



## STAFF REPORT

**Report To:** Planning Commission      **Meeting Date:** February 28, 2024

**Staff Contact:** Hope Sullivan, AICP, Director

**Agenda Title:** For Possible Action: Discussion and possible action regarding the Public Engagement Plan for the Master Plan Update. (Hope Sullivan, hsullivan@carson.org)

**Staff Summary:** In October 2023, the City commenced the Master Plan Update process. That same month, the City entered into a contract with Clarion Associates (“Consultant”) to work with the City in this effort. To ensure community input during the update process, the Consultant has prepared a draft Public Engagement Plan. The Board of Supervisors (“Board”) and the Planning Commission (“Commission”) reviewed the plan at its joint meeting of January 31, 2024 and provided input. The Commission will be conducting further review on this draft plan and provide input as to modifications that may improve the plan.

**Agenda Action:** Formal Action / Motion      **Time Requested:** 30 Minutes

### **Proposed Motion**

Depends on the discussion.

### **Board's Strategic Goal**

Quality of Life

### **Previous Action**

January 31, 2024 (Item 5b) – The Board and Commission reviewed the draft plan and provided input.

October 19, 2023 (Item 15a) - The Board approved a contract with Consultant to perform an update of the Carson City Land Use Master Plan Project.

### **Background/Issues & Analysis**

The existing Master Plan was adopted in 2006. The City has hired Consultant to work with the community to update the plan. As part of this effort, the Consultant has prepared a draft Public Engagement Plan to provide a strategy for community participation.

The draft plan was reviewed at a joint Board and Commission meeting on January 31, 2024. The consultant has modified the plan based on input received at that meeting. The Commission has requested to further review the draft plan. The purpose of this item is for the Commission to review and provide input to improve on the revised draft plan.

**Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation**

NRS 278.190

**Financial Information**

**Is there a fiscal impact?** No

**If yes, account name/number:**

**Is it currently budgeted?** No

**Explanation of Fiscal Impact:**

**Alternatives**

Provide additional direction to city staff regarding the Public Engagement Plan.

**Attachment(s):**

[6.F Supporting Materials.pdf](#)

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

Aye/Nay

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Vote Recorded By)



# Public Engagement Plan

Draft: January/February 2024

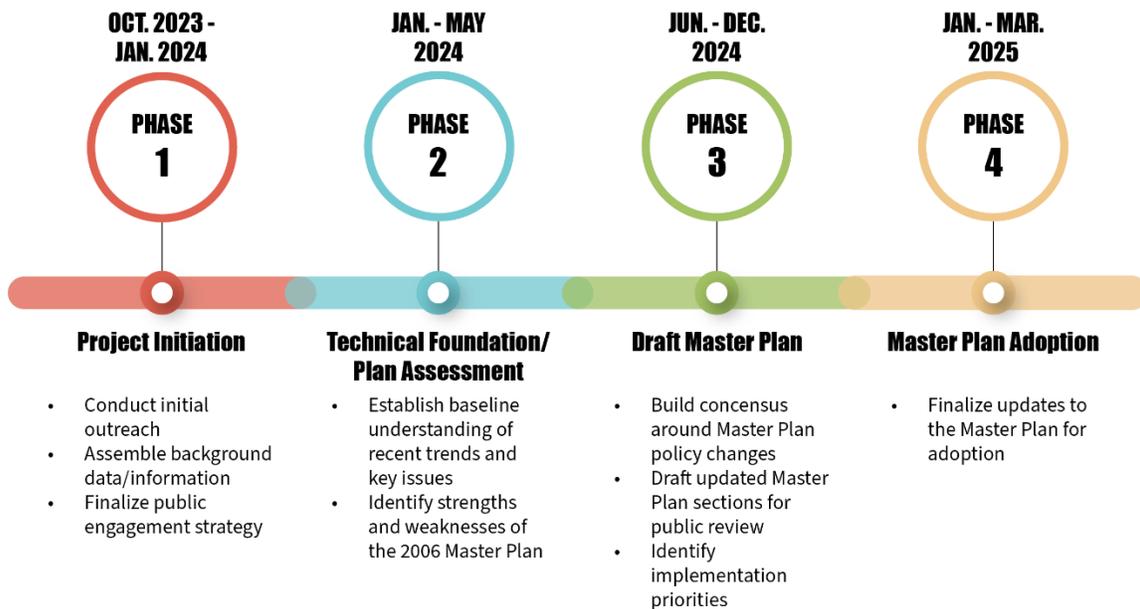
## 1. INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

In October 2023, Carson City initiated a process to update the City’s 2006 Land Use Master Plan (Master Plan). This is not expected to be a “start from scratch” effort. Rather, the update process will focus on modernizing the 2006 Master Plan to reflect the needs of Carson City today—and for the future—based on input from the community. The Envision Carson City Master Plan update is being led by the Carson City Community Development Department with support from Clarion Associates and Economic and Planning Systems (EPS).

### PROCESS OVERVIEW

An overview of the Master Plan update process is provided below, along with the expected timelines for each project phase and public engagement opportunities.



Kickoff Meetings	Public Engagement	Joint Meeting (BOS & PC)	Planning Commission Workshop	Planning Commission Adoption
			Board of Supervisors Adoption	

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The following principles should guide all communication and public engagement efforts to ensure participants are heard and understand how their input will be used in the Master Plan update process:

1. **Strengthen community understanding** of the Master Plan and its role in shaping the future of Carson City
2. **Focus on key issues and opportunities** identified by the community and City leadership
3. **Foster collaboration** by engaging a diverse set of community members in the process
4. **Bridge differences between various groups** by promoting civil/civic conversations and seeking common ground on contentious issues
5. **Provide multiple and meaningful ways for the community to engage** in the process—creating an environment that promotes collaboration and cooperation
6. **Be transparent** throughout all phases of the process

## PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

This Public Engagement Plan (PEP) will be used to guide community engagement efforts throughout the Master Plan update. The PEP includes three sections:

- **Groups in the Process.** This section identifies community groups and advisory groups that will be engaged in the Master Plan update.
- **Communications Strategy.** This section describes the methods that will be used to get the word out about meetings, events, and other input opportunities during the process.
- **Opportunities for Input.** This section defines the anticipated timing, format, and objectives for the various input opportunities planned as part of the Master Plan update process.

The PEP will be made available on the project webpage and will be updated as necessary.

## 2. GROUPS IN THE PROCESS

The entire Carson City community will be invited to participate in the Master Plan update at key points during the process, as outlined in Section 4. The list below represents community groups with an interest in the future growth and development of Carson City but is not intended to be all-encompassing. Groups are organized into categories for reference but may be engaged in more than one category of issues. Carson City departments are listed where applicable and will serve primarily as technical advisors to the project team.

### COMMUNITY GROUPS

#### COMMUNITY DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

- Design professionals
- Developers
- Historic Resources Commission
- Major property owners
- Nevada Builders Alliance

#### ECONOMIC VITALITY AND TOURISM

- Carson City Chamber of Commerce
- Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center Local business owners
- Major employers
- Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDAA)
- Western Nevada Development District (WNDD)
- Visit Carson City

#### HOUSING

- Home builders
- Nevada Rural Housing Authority
- Nonprofit organizations
- Residential realtors

#### RESIDENTS

- Hispanic/Latino community
- Residential neighborhoods (North, East, South, and West Carson City)
- Retirees

- Youth and young adults

#### INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

- Carson City Emergency Management
- Carson City Public Works Department
- Carson City School District
- Carson City Sheriff's Office

#### PARTNER AGENCIES

- Bureau of Land Management
- State of Nevada
- U.S. Forest Service
- Western Nevada College
- Washoe Tribe

#### OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Department
- Open Space Advisory Committee
- Muscle Powered

#### TRANSPORTATION

- Carson City Airport Authority
- Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)
- Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT)
- Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

## ADVISORY GROUPS

The project team will work closely with the following groups, as described below.

### CORE PLANNING TEAM

The project team will work closely with a core team comprised of key staff from the Carson City Community Development Department. The core team will assist with overall project coordination and scheduling on a day-to-day basis, and review and provide input on interim drafts and technical data as necessary to help guide the Master Plan update process. The core team will meet with the project team bi-weekly, or as needed, throughout the process.

### CARSON CITY DEPARTMENTS

Carson City departments will be engaged in the review of technical elements of the Master Plan to ensure that the updated Master Plan is aligned with other Carson City plans and initiatives. As technical advisors, relevant City departments will be asked to share information about the services already provided by Carson City, evaluate the feasibility of policy recommendations made, and collaborate on strategies to support the implementation of the updated Master Plan.

### ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

City staff and project team members will provide regular updates to the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission to keep both groups informed about overall project progress. Joint Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meetings will be held throughout the project to review and discuss project deliverables, such as the Master Plan Assessment and multiple drafts of the updated Master Plan. Three Planning Commission workshops will be held during Phase 3 of the Master Plan update to discuss changes proposed to the updated Master Plan based on input from the Carson City community.

### 3. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

#### OBJECTIVES

Establishing and maintaining open lines of communication about the Master Plan update is a central component of this PEP. Generally, project updates will be provided each time a major deliverable is made available for public review, and/or approximately two weeks in advance of public meetings, events, or input opportunities. Where possible, communications will rely on established connections to various social media networks, local news outlets, and distribution lists available to Carson City. Tapping into these established networks is one of the most efficient and effective ways to get the word out about the Master Plan update process. Primary methods of communication are outlined in the table that follows.

#### PRIMARY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

TOOL(S)	OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
<b>Web</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated project website</li> <li>Carson City website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide general project information</li> <li>Advertise upcoming meetings and events</li> <li>Provide access to online input opportunities</li> <li>Provide access to interim work products and other project-related materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarion will be responsible for managing materials and information posted on the project website</li> <li>Staff will be responsible for providing a link on the Carson City website that directs people to the project website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare project website for January 2024 launch and update as needed throughout the process</li> <li>Major updates will generally coincide with the completion of a project phase or publication of a major deliverable</li> </ul>
<b>Social Media</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook</li> <li>Instagram</li> <li>LinkedIn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand awareness of public meetings and events</li> <li>Direct community to online engagement activities</li> <li>Highlight participation in community events and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarion will prepare a series of suggested posts for distribution</li> <li>Carson City will incorporate as part of scheduled posts on respective sites, as applicable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post periodically throughout the process</li> <li>Begin advertising for community meetings and events two weeks in advance</li> <li>Periodic updates to announce and drive participation to online input opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>E-mail Blasts</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple listservs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide brief updates on the project</li> <li>Advertise upcoming meetings and engagement activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarion will draft content for staff review</li> <li>Clarion will send email blast from project listserv and staff may distribute through other existing listservs as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately two weeks prior to each community meeting, or to announce the release of interim deliverables for review</li> </ul>

TOOL(S)	OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
<b>Print/Online Media</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carson Now</li> <li>• Nevada Appeal</li> <li>• KTVN Online</li> <li>• Univision TV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build awareness of Master Plan update process</li> <li>• Expand reach of advertising for community meetings and online input opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarion will prepare draft press release for review and distribution</li> <li>• Carson City will distribute to news outlets as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press releases will be issued at least one week prior to a community meetings and public adoption hearings</li> </ul>
<b>Radio</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KNVC (95.1 FM) Online</li> <li>• Lotus Radio Corp.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand reach of advertising for community meetings and online input opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarion will prepare draft press release for review and distribution</li> <li>• Carson City will distribute to radio outlets as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press releases will be issued at least one week prior to a community meetings and public adoption hearings</li> </ul>
<b>Flyers</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community message boards</li> <li>• Civic buildings, as well as libraries, community centers, and other buildings with message boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build awareness of Master Plan update process, community meetings, and online input opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarion will develop flyers in English and Spanish for distribution</li> <li>• Carson City staff will print and distribute flyers as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately two weeks prior to community meetings and public adoption hearings</li> </ul>

## 4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

### OVERVIEW

This section outlines opportunities for public input during the Master Plan update process. Input opportunities generally correspond to major project milestones. Details for each round of engagement will be refined based on discussions with Carson City staff as the process moves forward.

DATE	OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES
<b>Project Initiation (December 2023 – January 2024)</b>		
December 4-6, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial interviews with Carson City residents, elected and appointed officials, partner agencies and service providers, major land holders (e.g. Western Nevada College, Carson Tahoe Regional Hospital, the State of Nevada, Carson City School District), conservation groups, real estate and development community representatives, and economic development and tourism interests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify strengths and weaknesses of the existing Master Plan</li> <li>Gather background data and build a deeper understanding of related plans and efforts</li> <li>Understand expectations of various stakeholder groups</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Foundation/Plan Assessment (January – May 2024)</b>		
January 31, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint Meeting: Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission (virtual)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present summary of feedback collected during December kickoff meetings</li> <li>Review draft Master Plan assessment</li> </ul>
April 10-12, <u>2024</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community engagement (in-person meetings) to include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members will be invited to participate in as many as eight 1-hour focus groups to discuss specific topics related to their individual interests/areas of expertise (e.g., community development, housing, business interests, infrastructure and public services, recreation, etc.) All focus groups will be advertised on the project website and open to the public.</li> <li>Two Master Plan Morning events may be held <del>on the second and third day</del>. These meetings are less formal and are likely hosted off-site (not at City Hall) at a coffee shop or cafe.</li> <li>One tabling event or focus group to be held on the Western Nevada College campus to gather feedback from current students and WNC staff and faculty.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate community members on the role of the Master Plan in shaping the future of Carson City and the targeted nature of this Master Plan update</li> <li>Share key findings from existing conditions, trends, and projections data and Master Plan assessment</li> <li>Gather feedback on preliminary recommendations for the updated Master Plan</li> </ul>

DATE	OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The entire Carson City community will be invited to attend a community meeting on the evening of the second night. This meeting will last between 1-2 hours and will likely include a presentation by the project team, time for Q&amp;A, and hands-on engagement activities.</li> </ul>	
April 15, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community engagement (project website—available for three weeks beyond in-person meetings)</li> </ul>	
April 16, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community engagement (virtual meeting via Zoom) – same format and materials as in-person community meetings</li> </ul>	
May 16, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Joint Meeting: Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission (virtual)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share key findings and preliminary recommendations for the updated Master Plan based on updates to existing conditions, trends, and projections</li> <li>● Share feedback from initial round of public meetings/online engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Draft Master Plan Updates (June – December 2024)</b>		
July 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Joint Meeting: Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission (virtual)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review draft of the updated Master Plan</li> <li>● Finalize August outreach strategy</li> </ul>
August 19, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community engagement (online—available for four weeks)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Post the review draft of the updated Master Plan for online review and comment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek input on changes made in the updated Master Plan review draft</li> </ul>
Week of August 28-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community engagement (in-person meetings) – will likely be similar to the approach taken in April with adjustments as needed</li> </ul>	
September 12, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community engagement (virtual meeting via Zoom)</li> </ul>	
October 3, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Joint Meeting: Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission (virtual)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss highlights of public input received on the updated Master Plan review draft</li> <li>● Seek input on outstanding questions/key policy considerations</li> </ul>
October 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Planning Commission Workshop #1 (Clarion in-person/EPS virtual)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review proposed changes to the draft of the Master Plan</li> </ul>

DATE	OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES
November 13, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Commission Workshop #2 (Clarion in-person/EPS virtual)</li> </ul>	
December 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Commission Workshop #3 (Clarion in-person/EPS virtual)</li> </ul>	
<b>Master Plan Adoption (January – March 2025)</b>		
February 3, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post Adoption draft for public review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlight changes made between the review draft and the adoption draft based on community feedback</li> <li>Provide an opportunity for public comment on the adoption draft</li> </ul>
February 26, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Commission adoption</li> </ul>	
March 20, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board of Supervisors adoption</li> </ul>	

**From:** Ellen DeChristopher <[ellen.huronout@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.huronout@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Saturday, February 3, 2024 12:06 AM

**To:** Hope Sullivan <[HSullivan@carson.org](mailto:HSullivan@carson.org)>

**Subject:** Comments re: Public Engagement Plan (Revised)

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Greetings Hope!

I appreciate this opportunity to ask questions and to provide additional feedback on the Public Engagement Plan (PEP) given the time constraints at yesterday's joint session.

A good segue to my primary concern -- that one hour for the April 10-12 community engagement opportunities will not be adequate if we plan to live up to the Guiding Principles (**Process Overview P 28**). I understand I make this statement without being privy to how you've allocated your budget for this project, or reviewing the actual presentation and discussion outline from Clareon. I know they're buttoned up and experienced in facilitating feedback, but if the public feels we used these sessions to check a box rather than to have authentic dialogue we will miss an opportunity to broaden the audience who participates in City Planning on a regular basis.

**Process Overview (P 28)**

Looking for clarification on whether this phase will include educating the participants on challenges the City and/or Applicant faces regarding infill projects; particularly in the downtown area. It's on the radar and I feel confident that education will go a long way in gaining trust and confidence in the City and the Master Plan revision process.

**Primary Communication Channels (P 5/32)**

Would appreciate more information on the content proposed for "online input opportunities". Additionally, who will be monitoring the comments, and what is the protocol for managing mis-information from a commenter?

Lastly, is there an issue or concern with Clareon providing an electronic file of the flyer to PC and/or BOS for their use in expanding the distribution (clubs, churches, social or professional groups that we interact with in the community)?

Again, many thanks.

Ellen

**From:** Greg Brooks <[greg.brooks@better-cities.org](mailto:greg.brooks@better-cities.org)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 7, 2024 4:37 PM

**To:** Hope Sullivan <[HSullivan@carson.org](mailto:HSullivan@carson.org)>

**Subject:** Welcome back + thoughts on public input

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Hi Hope – I understand you were off for a couple of days; I hope it was for something fun and relaxing.

Below are thoughts on the public-input portion of the master plan update. I've limited this to things I believe have zero to slight operational or budget impact vis-à-vis the consultants' work.

The common theme: Yes, it's a relatively straightforward update to a well-functioning plan and probably doesn't need the most comprehensive public-input process. But this is also an opportunity to be leveraged – a chance to engage with more than just Planning Commission meeting regulars and build trust for future projects by telling a story of what's worked and continues to work.

No matter what the city gets right, occasionally local government must ask the public for difficult things. These may help produce a great plan update, but also, hopefully, can build reputational capital for those times it's needed.

- **The city should frame this not merely as “What do you think?” but also “Here’s what we’ve done.”** Public input is not just important for the planning process, but also for letting the community know what's been done and what's been working – something many public information efforts don't seem to have much bandwidth for. Research correlates higher levels of communication with higher perceived levels of service; input processes that communicate how well the existing plan has served the community could help pay dividends in public support. Fiscal/operations impact: Zero to slight. I see this primarily as a matter of rhetoric and framing within the already planned public outreach efforts.
- **With a creative approach, the city could get broader input and strengthen ties with the community.** Virtually every stakeholder cohort in the consultant's presentation, as well as others in town, has an organized group attached to it. Why not leverage those existing channels and relationships to get more and broader input? A facilitated-discussion guide and methodology, combined with a brief training session or two for community leaders, could let them convene their own groups and gather input in a standardized, useful way. Instead of input from 10-30 people (as a strawman), we could 10x that number without 10x the staff or consultant labor. Disclaimer: This is an idea I executed a couple of decades ago for a regional transportation plan, so this could very well be an old dog with a not-so-new trick. But it broadens the audience for not just input but also the city's positive messages about how the master plan has worked so far. **\*And\*** it creates allies from community groups, which become good channels for future information. **\*And\*** by broadening the footprint of community input, it moderates the impact of individual but particularly strident voices. Fiscal/operations impact: Slight. There are lots of ways to structure this so the information that comes back is standardized and, as such, doesn't require endless staff or consultant analysis to reach meaningful conclusions. But it would require some effort up front and, no matter how standardized the process, it takes time to go through 10x the input.

If I haven't put you to sleep with all this? Thanks for reading. (And if I have? Well, it's a good lesson to work on my brevity skills.)

Greg