



Planning Commission Agenda Item

Date: May 10, 2023

Item No: 3

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Alfredo Melesio, Jr., AICP, EDFP
Director Land Development & Community Services
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SUBJECT: **AMP-03-2023 Urban Agriculture Element (Public Hearing).** Applicant: City of North Las Vegas. Request: An amendment to the Comprehensive Master Plan amending Guiding Principle 7, "Community Services, Amenities and Environment" to add an Urban Agriculture Element. CITYWIDE. (For Possible Action)

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The City of North Las Vegas is requesting consideration to amend the Comprehensive Master Plan (Resolution #2023-1) Chapter 3: Guiding Principle 7 Community Services, Amenities and Environment by adding an Urban Agriculture Element. The amendment would establish a new goal "7.9" and associated policies promoting urban farming and community gardening. The new policies also include a plan to inventory city owned vacant lands and other real property to determine if the lands are suitable for urban farming and gardening.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Previous Action
N/A

RELATED APPLICATIONS:

Application #	Application Request

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

Department	Comments
Public Works:	No Comment.
Police:	No Comment.
Fire:	No Comment.
Clark County School District:	No Comment.
Clark County Department of Aviation:	No Comment.

ANALYSIS:

The City of North Las Vegas is requesting consideration to amend the Comprehensive Master Plan (Resolution #2023-1) by adding an Urban Agriculture Element. The purpose of the Urban Agriculture Element (Element) is to establish policies that encourage the production of locally grown fruits and vegetables with the intent to increase access to nutritious food, enhance food security, and improve community health. The Urban Agriculture Element will also establish a policy to inventory city lands to determine the potential for urban farming and gardening.

Furthermore, the new policies included in the Element are intended to help enhance the environment and provide the community with educational opportunities related to gardening and nutrition. The Element further encourages conservation through the development of innovative desert farming practices that reduce water usage and promote renewable energy. Finally, the Element also promotes the sale of locally grown produce to the community through farm stands and farmers' markets.

Specifically, the City is amending the Comprehensive Master Plan Chapter 3, Guiding Principle 7, Community Services, Amenities and Environment definition and also adding a new goal, 7.9 Urban Architecture. Goal 7.9 Urban Agriculture will include the following new policies; Policy 7.9-1 Community Gardening, Policy 7.9-2 Garden / Farming Opportunities, Policy 7.9-3 Sustainable Gardens / Farms, and Policy 7.9-4 Farming Education Programs.

The City proposes the following amendments (red) to Guiding Principle 7:

- 1) The first paragraph in the section and replacing it with the following: **"North Las Vegas will become 'Your Community of Choice' by creating sustainable amenities that promote a sense of community, support environmental resources and provide efficient and reliable services. This will be accomplished through a series of initiatives focused on education, recreation and the environment. Residents will choose this amenity-driven city as a place to live, work, and play. "**

- 2) Add “Goal.7.9 Urban Agriculture,” followed by, “The City will collaborate with other organizations to identify opportunities to promote urban farming and community gardening.”
- 3) Add the following policies to Goal.7.9 Urban Agriculture:
 - Policy 7.9-1 Community Gardening, Encourage the development of community gardens throughout the City by amending city codes and policies to promote urban farming, farmers markets and farm stands.
 - Policy 7.9-2 Garden / Farming Opportunities, Establish a process to inventory vacant city lands for suitability for urban farming and gardening. Consider including parks, community centers and other City facilities in the inventory.
 - Policy 7.9-3 Sustainable Gardens / Farms, Encourage the use of alternative farming techniques to promote water conservation. Promote the planting of crops suitable for Southern Nevada’s arid climate and extreme heat.
 - Policy 7.9-4 Farming Education Programs, Support educational opportunities for urban farming.

Urban areas in which it is difficult to buy affordable healthy food are referred to as food deserts. The United States Department of Agriculture defines a food desert when a census tract meets the following two criteria: a poverty rate of 20 percent or higher, or a median family income at or below 80 percent of the statewide median family income and greater than 33 percent of residents live more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store. Readily available healthy food options within a person’s neighborhood influences their food choices. Eating more healthy food can help reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has compiled data to create a webmap that identifies access to healthy food in southern Nevada. The data includes census tract information for the following: locations of community gardens, farmers markets, food pantries, snap retailers, and grocery stores; households without a car; food deserts; and food insecurity rates. The webmap has identified two food deserts located within North Las Vegas. Both are located south of Cheyenne Avenue and west of the I-15 Corridor. Providing an opportunity to grow and purchase healthy food options (fruits and vegetables) locally will help minimize the negative impact food deserts have on our community.

The Urban Agriculture Element is intended to be a guide for the City to promote opportunities for urban farming and community gardening. The proposed amendment is consistent with and complements the components of the Southern Nevada Strong Regional Policy Plan visions and goals. The Urban Agriculture Element is in conformance with the objectives established in the Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan for Sustainable

Development. City Staff requests the above the outlined changes to the Comprehensive Master Plan be approved.

Approval Criteria: (Comprehensive Plan Amendments)

Recommendations and decisions on comprehensive master plan amendments may be approved if the City Council finds the proposed amendment will not diminish the supply of essential land uses in the City, including industrial zones that provide a critical employment base for the City, and that the proposed amendment meets at least one of the following:

- (1) The proposed amendment is based on a change in projections or assumptions from those on which the comprehensive master plan is based;
- (2) The proposed amendment is based on identification of new issues, needs, or opportunities that are not adequately addressed in the comprehensive master plan;
- (3) The proposed amendment is based on a change in the policies, objectives, principles, or standards governing the physical development of the City;
- (4) The proposed amendment may result in unique development opportunities that will offer substantial benefits to the City; or
- (5) The proposed amendment is based on an identification of errors or omissions in the comprehensive master plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution No 2023-1

Proposed changes to Chapter 3: Land Use Plan- Mixed Use Commercial – Redline Version

Proposed Changes to Chapter 3: Land Use Plan- Mixed Use Commercial

SNRPC Conformity Finding

Southern Nevada Strong Regional Policy Plan Self-Assessment

Southern Nevada Healthy Food Access Webmap