

Washoe County Board of County Commissioners



COMMUNITY
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WDCA24-0001
(Article 438, 810 & 902)

July 16, 2024

Introduce and first reading of an ordinance to amend the Washoe County Development Code:

- Article 438, Grading, Article 810, Special Use Permit, and Article 902, Definitions
- These amendments were heard by the Planning Commission on 6/4/24 and unanimously approved.

Purpose for Amendment Update



- Simplify the grading requirements and ease the regulatory burden for smaller scale grading projects.
- Bring the Washoe County grading code into closer alignment with our neighboring jurisdictions.
- Create standards that are more appropriate for the topographically constrained environment.
- Reorganize the code sections into a more useable and understandable regulatory scheme.

- Article 438, Grading has not received a major update in many years and has become cumbersome for staff and the public to implement.
- In early 2023, Washoe County staff met with outside local planning and engineering consultants to identify key issues and concerns with implementing Article 438.
- Planning staff worked closely with Engineering staff to prepare the draft amendment.
- A draft of the updated Article 438 was distributed for review to several Washoe County departments in December of 2023.

Background



- In January of 2024 staff met again with the outside planning and engineering consultants to review the proposed changes.
- A community workshop was held on February 20, 2024, and additional input was gathered.

Proposed Amendments (Art. 438)



- Reorganize Article 438 and renumber sections to improve order and flow.
- Significant changes to Article include the following:
 - Relax thresholds for major grading (special use permit) application requirements;
 - Add a new section for rockery walls and grading standards;
 - Streamline standards for both minor grading and major grading standards;
 - Allow slopes steeper than 3:1; and
 - Add exemptions to the grading permit requirement.

Proposed Amendments (Art. 438)



- The following sections are proposed to be deleted:
 - 438.15 Grading Fees
 - 438.25 Definitions
 - Moved to Article 902, some definitions were added, some definitions were combined with existing definitions, and several were deleted.
 - Requires Article 902 Definitions, to be amended.
 - 438.45 Grading of Slopes, 438.50 Cuts, & 438.55 Fills
 - Several Sections were combined with other Sections, some Sections were added, and several Sections were deleted.
 - 110.438.77, Phasing and Stabilization of Grading

Proposed Amendments (Art. 810)



Proposed Amendments to Article 810, Special Use Permits:

- To allow the County Engineer or the Director of Planning and Building to determine if final grading plans are in substantial conformance with approved special use permits (SUPs).
 - It is common for final civil improvement plans to identify differing volumes of grading from the volumes identified in the preliminary grading plans submitted with the SUP application.
 - While these volumes may differ, the overall intent of the grading may not be affected by the change.
 - This modification may allow the change to be approved internally without going back to a public hearing.

Community Meeting



- A community meeting was held by Zoom on February 20, 2024.
- The meeting included 17 attendees.
- Staff presented the proposed changes and the attendees had various questions about the proposed changes including:
 - What are the main changes;
 - How will the proposal impact the current requirements;
 - When will a special use permit be required;
 - Glad to be included in the process and that the grading code is being updated; and
 - The timing of approval for the code amendments.

Staff is able to make all 4 required findings, as shown in the staff report and recommends approval.

1. Consistency with Master Plan. The proposed Development Code amendment is in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Washoe County Master Plan;
2. Promotes the Purpose of the Development Code. The proposed Development Code amendment will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare, and will promote the original purposes for the Development Code as expressed in Article 918, Adoption of Development Code;
3. Response to Changed Conditions. The proposed development code amendment responds to changed conditions or further studies that have occurred since the Development Code was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and the requested amendment allow for a more desirable utilization of land within the regulatory zones; and
4. No Adverse Affects. The proposed development code amendment will not adversely affect the implementation of the policies and action programs of the Conservation Element or the Population Element of the Washoe County Master Plan.

Possible Motion



A possible motion can be found in the staff report.

Thank you

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