



AIA las vegas

a chapter of the American Institute of Architects

October 11, 2010

City of Las Vegas
Planning & Development
Development Services Center
731 S. Fourth Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101
Attn: Ms. Courtney Mooney, AICP
Urban Design Coordinator, Historic Preservation Officer

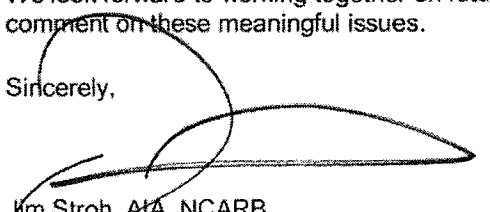
Dear Ms. Mooney,

On behalf of the Las Vegas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, representing approximately 85% of licensed architects practicing in the Las Vegas Valley, we are pleased to add our endorsement to the City's Title 19 Unified Development Code revisions and consolidations for chapters 19.00, 19.12, 19.14 and 19.18. Our support for these chapters is based on:

- The City's movement toward more sustainable community development.
- The City's acceptance of the ideals envisioned by the "AIA 150 Blueprint for America," conceived to inspire communities to come together around architecture, to share ideas for creating and sustaining livable communities. The Blueprint's 10 principles of livable communities: 1) Design on a human scale; 2) Provide choices; 3) Encourage mixed-use development; 4) Preserve urban centers; 5) Vary transportation options; 6) Build vibrant public spaces; 7) Create a neighborhood identity; 8) Protect environmental resources; 9) Conserve landscapes; and 10) "Design matters."
- The City's agreement in the near future to seek specific efficiencies relevant to automobile parking, with the goal of achieving significant reductions in parking ratios for many projects and uses. Such reductions offer myriad community advantages including aesthetic, practical, environmental, sustainability, and economic benefits. These measures will also place the City at the forefront of responsible community design, while potentially presenting a meaningful competitive advantage when compared with other jurisdictions.
- The City's goal within the near future of creating new guidelines for adaptive reuse and infill projects, certain to take a more central role during any meaningful economic recovery. These guidelines will signal a new direction for the valley by encouraging and rewarding responsible use, adaptation and re-tasking of existing buildings, previously thought to beyond their useful lives.
- The City's commitment to regard the subject revisions as living documents, subject to frequent and continuous improvement and modification, with the ultimate goal of creating and supporting more livable communities.

We look forward to working together on future chapter revisions and appreciate the opportunity to comment on these meaningful issues.

Sincerely,

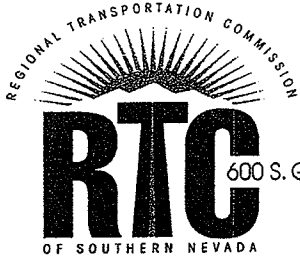


Jim Stroh, AIA, NCARB
Chairman, AIA Las Vegas Codes Committee

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600 S. Grand Central Parkway, Suite 350 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89106-4512 • 702-676-1500 • Fax: 702-676-1518

Jacob L. Snow,
General Manager

July 7, 2010

Margo Wheeler, AICP
Director
Planning & Development
731 South Fourth Street
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE

Dear Ms. Wheeler:

We are pleased to offer our support of the revisions to your Zoning and Subdivision Codes that include development of a Unified Development Code, in particular Chapters 19.02: Subdivision Design, Construction and Improvement Requirements; 19.04: Complete Streets Standards; and 19.08: Commercial and Industrial Districts – Purpose and Development and Design Standards. Having served on the Customer Feedback group, we appreciate the opportunity to have worked with staff and community representatives and are very supportive of the proposed revisions.

Should you have any questions, please contact Polly Carolin, FAICP, at (702) 676-1721 or carolinp@rtcsonv.com.

Sincerely,

Martyn James
Director of Planning Services

cc: Courtney Mooney

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Courtney Mooney

From: Sandie Taylor [sandie@snhba.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2010 3:18 PM
To: Margo Wheeler
Cc: Joe Pantuso
Subject: Comments on Changes to Title 19

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Margo Wheeler
Planning Director
City of Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV

Dear Margo:

The Southern Nevada Home Builders Association has participated with city staff representatives from the Planning and Public Works Departments for several months in a review of the proposed changes to Title 19. It has been a positive experience and I want to particularly thank Courtney Mooney, Robert Summerfield and Bart Anderson for their dedication to the process and high level of professionalism in working with the home building community representatives in reviewing many of the complex aspects in the code.

The home building industry in Southern Nevada is committed to adhering to sound planning principals for in the end doing such will benefit not only home buyers, but the community at large. There are outstanding examples of developments in the Las Vegas Valley that reflect a close level of cooperation between planners and home builders.

Let me begin by stating that the web-based interactive nature of the new code will be of great assistance to our builders and their consultants. The detailed linking that is provided throughout the document is a great technological tool that will benefit your customers and staff.

During the course of our review process, we have brought to the attention of staff aspects of the code that are of concern to the home building industry. The first of those was the initial high level of connectivity for new developments at an index of 1.5. We noted that by adopting such a level would all but eliminate the possibility of desired the cul-de-sac configurations in developments. We are pleased that the city recognized that such a high level of connectivity will result in the reduction of various amenities new home buyers seek. By agreeing to reduce the connectivity index to 1.3, staff displayed a willingness to work with developers. An index level of 1.3 provides for more connection within and between developments than currently exists, yet allows some of the desired features of a community such as the selective use of cul-de sacs and improved safety to residents.

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To achieve this lower level of connectivity it was agreed that pedestrian connections may be counted toward achieving the level stated level.

We worked with staff to come to some level of agreement on the matter of reductions in asphalt pavement for 47' streets. Additionally, we appreciate the city's effort to off set the costs of landscaping and additional paving at the periphery of developments in an amenity zone by reducing the Open Space requirements within a development. Nevertheless, this tradeoff in terms of equalizing costs may work for only some projects.

The portion of the code that still remains very troublesome for the building community is the policy which requires a ridged plan of minor collector streets at 1,320' intervals. This requirement could directly affect the economic feasibility of a project. Even with adjustment in levels of connectivity and the other adjustments that have been made in the code to date, this requirement would still be very burdensome from a cost perspective.

While many new concepts may be desirable for the city's agencies, it is the home buying public we must please. The home buying public is highly desirous of cul-de-sacs, less intersections, controlled traffic; a separation of land uses and in many cases privacy for their communities.

The SNHBA will support the adoption of this code if there are changes made in the section dealing with the Complete Street Policy--specifically the requirement for 60' minor collector streets at ¼ mile intervals. SNHBA stands ready to discuss further this aspect of the code that remains troublesome and welcomes the opportunity to continue to work with City staff.



Irene Porter
Executive Director
SNHBA

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