

May 3, 2025

Jenica Finegan, Council Relations Manager
City Manager's Office
1 E. First St., Reno, NV 89501

RE: Review of the City of Reno's Community Engagement Process

I have several ideas for consideration during the City of Reno's hiatus from public meetings which are not required by statute. Please share my thoughts in the public record regarding your work to review the City's community engagement process due to staffing limitations and overall budget shortfalls.

Eliminate or reduce meetings to quarterly which is the schedule I believe was followed prior to the Covid hiatus. The time and effort involved in monthly NAB meetings from your customer service staff is extensive and could be reduced significantly by a less frequent schedule. This would free up a great deal of time to focus on assisting staff and the Council with other projects, presentations, and public outreach efforts.

Many presentations currently included on each of the agendas of the NABs are of City-wide interest and these topics could be better addressed with greater public attendance by hosting a single meeting covering the topic of interest after doing the usual outreach through newsletters, social media, etc. Depending on the topic, an ad hoc committee could be appointed as necessary without the restrictions of a regularly appointed committee. Using the topic as the "headline" and purpose of the meeting would likely increase transparency and community engagement.

Development project presentations for proposed development adjacent to residential or mixed zoning should also be topic focused ad-hoc meetings led by the project planner. An alternative option would be to develop a requirement for the developer to hold a community meeting explaining the project to interested members of the public. I understand Washoe County has this requirement currently. For these meetings, I would recommend that a member of the development services department be in attendance to respond to and document questions and concerns from the public.

The overarching benefit of the NABs has been the cultivation of an engaged panel who each have their own expertise and familiarity with their surrounding neighborhoods. I have enjoyed working with staff to transcribe many of the NAB meetings and appreciate their professionalism and the work being accomplished by the City Manager's Office and the City Council.

Marianne Potts