiple business leaders also cited the need for more childcare options in Carson City.
- **Priority action: Title 18 rewrite.** Participants were supportive of land use policies that provided flexibility for business owners. One business leader shared that the City’s General Commercial zoning district is preferred by most commercial real estate brokers because it provides the most flexibility.
- **Priority action: Economic development champion.** Business leaders were generally supportive of the City taking a more active role in economic development, but indicated that the role would need to be carefully crafted to have the desired impact. Some participants noted that an economic development champion would need the authority to do more than just “attend meetings and listen” – they would also need support from City leadership to make meaningful changes.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

OVERVIEW

Two community meetings (one at the Staybridge Suites Hotel and one virtual) were held during the second round of public outreach. At each event, members of the project team gave a presentation and

hosted a general question-and-answer session with those in attendance. Approximately 22 people participated in the community meetings.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- **Vision.** The Mayor and a representative from Carson City Chamber of Commerce expressed support for ensuring that Carson City remains a vibrant community that is attractive to visitors and long-term residents.
- **Recreation and open space.** Participants shared their love of Carson City’s open space network and expressed support for creating more recreational opportunities in the city (e.g., climbing gym, bicycle park, and adaptive facilities that can be used by people of all abilities).
- **Housing.** Some participants expressed concern over the role of residents from other states in driving up local housing costs. A discussion was held about the updated Plan’s role in encouraging a variety of housing options, both in lower-density developments on large lots and in higher concentrations along the city’s commercial corridors. One participant shared concern about the possibility of creating high-density housing on vacant property in Lompa Ranch.
- **Land Use Plan.** One participant expressed confusion around some of the proposed land use category titles, such as the shift from CR, Conservation Reserve (Private) to LLC, Large Lot Conservation.
- **Transportation.** Two participants shared support for Carson City’s complete streets program and expressed a desire to see those principles carried forward with new development proposals.
- **Economic vitality.** Multiple participants supported efforts by the City to promote the city’s historic and recreational tourism assets. A discussion was held regarding the role of an economic development champion in “connecting the dots” between work already being done by local organization (e.g., Visitor’s Bureau and Chamber of Commerce) to promote Carson City as a lively destination.
- **Master Plan implementation.** One participant expressed a need for the City to coordinate action items identified in the Master Plan with actions identified in other City policy documents (e.g, the Strategic Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Hazard Mitigation Plan, etc.). A discussion was also held regarding the role of the City in encouraging reinvestment Downtown.

ONLINE COMMENTS ON MASTER PLAN DRAFT

OVERVIEW

A copy of the updated Master Plan draft was available for review and comment on the project website for four weeks. In that time, the document received 1,104 views. Additionally, 223 comments were left on the document by eight participants.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

All comments can be viewed using the following link: <https://envisioncarsoncity.konveio.com/carson-city-master-plan>