

Station moves forward on stalled plans to build casino in south Reno

Written by Administrator

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This is a rendering of the casino Station Casinos is planning to build at the corner of South Virginia Street and Kietzke Lane. (Photo: Provided by Station Casinos.)

Station Casinos is moving forward with long-stalled plans to build a casino on South Virginia Street across from the Reno-Sparks Convention Center.

The Las Vegas-based announced the new project today.

But Reno City Council members said Wednesday they have been meeting with casino representatives to hear their new plans for the 8-acre parcel over the past week. While the parcel is already properly zoned for gaming, the company needs a special use permit from the city. It applied for that permit on Monday.

The company also plans to use the unrestricted gaming license it bought from the Reno Turf Club, which was closed by the city for the train trench project in 2004. Because it has that grandfathered license, it won't be required to build hotel rooms. The Nevada Gaming Control Board would have to approve the relocation of the gaming operations to the South Virginia Street parcel.

"We are extremely excited about the Reno market and look forward to working with the City and State to secure the approvals necessary to build a high-quality gaming facility," said Lori Nelson, spokesperson for Station Casinos.

The project is expected to include 84,000 square feet in gaming and entertainment space, including a sports book, a bistro-style cafe and mobile sports-wagering kiosks.

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Councilman Oscar Delgado said the plans he saw also included a bowling alley and a cinema.

According to a press release from Station Casinos, the company doesn't have a start date for construction as it moves through the regulatory process. The project budget is expected to be up to \$70 million, could employ 350 construction workers and create 150 to 200 permanent jobs.

Station Casinos has run a successful business model building "neighborhood casinos" in Southern Nevada. The company's gaming portfolio includes 19 Nevada casinos, including nine larger casino resorts throughout the Las Vegas area. Their properties include Palace Station, Red Rock Casino, Green Valley Ranch and Sunset Station.

In 2004, the company made plans to enter the Reno market, buying land off the Mount Rose Highway near the Sierra Summit Mall and across from the convention center. In 2005, the Reno City Council rezoned the South Virginia Street property to accommodate gaming and the company announced a major hotel-casino project.

Under those plans, Station would have built 17-story, 500-room hotel tower in addition to the casino.

But when Station acquired the Turf Club license, it won the ability to build a casino without those hotel rooms.

"The recent expansion and diversification of Northern Nevada's economy has renewed the company's interest in developing a gaming property in the Reno-Sparks market," Station's press release said.

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