

**MINUTES**  
**CHURCHILL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION & BOARD OF**  
**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WORKSHOP**

**Tuesday, April 22, 2025**

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Bunyard called the regular workshop of the Churchill County Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, County Administrative Complex, 155 N Taylor Street, Fallon, Nevada.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Zack Bunyard, Chair; Jeff Goings, Vice Chair; Victor Ansotegui, Member; Tami Edgmon, Member; Joe Frey, Member; and Mark Hyde, Member.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Myles Getto, Chair; Eric Blakey; and Matt Hyde.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Randy Hines, Public Works Director; Dean Patterson, Senior Planner; Joseph Sanford, Deputy District Attorney-Civil; Jim Barbee, County Manager; Chris Spross, Assistant County Manager; and Diane Moyle, Administrative Assistant.

**2. Public Comment**

Chair Bunyard asked for public comment, and there were none.

**3. Verification of the Posting of the Agenda**

Chair Bunyard verified with Diane Moyle that the agenda had been posted in accordance with NRS 241 and the Churchill County Code on April 16, 2025.

**4. Consideration and possible action re: Review and adoption of Agenda as submitted or revised**

**Vice Chair Goings made a motion to approve the Agenda as submitted.**  
**Member Ansotegui seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (6-0).**

**5. Discussion Item**

- Consideration and possible action re: Review and discussion of potential amendments to the Churchill County Code relating to the land use table, design standards and details, special use permits, and/or temporary use permits.

Randy Hines, Public Works Director, shared a PowerPoint presentation to go through the land use table related to industrial uses and how things are shown and managed currently, as well as potential proposed changes to be considered (see attached). The goal is to be able to provide clarity in our industrial uses, as well as to ensure compliance and to protect public welfare. One of the problems with our industrial land uses in the code right now is that people do not understand what they can and can't do with their property. We have a single industrial zone that encapsulates vastly differing locations of use from downtown to the outskirts of town, and then further out in our open land areas. This creates a need for individual special permit review of almost all industrial activities. A full review is required in order to determine whether a specific use is approved. He shared a segment from the current land use table to show the layout and how to determine whether a use is

permitted, what permit may be required, and if something is prohibited in a certain zoning district. He further demonstrated the limited listing of industrial uses in the table right now and that most of those uses require a special use permit. The goal of this proposal is to provide more clarity regarding our land uses, to promote economic development, to protect the community, and to manage growth. It helps people know what they can do on a parcel if things are spelled out more clearly. It is being proposed to split the industrial zone into three different zones. There would be a light industrial (I1), a medium industrial (I2), and a heavy industrial (I3) zone. Director Hines then shared an example of some additional industrial uses that could be added to the land use table and how these could be allowed, prohibited, or requiring a special use permit in certain industrial zones. This would allow for more approved uses with a Zoning or Design Review in certain zones and not require a special use permit for everything in all of these locations, especially those further from the community. The list shown is just an example and a lot more work needs to be done to improve it. The goal is to have more uses listed to provide more clarity for those looking to bring an industrial use to our community of where these would be better located. Definitions would also be added to the code to further clarify the land uses.

Director Hines explained that when someone comes in with a particular use in mind, a pre application meeting will be held to discuss the proposed project. Those involved would be able to determine whether that use is allowed, allowed with a special use permit, or prohibited. Allowed uses would allow the applicant to proceed with the design review process. If it requires a special use permit, the applicant would be directed through that process. If that use is approved, then they would proceed with the design review process. He pointed out that the special use permit process and design review process can be run concurrently; however, if the use is not approved, the applicant takes the risk of potentially redesigning or relocating their project and incurring additional expense and time. The pre-application meeting would provide more instruction to the applicant about what they need to provide or submit. He then went over what the Design Review Process would include, and this would apply to those uses that are listed as an approved use as well as those that are approved by the Planning Commission. He also noted that the code currently has a “catch-all” for certain types of uses that would require a special use permit, and most of these affect many industrial uses. The goal would be to remove the “catch-all” related to industrial uses and incorporate these items into the design review process as well as the special use permit process. Information related to all of these categories would be required up front regardless of what permitting would be required. The clause would still apply to commercial uses as it stands currently.

Public involvement would still be included in the application process. There would be notices provided to neighbors and posting application materials online for review. One notification change could include just notifying adjacent property owners for those uses only requiring a Design Review. Right now, notification is made to landowners within 300’ and at least 30 unique parcel owners. We still want to notify those that would be most affected and get public input. Sometimes things are mentioned or brought up that weren’t considered previously. The public input would be focused toward addressing mitigation rather than disputing whether the particular use should be allowed. Input from the public isn’t really used to determine whether uses are allowed because that is determined by the code. Public notification gives them an opportunity to inform us about things that we may not be aware of or help to come up with mitigation for potential impacts.

Director Hines shared maps of the existing industrial zones and the proposed new industrial zones. On the current zoning map, which was displayed on the overhead screen and paper copies were provided on the tables, he stated that there are 167 parcels with industrial zoning in the county and shared the locations of some of the existing industrial uses. He then showed a map displaying



potential changes for the proposed three industrial zones. The light industrial zones would be closer to town and the highways, and the heavy industrial zones would be further from residential uses and highways. There was discussion about the friction zone along the highways through the county. These keep the four listed uses from being located within one-half mile of the major highways. Uses in the heavy industrial zone could also be included as prohibited in that friction zone. Vice Chair Goings questioned about the one-half mile and whether that was a state or county mandated. This is in the county code, and it pertains to only those uses listed (in this case there are four currently). Director Hines said that it had been discussed to only allow uses that would be allowed in I1 or I2 in the friction zone and prohibit I3 uses in that area if that is the desire of the commissioners. There was some discussion about creating a split zone versus utilizing the friction zone for larger parcels.

This discussion was seeking direction from the commissioners regarding these possible changes and what they would like to have considered, as well as whether or not this was something that the boards were interested in having time spent by staff moving forward.

Chair Bunyard inquired what types of use would be considered with only a review and do not require a special use permit. Jim Barbee said that the ones presented are just suggestions at this time, and these would be developed through the process of coming up with code changes. These uses would be identified as to whether they would just require a “tabletop” zoning review versus a special use permit. The idea is that the lists for the different zones would be very specific about the type of review that would be required. The public component would still be included even with the zoning review and allow the neighboring property owners to be notified. The public would also have the opportunity to appeal these approvals to the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. The primary idea is that these boards are making the decision on what uses they consider appropriate for the different zones that could be approved administratively. They are looking at the overall uses and not a specific company. He gave an example where the board gets to decide whether they would allow battery recycling in Industrial 3 zone, or whether they would allow it at all. If the use isn’t listed on the use table, then the code would have to be amended to add it later. If they add more general types of uses to the use table, this will open it up to more types of industrial uses that haven’t been covered previously. It is better to have the community to consider what types of uses it would like to have in the different zones now instead of waiting for each specific company to come forward and to be told that it shouldn’t be in a specific area. Chair Bunyard restated that it is mainly a zone review if it falls within the type of use for that. He inquired if, currently, all of these uses require a special use permit. Director Hines answered that most of them do. Chair Bunyard stated that some of his concern is that we need to have public comments. Even though the last several weeks have not been fun for everyone, it informs the public, gives them some input, and it gives them time to talk to people. This wouldn’t normally happen with a zone review. Director Hines responded that there would still be public comments for all applications. We would still notify by sending letters out, and it had been discussed that this be to adjacent parcels; however, we can still notify landowners within 300 feet and 30 unique owners. The department would still receive those comments, and if a comment came up that they deemed that the application would need to be denied, then the applicant can appeal it to the Planning Commission. At that point, we could hold a public meeting. The purpose of setting up the use table is to clear up at the beginning where the types of uses may be considered appropriate.

Chair Bunyard mentioned another code change that allowed R3 zoning, which was done for specific reasons at the time. Later, a certain developer wanted to apply for R3 zoning in a location that is probably not the best. Since we created the R3 zoning that could be requested, now other developers want it to apply for it in other locations, and we cannot specify where it shouldn’t be



located. Jim Barbee brought up that in this instance we are removing the point of where we are picking and choosing particular projects with particular people, and we are bringing consistency to our code across the board by outlining where certain types of use would be allowed with an administrative review. There was discussion regarding allowing certain types of uses in some areas, but not in other areas, or allowing certain uses while not allowing other similar uses in our current zoning, that could potentially cause legal problems in the county. This gives the board a chance to determine what belongs where, what clearly doesn't belong in certain areas, what we do not want here under any circumstances, and what types of industrial uses we want to recruit. Then businesses have a clear idea of what is welcome here in the county in terms of what types of uses we want. The entire process that is being proposed is a public process. They have the opportunity to come to the meetings and speak up about where these industrial zones will be and what could potentially be approved in the different industrial zones. This would also be working proactively regarding locating these types of industries instead of waiting for them to come forward and then trying to decide. Mr. Barbee pointed out that this should be tied to the Master Plan, which is also up for review right now. Our Master Plan has stated for more than 20 years that we want industrial and growth going in a certain direction. Is that what we want? Has that changed? Maybe it has, and it is up to the people in this room to make those decisions.

Planning Commission Vice Chair Jeff Goings said that if we are able to start bringing these types of things in, this would allow the growth to be driven to different locations. Those people that are looking to locate a business here would consider which industrial zone they should consider for locating their operation. This could potentially remove some of what we just went through, although he believes that some of that was due to the public not being informed, and we can drive industrial growth in the direction we would like it to go, as well as deciding now the types of things we don't want in certain locations or anywhere in the county. Chris Spross remarked that a developer would be less unsure when they consider relocating to Churchill County whether their project would be approved in the location they are purchasing. They could specifically look for the correct zoning district suitable for their project when they are considering purchasing property. He pointed out that even though the use may be approved, there could still be a list of conditions that they would need to meet in order to put their business in that location. This brings a little clarity to the developer, and on the public side there is input when the code changes come forward. Once it does get put into place, then as a member of the public, you know what types of use would not be allowed in certain industrial zones, as well as those uses that could be allowed. Jim Barbee then mentioned that there is the middle ground also, where a certain use could be allowed with a zone review in zone 3, but it could also be allowed in zone 2 with a special use permit. This would allow developers to bring forward an application knowing that there is no guarantee that it would be approved in zone 2.

Commissioner Matt Hyde said that this proposed zoning table is very important. He mentioned that the uses listed in the example may need to be reconsidered. He pointed out that fertilizer product storage, distribution, manufacturing, reclaiming and refining was only allowed in zone 3, but lithium is allowed in zone 2. In his opinion, anything that is storing hazardous material should be in zone 3. He thinks that it is important to get these correct, so it doesn't create the gray area as they move forward. Jim Barbee pointed out that it will be imperative to consult with experts while this table is being developed in order to make better choices. He noted that lithium is not identified as hazardous material by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Commissioner Hyde reiterated that lithium batteries are identified as hazardous even though lithium isn't. This table will be critical piece of regulation. Chris Spross mentioned that these materials are nowhere near ready to bring forward yet, and the examples presented were to give an idea and



determine whether more time and effort should be put toward moving in this direction. There are a lot of things that will need to be vetted and a lot more time put into developing these things. Another critical piece will be the descriptions that will supplement the use table and spell out more detail about the type of use. There was discussion about the commissioners giving input about what they would like to see and where they would like it to be located, so that changes could be proposed as they would like it to be approved. Some commissioners were still unsure about changing the very public process and turning it into a zoning review. Director Hines pointed out that this zoning review will be more of a design review, which is more extensive than the current zoning review. The developer will have to provide specific design review documents, including, but not limited to drainage report, traffic report, etc. The use may be considered an approved use, but that doesn't mean that they can just put up a building wherever they want and do whatever they want. There are still things that would have to be done, and that is why it would require a design review instead of the basic zoning review. It will be a lengthy review of the project, but a developer can have more assurance that the project may be allowed even if they have to meet extra conditions as they want to proceed.

Planning Commissioner Joe Frey questioned what the objective was of this workshop. Was it to decide if they want to go down this path, and there will be a long process toward that, or are they trying to get more specifics about what they want to be in which zoning districts? Joseph Sanford, Deputy District Attorney-Civil, responded that the main intention is to get a feel from the commission and the board if this general concept works, if they like the idea of this concept, and if there is something else, they would rather see. Maybe the members would rather have two industrial zones or four industrial zones. If there are different areas specifically for the different zones, they should state that now, and it can be developed that way. We do not need specific details about which zones should have an SUP or be allowed or prohibited, but if they have some of those ideas, he encouraged them to share those with Director Hines to consider while he puts the changes together. This is going to take some time. Commissioner Frey stated that this is a great path to go down, and he sees a lot of little nuances he would adjust, but this is a great starting path. It is a fantastic concept, and it is going to bring clarity to what could potentially be allowed in certain areas. He mentioned that after the whole public uproar with the last special use permit, he asked about 20 people to come to this workshop to start implementing the changes they would like to see in the future, and there is not a single one of those people at this meeting. Everyone has a chance to speak, everyone who is clearly upset over projects that were approved, but the time to become involved if they are upset about things is right now. They are not here. There was a question about other opportunities to have input, and it was explained that once the regulation has been developed and comes forward there will be public meetings held where people can speak up and share ideas. Commissioner Matt Hyde expressed his opinion that as these changes are brought forward, he would like to see things in the newspaper, flood the internet with these meetings, and have the room full of people when they are ready to decide that this is what they are doing. He loves this concept because this will help to alleviate a lot of what they just went through. We need to flood every outlet we can and get people to attend when they are ready to decide how we want to rezone these industrial areas and what types of uses should be allowed. Director Hines remarked that we are just looking at the industrial area because it has a smaller number of parcels, and this can be something that we can really create a good plan. Later, similar types of things can be implemented in commercial and agricultural uses, and it can help clarify the entire use table. Jim Barbee brought up something that he saw on the City of Fernley website that we should also consider on their public works page existing proposed projects and the status of those projects. He thinks that would



complement this proposed legislation and allow the public to see what projects are being considered or reviewed. This could include those under design review as well as special use permits. We want to be as open and transparent as possible in our governmental processes.

Vice Chair Goings said that it has been his experience in speaking with a lot of business owners that people outside of the county consider Churchill County not business friendly. If we can come to an agreement, find these uses and the specific locations, that opens the door for businesses to look at us again to consider that we are more business friendly. It gives those businesses that maybe don't have a location in Fernley or Reno, another location to look at. That is where we need to be the forerunners of this.

Commission Chairman Myles Getto thinks that it is a great idea. He had said while campaigning and while serving on the Planning Commission that we are all temporary. We are going to be replaced, and others will come in, and it should be set in our code what we want, and it shouldn't be up to the Planning Commission on whether a specific use is allowed or not. It should be more about considering what we want something to look like and what conditions should be added to get it there. This addresses that completely. Another thing is that this is a complete overturn of our industrial zoning. This will be a complete overturn on the rest of the zoning as well. This will take place in many public meetings before it has been finalized. If you want public input, you have to hold a public meeting, and any code changes require public hearings before it can be recommended or approved. There will be multiple opportunities for the public to address anything they want to as this moves forward. It was discussed that this will take several months. Mr. Sanford suggested that any uses or locations that the commissioners would like to provide input on be sent to Randy Hines and himself, so they can be included in the proposed changes. He further said that if a use isn't on the table, and it isn't really like anything that is on the table, it could be slightly more difficult to find where it could fit. It shouldn't be up to the department to try to figure out what it is similar to, and the new use would need to be brought forward as a proposal to amend the code in the future to include that use and under which zone.

Planning Commissioner Mark Hyde expressed his opinion that this is a good direction to move in. He wonders if some of these areas that are shown on the example as I2 and I3, could be cleaned up and only include one zoning on one parcel instead of mixed. He said that anything along Highway 50 he wouldn't want anything more than I2 along the highway. He would push the I3 out to the northern part of the county. One of the large complaints that we have deals with the prevailing winds. Anything that is along Highway 50 will pose a challenge if there are any potential odors. It makes sense to have I3 out north of town. He thinks that by specifying one zone for a parcel it will be much clearer. Commissioner Matt Hyde agreed with Mark Hyde. He said that Fallon and Fernley will continue to grow toward each other. He thinks that along Highway 50 could include some I2 uses, and the I3 should be parcels further from the community. Director Hines confirmed that he was thinking along these lines in that the areas within the friction zone along the highway would be I2 and the areas beyond the friction zone could be I3. Since many of these parcels are entire sections of land, it can pose a problem with zoning just along the highways at I2. During the design review, the developer would have to demonstrate the friction zone and that the use is not within that friction zone. There were other discussions related to division of land, locations needing railroad access, and so forth. It was decided to have the department move forward with development of this regulation to be brought forward at future meetings.

## **6. Public Comment**

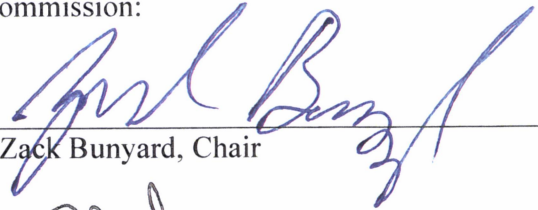
Chair Bunyard asked for any other public comment, and there were none.

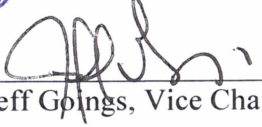


7. **Adjournment**

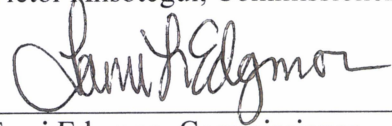
Chair Bunyard thanked everyone for coming to participate. There were no further comments or questions, so he adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

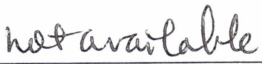
Planning Commission:

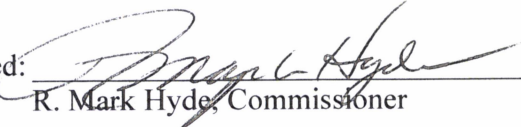
Approved:   
Zack Bunyard, Chair

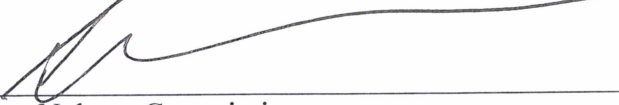
Approved:   
Jeff Golings, Vice Chair

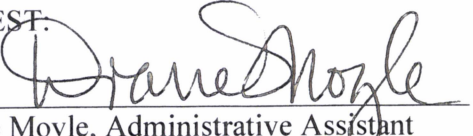
Approved:   
Victor Ansotegui, Commissioner

Approved:   
Tami Edgmon, Commissioner

Approved:   
Joe Frey, Commissioner

Approved:   
R. Mark Hyde, Commissioner

Approved:   
Scott Nelson, Commissioner

ATTEST:  
  
Diane Moyle, Administrative Assistant



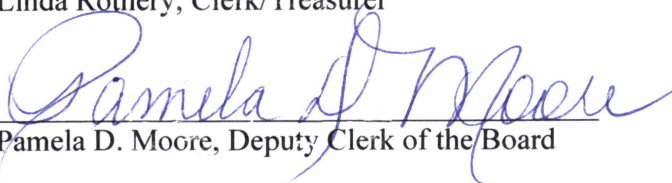
Board of County Commissioners:

Approved:   
Myles Getto, Chairman

Approved:   
Eric Blakey, Vice-Chairman

Approved:   
Matt Hyde, Commissioner

ATTEST:  
Linda Rothery, Clerk/Treasurer

  
Pamela D. Moore, Deputy Clerk of the Board