

April 7, 2026

9D. - Pat Davison

Washoe County Planning Commission  
1001 East Ninth Street  
Reno, NV

**RE: WDCA25-0006 (Attainable Housing Density Bonus)**

Chair Lazzareschi and Commissioners:

My name is Pat Davison. I am a resident of District 5. Thanks for this opportunity to comment on a very significant change to the Incentives article found in the Washoe County Development Code.

The policy question I see is the balancing act between the County giving the additional density vs the community benefit. Does the County receive an equal or greater benefit by giving the incentive versus any action that would happen without the incentive? Without the incentive we can speculate that more market rate, larger homes will be built as has been the trend.

With the incentive we have these potential positives for the community: 1) rent prices could stabilize or come down when more attainable units are added to the long term (30 year) housing supply; 2) an individual can start on the path of homeownership when attainable purchase units are deed restricted to income qualified home owners for the first nine years; and 3) more housing close to job centers can reduce traffic on area roadways and allow workers to be fully engaged in the community because they live and work here.

For the developer, the major benefit is that the assigned density for 80% of the project can be increased without going through the Regulatory Zone or Master Plan Amendment process plus the developer can still offer 20% of the units at or above market rate if desired.

On the other hand, we have a potential deterrent of a deed restriction on a home for purchase however the overall demand for attainable housing and the nine year term of the deed restriction may make the deterrent factor less important to some homebuyers, especially first time buyers. The negatives of more local traffic and other impacts (scenic, noise, drainage, light pollution, etc) than what was originally expected in an area with the assigned zoning could be substantial. **However, those impacts must still be addressed with any project proposal and cannot be ignored.** And you as the Planning Commission may have oversight as the reviewing body for future projects using a density bonus.

In my opinion, this density bonus is a specialized tool in the attainable housing toolbox and likely will not be used on a regular basis like other tools in the toolbox but may be the exact right tool in a specific location. It certainly deserves a place in Washoe County Code because the potential benefits outweigh the potential negatives. It leans into a more market or voluntary approach rather than mandatory approach. It provides flexibility and clarity. It is a great compliment to the other changes already approved for regulatory relief.

Thanks to Eric Young for helping me understand these changes over the last couple of months. The chart provided in Eric's staff report was very helpful to show how the draft text would be implemented in a real world setting. I think you can make at least one of the findings as described in the staff report and urge your support of this package.

Thanks for listening.

