

June 27 2023

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Governing Board
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV, 89410

Submitted via email to mambler@trpa.gov

Re: Item 6B Amendments to Washoe County's Tahoe Area Plan to Allow Single Family Condominium Uses in Special Area 1 of the Incline Village Commercial Regulatory Zone

Dear TRPA Staff and Governing Board,

The League to Save Lake Tahoe (League) is dedicated to protecting and restoring the environmental health, sustainability, and scenic beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. In connection with our mission, we advocate for the implementation of policies contained within regional land use and planning documents, including the Bi-State Compact, the 2012 Regional Plan Update (Regional Plan, or RPU) and Area Plans. Since supporting Area Plans as part of the Regional Plan Update in 2012, the League has continued to track and share good practices from Area Plans as they are developed around the Basin to ensure regional environmental goals are met and safeguards maintained.

Washoe County is proposing an amendment for permitting single-family condominiums in Special Area 1 of the Incline Village Commercial Zone, allowing the proposed condominium subdivision at 947 Tahoe Boulevard along with future mixed-use condominium uses in Special Area 1. The County is also proposing to codify a policy requiring condominiums to be allowed in the Incline Village Commercial regulatory zone when part of a mixed-use development or affordable housing.

If these are the types of projects we would like to see within town centers because they would help reach regional goals, then we should consider analysis and code changes, versus one-off Area Plan Amendments. The League does not necessarily object to the project itself, but rather the precedence of amending Area Plans to allow for the development of one project that is not in line with the RPU and existing Area Plan. If the Washoe County Tahoe Area Plan can be amended to support one condominium project, a bad precedent is set for amending Area Plans for other development projects that are inconsistent with Area Plans.

We appreciate that TRPA has considered mitigating actions as part of approval for this amendment, however, we do not support project level amendments to the Washoe County Tahoe Area Plan. An Area Plan, defined by TRPA, is a plan that "guides community development, ecosystem restoration, transportation planning, and revitalizing the Region's economy. It aims to create a place where people can live, work, and thrive while attaining and maintaining environmental standards." Amending the Washoe County Tahoe Area Plan to include a condominium project is not within the definition or intent of an Area Plan or associated amendment as this project does not meet this standard.

The League is not supportive of project level amendments to Area Plans because:

- Area Plan amendments need to be well-researched, comprehensive, necessary, and environmentally protective. This proposed amendment fails to provide environmental protection or provide adequate analysis of the impacts of the amendment.
- Project-driven amendments are incompatible with the purpose, intent, and substantive provisions of the Regional Plan Update, TRPA's Bi-State Compact, and Area Plans.

- TRPA's Area Plan Handbook states: "Frequent, piecemeal amendments to area plans are discouraged. Amendments should instead be packaged together and submitted as a single proposal." This is a piecemeal amendment.
- It's unclear if the Amendment and project will help to achieve RPU performance measures and benchmarks.
- The Regional plan has overarching goals and policies around housing that Area Plans must adhere to. It is unclear which Regional Plan goals and policies this amendment is supporting.

We will continue to work with TRPA on Area Plans and Area Plan Amendments and find solutions to update these plans periodically if they are consistent with the Regional Plan Update, Bi-State compact, and intent of these plans. We recommend that TRPA work more closely with the Washoe County Commissioners to identify barriers and opportunities for developing a more comprehensive plan for Area Plan Amendments moving forward.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura Patten".

Laura Patten
Senior Science Policy Analyst
League to Save Lake Tahoe