

## SNRPC Regional Policy Plan – Prologue

At the time this plan was being developed in 2000 and ultimately adopted in 2001, the economic and social climate in the Las Vegas Valley was much different than it is today. For the greater part of two decades, the region was among the fastest growing in the nation with the population doubling twice between 1985 and 2005. The Regional Policy Plan was developed as a guide for the community to accommodate this growth while addressing the pressures placed on roads, infrastructure, schools, services, and the environment. Now, as is the case with much of the country, we are faced with the challenges brought on by the national economic downturn. Where in 2002, the Las Vegas Valley was a leader in growth and development, in 2012 we are at the forefront of the foreclosure and unemployment crisis.

Some things haven't changed though. The Valley remains a "vibrant and exciting place to live and work". The need and desire for a regional vision and approach to address land use, transportation, housing, and environmental issues remains. In fact, addressing these issues is even more urgent as regional solutions are needed to bring the entire community back to an atmosphere of sustainability and prosperity. If the tone and the story seem dated, the needs and goals remain valid.

However, the SNRPC recognizes the obvious need to update this Regional Policy Plan. With the support of funding through HUD's Sustainable Communities Initiative, the SNRPC has undertaken the development of a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. This endeavor will build upon and expand our regional planning efforts through the involvement of new partnerships and the utilization of technology and methods for analysis and outreach that had been unavailable in the past. Anticipated for completion in early 2015, this plan will serve as a new foundation for regional planning and policy development in the Las Vegas Valley.

# *Southern Nevada Regional Policy Plan*



February 22, 2001  
September 28, 2010



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# Introduction

Southern Nevada is a vibrant and exciting place to live and work. Opportunities abound as growth continues to shape the region. In fact, growth has been dramatic: The Las Vegas Valley is the fastest growing region in the country. Since 1977, the population of the region has tripled and is expected to double again by the year 2020.

This growth is a mixed blessing. It means economic prosperity; businesses and residents of the region have certainly benefited from good economic times. Jobs are plentiful, and the economy is strong. Rapid growth also means, however, that more and more pressure is being placed on roads, sewers, schools, and the environment. The challenge facing the region is to sustain this growth without losing its quality of life. In short, we must plan for the future.

Good planning is nothing new to the Las Vegas Valley. Considering that a new house is built every 15 minutes, and a dozen new schools must be constructed each year to keep up with the growth, the Valley communities have done better than those in most other states in keeping up as well as they have. Now, regional leaders and the state legislature both agree that more is needed. Regional problems transcending local political jurisdictions must be solved on a regional level. While local autonomy must be respected, a regional vision is needed. Balancing the many regional needs with local independence is the challenge of this planning effort.

In order to address these regional issues in a collaborative way, local leaders have developed the Southern Nevada Regional Policy Plan. By creating a plan of action to address issues associated with rapid growth, improvements can be made to upgrade the quality of life and allow for continued economic progress. This plan is a guide for the future growth of the Las Vegas Valley; it will help guide local government leaders,



*The Las Vegas is the fastest growing region in the country*



*The new Bob Miller Middle School at Carnegie and Cozy Hill Circle*

businesses, and the Nevada Legislature in their efforts to maintain a strong economy while preserving and improving the quality of life and character of the Southern Nevada Region.

The focus of the Southern Nevada Regional Policy Plan is on making things happen. It is a way to coordinate important decisions about regional land use, transportation, public facilities, air quality, water quality, and open spaces. The Regional Policy Plan includes regional planning guidelines that will be followed by Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, Clark County, the Clark County School District, regional and state agencies, and public utilities. These guidelines address:

- Conservation, Open Space, and Natural Resources Protection
- Population Forecasts
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Air Quality
- Infill Development
- Public Schools/K-12 Education
- Sustainability

## Putting the Plan Together

In 1999, the Nevada Legislature adopted Assembly Bill 493 (set forth in the Appendix) requiring communities in the Las Vegas Valley to come together to produce a “regional policy plan”. As a mechanism for planning, the Las Vegas Valley governing bodies by interlocal agreement created the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition, which is comprised of elected officials from Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, and Clark County. Senate Bill 436, also approved in the 1999 legislative session, memorialized the interlocal agreement into state law and added an elected official from the Clark County School District to the coalition board.

The legislature charged the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (RPC) with crafting a regional plan that promotes the efficient use of land within existing urban areas, allows for the conversion of rural lands to other uses in a well-planned fashion, and promotes sustainable growth. The legislation favors growth in areas with existing public facilities, the preservation of natural resources, and balanced management of growth in the region. In short, the law requires the region to come together to better manage its future. The legislation also requires a “conformity” process through which regional planning efforts are to be coordinated with local planning efforts, and directs that “projects of regional significance” be addressed at a regional level.

With this legislative charge, the RPC immediately began its planning efforts. Fortunately, the Coalition was able to build on previous planning conducted by the Southern Nevada Strategic Planning Authority, which engaged thousands of citizens in identifying regional planning issues and created regional planning strategies and approaches to address anticipated growth needs. This prior planning effort served as the foundation for this regional planning process.

The Regional Planning Coalition initiated or supported a number of activities to assist in plan preparation, including:



Working group at a plan workshop



*Southern Nevada is building out at a residential density twice that of other major cities in the West.*

- Forming a "Technical Committee" consisting of managers and administrators from the various member jurisdictions.
- Establishing a "Planning Directors Committee" made up of the professional planning staff of the various jurisdictions.
- Retaining a consulting team to facilitate the planning process and produce a draft of the plan in concert with the Technical Committee and Planning Directors.
- Supporting organization of a "Kitchen Cabinet" Consisting of representatives of a cross-section of development and environmental interests. This group served as a sounding board to the consultants.
- Actively participating in discussions and revisions of the plan through monthly meetings with various committees and the consultants.
- Forming a "Speakers Bureau" to present summaries of planning activities to interested groups and publishing a brochure for citizens that explained the regional planning process.
- Consulting with related regional planning organizations to understand their current planning efforts and apprise them of the regional planning process.
- Conducting numerous interviews with a wide range of community representatives.
- Consulting with elected officials to provide input into the planning process.
- Briefing state legislators instrumental in developing the legislation.
- Organizing a major community workshop on the plan conformity process.

A particularly important early step in the creation of this plan involved learning how the Las Vegas Valley compares with other western regions on key regional planning indicators. As part of this education process, the RPC planning consultants compared Southern Nevada to other major western cities, including Denver, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, San Diego, and Reno. The regions were compared on population and employment growth rates, housing affordability, regional planning practices, parks and trails, transportation, and environmental quality.

The results of the comparison show both strengths and weaknesses and help set the stage for regional planning in the Valley:

- While Denver, Phoenix, and San Diego all have larger populations, Southern Nevada has the highest annual population and employment growth rate.

- Contrary to popular wisdom, Southern Nevada is building out at a residential density twice that of other major cities in the West. The other areas are developing at much lower densities, which encourages urban sprawl and an inefficient use of land and public facilities.
- Comparatively, Southern Nevada has the most affordable housing. The other cities are experiencing housing affordability problems, requiring more people to move further out to find housing. This furthers sprawl and increases commuting times, which further degrades air quality.
- Southern Nevada has the simplest and most efficient system of local government. The Valley has only five cities and the county engaging in local planning activities. The other regions have 5-10 times as many political jurisdictions engaging in planning, which makes regional planning coordination much more difficult.
- Southern Nevada engages in more regional planning than most of the other regions, taking a regional approach to transportation, water, wastewater, flood control and school planning. The largest gaps are in the coordination of these various planning efforts with land use planning and in coordinating school site acquisition.
- The Las Vegas Valley does not fare as well when comparing acres of locally owned parks or miles of developed trails. Most of the other regions have succeeded in providing more parks and trails opportunities. While it is true that the Valley is surrounded by extensive publicly owned land, that is also true for many western cities that provide more local parks and trails within the urbanized area. For example, the standard for the ratio of parks to population in this Valley is less than half that of other regions.
- While mass transit usage is high in the Valley compared to other communities, so is the use of the automobile. Bus ridership is high, but vehicle miles traveled are also high compared to the other regions, which has a direct adverse impact on air quality.
- The Valley is actually doing a good job of keeping up with regional infrastructure funding. The infrastructure backlog in the Las Vegas Valley is substantially less than in Denver and San Diego, where the transportation backlog alone is estimated to be greater than the total infrastructure backlog in the Las Vegas Valley.
- With regard to air quality, the Las Vegas Valley did not fare well in the mid-1990s compared to the other regions, but improvements have been made. Carbon monoxide levels



*SNRPC past Chair Steve Kirk (Henderson Councilman) at conformance workshop.*

have been coming down, and particulate matter levels are being addressed.

- The Valley does not fare particularly well when comparing watershed quality. Measures of water quality prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency raise concerns about the quality of the watershed. While this is not a measure of the quality of the drinking water that comes from the tap, it is an indicator of environmental quality.

This comparative information was particularly valuable in focusing attention on key issues throughout the process of drafting the regional plan. It also helped to dispel some myths and establish a better factual basis for plan policies.

In summary, the Southern Nevada region stacks up well compared to other major western cities with respect to:

- The small number of local governments engaged in planning.
- The amount of regional planning that is occurring.
- The density of residential development.
- Housing affordability.
- Transit ridership.
- Employment growth.
- Low infrastructure backlog.
- Air quality.

The region does not compare particularly well on:

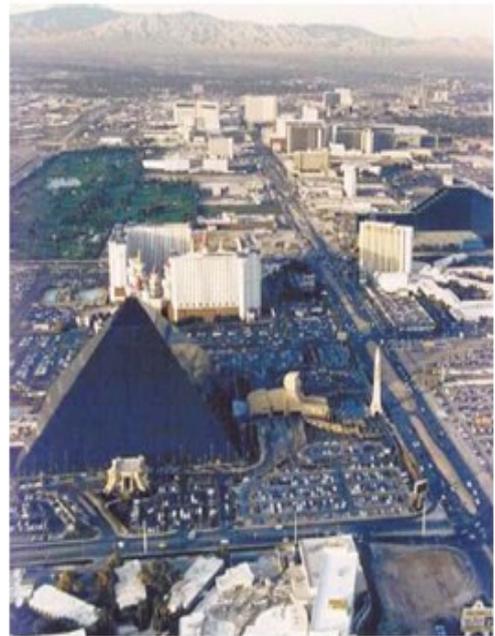
- Acres of parks and miles of trails.
- Vehicle miles traveled.
- Regional land use coordination.
- School site coordination.

# Guiding Principles

After this preliminary work, the Regional Planning Coalition developed an important set of principles to steer the planning process. These guiding principles served as a compass in drafting the plan and selecting among policy options. Because they represent an important consensus that was developed among the members of RPC, they should continue to play that role as the plan evolves in the future and in the RPC's decision-making processes:

- 1 **The Southern Nevada region desires to accommodate and take advantage of the benefits of growth, but address the negative impacts of that growth.**
- 2 **This plan builds on successful planning being conducted at the local level and through regional agencies such as the Regional Transportation Commission, the Southern Nevada Water Authority, the Regional Flood Control District, and others.**
- 3 **The Regional Planning Coalition respects local autonomy with regard to site-specific land use decisions and focuses on issues with larger regional impacts.**
- 4 **The Regional Plan focuses on policies and goals as a way to guide development and deal with impacts; it is not the role of the coalition or this plan to dictate specific locations where growth should occur.**
- 5 **The Regional Planning Coalition should be used as a forum for regional problem solving.**
- 6 **Efforts should be made to ensure that actions of federal, state, and regional agencies conform to the Regional Policy Plan.**

These guiding principles establish the framework around which the plan elements are constructed.

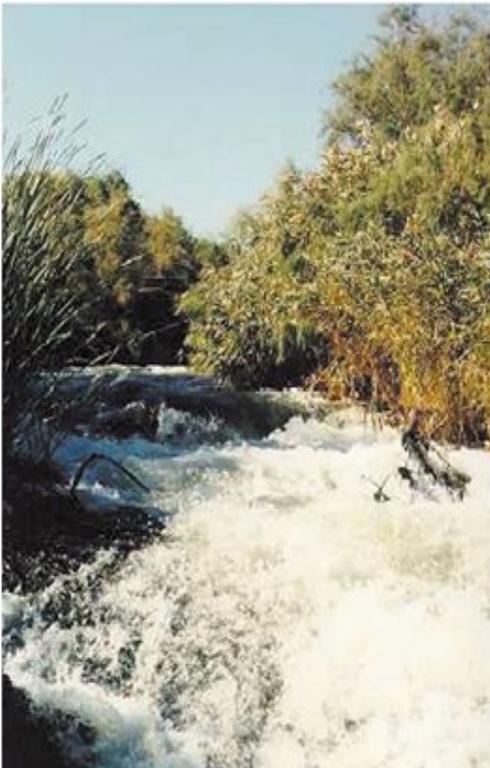


*The "Strip" is the Valley's economic engine.*

# Plan Elements

As noted above, this Regional Plan contains seven elements as called for in the state authorizing legislation:

- Conservation, Open Space, and Natural Resources
- Population Forecast
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Public Facilities
- Air Quality
- Infill Development
- Public Schools/K-12 Education



Importantly, these elements overlap with and address important related issues such as water quality and affordable housing. Each element begins with a context section that relates key factual background information and discusses major players and agencies involved in addressing that particular issue. The context also highlights aspects of the element that need to be dealt with from a regional perspective, as well as steps already taken or underway, and challenges remaining. Case study sidebars highlight relevant success stories from around the Las Vegas Valley, demonstrating progress already made and the potential for meeting regional challenges.

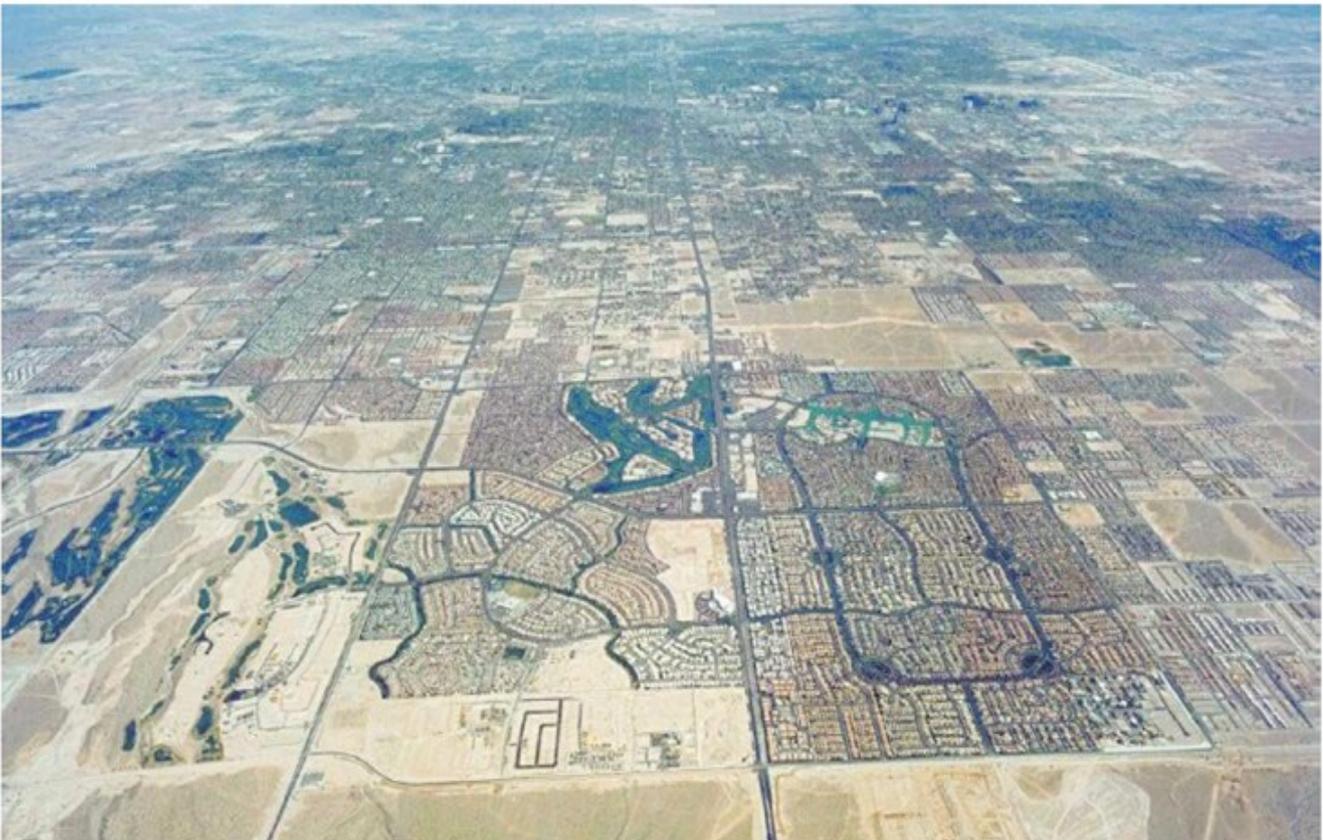
The second section sets forth in detail specific plan policies to address the major regional issues facing the Valley. The policies are broken down into three areas:

- **Regional Initiatives.** Major new regional efforts to be undertaken by the Valley's five local governments and school district, e.g., establishing a regional trails system.
- **Development Standards.** Consistent multijurisdictional development review standards to be adopted by each jurisdiction, e.g., standards to protect sensitive environmental areas and to govern construction of public infra-

- **Cooperation With Existing Regional Entities.** Specific initiatives between the five local governments and other regional entities such as implementation of the strategy to preserve and restore the Las Vegas Wash.

The final section identifies three to four action items that the local governments concluded need to be given a high priority to ensure timely and effective plan implementation.

The seven plan elements must be read together, not in isolation. For example, land use and air quality policies are inextricably intertwined just as are transportation and land use. A successful regional plan is one that recognizes this interaction and promotes coordination.



*The Las Vegas Valley has about a 20-30 year supply of vacant land to support projected*

## *Conservation, Open Space, and Natural Resource Elements*



### **Conservation Case Study: Buskin Basin Park**

*The City of Las Vegas has recently added seven acres of open space, picnic shelters, walking paths, a state of the art playground, and sports fields to its inventory of recreational facilities. Not only does this park provide up-to-date recreational facilities, it serves as a storm water detention basin that provides for the storage of 84.1 million gallons of storm water and is an integral part of the storm water management plan for the Las Vegas Valley. This is but one of several examples of joint efforts between the City of Las Vegas and the Clark County Regional Flood Control District currently under construction or being planned that serve dual use purposes.*

### **SETTING THE STAGE**

The Southern Nevada region is graced with some of the most spectacular scenery and public lands in the nation. They range from vast tracts of wild, environmentally sensitive lands managed by federal agencies to popular national recreational areas like Lake Mead. Perhaps because of the abundance of federally owned lands, the region has a shortage of close-in, easily accessible local parks and trails when compared to most other major western cities. This deficit was recognized by the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Authority, which recommended increasing the local parks/people ratio. It also recognized that the way that park space is calculated varies from jurisdiction-to-jurisdiction.

Much of the vacant land in the Valley and its environs is environmentally sensitive and not easily developable. The rugged terrain, steep slopes, washes and water resources make up an environmental system that poses significant management and conservation challenges. For example, the region is home to a number of threatened and endangered species such as the Desert Tortoise that are given special protection under federal law.

In addition to environmental issues, cultural and paleontological resources must also be taken into consideration. For example, the Upper Las Vegas Wash area is culturally significant to native and indigenous peoples, and contains a continuous section of Pleistocene strata with thousands of Ice Age mammal fossils. Other examples of significant historic and cultural resources include native and indigenous sites along the Whitney Mesa, the Las Vegas Springs Preserve, and Kiel Ranch, among others. Provisions should be made to ensure the long-term preservation and sensitive treatment of these resources.

These challenges have led to a flurry of efforts to address conservation, open space, and natural resource issues:

- The Las Vegas Wash Coordinating Committee, a broad-based inter-jurisdictional coalition, is crafting a plan to preserve this vital resource and protect water quality in the Valley;
- The region has adopted an intergovernmental protection plan for the Desert Tortoise that includes a development fee to pay for habitat protection and acquisition.
- A regional trails plan is being developed by the entities in the Valley.
- The state has authorized local governments to assess a residential construction tax that is used by all jurisdictions in the region to fund purchase of open space and parks.
- There are a variety of local initiatives underway that hold promise such as the recently completed Clark County Parks Master Plan, the Henderson steep slope protection regulations, joint use agreements for school playgrounds, and efforts by the regional Flood Control District to encourage joint planning and recreational use of flood control projects.



*Summerlin Trail*



*Desert Tortoise*

Other efforts are underway to address pressing issues. For example, there are good prospects to include trails as an integral part of all future flood control and drainage projects and to retrofit existing channels to provide greater recreational opportunities. Similarly, public utilities in the Valley have indicated their willingness to consider recreational use of utility corridors such as power lines. And of course, the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act offers enormous possibilities to provide land and funding for parks, open space, and resource protection.

This plan calls for a regional approach to open space planning and resource conservation. It recommends taking advantage of some clear opportunities to provide more easily accessible parks and trails and to conserve natural resources while maintaining the region's vibrant economy.

## **PLAN POLICIES**

### **Regional Initiatives**

- Establish a regional trails and open space plan with a regional funding base, without interfering in the design and provision of local parks by local jurisdictions.

The Regional Planning Coalition will serve as the regional oversight organization. Local governments will be encouraged to develop complementary local trail plans.

- Adopt a standard definition of parks and open space (i.e., neighborhood, community, regional) in each jurisdiction to facilitate regional parks planning.
- Target the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act special account to address areas with the most significant parks, trails, and open space needs. These funds should be used specifically for park development in more densely populated areas to create incentives for infill development.
- Coordinate the protection and preservation of environmentally, culturally or historically significant lands where such resources extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. Adopt a minimum parks and open space subdivision land dedication standards for new development (2.5 to 10 acres/1000 people depending on location). Seek to bring park developments in older established areas up to these standards. Require subdivision land dedication in accordance with applicable local and regional trails plan. Encourage the preservation of open space in accordance with local and regional open space plans. Give credit towards the existing residential construction tax to developers who dedicate land for open space and parks. Make the residential construction tax uniform throughout the Valley at the maximum level authorized by the State of Nevada.
- Encourage new subdivisions to maintain historic access to adjacent public lands that will remain public, or provide new access. Give credit for providing this access towards any local open space dedication requirement or residential construction tax.
- Adopt uniform regional sensitive lands protection standards throughout the Valley (e.g., no development on slopes greater than 30% without compliance with standards; 50-100 foot setback from defined major, environmentally sensitive stream/wash channels such as Las Vegas Wash, depending on whether it is located in an urban or suburban setting).



*Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve*

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#### **Plan Priorities**

1. Establish a regional trails and open space plan with a regional funding base, without interfering in the design and provision of local parks by local jurisdictions.
  2. Plan and construct flood control systems to provide trails and recreational facilities as well as serving flood-control functions.
  3. Promote better coordination between the school district and local governments on both facility sharing and joint development of schools and parks.
  4. Coordinate the protection of environmental, cultural and historic resources across jurisdictional boundaries.
-

### **Cooperation with Existing Regional Entities**

- Plan and construct flood control systems to provide trails and recreational facilities as well as serving flood-control functions. Acquire adequate rights-of-way to allow multipurpose use. Create program to retrofit existing flood channels and detention basins with trails and other recreational amenities as appropriate.

Convene an inter-jurisdictional planning committee under the auspices of the Regional Planning coalition to explore the planning, construction, financing and other aspects of expanded multi-purpose use of flood-control facilities.

- Promote better coordination between the school district and local governments on both facility sharing and joint development of schools and parks.
- Work with utilities to explore potential to use utility corridors for trails and other recreational purposes.
- Implement the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan to protect critical habitat and avoid federal control of local land development decisions. Expand the plan to include protection of riparian species.
- Implement the Southern Nevada Water Authority Cooperative Adaptive Management Plan, which establishes a strategy for preservation and restoration of the Las Vegas Wash.
- Work with the BLM to develop a plan for the protection of the cultural and paleontological resources of the Upper Las Vegas Wash.
- Continue working with the EPA, NRCS, Conservation District of Southern Nevada, Nevada Cooperative Extension Service and similar conservation-oriented agencies as appropriate to fund and implement environmental remediation, demonstration and educational programs in the region.

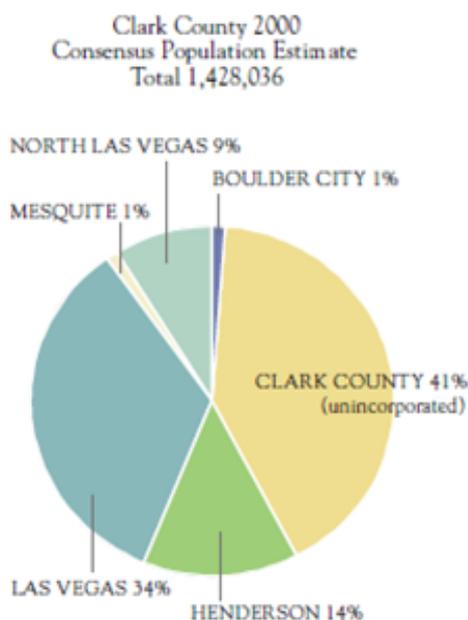
## Population Forecast Case Study: Cooperative Forecasting

In 2000, for the first time, the municipalities in Southern Nevada jointly reached consensus in the preparation and adoption of the annual population estimates for all of Clark County. Clark County staff led this project under the guidance of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition.

In the past, each municipality estimated its own population after which a joint technical review was conducted. This process was difficult and sometimes led to different sets of estimates for the various municipalities. Additionally, under the former process the individual estimates were not adopted as a package by the local governing bodies before submission to the State Demographer.

In summary, the consensus approach used by the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition for coordination of population information has been a great success. The process ensures that one set of population figures are submitted to the State Demographer and that population information is more widely supported by the local municipalities in Southern Nevada.

The following pie chart shows the estimated population distribution in Southern Nevada.



## Population Forecast

### SETTING THE STAGE

Southern Nevada is the fastest growing region in the country. The region grew from 405,000 people in 1977 to over 1.4 million people today. By the year 2020 the population of Southern Nevada is forecasted to be between 2 and 3 million people. With this amount of growth, it is a challenge to simply keep track of population and employment data and to manage the critical process of forecasting future growth. Different jurisdictions and agencies currently rely on different sources of data making for potential confusion and inconsistencies.

In addition to tracking growth trends, it is equally important to understand the relationship between forecasted growth and the ability of the Valley to support growth in particular areas, especially related to the ability to provide public facilities to support new growth. Fortunately, there is an emerging system of tracking capacity of new development in the Las Vegas Valley using geographic information technology and other computer modeling approaches. Efforts are underway to refine, improve, and expand this system for use throughout the Valley. Ultimately this system can be used to integrate the technical analysis of many issues such as land use, transportation, and air quality.

Thus, regional cooperation on population forecasting and related analyses is occurring, but different jurisdictions often use different data bases and independent analyses, creating potential inconsistencies and gaps in the regional understanding of regional land demand and capacity issues. This plan proposes the creation of an integrated regional system of tracking and forecasting population, employment growth, future land demand, and land capacity. It also calls for a system of maintaining and sharing this data on a cooperative regional basis.

## PLAN POLICIES

### **Regional Initiatives**

- The Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition has endorsed the forecasting model of University of Nevada Las Vegas Center for Business and Economic Research to update population forecasts every two years. The RPC has agreed to work with its constituent jurisdictions to develop a regional land demand and land capacity database, integrated with a regional geographic information system that will be used by all local and regional entities for planning purposes. The RPC will develop a system by which its constituent local governments can share information amongst themselves and with federal, state, and regional agencies.
- A regional intergovernmental agreement will be developed for the creation and maintenance of this regional repository of shared data and GIS-based land use modeling with regard to land demand and land capacity.



*A new home is built every 15 minutes in the Valley.*

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### **Plan Priorities**

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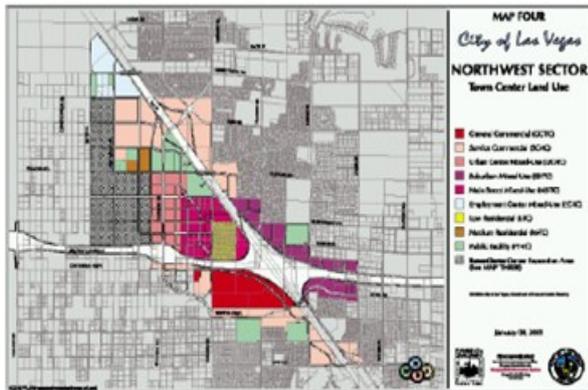
## Land Use

### SETTING THE STAGE

The Southern Nevada region has adequate land resources to support 20-30 years worth of future growth, even if it continues to occur at rapid recent rates. However, the Valley's land supply is not unlimited. In fact large undeveloped and unconstrained assemblages of property available for development are becoming increasingly rare, despite the pending release of substantial portions of Bureau Land Management (BLM) lands. With some notable exceptions, such as the 7,500 acres planned for master planned development in North Las Vegas, much of the remaining land is in smaller parcels. Thus, while undeveloped land is relatively plentiful, there is an increasing perception in the development community that large developable tracts are becoming scarcer.

The land use and development patterns in Southern Nevada are generally occurring in a fashion similar to many other fast growing regions. Most of the new development in the region is occurring on the undeveloped fringes. Different land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial and recreational, are occurring separate from one another, with few true mixed used developments in the region. These current development patterns, driven in part by the desire for personal mobility and freedom, cause heavy reliance on automobiles. Trips between home, work, school, shopping, services, and recreation typically require being in the car.

On the other hand, while many people believe that the Las Vegas Valley is an example of urban sprawl, development in the Valley is occurring at a higher density than in other major western cities. A low-density development pattern is often viewed as a symptom of sprawl; however, that is not occurring in the Valley as a general rule. New residential development in the Valley has a relatively high density of 6-8 dwelling units per acre.



### Land Use Case Study: Las Vegas Town Center Land Use Plan

Over the past decade the northwest section of Las Vegas has been the fastest growing area within the City. To Plan for and accommodate this rapid growth the City adopted the Northwest Area General Plan Amendment in 1996 which made provisions for a new Town Center. It also established a requirement to develop a master plan for the Town Center at a level of detail not provided by the City of Las Vegas General Plan.

The Town Center has been envisioned in the Northwest Plan as being a high intensity, high density, mixed use development. The plan incorporated a complete mix of land uses including retail, office, residential, parks, schools and other public facilities. The intent of the Town Center concept is to prevent the sprawl of commercial and office projects into developing residential neighborhoods that exist

*Continued on page 23*

Downtown Las Vegas serves as a symbolic heart of the region, making preservation and redevelopment important regional goals.

The “Strip” serves as the primary economic engine for the region, making its health and long-term viability critical to the region’s future. Boulder City, Henderson, and North Las Vegas each have downtowns that are in various stages of redevelopment. Each of the entities is expected to continue to allocate its own resources toward making its downtown successful.

The planning and management of land use in the Las Vegas Valley typically is handled at the local level by Clark County, the City of Las Vegas, the City of North Las Vegas, the City of Henderson, and Boulder City. In fact, these jurisdictions greatly value their local land use planning autonomy. Each unit of government engages in systematic land use planning and regulation, but there are only isolated instances of coordination between local governments as it relates to land use planning. Aside from minimal state requirements, there is no standardized format or content for local land use plans and development standards.

There are some examples of intergovernmental cooperation and development review, particularly related to cross boundary development impacts. Embryonic multijurisdictional land use planning efforts such as those occurring between the City of Henderson and Clark County and between the City of Las Vegas and Clark County in the northwest offer the potential to serve as a template for regional cooperation on land use issues. However, there is not a land use planning agency similar to those that plan flood control, water, or transportation improvements on a regional basis. There are several important implications of existing land use trends and patterns:

*Continued from page 22*

in the Northwest Sector Plan area by centrally locating the Town Center are a around the Beltway/ Highway 95 interchange. Most of the retail service and recreational needs of the resident population in the Northwest planning area will be met by Town Center.

This concentration of economic activities will accomplish three key objectives:

- The Town Center will aid in the preservation of the life-style which exists in most of the residential neighborhoods located in the Northwest planning area.
- The Town Center will reduce stress on existing as well as future infrastructure systems serving the Northwest planning area.
- The Town Center will provide an employment base for a majority of the residents in the Northwest planning area.

- As the Valley continues to develop and as vacant land becomes scarce, it is likely that satellite communities such as Jean, Primm, and Pahrump will experience significant growth pressures in the future. The proposed new airport near Jean will likely generate additional development demand outside Las Vegas Valley.
- Current development patterns, with growth primarily on the periphery, lead to costly infrastructure and service extensions such as sewers, water, and school services.
- Market forces are gradually leading to pressure for increasingly higher development densities.
- These same market forces will make infill development look increasingly attractive. While it is generally recognized that infill sites are able to take advantage of existing infrastructure, certain public facilities such as schools and parks may still be affected.
- Even with the release of BLM land, the Valley topography and the BLM ownership will act as a natural barrier to outward growth over the next 20-30 years.

This plan proposes an approach to land use planning that recognizes land as a valuable and limited resource. It emphasizes the relationship of land use planning to capital facilities planning, transportation, and air quality. It calls for a strong urban core and the gradual expansion of growth into new areas. It recommends a better mixing of land uses and a better balance of jobs and housing.

It calls for a strong urban core and the gradual expansion of growth into new areas. It recommends a better mixing of land uses and a better balance of jobs and housing.

## **PLAN POLICIES**

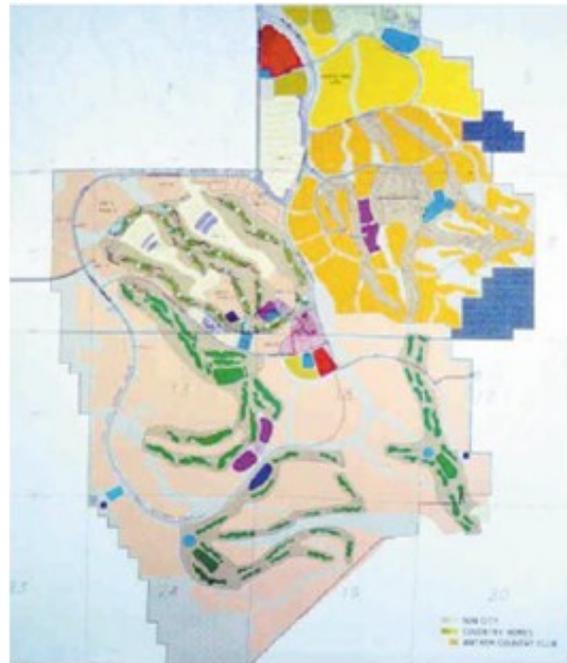
### ***Regional Initiatives***

- Recognize downtown Las Vegas as the .downtown. for the region, as a vital center for major governmental, financial, business, and cultural facilities as the City of Las Vegas implements its newly adopted Downtown Centennial Plan. Create incentives to encourage infill development in downtowns in Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, and North Las Vegas, and in urban centers in unincorporated Clark County.

- Create a series of mixed-use development centers in newly developing areas with an integrated mix of commercial, civic, and residential land uses, a balance of jobs and housing, connections to surrounding neighborhoods, a pedestrian emphasis, and access to mass transit.
- Identify preferred outlying growth areas, with special attention to the south I-15 corridor, Pahrump, Mesquite and northeast Clark County. Direct new development to these areas only in accordance with policies that support this Regional Plan. No major residential development should occur around the Jean/new airport without concurrent plans for mass transit service. Establish an open space community separator in western Clark County adjacent to Pahrump; no BLM land should be released in that area for residential development in Clark County.

#### **Development Standards**

- Non-contiguous development will not be encouraged. It should be permitted only with the requirement that developers share in providing needed infrastructure and that it meets level of service standards. Potential funding mechanisms include local improvement districts and development agreements, among others. Create a cost recoupment system for the eventual recovery of the cost of such services or facilities.
- Encourage development of multijurisdictional development review standards, where appropriate in selected areas. For example, sensitive land protection, cell tower regulation, and electrical sub-stations should be subject to multijurisdictional approaches.
- Provide incentives for intergovernmental planning and development review agreements (for example, additional funding for parks). Adopt joint city/county plans for influence areas around each incorporated area. Ensure that joint planning efforts do not significantly slow development review. Ensure that this system is not slower and inefficient without measurable results.



The regional plan recommends development with integrated trails and open spaces.

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#### **Plan Priorities**

1. Establish process for addressing impacts of projects of regional significance and projects with cross boundary impacts.
  2. Recognize downtown Las Vegas as the "downtown" for the region, as a vital center for major governmental, financial, business and cultural facilities and support implementation of the City of Las Vegas' newly adopted Downtown Centennial Plan.
  3. Identify preferred outlying growth areas, with special attention to the south I-15 corridor, Pahrump, Mesquite, and northeast Clark County. Direct new development to these areas only in accordance with policies that support this Regional Plan. No major residential development should occur around the Jean/new airport without concurrent plans for mass transit service. Establish an open space community separator in western Clark County adjacent to Pahrump; no BLM land should be released in that area for residential development in Clark County.
  4. Each local master plan should address the policies of this regional plan.
-

# Transportation

## SETTING THE STAGE

The explosive growth in Southern Nevada affects the average citizen directly through increased traffic congestions. The pace and form of this growth continues to increase traffic in the region. This growth combined with high percentages of “single occupancy vehicle trips” in the Valley means that traffic is increasing even more rapidly than the population. The increase in traffic and the related congestion causes significant public frustration.

To date the region has met its transportation needs mainly by construction new roads, often with local funds. However, findings of the Resort Corridor MIS demonstrate that even with all the improvements planned in the street network the region will not be able meet future travel demand through roads alone. Changes will be needed in the modes of transportation.

In fact, the regional CAT bus system has experienced substantial increases in ridership, demonstrating a potentially strong demand for transit. However, mass transit continues to account for a small percentage of regional trips--less than 2%.

Through the efforts of the Regional Transportation Commission and other agencies, regional transportation planning has improved in recent years. However, local street improvement planning has improved in recent years. However, local street improvement and construction projects are not well coordinated in terms of timing, phasing, and standards. Moreover, the region has not yet completed a transportation plan that examines all transportation modes and integrates transportation planning with land use and air quality planning.

Nevertheless, there are many positive strides being made in the transportation arena:

- The Regional Transportation Commission is engaged in a major effort to analyze the way in which alternative land use patterns relate to transportation efficiency. This analysis will establish a model for linking land use planning, transportation planning, and air quality planning.



*The Valley is building a multimodal transportation system.*

- The appropriate future mix of transportation modes such as automobiles, buses, guideway systems and trails is being examined at the regional level.
- The technical tools to allow for a complete and integrated analysis of transportation issues related to air quality and land uses are being developed.
- Plans are underway for a fixed guideway mass transit system to serve as the core for regional mass transit network. In addition, a high-speed mass transit system is being proposed to California.

The basic regional transportation challenge will be to reduce the growth of vehicle miles traveled in the region. Continued increases in automobile trips create an ongoing challenge for air quality attainment and obviously increase traffic congestion. As vehicle miles and congestion increases, average vehicle speeds decrease, trip duration increases, and air quality deteriorates. It is important for the region to better link transportation and land use and air quality planning and to arrive at the appropriate mix of transportation types that creates the best regional transportation system with the least impact on the environment.

A series of transportation planning improvements are proposed in this plan. These plan recommendations advance goals for accomplishing better regional planning linkage between land use, air quality, and transportation.

## PLAN POLICIES

### **Regional Initiatives**

- Complete a coordinated and integrated regional transportation and air quality plan that reflects and guides local land use plans.
- Create a regional transportation model that is integrated with air quality and other socioeconomic and demographic models.
- Develop a regional “intelligent transportation system.” This should include a mix of tools such as coordinated traffic signals that can be adjusted based on traffic conditions, and a central traffic monitoring and communications facility.



### **Transportation Case Study: North Las Vegas Super Bus**

Is this a bus or train? This cutting edge technology coming to you from France is a bus, a CivisBus to be exact. Tired of waiting around on Route 113, which is CAT’s 3rd busiest route, well here is the solution?

The RTC (Regional Transportation Commission) staff, working cooperatively with the City of North Las Vegas, the Nevada Department of Transportation, and Clark County has developed a Bus Rapid Transit Project (BRT) for the Las Vegas Boulevard North. This demonstration project will test and evaluate new technologies to increase transit capacity, reduce vehicle emissions, improve passenger convenience, increase cost effectiveness, evaluate optical guidance systems, and evaluate hybrid propulsion systems.

Some of the high tech features this CivisBus bus will have are: innovative interior design, wide doors, low floors to match curb height, optical guidance system, and hybrid electric/diesel power.

North Las Vegas will be the first entity to welcome this innovative project. Two project phases are an-

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## **Plan Priorities**

1. Complete a coordinated and integrated regional transportation and air quality plan that reflects and guides local land use plans.
  2. Develop an objective validation process for the prioritization and expenditure of street and highway funds.
  3. Reduce VMTs by promoting mixed-use developments and jobs/housing balance in each jurisdiction.
- 

- Take steps to encourage the use of mass transit, multiple-occupancy vehicles, and other modes as recommended in the alternative mode transportation study being developed by the Regional Transportation Commission. For example, equalizing commuting times with single-occupancy vehicles can encourage vehicle sharing.

### **Development Standards**

- Reduce “vehicle miles traveled” by promoting mixed-use developments and better jobs/housing balance in each jurisdiction.
- Promote land use patterns and development designs that will support regional mass transit.
- Draft a model local transportation demand ordinance and encourage local governments to adopt implementation tools tailored to local conditions.
- Develop model access control regulations and standards on major arterial and collectors.

### **Cooperation with Existing Regional Entities**

- Develop an objective validation process for the prioritization and expenditure of street and highway funds.
- Adopt consistent local street construction timing and phasing standards.
- Establish more effective systems of coordination of road construction activities and schedules and communication of such schedules to the public.

# Public Facilities

## SETTING THE STAGE

Public facilities, such as sewer, water, transportation, flood control and schools are the backbone of a community. Without good public facilities, no region can prosper. The Southern Nevada region has done a solid job of providing regional infrastructure services. However, local infrastructure has not kept pace with growth as well the regional infrastructure, nor are local infrastructure systems well coordinated with other local infrastructure systems. Further, the linkage between public facilities planning and land use planning has been lacking on both the regional and local level.

The relationship between the planning of school sites to the land use planning and development process in local communities has been a particular source of frustration. While school sites are typically negotiated in master plan communities, there is no uniform, established process for dedication of school sites as part of the overall development process. BLM land often provides sites for schools, although these parcels are not always located where they are needed. Also, many school facilities in established neighborhoods will need renovations or reconstruction in the near future.

The Southern Nevada region has some significant opportunities to construct public facilities that serve multiple purposes. Many regions, for example, build flood control facilities in such a way as to also serve as open space linkages as part of regional open space networks. The Southern Nevada regional flood control facilities have historically been based upon paved channels, with little opportunity for multiple purpose use of the facilities, although there have been recent examples of flood control facilities being used for playing fields and trails.



### Public Facilities Case Study: City of Henderson “Turn Key” Public facilities

In the City of Henderson, “turn-key” public facilities are increasingly common and are perfect example of cooperation between the public and private sectors. A private developer builds the facility and then “turns it over” to the city once completed.

Mast plans such as Green Valley Ranch, Seven Hills, Anthem, and South Valley Ranch all included parks which were dedicated to the city. In all, Henderson has received over 140 acres of developed park space through the turn-key process. Discover Park is 10 acres and has popular park features, including a playground, tennis courts, and barbecue and picnic facilities. Anthem Hills Park will be five times bigger than Discovery, and will offer a much wider range of recreation attractions, including volleyball courts, a swimming pool, a skate park, and a roller hockey rink.

Henderson’s three newest fire stations are all turn-key facilities. The developers of Lake Las Vegas Resort built Station No. 96., Station No. 97 was built by MacDonald Properties, developer of MacDonald Ranch and MacDonald Highlands. Station No. 98, the city’s newest was built by five separate developers, each with master plans nearby. Developers have also build and donated to the city several water and sewer facilities.



Boulder City City Hall



City of Las Vegas City Hall



Clark County Government Center

- Funding of public facilities is based upon a .growth pays for growth. basis, although there is no consistent requirement for adequate public facilities to be provided concurrently with development.
- There are some common standards for public facilities and utility rights-of-way, although additional standards could be identified and implemented.
- There are some public facility cost recovery and funding mechanisms, such as water system fees, flood control sales taxes, and transportation sales taxes, but they are not being used in a comprehensive way.
- Clark County has attempted to link land use planning with public facilities planning through the use of “Community Districts” and more recently through the Southwest Las Vegas Valley Public Facilities Needs Assessment Study.

While the region has done an admirable job of keeping up with explosive growth, there is room for improvement. Specifically, the linkages between public facilities planning and land use planning, including the location, density, and timing of development should be improved at both the regional and local level. The actual construction of new facilities should also be better coordinated through improved communication and more effective implementation techniques.

Financing of infrastructure should be re-examined, specifically the need to continue the evolution to .anticipatory financing. For provision of infrastructure, such as bonds, impact fees, and infrastructure assessment rather than continued reliance on a .pay as you go. approach.

This plan promotes a better coordination of public facilities with the land use planning process and better regional coordination. It also encourages the continued evolution of better public facility financing approaches that are more

#### **PLAN POLICIES**

##### ***Regional Initiatives***

- Develop improved baseline regional level of service standards and definitions for key facilities with regional impacts, such as arterial streets, flood management facilities, and parks.

The region has tried to meet public facility challenges in a number of ways:

#### **Development Standards**

- Non-contiguous development will not be encouraged. It should be permitted only with the requirement that developers share in providing needed infrastructure and that it meets level of service standards. Potential funding mechanisms include local improvement districts and development agreements, among others. Create a cost recoupment system for the eventual recovery of the cost of such services or facilities.
- Require local jurisdictions to have Capital Improvement Plans consistent with local land use plans. These plans should be in a consistent format so that regional needs can be more easily and consistently identified.
- Adopt a standardized cost sharing, recovery, and recoupment methodology for all jurisdictions in order to avoid case-by-case negotiations. Explore alternative cost recovery systems.
- Establish a more effective system of coordination of road construction activities and schedules and communication of such schedules to the public.

#### **Cooperation with Existing Regional Entities**

- Convene an interjurisdictional planning committee under the auspices of the Regional Planning Coalition to improve the identification of school sites. Include representatives of the development community on this committee.
- Local jurisdictions shall collaborate on a regional long range plan to address the issue of homelessness. They shall undertake interjurisdictional planning under the auspices of the SNRPC to improve planning and the location of homeless facilities.



*North Las Vegas fire station*



*New University of Nevada at Las Vegas building.*

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### **Plan Priorities**

1. Convene an interjurisdictional planning committee under the auspices of the Regional Planning Coalition to improve the identification of school sites. Include representatives of the development community on this committee.
  2. Develop improved baseline regional level of service standards and definitions for key facilities with regional impacts, such as arterial streets, flood management facilities, and parks.
  3. Require local jurisdictions to have Capital Improvement Plans consistent with local land use plans. These plans should be in a consistent format so that regional needs can be more easily and consistently identified.
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## Air Quality

### SETTING THE STAGE

The quality of the air that we breathe is a fundamental public health concern. Unfortunately the rapid growth in the Las Vegas Valley has contributed to air quality problems both as a result of increased vehicular traffic and land disturbance/construction activities for new development. The Valley is classified as a serious non-attainment area for both carbon monoxide (from motor vehicles) and PM10 (essentially dust created by land disturbance, construction activity, and unpaved roads) by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Moreover, proposed new US EPA Ozone Standards, and possibly new PM2.5 Standards, may result in additional non-attainment designations.

Continued increases in vehicle miles traveled will make it a challenge to comply with carbon monoxide standards. This is exacerbated by a regional land use pattern characterized by separation of land uses that encourages reliance upon the automobile.

Clark County is, however, making strides to improve the situation. For example, the Clark County Health District has adopted new rules to reduce PM10 through controls on disturbed vacant land, construction activities, and unpaved roads. These rules, effective on January 1, 2001, are among the most stringent dust control rules in the United States. Also, the Las Vegas Valley has not had a CO exceedence of EPA standards for over two years.

The challenges for improving air quality are closely related to land use and transportation planning issues. Reducing vehicle miles traveled, reducing land disturbance during the development process, paving unpaved roads, improving the mix of jobs to housing throughout the region, and encouraging development patterns conducive to transit are all important to improving air quality.



### Air Quality Case Study: City of Boulder City 15,000 Trees Program

In the spring of 1997, five hundred residents attended a potluck supper to dedicate themselves to the re-greening of Boulder City. Plans were drawn, demonstration projects were scheduled, and residents showed up to put plants into the ground. Simultaneously, Eldorado Energy was negotiating a lease for a gas-fired energy plant on city-owned land seventeen miles into the desert. Through creative work on the part of the energy company and the city, the Clark County Health district recognized the planting of trees as emissions mitigation. Monies became available to purchase the trees that will green Boulder City.

Through the development of a landscape crew dedicated to the implementation of re-greening landscape designs, over four miles of boulevard have been planted at an affordable cost. Three community planting days and ten specific planning projects (e.g., Eagle Scout projects, Ecology Club projects) later, countless residents own the re-greening effort. People watch the plants they planted grow. Boulder City has learned that planting trees improved air quality.

## PLAN POLICIES

### *Regional Initiatives*

- Identify and implement institutional methods of improving air quality planning, monitoring and regulations. Review the creation of a regional air quality board.
- Implement and enforce effective dust control rules and best management practices to attain PM10 standards.
- Monitor progress to attain and maintain carbon monoxide standards. Implement control measures as needed.
- Develop plans and actions to meet anticipated ozone standards.
- Adequately fund air quality planning and improvement programs.



*Dust from construction activities and unpaved roads contributes to air quality*

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### **Plan Priorities**

1. Implement and enforce effective dust control rules and best management practices to attain PM10 standards.
  2. Identify and implement institutional methods of improving air quality planning, monitoring and regulations. Review the creation of a regional air quality board.
  3. Adequately fund air quality planning and improvement programs.
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### ***Infill Case Study: North Las Vegas***

*Walker Park is a successful infill project created by the City of North Las Vegas in response to a dramatic residential need. At nearby Windsor Park subdivision, the residents were afflicted with homes that were sinking and collapsing around them as a result of the confluence of two geologic fissures. Many of the homes in Windsor Park were in such a dilapidated condition that they constituted a health and safety hazard to their occupants. The residents petitioned the City Council for assistance, and the development of Walker Park subdivision became a part of that assistance known as the Windsor Park Revitalization Project. The project took the form of a voluntary relocation program. Each resident was surveyed to determine both the priority of the need and their willingness to take part in the program. Walker Park Subdivision is a prime example of how infill development can be used to redevelop mature areas and thereby promote a healthy economic core for urban communities.*

## ***Infill Development***

### **SETTING THE STAGE**

Land should be viewed as a limited, valuable resource in Southern Nevada. The consumption of new, undeveloped land around the periphery of the region is necessary and will continue; however, the development or redevelopment of vacant or under-utilized land within existing urban areas can moderate the consumption of new land around the edges of the region. In addition, such “infill” development is typically able to take advantage of existing infrastructure systems.

At the same time, infill development, and redevelopment brings needed investment into areas that are often suffering from disinvestment. A healthy urban core helps ensure a healthy region.

There are a large number of vacant sites within the existing urbanized area of Southern Nevada. However, there are numerous hurdles discouraging development or redevelopment of many of these areas. These include local neighborhood opposition, environmental contamination of sites, lack of motivation by landowners to sell, antiquated infrastructure, high land values, and low holding costs. Land values and development costs have typically been lower for sites at the periphery of the valley, making greenfield development more lucrative for developers. Equivalent incentives are needed for infill and redevelopment sites to ensure that they are attractive to the development community.

One of the difficulties in planning for and promoting infill and redevelopment is that they are often difficult concepts to define. Many people consider infill to be narrowly applied to the urban core. Others consider the filling in of vacant sites in new developing areas to be infill. This lack of a commonly accepted definition of infill has made it difficult to arrive at a regional infill policy. The SNRPC addressed this in 2002 with its Infill Development Plan. The plan defined infill as “...the development or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites in economically or physically static or declining areas.”

In the future, the BLM will be a player in the infill process, through the selling by auction of substantial amounts of BLM land within the urbanized area. The BLM has already released substantial portions of land to the airport, notably west of the airport, which may be available for appropriate non-residential infill. Lands are identified for sale through a joint selection process established by interlocal agreement between Southern Nevada government entities.

A related and complementary component of infill in older developed areas is redevelopment. Redevelopment needs can be found in all of the Las Vegas Valley cities and unincorporated areas of Clark County.

An important aspect of infill development is compatibility with the surrounding area, especially if the area is a historic neighborhood. Historic neighborhoods and buildings are an important component of healthy and sustainable communities, and should be carefully considered in any redevelopment or infill policies and plans.

The challenge for development of a regional infill policy will involve overcoming infill hurdles and make living in infill areas more attractive. This plan advocates a regional strategy, implemented primarily at the local level, for defining, encouraging, and creating incentives for redevelopment and infill as a way to manage land resources in the Valley.

## PLAN POLICIES

### Regional Initiatives

- Provide incentives for infill development and redevelopment such as enterprise zones, blight removal, public investment, assistance with leasing and others.
- Encourage major public investment in facilities such as regional civic entertainment facilities in the urban core.
- Identify revenue sources, tax increment financing, or other tax initiatives to create funding to support redevelopment and infill programs such as low-interest construction loans, utility fee waivers, and provision of open space and community amenities.
- Adopt a common definition of historic neighborhoods based on NRS 278 to aid in identification and historic preservation planning efforts.



Historic Neighborhood, Las Vegas

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### Plan Priorities

1. Include infill and redevelopment policies in local Comprehensive Plans. Local communities should examine utility, fire, parking, design, setback and other local standards to remove impediments to infill. Consider service fee breaks or rebates. Utilize funds generated by BLM land sales to fund parks, trails, and natural lands in urban areas, making infill and redevelopment more attractive.
  2. Encourage major public investment in facilities such as civic entertainment facilities within the urban core.
-

- Identify funding sources for ongoing survey and inventory of historic neighborhoods and resources throughout Southern Nevada. Survey data should be compiled in a standard GIS or GIS-compatible program for efficient data sharing between local governments. A regional information management and access plan should be developed to assimilate and disseminate data on historic resources.

#### **Development Standards**

- Infill is the development or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites in economically or physically static or declining areas.
- Require that each jurisdiction create and implement an infill and redevelopment policy within their Comprehensive Plans.
- Include infill and redevelopment policies in local Comprehensive Plans. Local communities should examine utility, fire, parking, design, setback and other local standards to remove impediments to infill. Consider service fee breaks or rebates.
- Examine the feasibility of modifying cost recovery fees so that they are either not assessed, or are assessed at a lower rate in developed areas because public facilities needs are lower.
- Encourage higher density development in appropriate urban areas to make infill more attractive to developers.
- Historic neighborhoods are developed areas that consist of 10 or more residential dwelling units, where at least two-thirds of the dwelling units are 40 or more years of age.
- Require that each jurisdiction create and implement a historic neighborhood and resource policy within their Comprehensive Plans. The policy Local historic neighborhood policies should encourage the preservation of historic neighborhoods and buildings as an appropriate strategy for redevelopment, infill, job development, community stabilization and open space conservation.
- Encourage infill development of new housing, public and professional services and commercial uses in close proximity to historic neighborhoods, without encroaching into the residential boundaries.

#### **Cooperation with Existing Regional Entities**

- Encourage the state and federal government to give funding priority to areas with strong infill and redevelopment programs.
- Utilize funds generated by BLM land sales to fund parks, trails and natural lands in urban areas, making infill more attractive.
- Explore creative taxation systems that encourage
- development of vacant, infill parcels in urban areas.
- Develop a regional information management and access plan to assimilate and disseminate data on historic resources.
- Encourage local utility companies to prioritize
- infrastructure improvements in historic areas.
- Promote the protection and preservation of historic buildings and resources.

## Public Schools/K-12 Education

### SETTING THE STAGE

In 1950, the Las Vegas Valley's population was fewer than 50,000 residents and the Clark County School District was not yet in existence. In contrast, the Valley's population in 2009 exceeded two million residents, and the District was the fifth largest in the nation, with over 300,000 students.

The District manages one of the nation's largest school construction and modernization programs. Local entities and the District must work together to ensure that the locations of new schools/facilities and the expansion of existing schools and facilities serve the community, focus as community focal points and are fully integrated and accessible to residents and children via all modes of transportation be it motorized, bicycling, or walking.

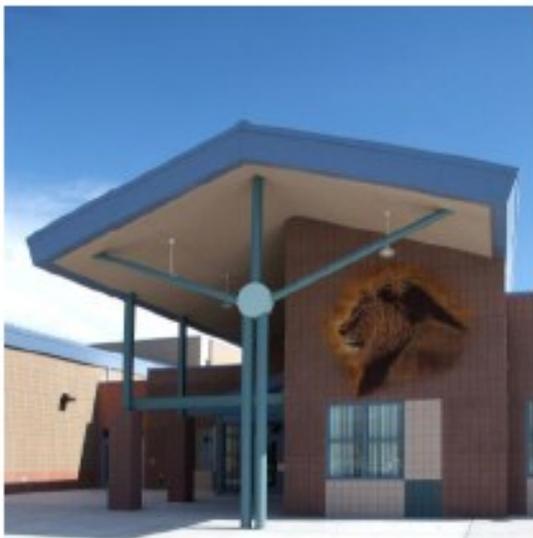
Facilitating community involvement is essential. Schools are important public assets in their neighborhoods and can increasingly provide space for daycare, community recreation, and adult education programs. Integrating community uses with school facility planning will help schools continue to play a vital role in their community, while achieving economies for public agencies. To achieve meaningful engagement and support, both structured and informal dialogue must be facilitated with all stakeholders. This is an essential part of the process that will begin transparency and foster more open communications.

To the greatest extent practicable, schools should be located adjacent to public facilities and have minimal adverse impacts to neighborhoods. Communicating the key elements of the final plan document to each regional agency and the surrounding community ensures familiarity with its elements and support for its aims. Continual identification of opportunities for partnerships and more extensive and innovative community use of public schools should be a collaborative effort.

This plan promotes improved coordination for the development of school facilities with local entities through future land use planning and the site selection process. The plan also encourages coordination between the regional entities to allow for appropriate and well-planned school and school facility locations.



*The Clark County School District covers 7,910 square miles and includes the entire metropolitan Las Vegas area, all outlying communities and rural areas. Under state law, each Nevada County has one school district responsible for K-12 public education. The District is divided into four Area Service Centers and one innovative region – Superintendent's Schools, which include Magnet Schools, Empowerment Schools, Language Acquisition Models, Career and Technical Academies and Professional Practice Schools. The District operates over 325 schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels including alternative and special education schools.*



**Plan Priorities**

1. Use SNRPC land use and population forecasting and estimating data when completing the schools facility master plan.
2. Convene an inter-jurisdictional work group to assist with site development coordination.
3. Support existing efforts to identify public properties for potential shared use and co-location opportunities.

**PLAN POLICIES**

**Regional Initiatives**

- Complete a coordinated and integrated schools facility master plan that reflects and informs local land use plans.

**Development Standards**

- Encourage the development of multi-jurisdictional planning for schools.
- Develop common planning strategies to achieve the most efficient use of resources and maximize utilization of facilities for the mutual benefit of stakeholders.
- Encourage the use of the School Development Tracking Form for new and existing developments for residential and commercial uses.
- Implement and adopt the use of a Public School Facilities' Element outlining goals, objectives and policies relating to and ensuring and improving school concurrency.

**Cooperation with Regional Entities**

- Improve upon coordination between jurisdictional entities and various outside agencies to facilitate joint development of schools/facilities, parks and other public community uses.
- Collaborate and work in coordination with local utilities and transportation agencies for better utilization of utility corridors, transit routes and future planning.
- Implement a Schools Element Plan with goals and policies advising of the site selection and land acquisition process as part of jurisdictional land use plans.
- Work with BLM and the various local jurisdictions to develop an overall land plan showcasing the various R&PP sites available and/or undeveloped and establish a strategy for land development decisions.

# Sustainability

## SETTING THE STAGE

The pursuit of greater sustainability is an important regional issue for Southern Nevada with many aspects that can best be addressed through collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries. As residents of a unique desert environment, Southern Nevadans understand necessity as well as the benefits, both environmental and economic, of conserving natural resources and living within the bounds of nature. In the public realm, local governments are leading the charge to provide necessary services to residents while striving to address the values of efficiency and environmental responsibility that residents have come to expect. Local governments also have a civic obligation and opportunity to serve as a public forum for furthering education and outreach efforts related to sustainability.

In Southern Nevada, sustainability has become a significant issue due to its close relationship with long-standing efforts such as water conservation, energy efficiency, and air quality. These factors will continue to play a critical role in our community's ability to grow and thrive as we look ahead into the future. Thoughtful management of our precious natural resources contributes to the quality of life of our residents and our ability to attract and retain progressive, community-oriented businesses to diversify our local economy.

Environmental issues rarely follow clear jurisdictional boundaries, and it is essential that governmental entities combine efforts in order to make a meaningful impact. SNRPC is the most appropriate forum for this type of collaboration in Southern Nevada. This Plan Element identifies a range of critical sustainability issues facing Southern Nevada and provides recommendations to help all communities grow more sustainably.

## PLAN POLICIES

### *Regional Initiatives*

- Promote Southern Nevada as a center for renewable energy and other green industries.
- Support ongoing efforts to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the region.
- Promote best practices for tree health in our arid climate through a regional urban forestry management plan.



*Nevada Solar One, Boulder City*



*Desert-Integrated Development*



*Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)*

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#### **Plan Priorities**

1. Coordinate regional efforts to manage and preserve natural resources.
2. Identify and implement sustainability measures and initiatives to increase regional tourism, diversify our economy, and stabilize population and employment without adversely impacting the environment.
3. Create educational and outreach tools to inform residents and visitors about the financial and environmental benefits associated with sustainability.
4. Secure funding to achieve the goals and objectives outlined herein.

- Promote the efforts of the Southern Nevada Water Authority with regard to water conservation.
- Coordinate with the Regional Transportation Commission to reduce congestion, enhance fuel efficiency, promote alternative modes of transportation, increase overall mobility, and improve air quality.
- Promote efforts to improve energy efficiency in new and existing buildings in Southern Nevada.
- Promote recycling efforts across the region.

#### **Development Standards**

- Integrate sustainable principles, such as energy efficiency, water conservation, and recycling, into governmental operations within each jurisdiction.
- Revise local regulations to remove barriers and provide support for sustainable development.

#### **Cooperation with Existing Regional Entities**

- Provide support for regional programs such as Conservation District of Southern Nevada, Green Chips, HomeFree Nevada, and other non-profit organizations.
- Coordinate with local businesses and non-profit organizations to promote sustainability efforts and benefits on a regional level.
- Work with state, federal, and private partners to explore financial and collaborative opportunities related to sustainability.

# Plan Conformance Process

The Achilles Heel of most regional plans is lack of any reliable framework for implementation. The RPC is proposing a process that will at once ensure that the plan is effective while maintaining traditional local land use prerogatives. The RPC studied a number of existing regional plan implementation processes in other jurisdictions across the United States as well as the regional plan adoption and review process employed by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency in Reno. The coalition analyzed the strengths and weakness of each and applied these lessons to craft an approach tailored to the Las Vegas Valley.

The process outlined below satisfies the state legislative requirement that the RPC adopt guidelines to determine if local plans are in “substantial conformance” with the regional plan.

## **DEFINITION OF “SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE”.**

One responsibility of the SNRPC in implementing the conformance review process is to establish a definition of “substantial conformance” for the purpose of determining when a local plan conforms with the Regional Policy Plan. There was consensus at the workshop, held to define a conformance process, that the definition of “substantial conformance” should require local plans to coordinate their programs with the regional plan while at the same time being sufficiently flexible to allow for the local plans to address regional issues in ways that have meaning at the local level. The proposed definition of “substantial conformance” embraces this flexible approach by requiring the local plans to be “compatible with” and “further” the goals and policies in the regional plan. This approach is similar to those used in Florida, New Jersey, and Truckee Meadows. Specifically, the definition of substantial conformance. Proposed to be applied by the SNRPC in the local plan review process is:

A local plan is in “substantial conformance with” The SNRPC Comprehensive Regional Policy Plan if it is “compatible with” and “furthers” the regional plan. The term “compatible with” means that the local plan is not in conflict with the SNRPC



*At center, SNRPC Chair Oscar Goodman (Las Vegas Mayor) at conformance workshop.*



RPC Past Chair Steve Kirk (Henderson Councilman) at conformance workshop

Comprehensive Regional Policy Plan. The term “furthers” means to take actions in the direction of realizing each goal and policy of the regional plan. For the purposes of determining substantial conformance of the local plan with the SNRPC Comprehensive Regional Policy Plan, the regional plan shall be construed as a whole and no specific goal or policy shall be construed or applied in isolation from the other goals and policies.

### CONFORMANCE PROCESS

The proposed plan conformance process proposed is based upon a cooperative approach that begins with a self-critique by local governments of the extent to which their local plans conform with the regional plan.<sup>1</sup> The plan process is modeled after the regional plan review requirements in other states that focus on consensus building, negotiation, and resolution. Of the regional planning processes examined in other jurisdictions, it represents the least adversarial approach while still providing credibility that the regional plan will be effective.

More specifically, the plan conformance process proposed for RPC.s review of local plans (the plans of local governments, regional agencies, state agencies and public utility master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans) includes three steps:

- Self-Assessment
- RPC Review and Comment
- Reconciliation/Certification

#### **Self Assessment**

After adoption of the regional plan, each jurisdiction should prior to March 1, 2002, prepare an assessment that demonstrates:

- How their local plans conform to the regional plan,
  - Ways in which the plans do not conform,
  - Steps that each local jurisdiction intends to take to bring non-conforming elements into conformity, and
  - Recommendations for amendments to the regional plan
- Note that the March 1, 2002, date is not contained in the state legislation, but was established to provide the RPC with adequate time to conduct the conformity review that must be completed by July 1, 2002, according to state law.

### **RPC Review and Comment**

The second step in the process would involve review of the local plan and self-assessment by the RPC. According to the state legislation, the RPC has until July 1, 2002, to determine if local plans conform to the adopted regional policy plan. This review and comment process therefore would need to take place between the March 1, 2002, date the local governments submit their plans to the RPC and July 1, 2002.

This review could be carried out either by staff that would be hired by RPC or by a consulting firm as discussed later in this section. The RPC would specify where it agreed that the local plan conformed, where it believed non-conformity existed, and recommendations for amendments to the local plan or regional plan to assure “substantial conformity”.

Representatives of the RPC might meet with each jurisdiction informally prior to publishing the RPC review/comment document to ensure that each had a full understanding of the relevant elements of the local and regional plans.

As provided in the state legislation, within 90 days after the date the submitting entity receives comments from the RPC, it would provide the RPC with a written response setting forth:

1. The manner in which the submitting entity changed the plan to be in substantial conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan; or
2. The reasons of the submitting entity for not bringing the plan into substantial conformance.

### **Reconciliation/Certification**

The final step in the process before certification of the local plan as required by state law would involve discussions between representatives of the RPC and the local jurisdiction that would attempt to reconcile any differences between the regional and local plan. The RPC would serve as a forum to work out these differences. The result of the process might be amendments to the local plan, amendments to the regional plan, or both. Again, emphasis would be on negotiation and resolution of differences.

The RPC would utilize conformance agreements at this point with local and regional entities. The conformance agreements would specify the changes in the local and regional plans to which they were mutually agreeing. This would provide certainty and guarantees to the local entities. It would also state that once these modifications were made, the local plan would be certified by the RPC as being in substantial conformance.

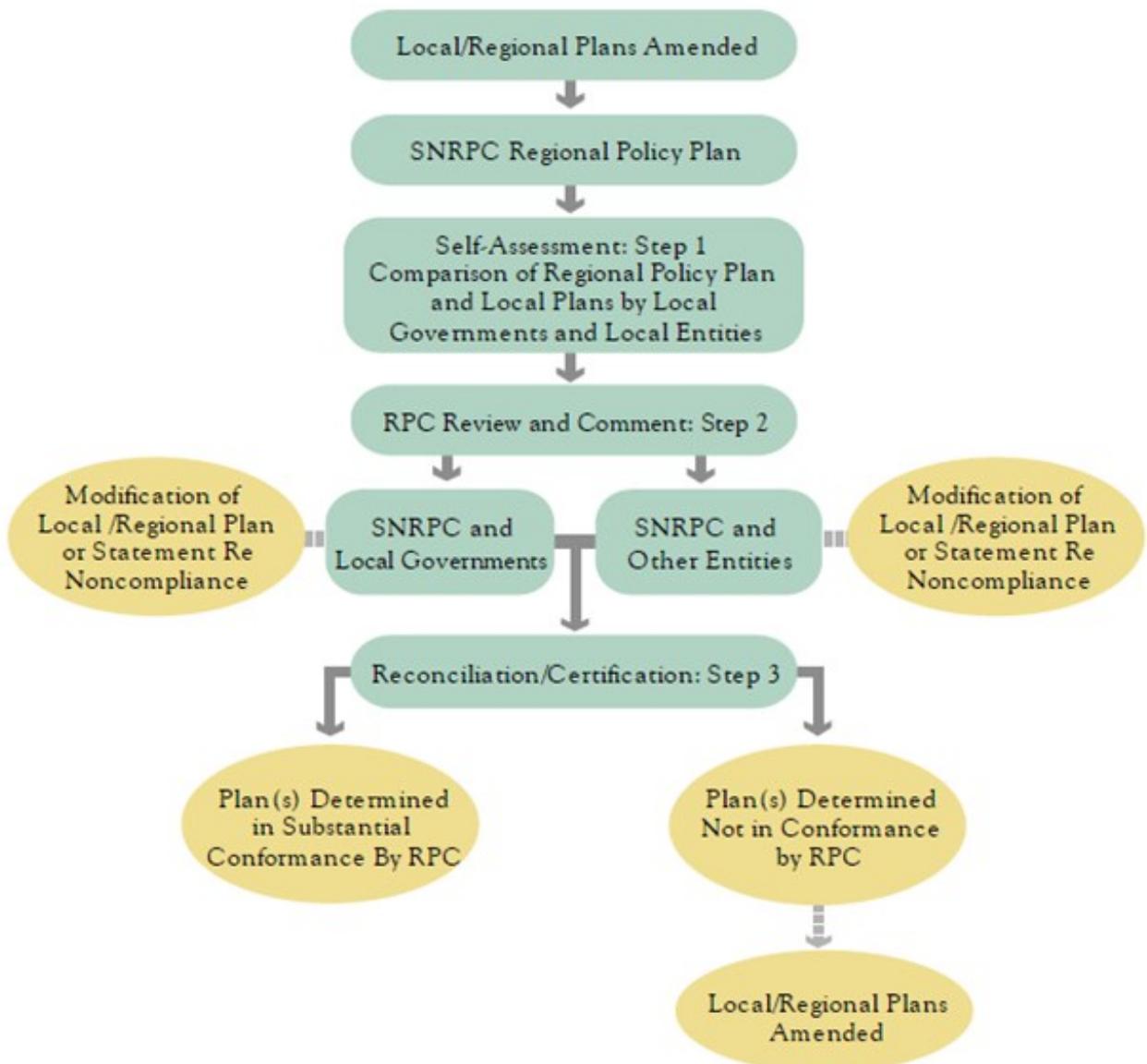


*Plenary session at conformance workshop*

The legislation provides that when the RPC determines any local plans or the county plans are in substantial conformance, some type of certification of conformity should be issued. As noted above, this must be done by July 1, 2002. The local government is then entitled to establish its own policies and procedures with respect to regional planning to the extent those policies and procedures do not conflict with state or federal law. It is unclear from the legislation, however, what is meant by entitled to establish its own policies and procedures with respect to regional planning.

The RPC intends to request legislative changes to this provision to clarify that certification recognizes conformance with the Regional Policy Plan and the benefits that come with conformance (See discussion of incentives in Implementation section.), but that it does not authorize the local government to modify a “certified” plan in such a way that it no longer conforms.

**SNRPC PLAN CONFORMANCE PROCESS**



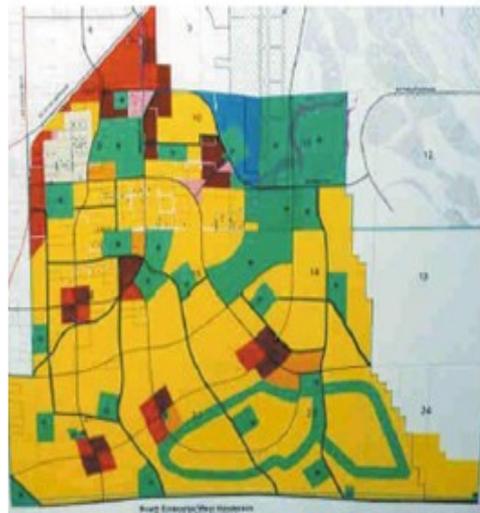
## IMPLEMENTATION

### *Incentives*

The state legislation includes vague enforcement mechanisms to ensure local plans conform with the Regional Policy Plan. The thrust of the recommended implementation program is towards incentives. There are several reasons for this. First, the intent of the RPC since the inception of this effort has been to foster a cooperative process, not one that creates controversy and potential for disputes. Second, unlike other jurisdictions studied, the small number of local governments involved here makes reaching agreement on plan conformity much easier than if multiple entities are involved. Third, there has been substantial progress in crafting regional plan elements that all local governments agree up-

Thus, the RPC supports the following incentives as essential elements in the SNRPC plan conformance process:

1. The provision of state funding for local entities to conform their local plans and land development regulations (where relevant) to the Regional Policy Plan.
2. A requirement that state and regional plans and development decisions (e.g., for road improvement projects or water projects) be consistent with all certified local plans and the Regional Policy Plan. The RPC will also seek to secure conformity with the plan by federal agencies to the extent permitted by federal law.
3. Legislative changes to provide fiscal incentives to local jurisdictions whose plans conform to the Regional Policy Plan for the purpose of funding infrastructure or acquiring public lands.
4. Home rule land use authority for local governments whose local plans are certified.



### *Updates and Amendments*

The state legislation addresses updates and amendments in two areas. First, after local plans are determined by the RPC to be in substantial conformance, they are to be reevaluated every two years. Second, after the regional plan is adopted, every amendment to a local plan (except site specific amendments to local land use plans) must be sent to the RPC for comment.

With regard to the two-year reevaluation requirement, experience shows this may not be the most practical policy since any plan amendment and plan conformance process is time consuming. For this reason, the SNRPC will seek to have these provisions amended by the state local legislature so that the regional plan is updated every 5 years, and plans reviewed for conformity at that time.

With regard to review of amendments to local plans between regional plan updates, the language of the state legislation will be followed, that is, all local governments submit all master plan, facility plan, or other similar plan amendments to the RPC for comment. This submittal would take place prior to final adoption of the amendments by the local government. The RPC will adopt a time limit (for example, 60 days) by which time it agrees it will relay comments back to the local government regarding the impact of the amendment on plan conformity. Importantly, site specific amendments to local land use plans are expressly exempted by the state legislation from this review.

### **Staffing**

The final implementation issue with respect to plan conformance is how the RPC will staff the conformance review process. It considered three options. The first option is to continue the present policy in which the planning departments of the participating local governments allocate staff to carry out SNRPC conformance review responsibilities. The benefit of this approach is primarily financial; additional staff would not be required to be hired by the RPC for conformance review. However, potential conflicts could arise under this approach, since local government staff could be responsible for evaluating the conformance of each others. local plans, with the potential for retaliation if one jurisdiction opposed a finding of conformity for another's plan. Furthermore, other problems related to inconsistent application of substantial conformance standards could occur due to the fact that a variety of persons from different local agencies would be conducting the review.

A second option is for the RPC to retain staff to undertake such reviews as well as other administrative duties. This is the approach taken by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency and in most other states with regional planning laws. There would be a cost involved to retain such staff, but having in-house staff would assure a more independent, timely review.

Finally, the RPC could hire an independent consultant to undertake reviews and make reports to the RPC.

Based on experience in other jurisdictions and discussions with the local planning directors, the RPC has decided to adopt option three. Funds will be budgeted to retain independent consultants to undertake plan reviews and other discrete assignments as necessary.

## Conclusion/Next Steps

This Regional Plan represents a concerted yearlong effort by the cities of Las Vegas, Henderson, North Las Vegas, and Boulder City, Clark County, and the Clark County School District to identify key regional challenges and develop realistic steps to address them. It has involved a substantial commitment of staff, time, and resources to produce.

In many ways, the cooperation and collegial spirit that emerged and grew during the planning process is a success story in and of itself. But this is only a beginning, and the plan should be viewed not as a static document, but a work in progress that must be refined, rethought, and updated over time. The important thing now is to bring this planning phase to a conclusion and to begin the “doing”. In many key aspects, the RPC has a running start. Important regional initiatives are already underway in the areas of open space, air quality, and transportation.

The RPC recognizes that implementation will take a substantial additional commitment from its constituent local governments and the Clark County School District. It will take continued attention and dedication of significant time by local elected officials in addition to their normal governmental duties.

One of the first orders of business after adoption of the Regional Plan will be to develop more detailed work plans with staff to address priority issues. These work plans will assign responsibility for action with timelines to gauge progress. People will be needed to execute these plans, and the SNRPC has already indicated its willingness to assign staff and resources to make sure implementation does not lag. The plan also identifies a number of areas in which the state legislature can act to support implementation and improve the odds that regional planning will be a success in the Las Vegas Valley. Discussions with legislative leaders need to begin immediately on these items.

The signs for success are encouraging. A cooperative spirit among elected officials and staff continues to infuse the work of the RPC. With the cooperation and support of the state legislature in terms of authority and resources, the Las Vegas Valley can become a national model of effective regional planning.



Views across valley circa 1978 (above) and today (below)



# Appendix

## Assembly Bill No. 493 (1999)

### Chapter .....

AN ACT relating to regional planning: providing for the establishment of a regional planning coalition in certain counties; setting forth the powers and duties of the regional planning coalition; requiring certain entities to submit certain plans to the regional planning coalition for review and recommendations; authorizing a city or county to establish its own policies and procedures with respect to regional planning in certain circumstances; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

### The People Of The State Of Nevada, Represented In Senate And Assembly, Do Enact As Follows:

- Sec. 1. Chapter 278 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 11, inclusive, of this act.
- Sec. 2. As used in sections 2 and 4 to 12, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, "regional Planning Coalition" means the regional planning coalition established pursuant to section 4 of this act.
- Sec. 3. 1. The legislature recognizes the need for innovative strategies of planning and development that:
- (a) Address the anticipated needs and demands of continued urbanization and the corresponding need to protect environmentally sensitive areas; and
  - (b) Will allow the development of less populous regions of this state if such regions:
    - (1) Seek increased economic development; and
    - (2) Have sufficient resources of land and water to accommodate development in a manner that is environmentally sound.
2. The legislature further recognizes that innovative strategies of planning and development may be superior to conventional strategies of planning and development with respect to:
- (a) Protecting environmentally sensitive areas
  - (b) Maintaining the economic viability of agricultural and other predominantly rural land uses; and
  - (c) Providing cost-effective public facilities and services.
3. It is the intent of the legislature that each comprehensive regional policy plan adopted or amended pursuant to this chapter should set forth a process of planning which:
- (a) Allows for:
    - (1) The efficient use of land within existing urban areas; and
    - (2) The conversion of rural lands to other uses, if such other uses are appropriate and consistent with the provisions of this chapter and the master plan of each affected city and county.

- (b) Uses innovative and flexible strategies of planning and development and creative techniques of land use planning which promote sustainable growth, including, without limitation, establishment of new towns, the maintenance of open space and mixed-use development.
4. It is the further intent of the legislature that when the governing body of a local government adopts a master plan or zoning regulation, the plan or regulation should promote a strategy of maximizing the use of existing facilities and services through redevelopment, interspersions of new housing and businesses in established neighborhoods and other mechanisms for urban revitalization.
  5. It is the further intent of the legislature that the construction of public facilities and the provision of services necessary to support development should be coordinated with activities of development to ensure that demand for such facilities and services can be met at the time the demand is created. In carrying out this intent, local and regional governmental entities are encouraged to construct public facilities, provide services or carry out development in phases. Public facilities constructed and services provided to accommodate new development should be consistent with plans for capital improvements prepared pursuant to NRS 278.0226.
- Sec. 4. In a county whose population is 400,000 or more, the board of county commissioners and the city council of each of at least the three largest cities in the county shall establish a regional planning coalition by cooperative agreement pursuant to chapter 277 of NRS.
- Sec. 5. 1. The regional planning coalition shall develop a comprehensive regional policy plan for the balanced economic, social, physical, environmental and fiscal development and orderly management of the growth of the region for a period of at least 20 years. The comprehensive regional policy plan must contain recommendations of policy to carry out each part of the plan.
2. In developing the plan, the coalition:
    - (a) May consult with other entities that are interested or involved in regional planning within the county.
    - (b) Shall ensure that the comprehensive regional policy plan includes goals, policies, maps and other documents relating to:
      - (1) Conservation, including, without limitation, policies relating to the use and protection of natural resources.
      - (2) Population, including, without limitation, a projection of population growth in the region.
      - (3) Land use and development, including, without limitation, a map of land use plans that have been adopted by local governmental entities within the region.
      - (4) Transportation.
      - (5) Public facilities and services.
      - (6) Air quality.
      - (7) Strategies to promote and encourage:
        - (I) The interspersions of new housing and businesses in established neighborhoods; and
        - (II) Development in areas in which public services are available.

3. The regional planning coalition shall not adopt or amend the comprehensive regional policy plan unless the adoption or amendment is by resolution of the regional planning coalition:
    - (a) Carried by the affirmative votes of not less than two-thirds of its total membership; and
    - (b) Ratified by the board of county commissioners of the county and the city council of each city that jointly established the regional planning coalition pursuant to section 4 of this act.
- Sec. 6.
1. The regional planning coalition shall study and develop methods to provide incentives for the interspersion of new housing and businesses in established neighborhoods, including, without limitation, the:
    - (a) Creation of an expedited process for granting necessary permits for a development that features such interspersion; and
    - (b) Imposition of a fee for the extension of infrastructure to encourage such interspersion.
  2. As used in this section, .infrastructure. means publicly owned or publicly supported facilities that are necessary or desirable to support intense habitation within a region, including, without limitation, parks, roads, schools, community centers, sanitary sewers, facilities for mass transit and facilities for the conveyance of water and the treatment of wastewater.
- Sec. 7.
1. The regional planning coalition may:
    - (a) Coordinate sources of information;
    - (b) Recommend measures to increase the efficiency of governmental entities and services;
    - (c) Make recommendations regarding the disposal of federal land; Establish methods for resolving issues related to boundaries and other matters that arise between jurisdictions;
    - (e) Review:
      - (1) Master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans, and amendments thereto, adopted by a governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility that is located in whole or in part within the region; and
      - (2) The annual plan for capital improvements that is prepared by each local government in the region pursuant to NRS 278.0226;
    - (f) Develop and recommend, to the extent practicable, standardized classifications for land use for the region;
    - (g) Consider and take necessary action with respect to any issue that the regional planning coalition determines will have a significant impact on the region, including, without limitation, projects of regional significance;
    - (h) Review, consider and make recommendations regarding applications submitted to agencies of the Federal Government and applications for federal assistance for federally-assisted programs or projects; and
    - (i) Designate allowable future land uses for each part of the county, including, without limitation, the identification of each category of land use in which the construction and operation of a public school is permissible. The identification of a category of land use in which the construction and operation of a public school is permissible must be carried out in consultation with the county school district and include a determination of whether there is sufficient land in the proximity of a residential development to meet projected needs for public schools.

2. The regional planning coalition shall establish a definition for the term “project of regional significance”. In establishing the definition, the regional planning coalition shall consider:
    - (a) Existing definitions of the term within the Nevada Revised Statutes; and
    - (b) That a project may have regional significance for several reasons, including, without limitation, the potential impact that the project may have on historic, archaeological, cultural, scenic and natural resources, public facilities and public services within the region.
- Sec. 8. Each governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility that is located in whole or in part within the region shall, not more than once every 2 years, submit to the regional planning coalition for its review all master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans of the governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility.
- Sec. 9. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility that is located in whole or in part within the region shall not adopt a master plan, facilities plan or other similar plan, or an amendment thereto, after March 1, 2001, unless the regional planning coalition has been afforded an opportunity to make recommendations regarding the plan or amendment. A governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility may adopt an amendment to a land use plan described in paragraph (f) of subsection 1 of NRS 278.160 without affording the regional planning coalition the opportunity to make recommendations regarding the amendment.
- Sec. 10. The regional planning coalition shall, on or before July 1 of each year, prepare and adopt a budget for the immediately succeeding fiscal year and shall submit that budget to each of the local governments within the region as a recommendation for funding.
- Sec. 11. The regional planning coalition may employ persons or contract for services necessary to carry out:
1. The provisions of sections 2 and 4 to 12, inclusive, of this act; and
  2. Other responsibilities set forth in the cooperative agreement pursuant to which the regional planning coalition was established pursuant to section 4 of this act.
- Sec. 12. 1. Not more than once every 2 years, the regional planning coalition shall review the master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans that it receives pursuant to section 8 of this act, and determine whether those plans are in substantial conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan.
2. If the regional planning coalition determines that a plan reviewed pursuant to subsection 1 is not in substantial conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan, the regional planning coalition shall return the plan to the submitting entity accompanied by recommendations regarding the manner in which the submitting entity may bring the plan into substantial conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan.
  3. Within 90 days after the date on which a submitting entity receives the plan and recommendations from the regional planning coalition pursuant to subsection 2, the submitting entity shall provide to the regional planning coalition a written response setting forth the:
    - (a) Manner in which the submitting entity changed the plan to be in substantial conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan; or
    - (b) Reasons of the submitting entity for not bringing the plan into substantial conformance.
  4. If the regional planning coalition determines that all the plans that a city or county is required to submit pursuant to section 8 of this act are in substantial conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan, the regional planning coalition shall issue to the city or county a

certificate or other indicia of that determination. Upon receipt of such a certificate or other indicia, the city or county, until the next time the regional planning coalition reviews the plans of the city or county pursuant to subsection 1, is entitled to establish its own policies and procedures with respect to regional planning, to the extent that those policies and procedures do not conflict with federal or state law.

Sec. 13. Each governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility that is located in whole or in part within the region shall, on or before May 1, 2000, submit to the regional planning coalition for its review all existing master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans of the governing body, regional agency, state agency or public utility.

Sec. 14. The regional planning coalition:

1. Shall:

(a) On or before March 1, 2001:

(1) Adopt a comprehensive regional policy plan in accordance with section 5 of this act. Before approving the plan, the regional planning coalition shall hold public hearings on the proposed plan in the cities and unincorporated areas within the county.

(2) In cooperation with local governmental entities within the county, develop guidelines to determine whether master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans established by those entities would conform with the comprehensive regional policy plan.

(b) On or before July 1, 2001, establish a preliminary definition for the term "project of regional significance". In establishing the definition, the regional planning commission shall consider the factors set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection 2 of section 7 of this act.

(c) On or before July 1, 2002, review the master plans, facilities plans and other similar plans that it receives pursuant to section 8 of this act, and determine whether those plans are in conformance with the comprehensive regional policy plan.

2. May, on or before February 1, 2001, submit three requests for proposed legislation to the legislature if the regional planning coalition determines that the proposed legislation is necessary to:

(a) Ensure the adequacy and consistency of activities within the region that are related to regional planning; or

(b) Enable local governmental entities within the region to carry out their authority to govern in a more efficient manner.

Sec. 15. The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 354.599 do not apply to any additional expenses of a local government that are related to the provisions of this act.

Sec. 16. This act becomes effective on January 1, 2000.

## ***Current Nevada Revised Statutes: 278.02521:Comprehensive Regional Policy Planning***

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NRS/NRS-278.html#NRS278Sec02521>