

Cultivating Community, Conserving the Basin

Project Factsheet



Overview

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) recognizes that affordable housing is vital for the health of our environment and communities. Many who live and work in the Lake Tahoe Basin are affected by the housing crisis, particularly workers who must commute in from neighboring areas and those who experience sub-standard housing conditions. To address this, TRPA has embarked on a multiyear project to update the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan, making housing more accessible while maintaining and improving environmental protections. The *Cultivating Community, Conserving the Basin* project promotes equity and climate resilience through improved growth management and meaningful community engagement. Together, we can ensure that everyone in Lake Tahoe has access to affordable, sustainable housing in thriving communities and a healthy environment.

How does TRPA manage growth and protect the environment?

The Bi-State Compact charges TRPA with establishing a Regional Plan that will achieve environmental goals, called thresholds, while allowing for orderly growth and development. The Lake Tahoe Regional Plan is unique in the nation because it created mechanisms to manage growth and development in the basin that enables TRPA to protect sensitive areas, limit new development, and guide development into more appropriate areas to protect the lake. This growth management system has been essential to environmental preservation throughout the region.

The Regional Plan should reflect the values of our region and help address the considerable challenges facing the Lake Tahoe Basin today. Updating our plans and policies creates a significant opportunity to come together to envision and implement an equitable future for Lake Tahoe.

Why are we updating land use policies right now? What does it mean for me?

The Lake Tahoe Region faces housing challenges similar to many popular destinations. While these issues are common, it is essential to recognize that we can improve the situation in the basin through effective plans and policies. To ensure residents, workers, and businesses can thrive, TRPA is focusing policy changes on key growth management mechanisms, specifically the development rights and transfer of development rights systems.

Key Words

BI-STATE COMPACT

The Bi-State Compact is an agreement between California and Nevada to work together to protect the lake and its environment. First approved by the states and Congress in 1969, it gives TRPA legal authority over land use and conservation programs.

THRESHOLDS

Environmental thresholds establish science-based standards necessary to maintain and restore the unique characteristics of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Implementation of the Regional Plan, Code of Ordinances, and growth management system must achieve and maintain the adopted thresholds.

REGIONAL PLAN

The Regional Plan establishes goals and policies to meet TRPA's environmental thresholds. It outlines goals, strategies, and actions to maintain and improve the environmental, social, physical, and economic well-being of the region.

CODE OF ORDINANCES

The Code of Ordinances functions as a rulebook for development and land use within the region, ensuring projects around the lake deliver water quality and other improvements that protect the natural environment. Proposed development projects must comply with both the Code and local plans.



These systems can be used to create more equitable, accessible, and inclusive housing within the region while maintaining and improving conservation and preservation of the lake and the surrounding environment.

As we engage in this important work, we want to hear from you on how both the natural environment and our Tahoe families and communities can thrive. *Cultivating Community* will ensure that everyone with a stake in the region's future has a meaningful opportunity to take part in the conversation.

What are development rights?

The development rights system was adopted in 1987 to limit the total amount of development in the Tahoe Basin, and to ensure the pace of development supports the environmental thresholds. Development rights are land use units someone must acquire before they have the right to develop a property. Development rights are allocated for different types of uses - housing, tourist accommodations, and commercial businesses. In the Tahoe Basin, development can only occur on properties with both the appropriate zoning, and a development right. The Regional Plan caps the number of development rights available in the region.

The development rights system has been instrumental in limiting growth and protecting the environment. Increasingly however, large homes and resorts are taking up the largest share of available development rights, while smaller homes and "missing middle" housing are essentially outcompeted.

Cultivating Community is an opportunity to ensure the development rights system works for everyone, supporting the types of housing our community needs while improving environmental outcomes.



Where are we in the process?

In 2020, TRPA convened the Tahoe Living Working Group, asking experts, local governments, and non-profits to help the agency bring forward the most effective actions to support affordable and workforce housing while protecting the environment. Earlier progress from the working group led to policy changes that addressed accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and added zoning incentives for affordable and workforce housing. The working group also identified TRPA's development rights system as needing improvement to better address housing access.

Through *Cultivating Community*, we will expand the Tahoe Living Working Group and create meaningful connections in historically underrepresented communities to generate new ideas to address housing inequities, explore policy and rule changes, and evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed changes.

What values will guide this process?

The values guiding this process are:

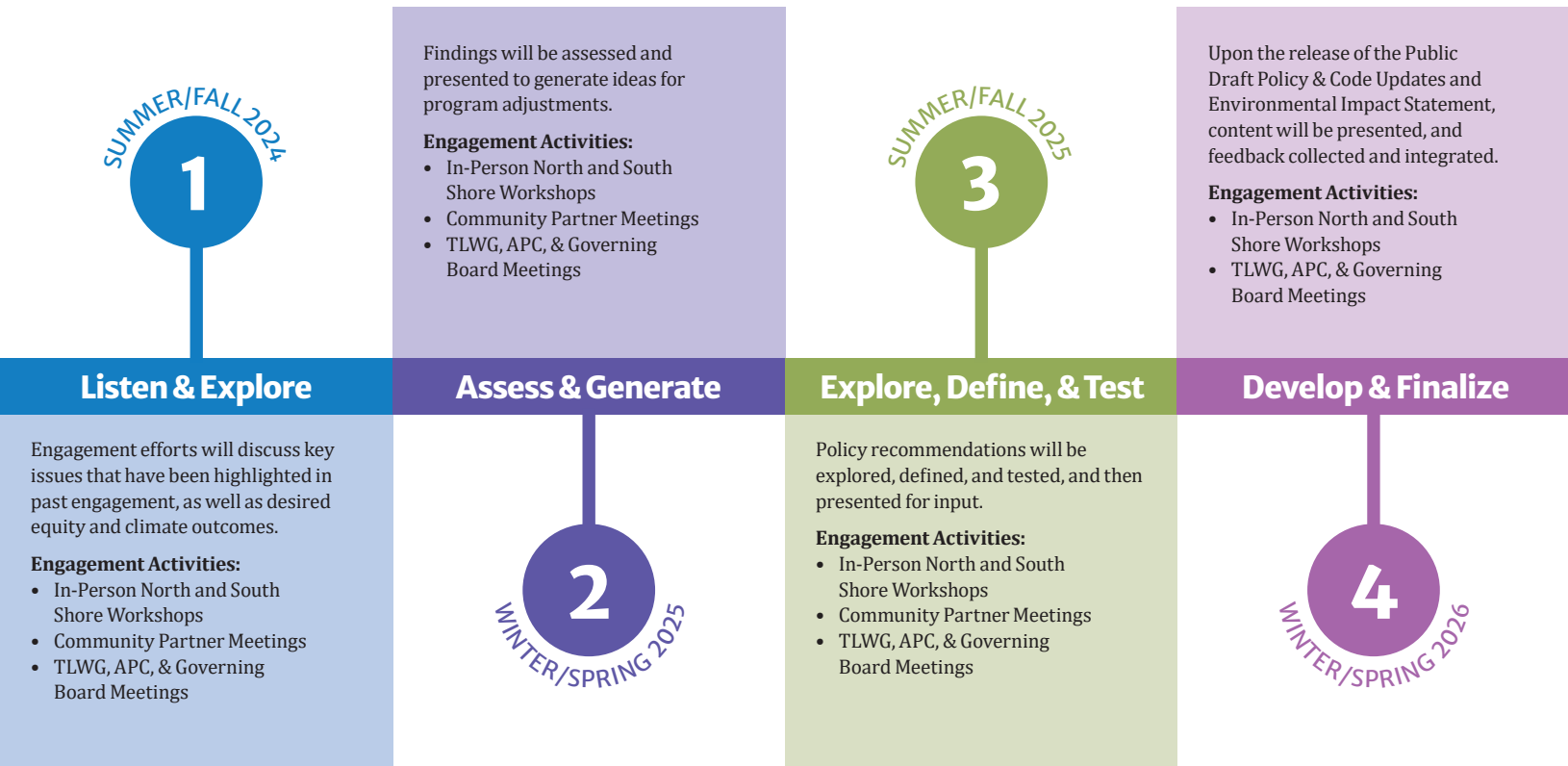
- > Protection of the lake environment for current and future generations.
- > Improved equity and access to housing so that people who work in Tahoe have more opportunities to live here.
- > Partnership and collaboration to find common ground and shape a shared vision for our future.
- > An inclusive process to ensure that every voice is shared, heard, and considered in the process.
- > Innovation in sustainability and creative solutions to shared challenges.

How will TRPA engage with partners and the public?

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is ready to listen to you and lead important region-wide conversations around the future of the Tahoe Basin. We are committed to ensuring every voice is heard and uplifting community values in articulating our goals and ultimately our updated policies and regulations. We will partner with local jurisdictions and the Washoe Tribe to ensure that the updated policies and regulations can work harmoniously with existing local and tribal policies. The agency will carry out a thorough environmental analysis to ensure lake clarity and other environmental threshold goals will be achieved, and we will ensure that all proposed policy and code updates are rigorously vetted and presented to the community and decision makers for feedback.

Get Involved

What is the project schedule/process?



How can I voice my ideas in the process?

By engaging in regionwide conversations around Regional Plan policies, you can bring forward important changes in the Tahoe Basin to support your family, your community, and our region's future. Throughout 2024 and 2025, there will be opportunities to weigh in on updates to the development rights system. We hope to see you soon at a neighborhood meeting, community event, Governing Board policy briefing, or to hear from you through other opportunities. We are working to make sure participation is easy and convenient for everyone. We know some work and family schedules are not as accommodating as others and that some neighborhoods are not as central as others. None of these factors should affect participation, and the agency is committed to making sure our engagement process is intentional and equitable so that every community member can weigh in.



Project Resources

Stay up to date on upcoming engagement events by frequently checking our project website tahoeliving.org.

QUESTIONS?

Email Jacob Stock at: jstock@trpa.gov



Scan the QR code to visit our project website.