

D.1 - Title 18
(Sign Code Text Amendment)

TXT23-00002

December 4, 2024



C I T Y O F
RENO

Sign Code Text Amendment

- **2022** – Hired consultant
- **Spring 2023** – Sign stakeholder meetings to find out what's good/bad with the existing Code
- **Fall 2024** – Sign stakeholder meetings to review proposed changes
- **October 2024** – Planning Commission feedback
 - **November 2024** – Downtown business owner stakeholders
- **December 2024** – City Council feedback



Areas NOT Proposed to Change

The majority of the Sign Code is being left in its current form

- No changes to off-premise (billboard signs)
- No changes to digital/animated signs
- No changes to regulations on digital sign brightness levels (i.e. nits)
- No changes to regulations on digital sign content



Issue – Missing Reference to Zoning Districts

Sign table missing zoning districts

- Mixed-Use Airport
- Parks, Greenways and Open Space
- UT-5, UT-10 and UT-40

District	Height, freestanding (max.)	Area, freestanding (max.)	Area, Wall (max.)	Illumination	Flashing/Animation
Residential					
All	6' monument only	50 sq. ft. per access up to 150 sq. ft. max w/site plan review	20 sq. ft. [1][2]	Indirect [8]	Not allowed
Mixed-Use					
All districts not listed below [6] [11]	8' maximum OR, if the parcel is ≥ one acre, freestanding sign maximum height is 25' [35' if parcel fronts street posted at 35 mph or greater]	125 sq. ft. maximum [5][7]	1 sq. ft. of sign area per lineal foot of business frontage Sign length shall not exceed 75% of business frontage All wall sign area shall not exceed 400 sq. ft. per parcel 5' maximum letter height Notwithstanding above, each business shall be allowed a minimum 40 sq. ft.	All types	Not allowed [12]
GC [6][9]	1' per 4' of linear street frontage Not to exceed 35' for signs adjacent to a major arterial; over 35' adjacent to a major arterial with a conditional use permit	60 sq. ft. up to 100 lineal street ft. frontage 125 sq. ft. for parcel between 100-400 lineal ft. frontage	1 sq. ft. of sign area per lineal foot of business frontage 6' maximum letter height for anchor tenants, 4' maximum letter height for line shops and pad sites	All types	Allowed up to 35' in height if not facing residential zones
NC [6]	Monument only 8' if < 100' street frontage [12' if 100'+]	60 sq. ft. monument	1 sq. ft./100 GFA [all signs combined not to exceed 400 sq. ft. per parcel, 3' maximum letter height] [4]	Indirect	Not allowed [13]
PO	8' monument only [3]	1 sq. ft./100 sq. ft. of GFA, max 25% of business frontage on a building	20 sq. ft./parcel	Indirect [8]	Not allowed
Nonresidential					
I	25'	80 sq. ft. per frontage; For properties with 2 or more street frontages, maximum combined area of 160 sq. ft. per sign.	1/business/ street frontage 1 sq. ft./lineal foot of building frontage	All types	Not allowed [13]
IC					
ME	25' or bldg. height 1/ street frontage	3 sq. ft./100 GFA combined [10]	3 sq. ft./100 GFA combined [10]	All types; indirect facing residential zones [8]	Allowed up to 25' if not facing residential zones
Special					
PF	6' monument established by conditional use permit	15% of allowed wall sign area	10 sq. ft./acre	All types; none facing residential	Not allowed
Overlay					
Gaming	100' Conditional use permit required to exceed 100'	No limit	No limit	All types	No limit



Issue – Sign Definitions

- Added definition of a “monument sign”
- Definitions relating to “freestanding sign” and associated sign types were clarified.
 - Includes pole signs
 - Includes monument signs



Issue – Content Neutrality

18.05.123 Content Neutrality and Substitution

- (a) **Content Neutrality** Despite any other provision of this Chapter, the content of a sign’s message does not limit its permissibility under this Chapter. However, location-based standards such as off-premises regulations, do apply.
- (b) **Substitution Allowed** Any sign allowed a commercial message may contain any non-commercial message. Any sign allowed a non-commercial message may contain any other non-commercial message.



Issue – Difficulty in Implementing the Code

- Proposing to modify table so that all businesses get a minimum of 40 square feet of signage

Table 5-1 Sign Regulations by Zoning District

District	Height, freestanding (max.)	Area, freestanding (max.)	Area, Wall (max.)	Illumination	Flashing/ Animation
		250 sq. ft. for parcels with more than 400 lineal ft. [5][7] artistic embellishment, no limit	Notwithstanding above, each business shall be allowed a minimum 40 sq. ft.		
NC [6]	Monument only 8' if < 100' street frontage (12' if 100'+)	60 sq. ft. monument	1 sq. ft./100 GFA (all signs combined not to exceed 400 sq. ft. per parcel, 3' maximum letter height) [4]	Indirect	Not allowed [13]
PO	8' monument only [3]	1 sq. ft./100 sq. ft. of GFA, max 25% of business frontage on a building	20 sq. ft./parcel	Indirect [8]	Not allowed

Issue – Too Many Footnotes

Proposing to modify table to go from **13** footnotes to **4** footnotes

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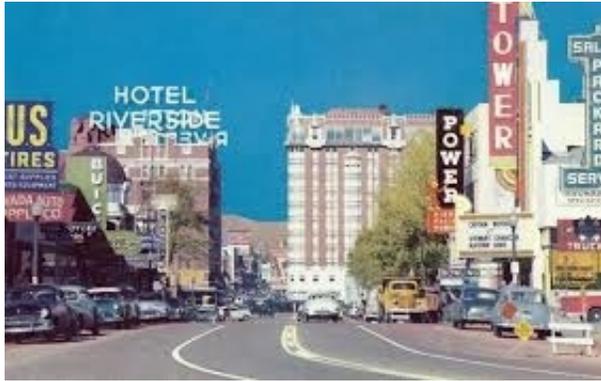
Notes:

- [1] Established by conditional use permit for nonresidential use in residential zone.
- [2] Either a wall or monument sign is allowed per street frontage.
- [3] On multi-tenant building, may have one 12 feet center identification sign/frontage.
- [4] Gross floor area (GFA).
- [5] The allowable square footage may be doubled on arterial roadways with a posted speed limited of 35 mph or greater.
- [6] Number of freestanding allowed: one per frontage, 2nd or one additional sign allowed if over 10 acres. Gas stations may have one additional 16 sq. ft. sign.
- [7] Copy area only.
- [8] Signs of light copy and dark backgrounds with internal illumination are permitted, provided the copy makes up less than 50 percent of the sign area.
- [9] As an alternative to specific square footage allowances for wall and freestanding signs in the GC zone, two square feet/lineal foot of building frontage may be utilized for all sign types combined.
- [10] Three sf/100 GFA is the maximum total sign area and may be provided on wall and/or freestanding signs.
- [11] Legally established Nonrestricted Gaming Operation, land uses may use Gaming Overlay district sign requirements.
- [12] Permitted on parcels fronting North Virginia Street, South Virginia Street, West 4th Street, East 4th Street, and Mill Street and shall not exceed 125 sq. ft. Any other street shall require a site plan review for flashing/animated signs.
- [13] Permitted subject to standards outlined in Section 18.05.114(b)(6)



Issue – Downtown Signs

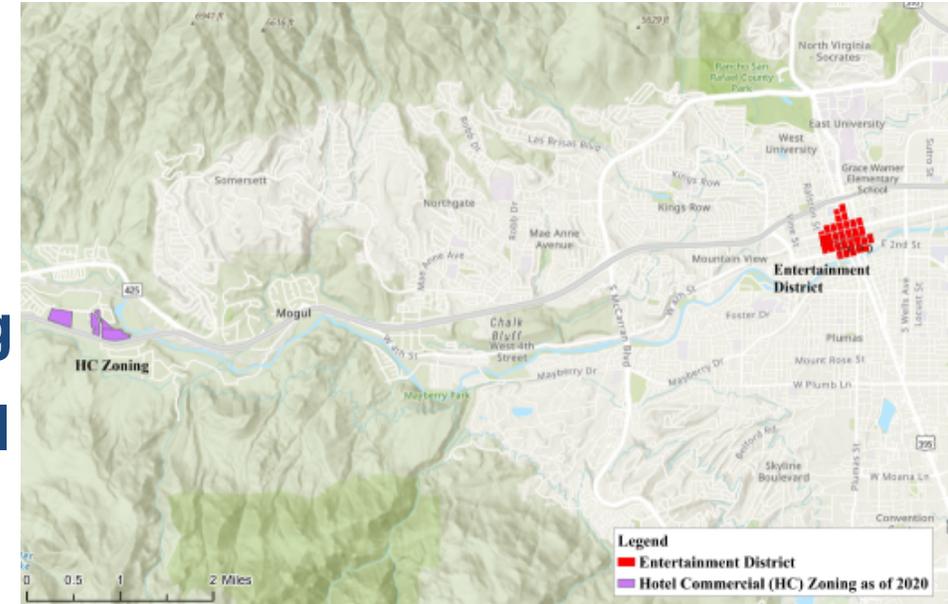
- History of signs in the Downtown core



Sign Regulations in the 2005-2021 Timeframe

2005 – 2021 Timeframe

- Large sign standards allowed
 - Anywhere zoned **Hotel Casino (HC)** (Verdi/Boomtown area)
 - **Legally Established Nonrestricted Gaming**
 - Anywhere zoned **Downtown Reno Regional Center (DRRC) Entertainment District**
- Approximately **146 acres**



Anywhere Zoned Hotel Casino

CHAPTER 18.16 SIGNS
 ARTICLE I: ON-PREMISES SIGNS
 Section 18.16.701. Permanent On-Premises Sign Regulations by Zoning District.

TABLE 18.16-1: SIGN REGULATIONS BY ZONING DISTRICT

ZONING DISTRICT	MAXIMUM HEIGHT FREESTANDING	SIGN AREA FREESTANDING	SIGN AREA WALL	ILLUMINATION	FLASHING/ ANIMATED
CC, AC (6) (9)	1':4' of linear street frontage not to exceed 25' in CC or 35' in AC; over 35' in AC with a "major" SUP	60 sq. ft. up to 100 lineal street ft. frontage, 125 sq. ft. for parcel between 100-400 lineal ft. frontage, 250 sq. ft. for parcels with more than 400 lineal ft. (5)(7) artistic embellishment, no limit	1 sq. ft. of sign area per lineal foot of business frontage. 6' maximum letter height for anchor tenants, 4' maximum letter height for line shops and pad sites. Notwithstanding the above, each business shall be allowed a minimum of 40 square feet.	All types	Allowed up to 35' in height if not facing residential zones
Commercial:					
CB	25'	60 sq. ft.	15% of the building facade area, 8' maximum letter	Illumination all types	Flashing allowed up to 35' in height
HC	100' "major" SUP required to exceed 100'	No limit	No limit	All types	No limit
Industrial I, IB, IC (6)	25'	80 sq. ft. per frontage; For properties with 2 or more street frontages, maximum combined area of 160 sq. ft. per sign.	1/business/ street frontage 1 sq. ft./lineal foot of building frontage	All types	Not allowed (13)

Hotel Casino Zoning District



All Legally Established Nonrestricted Gaming

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NOTES:					
(1) Established by special use permit for nonresidential use in residential zone.					
(2) Either a wall or monument sign is allowed per street frontage.					
(3) On multi-tenant building, may have one 12 feet center identification sign/frontage.					
(4) GFA - Gross floor area.					
(5) The allowable square footage may be doubled on arterial roadways with a posted speed limited of 35 mph or greater.					
(6) Number of freestanding allowed: one per frontage, 2nd or one additional sign allowed if over 10 acres. Gas stations may have one additional 16 sq. ft. sign advertising gas prices.					
(7) Copy area only.					
(8) Signs of light copy and dark backgrounds with internal illumination are permitted, provided the copy makes up less than 50 percent of the sign area.					
(9) As an alternative to specific square footage allowances for wall and freestanding signs in the AC and CC zones, two square feet/lineal foot of building frontage may be utilized for all sign types combined.					
(10) Three (3) sf/100 GFA is the maximum total sign area and may be provided on wall and/or freestanding signs.					
(11) Legally established Nonrestricted Gaming Operation, land uses may use HC sign requirements.					
(12) Permitted on parcels fronting North Virginia Street, South Virginia Street, West 4th Street, East 4th Street, and Mill Street and shall not exceed 125 sq. ft. Any other street shall require a site plan review for flashing/animated signs.					
(13) Permitted subject to standards outlined in RMC Section 18.16.702(f) "Additional Regulations for Animated Signs."					

Casino's



Signs in the Entertainment Zoning District

RMC 18.08.405 Regional Center and Transit Corridor Overlay Districts

(3) District Specific Standards

a. California Avenue District.

1. For properties located east of Holcomb Avenue, all uses operating between the hours of 12:00 midnight to 6:00 a.m. shall require a special use permit as described in Section 18.06.405(a)(4). For properties located west of Holcomb Avenue, uses operating between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. shall require a special use permit as described in Section 18.06.405(a)(4).
2. Buildings within the California Avenue District shall have a maximum building height of 45 feet. This may be increased with the approval of a special use permit.
3. Parking. At the applicant's discretion, parking ratios for the California Avenue District may be modified from the minimum standards listed in Table 18.12-8 (Off Street Parking Requirement Table) to be maximum standards.

b. Entertainment District.

1. Signs in the Entertainment District will meet the same standards as set forth in Table 18.16-1 for the HC zone (Section 18.16.207).

c. Keystone Avenue District.

1. Hotel with nonrestricted gaming operation shall be permitted through the special use permit process in RMC 18.06.405, for specific permitted locations identified in the DRRC Plan. d. Truckee River District. 1. The document entitled "Downtown Riverfront Design Guidelines" is adopted by reference and included as Appendix A to this Title 18 for the purpose of providing design guidance and standards for development within the Truckee River District of the Downtown Reno Regional Center.



Reference to Table 18.16-1 for the HC Zoning District

CHAPTER 18.16 SIGNS

ARTICLE I: ON-PREMISES SIGNS

Section 18.16.701. Permanent On-Premises Sign Regulations by Zoning District.

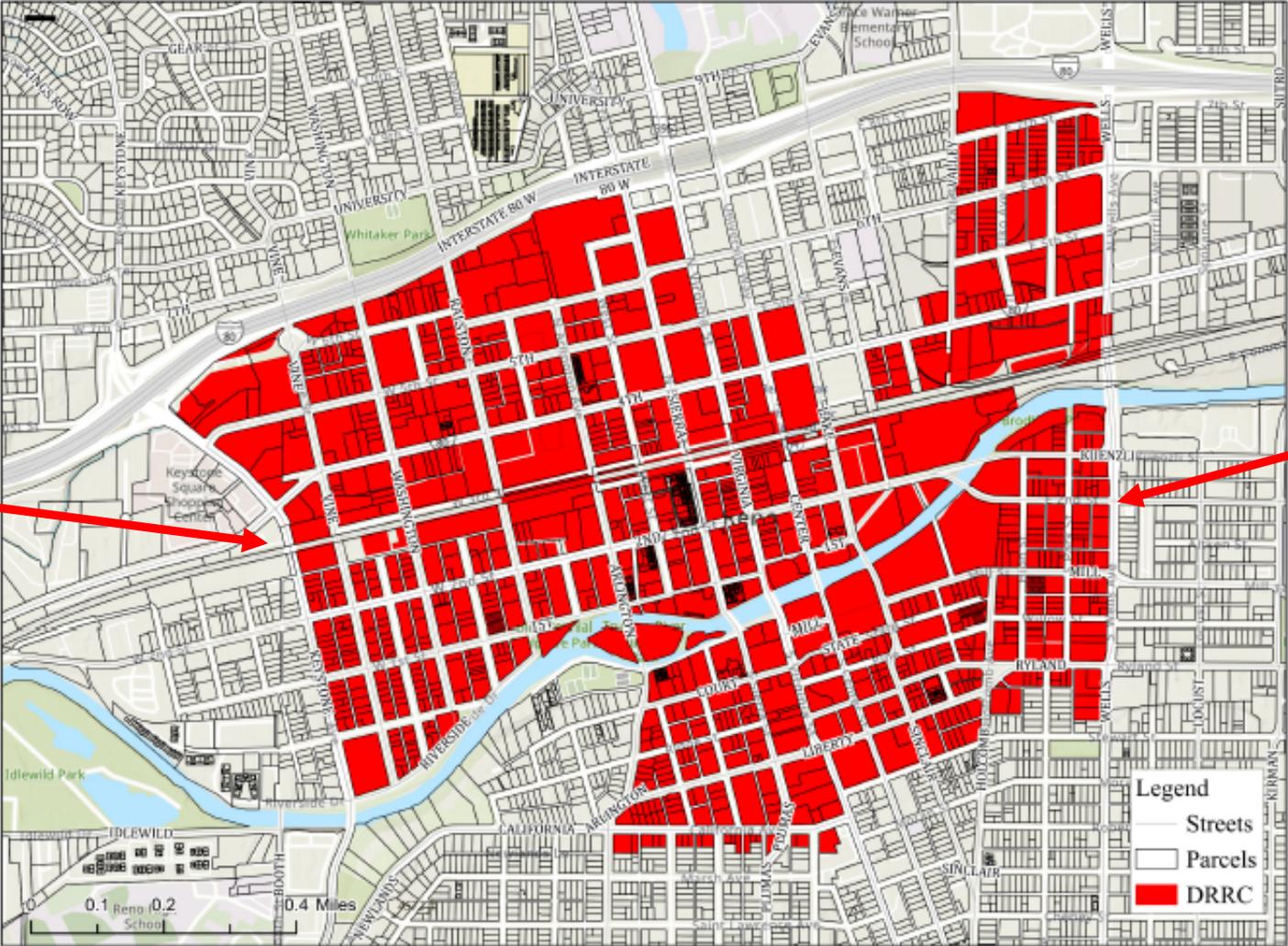
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All Businesses within the Entertainment District

Downtown Reno Regional Center (DRRC) - Entertainment District Boundary



Keystone Ave.



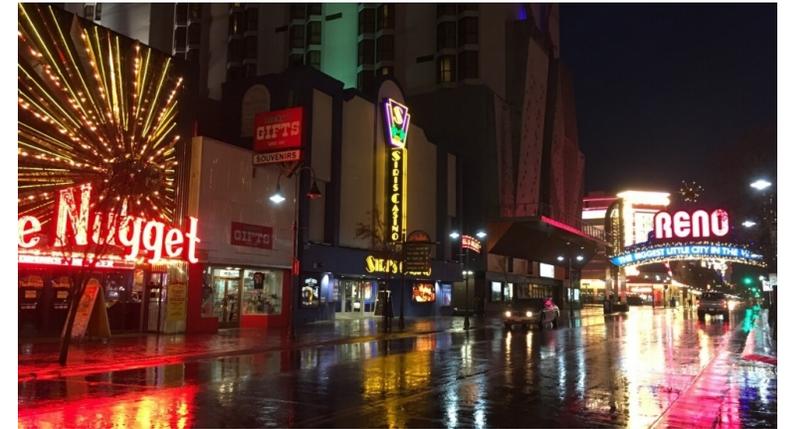
Wells Ave.



Gaming Overlay (Current Code)

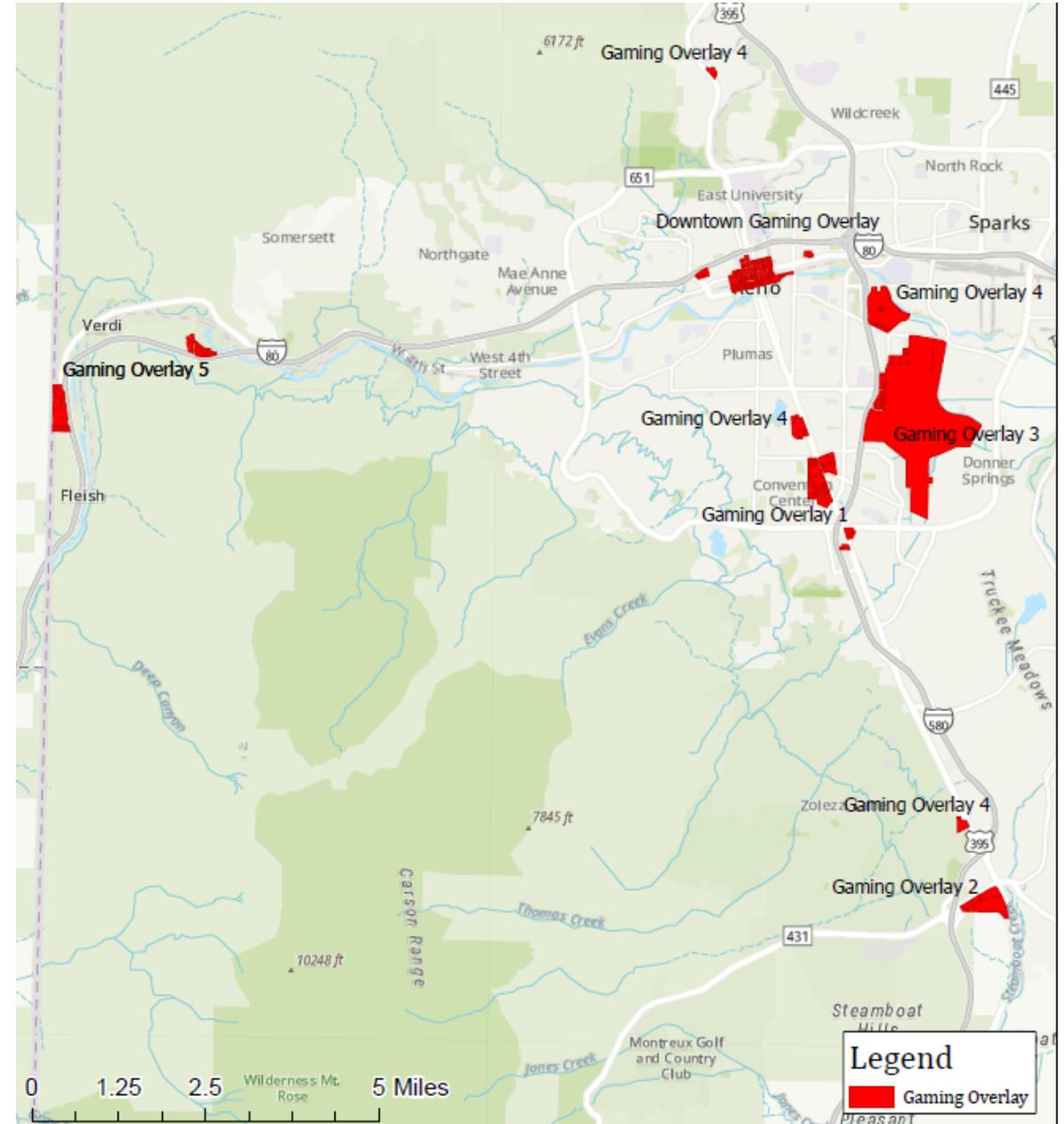
2021-Current Zoning Code

- 2021 Code rewrite established **Gaming Overlay District**
 - Anywhere that zoning would have previously allowed for casinos became the **Gaming Overlay District**
- Allowed liberal sign standards throughout *entire Gaming Overlay District*, regardless of use



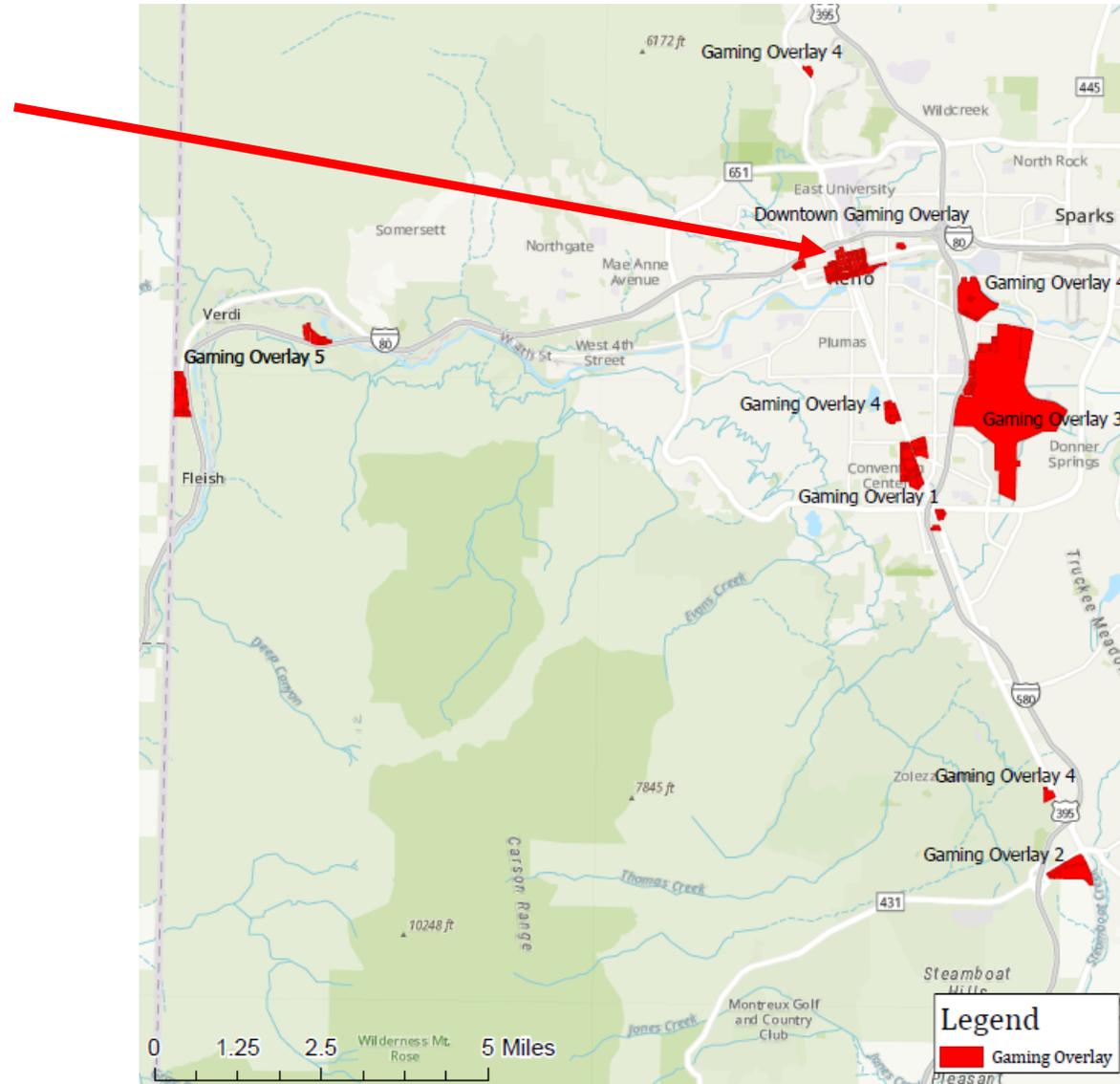
Gaming Overlay District

- Approximately **1,971 acres**
- Includes entire **Mixed-use Downtown Entertainment District (MD-ED)** zoning District



Gaming Overlay District

Gaming
Overlay District
INCLUDES
Downtown
Entertainment
District



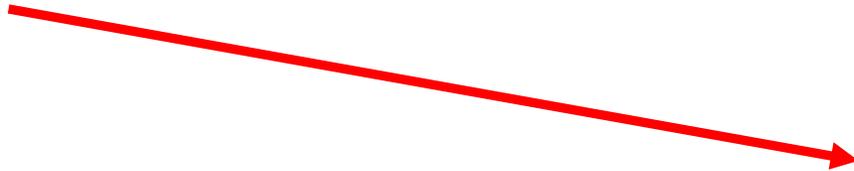
Sign Regulations for all Parcels within the Gaming Overlay District

Chapter 18.05 Signs

Article 1 On-Premises Signs

18.05.113 Permanent On-Premises Sign Regulations by Zoning District

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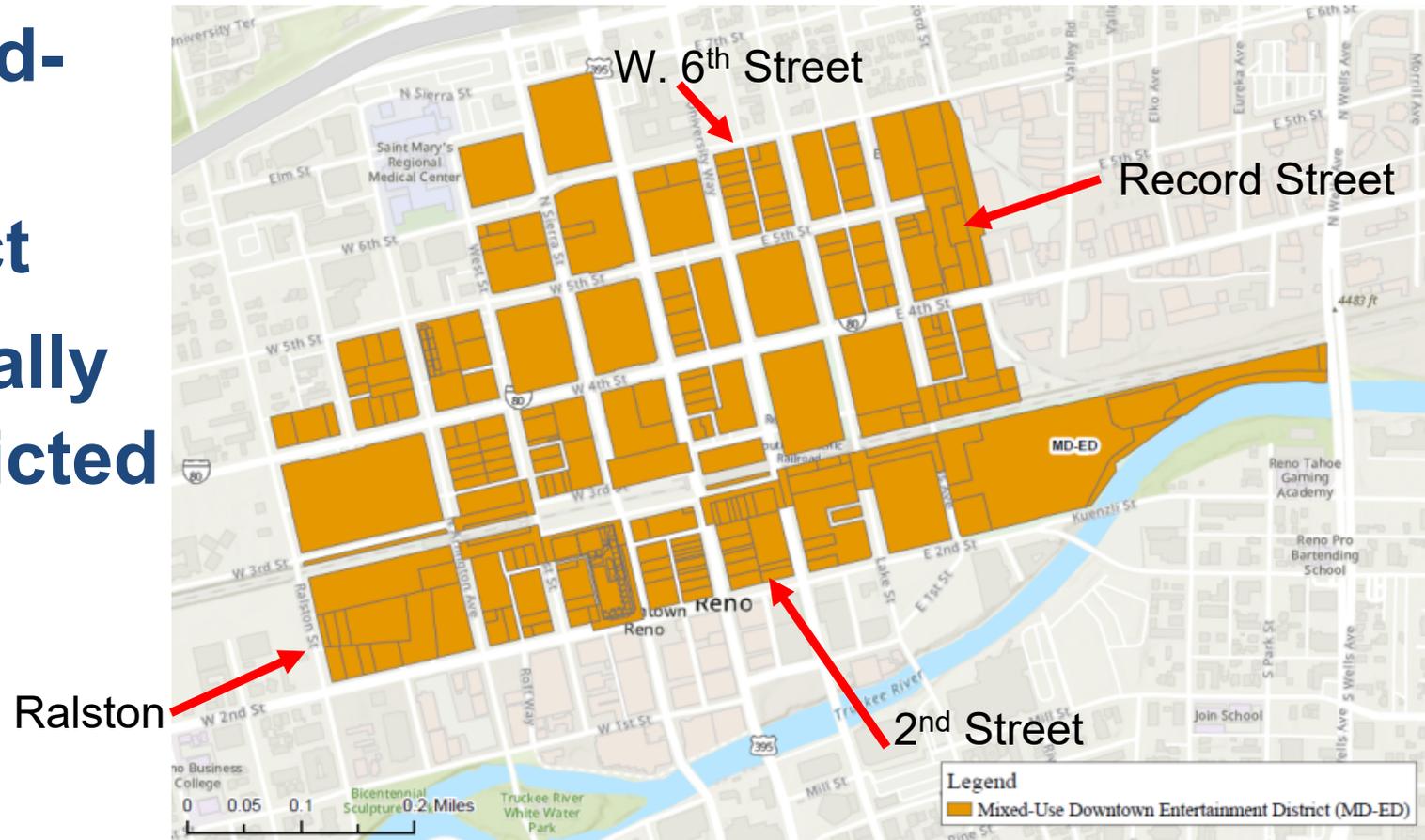
Proposed Staff Changes

- Remove sign standards tied to the **Gaming Overlay**
- Continue the sign standards only in the **Mixed-use Downtown Entertainment District (MD-ED)**
- Continue the sign standards only for **legally established nonrestricted gaming operations**



Proposed Downtown Core Area and Casino's

- Anywhere zoned **Mixed-Use Downtown Entertainment District**
- Any parcels with a **legally established nonrestricted gaming**, regardless of zoning district



Next Steps and Input Process

- ✓ Council initiated text amendment
- ✓ Stakeholder feedback
- ✓ Draft amendments developed
- ✓ Stakeholder feedback
- ✓ Planning Commission feedback
- ✓ Downtown Business Stakeholder feedback
- Feedback from Council –today
- Draft Ordinance process – January/February



Examples of Signs

35' height & 230 square feet



254 square feet



20 square feet



35' height & 42 square feet



50 square feet

