



# Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: November 13, 2014    Agenda Item Number: 8B

**Subject:** Informational Update on the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan

**Summary:** Staff will provide an overview of the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan and discuss how it is implemented

**Recommendation:** **Receive an update on the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan, and if desired, hold discussion and provide direction to staff**

**Prepared by:** Chad Giesinger, Senior Planner, AICP  
Washoe County Community Services Department  
Planning and Development Division

**Phone:** 775.328.3626  
**Email:** cgiesinger@washoecounty.us

## **Description**

Recent development within the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan (RSCJP) area has generated concern and questions from surrounding residents in the Red Rock/Silver Knolls area. Many of these questions involved how development projects are reviewed in the RSCJP and whether or not joint review by Washoe County and/or a Citizen Advisory Board is required. At the request of Commissioner Sarah Chvilicek, staff will provide an overview of the RSCJP to the Washoe County Planning Commission and discuss how it is implemented.

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## **Background**

After years of debate and concern over annexation and growth management policies in the North Valleys area, the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) acknowledged in 1995 the need for a comprehensive, long term plan for the North Valleys/Reno-Stead corridor area. This planning process was to be addressed by the next required five-year update to the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, which was scheduled to occur in 1996. Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Chapter 278.02784 grants the RPC the authority to designate joint planning areas for which the County and the affected City shall jointly adopt a Master Plan. Policy 35r of the 1996 Regional Plan designated the Reno-Stead Corridor a “joint planning area” per NRS 278.02784.

Policy 35r further directed that “Reno and Washoe County shall recommend, and the RPC shall confirm, the boundaries of the joint planning area. Reno and Washoe County shall develop the joint plan, which shall address: land use, sphere of influence boundaries, environmentally sensitive areas, sewer, water, transportation and other major public facilities”. In early 1998 the RPC adopted specific boundaries for the joint planning area and the City of Reno and Washoe County began developing the plan with extensive citizen input. Property owners within the specified boundary were surveyed regarding development plans for their property and numerous public meetings were held.

In addition to the aforementioned requirements, the Master Plan developed for the joint planning area was required to:

- (a) Be consistent with the comprehensive regional plan;
- (b) Designate the portion of the area, if any, that is included within the sphere of influence of a city;
- (c) Designate the portion of the area, if any, that is subject to the jurisdiction of the County for planning and zoning and development decisions; and
- (d) Be submitted to the Regional Planning Commission for review pursuant to NRS 278.028.

NRS 278.02786 sets forth the procedures for adoption of a Master Plan in a joint planning area as follows:

1. Before recommending the master plan for a joint planning area, each affected local planning commission shall jointly hold at least one public hearing thereon. Notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given by at least one publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least 10 days before the day of the hearing.
2. The recommendation of the master plan for a joint planning area must be by resolution of each affected local planning commission in the joint planning area carried by the affirmative votes of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of each commission. The resolution must refer expressly to the maps, descriptive matter and other matter intended by the county planning commission and the planning commission of each city in the joint planning area to constitute the recommended master plan for the joint planning area.
3. The master plan for the joint planning area that is recommended by the affected local planning commissions must be considered for adoption by each affected local governing body.
4. The affected local governing bodies may adopt such parts thereof as may practicably be applied to the development of the joint planning area. The master plan for the joint planning area becomes effective upon the approval by a majority of the membership of each affected local governing body.
5. Before adopting the master plan for the joint planning area, or part thereof, the affected local governing bodies shall jointly hold at least one public hearing thereon. Notice of the time and place of the hearing must be published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least 10 days before the day of the public hearing.

Following these procedures and requirements, the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan (RSCJP) was adopted and found in conformance with the Regional Plan on June 23, 1999. The plan established the boundaries of the Reno Sphere of Influence and designated the areas in which the County and City would have sole jurisdiction over planning, zoning, and development

decisions. Over time, subsequent amendments and updates to the Regional Plan expanded the City of Reno Sphere of Influence (SOI) and reduced the amount of area within the RSCJP that is subject to county planning jurisdiction. Voluntary contiguous annexations (per NRS 268.670) outside of the Regional Planning process also occurred within the RSCJP, further reducing the area of County jurisdiction to the point where the County currently has very little area remaining in its planning jurisdiction (much of which is already developed).

This situation led both parties to question the continued need for the joint plan. In 2009 the City of Reno proposed dissolving the plan pointing out that the 2007 update of the Regional Plan had established a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) corridor throughout a significant portion of the plan area. County planners were initially open to this possibility at the time, but after meeting with the community it was clear that there was a desire from county constituents to retain the plan. Therefore, an update to the plan was proposed instead to address changes that had occurred since the initial adoption in 1999. Reno and County planning staff worked jointly and with a citizen working group to update the plan. After the required joint meetings, an amended plan was adopted on November 12, 2010.

The most notable amendments to the plan resulting from the 2010 update included the removal of properties within the North Virginia Street TOD from the RSCJP area, the deletion of a substantial amount of policy and development standard language, and a provision expanding the noticing requirements for discretionary actions within the joint plan area. The primary purpose for deleting significant portions of the RSCJP language was to remove those sections which include standards that are already required by other documents, such as the Washoe County Development Code, City of Reno Land Development Code, Washoe County Land Use and Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as a variety of sections from the City of Reno Master Plan.

It is important to note that designation of a joint planning area does not equate to joint review and approval of all planning, zoning, and development decisions within the plan area. The only actions that require joint approval by both governing bodies are the initial adoption of the joint plan and any subsequent Master Plan amendments. Zoning map amendments within the plan area do not require joint review and approval, but noticing is required. Policy LU.6.2 (added during the 2010 update of the RSCJP) states that "new development requiring discretionary approval shall be noticed to neighboring property owners within 750 feet, with a minimum of 30 property owners. Development proposals shall be presented to both the City of Reno Ward Four North Valleys Neighborhood Advisory Board and the Washoe County North Valleys Citizen Advisory Board".

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Washoe County Planning Commission receive an update on the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan, and if desired, hold discussion and provide direction to staff.

### **Motion**

"I move to receive the update on the Reno-Stead Corridor Joint Plan, and provide staff with the following direction concerning the RSCJP."

xc: Gregory Salter, Esq., District Attorney's Office  
Bill Whitney, Director, Planning and Development