

**Public Comments on Proposed Property Maintenance Code Amendments  
Through May 12, 2014**

These are comments the City has received regarding the proposed code amendments. All addresses of complaints have been removed as well as phone numbers. The complaints, although not specific to the code amendments, were left in as a reference for the types of complaints that the Code Enforcement office receives.

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**Comments Received by Email**

Mr.Rodriquez,

I recently received a notice accompanying my bill for services regarding revision of the municipal code in the city of Sparks.

Is this information available on line?

It would be great if something could be done to improving the appearance of the properties in Sparks. I have lived in this neighborhood for over 25 years and the last 6-8 years have been associated with a change for the worse in the upkeep and appearance of the properties. There also seems to be many more potentially dangerous animals being kept as pets which makes it less appealing and safe when trying to enjoy the parks or walk the neighborhood.

Thank you.

R. B. Bannister, 2232 Wabash Circle, Sparks, NV 89434

First of all, sticking an insignificant piece of paper in with the sewer bill may meet the letter of the law for notification but certainly doesn't meet the intent.

I would appreciate a copy in writing of the proposed changes soonest so that I may have time to review and share with my neighbors and friends. E-mail will be acceptable or tell me where I can obtain a copy. I can understand the appearance and fire safety approach to not having a bunch of junk around one's house but at the same time I believe the city of Sparks already has ordinances in place to correct that type of problem. Are we reinventing the wheel here or merely creating an inconvenience for the residence. I'm sure I will have more comments after I have read the proposed changes which I look forward to receiving immediately if not sooner.

Don Jackson  
1189 La Via Way  
Sparks, Nv 89434

Looking forward to receiving an e-mail copy. I have reviewed chapters 20.35 and 7.16 of the Sparks ordinances and find them to be quite clear on what is acceptable. My question either now or at the workshop is how many citations or warnings have been issued by the city in the last 12 months against those two chapters and what were the results of the citations/warnings?

Don

Hello,

We received a notice with our sewer bill today. I know you're in for some controversy when the changes about boat and vehicle storage come up (include ATV's and trailers visible over the fence). Seems like everyone has toys today and they are determined to defend their "rights".

You can imagine the response my wife received when she asked about the car's gas mileage at a Cadillac dealer years ago. My family has always believed that if you think you can afford an RV or boat, you shouldn't complain about the price of gas, or the cost of storage. Over the years, we have had both. The boat was too large to trailer and berthed at around \$200/month on the Delta. The RV was about \$500 for six months right here in Sparks.

We are in a Homeowners' Association that does not allow on-street parking for more than 48 hours at a time. (Isn't that a legal restriction in Sparks already?) The housing lots in our area are not large enough for storage in the driveways or side yards. I support all the changes mentioned in the notice because most lots in Sparks are NOT large enough. The other changes sound like public safety issues.

My message to those who argue against the changes would be this: "If you want a large RV or boat at your home, buy a house in Pebble Creek or unincorporated Washoe County near La Posada on the north side. Otherwise, buy one you can put in your garage."

I wish you good fortune with this issue because I think it is the right thing to do.

Tom Haras

Mr. Rodriquez:

It was great speaking with you Tuesday morning and I appreciate your time in allowing me to ask questions and to express concerns about upcoming revisions in the Sparks municipal codes as pertains to properties. In general, I support and applaud the efforts of the City to ensure the safety of the public but moreover the impression of a tidy community that folks are proud to live in and visitors are impressed by when visiting. I am owner of a home in Sparks that for now is a second home that I frequent as often as possible, but have plans on retirement there. Since I am not present to do continual upkeep of the grounds, I have elected to keep the yard as it mostly was when I bought the home; mainly surface dirt!

As we spoke of, here are some topics of concern:

~I support the placement of front yard coverings to keep the "dust bowl" effect to a minimum throughout the city. However, I would strongly caution against the recommendation of rock or gravel as options. There are numerous safety and nuisance challenges that I have experienced by a next door neighbor who has done a complete rock covering.

First, the rocks continually bleed over into my yard, the sidewalks and into the street. While I was doing weed control in my yard, I found my self with handfuls of rocks all over my yard that I placed back into the neighbors. Additionally, a car pulled away from the curb and one of the rocks flew back from tire rotation and hit down nearby me and lastly these provide more then a temptation to kids as a quick pick and toss that can damage windows and property with minimum effort. This just seems like a choice of absolute last resort for a sensible ground cover.

~Under any new codes, if requiring a dirt front yard to be covered, will there be requirement for border control? I have found that as mentioned above, a neighbors choice to place down rocks or even a beauty bark, quickly migrates into other neighbors yards, sidewalks and the streets (if not controlled/confined correctly).

~One might argue that requiring landscaping in a front yard is intrusive. Will there be some financial allowances be made for those seeking it?

~I have seen a few front yards that have done bark, rocks or even Astroturf and yet no weed barriers were used and tall unsightly weeds have risen through and they just leave the weeds to grow high and die.

I would like to see a Weed Control program promoted with some deep special discount/offer on weed barriers when you announce the front yard vegetation appearance portion of any code changes. If a majority of homeowners with less than nice yards could take advantage of affordable barriers, this will go a long way in future appearance issues regardless of their choices of top coverings. I am confident that a partnership with Home Depot or local nurseries could be worked out for these coverings.

Again, I support and look forward to any changes as it will be a great step forward to ensure our neighborhoods are on an upward path to being a city to be proud to be part of!

Looking forward to future updates on the changes.

Regards,  
Lawrence King

To whom it may concern,

I received your notice regarding the revision of municipal codes for condition and appearance of properties. Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend your informational meeting May 6<sup>th</sup> since I will be traveling on business. So let this email serve as my input on this issue.

I firmly believe that this SHOULD NOT be a part of the City Of Sparks municipal code. The City of Sparks residential areas already have, in many areas, HOA's that address this issue. Many people do want to have this type of enforcement in their neighborhoods and are willing to pay the fees for them to be enforced. I for one DO NOT want nor need this type of enforcement in my neighborhood. I specifically searched out a neighborhood that DID NOT have an HOA before I purchased.

I believe a person should be able to use the property that they purchase for their own benefits, though we should be responsible to make sure that our use does not infringe on that of our neighbors. I do not believe this is an issue that needs attention by the City of Sparks or the use of its limited resources (my tax dollars) to enforce these unneeded regulations. If individuals would like this for their neighborhoods then establish an HOA that is agreed to by its residents and are funded by the residents.

If this code change is considered, I hope that it will be put in front of the residents of Sparks for a vote and not just initiated without.

Regards,  
Rick Schramm

I'm all for the beautification of the city. I own lots of rentals and manage some for my clients. I truly appreciate knowing if my properties are looking poor. I take great pride in being a good landlord and I know there are a lot of really poorly maintained properties out there. Here's a few of my thoughts.

1. It's a waste of my tax payer money for you to drive by and send me a registered letter when there are a few (very few) weeds that annoy the busy body in the neighborhood – heaven forbid if one weed grows in the side walk. The requirement before you drive out to see the complaint, have the complainant send you a photo. Seriously, sending a registered letter cost money – I can see if it is a serious violation but check out the two complaints that the neighbor on \_\_\_\_\_ has complained about – with all the dead yards in Sparks, my tax payer money funded you to drive a vehicle, and then send a letter. Did you send a letter to every home that has a dead yard. Be reasonable and tell the busy body to move to a neighborhood with a HOA that will monitor that.

2. It would be great if you had a voluntary database of owners emails so when you received a complaint, you would first email the owner a request before taking your time to drive by to take the photo, than the owner could have a week to resolve the issue before you actually drive by.
3. I purchased in a development with no CC&R's: if my tenant wants to park their boat or recreational vehicle or an inoperable car in the driveway it should not be your concern. Now if they are parking it on a lawn or blocking the side walk than that's a concern.
4. Do not make laws about securing doors and windows on vacant structures – that will be a nightmare! It is against the law for someone to enter someone else's property so don't punish the owner. What if I'm just in the process of changing tenants and you have some law about vacant structures. Maybe I chose to leave a window open because the carpets were just shampoo' d and now the busy body files a complaint. Seriously you have enough laws to enforce without more. The vacant property issue is going away soon as the property values have gone up. We are only doing a few short sales and foreclosures.  
I urge you to look at all the aspects and scenarios that a new law will create before you pass a new law. Thank you.

Donna P Clark, CRS, ABR, CDPE  
Broker Salesman

I received a handout about an upcoming meeting on 5/6/14 about code changes. I know what I am about to say is not directly tied to the code changes; you did ask feedback so here is a little.

While I fully understand the need for addressing the items you mentioned in the handout I have a more urgent concern for the city. Your code changes will our neighborhoods with safety and crime concerns; and will also help our neighborhoods to be more presentable and help to increase the property values. All of this is good and needed.

However my more immediate concern is with our neighborhood street condition. This certainly makes our neighborhood appear more run down, depresses property values, and causes maintenance/damage to our vehicles. I have addressed this with the city for some time only to have nothing ultimately done. About 3 years ago I was told that our street is one of the worst in the city and maintenance has been scheduled/delayed/cancelled at least 3 times that I know of.

While I believe that your work and efforts are commendable and ultimately needed; I am much more concerned with the condition of our neighborhood streets than someone having a broken car in their front yard or unlandscaped property.

Know this isn't exactly your purview but you did ask for feedback.

Linn Allen

I am a resident of Sparks. My name is Dick Matthie. I live at 2943 springland Ct.

Thank you for being part of a city government that cares for its residents.

I am in favor of regulations that will limit and/or prohibit the storing of unregistered vehicles, boats, trailers, etc. in driveways ,lawns, sideyards or vacant lots. It would also be nice if home owners would take better care of their yards, but I can understand how this could be difficult to enforce. I appreciate your regulation that prohibits the parking of RV ( and other vehicles for that matter ) on the street without being moved.

I will not be in town for your meeting of May 6, but you have my support to develop regulation that will help keep our city a nice place to live and raise a family.

Thank you and good luck May 6th.

BRAVO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I'm so glad someone is concerned enough about how Sparks appears to others, as well as those of us who live here, to do something about it!!!! Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!!!!

My suggestion is to have you guys just drive down the length of 4th Street from Victorian Ave to MacArthur Street, and bring a camera or a note pad!!!! I do it often and get depressed every time. Notice unkempt houses, yards, fences. There is junk lying around....makes us look like nobody cares.

I'm so glad you are doing something about this. Let me know what I can do.

Thanks again,

Karen Jackson,

3695 MacArthur Street, 89431

Mr. Rodriquez: I am concerned about the City code but unable to make the May 6th meeting. I feel that parked cars [filled with garbage]such as at \_\_\_\_\_and weeds, etc.and vehicles parked up and down the streets that are not in running order need to be ticketed. I had been on the SPD as a volunteer,ticketing handicap violators and saw many code problems. Perhaps that would be a good group to eyeball the city. I certainly would love to help with those breaking the law. Thanks , Barbara Wilson

Mr. Rodriquez,

I received the little feedback slip in my water bill and just wanted to say that my wife and I support efforts to address all of those issues mentioned. We live in an area that is covered by association CC&R's, Cimarron East HOA, and see first hand the value of establishing reasonable standards with regard to the care and condition of area properties.

Sorry we won't be able to attend the workshop, but we definately appreciate and support your efforts.

Thank you.

Steve and Linda Mantoani

3980 Desert Fox Drive, Sparks

Mr. Rodriquez,

Please email me the proposed changes to the Code per the notice I received with my City sewer bill. Title 7 already contains all or most of the issues listed in the notice and the authority to determine the extent of any problem, if one exists, and the proper code enforcement procedures including fines, etc. So why the changes and what are they? Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Lorrie Chase

Concerning your meeting scheduled for May 6th regarding the condition and appearance of proerties, I would like to comment on the parking of recreational items.

1. Jealousy: You can't make everyone happy. - You have a boat and I don't, so keep your boat out of my sight! Not a good reason for a law.

2. Counter productive: Lots of money is being spent to permote the Reno-Sparks area as a great Outdoor Recreational Area. But, keep your RVs out of sight. Someone might see them and think this is a great Outdoor Recreational Area.

3. If it's a problem, don't perpetuate it: The City of Sparks must share the blame for RVs parked in driveways. For years and, continuing today, it has allowed builders to locate the house in the middle of the front of the lot, thereby blocking backyard access. If the house were placed over a little to the left, there would be room to access the back yard. (Locating the house over a little would not change the distance between houses.)  
Clyde Wilson (I don't have an RV in Sparks.)

Dear Joe,

I am really glad to hear about the proposed changes to the municipal code. I've complained about my neighbor

\_\_\_\_\_ before. He has a boat that has been sitting in the driveway for eight years now. It's never been moved and the trailer tires are flat. The boat is full of old tires and garden hoses and assorted junk. When I complained to the city they said their power to do anything was limited. They sent him a letter about an abandoned boat and he went out and aired up the tires. After a few months the tires were flat again. His garage is packed full of junk also. He frequently leaves his garage door open for days so all the neighborhood gets to see the filth. It's quite a sight to see right next to my driveway. I will be putting my house for sale in a few months. Would you want to buy my house with this junk boat next door?

I will be out of town during the meeting of the code changes. Please let it be known I am totally in favor of rule changes to clean up the city of Sparks. This rule change is long overdue!

Regards,

Lyle Goodman  
3027 Cloverdale  
Sparks, NV 89434



It is never a treat to receive our sewer bill, however, I was very pleased to see information stating you are investigating citizen's concerns regarding the appearance of residential properties in Sparks. I will not be able to attend the May 6 meeting and would like to forward you clear examples of violations of CC&Rs and City code.

Maybe you could take a drive down \_\_\_\_\_ directly off Vista Blvd.. Several residents are unhappy with the appearance of properties on our street. (1) stores a 5th wheel and utility trailer containing a small bobcat either in the street or beside the driveway. The police department has asked him to remove the utility trailer and he does, waits a week or two, then puts it back. (2) has a older RV in the driveway and appears to have people living in it. (3) is running a business out of his home, has two vans parked in front of the house, which is on a corner, one of which hasn't moved in months. The police made him move a utility trailer which had been parked on the corner for years, so he put it in the driveway. There is a larger older RV parked on the street, or sometimes in the driveway as well. The driveway is short and has a fairly steep slope, not meant for

an RV or utility trailer. They are unable to park a vehicle in the garage because it is filled with items used for their business, so the daily vehicles are parked on the street as well.

I have no quarrel with parking an RV in front of the home for two or three days to load or unload. But according to the CC&Rs you cannot store RVs, commercial vehicles or construction equipment in the driveway or on the street. They must be screened from view.

We also have a couple of homeowners who have let their lawns and vegetation die. Most of us maintain our houses and yards. We care about maintaining the value we have.

These are violations of the CC&Rs, but because we do not have an HOA, it is impossible to enforce. Changing the municipal code may help.

There is my two cents! Thanks for allowing us to share our concerns.

Kathy Stefani

Mr. Rodriquez:

There is a house on the corner of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, just a couple of hundred feet from \_\_\_\_\_. It has had a broken window covered with plywood for years now. I believe the house is unoccupied. The front of the house has a fence that is falling down. In the side yard there are storage containers and inoperable vehicles that are an eyesore, to say the least.

The storage containers have been a target of graffiti in the past. I believe the City of Sparks and the owner of the property came to an understanding on the cost of covering up the artwork. I know of two instances of cleanup.

If you drive by the house and take pictures of it, you may be able to use it as a "poster child" for the informational meeting on May 6 th.

I will be out of town and not available to join in on the meeting.

Thanks for your time

Mitch Dominguez

680 East York Way

Howdy Mr. Rodriquez.

May 01, 2014

I'm responding to the City of Sparks request for citizen comments regarding concerns with the condition and appearance of Sparks properties and, revisions to the municipal code to be discussed at Sparks City Hall on May 6, 2014.

I will unfortunately be out of town on May 6 and can't attend but please officially submit this for the meeting on behalf of myself and my over 300 neighbors that are affected by the illegal dumping of compost on the property we all surround at \_\_\_\_\_, Sparks NV.

I own a condo at \_\_\_\_\_, Sparks NV 89431. The complex is "\_\_\_\_\_". The view from my condo balcony of \_\_\_\_\_, is shown in the attached photos. My visitors always ask "why are they (owners of \_\_\_) dumping trash there?" isn't it illegal??.

My 300+ neighbors and I want to know the answer. It appears the property owner of \_\_\_ is liable for illegal dumping or, allowing illegal dumping of rubbish, Disabled vehicles, Blight, Mosquitos, Mice, Rodents, Large Stable Flies, Extreme fire hazard (over 300 fireplaces surround the property) and extreme health hazard (decaying dead trees, brush, grass, weeds) all of which are breeding numerous insects, rodents and a horrible smell/strnch of decaying matter.

I have owned this condo since 2005 but was living in California for the last two years until August of 2013. Around that time I started complaining to different agencies (yours included) but the rubbish has not been removed. Our Condo Association was not able to correct either.

One of the Commercial companies that have been dumping there is \_\_\_\_\_ as shown in attached photos 2 and 3. There are others as well.

We would all appreciate the City of Sparks correcting this obvious violation of Fire Hazard, Health Hazard and and, of general Blight.

The overall aerial view can best be appreciated by accessing Zillow.com and inputting \_\_\_\_\_, Sparks NV. All of our surrounding properties can then be observed in perspective.

Thank you for your assistance,

Ronald E. Freeto, et al

2128 Roundhouse Rd

Sparks NV 89431

I received your notification of the meeting May 6 re the poor condition of certain properties in the City of Sparks. One such property that definitely should be addressed is \_\_\_\_\_. The entire front yard is filled with pallets, huge pieces of concrete, old lawn chairs, etc., etc. A few years ago the occupants started a rock wall fence, but never completed it . Therefore, what one sees from the street is a massive junkyard. Most other properties on the street are not fancy, but are maintained in at least a neat manner. This one is nothing less than an eyesore. Help!

Hello,

I'm writing this email in response to making the city of Sparks an HOA. This is an awful idea. If I wanted to live in an HOA I would have bought a house where one was present. I've lived in HOA's before and couldn't move out fast enough. This is America. I live in a neighborhood that has no HOA. I have neighbors around me that do not take care of their yards. I don't mind that they're yards aren't as well kept as mine. It's their property and can do whatever they want with them. If people are complaining about the look of some properties they should move to a neighborhood that has an HOA. If you do decide to make Sparks a city wide HOA, will you be lowering my taxes? I'll need this to offset the expense of finding and paying for a storage unit. I happen to be one of those people that have a boat next to my house. Please don't do this to the citizens of Sparks. A lot of people can't afford to make the changes if this code is passed. Thank you for your time .

Chris

Good Morning!

My name is Patricia Keough and I live at 1400 Zephyr Way, Sparks. I regret I will not be able to attend the informational meeting of Tuesday, May 6th concerning proposed code changes in an effort to improve the City's ability to address some of the concerns of citizens regarding the condition and appearance of properties in our area. I respectfully request that my comments be considered at the meeting. I am in complete agreement that something must be done to improve the appearance of our neighborhoods/community. I have lived here for over 50 years, and have seen the decline in appearance of homes and yards, due to negligence, storage of various vehicles all over the streets and driveways, etc. My wholehearted support goes toward strengthening the municipal codes and giving our enforcement officers the needed codes to bring about needed change in the appearance of our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your attention, and Good Luck!



Mr. Rodriquez

I cannot attend tonites meeting, although I support your efforts to gain input from residents re: properties. Obviously, not all folks see their properties in the same way. What is nice looking to me, isn't to you. However, I firmly believe that junk, garbage and debris should not be viewed by everyone who passes your home.

The biggest abusers of a disintegrating yards and homes are landlords. Somehow we need to make owners more responsible for the upkeep of their property. At the same time, it is their property to do with as they please. If it passes the health and safety rules, we might have to swallow hard and accept the state it is in. My biggest beef with Reno, Sparks and the County is how difficult we have made it to rid ourselves of 'junk'. Curbside trash pick up is limited; you need transportation to haul your debris to go to a dump site; then you need to be prepared to give up your food money to pay to dump your stuff.

It would be nice to have reduced-rate dumping (yes, I know we just had one in the month of April, what do I do with my stuff May thru March?). It would be nice if different areas of the City had dumpsters, at various times of the year, available for neighborhoods to dump their stuff.

Plain old enforcement of the existing rules would help immensely - 'dead' vehicles in the front yard; fire hazard of weeds and trash; cars and appliances leaking chemicals; dangerous attraction for kids, etc. Hope all goes well and that the community comes up with some positive ideas.

Stacey Piro

3142 Minino Ct.

Sparks 89436

Joe,

I attended Tuesday's workshop, but didn't stay.

I support all of the proposed code amendments, including the new ones for landscaping.

A Note: I often E-mail Chere with code violations in my neighborhood. She does an excellent job. Usually, the infractions are corrected in a week or so. Most of the time, I think, people aren't aware of the code. Once they are, the violations are corrected.

The one most often violated is parking vehicles in front yards, off the paved driveway, usually in that narrow portion between the driveway and the next property line. I see that constantly.

There is one other thing I've noticed: people running businesses out of their houses, especially landscaping businesses. This results in trailers with equipment lining the street and stacks of commercial-size fertilizer bags in the driveway.

Don Cox

1603 Union St.

Sparks

Good Morning,

First I would like to compliment the work done on the proposed code changes, the changes greatly reflect the need for property conservation in the City of Sparks.

During the public forum there were several issues were raised that I believe reconsideration.

1. Abandoned Homes Nuisance Issues should be separated from occupied home nuisance issues. Occupied homes are going to be a very dynamic and case reviewable cases, this will be something that will be difficult if not impossible to enforce on abandoned homes. It should be noted that not one objection was raised concerning abandoned homes.

2. Who will the Citations be issued to? The Homeowner is long gone, and in most cases the homes that require citations have not been foreclosed on due to defects in the note or the toxicity of what is owed verse the value of the distress property. The Lender will only secure the home & nothing more.
3. What pain factor is there for the Lender? If you cannot not cite them (and the owner is gone) what enforcement power can the City wield? This was the rationale for my suggestion of Certificate of Occupant Revocation and liens to have Code required work completed. These would provide “teeth” and financial repercussions for non-compliance of zoning codes. As noted prior, I do not understand why Sparks Code 15.05.109.4 cannot be utilized for this action.
4. The painted plywood option for street facing window covering should be revisited to just the plexi-glass option. The 3/8” plywood option will not provide any additional security and would be much more noticeable than transparent Plexiglas . Though slightly more expensive it will look better than the slapped on paint that the lender’s Agent will do.
5. Time Limits. How long can a property remain abandoned and non-maintained? The new Code states after 12 months or complaints the property will be considered abandoned, but how long will the City tolerate an abandoned, non-maintained home? One need only look at Detroit to see if there is no control.

We are not talking about an unoccupied home. We are speaking of a home that has no heat, no water maintaining sewer gas traps, no pest control and only imposed debris and trash removal. It is being kept in this condition solely by financial decisions made by Lenders with no care to the surrounding neighborhood. During the meeting \_\_\_\_\_ was presented as a success for Lender cooperation. I am at a loss for that conclusion. The Lender did not clean up the trash or keep the weeds down. My Tenants, neighbors & I did. The vermin issue was not controlled by the Lender, the Washoe County Health Department intervened as well as pest companies hired by myself and neighbors to provide perimeter protection. The dog feces problem went away only due to weather and time. The boarded up window only occurred after 3 months of complaints to the Lender by the Code Enforcement. The ice was not corrected by the Lender, the sun finally did. The squatter issue was only corrected by the Police & Zoning staff. Meanwhile the lender has taken no positive steps to take legal possession of the property nor to maintain it.

We are now starting on year four of this abandoned property with no resolution in sight.

The steps being made in whole are positive and long over-needed, but abandoned homes need a separate, enforceable fast track to protect our neighborhoods.

Thank You.

Mike Maskaly

I absolutely would prefer to have the city of Sparks enforce code, existing as well as enhanced code pertaining to the storage of vehicles on lawns. I own a house on \_\_\_\_\_ and have a neighbor with more vehicles than can be stored in his garage. There is always a vehicle armed on his front lawn. The city needs to hold home owners to a standard that would enhance the city, not degrade it. Please drive \_\_\_\_\_ to look at the discouraging situation.

Thank you, Deborah Davis

I think the code enforcement is a good idea. We have a house in our neighborhood that makes the rest of the neighborhood look trashy. They have graffiti on their house that had been there for month as well as junk stacked all around the yard. A little pride in ownership is a good thing.

Bree Peterson

*i couldn't even get in the door at 5:30.*

I own a property off O'Callahan/Sparks Blvd.

Hardly your run-down side of the tracks, but i have seen many flagrant violations: especially illegal dumping (of TV's and yard waste), deliberate evasion of WM/County rules, and failing to remove discarded items.

I feel that landlords are a big part of the problem locally.

'Like', i see Xmas trees in driveways lately...(!)

The weeds ordinance is unrealistic,

unless there is flexibility. (I see little of that by cityofsparks, nkrutz, etc., etc.)

Before the area was developed, native plant cover wasn't at 75%.

Leaf litter and natural detritus protected the soil.

A bare lot can be mitigated with safe chemicals and periodic water-downs.

Mandatory landscaping is problematic, consumes excess water.

Weeds can & do easily grow in hardscape/gravel areas, unless addressed properly.

Some grasses and herbs that grow naturally in the area may be labeled "weeds", when in fact they are not.

Weeds can be managed, using common sense, not just chemicals and a calendar.

The City in past years has sprayed on O'Callahan at the wrong time, while sometimes missing many plants.

While I agree in principal, it is imperative that

these matters be handled on a case-by-case basis.

The City has responded improperly on similar matters, such as sweeping/parking, thus alienating neighbors.

For years i have spent time, effort, and money on weeding (just) two properties in my neighborhood.

One problem property existed before i purchased my investment house in 2005- a frustrated neighbor left a Note.

A landlord near me allows vacating tenants to leave rotting food, diapers, etc.

loose in bags in front of his rental, subject to feral cats/mice, etc.

while he uses the WM bin for rocks and tree limbs.

This too-typical violation is repeated at another property across from Willowcreek Park, *while the house is still occupied.*

All while at the same time as we are asked to provide "Public Input".

Sparks-Not a responsive local government, as far as i can see.

*The city is next-to-impossible to contact about problems with problem properties, including commercial.*

(I have to e-mails to prove this)

i am ignored almost every time. The County is about as indifferent.

if U are going to use a Reno-style enforcement system, then U should enact a contact system like Reno Direct

I'm looking forward to the proposed code enforcement changes. I think this a positive move for our city. I

have some concerns I hope your team can follow up on:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ - weeds growing
2. \_\_\_\_\_ - the roof had been tarped since last year. Now a \_\_ roof is being put on over the existing shingles.
3. The post office on the corner of 4th and Prater looks trashy. What entity is in charge of maintaining these types of properties?

Thank you for all you and your team does. It is a fine line you all have to walk. I hope you will call on the community members to assist and volunteer. Sounded like many would be willing to help with cleaning up our little city. I don't know if some of the following ideas might be helpful:

1. Have a monthly "clean up a park" day where community members are asked to volunteer
2. Provide dumpsters in neighborhoods for a spring weekend clean up and a fall weekend clean up. Maybe Waste Management might donate some dumpsters? Many people can't afford to go to the dump anymore
3. Have volunteer graffiti cleaners. Provide standard color paint to the volunteers and have them proactively search out and cover up graffiti
4. Better maintenance at The Mariana
5. Volunteers to clean up the main areas and maintain vegetation

Thanks!

Isabella Michel

Dear Mr. Lawson and Mr. Rodriquez:

I am writing to support the changes in the code announced at the meeting on May 6th. I do believe you may have to think about how to address unconventional areas where front yard and side yard are not as defined as in tract housing. \_\_\_\_\_ near me comes to mind. The lots are wide and long and they are more rural in nature. Perhaps they have different zoning or something that will help differentiate between tract home requirements and requirements for rural lots. At the least though, they can fence off an area to store vehicles in. I am uncertain how to address the yard in these rural lots.

I am personally dealing with an elderly neighbor who is letting her yard die. Two other homes a few houses from me have dirt yards. One is a rental and another is a senior citizen as well. There needs to be some incentive for alternative landscaping if people do not want to water and mow grass. Seniors often have equity in their homes but need a reason like a possible fine to tap into that equity and get a loan for desert landscaping, or even, as in my neighbor's case, to get the sprinkler system fixed. They think they are saving money, but their property value declines and so does the neighborhood. As property values decline, a different type of neighbor may move in. They might not like the character that comes into a rough-looking neighborhood. It is a vicious cycle that will lead to a decline in our city.

That same neighbor can't afford a fence that is falling down between our backyards. She doesn't want to pay her half. If I had a code ordinance that addresses repair of fences even in the backyard, I may be able to persuade her to replace it. Part of it is down and part of it is only propped up preciously. We have offered her a loan to be repaid with no interest, but she doesn't yet see the reason to proceed. A future ordinance might help spur her.

Several people at the meeting were offering to volunteer to help Sparks with this. I doubt Sparks has the manpower to organize volunteers. Several years ago, I worked at the Governor's Commission on Volunteerism, and so I know how time consuming it is to run a volunteer program. I think Washoe County had a good one, but there was a grant-funded person in charge. Service organizations in Sparks are the best alternative. Perhaps the City can contact these organizations to help low income people, especially the seniors, comply with this new code. My neighbor, for instance, could use help fixing the irrigation system. Then perhaps we can convince her, with the help of the code, to save her front yard.

As far as junk cars, perhaps a limit should be suggested as well. One of my neighbors has six cars with at least three inoperable. Her husband and son recently died, so she has an emotional attachment to all of them. But an ordinance might make her choose which ones to keep. Even to get rid of the one on the gravel would be helpful. There are many junk cars in our neighborhood cluttering up yards. I think there should be a limit of two inoperable vehicles in the front of a house... on pavement. And keeping them covered is a good idea.

Recreational vehicles are a different problem. I think they should have restrictions as well. Some RVs are mammoth and should be stored in a lot. Too many boats are a problem, though covers can help. If your new code at least encourages them to put in a gate so they can go in the backyard out of sight behind a fence, that is a good solution.

I put up with a lot from my neighbors, because as long as they are law-abiding I say live and let live. But the problem with letting things get out of hand is that it will change the neighborhood and soon I won't have law-abiding neighbors anymore. A rough crowd will move in. Then my only choice will be to leave, but when I go to sell my house, I won't get much for it. It is a vicious cycle. So I will be glad of help from the City of Sparks to prod my neighbors into doing what is right for all of us.

Arlene Williams

Thank U for outreaching me.

i will detail some other, private property issues later.

There is an immediate, ongoing issue at\_\_\_\_\_.

i have contacted the City Council member for this Ward twice recently, and also the County and Waste Management many times for a number of years.

The recycle bins at the location (behind\_\_\_\_\_) have been overfull for at least 3 weeks.

*I have already collected about a yard of cans/bottles, etc. left outside by clueless citizens.*

Also, people have been leaving cardboard lately.

Now, the glass bin is overfull and local punks well smash bottles.

There is a 'RSW' recycle yard just a mile away at Greg. St. their staff is indifferent, at best

Y can't Somebody get these truck drivers off their butt and clue in the office people???

if I call WM, it goes to their Sacramento "service center" and the location isn't on their radar.

I am preventing wind and pilfering fools from scattering (recyclable) litter.

Hi Joe,

I was able to attend the workshop Tuesday to learn about the changes to the Sparks municipal code. I was impressed with the presentation and read the literature regarding the proposed changes. I feel these upgrades to the code will definitely improve the appearance of the city and the quality of life here. I will be glad to see them go into effect as soon as possible!

Could we also stop the scavengers from going through the trash bins before the WM truck comes by to empty them? I feel these people are using the guise of looking for recyclables in order to actually gather data to help them steal residents identity. WM does an excellent job of collecting recyclable materials and doesn't need any help.

I would also like for those responsible for the graffiti/vandalism in our community and parks (specifically Deer Park) to be caught and stopped from committing any more malicious acts.

Thank you for your hard work toward making Sparks the city we all love to live in.

William Rowe

Joe,

I appreciated the opportunity to introduce myself Tuesday evening at the Sparks meeting. In our brief discussion I mentioned the neglected property at \_\_\_\_\_. I believe the pictures are self-explanatory. Most of the neighbors on \_\_\_ are keeping their properties maintained and the value up, \_\_\_ being the exception. I would appreciate, and I am sure the neighbors would also, any steps you take to correct the appearance of this property. After you have had a chance to address this issue I would appreciate a follow up email outlining your decision and any corrective measures you are taking. Thanking you in advance, David Hilscher

This one corner property has an absentee owner,  
former occupant their son with alcoholism/other issues.

(I befriended him, tried to help)

A few times they completely cleared the front yard of weeds  
(all weeds, tho one or two are benign).

But they don't "get" plant biology-I do.

*The problem is the back/side is locked behind gates, and on one side (easily reached from neighbor's side area)  
the noxious weeds are tall-these things do Not respect property boundaries!!*

I spent about \$30 last year and \$20 this on spray,  
plus manual effort -past 5 years.

&& this lot has the painful, bicycle tire-destroying puncturevine on it.

Instead of citing and enforcement,  
education and allowing voluntary effort should be encouraged.

#### TRASHY NEIGHBORS

We shall see what happens after garbage pick-up tomorrow on two others.  
one is \_\_\_\_ across from the park...

The other has been a problem 9 years or more, from maggots in the waste can to leaking oil, to dumping out  
the garage (for 2 months there was a huge pile!).

Bad landlord!!

I can't explain Y no one in neighborhood has complained 2 U

The following was addressed to Adam Mayberry:

When I bought my house in Sparks sixteen years ago, I purposely bought in an area without a home owners  
association. I didn't want a bored retiree telling me I didn't pull my garbage can from the curb in a timely  
fashion or that my garage door was open for too long or I wasn't allowed to paint the trim around my  
windows a certain color. I now find that the City of Sparks is looking to become just such an entity.

I don't hunt or fish or knit or collect stamps. I work on cars. Specifically, I work on Jeeps. I'm a gearhead. I keep  
a clean yard but I do own multiple recreational vehicles and most of them are not stored inside. I have a non-  
operation vehicle on my property. I have a 1985 Jeep CJ-7 I'm about to 'dismantle'. I'm going to swap out  
better axles; I'm going to swap out the engine; I'm going to swap out the entire suspension system; all "major"  
vehicle work.

The current proposed changes would make my current way of life criminal.

I find it ironic that the City of Sparks, whose businesses take in millions of dollars the first week of every  
August, is now on a path to outlaw those who would build the very vehicles that draw the tourists and  
participants who dump those dollars in to our community.

Please review the proposed changes and only move forward with changes that ensure a beautiful city while  
ensuring the rights of the citizens of the City of Sparks to enjoy their chosen 'pursuit of happiness'.

Chapter 7.16 Nuisances

Section 7.16.010 Definitions

d. "Public nuisances" means any of the following conditions:

8. Nuisances in general.

I. Motor vehicles parked within the front or side yard areas on an unpaved surface.

***I disagree with the additional language above. As long as the vehicle is behind a fence and out of sight my neighbors and the City of Sparks should not concern themselves with it as it doesn't affect my neighbors or their property.***

***It doesn't even meet your own definition of interfering "with the reasonable use and enjoyment of adjacent properties; or which has detrimental effect upon adjacent property values."***

***Please leave this section unchanged. I do not agree that a parked vehicle in a side or back yard needs to be on a paved surface.***

m. "Inoperable vehicle or trailer"...

n. "Wrecked and/or junk items"...

o. Major repair work.

***I disagree with the additional language within "m.", "n." and "o." above. Although these sections were not typed out in full here, please read my explanations below.***

***The new language makes it a crime to work on cars.***

***Just because a vehicle is "inoperable" or "junked", by your definition, does not make it a nuisance. A vehicle "partially or fully dismantled" could be in the middle of a full restoration. Maybe a vehicle was in an accident and is being rebuilt by the owner. It MUST "interfere with the reasonable use and enjoyment of adjacent properties; or which has a detrimental effect upon property values" in order to be a nuisance.***

***Like some people enjoy planting tulips, I enjoy upgrading my Jeeps. They dig in the ground and plant bulbs. I remove a less than reliable, old rear axle housing and replace it with a newer, stronger axle housing. It's what I do and under the new rules, that would be outlawed.***

Section 20.35.030 Storage

~~B. Outside storage in the side yard or the rear yard.~~

***Again: I disagree with the additional language above. As long as the vehicle is behind a fence and out of sight my neighbors and the City of Sparks should not concern themselves with it.***

~~B.~~ Outside storage in the front yard, provided:

1. The total number of recreational vehicles in the front yard does not exceed two (2).

***I disagree with the additional language above. If I have a three car garage and have three recreational vehicles that are registered and licensed, I should have the right to park them in my front yard.***

C. Outside storage of up to two (2) vehicles

***I disagree with the additional language above. If I have three recreational vehicles and want to store them behind a fence on my back or side yard, I should have that right.***

***Again, it MUST “interfere with the reasonable use and enjoyment of adjacent properties; or which has a detrimental effect upon property values” in order to be a nuisance.***

Chapter 7.16 Nuisances

Section 7.16.015 Property Preservation

c. Rear and side yards. Outdoor storage of inoperable vehicles or trailers is permitted in rear and side yards if either of the following requirements is met:

ii. Vehicles or trailers are screened from public view with a six foot high opaque fence or six foot high landscaping providing comparable obstruction.

***This contradicts Section 7.16.010 – d, that doesn’t allow the storage of inoperable vehicles. I prefer the language of 7.16.015. As long as it is out of sight and does not have a “detrimental effect on property values” who cares?***

D. Minor vehicle repair work

1. “Minor vehicle repair work” includes...

a. The work shall not exceed 72 hours

b. Minor repair work may only be done on vehicle registered to the occupant(s) of the residential address where the work is being performed.

***Not every project goes as planned. I would like to ask that the time limit be removed as some project hit snags, parts are not required, a tool is not available, your buddy couldn’t come over to help you out, etc.***

***I understand that the City would like to prevent businesses from being operated from a residence. But what if I want to work on my girlfriend’s car or my buddy’s truck? As long as I do not take payment for the work, parts, tools use, etc., I should be allowed to help a friend.***

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns regarding the proposed code amendments.

Doug Barr  
2092 Tangerine St  
Sparks NV



## **Oral or Written Comments Submitted at the May 6, 2014 Public Informational Meeting**

Pat - Supports the code amendments.

Misha Miller – Supports the code amendments 100%.

Michael Gent - Supports the code amendments and proposes the City hire several part time code enforcement officers to supplement full time staff.

Anna - Supports the code amendments.

Lauren Hill – Supports the code amendments and wants to see the city back to being beautiful again with landscaping and vehicles removed from the front of the house so we do not look like a pick and pull car lot.

John Watts – Biggest concern is the dirt in the front yards and number of people that park on them. We need 6 code enforcement officers for a city of this size. Enforcement is not working because people go back and are doing it again. Like parking in the dirt in the front yards. My yard is landscaped and watered but I have to look across the street at filthy dirt.

Kenne and Shanna Nickels – Support the code amendments

Doug Globe - Lived in Sparks 25 years, I support the code changes and keep doing the good work you do. Also vacant homes need to be taken care of because kids can break in and maybe start fires in these houses.

Jeff Hanson - I support the code amendments but in regards as to how they are written now they appear to take into account the dead grasses on the golf course at D'Andrea.

Murray - Supports the code amendments.

Louise - Did not want to be in an HOA. I understand we need regulations to protect property values. I support code updates but to tread lightly in terms of assigning the time line to get the work done. It takes time to do upgrades on a house such as installing landscaping. People need time to get funds and do the work or higher someone.

Jill – Supports code amendments. Also a teacher and believes is a good opportunity for our children to clean up our city.

Lou - past president of Wingfield HOA & current vice president –The enforcement powers is what you need to get things done and it has to be more than just fines. It is not just the size of the fines it is also the ability to lean their property and take them to civil court if necessary.

Irene Gallon - Supports more code enforcement.

Mike Maskaly - Commends staff and the efforts going forward. Sees a large in gap in issuing citations to foreclosed homes. Who are you issuing citations to?

Charlene Gaskins – What are you going to do on foreclosed properties bought up by investors out of the area who are not reputable people and rent to people who are not reputable. Staff responded that fines would force their hand to clean up the property because it would be cheaper.

Terry Martin – Life time resident thanked staff for their work. I see code issues all the time and report them and they continue to come back again. If you don't have effective code enforcement citation powers in the future for these new codes we will have blighted areas in the future.

Rob Parsons – lived in area 40 years showed pictures of his house that was a nice house and in a nice neighborhood when he bought it. Now 18 years later his neighborhood has declined with junk vehicles, people dismantling vehicles, rocks and dirt yards. He bought it for a lot more than it is currently worth now.

Ann Murphy – Thanked code enforcement staff for their work in her neighborhood. Specifically concerned about people working on other peoples vehicles in her neighborhood, Rock, York and Tyler. Does not want to see the neighborhood go like Detroit.

Steve Gregory – 6th generation Nevadan, Before Council makes any commitments you have to think about the can of worms that will be opened. We are in a drought in Nevada described as the worst since the 30's. Properties are owned by banks that shut off water and won't irrigate. Investment properties with tenants include agreement for tenants to handle their own utility bill and a lot of them will not pay to water their lawn. Then there is the problem where I live there are the 1, 2, & 3 acre parcels on Bucky that is a lot of trees, grass and a lot of bare dirt. The last issue with all these new changes, budget cuts and the addition of a new employee will be, do you have enough code enforcement officers to do the job?

Anonymous - Why can't code enforcement when they are out on one call and see that the property next door to that call has the same issues; why can't they also respond to that code violation as well.

Murray - Lived in Sparks for 58 years, I support the code changes but there should be additions to the code for landscaping that talk about proper installation of especially non-living landscapes. No Astro turf for a lawn because it rots away. How we clean up our city should be asked. Volunteers are great. Prison crews are good. Instead of fining the property owner the city should clean up the mess and charge the property owner. If a property owner can't clean up their junk vehicles the city should tow them and bill the property owner for the price of the tow. Keep up the good work.

Wanda – Chose not to live in planned developments so no one would tell her when to take down her Christmas decorations. My mother is 80 years old she can't afford to landscape her yard. The lots in this city are so divers I don't see how you can accommodate all the situations and be fair. It's too much policing. Who is going to be tattling on people?

Arleen – City should get a grant to for people who cannot afford to landscape and put in irrigation systems.

Anonymous - 12 year resident of sparks why we don't see the commercial properties being kept up as well?

Vince Keller – I would like to comment on the area between the driveway and the nearest property line. Sparks is an old city we don't live in a tract development we have different configurations. Consider the diversity when making the regulations for storing RV's on residential lots because I can't afford commercial storage.

Don – Resident for 30 years consider the diversity of this city and the farthest property line from the house where we may store recreational vehicles.

Peter Lilly - Impermeable ground required only in the front yard area and not in the rear yard verses wanting to change my rock that I have my trailer stored on now to new code of impermeable ground cover I 'am not for it.

Betty – Want to see that rocks are still allowed to park your RV on the side yard of your driveway.

Craig – Lived in Sparks 35 years because of new ordinance I will not be able to do body work on my vehicle.

Chris Maul – Currently a president of an HOA. You are making a soft HOA and putting an economic burden on the people. How do these new proposal effect an HOA?

Chris Armstrong - I want to help a lifelong resident and 17 years former City employee. I want to commend code enforcement staff for the work they do with the little help they have to do it all. I have a list of chronic issues that I need to be taken care of besides the new code issues you are bring up tonight. I like the idea of landscaping we have issues with dead trees and rats. Again there are not enough code enforcement offices to take care of all the issues just in my neighborhood. So what can I do to help.

Chris Armstrong – Again I want to help, My neighbors and I cleaned up the demolished car wash at 15<sup>th</sup> and Prater. I can walk from here to my house and sight 200 violations. Should I, e-mail you, phone call you, do you want a list, what is going to make it easier on you. I know you all are already over whelmed and there is a lot on your plate but I ‘am here to help. I love the city. Staff responded to, e-mail us.