

Washoe County Planning Commission



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COMMUNITY  
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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**WDCA24-0001**  
**(Article 438, 810 & 902)**

June 4, 2024

This is an initiation and request to amend the Washoe County Development Code:

- For Article 438, Grading, Article 810, Special Use Permit, and Article 902, Definitions

# Purpose for Amendment Update



- Simplify the grading requirements and ease the regulatory burden for smaller scale grading projects.
- Bring the Washoe County grading code into closer alignment with our neighboring jurisdictions.
- Create standards that are more appropriate for the topographically constrained environment.
- Reorganize the code sections into a more useable and understandable regulatory scheme.
- Create grading requirements workable in today's world and make the code work for current situations.

# Background



- Article 438, Grading has not received a major update in many years and has become cumbersome for staff and the public to implement.
- In early 2023, Washoe County staff met with outside local planning and engineering consultants to identify key issues and concerns with implementing Article 438.
- Staff then met internally for the next year to review and edit Article 438 to address those key issues and concerns.
- A draft of the updated Article 438 was distributed for review to several Washoe County departments in December of 2023.

# Background

- In January of 2024 staff met again with the outside planning and engineering consultants to review the proposed changes.
- A Community Meeting was held on February 20, 2024, and additional input was gathered
- The proposed draft language is a result of all those meetings.

# Proposed Amendments (Art. 438)



- Reorganize Article 438 and renumber sections to improve order and flow.
- Significant changes to Article include the following:
  - Relax thresholds for major grading (special use permit) application requirements;
  - Add a new section for Rockery Walls and Grading Standards;
  - Streamlining of minor grading and major grading standards
  - Allowance of slopes steeper than 3:1; and
  - Add exemptions to the grading permit requirement

# Proposed Amendments (Art. 438)



- The following sections are proposed to be deleted:
  - 438.15 Grading Fees; determined to be unnecessary.
  - 438.25 Definitions
    - Moved to Article 902, some definitions were added, some definitions were combined with existing definitions, and several were deleted.
    - Requires Article 902 Definitions, to be amended.
  - 438.45 Grading of Slopes, 438.50 Cuts, & 438.50 Fills
    - Several Sections were combined with other Sections, some Sections were added, and several Sections were deleted.
  - 110.438.77, Phasing and Stabilization of Grading; determined to be unnecessary.

# Proposed Amendments (Art. 810)



## Proposed Amendments to Article 810, Special Use Permits:

- To allow the County Engineer or the Director of Planning and Building to determine if final grading plans are in substantial conformance with approved special use permits (SUPs).
  - It is common for final civil improvement plans to identify differing volumes of grading from the volumes identified in the preliminary grading plans submitted with the SUP application.
  - While these volumes may differ, the overall intent of the grading may not be affected by the change.
  - This modification will allow the change to be reviewed internally without going to a Hearing Board.



# Community Meeting



- A community meeting was held by Zoom on February 20, 2024, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- The meeting included 17 attendees.
- Staff presented the proposed changes and the attendees stated various questions about the proposed changes and how the changes would impact the current requirements.

There are 2 additional proposed amendments to the ordinance:

- In 110.438.05, Scope - removing language concerning “modified by the Director of Planning and Building, with the agreement of the County Engineer”. (page 3)
- Removing any reference and definition to Rock Crushing. (Pages 6 & 46)
  - After conversations with staff and input from the community it is recognized that more time is needed to further discuss rock crushing.

# Findings



- Staff is able to make all 4 required findings, as shown in the staff report and recommends approval.

# Possible Motion

I move that, after giving reasoned consideration to the information contained in the staff report and information received during the public hearing, the Washoe County Planning Commission recommend approval of WDCA24-0001, to amend Washoe County Chapter 110 (Development Code) within Article 438, Grading, Article 810, Special Use Permits, and Article 902 Definitions, as reflected in the proposed ordinance contained in Attachment A-1. I further move to authorize the Chair to sign the resolution contained in **Amended** Exhibit A, on behalf of the Washoe County Planning Commission and to direct staff to present a report of this Commission's recommendation to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners within 60 days of today's date. This initiation and recommendation for approval is based on all of the four findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.818.15(e).

# Thank you

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