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Summary: An ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 50 (Public Peace, Safety and Morals) to clarify the definition and determination of blight; add language to the definition of "obstruction"; declare the storage of vehicles or materials as items that may not cause an obstruction; amend the definition of "public view" to include public access easements and publicly maintained trails; clarify the term "regularly used location"; and declare that residing in a recreational vehicle in an unauthorized manner is a public nuisance.

BILL NO. _____

ORDINANCE NO. _____

Title:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WASHOE COUNTY CODE AT CHAPTER 50 (PUBLIC PEACE, SAFETY AND MORALS) TO CLARIFY THE DEFINITION AND DETERMINATION OF BLIGHT; TO ADD LANGUAGE TO THE DEFINITION OF "OBSTRUCTION" TO INCLUDE REFERENCE TO PUBLIC EASEMENTS; TO DECLARE THE STORAGE OF VEHICLES OR MATERIALS AS ITEMS THAT MAY NOT CAUSE AN OBSTRUCTION; TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF "PUBLIC VIEW" TO INCLUDE PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENTS AND PUBLICLY MAINTAINED TRAILS; TO CLARIFY THE TERM "REGULARLY USED LOCATION"; AND TO DECLARE THAT RESIDING IN A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE IN AN UNAUTHORIZED MANNER IS A PUBLIC NUISANCE; AND ALL MATTERS NECESSARILY CONNECTED THEREWITH AND PERTAINING THERETO.

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WHEREAS:

- A. This Commission desires to amend Washoe County Code Chapter 50 (Public Peace, Safety and Morals) as part of its efforts to strengthen code enforcement remedies and improve enforcement outcomes; and
- B. Pursuant to Washoe County Code Section 2.030, this Commission initiated the proposed amendments to Washoe County Code Chapter 50 on October 13, 2026; and
- C. The amendments and this ordinance were drafted in concert with the District Attorney's Office; and
- D. Following a first reading and publication as required by NRS 244.100(1), and after a duly noticed public hearing, this Commission desires to adopt this Ordinance; and
- E. This Commission has determined that this ordinance is not a "rule" as defined in NRS 237.060 requiring a business impact statement.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WASHOE COUNTY DOES HEREBY ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. Section 50.304 of the Washoe County Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

50.304 - Definitions.

As used in sections 50.300 to 50.310, inclusive, the following words and phrases shall be construed to have the following meanings:

- 1. "Animal." Every living creature not a member of the human race.
- 2. "Attractive nuisance." Any property, structure, premises, instrument, equipment or vehicle that is in such an unsafe and unprotected state as to constitute an attraction to children or vagrants, criminals or other unauthorized persons to their risk of injury or unlawful conduct.
- 3. "Blight." Conditions that substantially impair the livability of or community appearance of, or the safe, social or economic conditions of, the surrounding neighborhood or county community as stated in NRS 279.388, as amended. Such conditions include, without limitation, the accumulation of debris-refuse-rubbish; broken, rotting, crumbling, cracking or rusting fencing; broken windows; landscaping that is dead or dying, or exhibits uncontrolled growth; and any other similar conditions of disrepair and deterioration. **Pursuant to NRS Chapter 279 (Redevelopment of Communities), which primarily addresses blight in the context of redevelopment of communities or neighborhoods and not individual properties, an area must meet at least four (4) of the factors listed in NRS 279.388.**

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4. "Criminal gang." As defined at NRS 193.168, as amended and includes any combination of persons, organized formally or informally, so constructed that the organization will continue its operation even if individual members enter or leave the organization, which:
 - (a) Has a common name or identifying symbol;
 - (b) Has particular conduct, status and customs indicative of it; and
 - (c) Has as one of its common activities engaging in criminal activity punishable as a felony, other than the conduct which constitutes the primary offense.
5. "Dangerous condition or structure." A condition or structure that may injure or endanger the health, life, property or safety of the general public or the occupants of the property on which the condition or structure is located. This phrase includes, without limitation, a condition or structure that violates any rule, regulation, ordinance or code regulating health and safety enacted, adopted or passed by the board of county commissioners, including without limitation any rule, regulation, ordinance, or code adopted pursuant to NRS 244.3675, as amended concerning minimum levels of health or safety, the violation of which is designated as a nuisance in the rule, regulation, ordinance, or code.
6. "Debris-refuse-rubbish." Material that is discarded, worn out or cast off without regard to value; and is of a non-decaying nature, or is capable of decomposition to a putrid state, or is of solid or semi-solid wastes. Examples are: animal carcasses; accumulation of excrement; leaves; trimmings from brush, lawns, trees, gardens or shrubbery; weeds; dead trees and branches; piles of earth mixed with any of the matter set forth in this definition; manure; paper; trash; cardboard; metal; wood; glass; crockery; bedding; scrap; appliances; furniture; equipment; parts; junk vehicles; construction waste.
7. "Enforcement official." The sheriff, fire chief(s) and district health officer or their authorized designees, as well as inspectors or other code enforcement officers in the county departments of community development, building and safety, regional parks and open space, public works, and water resources, as well as animal control officers and any Washoe County employee possessing citation powers pursuant to NRS 171.17751, as amended.
8. "Garbage." Putrescible animal and vegetable waste resulting from the handling, storage, preparation, cooking, and sale and serving of food and beverage. Examples are: offal; swill; kitchen and table waste; organic animal and vegetable waste; bottles, cans, cups, plates, utensils, or containers that have been in intimate contact with food, confection, or beverage; and, any component used in the preparation or manufacture of matter intended for animal or human consumption.
9. "Graffiti." Any unauthorized inscription, word, figure, or design that is marked, etched, scratched, drawn, or painted on public or private property, real or personal, which defaces such property.
10. "Hazardous waste." As defined at NRS 459.430, as amended, means any waste or combination of wastes, including, without limitation, solids, semisolids, liquids or contained gases, except household waste, which:
 - (a) Because of its quantity or concentration or its physical, chemical or infectious characteristics may:
 - (1) Cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or serious irreversible or incapacitating illness; or
 - (2) Pose a substantial hazard or potential hazard to human health, public safety or the environment when it is given improper treatment, storage, transportation, disposal or other management.
 - (b) Is identified as hazardous by the Washoe County Department of District Health as a result of studies undertaken for the purpose of identifying hazardous wastes.

The term includes, among other wastes, toxins, corrosives, flammable materials, irritants, strong sensitizers and materials which generate pressure by decomposition, heat or otherwise.

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11. "Junk vehicle." A street-legal or non-highway vehicle, including component parts, which is ruined, dismantled or inoperable for any reason, or otherwise unused for its original purpose; or, a street-legal vehicle that does not possess a current, valid vehicle registration.
12. "Motorcycle." Every motor vehicle designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, except any such vehicle as may be included within the term "tractor" or "moped" as defined in NRS Chapter 482, as amended.
13. "Obstruction." The prevention of travel across or along the pathway of any public road **or public access easement** by, among other things, constructing gates, closing gates, **storage of vehicles or materials**, signage or any other impediment limiting the public use of the public road **or public access easement**.
14. "Off-road vehicle." Any motorized vehicle, including a motorcycle, designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain.
15. "Pollutant." As defined at NRS 445A.400, as amended and includes:
 - (a) Dredged soil, solid waste, incinerator residue, sewage, garbage, sewage sludge, munitions, chemical wastes, biological materials, radioactive materials, heat, wrecked or discarded equipment, rock, sand, cellar dirt and industrial, municipal and agricultural waste discharged into water.
 - (b) Pollutant does not mean water, gas or other material which is injected into a well to facilitate production of oil or gas, or water derived in association with oil or gas production and disposed of in a well, if the well is used either for facilitating production or for disposal purposes and if the Washoe County Department of District Health determines that such injection or disposal will not result in the degradation of ground or surface water resources.
 - (c) Further, pollutant does not mean water, gas or other material injected into a well or used to stimulate a reservoir of geothermal resources if the Washoe County Department of District Health determines that the injection or stimulation will not result in the degradation of ground or surface water resources.
16. "Public road." A road adjudicated public by any court of competent jurisdiction within the State of Nevada, or a road established public pursuant to NRS 405.195, as amended, or a road dedicated to and accepted by a governmental agency, or a road defined as set forth at NRS 405.191, as amended.
17. "Public view." Plainly visible **with the naked eye** from the public right-of-way **or public access easement, to include public trail easements and trails maintained by a public agency, or a private access easement that provides access to more than two (2) dwellings**, or from any regularly used location on public or private property. **The term "regularly used location" does not include the private use of screened back yards or other areas of private property not regularly accessed by the public; however, the term does include driveways and property frontage regularly accessed by deliveries or visible by the public.** Items enclosed and visually obscured within a structure, or within a lawful screen are not considered to be in public view.
18. "Residential foreclosure". The sale of a single family residence pursuant to NRS 40.430, as amended.
19. "Solid waste." All putrescible and nonputrescible refuse in solid or semisolid form. The term does not include hazardous waste.
20. "Screen." To provide physical separation and visual obscuration of one area from another on all sides and in all seasons. Such separation must be at least six feet high and includes, but is not limited to, the combination or individual use of a fence, decorative wall, structure, earth berm or dense landscaping.

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21. "Short Term Rental." A Short-term rental (STR) refers to existing single-family dwelling units where, for compensation, lodging is provided within either the entire home or a portion of the home for a rental period of less than 28-days. Short-term rentals are distinguishable from commercial lodging use types in that no meals may be provided within short-term rentals as part of the rental agreement and the home may only be rented out for short-term rental use to one group at a time. STRs are also often referred to as vacation rentals and are commonly made available through property management companies or online booking platforms.
22. "Structure." That which is built or constructed, or an edifice or building of any kind or any piece of work that is man-made or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner.
23. "Vehicle." Any self-propelled instrument of conveyance designed primarily for the transportation of persons or goods, **or any instrument required to be registered by the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles.**
 - (a) "Street-legal vehicle". Any instrument of conveyance which can be lawfully licensed or registered for use on public highways, streets, roads, or other public ways. Examples include, but are not limited to, automobiles, trucks, vans, trailers, motor homes or recreational vehicles, campers, motorcycles, and mopeds.
 - (b) "Non-highway vehicle". Any instrument of conveyance or off-road vehicle which cannot be lawfully licensed or registered for use on public highways, streets, roads, or other public ways. Examples include, but are not limited to, dune buggies, all terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, boats, and personal water craft.
24. "Welfare." The public's well-being in any respect including matters of health, peace, safety, order, and morals.

SECTION 2. Section 50.308 of the Washoe County Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

50.308 – Public nuisances.

In the unincorporated area of the county, a public nuisance is anything described in the Code as such, and is further defined as:

1. The existence of any dangerous condition or structure, or any property in a condition adverse or detrimental to public health, safety, or general welfare. A Short-Term Rental (STR) operated without the required permit shall be deemed a public nuisance due to the potential nuisance impacts related to parking, garbage, noise, and higher occupancy, and by the danger posed to surrounding properties created by an unpermitted use that has not passed required inspections for public health, safety, or general welfare standards applicable to STRs. In addition, per WCC 110.910.10(b), any property or structure that does not conform to the provisions of an applicable development regulation shall be and is hereby declared to be a public nuisance.
2. Maintenance of property, or any structure, in such a state of disrepair or deterioration that could:
 - (a) Cause harm to persons, or
 - (b) Cause damage to property or improvements in the immediate vicinity, or
 - (c) Cause or contribute to blight **as defined in NRS 279.388.** ~~and cause a substantial reduction of economic value of neighboring properties.~~
3. Structures that have been partially constructed and have not made substantial progress towards completion for a period of six months or longer, or structures that have been partially destroyed or demolished by fire or other causes and remain in such a state for a period of six months or longer.

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4. Property having adjacent sidewalks, parkways, and/or alleys that are not maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, including, but not limited to, trash, ~~weeds~~, oil, or similar conditions that interfere with their use.
5. Any vegetation, equipment or structure that may endanger in any manner the security or safe use of, or any access to, any street, utility line, sewer or public improved place.
6. The existence of debris-refuse-rubbish or garbage that could cause harm to persons, or be materially detrimental to property or improvements in the immediate vicinity, or could cause appreciable diminution of property values in the immediate vicinity, or contribute to blight (**as defined by NRS 279.388**), and appreciable diminution of the use, enjoyment, or aesthetic value of property or improvements in the immediate vicinity, or could become a harborage for rodents or other vermin, an attractive nuisance, a fire hazard, ~~or in any other way~~ or detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare. Large, remote lands in their natural state, and difficult to service with large machinery due to terrain and governmental regulations, are exempt unless an actual and probable danger exists.
7. The existence of any of the following on the exterior of the property of a residential foreclosure:
 - (a) Excessive foliage growth which diminishes the value of the property or of surrounding properties;
 - (b) Trespassers remaining on the property;
 - (c) Mosquito larvae growing in standing water; and,
 - (d) Any other condition that creates a nuisance as provided in this Nuisance Code.

Any enforcement of this section must be consistent with the provisions concerning residential foreclosures within NRS chapter 40, as amended.

8. Outdoor storage of any building materials, appliances, debris-refuse-rubbish, junk vehicles, or garbage in public view except as otherwise permitted by this Nuisance Code or as otherwise authorized pursuant to Code chapter 110, section 306, as amended.
 - (a) Junk vehicles used in a properly licensed business of, and located on that business's private property owned by, vehicle storage, licensed vehicle dealers, manufacturers, distributors, repair shops, rebuilders of vehicles, or automobile wreckers as set forth in NRS chapter 487, as amended are exempt from this section.
 - (b) Junk vehicles authorized for display by county permit are exempt from this section.
9. Structures used for the unlawful manufacture or distribution of controlled substances as defined in and regulated pursuant to NRS Chapter 453, as amended.
10. A building or place regularly and continuously used by the members of a criminal gang to engage in, or facilitate the commission of, crimes by the criminal gang.

Any enforcement of this section must be consistent with the provisions concerning criminal gangs within NRS chapter 244, as amended.

11. Attractive nuisances, except as otherwise provided in NRS 40.140, as amended, concerning agricultural activity and shooting ranges.
- ~~12. Land that has been altered so as to cause or contribute to erosion, subsidence, or surface water drainage impacting public or private property.~~
- ~~43~~**12.** The grading of land in any manner except as authorized pursuant to Code chapter 110, section 438, as amended. The grading of land incidental to the use of land for existing farming activities is exempt from this section.
- ~~44~~**13.** The discharge of pollutants into receiving waters or into the county's stormwater management system.

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- ~~45~~14. The existence of hazardous waste in a manner not consistent with applicable county, state or federal regulations.
- ~~46~~15. Obstruction of a public road, **public access easement**, or recorded public trails.
- ~~47~~16. The operation of a motorcycle or an off-road vehicle on public or private land within 1,000 feet of any residence owned or occupied by another unless for:
- (a) purposes of ingress onto or egress from the operator's property, or
 - (b) traditional use for property maintenance or on property actively used primarily for farming, or
 - (c) operation of a lawful vehicle on public streets and highways, or
 - (d) the official business of the military, fire, emergency or law enforcement.
- ~~48~~17. With the exception of pre-existing agricultural activities pursuant to NRS 40.140, as amended, the keeping, harboring or owning any animal that by making loud and frequent sounds causes annoyance to, or disturbance of the peace or comfort of, the neighborhood or a reasonable person of normal sensitivities in the vicinity, applicable as well to all property located within the cities of Reno and Sparks pursuant to the related interlocal agreement.
- ~~49~~18. Any animal, except domestic cats, found off the real property of or not under the control of its owner or other person responsible for it within the congested areas as established in Code chapter 55, as amended. This nuisance shall also apply to all property located within the cities of Reno and Sparks pursuant to the related interlocal agreement.
- ~~20~~19. Parking in or obstructing an officially designated fire lane or fire hydrant.
- ~~24~~20. Marking, etching, scratching, drawing, or painting graffiti, the abatement of which may also be conducted pursuant to Code section 50.270, as amended.
- 21. Residing in a recreational vehicle. For the purposes of this code, residing in a recreational vehicle means occupation of more than 30-days, unless the recreational vehicle is located in an authorized location or is being used in an authorized manner.**

SECTION 3. General Terms.

1. All actions, proceedings, matters, and things heretofore taken, had and done by the County and its officers not inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are ratified and approved.
2. The Chair of the Board and officers of the County are authorized and directed to take all action necessary or appropriate to effectuate the provisions of this Ordinance. The District Attorney is authorized to make non-substantive edits and corrections to this Ordinance.
3. All ordinances, resolutions, bylaws and orders, or parts thereof, in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent only of such inconsistency. This repealer shall not be construed to revive any ordinance, resolution, bylaw or order, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.
4. Each term and provision of this Ordinance shall be valid and shall be enforced to the extent permitted by law. If any

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term or provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof shall be deemed by a court of competent jurisdiction to be in violation of law or public policy, then it shall be deemed modified, ipso facto, to bring it within the limits of validity or enforceability, but if it cannot be so modified, then the offending provision or term shall be excised from this Ordinance. In any event, the remainder of this Ordinance, or the application of such term or provision to circumstances other than those to which it is invalid or unenforceable, shall not be affected.

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Passage and Effective Date

Proposed on _____ (month) _____ (day), 2026.

Proposed by Commissioner _____.

Passed on _____ (month) _____ (day), 2026.

Vote:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent:

Clara Andriola, Chair
County Commission

ATTEST:

Jan Galassini, County Clerk

This ordinance shall be in force and effect from and after the
27th day of the month of November of the year 2026.