

Washoe County Board of County Commissioners



**COMMUNITY
SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

WDCA24-0002 (Housing Package 2)

July 16, 2024

- Amendments **lower barriers to various types of housing** over seven different code areas:
 - Making Spanish Springs use table consistent with the rest of the County
 - Multi-family parking minimums
 - Bike parking
 - Sun Valley story limit removal
 - Turf requirements
 - Common and private open space requirements
 - Updating definitions

Housing—Background



- This housing package focuses on **existing barriers** for creating housing
- Spans 6 articles within the Washoe County Development Code
- Many of the codes being amended have not been updated since the 1990's
- Changes proposed are not applicable in Tahoe Planning Area

Sun Valley Height Limit Alternative



- Section 110.218.20 Height Restrictions. In addition to height restrictions established in Article 402, Density/Intensity Standards, and Article 406, Building Placement Standards, all new residential, commercial and industrial structures **outside of the Downtown Sun Valley area** are limited to two stories in height.

- ~~• Section 110.218.45(f) Building Heights. The maximum building height is limited to two stories. The maximum height standards do not apply to elements such as parapet walls, roof-mounted equipment, elevator towers, belfries, cupolas, water towers, silos, windmills, water tanks, etc., provided that the aggregate floor area of such structures is not greater than one-half of the total roof area.~~

Planning Commission made all four findings (one required) and recommended 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.

Recommended Motion



“Move to adopt Ordinance Number 1719, which is an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code) by modifying Divisions 2, 4, and 9 in order to update regulations related to the Spanish Springs Area Modifiers, Sun Valley Area Modifiers, Parking and Loading Requirements, Landscaping, and Open Space Standards; and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto; and to affirm the four findings of fact that the Washoe County Planning Commission made on May 7, 2024, as recorded with Resolution Number 24-10 and attached to the staff report for this item.”

Thank you

Kat Oakley, Senior Planner / Chris Bronczyk, Senior Planner
Washoe County CSD – Planning Division
koakley@washoecounty.gov / cbronczyk@washoecounty.gov
775-328-3628 / 775-328-3612



COMMUNITY
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Housing—Background

- Housing affordability and attainability are identified priorities in Washoe County
 - Envision Washoe 2040
- Amendments identified by BCC on November 14, 2023
- 6,840 dwelling units needed to support population increase through 2042
- 7,350 affordable units needed (TMRSHA)



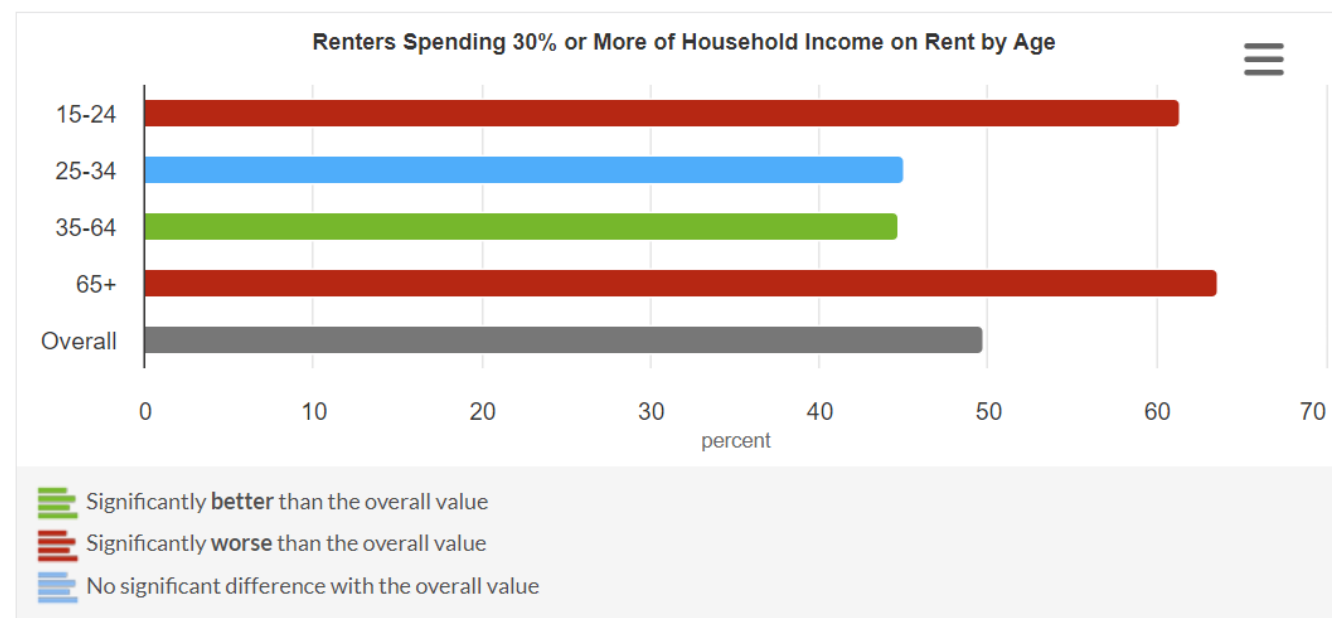
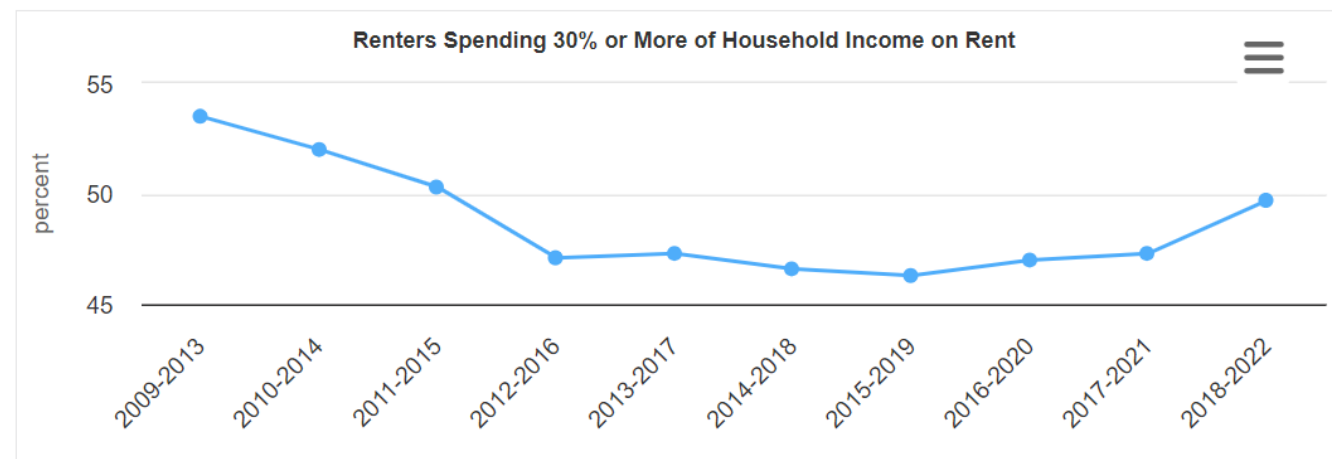
FIGURE 6. WASHOE COUNTY MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND MEDIAN HOME VALUE

Housing—Background (2)



- National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Cost of Housing Index:

- 50% of typical family's income needed for mortgage payment
- 100% of low-income family's income needed for mortgage payment
- Reno is the 10th most burdened housing market in the nation



Planning Area Modifiers



- Article 216, **remove Table C-1**, which modifies allowed residential uses in the Spanish Springs Area. Currently the table requires a special use permit for detached ADUs:
 - Prohibits residential development in the neighborhood commercial (NC) regulatory zone
 - Limits opportunities to apply for discretionary permits for various housing types in certain regulatory zones
- Article 218, **remove two-story height limit** in Sun Valley
 - Removes section 110.218.20 and subsection 110.218.45(f). The latter was identified after the Planning Commission meeting but necessary to meet description and intent of amendments
 - Height limits of regulatory zones will continue to apply (in most zones, 35 feet)
 - **No changes to zoning or multifamily allowances**

Article 410 – Parking and Loading



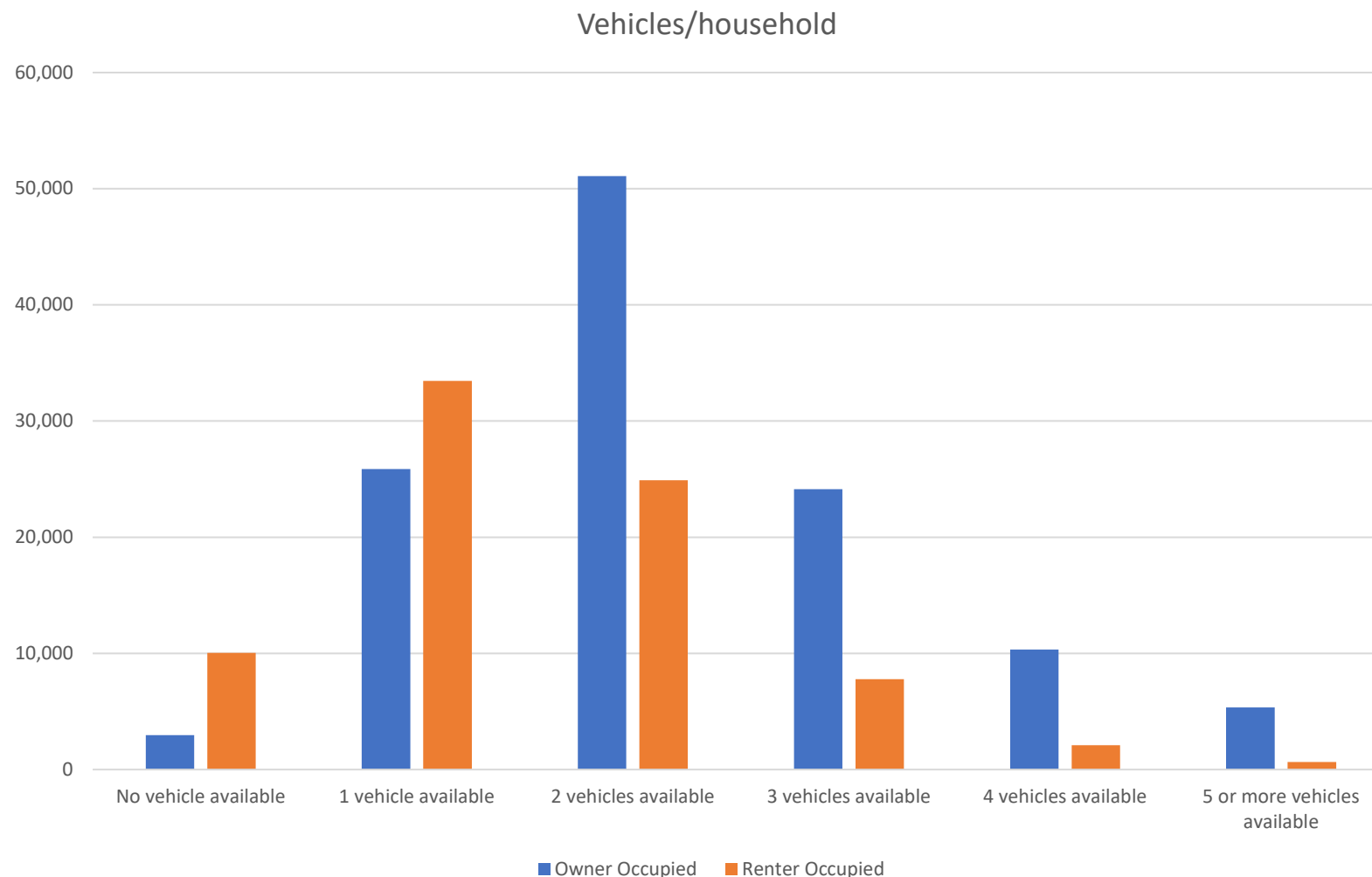
- Standards not updated since 1993
- High minimum parking requirements identified as a significant barrier
- Intended to **reduce number of required parking spaces** due to high cost of parking (construction, maintenance, land), which is often hidden in rent
- Proposed numbers still higher compared to Reno and Sparks, but are average nationally

	Current	Proposed
1 Bedroom	1.6 Spaces	1 Space
2 Bedrooms	2.1 Spaces	1 Space
3 Bedrooms	2.1 Spaces	2 Spaces
4 or More Bedrooms	2.1 Spaces	2.5 Spaces
Covered Parking	1 covered parking space is required for every unit	1 covered parking space is required for every 2 units

Article 410 – Parking and Loading



- Existing trends in Washoe County indicate current minimum parking is higher than what is necessary
- Household size has decreased
- In Washoe County most rental households use 1 or less vehicles
- Less demand for parking in rental households



Bicycle storage



- **Bicycle storage and bicycle rack standards** proposed
 - Bicycle rack type, placement, and installation requirements
 - Additional requirements outlined for short-term and long-term bicycle parking
- Support multimodal transportation along with affordable housing, to support residents without access to a car

Article 412 – Landscaping



- Remove current turf requirement
 - Current language requires multi-family developments to have a turf area equal to a minimum of **50% of the total landscaped area**
- Northern Nevada climate, requirements for permanent irrigation, and continued maintenance of turf areas creates an unintended burden on multi-family housing
- Consistent with Envision Washoe 2040—prioritizes water-wise landscaping
- Does not prohibit turf areas as amenities

Article 432 – Open Space Standards (Multifamily)



- Align multifamily private open space requirements with regional and national standards
- Reduction in the minimum size of ground floor rear yards, ground floor patios, and upper-level decks/balconies
 - Current requirements can create significant engineering costs
- Option to increase common open space in lieu of private open space
- Add standards for optional turf areas

Community Meetings



- Meetings held on April 1st and April 3rd
- April 1st meeting attended by approximately 5 people
- April 3rd meeting attended by approximately 7 people
- Questions related to the removal of the story limit in Sun Valley, density allowances changing, and changes to the balcony and patio sizes
 - Sun Valley community members had concerns on the removal of the story limit
 - Planning provided an update to the Sun Valley CAB on May 4, 2024
- Have had subsequent conversations with commentors about their questions and concerns

Article 410 – Parking and Loading



- Staff reviewed local and national jurisdictions parking requirements. Proposed minimums in Washoe County are high for the region, and in the middle for national requirements
- Many larger municipalities are moving towards eliminating parking minimums entirely
- Reno and Sparks generally have 1 parking space per unit, regardless of unit size

Article 410 – Parking and Loading



- Intended to reduce number of required parking spaces.
- Parking appears small on its own (150sf at the smallest) but the cost of parking, construction, operation, and maintenance is significant and often hidden within the cost of housing.
- Suburban off-street surface parking has an annualized cost of over \$1000 and urban surface parking has an annualized cost of over \$2000 per a 2023 parking study by VTPI
- The impact on rent can be significant due to the increased parking.