

Summary: This issue sheet summarizes potential amendments to Reno’s development standards. Recommendations are provided for topics to be addressed with the code update and topics to be considered through separate processes.

“Development standards” are design requirements for development and construction. These ordinances supplement building codes and generally focus on exterior requirements for buildings and property improvements, including design requirements and natural resource protection standards.

Staff recommends that the code update focus on development standard updates to align with the new Master Plan and make the code more “user-friendly.” Highly technical, multi-jurisdictional, and/or controversial topics are recommended to be considered through separate processes.

Targeted Code Assessment Report:

The Targeted Code Assessment Report called for a suite of organizational code improvements along with substantive amendments related to site and building design, grading and drainage, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, parking, landscaping, exterior lighting and natural resource protection.

Analysis and Recommendations:

Summary Table A outlines potential code amendment topics and general recommendations for changes to be completed with the code update and additional changes to be considered through separate processes.

Staff is requesting Planning Commission and City Council review and provide direction related to code amendment topics and general recommendations, as described in Summary Table A.

Summary Table B is a consolidated list of topics to consider through separate processes. The table includes topics that have been identified in this and prior issue sheets as appropriate for consideration through separate processes.

A future issue sheet will request Planning Commission and City Council prioritization of the topics to be considered through separate processes. Staffing levels will allow the City to work on some of the potential future amendments concurrently with the code update.

**Summary Table A:
Preliminary Table of Development Standard Amendments**

Amendment Topic	Background and Code Update Recommendations	Amendments to Consider Separately
<p>User-Friendly Amendments</p> <p><i>2019 City Council Priority</i></p>	<p>“User-friendly” code improvements are technical and organizational in nature. Changes generally involve consolidating and updating related standards that are currently addressed in a variety of ways or in more than one code section.</p> <p>These changes should result in a code that is easier for users to understand and for staff to administer. Changes should reduce development processing costs for applicants and for the City.</p>	<p>Staff recommends an ongoing code maintenance process to address issues that emerge following adoption of the updated code.</p>
<p>Incentives for Affordable Housing</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Priority Initiative PI-A</i></p> <p><i>Policy 4.1a-g IMP-4.1a IMP-4.1d IMP-4.2a-b</i></p> <p><i>2019 City Council Priority</i></p>	<p>Development of a Targeted Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategy is a priority Master Plan priority initiative separate from the code update. Amending development standards is one of many strategies being evaluated and pursued.</p> <p>A Regional Strategy for Housing Affordability was recently completed and presented to public officials. The document outlines a broad suite of approaches to improve housing affordability.</p> <p>Staff recommends that the code update focus on targeted amendments to a variety of development requirements to support more affordable housing opportunities. Amendments related to parking, grading, sidewalks, and landscaping should help reduce housing costs while maintaining requirements for quality design.</p> <p>Staff also recommends expansions to Reno’s existing affordable housing incentive programs for parking and housing density. Changes would seek to increase utilization by expanding eligibility from 50% AMI up to 80% AMI, reducing the contract period from 30 to 20 years, and allowing incentives for mixed use projects (in addition to residential projects).</p> <p>More significant new programs to potentially include an inclusionary housing ordinance should be considered separately.</p>	<p>The post-update zoning map assessment process outlined in issue sheet 1C should increase opportunities for more affordable housing products in Reno.</p> <p>Additional code amendments should be considered through separate processes to implement ongoing housing initiatives.</p> <p>Significant future amendments could include a mandatory or incentive based inclusionary housing program.</p>

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<p>Sustainable Development</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Priority Initiative PI-G</i></p> <p><i>Policy 2.5A-K</i> <i>Policy 5.4A</i> <i>Policy 7.1A</i> <i>IMP-2.5b</i></p> <p><i>Chapter 3 Design Principles</i></p>	<p>Sustainability is a Master Plan priority initiative separate from the code update. City staff recently released a draft Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, which should be finalized before the code update.</p> <p>One focus of the Master Plan and the Sustainability Action Plan is an integrated land use and transportation strategy intended to promote vibrant urban centers, natural resource protection, and multi-modal transportation options.</p> <p>Amendments to a variety of development standards help implement Master Plan provisions and the Sustainability Action Plan, as further described later in this table.</p> <p>Additionally, staff recommends that the code update include standard requirements for an employee trip reduction program (Policy 5.4A). The program would apply to new development and would utilize the Smart Trips program currently under development by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), or a similar program. The RTC Smart Trips program would require that development projects provide a certain number of trip reduction features to be chosen from a longer list of options. This would allow projects to select alternatives that are appropriate for their business and feasible to implement. The program should help reduce vehicle miles travelled and be affordable for local businesses.</p>	<p>Potential amendments to natural resource protection standards are outlined later in this table.</p>

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<p>Site and Building Design Standards <i>Master Plan:</i> <i>Policy 3.4D</i> <i>Policy 4.4A</i> <i>Policy 4.4F</i> <i>Policy 5.4C</i> <i>Policy 7.1C</i> <i>Policy 7.3B</i> <i>Policy 7.3D</i> <i>Policy 7.7B</i> <i>IMP-1.2f</i> <i>IMP-1.3f</i> <i>IMP-2.2c</i> <i>IMP-3.1b</i> <i>IMP-4.4c-d</i> <i>IMP-5.4b</i> <i>IMP-7.2c</i> <i>IMP-7.4a</i> <i>Chapter 3 Design Principles</i></p>	<p>Developing new site and building design standards is a major topic for the code update. The general content outline for site and building design standards will be addressed in a future issue sheet. Details will be developed and reviewed in coordination with the Technical Working Group and other interested parties.</p> <p>In general, updated standards should implement Master Plan policies and the area-specific design principles in Chapter 3 of the Master Plan.</p> <p>Standards would be developed for regional centers, community and neighborhood centers, corridors, employment areas, and neighborhoods. Design principles for sustainable development would also be addressed.</p>	
<p>Residential Adjacency Standards <i>Master Plan:</i> <i>Policy 4.3B</i> <i>Policy 4.4B</i> <i>Policy 4.4C</i> <i>Policy 4.4E</i> <i>Chapter 3 Design Principles</i></p>	<p>Staff recommends enhanced residential adjacency standards to provide compatible transitions between Reno’s non-residential and mixed use zoning districts and residentially zoned property. The standards would incorporate and update existing adjacency standards.</p> <p>In general, the adjacency standards would include requirements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional building heights and/or enhanced landscape buffers; • Locations of high intensity uses; • Discretionary review processes; • Noise limits; • Odor reduction; • Lighting; • Signs; and • Site access and circulation. 	

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<p>Infill Development Standards</p> <p><i>Master Plan Policy 2.2A-D Policy 4.3B Policy 5.4C IMP-4.3c</i></p>	<p>The City’s current standards for infill development should be consolidated and updated in accordance with Master Plan design principles.</p> <p>The model for updated standards would be some of the existing district-specific standards for neighborhood plan overlays. The current neighborhood plan overlays would be retained but could be phased out over time.</p>	<p>Modification or deletion of existing neighborhood plan overlay standards should be considered following adoption of the code update. This should be addressed in conjunction with the zoning map assessments for neighborhoods that currently have overlay district standards.</p>
<p>Grading and Drainage</p> <p><i>Master Plan Policy 7.1C Policy SD.14</i></p> <p><i>Design Principles Chapter 3</i></p>	<p>The City currently has standard grading and drainage requirements, while also requiring special use permits for most larger grading projects.</p> <p>Special use permits are required for grading that results in cuts deeper than 20 feet and/or fills greater than ten feet in height; and for grading in any major drainageway, on any hillside development, or within the Open Space zoning district.</p> <p>The City has been routinely requiring certain conditions of approval for grading and drainage. Proposed amendments would enhance the City’s grading and drainage standards by codifying standard conditions of approval. Concurrently, requirements for special use permit review for cuts and fills and for hillside development could be eliminated.</p> <p>This is a significant opportunity to streamline the development review process and reduce processing costs with few if any negative impacts. Special use permits would still be required for larger projects and more impactful uses.</p>	

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<p>Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Policy 3.4D Policy 4.2E Policy 4.5A Policy 4.5B Policy 5.1C Policy 5.2J Policy 5.4D Policy 5.4E Policy 7.2D Policy 7.3A Policy SD.30 IMP-3.2g IMP-4.5a-c IMP-5.1c IMP-5.2d</i></p>	<p>Current standards generally require sidewalks on both sides of City streets with administrative flexibility to waive requirements in a variety of situations, including in neighborhoods that were developed without sidewalks. The process requires individual consideration of waiver requests with subjective criteria in code. Trail locations in greenfield developments are generally applicant driven and negotiated with each development application.</p> <p>The current system has resulted in uncertainty for applicants, increased processing and construction costs, and a pedestrian and bicycle network that is not as connected as it could be.</p> <p>Staff recommends evolving to a system with standardized requirements for sidewalk and trail locations, to include a connectivity index for greenfield developments and future preparation of a sidewalk and trails master plan to identify where facilities are required and where they are not. This would be done in coordination with the Public Works and Parks departments.</p> <p>The plan should map an interconnected sidewalk and trail network that may not include sidewalks on both sides of streets where that type of design does not exist and may not be feasible or desired.</p> <p>Staff believes the recommended system will enhance the sidewalks and trail network while also reducing construction costs for sites where interconnected sidewalks are not feasible. Prior to completion of the sidewalk and trails plan, some level of case-by-case review will still be needed.</p>	<p>Staff recommends that the planned neighborhood assessments of zoning map amendments following the Code update be expanded to also include a detailed sidewalk and trail plan for each neighborhood.</p> <p>The neighborhood scale sidewalk and trail plans should evaluate and enhance existing facilities, as well as trails, greenways, and open spaces that are identified in Chapter 2 of the updated Master Plan.</p> <p>Following completion of the neighborhood scale evaluations, the planned facilities would be integrated into a comprehensive sidewalk and trail plan for the City of Reno.</p> <p>This detailed plan would be consistent with the 2017 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for the Region.</p>

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<p>Off-street Parking and Loading</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Policy 2.2B</i></p> <p><i>Chapter 3 Design Principles</i></p>	<p>The City currently has minimum parking requirements that significantly exceed best practices. Many parking lots throughout the City are larger than necessary.</p> <p>Amendments over the years have reduced parking requirements in certain infill development priority areas such as transit corridors. Reduced parking is also allowed City-wide when “a report based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual, or another nationally accepted authority is submitted which substantiates/validates the use of a different standard.”</p> <p>Changes to parking requirements have been identified as an effective way to reduce development costs and utilize land in a more sustainable manner.</p> <p>Recommended changes would align City parking requirements with best practices identified in the ITE manual. This would reduce the need for each project to either provide excess parking or prepare a special parking study to modify parking rates.</p> <p>Changes would be most significant outside the infill priority areas (where standard parking reductions are already allowed).</p> <p>Additionally, to further promote urban revitalization and a more walkable urban centers, staff recommends that current allowances for discretionary (i.e., not required) parking in the California Avenue district be expanded to include all Downtown zoning districts.</p> <p>Current allowances for reduced and on-street parking in priority infill development areas would generally be maintained. On-street residential parking permit programs would also be maintained.</p>	

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<p>Landscaping, Buffering, and Screening</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Chapter 3 Design Principles</i></p>	<p>Modest amendments are recommended to streamline and refine the current code.</p> <p>Adjustments to landscape area requirements are also recommended for mixed use districts. Changes would consolidate and refine current standards that require less landscaped area and a greater focus on street trees for moderate to high intensity infill development projects. Tree protection ordinances are addressed separately.</p>	
<p>Exterior Lighting</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Policy SD.19</i></p>	<p>Staff recommends more detailed lighting standards that address different types of lighting, spillover light, and dark sky lighting requirements. Current standards are general in nature.</p>	
<p>Historic Resources</p> <p><i>Master Plan Policy 2.2C Policy 7.5C Policy 7.5E Policy 7.5F Policy SD.18 IMP-3.1c IMP-7.5d</i></p> <p><i>Chapter 3 Design Principles</i></p>	<p>Master Plan Implementation Measure 7.5d outlines relatively detailed modifications to the City’s historic resource program. Changes would generally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modify the Historical Resource Commission; ○ Streamline processes; ○ Expand incentives for preservation; ○ Review projects for effects on nearby historic resources; and ○ Require mitigation for the loss of historic resources. <p>A draft ordinance has been prepared by the code consultants and is currently under review by the State Historic Preservation Office.</p>	<p>District-specific standards for the Powning, Newlands Heights, and Wells Avenue conservation districts should be developed following the code update in conjunction with the planned neighborhood zoning assessments or through alternative processes that include neighborhood engagement.</p>
<p>Food Access</p> <p><i>Master Plan Policy 6.5A-G Policy N-G.19 Policy S-D.21 IMP-6.5a-c</i></p>	<p>Master Plan provisions support increased access to healthy, fresh, and locally produced food. Current development standards generally facilitate local food production and sales.</p>	<p>Additional targeted code amendments to further enhance food production and access should be considered through separate processes in coordination with local food access advocates.</p>

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<p>Tree Protection</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Policy 7.7A Policy 7.7B Policy SD. 4 IMP 7.7b-c</i></p>	<p>The updated Master Plan supports enhanced tree protection programs. This topic involves multiple City departments and programs. Updates to tree protection ordinances should be addressed separately from the code update as part of the broader tree protection initiative.</p>	<p>Staff and the Urban Forestry Commission have started work to update Reno’s tree protection programs and ordinances. This work will be coordinated with the code update and may be finished more quickly.</p>
<p>Flood Hazard Areas</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Policy 6.2E Policy SD.11 IMP-6.2f-g</i></p>	<p>Recent flooding has caused concerns in Reno’s closed basins and elsewhere. This is a complex topic that involves multiple public agencies.</p> <p>With the code update, staff recommends codifying the “standard” condition of approval for 125% stormwater retention in closed drainage basins. Staff recommends that any additional amendments be considered separately from the code update and in coordination with flood management experts.</p>	<p>Broader amendments to flood hazard standards are on the list of potential future amendment topics.</p>
<p>Source Water Protection</p> <p><i>Master Plan: Policy 6.2H Policy 7.1D IMP-7.1h-j</i></p>	<p>Staff has been working with the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) and others to develop standards for a source water protection overlay district.</p> <p>Currently, this topic is primarily addressed by the state, but there is limited monitoring and enforcement. TMWA is interested in monitoring potentially polluting uses located near municipal water sources. TMWA would like to ensure compliance with applicable regulations in order to better protect the region’s water supply.</p> <p>The overlay district standards would apply to potentially polluting uses such as gas stations, dry cleaners, etc. Standards would generally involve references to applicable state regulations and a requirement for potentially polluting uses to notify TMWA during the development review process. The City would not assume any enforcement obligations beyond verifying that TMWA has been notified before permits are issued.</p>	

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Wetlands and Streams <i>Master Plan:</i> <i>Policy 7.1D</i> <i>Policy 7.1F</i> <i>Policy SD.5</i> <i>IMP-7.1d</i>	Code amendments could be considered to further implement Master Plan policies for the protection of hydrologic resources. Staff recommends that any amendments be considered through a separate process and potentially in conjunction with any flood hazard ordinance updates.	Wetland and stream standards are on the list of potential future amendment topics.
Major Drainageways <i>Master Plan:</i> <i>Policy 7.1E</i> <i>IMP-7.1a-c</i> <i>IMP-7.2a-h</i>	<p>Reno’s major drainageway ordinances are dated and less effective than they could be. Requirements lack sensitivity to the scale or importance of different drainageways – all valleys draining over 100 acres are regulated the same way. Disturbances require special use permit review.</p> <p>Code amendments could be considered to further implement Master Plan policies for major drainageway protection, while also streamlining the development review process.</p> <p>Staff recommends that changes be considered through a separate process. Amendments could also be addressed in a broader hydrologic resource project or as part of an open space and greenway planning effort that also implements Master Plan Policy 7.2A-G.</p>	<p>Major drainageway standards are on the list of potential future amendment topics.</p> <p>A broader open space and greenway ordinance is also listed as an alternative.</p>
Wildland Interface / Fire Safety <i>Master Plan</i> <i>Policy 6.2A-D</i> <i>IMP-2.3e-f</i> <i>IMP-6.2e</i>	<p>Master Plan implementation strategies call for the adoption of fire protection mitigation measures outside existing fire service areas, as well as adoption of the State Fire Marshal Standards for the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), including consideration of a WUI overlay area.</p> <p>Staff recommends this be considered through a separate process and in coordination with the Reno fire department.</p>	Wildland interface / fire safety standards are on the list of potential future amendment topics.
Signs <i>Master Plan:</i> <i>IMP-7.6c</i> <i>Design Principles</i> <i>Chapter 3</i>	Staff recommends targeted amendments to modify content-based regulations (e.g., certain temporary signs) and discretionary review processes as required by recent federal case law (Reed v Gilbert). Broader signage amendments should be considered through a separate process.	Sign standards are on the list of potential future amendment topics.

**Summary Table B:
Consolidated List of Potential Code Amendment Topics
(for Consideration Separate from the Code Update)**

Potential Future Code Amendment Topic	Status
<p><u>Reno Mayor’s Housing Committee - Interim Code Amendments</u> This is an interim suite of targeted amendments to address glitches in the current code and help reduce housing construction costs.</p>	<p>Initiated by City Council on May 8, 2019. Adoption hearings are scheduled in July and August, 2019.</p>
<p><u>Signs Required by State Law</u> This is a code maintenance item to address a glitch with the current code.</p>	<p>Initiated by City Council on May 8, 2019. Adoption hearings are scheduled in July and August, 2019.</p>
<p><u>Business Licenses for Package Alcohol, Beer and Wine</u> This is a targeted amendment to address businesses with package alcohol licenses and package beer and wine licenses.</p>	<p>City Council passed a 1-year moratorium and directed staff to prepare code amendments on May 8, 2019. Adoption hearings are tentatively scheduled in January & February, 2020</p>
<p><u>Neighborhood Scale Targeted Public Engagement Efforts.</u> Issue sheet 1C outlined a process to review zoning maps at the neighborhood scale following adoption of the code update. This issue sheet recommends the process be expanded to also include sidewalk and trail plans for each neighborhood, as well as a review of existing neighborhood overlay district standards in applicable areas.</p>	<p>Staff recommends this as a high priority initiative to begin following adoption of the Code update in the summer of 2020.</p>
<p><u>Conservation District Overlays</u> In coordination with neighborhood stakeholders, prepare overlay district standards for the Powning, Newland Heights, and Wells Avenue conservation districts. This effort may be combined with the targeted public engagement efforts in applicable areas.</p>	<p>Staff recommends this as a high priority initiative to begin following adoption of the code update in the summer of 2020. Some work may begin prior to completion of the code update.</p>
<p><u>Ongoing Code Maintenance</u></p>	<p>Staff recommends a regular and continuing process to monitor and refine the updated code as needed following its adoption.</p>
<p><u>Tree Protection Ordinances</u> This is an initiative of the Urban Forestry Commission to enhance Reno’s tree protection ordinances.</p>	<p>The City Manager’s Office assigned staff and began work in May 2019.</p>

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<p><u>Review of Short Term Rental, Accessory Dwelling Unit and/or Guest Quarter Ordinances</u> These are code topics that are not being amended in the code update and could be considered at a later date through a separate process. These topics could also be included in a broader review of housing standards.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Affordable Housing: Phase 2 Amendments</u> This potential project would evaluate additional code amendments beyond those to be included in the code update.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Flood Hazards: Phase 2 Amendments</u> This potential project would evaluate additional Code amendments related to flood hazards beyond those to be included in the code update.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Wetlands and Streams</u> This potential project would evaluate code amendments related to wetlands and streams. This could be combined with other topics in a broader review of hydrological ordinances.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Major Drainageways</u> This potential project would evaluate code amendments related to major drainageways. This could be combined with other topics in a broader review of hydrological ordinances and/or as a component of an open space and greenway planning initiative.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Open Spaces and Greenways</u> As an option, open space and greenway planning initiatives that are outlined in Master Plan Policies 7.2a-g could be expanded to also include an update of the major drainageways plan and ordinances.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Urban Wildland Interface and Fire Safety</u> This is a master plan implementation topic that will be led by the Reno Fire department, but also involves updates to the land development code.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).
<p><u>Signs: Phase 2 Amendments</u> This potential project would evaluate additional code amendments for signs beyond those to be included in the code update.</p>	Pending prioritization process (future issue sheet).