



Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: July 7, 2026

Agenda Item: 8D

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT CASE
NUMBER:

WMPA26-0001 (Heat Mitigation Plan)

BRIEF SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Amendments to Envision Washoe 2040 to establish a heat mitigation plan in accordance with Assembly Bill 96.

STAFF PLANNER:

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PROJECT TEAM:

Chris Bronczyk, Senior Planner
Jolene Bertetto, Planner

CASE DESCRIPTION

For hearing, discussion, and possible action to amend Envision Washoe 2040 to create a heat mitigation plan and, if approved, authorize the chair to sign a resolution to this effect.

The proposal is being reviewed under **Development Code Article 820, Amendment of Master Plan** and is applicable to **All Commission Districts**.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

DENY

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Explanation of a Master Plan Amendment

The purpose of a Master Plan Amendment application is to provide a method of review for requests to amend the Master Plan.

The Master Plan guides growth and development in the unincorporated areas of Washoe County and consists of three chapters. By establishing goals and implementing those goals through policies and action programs, the Master Plan addresses issues and concerns both countywide and within each planning area. Master plan amendments ensure that the Master Plan remains timely, dynamic, and responsive to community values. The Washoe County Master Plan can be accessed on the Washoe County website at [EnvisionWashoe 2040](#) or it may be obtained at the front desk of the Washoe County Planning and Building Division.

Chapter One, Foundation, describes the purpose of the Master Plan and the public engagement process that led to its creation. It also contextualizes the Master Plan in relation to the plans of other agencies and jurisdictions in Washoe County.

Chapter Two, Vision, contains the plan elements and planning area sections. This is where all the principles and policies can be found, which address a shared community vision for the future.

Chapter Three, Implementation, describes how the Master Plan is to be used. It contains implementation strategies, including a list of short term, mid-term, and long-term actions for plan implementation.

A recommendation to adopt the Master Plan Amendment requires an affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of the Planning Commission's total membership.

Background

In November of 2023, the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners adopted Envision Washoe 2040, a comprehensive update to Washoe County's master plan. At the time of its adoption, Envision Washoe 2040 complied with all applicable state requirements. In the 2025 Nevada Legislative Session, Assembly Bill (AB) 96 was enacted which required the addition of a "heat mitigation plan" to the Conservation Element of certain jurisdictions, including Washoe County. The heat mitigation plan must cover specific topics, including, "access to public cooling spaces, public drinking water, cool building practices, shade over paved surfaces and other mitigation measures to address heat in the community." An assessment of Envision Washoe 2040 revealed that the master plan already covered several of the elements required by AB 96; however, in order to address gaps and to more explicitly and comprehensively address urban and extreme heat, the subject master plan amendment is proposed.

The heat mitigation plan is intended to mitigate the impacts of heat on the community, which in Washoe County must include consideration of both urban heat and extreme heat. Urban heat islands, shown in Figure 1, are areas of concentrated heat caused by impervious surfaces such as buildings, roads, and other paved surfaces absorbing and releasing heat. Extreme heat can occur in urban and non-urban areas and refers more broadly to temperature-related weather conditions that can cause cumulative and acute stress on the human body. As a desert climate that has seen considerable urban and overall warming in recent years, both urban heat and extreme heat are important considerations in land use planning that will impact quality of life for years to come.



Figure 1 Urban Heat Islands

The passage of AB 96 presented a unique opportunity for regional coordination, as it prompted Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County to investigate heat mitigation concurrently in order to comply with state statute. In order to address extreme heat in a regionally coordinated manner, all three jurisdictions met throughout the process, also coordinating with the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA), Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), and other agencies. As a result, the proposed plan includes a policy for coordinating efforts with Reno and Sparks around cooling spaces and public drinking water. The heat mitigation plan update also provided an opportunity to integrate Reno-Sparks specific heat mapping data from the 2024 CAPA heat mapping project. These changes are described in more detail in subsequent sections of the staff report.

Summary of Amendments

Proposed amendments occur throughout Envision Washoe 2040 and fall within the following categories:

- Reorganizing narrative sections to create a “heat mitigation plan” and to address extreme and urban heat.
- Modifying and adding policies related to extreme heat mitigation and management.
- Using a red sun icon (☀️) to mark principles and policies throughout Envision Washoe 2040 that are relevant to extreme heat and part of the heat mitigation plan.
- Adding four new action items to Chapter 3.

Amendments are summarized in this section and a full redline of proposed changes is included in Exhibit B.

Heat Mitigation Plan Narrative

The Adaptation and Resiliency portion of the Conservation Element of Envision Washoe 2040 already contained considerable narrative addressing urban heat. However, in order to more comprehensively address the impacts of heat on both urban and rural areas, the information was reorganized and augmented with new details related to:

- Impacts to ozone, air quality, and attainment of air quality standards
- Impacts to the character of the community, including social vibrancy, social isolation, and agriculture
- Risks to and needs of rural communities, including water impacts, energy reliability, and emergency medical care access
- The benefits of an expanded tree canopy
- Direct and indirect impacts from increased visitation of extreme heat on the Tahoe Basin

Furthermore, data from the 2024 CAPA Heat Watch program was incorporated into the narrative. The Heat Watch Program created a map of temperature throughout the Reno-Sparks area at three different times on August 10, 2024. The data revealed a 23-degree Fahrenheit maximum temperature differential between neighborhoods and also showed that areas with sparse suburban development and low tree cover can concentrate heat in the day and evening. These findings point to the important role the unincorporated county must play in heat mitigation.

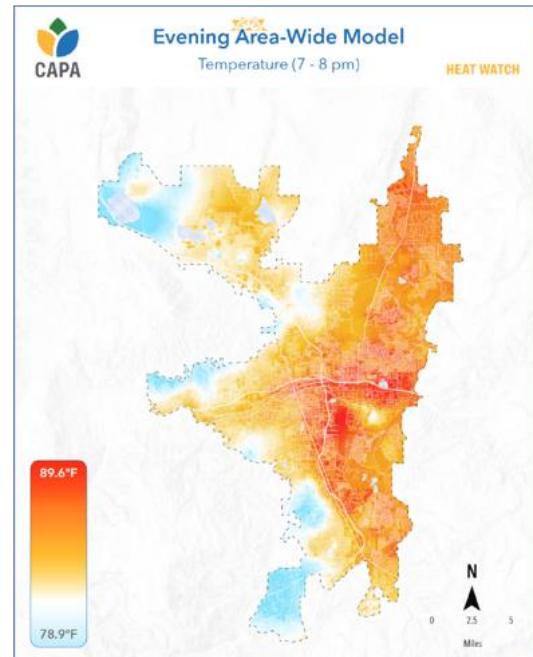


Figure 2 CAPA Heat Map

Lastly, the updated narrative improves reference to the many plans that are relevant to extreme heat and its impacts, including the 2025 Washoe County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Climate Action Plan, and the Regional Transportation Plan. As part of this master plan update effort, Planning coordinated with staff from TMPRA, RTC, NNPH, Washoe County Emergency Management, Reno, Sparks, Washoe County Sustainability, Washoe County Building, Washoe County Engineering, and Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space. As a result, the heat mitigation plan narrative reflects an improved understanding of the roles various agencies play in mitigating and managing extreme heat.

Amended and New Policies

Extreme heat influences and is influenced by many different aspects of the built environment and community life, so it is no surprise that policies throughout Envision Washoe 2040 are relevant to a heat mitigation plan. This master plan amendment includes a red sun icon (☀️) to mark principles and policies throughout the plan—including in the regional form and coordination, land use, and transportation elements—as part of the heat mitigation plan. However, most relevant policies, existing and proposed, are found in the adaptation and resiliency element, a subsection of the required conservation element. Several existing policies focus on mitigating the impacts of climate change, which includes extreme heat. In order to strengthen Envision Washoe 2040, some of these policies are amended to specifically address extreme heat. Furthermore, a new principle and several policies are proposed to address managing the impacts of extreme heat. A redline of proposed policy changes is below, organized by plan element. New language is shown in **red bold** and removed language in ~~red-strikeout~~.

Regional Form and Coordination

3.5 Prioritize open space acquisitions which protect aquifer recharge areas, current and future wellhead protection areas, source water protection areas, **vegetation and tree canopies in areas with high urban heat island effect**, and areas with natural hazards (floodplains, steep slopes, forested areas, etc.).

Adaptation and Resiliency

2.4 Coordinate with and support the efforts of Washoe County Emergency Management in hazard mitigation and emergency planning.

AR Principle 3 Mitigate the impacts of **extreme heat and** climate change on residents.

~~3.2 Assess the need to expand the County's tree canopy. Support expansion of the County's tree canopy, prioritizing the most vulnerable communities and key community resources, such as the Truckee River corridor.~~

3.3 Promote land uses and building techniques which reduce the use of heat absorbing surfaces and the urban heat island effect including limiting impervious surface; reducing parking requirements; promoting water-wise and drought tolerant landscaping; use of using green building materials such as green roofs, green walls, and cooling pavements; and promoting beneficial site orientation.

~~3.5 Work with the cities of Reno and Sparks to assess adequacy of access to public drinking water, shaded areas, and cooling centers within the County.~~

AR Principle 4 Manage the impacts of extreme heat.

4.1 Support efforts to raise awareness and knowledge about extreme heat and its impacts.

4.2 Collaborate with local and regional partners to develop heat management resources aimed at:

- **Reviewing where public cooling spaces exist or can be enhanced.**
- **Reviewing where access to public drinking water exists or can be enhanced.**
- **Developing an online map resource to inform the public about access to cooling spaces and where access to public drinking water is available.**

4.3 Support increasing the resiliency of energy supply networks and the accessibility of affordable energy.

4.4 Promote increasing shade on sites that serve populations vulnerable to extreme heat, such as children and seniors.

4.5 Promote increasing shade where appropriate in public infrastructure such as multimodal transportation stops and areas.

4.6 Assess the need for rural-focused extreme heat strategies, such as incentives for energy efficiency retrofitting, supporting access to medical care, and increasing grid resiliency and energy redundancy.

4.7 Support cool building practices such as awnings, light colored and living roofs, and increased insulation.

Action Items

Chapter 3 of Envision Washoe 2040 contains a series of implementation actions, broken into four categories: immediate and ongoing (0-3 years), short-term (0-5 years), mid-term (5-10 years), and long-term (10-20). As with the principles and policies in Chapter Two, there are many existing actions related to extreme heat, and those actions are modified as needed and marked with a red sun icon as part of the heat mitigation plan. To implement existing and proposed policies, four additional action items are proposed:

- Short-term action items:
 - Create codes and measurable goals related to tree canopy coverage with a preference for native tree or drought-tolerant species.
 - Assess need for rural-focused strategies to manage the impact of extreme heat and, if needed, pursue those strategies.
 - Conduct a study to identify the areas of the county most at-risk from extreme heat in order to prioritize investment in those areas.
- Mid-term action item:
 - Explore incentives for cool building practices in the Washoe County Development Code.

Revisions are also proposed to existing policies to better address extreme and urban heat. A full redline of changes can be found in Exhibit B.

Master Plan Consistency

The proposed amendment is consistent with the Envision Washoe 2040 Master Plan and brings the plan into compliance with AB 96. Proposed amendments pursue Adaptation and Resiliency Principle 3, "Mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents." Reno has already seen the most significant warming in the nation, with average summer temperatures 11.3 degrees warmer than historical averages according to a Climate Central report. Warming is expected to continue, and so mitigating and managing the impacts of extreme heat is a key aspect of adapting to climate change.

Public Outreach

NRS 278.210(2) and WCC Section 110.820.20 require a neighborhood meeting for any proposed master plan amendment. To seek feedback on the draft heat mitigation plan, staff hosted two neighborhood meetings—one in person and one digital—and released an online survey. Two members of the public attended the neighborhood meetings. The online survey received 35 responses, which are attached as Exhibit D. Respondents expressed many concerns related to extreme heat, many mentioning impacts to water and wells, paved surfaces increasing heat, energy costs and reliability, and health impacts, particularly to vulnerable populations such as seniors and children. A few respondents offered specific comments on the draft amendments, some stating that they thought such a plan was not necessary and others expressing that the plan should be broader and address pollution and carbon emissions. Respondents generally supported limiting urban sprawl and increasing green space and canopy cover. Specific changes made after public outreach are listed in the subsequent section.

In addition to requesting specific feedback on the draft, the online survey also asked questions related to people's behavior when faced with extreme heat. Many respondents

indicated that on hot days, they typically stay inside of an air-conditioned house or visit a shaded area or body of water. Responses aligned with the heat mitigation plan narrative, confirming that extreme heat increases reliance on energy and mechanical cooling infrastructure and affirming the importance of cool public green spaces. Most respondents indicated that they do not use cooling centers but believe that others would have barriers to accessing such centers, including transportation costs, lack of knowledge, and lack of availability in rural areas. Respondents also indicated that they believed seniors, pets, and unhoused people would be the most vulnerable to the impacts of extreme heat.

Survey respondents suggested many potential actions to address heat and its impacts, including increasing tree canopy and green infrastructure, reducing heat-absorbing hardscape, providing more drinking water and cooling centers, reducing carbon emissions, and more. Several of the proposed actions are addressed in proposed policies and/or actions in the heat mitigation plan.

Revisions Based on Public Input

As described above, public input varied and included some specific suggestions for revisions. Some participants expressed opposition to the creation of a heat mitigation plan, but most supported such a plan and provided suggestions for additional policies or actions. The following revisions were made to the plan after public outreach:

- Additional narrative to address extreme heat in the Tahoe Basin and the indirect impacts of extreme heat in the Truckee Meadows on the Tahoe Basin.
- Additional policy language supporting expanding the tree canopy in the Truckee River corridor.
- Additional detail regarding supporting cool building practices.
- Revisions to the proposed action items to include establishing measurable goals related to tree canopy.
- Various small amendments to improve clarity and detail in the heat mitigation plan narrative.

Reviewing Agencies

This heat mitigation plan was developed in coordination and consultation with many agencies and subject matter experts, including City of Reno Planning, City of Reno Sustainability, City of Sparks, Washoe County Sustainability, Northern Nevada Public Health, the Regional Transportation Commission, the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency, the Desert Research Institute, Washoe County Emergency Management, and Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space. As a result of the input from these groups, the heat mitigation plan provides much more comprehensive information about extreme heat and its impacts. As implementation of the heat mitigation plan and Envision Washoe 2040 continues, Washoe County Planning will continue to coordinate with partner agencies as needed.

Findings

WCC Section 110.820.15(d) requires the Planning Commission to make at least three of the five findings of fact to recommend approval of the amendments to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners. The following findings and staff comments on each finding are presented for the Planning Commission's consideration:

1. Consistency with Master Plan. The proposed amendment is in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Master Plan.

Staff Comment: The proposed master plan amendment conforms with the policies and action programs of the Master Plan by establishing policies and actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents, in alignment with Adaptation and Resiliency Principle 3.

2. Compatible Land Uses. The proposed amendment will provide for land uses compatible with (existing or planned) adjacent land uses, and will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare.

Staff Comment: The proposed master plan amendment does not modify the land use designation of any property. It supports public health, safety, and welfare by creating policies to manage and mitigate the impacts of extreme heat, which have both chronic and acute public health impacts.

3. Response to Change Conditions. The proposed amendment responds to changed conditions or further studies that have occurred since the plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and the requested amendment represents a more desirable utilization of land.

Staff Comment: The proposed amendment responds to changed conditions, namely the passing of AB 96 requiring the creation of a heat mitigation plan. It also incorporates information from the 2024 CAPA Heat Watch Study, which occurred after the 2023 adoption of Envision Washoe 2040. Proposed policies support various heat mitigation and management measures—including expanding tree canopy, encouraging cool building practices, and decreasing heat absorbing surfaces—which represent a more desirable utilization of land.

4. Availability of Facilities. There are or are planned to be adequate transportation, recreation, utility, and other facilities to accommodate the uses and densities permitted by the proposed master plan designation.

Staff Comment: The proposed master plan amendment does not include any changes to allowed land use or residential density. Therefore, there is no anticipated impact on availability of facilities, and this finding is not applicable.

5. Desired Pattern of Growth. The proposed amendment will promote the desired pattern for the orderly physical growth of the County and guides development of the County based on the projected population growth with the least amount of natural resource impairment and the efficient expenditure of funds for public services.

Staff Comment: The proposed amendment creates policies that encourage a pattern of growth and development that helps minimize and mitigate the impacts of extreme heat on Washoe County citizens. Heat-adaptive development patterns would help reduce cooling costs, medical costs, and other public expenditures.

Public Notice

Notice for master plan amendments must be given in accordance with the provisions of Nevada Revised Statutes 278.210(1), as amended and WCC Section 110.820.24. Notice

was provided in a newspaper of general circulation within Washoe County at least 10 days before the public hearing date. A legal ad was placed with the Reno Gazette Journal for June 26, 2026.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Washoe County Planning Commission adopt the resolution contained at Attachment A of this staff report to amend the Master Plan as set forth in Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA26-0001. It is further recommended that the Planning Commission to forward the master Plan amendment to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners for their consideration of adoption. The following motion is provided for your consideration:

Motion

I move that, after giving reasoned consideration to the information contained in the staff report and information received during the public hearing, the Washoe County Planning Commission adopt the resolution contained at Attachment A of this staff report to amend the Master Plan as set forth in Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA26-0001 having made at least three of the following five findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.820.15(d) [specify findings that can be made]. I further move to certify the resolution and the proposed Master Plan Amendments in WMPA26-0001 as set forth in this staff report for submission to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners and authorize the chair to sign the resolution on behalf of the Planning Commission.

1. Consistency with Master Plan. The proposed amendment is in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Master Plan.
2. Compatible Land Uses. The proposed amendment will provide for land uses compatible with (existing or planned) adjacent land uses, and will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare.
3. Response to Change Conditions. The proposed amendment responds to changed conditions or further studies that have occurred since the plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and the requested amendment represents a more desirable utilization of land.
4. Availability of Facilities. There are or are planned to be adequate transportation, recreation, utility, and other facilities to accommodate the uses and densities permitted by the proposed Master Plan designation.
5. Desired Pattern of Growth. The proposed amendment will promote the desired pattern for the orderly physical growth of the County and guides development of the County based on the projected population growth with the least amount of natural resource impairment and the efficient expenditure of funds for public services.

Appeal Process

Planning Commission action will be effective 10 calendar days after the written decision is filed with the Secretary to the Planning Commission and mailed to the original applicant, unless the action is appealed to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners, in

which case the outcome of the appeal shall be determined by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners. Any appeal must be filed in writing with the Planning and Building Division within 10 calendar days from the date the written decision is filed with the Secretary to the Planning Commission and mailed to the original applicant.



RESOLUTION OF THE WASHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO THE WASHOE COUNTY MASTER PLAN TO CREATE A HEAT MITIGATION PLAN (WMPA26-0001), AND RECOMMENDING ITS ADOPTION TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution Number 26-11

Whereas, Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA26-0001 came before the Washoe County Planning Commission for a duly noticed public hearing on July 7, 2026; and

Whereas, the Washoe County Planning Commission heard public comment and input from both staff and the public regarding the proposed master plan amendments; and

Whereas, the Washoe County Planning Commission gave reasoned consideration to the information it received regarding the proposed master plan amendments;

Whereas, the Washoe County Planning Commission has made at least three of the following findings necessary to support adoption of the proposed Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA26-0001, as set forth in NRS chapter 278 and Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 820:

Washoe County Code Section 110.820.15 (d) Master Plan Amendment Findings

1. Consistency with Master Plan. The proposed amendment is in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Master Plan.
2. Compatible Land Uses. The proposed amendment will provide for land uses compatible with (existing or planned) adjacent land uses, and will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare.
3. Response to Change Conditions. The proposed amendment responds to changed conditions or further studies that have occurred since the plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and the requested amendment represents a more desirable utilization of land.
4. Availability of Facilities. There are or are planned to be adequate transportation, recreation, utility, and other facilities to accommodate the uses and densities permitted by the proposed Master Plan designation.
5. Desired Pattern of Growth. The proposed amendment will promote the desired pattern for the orderly physical growth of the County and guides development of the County based on the projected population growth with the least amount of natural resource impairment and the efficient expenditure of funds for public services.

A certified copy of this resolution shall be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners and any appropriate reviewing agencies in accordance with NRS 278.230.

ADOPTED on July 7, 2026

WASHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

ATTEST:

Trevor Lloyd, Secretary

Dan Lazzareschi, Chair

Attachment: Exhibit A-1 – Master Plan Amendment Redline

Exhibit A-1, Master Plan Amendment Redline

ENVISION
WASHOE
2040



ENVISION WASHOE

2040

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2023



Ashleigh Burke and Jordan Robinson were both freshmen at Reno High School when they collaborated to create the Washoe County Master Plan Logo. They provided 3 options after being inspired by the idea of Planning in partnership with the community and making the “W” from Washoe a stronger symbol of recognition.

Ashleigh loves art, especially sports art and animation. She hopes to pursue a career in graphic arts design. Jordan has a passion for animation and hopes one day to work for Disney or DreamWorks Animation. Both were thrilled to have work on this logo as it is the very first real- world project for them. Washoe County is grateful for the young talent in our community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE

- ▶ Commissioner Vaughn Hartung, Washoe County Board of County Commissioners
- ▶ Chris Melton, Public Works Director, Sun Valley General Improvement District
- ▶ Cori Burke, Chief Deputy Assessor, Washoe County Assessor's Office
- ▶ Dale Way, Deputy Chief, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
- ▶ Daniel Doenges, Planning Manager, Regional Transportation Commission
- ▶ Dave Solaro, Assistant County Manager, Washoe County
- ▶ Eric Brown, County Manager, Washoe County
- ▶ Eric Crump, Director, Washoe County Operations Division
- ▶ Jeff Scott, Director, Washoe County Libraries
- ▶ Jeremy Smith, Director, Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency
- ▶ Kelly Echeverria, Program Coordinator, Washoe County Emergency Management
- ▶ Steve McBride, Division Director, Washoe County Human Services Agency
- ▶ Vahid Behmaram, Water Rights Program Consultant, CSD

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- ▶ Roger Pelham, Senior Planner
- ▶ Sarah Chvilicek
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- ▶ Timber Weiss, Licensed Engineer
- ▶ Vahid Behmaram, Water Rights Program Consultant, CSD

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CONSULTANT



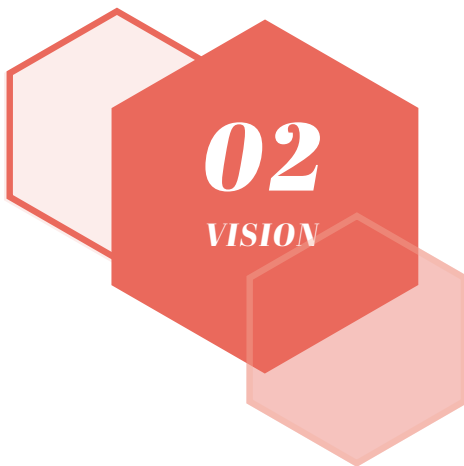
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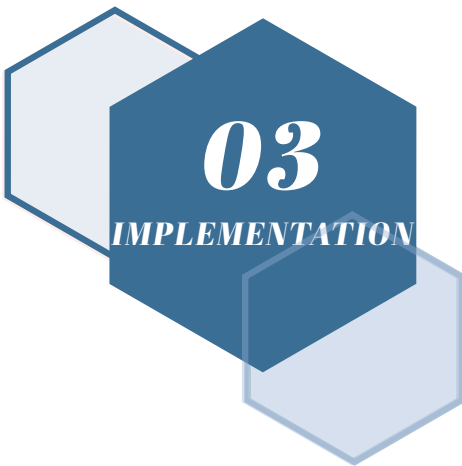


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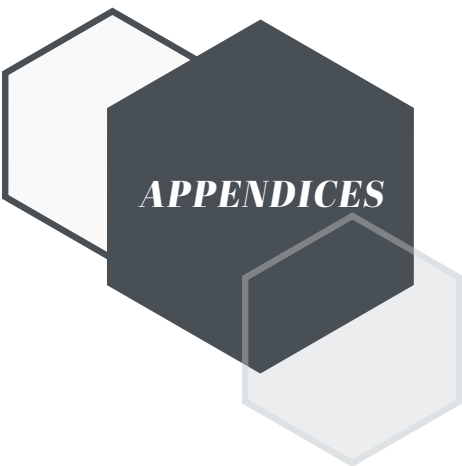
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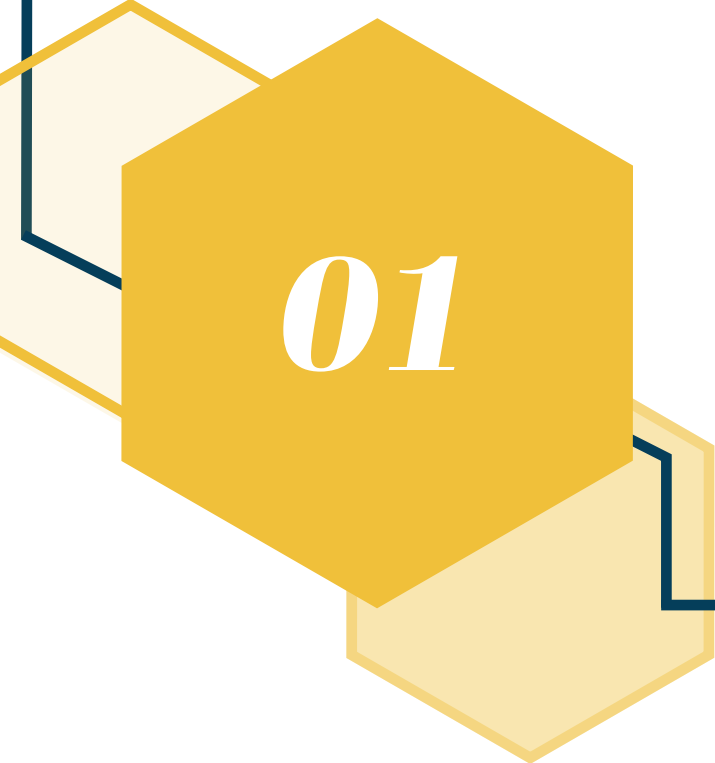
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01

FOUNDATION

IN THIS CHAPTER

- ▶ Purpose of the Plan
- ▶ Plan Organization
- ▶ Plan Process
- ▶ Public Engagement
- ▶ What We Heard
- ▶ Planning Area Description

IN RESPONSE TO THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES
FACING OUR REGION, WASHOE COUNTY IS RE-ENVISIONING
THE COUNTY'S APPROACH TO GROWTH. ENVISION WASHOE
2040 IS A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROCESS AIMED AT UPDATING
OUR MASTER PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO FOCUS
ON THE PRINCIPLES, POLICIES, CODES, AND PROGRAMS
NEEDED FOR OUR DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC COMMUNITY
TO THRIVE IN THE NEXT TEN TO TWENTY YEARS.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

WHAT IS THE WASHOE COUNTY MASTER PLAN UPDATE?

The Envision Washoe 2040 County Master Plan (Envision Washoe 2040) is a policy document that establishes a long-range framework to guide land development, environmental protection, public services, housing, transportation, and the economy within unincorporated Washoe County. Envision Washoe 2040 replaces the 2010 Washoe County Master Plan and drafters of the Envision Washoe 2040 Plan have made every effort to honor past work while adapting to today's challenges and opportunities. Additionally, Envision Washoe 2040 is founded on a community vision and four cross-cutting themes that influence the adopted principles, policies, and actions in the 2040 Master Plan.

The 2010 Master Plan consisted of 6 elements, 13 area plans, and 6 specific plans. The elements and area plans, though all part of the 2010 Master Plan, existed largely as separate documents. The area plans in particular were long, with policies and regulatory language which made it difficult to interpret land use transparently and consistently. The 2010 Master Plan in

its entirety was over 1,500 pages with repetitive language and various regulatory requirements, not appropriate for the master plan. In Envision Washoe 2040, the Area Plans have been refined to much more concise "Planning Area" sections in Chapter 2. Regulatory language in the Area Plans is now in the Washoe County Development Code. A similar process was undertaken with the elements, making Envision Washoe 2040 concise and easy to understand. The elements themselves are similar to those in the 2010 Master Plan, but reorganized to align with the structure of the Regional Plan. This makes inter-jurisdictional coordination easier and improves consistency throughout the region. The specific plans, which only apply to certain parcels in the county, are now separate from both the Master Plan and the Development Code. The essential content of the 2010 Master Plan has therefore been preserved in the appropriate locations, while Envision Washoe 2040 reflects the current state of Washoe County and is a more concise, user friendly document.



THE MASTER PLAN ESTABLISHES A COMMUNITY VISION AND THEN GUIDES AND SHAPES THAT VISION WITH PRINCIPLES, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS THAT GUIDE COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS. THE PLAN INCORPORATES A SERIES OF MAPS INTENDED TO BOTH EXPLAIN AND DEFINE THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY OF ALL LAND WITHIN UNINCORPORATED WASHOE COUNTY.

WHY NOW?

Washoe County is undertaking the Envision Washoe 2040 project now for many reasons. The last comprehensive master plan update occurred between 2003 and 2010. The plan that arose from that effort has reached the end of its anticipated time frame of 10 to 20 years and a comprehensive review of the challenges and opportunities facing the community in the next 10 to 20 years is due. Envision Washoe 2040 makes every effort to honor past work while adapting to today's context.

Significant Changes Since the 2010 Master Plan Adoption:

- ▶ **New Regional Plan:** In 2019, the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA) adopted a comprehensive update to the [Truckee Meadows Regional Plan](#) (the Regional Plan). Washoe County, Reno, and Sparks are required to adopt master plans that align with and implement the Regional Plan.
 - ▶ **Changing Population:** The demographic character of the community is changing. While the community has been aware of the need to plan for an aging population, the recent influx of residents has resulted in growth across most age groups. Growth in younger age groups has increased demand for alternative transportation, outdoor recreation opportunities, and more diverse and more affordable housing types.
 - ▶ **Significant Build-Out:** Since 2005, the region has experienced significant build-out in areas planned for growth at that time. As the demand for additional land for development increases, a renewed focus on infill, redevelopment, and the efficient use of land is necessary to minimize suburban sprawl.
 - ▶ **Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA):** The TROA governs how the Truckee River Flows and how storage reservoirs are managed in support of the many valid competing interests for water use in our community. After many years of negotiations, TROA was approved in 2008 which established management of the River based on scientific forecasts, and mandated regulatory, administrative, and operational practices.
 - ▶ **Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA):** At the time of the 2010 Master Plan, residents obtained municipal water services from two major water purveyors, TMWA and Washoe County, and several smaller water providers.
- However, the region has transitioned to a single major provider (TMWA), with several smaller water purveyors still remaining in operation, including Great Basin Water Company.
- ▶ **Annexation:** The 2010 master plan was adopted with a series of "specific plans" which included additional planning focus and standards for development. Several of these areas have since been annexed by the cities of Reno and Sparks, and no longer need to be addressed in the County's master plan.
 - ▶ **New Information Technologies:** Since the adoption of the current plan, significant technological advances have changed the ways in which individuals are able to and expect to interact with government and information in general. There are new opportunities and challenges associated with ensuring access to the County's plans and codes in ways consistent with community expectations.
 - ▶ **Climate Change:** Widespread recognition of the impacts of climate change in planning for natural resources, natural hazards, infrastructure, and public health has changed the way the County views the role of land use. Incorporation of these considerations are fundamental in the short- and long-term community response to climate change.
 - ▶ **Community Equity and Public Health:** The impacts of land use on a community's social equity profile and overall community health are now commonly understood to be significant. Equity focuses on the disparate impact on traditionally marginalized persons. Community health extends beyond just access to healthcare and permeates every aspect of life. Even seemingly unrelated social and economic functions of a community have intrinsic links to community health.

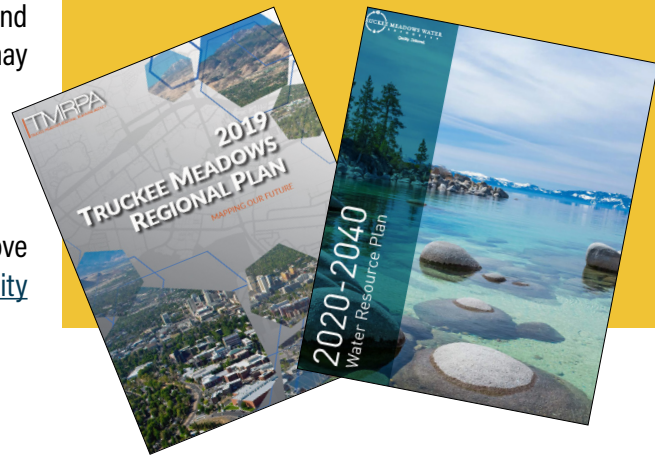
PLAN ORGANIZATION

CONNECTION TO OTHER PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS.) § 278.160 require all master plans to contain specific elements, but counties have flexibility in the organization of the elements to reflect local needs and context. Additionally, Envision Washoe 2040 is connected to other regional and local planning efforts like the 2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan (Regional Plan), the Truckee Meadows Regional Strategy for Housing Affordability, the Regional Transportation Plan, and the Regional Public Infrastructure Plan. Continued coordination with these plans and documents, as well as with the different regional districts, is important and could inform the development and refinement of other plans. Coordination with regional entities may focus on regional transportation, land use compatibility, open space and wildlife protection, resource conservation, provision of water and sewer, and education and economic development.

To access the most recent version of the plans listed above and other resources, please visit [Washoe County's Community Services website](#).

CONTINUED COORDINATION WITH THESE PLANS AND DOCUMENTS AS WELL AS WITH THE DIFFERENT REGIONAL AGENCIES IS IMPORTANT TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT AND REFINEMENT OF OTHER PLANS.



CONNECTION TO CROSS-CUTTING COMMUNITY THEMES

Envision Washoe 2040 is organized around seven community elements interwoven with four cross-cutting themes. The seven community elements are guided by NRS, and mirror the Regional Plan, illustrating Washoe County's commitment to the greater region. The four cross-cutting themes (at right) were identified by community members through the Envision Washoe 2040 process and illustrate a commitment from the County to preserve character-defining features and enhance Washoe County's sense of community.

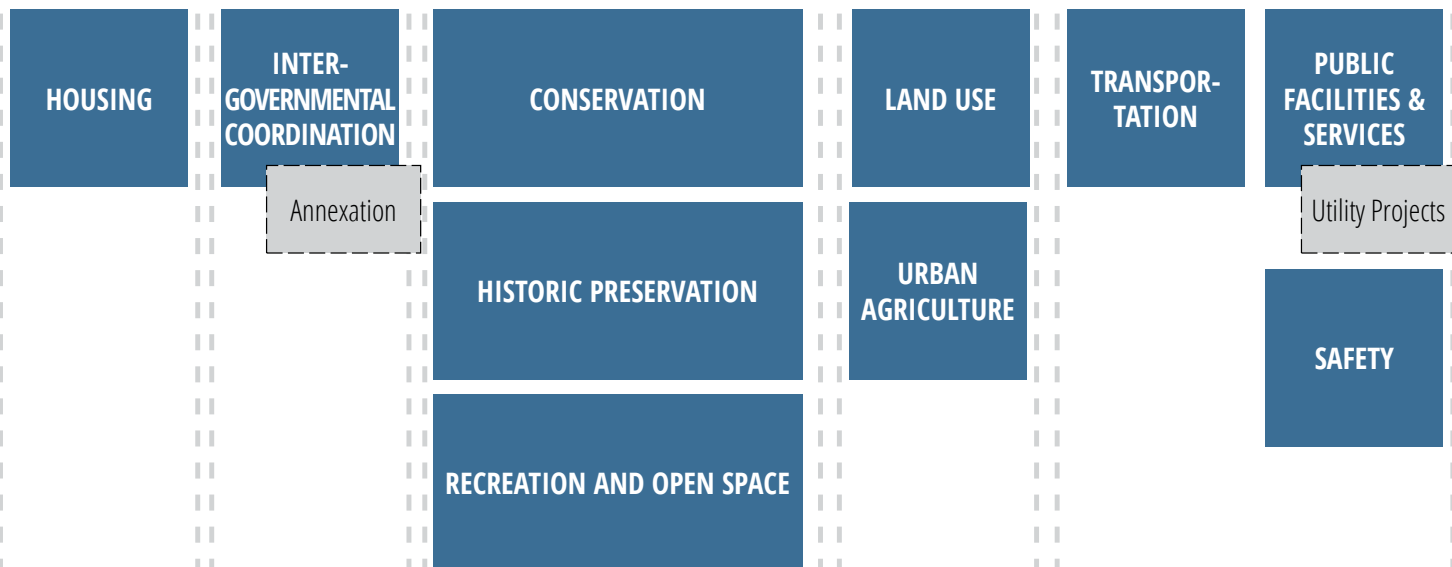


PLAN ORGANIZATION

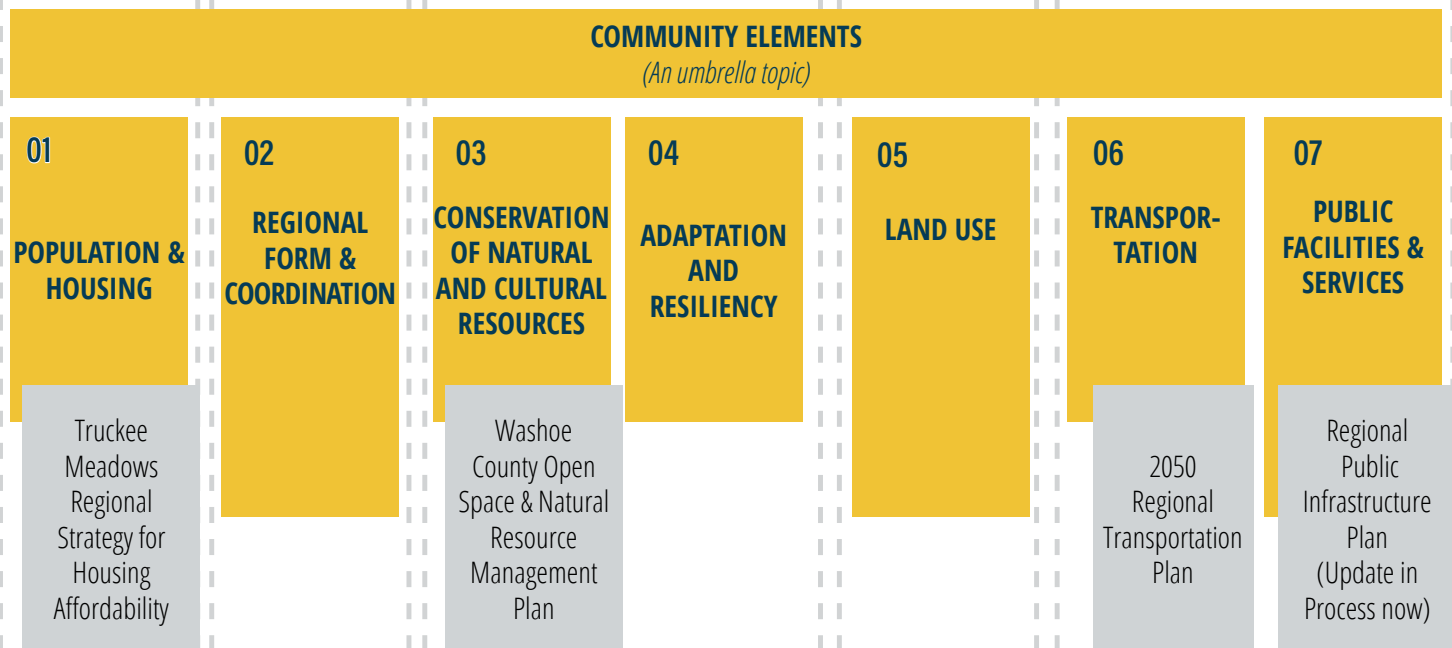
TRUCKEE MEADOWS REGIONAL PLAN



NEVADA STATUTORY ELEMENTS THAT MAY BE INCORPORATED INTO WASHOE COUNTY'S MASTER PLAN § 278.160



ENVISION WASHOE 2040

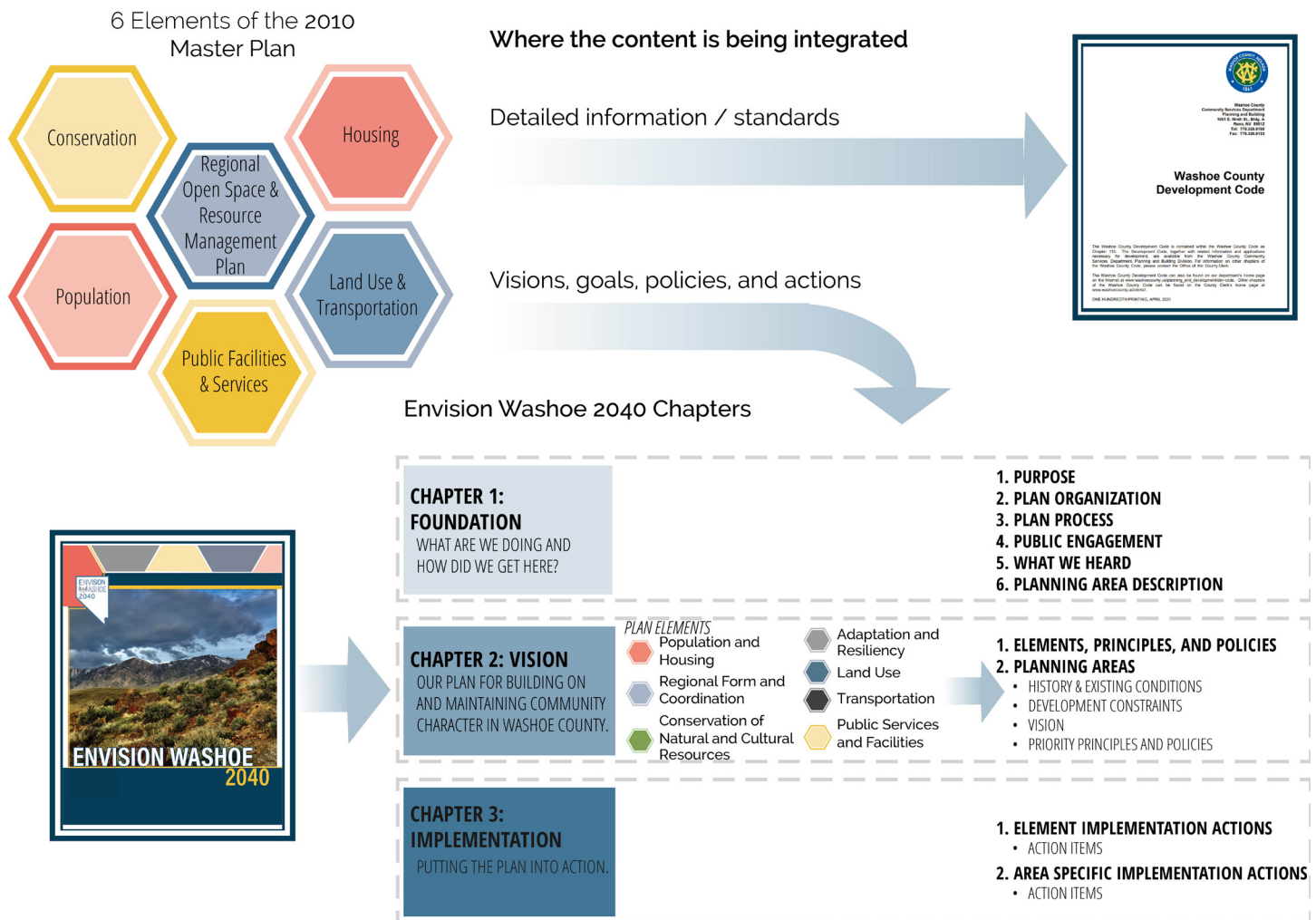


PLAN ORGANIZATION

One of the main goals of the Envision Washoe 2040 process was to better integrate County planning documents and adopted County policy guidance to facilitate more seamless implementation and allow for ease of use. The first step in the process was to build the framework, as described on the previous page. The intent was to build upon the strong foundation of the 2010 Master Plan and

build from the Regional Plan. This step also included relocating any regulatory and development-focused items from the 2010 Master Plan six community elements into the Washoe County Development Code.

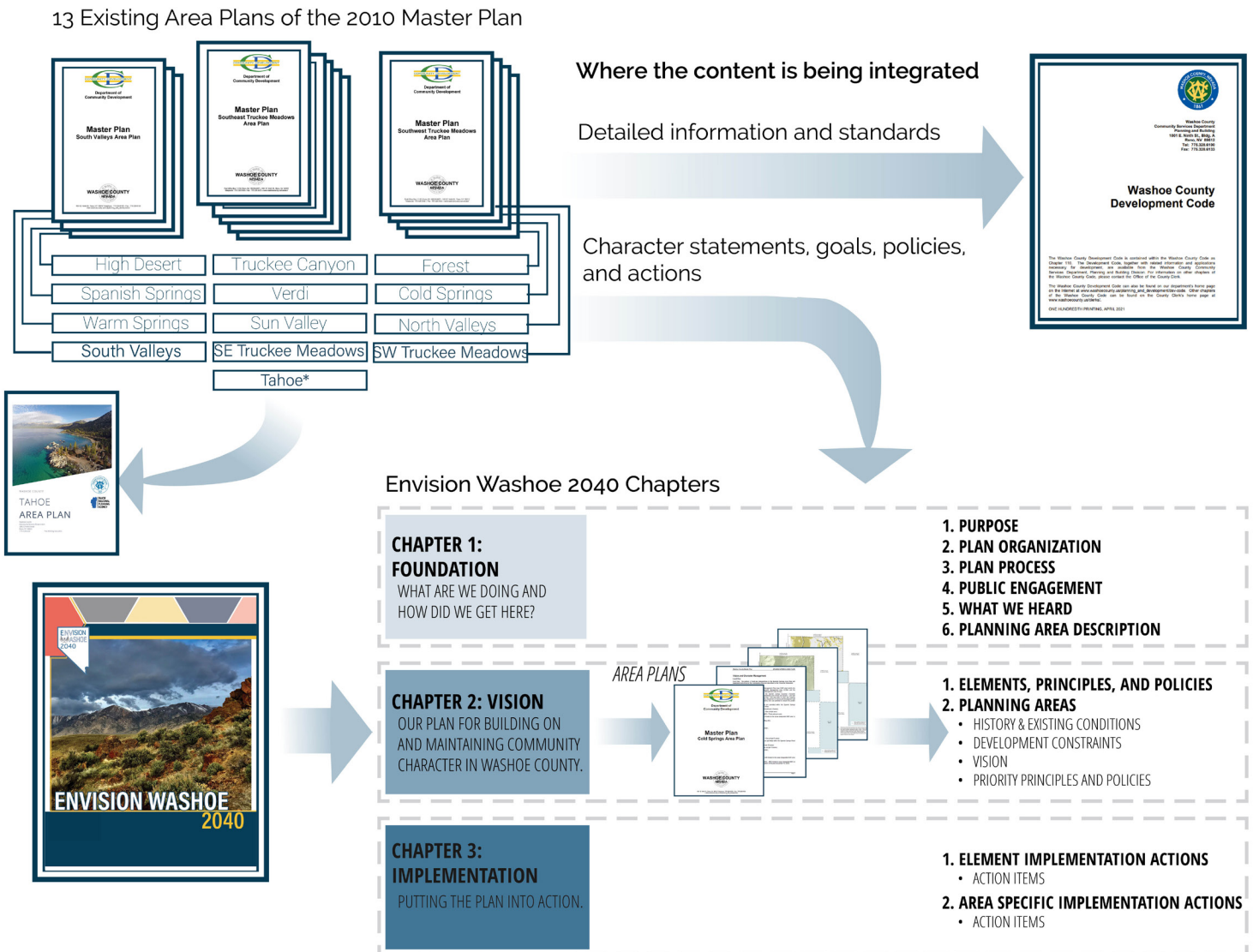
FIGURE 1. CONCEPT INTEGRATION



The second step was to integrate the thirteen Area Plans and several Specific Plans from the 2010 Master Plan into Envision Washoe 2040, without losing the character-defining features of each area. With input from residents of each area, the thirteen Area Plans were condensed into planning areas, with area-specific principles and policies. Statements, principles, goals,

and policies which appeared across multiple area plans were incorporated into one of the seven community elements. Detailed code standards were incorporated into the Washoe County Development Code to ensure implementation of those standards.

FIGURE 2. AREA PLAN INTEGRATION



PLAN PROCESS

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The planning process built a solid foundation for public engagement and discussion by establishing baseline information about the ability of the 2010 Master Plan to meet the basic expectations of the community and partner agencies, such as the State of Nevada and the TMRPA. The process led to the creation of several important documents, including an internal audit of the 2010 Master Plan that formed a critical foundation for Envision Washoe 2040. The purpose of the 2010 Master Plan Audit was to

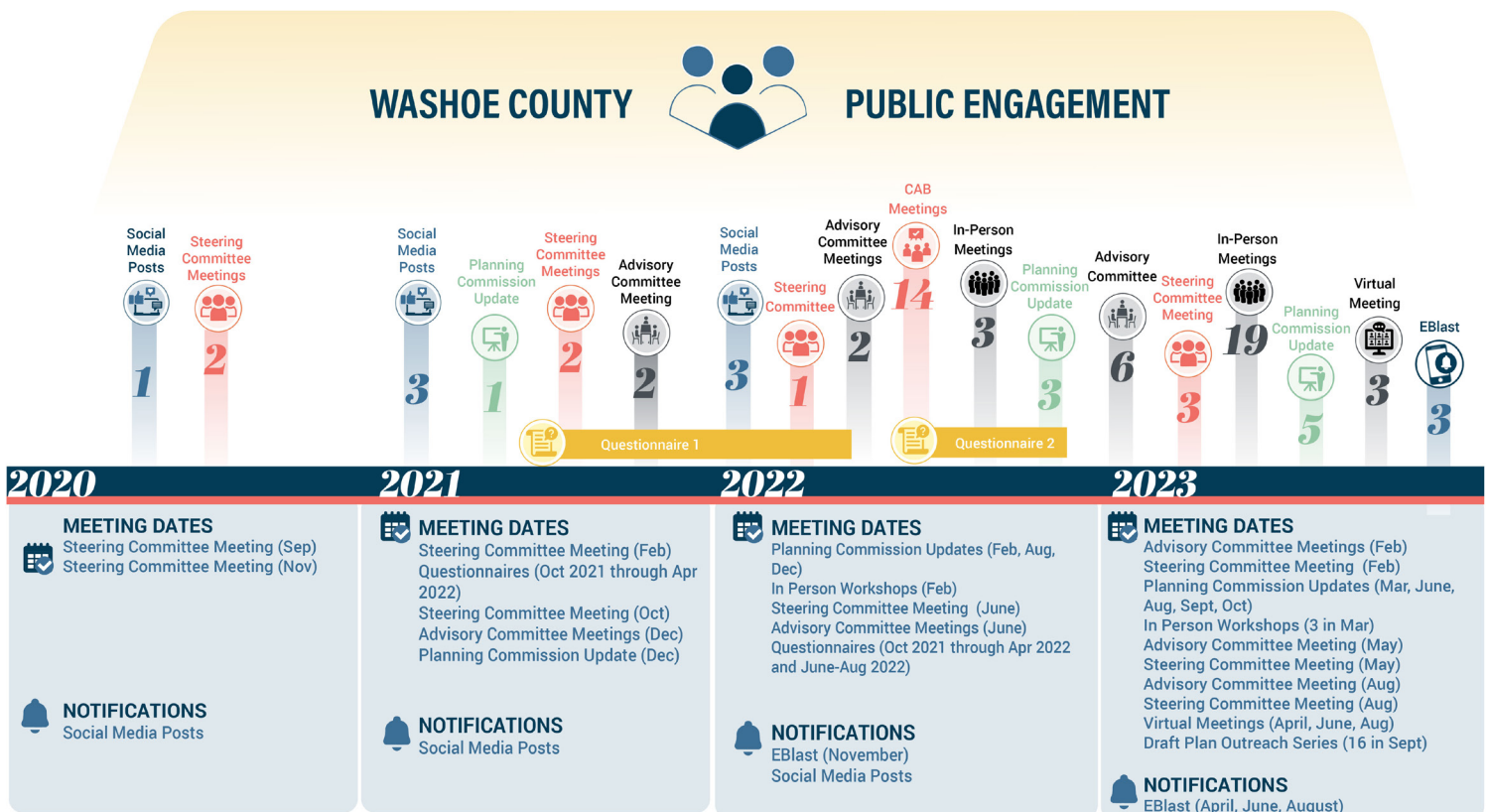
identify goals and policies that needed to be modified or removed due to redundancy (i.e., addressed in multiple places or multiple area plans) or irrelevance (i.e., already completed or no longer a priority), and to identify any additional goals or policies that could aid Envision Washoe 2040 in aligning with the Regional Plan. The audit's findings helped elevate general principles and policies to a master plan level and improved the usability of the area-specific principles and policies.

Internal County Coordination and Review

Prior to the Envision Washoe 2040 process, county staff consulted with TMRPA to conduct an audit of the newly adopted Regional Plan requirements against the 2010 Washoe County Master Plan and applicable Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS). As a result, the County developed a list of both short-term and long-term required amendments to the County Master Plan. Washoe County has completed this list of short-term amendments, while the list of long-term amendments are incorporated into Envision Washoe 2040.

The County also conducted an internal review with staff to identify issues related to the 2010 Master Plan's utility. Valuable insights came out of this exercise, including suggested enhancements resolving administrative inefficiencies, obsolete language, inconsistent codes and policies, repeated community frustrations, and unclear policy and code. See Appendix 3 for more information about the plan audit.

Overall Process Timeline



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH

Throughout the Envision Washoe 2040 process, the County sought to engage a broad array of regional stakeholders, organizations, technical plan users, and the general public through multiple methods. All outreach efforts aimed to be broad and inclusive, seeking input from all members of the county regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender expression, or any other status or identity. At each stage of the process, County staff and consultants reviewed demographic information of engagement participants to ensure a wide array of community members were involved.

Public involvement and planning documents were also fully integrated in an online format on a project website, www.EnvisionWashoe2040.org, and the County's Facebook page. Community members had convenient access to these platforms to learn more about the process and engage in interactive mapping, questionnaires, polls, and discussions.

ADVISORY GROUPS

Community Representatives:

The planning process began by listening and learning from County leaders, staff, and community representatives about what works in Washoe County and what sets the County apart within the state. Community representatives were interviewed during the first phase of the process. Read more in [Appendix 2 Stakeholder Interview Summary](#).

Steering Committee:

The Steering Committee (SC) worked early in the process to develop a set of guiding principles and vision for the project. The SC, made up of County and regional agency representatives, have been advocates for the process; acted as a sounding board for key concepts and alternatives; and assisted in the outreach process.

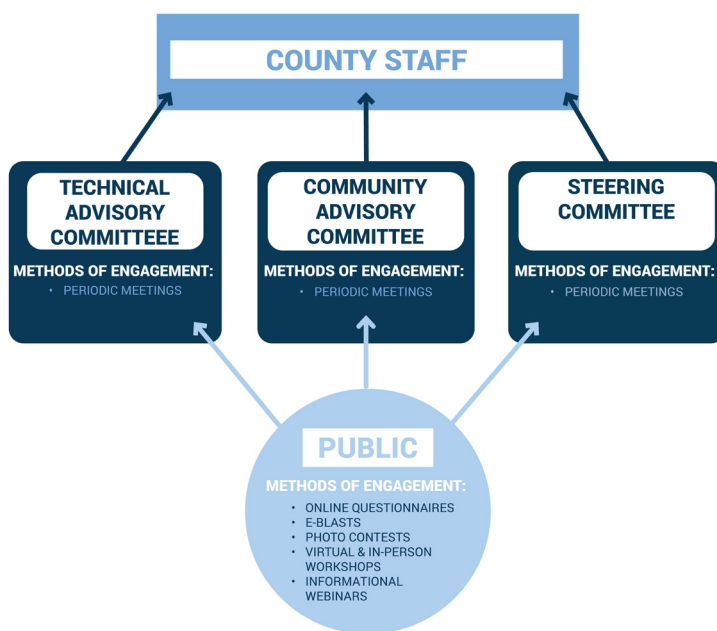
Technical Advisory Committee:

The role of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was to ensure that Envision Washoe 2040's response to the community's priorities is technically sound, pursues best practices, and has a real path to implementation. The TAC reviewed and addressed each plan element in depth.

Community Advisory Committee:

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) served as a liaison to the broader County and ensured that the public was heard and engaged. The CAC reviewed plan elements relating to committee member specialties and were tasked with educating and encouraging the public to participate. The CAC ensured goals, policies, and actions remained anchored in the community's values.

FIGURE 3. ENVISION WASHOE 2040 COMMITTEES



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

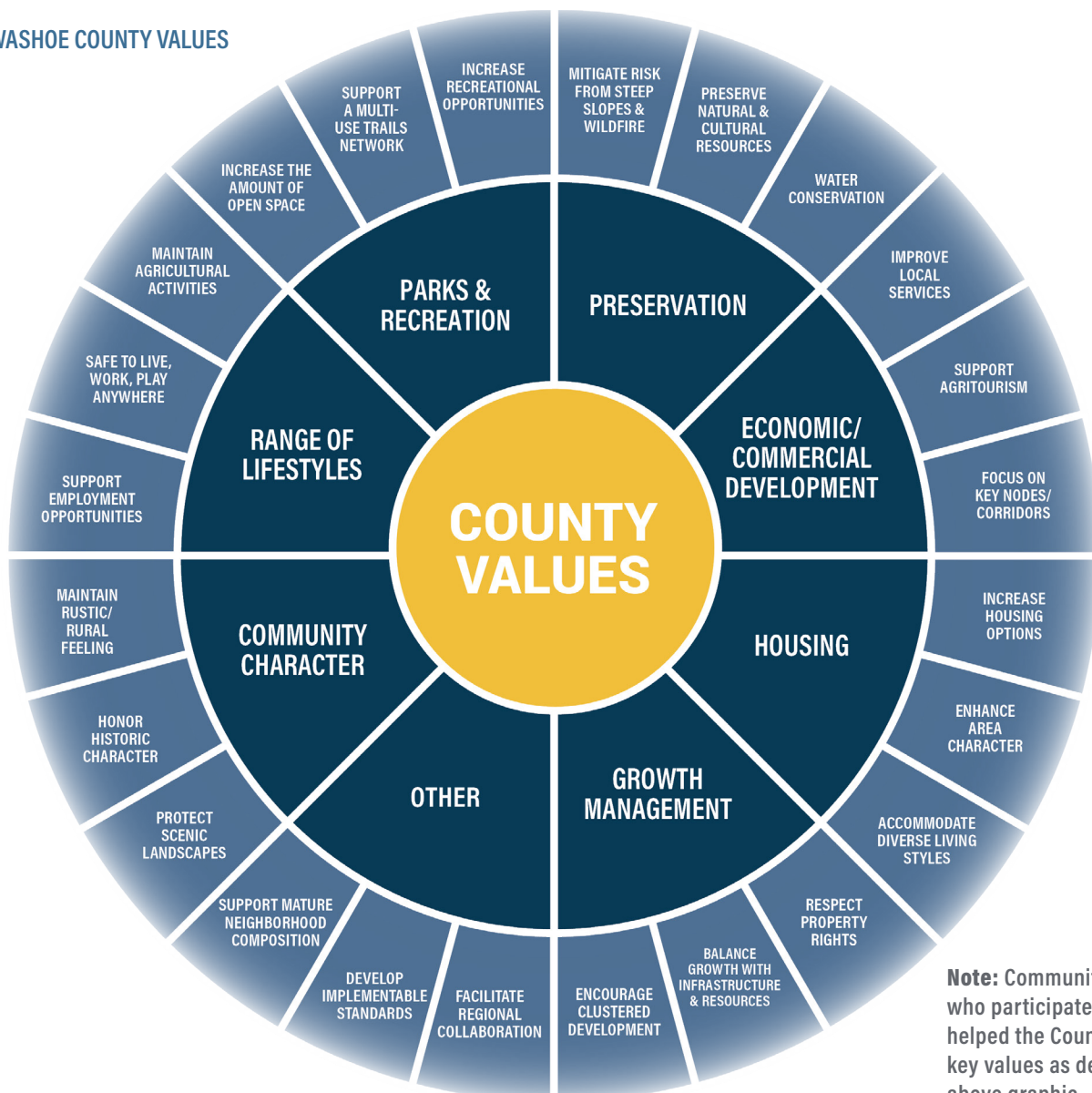
The Envision Washoe 2040 process relied on broad and representative community input to establish a unified vision and clearly articulate the shared values of the County's diverse population.

The planning process began by listening and learning from County leaders, staff, and other community members about what works in Washoe County, what is unique about the area, and what needs improvement. Interviews were conducted and designed to inform and energize community members about the planning process as well as gather preliminary insights about how the community views Washoe County now and into the future.

All interviewees lived in Washoe County, including some who claimed residency in the cities of Reno or Sparks. Several interviewees moved to the County in 2020 while some have a rooted, family history that goes back several generations within the region.

Following the interviews, County staff and consultants solicited community input through a series of questionnaires aimed at better understanding what residents love about the County and what could be improved.

FIGURE 4. WASHOE COUNTY VALUES



Note: Community members who participated in interviews helped the County identify key values as described in the above graphic.

WHAT WE HEARD

TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE OF WASHOE COUNTY

20
COMMUNITY
INTERVIEWS

2000+
QUESTIONNAIRE
RESPONSES

5
QUICK
POLLS

3
QUESTIONNAIRES



Preserve and enhance access to open space, recreation, wildlife, and natural resources.



Expand and emphasize economic, recreational, and cultural opportunities.



Promote pride in self-sufficiency and a rooted history in the region.



Address housing affordability.



Incorporate resiliency into countywide decision making (climate, market, politics, etc.).



Increase access to public transportation, quality education, and mental health services.

IN 2040, MY VISION FOR WASHOE COUNTY IS:



WHAT WE HEARD

Key Takeaways



Access to Nature and Recreation

Access to nature and recreation was the most common response in questionnaires and interviews. The access that residents have to hiking, biking, skiing, and open space was stated as the primary reason people were attracted to the area and one of the most important features that speaks to resident retention.



Top Challenges and Opportunities

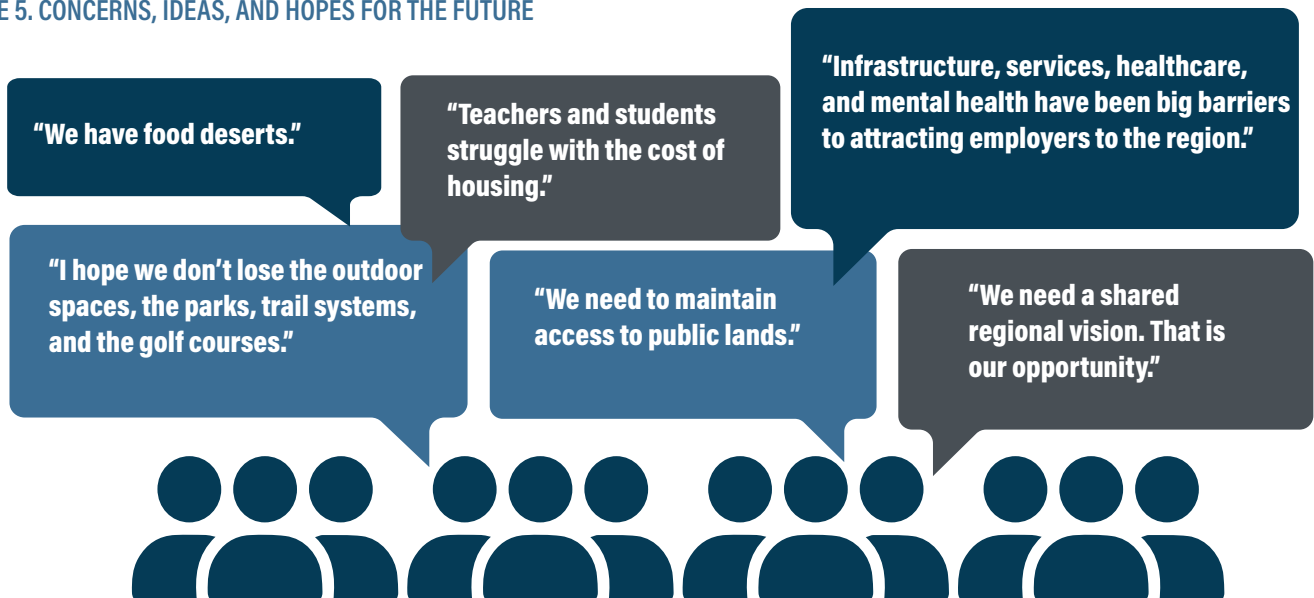
Key issues requiring attention include housing affordability, infrastructure and public transportation, homelessness, flexibility for developers, and creating a more efficient master plan. While economic and personal opportunity are at the forefront of the community, the ability for people to continue to live in, or move to the community, is becoming more difficult with the ever-increasing costs of housing and limited public transportation in certain areas. Several participants also indicated that there is room for improvement at the County level, related to flexibility in development review as a means of creating better development alternatives for the community and landowners. Lastly, stakeholders stated a need for increased access to food, mental health services, and overall healthcare access.



Economic Opportunity

In addition to the recreational amenities, community members highlighted the immense opportunities within Washoe County. Economic opportunity and the ability to succeed still exists in the community, as does the opportunity to make a difference by getting involved at the local or regional level as it relates to development, planning, local politics, environmental preservation efforts, and more.

FIGURE 5. CONCERNS, IDEAS, AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE



WHAT WE HEARD



Resiliency

Resiliency is one of the core components of Envision Washoe 2040, and community members were asked what it means to them in both interviews and questionnaires. To some stakeholders, resiliency translates to environmental resilience, or the ability to withstand and adapt to changing environments related to both climate change and shifts in the local and global economy. Mitigating the urban heat island effect and preparing for earthquakes and flooding were specific examples of being resilient in the face of environmental hazards. The concept of being able to adapt to unexpected changes and ensuring the master plan is developed with flexibility

was stressed by multiple stakeholders. Unexpected changes related to the County's budget, growth rate, technological advancements, environmental changes, and political changes were specifically stated. Several community members offered an alternative to the traditional view of resiliency, with a consideration for the community's social structure and the capacity to withstand stress-inducing events and periods, including pandemics and their effect on the physical and financial well-being of residents.

WHAT DOES RESILIENCY MEAN TO YOU?



WHAT WE HEARD

AREA PLANS OUTREACH

To capture unique characteristics and perspectives from each of the planning areas, in person workshops were conducted in proximate locations to each of the areas. The key themes from the workshops mirrored the key themes described below:

Desired Plan Characteristics



Clear and Accessible

Community members emphasized that clarity and accessibility were important in upcoming planning documents so that they are understandable and usable to the public. The consolidation and integration of the previous area plans into Envision Washoe 2040 creates a singular place for residents across the county to find policies that relate to their specific location, as well as see what policies other areas have prioritized.



Implementable

Implementation was a key theme that emerged, as community members wanted to see their feedback translated into action items with tangible results from planning documents. The implementation chapter of this document accomplishes just that, with Area Specific Action items to accomplish the goals that emerged from the area plan outreach sessions that were translated into policy direction. The Element Implementation Actions matrix in Chapter 3 of Envision Washoe 2040 is another aspect of transparency for implementation so that progress on action items have clear criteria to judge whether they have been accomplished.



Regional Approach

Throughout the public outreach process and emphasized at the area plan workshops, many concerns were raised about future water availability, lack of trail network connections, increasing fire risk, and other issues. Many of these concerns are not limited to single planning areas, suggesting the necessity for action items implemented by a regional approach. This plan establishes the basis for countywide policy that transcends planning area boundaries, so that in the case of common goals, collective geographies can benefit from actions that the County takes.



PLANNING AREA DESCRIPTION

HISTORY OF PLANNING AREAS

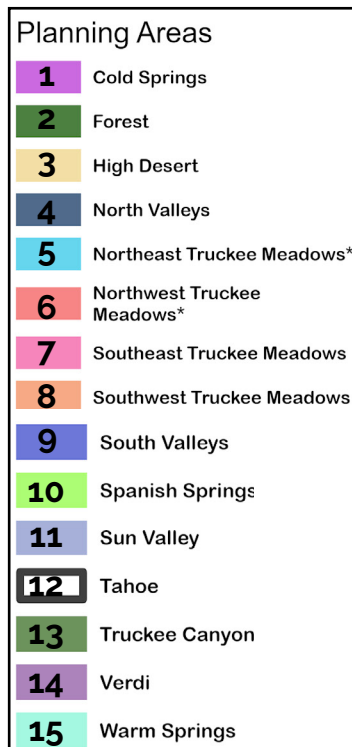
Washoe County's geographic area has always been characterized by its diversity in land use, built form, and residential and commercial character. Historically, the County's various master plans have recognized that diversity and attempted to identify the unique issues that each area within the unincorporated County may experience. The most important planning tool the County has used in this effort is the establishment of separate "planning areas" (otherwise known as "Area Plans"), shown in Map 1 to the right. The planning area concept can be found in Washoe County master plans that pre-date the current regional planning system. In fact, planning areas are found in the original regional plans the County was responsible for developing prior to the creation of the TMRPA.

The original boundaries of these early planning areas were established to recognize diverse issues across the County. Often, these issues were based on natural resource constraints such as hydrographic basins or wetlands. Boundaries were also established to recognize historical communities, the impact of major roadways, or proximity to services. Later versions of the planning areas were developed to match a growth management system the County implemented throughout the 1990's known as a one-map system. These planning areas largely focused on managing the location and timing of the extension of infrastructure in support of development. As the Regional Plan evolved to more fully direct the location and timing of services, the planning areas evolved to manage the impacts of growth on existing communities. These planning areas sought to preserve an historic sense of place associated with each area, often characterized as rural, regardless of the prevailing land uses, or levels of service.

KEY ISSUES

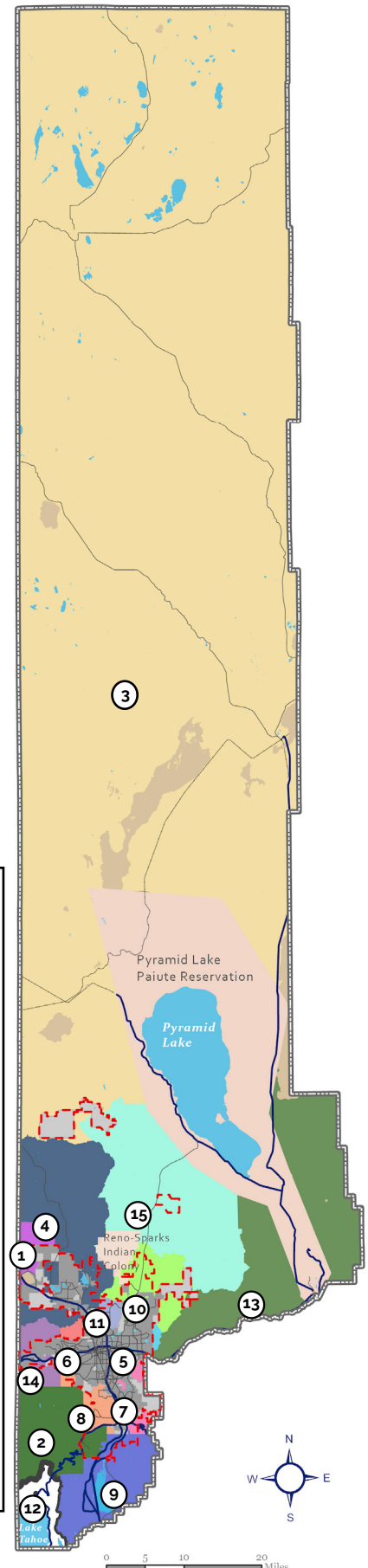
While each of these areas are unique, many of the goals and policies listed in the original area plans were applicable to the entire County and were more appropriately located in the general goals and policies in the plan elements. Elevating these goals and policies to countywide recommendations rather than repeating them in individual area plans reduces redundancy in each of the area plans and improves usability by highlighting only the area-specific goals and policies. Similarly, specific language pertaining to development regulations is most appropriate in the Washoe County Development Code.

Envision Washoe 2040 has integrated the area plan commonalities from the 2010 Master Plan into the Envision Washoe 2040 plan elements. This promotes a more efficient code administration process and also better facilitates plan implementation. The discussion, principles and policies set forth in Chapter 2's Planning Areas are the result of a dedicated effort to identify and refocus on characteristics that require special attention outside the countywide umbrella.



*Does not have an Area Plan

MAP 1. WASHOE COUNTY



02

VISION

IN THIS CHAPTER

- ▶ Vision Statement
- ▶ Plan Elements
 - » Population and Housing Element
 - » Regional Form and Coordination Element
 - » Conservation of Natural and Cultural Resources Element
 - » Adaptation and Resiliency Element
 - » Land Use Element
 - » Transportation Element
 - » Public Facilities and Services Element
- ▶ Planning Areas
 - » Cold Springs
 - » Forest
 - » High Desert
 - » North Valleys
 - » South Valleys
 - » Southeast Truckee Meadows
 - » Southwest Truckee Meadows
 - » Spanish Springs
 - » Sun Valley
 - » Truckee Canyon
 - » Verdi
 - » Warm Springs
 - » Other Planning Areas

VISION STATEMENT

"WASHOE COUNTY IS A PLACE OF DIVERSE AND RESILIENT OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD A QUALITY LIFE IN A SAFE AND ENGAGING COMMUNITY OFFERING UNPARALLELED ACCESS TO WASHOE COUNTY'S NATURAL LANDSCAPE, ITS ARTS, CULTURE, AND HISTORY, AND ITS RICH NETWORK OF COMMUNITY SERVICES."

PLAN ELEMENTS

ELEMENTS FORMAT

Existing Conditions

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Regional Plan has been identified as an overall guiding structure for the Envision Washoe 2040 process. In reviewing the Regional Plan, applicable state law, and the 2010 Washoe County Master Plan, seven elements were identified for this Plan. Each element contains an existing conditions analysis, followed by principles and policies to address key opportunities and constraints related to each element.

An integral part of Envision Washoe 2040 (this Plan) was the Existing Conditions Summary produced as part of the plan audit and first round of public engagement. This document summarized existing data, reports, plans, and policies to create a snapshot of current conditions within the County. These snapshots were used to analyze the challenges and opportunities the County faces and, along with public input, served as the foundation for development of principles and policies for each plan element.

The data and analysis from the Existing Conditions Summary has been integrated into each element to provide context for the principles and policies. The information in these snapshots was compiled at a point in time and some of this information is particularly susceptible to becoming dated or less applicable over time, specifically maps and data from outside agencies. Therefore, as Envision Washoe 2040 is applied, implemented, and amended over time, new and updated information should be considered as appropriate. Washoe County may rely on updated data when applying and implementing this Plan and during development review to ensure the vision, principles, and policies are accurately represented.

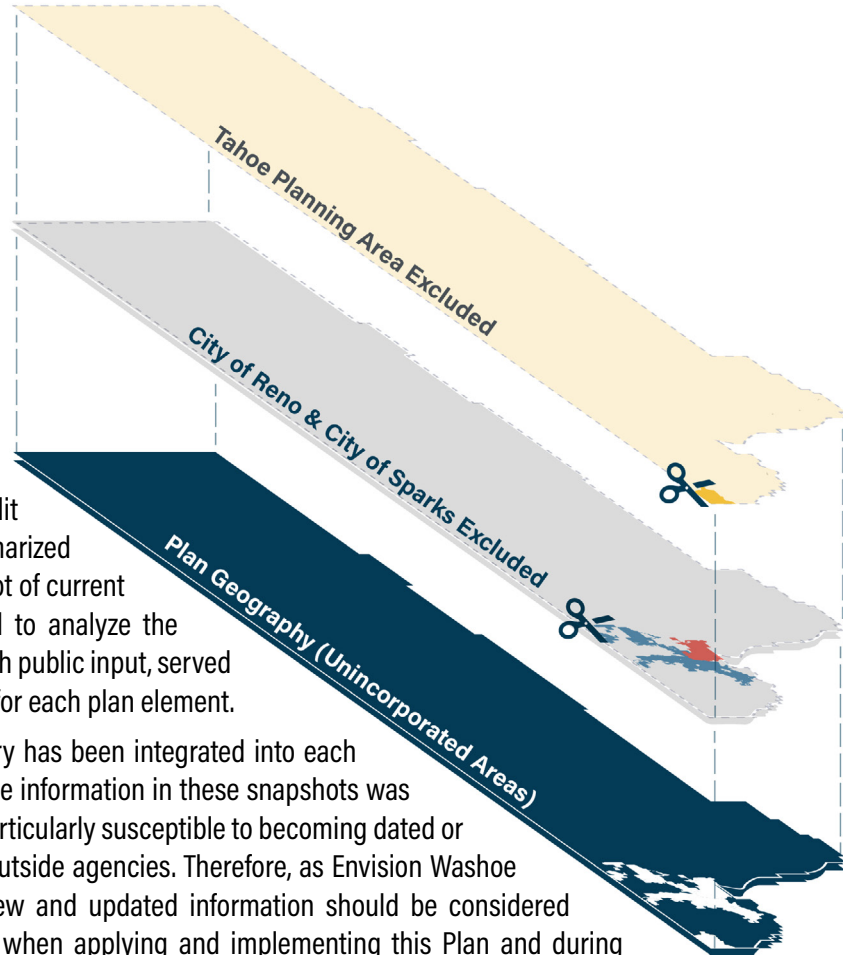
While Envision Washoe 2040 is only applicable to unincorporated Washoe County, and excludes the Tahoe Basin, some data was only available for Washoe County as a whole, including the cities of Reno and Sparks. In those cases where data for just the unincorporated areas of Washoe County could not be extracted, the countywide data was used and noted as "countywide" data for clarity. Other references to "Washoe County" or "the County" should be interpreted to refer only to the unincorporated areas of Washoe County outside of the Tahoe Basin.

Principles and Policies

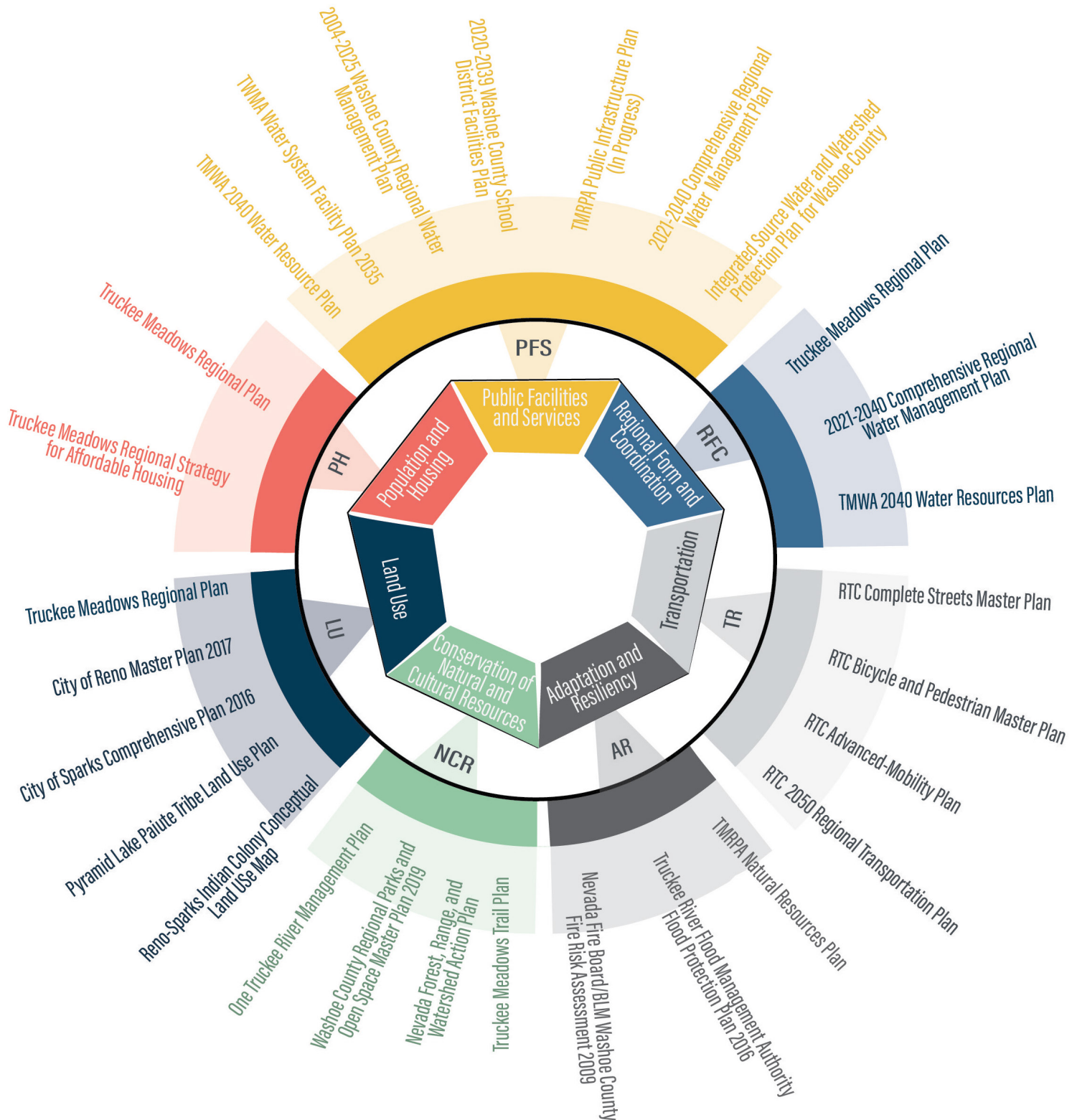
The Principles and Policies sections within each element describes Washoe County's goals and policies designed to help the County enhance the lives of the residents, protect the environment, and operate within its resources. These sections also detail ongoing regional and state efforts which align with each element and includes links to each of the related plans described on the next page. To further Washoe County's goal of regional coordination and cooperation, principles and policies from related plans which align with Washoe County's overarching goals and County policies have been incorporated directly into the principles and policies. Principles and policies which are from relevant plans are indicated with *italic* text and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan.

Principles are expressions of community ideals. They are broad directions that establish ideal future conditions toward which policies are focused.

Policies are statements which further refine the principles and guide the County's course of action to achieve the principles. They should guide decision-making and give clear indication of intent.



It is important to note that within each element, there are multiple other plans which relate to the element, but have been created by other County Departments, conservation organizations, other agencies, or the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TRMPA). Each element contains a graphic identifying related plans and linking to those plans. Where possible, principles and policies were built from other adopted Washoe County and Regional Plans to build off work that has already been completed. Principles and policies which are from relevant plans are indicated with *italic* text and an icon in the margin which links to the source plan.



01

POPULATION AND HOUSING ELEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Population

The rate of population growth within Washoe County is expected to remain steady over the next twenty years at a rate of about 1%, as stated in the [2022 Washoe County Consensus Forecast](#) (Consensus Forecast) within the Regional Plan. However, the age distribution of the population is expected to shift over the next two decades, due to the continued aging of the Baby Boomer population (people born 1946-1964). The retired age group (residents age 65+) is expected to increase by 3%, and the working age group (residents age 20-64) is expected to decrease by 2%, according to the 2022 Consensus Forecast. This increase in the retired population means that Washoe County will need to assess the ability of existing services and housing stock to meet the needs of an aging population. This assessment should include identifying opportunities to enhance the ability for the population to age in place, including improved public transportation and expanded housing diversity and options.

TABLE 1. POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE BY JURISDICTION

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Average Dwelling Unit Growth Share (%)</i>	<i>2021 NV Governor's Certified Estimate</i>	<i>Minimum Population Increase (-5%) 2022 to 2042</i>	<i>Maximum Population Increase (+5%) 2022 to 2042</i>	<i>Minimum 2042 Population Estimate **</i>	<i>Maximum 2042 Population Estimate **</i>
<i>City of Reno</i>	60.6	264,318	56,591	62,547	323,373	329,330
<i>City of Sparks</i>	23.1	107,489	21,572	23,842	130,000	132,271
<i>Unincorporated Washoe County</i>	16.3	113,306	15,222	16,824	129,191	130,793

Data Source: 2022 Consensus Forecast, Table 15

*** Includes the calculated growth increment of 4,067 people from the 2021 Governor's Certified estimate of 485,113 people to the 2022 start value of the Consensus Forecast of 489,180 divided based on the average share of dwelling unit growth by jurisdiction.*

The steady population increase can be largely attributed to in-migration. Based on data obtained from the US Census and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics, there has been more in-migration to the County than there have been births over the past decade. This trend is expected to continue as the opportunities that have traditionally driven growth to the area (to build a career, raise a family, access nature, and/or access education, civic life, and quality services and infrastructure) continue to demonstrate their power to attract people to the region. Washoe County's current and future demographic profile requires a commitment to increasing the range of housing opportunities. In order to house those who want to visit or live here, Washoe County should assess strategies to diversify its housing portfolio with a focus on affordability and accessibility.

The 2022 Consensus Forecast utilizes the 2021 Governor's Certified Population Estimates and Jurisdictional Percentages to highlight areas which can accommodate the forecasted population increase. The Regional Plan states a preference for population growth to be centered in the core of the region, particularly lands designated as MU Core and Tier 1 in the Regional Plan (See Map 2 - Regional Form in the 2019 Regional Plan (pg 65)). As shown in Table 1, Reno is expected to accommodate the majority of future growth due to proximity

to services and employment centers. Sparks is expected to accommodate 24% of anticipated population growth over the next twenty years and the unincorporated County is expected to accommodate 16%.

Housing

During stakeholder interviews, community members expressed concern that housing prices are outpacing incomes in the County and pressure from in-migration is increasing pressure on Washoe County's existing housing stock (See Appendix 1 for the full stakeholder interview summary).

Washoe County housing prices are increasing faster than its residents' incomes (Figure 6). This trend was identified in the 2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Strategy for Housing Affordability (2019 TMRSHA), but data from the US Census American Community Survey (ACS) demonstrates that the trend is continuing. Over the past ten years, the Median Home Value within Washoe County has increased 78%, from \$215,700 in 2010 to \$383,400 in 2019. During the same period, the Median Household Income within Washoe County increased by 42% from \$50,556 in 2010 to \$71,881 in 2019. In addition, the 2019 TMRSHA identified an increase in the proportion of renters from 40% in 2000 to 44% in 2016.

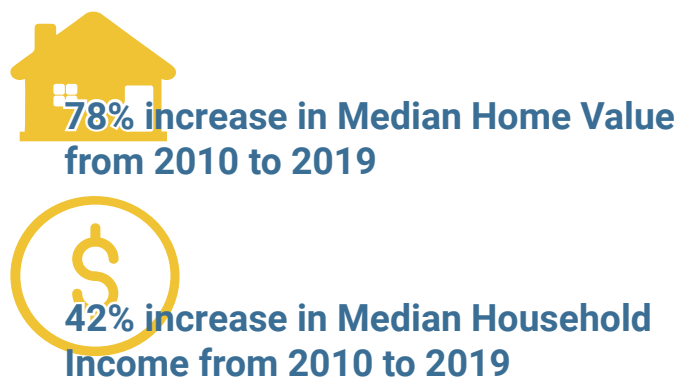


FIGURE 6. WASHOE COUNTY MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND MEDIAN HOME VALUE

Source: US Census Data. 2010-2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

The 2019 TMRSHA set the foundation for specific policies and actions which should be taken to address regional housing affordability issues, for area jurisdictions, including Washoe County. Therefore, the TMRSHA has been incorporated as part of the population and housing element. The TMRSHA policies focus primarily on creating flexible development standards and development incentives to encourage creation of affordable housing, provide funding for affordable housing development, and support community education programs to address local housing issues. Many of these actions can be accomplished

WASHOE COUNTY ACTIONS TO ADDRESS REGIONAL HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ISSUES

- ▶ *Develop new policies and coordinate processes with the lead regional housing entity and other local governments to ensure a consistent and clear environment for development across the region*
- ▶ *Support community education and outreach on housing issues*
- ▶ *Establish trust fund mechanism*
- ▶ *Identify processes where there is an opportunity to negotiate for affordability*
- ▶ *Update development fee structures (ex. building permit review fees) to support affordable housing development*
- ▶ *Create standard incentive packages for different levels of affordability in new developments*
- ▶ *Identify areas where affordability will be required, in addition to offering cost-offsetting incentives*
- ▶ *Align zoning with the Regional Plan, particularly allowing a greater diversity of housing types*
- ▶ *Direct staff across agencies to evaluate opportunities within existing codes and development review*
- ▶ *Support a greater mix of housing types (including infill development) and implement identified opportunities*
- ▶ *Leverage green programming/blight remediation funds to support more diverse housing products*
- ▶ *Support employer-assisted housing programs*
- ▶ *Help publicize information about supportive resources available for homeowners wishing to build ADUs & expand ADU programming to include technical assistance grants*
- ▶ *Create consistent standards for ADU development, including requiring homeowners planning to rent their ADUs to complete landlord training*

01

POPULATION AND HOUSING ELEMENT

through revisions to the Washoe County Development Code. However, the Washoe County Master Plan identifies County policies regarding affordable housing development.

The 2022 Consensus Forecast indicates that the overall population of Washoe County will increase by at least 98,299 persons between the years 2022 and 2042. Converting this to dwelling units using the County average of 2.46 persons per household, results in an overall demand for 39,959 additional dwelling units countywide by 2042. (Figure 7). In addition, the 2019 TMRSHA noted a countywide shortage of affordable and available units specifically for low-income households, particularly households earning 50% or less of Area Median Income (AMI). According to the 2019 TMRSHA, for every 100 households in unincorporated Washoe County there are only 40 available units for households earning 31-50% AMI and only 31 available units for households earning less than 30% AMI. This shortage is likely the result of an increase in competition for affordable

rental housing and slower rates of production across Washoe County. Additionally, the combination of home prices and rental rates out-pacing wages indicates that housing options within Washoe County are shrinking.

Washoe County has working relationships throughout the community's housing network with public, private, and nonprofit agencies. Building upon these existing relationships will enable the County to strategically create policies with the goal of increasing affordable housing options and increasing the variety of housing options available in the County to retain residents and support the local economy. The Regional Plan encourages Washoe County to direct new housing into currently developed and developing areas, minimizing the impact of housing on agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and the region's many valued open spaces. Directing growth into existing developed areas within the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA) also utilizes existing transportation and infrastructure networks to maximize efficiencies and minimize long-term costs.



FIGURE 7. 2020-2040 PREDICTED POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD INCREASE FROM THE CONSENSUS FORECAST

Source: Consensus Forecast and TMRSHA

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The Principles and Policies of the **Population and Housing** Element frame Washoe County's approach to ensuring housing stock within the unincorporated County matches the demands for its forecasted population. Our region is expected to experience population growth that is marked by diversity across social, economic, and demographic profiles. An increased diversity of available housing types is necessary to support this expected population profile.

The economic and population growth that our region is experiencing commonly leads to imbalanced housing markets, where market segments at the higher end of the market respond to demand at a far greater rate than lower end market segments. This leads to an overall housing market that favors narrow and less accessible housing types. The consequence of

this imbalance is a lack of adequate housing for families earning incomes of 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less. The severity of the imbalance increases toward the lower end of the spectrum, particularly below 50% AMI where demand typically far outpaces supply. Housing market segments below 120% AMI represent a considerable component of the region's employment base as well as a key contributor to the County's economic, social, and ethnic diversity. Addressing this imbalance is fundamental to supporting an economically and socially healthy community.

Housing our diverse population will require the development of diverse housing types throughout the community. Housing options should include both ownership and rental opportunities across the spectrum of both affordable (income restricted) and market housing. Within a regional framework, future housing development in Washoe County should provide a variety of housing types in rural, suburban and urban like environments. Washoe County's housing policies should not exclude any housing types; however, they should prioritize actions that create additional workforce housing, including owner-occupied duplexes, triplexes, and condos, and rental housing to serve all sectors of the local workforce.

The following principles and policies reflect the County's commitment to work with regional partners to increase housing diversity. The overarching goal of the county's approach is to ensure accessibility of adequate housing across all market segments and particularly those segments impacted by the natural imbalances that accompany growing communities.

Principles and policies from the Regional Plan and the TMRSHA that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *Truckee Meadows Regional Plan (Regional Plan)*
- ▶ *Truckee Meadows Regional Strategy for Affordable Housing (TMRSHA)*

PH Principle 1. Support ongoing regional initiatives to address housing needs for the moderate and low income, special needs, and senior populations.

- 1.1. *Utilize the Consensus Forecast and the TMRSHA to ensure the most recent population data is used to implement the Principles and Policies relevant to Housing, Land Use, Transportation, Public Services and Facilities, and Natural Resources.*
- 1.2. Continue to work with regional partners through the Washoe County HOME Consortium to support housing with attached services.
- 1.3. Work with advocacy groups to support development of housing for people with special housing needs such as the Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living.



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POPULATION AND HOUSING ELEMENT

- 1.4. *Encourage strategic utilization of the Washoe County Affordable Housing Trust Fund to further the implementation of the TMRSHA and the policies of this master plan.*

PH Principle 2. Coordinate population growth with the availability of water, sanitary sewers, streets and highways, and other public facilities and services.

- 2.1. *Promote development of affordable and workforce housing near public facilities, schools, jobs, and public transportation using mixed-use and higher density development.*
- 2.2. Direct development of residential densities greater than 1 unit per five acres into the TMSA where it can utilize planned local and regional infrastructure.

PH Principle 3. Use a balanced set of tools to increase and maintain the diversity of housing types across all income levels and to facilitate more affordable and workforce housing.

- 3.1. *Allow for more flexibility in the zoning and land use regulations to enable more housing types to be built throughout the community where adequate infrastructure exists.*
- 3.2. *Reduce regulatory barriers to the provision of affordable and workforce housing through methods including, but not limited to streamlining the development process or offering regulatory flexibility and/or financial incentives for affordable and attainable housing.*
- 3.3. Regularly monitor and reevaluate the fees associated with housing development.
- 3.4. *Support accessory dwelling units as a method of providing affordable and workforce housing.*
- 3.5. *Require and/or incentivize a mixture of housing types (i.e. product types, unit sizes, and price points) in large development applications and subdivisions.*
- 3.6. Disperse affordable and attainable housing throughout developments and neighborhoods.

PH Principle 4. Housing programs aimed at preventing homelessness and/or supporting special needs populations and senior populations include an appropriate connection to social services.

- 4.1. *Support stable housing as part of the County's social services network in conjunction with other Washoe County department efforts.*
- 4.2. Encourage housing development for persons with disabilities, special needs, and seniors with attached services.

PH Principle 5. Preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable and workforce housing.

3

5.1. *Support existing local and regional home rehabilitation, rental, and home ownership programs.*

5.2. Support a “no net loss” policy at the regional level as a framework for continuing availability of affordable housing.

4

5.3. *Prioritize preservation of existing affordable housing stock.*

5.4. Consider establishing standards to mitigate the negative effects of housing that is either vacant or ill-maintained by absentee owners.

5.5. Prioritize financial assistance for projects that will provide long-term affordability.

NO NET LOSS POLICY

An operating standard used in affordable housing, conservation, etc. that prevents or offsets the destruction of those resources.

PH Principle 6. Proactively expand cooperative efforts to provide housing.

6.1. Work cooperatively with the cities of Reno and Sparks to pursue regional efficiencies in all matters related to affordable housing.

0

6.2. *Partner with local employers to determine employee housing needs and explore programs to address these needs.*

6.3. *Explore opportunities to utilize state and federal funds, including HOME funds, to support the development of affordable housing.*

02

REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION ELEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Economy

According to the 2022 Consensus Forecast, the per capita income (income per person) for Washoe County is expected to increase from the current \$59,982 in 2022 to \$83,294 in 2042. This increase accounts for inflation and increase in population growth. With this increase in per capita income, Washoe County has the opportunity to target the provision of additional housing affordable to Washoe County residents using the forecasted 2042 per capita income.

In addition, the 2022 Consensus Forecast predicts an increase in total employment for all of Washoe County (including Reno and Sparks) from 316,833 in 2022 to 392,609 in 2042, with the largest shifts in employment industries being an increase in "Finance, Insurance and Real Estate", and "Services", and a decrease in "Retail". "Services" remains the largest employment industry across the County, encompassing over 45% of jobs countywide.

Of the total 226,568 full-time year-round workers living within Washoe County in 2018, 79% of workers (180,917 people) both live and work within the County. The most common places of employment in Washoe County are located within the City of Reno, which employs 60% of the residents of Washoe County, and within the City of Sparks, which employs 16% of residents. Additionally, 45,651 residents that live within Washoe County, or about 21% of residents, commute outside the County for work, primarily south and southeast of the County.

Generally, high percentages of workers commuting out of an area to other areas indicate a lack of jobs within their home community. However, given the high percentage of people that both live and work within the County, and that the percentages of workers commuting into and out of the County are fairly equal, Washoe County's priority should be to retain existing businesses and help them expand, rather than recruiting new businesses into the area. Retaining these existing businesses and supporting their growth could increase the region's economic resiliency, as it would ensure that the balanced distribution of workers who commute out of and into the County remains stable. Retaining existing businesses can also encourage sources of job growth to continue creating new opportunities for current and future Washoe County residents.

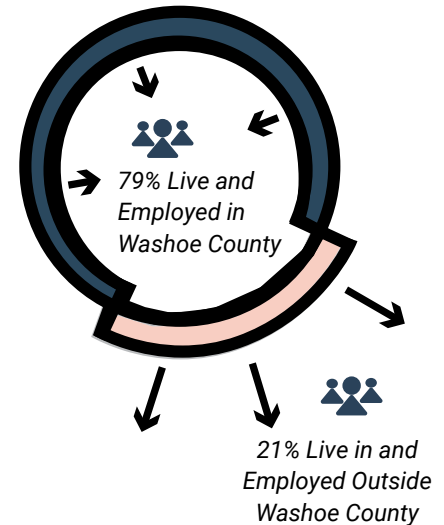


FIGURE 8. WASHOE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT

Source: US Census Data. 2010-2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

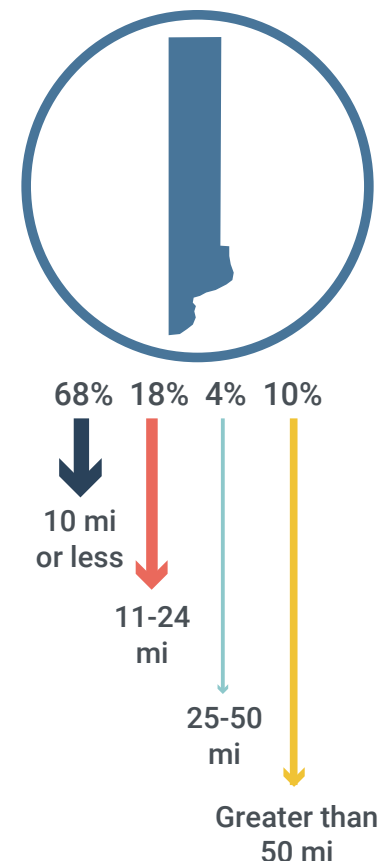


FIGURE 9. JOBS BY DISTANCE

Source: US Census Data. 2010-2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

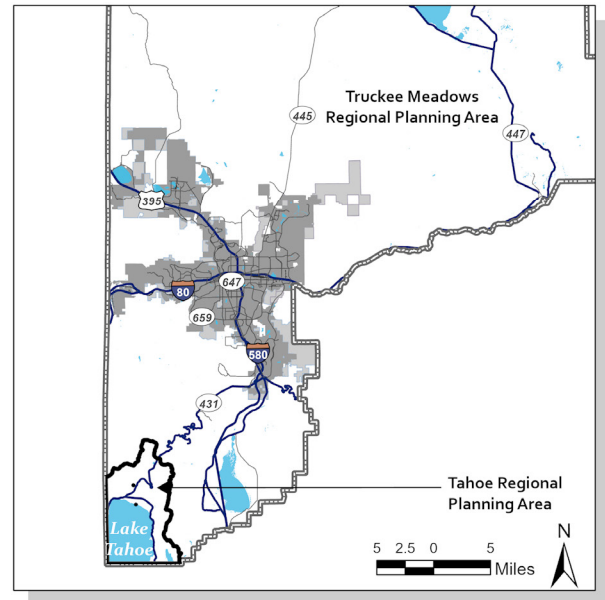
REGIONAL COORDINATION

Many aspects of Washoe County planning rely on regional coordination to ensure consistency and implementation. Specifically, annexation and ensuring consistent land uses along the City-County interfaces requires frequent, meaningful coordination between the County and the cities of Reno and Sparks. The Regional Plan identifies Spheres of Influence (SOI) for both Reno and Sparks specifically to define appropriate annexation boundaries and policies.

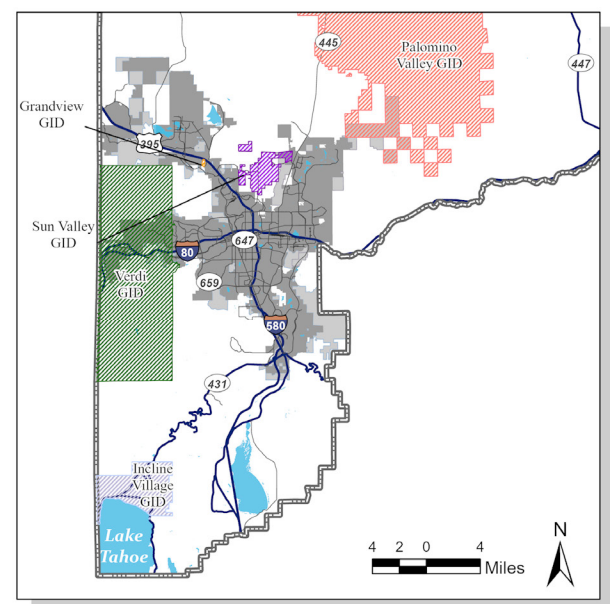
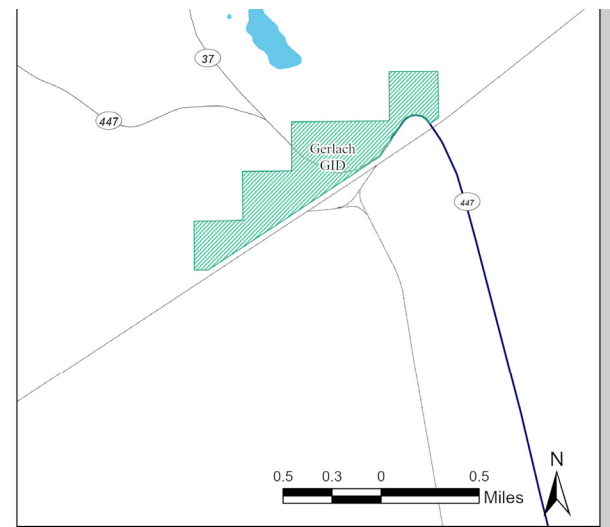
Two regional planning agencies directly deal with land use issues in Washoe County. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency focuses on preserving the natural features and resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The jurisdictions surrounding Lake Tahoe must conform to the Tahoe Regional Plan. The Tahoe Planning Area is the only planning area within Washoe County that is within the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency jurisdiction and is therefore not included in the Envision Washoe 2040 Plan.

Remaining portions of Washoe County, with the exception of tribal lands, fall within the jurisdiction of TMRPA. In 1989 the Nevada legislature created the TMRPA specifically to foster coordination between Washoe County, the City of Reno, and the City of Sparks. TMRPA is comprised of the Regional Planning Governing Board (RPGB), the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) and TMRPA's staff. TMRPA facilitates conversations between public and private decision makers regarding land use, infrastructure provision, and resource management. It also serves as an information and data warehouse, coordinating regional data collection and delivering advanced geospatial analytics for regional solutions including demographic, economic, and housing data.

In addition to coordination with regional planning agencies, Washoe County also coordinates land use decisions with various Special Districts, neighboring counties and municipalities, Washoe County School District (WCSD), Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), General Improvement Districts (GIDs), the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF), the Western Regional Water Commission (WRWC), Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Tribal Council, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Tribal Council, multiple County agencies, federal land management agencies, Nevada Division of State Parks, Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), and other state, tribal, and local agencies.



MAP 2. REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES



MAP 3. GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

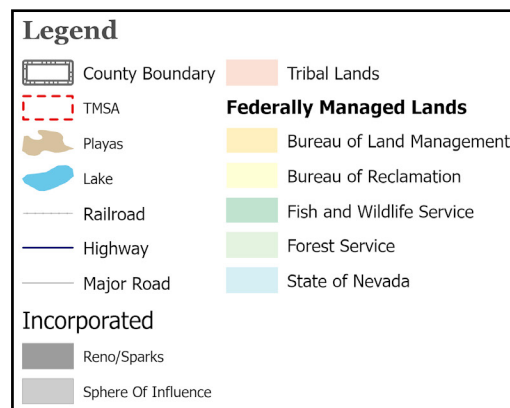
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REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION ELEMENT

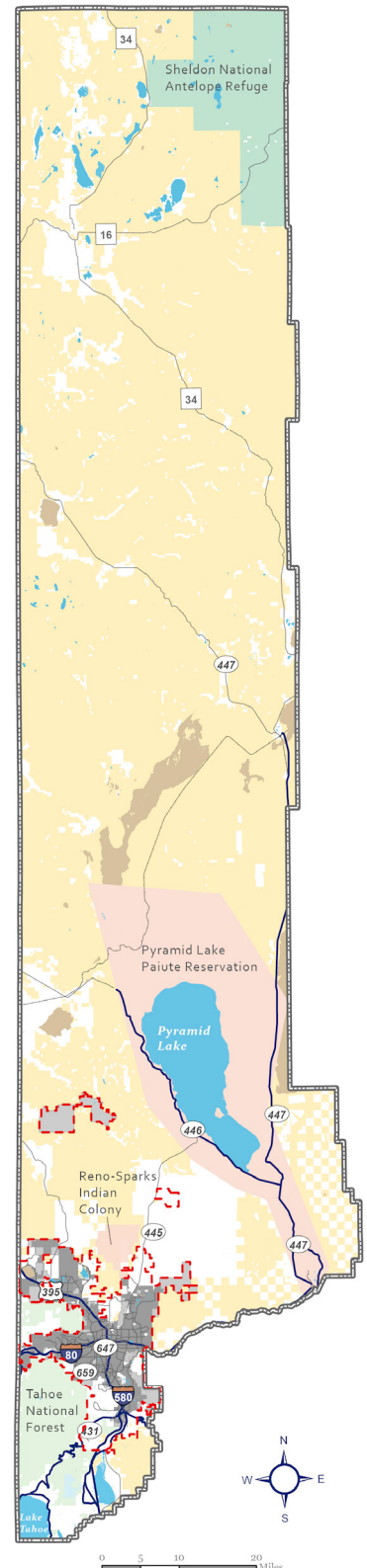
In the past, Washoe county has worked with the cities of Reno and Sparks on a variety of joint planning ventures. While none of the regional jurisdictions are currently implementing or pursuing any joint plans as described in Nevada Revised Statute 278.02784, Washoe County is committed to pursuing opportunities for coordination of land use plans and development decisions when appropriate.

Like the rest of the State of Nevada, Washoe County is largely composed of federal land, with approximately 80% of the unincorporated County being federally managed (Map 4). The largest federal land manager in Washoe County is the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which manages 65% of the land in the unincorporated County. Tribal lands and lands managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), also comprise 7.8% and 4.6% of the land in the unincorporated County respectively. This land ownership mandates that the County continue to work cooperatively with local, state, tribal, and federal agencies to manage the County effectively.

Periodically, concepts for the disposal of certain federal lands are considered. These have been referred to as the Federal Lands Bill, Washoe Lands Bill, or most recently, Truckee Meadows Public Land Management Act. In the future, lands that meet criteria in a Federal Lands Bill may be disposed of for either governmental or private use. While some lands near the metro area may be more appropriately disposed of for private sale, other areas in more northern parts of the County should be preserved as wilderness, open space, or recreation areas. Washoe County will continue to monitor these proposals and to actively participate in the development of potential language for future Lands Bills. Future updates to the Regional Plan are expected to consider the best way to incorporate federal lands into the portfolio of developable lands.



**MAP 4. FEDERALLY MANAGED LANDS IN
WASHOE COUNTY**



PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The **Regional Form and Coordination** Element consists of a set of cross-cutting principles and policies that target opportunities for collaboration among planning jurisdictions. The principles covered under this element are comprehensive, addressing topics like the economy, agriculture, transportation, and land use. Each of these principles provides opportunities for all areas to work toward mutually beneficial agreements and solutions that strengthen the region as a whole.

Growth and development in this region are managed through a complex, multi-jurisdictional collaboration of federal, state, tribal, and local agencies. Each of these agencies develops and maintains their own master plan or similar document to guide their roles within the region, and the Washoe County Master Plan is one of these plans. Ideally, the agencies

responsible for each of these plans will coordinate with the others. The following principles and policies seek to demonstrate Washoe County's commitment to developing valuable regional partnerships to manage the challenges of the next 10-20 years. In particular, the principles and policies address how regional coordination contributes to growth management and what the priorities for future regional coordination should be.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *Truckee Meadows Regional Plan (Regional Plan)*
- ▶ *2021-2040 Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan*
- ▶ *TMWA Water Resources Plan*

RFC Principle 1. Coordinate land use and growth decisions with local, regional, state, tribal, and federal partners.

- 1.1. Support development of reliable methods of communication to keep the region informed and engaged.
- 1.2. Seek opportunities to leverage County resources to advance the County's economic development strategy and Master Plan goals through creative public/private partnerships.
- 1.3. Coordinate with TMRPA, TMWA, WRWC, and the cities of Reno and Sparks regarding the Population Consensus Forecast to ensure sustainable water and wastewater resources and infrastructure.
- 1.4. Work with the GIDs within Washoe County to provide opportunities to communicate the unique challenges regional and local growth present to their efficient operation and fiscal sustainability.
- 1.5. Coordinate with the cities of Reno and Sparks to implement annexation and de-annexation protocols and administration of lands within the Sphere of Influence that ensure a transparent and efficient transition of land use opportunities.
- 1.6. Coordinate with WCSD on growth and new development as it relates to school capacity
- 1.7. Coordinate with the cities of Reno and Sparks, regional and local military installations, and tribal authorities regarding matters of land use compatibility wherever land-uses interact across jurisdictional boundaries or otherwise impact the relevant agency.

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THE ICONS
FOR MORE
INFORMATION!**

GOAL 3

RFC Principle 2. Utilize land use and transportation decisions to support a healthy economic base.

- 2.1. Strengthen the identity of the region by encouraging land uses that both contribute to the character of the community and enable the area to sustain a viable economic base.

02

REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION ELEMENT

- 2.2. Support development projects that align with master plan policies and promote business retention and expansion.
- 2.3. Protect industrial areas and employment centers from encroachment by potentially incompatible land uses or conversion to alternative uses.
- 2.4. Promote new industrial land use and zoning where services are available or can be provided in accordance with the Regional Plan.
- 2.5. Ensure that land use practices and regulations accommodate the needs of rural communities, and changing trends regarding businesses, including home and accessory rural occupations.

RFC Principle 3. Facilitate land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals that are in the public interest.

- 3.1. Coordinate with the TMRPA and Federal legislators and officials to support land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals when such actions are in the public interest, support the Washoe County Open Space Plan, or add unique cultural resource sites to public ownership.
-  3.2. Work with planning partners to develop funding sources and incentives for the acquisition, dedication, and maintenance of open space and sensitive lands.
- 3.3. Support partnerships for the use of Southern Nevada Public Land Management (SNPLMA) Funds for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.
- 3.4. Coordinate with NDOW and USFWS on acquisitions to benefit habitat management and species diversity identified in the Nevada Wildlife Action Plan and USFWS Updated Goals and Objectives for the Conservation of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout.
-  3.5. Prioritize open space acquisitions which protect aquifer recharge areas, current and future wellhead protection areas, source water protection areas, vegetation and tree canopies in areas with high urban heat island effect, and areas with natural hazards (floodplains, steep slopes, forested areas, etc.).
- 3.6. Support WCSSD in acquisition(s) of land in new subdivisions where inadequate school capacity is present, in accordance with NRS 278.180 & 278.346.

RFC Principle 4. Sustain interagency and inter-jurisdictional working relationships to foster an integrated approach to resource management.

- 4.1. Support the establishment of consistent or complementary conditions of approval for dedication of sensitive lands as open space across the region.
- 4.2. Partner with other public lands management agencies to encourage inter-jurisdictional compatibility of policies governing public access and use.
- 4.3. Continue interagency and inter-jurisdictional coordination in the planning, development, operations, and maintenance of park and recreational facilities.
- 4.4. Coordinate with other agencies to address lakes, rivers, and water-based recreation on a regional-level to ensure the sustainability of the natural environment.

RFC Principle 5. Capitalize on our natural resources to promote the historic industry sectors in a sustainable manner.

- 5.1. Seek funding opportunities that leverage economic development dollars and job creation targeted at rural communities to expand natural resource-based businesses.
- 5.2. Support sustainable forest management practices and initiatives with federal agencies that reduce fire risk and increase production.
- 5.3. Build on Washoe County's easily accessible location, proximity to Lake Tahoe, and other existing tourism activity to promote the County as a national destination for outdoor recreation, arts, and culture.

RFC Principle 6. Maintain agricultural practices to support local food growth and distribution.

- 6.1. Develop partnerships and standards aimed at increasing local food production.
- 6.2. Support alternative agriculture techniques, such as healthy soil initiatives and geothermal supported agriculture.
- 6.3. Be responsive, supportive, and adaptable to new forms of agriculture for both large- and small-scale farming.
- 6.4. Support secondary-income options on agricultural land such as agritourism uses, rural occupations, and agriculture related uses.

AGRITOURISM

Agritourism is defined as agricultural-adjacent uses which compliment or support existing agricultural operations. These uses are generally linked to production or processing of agricultural products to attract visitors and tourists to the farm/ranches as a supplemental income source.

Agritourism uses can be on-site, such as dude ranches, short-term rentals, camping, and agri-vacation, or off-site like fishing tours, snowmobile tours, and horseback riding.

RFC Principle 7. Facilitate development and expansion of local employment opportunities.

- 7.1. Explore tools to promote economic development that does not require the investment of local funds.
- 7.2. Collaborate with municipalities, economic development, and business groups, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions on a coordinated regional approach to economic and workforce development.

03

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

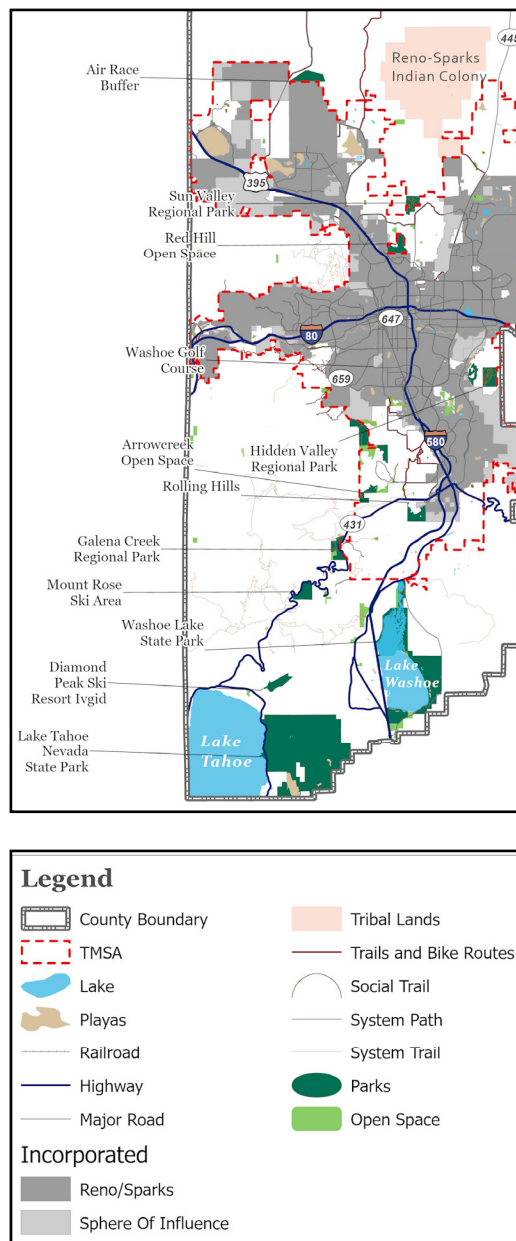
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Open Space and Natural Resources

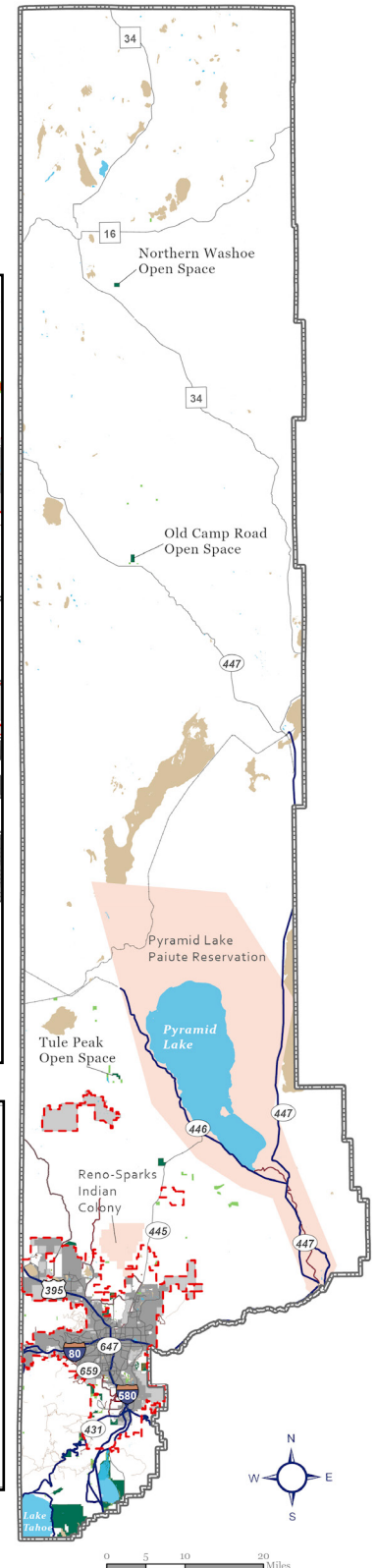
Washoe County is characterized by an abundance of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. Nevada boasts the highest percentage of public lands of any state in the nation. Access to this vast network of open space and preservation of important natural features remains integral to Washoe County residents' quality of life.

During the first phase of the Envision Washoe 2040 engagement, nearly every community member described the preservation of natural resources and continued opportunities for public access to open spaces as a critical priority. Community members discussed active and passive outdoor recreation opportunities, a high level of access to open space (both developed and natural), provision of greenways and parks, an expansive and interconnected trail network, accessible gathering spaces, and an abundance of scenic vistas as most important in maintaining access to nature. Generally, residents stated that they are happy with the level of access to outdoor recreation and natural resources. Ensuring the resilience of these opportunities was the highest priority from the community.

Access to the outdoors is one of the critical factors that draws people and businesses to the region. Yet as the region grows, risks related to encroachment



MAP 5. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE IN WASHOE COUNTY



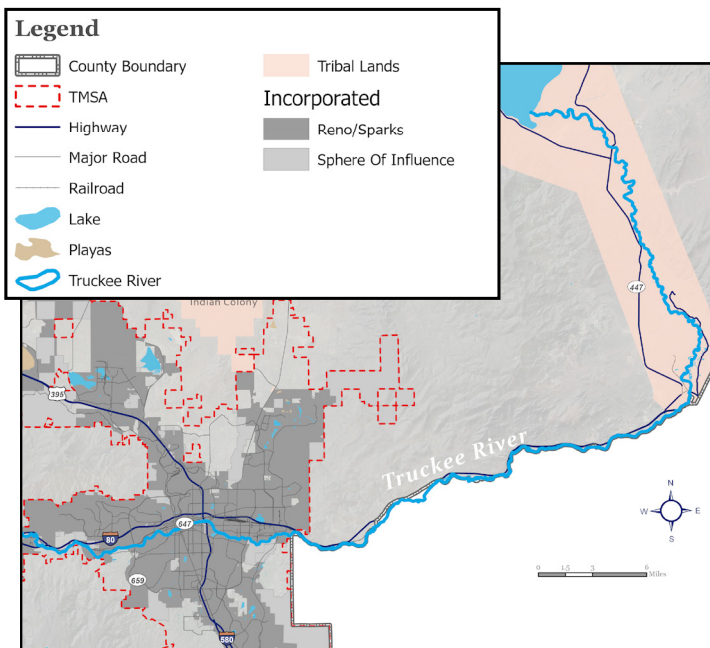
in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) increase, along with the increased demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. Protecting open space areas that support key ecosystem functions, such as flood retention and water filtration, not only creates a community that is more resilient to a changing climate, but also provides opportunities to enhance quality of life and public health by preserving scenic resources and providing more recreational benefits. Fortunately, Washoe County, including its Regional Parks and Open Space Program, operates within an extensive network of public and nonprofit agencies to manage natural resources within Washoe County and identify opportunities for improved management techniques and priorities.

In 2019, Washoe County adopted a [Park Master Plan](#) outlining the existing recreational amenities managed by the County as well as future goals and priorities, including acquisition of open space, expanding the regional trail system, and building out regional park facilities. The [Truckee Meadows Trails Plan](#) was also completed in 2021, which [inventoried existing trails](#) in the Truckee Meadows Region and identified trail connectivity gaps and future desired alignments. The main goals of that planning effort were to establish

an accessible, expandable, interconnected regional trail network; ensure high quality trail experiences; build awareness of the area's natural, cultural and recreational resources; and establish a set of sustainable trail design standards to be utilized across all jurisdictions.

Currently Washoe County manages approximately 70 miles of existing trails over 9,000 acres of open space, including an impressive patchwork of public lands primarily managed by the BLM and the US Forest Service (USFS). Two state parks provide public access to natural resources and open spaces in Washoe County: Sand Harbor State Park along Lake Tahoe, and Washoe Lake State Park.

Key among the area's natural resources is the Truckee River, which provides important habitat functions for the federally endangered Cui-ui and federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, as well as drinking water for residents. The Truckee River also creates unique recreational opportunities and connects the people and places of this community. During the first outreach phase, stakeholders indicated a strong interest in further investment in and protection



MAP 6. TRUCKEE RIVER WITHIN WASHOE COUNTY

of the Truckee River. The [One Truckee River Management Plan](#), developed by One Truckee River, focuses on improving the health of the river through long-term and sustainable management strategies and collaboration with public and private partners. The importance of the Truckee River is also recognized in Washoe County's [Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan](#), which details the unique vegetative communities and habitat types that define Washoe County. The Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is a component of the Conservation Plan required by NRS and provides greater detail of the region's biodiversity, cultural resources, natural hazards, recreational resources, visual and scenic character, and water resources (see Appendix 4 for the full Washoe County Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan).

TABLE 2. PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE MANAGED BY WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (2020)

PARK TYPE	NUMBER OF LOCATIONS	ACRES
<i>Neighborhood & Community Park</i>	39	435+
<i>Regional Park</i>	10	2,694+
<i>Special Use Parks</i>	7	982+
<i>Open Space & Trails</i>	69	9,113+
Totals	119	13,224+

03

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural Resources and Landscapes

Historically, present-day Washoe County was home to the Numa/Numu, Washeshu, Newe, and Nuwuv tribes. These tribes lived nomadically, in tune with the seasons. Nearby Lake Tahoe was an important gathering place for these tribes and many other peoples, and provided trade opportunities. Presently, there are two tribal entities in Washoe County: the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and the Paiute Tribe of Pyramid Lake. Both tribes continue to honor the land and their ancestral traditions, with populations totaling around 3,000 registered members.

The County has a deep history tied to mining, as it was mostly uncolonized until the Comstock Lode was discovered in 1859, drawing thousands of settlers to the area. There are several historic places throughout the County that demonstrate its history as a settler state for many moving westward. Outside of the limits of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County's various landmarks and historic places tell the County's story of development from a small railroad town to the nationwide attraction that it is today.

In northern Washoe County there are two places listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): the Gerlach Water Tower and Wadsworth Union Church. Both locations are a result of the Western and Central Pacific Railroads that ran through the area and spurred development of the towns that stand today. Early on, Washoe County was an important stop for trains carrying cargo to the west, and the Gerlach Water Tower provided a necessary resource for trains that still utilized steam engines. The Wadsworth Union Church serves as an important social center, providing a point of gathering for the early community of Wadsworth, as it continues to in the present day.



FIGURE 10. BOWERS MANSION

HISTORIC PLACES

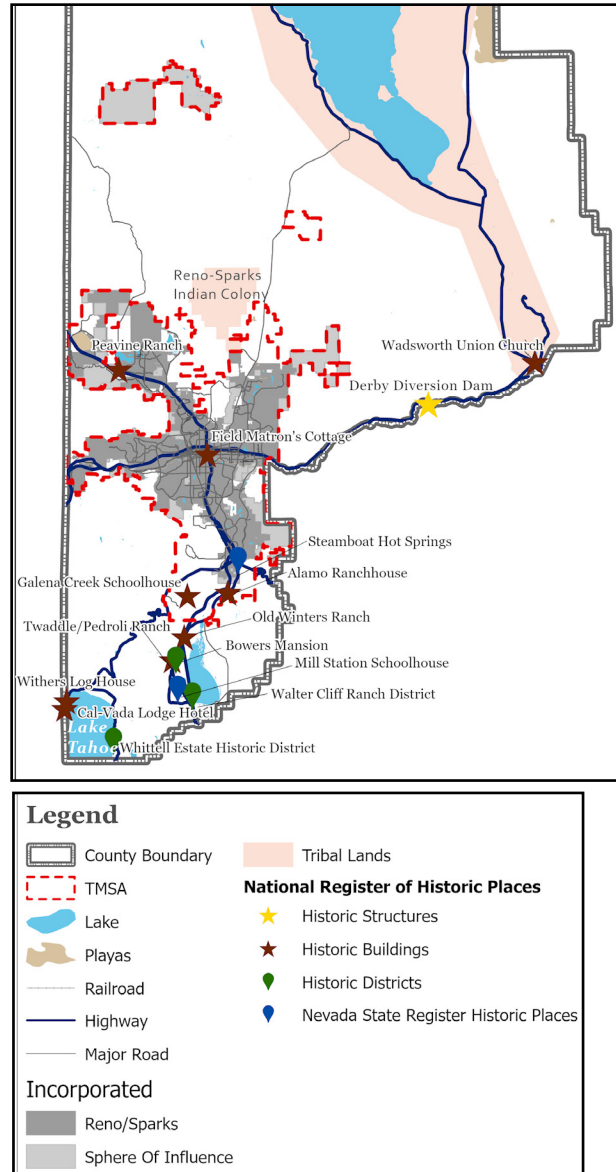
- ▶ *Derby Diversion Dam*
- ▶ *Gerlach Water Tower*
- ▶ *Wadsworth Union Church*
- ▶ *Alamo Ranchhouse*
- ▶ *Bowers Mansion*
- ▶ *Field Matron's Cottage*
- ▶ *Galena Creek Schoolhouse*
- ▶ *Withers Log Home*
- ▶ *Old Winters Ranch*
- ▶ *Cal-Vada Lodge Hotel*
- ▶ *Peavine Ranch*
- ▶ *Steamboat Hot Springs*
- ▶ *Twaddle/Pedroli Ranch*
- ▶ *Walter Cliff Ranch District*
- ▶ *Whittell Estate Historic District*
- ▶ *Mill Station Schoolhouse*



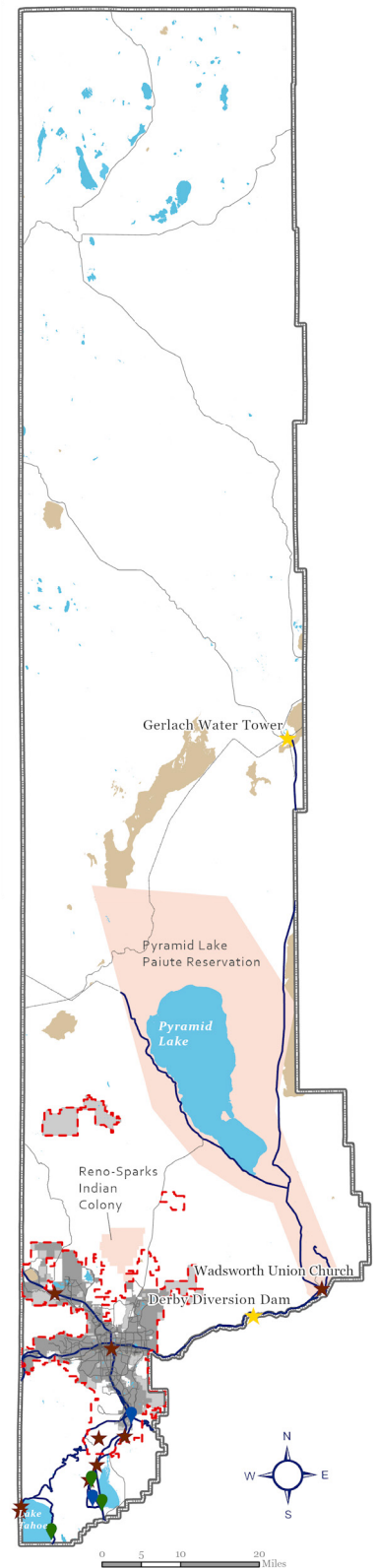
FIGURE 11. WADSWORTH UNION CHURCH

Further south is a wealth of historical locations, namely surrounding Washoe Lake. This area was known for its ranching. Many communities developed around the area's agricultural industry and wealth of resources, creating schoolhouses to educate children and food systems to provide for the many Comstock Lode miners. The historical places in the valley consist of ranches, the Bowers Mansion, and schoolhouses dating back to 1860. Notably, the Alamo Ranch house lies north of Washoe Lake, which was once home to Governor John Sparks, who was in office from 1903-1908. Among the ranches around Washoe Lake are the Twaddle/Pedroli Ranch, Old Winters Ranch, and Walter Cliff Ranch, each with its own impact on the history of the region. The Winters Ranch was home to Theodore Winters and his family, who transformed horse racing into an extremely popular activity in Nevada's early history. Walter Cliff Ranch supplied food and supplies to Comstock Lode miners for almost thirty years, and the Twaddle/Pedroli Ranch sits next to another historic home, the Bowers Mansion. This Mansion reflects the wealth that the Comstock Lode produced for the region, with its impressive architecture and idyllic grounds that many still visit.

On the edge of Washoe County is Lake Tahoe, where history ties into the region's resort economy. This history is represented by the famous Cal-Vada lodge, which attracted many vacationers to Lake Tahoe's shores and jump-started the area's development. Further down the shore is the Whittell Estate, which was 30,000 acres in size. Following a lawsuit between Whittell and the State of Nevada, 20,000 acres of the land created the Lake Tahoe State Park.



MAP 7. NRHP DESIGNATED PLACES



03

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The **Conservation of Natural and Cultural Resources** Element serves to provide principles and policies that not only preserve, but enhance the unique natural amenities found throughout Washoe County. The Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan (Appendix 4), Heat Mitigation Plan (pg. 49), and Transportation Policy TR4.3 serve as the Conservation Plan required by NRS. Natural features such as the Carson Range of the Sierra Nevada, the seemingly endless expanse of basin and range geography, and vast playas not only provide scenic and recreational amenities, but also vital habitat for iconic species such as the greater sage-grouse and California Bighorn Sheep. Water bodies like Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River, and Washoe Lake and surrounding wetlands also provide key habitat for aquatic species and extensive recreational opportunities. Washoe County residents value these natural amenities and often cite preserving access to

these natural areas and conserving the resources within them as being priorities. Open space, parks, and trails also mitigate urban heat, helping to build a more resilient community.

The County's natural resources provide vital ecosystem services to its inhabitants. Access to expansive trail networks and regional parks throughout the County are vital to the health and wellness of County residents. The indigenous peoples of Washoe County—the Northern Paiute and Washoe—have deep-seated cultural and spiritual connections to the surrounding landscape and wildlife. Water resources in the form of both surface water such as the Truckee River and ground water provide residents with reliable water for domestic and agricultural uses. There is also a strong link between watershed vegetation management and wildfire fuels management to sustain water resources from local watershed, especially in communities located in the wildland urban interface (WUI). The County also has many economic ties related to natural resources, ranging from recreation and resort amenities in Lake Tahoe; to resources extraction industries such as mining, geothermal, and natural gas development; to agricultural and cattle grazing.

The interconnectedness between the County's residents and the natural amenities, coupled with the growth and development within the County emphasizes the need for principles and policies meant to conserve these resources. As such, the County and its partner agencies within the region should regard these natural amenities as green infrastructure, which should be maintained or—in the event that they are adversely impacted—mitigated and replaced. The principles and policies found within this element serve to ensure that this green infrastructure is preserved throughout the County for the benefit of current and future generations.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *TMRPA Natural Resources Plan*
- ▶ *Truckee Meadows Trails Plan 2021*
- ▶ *Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2019*
- ▶ *One Truckee River Management Plan*
- ▶ *USFWS 2019 Updated Goals and Objectives for the Conservation of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout*
- ▶ *Nevada Forest, Range, and Watershed Action Plan*
- ▶ *Toiyabe Forest Management Plan*
- ▶ *Sierra Nevada Forest Plan*

plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- 1.1. Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- 1.2. Maintain dark night skies.
- 1.3. Coordinate with law enforcement agencies to reduce impacts on visual, cultural, and natural resources from illegal trail creation, OHV use, dumping, and impacts to public lands from illegal activities.
- 1.4. Support and participate in the Illegal Dumping Task Force and collaborate to inform the public on dumping and improve current efforts to eliminate illegal dumping.
- 1.5. Educate local and regional organizations and special interest groups of the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan's direct ties to economic development, tourism, the region's quality of life and sense of pride.

NCR Principle 2. Coordinate development and conservation goals with State, tribal, and federal agencies.

- 2.1. Continue to support and participate in the management actions, efforts, and on-going projects of the BLM and USFS for the conservation and preservation of natural resources within Washoe County.
- 2.2. Work cooperatively with the USFS and the BLM to mitigate impacts of land uses on private land adjacent to or within the National Forest and the public lands.
- 2.3. Coordinate wildlife protection efforts with NDOW, USFS, USFWS, the Nevada Division of Natural Heritage, Nevada Division of Parks, Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space.
- 2.4. Continue to partner with public and private agencies and individuals to implement methods for conservation of key wildlife habitats, habitats of threatened or endangered species, and cultural resources.
- 2.5. Work closely with agencies and jurisdictions to develop solutions for encouraging OHV use in appropriate areas.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- 3.1. Protect key wildlife and fishery habitats; habitats of threatened, endangered, or rare species; key migration routes or critical seasonal habitats; and areas important for scientific study.
- 3.2. Protect sensitive and important lands through development techniques such as common open space, conservation easements, and voluntary limitation on development such as a transferable development rights program.
- 3.3. Cooperate with RTC and NDOT to minimize wildlife conflicts within transportation corridors.
- 3.4. Create new tools within the Washoe County Development Code to value environmentally sensitive vegetation and wildlife within the development review process.
- 3.5. Acquire and restore critical habitat areas with particular

US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS) GOALS AND POLICIES

The USFWS periodically updates Goals and Objectives for federally threatened species. In 2019, the USFWS updated the Goals and Objectives for the Conservation of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout.

View the full document here to learn more about their efforts:

[2019 Updated Goals and Objectives for the Conservation of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout](#)

03

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

attention to threatened and endangered species and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

- 3.6. Support government and private efforts to control the spread of invasive, nonnative species throughout the region.
- 3.7. Coordinate with NDOW, NDF, and USFWS as necessary when analyzing or permitting management plans, projects, and other land use actions to provide adequate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to protect wildlife and natural resources within Washoe County.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

CLICK
THE ICONS
FOR MORE
INFORMATION!



2.3

- 4.1. Prioritize preservation of existing wetlands over mitigation of impacts.
- 4.2. Buffer water bodies, seeps, springs, playas, wetlands, and riparian areas from development and special use permits.
- 4.3. *Protect Critical Source Water Protection Areas.*

NR 13

- 4.4. Collaborate with WRWC, TMWA, Local Governments, Tribes, and other regional partners to manage land use practices to protect the watershed and water supply sources.
- 4.5. *Continue to implement the One Truckee River Management Plan to protect the Truckee River and its tributaries and apply best practices to all stretches of the Truckee River in Washoe County.*
- 4.6. Support the use of recycled water for uses that benefit wildlife and natural habitats or multiple beneficial uses including purified water projects.
- 4.7. Ensure water importation proposals are environmentally sound as set forth in NRS 533.370(3).

ONE TRUCKEE RIVER

One Truckee River is a coalition of public and private partners from 22 agencies working together to ensure a healthy and thriving Truckee River.

Visit their website to learn more about their efforts:

www.onetruckeeriver.org

NCR Principle 5. Maintain air quality at levels necessary to protect public health and welfare and improve visual clarity.

- 5.1. Support Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) in enhancing public education and advocacy efforts concerning air quality issues, sources, and solutions.
- 5.2. Support NNPH Air Quality Management Division in their efforts to continuously monitor air quality and mitigate identified health impacts.
- 5.3. Include air quality considerations in the development review and construction process.

- 5.4. Mitigate impacts of disturbances such as grading and tilling to future air quality.
- 5.5. Evaluate the need to develop enhanced landscaping standards to mitigate air pollution impacts.

NCR Principle 6. Acquire, develop, and maintain a system of regional parks and trails that provide for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

- 6.1. Develop a major regional trail or corridor system that connects the peaks and ranges in southern Washoe County, as well as a network connecting parks and open space.
- 6.2. Prioritize building upon existing infrastructure in the development and connection of trail corridors and facilities.
- 6.3. Support neighborhood and roadway design to minimize speeding and increase safety for all users of the system.
- 6.4. Integrate interpretation and environmental education into regional parks and open space to communicate the region's cultural heritage, natural history, and wildlife.
- 6.5. *Work with partner agencies including TMRPA, WCSO, NDOT, and RTC to support a collaborative approach to the creation of a network of parks, bikeways, greenbelts, recreational trails, multi-purpose corridors, and public facilities.*
- 6.6. Utilize the Truckee Meadows Regional Trail Plan (TM RTP) in the development review process and promote the construction of trails, trail heads, and other improvements necessary to achieve the trail network described in the TM RTP.
- 6.7. Require public access easements from subdivisions that are adjacent to public lands.
- 6.8. Pursue long-term funding opportunities for acquisition, development, and maintenance of parks, trails, open space, and other recreational facilities.

NR 9

NR 15

NCR Principle 7. Protect cultural resources within the region's suburban, rural, and urban interface areas.

- 7.1. Buffer designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and known significant or sensitive cultural resources from development.
- 7.2. Work in conjunction with tribes, federal, state, and local partners to identify critical cultural resource sites and protect them through acquisition, conservation easements, Recreation & Public Purpose (R&PP) leases, or other appropriate means.
- 7.3. Provide incentives for developers to voluntarily protect cultural resources in sensitive areas.
- 7.4. Encourage ongoing inter-jurisdictional coordination in cultural resource management.

NCR Principle 8. Educate citizens about the region's natural and cultural resources.

- 8.1. Work with partners to support development and maintenance of a comprehensive public education program to teach citizens about the history, legacy, and uniqueness of the region's cultural and scenic resources.
- 8.2. Incorporate the tribal legacy and history of Washoe County in the naming of trails, facilities, and points of interest.
- 8.3. Encourage preservation of unique geologic and mineral formations for educational, scientific, and other public purposes.

NCR Principle 9. Facilitate Native American tribal access to areas used for cultural purposes.

- 9.1. Ensure continued tribal access to areas used for cultural purposes, including gathering and hunting and traditional cultural practices.

03

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- 9.2. Work with local tribes to identify important traditional cultural gathering areas and associated plant species; recommend appropriate protection measures for maintaining a sustainable ecosystem.

NCR Principle 10. Facilitate the use of the best available data when considering the impact of development on natural and cultural resources.

- 10.1. Development review for projects that require a finding of conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan shall utilize the Natural Resource Consideration Areas (NRCA) policy, map and data layers tool contained in that plan to identify spatial interactions between the project the natural resources available in the tool. The NRCA spatial interactions identified in TMRPA's Initial Review Memorandum (IRM) should be addressed through the development review process.

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04

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Natural Hazards

Washoe County is subject to wildfires, earthquakes, floods, drought, volcanos, infectious disease, avalanches, and landslides as well as extreme winter and summer weather events. Each of these natural hazards has both an immediate and long-term impact on development. However, floods and wildfires pose the most frequent threats to the community. According to the FEMA National Risk Index (NRI), Washoe County's Risk Index and Expected Annual Loss are considered "relatively high", specifically tied to flooding, wildfires, and earthquakes. The Risk Index calculates overall risk to the community based on eight natural hazards, and the Expected Annual Loss represents the average economic loss in dollars resulting from natural hazards each year.

Catastrophic floods are part of the history of the region and have played a significant role in shaping current development practices. Significant efforts have been made to mitigate the impact of these floods on the community, including implementation of development standards and the creation of the Truckee River Flood Management Authority. More recently, as in other western areas, wildfire has become a more consistent threat with large portions of the County affected by fires between 2011 and 2020, and a significant portion of the County located in the wildland urban interface (WUI) (Map 8). The Truckee Meadows has been increasingly impacted by smoke from local and distant wildfires, causing increasing air quality and health issues throughout the region. Fire response in Washoe County is currently split between three fire departments and two fire protection districts, with a combined total of 47 stations and departments.

Washoe County has implemented development standards that address each of the natural hazards residents may face. However, as threats change in response to local or global conditions, Washoe County will have the opportunity to explore new practices to best protect the community. In the long term, site and building standards should align to best practices for climate change mitigation and adaption, including the State of Nevada's Climate Action Plan. When a best practice solution requires a regional effort, Washoe County will seek opportunities to be productively engaged in those efforts.

According to Nevada's Climate Action Plan, which identifies the ways in which Nevada's climate is changing, there is a strong likelihood that, over time, the community will experience hotter temperatures, more extreme droughts, a reduction in snowpack, and more frequent extreme floods and wildfires than in the past. The Climate Action Plan also outlines climate solutions, including greenhouse gas reduction targets and innovative methods for building community resilience. These solutions often go hand-in-hand with recreation

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AREA (DCA)

Consists of:

- ▶ *Playas,*
- ▶ *Jurisdictional waters and wetlands in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act,*
- ▶ *Designated FEMA floodways,*
- ▶ *Significant water bodies,*
- ▶ *Natural slopes over 30%,*
- ▶ *Publicly-owned open space, and*
- ▶ *Properties that are deed restricted to prevent development.*

goals and job opportunities. As the population increases over the next twenty years and the impacts of climate change intensify, Washoe County will need to balance the demand to provide continuing opportunities for access to outdoor recreation with safeguarding of the region's natural resources.

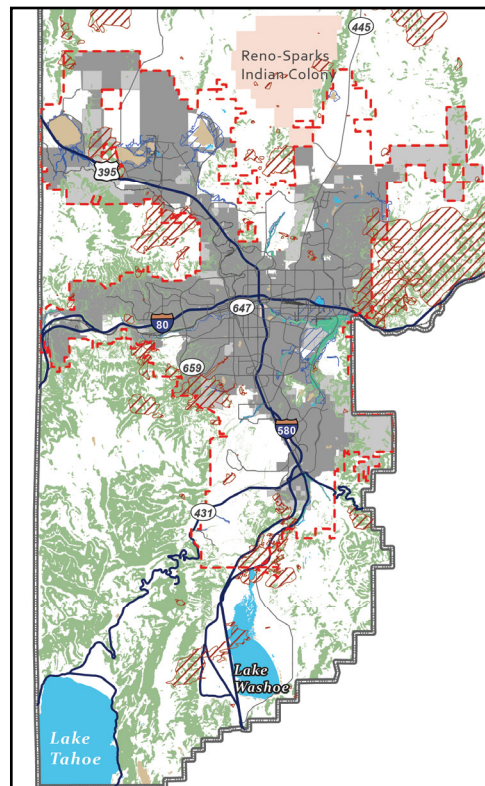
In addition to fire and flood risk, the Regional Plan policy Natural Resources 3 defines the Development Constraints Area (DCA) as an overlay within the County that identifies additional development constraints including federal lands, playas, wetlands, and steep slopes (Map 8). The DCA overlay takes precedence over otherwise applicable policies describing the desired density and intensity of development within the County. According to the Regional Plan, development within the DCA is limited to communication facilities, recreational facilities, parks and open space, agriculture, forestry and mining, and transportation and utilities infrastructure necessary to service development. Residential development is limited to a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres or one dwelling unit per existing parcel in 2019, whichever is greater. Other uses may be allowed in isolated areas if the encroachments enhance the overall project design and a 2:1 ratio of non-constrained area is preserved as open space for every developed constrained area.

According to the Regional Plan, the primary intent of the DCA is to preserve development-constrained lands in an undeveloped state wherever possible, to minimize encroachments into the DCA, and to provide additional design features to mitigate the visual impact of necessary encroachments. Much of northern Washoe County lies outside the DCA, but large swaths of southern Washoe County, primarily lands along the Nevada - California border lie within the DCA (Map 8). Development on federal lands within the DCA will also need to be coordinated with the appropriate federal land management agency.

Heat Mitigation Plan

In 2025, a new provision was introduced to Nevada Revised Statutes requiring that a Heat Mitigation Plan be included in

the Conservation Element for several jurisdictions, including Washoe County. As a region with a semi-arid desert climate, Washoe County has always been subject to higher temperatures and the challenges heat brings. Climate change exacerbates harsh conditions, especially heat-related issues as average temperatures are projected to increase between 3 and 12 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100 in the United States (Reidmiller, D.R. et al., 2017). As of 2026, Reno is the fastest-warming city in the United States. This Heat Mitigation Plan addresses heat's impact along various dimensions, for the urban and rural areas of the County.



Legend

- County Boundary
- TMSA
- Lake
- Railroad
- Highway
- Major Road

Incorporated

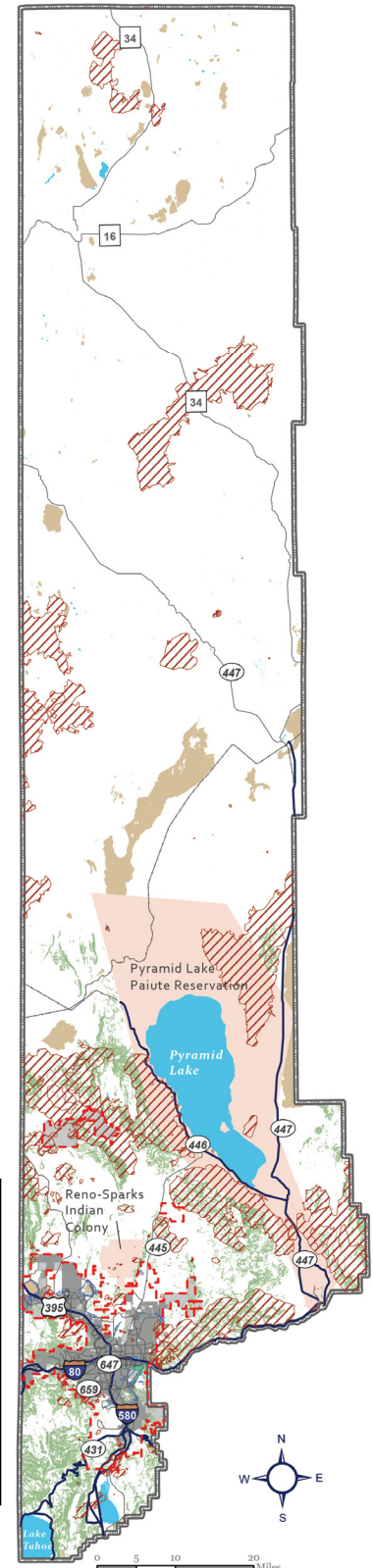
- Reno/Sparks
- Sphere Of Influence

Tribal Lands

- Fires 2011-2020

Development Constraints Area

- Slopes 30% and greater
- Playas
- Wetlands
- Floodway



MAP 8. NATURAL HAZARDS IN WASHOE COUNTY

04

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

Extreme Heat

Extreme heat is the nation's most deadly natural hazard (Keith and Meerow, 2021). Projected warming in the southwest United States, including Nevada, is expected to increase heat-related illnesses, which can lead to hospitalizations and fatalities (Crimmins, A.R. (editor) et al., 2023). Heat also has public health, social, and economic impacts. Adapting to extreme heat is therefore essential to quality of life.

The public health impacts of extreme heat include heat-related illnesses but extend beyond them. Higher temperatures accelerate ozone formation from transportation, industry, and utilities emissions, worsening air quality and increasing health risks for sensitive groups such as people with lung disease, older adults, children, and outdoor workers (EPA, 2026). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has strengthened ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) over time with the latest being the 2015 NAAQS of 0.070 parts per million (ppm) for attainment. Since 2015, Washoe County has either been only slightly below the threshold or has violated it, meaning that any strengthening of the NAAQS or increase in ozone from extreme heat could cause Washoe County to be designated nonattainment by EPA. In addition to public health consequences, nonattainment also has significant economic implications including potential reduction in transportation funding, raising compliance and permitting costs, and reducing business investment. Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), formerly known as Washoe County Health District, joined the EPA's Ozone Advance program in 2017 to strengthen voluntary attainment efforts. Several of the key performance indicators (KPIs) for success in reducing ozone precursor emissions are land use related, including vehicle miles traveled, tree canopy, and bikeways (Washoe County Health District, 2017). Although the EPA discontinued the Advance Program in 2025, NNPH still uses its framework to prioritize strategies for reducing ozone precursors.

Other potential impacts of extreme heat are interconnected and touch every aspect of life. On days with high temperatures, thermal comfort—which is influenced by temperature, humidity, wind, and other factors—decreases, which may decrease the likelihood that an individual will go to an event, bike to work, or go shopping. Each of these decisions impacts the social vibrancy and economic wellbeing of a community, particularly for those who already are more likely to be isolated, such as seniors. Warming also has impacts on agriculture by reducing crop yields, stressing livestock, and increasing irrigation demand.

The University of California Center for Disease Control Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry developed a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) which depicts areas where populations may be more or less resilient and able to respond to hazardous events. The SVI uses a series of census-derived factors relating to socioeconomic status, household characteristics, racial and ethnic minority status, and housing type and transportation. SVI scores range from 0 to 1, with a score of 0 being not vulnerable and a score of 1 being very vulnerable. Washoe County, as a whole, has a medium-high vulnerability SVI score of 0.67. The census tracts with the highest SVI scores and therefore the most vulnerable populations, are the unincorporated portions of the county immediately adjacent to Reno and Sparks in Sun Valley, Cold Springs, and North Valleys, as well as the High Desert planning area.

Although heat conditions are expected to worsen across urban and suburban areas where much of the county's population is concentrated, rural parts of the County are also expected to experience the effects of increased heat, especially related to water, medical services, and energy. Infrastructure access and quality is important in rural planning areas where extreme heat poses a greater threat to human health and safety due to a lack of localized services. Ensuring that water is available to rural communities, providing reliable energy and power grids, and providing emergency medical services will be priorities for rural areas facing heat challenges.

Urban Heat

While extreme heat impacts all parts of Washoe County, urban areas are particularly vulnerable due to impervious surfaces like buildings, roads, and other paved surfaces that absorb and release heat, increasing temperatures in concentrated areas. These areas of concentrated heat are described as urban heat islands (UHIs) and require special consideration to mitigate their impacts.

UHIs are influenced by many factors, including land use patterns, air temperature, and wind. Hotter areas tend to correlate with socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. UHI effect leads to warmer nights, which compounds public health risks as people and infrastructure do not have time to cool down. In 2024, the CAPA Heat Watch program, in association with Washoe County and other local agencies, mapped UHIs in the urban and suburban areas of Washoe County. The maximum mapped temperature differential between neighborhoods was 23-degrees Fahrenheit. While UHIs are often associated with highly urbanized areas, the CAPA Heat Watch mapping found that areas with more sparse suburban development and low tree cover can also concentrate heat in the day and evening, pointing to the importance of tree canopy and shade for neighborhood cooling.

Washoe County has a mix of rural, suburban, and urban areas across a large geographic region, some of which fall under County jurisdiction and others under the Cities of Reno and Sparks jurisdiction. Suburban and urban planning areas adjacent to cities require multi-jurisdictional collaboration as the County works to reduce the impacts of UHIs. Jurisdictions can and should collaborate on providing and communicating resources such as public air-conditioned spaces (cooling centers) and public drinking water, as well as on heat-related land use policies and best building practices.

Land use decisions underpin the majority of urban heat solutions because of the built environment's impact on local climates. Managing growth to limit outward sprawl helps reduce the need for new roads, parking areas, and other heat-absorbing surfaces, while preserving open space. Establishing urban growth boundaries within the County can provide cooling to surrounding areas. As the County grows, land use decisions regarding locations and types of development should carefully assess potential for urban heat impacts.

The Washoe County Development Code can serve as an effective tool for reducing urban heat island effects and strengthening community resilience to rising temperatures in the Truckee Meadows. Expanding shade and tree planting requirements is a practical and cost-effective approach to improving public health while supporting long term sustainability goals. Increasing summer temperatures, extensive paved surfaces, and limited existing shade contribute to elevated surface and ambient temperatures in developed areas, particularly within parking lots, commercial centers, and pedestrian corridors. Integrating shade into existing landscaping and parking lot design standards would help reduce heat absorption without substantially altering established development patterns. Site design strategies such as planting shade trees to reduce heat gain on pavement and building surfaces, providing shaded pedestrian routes, and encouraging the use of reflective or permeable materials can lower localized temperatures, reduce building cooling demands, and improve walkability.

In Washoe County's high desert climate, tree canopy expansion should emphasize drought-tolerant and cold-hardy species capable of providing meaningful cooling benefits while conserving water resources and withstanding seasonal extremes. Tree shade has been shown to significantly reduce surface temperatures and ambient heat exposure, making it one of the most effective passive cooling strategies available. Even modest increases in canopy coverage along streetscapes, parking areas, trails, and public spaces can improve pedestrian comfort and reduce heat-related health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations. Establishing canopy expectations within future development standards would allow shade infrastructure to be incrementally integrated as growth occurs. New and infill development can integrate multiple heat mitigation practices at once, eventually creating a connected shade system that keeps the community safe in public spaces. Over time, this approach would expand tree canopy coverage, improve energy efficiency, and enhance community resilience to extreme heat.

Higher elevation parts of southern Washoe County, including the Tahoe Basin, experience less direct impacts of extreme heat due to cooler climates and high amounts of shade in forested areas. However, even these areas are experiencing warming, and building infrastructure may not include air conditioning or other cooling technologies and designs. The Tahoe Basin also may experience indirect impacts of extreme heat in the Truckee Meadows from increased trips to Lake Tahoe where conditions are cooler. Thus, policies that decrease heat in urban areas of the Truckee Meadows will also mitigate indirect impacts to the Tahoe Basin.

04

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

In 2019, the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan required that local governments include strategies to reduce UHI impacts. Future data compilation of available public drinking water, shaded areas, and cooling centers within the unincorporated County can help the community protect themselves against extreme heat. Washoe County Planning can also support other ongoing efforts and plans to address extreme heat, including the 2025 Washoe County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Regional Transportation Plan. This Heat Mitigation Plan includes policies and their associated action items in this section and throughout Envision Washoe 2040, which are marked with a  icon. These include AR Principles 3 and 4, AR Policy 2.4, RC Policies 3.2 and 3.5, TR Principle 3, and LU Policies 3.2 and 3.3.

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The **Adaptation and Resiliency** Element's principles and policies address the various challenges of living with natural hazards while proactively mitigating risks to health and safety. While development in the County is set among the backdrop of wide-open spaces, dense forests, and expansive valleys, there are risks associated with development along the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). Wildfires, landslides, and degradation of natural and protective wetlands can challenge the safety of those who live, work, or recreate in these areas.

Climate change has drastically increased the severity and frequency of natural disasters and extreme weather events, making planning for extreme situations more important than ever. Both urban and rural areas will face their own challenges with heat islands, natural area preservation, and integrating energy efficient practices into the public's everyday lives. The Adaptation and Resiliency principles and policies are primarily focused on limiting development to appropriate areas, reducing or mitigating development outside those areas, collaborating with partner agencies, and proactively investing in solutions that reduce the impacts of climate change. The goal of these principles and policies is to support thoughtful development practices that increase the resilience of the County and create a strong response network for climate-related hazards and their impacts.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *TMRPA Natural Resources Plan*
- ▶ *One Truckee River Management Plan*
- ▶ *Truckee River Flood Management Authority Flood Protection Plan 2016*
- ▶ *Nevada Fire Board/BLM Washoe County Fire Risk Assessment 2009*
- ▶ *2025 Washoe County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan*
- ▶ *Washoe County Climate Action Plan*
- ▶ *2019 Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan*
- ▶ *RTC 2050 Regional Transportation Plan*

AR Principle 1. Limit development in the Development Constraints Area.

NR 5
& 6

- 1.1. *Minimize development in areas with natural steep slopes and ensure that technically and aesthetically appropriate standards are applied to development of slopes between 15% and 30%.*
- 1.2. Limit development in floodplains that would constrict or otherwise result in higher floodwater levels or peak flows, or impact to floodplain functions.
- 1.3. *Ensure development within the WUI is consistent with industry best practices.*
- 1.4. Update and implement the Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment study and recommendations to guide management of wildfire hazards in urban interface areas.
- 1.5. Support riparian habitat and river channel restoration as an important component of overall flood management planning.

AR Principle 2. Coordinate natural hazard response with regional and federal agencies.

- 2.1. Support Fire Protection District efforts to develop, fund, and implement a Community Wildfire Protection Program and replanting program for all non-federal public lands in the region.
- 2.2. Promote partner agency efforts in helping individuals learn to live with fire.
- 2.3. Coordinate the activities of the Regional Open Space Program with proposed restoration projects on the lower Truckee River.
- 2.4. Coordinate with and support the efforts of Washoe County Emergency Management in hazard mitigation and emergency planning.

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of extreme heat and climate change on residents.

- 3.1. Support efforts to reduce energy consumption including incentives for use of green building and design techniques (ex. density bonuses, height bonuses, and alternative funding sources to offset permit fee reductions, etc.).
- 3.2. Support expansion of the County's tree canopy, prioritizing the most vulnerable communities and key community resources, such as the Truckee River corridor.
- 3.3. *Promote land uses and building techniques which reduce the use of heat absorbing surfaces and the urban heat island effect including limiting impervious surface; reducing parking requirements;; promoting water-wise and drought tolerant landscaping; using green building materials such as green roofs, green walls, and cooling pavements;; and promoting beneficial site orientation.*
- 3.4. *Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/County.*
- 3.5. Work with USFS and other federal partners to manage forest health, fuels reduction, and forest restoration to protect the watershed from fire impacts.

AR Principle 4. Manage the impacts of extreme heat.

- 4.1. Support efforts to raise awareness and knowledge about extreme heat and its impacts.
- 4.2. Collaborate with local and regional partners to develop heat management resources aimed at:
 - Reviewing where public cooling spaces exist or can be enhanced.
 - Reviewing where access to public drinking water exists or can be enhanced.
 - Developing an online map resource to inform the public about access to cooling spaces and where access to public

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ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

drinking water is available.

- 4.3. Support increasing the resiliency of energy supply networks and the accessibility of affordable energy.
- 4.4. Promote increasing shade on sites that serve populations vulnerable to extreme heat, such as children and seniors.
- 4.5. Promote increasing shade where appropriate in public infrastructure such as multimodal transportation stops and areas.
- 4.6. Assess the need for rural-focused extreme heat strategies, such as incentives for energy efficiency retrofitting, supporting access to medical care, and increasing grid resiliency and energy redundancy.
- 4.7. Support cool building practices such as awnings, light colored and living roofs, and increased insulation.

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LAND USE ELEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Regional Land Designations

As mentioned in the Conservation of Natural and Cultural Resources Element, the Regional Plan promotes a regional form of development and land use that aims to lessen sprawl and support a higher intensity and density of development within the developed areas at the Region's core. Specifically, the Regional Plan focuses on compatible mixed-use infill development which optimizes infrastructure, provides efficient transportation, protects environmentally and culturally sensitive resources, and supports housing choice through the designation of the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA) and Regional Land Designations. The TMSA is the defined area within which municipal services and infrastructure are anticipated to be provided. The TMSA is subject to change with time.

The TMSA also functions as a growth management tool to limit over-extension of municipal services and minimize sprawling development patterns while providing for a variety of living and working situations and focusing development in areas where it can be efficiently serviced.

Within the TMSA, there are four distinct Regional Land Designations - Mixed Use Core, Tier 1 Land, Tier 2 Land, and Tier 3 Land - which together are intended to absorb 98% of the region's growth over the next 20 years. These regional land designations encompass lands within the municipal boundaries of Sparks and Reno, as well as some unincorporated areas in Washoe County. The Regional Plan prioritizes development within the TMSA with infill of the Mixed Use Core being the highest priority, followed by Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 lands. There is no land within the unincorporated portion of Washoe County designated as Mixed Use Core.

TABLE 3. REGIONAL LAND DESIGNATIONS WITHIN WASHOE COUNTY*

REGIONAL LAND DESIGNATION	MINIMUM DENSITY	MAXIMUM DENSITY	NONRESIDENTIAL STANDARDS
<i>Mixed Use Core</i>	14 du/ac	No maximum	0.25 floor-area ratio minimum
<i>Tier 1 Land</i>	Existing	No maximum	None
<i>Tier 2 Land</i>	No minimum	30 du/ac	None
<i>Tier 3 Land</i>	No minimum	Existing	Existing – Commercial development to support the surrounding neighborhood may be allowed in certain instances
<i>Rural Area</i>	N/A	1 unit per 5 acres**	Dispersed nonresidential uses**

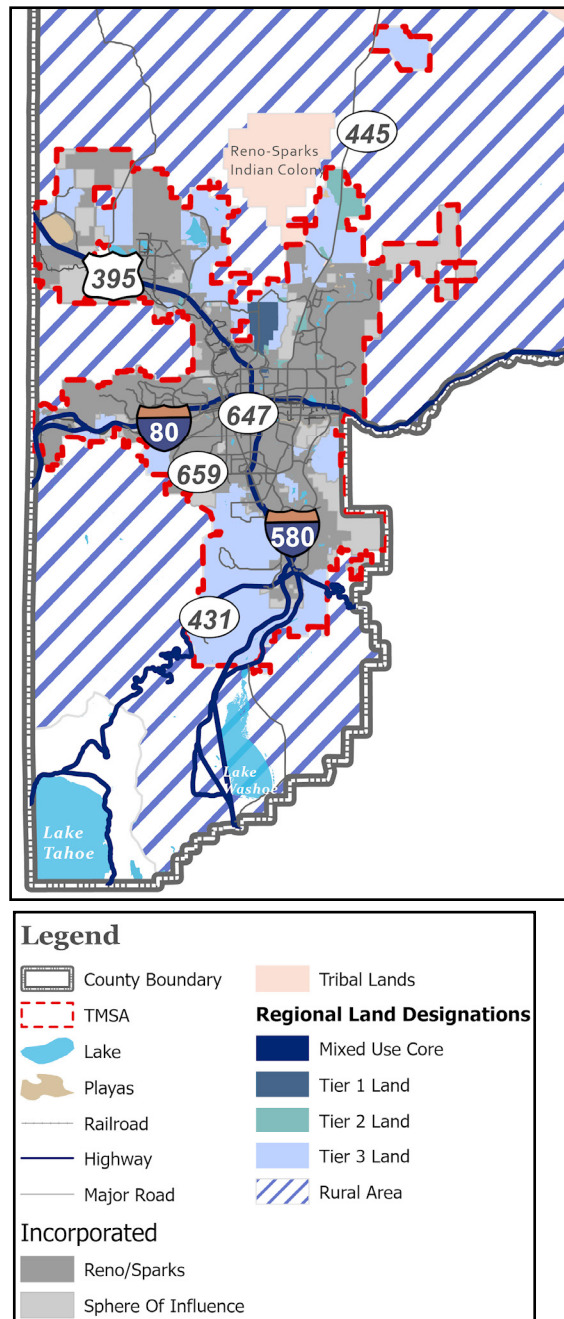
Data Source: 2019 Regional Plan, Table 3.1

*Densities and standards in this table are accurate as of July 2023, but are subject to change>Please see the current Truckee Meadows Regional Plan for current requirements.

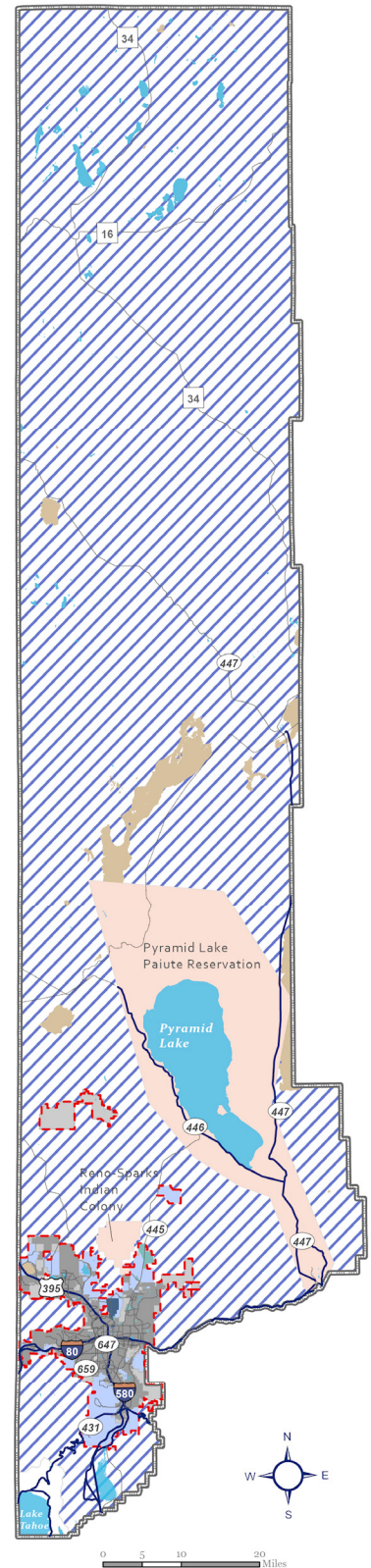
**See 2019 Regional Plan Policy RF6.

The areas outside the TMSA are identified as the Rural Area. The Rural Area is currently characterized by active agriculture, ranches, forestry, dispersed residences and business or commercial services, and limited industrial and recreational uses not compatible with urban or suburban development. Development in the Rural Area is restricted to a maximum of 2% of the Region's growth. If the proportion of development in the Rural Area exceeds the 2% maximum allowance, the Regional Plan prohibits any master plan amendment or project of regional significance resulting in an intensification of residential growth within the Rural Area. One of the features of the rural area is the presence of the regionally designated freestanding communities of Gerlach, Empire and Wadsworth. These communities, developed long before the implementation of the current regional plan tiering system, provide services, housing and commercial opportunities at an intensity not permitted elsewhere in the rural area. The freestanding community designation recognizes the unique history, character, and needs of these areas.

Unincorporated Washoe County lands comprise the entirety of the Rural Area with pockets of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Land in developed areas adjacent to Reno and Sparks. As noted in Table 3, Tier 1 Lands have a minimum density of the existing allowed density and no maximum density. This means that it is expected that lands designated as Tier 1, which are generally in the Sun Valley Planning Area, absorb growth as it occurs in the unincorporated County, but within the TMSA. The specific form and density of development which is expected in the Sun Valley Planning Area is discussed in the Planning areas section of this chapter. Other unincorporated County lands within the TMSA are designated as primarily Tier 3, with a patch of Tier 2 Land in the northeastern portion of the TMSA. The maximum allowed density in Tier 3 lands is not to exceed the residential density allowed by the current land use plan category, meaning that unless the Regional Plan land designations are amended in those unincorporated County neighborhoods within the TMSA, what is allowed today is likely to be similar to what you will see in the future. In order for land designations in the Regional Plan to be amended there would need to be presence of significant infrastructure to serve the area.



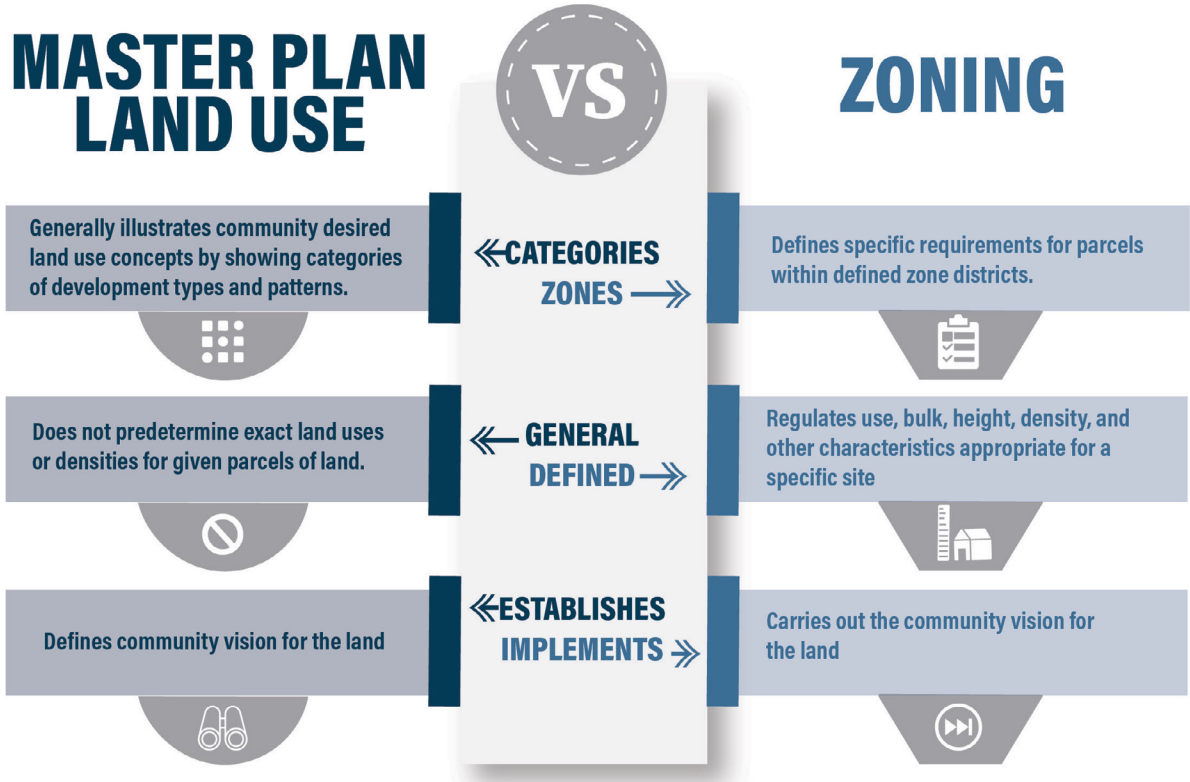
MAP 9. REGIONAL LAND DESIGNATIONS



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LAND USE ELEMENT

Master Plan Land Use



The Master Plan Land Use Maps for each Planning Area within the County (Maps 11-22 in the Planning Areas section of this Chapter) and associated Land Use Category descriptions, coupled with the principles and policies of the Plan, help direct development patterns, infrastructure improvements, and the general character and location of neighborhoods, commercial areas, and amenities, such as parks and schools. The Master Plan Land Use categories are broader than zoning and indicate the general land use of a parcel rather than the specific standards by which it will be developed. Master Plan Land Use Maps are meant to provide a general picture of future development for citizens to anticipate the future form of their area. Master Plan Land Use designations guide regulatory zoning decisions.

While designations found on the Master Plan Land Use Maps generally indicate the intended primary use and residential density for a particular area, zoning districts specifically define allowable uses and contain the design and development regulations for those intended uses. Zoning and associated development code standard sets the policies and laws governing the use, bulk, height, density, and other physical or operational characteristics on a specific site. The Master Plan Land Use Maps within Envision Washoe 2040 utilize the following Master Plan Land Use Designations as described in Table 4.

TABLE 4. ENVISION WASHOE 2040 MASTER PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

MASTER PLAN LAND USE	INTENT	ALLOWED ZONING (See Washoe County Development Code for Specific Standards)
<i>Open Space</i>	The Open Space Master Plan category is intended to create, preserve, and connect areas of natural, cultural, and scenic resources, including but not limited to, ridges, stream corridors, natural shoreline, scenic views, agricultural, or other land devoted exclusively to open space uses.	► Open Space ► Public and Semi-Public Facilities ► Parks and Recreation
<i>Rural</i>	The Rural Master Plan designation is intended for areas of the County that are remote, have minimal infrastructure, contain significant amounts of open spaces, and which are suitable for commercial agricultural and grazing uses, extraction industries, natural resource conservation, energy production, rural commerce, and large lot residential uses. A residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres is allowed within the Rural Master Plan designation.	► General Rural ► General Rural Agriculture ► Public and Semi-Public Facilities ► Parks and Recreation ► Specific Plan ► Open Space
<i>Rural Residential</i>	The Rural Residential Master Plan designation is intended primarily for larger lot residential uses, small scale agricultural uses, natural resource conservation, and rural commerce, with allowed densities ranging from 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres up to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. A density of one dwelling unit per 2.5 acres is allowed within the Rural Residential designation provided the property is within the Truckee Meadows Services Area, as amended. Divisions of land and the provision of services outside the TMSA, as defined in the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, must be consistent with the provisions of that plan.	► Low Density Rural ► Medium Density Rural ► High Density Rural ► Public and Semi-Public Facilities ► Parks and Recreation ► Specific Plan ► Open Space
<i>Suburban Residential</i>	The intent of the Suburban Residential designation is to provide for a predominantly residential lifestyle with supporting mixed-use nonresidential and residential uses, including commercial, public and semi-public facilities; and parks and open space. A further goal of this group is to protect the stability of existing unincorporated neighborhoods and to encourage compatible smart growth development, while allowing diversity in lifestyle that is manifested in a variety of lot sizes, density, levels of mixed-use and land use patterns. Developments proposed within the Suburban Residential designation should promote the development of walkable, mixed-use communities that meet the daily needs of residents, balance jobs and housing, offer a high quality of life, reduce the need for automobile trips, encourage the utilization of public transit and result in the creation of distinctive and attractive communities that create a strong sense of place.	► Low Density Suburban ► Low Density Suburban 2 ► Medium Density Suburban ► Medium Density Suburban 4 ► High Density Suburban ► Public and Semi-Public Facilities ► Parks and Recreation ► Specific Plan ► Open Space

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LAND USE ELEMENT

MASTER PLAN LAND USE	INTENT	ALLOWED ZONING (See Washoe County Development Code for Specific Standards)
<i>Urban Residential</i>	The intent of the Urban Residential designation is to provide an overall mix, intensity and connection of uses that is much greater than the suburban form. A full range of urban services, such as public water and sewer, an extensive interconnected road and bicycle network, public transit incorporated in all new developments, safety and emergency response services, parks, schools, interconnected trails and open space should be available in this land use group. Development proposals for this Master Plan designation should be of high architectural quality and encompass a mix of connected uses including a wide range of housing choices and densities, commercial and employment uses with public and semi-public facilities. New developments are expected to include amenities and recreational opportunities. Pedestrian needs will take precedence in the design of transportation and circulation systems.	▶ Low Density Urban ▶ Medium Density Urban ▶ High Density Urban ▶ Public and Semi-Public Facilities ▶ Parks and Recreation ▶ Specific Plan ▶ Open Space
<i>Commercial</i>	The intent of the Commercial designation is to create and preserve areas for businesses that provide a variety of wholesale and retail goods and services, which serve a neighborhood or community market and are created in conjunction with residential uses to create a mixed-use, new-urbanist community. The uses may include wholesale and retail stores, shopping centers, specialty shops, personal services and automobile services. Other uses include offices, restaurants, theaters and other compatible activities that serve the area. Business parks containing professional, medical, educational, financial and insurance services and supportive commercial activities are also appropriate under this designation.	▶ Neighborhood Commercial/ Office ▶ General Commercial ▶ Tourist Commercial ▶ Public and Semi-Public Facilities ▶ Parks and Recreation ▶ Specific Plan ▶ Open Space
<i>Industrial</i>	The intent of the Industrial designation is to provide for activities such as manufacturing, warehousing, mining and construction. The industrial designation is intended to create an environment in which industrial operations may be conducted with minimal impact on the natural environment and surrounding land uses. To conform with the Regional Plan, in unincorporated areas within the TMSA, non-residential uses of appropriate scale to serve the community and not the greater region are allowed. The appropriate scale of non-residential development shall be based on generally accepted service standards for population, employment, service area, and market analysis. Industrial/ warehouse uses are permitted only within existing or planned multi-use business parks found in conformance with the Regional Plan.	▶ Industrial ▶ Public and Semi-Public Facilities ▶ Parks and Recreation ▶ Specific Plan ▶ Open Space

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The principles and policies of the Land Use Element are, for many users, the most important set of Master Plan policies for managing growth and development. As such, the following principles and policies are aimed at multiple goals. The overarching goal is to demonstrate a commitment to the regional form and pattern described by the Regional Plan. The policies express a commitment to direct new development inside the TMSA. They also demonstrate Washoe County's commitment to its unique responsibilities in the vast rural areas located outside the TMSA. The policies established here, when implemented, will create the new land use opportunities necessary to fulfill the Regional Plan in a manner that is consistent with the vision of Washoe County residents. In doing so they ensure the desired character of unincorporated communities will continue to be a fundamental consideration in the review of new development and ensure Washoe County's development review processes instill public trust and confidence by remaining comprehensive and transparent.

Additionally, these policies establish land use opportunities and priorities that coordinate with policies found in each of the other Elements. These policies promote the vision and goals of each of the County's Planning Areas and supplement the Master Plan Land Use Maps for each Planning Area.

Promoting the local vision within the regional framework will require flexibility at all levels of the development process, but particularly in community design. This flexibility should be a component of the county's master plan, zoning, and development code. Innovative approaches to community design that promote a desired sense of place will be necessary. At the same time, transparency, consistency, and uniformity in the way policies and codes apply to individual property owners are valuable principles that provide balance to the desired flexibility.

The Principles and Policies that follow are intended to guide the distribution of land uses in a way that promotes both the desired regional framework and the desired sense of place throughout the unincorporated county. They further support the regional partnerships necessary to implement the overall development process. These policies promote the growth of communities that meet their residents' expectations for the future.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan (Regional Plan)*
- ▶ *City of Reno Master Plan 2017*
- ▶ *City of Sparks Comp Plan 2016*
- ▶ *Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Conceptual Land Use Map (Conceptual Map for Hungry Valley Only)*
- ▶ *Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Land Use Plan*

LU Principle 1. Facilitate partnerships to ensure land use decisions are based on the best available information.

- 1.1. Continue to cooperate with TMRPA to ensure the County's approach to growth and development is consistent with and supportive of the regional vision.
- 1.2. Provide a variety of opportunities to involve the community in the review of future growth and development.
- 1.3. Continue to coordinate land use policies and decisions with the public health goals of the Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH).
- 1.4. Continue to coordinate land use policies and decisions with impacts to school enrollments, the Safe Routes to School program, and the WCSD Capital Facilities Planning.

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LAND USE ELEMENT

LU Principle 2. Tier land use decisions from the Regional Land Designations and the Priority Hierarchy for development as described in the Regional Plan.

- 2.1. Regularly review the Master Plan Land Use Map to maintain consistency with the Regional Plan and meet community needs and update as necessary.
- 2.2. Align future rezoning and development proposals with the Master Plan Land Use Map and Master Plan policies.
- 2.3. Allow flexibility in development proposals when appropriate to vary lot sizes, cluster dwelling units, and use innovative approaches to site planning to meet multiple County principles and policies.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- 3.1. Collaborate with other agencies to develop methods for assessing all developments individually and cumulatively for potential impact upon the natural resources of Washoe County.
-  3.2. Promote landscaping that is consistent with best practices for resource sustainability, habitat preservation and enhancement, and natural hazard resilience.
-  3.3. *Incentivize residential cluster and common open space developments as an alternative to conventional subdivision development where clustering will achieve permanent protection of open space or valued natural resources.*
- 3.4. Support individual property owner's efforts to designate conservation easements on their land.


NR 10
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ONEWATER NEVADA

OneWater Nevada is a regional collaborative effort to realize innovative water supply options and advanced water treatment technologies.

To learn more about their water conservation efforts visit onewaternevada.com

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- 4.1. Encourage design of industrial, commercial, and multifamily uses to contribute to the community's sense of place rather than detract from it.
- 4.2. Where needed, expand existing public facility links such as trails, paths, open space, and streets to create connectivity between communities and neighborhoods.
- 4.3. Support visual improvements to enhance community gateways.

- 4.4. Encourage design of commercial centers to accommodate a range of uses over time.
- 4.5. Assess the feasibility of implementing form-based codes and other sustainable design practices.
- 4.6. Encourage design of new developments to accommodate the needs of all users, including young, aging, disabled and special needs populations.
- 4.7. Create a safe, high-quality pedestrian-oriented street environment that is visually interesting, comprehensive, and varied.
- 4.8. Designate land for urban farms and community gardens to allow community connections from growing and consuming local food.
- 4.9. Identify and pursue opportunities to reduce the extent of food deserts.

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- RF 6**
- 5.1. *Maintain large lot sizes outside of the TMSA and prohibit land use changes that would result in a parcel less than 5 acres in size.*
 - 5.2. *Limit growth in the Rural Area (RA) to no more than 2% of the Region's 20-year residential growth.*
- RF 7**
- 5.3. *Consider the feasibility of establishing Rural Development Areas when necessary to preserve open space or protect natural resources.*
 - 5.4. *Engage with the residents of the Freestanding Communities (Gerlach, Empire, Wadsworth) to ensure development is consistent with communities' unique needs.*
 - 5.5. Preserve and promote the rural communities and rural area's natural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources to residents and visitors.
 - 5.6. Promote economic vitality for rural residents through the support of opportunities for a rural lifestyle without degrading the environment.
 - 5.7. Strengthen access to sufficient water rights to support anticipated needs of urban agriculture.

LU Principle 6. Direct Development into the TMSA.

- 6.1. Invest in infrastructure and services where required for health and safety reasons.
- 6.2. Promote compatible mixed-use and infill development patterns within the TMSA.
- 6.3. Strengthen existing neighborhoods and promote infill development through:
 - » Revitalizing older neighborhoods to promote long-term stability.
 - » Incentivizing commercial revitalization.
 - » Promotion of funding resources such as the Nevada Brownfields Program.
 - » Creation of density bonuses and other innovative development tools to encourage infill in targeted areas.
 - » Transition of existing vacant or blighted county lands to urban agriculture.
- 6.4. South of T26N, locate schools with a projected population of 300 or more full-time students throughout any part of the calendar year within the TMSA.

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TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

In Washoe County, transportation planning is under the authority of several different agencies. Together, these agencies are responsible for complying with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) regarding transportation planning. State law separates transportation planning into several distinct categories that cover a broad range of topics. NRS 278.160(1)(h)(3) states that a transportation plan may contain "locations of rights-of-way, terminals, viaducts and grade separations." The plan may also include "port, harbor, aviation and related facilities." NRS 278.160(1)(h)(2) states that a transit plan may contain "proposed multi-modal system of transit lines, including mass transit, streetcar, motor coach and trolley coach lines, paths for bicycles and pedestrians, satellite parking and related facilities." NRS 278.160(1)(h)(1) provides that a streets and highway plan may show "the general locations and widths of a comprehensive system of major traffic thoroughfares and other traffic ways and of streets and the recommended treatment thereof, building line setbacks, and a system of naming or numbering streets and numbering houses, with recommendations concerning proposed changes." Much of this information can be found in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan that was produced by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC). The RTC has been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Washoe County. Washoe County, including the cities of Reno and Sparks, generates approximately 3 million annual vehicle miles traveled (AVMT) and ranks as the State's second highest AVMT producer after Clark County. From 2010 to 2020, while the total AVMT for the County increased, Washoe County did see a 1% reduction in its generation of the State's AVMT, going from 15% to 14%, but the total AVMT for the County did increase and is projected to continue to increase.

Looking at the traffic counts on major roads in Washoe County, 2010 data shows the highest traffic counts on I-80, US 395, I-580, and N McCarran Blvd. 2020 data shows the highest traffic counts on I-80, I-580, US 395, and McCarran Blvd.

The RTC of Washoe County plays a vital role in planning for the future of the County by conducting long-range transportation planning

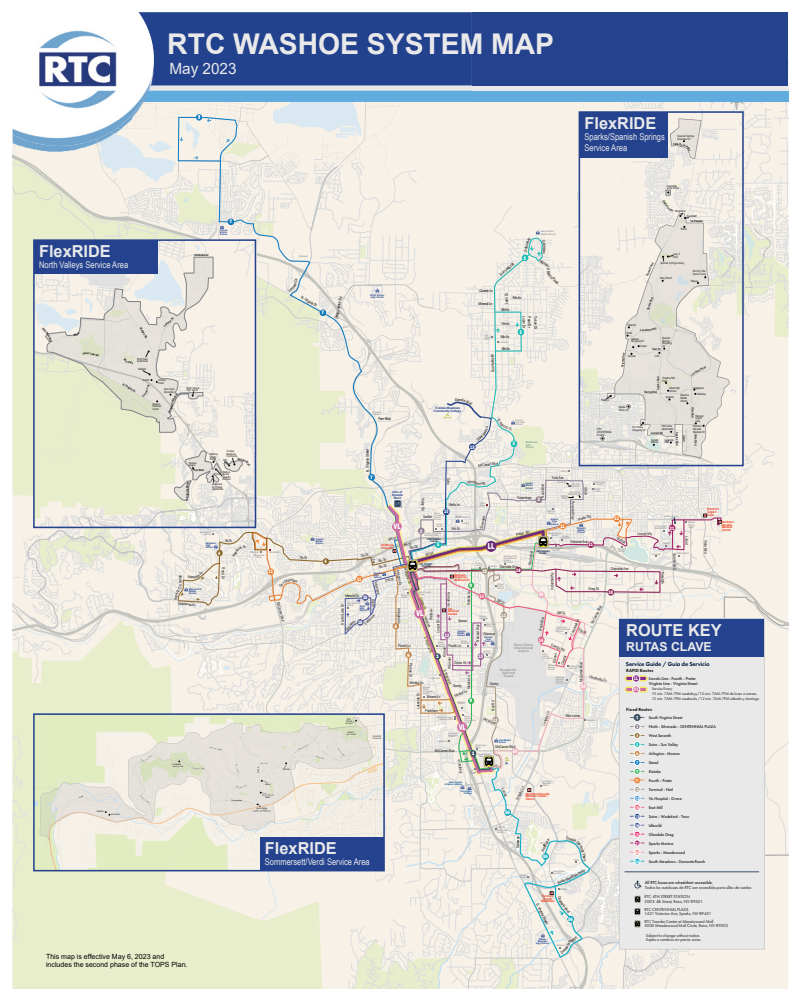


FIGURE 12. RTC BUS ROUTES MAP

RTC Washoe May, 2023 (rtcwashoe.com)

for the region, providing public transit service, and building the regional roadway network. Providing affordable and convenient transit throughout Washoe County is a challenge due to the size and rural character of most of the County. However, there are multiple bus routes throughout the Reno-Sparks metropolitan area. The bus routes could potentially be expanded to other communities to provide more connectivity throughout the County.

Although some RTC Ride routes do access portions of unincorporated Washoe County south of Reno, the primary RTC Ride service to the unincorporated portions of the County is provided in Sun Valley and the North Valleys. RTC also provides demand responsive and limited demand-based fixed-route paratransit service to many parts of the unincorporated County through its RTC Access system.

In 2007, the TMRPA focused on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in their plan, entitled "Transit Oriented Development in the Truckee Meadows: Bridging the Gap Between Planning and Implementation." TOD aims to

reduce auto-dependent traffic by coordinating development with alternative forms of transportation. The TOD Plan ultimately promotes compact, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development surrounding a vibrant transit system. By coordinating transit and development, gaps in bus services and trail connectivity can be addressed in a holistic way that prioritizes people and how they move, while also improving air quality, health, and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMTs). With the 2019 Regional Plan and 2050 Regional Transportation Plan, focus has evolved from TOD into the Regional Land Designations with a TOD component. The Tier 1 designation still maintains some of the TOD concepts with no maximum density and a focus on multi-modal and transit connectivity. Additionally, the Tier 2 designation allows a relatively high 30 dwelling units/acre maximum density, which acknowledges the past TOD footprint, and the geographic location of Mixed Use zoning that was associated with past TOD efforts remain in both Reno's and Sparks's master plans.

In addition to bus routes, over 650 miles of bicycle and pedestrian trails currently exist in Washoe County. The RTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan provides guidance, policies, and actions for improving the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure within Washoe County. The majority of the existing trails within Washoe County are located within Reno and Sparks or in the nearby recreation areas. There is the opportunity to provide greater bike and pedestrian connections in the Reno-Sparks metro area, but limited ability to expand those connections to other parts of the County. Limited paratransit (transit service which operates within a ¾-mile buffer of the fixed-route zone) service is currently available in parts of unincorporated Washoe County through the RTC Ride bus system. Transit service to the Lake Tahoe and Incline Village areas is through the Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART), in cooperation with Placer County, California. RTC's Flexride service also provides transit service to select areas of Sparks/Spanish Springs, Somersett/Verdi, and in select areas of North Valleys. Since August 2000, RTC has partnered with the Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) to provide the RTC Regional Connector intercity service.

In the Tahoe Basin, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan for 2050 addresses similar issues as the RTC with additional emphasis on the environmental impacts from transportation needs. While the Tahoe planning area and Tahoe region as a whole are not included in this Plan, it is important to ensure that there are connections between the Tahoe transportation network and the transportation network in the unincorporated County. The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) also plays a vital role in the management of the transportation network. Its mission is to efficiently plan, design, construct and maintain a safe and effective transportation system for Nevada. The agency is divided into three districts to better manage the vast highway system. Washoe County is located within District 2.

The Washoe County Roads Team within the Washoe County Community Services Department maintains and preserves over 1,000 miles of paved and gravel roads in the unincorporated portion of Washoe County, including providing snow and ice control and right-of-way maintenance including street sign repair/replacement and weed abatement. The Washoe County Roads Team also maintains an extensive network of public water conveyance ditches along County roadways. The Washoe County Roads Team works closely with other Washoe County Community Services Department teams including the Engineering and Operations Teams, and local regional partners to design, install, and maintain community traffic infrastructure and ensure connectivity between jurisdictions countywide.

RTC INTERACTIVE MAP

RTC has launched an interactive website to allow users to locate bus stops near any address, view all stops along a specific route, view all routes that service a specific stop, view RTC Transit pass vendors, and see the next 4 bus arrival times at any stop.

Visit to plan your next trip using RTC:
rtcwashoe.maps.arcgis.com

06

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The principles and policies of the **Transportation Element** are aimed at the challenges of creating and maintaining a quality transportation system in our multi-jurisdictional environment. While these policies demonstrate a commitment to conformance with the Regional Plan, increasing accessibility to the transportation system across multiple jurisdictions is critical to achieving the overall vision of the community. Community input regarding growth and development often expresses frustration with the transportation system and its ability to absorb growing demand

in a safe and responsible manner. The following policies represent Washoe County's acknowledgment of this community wide concern. The policies also demonstrate the County's commitment to proactively respond to transportation challenges in coordination with the region's many transportation agencies. While the responsibilities for planning, constructing, and maintaining the local road network are divided among NDOT, RTC, City of Reno, City of Sparks, and Washoe County, the network remains interconnected. The principles and policies below address the challenges and opportunities of this complex environment.

The County is committed to ensuring that transportation infrastructure meets the needs of not just the existing development, but future development. These policies also respond to the community's desire to pursue innovative transit and multi-modal opportunities. Community input strongly supports the development and maintenance of active transportation opportunities for walking, biking, and emerging individual electric vehicle technology such as e-scooters and bikes. The policies support a transportation network that is consistent with the community's deep connection to outdoor recreation.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ [*RTC 2050 Regional Transportation Plan*](#)
- ▶ [*RTC Advanced-Mobility Plan*](#)
- ▶ [*RTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*](#)
- ▶ [*RTC Complete Streets Master Plan*](#)

TR Principle 1. Create an interconnected transportation network.

- 1.1. Promote the connectivity of the neighborhoods within the larger community and region by:
 - » Encouraging block lengths that promote pedestrian, cycling, and vehicular circulation.
 - » Designing new developments to contain stubs for connection to adjacent developments.
 - » Designing new developments to utilize planned public transportation.
 - » Encouraging separate bicycle and pedestrian pathways.
- 1.2. Connect open space, trail access, and bikeway systems with multi-use trails in accordance with the Truckee Meadows Trail Plan.
- 1.3. *Work to preserve the condition of sidewalks and bicycle facilities. Maintain facilities, where feasible, for year-round use.*

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14. *Support mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and community revitalization projects that encourage walking, bicycling, and easy access to existing and planned transit stops.*

TR Principle 2. Provide an efficient transportation network through coordinated operations, system management, technology, and targeted investments.

- 2.1. Encourage the incorporation of transit stops and other multi-modal facilities in the development review process where regular transit service exists or is planned.
- 2.2. Facilitate the proactive maintenance and construction of roadways and pedestrian ways to ensure high-quality, safe travel.
- 2.3. Employ Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies such as minor widening, improved channelization, improved signage, traffic signals, and other low-cost mitigation measures.
- 2.4. *Support the use of emerging technologies, such as the use of mobile device applications to navigate the active transportation network and facilitate ridesharing, efficient parking, and transit use.*
- 2.5. *Prioritize regional and local investments that fulfill TMRPA objectives in transit, active transportation demand management, and other programs which support identified TMRPA transportation performance outcomes.*
- 2.6. *Support parking management programs that incentivize non-auto modes and discourage private auto-mobile use at peak times in peak locations, alleviate circulating vehicle trips associated with parking availability.*

RTP



TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- 3.1. Implement transportation systems that reduce dependence on automobiles.
- 3.2. Encourage large-scale employers and development to accommodate employees by providing on-site parking and/or transportation services.
- 3.3. Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.
- 3.4. Limit auto-related business such as retail, service, or repair of automobiles within pedestrian-oriented districts.
- 3.5. Promote and facilitate recreational use of green space by pedestrians and bicyclists, and provide access to public facilities, recreation, public transportation, and open space.

RTP

TR Principle 4. Coordinate transportation decisions with regional and local partners.

- 4.1. *Advocate for a regional evaluation of how transportation infrastructure could be developed concurrently with development to meet transportation demands.*
- 4.2. *Support multi-jurisdictional efforts to address transportation infrastructure and investment.*
- 4.3. *Work with RTC to provide a transportation system and planning process that is responsive to community needs and environmental concerns, including attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards, wildlife crossing considerations, and energy conservation.*
- 4.4. *Collaborate with federal, State, and tribal partners to establish efficient rail, air, and bus transportation connections to and from Tahoe and surrounding metropolitan areas.*
- 4.5. *Encourage collaboration between public lands managers, departments of transportation, transit providers, and other regional partners to support sustainable recreation and multi-modal access to recreation sites.*
- 4.6. *Coordinate transportation efforts with WCSD, especially regarding Safe Routes to School, school zones, school crossings, etc.*

06

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

TR Principle 5. Reduce transportation-related emissions and pollutants.

- 5.1. Support TMRPA efforts to:
 - » Use its planning authority to develop an urban form that minimizes the growth of vehicle miles traveled;
 - » Add guidelines to the Regional Planning Commission Resolution to require that “Projects of Regional Significance,” include a quantified analysis of their impact on regional air quality.
- 5.2. Support RTC implementation of the Smart Trips 2 Work program that will reduce the growth of vehicle miles traveled.

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07

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

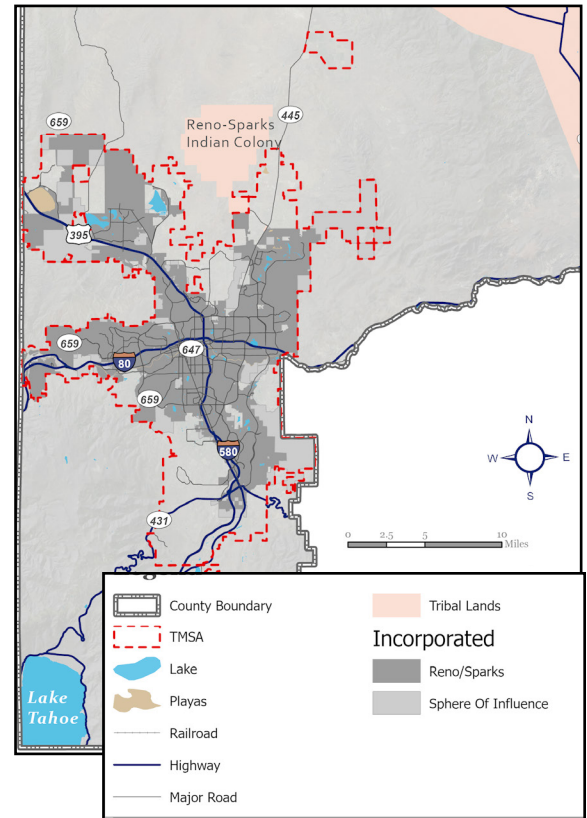
Water

Washoe County's primary purveyor of water is the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), a not-for-profit, community-owned water utility overseen by a seven-member board of directors made up of elected officials from Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County, as well as an appointed Citizen Advisory Committee. TMWA treats and delivers water to over 440,000 residents in the Truckee Meadows Region.

TMWA has a diverse water supply, with a mix of surface and groundwater resources. Surface water includes the Truckee River, upstream reservoir storage, and creek resources. The Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA), implemented in 2015, provides additional upstream drought storage and operational flexibility for TMWA. Groundwater resources include 89 production wells in nine hydrographic basins, including five production wells in Honey Lake Valley as part of the Fish Springs Ranch Water Supply Project. Through its aquifer storage and recovery program, TMWA supplements its groundwater supply by injecting treated surface water into many of its production wells during the winter, when customer demand is lower. This mix of resources allows TMWA to manage its water supply by utilizing mostly surface water when demand is low and supplementing with groundwater when demand is high or during droughts.

In addition to providing water, TMWA works to conserve water. As a testament to their work, municipal residential per capita demand decreased by 3% annually from 2003 to 2019. TMWA's 20-year water demand projection estimates a 14% increase in water demand from approximately 83,000 acre-feet in 2020 to 96,000 acre-feet in 2040. Since the early 1980s TMWA (and its predecessor) have required all new development served by TMWA to dedicate water rights to meet the project's estimated water demand. For every acre-foot of surface water rights needed for new development, an additional 11% of water rights must be dedicated to TMWA for drought storage. To meet anticipated future demand, TMWA will rely primarily on the conversion of Truckee River water rights from irrigation to municipal use along with Fish Springs Ranch groundwater.

Supporting TMWA, are other small water purveyors within Washoe County including Gerlach GID, Riverbend Mobile Home Park, Silver Knolls Water Co., Rosemount Water Co. Steamboat Springs Water Co., Verdi Meadows Utility Co., Sun Valley GID, and Great Basin Water Co.



MAP 10. TMWA WATER AND SEWER SERVICE BOUNDARY

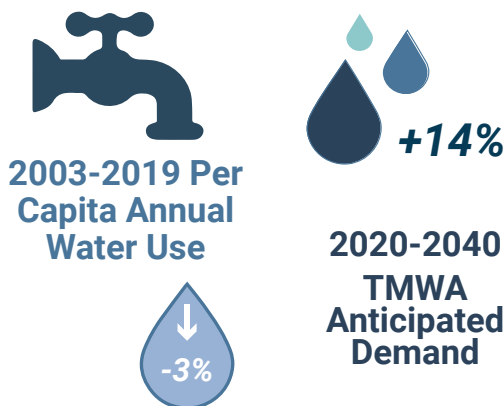


FIGURE 13. 2000-2020 WATER DEMAND AND 2040 DEMAND PREDICTIONS

Source: TMWA Water Facilities Plan

(GBWC). In 2007, Revisions to NRS created a new regional water entity in Washoe County, called the Western Regional Water Commission (WRWC), to focus on improving water resource planning at the regional level and facilitate coordinated resource management among the Truckee Meadows member entities. The member entities include the cities of Reno and Sparks, the South Truckee Meadows General Improvement District, the Sun Valley General Improvement District, TMWA, and Washoe County.

Sewer, Recycled Water, and Storm Water Management

Currently, properties within the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA) are able to connect to municipal sewer and water (Map 10). Washoe Utility Services (WUS), within the County Community Services Department (CSD), oversees sewer collection, recycled water, and storm water management across the County. With more than 300 miles of sewer mains covering 22 square miles, CSD serves approximately 16,000 customers including some urban areas in Reno and Sparks. In addition, 11 other private utility service companies provide sewer collection and storm water management services to other portions of the County, primarily in the Reno-Sparks metro area. CSD treats an average of 5 million gallons of wastewater per day at three regional wastewater plants: South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility and two smaller treatment facilities in the Cold Springs and Lemmon Valley hydrographic basins. CSD manages the recovery of reclaimed water (non-potable water to irrigate landscaping, sports fields, and golf courses) and biosolids (capable of generating energy through the production of biogas) from these waste streams.

OneWater Nevada, is a collaboration between the University of Nevada, Reno, the City of Reno, City of Sparks, Washoe County, TMWA, TMWRF, NNWPC and WRWC to develop a comprehensive approach to water management that is resilient and sustainable for future generations. OneWater Nevada seeks to identify, understand, and implement water practices, through methods to both conserve and extend the use of existing water resources which consider long term water-resource and water-quality management issues. OneWater Nevada's research indicates that Advanced Purified Water (also known as recycled water) represents an opportunity to create an entirely new water resource to serve the region.

Broadband

Broadband access is another intrinsic service for Washoe County. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines broadband, or fast internet, as internet with download speeds of at least 25 Mbps and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps. A look at Washoe County's broadband data (Table 5) shows that the County is above standard, with upload and download speeds at 54 Mbps and 13 Mbps respectively. While the standardized download and upload speeds accommodate many families' needs, the ideal speeds truly depend on how residents use the internet at home. With many individuals now working and studying from home, the need for faster and more reliable broadband access is growing. Another important data point to highlight from the below table is the direct link between poverty and lack of internet access. The percentage of Washoe County population living below the poverty level and households without internet access are 11% and 9% respectively. This link is common across the nation and many governments and organizations are working to close the digital gap. Interestingly, there are higher proportions of households without internet access within the cities of Reno and Sparks compared to the unincorporated County. As Washoe County continues to grow, efforts should be made to achieve the 'last mile' of broadband connection—linking residents to each other as well as schools, jobs, health, and other important daily needs. New telecommunications infrastructure is encouraged to be co-located with other similar types of facilities in existing (or new) corridors as applicable and possible in the Regional Utility Corridors as designated by 2019 Regional Plan.

TABLE 5. WASHOE COUNTY BROADBAND, 2021

<i>Total Households</i>	182,180 (ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2020)
<i>Households Without A Computer, Smartphone, or Tablet</i>	5.5%
<i>Households Without Internet Access</i>	9%
<i>Population whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level</i>	11%
<i>Average Download Speed (Mbps)</i>	54 Mbps
<i>Average Upload Speed (Mbps)</i>	13 Mbps

Source: Broadband USA, 2021

07

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

Washoe County provides numerous services that are not subject to review and regulation by the TMRPA. These services include Senior Services, the Library, Public Safety (Sheriff), Judicial/Court service, and social services. These services are subject to the pressures of population growth and careful planning is necessary to ensure they meet the community's expectations. Washoe County is committed to providing quality services in all these arenas as the region grows. The agencies responsible for these services undertake their own dedicated planning activities aimed at meeting the region's growing needs for services. In a similar fashion to the regional coordination described in the Regional Form and Coordination Element, these independent agencies utilize the same growth forecasts all other regional agencies use when developing their independent master plans focused on their specific range of services.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *TMWA 2040 Water Resource Plan*
- ▶ *TMWA Water System Facility Plan 2035*
- ▶ *2016-2035 Washoe County Regional Water Management Plan*
- ▶ *TMRPA Public Infrastructure Plan (In Progress)*
- ▶ *2021-2040 Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan*
- ▶ *Integrated Source Water and Watershed Protection Plan for Washoe County*
- ▶ *Washoe County School District Facilities Plan 2020-3029*

The Public Facilities and Services Element incorporates multiple NRS-required elements of a master plan including Safety and Public Facilities and Services, as described in Chapter 1. The [Washoe County Consensus Forecast](#) serves as the required population plan and the [Regional Utility Sites & Corridors Map](#) serves as the Above Ground Utility Plan. Harbors were not addressed because Washoe County does not have any harbors.

The principles and policies of the Public Facilities and Services element demonstrate Washoe County's commitment to providing facilities and services that are sustainable and adequately funded to support the forecast population. The policies encompassed within this element support and conform with the Regional Plan's vision of how services should be extended to new development.

Overall, the policies refer to a range of necessary services such as water, sewer, broadband, and renewable energy. The primary goal of this element's principles and policies is to ensure that basic services are available for existing and new development on a sustainable basis. Water is especially important throughout these policies, as cooperatively managing water resources is a key strategy for sustainable development. Accommodating future growth requires the provision of numerous services controlled by a range of different agencies, like TMWA, small water purveyors within the County, and WUS. Collaboration among these agencies is paramount to creating infrastructure that benefits multiple jurisdictions, increases safety and health, and reduces costs for its users. The purpose of these principles and policies is to create opportunities for collaboration, mechanisms for change, and long-term solutions across county and municipal boundaries.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with italic text and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

PFS Principle 1. Cooperatively manage water resources for long-term sustainability.

WASHOE COUNTY CLEAN WATER

Visit washoecountycleanwater.org to learn more about The 2020 Integrated Source Water and 319(h) Watershed Protection Plan for Public Water Systems and the Truckee River in the Truckee Meadows and other watershed management and source water protection efforts in Washoe County.

CLICK
THE ICONS
FOR MORE
INFORMATION!

- 2.1 1.1. *Coordinate implementation of TMWA's 2020-2040 Water Resources Plan and the WRWC Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan with TMWA and WRWC.*
- 1.2. Support the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA).
- 2.5 1.3. *Implement TMWA's Drought Contingency Plan to promote smart and efficient use of the community's water resources in compliance with all federal and state regulations.*
- 1.4. Continue to work with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), TMWA, TMRPA, and Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) to implement the 2020 Integrated Source Water and 319 (h) Watershed Protection Plan for Public Water Systems and the Truckee River in the Truckee Meadows to preserve and enhance available water supplies, address known and potential threats to water quality, and promote awareness and consideration of critical source water protection areas as identified in the plan.
- 3.4 1.5. Continue to work with the Central Truckee Meadows Remediation District (CTMRD) to address contamination.
- 1.6. Continue to work with GBWC and TMWA to find solutions, such as septic to sewer conversions in areas with water quality issues and nitrate contamination in Spanish Springs Valley.
- 2.3 1.7. *In cooperation with TMWA, continue to investigate and evaluate potential future water management projects consistent with, and in addition to, TROA to further increase the region's water security.*
- 1.8. Work with state and federal agencies to manage local groundwater resources to ensure annual use does not exceed rates of inflow and recharge.
- 1.9. Evaluate Master Plan Amendments and Projects of Regional Significance against the 2019 Regional Plan and WRWC Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan.
- 1.10. *Protect groundwater recharge areas and continue to develop programs to utilize groundwater in a sustainable manner.*
- 1.11. Support WRWC and TMWA planning efforts to ensure that current and projected water demands can be met in a sustainable manner.
- 2.4 1.12. Support the investigation and development of new sustainable, long term water resources consistent with the Regional Plan and the Regional Water Management Plan.
- 1.13. Promote a coordinated regional approach to effluent management, including but limited to the disposal and use of treated effluent when appropriate.
- 2.7 1.14. Promote conjunctive management of multiple water resources.
- 1.15. Prohibit unsustainable groundwater mining as a method of water management.

PFS Principle 2. Provide sufficient water to meet the current and future needs of County residents.

- 2.1. Balance new water supply commitments and existing commitments with sustainable sources of water supply.

07

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

- 2.2. *Support TMWA's conjunctive use plan and manage surface water and groundwater supplies for municipal and industrial use to withstand at minimum the worst drought cycle of record.*
- 2.3. Ensure new suburban- and urban-level development is served by a community water supply system.
- 2.4. Encourage the use of reclaimed wastewater to meet non-potable water demand where such use is an efficient utilization of water rights, is cost effective, and where the quality meets the use type.
- 2.5. Ensure that water rights sufficient to serve proposed developments are dedicated to Washoe County when new parcels are created outside the TMSA.

PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- 3.1. Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.
- 3.2. Master Plan land use designations will implement the limitations on the provision of services in the rural area as described in the regional plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.
- 3.3. Development of new schools in the rural area is permitted only in conformance with the most current restrictions applied by the Regional Plan.
- 3.4. Develop facilities and services consistent with the priority hierarchy for development described in the Regional Plan.
- 3.5. In accordance with the Regional Plan, limit water and wastewater infrastructure outside the TMSA, except for the management of effluent management and recycled water.
- 3.6. Coordinate with independent service providers to understand their service delivery plans, especially those service providers seeking local government funding.
- 3.7. Coordinate with WCSD to ensure development is concurrent or planned to align with adequate school facilities, capacity, and transportation infrastructure.
- 3.8. Washoe County agencies responsible for Senior Services, Public Safety, Libraries, and Social Services will plan for the provision of services to a growing population through the development and implementation of independent master plans or other similar means using population data from the regional consensus forecast.

PFS Principle 4. Support the development and maintenance of adequate, safe, and resilient energy infrastructure and resources.

- 4.1. Support and implement the Regional Plan policies regarding Utility Corridors and sites.
- 4.2. Facilitate the responsible development of regional renewable energy generation and infrastructure.
- 4.3. Coordinate with Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority on any project that proposes new or expanded

electrical transmission infrastructure within Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 77 areas of public use airports within the region

- 4.4. Support regional approaches to providing public services and facilities in coordination with federal agencies, General Improvement Districts, municipalities, and regional agencies.
- 4.5. Encourage the collocation of renewable energy generation infrastructure with other forms of land use.
- 4.6. Encourage the clustering of renewable energy generation infrastructure near existing infrastructure and outside of sensitive wildlife, scenic, or natural resource areas.

PLANNING AREAS

LAND USE PLANNING AREAS

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Washoe County is comprised of distinct planning areas, each with their own unique character, opportunities, and development constraints. Since their inception, the incorporation of the planning areas into the County's master plan has been used as a tool to identify and focus on the unique issues specific to planning areas that are not generally applicable throughout the entire unincorporated County.

Envision Washoe 2040 continues this legacy by incorporating portions of the area plans from the 2010 Master Plan directly into this chapter as distinct "planning areas". These planning areas are the result of a dedicated effort to identify and refocus on those characteristics in each area that require special attention outside the countywide umbrella. Envision Washoe 2040 recognizes that community character is composed of all the issues an area faces, including both countywide and area specific issues. The following planning area discussions support the desired community character by clearly and concisely identifying each area's unique character, constraints, and opportunities. Targeted principles, policies, and actions are provided to specifically guide development in each of the planning areas. As overall regional growth continues to dilute some of the differences between the areas, these planning areas ensure their unique needs are identified and addressed.

It should be noted that the Tahoe planning area maintains a separate area plan and is therefore not included in Envision Washoe 2040. Additionally, the former Northeast Truckee Meadows and Northwest Truckee Meadows Area Plans are almost entirely within the jurisdiction of the cities of Reno or Sparks and therefore do not have dedicated planning area sections in Envision Washoe 2040.

Land Use Types

The concept of urban versus suburban versus rural community character was at the heart of many of the conversations regarding specific planning areas within unincorporated Washoe County. Each area has its own unique character, as well as distinct issues, opportunities, constraints, and priorities. Many residents describe their areas as "rural," but the character of these areas varies greatly. During the Envision Washoe 2040 process, community members were asked to describe "urban," "suburban," and "rural" character.

It is important to clearly articulate the unique quality of each planning area to ensure that development occurs in the desired amount, location, and type throughout the County.



What does it mean to be Rural?

Washoe County residents describe rural land use areas as large lots of at least forty acres with no direct neighbors and plenty of wide-open space used for farming, livestock, or wildlife preservation. These areas have dark skies and are quiet places. Rural areas are not connected to municipal services, instead using well water and septic systems. The population in rural areas is small, with "more livestock than people." Although these communities are small, they are close-knit, connected communities where everyone looks out for each other. These areas have few amenities, if any, and residents need to commute long distances to get groceries, gas, or other supplies.

What does it mean to be Suburban?

Suburban areas were designated as the transition from Urban to Rural. For Washoe County residents, the suburbs are defined as predominantly containing single-family homes in planned communities with enough space for yards, vehicles, and storage. People living in suburban areas rely primarily on their cars for transportation, such as commuting to work or venturing into urban areas for the amenities of the city. In these areas, businesses are centrally located in shopping centers with grocery stores. People in these areas are far enough away from the city for their neighborhoods to be peaceful and quiet, yet still can quickly access the urban core. Additionally, recreation is not far away and serves as an escape from the faster pace of urban and suburban life.

Some areas within the County which are suburban in land use pattern have maintained a rural character due to the lifestyles of residents of these areas. The elements most referenced when describing the "rural character" of these suburban areas are the keeping of horses and livestock, ranch-style homes, scenic vistas, nearby open spaces and connection to public lands, and presence of dark skies. In these areas which have a more suburban land use pattern of smaller lots, an auto-oriented transportation network, and connection to nearby services but have maintained a more rural lifestyle, land use decisions should consider both components.

What does it mean to be Urban?

Most commonly, Washoe County residents feel that living in an urban area means that the area was walkable and cyclable with amenities such as schools, workplaces, grocery stores, and entertainment close by. These areas also place an emphasis on mixed-use zoning which supports a culturally rich, dynamic, and accessible landscape. Many folks imagine an urban area as one with tall buildings, sidewalks, bike lanes, and parks. The housing in an urban area is made up of multi-family housing such as apartments, condominiums, and few single-family homes on small lots. This high-density housing also indicates high population density in the area.

RURAL



- ▶ Forest
- ▶ High Desert
- ▶ North Valleys
- ▶ South Valleys
- ▶ Truckee Canyon
- ▶ Verdi
- ▶ Warm Springs

SUBURBAN



- ▶ Cold Springs
- ▶ North Valleys
- ▶ Southeast Truckee Meadows
- ▶ Southwest Truckee Meadows
- ▶ Spanish Springs
- ▶ Sun Valley

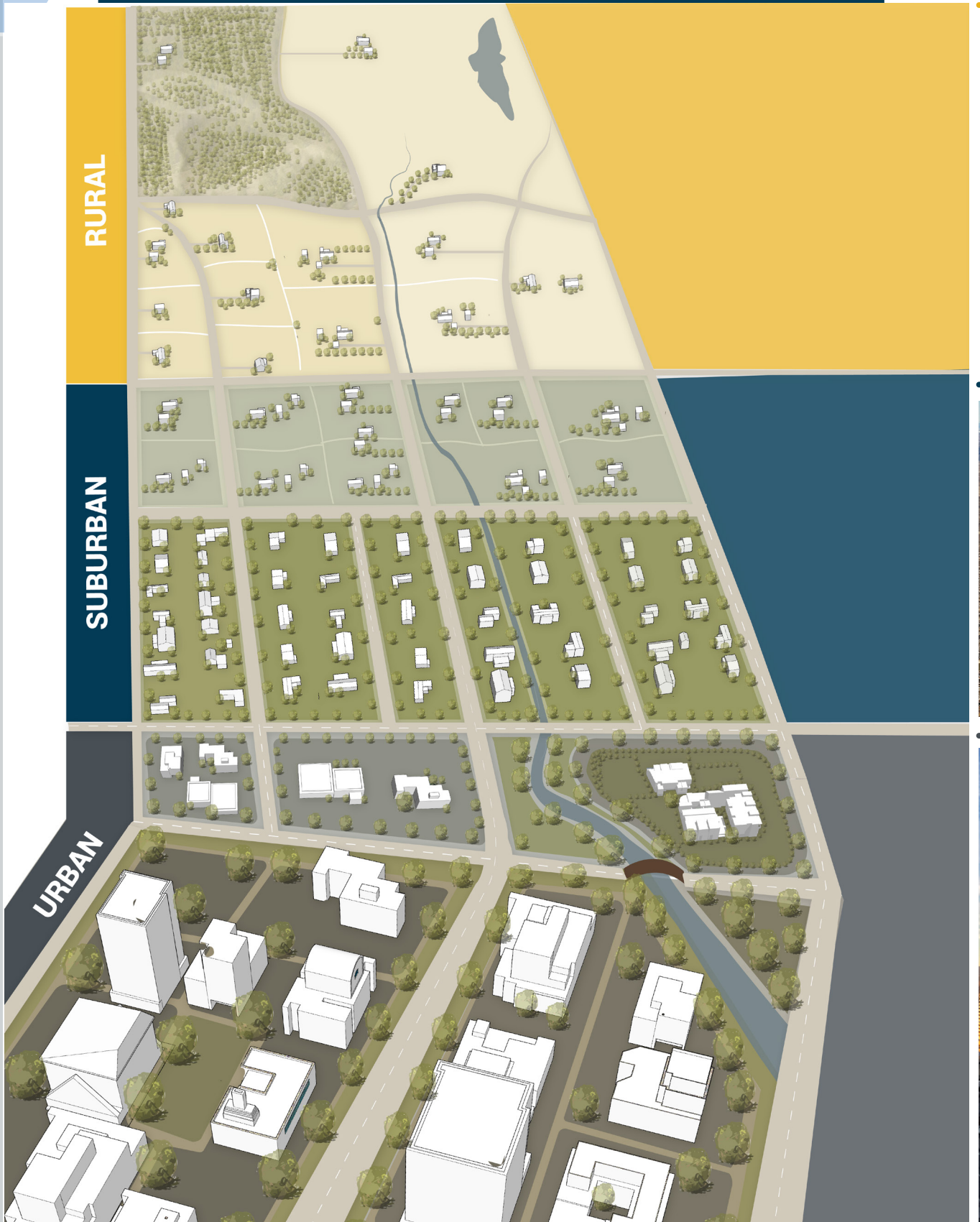
URBAN



- ▶ Reno*
- ▶ Sparks*

* Included for reference only

PLANNING AREAS



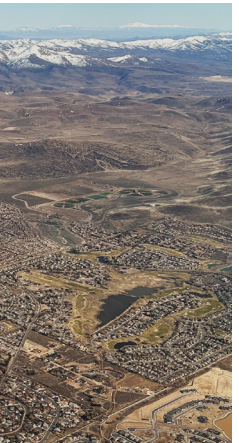
Rural Land Use



Within rural land use typology there is a range of character types, including agricultural areas, federal lands, large undeveloped areas, and dispersed residential areas. The following features are generally indicative of rural land use character in Washoe County:

- ▶ Abundance of recreational opportunities
- ▶ Large lots with more undeveloped land and open space than development
- ▶ Predominately agricultural with low residential density
- ▶ Few commercial services
- ▶ Little to no multi-modal transportation connections

Suburban Land Use



The suburban land use typology includes areas where residential development is the predominant land use, regardless of lifestyle and accessory uses. The following features are generally indicative of suburban land use character in Washoe County:

- ▶ Primarily residential land uses
- ▶ Abundance of recreational opportunities
- ▶ Variety of housing options
- ▶ Commercial services and employment opportunities
- ▶ Accessory urban agriculture options
- ▶ Multi-modal transportation connections including sidewalks, bike paths, and transit services

Urban Land Use



While none of the planning areas within unincorporated Washoe County exhibit typical urban land use patterns, both Reno and Sparks depict urban land use patterns. The urban land use typology is included as a reference to describe the range of land uses and residential densities throughout the region. Urban land use is characterized by higher intensity uses, greater presence of multi-modal transportation options, and a predominance of commercial and retail uses compared to rural and suburban land use patterns. The following features are generally indicative of urban land use character in Washoe County:

- ▶ Connection to services, commercial and retail centers, and employment areas
- ▶ Mix of multi-unit and single-unit residential options
- ▶ Abundance of multi-modal transportation options including sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use pathways, and a variety of transit services
- ▶ Accessory urban agriculture options.

PLANNING AREAS

PLANNING AREA FORMAT

Character Tag

SUBURBAN

RURAL

At the top of each page of each planning section there is a "tag" for the general character of the community matching the land use typed described on page 75. Each planning area is either tagged as predominately "rural" or predominately "suburban".

History & Existing Conditions

This section of each planning area briefly describes the history of the planning area, how development has traditionally occurred, any unique land use patterns, and any key features which define the specific community.

Character Statement

This statement within each planning area reflects the overall vision for the community for the next 20 years.

Development Constraints

This section within each planning area describes the specific opportunities and challenges that regional growth poses for each area's desired character. This section focuses on the unique development constraints and opportunities for improvement in each planning area, not general challenges that the County faces as a whole.

Existing and Desired Conditions Snapshot

The existing and desired conditions snapshot is a subsection of the Development Constraints section which focuses on four key metrics: adequacy of recreation opportunities, integrity of scenic resources, availability of commercial services, and presence of multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

The bars extending from each icon identify the current condition for each metric. The yellow text at the end of each bar describes the desired future condition (improve or maintain). The longer the bar, the more present the service/resource is, based off the following scale:

- **Generally Absent** – The service/resource is generally unavailable or not present throughout the majority of the planning area.
- **Partially Present** – The service/resource is present in portions of the planning area but not widely accessible.
- **Generally Present** – The service/resource is present through most of the planning area and generally accessible.
- **Highly Accessible** – The service/resource is present throughout the planning area and is easily accessible in the majority of the planning area.

Priority Principles and Policies

The principles and policies listed for each planning area are aligned with the countywide principles and policies listed in the Elements. To learn more about specific element principles or policies, please visit the respective Element Section in Chapter 2 of this Plan.

The principles and policies listed in this section represent the priorities for each area, as identified by the residents in each community. Due to unique characteristics and conditions in each area, some planning areas have unique policies to address specific issues. These unique policies are shown in *blue italics*.

ELEMENTS	
PH	POPULATION AND HOUSING
RFC	REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION
NCR	CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
AR	ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY
LU	LAND USE
TR	TRANSPORTATION
PFS	PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Master Plan Land Use Map

The Master Plan Land Use Map describes the desired future character for each planning area using the master plan designations described in Table 4 in the Land Use element.

COLD SPRINGS

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Google Street View



HISTORY AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

Located approximately 20 miles north of downtown Reno in scenic Cold Springs Valley, the Cold Springs planning area is characterized by a series of ridge lines surrounding a large intermittent playa lake bed known as the White Lake Playa. A seasonal lake of varying size forms on the White Lake Playa representing a major landmark and important community identifier for the Cold Springs community.

Over time, Cold Springs has evolved from its rural roots in ranching, mining, and open spaces into an area of mixed suburban, rural, and non-residential land uses. Although the community is now predominantly a residential community, there are small areas of commercial and industrial development. Commercial development, including tourist commercial, is primarily located near the Bordertown exit and along Village and White Lake Parkway. Industrial development is generally located near the railroad tracks along the western border of the planning area, with some additional industrial land use along White Lake Parkway (e.g. Reno Truss Co.).

Residential neighborhoods of varying density and type surround the northern half of the White Lake Playa and extend into the northern portion of Cold Springs Valley. Initial residential subdivision in the valley established a land use pattern of small 5-acre and 1-acre lot subdivisions. These areas were, and continue to be, characterized by equestrian uses and small-scale livestock activities. Sporadic large lot parcel maps followed these initial subdivisions until the 1970s when several new subdivisions established a change in the residential land use pattern to predominantly 1/3-acre lots. In the 1980s and 1990s, additional 1/3-acre lot subdivisions were platted rounding out what is commonly referred to as "old" Cold Springs. Although technically considered suburban in terms of density and land use patterns, "old" Cold Springs lends itself to a more rural lifestyle with, open ditches, gravel driveways, little or no street lighting, boarding of horses, and a mix of manufactured and stick built homes.

In 2000, a large common open space development was approved representing yet another change in the area's land use pattern, with smaller lots ranging from ½ to 1 acre, but an overall density consistent with adjacent traditional 1/3-acre lot and block subdivision. This development, known as "Woodland Village" or "Cold Springs 2000", includes a small commercial "town center," a school site, three parks, and athletic fields surrounded by approximately 2,000 residential lots laid out in a circular pattern. Spokes of open space connect the town center to surrounding residential lots and provide pedestrian/bicycle access.

Open space, public land, and mountains surround the developed portions of the Cold Springs Valley.

Distinguishing natural features include the intermittent White Lake Playa, wetlands, springs, dark night skies with bright stars, open public lands, historic ranching areas, unique rock outcroppings, and the surrounding mountains and ridge lines. The ridge lines that surround the Cold Springs Valley form the Cold Springs Hydrographic Basin. Typical of the basin and range topography found throughout Nevada, the Cold Springs Hydrographic Basin is a “closed” basin, meaning that all hydrology remains within the basin by collecting in low lying areas (in Cold Springs this primarily occurs on the White Lake Playa). These natural resources represent important community identifiers that contribute significantly to the community character and overall quality of life in the area. Surrounding public lands owned and managed by both the BLM and the USFS are of particular importance to the community and offer an abundance of recreational activities ranging from off-road vehicle use to wildlife viewing. It is extremely important to the community that access to these areas be preserved; however, the continued accommodation of all users and activities will require careful management to avoid resource degradation and negative impacts to residents.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

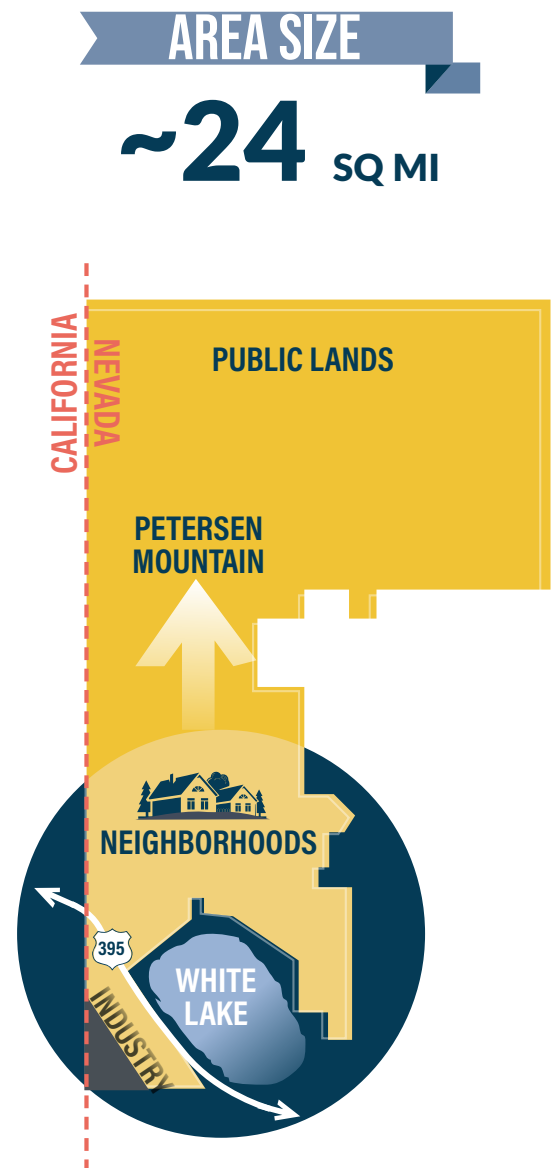
The Regional Plan designates the areas within the TMSA in the Cold Springs planning area as Tier 3, and areas outside the TMSA as Rural. This means that over the next 20 years, the areas within the TMSA will continue to experience and accommodate development at a maximum density mirroring existing development, and areas outside the TMSA will remain largely undeveloped with a maximum density of 1 unit per 5 acres. Development of small scale local serving commercial uses can be accommodated within the TMSA, as well as the continuation and addition of small-scale industrial uses that will offer employment opportunities and economic diversity.

Future development in the Cold Springs area will be limited by natural features including existing steep slopes along the western portion of the planning area, wetlands, floodplains, and water bodies. Additionally, the northern portion of the Cold Springs Valley is federally managed by the BLM and the USFS. The City of Reno municipal boundary abuts the eastern and southern boundaries of the planning area and the White Lake playa, affecting the development patterns in those areas. Currently, traffic and lack of community services including fire, police, and healthcare services, are major constraints for new development. Fire hazards and steep slopes also pose a risk to new and existing development in the valley. Preservation of scenic views and utilizing multi-use development are priorities for new development.

Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Increase the number of schools to provide safe commutes for children and families ▶ Preservation of scenic views as a public amenity ▶ Multi-use development	▶ Traffic on Highway 395 ▶ Lack of access to community services for new development ▶ Fire hazards along Wildland-Urban Interface

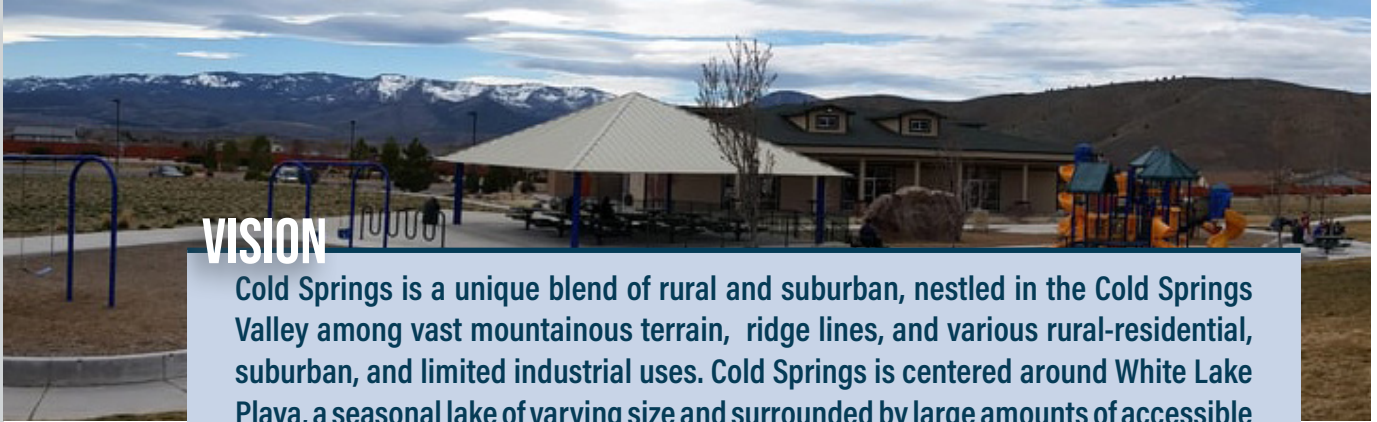
FIGURE 14. COLD SPRINGS KEY FEATURES



COLD SPRINGS

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space

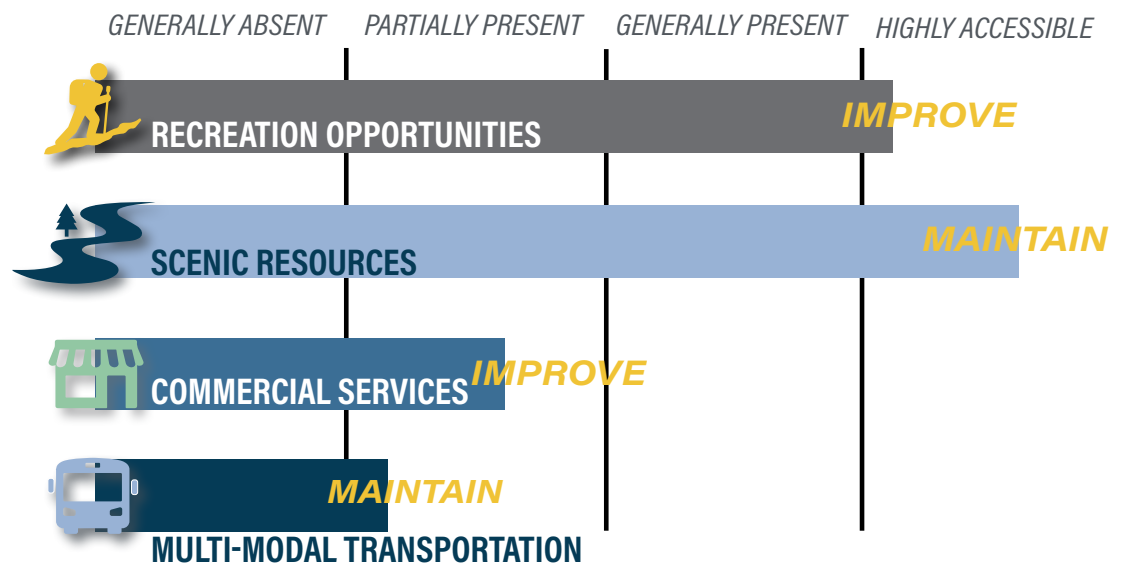


VISION

Cold Springs is a unique blend of rural and suburban, nestled in the Cold Springs Valley among vast mountainous terrain, ridge lines, and various rural-residential, suburban, and limited industrial uses. Cold Springs is centered around White Lake Playa, a seasonal lake of varying size and surrounded by large amounts of accessible public land. Equestrian activities are a focal point for the region, honoring Cold Springs' historical roots.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Cold Springs has highly accessible recreation opportunities due to the proximity of public lands within the planning area, but there is an opportunity to improve access to recreation opportunities, especially equestrian trails, and bicycle and pedestrian trail connections in the existing neighborhoods. Scenic resources are also highly accessible, with views of the surrounding mountains and public lands largely unobstructed. Future development should maintain these viewsheds. Commercial services are partially present, but there is an opportunity to improve the number and variety of services within the valley. Multi-modal transportation is partially present, with some inter-state services to California. Additional trail connections are possible within the area, but further public transit service is unlikely. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

PH Principle 2. Coordinate population growth with the availability of water, sanitary sewers, streets and highways, and other public facilities and services.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Promote development of affordable and workforce housing near public facilities, schools, jobs, and public transportation using mixed-use and higher density development.

PH Principle 3. Use a balanced set of tools to increase the diversity of housing types across all income levels and facilitate more affordable, senior, multi-family, and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 3.5 Require and/or incentivize a mixture of housing types (i.e. product types, unit sizes, and price points) in large development applications and subdivisions.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewshed including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

LU Principle 1. Facilitate partnerships to ensure land use decisions are based on the best available information.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Continue to cooperate with TMRPA to ensure the County's approach to growth and development is consistent with and supportive of the regional vision.

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- ▶ Policy 4.1 Encourage design of industrial, commercial, and multifamily uses to contribute to the community's sense of place rather than detract from it.
- ▶ Policy 4.3 Support visual improvements to enhance community gateways.

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.1 Maintain large lot sizes outside of the TMSA and prohibit land use changes that would result in a parcel less than 5 acres in size.

LU Principle 6. Direct Development into the TMSA.

- ▶ Policy 6.2 Promote compatible mixed-use and infill development patterns within the TMSA.

TR Principle 2. Provide an efficient transportation network through coordinated operations, system management, technology, and targeted investments.

- ▶ Policy 2.3 Facilitate the proactive maintenance and construction of roadways and pedestrian ways to ensure high-quality, safe travel.
- ▶ Policy 2.4 Employ Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies such as minor widening, improved channelization, improved signage, traffic signals, and other low-cost mitigation measures.

PFS Principle 1. Cooperatively manage water resources for long-term sustainability.

- ▶ Policy 1.8 Work with state and federal agencies to manage local groundwater resources to ensure annual use does not exceed rates of inflow and recharge.

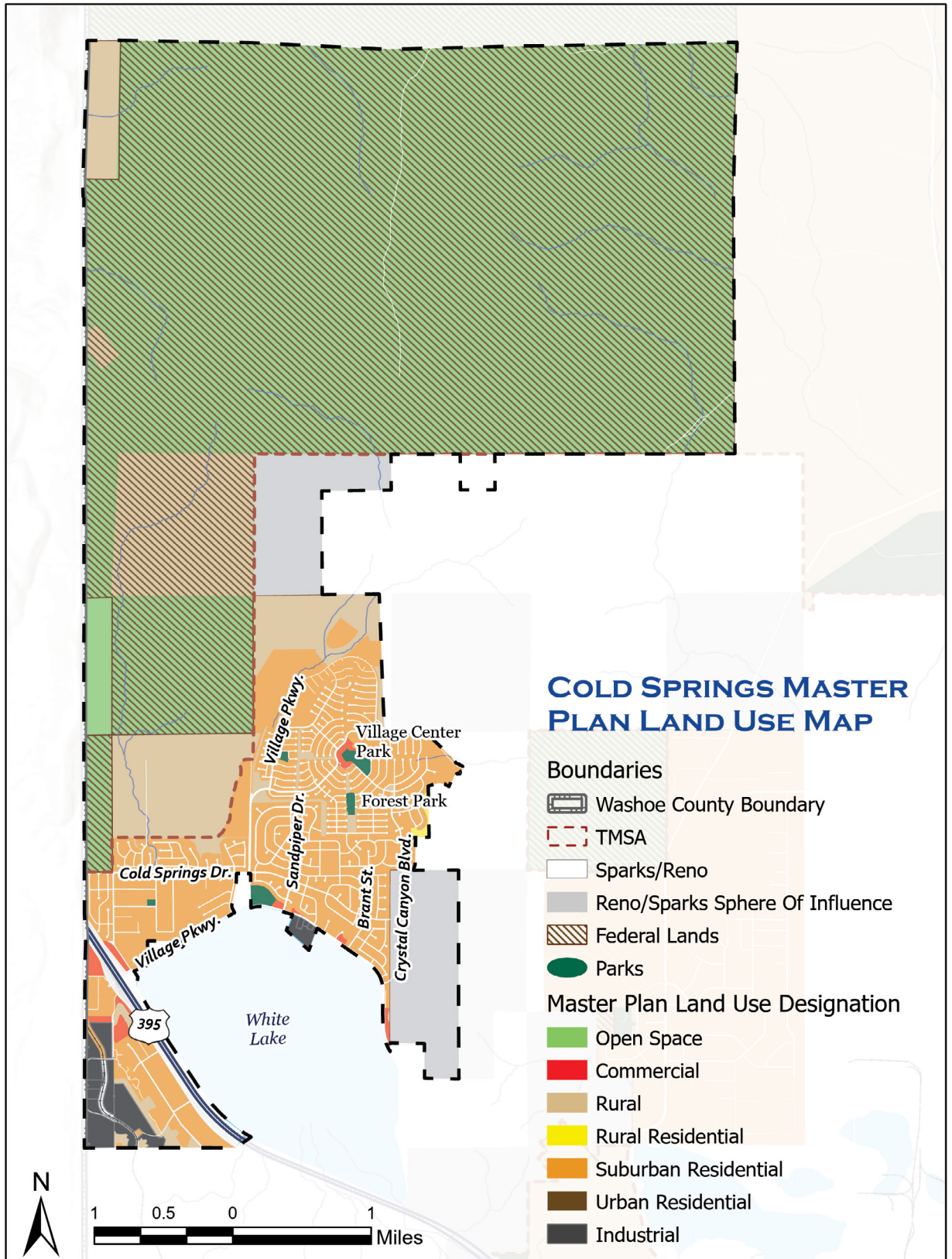
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.

COLD SPRINGS

SUBURBAN

MAP 11. COLD SPRINGS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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FOREST

RURAL

Photo Credits: Alison Oakley



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Forest planning area is a distinct planning area located in the southwest portion of Washoe County. It comprises approximately 130 square miles, much of which falls within the Toiyabe National Forest and the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service. The Forest planning area sits entirely within the Truckee River Basin. Several creeks, along with the Steamboat Irrigation Ditch, provide groundwater recharge and surface water to the south Truckee Meadows area.

The Forest planning area is known for its scenic and natural resources, consisting of spectacular mountain vistas, abundant wildlife, and a prevalent feeling of openness. The Mount Rose Highway, a County-designated scenic corridor, provides a stunning panorama of the southern Truckee Meadows, the Sierra Nevada, and the Virginia Range, and serves as a gateway to Lake Tahoe. As a wildland interface and transition zone, the integration of human and natural environments in the Forest planning area is a key local characteristic. Growth in the planning area is managed to minimize negative impacts on the surrounding natural features including air, water, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and attempts to blend new development with existing development.

The Forest planning area is also home to Mount Rose Ski Tahoe Resort and the Mount Rose Resort Services Area (RSA). Mount Rose Ski Tahoe Resort is not only an important feature of the area's character, but of the entire region's character and identity as well. It is expected that future growth of this area will be focused on taking advantage of the unique natural environment and will not compete with service providers in the urban areas.

Throughout much of the Forest planning area the transition from large ranches and public lands to residential development has resulted in a suburban development pattern with a rural texture. The residential area lies within the TMSA and consists primarily of 1-5 acre lots, with some smaller and larger residential lots interspersed throughout. The Forest planning area is well known for some limited commercial uses that both serve the local population and take advantage of the recreational opportunities the area provides. The existence of livestock, particularly horses and cattle, for recreational, economic, and educational purposes is common and recognized as a significant contributor to the local character. The area's residents enjoy living in an area abundant with animals, both wild and domestic.

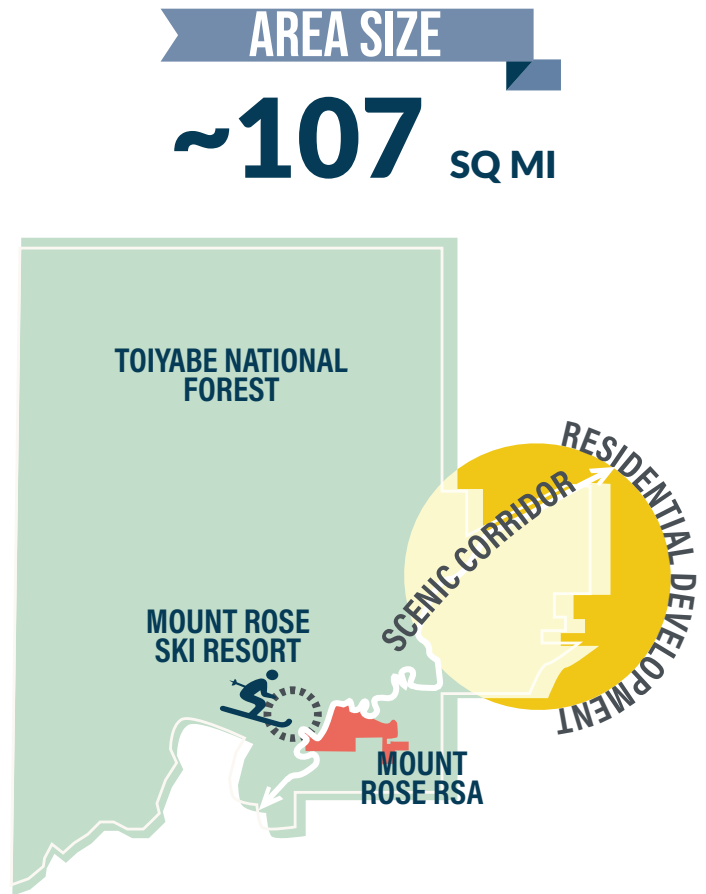
The threat of periodic natural hazards including floods, avalanche, earthquake, and wildland fires is a danger in much of the Forest planning area. Washoe County works in close collaboration with other agencies to reduce these threats through the application of development standards and practices and through education programs.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

The Regional Plan designates the areas within the TMSA in the Forest planning area as Tier 3, and areas outside the TMSA as Rural. This means that over the next 20 years, the areas within the TMSA will continue to experience and accommodate suburban development at the current maximum density of about 1-2 units per acre with commercial development supporting the local community, and areas outside the TMSA will remain largely undeveloped with a maximum density of 1 unit per 5 acres. Development of small scale local serving commercial uses can be accommodated within the TMSA and the Mount Rose RSA, building upon existing commercial and recreational opportunities.

Future development in the Forest planning area will be limited by adjacent public lands and designated wilderness areas, as well as natural features including steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains throughout the Forest planning area. Currently, lack of emergency services, limited infrastructure, and limited evacuation routes are major constraints for new development. Fire hazards along the Wildland Urban Interface and steep slopes also pose a risk to new and existing development in the area. Preservation of scenic views and enhancing the variety and access to recreational opportunities within the area are priorities for new development. In addition, new and infill development in the area has the opportunity to build upon existing development and support existing commercial development and improve road infrastructure and safety.

FIGURE 15. FOREST KEY FEATURES



Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Create a welcoming space for tourism with more amenities and parking at trail heads ▶ Make existing businesses more accessible ▶ Invest in road infrastructure and safety ▶ Balance development with open space » Preserve land, open spaces, and wildlife habitat in case of future lands bill » Enhance recreational activities and access to those opportunities	▶ Wildland-Urban Interface ▶ Lack of adequate infrastructure ▶ Pollution—light, water, litter ▶ Limited evacuation routes in the case of emergency or fire

FOREST

RURAL

Photo Credits: Katherine Oakley

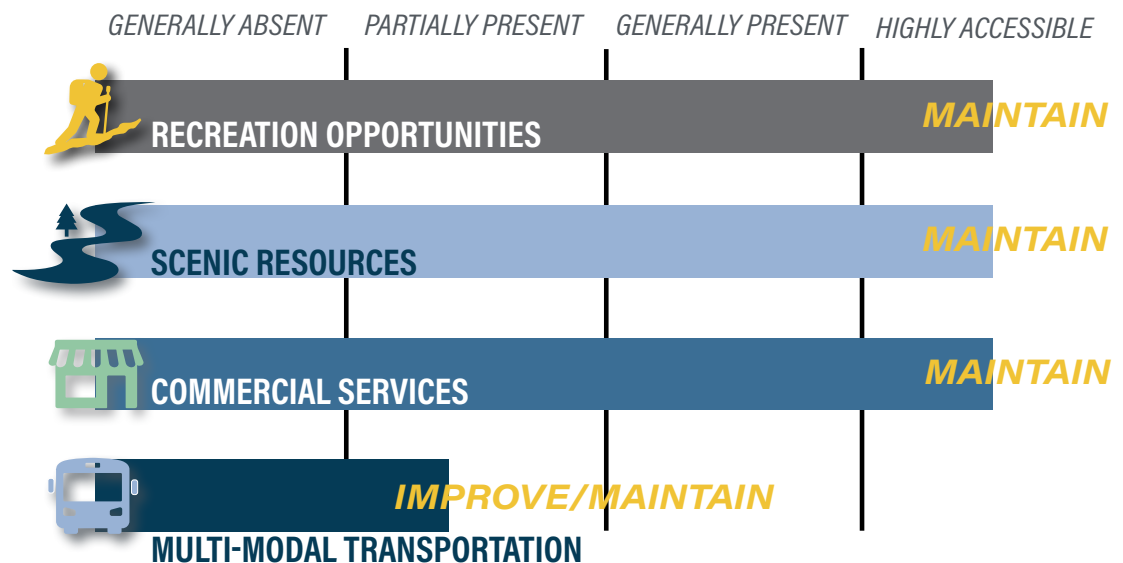


VISION

The Forest area is the gateway to Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevadas, characterized by large contiguous public land holdings, active agricultural ranches, small pockets of one-acre subdivisions, and sweeping vistas from the Mt. Rose Highway. The Forest area includes the Mount Rose Resort Services Area, which provides recreation-focused services and lodging. Future residential and commercial development should mirror the existing development pattern and density, with a focus on providing local employment opportunities, maintaining open space, and providing trail connections.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Recreational services, scenic resources, and commercial services are all highly accessible, primarily due to the amount of public land and designated wilderness areas within the Forest planning area. Future development should seek to maintain this level of service. Multi-modal transportation is partially present, with some services from Reno and Sparks to Lake Tahoe, but there is an opportunity to expand existing services to improve access to public transportation. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Protect sensitive and important lands through development techniques such as common open space, conservation easements, and voluntary limitation on development such as a transferable development rights program.
- ▶ Policy 3.3 Cooperate with RTC and NDOT to minimize wildlife conflicts within transportation corridors.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

- ▶ Policy 4.2 Buffer water bodies, seeps, springs, playas, wetlands, and riparian areas from development.
- ▶ Policy 4.3 Protect Critical Source Water Protection Areas.
- ▶ Policy 4.7 Ensure water importation proposals are environmentally sound as set forth in NRS 533.370(3).

NCR Principle 6. Acquire, develop, and maintain a system of regional parks and trails that provide for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

- ▶ Policy 6.5 Work with partner agencies including TMRPA, WCSSD, NDOT, and RTC to support a collaborative approach to the creation of a network of parks, bikeways, greenbelts, recreational trails, multi-purpose corridors, and public facilities.

NCR Principle 8. Educate citizens about the region's natural and cultural resources.

- ▶ Policy 8.3 Encourage preservation of unique geologic and mineral formations for educational, scientific, and other public purposes.

AR Principle 2. Coordinate natural hazard response with regional and federal agencies.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Support Fire Protection District efforts to develop, fund, and implement a Community Wildfire Protection Program and replanting program for all non-federal public lands in the region.
- ▶ Policy 2.2 Promote partner agency efforts in helping individuals learn to live with fire.

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/county.

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- ▶ Policy 4.1 Encourage design of industrial, commercial, and multifamily uses to contribute to the community's sense of place rather than detract from it.
- ▶ **Forest Policy. Support expansion and modernization of the services and facilities of the historic Mount Rose Ski area and the Mount Rose Resort Services Area, consistent with the Regional Plan. The development code shall provide the detailed regulatory framework to ensure the standards of the Regional Plan regarding resort service areas are met.**

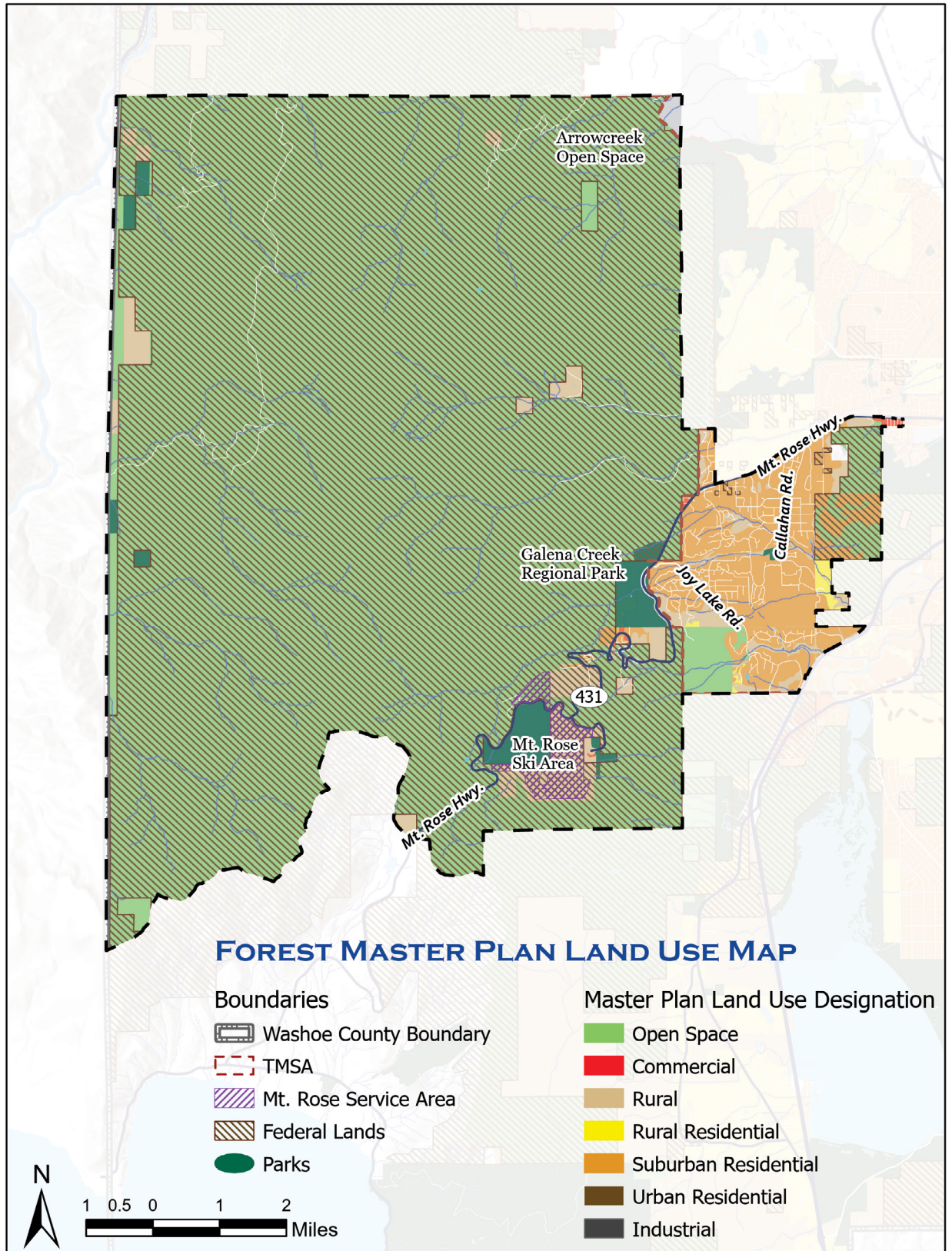
LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.1 Maintain large lot sizes outside of the TMSA and prohibit land use changes that would result in a parcel less than 5 acres in size.

TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.

FOREST

RURAL
MAP 12. FOREST MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP


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HIGH DESERT

RURAL

Photo Credits: Katherine Oakley



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The High Desert Planning Area is the largest planning area in the County and comprises the northern 2/3 of Washoe County, stretching from the northern, eastern, and western County borders down to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation and North Valleys and Warm Springs Planning Areas. Most residents reside in the frontier towns of Gerlach and Empire. These communities are the focal points for long-term residential and commercial development in the High Desert Planning Area. Gerlach consists primarily of residential lots under ½ acre interspersed with some larger lots and commercial areas. Empire's residential pattern is similar to Gerlach, but with more commercial and industrial warehousing and storage within the town.

Both Gerlach and Empire contain small mixed-use areas designed to promote neighborhood-level retail and services. Additionally, the Downtown Gerlach Overlay District was developed to facilitate economic development, promote tourism, enable community character, and assist in the preservation of historic structures. However, due to the remoteness of Gerlach and Empire, development has been slow and consisted largely of manufactured housing types. There is a strong community desire to improve the appearance of the High Desert Planning Area without incurring excessive on-site development costs.

Outside of the communities of Gerlach and Empire there remain vast amounts of undeveloped or sparsely developed areas that are truly rural in nature. These areas are largely BLM-managed lands, including the Black Rock Desert and the High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area. These areas contribute to the feelings of openness and seclusion, which are highly valued by residents, as well as a variety of recreation opportunities. However, the pressure on these public lands to accommodate all the various users requires an ongoing effort to manage these important areas to prevent degradation of natural resources, mitigate negative impacts on residents, and lessen the burdens placed on public services such as EMS.

The High Desert Planning Area sits at the crossroads of railroad/mining tradition and a more recent Burning Man inspired culture. Event goers often travel through the planning area and may stop in Gerlach and Empire on their way to Burning Man, creating economic opportunities for the towns provider of cultural and artistic opportunities that are showcased on an international level, as well as a significant employment base.

The scenic value of the planning area is an important component of the community, with panoramic mountain and desert views dominating the viewshed, especially from State Highway 447 and County Road 34. High Desert is home to many natural heritage sites, as inventoried in the Nevada Natural Heritage Plan, as well as redwood fossil sites in Duck Flat, Forty-nine Camp, and George Lund Petrified Forest. Geothermal areas in the High Desert planning area include Wards Hot Springs, Gerlach Hot Springs, and San Emidio Desert Hot

Springs, providing both recreational and scenic appeal.

The High Desert planning area is composed of a number of unique habitats that provide for a diverse population of wildlife and plants. The federal list of threatened and endangered species indicates that the endangered Peregrine falcon and Southern bald eagle occur in the planning area. In 2006, The Nevada Natural Heritage Program ranked Wall Canyon and Fly Geyser as "Highest Priority Conservation Sites." These sites are characterized as currently requiring protection in order to conserve a significant assemblage of at-risk species and to prevent the loss of one or more species in the immediate future.

Development Constraints

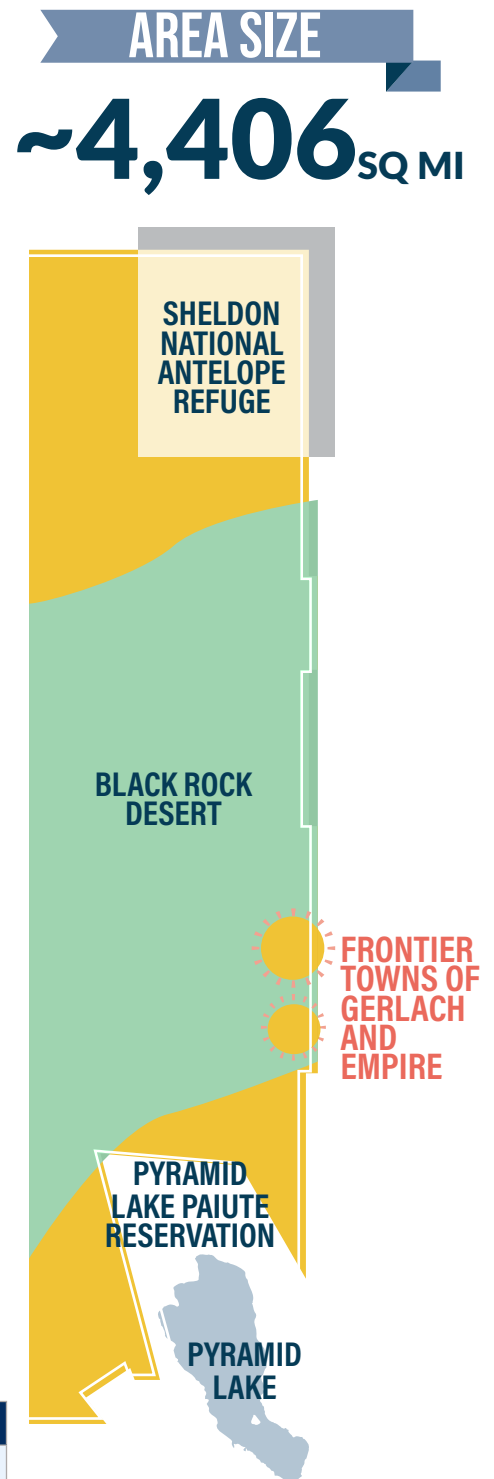
The Regional Plan designates the entirety of the planning area outside the existing freestanding communities of Gerlach and Empire as Rural, meaning intensification is not desired and residential development is limited to a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. Regional and Countywide policies state that growth and development should be consistent with available resources and that intensification of land use must occur in and around existing urban areas where there can be an orderly extension of public services and facilities. Additional development outside Gerlach and Empire is limited not just by the Regional Plan, but also by availability of infrastructure and services. All water resources in the Honey Lake Basin of the High Desert are fully appropriated, and there is currently a lack of commercial, healthcare, fire, and EMS services. Power, water, and wastewater services are also limited, meaning future development is likely to require augmentation of services. Additional development constraints in the area are related to the proportion of the federally managed land in the planning area including wilderness study areas, wildlife refuges, steep slopes, or are intermittent lakes and playas.

Opportunities for enhancement of the area's unique features include designation of the entirety of Highway 447 and County Road 34 as scenic byways; investing in preservation of historical buildings within Gerlach and Empire; and fostering arts and in-town development through creative arts grants, community art projects, and loosening of aesthetic focused building codes. Preservation of access to public lands, balancing open space and allowing for new development which supports the independence of the frontier towns are priorities for new development in the planning area.

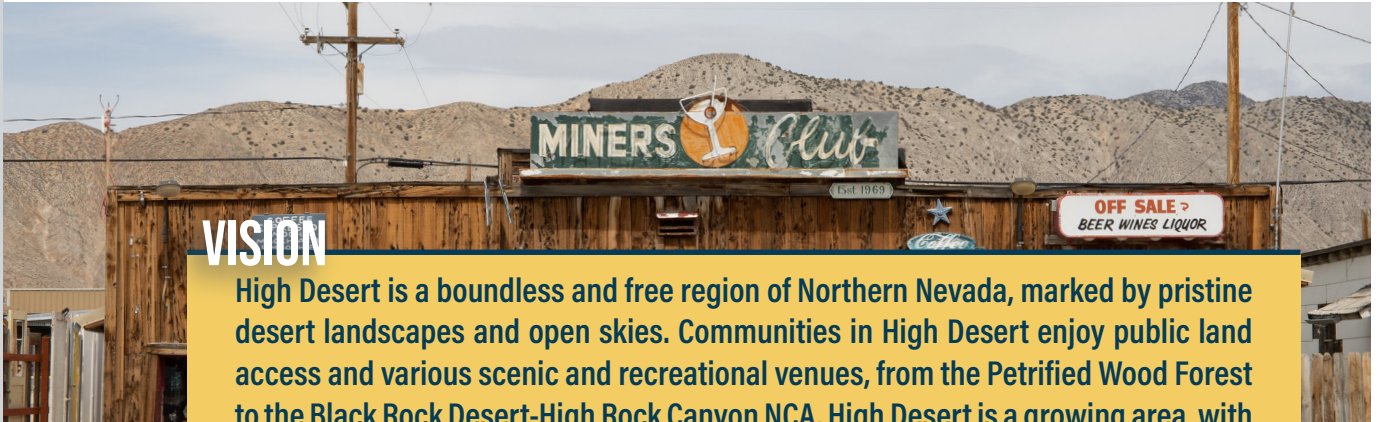
Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Designate Highway 447 as a scenic byway from Nixon to California to encourage beautification ▶ Invest in preservation of historical buildings ▶ Encourage commercial development to support frontier town sustainability	▶ Lack of services ▶ Limited housing available ▶ Lack of adequate power, water, and wastewater infrastructure ▶ Many commercially-zoned parcels in Gerlach are vacant ▶ BLM owns a majority of the land within the planning area ▶ Honey Lake Basin water resources are fully appropriated
111 Preserve access to public lands	

FIGURE 16. HIGH DESERT KEY FEATURES



HIGH DESERT

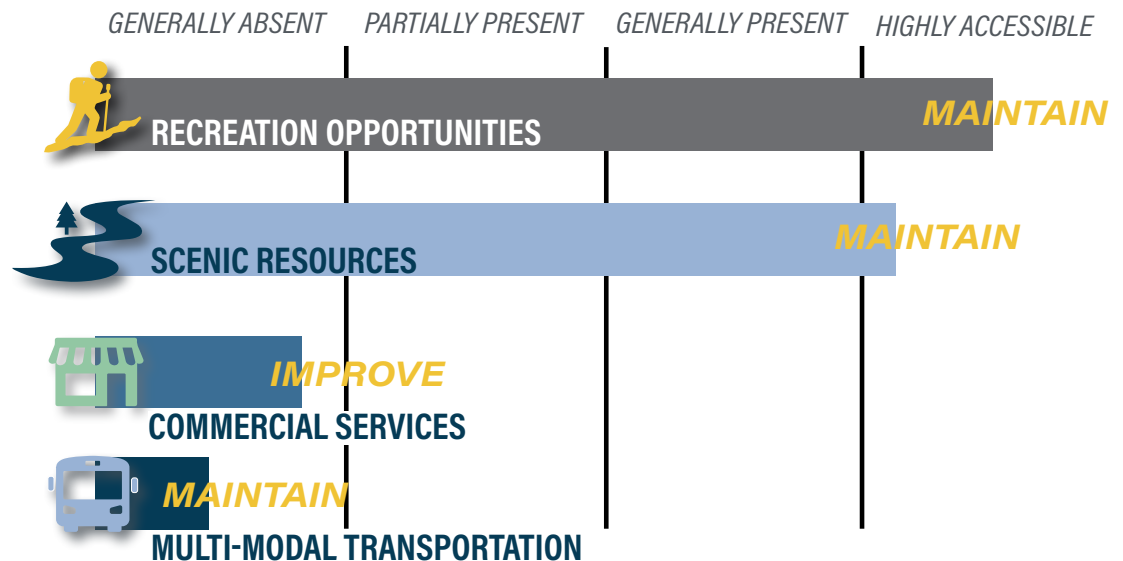
RURAL
Photo Credits: Flickr


VISION

High Desert is a boundless and free region of Northern Nevada, marked by pristine desert landscapes and open skies. Communities in High Desert enjoy public land access and various scenic and recreational venues, from the Petrified Wood Forest to the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon NCA. High Desert is a growing area, with many opportunities for sustainable development that celebrates its natural beauty.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Recreation opportunities and scenic resources are both highly accessible due to the vast amount of public land and wilderness study areas within the High Desert planning area. Future development should seek to maintain this level of service. Multi-modal transportation and commercial services are generally absent, with some commercial and retail services available in Gerlach and Empire, but little to no multi-modal transportation service. There is an opportunity to support development of new commercial services within Gerlach and Empire, but due to the remoteness of the planning area, expansion of multi-modal transportation options is unlikely. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

PH Principle 3. Use a balanced set of tools to increase the diversity of housing types across all income levels and facilitate more affordable, senior, multi-family, and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Support accessory dwelling units as a method of providing affordable and workforce housing.

PH Principle 5. Preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 5.4 Consider establishing standards to mitigate the negative effects of housing that is either vacant or ill-maintained by absentee owners.

RFC Principle 2. Utilize land use and transportation decisions to support a healthy economic base.

- ▶ Policy 2.5 Ensure that land use practices and regulations accommodate needs of rural communities, and changing trends regarding businesses, including home and accessory rural occupations.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

- ▶ Policy 4.3 Protect Critical Source Water Protection Areas.
- ▶ Policy 4.4 Collaborate with WRWC, TMWA, Local Governments, Tribes, and other regional partners to manage land use practices to protect the watershed and water supply sources.

AR Principle 1. Limit development in the Development Constraints Area.

- ▶ Policy 1.3 Ensure development within the WUI is consistent with industry best practices.

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/County.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Promote landscaping that is consistent with best practices for resource sustainability, habitat preservation and enhancement, and natural hazard resilience.

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- ▶ Policy 4.4 Support visual improvements to enhance community gateways.
- ▶ **High Desert Policy. Consider establishing standards to mitigate the negative effects of vacant or ill-maintained land by absentee owners.**

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.4 Engage with the residents of the Freestanding Communities (Gerlach, Empire, Wadsworth) to ensure development is consistent with communities' unique needs.
- ▶ **High Desert Policy. Identify methods to remove the barriers to development and general property improvement experienced in remote areas as a result of low availability of professional services including engineering, architecture, surveying, and heavy equipment operation.**
- ▶ Policy 5.5 Preserve and promote the rural communities and rural area's natural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources to residents and visitors.

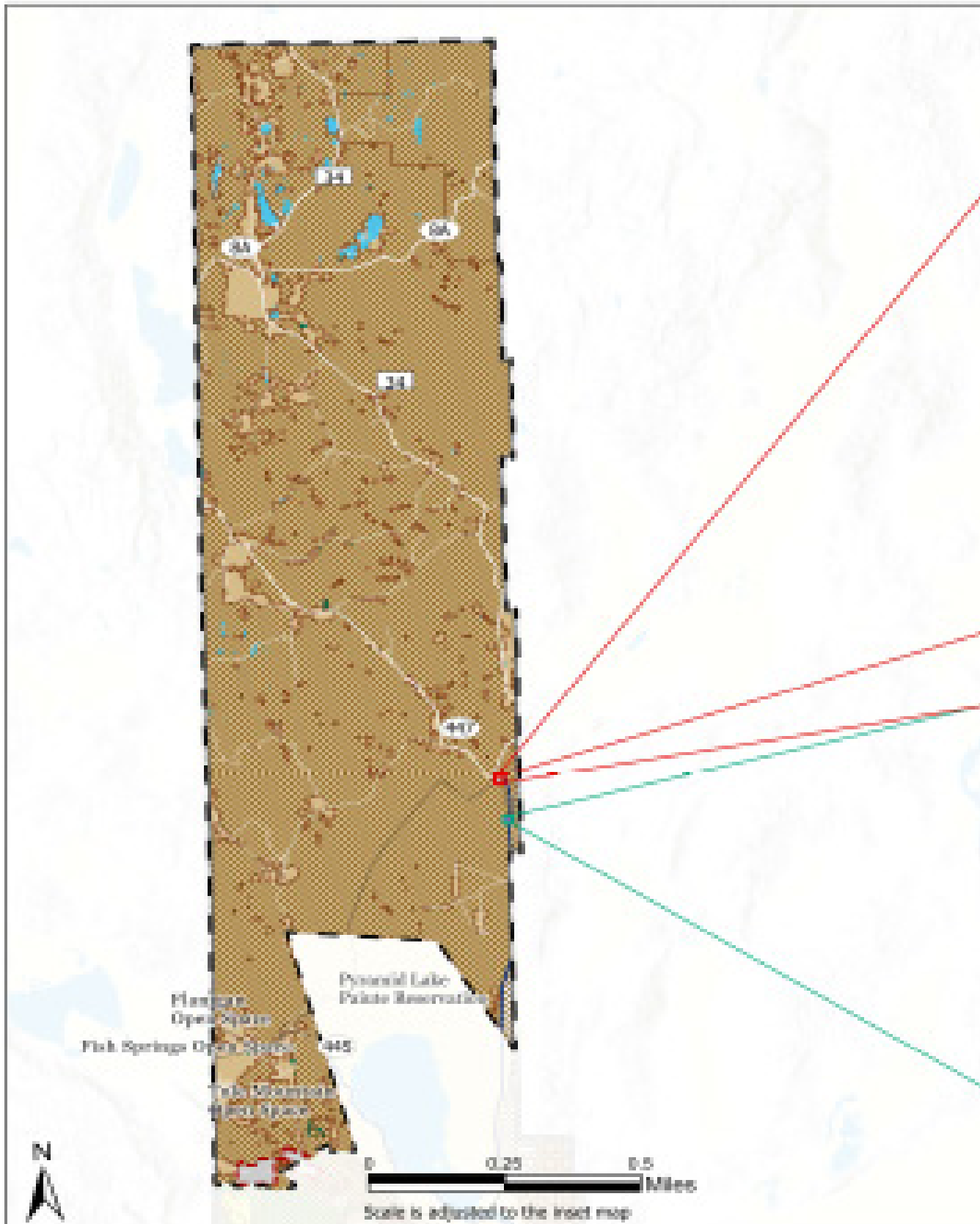
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.

HIGH DESERT

RURAL

MAP 13. HIGH DESERT MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



Gerlach Specific Plan Area



HIGH DESERT MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP

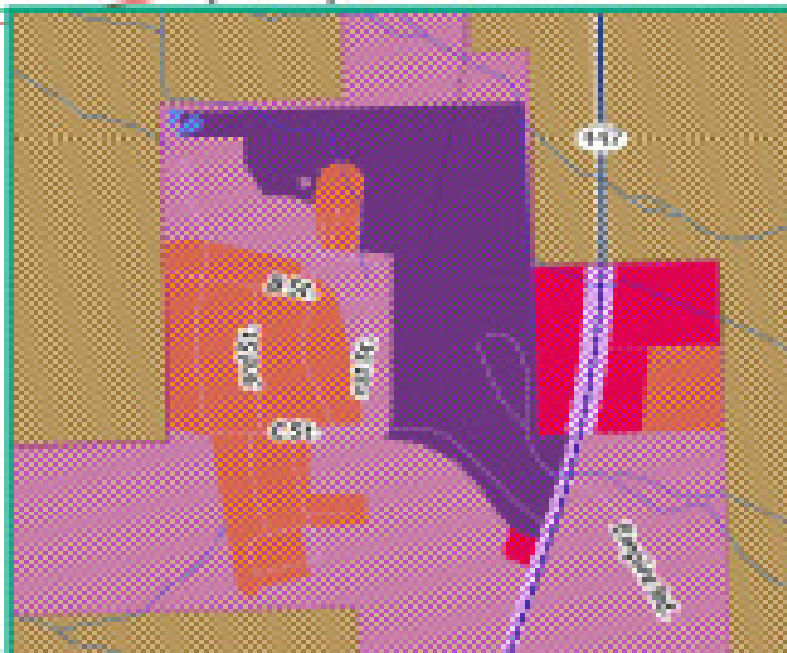
Boundaries:

- Washoe County Boundary
- THSA
- Reno/Sparks Sphere Of Influence
- Gerlach Free Standing Community
- Empire Free Standing Community
- Tribal Lands
- Federal Lands
- Parks

Master Plan Land Use Designation

- Open Space
- Commercial
- Rural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Urban Residential
- Industrial

Empire Specific Plan Area



03/27/2025

NORTH VALLEYS

SUBURBAN

RURAL

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The North Valleys planning area has a complex development pattern with the City of Reno municipal boundary splitting the planning area down the middle between the Silver Knolls and Silver Hills areas and the Golden Valley and Lemmon Valley areas. The presence of the City of Reno brings higher density residential, commercial, and industrial land uses into the planning area than the surrounding County development. The unincorporated portions of the North Valleys planning area contain several distinct communities. While the land uses found in the North Valleys planning area range from very rural to heavily suburban, the area's communities enjoy many elements of a more rural character, particularly as they relate to the natural environment, subdivision design, and livestock ownership. Much of the North Valleys, in both suburban and rural areas, exhibits a distinctly equestrian character. In part, this is due to the large areas of designated open space under federal ownership, both to the south associated with Peavine Mountain USFS, and to the north associated with numerous BLM holdings. The communities in the North Valleys are diverse, supporting various lifestyles and economic uses.

Golden and Lemmon Valleys are similar regions, encompassing a range of residential and small-scale commercial uses. Both areas lie within the TMSA, but Lemmon Valley provides for a much higher density of residential development than Golden Valley. Both areas have significant natural resources, with Golden Valley's BLM lands to the north and east and Lemmon Valley's Swan Lake wetlands. Much like Golden Valley's BLM lands, the wetlands are a focal point for the community, providing educational and recreational opportunities that add to the natural beauty of the area. Outdoor recreational opportunities are also an important component of the community, especially as they relate to equestrian trails and multi-use trails.

While technically in the City of Reno, the Reno-Stead Incorporated Area within the North Valleys planning area contributes significantly to the overall character. The Reno-Stead Airport provides significant employment and commercial opportunities to residents of this portion of the County. Surrounding the Reno-Stead Incorporated Area is Silver Knolls, located at the west edge of the Reno-Stead Airport. Silver Knolls is a more isolated suburban area, although similar to both Golden and Lemmon Valleys in its character. The Silver Hills Community lies within the TMSA and is characterized by a residential land use pattern that provides for a variety of housing options to meet the area's population needs while preserving the area's character, allowing densities up to three units per acre. The existing ridge lines and rolling terrain provide for a "mountain ranch" themed residential development that accentuates the views and natural topography.

The North Valleys planning area is home to two areas of a decidedly more rural character with less residential development than the areas closer to the City of Reno. These residential areas exist in and around large blocks

of federal land, managed primarily by the BLM. A significant amount of home-based business, agriculture, and agricultural related business exists in and around these communities. The lack of air, water, noise, and light pollution, as well as low traffic congestion are commonly cited as key components of the rural areas' character. Equestrian and livestock activities for recreational, educational, and economic purposes are common. The proximity to trails and public lands facilitates horseback riding and other outdoor activities that form the basis of recreation in the area. The value of this area for educational and scientific purposes is highlighted by the existence of the Animal Ark Wildlife Sanctuary.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Most of the residential areas within the North Valleys planning area are within the TMSA and designated as Tier 2 and Tier 3 lands by the Regional Plan. Tier 2 lands have the opportunity to take advantage of residential infill development, allowing up to 30 dwelling units per acre, whereas Tier 3 lands are expected to see the same development patterns that exist today. Commercial development on Tier 3 lands should serve the local community and blend with existing commercial development. Areas outside the TMSA, including the residential areas in the northern portion of North Valleys are designated as Rural, meaning future development density is limited to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. Steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands provide some dispersed development constraints throughout the planning area. The wildland urban interface in the northern portion of the area provides some risk of wildfire and natural hazards.

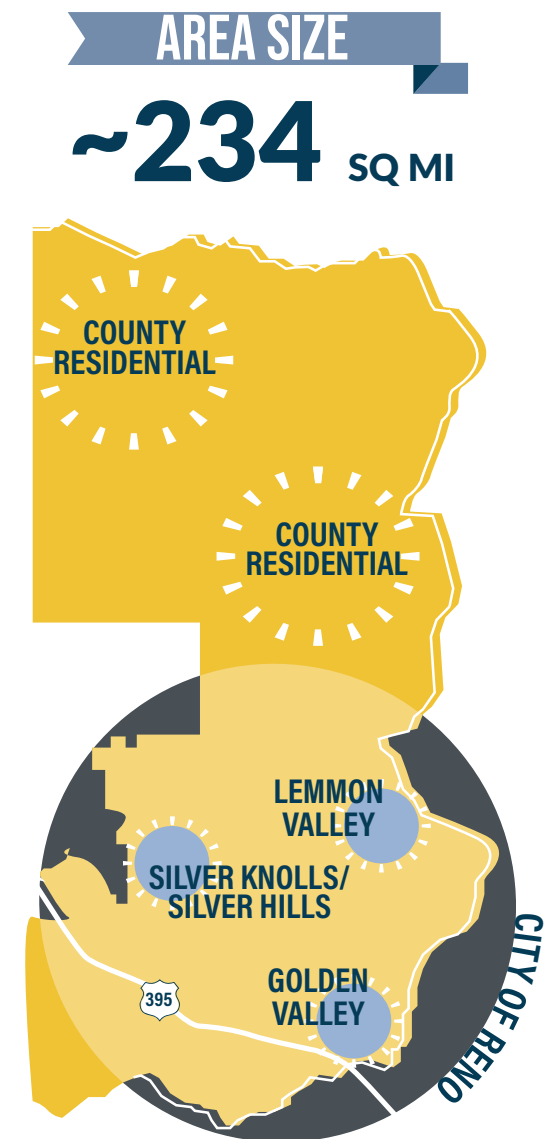
The presence of higher densities within the City of Reno has created land use conflicts with unincorporated areas with lower densities and larger lots. Additionally, many of the unincorporated areas within the TMSA and adjacent to the City of Reno lack public water and sanitary services. High traffic volumes along Highway 395 are also a limiting factor for future development and emergency services provision.

Future development in the North Valleys has the opportunity to thoughtfully plan developments to mitigate the loss of agricultural and ranching lands and landscape and wildlife conservation. New development also has the opportunity to provide concurrent water and wastewater infrastructure. While the North Valleys is served by some public transportation, there is an opportunity to expand public transportation services with new and infill development as well as an opportunity to expand the existing commercial area on Lemmon Drive and Buck Drive.

Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Mitigate loss of agricultural and ranching lifestyle ▶ Provide infrastructure concurrent with new development ▶ Landscape and wildlife conservation ▶ Connect public transit to the North Valleys to reduce traffic congestion ▶ Expand existing node of commercial on Lemmon Drive and Buck Drive	▶ Land use and zoning conflicts—high density next to large lots ▶ Lack of public services ▶ Wildland-Urban Interface ▶ Need for increased communication/coordination between the County and City of Reno ▶ Traffic on Highway 395 ▶ Desire for increased maintenance on Lemmon Drive ▶ Flooding threat from Swan Lake closed basin

FIGURE 17. NORTH VALLEYS KEY FEATURES



NORTH VALLEYS

SUBURBAN

RURAL

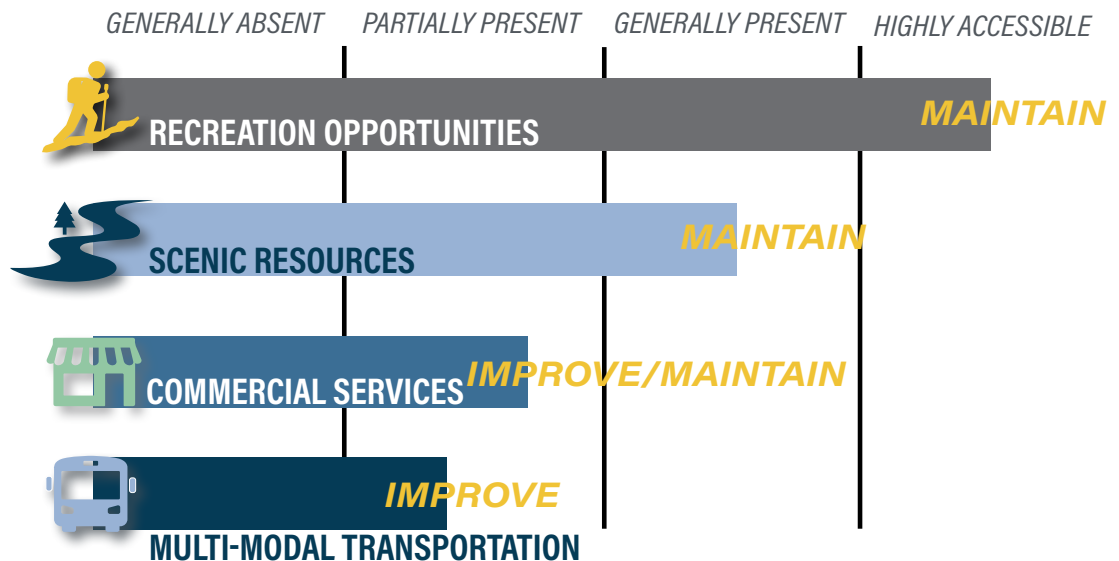


VISION

The North Valleys is known for its wealth of natural resources and open space, providing views and access to regional assets for its community members. This area experiences a large range of uses, both residential and commercial. Uses shift from rural residential to medium density residential, demonstrating the North Valleys' varying needs. It is common for residents to own livestock and utilize equestrian trails in the area. Central to the North Valleys is the Reno-Stead Airport, which adds a unique site for regional events as well as development needs that support the airport as a focal point of the community.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Due to the proximity of residential areas to federally managed lands, the recreation opportunities in North Valleys are highly accessible and should be maintained with future developments. Scenic resources are generally present, but have been partially diminished due to more dense development within the incorporated areas within the planning area. Future development should seek to maintain the scenic resources. Commercial services are partially present in the unincorporated area and there is an opportunity to improve and support existing commercial services with new development in the County. Multi-modal transportation options are partially present within this portion of the unincorporated area, but there is an opportunity to bolster services, especially in the areas immediately adjacent to the City of Reno. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

PH Principle 3. Use a balanced set of tools to increase the diversity of housing types across all income levels and facilitate more affordable, senior, multi-family, and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Support accessory dwelling units as a method of providing affordable and workforce housing.

PH Principle 5. Preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 5.4 Consider establishing standards to mitigate the negative effects of housing that is either vacant or ill-maintained by absentee owners.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

AR Principle 1. Limit development in the Development Constraints Area.

- ▶ Policy 1.3 Ensure development within the WUI is consistent with industry best practices.
- ▶ Policy 1.4 Update and implement the Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment study and recommendations to guide management of wildfire hazards in urban interface areas.

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/county.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Promote landscaping that is consistent with best practices for resource sustainability, habitat preservation and enhancement, and natural hazard resilience.

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- ▶ Policy 4.3 Support visual improvements to enhance community gateways.

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.5 Preserve and promote the rural communities and rural area's natural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources to residents and visitors.

TR Principle 2. Provide an efficient transportation network through coordinated operations, system management, technology, and targeted investments.

- ▶ Policy 2.3 Facilitate the proactive maintenance and construction of roadways and pedestrian ways to ensure high-quality, safe travel.
- ▶ Policy 2.4 Employ Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies such as minor widening, improved channelization, improved signage, traffic signals, and other low-cost mitigation measures.

PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

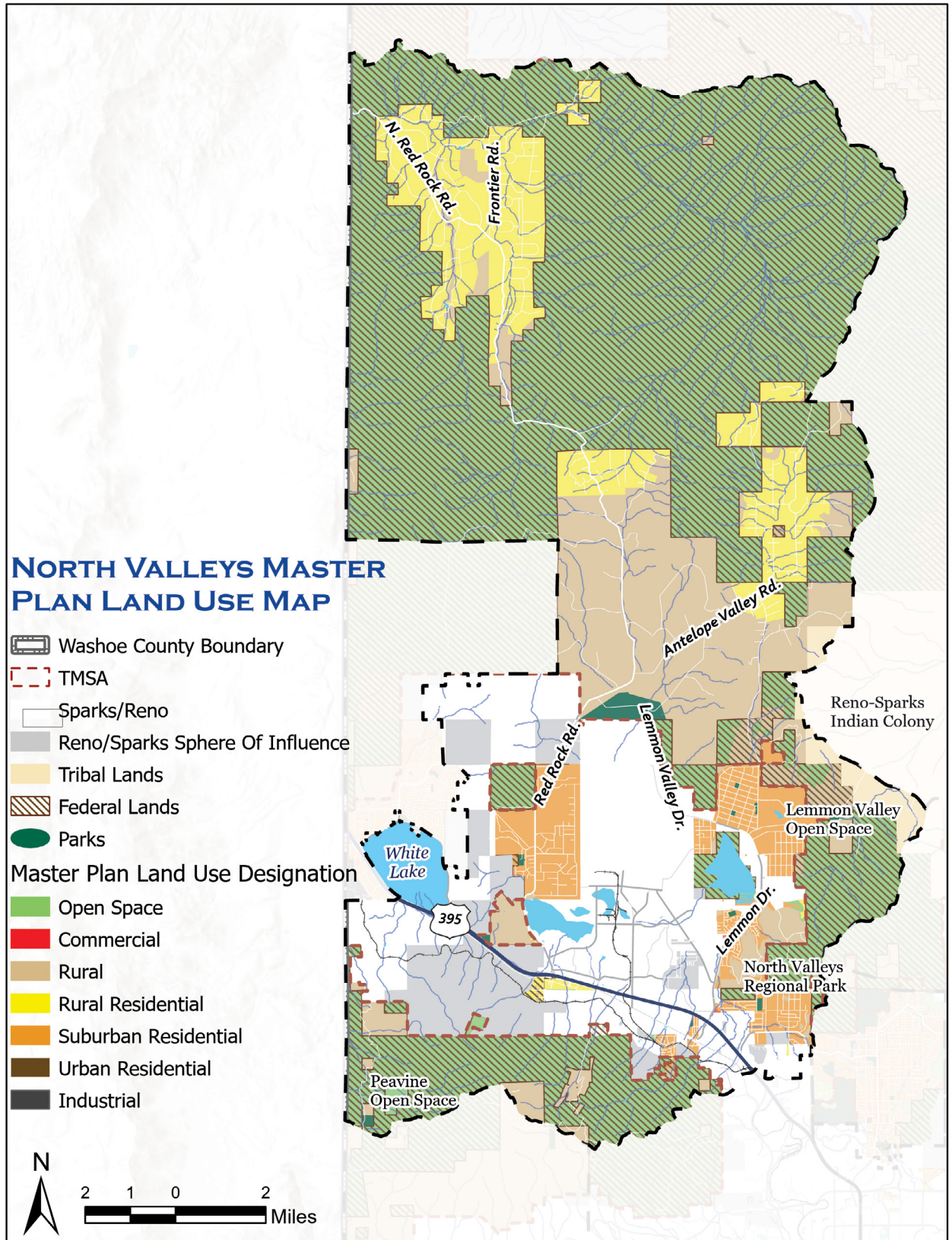
- ▶ Policy 3.1 Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.
- ▶ Policy 3.3 Development of new schools in the rural area is permitted only in conformance with the most current restrictions applied by the Regional Plan.

NORTH VALLEYS

MAP 14. NORTH VALLEYS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP

SUBURBAN

RURAL



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SOUTH VALLEYS

RURAL



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The South Valleys planning area includes Steamboat Valley, Pleasant Valley, and Washoe Valley, and stretches down to the southern border of Washoe County. This area is a scenic greenbelt between the urban areas of Reno and Sparks and Carson City. Historic Highway 395 and the Interstate 580 extend through the South Valleys from Reno to Carson City, providing a valuable transportation link that helps to connect the region. The South Valleys comprise a valuable resource of open space, water resources, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, peaceful valleys, and magnificent views of the Sierra Nevada, Carson, and Virginia ranges.

More than half of the Washoe Valley floor and surrounding areas are protected and maintained by a variety of public agencies. Over the past several decades land management agencies have cooperated with conservation groups and landowners to protect open space. Protected areas in the South Valleys include a designated Important Bird Area, a portion of the Pacific Flyway which includes Scripps Wildlife Management Area, the wildlife mitigation area of Washoe Lake State Park, and other protected areas. In addition to wildlife habitats, Washoe Lake State Park, Davis Creek Regional Park, Bowers Mansion Regional Park, and small neighborhood parks provide recreational opportunities to South Valleys residents. Public campgrounds, multi-use trails, equestrian facilities, and boat landings also provide recreational amenities. Trails to Virginia City via Jumbo Grade, to Lake Tahoe and the Tahoe Rim Trail, and to Hobart Reservoir, and Galena Creek provide additional recreation opportunities. A designated Nevada State Scenic Byway along Highway 395 allows residents and visitors to enjoy the beauty of the area.

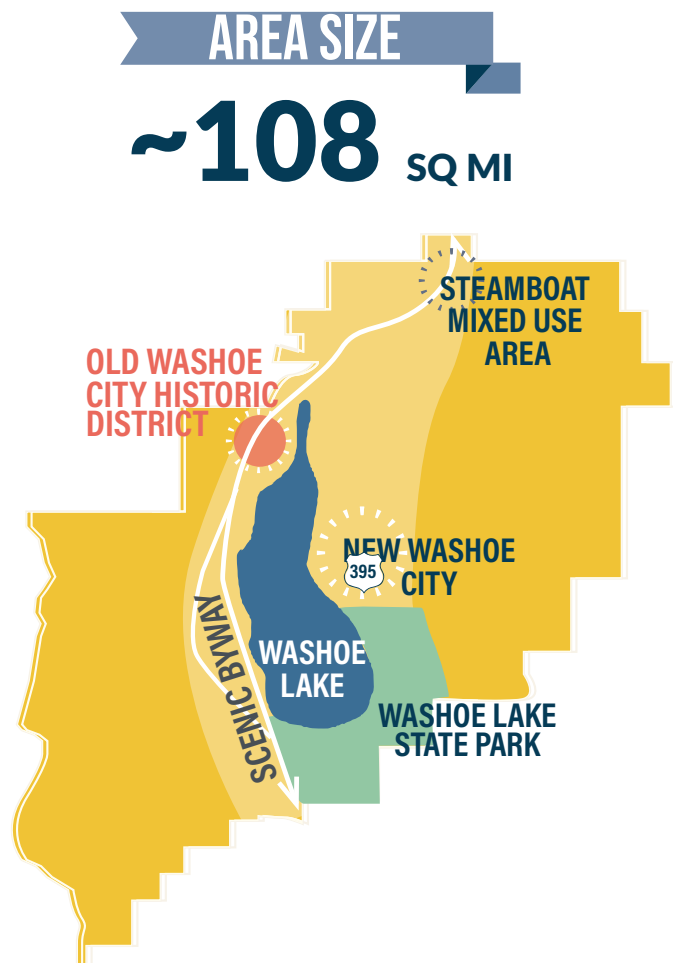
South Valleys water resources are carefully managed to ensure long-term sustainability. The lakes, wetlands, and various creeks running through the area contribute to the beauty of the area and its vegetation and wildlife, specifically Washoe Lake, Davis Creek, Galena Creek, and Steamboat Creek. Protection of watersheds and ground water recharge areas are a primary concern of this planning area to maintain water quality, aquifer recharge, and supply for existing residents. Residents of the South Valleys planning area are proud of its rich history of Native American use and habitation, which impacted the area's geology, botany, and wildlife. Starting in the 1850's, this area was key in the development of early settlement, including mining, logging, ranching, agriculture, and the location of the first county seat, Washoe City.

Residential and non-residential development patterns express a rural heritage of integration of residential and non-residential development with the area's natural resources. Limited areas of commercial development are located along the Highway 395 corridor in Steamboat Valley, along Highway 395 in Old Washoe City, and in New Washoe City near the intersection of Eastlake Blvd and Esmeralda Drive. These commercial areas co-

exist with residential communities, providing goods and services to residents and visitors. Dwellings are generally secondary focal points with large, contiguous state and federal land holdings dominating the landscape, often blending with sizable agricultural and residential parcels. Livestock and agriculture are a significant contributor to the rural heritage of the area, with many residents owning livestock and farm animals, for recreational, economic, and educational purposes. The presence of livestock and working ranch animals has a long history in the area, as shown by the presence of multiple equestrian facilities throughout the area.

The significant differences between East and West Washoe Valley stem from both their historical settlement pattern and their physical geography. West Washoe Valley, along the eastern slope of the Carson Range, is characterized by large residential parcels, active ranching operations with expansive pastures, seasonal wetlands, and large pine trees typical of the higher altitude. Much of the open pasture and wetland area is publicly owned and managed for public open space. Many of the historic resources of the South Valleys are in West Washoe Valley. On the other side of Washoe Lake lies New Washoe City. New Washoe City is comprised of cattle ranching operations, agriculture, equestrian facilities, residential development, and a small commercial node serving the local community. The large amount of one- and five-acre residential parcels in the New Washoe City area defines this area. The limited employment opportunities in the area mean most people work outside Washoe Valley. A proliferation of equestrian and hobby livestock related activities is characteristic of this area.

FIGURE 18. SOUTH VALLEYS KEY FEATURES



DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Nearly all of the South Valleys is located outside the TMSA and designated by the Regional Plan as Rural. This Rural Land Use Designation builds upon environmental constraints in the South Valleys area including streams and lakes, floodplains and wetlands, limited water resources, wildland-urban interface areas, and steep slopes along the western portion of the planning area. The combination of the Rural Land Use Designation and environmental constraints limits future development potential to a maximum of 1 unit per 5 acres throughout most of the planning area. Future development may also be limited by the lack of transit and safe bicycle connections and limited fire and sheriff services. The South Valleys has the unique opportunity to continue to work with federal land management agencies and private landowners to continue to identify opportunities for open space conservation and protection of key wildlife habitats. Expansion of the public trail network and further implementation of scenic byway protections and standards could also be achieved through future planning efforts.

Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Identify opportunities to purchase land for open space ▶ Increase efficiency of water use (reuse/recycling) ▶ Implement Washoe Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan ▶ Maintain public trail access and expand trail network	▶ Limited water resources ▶ Conflicts between commercial and residential areas ▶ Limited fire protection and sheriff response ▶ Lack of transit and safe bike lanes and trails ▶ Wildfire risk on the west side of Washoe Lake

SOUTH VALLEYS

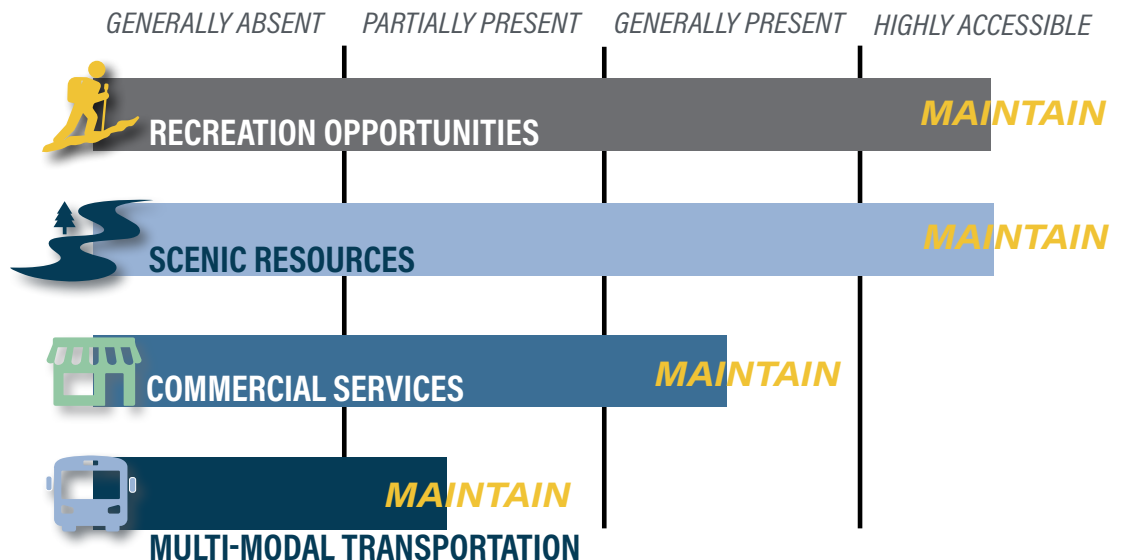
RURAL

VISION

The South Valleys planning area is characterized by abundant cultural resources, wide open spaces, access to public lands and recreation opportunities, and active agricultural and working lands. The primary vision for this area is to maintain the area's natural and cultural heritage through scenic protections like Washoe Valley. Future residential and development should mirror the existing development pattern and density, with a focus on maintaining open space, supporting agriculture-related uses, maintaining opportunities for livestock and farm animal ownership, and providing trail connections. To protect the rural, agricultural, historic character, and visual quality of the area, commercial development should be limited to the existing commercial areas and uses which support the local community.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Scenic resources and recreation opportunities are highly accessible and the existing level of service should be maintained. Commercial services are generally present but limited and residents are satisfied with the level of commercial services and do not desire expansion of services except small-scale retail to serve the neighborhoods. Multi-modal transportation is partially present, with some multi-use paths but no transit services. Expansion of trails for recreational use is possible within the area, but expansion of multi-modal transportation services is unlikely due to low density residential uses throughout the Valley. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

RFC Principle 6. Maintain agricultural practices to support local food growth and distribution.

- ▶ Policy 6.1 Develop partnerships and development standards aimed at increasing local food production.
- ▶ Policy 6.4 Support secondary-income options on agricultural land such as agritourism uses, rural occupations, and agriculture-related uses.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Protect sensitive and important lands through development techniques such as common open space, conservation easements, and voluntary limitation on development such as a transferable development rights program.
- ▶ Policy 3.4 Create new tools within the Washoe County Development Code to value environmentally sensitive vegetation and wildlife within the development review process.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

- ▶ Policy 4.2 Buffer water bodies, seeps, springs, playas, wetlands, and riparian areas from development.
- ▶ Policy 4.3 Protect Critical Source Water Protection Areas.
- ▶ Policy 4.7 Ensure water importation proposals are environmentally sound as set forth in NRS 533.370(3).

NCR Principle 6. Acquire, develop, and maintain a system of regional parks and trails that provide for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

- ▶ Policy 6.4 Integrate interpretation and environmental education into regional parks and open space to communicate the region's cultural heritage, natural history, and wildlife.
- ▶ Policy 6.5 Work with partner agencies including TMRPA, WCSD, NDOT, and RTC to support a collaborative approach to the creation of a network of parks, bikeways, greenbelts, recreational trails, multi-purpose corridors, and public facilities.
- ▶ Policy 6.6 Utilize the Truckee Meadows Trail Plan (TMTP) in the development review process and encourage the incorporation of identified trail connections.
- ▶ Policy 6.7 Require public access easements from subdivisions that are adjacent to public lands.

NCR Principle 7. Protect cultural resources within the region's suburban, rural, and urban interface areas.

- ▶ Policy 7.1 Buffer designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and known significant or sensitive cultural resources from development.
- ▶ Policy 7.2. Work in conjunction with tribes, federal, state, and local partners to identify critical cultural resource sites and protect them through acquisition, conservation easements, Recreation & Public Purpose (R&PP) leases, or other appropriate means.

NCR Principle 8. Educate citizens about the region's natural and cultural resources.

- ▶ Policy 8.1 Work with partners to support development and maintenance of a comprehensive public education program to teach citizens about the history, legacy, and uniqueness of the region's cultural and scenic resources.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Incentivize residential cluster and common open space developments as an alternative to conventional subdivision development where clustering will achieve permanent protection of open space or valued natural resources.

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.1 Maintain large lot sizes outside of the TMSA and prohibit land use changes that would result in a parcel less than 5 acres in size.
- ▶ Policy 5.2 Limit growth in the Rural Area (RA) to no more than 2% of the Region's 20-year residential growth.

SOUTH VALLEYS

RURAL

TR Principle 2. Provide an efficient transportation network through coordinated operations, system management, technology, and targeted investments.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Encourage the incorporation of transit stops and other multi-modal facilities in the development review process where regular transit service exists or is planned.
- ▶ Policy 2.3 Facilitate the proactive maintenance and construction of roadways and pedestrian ways to ensure high-quality, safe travel.

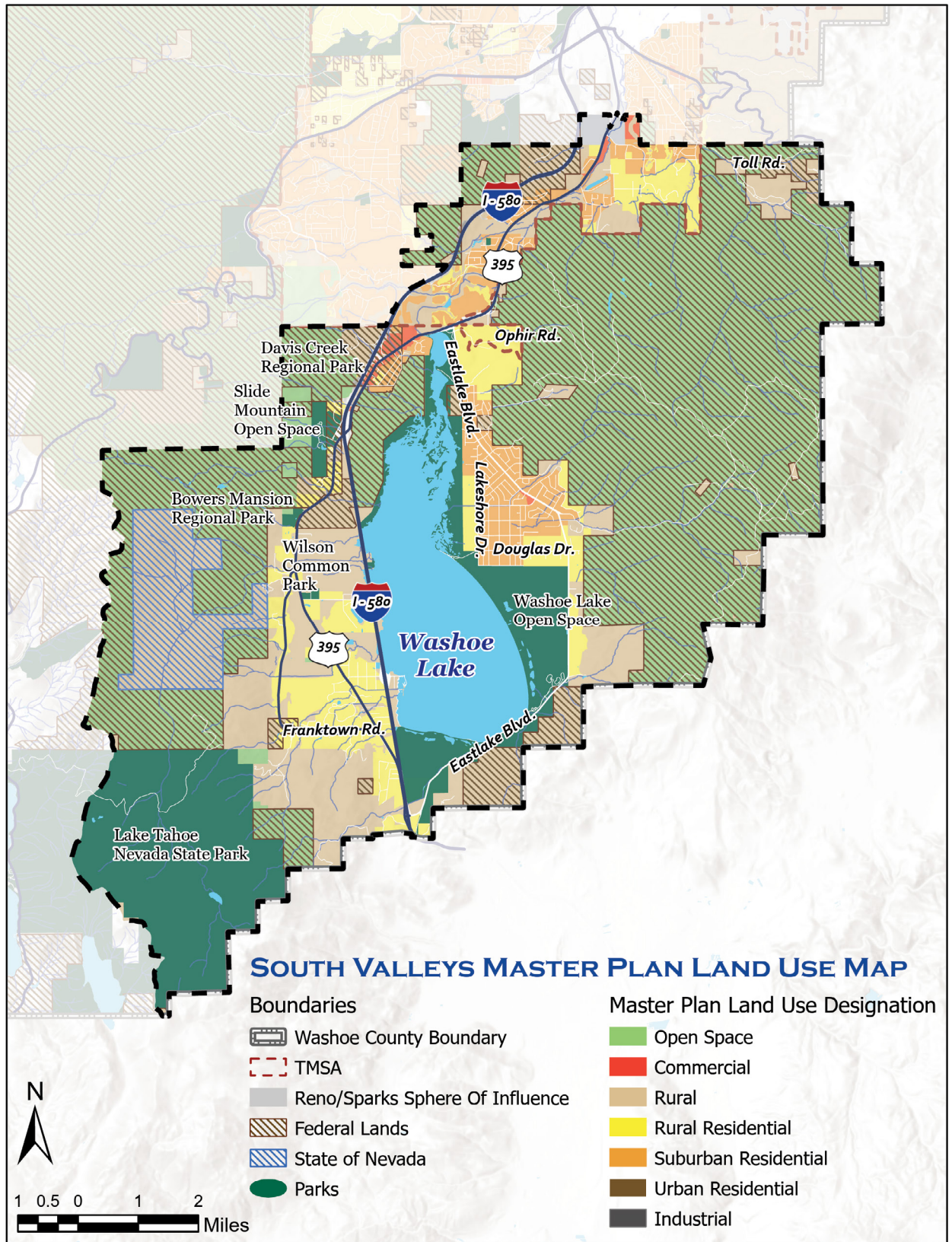
PFS Principle 2. Provide sufficient water to meet the current and future needs of County residents.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Balance new water supply commitments with existing commitments at or below perennial yield to achieve a long-term sustainable water supply.

PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ Policy 3.5 In accordance with the Regional Plan, limit water and wastewater infrastructure outside the TMSA, except for the management of effluent management and recycled water.

MAP 15. SOUTH VALLEYS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Southeast Truckee Meadows (SETM) planning area is a large and diverse area that covers individual communities that are separated both geographically and by their character. Large expanses of land have been annexed into the City of Reno and rapidly converted to higher density subdivisions and other land uses. This density difference sets apart the existing communities in the planning area and poses unique planning challenges to work cooperatively with the City of Reno to mitigate conflicts between the land uses.

Hidden Valley is a historical, semi-rural community within the unincorporated county that borders Reno to the west. Hidden Valley was a part of the Emigrant Trail taken by pioneers who were California bound in the mid-19th century, including the infamous Donner Party. Feral horses have grazed on this land for many years, along with the diverse ecosystems of Hidden Valley's hills and wetlands. There are no major highways or arterial roads that bisect Hidden Valley, which enables residents to enjoy a quiet atmosphere free from traffic noises. There are no streetlights in the Valley, preserving views of the night stars. Residents of this area value privacy and quiet, combined with nearness to the city to take advantage of its many amenities. Housing density largely comprised of 1/3 - 1/2 acre lots, with many undeveloped lots along the eastern portion of the community. There is no commercial or industrial activity in the area, with little desire for any to be built due to the proximity of Reno.

The Virginia Foothills Community is comprised of a combination of custom homes and subdivisions that range in lot size from 1/3 to 1/2 acre with a few larger properties. The steep privately-owned and mostly undeveloped mountains of the Virginia Range are to the east and Geiger Grade (SR 341) on the south separates the Virginia Foothills from the Toll Road area. Residents support efforts to designate the highway as a "Scenic Highway" from the State. The area supports a small amount of neighborhood commercial along SR 341. Due to the close proximity of new commercial development in the City of Reno, the residents believe that there is no need for further commercial or industrial development.

The Toll Road Community is bordered on the west by the City of Reno and U.S. 395 and on the north by SR 341 and the Virginia Foothills community. The Toll Road community is lower-density suburban residential community, with a more rural atmosphere than the neighboring Virginia Foothills area. The area is a combination of older homes, newer subdivisions and manufactured home subdivisions located on the western edge of the planning area with lot sizes ranging from 1/3 acre to 2 acres primarily. The Toll Road community is the only community within the SETM planning area that has any appreciable amount of federal land. The southern end of the

Toll Road area is located in what is considered a wildland/urban interface. Wildfires have burned through this area in the past and emergency ingress and egress is currently limited. Bailey Creek has also caused flooding and property damage in the past.

Unlike many of the other planning areas in the County, SETM does not contain large tracts of public lands. Federally managed lands are located in the Huffaker Hills/Rattlesnake Mountain area; south of Hidden Valley; a large parcel on the hill above the Reno-Sparks Wastewater Treatment Plant; Hidden Valley Regional Park and a small hill east of Steamboat Hot Springs. The primary recreation opportunity in the area is the Hidden Valley Regional Park. The most scenic aspect of the planning area may be the Virginia Range that forms the eastern boundary of the planning area and abuts neighboring Storey County. However, the area contains several perennial streams, water channels, and many unnamed intermittent streams. Steamboat Creek provides a common bond for the planning area as it winds its way from south to north eventually emptying into the Truckee River. Steamboat Creek provides essential water to sustain wildfowl life and marshland and has the potential to provide additional natural, scenic, and recreational amenities with restoration and enhancements.

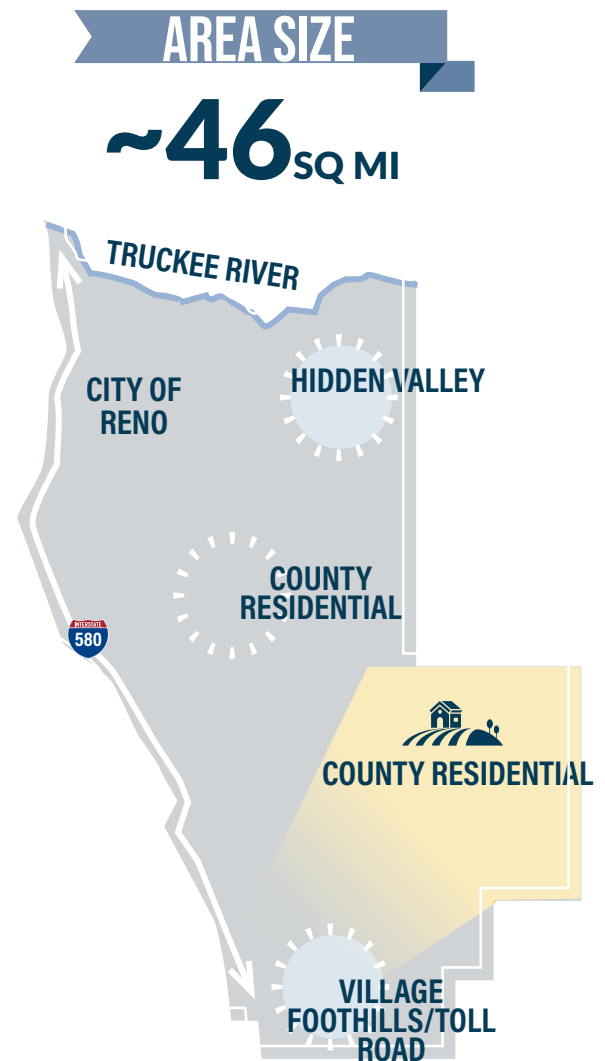
DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Nearly all of the residential areas within the SETM planning area are within the TMSA and designated as Tier 3 lands by the Regional Plan. Tier 3 lands are expected to see the same development patterns that exist today with some neighborhood-serving commercial uses. The few areas outside the TMSA, including portions of the Hidden Valley community and rural areas in the southeastern portion of the planning area are designated as Rural, meaning future development density is limited to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. The conflicts in land use and residential density between the annexed areas and the unincorporated communities within the SETM is one of the largest development constraints currently. Various natural hazards including water bodies, streams and creeks, wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes are present throughout the entirety of the unincorporated portions of the planning area, limiting future development opportunities in the County. Lack of public transportation to the unincorporated portions of the planning area and few services for aging residents also limit future development. However, there is the opportunity to increase services and improve connectivity of walking and bike paths within the planning area with cooperative planning with the City of Reno. Future development also can integrate more affordable housing and protect important wetland and water resources in the area.

Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Integrate more affordable housing into new developments ▶ Preserve nearby wetlands and natural areas ▶ Improve services and accessible recreation opportunities ▶ Connect existing walking and bike paths to each other	▶ Flooding and wildfire risk ▶ Land use conflicts with annexed areas ▶ Few services for aging residents ▶ Lack of public transportation

FIGURE 19. SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS KEY FEATURES



SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space

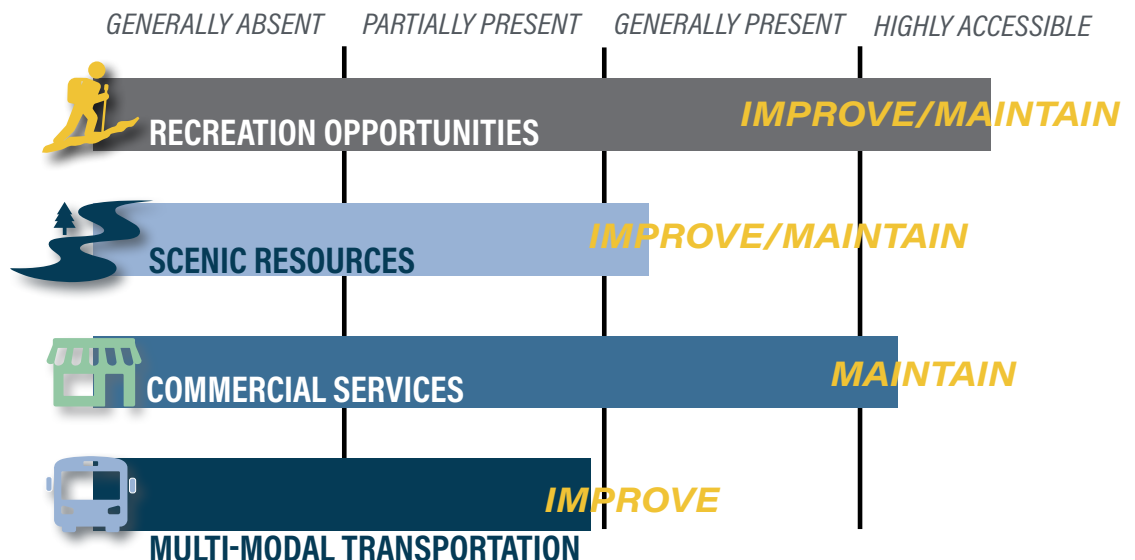


VISION

The Southeast Truckee Meadows is characterized by scenic areas, such as the nearby Virginia Range and its residential communities, setting it apart from other planning areas. SETM's residential areas tell the story of a region defined by gold rush settlers and travelers, wild horses, regionally treasured night skies, and large lot homes. With little to no industrial or commercial development, residents enjoy the peace and quiet of high desert living, while having access to nearby amenities within the City of Reno. Because SETM has much less federal land than other planning areas, preserving residential character and local natural areas is paramount.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

SETM has highly accessible recreation opportunities due to bike paths and the Hidden Valley Regional Park, but there is an opportunity to maintain access to recreation opportunities, especially equestrian trails, and improved bicycle and pedestrian trail connections in the existing neighborhoods. Scenic resources are generally present, with views of the Virginia Range only partially impeded. Future development should mitigate further impacts to these viewsheds and seek to improve the quality of Steamboat Creek and other water resources. Commercial services are highly present but are largely within the City of Reno. Multi-modal transportation is partially present, but with few services outside the city. Additional trail connections and public transit service connections are possible within the area. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

- ▶ Policy 4.1 Prioritize preservation of existing wetlands over mitigation of impacts.
- ▶ Policy 4.2 Buffer water bodies, seeps, springs, playas, wetlands, and riparian areas from development.

NCR Principle 7. Protect cultural resources within the region's urban, rural, and urban interface areas.

- ▶ Policy 1.2 Work in conjunction with tribes, federal, state, and local partners to identify critical cultural resource sites and protect them through acquisition, conservation easements, Recreation & Public Purpose (R&PP) leases, or other appropriate means.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Collaborate with other agencies to develop methods for assessing all developments individually and cumulatively for potential impact upon the natural resources of Washoe County.

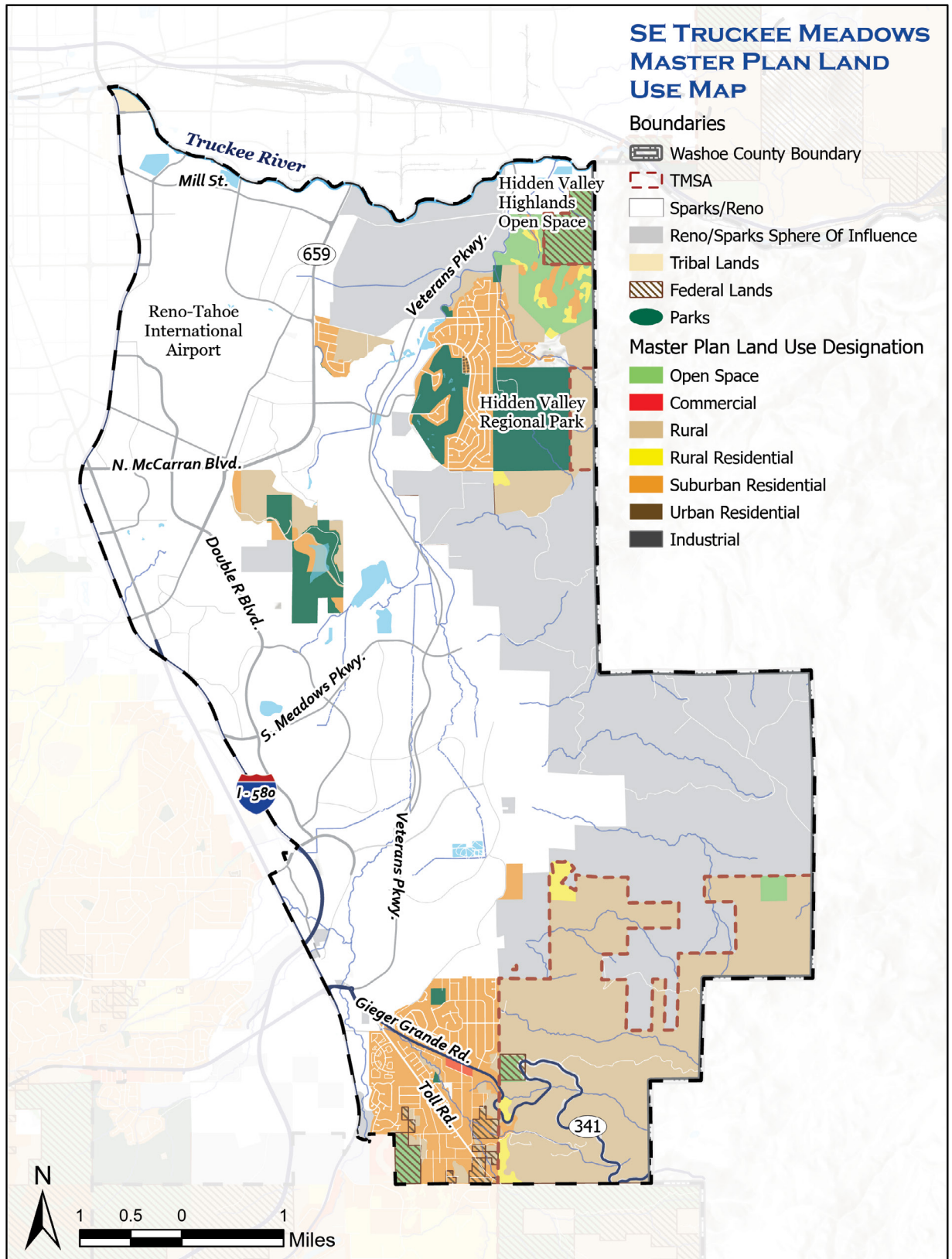
TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.

SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

SUBURBAN

MAP 16. SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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SOUTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Southwest Truckee Meadows planning area spans 47 square miles in the southern portion of Washoe County, at the foothills of the Carson Range. It is bounded on the west by the Toiyabe National Forest, on the north by the Truckee River, on the east by I-580 and South Virginia Street, and on the south by the Steamboat Hills and the Mt. Rose Highway (Highway 431). About half of the planning area lies within the City of Reno and the unincorporated areas maintain a predominately suburban character.

An abundance of hills, streams, and meadows provide educational, scientific, and recreational opportunities, making the area an attractive place in which to work and live. The area's gently rolling terrain provides open space and serves as a scenic backdrop for surrounding areas. As a wildland interface and transition zone, the Southwest Truckee Meadows planning area can be best characterized by its integration of human and natural environments. Issues involving habitat and access to public land predominate the southern and western portions of the area.

Primary scenic and natural resources in the areas include alluvial fans and foothills, open pastures, stream and wetlands, adjacent national forest lands, and the Truckee River. The Truckee River, as well as other trails and bridle paths, are easily accessible and are used by residents throughout Washoe County. Continued access to these areas and the Toiyabe National Forest and Mount Rose Wilderness Area add to a proliferation of outdoor recreational opportunities in the area. The Southwest Truckee Meadows planning area rests entirely within the Truckee Meadows Hydrographic Basin and several creeks provide groundwater recharge and surface water to the south Truckee Meadows area. Evans, Thomas, Whites, and Dry Creek are just a few of the numerous perennial and intermittent creeks found in the planning area. These creeks, along with the Truckee River, support riparian vegetation and provide habitat for various types of waterfowl and small mammals.

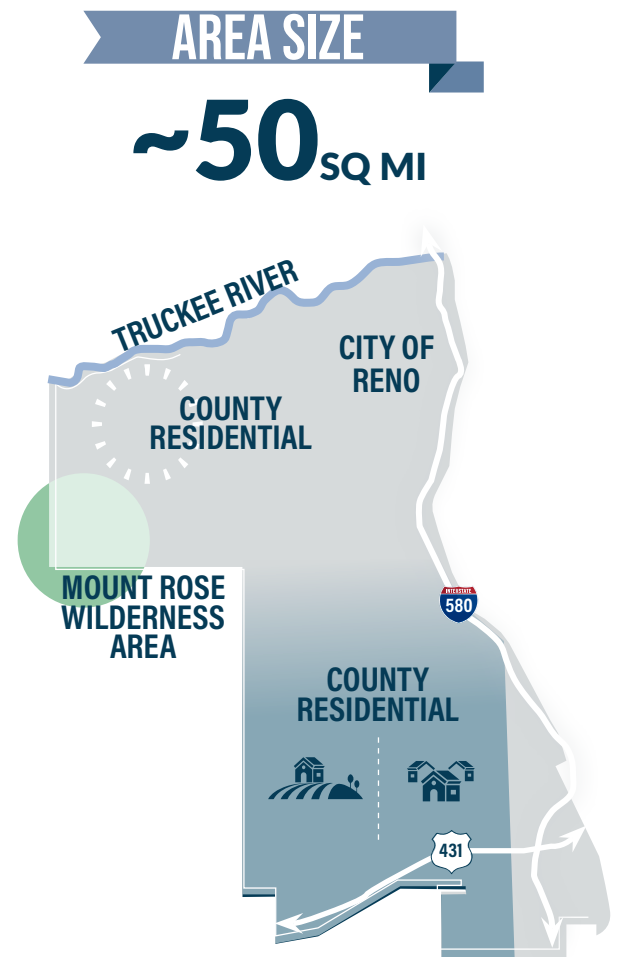
The Southwest Truckee Meadows communities exist in close relation to large blocks of state and public lands. The cultural, natural, and recreational resources on these public lands, as well as on private lands are a key component of the area's character. Residents in this area have expressed a particular interest in innovative approaches to resource conservation and preservation, including production and utilization of alternative energy sources at the individual residence level, water conservation technology, and innovative waste management technologies.

Large ranches and open space in the Southwest Truckee Meadows have transitioned to residential development, resulting in a suburban development pattern within a rural context. Development has been predominantly residential with some commercial uses. Residential development patterns vary, with lots in some areas as small as 1/3 acre and in other areas with lots ranging in size from 5-10 acres.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Nearly all of residential areas within the Southwest Truckee Meadows planning area are within the TMSA and designated as Tier 3 lands by the Regional Plan. Tier 3 lands are expected to see the same development patterns that exist today with some neighborhood-serving commercial uses. Development constraints in this planning area are largely tied to natural hazards, such as steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands adjacent to the Truckee River, and some areas of critical environmental concern. Additionally, limitations associated with the existing roads and public transportation to the unincorporated portions of the planning area limit the potential for future development. Congestion along Wedge Parkway and Arrowcreek Parkway and non-continuous bike lanes and sidewalks also limit transportation services in the area. However, future infill development can enhance existing multi-modal facilities and encourage connection to public transportation services. Future development may also take advantage of the ability to integrate more mixed-use development into the various communities to improve access to commercial and retail services and provide local services.

FIGURE 20. SOUTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS KEY FEATURES



Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Move away from car dependent design and incorporate more multi-modal transportation ▶ Unify communities around gathering spaces that promote connection (parks, dog parks, community centers) ▶ Integrate mixed-use development and infill projects	▶ Limited water resources ▶ Maintenance of existing road infrastructure ▶ Limitations associated with the existing roads and public transportation (schools, emergency services, utilities) ▶ Little public transportation ▶ Bike lanes and sidewalks are not usually continuous ▶ Traffic congestion along Wedge Parkway and Arrowcreek Parkway

SOUTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

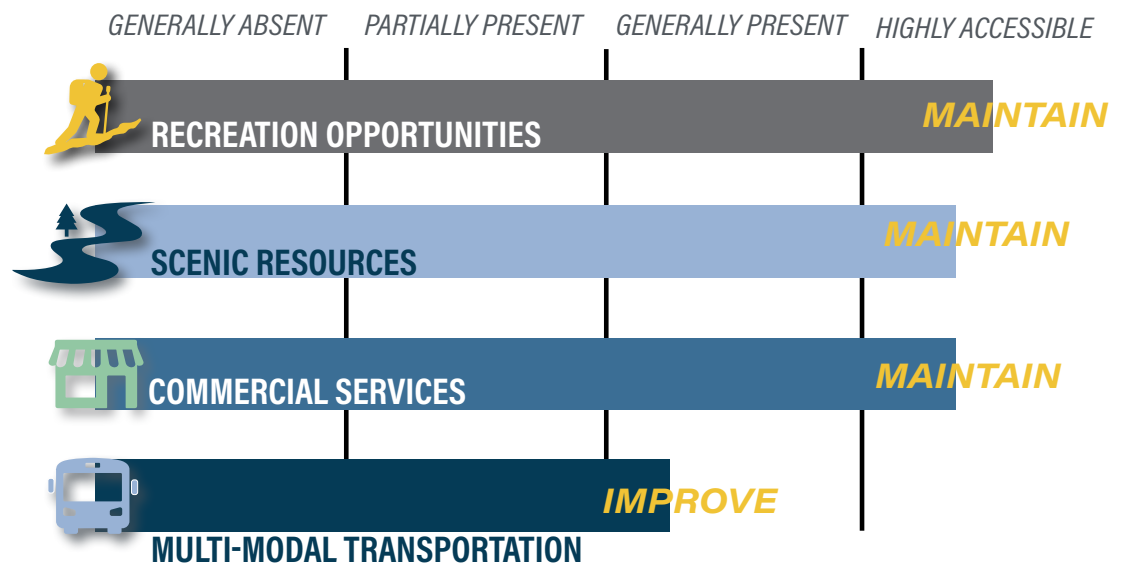
SUBURBAN
Photo Credits: Vahid Behmaram


VISION

The Southwest Truckee Meadows area houses its community within neighborhoods that evoke pastoral sensibility in a suburban setting. Suburban housing is surrounded by diverse natural features dominating the landscape such as alluvial fans and foothills, pastures, streams, and wetlands. Trails proliferate the area providing forest access and opportunities for outdoor recreation within the surrounding public lands. Hobby livestock for recreational, economic and educational purposes is commonplace and a contributor to a desired future of rural lifestyle preservation in the Southwest Truckee Meadows.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Scenic resources and recreational opportunities are highly accessible in the Southwest Truckee Meadows. Views of Toiyabe National Forest and Mount Rose Wilderness Area are largely unobstructed and access to the Truckee River is prevalent. Future development should maintain the accessibility and integrity of these resources and viewsheds. Commercial services are highly present but are largely within the City of Reno. Multi-modal transportation is generally present, with RTC bus service throughout the incorporated portions of the area and some services outside the city. Additional trail connections and public transit service connections are desired within the area for both recreation and transportation purposes. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

PH Principle 3. Use a balanced set of tools to increase and maintain the diversity of housing types across all income levels and to facilitate more affordable and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Reduce regulatory barriers to the provision of affordable and workforce housing through methods including, but not limited to streamlining the development process or offering regulatory flexibility and/or financial incentives for affordable and attainable housing.

PH Principle 5. Preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable and workforce housing.

- ▶ Policy 5.3 Prioritize preservation of existing affordable housing stock.

RFC Principle 3. Facilitate land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals that are in the public interest.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Work with planning partners to develop funding sources and incentives for the acquisition, dedication, and maintenance of open space and sensitive lands.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.2 Protect sensitive and important lands through development techniques such as common open space, conservation easements, and voluntary limitation on development such as a transferable development rights program.

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/county.

TR Principle 2. Provide an efficient transportation network through coordinated operations, system management, technology, and targeted investments.

- ▶ Policy 2.3 Facilitate the proactive maintenance and construction of roadways and pedestrian ways to ensure high-quality, safe travel.
- ▶ Policy 2.4 Employ Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies such as minor widening, improved channelization, improved signage, traffic signals, and other low-cost mitigation measures.

TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.

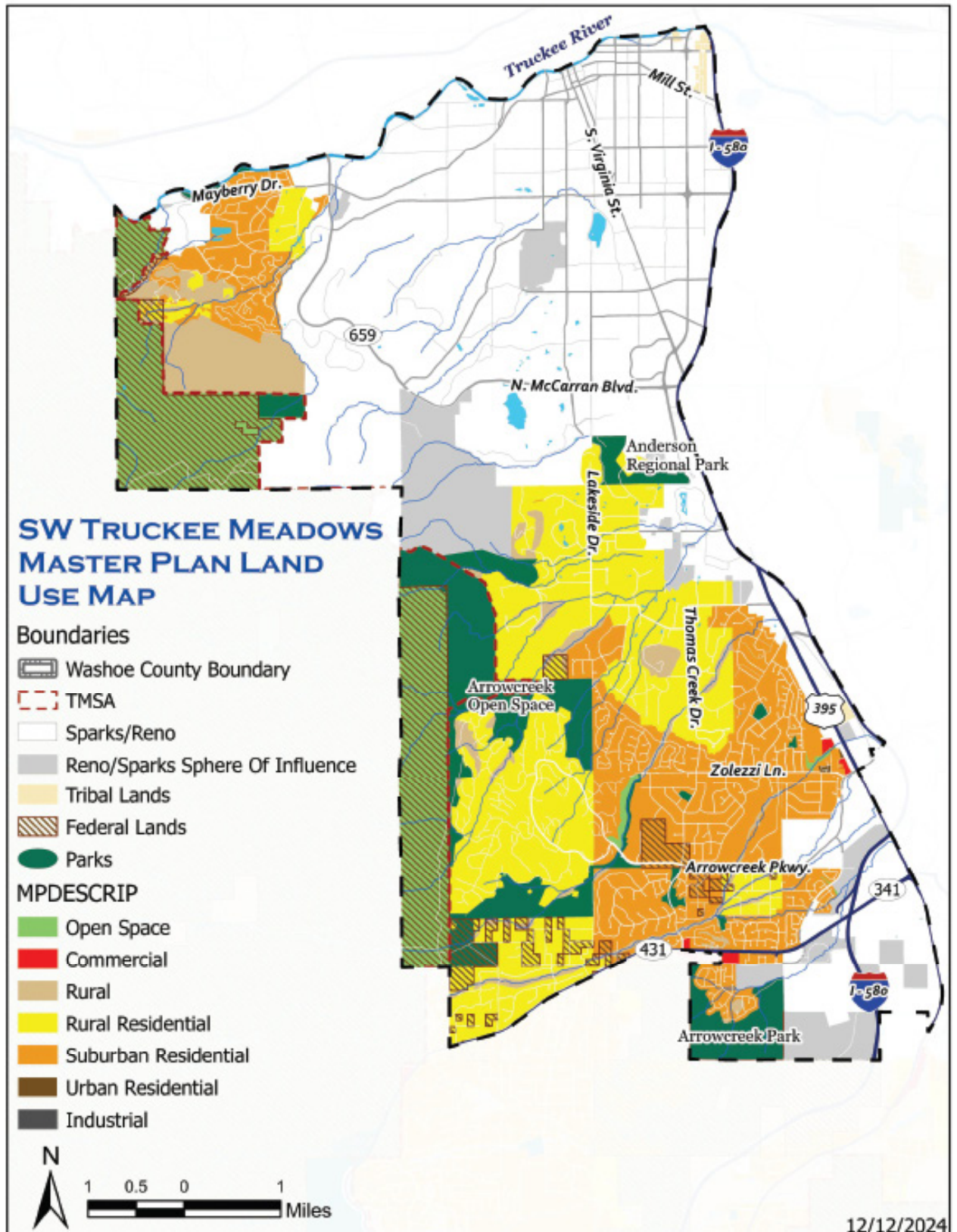
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.

SOUTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

SUBURBAN

MAP 17. SOUTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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SPANISH SPRINGS

SUBURBAN



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Spanish Springs community is in the scenic Spanish Springs Valley, along the northern border of the City of Sparks. Over time, the community has evolved from its agriculture and mining roots into neighborhoods complete with mixed use and commercial centers. Open vistas of the surrounding ridges and more distant mountain ranges are an important identifying characteristic of the Spanish Springs planning area. Along the western portion of the planning area lies a public rural community airport, under private lease from the BLM. Spanish Springs is bounded to the west by the Reno Sparks Indian Colony.

Spanish Springs provides a range of employment opportunities and a more limited, but still mixed, range of residential opportunities both in the City of Sparks and in the unincorporated areas of the County. Recent development in the Spanish Springs area has continued to increase employment opportunities, making it possible for more Spanish Springs residents to choose to work closer to home. A distinct suburban core is concentrated along Pyramid Highway, including a mix of non-residential uses with residential densities of up to three dwelling units per acre.

Village Green Commerce Center is located on the south side of Calle de la Plata, east of Pyramid Highway in Spanish Springs. The specific plan area is a 70-acre environmentally sensitive Business & Industrial Park that creates a stronger potential employment base within the Spanish Springs valley and includes a 20-acre open space.

Outside the suburban core, a transition to a more predominate residential character occurs. This transition occurs most rapidly in the west as elevation increases along the western slopes of the Spanish Springs Valley. To the north and east, the transition to rural stretches out into the valley and includes lower-density, suburban residential opportunities (1-5 acre parcels). The area outside the suburban core and transition area is predominately of a rural character with larger parcels and agricultural land uses. Aggregate mining is a significant component of the local landscape and is found in both the suburban and rural areas.

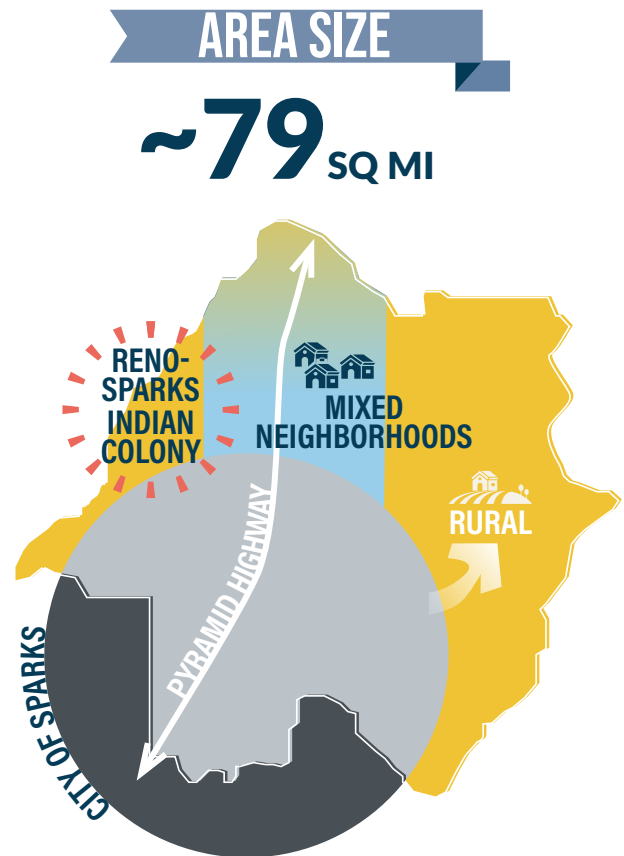
The area's western character is partly realized in the equestrian orientation that has evolved in a substantial portion of the area devoted to larger parcels along the northern and eastern portion of the planning area. This equestrian character also maintains an integrated trail system that provides access to regional and local open space, as well as to local economic activity.

FIGURE 21. SPANISH SPRINGS KEY FEATURES

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Given that Pyramid Highway is the main thoroughfare in the Spanish Springs planning area, traffic and emergency ingress and egress are primary development constraints. Over half of the planning area lies within the City of Sparks, creating some land use conflicts and compounding transportation constraints. Steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands also pose development constraints for new development.

The Regional Plan designates the Spanish Springs planning area as a mix of Tier 2 and Tier 3 lands within the TMSA. This means that over the next 20 years, the areas designated as Tier 2 lands will have the opportunity to take advantage of residential infill development, allowing up to 30 dwelling units per acre, whereas Tier 3 lands are expected to see the same development patterns that exist today with some commercial uses supporting existing neighborhoods. However, public services, specifically sewer are currently limited in the planning area. As in other planning areas, the lands outside the TMSA are designated as Rural, limiting future development to a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 5 acres. Future development in Spanish Springs has the opportunity to improve transportation infrastructure and support preservation of the historical buildings within the area.



Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Maintain the community character of Spanish Springs amidst new development ▶ Expansion and improvement of Pyramid Highway ▶ Increase road connectivity—Hungry Valley to Highway 395 ▶ Preserve historical areas/buildings	▶ Desire for safer transportation infrastructure ▶ High traffic and congestion

SPANISH SPRINGS

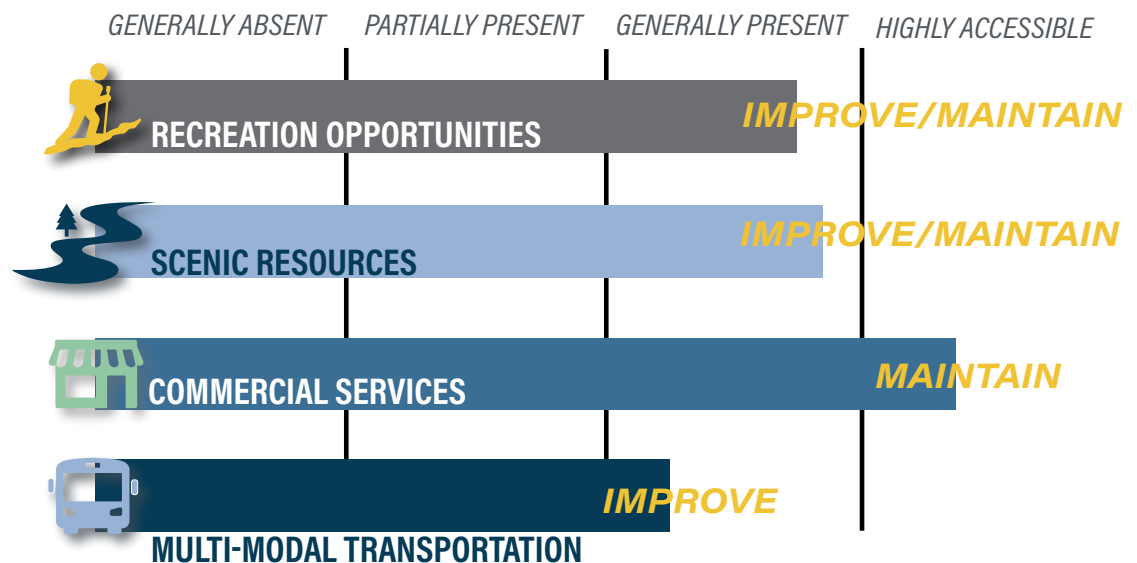
SUBURBAN

VISION

The Spanish Springs community is located in the scenic Spanish Springs Valley, along the northern border of the City of Sparks. The area embodies an equestrian oriented western character, with expansive open space that hosts beloved community trails and rustic building types reminiscent of its history. Its rural orientation, complimented by a suburban core, supports the area's dedication to providing its residents with economic opportunities while preserving the low density, large-lot residential uses that are typical in the community. For years to come, the Spanish Springs community will participate in innovative projects that contribute to local and regional resource conservation efforts and that bring greater efficiency to the utilization of resources.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Recreational opportunities and scenic resources are generally present in the Spanish Springs area but there are opportunities to improve both by increasing multi-modal connections and working cooperatively with the City of Sparks to reduce traffic congestion on Pyramid Highway. Cooperative efforts to reduce congestion can reduce environmental pollution and support efforts to maintain highly accessible commercial services and improve multi-modal transportation opportunities. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

NCR Principle 6. Acquire, develop, and maintain a system of regional parks and trails that provide for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

- ▶ Policy 6.5 Work with partner agencies including TMRPA, WCSD, NDOT, and RTC to support a collaborative approach to the creation of a network of parks, bikeways, greenbelts, recreational trails, multi-purpose corridors, and public facilities.
- ▶ Policy 6.7 Require public access easements from subdivisions that are adjacent to public lands.
- ▶ Policy 6.8 Pursue long-term funding opportunities for acquisition, development, and maintenance of parks, trails, open space, and other recreational facilities.

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.5 Preserve and promote the rural communities and rural area's natural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources to residents and visitors.

TR Principle 1. Create an interconnected transportation network.

- ▶ Policy 1.4 Support mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and community revitalization projects that encourage walking, bicycling, and easy access to existing and planned transit stops.

Transportation Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.

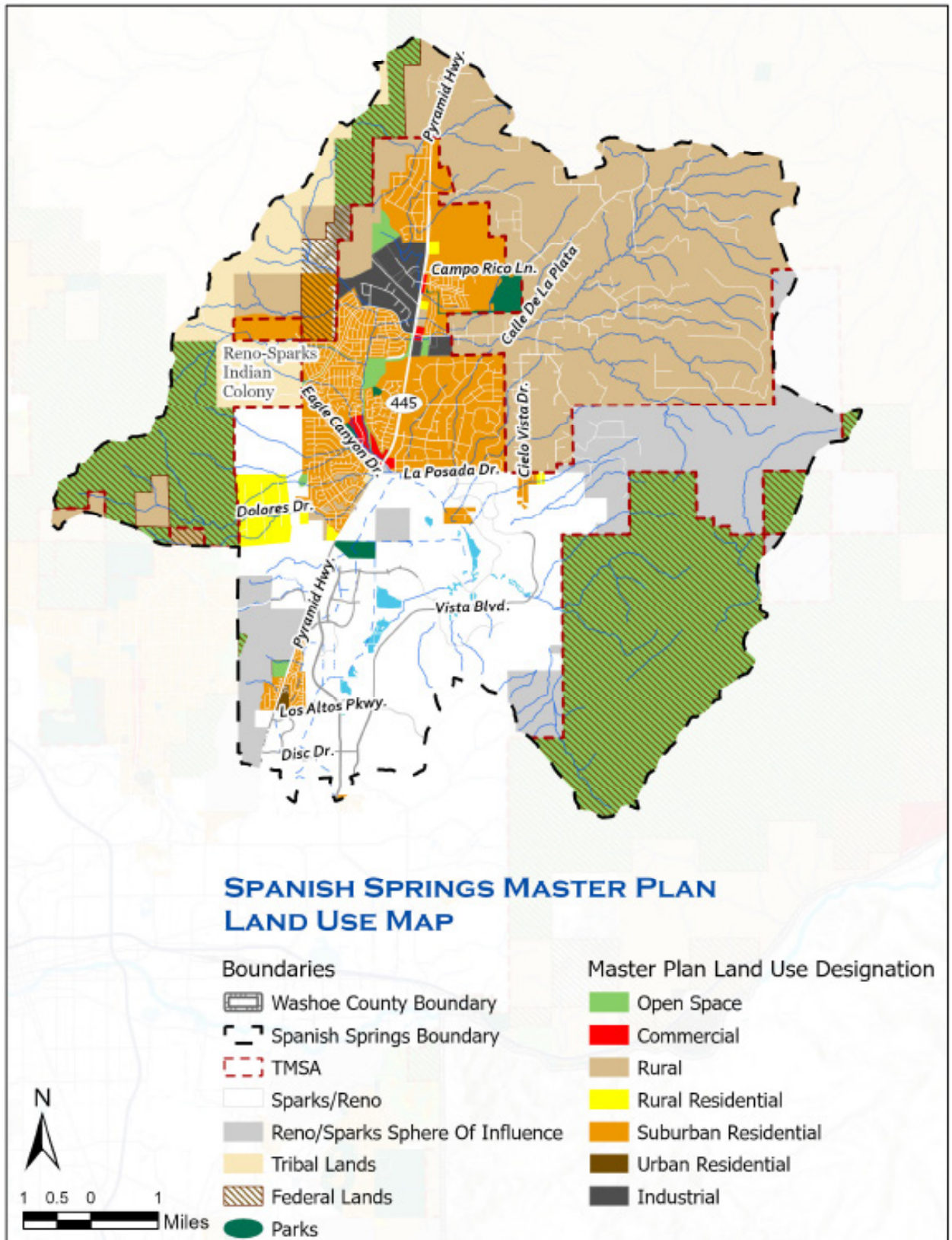
TR Principle 4. Coordinate transportation decisions with regional and local partners.

- ▶ Policy 4.1 Advocate for a regional evaluation of how transportation infrastructure could be developed concurrently with development to meet transportation demands.

SPANISH SPRINGS

SUBURBAN

MAP 18. SPANISH SPRINGS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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SUN VALLEY

SUBURBAN



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Sun Valley community is located in a geographically separated valley, between the City of Sparks on the east and the City of Reno on the west. Over time, the community has evolved from a primarily residential area to incorporate more commercial and mixed-use areas within the residential neighborhoods. The existing commercial corridor along Sun Valley Blvd. provides employment opportunities and a mixed range of residential opportunities.

Open vistas of the surrounding ridges and access to public lands are an important asset to Sun Valley. Retaining these lands as Open Space and continued access to these lands is paramount to the valley's character, contributing significantly to a community desire to develop and maintain an accessible, integrated trail system. Community support exists for connecting existing trails to develop a Sun Valley Rim Trail.

Sun Valley prides itself in being an area with clean water to drink and clean air to breathe, pedestrian safety, an adequate public transit system, manageable traffic, accessible public services, open space, trails, quality schools, and affordable housing. As Sun Valley grows, the distribution of land uses and provision of public facilities and infrastructure will support Sun Valley being a safe and healthy place to live, raise a family, work, run a business, recreate, and retire. Enhancements to the mixed-use development adjacent to Sun Valley Boulevard are needed to improve the appearance of existing commercial development and concentrate multi-family residential on this major arterial near existing services.

The existing land use pattern in the Sun Valley planning area is comprised of a suburban core that includes a mix of residential densities, located throughout the central portion of the valley, with higher densities along Sun Valley Boulevard and north of El Rancho Drive. The desired land use pattern includes a mixed-use district that will be concentrated along both sides of Sun Valley Boulevard from approximately Rampion Way in the south to 7th Avenue in the north to provide additional opportunities for mixed-use development, including office, commercial, and multi-family residential uses within the same structure. Next to the suburban core, on the edges of the valley, are a few dispersed transition areas made up of residential densities at one unit per acre that are not connected to community sewer or water. The area outside the suburban core and transition areas is predominately of a rural character and comprised of some private property and public lands. A small industrial area is located north of 7th Avenue along Stella Drive, with no current plans for expansion.

FIGURE 22. SUN VALLEY KEY FEATURES

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Sun Valley is located wholly within the TMSA and is one of the few areas of the unincorporated County designated as Tier 1 land by the Regional Plan. As such, Sun Valley has the unique opportunity to focus new development to meet the needs of residents by allowing for increased density across the planning area. This increased density, with minimum density designated as the existing density and no maximum density, allows for Sun Valley to facilitate mixed-use and multi-family development to enhance community character and provide more opportunities for affordable housing. This also provides an opportunity for Washoe County to work with Sun Valley residents to develop a new mixed-use zoning district tailored to meet the needs of residents and take advantage of increases in allowed residential densities. Additionally, new and infill development may provide a better balance in the mix of housing types and preserve access to open spaces. However, in order to take advantage of the infill and redevelopment opportunities, existing transportation constraints need to be addressed, including narrow streets between Sun Valley and North Valleys, and the lack of multi-modal opportunities.



Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Preserve open space and ensure easy access for the community ▶ Attract visitors to the area ▶ Balance single-family homes with higher density housing	▶ Narrow streets between Sun Valley and North Valleys ▶ Lack of multi-modal opportunities for the community—sidewalks, bike lanes ▶ Lack of connectivity between Highway 395 and Pyramid Highway

SUN VALLEY

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space

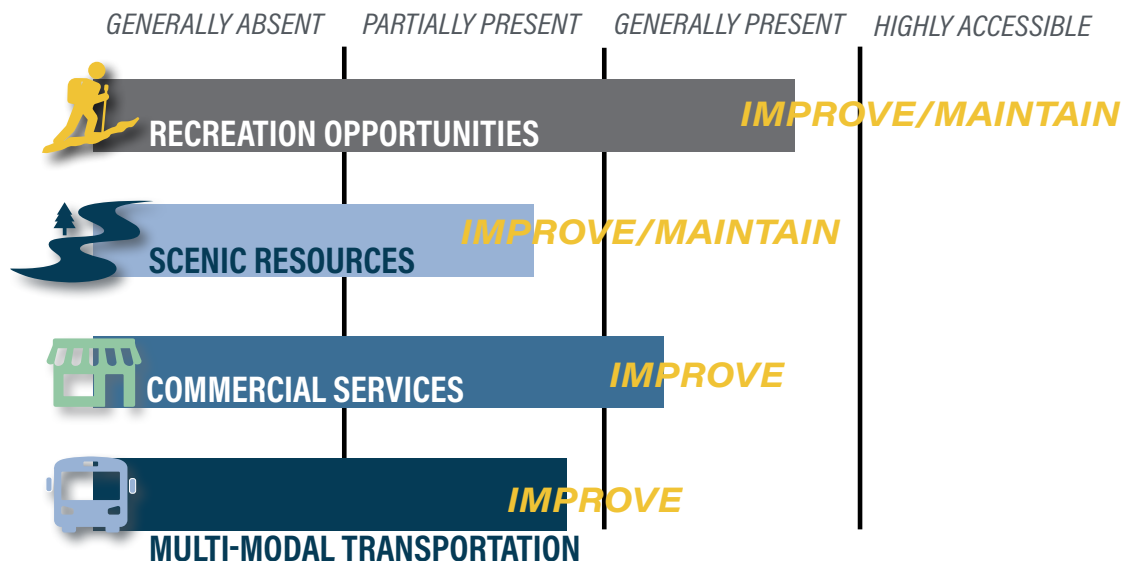


VISION

Nestled between two large urban centers and surrounded by open vistas, the Sun Valley area embodies community through its beloved suburban neighborhoods and abutting rural areas. Sun Valley embodies a culture of connection, a business-friendly environment, and a safe and healthy place to live, raise a family, work, run a business, recreate and retire. In the future, Sun Valley will continue to prioritize its people through the prioritization of sustainable growth supporting healthy lifestyles.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Recreation opportunities are generally present, but there are also opportunities to improve trail connectivity with new and infill development. Scenic resources are partially present and there are opportunities to preserve existing views of the ridge lines and public lands on the edges of the planning area. Commercial services and are generally present. Future development should focus on mixed-use and infill commercial development to provide a wider range of services to Sun Valley residents. New and infill development should seek to enhance the community character rather than detract from it. Multi-modal services are partially present with some RTC services but there are opportunities to increase transit services with new development. There are also opportunities to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to provide safe alternatives for residents. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

PH Principle 2. Coordinate population growth with the availability of water, sanitary sewer, streets and highways, and other public facilities and services.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Promote development of affordable and workforce housing near public facilities, schools, jobs, and public transportation using mixed-use and higher-density development.
- ▶ Policy 2.2 Direct development of residential densities greater than 1 unit per five acres in the TMSA where it can utilize planned local and regional infrastructure.

RFC Principle 7. Facilitate development and expansion of local employment opportunities.

- ▶ Policy 7.2 Collaborate with municipalities, economic development, and business groups, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions on a coordinated regional approach to economic and workforce development.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of climate change on residents.

- ▶ Policy 3.4 Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/County.

LU Principle 2. Tier land use decisions from the Regional Land Designations and the Priority Hierarchy for development as described in the Regional Plan.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Regularly review the Master Plan Land Use Map to maintain consistency with the Regional Plan and meet community needs and update as necessary.

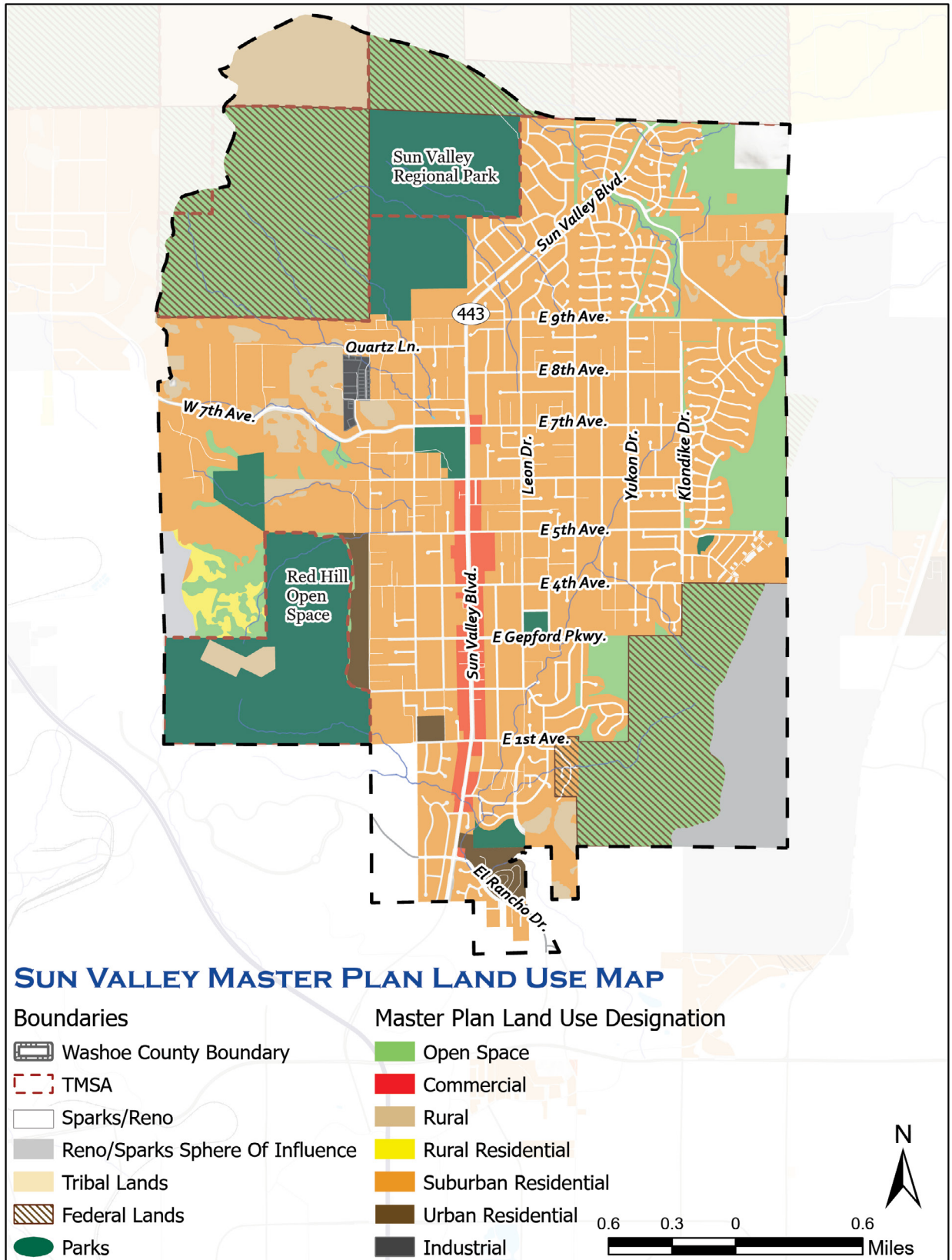
TR Principle 1. Create an interconnected transportation network.

- ▶ Policy 1.4 Support mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and community revitalization projects that encourage walking, bicycling, and easy access to existing and planned transit stops.

TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.

SUN VALLEY

SUBURBAN
MAP 19. SUN VALLEY MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP


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TRUCKEE CANYON

RURAL



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Truckee Canyon planning area lies within the Truckee River Canyon between Vista and Wadsworth, extending to the east all the way to Lyon County. The Truckee River Canyon forms the southern boundary of the planning area, dividing Washoe County from Storey County. The scenic corridor, from Interstate 80 as it passes through the Truckee Canyon planning area, provides views of rugged mountain slopes and escarpments that define the Truckee Canyon.

The most prominent feature in the Truckee Canyon planning area is the steep rugged mountains of the Pah Rah Range that make up the majority of the planning area. The planning area encompasses approximately 1,048 square miles, of which approximately 750 square miles are located within the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation, meaning approximately 298 square miles are within Washoe County's jurisdiction. It should be noted that the County does not have jurisdiction over the Pyramid Lake Reservation lands.

Prehistoric artifacts, rock art, seasonal camps and residential sites give evidence of long-term human occupation of the Truckee Canyon planning area, including occupation by the Northern Paiutes. Research indicates that the Truckee Canyon planning area may have been utilized as early as 7,000 years ago. Later activity in the planning area, related to European settlement, first occurred with emigrant wagon trains passing through during the 1840s. The California Emigrant Trail (Truckee Branch) crossing northern Nevada utilized the Truckee River Canyon as a way to California.

There are approximately 461 acres of prime farmland dispersed across the planning area, some of which supports cattle herds on private land. Prime farmlands are lands that provide the highest crop yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources and can economically sustain high yields of crops when managed using acceptable farming methods. The residents in the planning area have expressed a strong interest in preserving irrigated agricultural land, particularly pastureland along the Truckee River.

Dodge Flat and the area around Wadsworth provide the largest area of level terrain in the planning area and the majority of the developed areas within the planning area are located here. Aside from some commercial and industrial development along the north side of Highway 80, outside the Wadsworth area, steep slopes, federal lands, and other physical development constraints have limited development potential in the planning area.

Certain portions of the Truckee Canyon planning area are areas of extreme wildfire potential. Development in desert areas create safety concerns. Both landslides and debris flows have occurred in recent history and are a hazard in areas located on steep slopes, hillsides, or below the mouths of canyons.

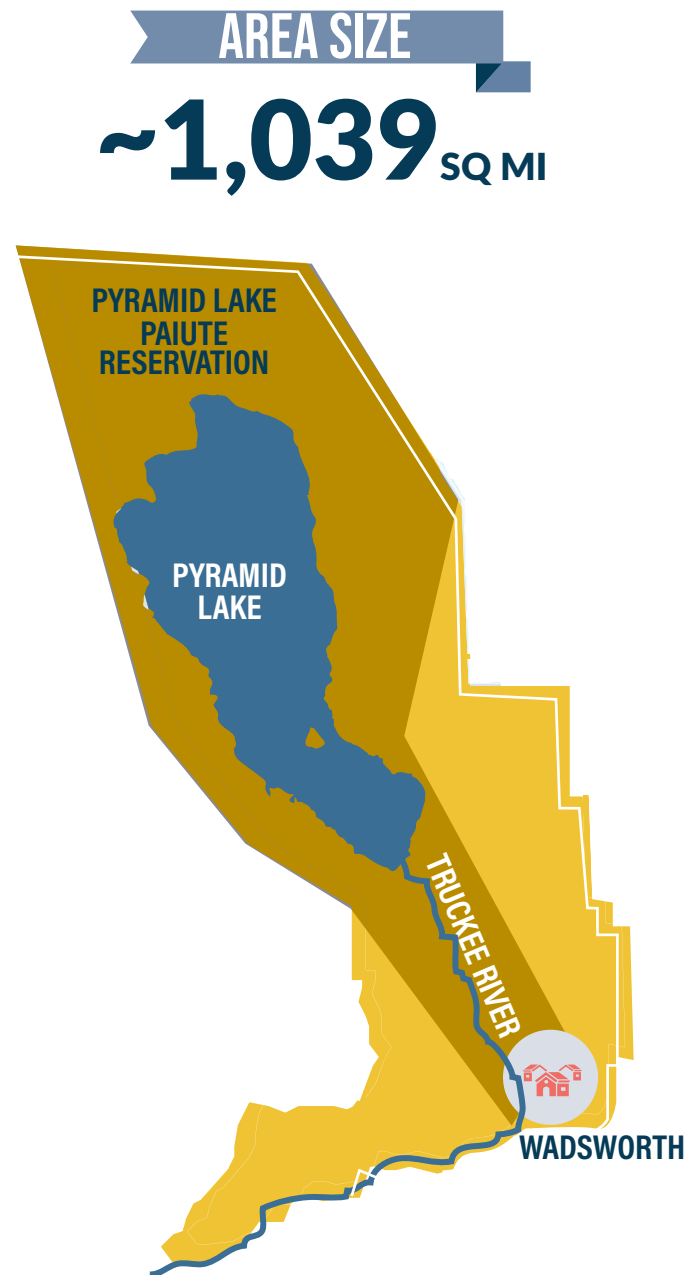
DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

All of the Truckee Canyon planning area is located outside the TMSA and designated by the Regional Plan as Rural. This Rural Land Use Designation builds upon environmental constraints in the planning area including the Truckee River, floodplains and wetlands, limited water resources, wildland-urban interface areas, and steep slopes. The combination of the Rural Land Use Designation and environmental constraints limits future development potential to a maximum of 1 unit per 5 acres throughout most of the planning area. Future development may also be limited by the lack of fire and emergency services and lack of transportation services.

In the Truckee Canyon planning area, soil related constraints include problems of erosion, limitations for septic tank absorption fields and building limitations. The potential for floods caused by winter snow melts, rains, or summer cloudbursts is high in the Truckee Canyon planning area, especially along the Truckee River. Limited water resources also limit future development, with most of the water service in the planning area currently provided through individual wells with the exception of the mobile home parks that have a community water system.

While future development in the Truckee Canyon is limited, there is an opportunity for the County to work with landowners to expand trail and recreation opportunities in Peavine Mountain and the Truckee River. There is also an opportunity to support creation of more wildlife corridors and expansion of schools to meet the needs of the community.

FIGURE 23. TRUCKEE CANYON KEY FEATURES



Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Expansion of schools to meet the needs of the community ▶ Trail expansion and access on Peavine Mountain and the Truckee River ▶ Create more wildlife corridors along the highway ▶ Prioritize a community feel with development to create a well-connected town	▶ Limited water resources ▶ Private ownership restricting access to public lands ▶ Lack of road infrastructure in rural areas ▶ Soil constraints

TRUCKEE CANYON

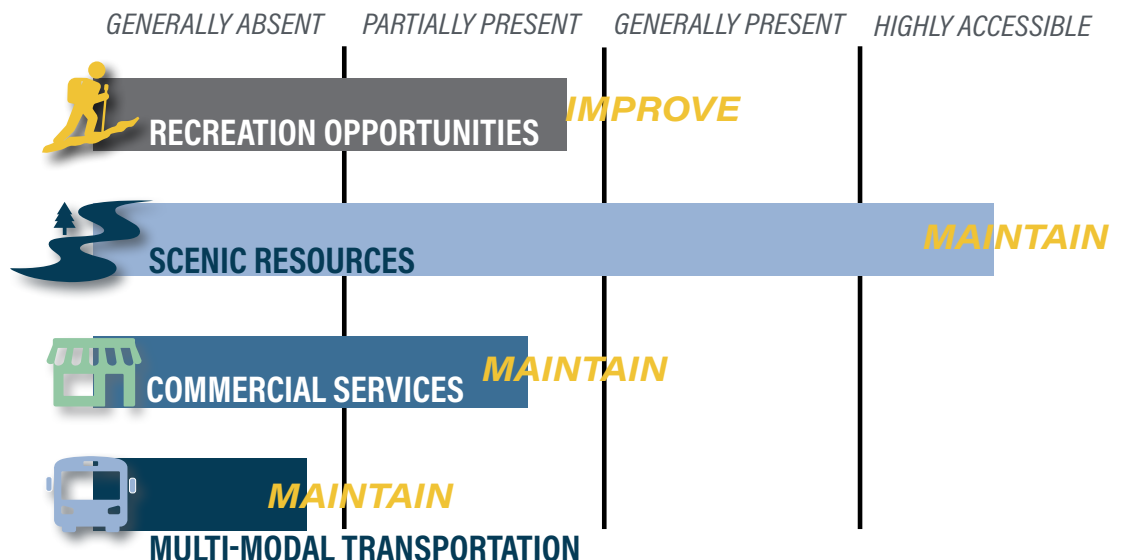
RURAL

VISION

Encompassing the Pyramid Lake Paiute Indian Reservation, the scenic corridor along the Truckee Canyon, and the Wadsworth freestanding community, the Truckee Canyon planning area has a storied history of archaeological and cultural resources weaved into its landscape. Its rural environment, unique natural resources, and proximity to Reno and Sparks make Truckee Canyon a desirable place to live, work, and visit. The community looks to the future through a lens of conservation to provide longevity for the beauty and health of the community by thoughtful development that complements the land and serves its people.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Truckee Canyon has partially present recreation opportunities, but there is an opportunity to improve access to recreational opportunities through cooperation with landowners to expand trail and recreation opportunities on Peavine Mountain and along the Truckee River. Scenic resources are highly accessible, with views of the surrounding mountains, Truckee River, and public lands largely unobstructed. Future development in the planning area is limited, but new development should maintain these viewsheds. Commercial services are partially present and community-oriented. Multi-modal transportation is generally absent, with little to no services to the area. Additional trail connections are possible within the area, but further public transit service is unlikely due to the remoteness of the planning area. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

RFC Principle 2. Utilize land use and transportation decisions to support a healthy economic base.

- ▶ Policy 2.5 Ensure that land use practices and regulations accommodate needs of rural communities, and changing trends regarding businesses, including home and accessory rural occupations.

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.

NCR Principle 2. Coordinate development and conservation goals with federal agencies.

- ▶ Policy 2.1. Continue to support and participate in the management actions, efforts, and on-going projects of the BLM and USFS for the conservation and preservation of natural resources within Washoe County.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Protect key wildlife and fishery habitats; habitats of threatened, endangered, or rare species; key migration routes; and areas important for scientific study.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

- ▶ Policy 4.2 Buffer water bodies, seeps, springs, playas, wetlands, and riparian areas from development.
- ▶ Policy 4.5 Continue to participate in the One Truckee River Management Plan to protect the Truckee River and its tributaries.

NCR Principle 7. Protect cultural resources within the region's urban, rural, and urban interface areas.

- ▶ Policy 7.1 Buffer designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and known cultural resources from development.
- ▶ Policy 7.2 Work in conjunction with tribes, federal, state, and local partners to identify critical cultural resource sites and protect them through acquisition, conservation easements, Recreation & Public Purpose (R&PP) leases, or other appropriate means.
- ▶ Policy 7.3 Participate in the ongoing development of policy and tools to mitigate loss of cultural resources within the region's urban, rural, and urban interface areas.

NCR Principle 9. Facilitate Native American tribal access to areas used for cultural purposes.

- ▶ Policy 9.1 Ensure continued tribal access to areas used for cultural purposes, including gathering, hunting, and traditional cultural practices.
- ▶ Policy 9.2 Work with local tribes to identify important traditional cultural gathering areas and associated plant species; recommend appropriate protection measures for maintaining a sustainable ecosystem.

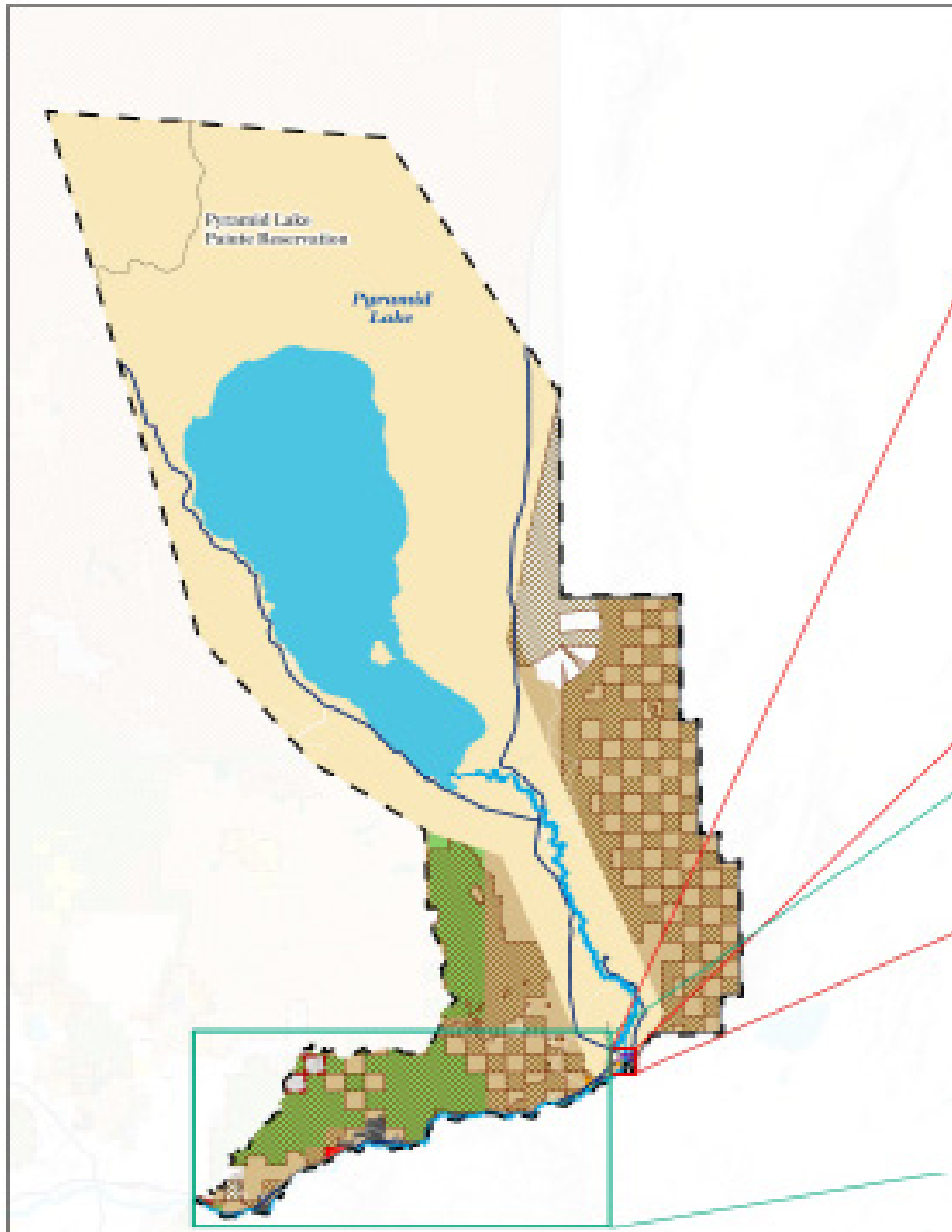
LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.4 Engage with the residents of the Freestanding Communities (Gerlach, Empire, Wadsworth) to ensure development is consistent with communities' unique needs.
- ▶ Policy 5.5 Preserve and promote the rural communities and rural area's natural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources to residents and visitors.

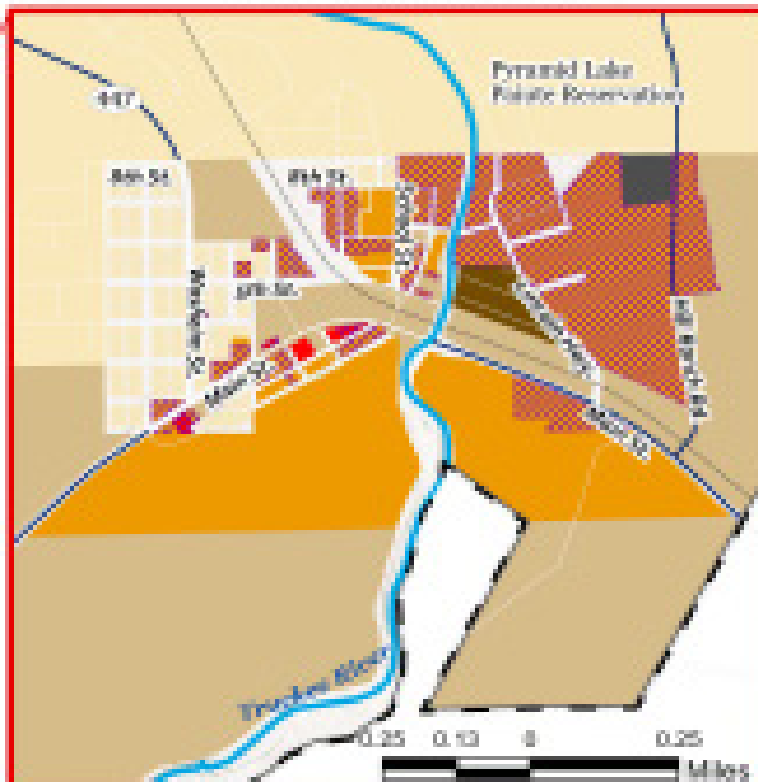
TRUCKEE CANYON

RURAL

MAP 20. TRUCKEE CANYON MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



Wadsworth Inset



TRUCKEE CANYON MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP

Boundaries

- Washoe County Boundary
- THCA
- Wadsworth Free Standing Community
- Tribal Lands
- Federal Lands
- Parks

Master Plan Land Use Designation

- Open Space
- Commercial
- Rural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Urban Residential
- Industrial

Truckee River Inset



01/23/2025

VERDI

RURAL



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Verdi planning area rests along the Nevada-California border, with high desert landscapes to the east and the rising Sierra Nevada to the west. It is characterized by largely unincorporated County land north and south of the populous city of Reno, with public lands permeating the landscape and the Truckee River corridor running through its center.

Verdi's origins date back to the discovery of gold in California in 1848. The original route of the 49ers, on their journey to find mining areas in the Sierra foothills runs along the same axis as the current U.S. 40 railroad and Highway Interstate 80. This passageway is now considered the main transportation corridor through Verdi.

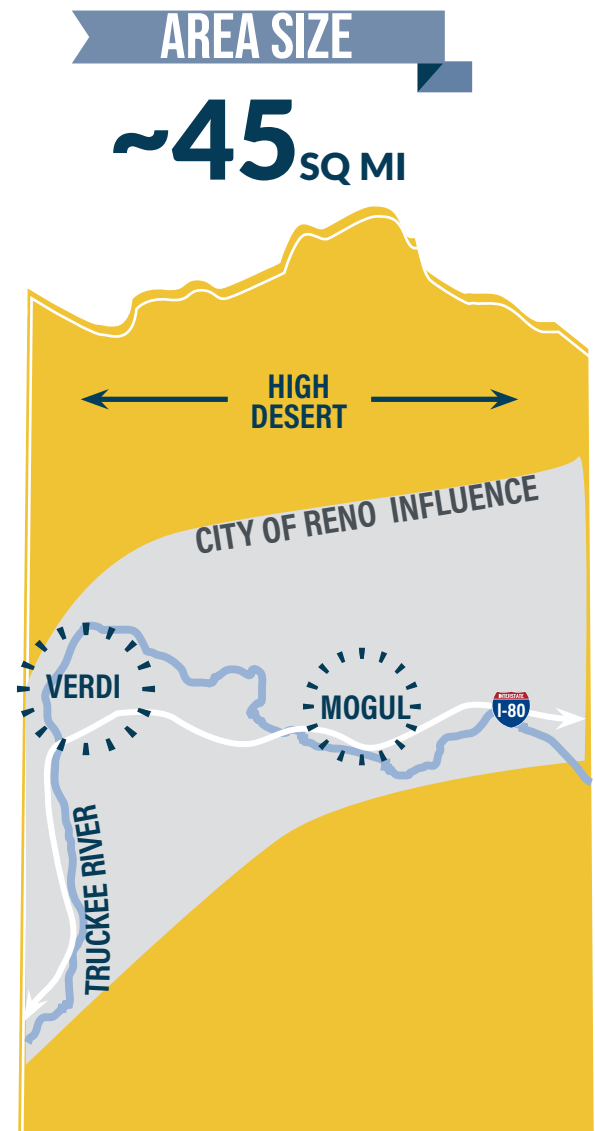
The highly agricultural area is made up of three distinct neighborhoods; Verdi, Mogul, and Belli Ranch. This planning area sees higher amounts of precipitation than other areas of the County. Further, its active earthquake fault lines have had significant impacts on the landscape throughout history.

The area's early economy was built off four main economic industries; lumber, mining, agriculture and transportation. Lumber is no longer a defining economic focus for the area, Verdi continues to support transportation efforts through traveler services and a railroad shipping stop, agricultural and ranching uses, and small mining operations within the Sierra Nevada. Verdi's charm lies within its distinction between the various communities. The community of Verdi hosts a commercial center with small- to medium-sized businesses, known as the Village Center. The communities of Mogul and Belli Ranch are predominately residential in character with lots ranging from 0.5 – 3 acres in size.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

The developed residential portions of the planning area lie within the TMSA and are designated as Tier 3 lands by the Regional Plan. Tier 3 lands are expected to see the same development patterns that exist today with some commercial uses supporting existing neighborhoods. As in other planning areas, the lands outside the TMSA are designated as Rural, limiting future development to a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 5 acres. Future development in Verdi has the opportunity to provide accessible schools and direct development away from wildlife habitats and rural areas. Future development is limited in the Verdi area due to the Regional Land Use Designation as well as traffic and safety concerns on I-80.

FIGURE 24. VERDI KEY FEATURES



Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Protect and preserve rural land ▶ Provide accessible schools and education ▶ Conserve wildlife habitat for sensitive species ▶ Preserve scenic views and natural landscape along highways	▶ Traffic and lack of safety on I-80 ▶ Access to recreation is dependent on location

VERDI

RURAL

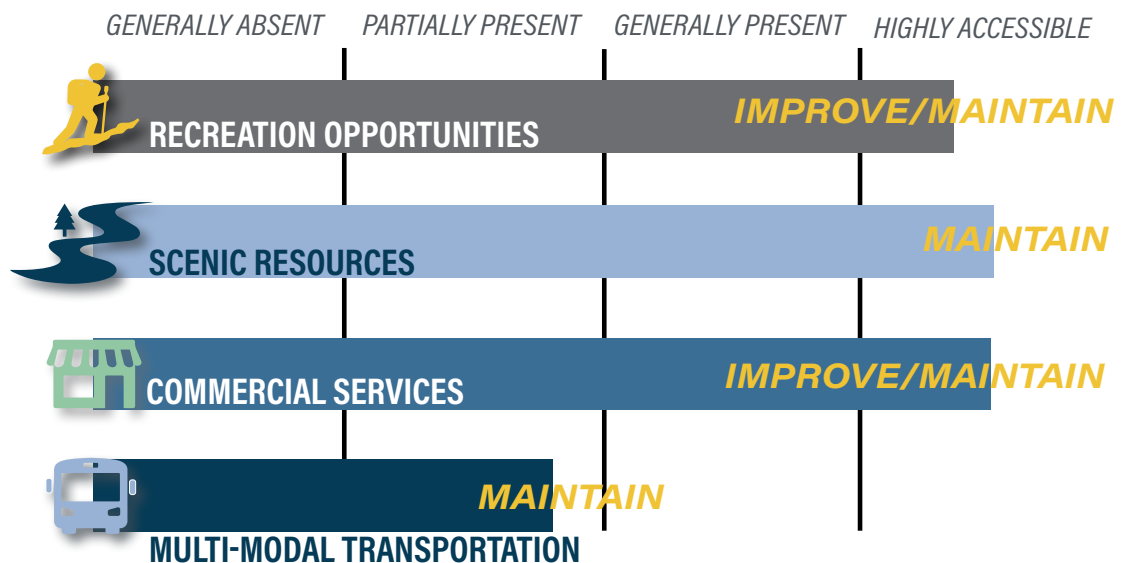


VISION

The Verdi community lies within unincorporated Washoe County, extending north and south of Reno. Verdi is characterized by its historic rural heritage within a mountainous and high desert terrain, typified by access to sweeping public lands and connection to the undeveloped areas along the Truckee River. The Verdi community has fostered a deep connection to its place, reflecting a community attitude of hard work and independence. Verdi is committed to preserving its historic character, enhancing its Village Center, and welcoming new members to town.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Recreational opportunities in the Verdi planning area are highly accessible; however, access to recreation is dependent on location. There is an opportunity to support improved access to existing recreational opportunities and provide additional trail connections. Scenic resources are highly accessible, with views of the surrounding mountains, Truckee River, and public lands largely unobstructed. Future development in the planning area is limited, but new development should maintain these viewsheds. Commercial services are highly accessible. Multi-modal transportation is partially present, with some services to the unincorporated portions of the planning area and greater services within the incorporated areas. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Protect key wildlife and fishery habitats; habitats of threatened, endangered, or rare species; key migration routes or critical seasonal habitats; and areas important for scientific study.
- ▶ Policy 3.2 Protect sensitive and important lands through development techniques such as common open space, conservation easements, and voluntary limitation on development such as a transferable development rights program.

NCR Principle 6. Acquire, develop, and maintain a system of regional parks and trails that provide for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

- ▶ Policy 6.5 Work with partner agencies including TMRPA, WCSO, NDOT, and RTC to support a collaborative approach to the creation of a network of parks, bikeways, greenbelts, recreational trails, multi-purpose corridors, and public facilities.

AR Principle 2. Coordinate natural hazard response with regional and federal agencies.

- ▶ Policy 2.1 Support Fire Protection District efforts to develop, fund, and implement a Community Wildfire Protection Program and replanting program for all non-federal public lands in the region.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Incentivize residential cluster and common open space developments as an alternative to conventional subdivision development where clustering will achieve permanent protection of open space or valued natural resources.

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- ▶ Policy 4.1 Encourage design of industrial, commercial, and multifamily uses to contribute to the community's sense of place rather than detract from it.

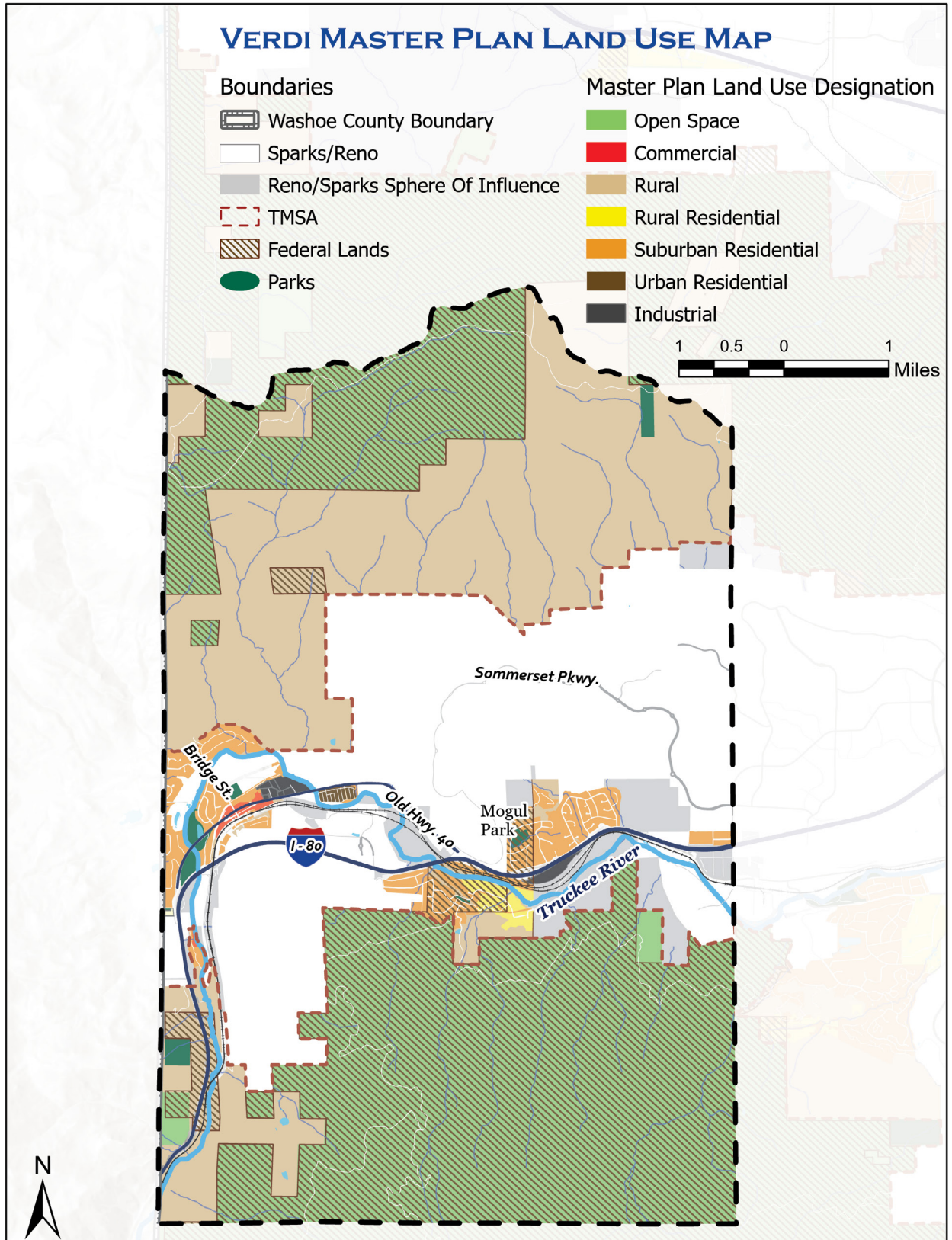
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ Policy 3.1 Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.

VERDI

RURAL

MAP 21. VERDI MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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WARM SPRINGS

RURAL



HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Warm Springs Valley has hosted open range cattle ranches throughout its history, operating on both private and BLM land. Its agricultural and rural character is hosted on a large, gently sloping valley surrounded by mountainous terrain and canyons. From its woodlands in high elevation areas to its grass-laid valleys, Warm Springs encompasses both high desert characteristics and a refuge for wildlife, including populations of feral horses. The Warm Springs planning area includes all of Palomino Valley and Warm Springs Valley. Warm Springs is located north of the City of Sparks on both sides of the Pyramid Lake Highway, State Route 445, in Washoe County. The planning area is bounded on the northeast by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Reservation boundary and on all other sides by the Warm Springs Valley Hydrographic Basin boundary. The planning area also shares land with the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, residing in the eastern half of Hungry Valley.

Scenic resources within Warm Springs include a scenic corridor around Pyramid Lake Highway, which offers views of rugged mountain terrain and broad, open valleys. The surrounding Hungry Ridge, Dogskin Mountain, the Virginia Mountains, and the Pah Rah Range provide dramatic mountain views serving as a visual barrier from the developed areas of the City of Reno and Spanish Springs and provides important habitat to a variety of wildlife species including pronghorn, deer, small game species, and a variety of game birds. Contrasts of color and elevation make these mountains an important visual resource. Vast rangeland and agricultural land are present throughout the valley, as well as archaeological evidence of long-term human occupation.

The Warm Springs planning area also contains the BLM's Palomino Valley Wild Horse and Burro Center. Portions of the Virginia Mountains are designated as a BLM semi-primitive recreation area and should be protected from development. The Incandescent Rocks are located in the Virginia Mountains and have been designated as a Nevada Natural Heritage Site and as a scenic Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) by the BLM.

Currently, most residential development consists of large parcels, 40+ acres, which conserves the rural feeling of Warm Springs. Large-lot development is permitted in the planning area, within the limits of current and future water resources. Industrial development is minimal in the planning area, with the main location of industrial uses being the Chapman facility.

The Warm Springs planning area contains the Warm Springs Valley Hydrographic Basin as well as Cottonwood and Paiute Creeks, both perennial streams, and many unnamed intermittent streams. There are several year-round springs in the planning area, particularly in the Winnemucca Valley area. Large agricultural land uses in the middle of the Warm Springs planning area utilize extensive amounts of groundwater for irrigation and runoff from these uses contributes to surface water flow in the planning area.

FIGURE 25. WARM SPRINGS KEY FEATURES

AREA SIZE
~290 SQ MI

Warm Springs Specific Plan

The Warm Springs Specific Plan (WSSP) was adopted in 1992 as a subcomponent of the Warm Springs Area Plan. Although the WSSP is referred to as a “specific plan,” it is not considered a “planned unit development” subject to NRS Chapter 278A or a “specific plan” subject to Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 442 (adopted in 2015). The vision for the WSSP was the development of a satellite suburb with commercial and municipal services to serve a mix of relatively large lots ranging from 1 to 5 acres. The location of the WSSP, which was outside the service area for Washoe County municipal services such as roads, water, and sewer, required the plan to provide for these services independently. The WSSP contemplated a financing plan intended to collect fees that would eventually pay for the development of the necessary roads, water, and sewer infrastructure. The maximum anticipated development was linked to a water resources management plan. The WSSP was intended to serve as the center of residential development and the community service center for the Warm Springs community. Development within the WSSP was also intended to maintain and enhance the agricultural and rural character of the Palomino Valley. The desired residential uses in the WSSP were single-family homes with design, building materials, colors, and site development which blend with the overall rural character of the former planning area. Cluster development at a density greater than three dwelling units per acre was to be permitted in the WSSP, where possible, to maintain open space.

The water resources management plan was and continues to be necessary to reconcile an ongoing imbalance between existing water rights and the hydrographic basin's sustainable annual yield. The plan calls for balancing three basic components: Annual Yield, Water Rights, and Land Use. The balancing mechanism implemented to achieve this goal has been referred to as a water rights discount, and in practice requires development to dedicate to Washoe County 2.5-acre feet of water rights for each dwelling unit rather than the 2.0-acre feet required elsewhere throughout the County. The plan anticipates that over time, as the existing zoning is realized and dwelling units are developed, the basin will become less and less over appropriated.

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The WSSP also included a set of design standards for development that were intended to blend the area's rural character with some typical suburban order and standardization. Generally these standards provided for an orderly network of roads, consistent lot sizes and required yards to conform to standards to create a uniform sense of place. The community continues to appreciate these standards and expresses support for their continued implementation.

However, despite the WSSP's attempts to provide a comprehensive plan to achieve this land use vision, after 30 years, the plan remained largely unfulfilled. The development that is occurring in the WSSP area is not entirely consistent with the original vision of the WSSP, as parcel maps have become the only fiscally possible opportunity for development. The general failure of the WSSP is due to many different factors. Despite the WSSP's attempt to be thought-out and comprehensive, the WSSP's financing plan – the mechanism to pay for the necessary municipal services – proved to be wholly inadequate to cover the real-world costs for paved roads, and municipal water and sewer infrastructure. From the adoption of the WSSP, these costs proved an insurmountable barrier to the



WARM SPRINGS

RURAL

Photo Credits: Pat McMurray



implementation of the established zoning. Eventually, Washoe County recognized the financing plan would always be inadequate and acted to amend the WSSP to delete the financing plan component. During the Envision Washoe 2040 process, it was determined that the other portions of the WSSP can also be dissolved. The WSSP's development guidelines and water management plan continue to be implemented as components of the Washoe County Master Plan. The WSSP's development guidelines and water management plan were incorporated into the Washoe County Development Code and continue to be implemented as components of the Washoe County Development Code. However, until the necessary infrastructure can be provided, the existing land use plan/zoning map is unlikely to be fulfilled.

While the lack of an adequate financing plan prevented the fulfillment of the WSSP, it did not prevent development based on Washoe County's Parcel Map regulations. The application of these alternative development regulations has resulted in a development pattern based on unpaved roads, wells and septic systems. The lack of municipal water and sewer has resulted in some community concerns about groundwater quality. Further, the continued use of water for agricultural production has not contributed to bringing the basin's over appropriation into balance, contributing to an ongoing concern about water availability in addition to water quality concerns. While there are region-wide initiatives with TMWA, Washoe County, and the Cities of Reno and Sparks that have the potential to alter the underlying conditions and create opportunities for both groundwater quality and quantity enhancements, these initiatives are in their early stages. Future updates to this plan will likely be able to consider the impacts and opportunities these initiatives may present. The community supports water projects that increase agricultural opportunities, but firmly oppose using any increase in water availability for additional development potential. More information on the Warm Springs Water Management Future Policy Discussion and 2023 Water Rights Inventory can be found in Appendix 5. At the time the water discount factor was created, the state of knowledge regarding the basin's annual yield was in dispute. In addition, the expected water use of individual land uses was based on a mix of data and untested assumptions. The resulting discount factor resulted from multiple negotiations and compromises between the state engineer, Washoe County, and the original landowners. Washoe County is currently undertaking a modern analysis, based on the newest and best available data. This analysis will lead to a proposal for an updated water management plan with a discount factor supported by current data. In the meantime, the existing discount factor will continue to be implemented.

The lack of a paved road network gives rise to additional concerns. Paved road networks that are typical of full subdivisions contribute significantly to the management of storm water. While the unpaved roads typical of a parcel map are required to meet engineering standards, they are less able to withstand storm water

events, potentially resulting in more damage to roadways and neighboring property. In addition to the increased challenges of storm water management, the area's expanding unpaved road network requires significant maintenance, particularly while construction traffic for new development remains consistently high. The Palomino Valley General Improvement District (PVGID) was established to maintain the roadway network throughout the former WSSP as well as some roadways extending into the Warm Springs planning area. In addition to general maintenance the PVGID is responsible for maintaining the road network after significant storm water events, repairing the ongoing damage from construction traffic, and keeping dust within acceptable limits. The PVGID currently confronts the challenges of maintaining this largely unpaved road network under the constraints of a revenue structure which originally anticipated a land use pattern based on paved roads and a developer driven financing scheme. Community members throughout the PVGID service area are concerned the current revenue structure established by its charter is not capable of keeping pace with the continued parceling within the former WSSP.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Physical development constraints from natural hazards pose the greatest development constraints in the Warm Springs planning area. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has identified some soils in the Warm Springs planning area as having severe limitations for septic tank absorption fields. The potential for floods caused by winter snow melts, rains or summer cloudbursts is high in the Warm Springs planning area. Additionally, steep slopes throughout the planning area limit the opportunities for future development.

Aside from the WSSP area, the Regional Plan designates the entirety of the Warm Springs planning area as Rural, therefore limiting future residential development to no greater than 1 unit per 5 acres. However, given the water resource constraints, physical development constraints, and lack of emergency services, the ability to build to even a 1 unit per 5 acre density in the valley is unlikely. Future development in the valley should seek to protect and preserve the rural landscape, maintain dark skies, preserve viewsheds, and protect wildlife habitats.

Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
▶ Protect and preserve rural land ▶ Provide accessible schools and education ▶ Conserve wildlife habitat for sensitive species ▶ Preserve scenic views and natural landscape along highways	▶ Lack of road maintenance and traffic on Pyramid Hwy ▶ Lack of emergency vehicle access, access to police ▶ Limited access to water

WARM SPRINGS

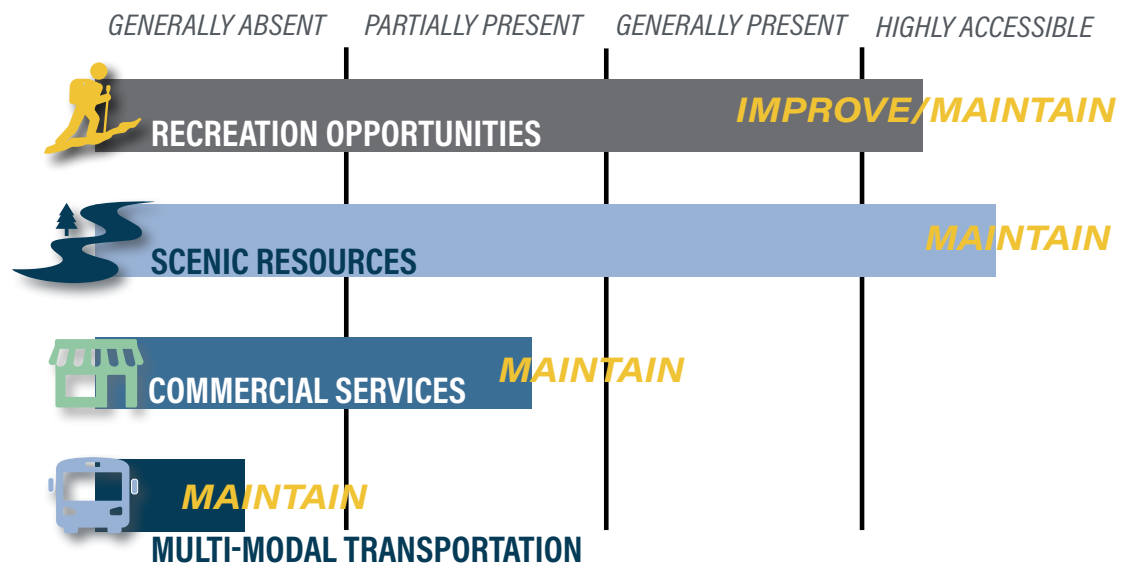
RURAL
Photo Credits: Julee Olander


VISION

The Warm Springs planning area values its active agricultural lands along with views of open cattle ranches set against the scenic backdrop of wild horses in Palomino Valley. Warm Springs spans both sides of the Pyramid Lake Highway, creating a scenic state thoroughfare stretching throughout the valley with surrounding mountain peaks along its borders. Warm Springs' protection of dark skies and ranching heritage complement its community resources, creating an area that will continue to support its community while preserving its unique natural landscape.

EXISTING AND DESIRED CONDITIONS SNAPSHOT

Recreation opportunities, scenic resources, and commercial services are all highly accessible in Warm Springs, but there is an opportunity to improve access to recreation, which is currently dependent on location, and provide additional trail connections throughout the planning area. Preservation of scenic resources and viewsheds should be a priority consideration with new development. While the few commercial services are partially present, services are limited and residents of Warm Springs are satisfied with commercial opportunities and are generally comfortable with traveling for services in exchange for the feeling of seclusion the area provides. Multi-modal transportation is generally absent with little interest in providing additional services. The graphic below represents the existing conditions as bars and the desired future conditions as yellow text for each of the four plan themes.



PRIORITY PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

NCR Principle 1. Maintain scenic resources within the County.

- ▶ Policy 1.1 Collaborate with all planning partners to identify and protect the region's significant visual gateways and viewsheds including ridge lines, buttes, mountains, and riparian corridors.
- ▶ Policy 1.2 Maintain dark night skies.

NCR Principle 3. Protect key wildlife and vegetation resources.

- ▶ Policy 3.3 Cooperate with RTC and NDOT to minimize wildlife conflicts within transportation corridors.

NCR Principle 4. Protect and improve water resources.

- ▶ Policy 4.2 Buffer water bodies, seeps, springs, playas, wetlands, and riparian areas from development.
- ▶ Policy 4.3 Protect Critical Source Water Protection Areas.
- ▶ Policy 4.7 Ensure water importation proposals are environmentally sound as set forth in NRS 533.370(3).
- ▶ *Warm Springs Policy. Any additional water made available through the development and implementation of any regional water infrastructure or resources plan should be used for agricultural opportunities rather than increasing residential, commercial, or industrial development opportunities.*
- ▶ *Warm Springs Policy. Work with the State Engineers office to maintain a water management plan that seeks to balance annual yield, available water rights, and development potential*

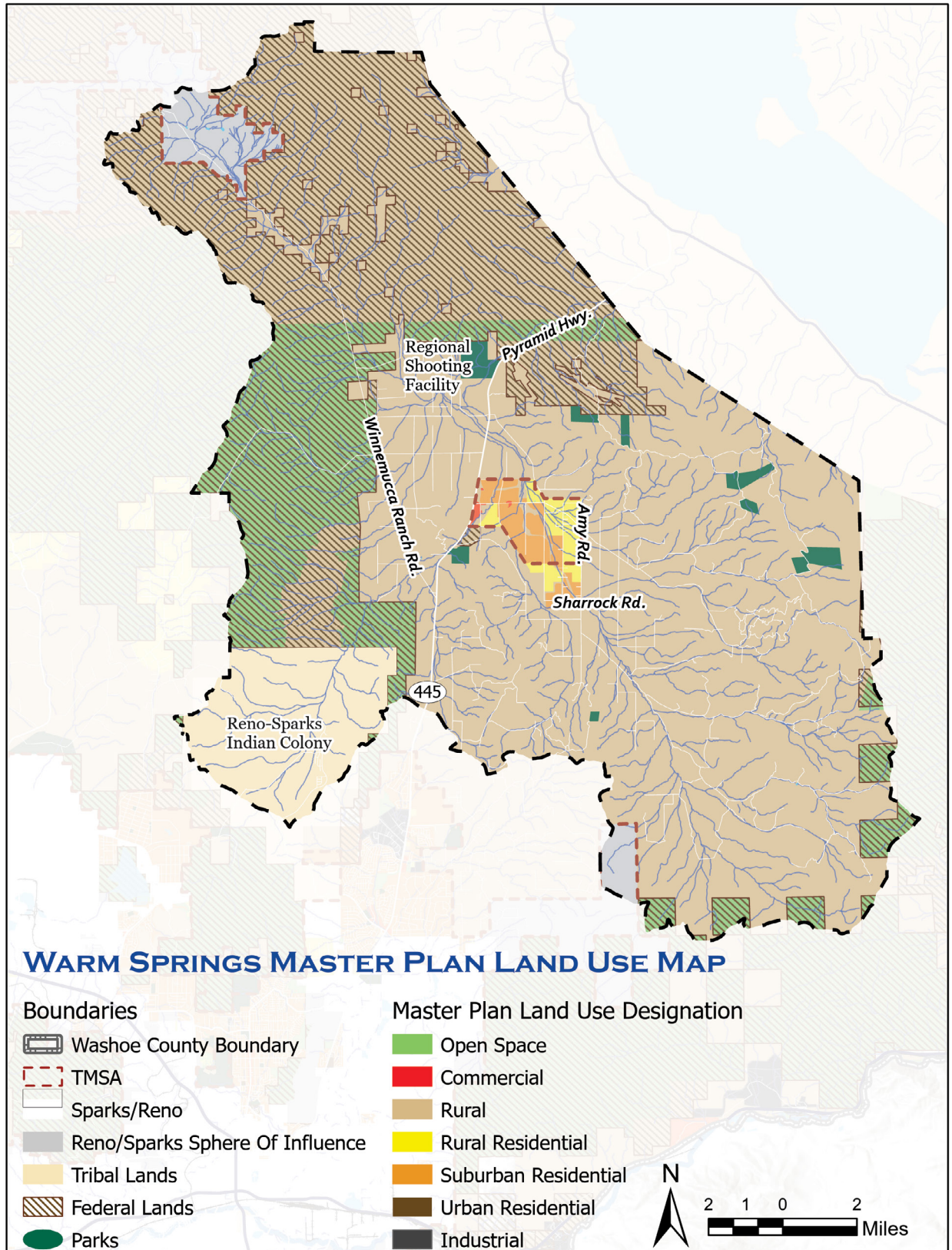
AR Principle 2. Coordinate natural hazard response with regional and federal agencies.

- ▶ Policy 2.2 Promote partner agency efforts in helping individuals learn to live with fire.

LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ Policy 5.1 Maintain large lot sizes outside of the TMSA and prohibit land use changes that would result in a parcel less than 5 acres in size.
- ▶ Policy 5.2 Limit growth in the Rural Area (RA) to no more than 2% of the Region's 20-year residential growth.

WARM SPRINGS

RURAL
MAP 22. WARM SPRINGS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP


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OTHER PLANNING AREAS

INTRODUCTION

There are unincorporated areas of Washoe County which do not fall into one of the planning areas described in Envision Washoe 2040. These areas include the Tahoe Area Plan, the portions of the Northeast and Northwest Truckee Meadows Planning Areas, and various unincorporated islands within the cities of Reno and Sparks.

TAHOE AREA PLAN

The Tahoe Area Plan is subject to a separate planning framework created and maintained by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA.) The TRPA is a bi-state agency created by the United States Congress. Therefore, Washoe County adopts and maintains a separate master plan for the Tahoe Planning Area that meets the conformance requirements of the TRPA. Growth in the Tahoe basin is subject to a dwelling unit cap. This approach changes the way population growth is planned for and managed. In the Tahoe basin, the master plan is focused on re-development efforts, multi-modal transportation, and environmental mitigation.

TAHOE AREA PLAN

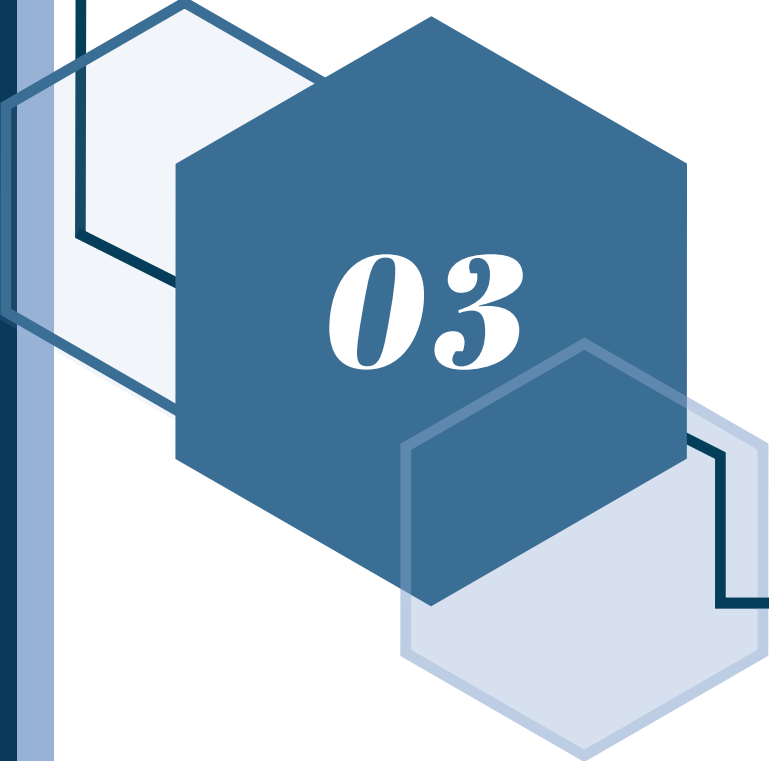
[View the Tahoe Area Plan HERE](#)

NORTHEAST AND NORTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS PLANNING AREAS

The Northeast and Northwest Truckee Meadows Planning Areas are now comprised of lands either inside the boundaries of either Reno or Sparks or are within one of those city's Sphere of Influence giving them full land use planning authority. When the planning areas were originally created, annexation by the two cities generally occurred slowly and predictably. Over time portions of these two planning areas were absorbed. Then, circa 2000-2015, both cities entered a period of rapid annexation based on a separate section of the NRS which provided for property owner driven voluntary annexation. During this approximately 15 year period both cities expanded along the Truckee River corridor and absorbed lands to the north along Highway 395 corridor in Reno and the Pyramid Highway corridor in Sparks. By the year 2020, the majority of these two planning areas were in an annexed portion of either Reno or Sparks. Washoe County continues to utilize the planning area designation in these two areas for a variety of important administrative purposes.

The County assessor's office, in coordination with the Technology Services department, continues to recognize these planning areas to ensure all of Washoe County's parcel base is included in the GIS system. Further, the historical annexation pattern has resulted in several areas that have come to be referred to as unincorporated islands. These areas are generally small pockets of previously developed land. Both cities have tended to favor annexing only undeveloped parcels. As such, these previously developed neighborhoods become surrounded by incorporated areas. At this time, the county has not identified a need for any special or targeted principles, policies, or actions beyond those identified in the Regional Coordination Element regarding future annexation and de-annexation. These properties will be subject to the principles and policies of the Elements but will not be targeted for a more focused discussion until such time as the county identifies a need for a more focused approach to these areas.

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03

IMPLEMENTATION

IN THIS CHAPTER

- ▶ Element Implementation Matrix
- ▶ Area Specific Implementation Action Items

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AS WELL AS AN OVERVIEW OF HOW TO UPDATE AND AMEND THIS PLAN. THIS CHAPTER BUILDS UPON CHAPTER 2 AND REINFORCES THE KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE COUNTY TO IMPLEMENT THE OVERALL DIRECTION OF THE MASTER PLAN, INCLUDING ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; NEW PLANS, STUDIES, OR POLICIES; ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS OR RESOURCES; AND CAPITAL PROJECTS.

USING THE PLAN

Envision Washoe 2040 is intended to be an adaptable and updatable resource identifying Washoe County's goals and priorities, as voiced by the community. The intent of the Master Plan is:

- ▶ To review and ensure alignment of discretionary land use applications with the overall County vision and applicable planning area visions, as well as applicable principles and policies in conjunction with the County Development Code regulations.
- ▶ To monitor success of the Plan and adapt where necessary to ensure progress towards a resilient and sustainable Washoe County.
- ▶ To serve as an online resource and hub for relevant County and regional plans.
- ▶ To effectively communicate the vision for the future of Washoe County.
- ▶ To serve as a guide for developing County strategic initiatives, budgeting capital improvement programs, and amending the Washoe County Development Code.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND UPDATES

Envision Washoe 2040 is implemented through an adaptable but systematic approach aligning County decisions, processes, regulations, and standards with the vision and objectives of this Plan. This process ensures that day-to-day decisions regarding development in the County result in a growth pattern that clearly reflects the County's vision and values.

This Plan represents a collaborative effort between Washoe County, local and regional agencies, and the broader community to analyze trends and development patterns and develop policies for future development and growth in a way that enhances the region. This Plan is specifically designed to be a living and adaptable document which can respond to changing conditions, circumstances, and markets.

It is expected that periodic amendments and updates will be necessary for Envision Washoe 2040 to remain current and reflective of local issues and policies. State law allows the County to periodically amend its Master Plan to ensure consistency with the Regional Plan and meet community needs and expectations. Amendments to the Master Plan shall be made in conformance with applicable state statutes (e.g., NRS 278.210 through 278.230) and Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 820, as may be amended from time to time.

USING THE PLAN

The following procedures are recommended to maintain the effectiveness of the Plan.

1. **Periodic Review of Implementation.** A periodic report on the Master Plan's performance and implementation should be prepared by County staff and presented to the Washoe County Planning Commission. This report will evaluate whether principles and policies are being achieved by reporting progress on County initiatives, potential capital improvement projects and grant applications; experience with the development review process; and recommendations for realignment of County priorities related to the Plan. Implementation items should be updated as part of this process to ensure County principles are being met.
2. **Periodic Review of Master Plan.** Periodic review of the contents of the Master Plan shall provide an opportunity to systematically evaluate the Plan for ongoing relevancy. A limited but systematic update is recommended within five years of adoption, or earlier if sufficient need is indicated based on periodic reporting and plan experience. This review will provide the opportunity to ensure that the materials contained within the Plan remain current and pertinent. These periodic updates should serve to prolong the useful and relevant life of this document and extend the period before which a more complete revamping of the document is deemed necessary. However, regardless of periodic amendments, a major update of the Master Plan should occur every ten years. A major update involves significant public outreach which allows the community to reflect on what has worked and what has not, and make significant adjustments to the overall Plan, as necessary.
3. **Typographical Errors.** Non-substantive typographical errors in the Master Plan may be corrected administratively as long as such changes do not alter the meaning of the sentence being corrected.
4. **Minor Amendments.** External document references included as hyperlinked attachments to this Master Plan may be updated administratively as long as updating the linked documents does not substantively modify adopted language or graphic elements of the Plan, especially principles and policies. Technical data in the Master Plan document, including statistical information such as employment projections, population projections, current employment statistics, and land use inventory changes should be updated through the minor amendment process in accordance with NRS 278.225 and applicable provisions of the Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 820. Technical data updates should occur in conjunction with updates to the Consensus Forecast, biennially in accordance with updated Consensus Forecast and State Demographer data updates. Minor changes or revisions to the Plan's text, figures, or maps, may also be processed through the minor amendment process to reflect updated information or grammatical corrections (including correction of spelling or grammatical errors, updating the base information on maps, and the updating of terms and references to reflect current adopted language or organizational structure, etc.) provided that these changes do not modify the intent or substantive content of the document, as adopted.
5. **Other Amendments.** All other changes to the language and text of the Plan that are not considered minor amendments will be processed in accordance with state law and Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 820.

USING THE PLAN

PLAN MONITORING AND KEY INDICATORS

Envision Washoe 2040 embarks on a new process for the County in monitoring plan progress and evaluating successes and setbacks in accomplishing plan principles and policies. Envision Washoe 2040 uses a set of key indicators to track existing and desired conditions and to identify trends. Through tracking of these selected indicators consistently over a number of years, benchmarks can be identified, trends evaluated, targets set, and policies and strategies adjusted as necessary to ensure that Plan objectives are met.

The identified key indicators are intended to be used to measure and report on a limited number of key data points that focus on progress toward achieving the overall objectives of the Plan. These indicators are specific measures that bear a direct or indirect relationship to accomplishing one or more of the primary goals and objectives of the Plan and should be analyzed holistically to understand the County's progress. Some indicators are especially useful in evaluating new development and redevelopment against county-wide and regional averages, and others will lend themselves better to planning area analysis. Indicators may be compared to other counties, regions, or neighboring communities to compare past and future performance and better understand Washoe County's role within the larger regional context. Some, but not all, of the key indicators can and should be used, as appropriate and applicable, in the evaluation of discretionary land development applications. In this capacity, the intent is not to require a particular development proposal to demonstrate a positive correlation with every indicator.

In addition, the County may choose to track additional supporting indicators to supplement the data from the key indicators listed in this section. These supplemental indicators may vary and change as the County implements and adjusts the Plan monitoring process.

KEY INDICATORS

1. Housing Diversity
2. Dwelling Units in Transit Service Area
3. Access to outdoor recreation
4. Lands in agricultural production and conservation easements

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Implementation of the Plan's Master Plan Land Use Map and associated principles and policies will be key considerations during review of future development proposals within the unincorporated County. As new projects are reviewed, it will be the responsibility of the approving authority to balance the needs of the community to meet the intent of the Plan. In addition to its use in development review, this Plan will be used to the fullest practical and applicable extent as a guide for County-initiated regulatory changes, other projects, programs, and relevant funding choices. The highest priority recommendations of this Plan will be considered during development of annual budgets and multi-year capital improvement programs.

Master Plan Land Use Categories and Planning Area Planning

One of the main focuses of Envision Washoe 2040 was to align the Washoe County Master Plan with the 2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. Conversations with County staff, TMRPA, and the public identified a unique circumstance in Washoe County, where the existing master plan land use designations depicted on the land use maps for each planning area in the County are so broad that each planning area contained a unique set of land use modifiers, which changed allowed uses and densities in each area. This additional layer of land use designation complicates the long-range planning process by blending zoning and land use. Compared to peer and regional communities, Washoe County has the fewest master plan land use designations, which could be contributing to a lower predictability of land use than neighboring communities. Updates to these land uses were not made as part of the Envision Washoe 2040 process but were identified as a priority implementation action to provide landowners and residents with greater predictability of land use than the current system.

Updating or adding new master plan land use designations is an important implementation strategy to address unique characteristics and land uses within each of the County's planning areas. The Envision Washoe 2040 process identified the need for revisions to the master plan land use designations and land use maps associated with each planning area but did not dive deeply into the specific land uses within each planning area. Instead, Envision Washoe 2040 set the foundation for the planning area planning process by removing regulatory development code language from the former Area Plans, refining the vision and existing conditions and identifying priority principles and policies for each area, building off the plan elements.

A key recommendation from this Plan is to update the master plan land use designations and land use maps for each planning area collaboratively with the community and TMRPA to ensure consistency with the Regional Plan, long-term preservation of the character of each area, and proactively plan for the future of each area. This process should also consider appropriate areas for urban agriculture, solid waste disposal plans, wildlife habitats and sensitive areas, cultural and natural resource protections, population growth, and affordable housing provision. This land use planning process should actively engage with community members in each area to co-create neighborhood plans which meet the needs of current and future residents. Updates to other portions of the planning areas within this plan may not be necessary in order to update the land use maps and should serve as a guide for updating master plan designations.

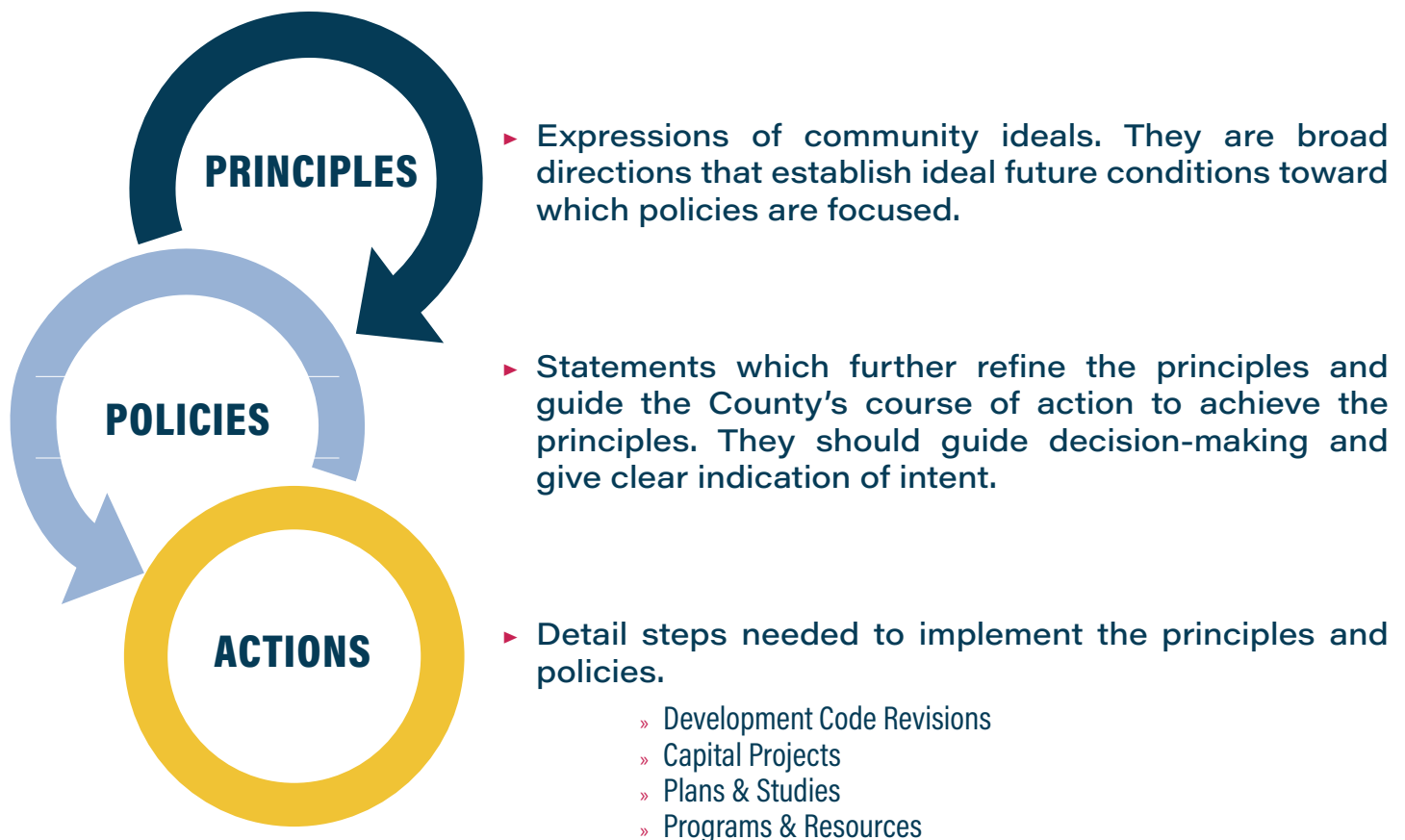
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Implementation Matrix

Action items detail steps needed to implement the principles and policies as set forth in Chapter 2. Actions not listed within this document could be identified later and through subsequent public process and still help achieve the goals and objectives within this Plan. The lists of element implementation actions and area specific implementation action items are not an exhaustive list and should be updated as action items are completed in tandem with Master Plan update efforts.

The matrices in this section represent a list of action items that were identified as community priorities throughout the Envision Washoe 2040 public engagement process. The actions contained therein are intended to act as a guide and aide to strategic planning rather than a list of actions and deadlines. These matrices can and should evolve over time and are intended as a tool for plan implementation. They aide the planning process by identifying strategic partnerships, keeping track of community priorities, and articulating possibilities for plan implementation.

The items in the Area Specific Implementation Actions matrix are reflective of extensive community conversations throughout the Envision Washoe 2040 process. Some of the actions contained therein are extremely important to community members, and one goal of this section is to capture those priorities. However, in some cases, another agency or group has jurisdiction of the actions in question and Washoe County's role will be exclusively supportive in nature. Washoe County will support these actions where possible, but cannot always initiate or achieve them independently. This list is intended to act as a guide and aide to strategic planning rather than a list of actions and deadlines. They aide the planning process by identifying strategic partnerships, keeping track of community priorities, and articulating possibilities for plan implementation.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Type of Action

- ▶ **Development Code Revisions:** Some zoning and subdivision regulations and standards in the Washoe County Development Code will need to be updated to ensure consistency with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.
- ▶ **Plans/Studies:** The Master Plan recognizes there are specific locations or initiatives that may require additional support and direction at a more detailed level than what is established in this Master Plan. These include site-specific development guidelines, master and/or subarea plans, and feasibility or funding studies.
- ▶ **Programs and Resources:** May include development of an educational program, marketing campaign, an intergovernmental agreement or coordination with other entities. This could also include a repository of resources to inform the public, encourage civic engagement, and overall, invite the community to contribute to the success of the Master Plan efforts. Programs and resources may also involve collaboration with local and regional organizations.
- ▶ **Capital Projects:** These major infrastructure investments and funding partnerships are relevant to the implementation of the Master Plan principles and policies. These projects should be considered in conjunction with other capital improvements, policies, and County-adopted plans to determine priorities, project efficiencies, and timing of capital improvement expenditures.

Time frame

Timeframes provided in this chapter are estimates that are subject to change based on available resources and Board of County Commissioner priorities.

- ▶ **Ongoing/Immediate Actions:** Actions that are either ongoing or should be prioritized for kickoff within two years and completed within five years.
- ▶ **Short-Term Actions:** Actions which can be started within three years and completed within five years.
- ▶ **Mid-Term Actions:** Actions which can be completed in five to ten years.
- ▶ **Long-Term Actions:** Actions which require ten to twenty years for completion.

Lead/Partners

The lead indicated for each action is responsible for initiating the action and ensuring its completion. Identified partners include County departments, state agencies, or regional agencies.

Anticipated Funding Source

- ▶ **\$:** Generally lower cost actions that may be completed using existing monies from the County's General Fund.
- ▶ **\$\$:** Mid-level cost actions which may require funding assistance, through grants or partnerships with other agencies, etc. These actions may also require hiring an outside consultant.
- ▶ **\$\$\$:** High cost actions which will require substantial funding, likely involving federal or state grant monies, partnerships with other agencies, and potentially bonding and/or other financing tools.

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
<i>Ongoing and Immediate Action Items</i>					
Develop a Dark Skies Ordinance to minimize impacts of excess lighting while maintaining a safe level of visibility at night.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1.1; NCR1.2	Planning		\$
Review public notice practices for opportunities to increase their effectiveness.	Development Code Revisions	RFC1.1, RFC2.5 LU1.5,	Planning		\$
Develop standards and code enforcement strategies to outdoor storage areas.	Development Code Revisions	LU4.3, LU4.7	Planning	Code Enforcement	\$
Update ridgeline protection standards to mitigate development impact on scenic views.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1.1, AR1.1	Planning		\$\$
Develop sensitive area standards to protect and mitigate development impacts to natural open space, wildlife habitat, water bodies, wetlands, and sensitive lands. Include standards for scenic viewshed protection.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1, NCR3, NCR4	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$
Update the Development Code to remove barriers to provision of affordable and workforce housing consistent with ongoing Washoe County Strategic planning efforts.	Development Code Revisions	PH3.1, PH3.2, PH3.3	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$\$
Conduct a development code assessment to identify barriers to affordable housing	Development Code Revisions	PH3.1, PH3.2, PH3.4	Planning	Washoe County Housing	\$\$
Evaluate the maximum densities and consider removing discretionary permit requirements and expand the types of housing allowed by-right in all zones where appropriate.	Development Code Revisions	PH2.1, PH3.1, PH. 3.2, PH3.4, PH3.6, PH5.3	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$\$
Develop new methods, through zoning designations, overlays, or some other method, to encourage walkability, multi-modal transportation, and residential development near commercial uses and transportation nodes.	Development Code Revisions	PH2.1, PH3.1, PH3.5, 	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$\$
Revise the accessory dwelling units section of the Development Code to expand options and reduce regulatory barriers.	Development Code Revisions	PH3.5	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Amend the Development Code to require an environmental review for subdivisions and development in sensitive areas.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1, NCR3, NCR4	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space, NDOW	\$\$
Adopt water conservation incentives and ordinances that encourage residents to use conservation devices, low-water landscaping, and efficient irrigation.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, LU3.2	Planning	Engineering, Building, Utilities and Maps	\$\$\$
Review and amend the development and architectural standards with the goal of reducing emissions and increasing resiliency.	Development Code Revisions	AR3 	Planning		\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
<i>Short-Term Action Items</i>					
Develop a landscape planting checklist and guide that includes plants appropriate for Low Impact Development (LID) projects/practices.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, AR3, LU3.2	Planning	Tribes, Nevada Native Plant Society	\$
Create codes and measurable goals related to tree canopy coverage with a preference for native tree or drought-tolerant species.	Development Code Revisions		Planning	WC Sustainability, WC Parks and Open Space	\$\$
Assess the need for rural-focused strategies to manage the impact of extreme heat and, if needed, pursue those strategies.	Programs/Resources		Planning	Emergency Management, WC Sustainability	\$\$
Conduct a study to identify the areas of the county most at-risk from extreme heat in order to prioritize investment in those areas.	Plans/Studies		Planning	WC Sustainability	\$\$
Create incentives for new developments and homeowners to incorporate renewable energy generation (solar, geothermal, wind, etc.) that generate at least 30% of household power each year.	Development Code Revisions	AR3.4 	Planning		\$
Amend the development code to provide standards for passive solar energy measures that encourages its use.	Development Code Revisions	AR3.4 	Planning		\$
Require proposed projects and land use changes in areas with groundwater recharge potential to include project features or adequate land for passive recharge.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4	Planning		\$
Revise the development review process to allow major development proposals to be reviewed by the appropriate state or federal agencies for impacts to wildlife habitats and include potential mitigation measures.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3, NCR4	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space; NDOW	\$
Utilize development practices that increase slope stability and reduce erosion, including re-vegetation, restricting development, clustering, etc.	Development Code Revisions	AR1, AR2	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$
Update master plan land use maps and apply new land uses.	Plans/Studies	LU2, LU3, LU5, LU6	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$\$
Explore non-development incentives for the permanent protection of open space.	Plans/Studies	NCR3	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$
Set-up regular meetings with the tribal governments to review and identify potential interactions with cultural resources that are not mapped (monthly or quarterly).	Plans/Studies	NCR1.1, NCR1.5, NCR3.1, NCR3.2	Planning	Tribal Partners	\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Establish estimates of water demand for a variety of lot sizes to better manage and plan for water supply. This includes working with County engineering to update County sewer design standards documents.	Plans/Studies	NCR4, PFS1, PFS2, PFS3	Planning	Engineering, Capital Projects, Utilities and Maps	\$\$\$
Identify indicators that measure achievement of the principles in each element.	Programs & Resources	ALL	Planning		\$
Explore the establishment of a dedicated funding source for the acquisition of permanent open space for wildlife habitat protection, scenic vista protection, heat mitigation, and agriculture preservation.	Programs & Resources	NCR2, RFC6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3 	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$\$
Allow for lot size averaging and clustered developments (i.e. 5 lots per 50 acres vs 10 acre minimum lots).	Development Code Revisions	LU2, LU3, LU5, LU6	Planning		\$\$\$
Establish requirements for standard subdivisions to dedicate natural open space or park space as part of new residential development.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3, LU4 	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$\$
Work with TMWA to update the County's development review process, regulatory zone maps and development code, and Master Plan Land Use Map to prevent development that could contaminate groundwater resources within identified wellhead/source water protection areas	Development Code Revisions	PFS 1.1, PFS 1.2, PFS 1.4,	Planning	TMWA; TMRPA	\$\$\$
Evaluate the need to include Electric Vehicle Readiness requirements into Development Code	Development Code Revisions	T 1.1, T 1.4, T2.5, T2.6, 	Planning		\$
Establish parking maximums instead of parking minimums to avoid empty parking lots.	Development Code Revisions	LU3, TR3, TR5	Planning		\$
Design neighborhood streets to include tree canopies for shade, bike lanes, sidewalks, and street widths appropriate for residential areas to encourage walkable communities.	Development Code Revisions	LU3, TR3, TR5 	Planning		\$
Revise the development code to require that mineral extraction operations be compatible with surrounding land uses and minimizes adverse effects on the environment.	Development Code Revisions	LU3	Planning		\$
Revise the development code to require buffers around water sources alongside protection plans that ensure water quality and wildlife access during development reviews.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3, NCR4, PFS1,	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space; TMWA	\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Implement manufactured housing regulations that support the community's demands for fair, equitable, and diverse housing options	Development Code Revisions	PH2, PH3, PH4	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Explore tools for transferring development potential from rural areas to suburban areas	Development Code Revisions	LU3, LU5, LU6, NCR3 	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$\$
Define criteria to identify historic buildings and sites.	Development Code Revisions	NCR7	Planning		\$\$
Create development standards that mitigate urban heat through surfacing, landscaping, and building design.	Development Code Revisions	AR3, LU3 	Planning	Emergency Management	\$\$
Enhance existing water quality protection tools and explore the development of new tools such as an aquifer protection overlay or a water quality commission.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, PFS1, PFS2, PFS4	Planning	TMWA; TMRPA	\$\$
Update the Development Code to require an analysis of the fiscal impact of larger-scale development proposals on Washoe County services	Development Code Revisions	RFC2.1, RFC7.1, PFS2; PFS, PFS4	Planning	Engineering and Capital Projects; TMRPA	\$\$
Revise water adequacy standards in the Development Code to incorporate standards of the 2020 Integrated Source Water and 319 (h) Watershed Protection Plan for Public Water Systems and the Truckee River in the Truckee Meadows through the development review process	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, PFS1, PFS2, PFS4	Planning	TMWA; TMRPA	\$\$
Create development regulations to support transit-oriented development and require the installation of bikeways, sidewalks, trees, and pathways, starting in targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 districts and streets.	Development Code Revisions	LU4, TR1, TR2, TR3	Planning	RTC	\$\$
Update county trails planning documents to comply with the Truckee Meadows Trails Action Plan and conceptual regional trails network.	Plans/Studies		Planning; Regional Parks and Open Space	TMRPA	\$\$
Work with SHPO, TMRPA, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, and Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe to identify and update the map of cultural resources in Washoe County.	Plans/Studies	NCR7, NCR8, NCR9	TMRPA, Planning	SHPO, tribal partners	\$\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Create a vegetation cover map that can be used to help inform the identification of relative criticalness of habitat types.	Plans/Studies	AR3.5	Planning	Nevada Division of Natural Heritage	\$\$
Conduct an assessment to identify locations and needs for resilience hubs/cooling centers.	Plans/Studies	AR4.2 	Planning	Emergency Management	\$\$
Work with local, state, and federal partners to expand the urban canopy and include trees on Washoe Transportation Projects.	Plans/Studies	AR3.2	Planning	NDOT, RTC	\$\$
Identify areas that would benefit from community gardens or small-scale, neighborhood agriculture, such as vacant lots.	Programs & Resources	AR3, RFC6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3	Planning	UNR Extension	\$
Develop an outreach program for landlords to encourage long-term rentals instead of short-term rentals.	Programs & Resources	PH5	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Explore hiring additional staff to implement strategies and plans.	Programs & Resources	ALL	Planning		\$\$
Develop an educational outreach program on strategies for living with extreme heat in partnership with regional medical centers.	Programs & Resources	AR3 	Planning		\$
Mid-Term Action Items					
Support completion of the outstanding segments of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway.	Capital Improvements	TR1, TR4	Engineering, Capital Project	Planning, Tahoe Pyramid Trail Organization, OTR, Nevada Land Trust	\$\$\$
Explore incentives for cool building practices in the Washoe County Development Code.	Development Code Revisions		Planning	Building	\$
Consider adopting minimum density requirements for mixed-use zone districts	Development Code Revisions	LU3, LU5, LU6	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$
Integrate sustainable building practices into new development (LEED, xeri/native landscaping, low-impact grading)	Development Code Revisions	AR3, LU3	Planning	Sustainability	\$
Partner with other County agencies to revise the County Development Code to require and assure site reclamation as a condition of extraction approval.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3	Planning		\$
Work with historic, tribal, and cultural partners to create a development review process that protects the region's cultural resources.	Development Code Revisions	NCR7, NCR8, NCR9	Planning	Tribal; SHPO	\$\$
Develop design standards that allow for public and private renewable energy generation (solar, wind, etc.) and complement the existing character of an area.	Development Code Revisions	AR3 	Planning		\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Partner with Forestry experts to develop fuels management plans for County-owned lands, prioritizing County-owned areas in the WUI.	Development Code Revisions	AR1, AR2	Emergency Management	Planning	\$\$
Support establishment of a monitoring system for assessing the singular and cumulative impacts of growth and development on wildlife and natural resources. Implement actions in response to what is learned to provide better habitat and movement corridor protection.	Development Code Revisions	AR2, AR3	Planning	NDOW, NDNH, NDF, DRI	\$\$\$
Amend wildlife protection standards for development density, intensity, location, clustering, permeability, and wildlife-human conflict.	Development Code Revisions	AR1.3	Planning	NDOW	\$\$
Amend the Development Code to better incentivize urban agriculture.	Development Code Revisions	RFC 6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3	Planning		\$\$
Assess need to establish disincentives for demolition of affordable housing units (ex. permit surcharge)	Plans/Studies	PH2, PH3	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Develop and regularly update preservation plans for existing wetlands using the Federal Clean Water Act and any other federal wetland regulations.	Plans/Studies	NCR3, NCR4	Regional Parks and Open Space	Planning	\$\$
Update the Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment study to guide management of wildfire hazards in urban interface areas	Plans/Studies	AR1.3	Emergency Management	Planning	\$\$
Support identification of areas appropriate for roadway underpasses, overpasses, speed reductions, or other wildlife-vehicle collision mitigation measures in heavy volume wildlife-crossing areas.	Plans/Studies	NCR3, TR3	Planning	RTC, NDOW	\$\$\$
Identify transit corridors and multimodal lanes that would benefit from increased shade structures or urban canopy.	Plans/Studies	TR3 	Planning	RTC	\$\$
Develop a Water Supply and Quality Study to understand the supported densities, water use thresholds and risks to water quality that will guide land use decisions in the future.	Plans/Studies	PFS1, PFS2	Engineering, Capital Projects, Utilities and Maps	WRWC, NDEP, and TMWA	\$\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Support development of a Public Lands Etiquette Plan in coordination with public land management agencies to promote and increase public land access points, educate the public on appropriate access locations, and develop signage.	Plans/Studies	NCR6	Planning	Public Land Management Agencies	\$\$\$
Map urban heat islands within appropriate areas of the County using the National Integrated Heat Health Information System.	Plans/Studies	AR3.5	Planning	Emergency Management; Engineering and Capital Projects, Utilities and Maps, UNR	\$\$
Update the intergovernmental agreement with the City of Reno and City of Sparks to reflect updated SOI boundaries and development review process.	Programs & Resources	RFC1, RFC2, LU1	Planning	Reno; Sparks	\$\$
Work with the cities of Reno and Sparks to establish a reliable funding source for workforce housing provision.	Programs & Resources	RFC1, PH6	Planning	Reno; Sparks; TMRPA	\$\$\$
Implement a no net loss program for affordable housing	Programs & Resources	PH5.3	Planning	Washoe County Housing; Reno; Sparks; TMRPA	\$\$
Collaborate with the Washoe County Food Policy Council to bring forward best practices and to collaborate with other state and federal agencies (e.g., Nevada Council on Food Security, Nevada Department of Agriculture, National Resource Conservation Service) to encourage urban agriculture.	Programs & Resources	RFC6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3	Planning	Sparks, Reno, TMRPA	\$\$\$
Long-Term Actions					
Develop standards to discourage new billboards, signage and exposed utility poles that contribute to visual clutter during development review.	Development Code Revisions	LU4	Planning		\$
Develop a mixed-use zone district that establishes a high-quality pedestrian-oriented street environment that is visually interesting, comprehensive and varied.	Development Code Revisions	LU4, LU6	Planning		\$\$
Develop standards to govern all phases of renewable energy exploration and development, including restoration of areas once the resource becomes nonproductive.	Development Code Revisions	AR3	Planning		\$\$
Develop a Best Value First Asset Management Policy to strategically employ preventative maintenance to maximize maintenance funds.	Plans/Studies	PFS3, PFS4	County Facilities, Capital Projects	Planning	\$

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Develop a Dig Once Policy and Dark Fiber Policy to coordinate excavation activities and include the necessary conduit for fiber optic or other communications cabling on or adjacent to roadways to prevent unnecessary expense and disruption.	Plans/Studies	PFS4	Engineering	Planning	\$\$

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AREA SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

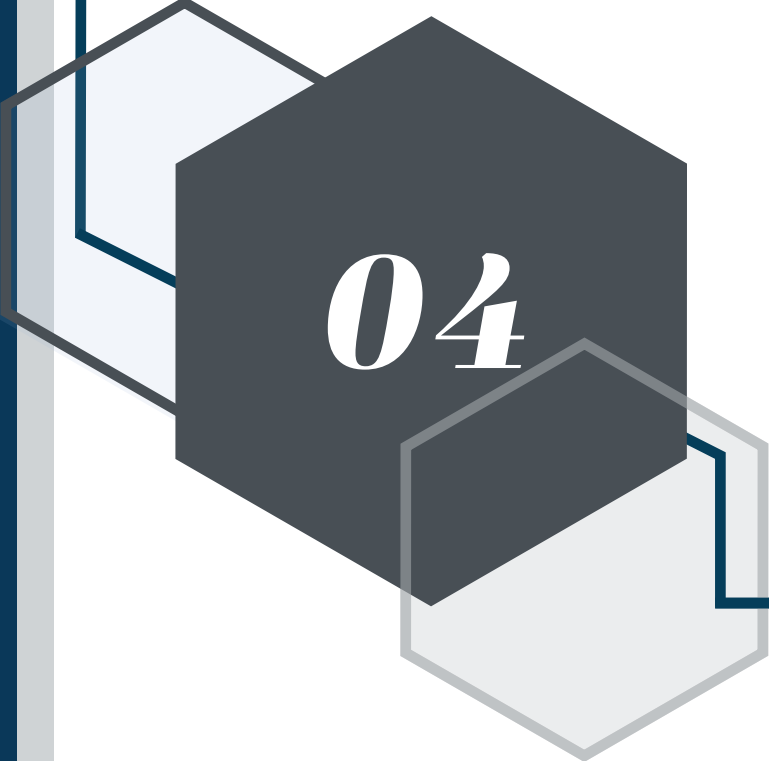
ACTION	TYPE	ASSOC. PLANNING AREA	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Support efforts to work with NDOT to widen Highway 395.	Capital Improvements	Cold Springs	Engineering	NDOT; RTC	\$\$\$
Support efforts to widen Crystal Canyon Boulevard and White Lake Parkway to 4 lanes.	Capital Improvements	Cold Springs	Engineering	NDOT; RTC	\$\$\$
Support efforts to develop wildlife crossings over/under Highways 395 between the Red Rock Road exit and White Lake Parkway.	Capital Improvements	Cold Springs	Engineering	NDOT; RTC	\$\$\$
Support efforts to develop equestrian trails connecting into the Silver Knolls community and north into the Peterson Range.	Plans/Studies	Cold Springs	Planning		\$\$
Develop design standards for infill and commercial buildings.	Development Code Revisions	Forest	Planning		\$\$
Support efforts to develop a separated bike path up Mt. Rose Highway.	Capital Improvements	Forest	Engineering		\$\$\$
Support efforts to work with NDOT on traffic-calming measures on Mt. Rose Highway from Joy Lake Rd to Douglas Fir Dr.	Capital Improvements	Forest	Engineering	NDOT; RTC	\$\$\$
Support efforts to develop wildlife crossing structures between N. Timberline Drive and Thomas Creek Road.	Capital Improvements	Forest	Engineering	NDOT; RTC	\$\$
Develop dark sky lighting standards specific to the Forest area.	Development Code Revisions	Forest	Planning		\$
Establish dark-sky standards specific to the High Desert area.	Development Code Revisions	High Desert	Planning		\$
Support efforts to complete feasibility assessment of developing a local community power grid of wind and solar owned by the residents of the towns for Gerlach and Empire.	Capital Improvements	High Desert	TBD	Planning	\$\$
Create a mixed-use district which allows for flexibility tailored to Gerlach and Empire.	Development Code Revisions	High Desert	Planning		\$\$
Revise development standards to allow housing options meeting the needs of the High Desert including revisions to the manufactured and mobile home allowances.	Development Code Revisions	High Desert	Planning	Washoe County Housing	\$
Develop historic preservation standards and funding options for structure preservation in Gerlach.	Development Code Revisions	High Desert	Planning		\$\$
Establish a land use pattern and development standards for Gerlach and Empire that pursue community identified opportunities enabled by the freestanding community designation of the Regional Plan.	Plans/Studies Development Code Revisions	High Desert	Planning		\$\$\$
Identify areas within BLM land as important recreational locations.	Plans/Studies	High Desert	Planning	BLM	\$
Work with NDOT to designate Highway 34 north of Gerlach as a Scenic Highway or Byway.	Plans/Studies	High Desert	Planning		\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOC. PLANNING AREA	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Conduct a comprehensive study of infrastructure and road maintenance needs and the development of an infrastructure program for Gerlach and Empire.	Plans/Studies	High Desert	County Facilities, Capital Projects	Planning	\$\$\$
Encourage partnerships with area stakeholders including residents, Burning Man, Friends of Black Rock/High Rock, etc. to promote tourism and recreation within the National Conservation Area.	Programs & Resources	High Desert	Planning		\$
Develop policies or standards that encourage property owners to clean up, improve, and/or find tenants for vacant or underutilized commercial spaces that negatively impact activity centers or residential neighborhoods.	Programs & Resources	High Desert	Planning		\$\$
Develop and plan for more equestrian trails and non-motorized multi-use trails.	Capital Improvements	North Valleys	Regional Parks and Open Space	RTC; Planning	\$
Support NDOT efforts to widen Red Rock Road and Highway 395.	Capital Improvements	North Valleys	Engineering	RTC; NDOT	\$\$\$
Develop stricter standards to minimize building in flood zones.	Development Code Revisions	South/ North Valleys	Engineering	Planning	\$
Work with agency partners to implement the Nevada State Washoe Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan .	Plans/Studies	South Valleys	Planning		\$
Develop trails around Washoe Lake and expand equestrian trails beyond Washoe Park.	Capital Improvements	South Valleys	Regional Parks and Open Space		\$
Continue to encourage buffering and transitions for development near City/County boundaries to mitigate potential land use conflicts.	Plans/Studies	SETM	Planning		\$\$\$
Conduct an assessment to identify improvements to Bailey Creek to reduce the risk of flooding.	Plans/Studies	SETM	County Facilities, Capital Projects	Engineering	\$
Support efforts by the City of Sparks and NDOT to reduce traffic congestion on Pyramid Highway.	Plans/Studies	Spanish Springs	RTC; NDOT	Engineering	\$\$\$
Revise the development code to facilitate redevelopment in Sun Valley, particularly along the Sun Valley Blvd corridor.	Development Code Revisions	Sun Valley	Planning		\$\$
Establish incentives to encourage redevelopment and develop a mixed-use district tailored to Sun Valley.	Development Code Revisions	Sun Valley	Planning		\$\$

AREA SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOC. PLANNING AREA	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Develop a housing rehabilitation program to revitalize the Sun Valley community including: development in partnership with public and private organizations and local community groups, and/or incentives, such as waiver of annual fees or reduction in permit fees necessary for rehabilitation, to encourage upkeep and rehabilitation of housing by property owners and encourage upgrades to meet minimum energy efficiency standards.	Programs & Resources	Sun Valley	Planning	Washoe County Housing	\$\$\$
Increase code enforcement and beautification in Sun Valley.	Plans/Studies	Sun Valley	Planning		\$\$
Work closely with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council and Storey County representatives to coordinate development and to avoid duplication of services.	Plans/Studies	Truckee Canyon	Planning	Tribal Partners	\$\$
Work with the Cities of Reno and Sparks and Storey County to develop a plan to address solid waste disposal.	Plans/Studies	Truckee Canyon	Engineering	City of Reno; City of Sparks	\$\$
Review and update the development standards associated with the Verdi historic district to create more opportunities for small business development.	Development Code Revisions	Verdi	Planning		\$\$
Identify barriers to development in the historic district along State Highway 40 created by historic parceling and right-of-way decisions	Development Code Revisions	Verdi	Planning		\$\$
Implement development standards that preserve the original aesthetic concept of the former WSSP.	Capital Improvements	Warm Springs	Planning		\$
Develop strict dark sky requirements specific to Warm Springs.	Development Code Revisions	Warm Springs	Planning		\$
Support efforts to designate Pyramid Highway as a scenic byway.	Plans/Studies	Warm Springs	Planning		\$
Work with the PVGID to identify the challenges that have arisen due to the failure of the former WSSP.	Plans/Studies	Warm Springs	Planning		\$\$\$
Update the WSSP water management plan using data from the State Engineer's Office.	Plans/Studies	Warm Springs	Engineering	Planning	\$\$\$



04

APPENDICES

IN THIS CHAPTER

- ▶ Appendix 1: Glossary
- ▶ Appendix 2: Stakeholder Interview Summary
- ▶ Appendix 3: Plan Audit
- ▶ Appendix 4: Conservation Plan- Washoe County Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan
- ▶ Appendix 5: 2022 Warm Springs Water Policy and 2023 Water Rights Inventory



APPENDIX 1

ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

ACRONYMS

ACEC – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	RSA – Resort Services Area
ACS – American Community Survey	RTC – Regional Transportation Commission
ADU – Accessory Dwelling Unit	RWMP – Regional Water Management Plan
AMI – Area Median Income	R&PP – Recreation and Public Purpose
AVMT – Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled	SETM – Southeast Truckee Meadows
BLM – Bureau of Land Management	SNPLMA – Southern Nevada Public Land Management
CAMPO – Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization	SOI – Spheres of Influence
CTMRD – Central Truckee Meadows Remediation District	SVI – Social Vulnerability Index
CSD – Community Services Department	SWPA – Source Water Protection Area
DCA – Development Constraints Area	TART – Tahoe Area Regional Transit
FAR – Federal Aviation Regulations	TMRPA – Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Authority
FCC – Federal Communications Commission	TMRP – Truckee Meadows Regional Plan
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency	TMRSHA – Truckee Meadows Regional Strategy for Housing
GBWC – Great Basin Water Company	TMSA – Truckee Meadows Service Area
GID – General Improvement District	TMTF – Truckee Meadows Trail Plan
MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization	TMWA – Truckee Meadows Water Authority
NCA – National Conservation Area	TMWRF – Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility
NDEP – Nevada Department of Environmental Protection	TOD – Transit-Oriented Development
NDOT – Nevada Department of Transportation	TROA – Truckee River Operating Agreement
NDOW – Nevada Department of Wildlife	TRPA – Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
NIHHIS – National Integrated Heat Health Information System	TSM – Transportation System Management
NNPH – Northern Nevada Public Health	UHI – Urban Heat Island
NNWPC – Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission	USFS – United States Forest Service
NRHP – National Register of Historic Places	USFW – US Fish and Wildlife Service
NRI – National Risk Index	VMT – Vehicle Miles Traveled
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service	WCSD – Washoe County School District
NRS – Nevada Revised Statutes	WHPA – Wellhead Protection Area
OHV – Off-highway Vehicle	WRWC – Western Regional Water Commission
RA – Rural Area	WUI – Wildland-Urban Interface
RPC – Regional Planning Commission	WUS – Washoe Utility Services
RPGB – Regional Planning Governing Board	

DEFINED TERMS

Access/Egress: Points of entrance and exit from subdivisions and communities. These access and egress points prevent a population from being isolated from outside support in the event of a natural disaster.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): Finished habitable space in a single-family dwelling or in a detached building that is clearly accessory to the single-family dwelling on the lot. Accessory living area may contain a complete dwelling unit.

Adequate Infrastructure: Facilities and services (including water and sewer systems, fire protection and roads) that are available and have the capacity to serve new development without reducing levels of service below established minimum standards.

Affordable Housing: Subsidized or deed-restricted housing built with federal funding and designed to be affordable for specific income levels (usually 30% or 50% of the area median income). (See [Truckee Meadows Housing Study](#) for more information)

Alternative Transportation: Any and all transportation types other than the automobile. Alternative modes of transportation include bicycles, buses, carpools, van pools, pedestrians, and passenger railroads.

Area Median Income (AMI): A measure of the typical income for a household in a region, calculated annually by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Area median income helps determine eligibility for low-income programs, such as affordable housing.

Area Plan: Detailed plan prepared for defined Planning Areas that show cohesive characteristics, unique land use issues, and opportunities. These plans can detail location-specific needs, recommend changes or improvements on a scale that is not possible for the majority of the county area, and serve as an extension of the Washoe County Master Plan.

Broadband: The Federal Communications Commission defines broadband as internet connection speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream.

Broadband service: The provision, on either a commercial or non-commercial basis, of data transmission technology that provides two-way data transmission to and from the Internet with advertised speeds of at least 768 kilobits per second (kbps) downstream and greater than 200 kbps upstream to end users or providing sufficient capacity in a middle mile project to support the provision of broadband service to end-users within the project area.

Building Code: A set of rules that specify standards for construction of buildings and are in effect for all permits.

Building Envelope: Areas within the boundaries of a lot within which all buildings on the lot must be placed.

Capital Facilities: Land and structures used by the public including fire stations, parks, and schools; also called public facilities.

Capital Improvement Program/Plan: A schedule and budget for future capital improvements (building or acquisition projects) for roads, utilities and other capital facilities, to be carried out over a specific time period.

Centralized Wastewater System: A publicly owned, centralized sewage collection and treatment system.

Cluster Development: A development design which concentrates buildings on a portion or portions of the site to leave the remainder undeveloped and used for agriculture, open space and/or natural resource protection.

Community Sewer System: A sewage system that collects sewage from more than one parcel or lot and provides treatment at a centralized location and is not owned by a sanitation district or municipality or local government.

Community Wildfire Protection Plans: A resource and tool that allows local communities to influence where and how federal agencies implement fuel reduction projects on federal and non-federal lands in the Wildland-Urban Interface.

Concurrency: Adequate public facilities are available when the impacts of development occur.

Conservation Easement: A legal agreement between a landowners and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land to protect its conservation values. The conditions of the land are monitored to ensure adherence to the terms of the conservation easement and to conserve the land in perpetuity.

Critical Source Water Protection Areas: The land surrounding an individual well or stream where the water quality is potentially most vulnerable to contamination from human activities.

Cross-Cutting Theme: Themes identified by community members that influence the development of the Principles, Policies, and Strategies.

Cultural Resource: A site or structure which is part of the area's cultural heritage; that is, which typifies a particular stage of human activity in the area. Cultural resources include archaeological

sites, historic buildings and sites, and undisturbed natural sites that have historic or prehistoric associations including those with paleontologist (fossil) specimens.

Defensible Space: An area where material capable of allowing a fire to spread unchecked has been treated, cleared, or modified to slow the rate and intensity of an advancing wildfire and create an area for fire suppression operations.

Density Bonus: An increase in allowable density used as an incentive to a developer to benefit the community and/or maximize the protection of open space, water quality, or air quality.

Density: The number of housing units per unit of land, i.e. per acre.

Design Standards/Criteria: A standard contained in a land use regulation which relates to design of a subdivision, site plan or structure.

Development Code: A regulatory document containing all of Washoe County's land use regulations, including zoning district provisions and subdivision requirements. It brings together all regulations under a single administrative procedure, with uniform definitions and other common elements to achieve a more understandable, user-friendly regulation.

Development Constraints Area (DCA): An overlay within the County that identifies additional development constraints including federal lands, playas, wetlands, and steep slopes.

Development Potential: A determination of how an area of land can be developed through analyzing physical attributes, carrying capacity for a specific land use, and potential market demand.

Development Review Process: Washoe County has a variety of review processes used to evaluate development applications in the unincorporated area of the County. The particular review process is based on the type of development application and is outlined in the Development Code i.e., a pre-application conference, permit review, neighborhood referral and meeting, development plan, and public hearings by the Planning Commission, Parcel Map Review Committee, Board of Adjustment and/or Board of County Commissioners.

Development Right: The right to develop property. This right may be sold, purchased, or transferred utilizing a Transferable Development Rights program.

Development Standards: Standards or criteria that are applied to development based on its use, location, or other considerations.

Disaster: Any natural catastrophe (including, but not limited to, any tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought),

or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood or explosion in any part of Washoe County, which in the determination of the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant assistance through a re-build program to alleviate the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.

Entitlements: Legal rights conveyed by approvals from governmental entities to develop a property for a certain use, intensity, building type, or building placement.

Fee-in-lieu: A fee paid instead of making a land dedication, capital improvement or other requirement, and equivalent to that requirement. An example is a fee-in-lieu of a school site dedication as part of a subdivision approval.

Fire/Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code: Land Use Code provisions that advance fire and life safety for the public, as well as property protection through a comprehensive approach to wildfire regulation and hazard management.

Floodplain: The channel and relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream or river that has been or may be covered by water during times of flood.

Floodway: The channel of a river or other water course and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the based flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation by more than 0.5 foot.

Form-based Code: A land development regulation that uses physical form of a space to organize code, rather than a separation of uses, and is used as alternative to traditional zoning.

Freestanding Community: Refers to the communities of Gerlach, Empire, and Wadsworth in the unincorporated County.

Fuel Management and Reduction Program: Focuses on providing resources and incentives that encourage private landowners to maintain their properties in a manner that reduces fire hazards.

General Improvement District: Limited purpose quasi-municipal entity established under Nevada Revised Statutes, Chapter 318 to provide specific services to a defined area.

Growth Management: A system of land use regulations designed to influence the location, timing, and character of development, instead of controlling the amount or rate of growth.

Housing Cost Burden: Monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income over the past 12 months either as rent or mortgage payments. Housing costs equal to or greater than 30% of a household's income is considered to be a cost burden.

Impact: The potential direct or indirect effects of a proposed development on activities, utilities, traffic, surrounding land uses, the environment and other factors.

Implementation Strategies: A plan of action intended to accomplish a specific principle.

Intensity: The level of concentration of non-residential land uses or activities occurring within an area.

Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA): A contractual agreement between the County and another governmental entity. IGAs with municipalities are the County's primary means of achieving coordinated planning for the areas adjacent to city limits. The agreements define appropriate future urban areas and establish standards and procedures for development in these areas. They may also define Sphere of Influence Areas (defined below).

Land Use: A description of how land is used or occupied.

Level of Service: An established minimum capacity of public facilities or services that must be provided per unit of demand, i.e. per new housing unit.

Master Plan: A document adopted by the Planning Commission and Washoe County Board of County Commissioners to provide policy direction on the physical development of the County.

Master Plan Land Use: Broadly guides the location, intensity, and type of development by identifying future growth opportunities and constraints.

Multimodal Transportation: A transportation system that includes multiple types (modes) of conveyances such as an automobile, rail, bus, pedestrian and bicycle.

Natural Hazards: All areas that are or may become hazardous due to environmental conditions, including but not limited to wildfire; avalanche; landslide; rock fall; mud flow and debris fan; unstable or potentially-unstable slopes; seismic effects; radioactivity; ground subsidence; and expansive soil and rock.

Non-conforming uses: Uses that do not comply with the existing zoning, but legally existed prior to the adoption, revision or amendment of the Development Code.

No-Net Loss: An operating standard used in affordable housing, conservation, etc. that prevents or offsets the destruction of those resources.

Non-Traditional Households: Living arrangements that deviate from the traditional U.S. Census Bureau classifications of family households or non-family households. These can include, but are not limited to: cohabitating or unmarried couples, female-headed

households, unrelated roommates, or single-person households.

Overlay Zoning: A regulatory tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over an existing base zone(s), which identifies special and additional provisions. These could include zoning requirements that address natural disaster risk, development patterns, the implementation of a "village pattern" in rural communities, and areas unsuitable for intense development (including expansion of flood regulations to include geologic and wildfire hazards).

Policy: A statement of standard or a course of action that guides governmental action and decision making.

Population Consensus Forecast: A population forecast developed TMPRA and utilized by Washoe County that takes into account population growth rates, age distribution, employment, and income.

Principle: A desired ideal and a value to be sought; an end toward which effort is directed.

Quality of Life: The personal perception of the physical, economic and emotional well-being that exists in the community.

Regional Plan: Refers to the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan developed by TMRPA.

Recreation & Public Purpose (R&PP): An agreement that allows the BLM to lease or sell public lands to state or local governments for recreational or other public use.

Resilience: The capacity to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.

Riparian Areas: Areas of land and water forming a transition from aquatic to terrestrial ecosystems along streams, lakes, and wetlands.

Rural (Land Use): Large lots of at least forty acres with no direct neighbors and plenty of wide-open space used for farming,, livestock, or wildlife preservation. Rural areas are not connected to municipal services, instead using well water and septic systems. These areas have few amenities, if any, and residents usually commute long distances to get groceries, gas, or other supplies.

Rural Development Area: A land use designation allowed by the Regional Plan to allow for clustering of lots where it is beneficial to identify areas for open space and natural resource preservation, and is of public benefit. RDAs must not exceed an overall residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres on the site.

Service Districts: Service area for fire protection, road, and water districts.

Spheres of Influence (SOI): Areas identified by the Regional Plan that are specific to Reno and Sparks and help define annexation boundaries and policies.

Suburban (Land Use): Predominantly single-family homes in planned communities with enough space for yards, vehicles, and storage. People living in suburban areas rely primarily on their cars for transportation, such as commuting to work or venturing into urban areas for the amenities of the city. In these areas, businesses are centrally located in shopping centers with grocery stores. People in these areas are far enough away from the city for their neighborhoods to be peaceful and quiet, yet still can access the urban core. Additionally, recreation is not too far and serves as an escape from the faster pace of urban and suburban life.

Technical Advisory Committee: A team of Washoe County staff and agency representatives that provides an important in-house perspective throughout the planning process.

Transferable Development Rights: An incentive program that allows additional density where the community wants to grow ("receiving areas") in exchange for reservation of sensitive or hazard areas that the community wants to protect from future development ("sending areas"). Also known as Transfer of Development Rights.

Transit: A public transportation system (i.e. a public bus or light rail system).

Transportation System Management (TSM): A set of methods used to increase the capacity a part of transportation infrastructure without increasing its physical size.

Travel Demand Management Program (TDM): A plan to alleviate traffic congestion through improved management of vehicle trip demand, often including strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicles and encouraging travel at times of lower congestion.

Unincorporated: All unincorporated areas within Washoe County that are outside of the Reno and Sparks municipal boundaries and the Tahoe Basin/Tahoe Planning Area.

Urban Development or Urban Services: An average density of at least 2 housing units per acre and existing or planned availability of public water and public sewer.

Urban Heat Islands (UHIs): Urbanized areas that experience higher temperatures than surrounding areas due to a greater concentration of buildings, roads, and other man-made infrastructure.

Utility Corridor: An underground or aboveground passageway built to carry utility lines such as electricity, steam, water supply pipes, and sewer pipes.

Vulnerable Population: The economically disadvantaged, racial and ethnic minorities, the uninsured, the elderly, the homeless, and those with other chronic health conditions. It also includes rural residents who encounter barriers to accessing healthcare services.

Watershed: An area of land that drains rainwater or snow into one location such as a stream, lake, or wetland and that supplies drinking water, water for agriculture and manufacturing, opportunities for recreation, and provides habitat.

Wetland: The land transition between water and land systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water, including swamps, marshes, bogs, riparian areas, salt flats, and vernal pools.

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI): A zone of transition between undeveloped wildland and human development.

Workforce Housing: Housing typologies intended for households that don't qualify for affordable housing, typically with incomes between 80 and 120% of AMI. (See [Truckee Meadows Housing Study](#) for more information)

Xeriscaping: Systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the infiltration, movement into the atmosphere, or use of storm water in order to protect water quality and aquatic habitat and reduce water consumption.

Zoning: An element of the Development Code that refers to land use entitlements and requirements that regulate appropriate use, bulk, height, density, and other characteristics appropriate for a specific site.

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VIEW THE APPENDIX!**



APPENDIX 2

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Photo Credits: Pat McMurray

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APPENDIX 3 PLAN AUDIT

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APPENDIX 4

CONSERVATION PLAN: WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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APPENDIX 5

WARM SPRINGS WATER MANAGEMENT FUTURE POLICY DISCUSSION AND 2023 WATER RIGHTS INVENTORY

ENVISION
WASHOE
2040

ENVISION WASHOE

2040

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2023

02

REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION ELEMENT

- 2.2. Support development projects that align with master plan policies and promote business retention and expansion.
- 2.3. Protect industrial areas and employment centers from encroachment by potentially incompatible land uses or conversion to alternative uses.
- 2.4. Promote new industrial land use and zoning where services are available or can be provided in accordance with the Regional Plan.
- 2.5. Ensure that land use practices and regulations accommodate the needs of rural communities, and changing trends regarding businesses, including home and accessory rural occupations.

RFC Principle 3. Facilitate land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals that are in the public interest.

- 3.1. Coordinate with the TMRPA and Federal legislators and officials to support land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals when such actions are in the public interest, support the Washoe County Open Space Plan, or add unique cultural resource sites to public ownership.
-  3.2. Work with planning partners to develop funding sources and incentives for the acquisition, dedication, and maintenance of open space and sensitive lands.
- 3.3. Support partnerships for the use of Southern Nevada Public Land Management (SNPLMA) Funds for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.
- 3.4. Coordinate with NDOW and USFWS on acquisitions to benefit habitat management and species diversity identified in the Nevada Wildlife Action Plan and USFWS Updated Goals and Objectives for the Conservation of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout.
-  3.5. Prioritize open space acquisitions which protect aquifer recharge areas, current and future wellhead protection areas, source water protection areas, **vegetation and tree canopies in areas with high urban heat island effect**, and areas with natural hazards (floodplains, steep slopes, forested areas, etc.).
- 3.6. Support WCSD in acquisition(s) of land in new subdivisions where inadequate school capacity is present, in accordance with NRS 278.180 & 278.346.

RFC Principle 4. Sustain interagency and inter-jurisdictional working relationships to foster an integrated approach to resource management.

- 4.1. Support the establishment of consistent or complementary conditions of approval for dedication of sensitive lands as open space across the region.
- 4.2. Partner with other public lands management agencies to encourage inter-jurisdictional compatibility of policies governing public access and use.
- 4.3. Continue interagency and inter-jurisdictional coordination in the planning, development, operations, and maintenance of park and recreational facilities.
- 4.4. Coordinate with other agencies to address lakes, rivers, and water-based recreation on a regional-level to ensure the sustainability of the natural environment.

03

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The **Conservation of Natural and Cultural Resources** Element serves to provide principles and policies that not only preserve, but enhance the unique natural amenities found throughout Washoe County. The Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan (Appendix 4), **Heat Mitigation Plan (pg. 49)**, and Transportation Policy TR4.3 serve as the Conservation Plan required by NRS. Natural features such as the Carson Range of the Sierra Nevada, the seemingly endless expanse of basin and range geography, and vast playas not only provide scenic and recreational amenities, but also vital habitat for iconic species such as the greater sage-grouse and California Bighorn Sheep. Water bodies like Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River, and Washoe Lake and surrounding wetlands also provide key habitat for aquatic species and extensive recreational opportunities. Washoe County residents value these natural amenities and often cite preserving access to these natural areas and conserving the resources within them as being priorities. **Open space, parks, and trails also mitigate urban heat, helping to build a more resilient community.**

The County's natural resources provide vital ecosystem services to its inhabitants. Access to expansive trail networks and regional parks throughout the County are vital to the health and wellness of County residents. The indigenous peoples of Washoe County—the Northern Paiute and Washoe—have deep-seated cultural and spiritual connections to the surrounding landscape and wildlife. Water resources in the form of both surface water such as the Truckee River and ground water provide residents with reliable water for domestic and agricultural uses. There is also a strong link between watershed vegetation management and wildfire fuels management to sustain water resources from local watershed, especially in communities located in the wildland urban interface (WUI). The County also has many economic ties related to natural resources, ranging from recreation and resort amenities in Lake Tahoe; to resources extraction industries such as mining, geothermal, and natural gas development; to agricultural and cattle grazing.

The interconnectedness between the County's residents and the natural amenities, coupled with the growth and development within the County emphasizes the need for principles and policies meant to conserve these resources. As such, the County and its partner agencies within the region should regard these natural amenities as green infrastructure, which should be maintained or—in the event that they are adversely impacted—mitigated and replaced. The principles and policies found within this element serve to ensure that this green infrastructure is preserved throughout the County for the benefit of current and future generations.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *TMRPA Natural Resources Plan*
- ▶ *Truckee Meadows Trails Plan 2021*
- ▶ *Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2019*
- ▶ *One Truckee River Management Plan*
- ▶ *USFWS 2019 Updated Goals and Objectives for the Conservation of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout*
- ▶ *Nevada Forest, Range, and Watershed Action Plan*
- ▶ *Toiyabe Forest Management Plan*
- ▶ *Sierra Nevada Forest Plan*

04

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Natural Hazards

Washoe County is subject to wildfires, earthquakes, **floods, drought, volcanos**, infectious disease, avalanches, and landslides as well as extreme winter and summer weather events. Each of these natural hazards has both an immediate and long-term impact on development. However, floods and wildfires pose the most frequent threats to the community. According to the FEMA National Risk Index (NRI), Washoe County's Risk Index and Expected Annual Loss are considered "relatively high", specifically tied to flooding, wildfires, and earthquakes. The Risk Index calculates overall risk to the community based on **11 eight** natural hazards, and the Expected Annual Loss represents the average economic loss in dollars resulting from natural hazards each year.

Catastrophic floods are part of the history of the region and have played a significant role in shaping current development practices. Significant efforts have been made to mitigate the impact of these floods on the community, including implementation of development standards and the creation of the Truckee River Flood Management Authority. More recently, as in other western areas, wildfire has become a more consistent threat with large portions of the County affected by fires between 2011 and 2020, and a significant portion of the County located in the wildland urban interface (WUI) (Map 8). The Truckee Meadows has been increasingly impacted by smoke from local and distant wildfires, causing increasing air quality and health issues throughout the region. Fire response in Washoe County is currently split between three fire departments and two fire protection districts, with a combined total of 47 stations and departments.

Washoe County has implemented development standards that address each of the natural hazards residents may face. However, as threats change in response to local or global conditions, Washoe County will have the opportunity to explore new practices to best protect the community. In the long term, site and building standards should align to best practices for climate change mitigation **and adaption**, including the State of Nevada's Climate Action Plan. When a best practice solution requires a regional effort, Washoe County will seek opportunities to be productively engaged in those efforts.

According to Nevada's Climate Action Plan, which identifies the ways in which Nevada's climate is changing, there is a strong likelihood that, over time, the community will experience hotter temperatures, more extreme droughts, a reduction in snowpack, and more frequent extreme floods and wildfires than in the past. The Climate Action Plan also outlines climate solutions, including greenhouse gas reduction targets and innovative methods for building community resilience. These solutions often go hand-in-hand with recreation

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AREA (DCA)

Consists of:

- ▶ *Playas,*
- ▶ *Jurisdictional waters and wetlands in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act,*
- ▶ *Designated FEMA floodways,*
- ▶ *Significant water bodies,*
- ▶ *Natural slopes over 30%,*
- ▶ *Publicly-owned open space, and*
- ▶ *Properties that are deed restricted to prevent development.*

goals and job opportunities. As the population increases over the next twenty years and the impacts of climate change intensify, Washoe County will need to balance the demand to provide continuing opportunities for access to outdoor recreation with safeguarding of the region's natural resources.

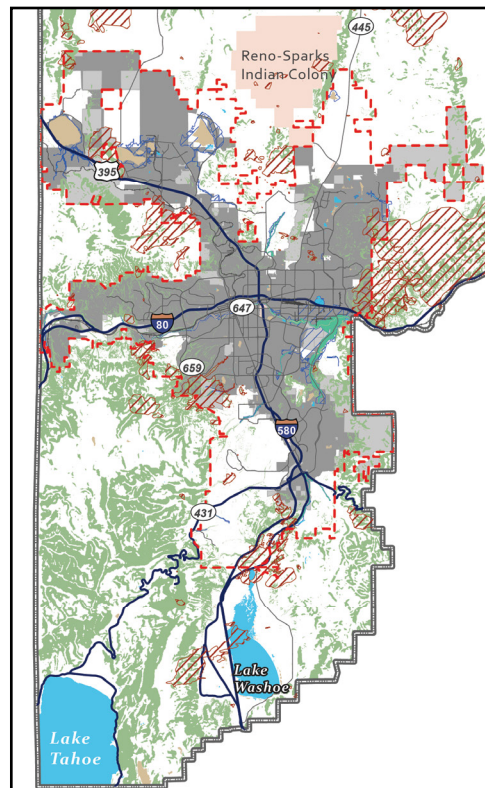
In addition to fire and flood risk, the Regional Plan policy Natural Resources 3 defines the Development Constraints Area (DCA) as an overlay within the County that identifies additional development constraints including federal lands, playas, wetlands, and steep slopes (Map 8). The DCA overlay takes precedence over otherwise applicable policies describing the desired density and intensity of development within the County. According to the Regional Plan, development within the DCA is limited to communication facilities, recreational facilities, parks and open space, agriculture, forestry and mining, and transportation and utilities infrastructure necessary to service development. Residential development is limited to a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres or one dwelling unit per existing parcel in 2019, whichever is greater. Other uses may be allowed in isolated areas if the encroachments enhance the overall project design and a 2:1 ratio of non-constrained area is preserved as open space for every developed constrained area.

According to the Regional Plan, the primary intent of the DCA is to preserve development-constrained lands in an undeveloped state wherever possible, to minimize encroachments into the DCA, and to provide additional design features to mitigate the visual impact of necessary encroachments. Much of northern Washoe County lies outside the DCA, but large swaths of southern Washoe County, primarily lands along the Nevada - California border lie within the DCA (Map 8). Development on federal lands within the DCA will also need to be coordinated with the appropriate federal land management agency.

Heat Mitigation Plan

In 2025, a new provision was introduced to Nevada Revised Statutes requiring that a Heat Mitigation Plan be included in the Conservation Element for several jurisdictions, including Washoe County. As a region

with a semi-arid desert climate, Washoe County has always been subject to higher temperatures and the challenges heat brings. Climate change exacerbates harsh conditions, especially heat-related issues as average temperatures are projected to increase between 3 and 12 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100 in the United States (Reidmiller, D.R. et al., 2017). As of 2026, Reno is the fastest-warming city in the United States. This Heat Mitigation Plan addresses heat's impact along various dimensions, for the



Legend

- County Boundary
- TMSA
- Lake
- Railroad
- Highway
- Major Road

Incorporated

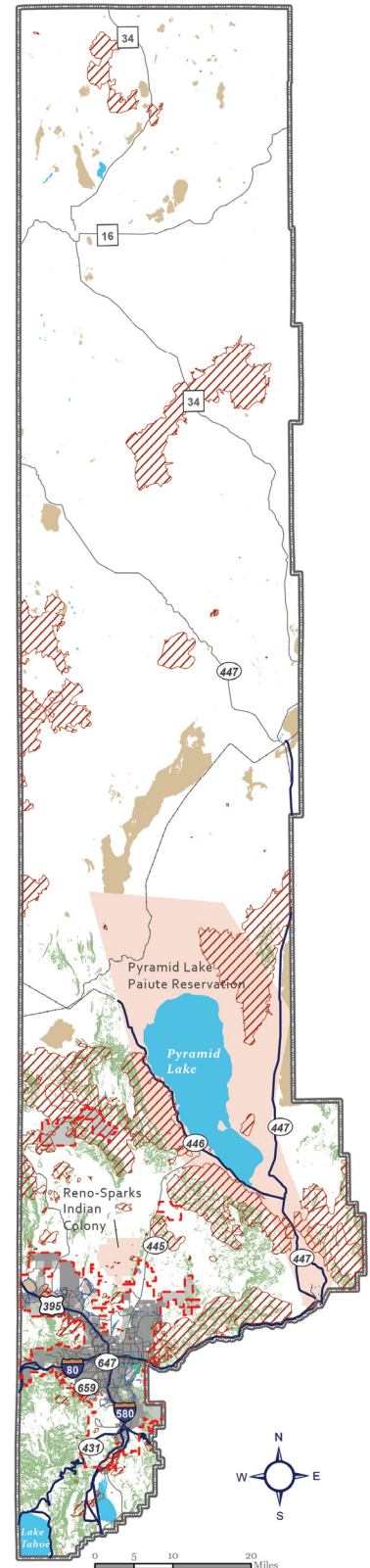
- Reno/Sparks
- Sphere Of Influence

- Tribal Lands
- Fires 2011-2020

Development Constraints Area

- Slopes 30% and greater
- Playas
- Wetlands
- Floodway

MAP 8. NATURAL HAZARDS IN WASHOE COUNTY



04

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

urban and rural areas of the County.

Extreme Heat

Extreme heat is the nation's most deadly natural hazard (Keith and Meerow, 2021). Projected warming in the southwest United States, including Nevada, is expected to increase heat-related illnesses, which can lead to hospitalizations and fatalities (Crimmins, A.R. (editor) et al., 2023). Heat also has public health, social, and economic impacts. Adapting to extreme heat is therefore essential to quality of life.

The public health impacts of extreme heat include heat-related illnesses but extend beyond them. Higher temperatures accelerate ozone formation from transportation, industry, and utilities emissions, worsening air quality and increasing health risks for sensitive groups such as people with lung disease, older adults, children, and outdoor workers (EPA, 2026). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has strengthened ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) over time with the latest being the 2015 NAAQS of 0.070 parts per million (ppm) for attainment. Since 2015, Washoe County has either been only slightly below the threshold or has violated it, meaning that any strengthening of the NAAQS or increase in ozone from extreme heat could cause Washoe County to be designated nonattainment by EPA. In addition to public health consequences, nonattainment also has significant economic implications including potential reduction in transportation funding, raising compliance and permitting costs, and reducing business investment. Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), formerly known as Washoe County Health District, joined the EPA's Ozone Advance program in 2017 to strengthen voluntary attainment efforts. Several of the key performance indicators (KPIs) for success in reducing ozone precursor emissions are land use related, including vehicle miles traveled, tree canopy, and bikeways (Washoe County Health District, 2017). Although the EPA discontinued the Advance Program in 2025, NNPH still uses its framework to prioritize strategies for reducing ozone precursors.

Other potential impacts of extreme heat are interconnected and touch every aspect of life. On days with high temperatures, thermal comfort—which is influenced by temperature, humidity, wind, and other factors—decreases, which may decrease the likelihood that an individual will go to an event, bike to work, or go shopping. Each of these decisions impacts the social vibrancy and economic wellbeing of a community, particularly for those who already are more likely to be isolated, such as seniors. Warming also has impacts on agriculture by reducing crop yields, stressing livestock, and increasing irrigation demand.

The University of California Center for Disease Control Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry developed a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) which depicts areas where populations may be more or less resilient and able to respond to hazardous events. The SVI uses a series of census-derived factors relating to socioeconomic status, household characteristics, racial and ethnic minority status, and housing type and transportation. SVI scores range from 0 to 1, with a score of 0 being not vulnerable and a score of 1 being very vulnerable. Washoe County, as a whole, has a medium-high vulnerability SVI score of 0.67. The census tracts with the highest SVI scores and therefore the most vulnerable populations, are the unincorporated portions of the county immediately adjacent to Reno and Sparks in Sun Valley, Cold Springs, and North Valleys, as well as the High Desert planning area.

Although heat conditions are expected to worsen across urban and suburban areas where much of the county's population is concentrated, rural parts of the County are also expected to experience the effects of increased heat, especially related to water, medical services, and energy. Infrastructure access and

quality is important in rural planning areas where extreme heat poses a greater threat to human health and safety due to a lack of localized services. Ensuring that water is available to rural communities, providing reliable energy and power grids, and providing emergency medical services will be priorities for rural areas facing heat challenges.

Urban Heat

As a region with a semi-arid desert climate, Washoe County has always been subject to higher temperatures and the challenges heat brings. Climate change exacerbates harsh conditions, especially heat-related issues as temperatures increase. **While extreme heat impacts all parts of Washoe County,** urban areas are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat due to impervious surfaces like buildings, roads, and other paved surfaces that absorb and release heat, increasing temperatures in concentrated areas. These areas of concentrated heat are described as urban heat islands (UHIs) and require special consideration to mitigate their impacts.

UHIs are influenced by many factors, including land use patterns, air temperature, and wind. Hotter areas tend to correlate with socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. UHI effect leads to warmer nights, which compounds public health risks as people and infrastructure do not have time to cool down. In 2024, the CAPA Heat Watch program, in association with Washoe County and other local agencies, mapped UHIs in the urban and suburban areas of Washoe County. The maximum mapped temperature differential between neighborhoods was 23-degrees Fahrenheit. While UHIs are often associated with highly urbanized areas, the CAPA Heat Watch mapping found that areas with more sparse suburban development and low tree cover can also concentrate heat in the day and evening, pointing to the importance of tree canopy and shade for neighborhood cooling.

Washoe County has a mix of rural, suburban, and urban areas across a large geographic region, some of which fall under County jurisdiction and others under the Cities of Reno and Sparks jurisdiction. Suburban and urban planning areas adjacent to cities require multi-jurisdictional collaboration as the County works to reduce the impacts of UHIs. **Jurisdictions can and should collaborate on providing and communicating resources such as public air-conditioned spaces (cooling centers) and public drinking water, as well as on heat-related land use policies and best building practices.**

Land use decisions underpin the majority of urban heat solutions because of the built environment's impact on local climates. ~~Concentrated development and infill combined with other shading solutions can greatly reduce heat in urban areas by reducing sprawl and minimizing heat retained by impervious surfaces. Additionally, creating green spaces,~~ **Managing growth to limit outward sprawl helps reduce the need for new roads, parking areas, and other heat-absorbing surfaces, while** preserving open space, ~~and e~~Establishing urban growth boundaries within the County can provide cooling to surrounding areas. As the County grows, land use decisions regarding locations and types of development should carefully assess potential for urban heat impacts.

~~Land use decisions underpin the majority of urban heat solutions because of the built environment's impact on local climates. Concentrated development and infill combined with other shading solutions can greatly reduce heat in urban areas by reducing sprawl and minimizing heat retained by impervious surfaces. Additionally, creating green spaces, preserving open space, and establishing urban growth boundaries within the County can provide cooling to surrounding areas. As the County grows, land use decisions regarding locations and types of development should carefully assess potential for urban heat impacts.~~

Within the urban environment, design elements such as built shade structures, canopy and green roofs, and water features can greatly reduce urban heat impacts and increase community resilience. New and infill development can integrate multiple practices at once, eventually creating a connected shade system that keeps the community safe in public spaces.

The University of California Center for Disease Control Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry developed a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) which depicts areas where populations may be more or less resilient and able to respond to hazardous events. The SVI uses a series of census-derived factors relating to socioeconomic status, household characteristics, racial and ethnic minority status, and housing type and transportation. SVI scores range from 0 to 1, with a score of 0 being not vulnerable and a score of 1 being very vulnerable. Washoe County as a whole has a medium-high vulnerability SVI score of 0.67, indicating that the public's resilience against public health emergencies is compromised. Much of the population in the County is concentrated in the southern portion of the unincorporated County and within Reno and Sparks, with small, rural pockets located in northern areas. These rural communities will face different heat-related challenges than urban areas due to their geographical isolation and infrastructure availability. The census tracts with the highest SVI scores and therefore the most vulnerable populations, are the unincorporated portions of the county

04

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

immediately adjacent to Reno and Sparks in Sun Valley, Cold Springs, and North Valleys, as well as the High Desert planning area.

Although heat conditions are expected to worsen across urban and suburban areas specifically, rural parts of the County are also expected to experience the effects of increased heat, especially related to water, medical services, and energy grids. Infrastructure access and quality is important in rural planning areas where these challenges already exist and pose greater threats to human health and safety due to a lack of localized services. Most rural parts of the County are currently serviced by private wells, with concerns for future water supply. Ensuring that water is available to rural communities, providing reliable energy and power grids, and providing emergency medical services can be powerful solutions for rural areas facing heat challenges.

Currently, one of the most significant challenges to UHI mitigation is data availability. Planners have recently started to account for urban heat and analyze how it affects planning areas. The National Integrated Heat Health Information System (NIHHIS) is a collaborative government program that allows decision makers to begin cataloging UHIs in their regions to better inform UHI mitigation. UHIs are also becoming more common across all levels of planning. In 2019, the TMSA Regional Plan required that local governments include strategies to reduce UHI impacts. Future data compilation of available public drinking water, shaded areas, and cooling centers within the unincorporated County can help the community protect themselves against extreme heat.

The Washoe County Development Code can serve as an effective tool for reducing urban heat island effects and strengthening community resilience to rising temperatures in the Truckee Meadows. Expanding shade and tree planting requirements is a practical and cost-effective approach to improving public health while supporting long term sustainability goals. Increasing summer temperatures, extensive paved surfaces, and limited existing shade contribute to elevated surface and ambient temperatures in developed areas, particularly within parking lots, commercial centers, and pedestrian corridors. Integrating shade into existing landscaping and parking lot design standards would help reduce heat absorption without substantially altering established development patterns. Site design strategies such as planting shade trees to reduce heat gain on pavement and building surfaces, providing shaded pedestrian routes, and encouraging the use of reflective or permeable materials can lower localized temperatures, reduce building cooling demands, and improve walkability.

In Washoe County's high desert climate, tree canopy expansion should emphasize drought-tolerant and cold-hardy species capable of providing meaningful cooling benefits while conserving water resources and withstanding seasonal extremes. Tree shade has been shown to significantly reduce surface temperatures and ambient heat exposure, making it one of the most effective passive cooling strategies available. Even modest increases in canopy coverage along streetscapes, parking areas, trails, and public spaces can improve pedestrian comfort and reduce heat-related health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations. Establishing canopy expectations within future development standards would allow shade infrastructure to be incrementally integrated as growth occurs. New and infill development can integrate multiple heat mitigation practices at once, eventually creating a connected shade system that keeps the community safe in public spaces. Over time, this approach would expand tree canopy coverage, improve energy efficiency, and enhance community resilience to extreme heat.

Higher elevation parts of southern Washoe County, including the Tahoe Basin, experience less direct impacts of extreme heat due to cooler climates and high amounts of shade in forested areas. However, even these areas are experiencing warming, and building infrastructure may not include air conditioning or other cooling technologies and designs. The Tahoe Basin also may experience indirect impacts of

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ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

extreme heat in the Truckee Meadows from increased trips to Lake Tahoe where conditions are cooler. Thus, policies that decrease heat in urban areas of the Truckee Meadows will also mitigate indirect impacts to the Tahoe Basin.

In 2019, the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan required that local governments include strategies to reduce UHI impacts. Future data compilation of available public drinking water, shaded areas, and cooling centers within the unincorporated County can help the community protect themselves against extreme heat. Washoe County Planning can also support other ongoing efforts and plans to address extreme heat, including the 2025 Washoe County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Regional Transportation Plan. This Heat Mitigation Plan includes policies and their associated action items in this section and throughout Envision Washoe 2040, which are marked with a ☀ icon. These include AR Principles 3 and 4, AR Policy 2.4, RC Policies 3.2 and 3.5, TR Principle 3, and LU Policies 3.2 and 3.3.

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The **Adaptation and Resiliency** Element's principles and policies address the various challenges of living with natural hazards while proactively mitigating risks to health and safety. While development in the County is set among the backdrop of wide-open spaces, dense forests, and expansive valleys, there are risks associated with development along the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). Wildfires, landslides, and degradation of natural and protective wetlands can challenge the safety of those who live, work, or recreate in these areas.

Climate change has drastically increased the severity and frequency of natural disasters and extreme weather events, making planning for extreme situations more important than ever. Both urban and rural areas will face their own challenges with heat islands, natural area preservation, and integrating energy efficient practices into the public's everyday lives. The Adaptation and Resiliency principles and policies are primarily focused on limiting development to appropriate areas, reducing or mitigating development outside those areas, collaborating with partner agencies, and proactively investing in solutions that reduce the impacts of climate change. The goal of these principles and policies is to support thoughtful development practices that increase the resilience of the County and create a strong response network for climate-related hazards and their impacts.

Principles and policies from the Relevant Plans listed in the call out box above that align with Washoe County overarching goals and policies are indicated with ***italic text*** and an icon in the margin noting the goal/policy number which links to the source plan. The text in the blue boxes indicates the goal/policy number from the related plan, not from the Envision Washoe 2040 plan. For example, "NR 5" is the policy number in the related plan.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ [TMRPA Natural Resources Plan](#)
- ▶ [One Truckee River Management Plan](#)
- ▶ [Truckee River Flood Management Authority Flood Protection Plan 2016](#)
- ▶ [Nevada Fire Board/BLM Washoe County Fire Risk Assessment 2009](#)
- ▶ [2025 Washoe County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)
- ▶ [Washoe County Climate Action Plan](#)
- ▶ [2019 Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan](#)
- ▶ [RTC 2050 Regional Transportation Plan](#)

AR Principle 1. Limit development in the Development Constraints Area.

- 
- 1.1. *Minimize development in areas with natural steep slopes and ensure that technically and aesthetically appropriate standards are applied to development of slopes between 15% and 30%.*
 - 1.2. Limit development in floodplains that would constrict or otherwise result in higher floodwater levels or peak flows, or impact to floodplain functions.
 - 1.3. *Ensure development within the WUI is consistent with industry best practices.*
 - 1.4. Update and implement the Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment study and recommendations to guide management of wildfire hazards in urban interface areas.
 - 1.5. Support riparian habitat and river channel restoration as an important component of overall flood management planning.

AR Principle 2. Coordinate natural hazard response with regional and federal agencies.

- 2.1. Support Fire Protection District efforts to develop, fund, and implement a Community Wildfire Protection Program and

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ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

replanting program for all non-federal public lands in the region.

- 2.2. Promote partner agency efforts in helping individuals learn to live with fire.
- 2.3. Coordinate the activities of the Regional Open Space Program with proposed restoration projects on the lower Truckee River.

- ☀️ 2.4. **Coordinate with and support the efforts of Washoe County Emergency Management in hazard mitigation and emergency planning.**

☀️ AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of **extreme heat and climate change** on residents.

- 3.1. Support efforts to reduce energy consumption including incentives for use of green building and design techniques (ex. density bonuses, height bonuses, and alternative funding sources to offset permit fee reductions, etc.).
- 3.2. ~~Assess the need to expand the County's tree canopy.~~ **Support expansion of the County's tree canopy, prioritizing the most vulnerable communities and key community resources, such as the Truckee River corridor.**
- NR 10 3.3. *Promote land uses and building techniques which reduce the use of heat absorbing surfaces and the urban heat island effect including limiting impervious surface;; reducing parking requirements;; promoting water-wise and drought tolerant landscaping;; ~~use of~~ using green building materials **such as green roofs, green walls, and cooling pavements;; and promoting beneficial** site orientation.*
- 3.4. *Encourage development of alternative and renewable energy generation and infrastructure, including but not limited to solar, wind, and geothermal to benefit the community/County.*
- 3.5. ~~Work with the cities of Reno and Sparks to assess adequacy of access to public drinking water, shaded areas, and cooling centers within the County.~~
- 3.6. Work with USFS and other federal partners to manage forest health, fuels reduction, and forest restoration to protect the watershed from fire impacts.

☀️ AR Principle 4. Manage the impacts of extreme heat.

- 4.1. **Support efforts to raise awareness and knowledge about extreme heat and its impacts.**
- 4.2. **Collaborate with local and regional partners to develop heat management resources aimed at:**
 - **Reviewing where public cooling spaces exist or can be enhanced.**
 - **Reviewing where access to public drinking water exists or can be enhanced.**
 - **Developing an online map resource to inform the public about access to cooling spaces and where access to public drinking water is available.**
- 4.3. **Support increasing the resiliency of energy supply networks and the accessibility of affordable energy.**
- 4.4. **Promote increasing shade on sites that serve populations vulnerable to extreme heat, such as children and seniors.**

- 4.5. Promote increasing shade where appropriate in public infrastructure such as multimodal transportation stops and areas.
- 4.6. Assess the need for rural-focused extreme heat strategies, such as incentives for energy efficiency retrofitting, supporting access to medical care, and increasing grid resiliency and energy redundancy.
- 4.7. Support cool building practices such as awnings, light colored and living roofs, and increased insulation.

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LAND USE ELEMENT

LU Principle 2. Tier land use decisions from the Regional Land Designations and the Priority Hierarchy for development as described in the Regional Plan.

- 2.1. Regularly review the Master Plan Land Use Map to maintain consistency with the Regional Plan and meet community needs and update as necessary.
- 2.2. Align future rezoning and development proposals with the Master Plan Land Use Map and Master Plan policies.
- 2.3. Allow flexibility in development proposals when appropriate to vary lot sizes, cluster dwelling units, and use innovative approaches to site planning to meet multiple County principles and policies.

LU Principle 3. Support development that respects natural resources.

- 3.1. Collaborate with other agencies to develop methods for assessing all developments individually and cumulatively for potential impact upon the natural resources of Washoe County.
-  3.2. Promote landscaping that is consistent with best practices for resource sustainability, habitat preservation and enhancement, and natural hazard resilience.
-  3.3. *Incentivize residential cluster and common open space developments as an alternative to conventional subdivision development where clustering will achieve permanent protection of open space or valued natural resources.*
- 3.4. Support individual property owner's efforts to designate conservation easements on their land.


NR 10
**CLICK
THE ICONS
FOR MORE
INFORMATION!**

ONEWATER NEVADA

OneWater Nevada is a regional collaborative effort to realize innovative water supply options and advanced water treatment technologies.

To learn more about their water conservation efforts visit onewaternevada.com

LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- 4.1. Encourage design of industrial, commercial, and multifamily uses to contribute to the community's sense of place rather than detract from it.
- 4.2. Where needed, expand existing public facility links such as trails, paths, open space, and streets to create connectivity between communities and neighborhoods.
- 4.3. Support visual improvements to enhance community gateways.

14. *Support mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and community revitalization projects that encourage walking, bicycling, and easy access to existing and planned transit stops.*

TR Principle 2. Provide an efficient transportation network through coordinated operations, system management, technology, and targeted investments.

- 2.1. Encourage the incorporation of transit stops and other multi-modal facilities in the development review process where regular transit service exists or is planned.
- 2.2. Facilitate the proactive maintenance and construction of roadways and pedestrian ways to ensure high-quality, safe travel.
- 2.3. Employ Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies such as minor widening, improved channelization, improved signage, traffic signals, and other low-cost mitigation measures.
- 2.4. *Support the use of emerging technologies, such as the use of mobile device applications to navigate the active transportation network and facilitate ridesharing, efficient parking, and transit use.*
- 2.5. *Prioritize regional and local investments that fulfill TMRPA objectives in transit, active transportation demand management, and other programs which support identified TMRPA transportation performance outcomes.*
- 2.6. *Support parking management programs that incentivize non-auto modes and discourage private auto-mobile use at peak times in peak locations, alleviate circulating vehicle trips associated with parking availability.*

RTP



TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- 3.1. Implement transportation systems that reduce dependence on automobiles.
- 3.2. Encourage large-scale employers and development to accommodate ~~for~~ employees by providing on-site parking and/or transportation services.
- 3.3. Prioritize development of alternative modes of transportation before expanding the roadway network.
- 3.4. Limit auto-related business such as retail, service, or repair of automobiles within pedestrian-oriented districts.
- 3.5. Promote and facilitate recreational use of green space by pedestrians and bicyclists, and provide access to public facilities, recreation, public transportation, and open space.

RTP

TR Principle 4. Coordinate transportation decisions with regional and local partners.

- 4.1. *Advocate for a regional evaluation of how transportation infrastructure could be developed concurrently with development to meet transportation demands.*
- 4.2. *Support multi-jurisdictional efforts to address transportation infrastructure and investment.*
- 4.3. *Work with RTC to provide a transportation system and planning process that is responsive to community needs and environmental concerns, including attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards, wildlife crossing considerations, and energy conservation.*
- 4.4. *Collaborate with federal, State, and tribal partners to establish efficient rail, air, and bus transportation connections to and from Tahoe and surrounding metropolitan areas.*
- 4.5. *Encourage collaboration between public lands managers, departments of transportation, transit providers, and other regional partners to support sustainable recreation and multi-modal access to recreation sites.*
- 4.6. *Coordinate transportation efforts with WCSD, especially regarding Safe Routes to School, school zones, school crossings, etc.*

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
<i>Ongoing and Immediate Action Items</i>					
Develop a Dark Skies Ordinance to minimize impacts of excess lighting while maintaining a safe level of visibility at night.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1.1; NCR1.2	Planning		\$
Review public notice practices for opportunities to increase their effectiveness.	Development Code Revisions	RFC1.1, RFC2.5 LU1.5,	Planning		\$
Develop standards and code enforcement strategies to outdoor storage areas.	Development Code Revisions	LU4.3, LU4.7	Planning	Code Enforcement	\$
Update ridgeline protection standards to mitigate development impact on scenic views.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1.1, AR1.1	Planning		\$\$
Develop sensitive area standards to protect and mitigate development impacts to natural open space, wildlife habitat, water bodies, wetlands, and sensitive lands. Include standards for scenic viewshed protection.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1, NCR3, NCR4	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$
Update the Development Code to remove barriers to provision of affordable and workforce housing consistent with ongoing Washoe County Strategic planning efforts.	Development Code Revisions	PH3.1, PH3.2, PH3.3	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$\$
Conduct a development code assessment to identify barriers to affordable housing	Development Code Revisions	PH3.1, PH3.2, PH3.4	Planning	Washoe County Housing	\$\$
Evaluate the maximum densities and consider removing discretionary permit requirements and expand the types of housing allowed by-right in all zones where appropriate.	Development Code Revisions	PH2.1, PH3.1, PH. 3.2, PH3.4, PH3.6, PH5.3	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$\$
Develop new methods, through zoning designations, overlays, or some other method, to encourage walkability, multi-modal transportation, and residential development near commercial uses and transportation nodes.	Development Code Revisions	PH2.1, PH3.1, PH3.5, 	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$\$
Revise the accessory dwelling units section of the Development Code to expand options and reduce regulatory barriers.	Development Code Revisions	PH3.5	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Amend the Development Code to require an environmental review for subdivisions and development in sensitive areas.	Development Code Revisions	NCR1, NCR3, NCR4	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space, NDOW	\$\$
Adopt water conservation incentives and ordinances that encourage residents to use conservation devices, low-water landscaping, and efficient irrigation.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, LU3.2	Planning	Engineering, Building, Utilities and Maps	\$\$\$
Review and amend the development and architectural standards with the goal of reducing emissions and increasing resiliency.	Development Code Revisions	AR3 	Planning		\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
<i>Short-Term Action Items</i>					
Develop a landscape planting checklist and guide that includes plants appropriate for Low Impact Development (LID) projects/practices.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, AR3, LU3.2	Planning	Tribes, Nevada Native Plant Society	\$
Create codes and measurable goals related to tree canopy coverage with a preference for native tree or drought-tolerant species.	Development Code Revisions		Planning	WC Sustainability, WC Parks and Open Space	\$\$
Assess the need for rural-focused strategies to manage the impact of extreme heat and, if needed, pursue those strategies.	Programs/ Resources		Planning	Emergency Management, WC Sustainability	\$\$
Conduct a study to identify the areas of the county most at-risk from extreme heat in order to prioritize investment in those areas.	Plans/Studies		Planning	WC Sustainability	\$\$
Create incentives for new developments and homeowners to incorporate renewable energy generation (solar, geothermal, wind, etc.) that generate at least 30% of household power each year.	Development Code Revisions	AR3.4 	Planning		\$
Amend the development code to provide standards for passive solar energy measures that encourages its use.	Development Code Revisions	AR3.4 	Planning		\$
Require proposed projects and land use changes in areas with groundwater recharge potential to include project features or adequate land for passive recharge.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4	Planning		\$
Revise the development review process to allow major development proposals to be reviewed by the appropriate state or federal agencies for impacts to wildlife habitats and include potential mitigation measures.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3, NCR4	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space; NDOW	\$
Utilize development practices that increase slope stability and reduce erosion, including re-vegetation, restricting development, clustering, etc.	Development Code Revisions	AR1, AR2	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$
Update master plan land use maps and apply new land uses.	Plans/Studies	LU2, LU3, LU5, LU6	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$\$
Explore non-development incentives for the permanent protection of open space.	Plans/Studies	NCR3	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$
Set-up regular meetings with the tribal governments to review and identify potential interactions with cultural resources that are not mapped (monthly or quarterly).	Plans/Studies	NCR1.1, NCR1.5, NCR3.1, NCR3.2	Planning	Tribal Partners	\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Establish estimates of water demand for a variety of lot sizes to better manage and plan for water supply. This includes working with County engineering to update County sewer design standards documents.	Plans/Studies	NCR4, PFS1, PFS2, PFS3	Planning	Engineering, Capital Projects, Utilities and Maps	\$\$\$
Identify indicators that measure achievement of the principles in each element.	Programs & Resources	ALL	Planning		\$
Explore the establishment of a dedicated funding source for the acquisition of permanent open space for wildlife habitat protection, scenic vista protection, heat mitigation , and agriculture preservation.	Programs & Resources	NCR2, RFC6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3 	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$\$
Allow for lot size averaging and clustered developments (i.e. 5 lots per 50 acres vs 10 acre minimum lots).	Development Code Revisions	LU2, LU3, LU5, LU6	Planning		\$\$\$
Establish requirements for standard subdivisions to dedicate natural open space or park space as part of new residential development.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3, LU4 	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space	\$\$\$
Work with TMWA to update the County's development review process, regulatory zone maps and development code, and Master Plan Land Use Map to prevent development that could contaminate groundwater resources within identified wellhead/source water protection areas	Development Code Revisions	PFS 1.1, PFS 1.2, PFS 1.4,	Planning	TMWA; TMRPA	\$\$\$
Evaluate the need to include Electric Vehicle Readiness requirements into Development Code	Development Code Revisions	T 1.1, T 1.4, T2.5, T2.6, 	Planning		\$
Establish parking maximums instead of parking minimums to avoid empty parking lots.	Development Code Revisions	LU3, TR3, TR5	Planning		\$
Design neighborhood streets with proper widths that to include tree canopies for shade, bike lanes, sidewalks, and street widths appropriate for residential areas to encourage walkable communities.	Development Code Revisions	LU3, TR3, TR5 	Planning		\$
Revise the development code to require that mineral extraction operations be compatible with surrounding land uses and minimizes adverse effects on the environment.	Development Code Revisions	LU3	Planning		\$
Revise the development code to require buffers around water sources alongside protection plans that ensure water quality and wildlife access during development reviews.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3, NCR4, PFS1,	Planning	Regional Parks and Open Space; TMWA	\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Implement manufactured housing regulations that support the community's demands for fair, equitable, and diverse housing options	Development Code Revisions	PH2, PH3, PH4	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Explore tools for transferring development potential from rural areas to suburban areas	Development Code Revisions	LU3, LU5, LU6, NCR3 	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$\$
Define criteria to identify historic buildings and sites.	Development Code Revisions	NCR7	Planning		\$\$
Create development standards that mitigate urban heat through surfacing, landscaping, and building design.	Development Code Revisions	AR3, LU3 	Planning	Emergency Management	\$\$
Enhance existing water quality protection tools and explore the development of new tools such as an aquifer protection overlay or a water quality commission.	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, PFS1, PFS2, PFS4	Planning	TMWA; TMRPA	\$\$
Update the Development Code to require an analysis of the fiscal impact of larger-scale development proposals on Washoe County services	Development Code Revisions	RFC2.1, RFC7.1, PFS2; PFS, PFS4	Planning	Engineering and Capital Projects; TMRPA	\$\$
Revise water adequacy standards in the Development Code to incorporate standards of the 2020 Integrated Source Water and 319 (h) Watershed Protection Plan for Public Water Systems and the Truckee River in the Truckee Meadows through the development review process	Development Code Revisions	NCR4, PFS1, PFS2, PFS4	Planning	TMWA; TMRPA	\$\$
Create development regulations to support transit-oriented development and require the installation of bikeways, sidewalks, trees , and pathways, starting in targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 districts and streets.	Development Code Revisions	LU4, TR1, TR2, TR3	Planning	RTC	\$\$
Update county trails planning documents to comply with the Truckee Meadows Trails Action Plan and conceptual regional trails network.	Plans/Studies		Planning; Regional Parks and Open Space	TMRPA	\$\$
Work with SHPO, TMRPA, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, and Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe to identify and update the map of cultural resources in Washoe County.	Plans/Studies	NCR7, NCR8, NCR9	TMRPA, Planning	SHPO, tribal partners	\$\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Create a vegetation cover map that can be used to help inform the identification of relative criticalness of habitat types.	Plans/Studies	AR3.5	Planning	Nevada Division of Natural Heritage	\$\$
Conduct an assessment to identify locations and needs for resilience hubs/cooling centers.	Plans/Studies	AR3.54.2 	Planning	Emergency Management	\$\$
Work with local, state, and federal partners to expand the urban canopy and include trees on Washoe Transportation Projects.	Plans/Studies	AR3.2	Planning	NDOT, RTC	\$\$
Identify areas that would benefit from community gardens or small-scale, neighborhood agriculture, such as vacant lots.	Programs & Resources	AR3, RFC6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3	Planning	UNR Extension	\$
Develop an outreach program for landlords to encourage long-term rentals instead of short-term rentals.	Programs & Resources	PH5	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Explore hiring additional staff to implement strategies and plans.	Programs & Resources	ALL	Planning		\$\$
Develop an educational outreach program on strategies for living with extreme heat in partnership with regional medical centers.	Programs & Resources	AR3 	Planning	Emergency Management	\$
<i>Mid-Term Action Items</i>					
Support completion of the outstanding segments of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway.	Capital Improvements	TR1, TR4	Engineering, Capital Project	Planning, Tahoe Pyramid Trail Organization, OTR, Nevada Land Trust	\$\$\$
Explore incentives for cool building practices in the Washoe County Development Code.	Development Code Revisions		Planning	Building	\$
Consider adopting minimum density requirements for mixed-use zone districts	Development Code Revisions	LU3, LU5, LU6	Planning	TMRPA	\$\$
Integrate sustainable building practices into new development (LEED, xeri/native landscaping, low-impact grading)	Development Code Revisions	AR3, LU3	Planning	Sustainability	\$
Partner with other County agencies to revise the County Development Code to require and assure site reclamation as a condition of extraction approval.	Development Code Revisions	NCR3	Planning		\$
Work with historic, tribal, and cultural partners to create a development review process that protects the region's cultural resources.	Development Code Revisions	NCR7, NCR8, NCR9	Planning	Tribal; SHPO	\$\$
Develop design standards that allow for public and private renewable energy generation (solar, wind, etc.) and complement the existing character of an area.	Development Code Revisions	AR3 	Planning		\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
Partner with Forestry experts to develop fuels management plans for County-owned lands, prioritizing County-owned areas in the WUI.	Development Code Revisions	AR1, AR2	Emergency Management	Planning	\$\$
Support establishment of a monitoring system for assessing the singular and cumulative impacts of growth and development on wildlife and natural resources. Implement actions in response to what is learned to provide better habitat and movement corridor protection.	Development Code Revisions	AR2, AR3	Planning	NDOW, NDNH, NDF, DRI	\$\$\$
Amend wildlife protection standards for development density, intensity, location, clustering, permeability, and wildlife-human conflict.	Development Code Revisions	AR1.3	Planning	NDOW	\$\$
Amend the Development Code to better incentivize urban agriculture.	Development Code Revisions	RFC 6, LU 4.8, LU5.7, LU6.3	Planning		\$\$
Assess need to establish disincentives for demolition of affordable housing units (ex. permit surcharge)	Plans/Studies	PH2, PH3	Planning	Washoe County Housing and Homeless Services	\$
Develop and regularly update preservation plans for existing wetlands using the Federal Clean Water Act and any other federal wetland regulations.	Plans/Studies	NCR3, NCR4	Regional Parks and Open Space	Planning	\$\$
Update the Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment study to guide management of wildfire hazards in urban interface areas	Plans/Studies	AR1.3	Emergency Management	Planning	\$\$
Support identification of areas appropriate for roadway underpasses, overpasses, speed reductions, or other wildlife-vehicle collision mitigation measures in heavy volume wildlife-crossing areas.	Plans/Studies	NCR3, TR3	Planning	RTC, NDOW	\$\$\$
Identify transit corridors and multimodal lanes that would benefit from increased shade structures or urban canopy.	Plans/Studies	TR3 	Planning	RTC	\$\$
Develop a Water Supply and Quality Study to understand the supported densities, water use thresholds and risks to water quality that will guide land use decisions in the future.	Plans/Studies	PFS1, PFS2	Engineering, Capital Projects, Utilities and Maps	WRWC, NDEP, and TMWA	\$\$\$

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Helen D. Neff
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Incline Village, NV 89450
hneff9@earthlink.net / 775-560-4299

Date: May 11, 2026

TO: Kat Oakley, Washoe County Planning Manager

FROM: Helen Neff, Incline Village Resident

RE: Feedback on Draft Heat Mitigation Plan

Dear Ms. Oakley,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Heat Mitigation Plan.

The rise in the heat index in Reno/Sparks and the surrounding areas of Washoe County is of great concern to ALL county residents, including those who live in the Tahoe Area. With each summer heat wave, thousands of people escape the rising temperatures by making day trips to Lake Tahoe adding even more environmental concerns, notably traffic and pollution, for the lake and surrounding communities. In addition, the warming of Reno/Sparks is resulting in milder winters for the Tahoe Region, affecting the snowpack, our winter economy, and most critical: increasing the fire danger in the warmer months.

As more development is approved for Washoe County, the heat index will rise further. The recent approval of 940 lots for residential construction in Washoe Valley is the latest example. Paving over any undeveloped land, even desert land, adding roads and other infrastructure, only increases the heat index further.

I appreciate the effort that has gone into developing the Heat Mitigation Plan and the recognition that urban heat presents growing public health, economic, and environmental challenges. Not to mention “quality of life,” which has been stated as an important factor in recent videos and articles by county management.

However, it is troubling that the plan does not currently include clear, measurable goals or defined benchmarks for success, particularly with respect to tree canopy coverage, one of most effective ways to get the public to participate. While the plan acknowledges the importance of urban forestry, it does not establish a baseline for existing canopy in developed areas, nor does it identify specific targets or timelines for improvement.

I understand the concern that a single, countywide canopy percentage may not be meaningful given the wide variation across geographic areas. However, this underscores the need for more refined metrics; not the absence of them. A more effective approach would be to focus on developed and developable (or zoned for development) areas, where heat impacts are most acute and mitigation efforts are both feasible and necessary.

There is an online free tool to measure tree canopy by census tract, and this could be utilized to establish a baseline and goals: <https://treecanopy.us/>

To strengthen the plan, please add the following:

- Establish a baseline tree canopy percentage specifically for urban and suburban (developed) areas.
- Publicize the benefits of trees: <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/benefits-trees-and-vegetation>
- Set measurable canopy increase targets tied to defined timeframes (e.g., 2035 and 2045).
 - Use a methodology that excludes undeveloped desert and rural lands from canopy calculations to ensure goals are realistic and actionable.
- Prioritize canopy expansion in heat-vulnerable neighborhoods and higher-density areas.
- Include a commitment to regular reporting to track progress and ensure accountability.
- Coordinate implementation with the cities of Reno and Sparks.
 - Reno’s April 2026 proposed amendment to their master plan states a 2012 tree canopy of 5.2%. Although “tree canopy” is referenced thirteen times in the plan, there is no reference to any recent measurements, no stated goals to increase the percentage nor any timeframe to do so.
- Plan for trees like any other must-have infrastructure. Just like roads, sewers, water lines and power grids, trees require planning, investment and regular maintenance. <https://treesasinfrastructure.com/>

Other communities across the United States who are facing similar climate and growth challenges have adopted targeted, data-driven approaches to urban heat mitigation. Incorporating measurable, location-specific goals will improve transparency, guide investment, and help ensure that the benefits of this plan are both effective and equitably distributed.

Thank you again for your work on this important initiative and for implementing these recommendations.

Top Concern
Too much development = more energy usage
More pavement = more heat
Water.
Fire, watersafety
Human health risks from heat and wildfire threats, energy costs and habitat disruptions
What rising temperatures and heat are you referring to? The normal rising temperatures which happen with every change in seasons or the made up bullshit of
1. Discomfort in being active outdoors in summer, especially anywhere near asphalt! Why are most playgrounds black asphalt in Reno? It is so unhealthy for the children.
2. Lack of tree coverage along bicycle trails esp. on Veterans Plwy.
Pets, power outages, power costs
It’s a natural phenomenon that is being politicized. Over the centuries there have been above and below temperatures.
Dark asphalt absorbs heat and warms our city differently than grass or open space; concrete buildings also do the same.
Increasing amounts of blacktop surfaces downtown and elsewhere. Lack of trees planted downtown and in urban areas. Data centers in the fastest heating
No concerns. Seasons come, seasons go. It is called weather. Do not spend my tax dollars on this nonsense. Public Safety, Roads and Infrastructure is all
Lack of water, Lack of water, Lack of water.
Water resources and unpredictable winters
This is bad for people, animals, plants
We are going to cook ourselves
Large Scale Solar Farms, Data Centers, Industrial and high density residential water usage.
No cooling centers that I'm aware of in Sun Valley. For those citizens that do not drive there is limited transportation to a cooling center outside of Sun Valley.
No one knows where the cooling centers are.
1. Loss of natural habitat/wildlife
2. Increased NV Energy bills
3. Inability of outside recreation
my a/c gives up, power outage
1. Development removing trees and adding asphalt.
2. Development using cheap dark asphalt shingles on multiple apartment structures.
3. No restoration after fires.
Energy for cooling without being overcharged by n.v. enough water to cool down landscape. More municipal solar panels
1) The use of asphalt in parking lots. Should it / could it be painted a light color.
2) The increase of carbon emissions when driving to metropolitan area
3) Drought & wild fire My well was not affected by the drought of 10 or 15 years ago. Experienced well drillers dug deep,
Rising cost of cooling
Health impacts on the elderly and poor
Lack of planning to incorporate green space as part of growth, using native plants and trees to reduce urban heat island
The needless deaths of human, animal, and plant life that will occur
The breakdown of civilization as resources become more strained and supply chains break down
Lack of access to medical care
Water Recourse
Technology centers and the heat they disperse
Mismanagement of water
1. Lack of meaningful, evidence based, impactful local policy and procedures for mitigating emissions causing warming to begin with (such as data center regulation, encouraging roof top solar installation, use of electric vehicles, reduction in food waste, reduction in plastic use, etc).
2. Protecting vulnerable workers and citizens from heat related illness.
3. An emergency water and food plan that address changes in the water/food system due to climate change.
1. Public Health and Vulnerable Populations
Extreme heat is already the deadliest natural hazard, and it disproportionately impacts seniors, children, and working families—especially in areas like the North Valleys. Heat-related illness, poor air quality, and limited access to cooling or water create real risks that government must address responsibly.
2. Infrastructure Strain and Rural Inequity
Rising temperatures put stress on water systems, energy grids, and emergency services—particularly in rural communities that lack redundancy and resources. In places like Cold Springs and outlying areas, limited infrastructure means heat is not just uncomfortable—it’s a safety issue.
3. Growth Without Smart Planning
Poorly planned growth—too much pavement, not enough shade, and disconnected development—makes heat worse. We need smarter, coordinated planning that balances development with open space, tree canopy, and long-term sustainability without overburdening residents or businesses.
cost to cool our home, protecting vulnerable populations (animals, seniors, homeless, etc), and water availability/drought issues.
Anyone working in agriculture has to deal with working in the extreme temperatures that continue to rise within our region. Within planning code there is requirements to continue paving over land. Not allowing the land space to heat and cool in a manner that nature intended. It is important that the planning department work with industries that want to work with the land. Agricultural businesses can help with heat mitigation through regenerative practices that
parking lots using black asphalt when there are alternatives to this
Cutting down of old growth trees for another parking lot
not enough trees or places to sit that are in the shade

health, safety and welfare of our residents
Vacant/partially-vacant parking lots that radiate heat. Unshaded sidewalks make walking difficult during peak sun hours
Poorly planned suburban sprawl continues to encroach on native habitats, especially sensitive areas like wetlands.
Reliance of roads, parking lots, and large commercial lots leads to an excessively large area of asphalt, concrete, and other impervious surfaces that create an urban heat island effect and inhibit groundwater infiltration.
Rising heat is an issue that disproportionately affects poor communities and the elderly, with wealthier populations often living at higher elevations in the
How’s my well
Well water
Stress on power grid, heat illness, excessive development and resource use
My top three concerns related to rising temperatures and heat are increased health risks to all plant life and animals, including humans, such as heat stress and heat-related illnesses; exacerbation of existing health conditions, particularly for vulnerable populations (young, seniors); and the growing frequency and intensity of heatwaves, which has lead to public health emergencies and increased mortality, and fires and their health risks to all plant life and animals, including humans. I am age 72 and I DON'T have a whole house air conditioner.
Higher energy consumption for buildings. Outdoor spaces not tolerated. Higher water consumption for plants, evaporative cooling.

Do you have any specific comments for the draft Envision Washoe 2040 amendments?
Yeah, don't spend money on stupid shit that people aren't going to use and cost over runs are outrageous because of the corruption in politicians and the
Reduce the amount of rock used in landscaping in favor of wood mulch and native plants, grasses and wildflowers!!
It's a natural event. Live with it.
Comment- quit wasting tax dollars on this nonsense.
Telling people to go to a cooling center isn't addressing the core problem. Are we going to make the billionaires pay their fair share? I hope so.
Yes, hold the line on the City of Reno Sphere of Influence. High density projects that strain fragile resources are not sustainable. Protect our scenic vistas and ridgelines from further annexation and zoning changes. (Thinking South Reno above Damonte Ranch High School here.) More asphalt roads, more data centers, more solar farms, more heat reflecting roofs -- these all contribute to the increased urban heat dome.
We need to be aware of and help all of our citizens in Washoe county, not just the kids and seniors. The excessive heat affects us all. Whatever the plan ends up being it needs to be posted and advertised so everyone is aware allowing the people in need to be aware of services to help them.
Better start working on it now while we still have access to open space to help mitigate increased heat
Free or low cost fans made available for seniors.
Goof job on that.
Any mitigation plan that does not include a plan to SEVERELY restrict carbon emissions and implement consequences for polluters is not taking the climate crisis seriously. We are out of time to beat around the bush.
No, I have not read the plan.
The draft Heat Mitigation Plan is a strong step in recognizing extreme heat as a public health and infrastructure issue. However, it needs clearer implementation details, including timelines, costs, and measurable outcomes, to ensure it is actionable. The plan should also better address impacts on housing affordability, as new development requirements could increase costs if not balanced with incentives and flexibility. Keeping open space is critical to heat mitigation and should not be waved in any circumstance Rural communities like the North Valleys and Cold Springs need more specific strategies for water access, emergency services, and energy reliability, as they face unique risks. Finally, strong regional coordination between the County, Reno, and Sparks will be essential to ensure consistent standards and effective implementation across the region. Unfortunately though Reno doesn't play fair with Washoe County and they will not respect a Regional coordination effort on anything a greater focus on reduction of urban heat islands and infill rather than sprawling out to the the rural areas. To address vulnerable rural residents, focus on parks/green spaces with trees and shade structures as well as community centers and senior centers in areas like Lemmon Valley, Red Rock, Palomino
paint the roadways white or light colored, adding more trees and provide better transportation to cooling centers that stay open until late at night

Na
Not sure it's necessary.
continued from above Decommissioned school and public buses can be converted into mobile cooling centers by gutting, insulating and installing air conditioning powered by solar panels. These vehicles provide emergency refuge during heat waves, featuring cots, seating and medical supplies to serve vulnerable populations. https://www.schoolbusfleet.com/news/retired-bus-to-be-converted-into-mobile-rehab-center and https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20220804/p2a/00m/0na/021000c and https://www.schoolbusfleet.com/news/retired-bus-to-be-converted-into-mobile-rehab-center 12. Enforce Workplace Protections for shade, water and rest breaks for outdoor workers. 13. Require energy conservation to prevent power outages and provide assistance for cooling costs for low-income households. 14. Implement alert systems to warn the public about high-risk heatwaves. 15. Switch to solar-powered public transportation https://www.bridgestone.com/bwsc/stories/article/2019/06/17-2.html
We should be proactive about this. Pitch the special park districts to include shade structures for parks and public spaces plus urban forestry to pay for the cost to install and maintain more trees in streetscapes and public areas.

On hot days, where do you usually go to stay cool?
Inside my house, splash pad, pool, in the mountains, Lake Tahoe
Pool, river, Tahoe
Home
Inside a building, preferably one with air-conditioning, like my home or a office building.
Indoors in air conditioning! I normally hate air conditioning. Or we try to find a community pool - there are not many on the east side of town.
In my house, or backyard under tree. Also, in the Truckee River at Rock Park or Riverwalk. Sun Valley pool
I don't go anywhere. I dress accordingly
stay in the shade or air conditioning, perhaps a swimming pool
In my home with shades drawn.
In my home, in my yard, at a park. The same as I do to stay warm on a cold day.
Shade, lake, river, inside.
Inside of my home or office.
I finally bought at great expense as I'm retired central A/C as I can't tolerate the 97 and up temps anymore. If it's not extremely hot, I have all the windows open with ceiling and stand-up fans going. There is no place in Sun Valley to go other than businesses where you need to spend money to stay any length of
1. Shady spot
2. Indoors with air conditioning
Run the a/c and stay inside
By the river. Home with the sprinkler and a fan.
My home
I stay home. Home is passive solar. Has 6" or 8" exterior studs, louvers shade it from summer sun, let in winter sun. Have an air conditioner & fans
Home
I stay inside my house
Anywhere the sun is not.
In my home that has air conditioning and tree shade.
Inside with the AC on. On hot days, I try to stay practical—I look for shade, air conditioning, and places that are accessible to everyone. That can mean spending time in public buildings like libraries or community centers, or getting outdoors early or later in the day where there's natural shade.
Air-conditioned buildings, air conditions vehicle, shaded areas
I try to go on a shady spot on our 10 acre property. We do not have air conditioning so we try to drink lots of water and stay out of direct sun on hot days.
stay at home
go to a public place where it is cool

inside
Home, or to a grassy park and sit under a tree or put my feet in the river
Close the blinds and stay home. Take a dip in the Truckee River. Enjoy some windy evenings.
House
Inside my air conditioned home
Home with AC, indoor environments
I don't as I stay home. I am age 72 and I DON'T have a whole house air conditioner. I don't know where cooling locations and their times available are.
Inside my house. We have lived in the same 2 story house for 31 years in south suburban Reno. It has a swamp cooler on the upper floor which used to cool the house to 75 degrees on the very hottest days. Now it is so much warmer it can only cool down to about 80 degrees which is hot. We go to the lower/first floor. We used to wear a jacket outside at night during the summer but never needed now it is so much hotter.

[illegible]

For many, the river is inaccessible because of car dependency. Encouraging RTC to add more stops and routes along the river would enable more people of all backgrounds to enjoy the cool river on hot days.
Lack of greenery
nothing
Cost of cooling indoor spaces, concerns about my resource consumption to cool home/water plants/etc contributing to more heating or environmental damage
I am age 72, and am unable to drive so I am dependent upon affordable, safe and reliable public transportation.

Are there groups in your community that you believe are more vulnerable to the impacts of heat? If so, which ones?
The homeless The underserved communities Homeless pets at the shelter
Elderly
Elderly people and those who can’t afford air conditioning
The homeless and some elderly people
My dog is very sensitive to heat! Also the elderly and young children. Our child does not like to be outside during the heat of day in summer.
Homebound Seniors whose home swamp coolers need repair/replacement. Homeless living in RVs.
No.
people without shade or A/C on very hot days.
Elderly and low income.
Maybe Seniors.
Homeless individuals - people and PETS. Elderly people without access to cooling.
Every living thing.
I believe the children and seniors in Sun Valley are impacted by the heat. We have a pool with little shade but that doesn't accommodate everyone who needs relief.
Many older homes do not have air conditioning; older folks who live in non-air conditioned homes do not feel the heat
elderly
Low income seniors in apartments with no air conditioning or even fans.
The homeless, and ppl who can't afford n.v. rates
Not that I know of.
Poor Elderly Unhoused
Homeless, elderly, and young people
Elderly
Those who cannot afford air conditioning. Those who work outside. Children, older adults, pets, farm animals, wildlife, trees and other species.
Seniors and Medically Fragile Residents Older adults are at higher risk for heat-related illness, especially those on fixed incomes who may limit air conditioning use or lack access to cooling centers. Low-Income and Working Families Families in older housing or without reliable cooling systems are more exposed. Outdoor workers—construction, landscaping, and service jobs—face prolonged heat exposure with fewer protections. Rural Communities (North Valleys, Cold Springs, Gerlach areas) These areas often lack: Reliable water access Nearby medical services Cooling infrastructure That makes extreme heat a public safety issue, not just a comfort issue. Children and Students Schools, playgrounds, and sports activities expose kids to high temperatures, especially where shade is limited. Communities with Limited Tree Canopy / High Heat Areas
seniors, pets, livestock, children, homeless/unhoused individuals, poor individuals, agricultural workers (farmers, ranchers), construction and any of the labor trades working on outdoor projects.
There are elderly in our community that may have access to air conditioning. For the most part they stay indoors out of the direct sun.
elderly people homeless people

those in areas that are lower income and that don't have trees and parks near by.
Older folks and homeless folks.
Poor elderly folk will struggle to afford to reliably stay cool. The homeless also have zero way to control the climate around them and are completely at the mercy of nature.
Elderly
nope
Homeless people, people living without AC in older buildings, people with preexisting health conditions, senior citizens
Young, seniors, Veterans, outside workers, animals, pets, plants, trees, bushes.
Low income without air conditioning.

Further Comments?
Quit wasting peoples fucking time and money on bullshit
Stop allowing developers to build and take the money away from the community. Require them to provide green space for apartments and commercial areas.
Quit wasting tax dollars on this feel good, virtue signaling nonsense.
Do we have water, or don't we? The drought in Washoe County during the 1980s was so severe, it prompted us to 'help' by letting our lawn die. I remember standing out in the middle of a bone-dry Truckee River. Since then, development has been approved to add hundreds of thousands of people, and water intense industrial development. Either we have water, and we have all been duped into thinking we don't, in which case I feel like a sucker for going along with
More services for our seniors need to be provided and then advertised so people know about them. The 9th st Senior Center is cool, but all the seniors needing help can't possibly get there or fit in the building! They do hand out fans for our seniors but if you can't get there you don't get one! Sun Valley needs help as
Our region is getting too populated to support the ever increasing demands made by this population increase. We have a limited amount of water and NV Energy is not addressing the power needs our increasing population will require
The County removed so many trees and shrubbery the last several years ! They all provided shade
One additional concern is long-term accountability. The plan should include regular reporting and updates to track progress and adjust strategies as conditions change.
Public input should remain part of the process, especially from rural and high-risk communities, to ensure solutions are practical and locally informed.
The County should also prioritize cost-effective solutions first—such as shade, tree canopy, water access, and stronger, better-defined open space requirements that preserve land and reduce heat impacts—something that would greatly benefit areas like the North Valleys.
Finally, flexibility will be key. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work across a county as diverse as Washoe, so regional differences must be respected while still achieving overall heat mitigation goals.

Na
Ban all new fossil fuel engines including but not limited to in vehicles, ATVs, dune-buggies, trains https://cer.gov.au/news-and-media/case-studies/byron-bay-solar-powered-train , construction equipment, landscaping equipment, lawnmowers, leaf blowers, generators mobile and permanent, appliances, HVAC systems in all homes and businesses. Require change from all existing fossil fuel engines to solar powered. with electric battery engines within 5 years.
https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/news/carb-approves-updated-regulations-requiring-most-new-small-road-engines-be-zero-emission-2024

What actions should the County take to address heat and its impacts?
More trees, more shaded parks and open spaces, more splash pads for families at the parks, community swimming pools
Slow growth
Plant more trees and other landscaping that reduces temperatures, update community plans and building codes to prevent building and development plans that encourage heat island effects, invest in infrastructure to improve the power grid and develop emergency plans to mitigate heat wave dangers
Why is it the counties job to address heat and it’s impacts? There are other more important issues.
Use more wood mulch instead of rock in landscaping! Add planting strips between roads and sidewalks. Reduce width of very wide roads, like Hidden Valley! Allow willow and cottonwood to grow in pastures and open space. Use concrete in place of black asphalt.
Reducing heat island effect by not having as much unbroken hardscape. Increasing places/parks where you can access the Truckee River for
It’s not the the job of governments to fix every problem. Family should help their own.
I've seen southern cities place bottled water at key locations in the city where most of the vulnerable are affected. Also misters in shay places can help - in
Increase tree canopy and require developers to provide adequate green space. Stop approving data centers in populated areas such as the one on Keystone.
None. Focus on Public Safety, Roads, Infrastructure.
Less development. more trees
Tree canopy sounds good! Less asphalt, more natural ground covering A subway or speedrail would be great
Stop the sprawl of the City of Reno Sphere of Influence. Ranchers have known that our fragile desert-centric ecosystem cannot sustain large numbers of livestock; why do we think it can sustain large amounts of human development? Stop high-density sprawl, water sucking Data Centers, massive heat reflecting solar projects, and other developments that put ever increasing pressure on our fragile resources, especially water.
Sun Valley needs cooling centers. We have a Community Center that has A/C but closes at 12pm M-F. If the cooling centers close to Sun Valley were advertised and transportation was better especially for seniors it might help. At this time RTC allows kids with school ID to ride for free but how safe is this is
1. increase parks - that includes trees, natural landscaping 2. stop paving all of Washoe County
Give all the senior citizens a trip to Alaska
1. We need more trees to mitigate heat sink. 2. We need to encourage white roofs and light colored asphalt shingles, with exception of solar panels. 3. We need to fund restoration of land after fires, mitigating black burn scars
MoreTree canopy in the parks.
I think your plan is great. Implementing it could be quite challenging
Requirements to implement green canopy. Increase the number of trees that are planted along streets. Require owners of vacant lots to plant wildlife on there while they are undeveloped or face increase fines or taxes. Encourage empty lot owners to develop them and when the develop them build them with heat resistance in mind. Increase solar panels over existing parking lots such as the Atlantis
Pass regulation to restrict green house gas emissions from businesses and utilities, give cash vouchers for folks to install solar, offer community health clinics to give homeless access to health care and monitor heat related illness, implement a county-wide environmental restoration jobs program to help our environment adapt to heat, FULLY fund libraries and expand their hours so that can act as cooling centers, run a campaign on switching to a plant based diet
Technology Farms have a huge impact on what the County is asking opinions on how to curtail
Create meaningful, impactful climate mitigation policy. Collect data on climate change impacts to use in decision making.
The County should focus on practical, measurable actions that protect residents without overburdening them. First, expand access to cooling—by increasing cooling centers, public drinking water, and clear communication during heat events. Second, invest in smart infrastructure by encouraging tree canopy, shade, and heat-reducing design in new development and public spaces, while supporting retrofits in existing neighborhoods. Third, prioritize rural communities by improving water reliability, emergency response access, and energy resilience where services are limited. Finally, ensure growth is planned responsibly by aligning land use decisions with long-term sustainability—reducing excessive pavement, improving walkability, and coordinating regionally. The goal should be simple: protect public health, strengthen infrastructure, and make sure every community has the resources to handle extreme heat.
invest in utilizing solar panels for shade over large parking areas and use the extra electricity generated to power more cooling locations such as senior centers/community centers. This would serve multiple purposes including mitigations of the heat islands that large parking lots contribute significantly to,
It is important that Washoe County encourage all businesses to have regenerative landscaping that is pollinator friendly. The city and county should not continue to improve large buildings and parking lots that are part of the heat issue. Every hard scape location adds to the increased temperatures throughout the state.
definitely more trees painting the streets white, this has been done on Phoenix with very good results cooling centers that do not close at night, 5pm is still in the hot test part of the day

prioritizing parks, maintenance of parks and low impact development. green infrastructure. increase tree canopy and maintenance of trees. industrial
Cover parking lots with solar and sidewalks with trees etc. Light color roofing requirements.
The County should increase tree canopy with large, long-lasting native species. Corridors like Riverside Drive will always be more valuable because of their impressive canopy that enables pedestrians to comfortably enjoy the outdoors year round.
The County should take further steps to facilitate urban development instead of enabling more & more suburban sprawl. Even with the decline in gambling revenue, downtown and midtown Reno continue to be a cultural hub. Areas like this use fewer resources to build and sustain per person compared to distant communities like Spanish Springs or the North Valleys.
Add trees and native plants
trees are good.
Regulate development more by being certain about where resources will come from to offset impacts, create greener spaces with a certain amount of tree canopy, demand that businesses and developments have X amount of tree canopy and a plan to maintain it, fund public transportation initiatives to reduce
1. Require in Codes increased tree canopy 2. Increase access to cooling centers 3. NO data centers. Felt about 6.2 miles away from facilities, impacting up to 343 million people globally, areas around 6k+ data centers worldwide saw an average land temperature INCREASE of about 2 degrees C / 3.6 degrees F. Some INCREASED 9 degrees C / 16.4 degrees F 4. Require cover and shade ALL parking lots and roofs with solar panels 5. Expand urban green spaces for shade 6. Ban all rock groundcover in favor of bark and pine cones 7. Ban all grass and plastic grass lawns. 8. Require a combination of immediate personal safety measures, urban planning enhancements, and long-term climate strategies 9. Require switch to reflective pavement 10. Require solar-powered shade structures in public areas and at transit stops. https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20220804/p2a/00m/0na/021000c 11. Require converting decommissioned school and public buses into mobile cooling centers.
Require lighter color pavements, roof tops and buildings. There are coatings that provide lighter colors on pavements that would reduce heat. There are maintenance costs but high benefits. Increase tree canopy. Approve special park districts and include urban forestry to pay for the cost to install and maintain more trees in streetscapes and public areas.