

PLACER COUNTY'S TAHOE BASIN AREA PLAN

Placer County's (County) Board of Supervisors approved the new Tahoe Basin Area Plan (Area Plan), and associated Tahoe City Lodge Project, in December 2016. In January, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Governing Board also approved both items.

TRPA's 2012 Regional Plan Update initiated a transition from plan area statements and community plans to area plans as the land use tools for geographic areas. This Area Plan updates Placer County's land use regulations at Lake Tahoe and serves as the General Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin portion of the County. Area plans allow local agencies to implement the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan policies at a smaller scale and with greater flexibility. For most projects, area plans allow streamlined review at the local level, eliminating TRPA and County overlapping permit requirements.

Conservancy staff reviewed and commented on the draft Area Plan to ensure that the State's lands and interests were appropriately represented and considered. The Area Plan now designates the Conservancy's lakefront lands under Recreation types of zoning, the only major change to Conservancy properties from the past.

Staff also considered community input received during the County's Area Plan process for the Conservancy's own planning efforts. For example, the Eastern Pier Alternative for the Kings Beach State Recreation Area was added due to input received from the County's 2013 community "visioning" exercise.

Key Elements

The Area Plan, which encompasses 72 square miles within the Lake Tahoe Basin, encourages environmentally beneficial redevelopment, enhanced mobility, and concentration of uses within TRPA-designated town centers in Tahoe City and Kings Beach. The associated environmental documents also addressed one near-term redevelopment project, the Tahoe City Lodge, and one environmental redevelopment design concept, the Kings Beach Center (a conceptual mixed-use redevelopment design on parcels owned by the County). These two projects offer opportunities to facilitate redevelopment in the town centers.

The Area Plan implements the Lake Tahoe Region's Mobility 2035 plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (2012) by including elements designed to: reduce traffic and congestion by creating walkable communities; increase alternative transportation

options; restore the environmentally sensitive areas; reduce stormwater pollution; and enhance recreation opportunities.

To improve community sustainability and promote redevelopment and revitalization, the Area Plan created a new program that allows the limited conversion of existing development to new property uses. Through the program, existing commercial floor area can be converted into the units needed for creation of tourist lodging projects. These new lodging projects must have sidewalks, be located within a town center and within one-quarter mile of transit service, and include best management practices to prevent stormwater pollution.

Tahoe City Lodge Project

The Tahoe City Lodge Project is an example of how the new Area Plan can revitalize communities and restore the environment. The County Board of Supervisors and TRPA Governing Board approved the Tahoe City Lodge Project, using the regulatory provisions and incentives outlined in the new Area Plan.

Located in the Tahoe City Town Center, the three-acre project would redevelop an existing commercial complex into a 118-unit lodge with resort amenities and conference facilities. The project also redevelops the Tahoe City Golf Course clubhouse and implements shared-use parking. The resulting development reduces land coverage by 10,080 square feet and restores 1.7 acres of stream environment zone while deed restricting the portion of the golf course for recreation, public service, and conservation.

Tourist Accommodation Units

The County intends to encourage redevelopment by making tourist accommodation units (TAUs), the development right needed to construct a new overnight lodging unit in the Lake Tahoe Basin, available to lodging project proponents. In December, the County Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of 15 privately-banked TAUs. The County is working with the Conservancy and other parties to purchase additional TAUs for the project.

Litigation

The nonprofit California Clean Energy Committee filed a lawsuit in December alleging that the County Board of Supervisors violated the California Environmental Quality Act in its Area Plan approval by failing to evaluate feasible mitigation for climate change impacts. At this time, it is unclear how the lawsuit may impact implementation of the Area Plan and Tahoe City Lodge Project.

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