



## STOREY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE

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*Jay Carmona, Chair*  
*Clay Mitchell, Vice-Chair*  
*Lance Gilman, Commissioner*

March 7, 2021

Honorable Governor Steve Sisolak  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

### **Re: Storey County's Position on Innovation Zone bill draft as of 03/02/21**

Governor Sisolak:

The Board of Storey County Commissioners on March 2, 2021, directed county staff and lobbyists to take certain positions on BDR 1109-related draft legislation providing for the creation of Innovation Zones. Storey County opposes the Innovation Zone bill as presented thus far; however, the board finds merit in certain elements of the bill including expanding technology uses across the county and developing a mixed-use residential community at Painted Rock. The following summarize the board's directives.

1. ***Technology – Support and work with legislature and applicable elected officials to explore Blockchain, cryptocurrency, stable-coin, and other such technological advances and currency.***

Storey County is Nevada's forerunner in embracing and utilizing new technologies, and the board finds that new digital platforms such as stable-coin and Blockchain to be the potential digital capital of the future. We will seek guidance from the Nevada Department of Taxation; county recorders, clerks, and treasurers; and other such agencies and associations to evaluate the viability of these technologies and develop appropriate framework for their implementation.

2. ***Residential "Smart City" – Continue to support 2016 Storey County Master Plan as applicable to neo-traditional and new-urbanistic design as proposed by Blockchains' "Smart-City".***

The Storey County Master Plan supports large-scale residential development at Painted Rock. A mixed-use community integrating commercial, residential, and live-work use patterns is preferred over suburban "sprawl". Graphic renditions by Blockchains, LLC and R&R Partners illustrating high-rise buildings clad in stainless-steel and glass, situated within clustered high-density nodes, and supported by multi-modal transit and "Smart" infrastructure are aligned with the goals and objectives of the plan for this area.

3. ***Separate Local Government – Oppose separatist governing control and carving up Storey County.***

Carving out a separate government within Storey County is not necessary for the advancement of technology, innovative industries, or residential "smart city" development. Storey County has for 20 years been Nevada's leader in attracting, permitting, and supporting technology, manufacturing, and energy sectors, and transforming northern Nevada from dependence on gaming to the diversified economic powerhouse it is today. Tesla, Panasonic, Switch, Google, Fulcrum Bioenergy, and nearly 20 million square-feet of other companies made Storey County their home because of fast and simple permitting, easy access to elected and appointed officials, and a dedicated team capable of finding innovative ways to overcome economic, social, environmental, and geographic obstacles.

Removing Storey County from the proven calculus it formulated may cause adverse economic, social, and environmental impacts to the county and region. We will explore ways in which objectives in the draft legislation may be achieved within existing local and state regulatory framework.

4. ***Planning & Development – Reach out to Governor, Blockchains, and others for meaningful and authentic good-faith discussion to coordinate planning and oversight within existing governing framework.***

Conversations about the proposed legislation must consider state and local regulations, and binding agreements in-place in Storey County such as the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center (TRI-Center) development agreement, TRI-Center infrastructure payback agreement, the TRI General Improvement District regulations and responsibilities, the inter-county effluent water line Tax Increment Area agreement, economic development and diversification districts for technology and manufacturing sector abatements, court degrees, utility and other easements and rights-of-ways, and government services agreements.

5. ***Progress – Periodically update the Storey County Board of County Commissioners on the status of Innovative Zone BDR and bill, to and seek amended direction as conditions change and are known.***

We will periodically update the board on research findings into the Innovation Zone matters and seek direction as conditions change and more is known about the draft bill.

We respectfully request a meeting with you and your team to openly discuss the Innovation Zone bill. We look forward to being part of a conversation about the potential benefits in the draft bill, and ways to overcome challenging aspects of the proposed legislation within existing fiscal, economic, environmental, and land use regulatory structures.

Respectfully submitted,

Austin Osborne  
Storey County Manager

Enc: Storey County Master Plan - <https://www.storeycounty.org/292/Master-Plan>

Cc.: Storey County Commissioners  
Storey County District Attorney  
Storey County Lobbyists  
Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)  
Nevada Association of Counties (NACO)