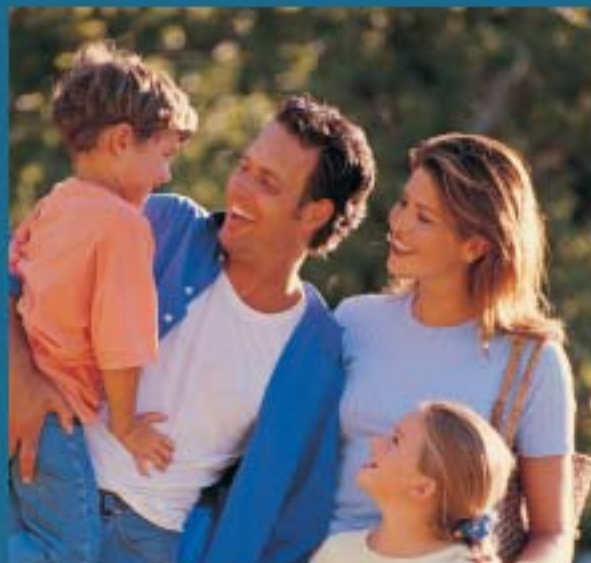


# SPARKS

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# SPARKS NEVADA

## *Nevada's Quality of Life Indicator*

Sparks began in 1904 as a railroad town with 1,400 residents. By 1990 it had evolved into a bedroom community of more than 50,000. Today, Sparks is transitioning into a traditional, self-sufficient, mixed-use city, which translates into a high quality of life for its estimated 81,000 residents.

"It has the top quality of life in the region," said Rob Joiner, Sparks advance planning manager. "That's what our surveys of residents and businesses tell us."

What is quality of life? "It's having all kinds of opportunities available for everyone – seniors, youth, families and individuals," said Randy Mellinger, Sparks assistant city manager, community development. Opportunities include housing, employment, recreation, community facilities, public safety and good vehicle circulation. Quality of life is also having a strong local economy. "Quality of life is feeling proud of your city, proud of your community," Mellinger said.

City officials are maintaining quality of life for residents by pursuing a balance of land uses rather than relying on mostly residential development, as in the past. "In each of the new projects, we require business parks, commercial and residential to be symbiotic," Joiner said. "That's kind of exciting, and that's a healthy smart growth. "If we continued to grow the way we grew 20 years ago, we wouldn't have the financial resources to sustain those residents."

The shift in development approach came at the right time, about five years ago, as Sparks has been facing a steady, 4-plus percent increase in its population over the past five years, according to U.S. Census data. Last year its population surpassed

80,000. Sparks is the fastest-growing community in Northern Nevada, and Nevada leads the states in population growth.

Spurring the growth in the Rail City has been the booming housing market, the area's desirability in terms of the business market and climate, and the availability of land and natural resources.

Sparks is expected to reach its maximum population of 135,000 in 25 years. "Even though we're growing as fast as we are, we still retain our quality of life," said Tom Burrous, Sparks redevelopment/economic development analyst. In fact, the city's 2005 Public Attitude Survey of 505 randomly selected residents revealed that 80 percent rated the overall quality of life in Sparks as very good or better.

"The quality of life is very good in Sparks," said Mayor Geno Martini. "We're a family-oriented community. We have great special events and great parks, and we have something for everybody."

### **Specific actions**

City officials are pursuing the creation of more job opportunities for residents by encouraging development of more business parks and attracting high-tech, research and development, and high-end manufacturing companies.

"Sparks is looking to attract more employment and have that employment be located close to a variety of residential choices," said Armando Ornelas, Sparks redevelopment manager. "We're also looking for the availability of employment to diversify and the quality of employment to rise over time in terms of the wages that are paid."

Another objective is developing more commercial centers, particularly along the Pyramid Highway, so residents won't have to drive to Reno for shopping. Two such retail projects in the works are Sparks Crossing and the Sparks Galleria.

Also enabling shorter commutes are live-work-and-play communities such as Kiley Ranch North, Copper Canyon, Victorian Square and others, which incorporate housing, employment and recreation. Housing tends to encompass a mix of single-family homes, apartments, townhouses and condominiums.

More recreational opportunities are in the pipeline as well; for example, the proposed RED Development retail/entertainment complex project alongside the Sparks Marina Park and the redevelopment plan for Victorian Square downtown. "The development we're getting is crucial to the future of Sparks," Mayor Martini said.

The city also is ensuring new developments are of the highest quality possible. New construction must meet the standards outlined in the city's Design Standards Manual. "We want to see a variety of materials – stone, stucco, split-face block – to mix it up and make it look nice," said Neil Krutz, Sparks director, community development.

The city's efforts spur economic vitality, not only through the creation of additional jobs, but also by attracting tourists and increasing potential revenues for the city via property and sales taxes.

"We have a great economic base here, and it's growing every day," Joiner said. "It's an exciting time to be a resident of Sparks to watch this and grow with this. Residents tell us they're very supportive of how we're growing."



*Victorian Square, the heart of Sparks' downtown and the hub of many community events, is being transformed into an urban village with residential, retail and office components.*

### Smart Growth Key to Sparks' Future

Sparks' first smart growth project – Kiley Ranch North – is well underway. "Growth is inevitable, but smart growth is optional," said Rob Joiner, Sparks advance planning manager. "We opted for smart growth."

Smart growth is a development strategy used to fight suburban sprawl. "If we continue to grow and we need room for this population, smart growth addresses that by taking a big percentage of the population and putting them in the types of communities more traditional to urban living – attached units, townhouses, condominiums, small lot parcels," said Randy Mellinger, assistant city manager, community development.

Smart growth also incorporates high-end manufacturing, and high-tech and research and development industries into the community. Rather than strip malls, smart growth embraces walkable town-center types of commercial or entertainment elements that are surrounded by residential development.

"Instead of sprawling at a strategic location, you intensify in those areas," Mellinger said. "You do a lot of mixed uses to give people an opportunity to live there, and theoretically, never have to leave."

Incorporating these principles, Kiley Ranch North, in its 808 acres in Spanish Springs, would contain 4,436 single-family units ranging from five to 24 dwelling units per acre, 123 acres of commercial development and 142 acres of business park. Other elements would include two school sites, 14 acres of neighborhood parks, 18 acres for public or institutional use and 120 acres of open space.

"One of the neat features of this project, as well as the business park areas, is that it creates a town center area within the plan," said Rob Pyzel, Sparks planning manager. "It's basically a community focal point with higher densities and

mixed uses, with retail on the first floor and residential on the floors above."

City officials anticipate construction would begin on the first phase by year's end. Buildout would require 10 years.

### Benefits

Having homes and jobs in one location would shorten commutes for Sparks residents, giving them more time to devote to family and community, Mellinger said. Less driving would reduce traffic and air quality degradation, and improve traffic flow. The businesses that relocate to Kiley Ranch North would generate an estimated 5,500 jobs. "That's huge," Mellinger said. "That's a major economic benefit."

Sparks' economy would get a boost through assessed valuation, the value placed on property for the purpose of calculating taxes. The business park and other non-residential elements generate greater tax revenues than the residential components. That money would be used for community services, such as fire, police, parks and road maintenance. "The assessed valuation really helps because (the project) is higher density, especially per acre," Mellinger said.

When completed, Kiley Ranch North would have an appraised value of \$1.6 billion and contribute \$32.1 million in property and \$14.4 million in sales taxes to Sparks, according to developers. "That's a big surplus to the city," Mellinger said.



*Sparks Marina Park contains an 80-acre lake that boasts swimming beaches, sand volleyball courts, picnic areas, parks and trails, all in the center of the City of Sparks.*

### Other Mixed-Use Developments

Plans for additional business parks and commercial centers alongside family homes are also in the works, including Pioneer Meadows, Stonebrook and Copper Canyon Commerce & Technology Park. Pioneer Meadows is a mixed-use development adjacent to Kiley Ranch North that would include 47 acres of commercial development and 109 acres of business park in addition to residences. Stonebrook, proposed for a location further north, would contain about 90 business-park acres.

"We want more business-park destinations overall – not just industrial, but primarily corporate, centers," Mellinger said. "Per acre, they generate a lot more high-paying jobs than any other use."

### Victorian Square and Downtown Redefining the Urban Experience

The city has invested in the Victorian Square downtown area since the 1970s and it has been the flagship of Sparks' redevelopment. Today it's the hub for community events such as the Hometowne Farmers Market, the Nugget Best in the West Rib Cook-off and Hometowne Christmas.

A new plan for downtown's Victorian Square has it transforming from primarily a retail center into an urban village. "We're looking to distinguish our downtown from the rest of the offerings in the region, both on the retail and residential sides," said Armando Ornelas, Sparks redevelopment manager.

With the existing John Ascuaga's Nugget, the Silver Club and Century 14 Cinema as anchors, the three-phase project would include at least 200 townhomes and lofts, as well as 79,000 to 99,000 square feet of retail.

The city government believes so strongly in the project that it is considering relocating to downtown. The new city hall plus additional office space would span about 150,000 square feet. "Moving there will help spur our downtown growth," said Mayor Martini. "If we could put 500 employees downtown daily to interact with the businesses down there, it can do nothing but help."

Buildings would be no higher than four stories, and the materials and street

## RENO AIRPORT SERVING NORTHERN NEVADA

**N**on-stop service is what Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RTIA) is all about. The airport's dedication to service is demonstrated by the fact that 5.1 million passengers experienced RTIA in 2004 – the highest number since before 2001.

RTIA offers more than 11,000 departure seats per day. With the number of passengers and flights increasing, the airport has an important role to play representing the community to the traveling public. Reno-Tahoe International makes the all-important first and last impression on travelers as they arrive and depart the community.

"Our staff is dedicated to offering passengers a travel experience that will make them want to return to our region," said Larry Harvey, Chairman of the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority Board and a resident of Sparks. Airport Passenger Aides help guide customers through the ticketing lobby and security checkpoints. Airport Ambassadors welcome travelers to the region while providing information on everything from hotels to entertainment, shuttles and restaurants.

Service also means the number of flights and destinations that customers can reach from Reno/Sparks. RTIA offers 90 daily non-stop departures to 18 cities. Flights to hubs like Atlanta, Chicago and Dallas connect Northern Nevada to the world.

Today's RTIA passengers also benefit from service-related improvements designed to enhance the overall travel experience. With 47 percent of the airport's customers now flying for business, the addition of wireless Internet service throughout the terminal is a key addition.

Airport restrooms are being remodeled and made more family-friendly, while Peet's Coffee and new food choices are being added to the airport's menu. New flooring is planned for the food court and main lobby area. An expansion project is also scheduled to widen the area near the security checkpoints.

"Whether it's customer service, new air service or improved facilities, we are dedicated to creating a positive travel experience," Harvey said.

*Centennial Plaza, the new transit center in Sparks, will improve bus operations and prepare for future growth. It will also provide opportunities for small business and passenger services. RTC will seek partners for joint development which will enhance the transit experience and increase the value of the transit center to the surrounding community. Newsstands, banking, grocers and daycare facilities are among the uses being considered for this project.*

## We're Driving Business Home



*Design concept of Centennial Plaza, the new Sparks transit center*

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## COPPER CANYON

**C**opper Canyon Commerce & Technology Park is a 1,226-acre, live-work-and-play community slated to house about 5,000 people and employ 8,000 to 10,000. Located along Sparks' eastern edge on Vista Boulevard, the development would incorporate a master-planned community, as well as a commerce and technology park. "We're trying to attract larger corporate users," said Michael Barnes, general manager.

The project would include 1,033 homes, 876 apartments, condominiums and townhomes, 3.6 million square feet of office space and a 200-room hotel/casino. Other features include 24.5 acres for commercial development, 692 acres of common area, 15 miles of trails and an amphitheater.

Three major amenities would be the close proximity - 500 feet - to Interstate 80, the fantastic views of the valley and the Sierra Nevada, and the open space. "It has beautiful canyons and rock outcroppings," Barnes said. "We're trying to focus on bringing out the natural amenities."

Construction on Copper Canyon likely would start in the second or third quarter of 2006. Residential construction is expected to be completed in three to four years, whereas the commercial element is expected to be finished in eight to 10 years.

orientation would create an urban look and feel. Local, regional and unique retail would be emphasized to distinguish downtown from what's available in suburban areas.

"We believe that as the region's population grows and becomes more diverse, downtown will appeal to a segment as a place to live, work and play," Ornelas said. The initial target market is people without children in the household - empty nesters, pre-retirees, young couples and singles - who like the idea of having a choice of restaurants, shops and entertainment within walking distance of their homes.

Additionally, the Sparks Redevelopment Agency expects the Victorian Square makeover to drive revitalization of a broader area. "It's kind of like a snowball effect," said Tom Burrous, Sparks redevelopment/economic development analyst. "If you start bringing in new business, new buildings and more traffic into downtown, the immediate areas will also benefit from those improvements."

The Victorian Square project's first phase, primarily townhouses and two restaurants but also some live/work units and other residential, likely would be under construction by May 2006. Phase 2, a combination of retail and city hall, would start about a year after that and would likely be ready for occupancy by June 2008. What phase 3 would entail would depend upon the market and the needs of the first two phases.

### Centennial Plaza

Also approved for downtown Sparks is a new transit center, Centennial Plaza. "We chose Victorian Square because we wanted the transit hub in Sparks to be central for the city's citizens and visitors," said Michael Moreno, community relations officer for the Regional Transportation Commission. "It made sense for us to be there because of the past and future redevelopment efforts."

The \$15 million, two-story, 12,125-square-foot facility would showcase a railroad roundhouse design compatible with the character of Victorian Square, a public art component and green buildings. "The design is of a very high quality, and we feel it will be aesthetically an enhancement to downtown," Ornelas said.

Construction is expected to start late 2005 or early 2006, with the center opening in 2007. Redevelopment Agency officials hope relocating the facility will make it more convenient and attractive to daily riders. They also expect the depot to attract people visiting Reno, who can easily take the express service to downtown Sparks.

The ultimate goal is for downtown to appeal to residents and tourists in its own right. City officials anticipate the new development strategy for Victorian Square will work, as the approach has been successful in cities around the country that are revitalizing their downtowns.

"It's exciting to have a mixed-use downtown," said Randy Mellinger, assistant city manager, community development. "That's really what (traditional) downtowns have been about over the years."

### RED Development

The Rail City could have its own Universal City Walk, Downtown Disney or Irvine Spectrum as early as summer 2007. It would be called The Legends at Sparks Marina. "It's a very exciting project and potentially represents a \$300 million to \$350 million investment in the marina area," said Ornelas.

The pedestrian-oriented entertainment and retail complex would house 50 to 70 retailers in a venue containing more than 800,000 square feet. It would include a mix of large destination retailers, small and supporting shops, one or more entertainment venues, an educational component and various unique restaurants.



*The Legends at Sparks Marina, a project of RED Development, is a first-class entertainment and retail complex planned for downtown Sparks.*

The project would be similar to another of RED's projects, The Legends at Village West, in Kansas City, Kan. Tenants there include chain stores, such as Brooks Brothers, Casual Corner and Wilson's Leather, but also regional shops, such as the jeweler, Helzberg Diamonds, and the gift boutique, Pride of Kansas City. Some restaurants feature an entertainment aspect, including Dave & Buster's, which contains a midway along with traditional games, and T-Rex, a restaurant where dinosaurs come to life amidst geysers, waterfalls and ice caves.

The Legends at Sparks Marina would be visually attractive, with first-class landscaping and water features. The ambiance would be one of excitement and energy, which would be created through graphics, signage, lighting and the types of tenants and attractions.

The complex would be located between the Sparks Marina Park and Sparks Boulevard, north of Interstate 80. It not only would complement the existing residences at the marina by creating a better mix of uses, but also it would be a recreation and entertainment draw for tourists. RED anticipates the project will attract visitors and shoppers from 250 to 300 miles away – up to more than 10,000 per year.

"I believe it will be one of the most visited sites in Northern Nevada and have a tremendously positive effect on tourism," said Steve Graham, vice-president of destination development for RED Development.

#### Pyramid Highway Commercial Projects Add to Quality of Life

Costco, Home Depot, Best Buy, Old Navy and Cost Plus World Market are some of the retailers slated to open stores soon in Sparks. The more than 7.5 million square feet of commercial development planned for the Pyramid Highway will allow residents to shop close to home rather than having to drive to Reno. "It will reduce commute times and make for a better quality of life and cleaner air," said Neil Krutz, Sparks director, community development.

Three sizable commercial projects are planned. To complement the existing Kohl's and soon-to-open Super Wal-Mart, 41-acre

Sparks Crossing will be built across the street. The center would house retailers such as Best Buy, Bed, Bath and Beyond, Old Navy, OfficeMax, Michael's, Cost Plus World Market and PetSmart, along with restaurants and smaller shops. City officials expect the site to open in summer 2006.

South of Sparks Crossing would be Sparks Galleria. This mixed-use development would

use 70 of its 133 acres for commercial entities, including Costco, Gold's Gym and Home Depot. The shopping center is well under way, with some businesses likely to open this year. The development also would encompass some 51 acres of single-family residences including a 175 cluster-home project – The Preserves – and a condominium community – Galleria Station.

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Construction on the Spanish Springs Town Center, north of Sparks Crossing, is likely to start next spring. Its 41 acres would house tenants such as drug stores, credit unions and sandwich shops, which would service the neighborhood.

### Aesthetic Requirements

City officials require all new commercial development be visually attractive. Big box buildings embellished only with paint no longer are acceptable. "What we're trying to do is continually raise that bar, so we're getting better and better places you want to be," Krutz said. "Even if it's just going to Safeway or Bully's for a beer after work, the places should be architecturally appealing, with sufficient landscaping." In fact, 20 percent of the land in each commercial project must be landscaped.

All design standards, regarding everything from site grading to trash enclosures, are outlined in the city's Design Standards Manual. "It gives the city some flexibility in interpreting those standards, but sets the minimum bar for the development community," said Rob Pyzel, Sparks planning manager.

### More Businesses Choosing Sparks

With its business-friendly and family-oriented features, Sparks continues to attract new and expanding businesses. During the fiscal year ending June 2005, about 10 companies, primarily manufacturers, moved to the Rail City. They include:

- Micro Matic USA Inc., a manufacturer of draft beer keg dispensing equipment, including keg taps, beer towers and tap handles;
- American Wick Drain Corp., a producer of geocomposite soil drainage products;
- Biodiesel Solutions Inc., a designer and

manufacturer of processing equipment and accessories for converting used and fresh vegetable oil into clean-burning biodiesel;

- Impression Inks, a manufacturer of printing inks;
- ITS Logistics, a company offering customized warehousing, transportation and distribution solutions.

### Why Sparks?

Companies are choosing Sparks because it's business-friendly. The tax structure is favorable, since Nevada has no inventory tax, corporate income tax or franchise tax, among others. Furthermore, statewide business incentives are in place, including Sales and Use Tax and Property Tax Abatements.

Sparks is ideally located, at the cornerstone of two main thoroughfares – U.S. Highway 395 and Interstate 80 –

## SPARKS ATTRACTS OUTSTANDING INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES

**A**s Sparks continues to expand and reach further north and east, the city has seen a tremendous growth in industrial development. Industrial developers are taking notice of the opportunity they have with this thriving city. Among the first industrial developers to take advantage of Sparks and all it offers was DP Partners.

DP Partners, Nevada's largest industrial developer, joined the Sparks infrastructure in 1978 with a 324,000-square-foot facility at the gateway to the new industrial Sparks on Vista Boulevard. The facility is the fourth-largest building in the Sparks area, behind K-Mart (1.5 million square feet), GM/Sanmar (468,000 square feet) and the Wesco Building (404,000 square feet).

"As a member of the Sparks community, we can say we are excited with what has taken place here as far as industrial development," said Michael McCabe, DP Partners' vice president of leasing. "DP Partners recognized that Sparks could offer an industrial developer an incredible opportunity that would greatly benefit our clients."

DP Partners' Sparks facility at 45 Vista Blvd. has seen a great deal of action with a multitude of tenants and special events. Distributors, manufacturers and even volleyball tournaments have graced the inside of this building.

"The diversity of this building makes it unique to the area," said McCabe. "DP Partners can work with a wide variety of types of clients to accommodate them within this building. We believe in long-term relationships, built through trust, respect, outstanding service and commitment to mutual success." DP Partners is currently looking for a tenant for the Vista Boulevard address, with plans to upgrade the facility and its features.

DP Partners, whose corporate headquarters is in Reno, is a privately held company with a history spanning more than 45 years. As one of the largest industrial developers and property management companies in the nation, DP Partners' expertise includes commercial real estate, industrial property management, design/build projects, construction management services and industrial property development.



within a few hours' drive of California, and near rail transportation. "We can reach 11 western states in a day's trucking time," said Ken Pierson, director of business development for the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN).

Sparks' dry climate is ideal for certain industries, such as manufacturers of spices or vitamins, as they can save the money they otherwise would have to pay for removing moisture from the air.

The educated workforce is growing rapidly, as the population increases and as more people obtain occupational skills training at Truckee Meadows Community College and the University of Nevada, Reno. The two schools work with EDAWN and CityWorks, Sparks' community development department, to determine the areas of education on which they need to focus in order to meet the area's needs.

Finally, the quality of life that Sparks offers is a draw. That includes a family-friendly atmosphere, quiet residential neighborhoods, good schools and an abundance of recreational opportunities. "If you combine all those things, that's what's attracting those companies and growing business," Pierson said.

### Targeting California

Although companies relocate to Sparks from around the country, most move from California. One reason is California's proximity to Northern Nevada. The other is the high cost of conducting business in California. "It's just a ripe market for us," said Julie Ardito, director of public relations for EDAWN.

Over the past two years, EDAWN has implemented an integrated marketing campaign solely for California, which bears the theme: "Will your business be terminated?" Ardito explained, "The underlying message is that it's more affordable to do business in Nevada due to the low tax climate, the quality of life and overall pro-business environment."

The campaign has been highly successful, as inquiries from California companies have risen steadily since its launch, and it

has generated a vast amount of media coverage. "It's been huge," Ardito said. "We are very much on the radar of companies and CEOs in California. Northern Nevada is really changing its image and reputation. It's dispelling the myth that it's only about gaming and is really addressing and positioning itself as a diversified business climate."

At any given time EDAWN works closely with about 200 companies, about 40 to 60 of which are top prospects for moving to Northern Nevada. "Being that we are one of the fastest growing cities in Northern Nevada, a good percentage of those are probably looking in our area," said Tom Burrous.

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### Financial Incentives

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- Sales and Use Tax Abatement
- Sales and Use Tax Deferral
- Business Tax Abatement
- Property Tax Abatement
- Job Training
- Recycling Property Tax Abatement
- Renewable and Energy Storage Abatements
- Industrial Development Bonds
- Technical and Support Services

### Tax Structure

Nevada continues to offer one of the least burdensome tax structures in the country. Nevada businesses do not pay many of the taxes other states impose, including:

- Admissions tax
- Corporate income tax
- Estate and/or gift tax
- Franchise tax
- Inheritance tax
- Inventory tax
- Personal income tax
- Special intangible tax
- Unitary tax



### Quality of Life Draws Retirees

The Corcoran Group, a New York City-based real estate company, recently named Sparks among the five best places in the U.S. to retire. A survey of nearly 3,700 real estate brokers and residents from all over the country ranked cities based on affordability, community involvement, recreation, cultural access and healthcare.

Sparks was rated No. 2 in the country by real estate expert Barbara Corcoran when she appeared on *Good Morning America*. She designated Sparks "Best Place for the Physically Active" because of the variety of outdoor activities available to its residents, including skiing, golfing, hunting and fishing, and hiking and bicycling in the area's mild climate. Sparks also got high marks for its convenient location, just a quick plane ride from the Bay Area, Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

The number of residents age 55 and older living in Sparks has grown from 9,200 in 1990 to over 13,000 in 2004 – a 44.6 percent increase. The other top cities listed were Ann Arbor, Mich., Astoria, Ore., Amelia Island, Fla. and Yaletown, Vancouver, Canada.

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## Sparks Cityworks

### Serving the City and the Public

The 72-member staff of CityWorks, Sparks' Community Development Department, oversees growth and development within the Rail City. "It's obviously one of the most essential departments," said Rob Joiner, Sparks advance planning manager. "We couldn't experience the growth and vitality we have without it."

Each CityWorks division works toward a common goal: "to promote and sustain physically sound development that preserves, protects and improves the community." The building staff reviews building plans, issues permits and conducts inspections of all building construction to ensure compliance with ordinances. The engineering team checks subdivision and parcel maps, reviews development proposals to ensure they meet design standards, inspects all city projects, answers public inquiries and does geographic electronic mapping.

The planning staff is comprised of current and long-range planners. Current planners are responsible for all development review, plan checking, permitting, entitlements, subdivisions, zone changes, master plan amendments, code amendments, special use permits, variances and regional plan amendments. They review and approve, or make recommendations on, projects to the appointed and elected officials.

Long-range planning centers on the community's future needs and managing growth. Tasks include participating in regional planning and other regional programs and committees, economic development, redevelopment planning, affordable housing, the annexation program and updating the city's master plan.

CityWorks also carries out code enforcement, maintains an electronic database of all building plans and issues a quarterly newsletter containing community development news, information and major project updates. It's available in print at the CityWorks office and online at [cityofsparks.us](http://cityofsparks.us).

With Sparks' population growing as fast as it is, CityWorks has a lot to do. "We're all excited about this phenomenon that's going on around us," Joiner said. "We also take our responsibility very seriously. We want to get it right, and we're pretty confident we are meeting that goal."

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

Earlier this year, CityWorks created the much-needed position of customer service coordinator and hired Karen Todd to take over the job. She answers any and all questions, directs people to the appropriate services, fields complaints and helps the community understand what CityWorks does. "Karen Todd has been a godsend to us," Joiner said. "She has a wealth of knowledge and a way of speaking to the media that helps us."

For businesses interested in Sparks, Tom Burrous, redevelopment/economic development analyst, is the point person. "My job is to assist businesses coming into the city or looking at Northern Nevada and to interest them in the City of Sparks," he said. He not only works with international organizations looking for investment opportunities in Sparks, but also assists local small businesses, with everything from finding a location to creating a marketing plan. He oversees the Web site, [www.sparksmeanbusiness.com](http://www.sparksmeanbusiness.com), which provides ample information about the city and conducting business there. Burrous works with organizations such as EDawn, the Nevada Commission on Economic Development and the area chambers of commerce.

"CityWorks is business oriented," Burrous said. "We assist companies to get up and rolling smoothly and rapidly. CityWorks is a one-stop shop, where they can get all their permits and everything in one place. If people have questions, we'll find the answers for them."

## KEY CONTACTS

CityWorks, (775) 353-2340, [www.sparksmeanbusiness.com](http://www.sparksmeanbusiness.com)

Tom Burrous, Economic Redevelopment, (775) 353-7830

Karen Todd, Customer Service, (775) 353-4068

Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDawn),

(775) 829-3700 or (800) 256-9761, [www.edawn.org](http://www.edawn.org)

Sparks Chamber of Commerce, (775) 358-1976, [www.sparkschamber.org](http://www.sparkschamber.org)

Sparks Business Licenses, (775) 353-2360

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HOUSING

Sparks offers a wide range of housing options, from starter homes to executive custom and semi-custom homes. Two master-planned, golf communities - Wingfield Springs and D'Andrea - contain more than 4,500 homes. With apartments, condominiums, townhouses and single-family residences, Sparks has homes to suit everyone's needs.

CLIMATE

Sparks offers four distinct seasons with few extremes. Average temperatures range from winter lows in the 20s to summer highs in the 90s. Low humidity characterizes the area, making the cool days seem not so cold, and the warm days not so hot. Rain is scarce (fewer than 8 inches on average annually), as are cloudy days. Snow, however, is certain (23.5 inches on average per year), though it tends to melt by late afternoon in the valleys. Here, the sun shines more than 300 days a year, providing warm days, cool nights and blue skies.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The tremendous resources of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) provide a wide variety of assistance to the business community and opportunities for collaboration. All major fields of study and many advanced degree programs are provided at UNR, a fully accredited state university. TMCC offers numerous training programs and will customize programs for individual businesses.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Minutes from spectacular Lake Tahoe, Sparks is surrounded by natural beauty and limitless recreational opportunities. The Reno-Sparks-Lake Tahoe region has more than 18 world-class ski resorts, 40-plus golf courses and 60 gaming locations. Sparks boasts Wild Island Family Adventure Park, Alf Sorenson Community Center, Deer Park Pool, biking trails along the Truckee River and river fishing. The Sparks Marina Park offers scuba diving, sailboating, swimming, walking, biking and fishing.

TRANSPORTATION

Railroads • Served by Union Pacific Railroad

Highways • The Reno/Sparks area is bisected by Interstate 80 east/west and U.S. Highway 395 north/south  
 Airport • Reno-Tahoe International Airport. U.S. Customs Inspectors based at the airport serve the area as a U.S. port of entry. Trucklines • Close to 60 motor carriers provide a combination of transcontinental, interstate and intrastate deliveries. United Parcel Service has an area terminal located in industrial Sparks.

# The Community Newspaper of Sparks Since 1910



Since 1910, the *Sparks Tribune* has been the voice of Sparks -- providing Rail City residents with local news and information . . . and local sports coverage.

In the course of our 95 year history, we've delivered news of heated city council debates, Sparks men and women serving in world wars, a devastating depression, endless road construction projects, shopping center openings, and Sparks High School's state football championship.

We are your community newspaper.

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