

## STAFF REPORT

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**Date:** February 11, 2015

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**Thru:** Andrew Clinger, City Manager

**Subject:** J.2. Staff Report (For Possible Action): Update, discussion and potential direction regarding reinstatement of Neighborhood Advisory Boards (NABs).

**From:** Deanna Gescheider, Director of Communications & Community Engagement

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**Summary:** At the December 10, 2014 meeting, City Council requested information related to the potential for reinstating a citizen engagement program similar to the City's Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB) program. Staff recommends that Council accept the staff report and approve the recommendation to implement the revised Neighborhood Advisory Board Program.

**Previous Council Action:** At the December 10, 2014 meeting, Council directed the Office of Communications and Community Engagement (OCCE) to create a plan to reinstate the NAB program.

At the May 22, 2013 meeting, City Council approved the updated Comprehensive Community Engagement Program.

**Background:** In December of 1994, District Councils were formed to serve as a vehicle for citizens to provide input on a variety of community issues and programs. In 2005 they were renamed Neighborhood Advisory Boards (NABs). A focus of NABs was to provide residents with information related to proposed development projects in their neighborhoods. As the local economy began to slow in 2008, development activity started to decline significantly, resulting in a lack of meaningful NAB agenda items, difficulties in the recruitment of a full nine-member board, and a continual drop in NAB meeting attendance. In an effort to enhance citizen engagement and reach a broader audience, the Office of Communications and Community Engagement (OCCE) recommended the replacement of the NAB program with a Comprehensive Community Engagement Program. The recommended program included an expansion of social media communications, Hot Topic and Council Member/Ward specific meetings, and other information sharing methods.

**Discussion:** City staff met with individual Council Members, reviewed citizen input from past community meetings, and evaluated engagement programs from a number of cities throughout the nation. The information was compiled and summarized into three prime objectives for a new NAB program. Those objectives are:

**1. Improve communication between citizens and City Council Members.**

- monthly NAB meetings
- regular Council updates
- early identification of potential issues

**2. Provide citizens the opportunity for early engagement on important community and regionally significant issues/projects.**

- Master Plan input
- empower citizens to identify neighborhood improvement projects
- regional agency updates

**3. Create a venue for citizens to review and provide feedback on certain development projects.**

- timely information on Ward development activity
- gather meaningful citizen input
- provide status updates

The proposed NAB program will facilitate early citizen engagement and respond to citizen requests on important issues. Citizens have consistently expressed interest in seeing their City Council Member on a regular basis and learning about development projects in their Ward. The proposed program will address these requests, create a venue for neighborhood discussions, and project implementation.

If the recommended program is approved, staff anticipates initiating an awareness and recruiting campaign in March. Upon review of citizen applications, NAB members will be appointed at an April Council meeting. The first NAB meeting and NAB member training will take place in May.

OCCE, Community Development, and City Attorney staff established the following framework to create an updated NAB program.

**Structure:**

- Each Ward will have one NAB with five City Council appointed NAB members.
  - The membership of the NAB should represent the diversity of the Ward.

- NAB members will serve a two year term and be eligible for one additional two year term.
- Each NAB member will serve as Chairperson for at least two meetings per year (i.e. a rotating chairperson approach).
- Council Member, Liaison, and the rotating Chairperson will set the agenda.
- There will be 10 to 12 NAB meetings per year.
- Meetings will be held on a monthly basis from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., on a specific day and location within the Ward. **(Attachment A)**
- Meetings will be governed by Nevada's Open Meeting Law (NRS Ch. 241).
- The Council Member will attend their monthly Ward NAB meeting. If the Council Member cannot attend, the At-Large Council Member or Mayor will be invited to attend in their place.
  - The Council Member's Community Liaison will also attend NAB meetings.

#### **Community Development projects:**

- Development projects detailed on the Development Review Memo (DRM) will be included on the respective NAB agenda.
  - Developers will be notified that their project is on an agenda, but they are not required to attend.
  - A member of the Community Development staff will attend the NAB meeting to present the process and review application information. Staff will not discuss the details or merits of the application.
  - NAB members and meeting attendees will have an opportunity to review and give input on development projects on the Project Review Form during NAB meetings or online. **(Attachment B)**
  - Staff will update NABs after Planning Commission/City Council action to inform them on the outcome and how NAB concerns were addressed.

#### **NAB member training (Attachment C):**

- NAB members will be required to attend a training prior to their first meeting.
- Training will include:
  - NAB purpose and structure
  - NRS 241 - Open Meeting Law
  - Ethics/Conflict of Interest
  - Robert's Rules of Order/Running an effective meeting
  - Development Process and citizen input
  - NAB community engagement
  - Social media training/Facebook group management

**Neighborhood discussions:**

- City departments and outside agency updates can be agendized on an as needed basis.
- NABs will have the ability to identify improvement projects within their Ward. Requests for a Council Donation Fund allocation can be made if there are costs associated with a project.

**Measures of success:**

- Attendee numbers are not as critical to NAB success as their ability to identify neighborhood concerns, potential solutions, and proactive improvement projects.
- NABs will present an activity/accomplishment report to Council on an annual basis.
- Staff will track:
  - the number of neighborhood concerns identified through the NABs
  - action taken to address concerns
  - neighborhood improvement projects initiated by the NABs
  - the number of development projects presented to the NABs
  - individual NAB Facebook group activity

**Online engagement tools:**

- Facebook Groups for each NAB will be created.
  - This will allow community members to share ideas and hot topics within their neighborhood.
  - City staff will monitor the Groups and communicate new ideas and hot topics to the appropriate staff.
- Staff will continue to evolve the Ward web pages of Reno.gov to feature interesting content from each Ward.
- The Textizen survey tool will help gather input on controversial developments as needed, allowing everyone to participate whether at the meeting or not.
- The Ward email databases will be used to push notifications about development or other interesting topics to the neighborhoods.

**Funding recommendations:**

- In order to broaden public awareness of the NAB opportunities, OCCE will create a promotional campaign that will include print and media advertising buys, social media posts, e-mail invitations, PSAs, press releases, and personal contacts.
- Staffing costs will increase with the attendance of a Community Development staff member at monthly NAB meetings.
- A professional minute taker will be contracted to attend meetings and transcribe minutes in a timely manner.

- Community Pride Grant Funds will no longer be made available to NABs. Instead, a request to increase Council Donation Funds will be submitted during the FY15/16 budget process. If approved, the Council Member will have the opportunity to request an allocation of their funds to help offset the costs associated with NAB identified neighborhood improvement projects.

**Financial Implications:** We anticipate any funding implications for FY 14/15 be covered by the OCCE budget. For the FY 15/16 budget an allocation of \$142,900 will be requested to cover costs associated with a public awareness/recruitment marketing campaign, a professional minute taking service, equipment, staff time and other ancillary costs. **(Attachment D)**

**Legal Implications:** Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada Law. NABs will be created by Resolution.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that Council accept the staff report and approve the recommendation to implement the revised Neighborhood Advisory Board Program.

**Proposed Motion:** I move to accept the staff report and approve staff's recommendation.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A - NAB Meeting Locations and Dates (PDF)
- Attachment B - Project Review Form (PDF)
- Attachment C - NAB Training (DOCX)
- Attachment D - NAB Proposed Budget (PDF)

## Attachment A

### *Proposed NAB Meeting Locations and Dates*

#### **Ward One**

**McKinley Arts and Culture Center**  
925 Riverside Drive

#### **Schedule/Day**

First Thursday of each month

#### **Ward Two**

**Moana Nursery Design Center**  
3520 Clover Way  
(adjacent to 1100 W. Moana Lane)

Third Tuesday of each month

#### **Ward Three**

**Reno City Hall**  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor Caucus Room

First Tuesday of each month

#### **Ward Four**

**Reno-Stead Airport Meeting Room**  
4895 Texas Avenue

Third Thursday of each month

#### **Ward Five**

**Reno City Hall**  
First Floor Foyer Area

Second Tuesday of each month



# PROJECT REVIEW FORM

## Ward One

### Neighborhood Advisory Board

Case No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Case Name \_\_\_\_\_

Case Planner \_\_\_\_\_ Community Liaison \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Citizen \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information – Email \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please note this form and all information on it will be part of the packet that goes to Planning Commission and/or Reno City Council and will be public record.

Please check the “opt-in” box to receive Reno Connect email newsletters. Reno Connect is the best way to stay informed about the latest news and updates from the City of Reno. We’ll never share your email address with third-party persons, companies or organizations.

Citizen Input and Review – Thank you for your interest in the above named case. We hope the presentations from the developers and City of Reno staff on this project has been beneficial and informative. We want your feedback and comments as we gather information to share with the Planning Commission as they make their findings and decisions. As appropriate, please share your comments on these project areas and also on other issues or modifications. Thank you!

1. Compatibility of proposal with surrounding area:
  
2. Traffic impacts & pedestrian safety:
  
3. Proposed design contributes to and enhances the character of the area:

Please complete other side for additional input.

Attachment B

4. Environmental Impacts:

5. Appropriate Signs:

6. Other Issues/Suggested Modifications:

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Signature

Thank you for your comments!



## Attachment C

### *Proposed NAB member training*

#### 1) NAB Purpose – General Overview

- To improve communication between citizens and Council.
- Provide citizens the opportunity for early engagement on important issues.
- Create a venue for citizens to review and provide feedback on certain development projects.

#### Expand on how it provides:

- A. open line of communication with City Council Members and community members
- B. opportunities to discuss neighborhood issues and identify potential solutions
- C. the official citizen participation structure for issues relating to land use, physical development, programs, activities, and general neighborhood improvement efforts

#### 2) Open Meeting Law Review NRS 241.020

The Open Meeting Law is to ensure citizens have the opportunity to hear about and provide comments related to city business.

- A. posting requirements
- B. public comment
- C. quorum requirements
- D. non-meeting events
- E. "serial" meetings

#### 3) Ethics Laws/Conflict of Interest

- A. appointed members (by Council) are treated similar to public officials
- B. recuse if involved w/group/project, can benefit financially
- C. don't use your position on NAB for personal benefit

#### 4) NAB Resolution Review

- A. NABs are governed by Council adopted Resolution
- B. five Council appointed members
- C. two year terms w/one consecutive two year term. One year between maximum four years of service considered for reappointment.
- D. rotating Chair for each meeting

#### 5) Running an effective meeting

- A. Review best practice recommendations on audience engagement, productivity timeliness and project coordination.

#### 6) Public/Media Comments

- A. Members who speak on issues in the public will identify that they are expressing their own individual opinion and not a representation of a NAB position.

#### 7) Development Issues

- A. development project process
- B. review Findings
- C. review Project Review Form
- D. provide examples of effective citizen input on projects

**8) NAB Engagement**

- A. sharing information with neighbors
- B. encourage attendance, signing up for Reno Connect and joining Ward Facebook groups to receive agendas and neighborhood news
- C. NAB involvement in other agency projects
- D. identify NAB projects for neighborhood improvement – park clean ups, graffiti removal, etc.
- E. special interest presentations – Emergency Preparedness, bicycle safety, etc.

**9) Social Media Training**

- A. NAB Facebook group management

**10) Questions and Answers**

<b>Attachment D</b>			
<b>FY 15/16 Proposed NAB budget</b>			
Staff			
	OCCE	\$9,900.00	*
	CD	\$9,000.00	**
	Part Time Staff (New)	\$65,000.00	w/benefits
	Misc.	\$1,500.00	
	Minutes	\$30,000.00	
Room Rental		\$0.00	
Equipment Rental		\$2,000.00	
Advertising		\$25,000.00	
Misc.		\$500.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$142,900.00</b>	<b>***</b>
<b>* OCCE staff calculation</b>			
	5 hours per meeting		
	5 meetings per month		
	\$33 per hour		
<b>**CD staff calculation</b>			
	3 hours per meeting		
	5 meetings per month		
	\$50 per hour		
<b>*** Total does not include Council Donation Fund increase</b>			