



# City of Nevada City

---

February 13, 2017

Dear City of Nevada City / Nevada City Sphere of Influence Residents,

One of the reasons Nevada City enjoys such a special reputation is because of the community's sense of place. Nevada City's "essence" as a small, compact, historic town surrounded by green, wooded hills is embodied in the City's General Plan. **You are receiving this letter because a proposal by the Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) staff to significantly reduce the City's sphere of influence (SOI) may impact your property.**

The City's SOI is a planning boundary outside of the City's limit line that identifies the agency's probable future boundary and service area. If properties are removed from the City's SOI, the City's role in development approval would be reduced to merely being able to comment so that projects could be approved by the County over the City's objection. The County could also change the zoning to allow uses more intense than anticipated currently. These changes could have dramatic impacts on properties and neighborhoods both inside the city limits and within the SOI.

The City Council is interested in knowing whether you have any concerns with the LAFCO staff's proposal and invites you to send your thoughts on the matter via email or letter. Correspondence may be directed to City Manager Mark Prestwich via email ([mark.prestwich@nevadacityca.gov](mailto:mark.prestwich@nevadacityca.gov)) or to the address below:

City of Nevada City  
Attn. Mark Prestwich  
317 Broad Street  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Please note the City's website ([www.nevadacityca.gov](http://www.nevadacityca.gov)) has a link with additional information on the Sphere of Influence issue to help you learn more. We encourage you to participate in this discussion and invite you to attend the LAFCO Sphere of Influence Workshop on February 23, 2017. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Nevada County Government Center's Board Chambers located at 950 Maidu Avenue.

Sincerely,

*Mark T. Prestwich*

Mark T. Prestwich  
City Manager

Enclosures

# Nevada City – Sphere of Influence

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

- 1. What is the City's Sphere of Influence?** A City sphere of influence (SOI) is a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency. Territory is included in a SOI to:
  - Apply zoning and development standards, including environmental protections
  - Create efficiencies in service delivery
  - Protect and expand the tax base
  - Provide municipal services beyond those available in rural areas.
- 2. Who approves the City Sphere of Influence?** The seven member Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is responsible for determining the City's SOI.
- 3. What factors were considered in developing Nevada City's SOI?** The current SOI boundary was based upon several factors, including, but not limited to:
  - Consideration of septic systems that will eventually fail able to be served by Nevada City's Wastewater Treatment Plant
  - Protecting the immediate watershed from adverse impacts from development
  - The City's view shed that preserves the community's sense of history and general character
  - Nevada City's ability to facilitate thoughtful higher density smart growth near commercial districts
  - Ability of the City to provide recreation, fire protection/emergency services, law enforcement services to SOI residents
  - Primary access routes associated with arterial roadways and collector roads that originate in the City
- 4. What is the history on Nevada City's Sphere of Influence?** Nevada City's Sphere of Influence was carefully developed and approved by the Nevada County LAFCo Board in 1983. The Sphere was again reviewed and approved by the Nevada County LAFCo Board in 2008. Since incorporation, Nevada City has approximately doubled its incorporated territory.
- 5. If my property is removed from the Sphere of Influence, is it possible the County could change the zoning of my property or neighborhood?** Yes, if your property is removed from the SOI, then the City would only be able to comment on proposals to change zoning. It is possible the County could modify the zoning to a more intense or different land use (e.g. multi-family, commercial, industrial, etc.).
- 6. My property is on a septic tank that is aging. If my septic tank fails, will I still be able to connect to City sewer if my property is removed from the SOI?** Standard septic systems last approximately 50 years and possibly less in this region given substandard soils associated with previous mining activities. Removal of your property from the SOI would complicate your ability to connect to City sewer.
- 7. Does the City have sewer capacity to accommodate properties in the current sphere of influence?** Yes, the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant has capacity for 0.69 million gallons per day (mgd). Current average dry weather flow ranges from 0.38 to 0.47 mgd and has capacity to serve the entire SOI.