



Douglas County Master Plan Workshops June 2016

Summary of Comments

June 18, 2016 – Douglas County Community and Senior Center

There were comments concerning the location of new infrastructure. New infrastructure allows unplanned growth. The Master Plan should define where new infrastructure should be allowed.

Several comments were raised about the Master Plan amendment process. Jim Slade asked who was considered a stakeholder for the Master Plan Update process and voiced objections to the Master Plan Map Amendment process. Mimi Moss explained that a similar amendment process was used for the 1996 Master Plan. At their February joint workshop, the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners agreed to use a streamlined Master Plan amendment process for the 2016 Update. This process would be available at no charge for property owners. However, property owners could only submit amendment requests if public services, such as public water and wastewater, are already provided for the parcel(s).

Dan and Gail Greenlee wanted to know about the noticing requirements. Barbara Smallwood also asked about the noticing requirements and whether they would be expanded under the streamlined Master Plan Map Amendment process.

Residents of Fish Springs (Bev Anderson and Gretchen Walsh, Nevada Preservation League) raised concerns about the Douglas County Lands Bill during the break period. Concerns raised related to disposal of lands after the County acquires land from the BLM. There are also issues regarding the Bi-state Sage Grouse in the Fish Springs area.

June 22, 2018 – Topaz Ranch Estates Community Center

There is interest in locating an elementary school and an occasional County office in Topaz Ranch Estates (TRE).

There are no fueling facilities in TRE and residents must travel to Topaz Lake or else Gardnerville for gasoline. Residents travel to Yerington for DMV. Can State and County services be scheduled at TRE? Residents voiced complaints about the road conditions, especially in the Topaz Lake area.

Residents expressed frustration with County development standards which are too urban and inappropriate for rural areas. They stated that these standards discourage economic investment and create dis-investment in TRE.

Karen Beckerbauer of Douglas County Social Service stated that she had not been able to obtain housing vouchers from the Nevada Rural Housing Authority for two years. The rents are too high in Douglas County. Crestmore Village in Gardnerville is trying to provide housing for veterans.

Residents discussed the illegal dumping that takes place in TRE.

Residents suggested using bulletin boards for outreach. Fred Farley stated that there is a Neighborhood Watch for TRE.

June 23, 2018 – Genoa Town Hall

Steve Lewis asked if some topics, such as flooding and drainage, should have their own chapter in the Master Plan. He also asked if there could be cliff notes or some easier way to navigate the Master Plan information. The consultant stated that an index will be prepared to help people look for specific topics in the Master Plan.

Bobbi Thompson noted that the Airport is preparing a new Master Plan and she wants to make sure that future development does not hurt airport operations.

One attendee asked about multigenerational housing on the same parcel. There was discussion about the current standards for accessory dwelling units.

Carlo Luri commented that items that are public health and safety should be a priority, such as the need for a trail between Gardnerville Ranchos and Gardnerville. The Master Plan has become a tool for naysayers. The consultant noted that the actions in the Master Plan could be prioritized based on public health and safety issues.

One attendee spoke to the need to improve infrastructure, particularly broadband for industrial parks.

Dominique Etchegoyhen spoke to the need for incentives for the receiving areas and incentives for infill development.

Commissioner-Elect Larry Walsh commented on the need to make Highway 395 safer and favored a bypass. Mimi pointed out that this will be examined as part of the update to the Transportation Element, which is in process. Planning Commission Chair Margaret Pross expressed concern about the loss of traffic and business impacts with a freeway bypass. Some towns are ruined after construction of bypasses.

Michael May commented that the County has become too expensive and regrets the loss of its rural character. There is too much development.

Mimi Moss noted that there is a need for multifamily residential development in the towns, but there is usually opposition.

June 30, 2016 – Pinyon Hills Elementary

Cindy Hunter asked if they would need to fight “solar” again. Mimi Moss explained that the County adopted a new solar ordinance to address solar facilities that are primary uses on a parcel. The ordinance only allows such uses on FR-40 and they can’t be located in floodplains or in view corridors. Solar facilities are still allowed as accessory uses, such as the one at the GE facility in Minden. The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element was amended to address solar facilities.

Commissioner-Elect Larry Walsh asked whether the Master Plan would address water issues and how much growth can be supported based on available water resources.

Bob Ballou suggested adding a cross reference in the Master Plan for relevant code sections.

John Lufrano, Indian Hills GID Manager, asked about the extension of Vista Grande. Vista Grande could be used as a bypass when there are accidents on US 395. Mimi Moss explained that the 40 acre portion that is located on US Forest Service land is contained in the Douglas Lands Bill. If the County can transfer this land to the private sector, the road could be constructed. Another option is to use Redevelopment funds again for extending Vista Grande.

One attendee asked if flooding would be addressed in the updated Master Plan. Mimi Moss explained that the current Environmental Resources and Conservation Element addresses flooding issues. Does the Element need to be strengthened? Is there a need for a GID or special assessment district? The County received a grant from FEMA for the Smelter Creek Wash in Ruhenstroth. If flood improvements are implemented, properties can be removed from the floodplain and no longer have to pay for flood insurance.

Planning Commissioner Frank Godecke commented that he had participated in the County’s stormwater management plan effort. This needs to be revisited. It’s not just flooding, but also non-point source water pollution.

Mimi Moss stated that the drainage areas need to be protected. With flash flooding, there is no capacity to handle the flooding and it can’t be predicted. The County is not responsible for maintaining drainage areas. The responsibility is left to the developer or the Homeowners Association. If there was a utility district, the County could maintain the drainage areas.