

DRAFT

Sparks Comprehensive Plan Phase II Questions by Topic February 1, 2016

Managing Growth

Sparks' population is projected to grow from 93,000 in 2015 to 120,077 in 2034. The first phase of the Ignite Sparks community survey indicates that managing growth is the community's top concern. How Sparks manages growth will have varying effects on many aspects of the community, including the character of the community and its neighborhoods, traffic, the City's financial condition and the ability of the City and other public agencies to provide public services, facilities and amenities. Conversely, how the City chooses to invest in things like public infrastructure will affect the pattern and timing of growth.

How should Sparks grow? Select 2 options:

- Everywhere within the City boundary
- Focus new development along the Prater Way corridor
- Focus new development along major highways and boulevards (i.e. Pyramid Highway, Vista Blvd., Sparks Blvd.)
- Focus new development in existing residential neighborhoods (redevelopment of older areas)
- Grow into new areas outside City boundaries

If we plan for growth outside the current City's boundaries, should Sparks annex land for more uses that includes:

- Residential development
- Office
- Retail/commercial development
- Industrial development
- Open space/Parks

How do you want the City to manage future growth?

- Require development to pay for infrastructure
- City investments to guide growth and development

Traffic and Mobility

This topic is the street network, bus system, pedestrian paths and trails, and bicycle routes....all forms of moving people and goods. In Sparks, as in the rest of Washoe County, automobiles are by far the dominant mode of travel. Bus transit service is limited to the older, more densely populated areas of Sparks, primarily along and south of the Prater Way corridor. The City of Sparks, Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) all play a role in providing transportation infrastructure. All lack sufficient funding to address Sparks' and the region's backlog of needs and a growing population. Determining Sparks' transportation priorities is critical.

What is your current commute time to work from your home?

- 0 – 5 minutes
- 6 – 10 minutes
- 11 – 15 minutes
- 16 – 20 minutes
- 20 – 30 minutes
- 30 or more minutes

In 2030, what is the maximum commute time you would like to travel between home and work?

- 0 – 5 minutes
- 6 – 10 minutes
- 11 – 15 minutes
- 16 – 20 minutes
- 20 – 30 minutes
- 30 or more minutes

In 2030, how would you prefer to (primarily) commute to work? Select 2 options:

- Driving my own vehicle
- Ridesharing
- Bus
- Bicycle
- Walk

What transportation issues should be priorities in the Sparks Comprehensive Plan? Select 2 options:

- Build new roads and widen existing roads
- Improve street & road pavement conditions
- Add pedestrian paths and improve existing sidewalks
- Provide more/improve bike lanes
- Improve public bus service
- Locate more employment closer to housing

Public Safety

Public safety relates to the subjects of police protection, fire services, and maintenance of public services including streets, facilities and utility lines.

The Phase I results from the Ignite Sparks community survey indicates that crime is a significant concern, particularly in the City's older neighborhoods. Growth will impact the City's ability to provide essential services, including police protection, crime prevention, fire protection and emergency medical services. Public safety also depends on the maintenance of public infrastructure such as roads, pedestrian networks, storm water and sewer collection and treatment facilities. The City's ability to provide these services was sharply reduced during the recent economic downturn and will be further tested by growth.

What Fire Department emergency services do you value most? Select 3 options:

- Fire suppression
- Emergency medical services
- Rescue response – water, trench, confined space, collapsed structures
- Response to vehicle accidents
- Public Assists – investigation of smoke and carbon monoxide detector activations, broken water pipe assistance, lift assist, etc.
- Response to environmental emergencies

What Police Department services do you value most? Select 3 options:

- Beat cops who know their neighborhoods well
- Gang officers/units
- Detective unit
- Traffic enforcement
- Call response
- Graffiti response

What public works services do you value most? Select 3 options:

- Flood protection
- Road maintenance
- Traffic light timing
- Sewage collection and treatment
- Park maintenance
- Drought and natural disaster preparedness
- Graffiti removal

Community and Neighborhood Character

Community and Neighbor Character relates to the type of atmosphere the citizens of Sparks want their community to grow into. Respondents to the Phase 1 Ignite Sparks survey clearly appreciate Sparks' "small town" character and the sense of community felt by many Sparks residents. These respondents also expressed a desire to maintain these qualities as the community grows. How can Spark best maintain the quality of life and those aspects of Sparks that citizens love? What do the citizens want as the character of Sparks? Are there different characteristics that are desired in different parts of the city?

What does "small town /community" mean to you? Select 2 options:

- Neighborhoods that are safe from crime
- Well maintained neighborhood parks and playgrounds
- Excellent teaching and school facilities
- Neighborhood places to gather
- One to two story buildings rather than high rise buildings
- Small-scale village center development with shopping and dining
- A vibrant downtown with shopping, restaurants, events, etc.

What type of community character do you want to see in 2030?

- Neighborhoods with a mix of uses including single-family homes, apartments, dining and shopping
- Single-family homes separated from all other uses including shopping, commercial and industrial uses
- Spanish Springs portion of Sparks to continue developing as suburban development with higher densities to be located within older Sparks
- Victorian Square evolves into a downtown area with high density residential housing, shopping, jobs and dining

What kind of neighborhood will you will want to live in 2030?

- Single-family home close to a street with small restaurants and shops
- Single-family home close to strip mall with plenty of parking
- Planned community with a homeowner association
- House, apartment or condo in downtown/Victorian Square area
- A diverse community with a wide variety of housing for all income levels, backgrounds, and ages
- Suburban housing on large lots

What uses should be near housing? Select 2 options:

- Retail, restaurants and bars
- Offices
- Industrial
- Open space
- Only residential

What do you consider downtown?

- Victorian Square area
- Legends at Sparks Marina
- Galleria area in Spanish Springs
- The Prater Way corridor from Victorian Square to the Legends at Sparks Marina
- None
- Other, please specify

What do you do currently when you go “downtown” now? Select 2 options:

- Dine
- Bars
- Shop
- Go to the movies
- Gamble
- Special events (i.e. Christmas parade, rib cook-off, Hot August Nights)
- Gathering place (i.e. concerts)
- Don't go to downtown Sparks

What do you want to be able to do in the future when you to go to downtown Sparks? Select 2 options:

- Dine
- Bars
- Shop
- Go to the movies
- Gamble
- Special events (i.e. Christmas parade, rib cook-off, Hot August Nights)
- Gathering place (i.e. concerts)
- Other

Housing and Affordable Housing

This topic covers the types of housing that should be available in Sparks and its cost relative to the household incomes of current and potential Sparks' residents.

What type of housing do you currently live in?

- House on a medium to large lot
- House on a small lot
- Own a condo or townhouse
- Rent an apartment or duplex
- Mobile home

In 2030, what type of housing do you want to live in?

- House on a medium to large lot
- House on a small lot
- Own a condo or townhouse
- Rent an apartment or duplex
- Mobile home
- Mixed-use housing with restaurants/retail on the ground floor and housing on the 2nd and 3rd stories
- Micro home, e.g. 400 square foot unit

If you reside in Sparks, do your housing costs create an excessive strain on you household budget?

- Yes
- No

Has the rise in the price of housing in recent years affected your household?

- Positively
- Negatively

What types housing does Sparks need more of. Select 2 options:

- For-sale housing for lower-income households
- For-sale housing for middle-income households
- For sale housing for high-income households
- Rental housing for lower-income households
- Rental housing for middle-income households
- Rental housing for high-income households
- Assisted living and nursing homes

Economic Vitality

Sparks' future as a desirable place to live, work and visit is dependent upon a dynamic, diversified and growing economic base that complements the character of the community. Sparks needs to be regionally competitive and retain and attract businesses to offer well-paying jobs to our citizens, respect our high desert environment, bolster our tax base and support a quality of life that is distinctive in the region.

What is the most important economic driver that the City of Sparks should support?

- Retain existing businesses
- Attract new businesses and industries
- Attract tourism and special events

What strategies should the City of Sparks adopt to increase economic vitality? Select 2 options:

- Increase the amount of land zoned for commercial and industrial activities
- Permit large scale industrial (warehousing and distribution facilities like Amazon) uses in Spanish Springs portion of Sparks
- Maintain existing limitations on large scale warehousing and distribution facilities in Spanish Springs portion of Sparks so as to reserve land for traditional office-oriented business park uses
- Supplement hotel room tax with City's general fund money to support existing and new special events
- Develop technical assistance programs to businesses
- Provide financial incentives for the formation and expansion of businesses
- Focus on maintaining and improving existing city services (public safety, for example), public infrastructure (roads, sewer collection and treatment facilities, for example) and quality-of-life facilities (parks and recreation facilities, for example).

Fiscal Health

To be a city of choice, the City must be fiscally responsible with a budget that prioritizes spending, services and maintenance.

What policies should the City of Sparks pursue to maintain fiscal sustainability?

- Aggressively pursue growth that enhances tax revenues
- Seek to increase fees and taxes to maintain or enhance services
- Limit growth as necessary to maintain current service levels for current residents and businesses.
- Incur debt to provide infrastructure (i.e. roads, water lines, sewer lines, fire stations, parks, etc.) and City facilities needed to accommodate growth

Finance/Priority Exercise: Balance City's Checkbook (Refer to P:/2016 Comprehensive Plan Update/Survey Results Phase 1 folder – Manage County Checkbook Douglas)

Resiliency and Sustainability

Resiliency refers to the ability to withstand and manage disruptive forms of change, terrorist attacks, impacts of climate change, natural disasters, public health crises and technological change. Sustainability is generally understood to mean the ability of a community to meet the needs of the present without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

What should Sparks focus on to increase resiliency? Select 2 options:

- Increase the community's ability to cope with extended/more frequent droughts
- Increase the ability to mitigate and recover from extreme weather events, such as flooding
- Protect watersheds
- Diversify energy sources
- Preparedness for public health emergencies and mass casualty events

If the City should seek to increase the community's sustainability, what should it focus on?

Select 2 options:

- Water conservation
- Green building construction
- Solar and other renewable energy
- Access to fresh & healthy food
- Air quality
- Protection of river & wetlands
- Access to open space and nature
- Reduction of carbon emissions

Should the City adopt policies and allocate resources to increase the community's sustainability?

- Absolutely
- No
- Only if such efforts do not limit development and economic growth

Facilities and Amenities

The City's main functions are to provide services including fire and police protection, street maintenance including traffic lights and street signs, sewer collection and treatment, storm drainage infrastructure and maintenance of city properties including parks. Other services the City provides are management of city operations, planning for the future of the community, providing recreational opportunities and hosting events.

Which city utilities and facilities are most important for Sparks to prioritize when planning for growth in 2030? Select 3 options:

- Sidewalks
- Bike lanes
- Roads
- Water
- Sewer
- Fire stations
- Police substations
- Parks and trails
- Safe walking and biking routes to schools
- Community centers (e.g. Alf Sorenson)
- Senior centers
- ADA compliance

What services and maintenance are most important for Sparks to prioritize when planning for growth in 2030? Select 3 options:

- Street pavement and repair
- Street cleaning and snow removal
- Timing of traffic signals
- Traffic safety and calming
- Code enforcement (e.g. clean yards, graffiti removal)
- Flood preparedness
- Maintenance of parks
- Energy conservation projects
- Community planning

What facilities and services need more funding? Select 2 options:

- Police
- Fire
- Street maintenance
- Parks
- Upgrades and/or expansion of sewer collection lines and sewer treatment plant
- Community centers (e.g. Alf Sorenson, Sparks Senior Center)
- Municipal court capacity
- None

Quality of Life

Residents of Sparks love their community. This was made evident during the public outreach and the Vision Survey. Respondents regularly used phrases such as “small town, community, family, home town, and friendly.” The challenge will be to maintain these characteristics and the community’s quality of life while accommodating growth.

What recreation activities are most important to you?

- Entertainment and special events
- Golf
- Bicycle trails and circuits
- Exercise equipment areas
- Swimming pools
- Dog parks
- Outdoor fields (e.g. baseball, lacrosse, soccer fields)
- Indoor gymnasiums
- Skateboard parks
- Paths for walking and jogging
- Scheduled programs and classes

What are quality of life features for you? Select 3 options:

- Public art
- Sparks Heritage Museum
- Access to Truckee River
- Special Events
- Performing arts
- Movie theater
- Mountain views
- Live music venues
- Shopping and dining

Do you think you have access to, and can afford, healthy food?

- Yes, I can afford to buy and can easily get to healthy food
- No, it is difficult for me to buy healthy food on account of money or transportation issues