



CITY OF
NORTH LAS VEGAS

Your Community of Choice

CITY OF NORTH LAS VEGAS
BOARD, COMMITTEE, AND COMMISSION
HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Citizen knowledge, interest, and action are important ingredients to the delivery of top quality public services.



Citizen participation plays an important role in local government.

The North Las Vegas City “Council” has established boards, committees, and commissions to advise and assist the Council in dealing with specific projects, policies, and issues of concern. There are approximately 60 citizens presently serving the City on these bodies. The City benefits from these dedicated individuals because boards, committees, and commissions play an integral and important role in the City’s decision-making process.

Being a member of a City board, committee, or commission requires work and commitment, and the City hopes it is a very rewarding experience.

This handbook has been prepared to:

- Outline the role and functions of each City board, committee, and commission;
- Review important guidelines for all boards, committees, and commissions, including individual responsibilities of appointed members; and
- Provide information about the history and composition of the City’s organization.

ABOUT THE CITY



A Unique Place

North Las Vegas is a unique and colorful place, full of rich history and beauty. First incorporated in 1946, North Las Vegas has since grown and changed, but still retains much of its charm and heritage. Located at the northern tip of the Las Vegas Valley, North Las Vegas is also one of Nevada's fastest growing cities. North Las Vegas is characterized by its friendly atmosphere, development opportunities, civic pride, and responsive government. Located in Clark County, the City encompasses an area of about 100.48 square miles and has a residential population in excess of 240,000. The City is surrounded by majestic mountains and desert valleys. Sunshine is enjoyed 86% of the year with an average daily temperature of 78 degrees. North Las Vegas has something for everyone including vacation, recreational, cultural, and historical attractions. The City's motto is "Your Community of Choice" because it is a great choice for residents, businesses, and visitors.

A Charter City

North Las Vegas is a charter city as compared to a general law city. The City Charter empowers the City to regulate and adopt its own procedures and organization. All special charter cities in Nevada are governed by the council-manager form of government. Any proposed amendments to a city's special charter, must be through petition and approval of the voters, or by amendment through the Legislature. Therefore, the City's Charter and the City's Municipal Code are its basic bodies of law.

The City Council

The City Council is the legislative and policy-making body of the City. The City Council consists of five members. The Mayor is directly elected to a four-year term, and the four City Council members are elected to overlapping four-year terms. Under a council-manager form of government, the City Council appoints a City Manager, who is responsible for the proper and efficient management of municipal services. The City Council also appoints a City Attorney to serve as the City's legal counsel. The powers and duties of the City Manager are detailed in [City Charter, Article 3](#). To assist in managing the organization, the City Manager appoints an executive management staff consisting of assistant city managers and the department directors.



The City Logo

The City logo was adopted in October of 1998 and visually represents the vitality and history of the City and includes bright and energetic colors. The logo features a modern ½ circle design with the shadow of a B-2 Stealth Bomber in the forefront to signify the City's proximity to Nellis Air Force Base. Elements in the seal include residential and business buildings set in the desert alongside a wandering trail flanked by cacti. These elements portray the City's prosperous and flourishing economic and residential development in the Nevada desert. The logo also features the outline of mountains, which frame the City's northern edge. The clouds floating above the mountains' edge under a bright blue sky depict the sunny warm weather associated with the City's desert climate.

City Organization

Board, committee, and commission members should be familiar with the City organization and develop an understanding of the City departments and their operations. A brief description is included in this section with links to each department's website for more details.

City Clerk's Office

The City Clerk's Office supports the City Council, public, and staff in the areas of legislation, elections, agenda management, records management, contracting, and requests for public information. The Clerk's Office prepares agendas for the City Council, the Redevelopment Agency, the Library District Board of Trustees, and for all advisory boards. City Clerk's staff attends all open meeting law meetings and records the official minutes and legislative history of the City. The City Clerk administers the advisory board appointment process, is the City's elections official, the City's records official, and provides a wide array of information and services to the public, elected officials, and staff.

City Manager's Office

The City Manager is responsible for the administration of City resources and operations in accordance with City Council policy. All department directors, except the City Attorney and Municipal Court Judge, are responsible to the City Manager, either directly or through one of the assistant city managers. The City Manager's Office is responsible for the preparation of the City's budget, and various other programs, projects, and activities related to City policies and services.

City Attorney's Office

The City Attorney is appointed by the City Council. The City Attorney is the legal advisor to the City Council, City boards, committees, and commissions, and City staff on all matters pertaining to the affairs of the City. The City Attorney or designated Deputy City Attorney attends board, committee, or commission meetings. The City Attorney's Office provides transactional and advisory services as general counsel, and provides litigation services. It has two divisions, Civil and Criminal, to perform those separate functions.

Communications

The Communications Division oversees the City's communications related functions, including: public information; internal and external communications; media relations; issue management; branding; and development of a distinct City image.

Economic and Business Development

The Economic and Business Development Division is charged with helping the City maintain a business-friendly atmosphere, by paving the way for potential industries and high-tech businesses to move to the City and prosper. The Division is led by the City's Chief Innovation Officer who works with Council, staff, citizens, and other stakeholders citywide to create a positive environment for small and big businesses in the City. The intent of this positive environment is to create a diverse and financially sound residential and commercial community that is self-sustaining.

Finance Department

The Finance Department's foremost responsibility is to conduct the fiscal affairs of the City in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and sound business practices. The Finance Department diligently safeguards the resources of the City and ensures that prudent fiscal management policies are maintained. The Finance Department has four divisions: Accounting; Budgeting; Purchasing; and Risk Management. The Department Director is a member of the City's Deferred Compensation Plan Committee.

Fire Department

The North Las Vegas Fire Department (NLVFD) is an all hazards public safety department providing 24-hour emergency fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to citizens, visitors, and businesses citywide. Service is provided from eight strategically located fire stations each day using six engines, two trucks, two advanced life support rescues, one air resource unit, and two Battalion Chiefs. NLVFD also manages the City's Emergency Operations Center.

Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department (HR) collaborates with other City departments and the public to develop and deliver programs and services to support and strengthen the City's workforce. HR's goal is to have a workforce that delivers the highest standard of service to the public. HR is divided into four functions: labor and employee relations; Human Resources Information System and compliance; benefits and training; and, recruitment and employment. The HR Director acts as a staff liaison to the Civil Service Board of Trustees and is a member of the City's Deferred Compensation Plan Committee.

Information Technology Department

The Information Technology Department is responsible for all aspects of information and technology management. The Department provides computing services to the City and is responsible for purchasing, configuring, maintaining, and upgrading hardware and software for all City departments. The department is charged with creating opportunities for leveraging City information resources, concentrating resources for strategic information management initiatives, and designing, developing, and sustaining enterprise-wide solutions. The Department seeks out and implements technologies to ensure the most efficient delivery of services.

Land Development and Community Services Department

The Land Development and Community Services Department is one of the largest City departments and is responsible for a wide array of services, pertaining to residential and commercial structures. Divisions include building safety, business license, code compliance and graffiti abatement, fire safety, neighborhood services, and planning and zoning. In the area of community development, this department coordinates all planning for the development of the City, assuring that all development is in accordance with the various approved plans, codes, and ordinances. The Department Director and staff act as staff liaisons to the Citizens' Advisory Committee, the Joint Board of Appeals, and the Planning Commission.

Municipal Court

The Municipal Court has jurisdiction over traffic violations and misdemeanor offenses occurring within the city limits of North Las Vegas. The Municipal Court is presided over by an elected Municipal Judge and an appointed Court Administrator. Municipal judges are elected to six-year terms.

Neighborhood Leisure Services Department

The Neighborhood Leisure Services Department provides a diversity of open spaces, parks, and leisure opportunities to the City's residents and visitors. The Department offers programs and facilities to support citizens' diverse interests in parks, recreation, and culture. The core services are recreation services and parks services including events in the parks, golf courses, and a large amphitheater at Craig Ranch Regional Park. The Department Director and staff act as staff liaisons to the Parks, Arts, Recreation, and Culture Advisory Board.

North Las Vegas Library District

The North Las Vegas Library District has three branches within the City. It has a great collection of books, magazines, current movie DVDs, an ever-increasing Spanish collection, and specialized books and materials on diverse topics. The district provides a variety of services, including public reference services, children's arts and crafts, story times, cultural and civic programs, public use computers (including Internet access), and a broad array of training and professional enrichment services and opportunities. The Library Director acts as a staff liaison to the Library District Board of Trustees.

Police Department

The Police Department is a public safety department with a mission to provide a safe, secure, and enjoyable community. This is accomplished by protecting lives and property; maintaining social order by enforcing federal, state, and local laws; working in a collaborative effort with the community to identify problems and disorder; and involving the community in the search for solutions. The Department has five command units, which are divided into 16 divisions located across the City.

Public Works Department

The Public Works Department is one of the largest City departments and is responsible for a huge array of services including development and flood control, engineering, surveying, construction services, real property services, infrastructure maintenance, and transportation/traffic services, assuring that all development is in accordance with the various approved plans, codes, and ordinances.

Utilities Department

The Utilities Department is responsible for providing water and sewer service to city residents and businesses through the operation of the Water Reclamation Facility, and administers the City's franchise agreement for refuse and recycling services. The Department Director and staff act as staff liaisons to the Utility Advisory Board.

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship with the City Council

A good relationship with the City Council is essential. The primary responsibility of boards, committees, and commissions is to advise and make recommendations to the City Council. The boards, committees, and commissions are responsible for providing additional avenues of communication with the general public. As they provide their recommendations to the City Council, advisory body members should keep in mind that no advisory body has the authority to establish City policy or administrative direction. It is the City Council's role to receive the recommendations made by the boards, committees, and commissions, and to consider them in its decision-making. Regardless of one's individual position, it is customary for a board or commission member to support the policy decisions of the City Council once they are made.

Official communications with the City Council should be in written form from the entire appointed body. Communications will then be forwarded through the staff liaison to the City Council and the City Manager's Office. Typically, the role of staff is to communicate the position of a board or commission rather than to advocate it. Whenever a Board, Committee, or Commission has an item before the City Council, the Chair or a representative of that appointed body is not required to attend the Council meeting, but is encouraged to be present at the City Council meeting to speak to the topic or answer questions (especially when the staff recommendation differs from that of the Board, Committee, or Commission). Staff will always indicate in the agenda report recommendation if the staff recommendation differs from that of the board, committee, or commission.

When an appointed member addresses the City Council at a public meeting, it should be made clear whether or not he/she is speaking on behalf of the board, committee, or commission, or as an individual. If the member is speaking on behalf of a Board, Committee, or Commission (normally this would be done by the Chair or Vice Chair), only the majority position of the board, committee, or commission should be advocated. If the member is expressing his/her own personal viewpoint on a particular subject, it should be stated as such.

Appointed members to City boards assist the City Council and staff by focusing attention on specific issues of community concern:

- Encouraging citizen participation and involvement in the ongoing management of their community;
- Providing a grass roots perspective on issues of importance; and
- Making recommendations based on thorough review of alternatives from a citizen's perspective.

Relationship with City Staff

The staff liaisons to the Council appointed bodies are valuable resources. They do research and provide relevant information that enhances a body's ability to get things done. Staff is available to answer questions and follow-up on items brought before the board, committee, or commission. Appointed members should be aware of the time involved on the part of staff in preparing studies and reports, and should make sure that all staff requests are consistent with the appointive body's approved work program.

Appointed bodies may not direct staff to initiate major projects without approval from the City Council and individual members may not direct staff to initiate any program or study. In addition, appointed members should not become involved in the operational matters of City departments unless specifically provided for in their prescribed powers and duties. Any comments on operational issues should be provided to staff outside of a City meeting.

Relationship with Fellow Members

Cooperation among fellow board, committee, and commission members plays an important role in the successful efforts of City boards, committees, and commissions. In order to build consensus around common goals and objectives, members should first show a willingness to define objectively the issues at hand and then work to reconcile opposing viewpoints. When appointed members interact positively, the group as a whole will be more effective. Important points to keep in mind in working with other appointed members are:

- Respect an individual's viewpoint, even though it may be different from your own;
- Allow other members adequate time to present their views before making comments;
- Be open and honest;
- Welcome new members and help them become acquainted with their board, committee, or commission; and
- Accept responsibility, voice opinions, be fair, and factual.

Relationships with the Public

Good relations with the public are vital for all City boards, committees, and commissions. In many cases, each body serves as a link between the City Council and the public, helping to inform the public, to reconcile opposing viewpoints, and to explain City programs and policies. Appointed members should welcome citizen input at meetings and be considerate of all interests, attitudes, and differences of opinion. Each body provides a channel for citizen expression by listening to comments, opinions, and concerns from the public. Therefore, it is important to be responsive and in tune with the community.

Relationship with Other Council-Appointed Bodies

From time to time, issues come before the City that involves two or more appointed bodies. When this occurs, each body should focus on their own advisory responsibilities, not on areas that are under the jurisdiction of the other appointed body. The responsibilities of appointed bodies are, at times, very close to one another, and care should be taken to avoid overlapping to the greatest degree possible. This can obviously get confusing, and it is often difficult to resist getting involved in decisions that are not the responsibility of your appointed body. On a particularly complex project, or when appointed members' objectives contradict one another, it may be appropriate to have joint meetings to improve communication and facilitate a common ground. In addition, the City Council may designate a "lead body" on complex projects to help facilitate communication and decision-making.

Business Relationships

Members of boards, committees, or commissions who have a financial interest in a City project should ensure that they do not participate in the review and approval of a City project as a member of any City board, committee, or commission. Always consult with the City Attorney's Office to determine if there is conflict of interest and the steps necessary to avoid a violation of conflict of interest laws.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND EXPECTATIONS

Appointed Member Requirements and Appointment Process

Appointed members of all City advisory bodies must be residents of the City of North Las Vegas with the exceptions of two members on the Utility Advisory Board and members of the Joint Board of Appeals. Members serve four-year terms or terms as specified to fill an unexpired term. The term of service shall be at a maximum of three consecutive terms or 12 years. Interested applicants submit a [Willingness to Serve Form](#) for appointment. When vacancies occur, the Mayor and Council review those forms individually. Appointments are made by the full City Council at a regular City Council meeting. Periodically after appointment, the City Council reviews member

attendance and performance. Members can be removed from office by the City Council for excessive absences, inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance of office.

Appointment Limitations

Board, committee, and commission members are not permitted to sit on more than one City board, committee, or commission. This does not preclude a member from participating in an "outside" agency (e.g. the Southern Nevada District Board of Health).

Orientation

An orientation program for newly appointed members will be held within 30 days of appointment to a board, committee, or commission. The orientation will be arranged by the staff liaison and includes an overview of North Las Vegas City Government and a comprehensive briefing with the staff liaison, body Chair and/or Vice-Chair. The orientation program is designed to welcome newly appointed members and cover information to prepare them for their first few meetings, but not to overwhelm them with information. The orientation of new members is really an on-going process during the first few months after appointment. In reality, we hope the learning process never stops.

Training for Appointed Members

Continuing education to further one's knowledge of the various issues that face cities is essential to serving the public interest. Appointed members are encouraged to attend conferences and workshops, read relevant publications, and utilize other opportunities for personal and professional training that will bring new ideas into the community.

General Guidelines for Appointed Members

The Council encourages active citizen participation in the business of city government. Boards, committees, and commissions provide an opportunity for interested residents to participate in the governing of their community under guidelines and procedures established by the Council.

Boards, committees, and commissions can improve the quality of city government by providing the Council with resources to make better-informed decisions. Other benefits of these bodies include improved lines of communication between the public and Council, greater opportunities for discussion of public issues, and more citizen involvement in city government. Appointment to a City board, committee, or commission is an honor. It provides an opportunity for genuine public service. Each appointed member should be aware of the responsibilities that go along with officially serving the City. The specific duties of each body vary with the purpose for which it was formed.

There are, however, many responsibilities common to all appointed members:

- Understand the role and responsibility of the board, committee, or commission. Be informed of its functions, work programs and relationship with other bodies.
- Represent the overall public good, not the exclusive point of view of a sole group or interest.
- Keep all lines of communication open. Each appointed member serves as a communication link between the community, the City Council, and staff.
- Do your homework and be prepared. Appointed members should become familiar with items under consideration prior to meetings in order to be fully prepared to discuss, evaluate, and act on matters scheduled for consideration. Feel free to seek staff's advice and assistance in advance of a meeting.
- Establish a good working relationship with fellow appointed members, the City Council, and your staff liaison.
- Understand the scope and authority of your appointed body's responsibility and strive to work within that scope.
- Be a participant, an active representative, and be enthusiastic.
- Your role as an appointed representative of the City Council carries with it a significant responsibility. As an "ambassador" of the City of North Las Vegas, the City Council hopes that you conduct yourself with politeness and courtesy. Your role is a position of service that is charged with maintaining the public trust. It is important that you not abuse that trust.

Nevada's Open Meeting Law

Political accountability is essential to responsible government. To help ensure accountability, the "Open Meeting Law" (Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 241) requires all meetings of the legislative body to be open and public. The law prohibits closed or secret meetings except under very special circumstances. The City Council takes this matter very seriously, and insists that the "public's business" be done in an open forum. It is essential that no perception to the contrary be conveyed. The Open Meeting Law also establishes requirements for advance notice and a posted agenda before regular meetings take place. Furthermore, no action may be taken on an item at any meeting without a quorum present. You are strongly encouraged to read the Open Meeting Law information included in the "Important Links" section of this handbook.

Conflict of Interest

To best serve the community, the City Council appoints persons with knowledge of the issues that face North Las Vegas to serve on boards, committees, and commissions. Consequently, it is inevitable that matters will occasionally come before boards, committees, or commissions in which individual members have a direct or indirect financial interest. When this happens, the member may need to disqualify him/herself from participating in the discussion and abstain from voting. Potential conflicts of interest should not be taken lightly. The City Council has placed a special trust in you that should not be abused. When in doubt, contact the City Attorney's Office to discuss your concerns.

Adherence to Policies

Appointed members should not approve projects that violate adopted City Council policies. Members can make recommendations to the City Council about exceptions to a City policy and can also recommend policy changes when appropriate.

Attendance

Regular attendance at meetings is critical to the effective operation of City boards, committees, and commissions. Therefore, all members are expected to attend all of their appointed board, committee, or commission meetings, including special meetings. If you are unable to attend a meeting, call your Chair or staff liaison prior to the meeting. If a problem with frequent absenteeism arises, the City Council may take action to remove you from your position. Review the specific resolution, ordinance, or by-laws that govern the board

Role of the Chair

The principal role of the Chair is to manage the board, committee, or commission meeting. This includes maintaining the order of business during the meeting, focusing discussion on the issues at hand, and ensuring that the public appearing before the body are treated courteously. The Chair must make certain that discussions are not sidetracked. Duties of the Chair also include review of the agenda with the staff liaison before the meeting and representing the body at City Council meetings if necessary.

Planning Commissioner and Utility Advisory Board Member Stipends

In accordance with [CNLV MC 2.16.020\(B\)](#) and [13.02.010\(B\)](#) respectively members of the Planning Commission and Utility Advisory Board shall receive seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) compensation for each meeting attended.

ORIENTATION PROGRAM

The orientation of newly appointed members is important to help members gain a sense of belonging to the board, committee, or commission and the City family. The orientation helps the new member understand City goals and policies, and it allows them to share in the Board/Committee/Commission's sense of purpose. The Orientation Program consists largely of one-on-one meetings to familiarize the new member with the handbook and introduce the new member to the City.

The City Clerk's Office notifies members of their appointment, of the requirement to be sworn in before attending a meeting, and administers the oath of office to new members. Then, in order for the new member to become familiar with the City organization and with their new responsibilities, the staff liaison will:

- Contact the new member and welcome him/her to service with the City.
- Arrange for the member to meet with the Mayor and the City Manager.
- Arrange for the member to meet with a representative from the City Manager's Office to receive a briefing on the City organization and services, budget process, etc.
- Arrange for the member to meet individually with the City Attorney or designee to discuss the legal basis for the appointed body, conflict of interest considerations, and Nevada's Open Meeting Law.
- Arrange a meeting with the new member, the appointed body Chair, Vice-Chair, and staff liaison to discuss:
 - Key functions of the appointed body;
 - Duties and responsibilities;
 - Scope and limits of responsibility;
 - Operating procedures;
 - Role and authority of the appointed body, City Council, and relationship to the City Council;
 - Issues and areas of overlap with other appointed bodies;
 - Staff roles and responsibilities to the member;
 - Role of the Chair;
 - Working with the public;
 - BCC Handbook;
 - Current Work Programs;
 - Staff and resources available to the appointed body;
 - Agenda preparation process;
 - Meeting process;
 - Current issues before the appointed body;
 - Subcommittees; and
 - Procedure for appealing appointed body decisions.

- Take you on a tour of the City and important City facilities.
- Supply you with:
 - Minutes of several recent meetings of your appointed board, committee, or commission
 - Goals and objectives of the appointed body and its current work program
 - Staff reports on items/issues currently before the board, committee, or commission
 - Ordinances, Resolutions, By-Laws, or Charter/Municipal Code that define the board, committee, or commission (i.e. number of members, quorum, term limits, meeting times, absences, etc.)

IMPORTANT LINKS

- City's [Public Access Portal](#)
 - See the Meetings tab for past and future meeting agendas
 - See the Boards tab for information on boards and to run reports on them
 - See the Documents do find City minutes, ordinances, and resolutions
 - See Video tab to watch live or on demand video
- City's [Charter and Municipal Code](#)
- [Nevada's Open Meeting Law](#) manual developed by the Nevada Attorney General's Office
- [Guide to Council meetings](#) – this is a guide to how Council meetings are conducted and the basic types of City laws
- [City website](#) – members of boards, committees, and commissions should familiarize themselves with the department website for which the board serves