

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Date: March 1, 2023

To: Reno City Planning Commission

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action) Case No. LDC23-00045 (Peavine Substation) – A request has been made for a conditional use permit for: 1) the establishment of major utility/ 120kV electrical substation and; 2) grading resulting in cuts deeper than 20 feet and/or fills greater than ten feet in height. The vacant ±9.74 acre subject site is generally located on the southwest corner of the intersection of North Virginia Street and Peavine Peak Road. The site has a zoning designation of Single-Family Residential - 8 dwelling units per acre (SF-8) and a Master Plan land use designation of Special Planning Area (SPA). This is a Project of Regional Significance (PRS) for the establishment of an electrical substation.

From: Brook Oswald, Associate Planner

Ward #: 4

Case No.: LDC23-00045 (Peavine Substation)

Applicant: Mark Sullivan

APN: 082-083-32

Request: **Condition Use Permit:** To establish: a) a major utility 120 kV electrical substation, and; b) grading resulting in cuts deeper than 20 feet and/or fills greater than ten feet in height.

Location: Refer to Case Maps (**Exhibit A**).

Proposed Motion: Based upon compliance with the applicable findings, I move to approve the Conditional Use Permit, subject to conditions and recommend that the City Council sponsor the corresponding Regional Plan amendment to the Truckee Meadow Regional Planning Agency.

Summary: A request has been made to establish an electrical substation facility on approximately 9.74 acres of vacant land immediately adjacent to an existing regional utility corridor (**Exhibit B**). Development of a major utility in the Single-Family - 8 dwelling units per acre (SF-8) zoning

district requires a conditional use permit (CUP). The project site is located in an area with sloping topography. A flat development pad is required to accommodate the proposed infrastructure and overall grading impacts were reviewed. The request is a Project of Regional Significance (PRS) and will require an amendment to the Regional Plan to add a new regional utility substation site (**Condition 5**). Staff analysis focused on: 1) site design; and 2) grading. With all recommended conditions of approval, the proposed site design meets or exceeds all code standards and addresses applicable findings. Staff recommends approval, subject to all proposed conditions.

Discussion: The North Valleys area has experienced rapid development growth in recent years related largely to the industrial and residential sectors. The Peavine Substation project will provide load relief to the existing Silver Lake and Valley Road substations and provide increased reliability for all customers in the North Valley. This request will establish additional capacity to serve approved but unbuilt commercial and residential loads. The project will mitigate the capacity concerns given expected growth trends. These trends indicate that the Valley Road transformer will be operating over capacity by 2024. An existing 120 kV transmission line is immediately adjacent to the substation parcel and the establishment of a utility corridor will not be required. Construction of the proposed electrical substation expands the electrical infrastructure network, reduces burden on existing infrastructure, and supports of the City's concurrency management system policies and goals.

Analysis: The substation will have no onsite employees and is anticipated to have remote employees on a monthly basis for routine maintenance. There will be no public access or services. The facility will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Two medium power transformers are planned for maximum buildout of the substation based on customer interconnection applications and updated load forecasts.

Overall Design and Compatibility: The vacant parcel is adjacent to undeveloped property and a Truckee Meadows Water Authority water tank to the east, vacant land and a railway right of way to the south, industrial related uses to the east, and a self-storage warehouse to the north. Impacts to surrounding properties and uses are not anticipated. Minor impacts to surrounding properties are anticipated during construction and hours of construction should be limited (**Condition 6**).

Reno Municipal Code 18.03.305 Public and Quasi Public Utilities and Services allows substations multiple design and layout options to comply with screening requirements. Due to the remote location and safety concerns, formal vegetative landscaping is not proposed. A combination of semi opaque fencing, solid decorative walls, rock mulches, and artistic design elements is proposed (**Exhibit B and Condition 7**).

The front yard landscape and proposed grading elevations provide a transition and buffering from the public right of way along North Virginia Street to mitigate overall visual impacts. Site lighting

is not proposed. Any future lighting will meet the requirements and standards of Reno Municipal Code.

Eight foot fencing with barb wire is allowed at major utility sites to promote safety. The fencing should be vinyl coated and slatted to provide a semi opaque screening on the west, south, and east sides of the facility. The north side of the facility should have a decorative solid wall to further mitigate visual impacts from the public right of way (**Condition 8**).

Infrastructure: The subject site is vacant and all services necessary to serve future development can be extended to the site. The project is a remote facility and no water or sewer service is required at the site. Fiber optics will be provided for protection, telemetry, and to communicate with the existing Silver Lake and Valley Road Substation. An existing telecom easement bisects the property and will be relocated prior to construction.

All runoff from storm water and other precipitation events will be managed to prevent on-site flooding, manage the spread of non-point source pollutants, and reduce the volume of stormwater entering municipal storm drains and natural drainages during periods of peak flows (**Condition 9**).

Roadways and Traffic: Access to the site will be provided by Peavine Peak Road to two driveways on the eastern side of the site. No significant traffic impacts are anticipated with the proposed development. To promote safety and minimize dirt track out onto roadways the driveway approaches and connection to North Virginia Street should be paved (**Condition 10**). The Administrator has determined the request meets the requirements for a curb, gutter, and sidewalk requirement waiver. The project has no employees, does not generate pedestrian activity, and there is currently no pedestrian activity associated with the adjacent property developments. The RTC has plans to widen North Virginia Street in this area in the 2031-2050 timeframe and the need for curb, gutter, and sidewalk would be re-evaluated at that time.

Grading: The site is proposed to be graded to create the required pad for a substation facility. All slopes will be stabilized and reseeded per City standards. The proposed grading creates safe access and land suitable to meet substation requirements (**Exhibit C**).

Master Plan Conformance: The site has a Master Plan land use designation of Single-Family Neighborhood (SF) and is located in a Foothill Neighborhood per the Structure Plan Framework of the Reno Master Plan. As proposed and with the recommended conditions, the project is in conformance with the Master Plan land use designation and supportive of the following applicable Master Plan principles, goals and policies:

- Policy 2.1B: Concurrency Management System
- Policy 2.4G Regional Utility Corridors

- Policy 2.4H Electrical Transmission Infrastructure
- Policy N-FN.2: Grading

Public and Stakeholder Engagement: The project was reviewed by various City divisions and partner agencies, and comments were incorporated into the project analysis (**Exhibit D**). The applicant presented and answered questions at the Ward 4 Neighborhood Advisory Board. A courtesy notice was sent out to surrounding property owners upon initial submittal of the project and one comments was received. Comments received after the submittal of this staff report will be forwarded to the Planning Commission. Required noticing will occur prior to the hearing.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: All conditions shall be met to the satisfaction of Development Services Department staff, unless otherwise noted.

1. The project shall comply with all applicable City codes, plans, reports, materials, etc., as submitted. In the event of a conflict between said plans, reports, materials and City codes, City codes in effect at the time the application is submitted, shall prevail.
2. The owner or developer shall apply for a building permit for the entire project within 18 months of the date of approval of the conditional use permit approval and maintain the validity of that permit, or the conditional use permit approval shall be null and void.
3. Prior to the issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall attach a copy of the final approval letter. The approval letter shall accompany a narrative that describes how the requested permit addresses each of the approved conditions of approval.
4. The applicant, developer, builder, or property owner, as applicable, shall continuously maintain a copy of this approval letter on the project site during the construction and operation of the project/business. The project approval letter shall be posted or made readily available upon demand by City staff.
5. Final approval of this Conditional Use Permit is contingent on the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission and/or Governing Board approvals for a Project of Regional Significance and the Amendment of the Regional Plan.
6. Hours of construction, including grading, shall be limited to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. There shall be no construction on Sundays, excluding dust control and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan measures. A note to this effect shall be placed on the title sheet of all building permit plan sets and a sign shall be posted at the construction site. If the construction hours need to be varied for the pouring of concrete slabs, a plan detailing the

construction operations and provisions to minimize impacts on nearby residential areas shall be submitted and approved to the satisfaction of the Administrator.

7. Prior to the approval of any permit, the applicant shall provide stamped and signed landscape plans that clearly detail the proposed non-vegetative landscaping generally depicted in **Exhibit B**.
8. Prior to the approval of any permit, the applicant shall provide plans that all fencing/slats are vinyl coated and that an eight foot solid decorative wall is installed on the northern end of the facility facing North Virginia Street, subject to staff approval. All walls and fences shall be of a neutral earth tone color palate.
9. Prior to the approval of any permit, the applicant shall demonstrate that all storm water runoff is mitigated at a 1:1.3 ratio. Stormwater facilities shall employ Low Impact Development (LID) standards and be incorporated into the overall landscape design.
10. Prior to the approval of any permit, the applicant shall provide plans that demonstrate the following areas are paved:
 - 1) All driveway approaches to the substation facility
 - 2) A minimum section of 50 feet in length and 24 feet wide of Peavine Peak Road at the intersection of North Virginia Street.

Findings:

General Approval Criteria: The decision -making body shall review all development applications for compliance with the applicable general review criteria stated below.

- 1) Consistency with the Reno Master Plan: The proposed development shall be consistent with the Reno Master Plan. The decision-making authority:
 - a. Shall weigh competing plan goals, policies, and strategies; and
 - b. May approve an application that provides a public benefit even if the development is contrary to some of the goals, policies, or strategies in the Reno Master Plan.
- 2) Compliance with Title 18: The proposed development shall comply with all applicable standards in this Title, unless the standard is lawfully modified or varied. Compliance with these standards is applied at the level of detail required for the subject submittal.
- 3) Mitigates Traffic Impacts: The project mitigates traffic impacts based on applicable standards of the City of Reno and the Regional Transportation Commission.
- 4) Provides Safe Environment: The project provides a safe environment for pedestrians and people on bicycles.
- 5) Rational Phasing Plan. If the application involves phases, each phase of the proposed development contains all of the required streets, utilities, landscaping, open space, and

other improvements that are required to serve or otherwise accompany the completed phases of the project, and shall not depend on subsequent phases for those improvements.

Conditional Use Permit: In addition to meeting the criteria in Section 18.08.304(e), Approval Criteria Applicable to All Applications, the following findings shall be made prior to granting a conditional use permit pursuant to RMC 18.08.605(e):

1. The proposed location of the use is in accordance with the objectives of this Title and the purpose of the zoning district in which the site is located;
2. The proposed land use and project design is compatible with surrounding development;
3. The proposed land use and project design is consistent with applicable development standards;
4. Public services and facilities are available to serve the project, or will be provided with development;
5. The characteristics of the use as proposed and as may be conditioned are reasonably compatible with the types of use permitted in the surrounding area; and
6. The granting of the conditional use permit will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare. The factors to be considered in evaluating this application shall include:
 - a. Property damage or nuisance resulting from noise, smoke, odor, dust, vibration, or illumination; and
 - b. Any hazard to persons and property.

Attachments:

Exhibit A – Case Maps

Exhibit B – Site and Landscape Plan

Exhibit C – Grading and Utility Plans

Exhibit D – Agency and Public Comments

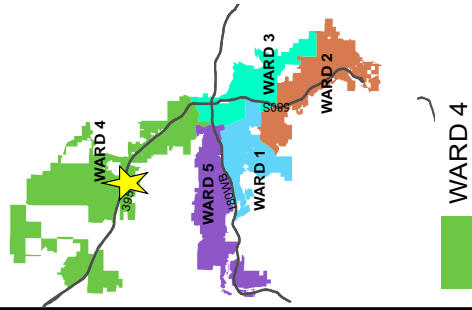
Exhibit A

AREA MAP

LDC23-00045

(Peavine Substation)

Subject Site ► 



Development
Services
Department

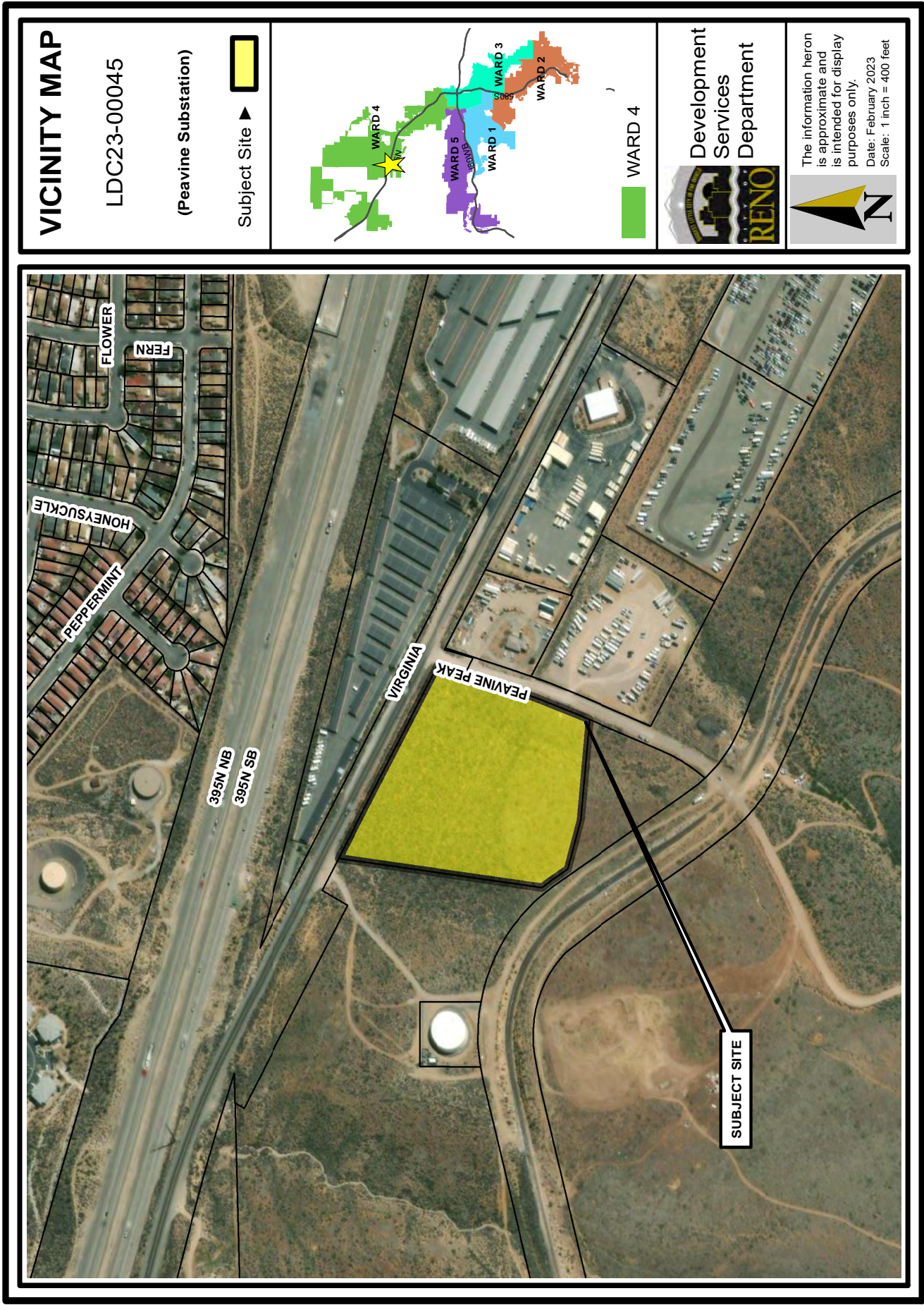


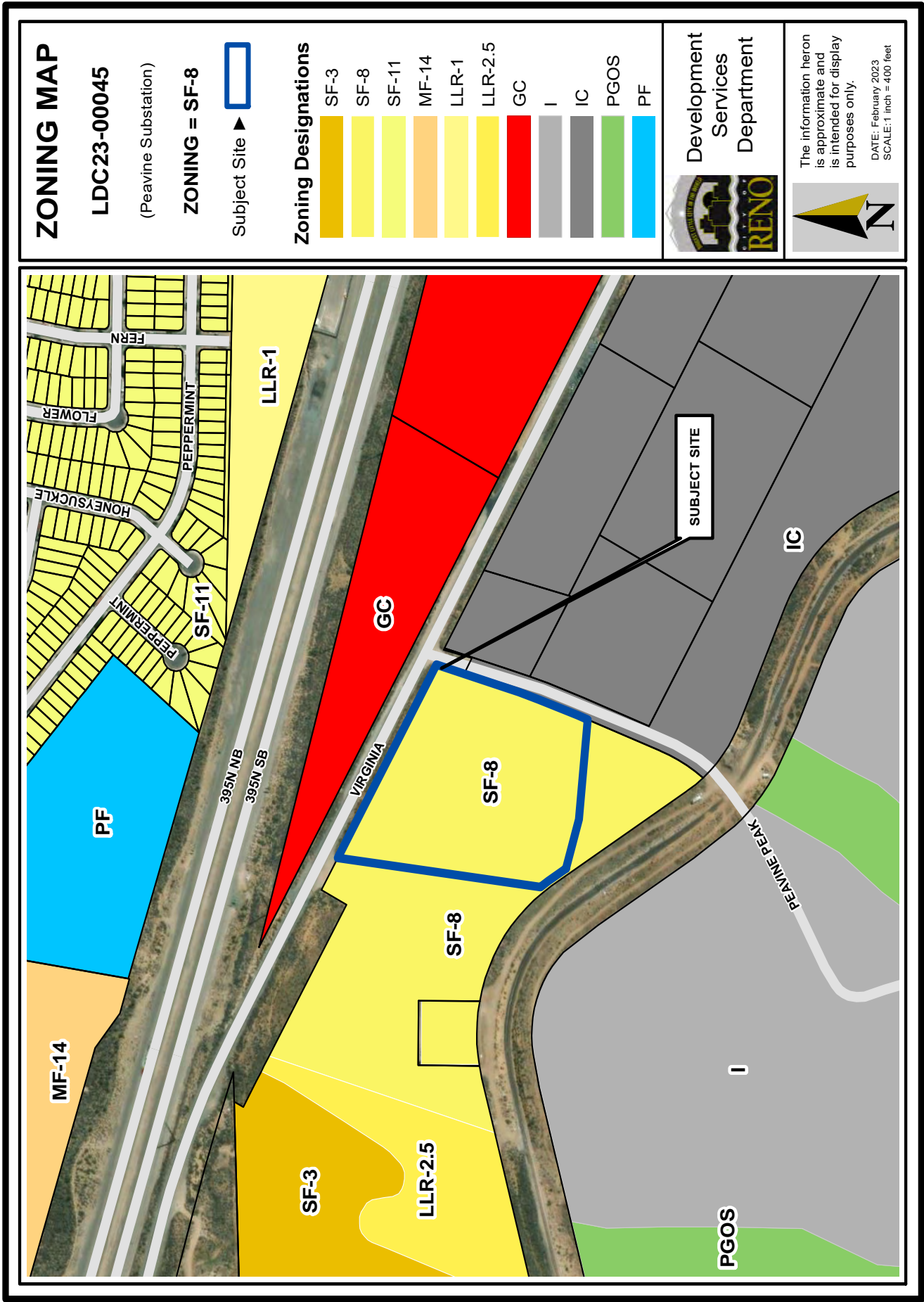
The information herein
is approximate and
is intended for display
purposes only.

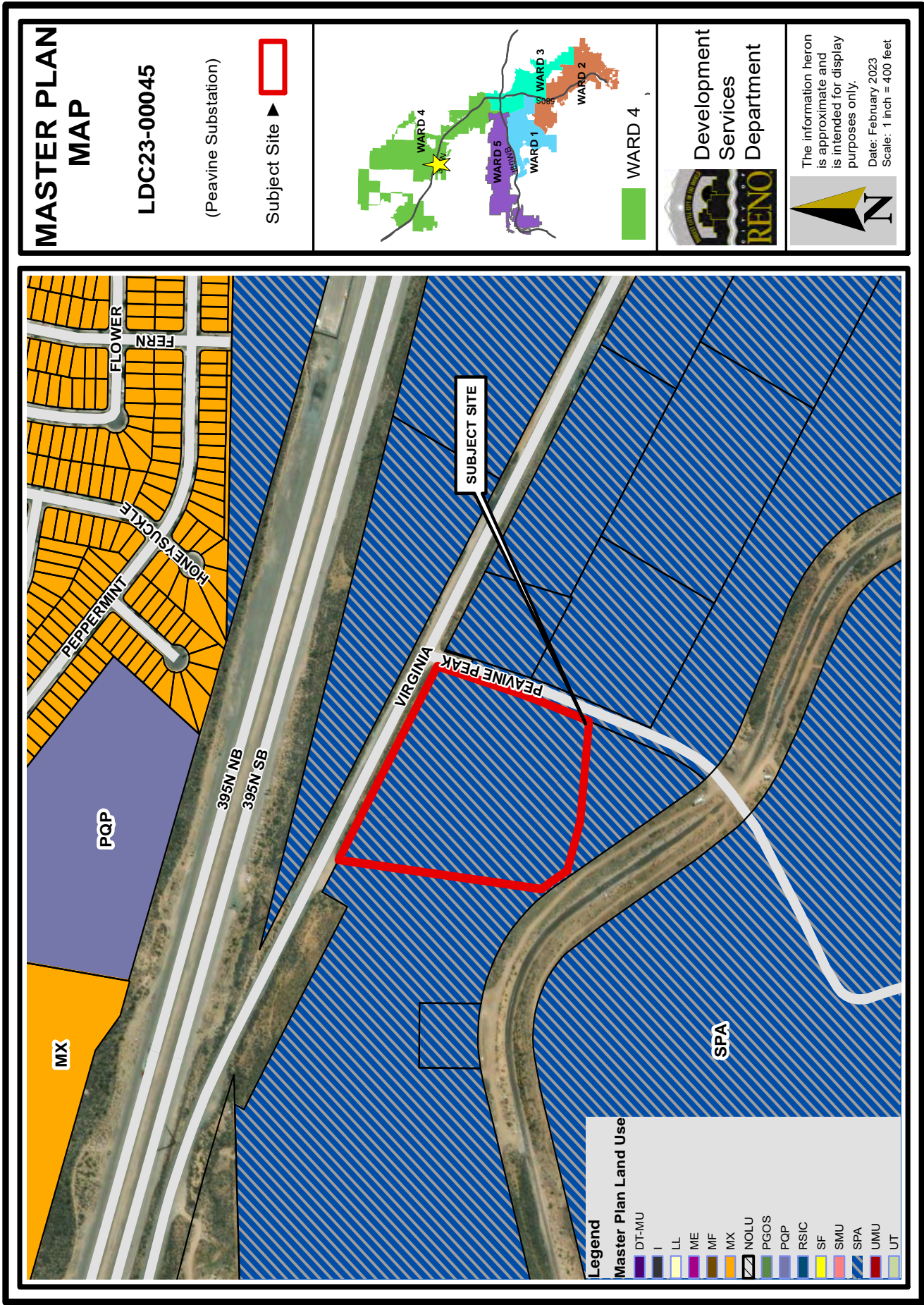
Date: February 2023

Scale: 1 inch = 800 feet

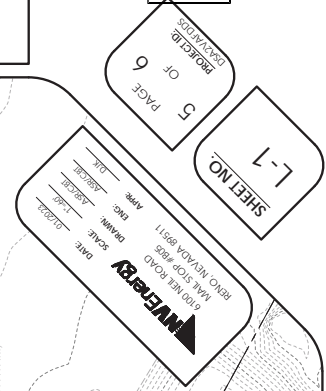








REV	REVISION	DATE	DWN	ENG	CHK'D	APPR



1. ADD 5300 FEET TO ALL ELEVATIONS.

Attachment: Exhibit B- Site and Landscape Plan



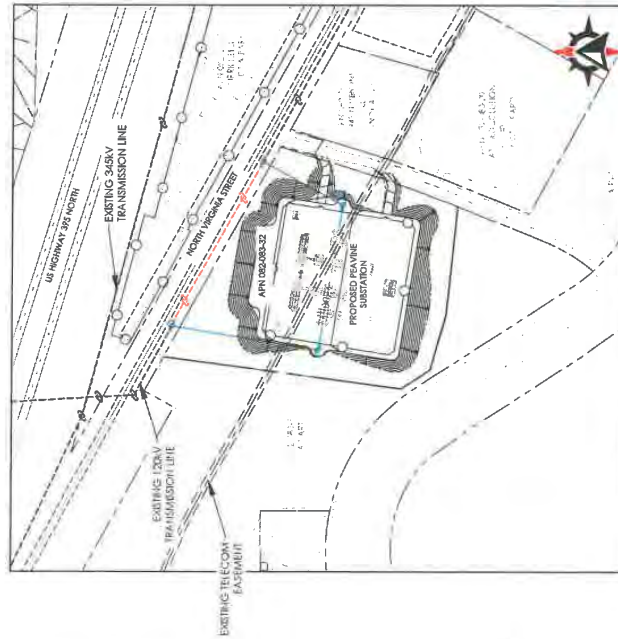
PEAVINE SUBSTATION SPECIAL USE PERMIT

CITY OF RENO, WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA
A.P.N. 082-083-32

OWNER/DEVELOPER
NV ENERGY
6100 NEL ROAD
RENO, NV 89511
CONTACT: ALEXA REXFORD, PE
(775) 834-3563
ALEXA.REXFORD@NENERGY.COM



VICINITY MAP
NOT TO SCALE



SITE PLAN
SCALE 1"=100'

BASIS OF BEARINGS & ELEVATION

THE BASIS OF BEARINGS AND ELEVATION FOR THIS SURVEY IS HAVERS/PALMER'S 1985 SURVEY OF THE PEAVINE SUBSTATION AND THE ADJACENT LANDS, WHICH BEARS 172538" W.

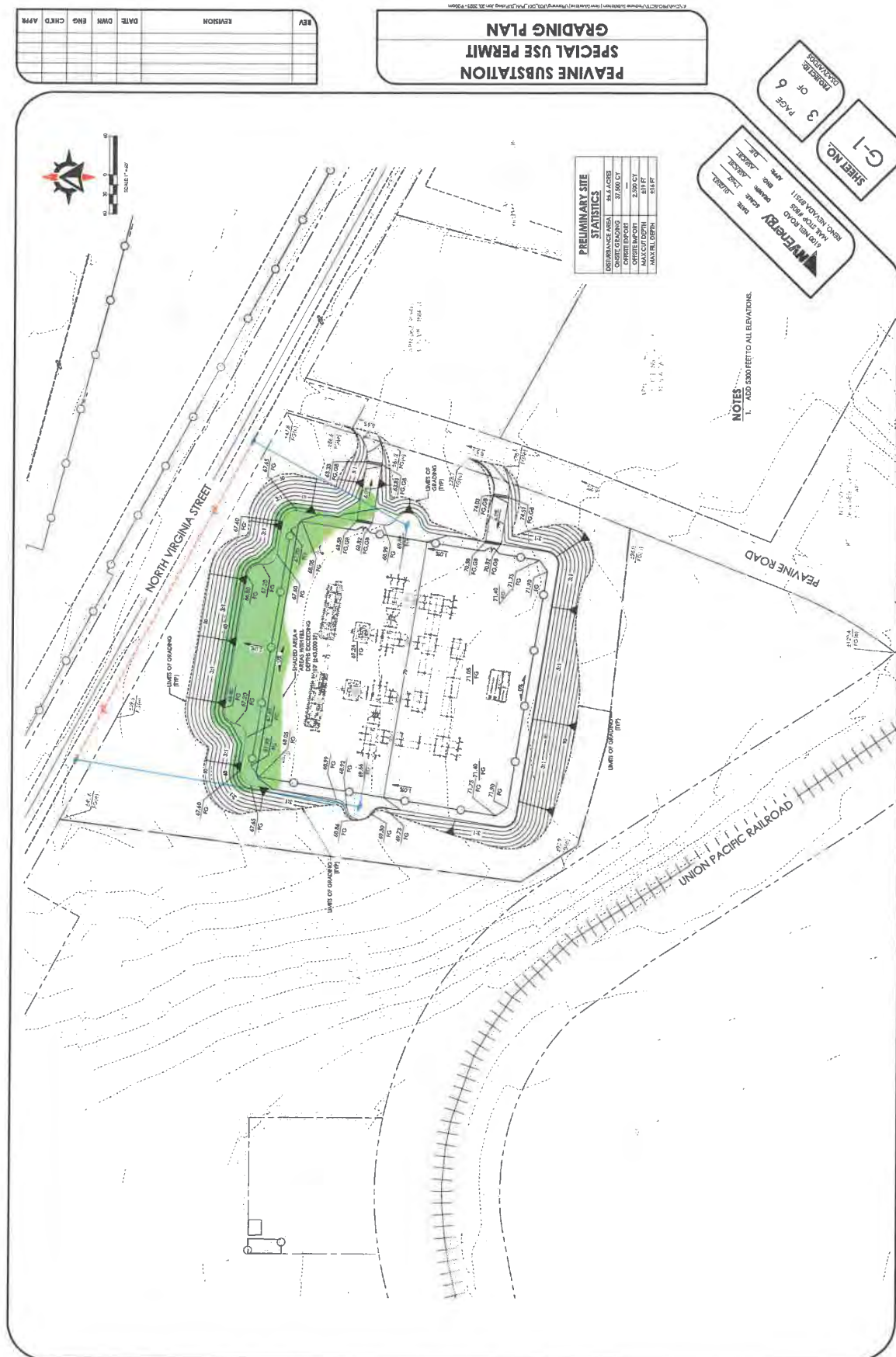
PAGE NO.	SHEET NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	1-1	TITLE SHEET
2	2-1	SITE PLAN
3	3-1	GRADING PLAN
4	4-1	CROSS SECTIONS
5	5-1	LANDSCAPE PLAN
6	6-2	LANDSCAPE ELEVATION VIEW

**PEAVINE SUBSTATION
SPECIAL USE PERMIT
TITLE SHEET**

REV	REVISION	DATE	BY	CHKD	APP

NV ENERGY
6100 NEL ROAD
RENO, NV 89511
DATE: 10/1/2011
BY: ALEXA REXFORD
CHKD: ALEXA REXFORD
APP: ALEXA REXFORD
SHEET NO. 1-1
PAGE 1 OF 6
PROJECT: PEAVINE SUBSTATION

Exhibit C



**WASHOE COUNTY
HEALTH DISTRICT**
ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE

February 14, 2023

City of Reno
Planning and Development Division
PO Box 11130
Reno, NV 89520-0027

RE: Peavine Substation; 082-083-32
Conditional Use Permit; LDC23-00045

Dear City of Reno Staff:

The Washoe County Health District, Environmental Health Services Division (WCHD) has reviewed the above referenced project.

1. The WCHD does not have any concerns related to this application as submitted.
2. If the approved project is approved, it will be subject to WCHD plan review processes.

If you have any questions or would like clarification regarding the foregoing, please contact James English, EHS Supervisor at jenglish@washoecounty.us regarding all Health District comments.

Sincerely,



James English, REHS, CP-FS
EHS Supervisor
Environmental Health Services
Washoe County Health District

Which Category Describes You Citizen

Case Number LDC23-00045

Do you wish to opt-in to receive Reno Connect Development Project email newsletters? Yes

Citizen General Public Comment Form

Full Name Kelly Orr

Contact Email kellyroseorr@gmail.com

Contact Phone Number 7754325094

Position In Opposition

Leave comments on this case here. This development DOES NOT FIT the excessive growth in Ward 4. This should be tabled until the roads, infrastructures, schools, and area can handle any further development!

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These messages are not added in the [premium version](#).