

04-09-2025 - Reno City Council Meeting - Item J.1 Public Comment									
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April 9, Reno City Council Meeting

By Emily Allen

I will deliver a 3-minute summary of the full comments below during the City Council public hearing on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at Reno City Hall.

Public Comment on Shared Ownership (Full)

Dear City Council Members and Mayor. My name is Emily Allen. I am a Reno resident sharing the potential of shared ownership to address the economic challenges facing our community. Last week, I gave a similar presentation to your Planning Commission and they requested a deeper dive. Today, I'll share that information with you directly and build on it further.

As Reno explores long-term strategies for housing, small business resilience, and economic equity, I encourage the City to formally explore shared ownership structures as scalable solutions. These models - already adopted by other cities - build community wealth, increase the resiliency of local businesses, and improve housing affordability.

The US economy is facing a multitude of challenges: stagnant wages, rising costs, especially housing costs, wealth inequality, and a possible oncoming recession. To combat these challenges, cities including Denver, Albuquerque, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati, have begun implementing a set of impactful and self-sustaining shared ownership solutions. One shared ownership solution we are all familiar with are consumer cooperatives, including REI and our very own Great Basin Community Food Co-op. This comment addresses three additional buckets of shared ownership solutions:

1. Community ownership of real estate
2. Employee ownership
3. Business and community ownership of shared services

With Reno already facing pressure on affordable housing and aging business ownership, these models offer local solutions that puts assets back in the hands of community members.

1. Community ownership of real estate

Community ownership of real estate can create and preserve permanently affordable housing and commercial properties. There are multiple models of [community ownership of real estate](#), including:

- **Community Land Trusts** or **neighborhood trusts**, such as the Community Housing Land Trust administered by our Community Foundation of Northern Nevada. In this model, a trust, often managed by a nonprofit, owns real estate on behalf of the community and maintains housing affordability.
- This model can also be used for commercial properties - in Philadelphia, [Kensington Corridor Trust](#) is a community-controlled real estate entity that owns and manages 30 residential and commercial properties, keeping rents low for both local residents and businesses.
- **Housing or resident-owned cooperatives** where individual residents of apartment buildings or mobile home parks come together to buy the building or the land they are

renting to own and manage it cooperatively. [ROC USA](#) is a national nonprofit that has supported the transition of over 300 mobile home communities to resident-owned communities, preserving almost 24,000 affordable housing units.

As you evaluate housing and land use proposals, I urge you to recognize shared ownership, especially housing co-ops and land trusts, as viable, scalable tools to deliver permanently affordable housing and community stability.

2. Employee ownership

While shared ownership in real-estate directly supports housing affordability, employee ownership in businesses offers a viable exit strategy for retiring business owners and creates benefits for workers, businesses, and communities. Small businesses are anchors of our local economy, creating good jobs for Reno's residents and giving the city its unique character. But in Reno and across the country, we're grappling with a crisis of small business closures as owners reach retirement age with no plan succession plan:

- [Half](#) of Washoe County's businesses have owners over the age of 55 who will retire in the next 10 to 15 years.
- An estimated [70%](#) of them will be unable to sell their businesses, and many of these companies and the jobs they provide our community will vanish.

An exit strategy that many retiring owners are unaware of is selling the business to their employees.

Employee-owned companies come in many forms, including employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs), worker cooperatives, and employee ownership trusts (EOTs). They operate across different industries, from advanced manufacturing to home healthcare. Not only does employee ownership provide selling owners with a viable exit strategy and pathway to retirement, employee ownership also benefits workers, businesses, and communities:

- For workers, employee ownership can mean greater job stability, better benefits and wages, and opportunities to build wealth
- For businesses, employee ownership can reduce turnover, improve productivity, and increase resiliency during a recession
- For communities, employee ownership keeps businesses locally rooted, ensuring that revenues circulate in the community and strengthen the local economy

There are over [700](#) worker cooperatives, [6,500](#) ESOPS, and around 50 EOTs in US. In Nevada, we have only [23](#) ESOP companies, few to no worker cooperatives, and no employee ownership trusts. As you explore economic development plans to support and maintain existing businesses, consider supporting transitions to employee-owned businesses through research, educational awareness, training, and technical assistance.

3. Community-owned shared services

Finally, community-owned [shared services](#) drive down costs for members and use resources more efficiently. Small businesses, nonprofits, and governments are struggling with rising operational costs. These organizations can come together to form purchasing or shared services cooperatives to achieve better economies of scale, driving down operational costs.

Shared services often include HR, accounting, insurance, IT, and purchasing of services and utilities (e.g., janitorial and facilities management, electricity, gas, trash hauling).

From [Washington, DC](#), and [Vancouver, CA](#), to the thousands of Credit Union Service Organizations (CUSOs) and ACE hardware stores in the US, there are many successful examples of these shared services or purchasing cooperatives:

- In DC, the [Community Purchasing Alliance](#) (CPA) conducts \$20M in annual purchasing for schools, retirement communities, housing co-ops, and nonprofits, and is now spreading to other locations including Connecticut, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Illinois.
- In Wisconsin, [CESA Purchasing](#) is a statewide cooperative that works with over 100 vendors to provide contracts with discounts and other value-added benefits to K12 schools, libraries, technical colleges, universities, municipalities, and other non-profit educational entities.
- Cooperatives can even be used for renewable energy projects. The [People's Solar Energy Fund](#) supports community-owned solar projects across the country, ensuring more sustainable and affordable energy for communities.

As the city seeks to collaborate with local, regional, and state partners on issues of mutual significance, please consider convening public, private, and nonprofit organizations to explore shared service cooperatives.

City of Reno's Role

Municipal governments play a key role in supporting the development of shared ownership initiatives. From conducting research and analysis to supporting the design and implementation alongside community and national partners, cities across the country are supporting the infrastructure necessary for these initiatives to flourish.

- In [Tucson](#), the city's office of economic initiatives partnered with Local First Arizona and Project Equity to track small businesses at risk of closure and provide education and training to local businesses owners and business advisors to support employee ownership transitions.

Should the City be interested in exploring shared ownership more deeply, I'd welcome the opportunity to support that work through research, stakeholder engagement, and implementation planning based on models from other cities. This could begin with conducting research and analysis on the specific challenges and opportunities in Reno and on existing shared ownership initiatives, including:

- Case studies of initiatives in other cities.
- Benchmarking of resources needed, costs, timelines, community impacts / outcomes.

Please let me know if you are interested in learning more. Thank you.



FW: Feedback for City of Reno

From Chad Waters <WatersC@reno.gov>

Date Wed 4/9/2025 11:30 AM

To Public Comment - CC <PublicComment@reno.gov>

From: City of Reno <reno@enotify.visioninternet.com>

Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 11:20 AM

To: Webmaster <Webmaster@reno.gov>

Subject: Feedback for City of Reno

You have received this feedback from Kathleen Bodine <realtat@hotmail.com> for the following page:

<https://www.reno.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/30695/67>

The projected apartment complex at 6000 Plumas is a terrible idea. It would add horribly to the already disastrous traffic problems in our area. Traffic has become so heavy and so dangerous that we cannot live normally any more. We don't have the roads to accommodate all the cars. What about senior citizens? We can't switch to bicycles. We need to be able to use the roads.



Agenda Item I.2

From Amanda Frazier <amanda.frazier@fpimgt.com>

Date Wed 4/9/2025 12:15 PM

To Public Comment - CC <PublicComment@reno.gov>

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the reopening of the 1 UP club, as a representative of the 3rd Street Flats Apartment building and its residents located across the street.

I urge you to reconsider opening this establishment, as in the past, it has created a lot of concern for the residents here. The club is disruptive in the late evening and early morning hours. There have been many instances of people fighting in the streets and yelling, and there has also been violence, drug activity, and prostitution in front of the 1 UP.

Reopening this club poses a safety concern, as there have been stabbings and shootings. We do not want to have an establishment that does not add value to the area. There are enough clubs in the area; there needs to be something that adds value and contributes to the beautification of the downtown Reno area. We do not want another place that reflects poorly on Reno.

Thank you for considering my concerns.



Mandy Frazier - Community Director 3rd Street Flats
www.3rdstreetflatsreno.com | tel: 775.954.2888
303 W. 3rd Street Reno, NV. 89503





FW: Feedback for City of Reno

From Chad Waters <WatersC@reno.gov>

Date Wed 4/9/2025 9:50 AM

To Public Comment - CC <PublicComment@reno.gov>

From: City of Reno <reno@enotify.visioninternet.com>

Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 9:25 AM

To: Webmaster <Webmaster@reno.gov>

Subject: Feedback for City of Reno

You have received this feedback from Sandra Pazen <Jadsa59@hotmail.com> for the following page:

<https://www.reno.gov/government/city-council>

NO NO NO to the high rise apartments on McCarren!!!!!!!! The traffic is horrible and very dangerous!!!! The people DO NOT want this and YOU work for US. Listen to the people not the money!!! PLEASE



Outlook

Re: Reno city Council Meeting April 9 2025, Agenda Item I-1: Jacob's application for C.U.Permit for 15,000 seat concert arena downtown Ren

From Sue Smith <sue@argentnevada.com>

Date Wed 4/9/2025 8:28 AM

To Peter Neumann <pcn@att.net>

Cc Public Comment - CC <PublicComment@reno.gov>; Toni Harsh <toniharsh@charter.net>; Ted Schroeder <nvlaw2@gmail.com>

Unfortunately J resorts seems to have cart blanche with the Reno City Council. The arena is already under construction.

Sue Smith
NV Real Estate License # B028370
Argent Commercial Real Estate
775-323-5000
Sent via mobile-

On Apr 8, 2025, at 10:27 PM, Peter Neumann <pcn@att.net> wrote:

To the Honorable Mayor & Members of the Reno City Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my **opposition** to the granting of a conditional use permit for construction of an open air concert venue on land which is better suited for construction of low cost or medium cost housing. (Agenda Item I-1)

There is a great need for low cost and medium cost housing.

There is NO need for yet another concert venue, especially when GSR is building one that will seat many times more. GSR's project makes sense for where it is located, which is in noisy environment near the Reno-Tahoe Airport, and which has literally thousands of parking spaces, and multiple traffic lanes to accommodate thousands of vehicles.

Applicant Jacob's (Js Casino)'s project does not make sense. It will create a noise nuisance for several HUNDRED owners of residential condominiums located only 200 to 300 feet away. It will cause traffic congestion and confusion on Arlington Avenue during large concerts. It will constitute a safety hazard in the event of an ambulance emergency or a fire.

And the noise from 30 outdoor concert events for 15,000 people will affect not only the downtown Reno residents, but many others including those in the Newlands Neighborhood, the Powning Neighborhood, and the patients at St. Mary's Hospital 3 blocks away.

The 2023 and 2024 "Bass Camp" concerts in Wingfield Park proved that the Reno Police Department and Reno Code Enforcement Department are not capable of enforcing the 75 decibel noise limits required by existing law. If you will examine the **After-Action Reports** filed by Reno Code Enforcement Officers reporting on the Bass Camp concerts of both 2023 and 2024, you will find **multiple violations described**. These are on file with the clerk's office and are public documents.

The NOISE was so loud, and so unnerving with the throbbing, pulsating, pounding, thump-thumping sounds that penetrated the walls and windows of many residential units hundreds and thousands of feet from the huge amplifiers of the Bass Camp organization (speakers as large as refrigerators), that people's picture frames were reported to fall off their walls, and their windows and doors shaking, even with their doors and windows closed. That is the power of huge amplifiers and loud speakers, blasting low frequency (bass) sounds, which penetrate even steel automobiles, as anyone knows who has experienced their car begin to vibrate when a scofflaw driver pulls up beside them at a stop light, with bass sounds coming from even a small car speaker. These bass sounds are described by the Reno Code Enforcement officers in their "after-action" reports as: "boom-boom, thump-thump" noises, that they could hear for BLOCKS AWAY from the Wingfield Park venue.

And yet, despite the **After-Action Report** of the Code Enforcement officers following the 2023 Bass Camp event, describing nearly 2 dozen violations of Reno Code, the City of Reno granted the same organization a repeat performance permit for 2024, also held at Wingfield Park.

And again, there were **multiple code violations** reported by Code Enforcement Officers in the **After-Action Report** following the 2024 Bass Camp event in Wingfield Park, as well.

If the City of Reno code enforcement and law enforcement departments are incapable of enforcing the noise limitation laws and other Reno ordinances relative to only two **outdoor festival concerts** why should this Council presume they could do so for 30 outdoor concerts per season, conducted 3 blocks south of a major hospital?

The obvious answer is that the Council **should not** so presume. The City of Reno budget is reported to be \$25 million in deficit for this fiscal year. There is no reason to believe it will hire special enforcement officers for 30 outdoor concerts each season, at which there can be 15,000 people in attendance.

The space that will be occupied by the proposed concert venue's chairs, bleachers, tents, portable toilets, and parking for the attendees' vehicles ought to be used for low cost or medium cost housing.

Please vote to overrule the Planning Commission's approval of this project's C.U.P. and **deny the application**.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter C. Neumann
Newlands Neighborhood Association