



Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: October 16, 2023

Agenda Item: 8A

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NUMBER:

WMPA23-0007 (Envision Washoe 2040)

BRIEF SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Envision Washoe 2040 is a comprehensive and structural update of the Washoe County Master Plan. It establishes a vision for Washoe County over the next 10-20 years and consolidates the 18 existing Master Plan documents into a single document.

STAFF PLANNERS:

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CASE DESCRIPTION

For hearing, discussion, and possible action to adopt Envision Washoe 2040, a comprehensive update to the Washoe County Master Plan. If adopted, this plan would replace the existing Washoe County Master Plan—excluding the Tahoe Area Plan—and provide a contemporary vision for growth and development in Washoe County for the next 10-20 years. And, if approved, authorize the chair to sign a resolution to this effect. Any approval by the Planning Commission is subject to adoption by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners and a finding of conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan by the regional planning authorities.

Development Code: Commission District: Authorized in Article 820, Amendment of Master Plan All Districts



Vicinity Map

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

DENY

POSSIBLE 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 to this staff report to initiate and adopt an amendment to the Master Plan as set forth in Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA23-0007, having made at least three of the five findings set forth in Washoe County Code Section 110.820.15(d) and the sixth finding related to military installations. I further move to certify the resolution and the proposed Master Plan Amendments in WMPA23-0007 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.

(Motion with Findings on Page 12)

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Explanation of a Master Plan Amendment

The Master Plan guides growth and development in the unincorporated areas of Washoe County. Nevada law requires Washoe County to adopt a Master Plan which is described as “a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the city, county or region which in the [planning] commission’s judgment bears relation to the planning thereof.” NRS 278.150(1). By establishing policies and implementing those policies through action programs, the Master Plan is meant to address issues and concerns both countywide and within each community (referred to as “planning areas”). Master Plan amendments ensure that the Master Plan remains timely, dynamic, and responsive to community values.

Washoe County’s existing Master Plan was finalized in 2010 (“2010 Master Plan”) and consists of three volumes:

Volume One of the 2010 Master Plan outlines six broad countywide priorities through the year 2025. These priorities are known as “elements” and each is summarized below:

- **Population Element.** Projections of population, housing characteristics, trends in employment, and income and land use information for the County.
- **Conservation Element.** Information, policies and action programs, and maps necessary for protection and utilization of cultural and scenic, land, water, air and other resources.
- **Land Use and Transportation Element.** Information, policies and action programs, and maps defining the County’s vision for development and related transportation facilities needed for the forecasted growth, and protection and utilization of resources.
- **Public Services and Facilities Element.** Information, policies and action programs, and maps for provision of necessary services and facilities (i.e., water, sewer, general government and public safety facilities, libraries, parks, etc.) to serve the land use and transportation system envisioned by the County.
- **Housing Element.** Information, policies and action programs, and maps necessary to provide guidance to the County in addressing present and future housing needs.
- **Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan Element.** Information, policies and action programs, and maps providing the necessary framework for the management of natural resources and open spaces.

Volume Two of the 2010 Master Plan consists of 13 Area Plans, which provide detailed policies and action programs for local communities in unincorporated Washoe County relating to conservation, land use and transportation, public services and facilities information, and maps.

Volume Three of the 2010 Master Plan houses Specific Plans, Joint Plans and Community Plans that have been adopted by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners. These plans provide specific guiding principles for various districts throughout unincorporated Washoe County.

Master Plan amendments are processed in accordance with Nevada Law (e.g., NRS 278.210 thru 278.230) and Washoe County Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 820, *Amendment of Master Plan*.

When making a recommendation to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners to adopt a Master Plan amendment, the Planning Commission must make at least three of the five findings as set forth in Washoe County Code (WCC) Section 110.820.15(d). If a military installation is required to be noticed, then an additional finding of fact pursuant to WCC Section

110.820.15(d)(6) is required. 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 2020, Washoe County began a comprehensive update to the Master Plan to modernize and update Washoe County's community vision for land use in the unincorporated County and to ensure that the Master Plan conforms with both state law requirements and the 2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. Both state law and the Regional Plan require Washoe County's Master Plan to include certain topics (otherwise known as "Elements"), as well as other detailed requirements and information that should be included in reviewing each element. State law requires the Washoe County Master Plan to include the following: (a) a Housing Element, (b) a Conservation Element, including a "conservation plan", and (c) a Public Facilities and Services Element, including a "population plan" and "aboveground utility plan". The Regional Plan requires Washoe County's Master Plan to address the following elements: Population Growth, Regional Coordination, Natural Resources, Regional Form, and Public Facilities and Services.

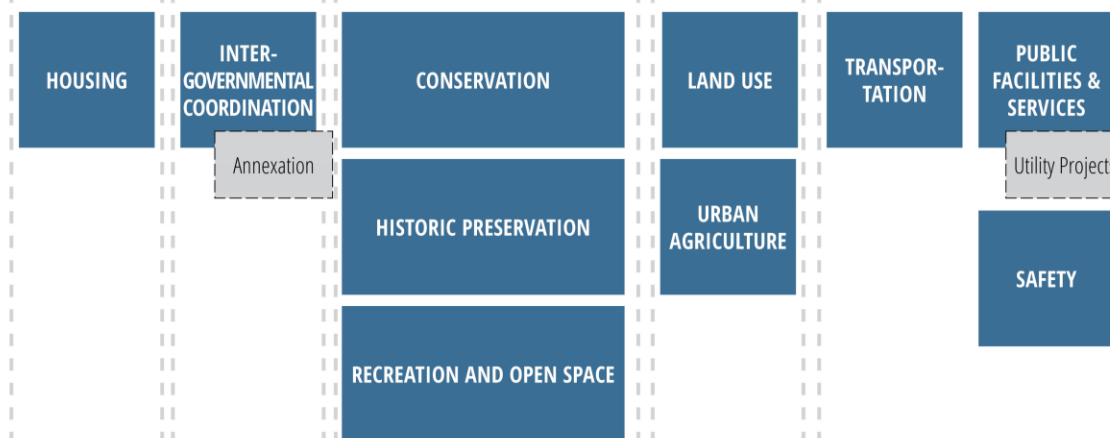
The following graphic details how the proposed Master Plan includes these overlapping required subjects.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

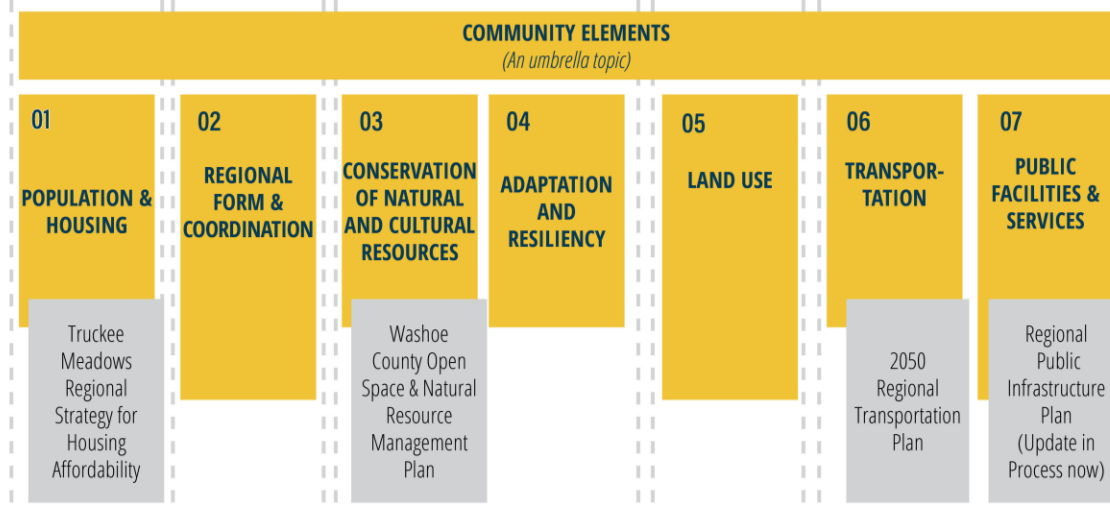
TRUCKEE MEADOWS REGIONAL PLAN



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



ENVISION WASHOE 2040



The Envision Washoe 2040 project is the first comprehensive update and restructuring of the Washoe County Master Plan since the early 1990's. In the intervening years, planning in Washoe County has changed considerably in both policy and substance. Some of these substantive changes include the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, which was comprehensively updated in 2019, the establishment of the Truckee River Operating Agreement, considerable boundary changes to both Reno and Sparks, and more. On the ground, the population has grown from approximately 340,000 in 1990 to 497,000 in 2022. Many areas planned for growth in the 2010

Master Plan are now substantially built out and new challenges have come to the forefront, such as climate resiliency, affordable housing, and public health. Washoe County has changed, and so too must our plan for the future. As such, this project is better viewed as a “repeal and replace” than a standard Master Plan amendment.

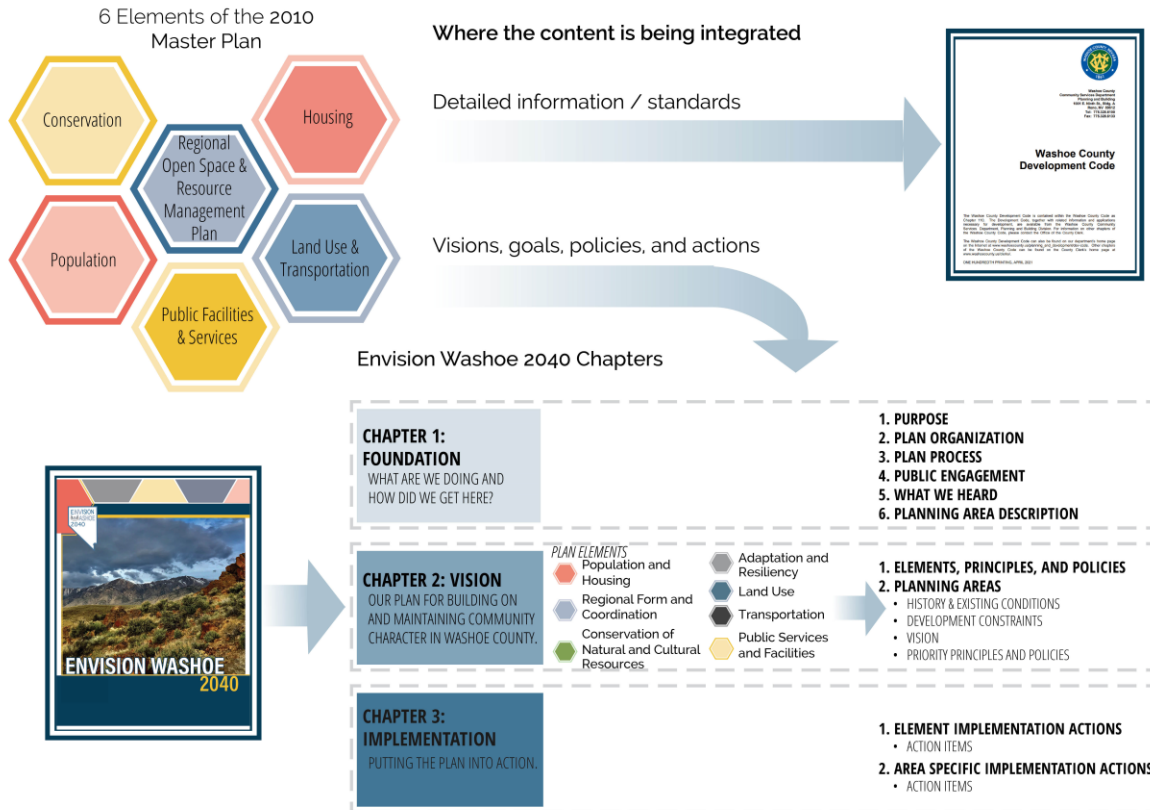
In 2020, staff started the Master Plan update process by establishing three advisory committees: the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Steering Committee (SC.) The CAC is composed of citizens from each planning area. They directly advised county staff and utilized their networks to gather broader community input on the proposed plan and update process. The TAC is also composed of members of staff and the public who represent different stakeholder groups that interact with the Master Plan, including representatives from the Planning Commission, the consulting community, and others. The TAC ensured that the Plan's response to the community's priorities is technically sound, pursues best practices, and that policies have a real path to implementation. The Steering Committee is composed of the County Department and Regional Agency Directors. The Steering Committee was tasked with ensuring the project stayed focused and on track.

Before beginning the broader public process, the SC identified 4 guiding principles for the Master Plan update: *efficiency, clarity, accessibility, and support*. The 2010 Master Plan is over a thousand pages long and housed in 18 separate documents. Though it is meant to act as a guide for decision making, it is difficult for staff, consultants, the public and governing bodies to navigate. The guiding principles of Envision Washoe 2040 articulate the solution to these problems. Rather than being untenably verbose, Envision Washoe 2040 is 185 pages instead of 1,500, and is designed to contain only meaningful and actionable information. The language is more succinct and clearer, with the goal that everyone reading it walks away with the same understanding of what it says. This improved clarity will improve accessibility to all citizens of Washoe County, as will the increased use of graphics and links within the plan document. Finally, Envision Washoe 2040 is not a list of aspirations that will ultimately go unrealized. Instead, continuous stakeholder involvement will cultivate support both inside and outside of the County government. These goals guided the Envision Washoe 2040 project at every step, and the result is the draft document under consideration by the Planning Commission today.

Plan Structure

After extensive public outreach and input from the steering and advisory committees, staff determined that a new form and structure for Washoe County’s Master Plan was needed. The new structure consolidates the 18 documents that currently comprise the 2010 Master Plan into one document, as reflected in the diagrams below.

Concepts Integration:



The 2010 Master Plan includes six “elements” and 12 area plans (the Tahoe Area Plan constitutes its own Master Plan and is excluded from this project). While the elements and area plans are technically all part of the same Master Plan, each document exists largely separately. One of the goals of Envision Washoe 2040—as established early in the project by the Steering Committee—was to streamline the Master Plan into one concise and clear document that is accessible to all. As shown in the figure above, this has been achieved by restructuring the plan to: (a) move language that contains specific development standards into the Washoe County Development Code (WDCA23-0002), and (b) incorporate the plans into a single document that contextualizes them in relation to each other. The result is a three-chapter plan.

The structure of the new Envision Washoe 2040’s Master Plan document is as follows: Chapter One, Foundation, provides background and context for the plan. It addresses the history and purpose of the planning areas in Washoe County; describes the process and engagement undertaken to create the Master Plan; and briefly chronicles existing conditions in the county. Additionally, this section places the Washoe County Master Plan in a regional context. Washoe County’s Master Plan is one such plan that exists in a network of other similar documents for other agencies/jurisdictions in the region. The ability of Washoe County to implement our Master Plan will be impacted by the plans of other agencies, such as the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), and the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA). Throughout the Master Plan, but in Chapter 1 particularly, emphasis is placed on describing the network of agencies that govern and influence patterns of land use and development in Washoe County.

Chapter Two, Vision, is focused on defining a vision for the future of the county. It describes where we are now and where we want to go. Chapter 2 is broken into two parts: the first part includes the elements and the second part includes the planning areas. Each element is a topic—such as Land Use, Transportation, or Natural and Cultural Resources—which in some cases are required by state law to be addressed in a Master Plan. The 2010 Master Plan contained six elements. Envision Washoe 2040 contains seven elements. The elements include an overall description, and the principles and policies applicable to that topic for the whole County. These policies will guide the County in pursuing its principles and goals, through development review and other methods. The relationship between principles, policies, and actions is described below. Actions will appear in Chapter 3.

The second half of Chapter 2 contains the twelve planning areas. This section distills each existing area plan (now referred to as “planning areas”) down to approximately four pages. As with the elements, much of the text in the existing area plans consists of specific goals and policies that function as rules and regulations which would more appropriately be contained in the development code. Accordingly, in concert with the Master Plan update, staff is also bringing forward development code amendments to accomplish this transfer (WDCA23-0002). What remains in the Master Plan is distilled to focus on what is essential and unique to each area.

The third and final chapter focuses on implementation, or the “action” component as shown in the figure above. Chapter 3 contains implementation items that are tied to one or more policies. Each implementation item also contains a broad time frame to accomplish the item (e.g., short term, medium term, long term, continuous), and the types of resources that are required to complete the specified action. Depending on the policy, the action may be a development code revision, a capital project, creation of further plans and/or studies, or creation of programs and resources. These actions are not a concrete to-do list that achieves every single policy, but rather a place to start in implementing the Master Plan. The list is expected to evolve over time.

The Washoe County Master Plan has several intersections with the planning process: it identifies necessary capital improvements, describes future planning initiatives, and is an essential tool in the development review process. While Chapter 3 focuses on the former two, the Master Plan is implemented every day through development review. Discretionary applications generally require a finding of conformance with the Master Plan, making development review a mechanism through which the Master Plan can influence development on a project-by-project basis. The Plan itself is a guide, describing community priorities in an accessible form that decision makers can use when assessing a development proposal. This new structure drastically reduces the amount of material that needs to be reviewed in order to evaluate a project. Furthermore, by reducing the volume of materials related to each planning area by moving appropriate sections into the development code, Master Plan review should be more uniform across the County. All these improvements will make the Master Plan more accessible to all as a tool for decision making.

Public Outreach

Public outreach for the project began with the initial stages, guided by the SC and the advisory committees. Staff started phase one of public outreach efforts in 2021, which included county surveys, stakeholder interviews, presentations at Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs), and workshops. A full list of CAB, committee, and other public meetings can be found on the project website “Meetings” page, located at <https://www.envisionwashoe2040.org/pages/meetings>, and in Attachment B. In addition to the 40+ meetings held from 2020-2023, the project team also conducted 20 stakeholder interviews, ran several questionnaires with over 500 respondents, and conducted 5 online surveys. Based on these efforts and feedback received, the project team established a new format for the Washoe County Master Plan that is described above.

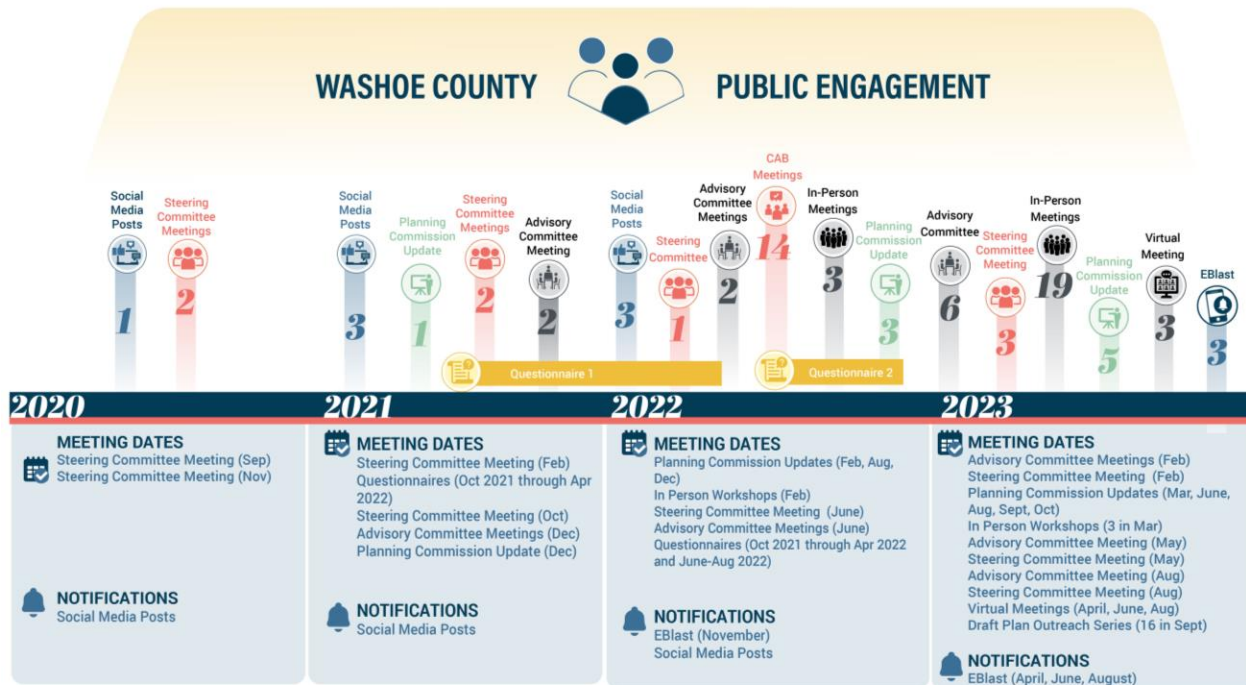
Phase two of public outreach focused on getting feedback on drafts of the new Area Plans (Planning Areas). The Planning Areas have been a part of Washoe County's planning process for decades. As such, staff wanted to have an extra phase of outreach and feedback to ensure that the new revised planning area documents retain everything that Washoe County citizens find valuable while being more concise and accessible to all. This phase of public outreach included a familiar suite of strategies, including online surveys, CAB meetings, advisory committee meetings, and in-person public workshops. All these tools were used both to develop policies within the elements of Chapter Two that have county-wide applicability, and to develop vision statements and policies specific to each planning area. Community meetings were held across the county, including one in Gerlach, and Washoe County Planning's first-ever Spanish-language workshop in Sun Valley. Citizens also had the opportunity to comment on the draft plan online through a platform known as Konveio. Over the course of the workshops, 120 individuals provided comments in-person. The online platform, Konveio, had over 1,200 views and 217 comments.

During phase two of outreach, staff also had continuous meetings with agency partners to get feedback on the draft plan. Several agencies provided comments. A total list of agencies contacted throughout the process is included as Attachment C.

After incorporating all the feedback received from the public and from other agencies and stakeholders, staff embarked on Phase 3 of public outreach: full draft release and feedback. The first full draft of Envision Washoe 2040 was released on August 11th through Konveio, the same online commenting software used in Phase 2. It remained open for comment through September 15th and was advertised through several email lists, news releases, and flyers (in English and Spanish) posted at various locations throughout the county. Staff also hosted a number of engagement opportunities, as described below:

- Presentations at all CAB meetings.
- Setting up tables at several community events, including the Bowers Mansion Bluegrass Festival, the Lazy 5 Music Series, and the Sierra School of Performing Arts' presentation of The Addams Family.
- Four "Planner at the Library" events where citizens could come speak to a planner about the Master Plan update.
- Five dedicated "Open House" events for people to come speak to planners about the project, including one for Spanish-language speakers.
- One online webinar providing an overview of the Master Plan update and showing how to use the online commenting platform.

Over the course of the public comment period, Konveio had over 1,600 views and 229 comments. Parter agencies had to the opportunity to comment on a separate Konveio page, which had 218 views and 21 comments. The feedback received was incorporated into a final draft of the plan, which is attached to this staff report as Attachment A for your consideration. All phases of public outreach are summarized in the graphic below.



Generally speaking, comments received during this phase of outreach focused on strengthening language related to climate change and other environmental issues such as carbon emissions, urban heat, and pollution; technical edits to correct errors and improve readability; and comments of support or of disagreement with specific principles, policies, or actions. Commenters were also overwhelmingly supportive of the format of Chapter 3 and the action items specified therein. Mistakes identified by commenters were corrected, and changes to policy language were made when necessary and not in conflict with feedback received from the broader public and advisory committees. In many cases, comments made on one section of the plan were covered by an existing policy or action in another section, and therefore no changes were required. All comments received were considered and the plan modified as appropriate. The plan being considered by the Planning Commission today is largely the same as what was reviewed by the public, as there were no comments requesting changes on most of the plan text. This by and large confirms that phase 3 of public outreach served as intended: as a final verification that staff had captured the community's desires in the draft plan, as informed by phases 1 and 2 of outreach.

An Updated Community Vision

After a three-year long process, the plan under consideration today provides an up-to-date vision of what matters to the citizens of Washoe County. It identifies four cross-cutting themes of interest—concurrency of infrastructure, housing diversity, conservation of natural resources, and outdoor recreation and access—and tracks them throughout the plan. It articulates a clear strategy for implementation to realize a shared community vision. Additionally, the plan is in a new format that is interactive and accessible to all, making it easier for all citizens to be involved in planning in the future. The adoption of this new Plan will improve the planning process for all participants, providing a clear set of principles and policies that can be mutually understood and applied during the review of projects. With this new shared vision, all stakeholders in Washoe County will be better equipped to face the challenges and opportunities of the next 10-20 years.

Findings

WCC Section 110.820.15(d) requires the Planning Commission to make at least three of the five findings of fact plus the sixth finding related to military installations in order to recommend approval of these 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 Master Plan as currently adopted states a time horizon ending in 2025. In accordance with this period, the newly proposed Master Plan updates the document for the next 10-20 years, maintaining all elements required by NRS and incorporating new elements included in the 2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. While the form of the plan is very different, many of the previous policies are maintained, and much of the development standards included in the 2010 Master Plan are being transferred to the Washoe County Development Code for the Planning Commission's consideration under WDCA23-0002. The proposed plan therefore substantially conforms with the Master Plan and Master Plan requirements, namely by providing an appropriate update to address growth and development beyond 2025.

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: This Master Plan update proposes no changes to the Master Plan land use map or any regulatory zones. Instead, it updates the plan to approach land use for the next 10-20 years more appropriately in a way that benefits public health, safety, and welfare.

3. **Response to Changed 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 last structural update to the Master Plan occurred in the early 1990's, and the Plan's current time horizon ends in 2025. The proposed updated plan is a direct reaction to changing conditions and establishes a community vision based on public outreach over the last three years. The proposed plan contemplates a more desirable utilization of land based on existing land uses.

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: This Master Plan update proposes no changes to the Master Plan land use map; therefore, there is no increase in density and no impact to facilities.

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: This Master Plan update more accurately describes the desired pattern for the orderly physical growth of the County as informed by extensive public engagement. Public outreach identified natural resources and effective public services and

infrastructure as key topics of concern, and this plan addresses those topics comprehensively.

6. Effect on a Military Installation. The proposed amendment will not affect the location, purpose and mission of the military installation.

Staff Comment: The proposed Master Plan update does not change the Master Plan land use designation of any parcel. Rather, it updates the overall plan to guide growth and development in the County. It therefore will not have an impact on any military installation.

Neighborhood Meeting

NRS 278.210(2) and WCC Section 110.820.20 require a neighborhood meeting for any proposed Master Plan amendment. The neighborhood meeting was held at 1001 E 9th St, Building A, Atrium on September 5, 2023, from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. A few people attended and asked questions of Planning staff. Over 15 similar events were held across the county in August and September of 2023. As a result, the online draft received over 1,600 views and 229 comments.

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 110.820.23. 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 October 6, 2023.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Washoe County Planning Commission adopt the resolution contained as Exhibit A of this staff report to amend the Master Plan as set forth in Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA23-0007. It is further recommended that the Planning Commission 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 in Attachment A to this staff report to initiate and adopt an amendment to the Master Plan as set forth in Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA23-0007, having made at least three of the following five findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.820.15(d) and the sixth finding related to military installations. I further move to certify the resolution and the proposed Master Plan Amendments in WMPA23-0007 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.
6. Effect on a Military Installation. The proposed amendment will not affect the location, purpose and mission of the military installation.

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.



Envision Washoe 2040 Stakeholders

Over the course of the Envision Washoe 2040 process, the project team has engaged many stakeholders. These groups/individuals include other county departments, other agencies, and community groups. Below is a list of stakeholders the project team has engaged through meetings, requests for comment, and/or invitations to stakeholder interviews.

Individuals/Groups Within the County

- Washoe County Sustainability Manager
- Washoe County School District
- Washoe County Health District (WCHD) Air Quality
- WCHD Emergency Medical Services
- WCHD Environmental Health
- WCHD Special Events
- Washoe County Division of Engineering
- Washoe County Water Rights Manager
- Washoe County Planning Commission

Partner Agencies

Local

- Reno Sparks Indian Colony
- City of Reno
- City of Sparks
- Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada
- Western Regional Water Commission
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
- Palomino Valley General Improvement District (GID)
- Gerlach GID
- Sun Valley GID
- Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency
- Reno Fire Department
- Sparks Fire Department
- Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
- City of Fernley
- Regional Transportation Commission

Utility

- Truckee Meadows Water Authority
- NV Energy
- AT&T
- Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative
- Sky Ranch Utility
- Southwest Gas

- Utilities, Inc.

State

- Nevada Department of Wildlife
- Nevada Division of Natural Heritage
- Nevada Bureau of Reclamation and Mining
- Nevada Department of Environmental Protection
- Nevada Department of Forestry
- Nevada Department of Transportation
- Nevada Department of Agriculture
- Nevada Highway Patrol
- Nevada State Parks
- Nevada Water Resources
- Nevada State Historic Preservation

Federal

- Bureau of Land Management
- United States Forest Service
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Postal Service

Community Groups/Individuals

- EDAWN
- Small Business Development Center (UNR)
- John Krmpotic
- CFA
- Wood Rogers
- Stantec
- Rubicon Design Group
- Ken Krater
- Jesse Haw
- Robert Sader
- Bob Lissner
- Ed Alexander
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)
- Desert Research Institute (DRI)
- Food Bank of Northern Nevada
- United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra
- Salvation Army
- El Sol
- Ahora Latino Journal
- Actionn

- Nevada Housing Coalition
- Regenisis Reno (YIMBY)
- UNR Agricultural Extension
- Coalition for Health Nevada Lands, Wildlife, and Wild Horses
- Nevada Land Trust
- Shirley Farmers Market
- Friends of Black Rock/High Rock, Inc
- Nevada Arts Council
- Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Committee (CAB)
- South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley CAB
- Gerlach/Empire CAB
- North Valleys CAB
- Sun Valley CAB
- Warm Springs CAB
- West Truckee Meadows/Verdi CAB
- One Truckee River



RESOLUTION OF THE WASHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

ADOPTING ENVISION WASHOE 2040, A COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE TO THE WASHOE COUNTY MASTER PLAN. IF ADOPTED, THIS PLAN WOULD REPLACE THE EXISTING WASHOE COUNTY MASTER PLAN— EXCLUDING THE TAHOE AREA PLAN—AND PROVIDE A CONTEMPORARY VISION FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN WASHOE COUNTY FOR THE NEXT 10-20 YEARS. AND RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THESE MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution 23-14

Whereas, Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA23-0007 came before the Washoe County Planning Commission for a duly noticed public hearing on October 16, 2023; and

Whereas, the proposed amendments represent a comprehensive update to the Washoe County Master Plan based on public and stakeholder involvement; and

Whereas, the new master plan will be accessible, clear, efficient, and supported; 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; and

Whereas, the Washoe County Planning Commission has made the following findings necessary to support adoption of the proposed Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA23-0007, 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.
6. Effect on a Military Installation. The proposed amendment will not affect the location, purpose and mission of the military installation.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that pursuant to NRS 278.210(3):

- (1) Subject to approval by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners and a finding of conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, and also subject to approval by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners of WDCA23-0002, the Washoe County Planning Commission does hereby adopt Master Plan Amendment Case Number WMPA23-0007, comprised of the documents attached as Exhibit A to this resolution, descriptive matter and other matter intended to constitute the amendments as submitted at the public hearing noted above; and
- (2) To the extent allowed by law, this approval is subject to the conditions adopted by the Planning Commission at the public hearing noted above.

A certified copy of this resolution shall be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners and any appropriate reviewing agencies in accordance with NRS 278.220.

ADOPTED on October 16, 2023

WASHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

ATTEST:

Trevor Lloyd, Secretary

Rob Pierce, Chair

Attachment: Exhibit A – Envision Washoe 2040

Exhibit A, WMPA23-0007

ENVISION
WASHOE
2040



ENVISION WASHOE

DRAFT

October 9, 2023

2040



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

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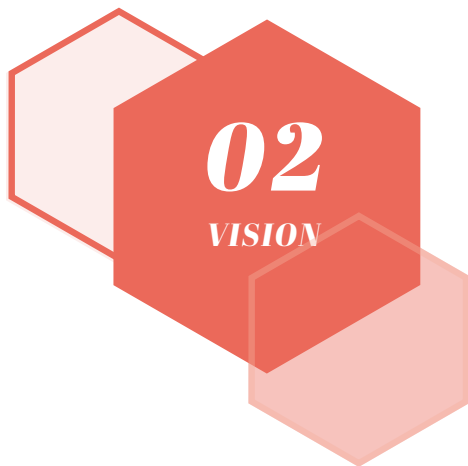
LOGAN SIMPSON

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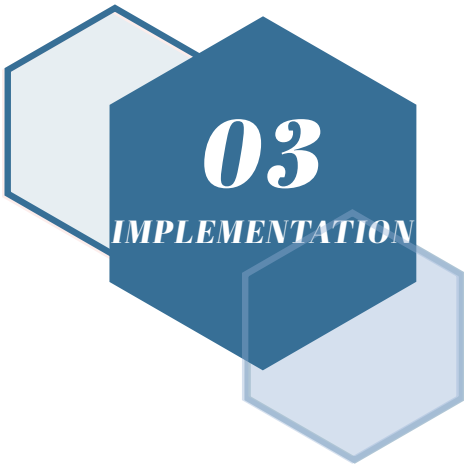


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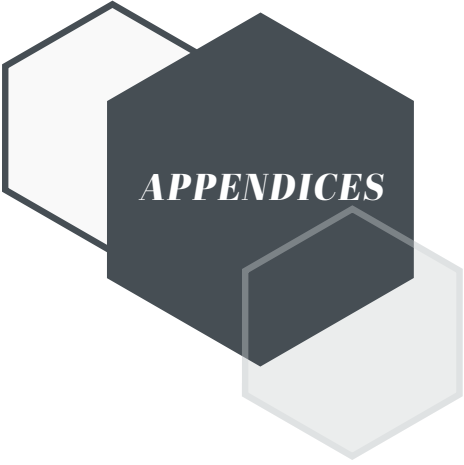
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01

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

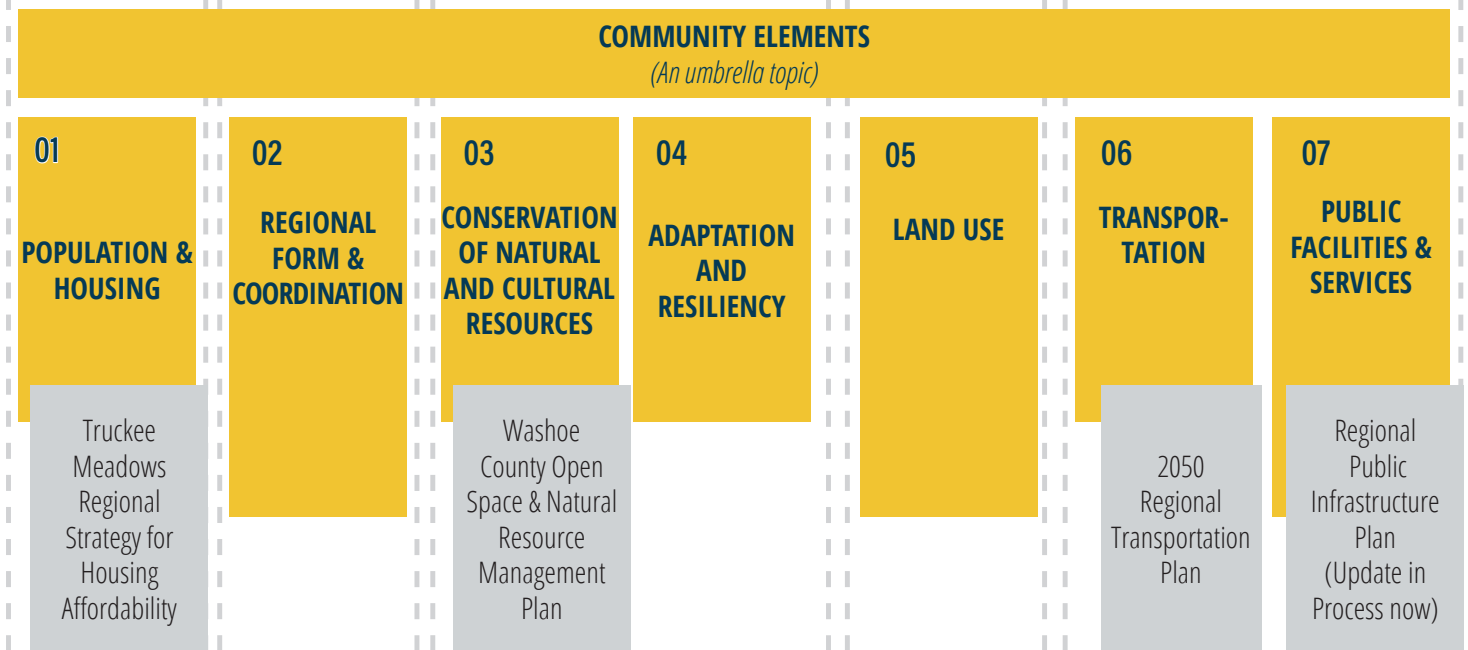
TRUCKEE MEADOWS REGIONAL PLAN



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



ENVISION WASHOE 2040

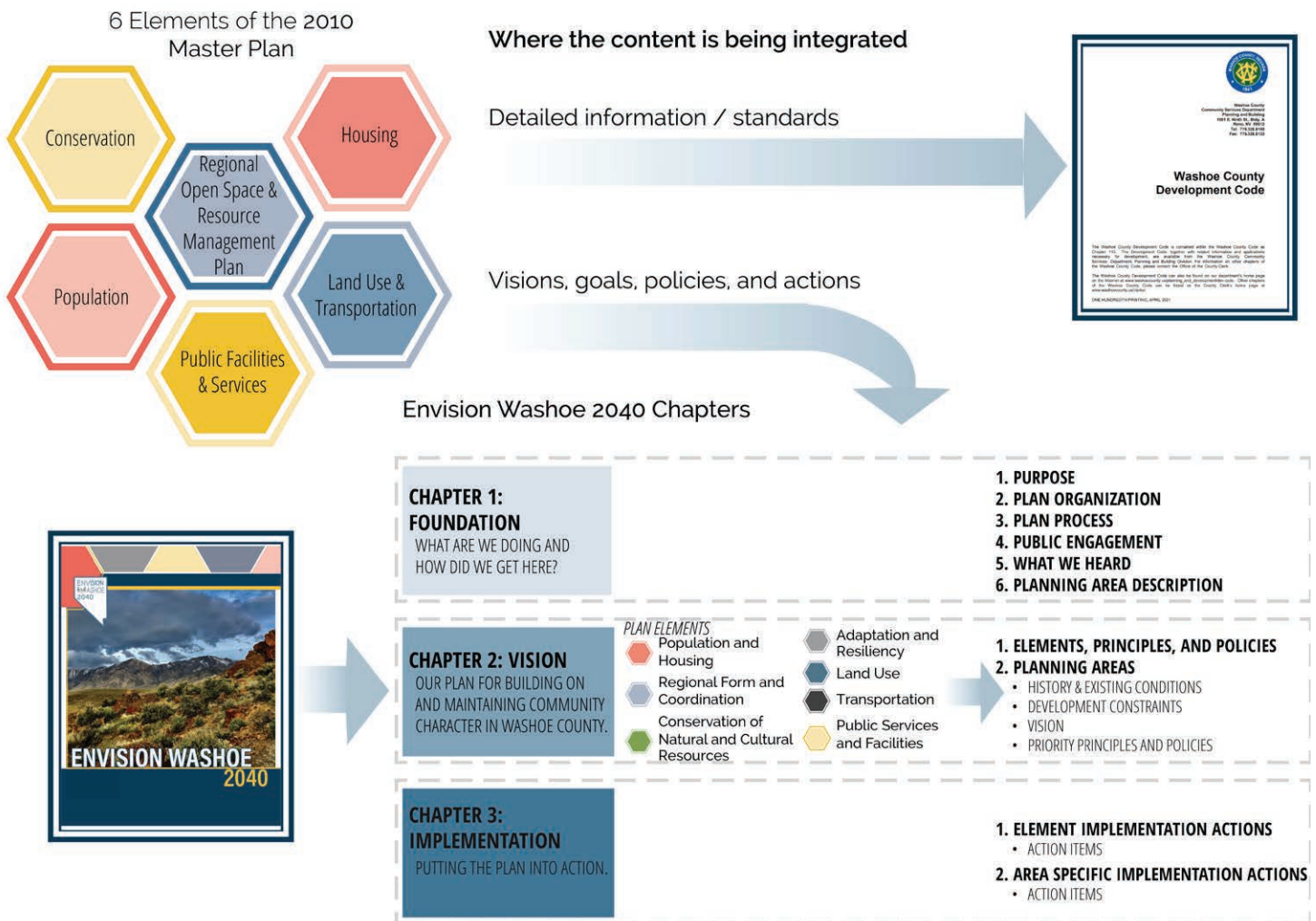


PLAN ORGANIZATION

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.

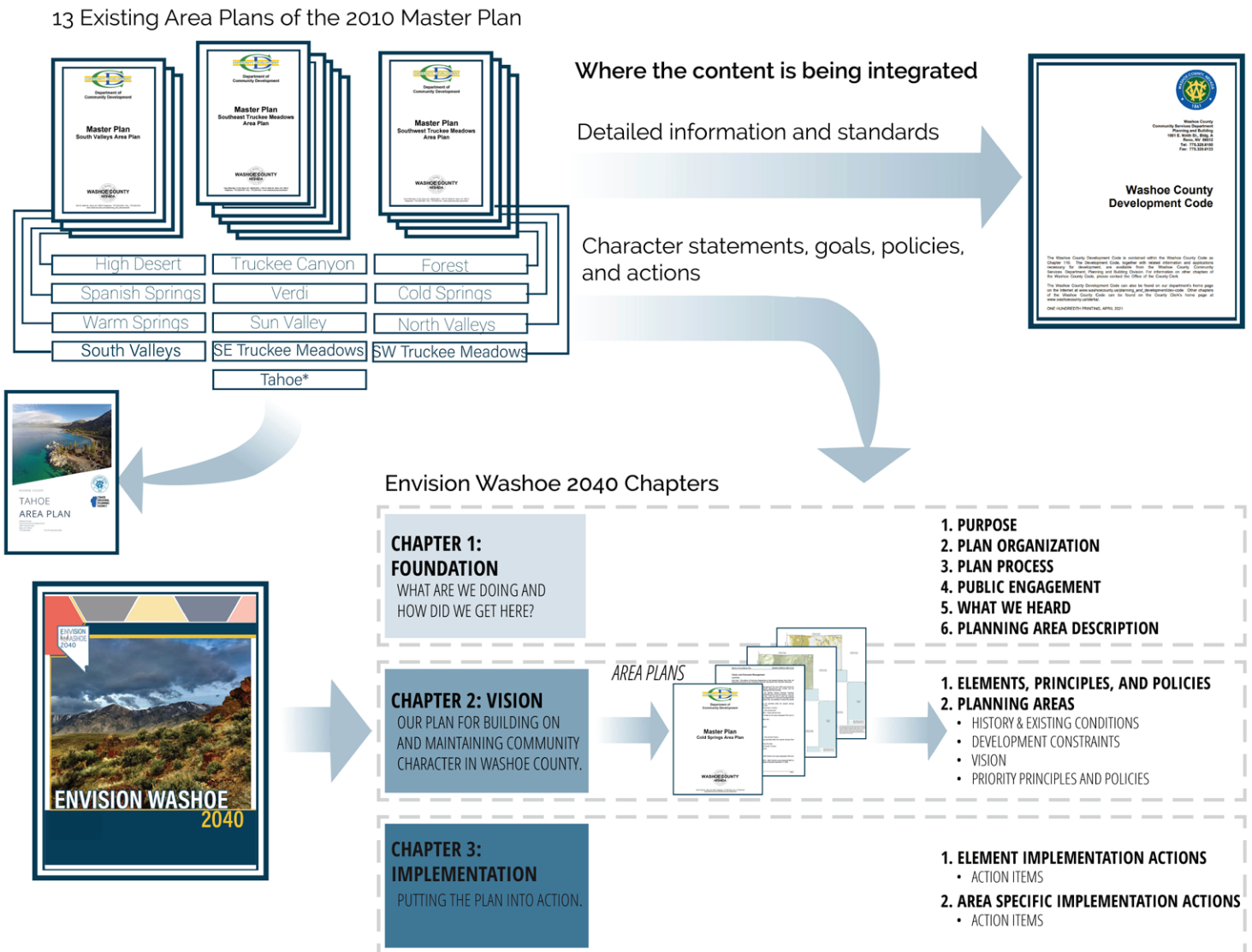
FIGURE 1. CONCEPT INTEGRATION



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

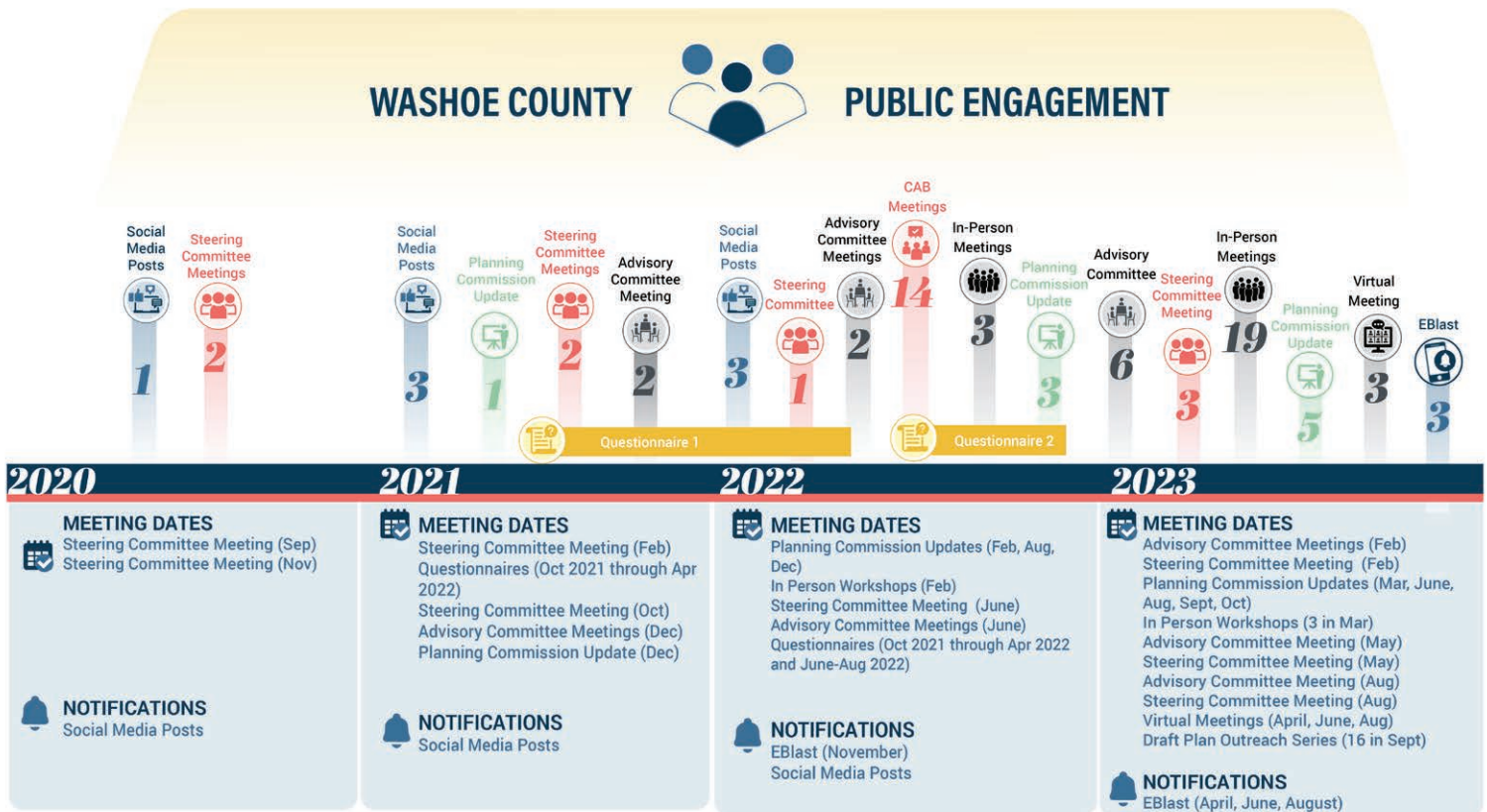
identify goals and policies that needed to be modified or removed due to redundancy (i.e., addressed in multiple places or multiple area plans) or irrelevance (i.e., already completed or no longer a priority), and to identify any additional goals or policies that could aid Envision Washoe 2040 in aligning 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.

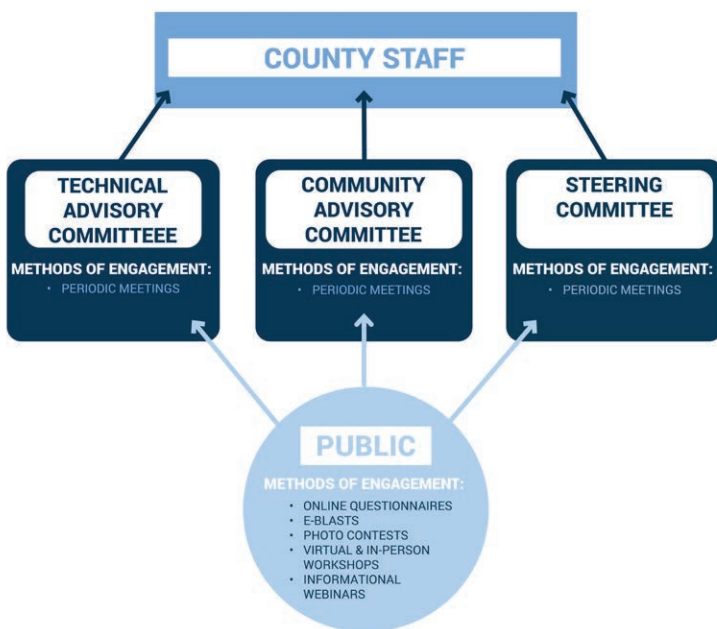
Technical Advisory Committee:

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

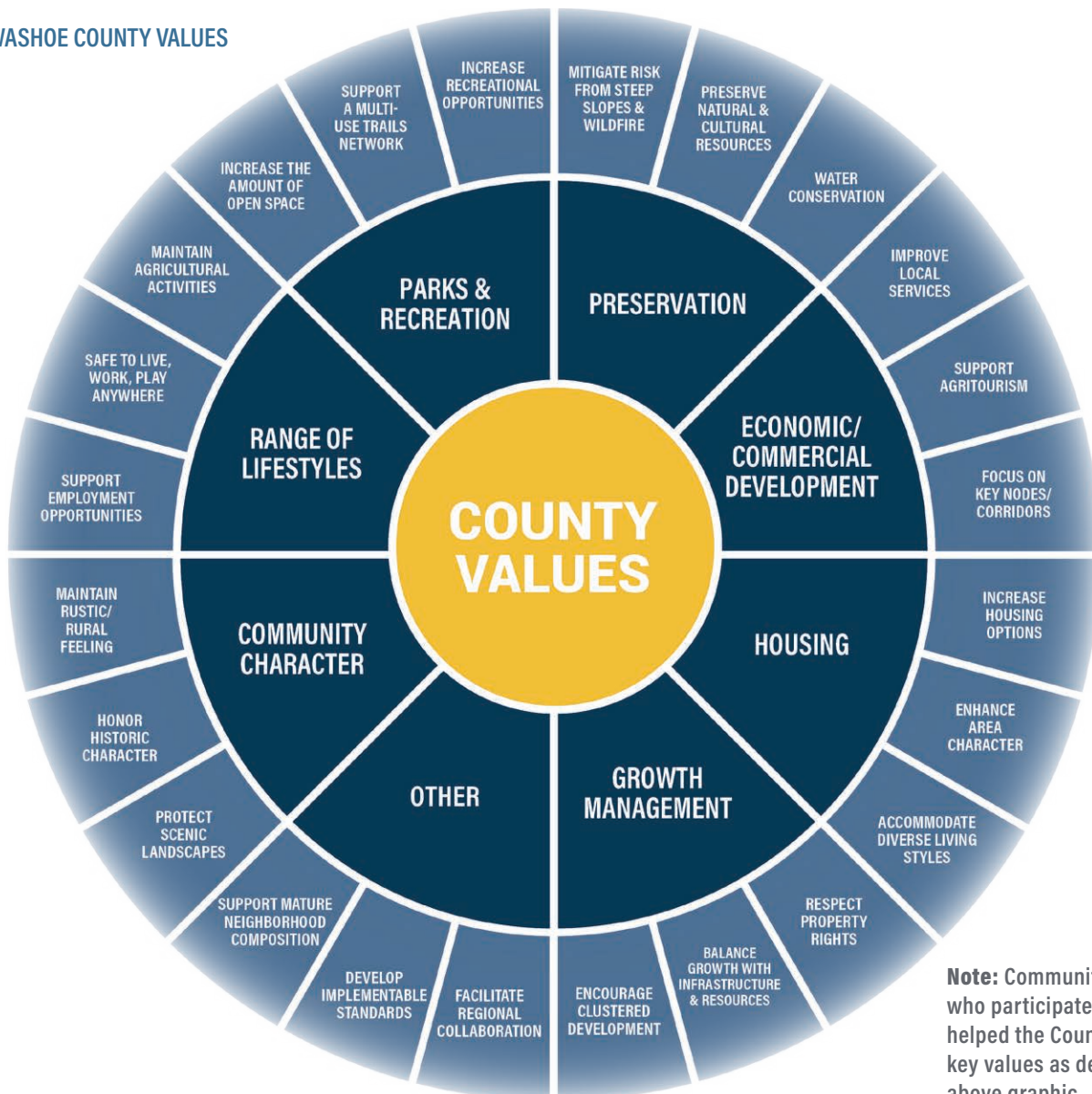
The Envision Washoe 2040 process relied on broad and representative community input to establish a unified vision and clearly articulate the shared values of the County's diverse population.

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

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

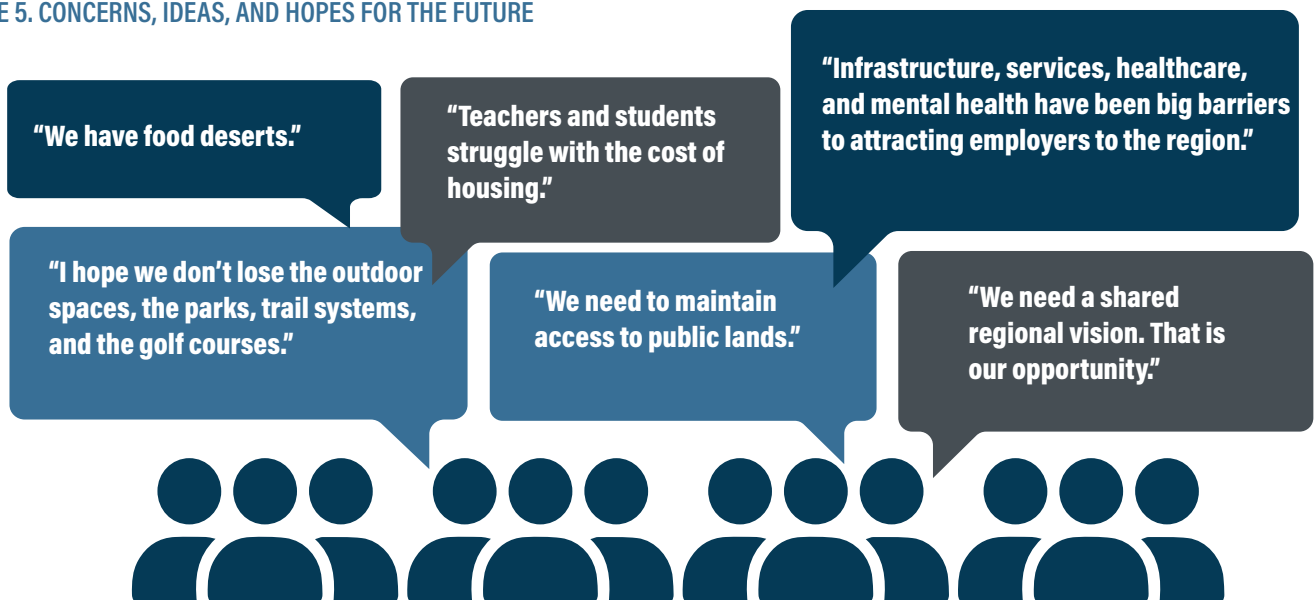
Key issues requiring attention include housing affordability, infrastructure and public transportation, homelessness, flexibility for developers, and creating a more efficient master plan. While economic and personal opportunity are at the forefront of the community, the ability for people to continue 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

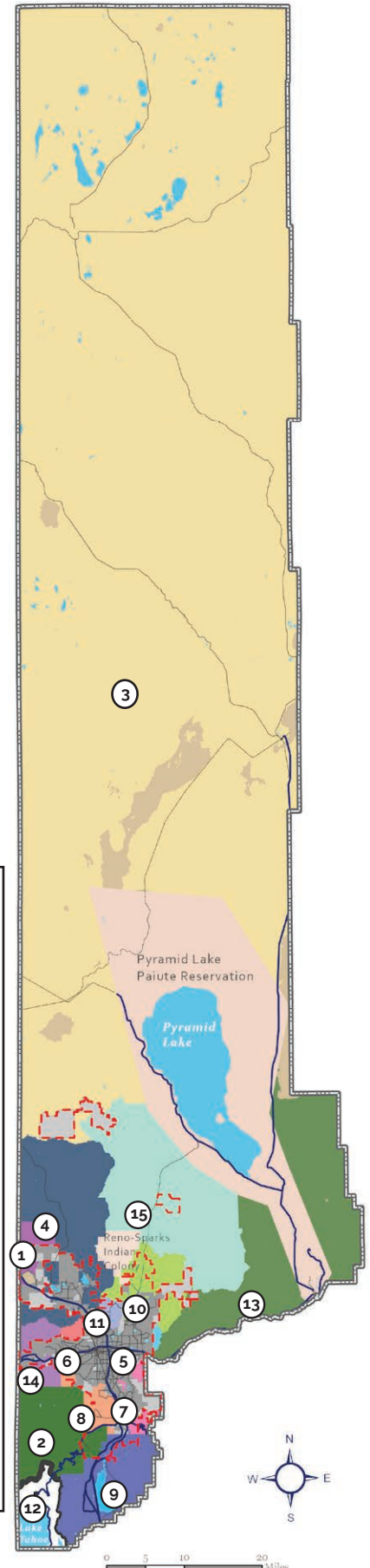
While each of these areas are unique, many of the goals and policies listed in the original area plans were applicable to the entire County and were more appropriately located in the general goals and policies in the plan elements. Elevating these goals and policies to countywide recommendations rather 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.

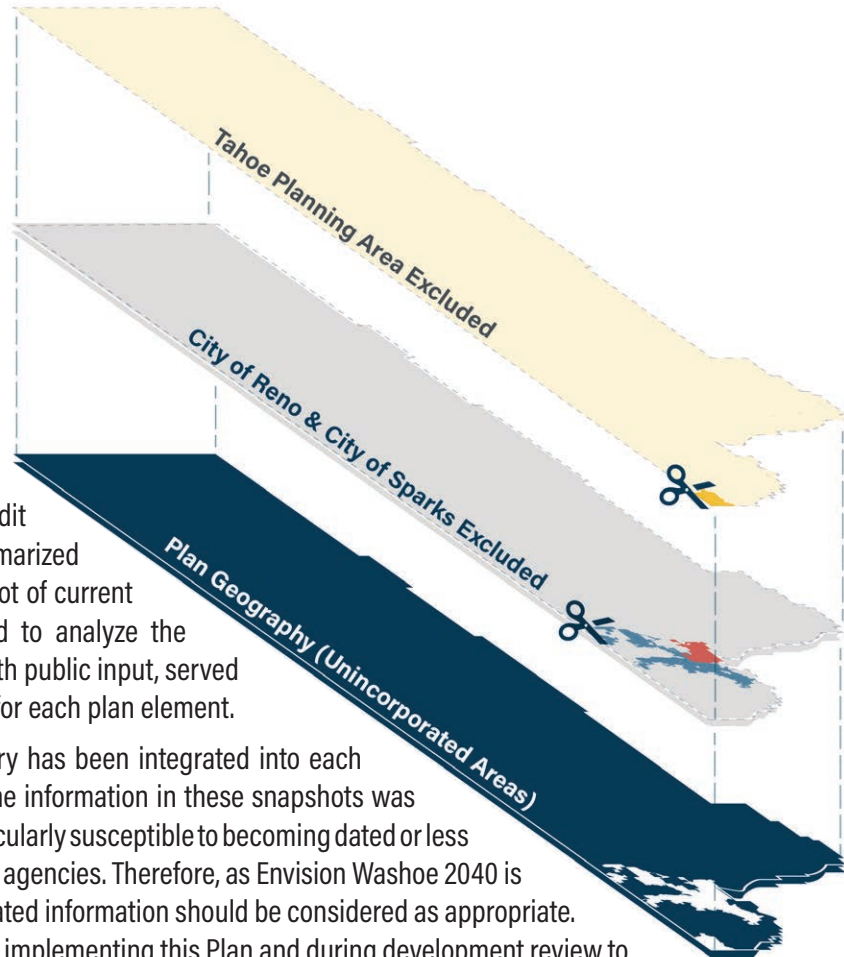
While Envision Washoe 2040 is only applicable to unincorporated Washoe County, and excludes the Tahoe Basin, some data was only available for Washoe County as a whole, including the cities of Reno and Sparks. In those cases where data for just the unincorporated areas of Washoe County could not be extracted, 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

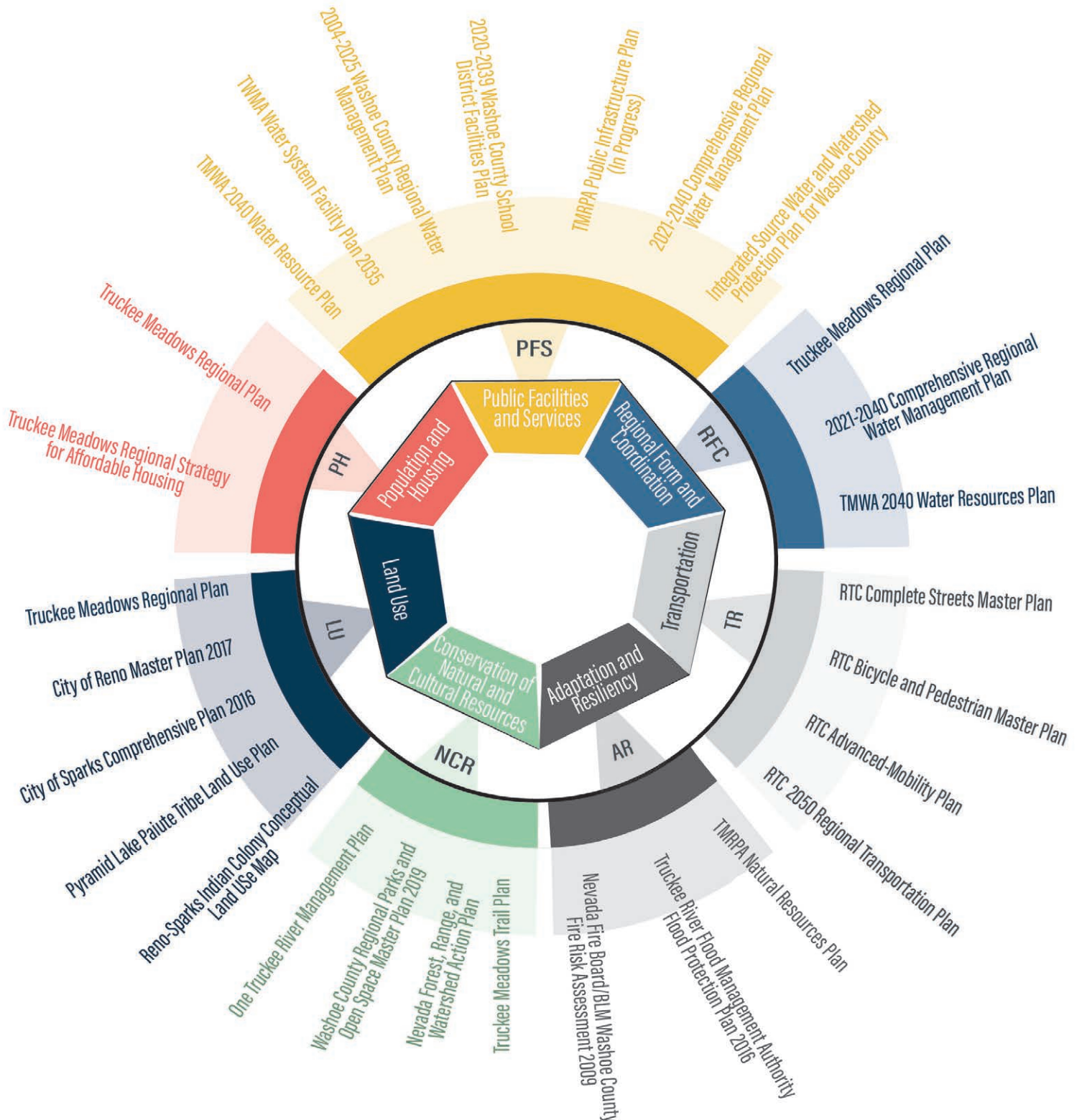
The Principles and Policies sections within each element describes Washoe County's goals and policies designed to help the County enhance the lives of the residents, protect the environment, and operate within its resources. These sections also detail ongoing regional and state efforts which align with 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.



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.

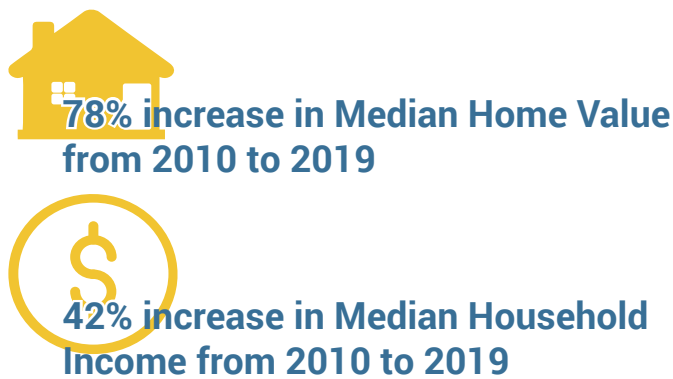


FIGURE 6. WASHOE COUNTY MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND MEDIAN HOME VALUE

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*

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.

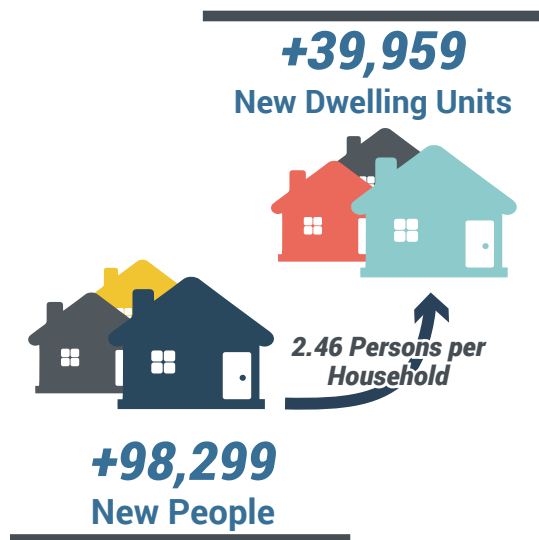


FIGURE 7. 2020-2040 PREDICTED POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD INCREASE FROM THE CONSENSUS FORECAST

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.

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.

RELEVANT PLANS

- ▶ *[Truckee Meadows Regional Plan \(Regional Plan\)](#)*
- ▶ *[Truckee Meadows Regional Strategy for Affordable Housing \(TMRSHA\)](#)*



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.

1. 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.

0. 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.*
- PG 4. 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.*
1. 3.3. Regularly monitor and reevaluate the fees associated with housing development.
1. 3.4. *Support accessory dwelling units as a method of providing affordable and workforce housing.*
2. 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.

5. 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.*

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.

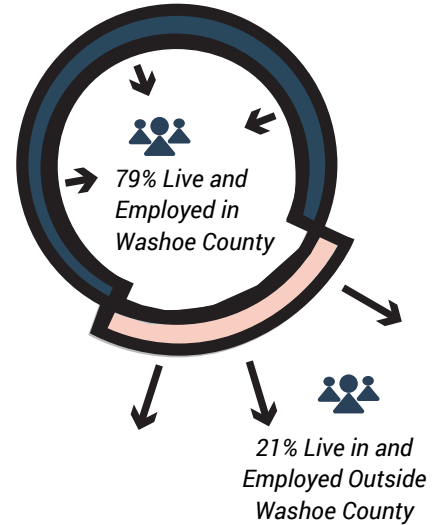


FIGURE 8. WASHOE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT
Source: US Census Data. 2010-2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

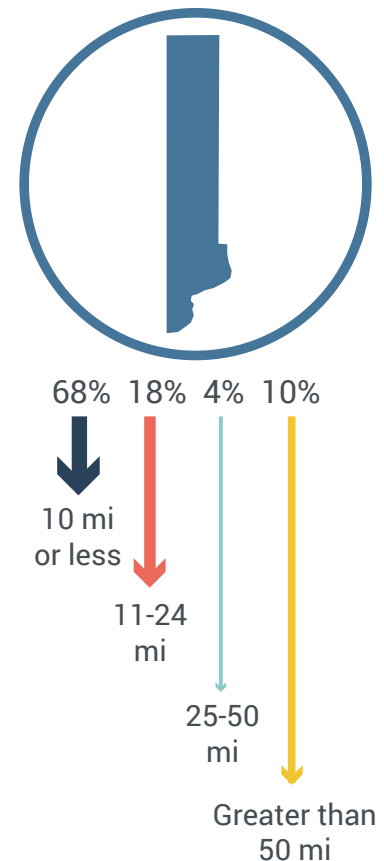


FIGURE 9. JOBS BY DISTANCE
Source: US Census Data. 2010-2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

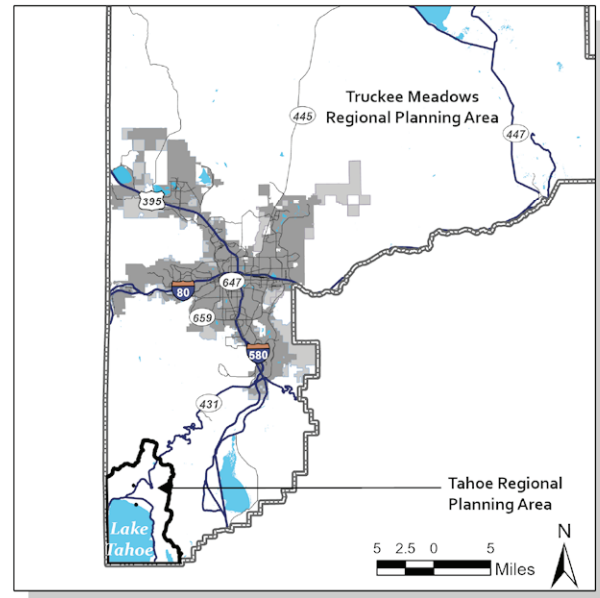
REGIONAL COORDINATION

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.

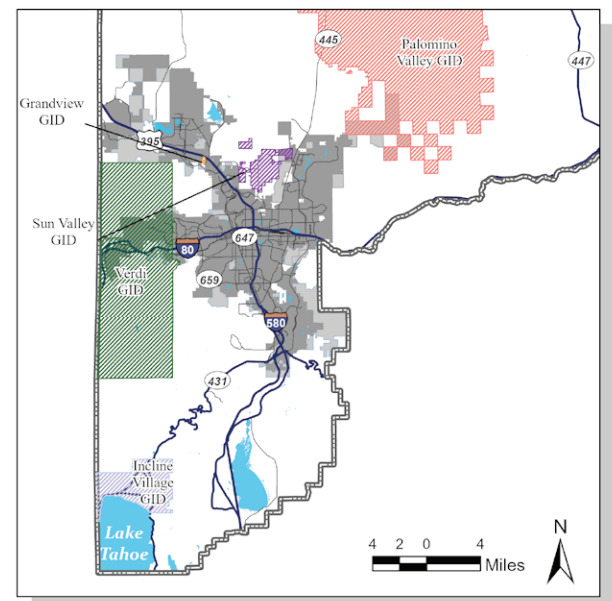
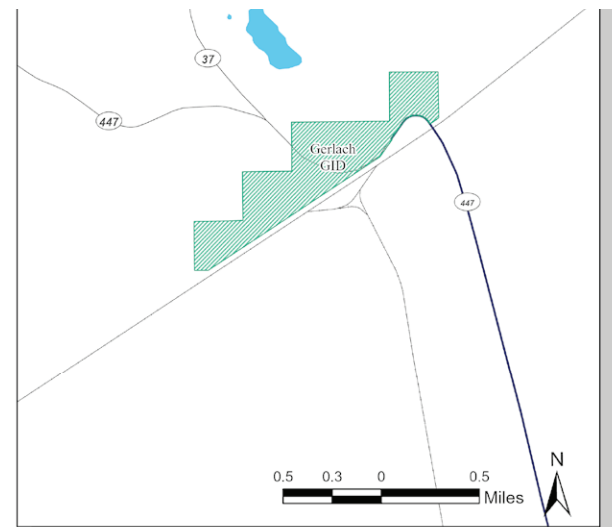
Two regional planning agencies directly deal with land use issues in Washoe County. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency focuses on preserving the natural features and resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The jurisdictions surrounding Lake Tahoe must conform to the Tahoe Regional Plan. The Tahoe Planning 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



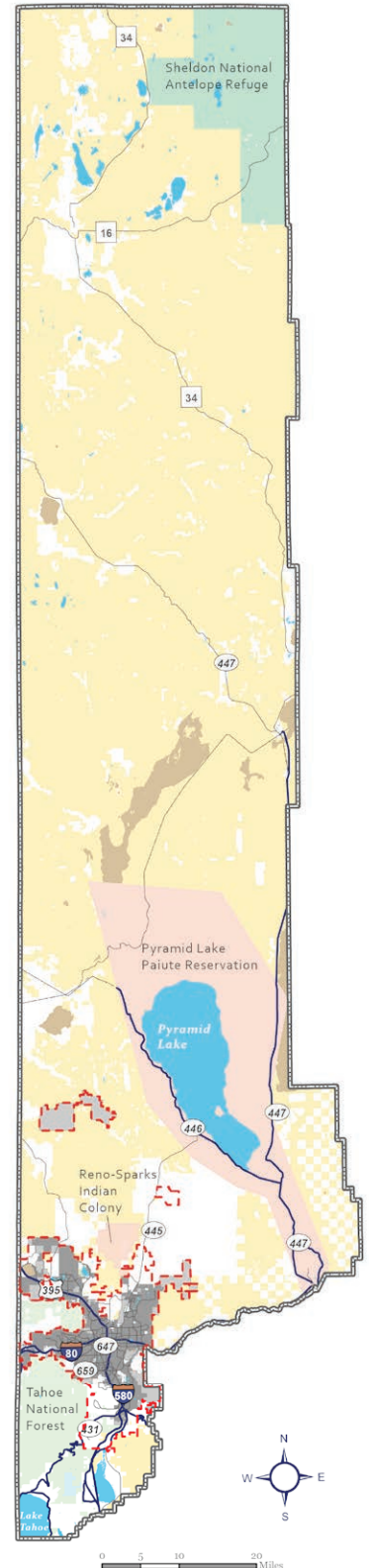
MAP 3. GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION ELEMENT

Washoe County also works with other local governments on joint planning ventures, specifically in the Reno-Stead area, University Farms and the southern portion of the Spanish Springs area. In these cooperative planning areas, the Washoe County master plan land use designation is used as a baseline for development and any changes to the master plan requires conformance review with the relevant joint plan.

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

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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.
- 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.

REGIONAL FORM AND COORDINATION ELEMENT

- 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, 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.

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.

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.

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.

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

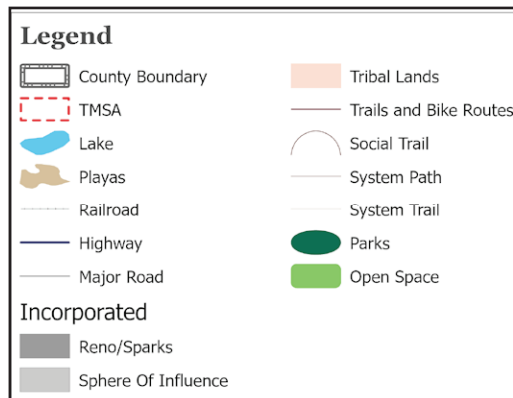
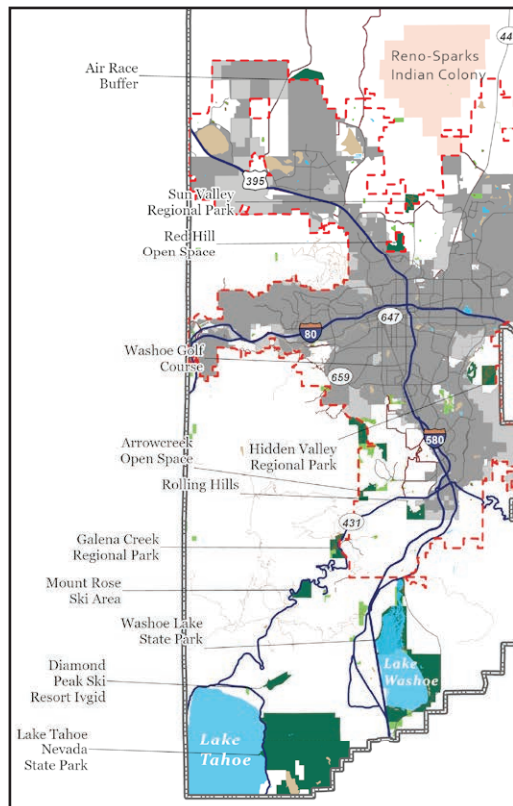
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Open Space and Natural Resources

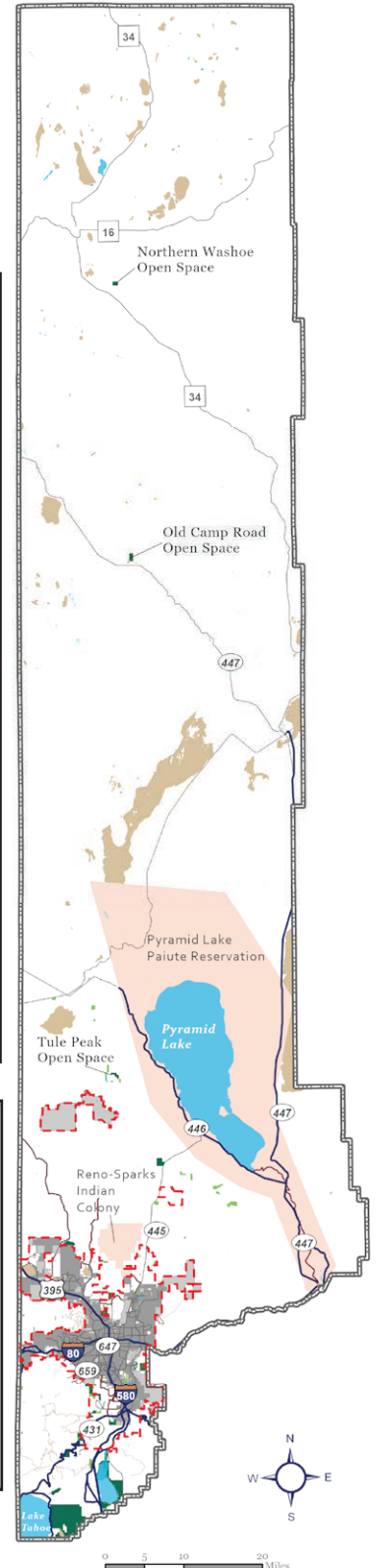
Washoe County is characterized by an abundance of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. Nevada boasts the highest percentage of public lands of any state in the nation. Access to this vast network of open space and preservation of important natural features remains integral to Washoe County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



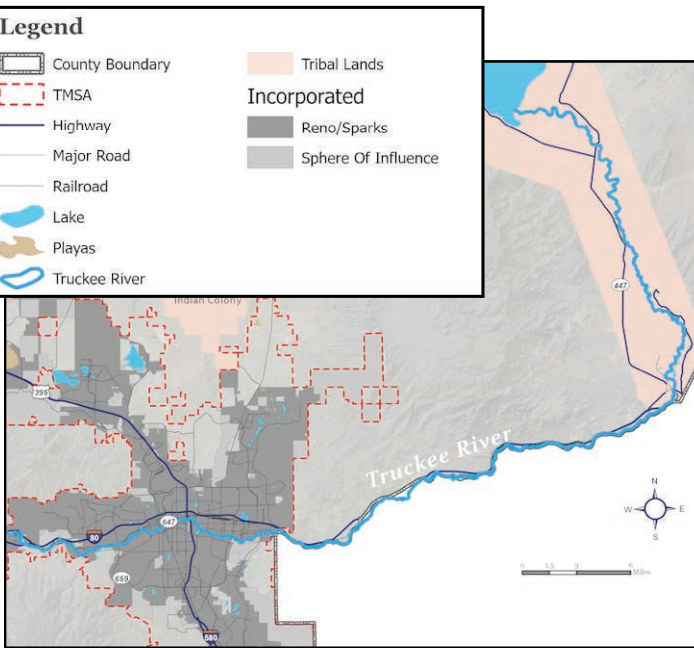
in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) increase, along with the increased demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. Protecting open space areas that support key ecosystem functions, such as flood retention and water filtration, not only creates a community that is more resilient to a changing climate, 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+

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

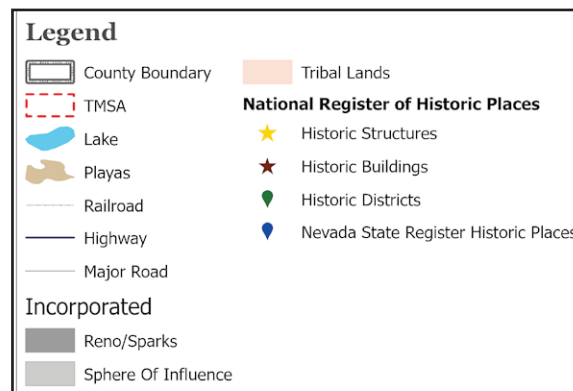
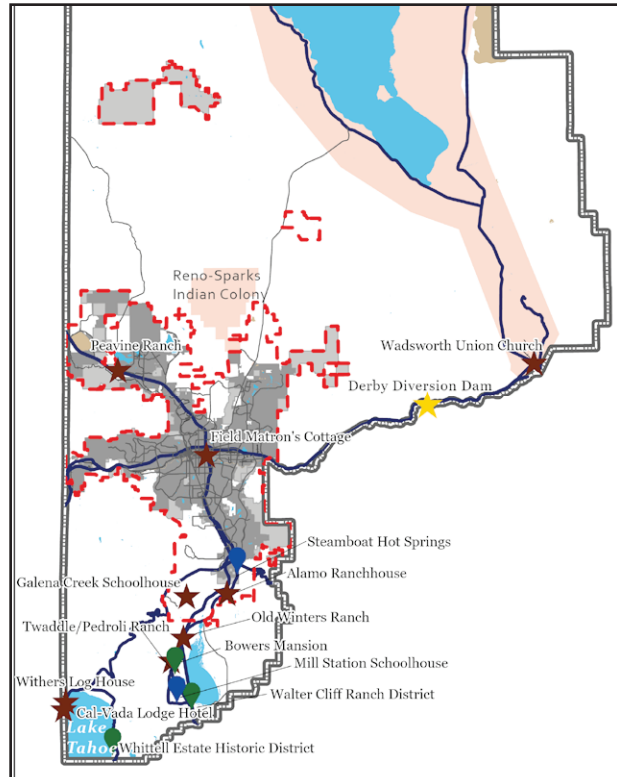
- ▶ *Derby Diversion Dam*
- ▶ *Gerlach Water Tower*
- ▶ *Wadsworth Union Church*
- ▶ *Alamo Ranchhouse*
- ▶ *Bowers Mansion*
- ▶ *Field Matron's Cottage*
- ▶ *Galena Creek Schoolhouse*
- ▶ *Withers Log Home*
- ▶ *Old Winters Ranch*
- ▶ *Cal-Vada Lodge Hotel*
- ▶ *Peavine Ranch*
- ▶ *Steamboat Hot Springs*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



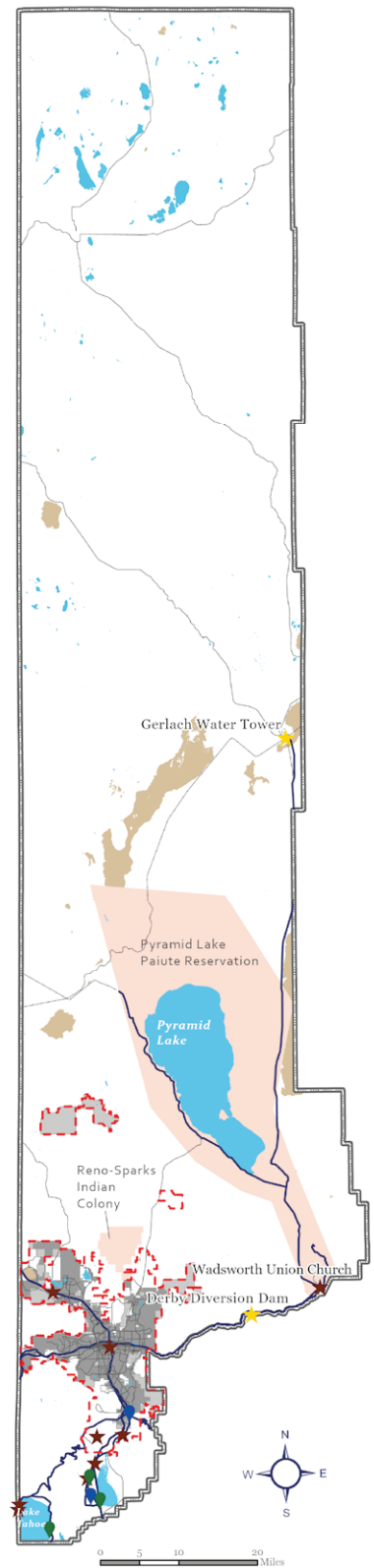
FIGURE 11. WADSWORTH UNION CHURCH

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



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) 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.

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 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*](#)
- ▶ [*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*](#)

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 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.

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](#)

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- 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!**



- 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.*
- 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.

NR 13



- 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, 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.*
- 6.6. Utilize the Truckee Meadows Trail Plan (TMTP) in the development review process and encourage the incorporation of identified trail connections.
- 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

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.

NR 15

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.
- 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.

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Natural Hazards

Washoe County is subject to wildfires, earthquakes, floods, 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 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, 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.

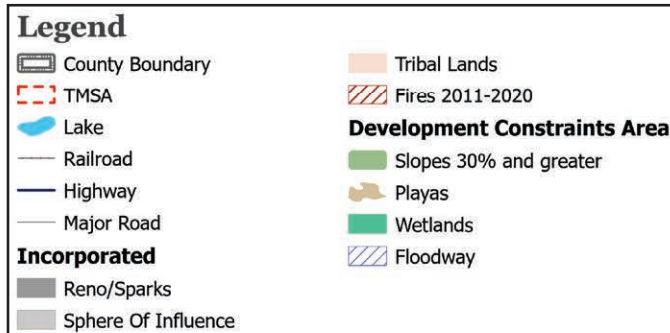
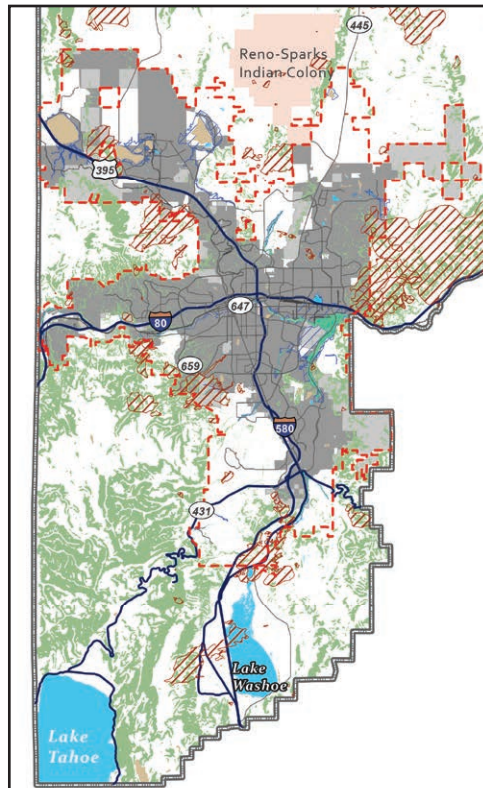
In addition to fire and flood risk, the Regional Plan policy Natural Resources 3 defines the Development Constraints Area (DCA) as an overlay within the County that identifies additional development constraints including federal lands, playas, wetlands, and steep slopes (Map 8). The DCA overlay takes 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.

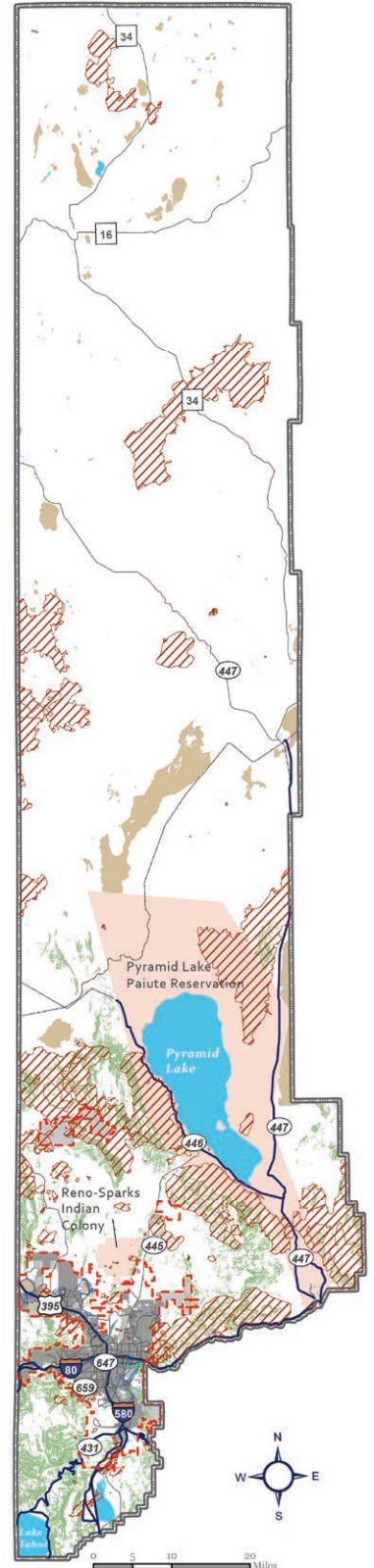
Urban Heat

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. 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.



MAP 8. NATURAL HAZARDS IN WASHOE COUNTY



ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

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.

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 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.

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

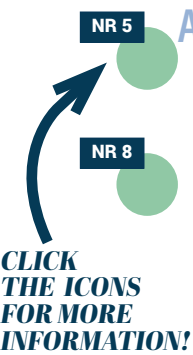
- ▶ [TMRPA Natural Resources Plan](#)
- ▶ [One Truckee River Management Plan](#)
- ▶ [Truckee River Flood Management Authority Flood Protection Plan 2016](#)
- ▶ [Nevada Fire Board/BLM Washoe County Fire Risk Assessment 2009](#)

NR 5 AR Principle 1. Limit development in the Development Constraints Area.

- 1.1. *Minimize development in areas with natural steep slopes.*
- 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.

NR 8 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.



ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY

AR Principle 3. Mitigate the impacts of 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.
- 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 green building materials, and 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.

NR 10

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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**

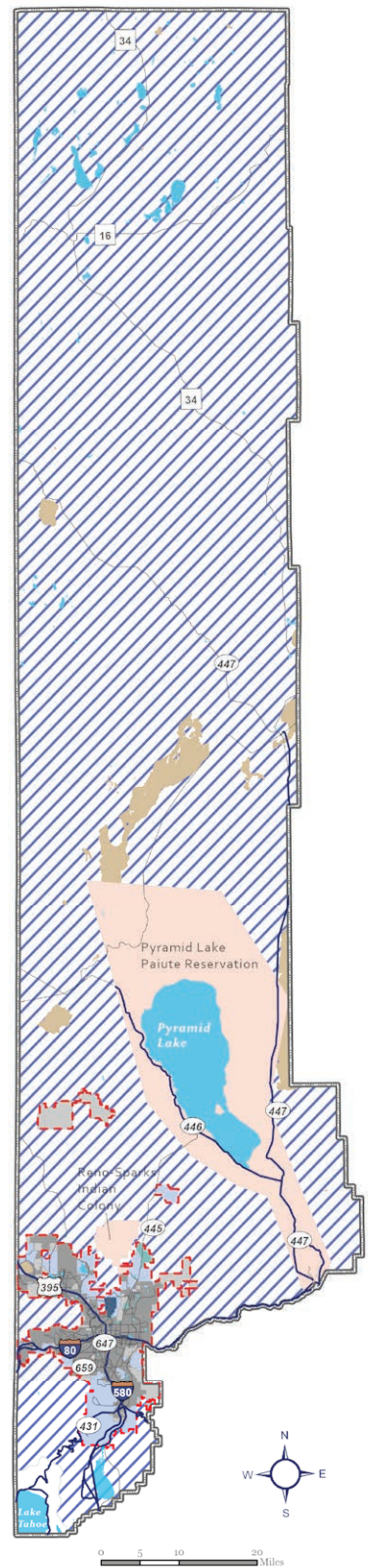
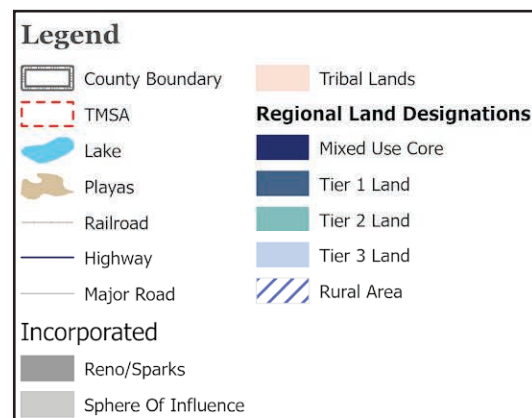
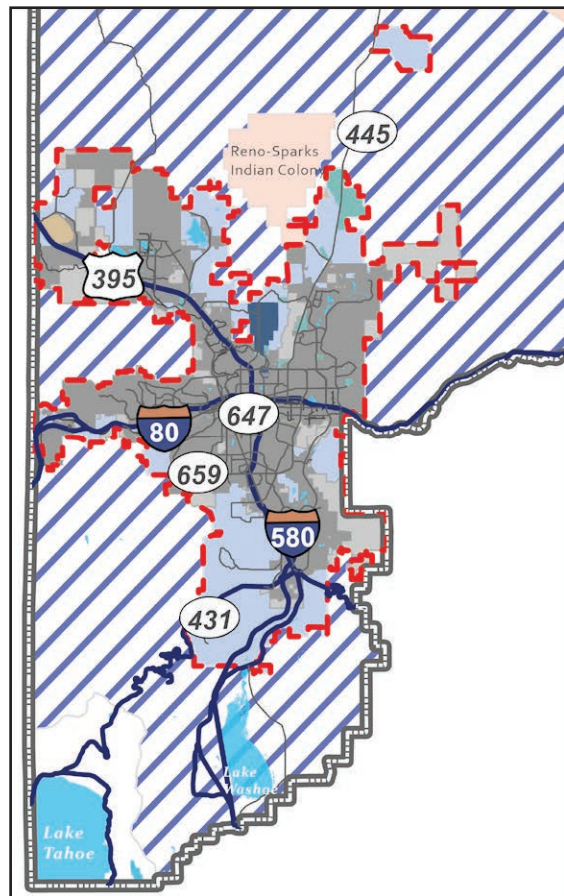
Data Source: 2019 Regional Plan, Table 3.1

*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.

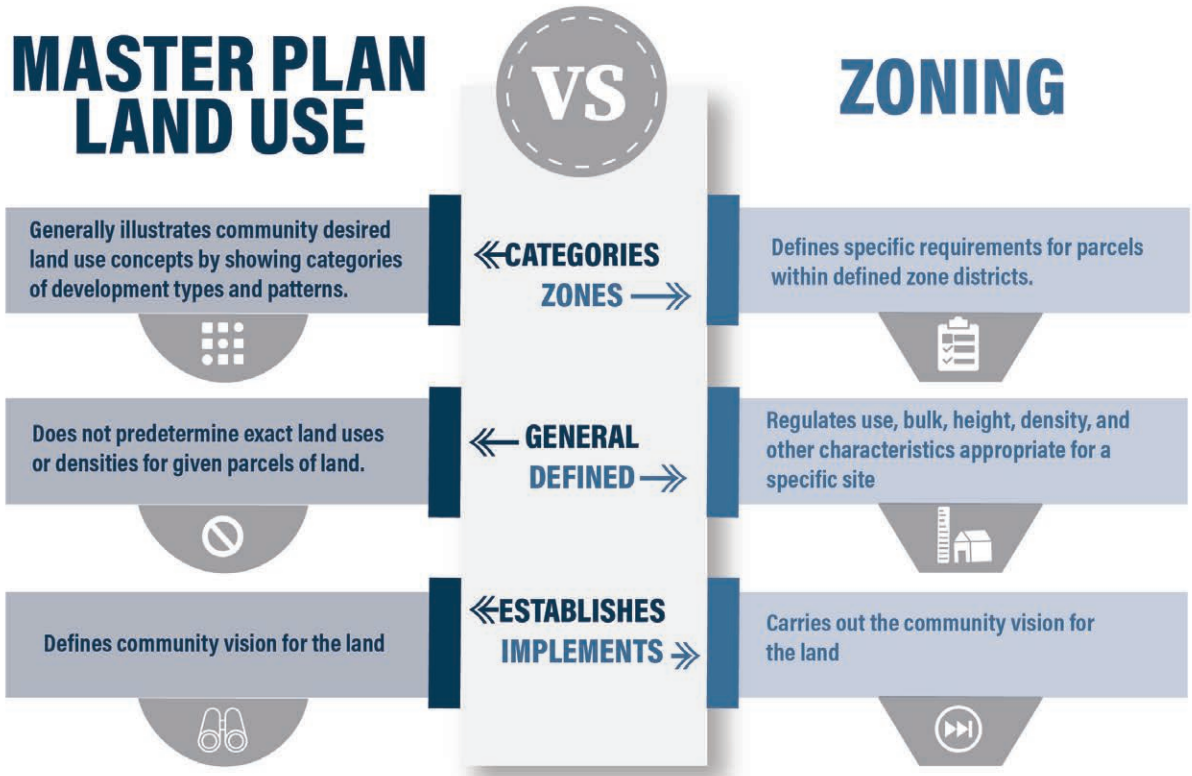
Unincorporated Washoe County lands comprise the entirety of the Rural Area with pockets of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Land in developed areas adjacent to Reno and Sparks. As noted in Table 3, Tier 1 Lands have a minimum density of the existing allowed density and no maximum density. This means that it 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

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 <i>(See Washoe County Development Code for Specific Standards)</i>
<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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

05

LAND USE ELEMENT

MASTER PLAN LAND USE	INTENT	ALLOWED ZONING <i>(See Washoe County Development Code for Specific Standards)</i>
<i>Urban Residential</i>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Low Density Urban ▶ Medium Density Urban ▶ High Density Urban ▶ Public and Semi-Public Facilities ▶ Parks and Recreation ▶ Specific Plan ▶ Open Space
<i>Commercial</i>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Neighborhood Commercial/ Office ▶ General Commercial ▶ Tourist Commercial ▶ Public and Semi-Public Facilities ▶ Parks and Recreation ▶ Specific Plan ▶ Open Space
<i>Industrial</i>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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.

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.



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.*
- 5.3. *Consider the feasibility of establishing Rural Development Areas when necessary to preserve open space or protect natural resources.*
- RF 7 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.

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

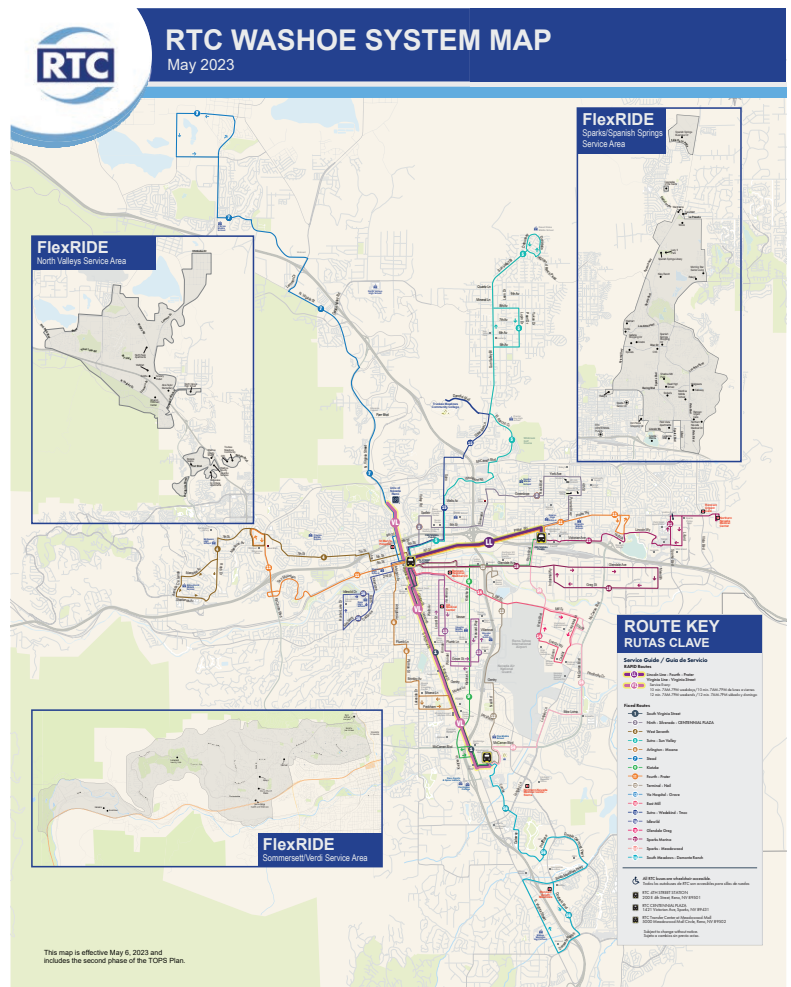


FIGURE 12. RTC BUS ROUTES MAP

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 ¼-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

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.

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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 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.*

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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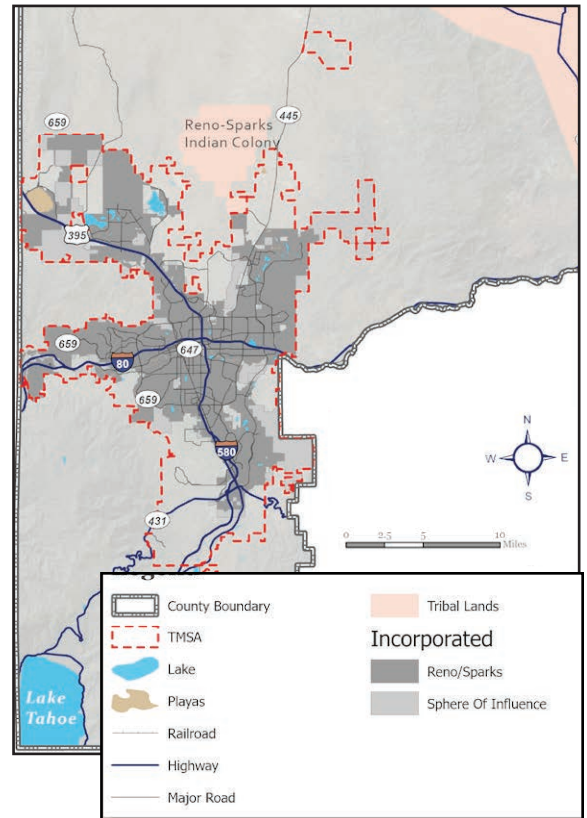
EXISTING CONDITIONS

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



MAP 10. TMWA WATER AND SEWER SERVICE BOUNDARY

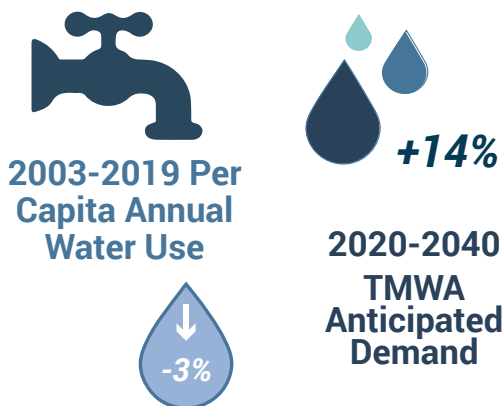


FIGURE 13. 2000-2020 WATER DEMAND AND 2040 DEMAND PREDICTIONS

Source: TMWA Water Facilities Plan

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.

(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 <i>(ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2020)</i>
<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

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.

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 and address known and potential threats to water quality.

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.

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.*

2.3 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.

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.

2.4 1.13. Promote a coordinated regional approach to effluent management, including but limited to the disposal and use of treated effluent when appropriate.

1.14. Promote conjunctive management of multiple water resources.

1.15. Prohibit unsustainable groundwater mining as a method of water management.

2.7

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.

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.*

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PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

- 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

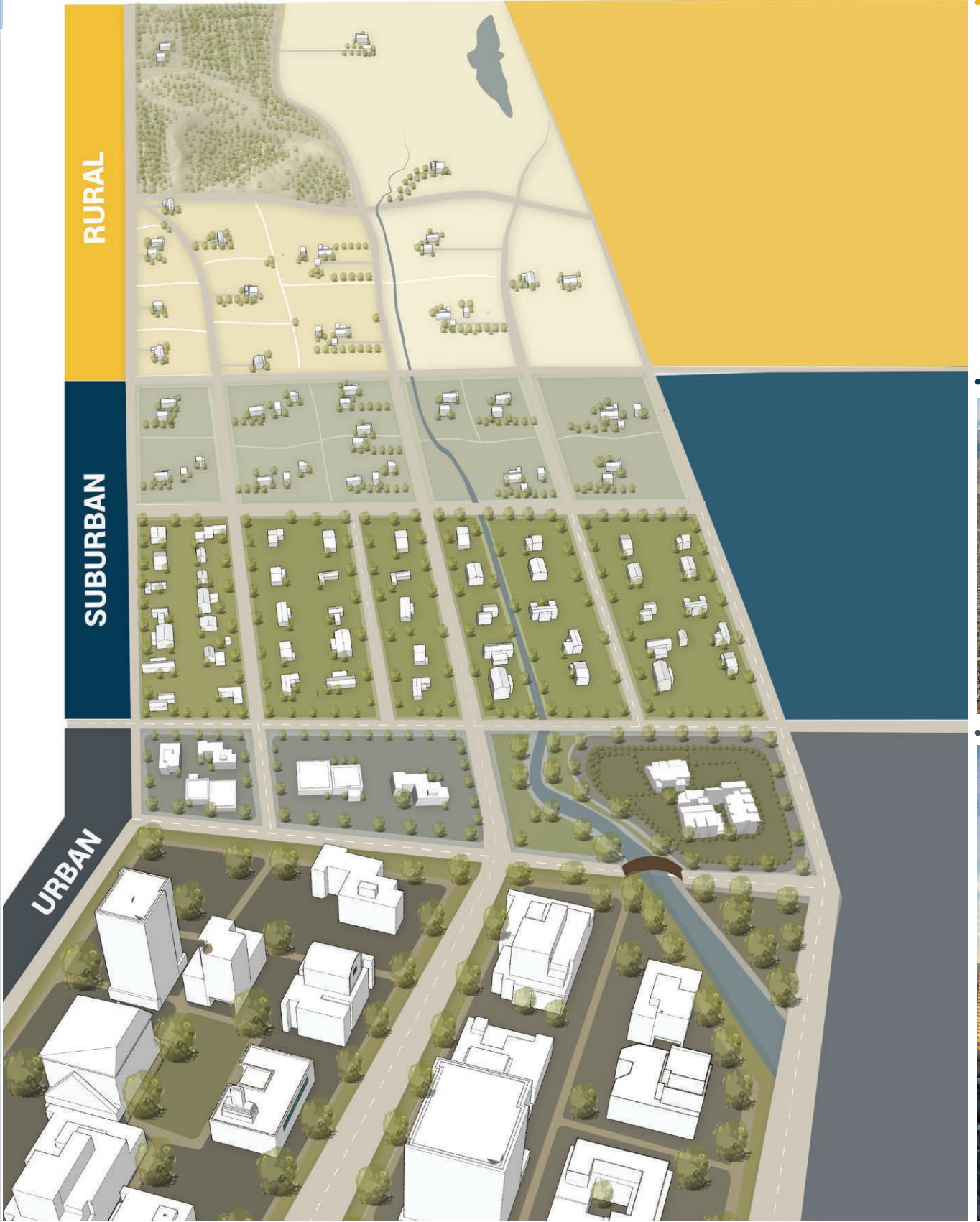


URBAN

- ▶ 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*.

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.

<i>ELEMENTS</i>	
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

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

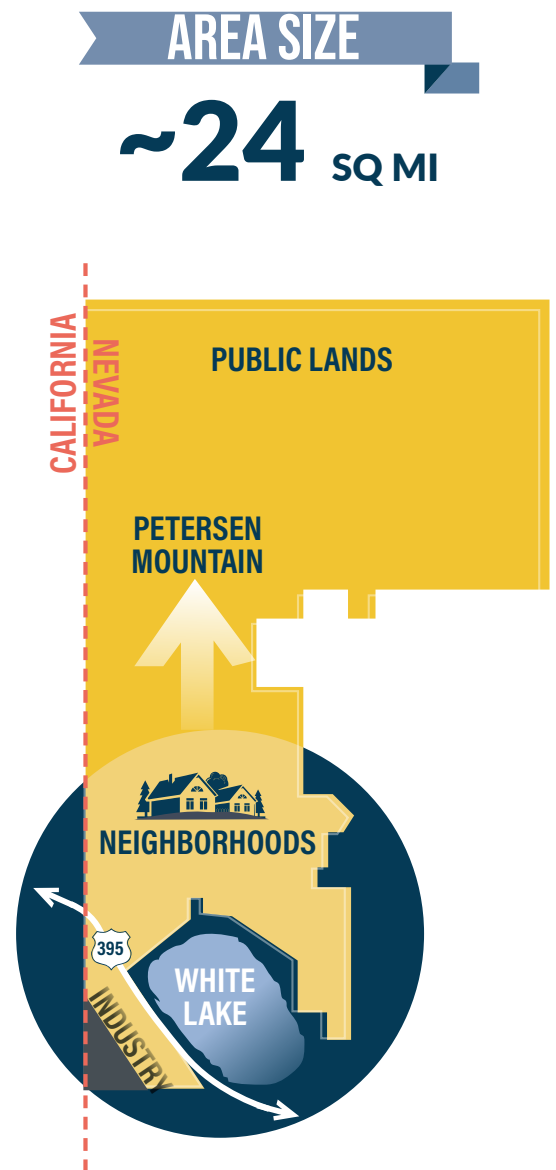
The Regional Plan designates the areas within the TMSA in the Cold Springs planning area as Tier 3, and areas outside the TMSA as Rural. This means that over the next 20 years, the areas within the TMSA will continue to experience and accommodate development at a maximum density mirroring existing development, 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increase the number of schools to provide safe commutes for children and families ▶ Preservation of scenic views as a public amenity ▶ Multi-use development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

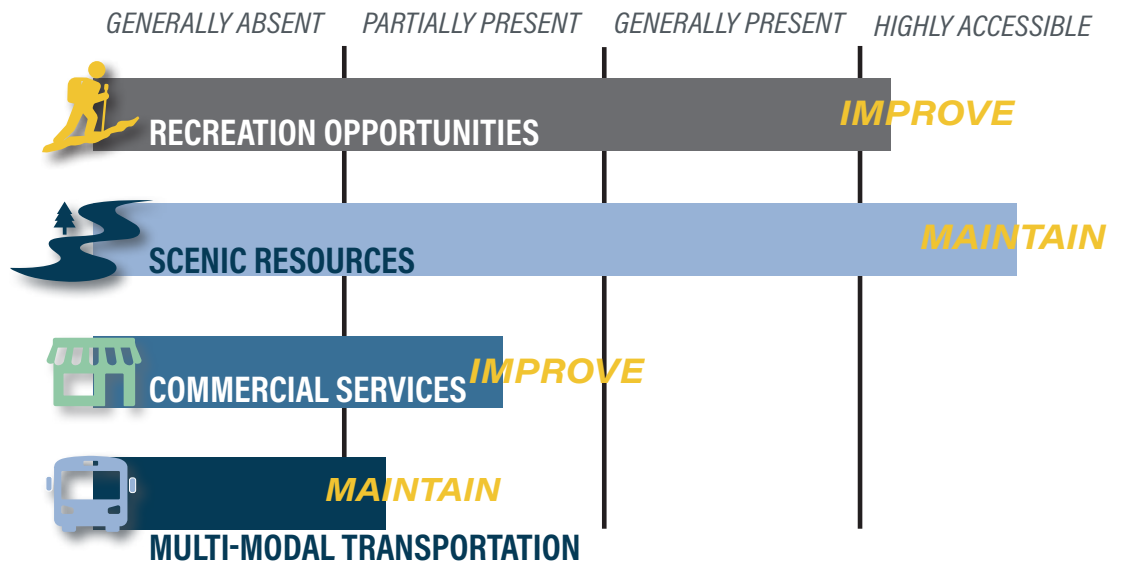


VISION

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.

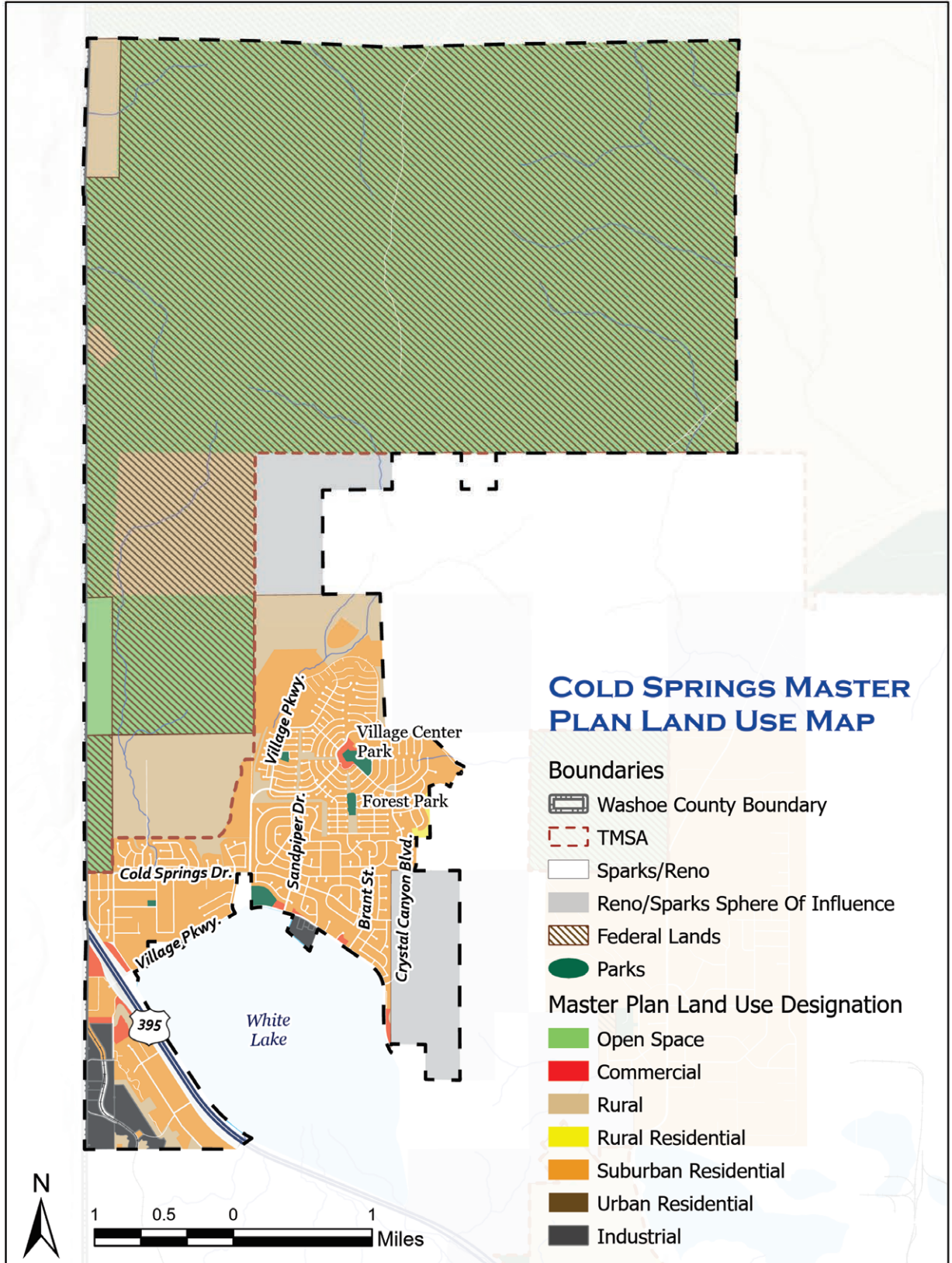
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ 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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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

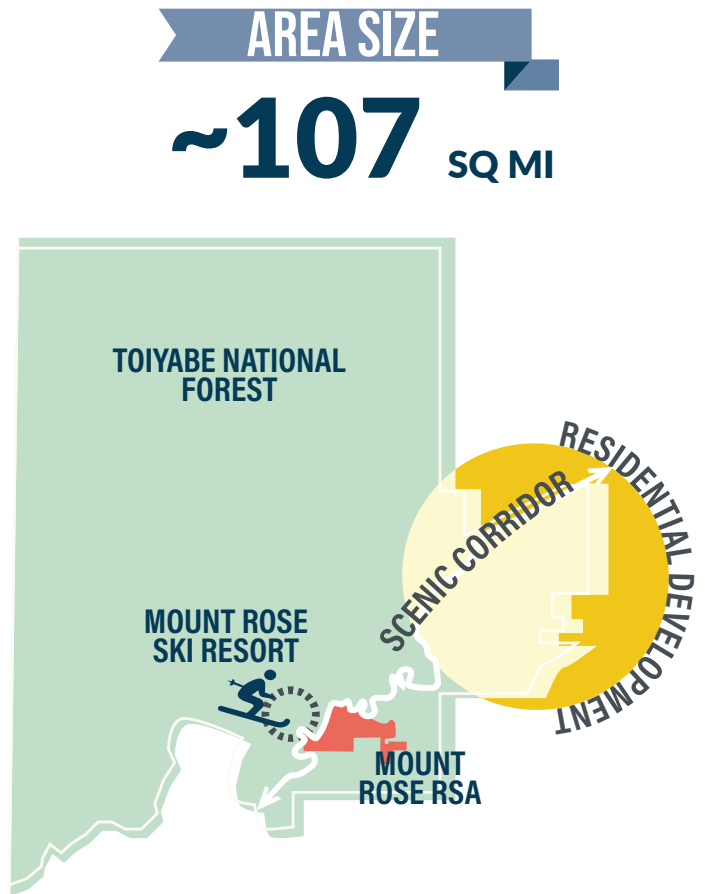
The Regional Plan designates the areas within the TMSA in the Forest planning area as Tier 3, and areas outside the TMSA as Rural. This means that over the next 20 years, the areas within the TMSA will continue to experience and accommodate suburban development at the current maximum density of about 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.

Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Preserve land, open spaces, and wildlife habitat in case of future lands bill » Enhance recreational activities and access to those opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Wildland-Urban Interface ▶ Lack of adequate infrastructure ▶ Pollution—light, water, litter ▶ Limited evacuation routes in the case of emergency or fire

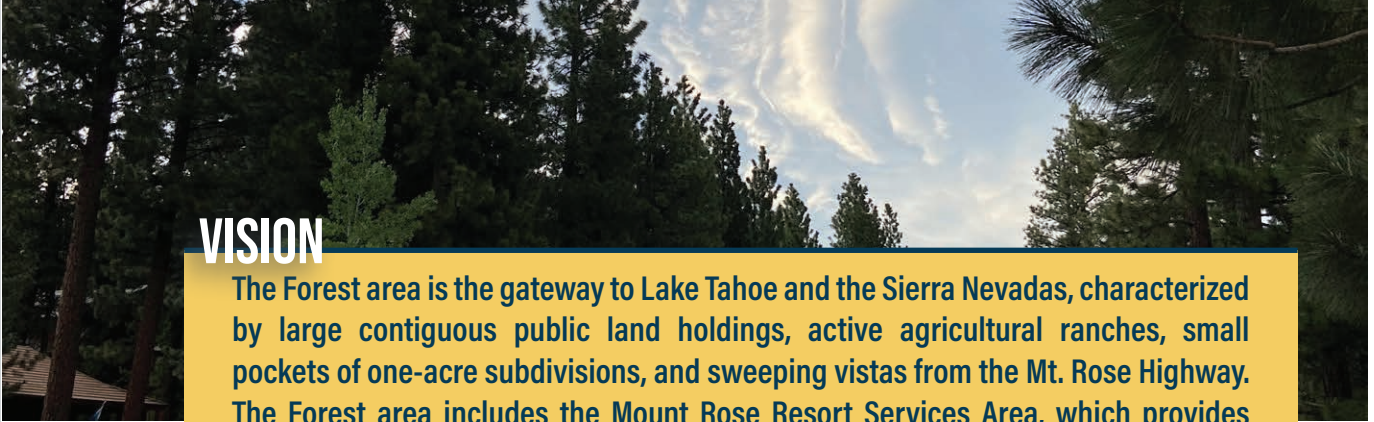
FIGURE 15. FOREST KEY FEATURES



FOREST

RURAL

Photo Credits: Katherine Oakley

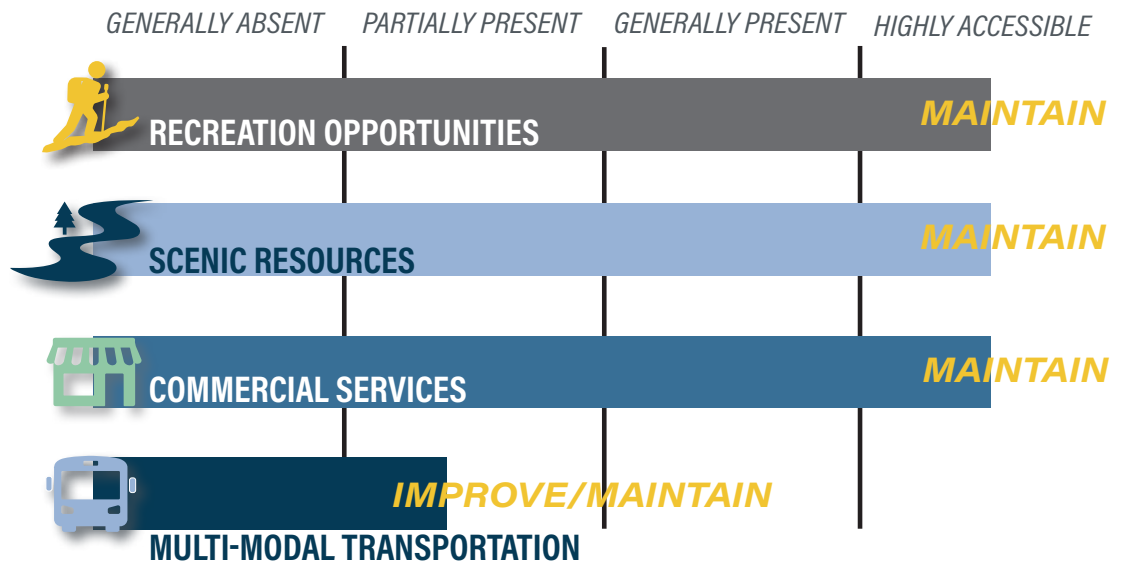


VISION

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, 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.

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.***

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.

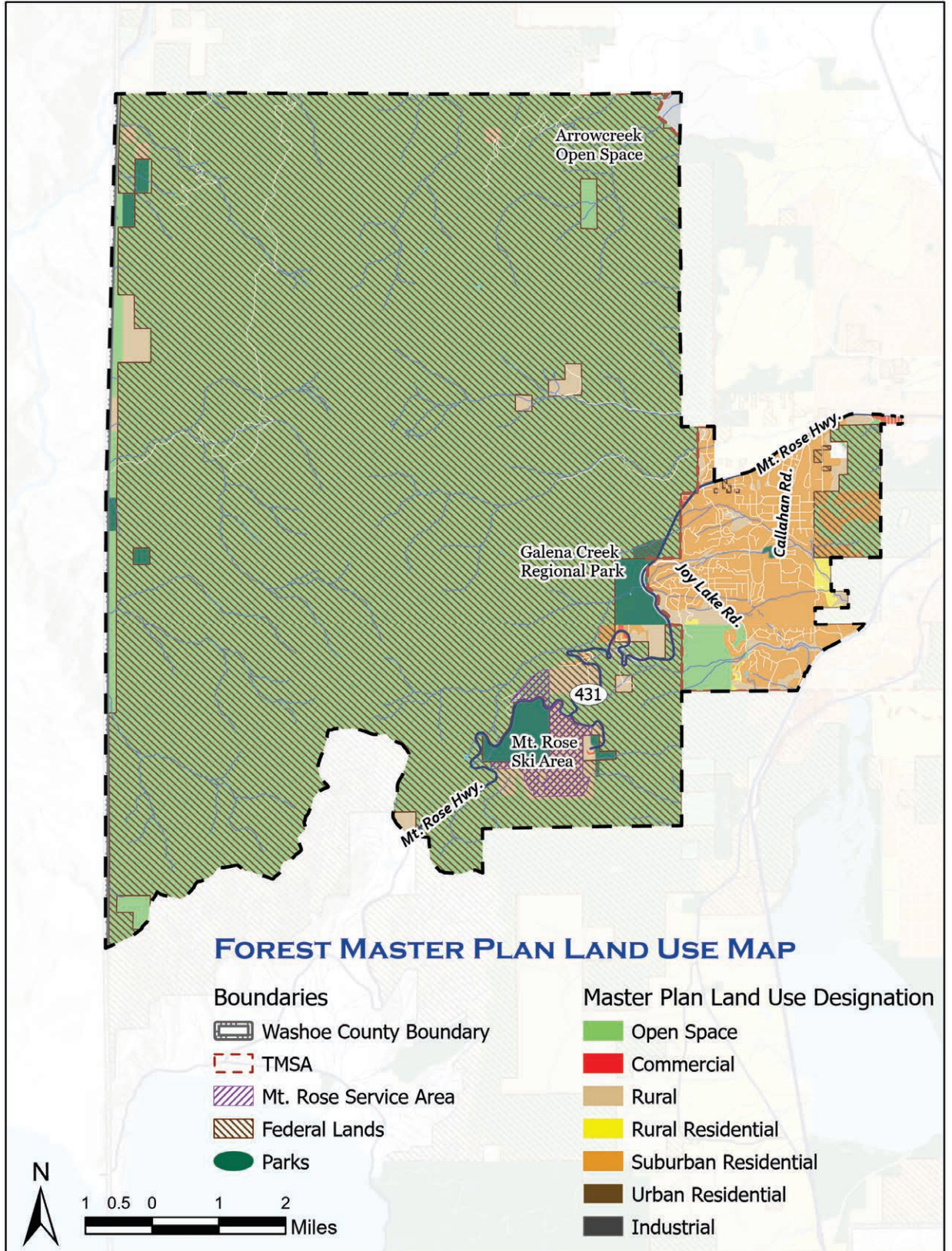
TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ 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 Geysers 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

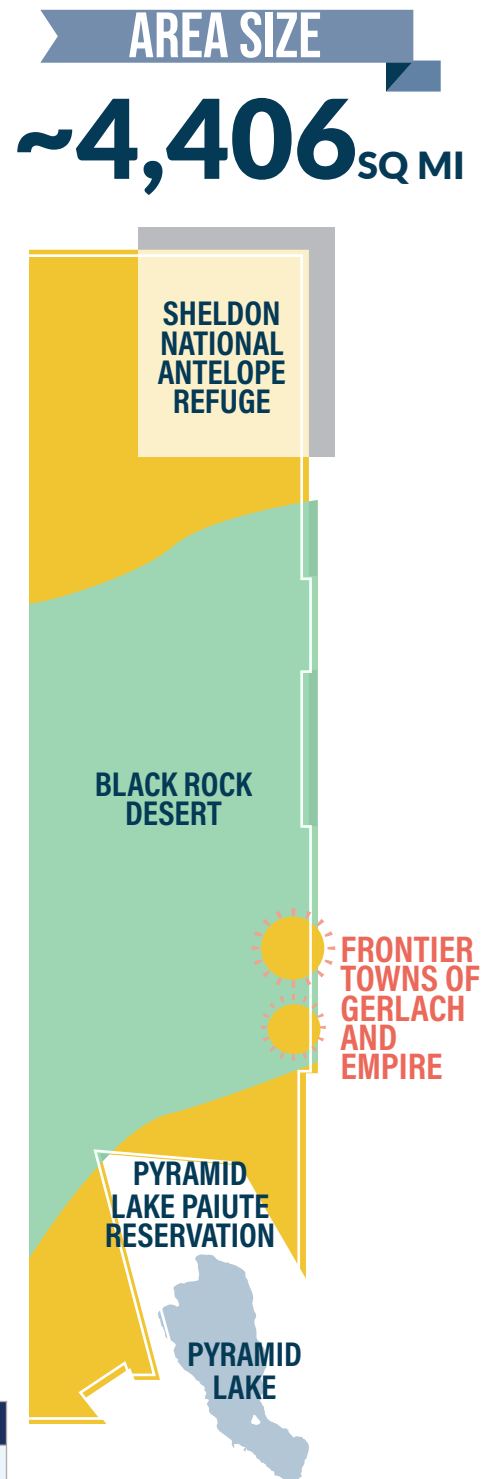
The Regional Plan designates the entirety of the planning area outside the existing freestanding communities of Gerlach and Empire as Rural, meaning intensification is not desired and residential development is limited to a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. Regional and Countywide policies 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

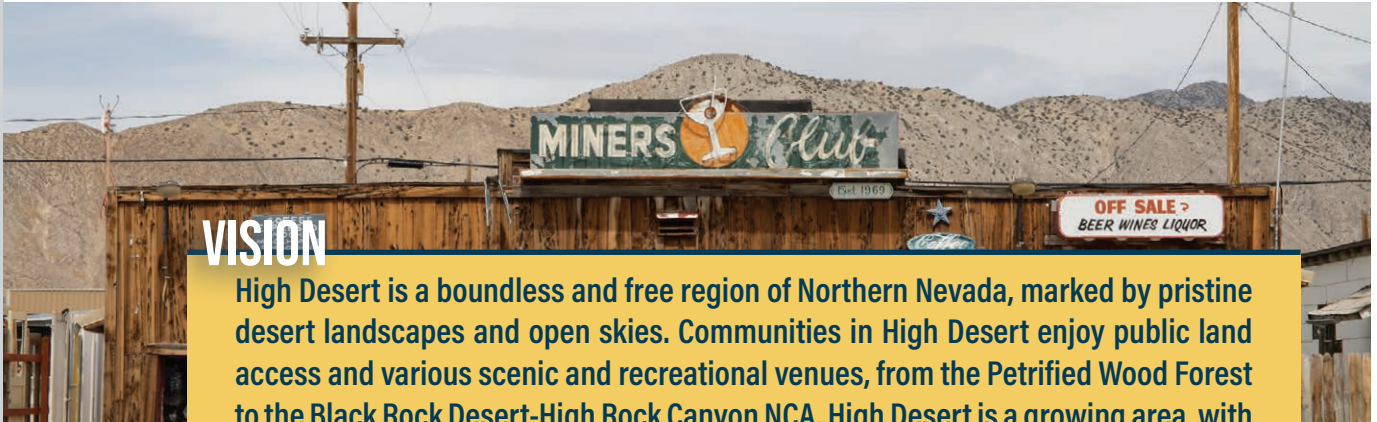
FIGURE 16. HIGH DESERT KEY FEATURES



HIGH DESERT

RURAL

Photo Credits: Flickr

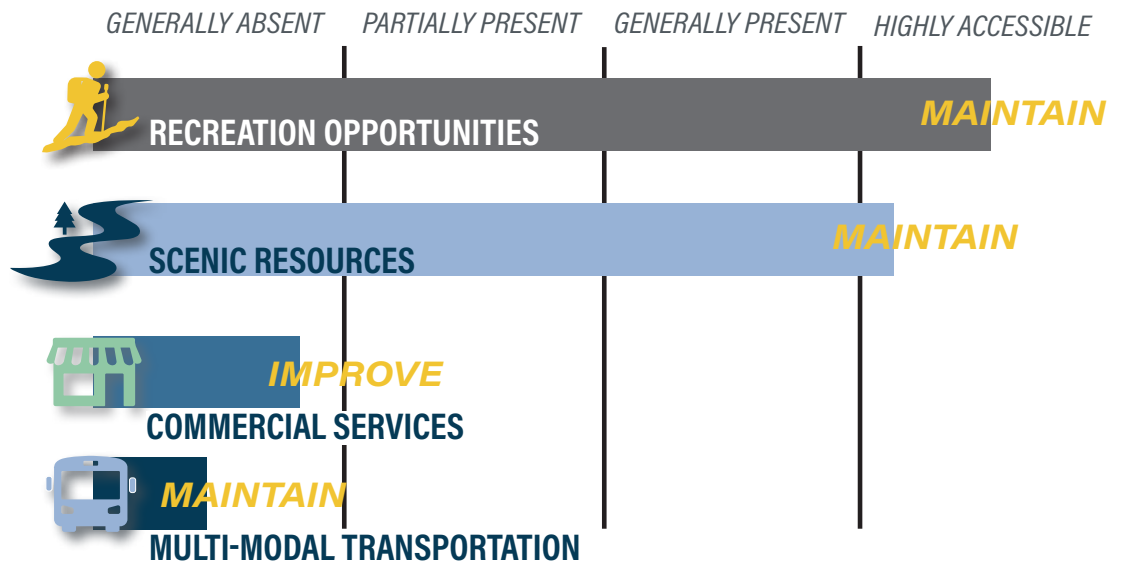


VISION

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.

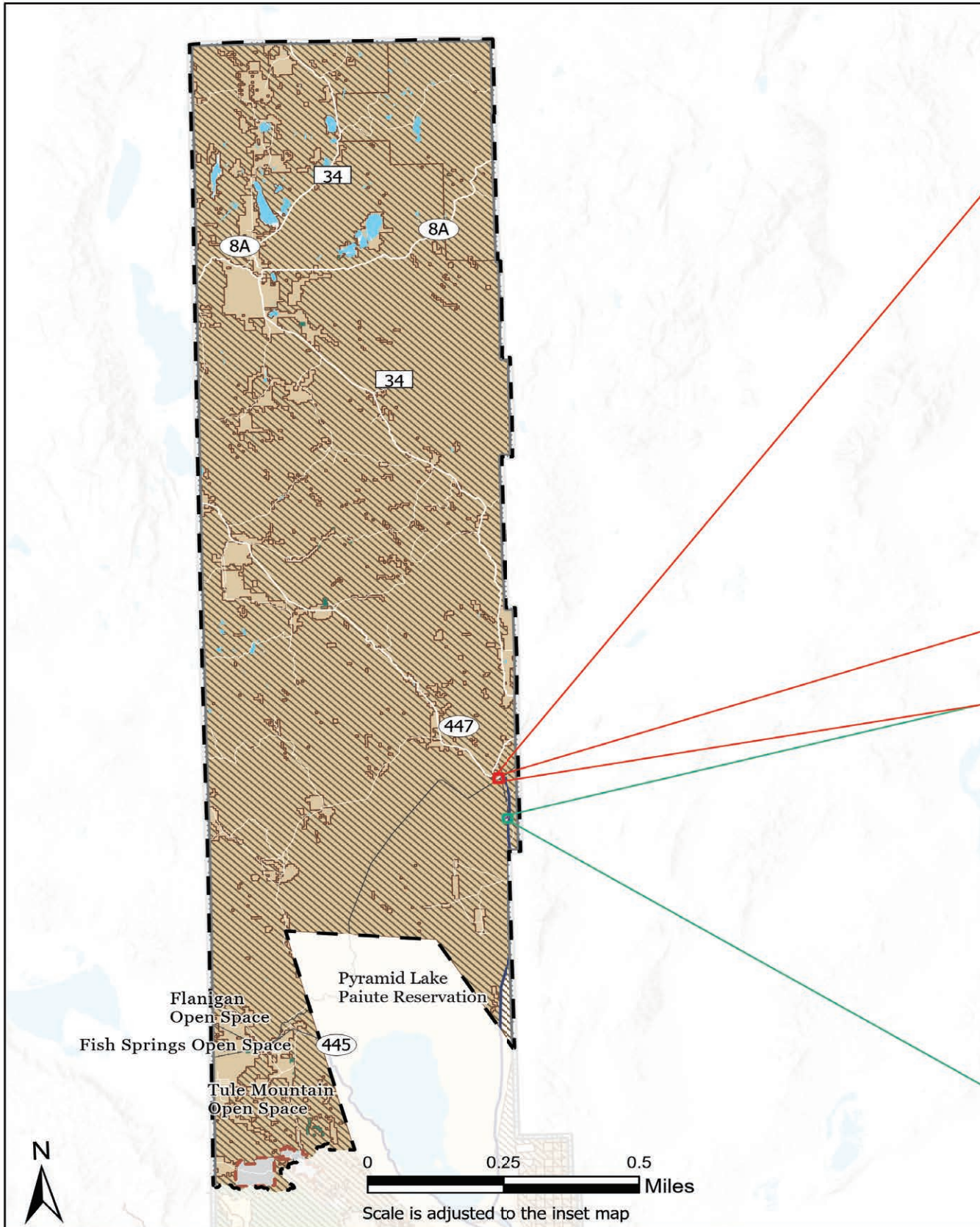
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ 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

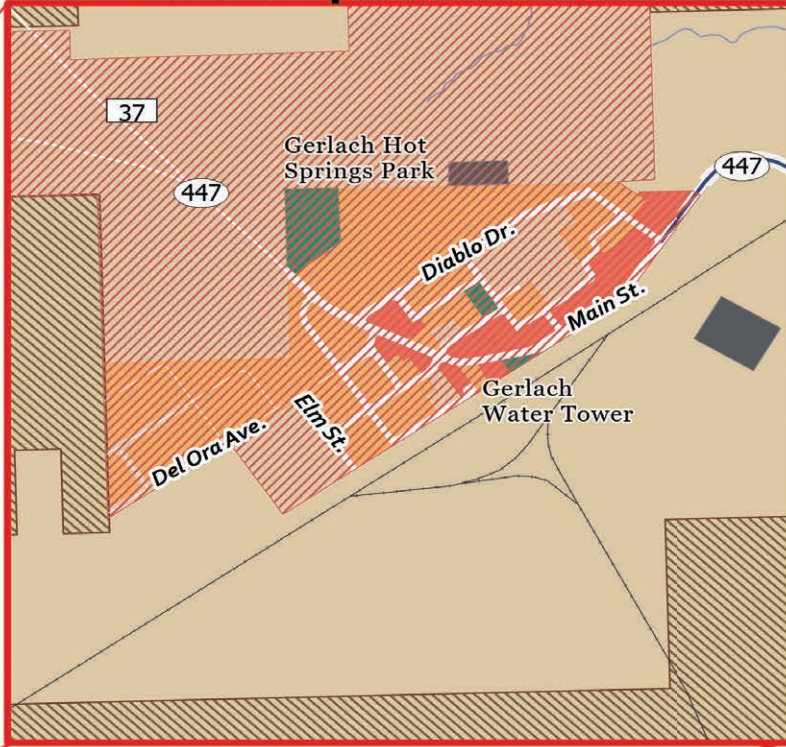
HIGH DESERT

RURAL

MAP 13. HIGH DESERT MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



Gerlach Specific Plan Area



HIGH DESERT MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP

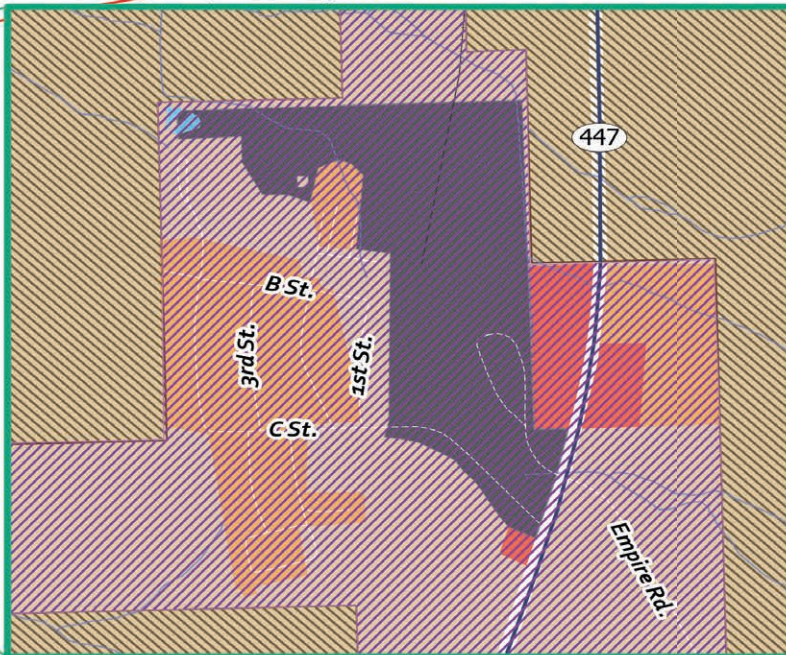
Boundaries

- Washoe County Boundary
- TMSA
- 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



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.

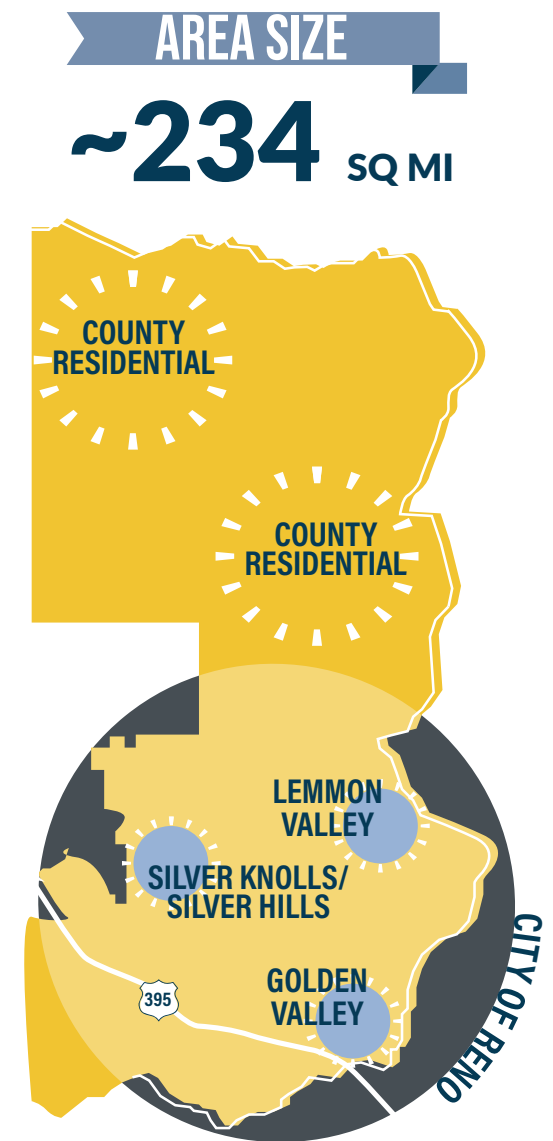
DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

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.

FIGURE 17. NORTH VALLEYS KEY FEATURES



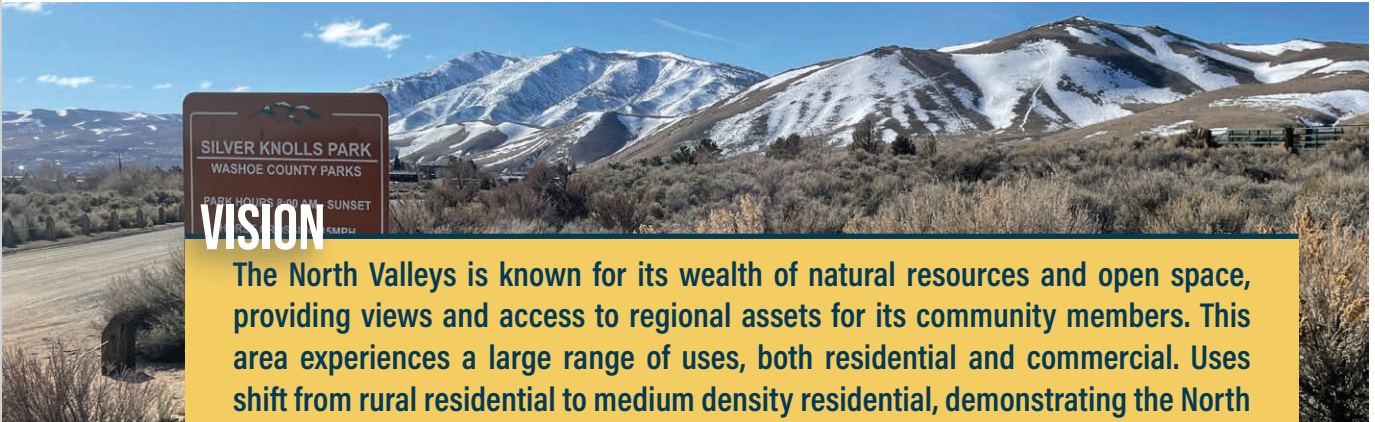
Opportunities and Constraints Summary

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

NORTH VALLEYS

SUBURBAN

RURAL

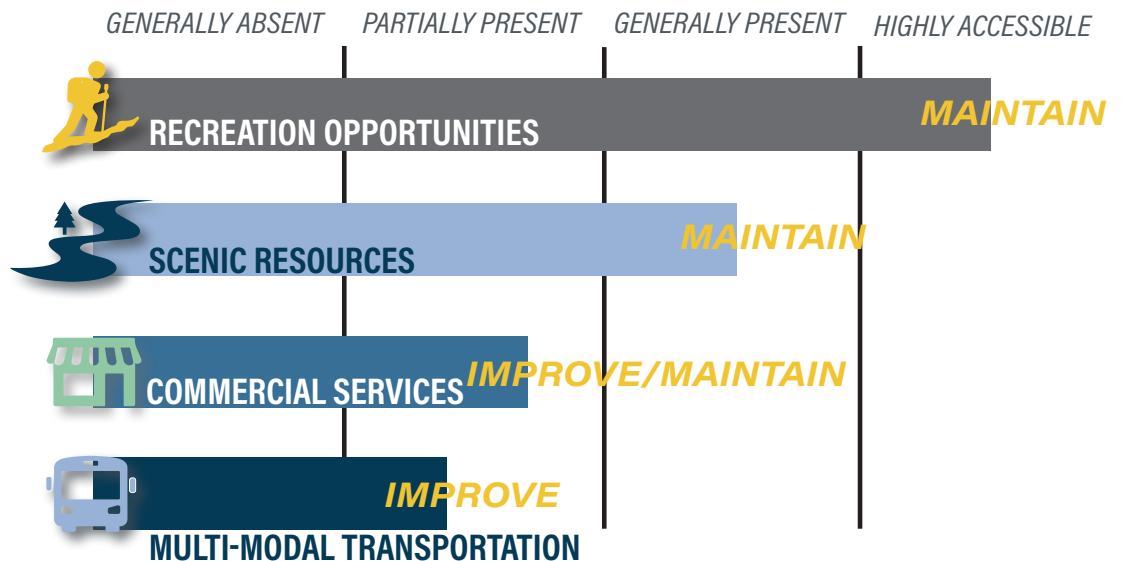


VISION

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.

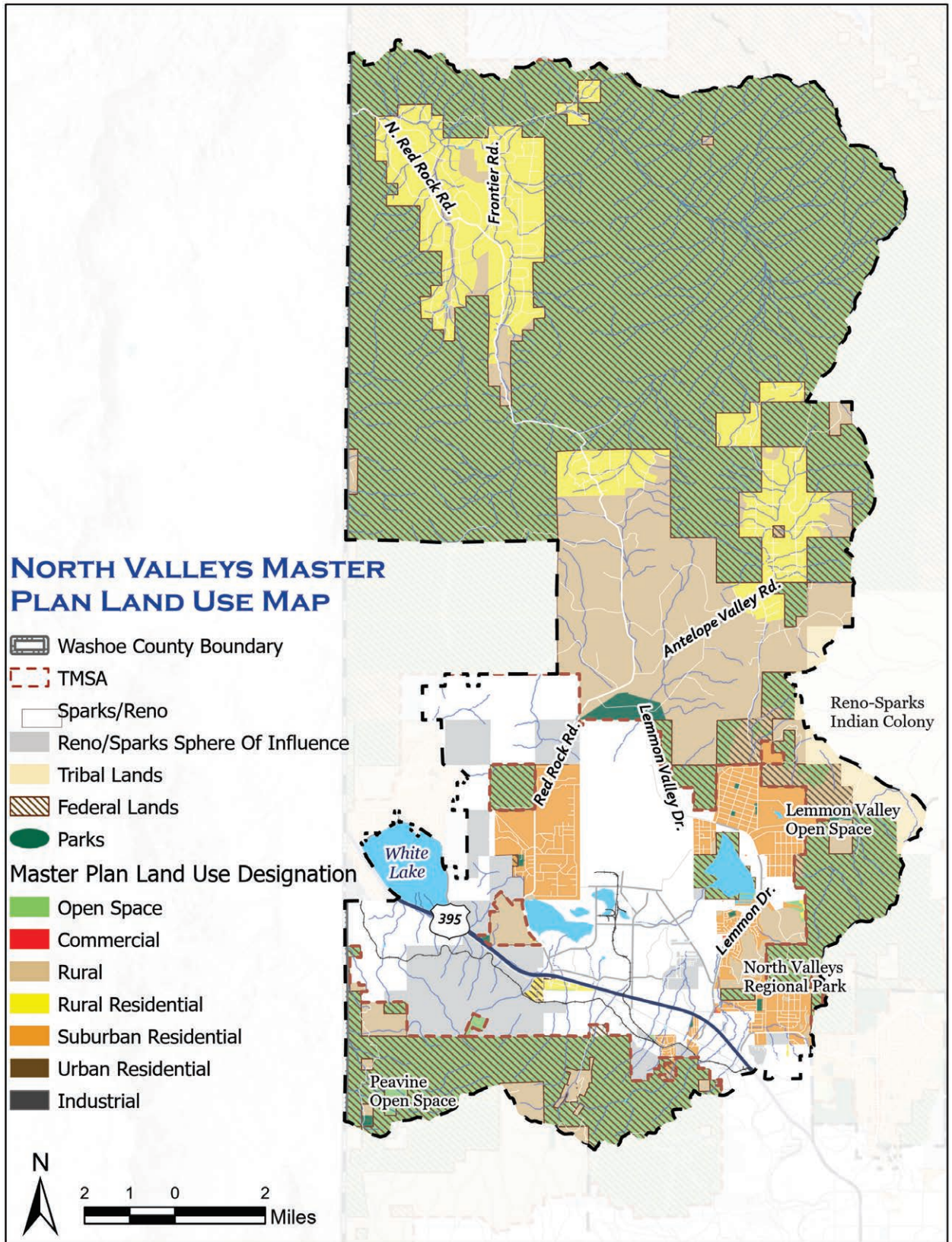
- ▶ Policy 3.1 Identify barriers to service delivery goals to meet Washoe County's minimum service standards for potable water, wastewater, storm water and flood, schools, and transportation as depicted in the Regional Plan List of Facilities and Service Standards.
- ▶ Policy 3.3 Development of new schools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

NORTH VALLEYS

SUBURBAN

RURAL

MAP 14. NORTH VALLEYS MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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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.

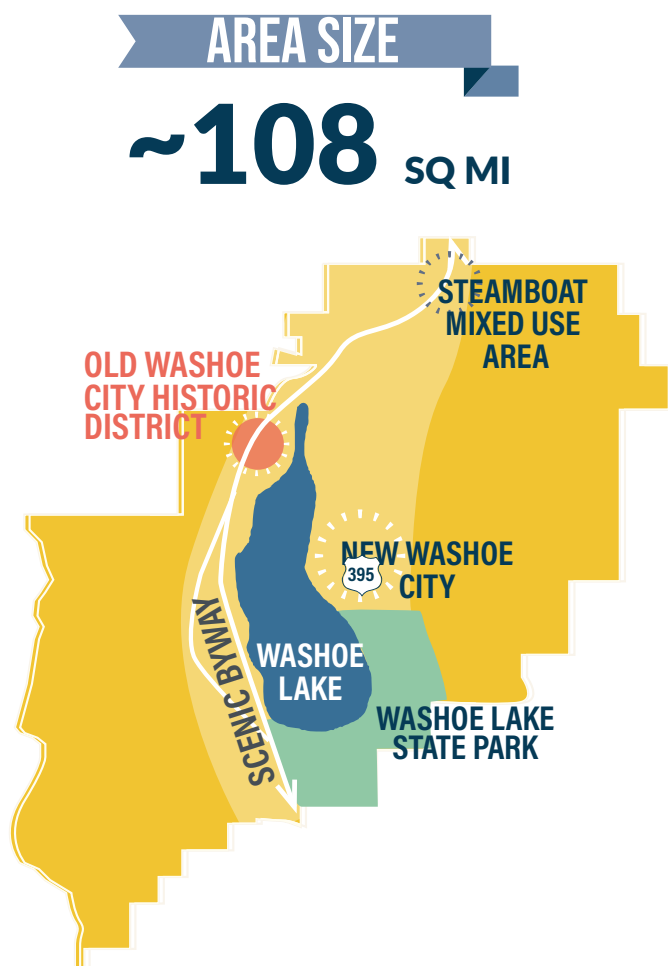
South Valleys water resources are carefully managed to ensure long-term sustainability. The lakes, wetlands, and various creeks running through the area contribute to the beauty of the area and its vegetation and wildlife, specifically Washoe Lake, Davis Creek, Galena Creek, and Steamboat Creek. Protection 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

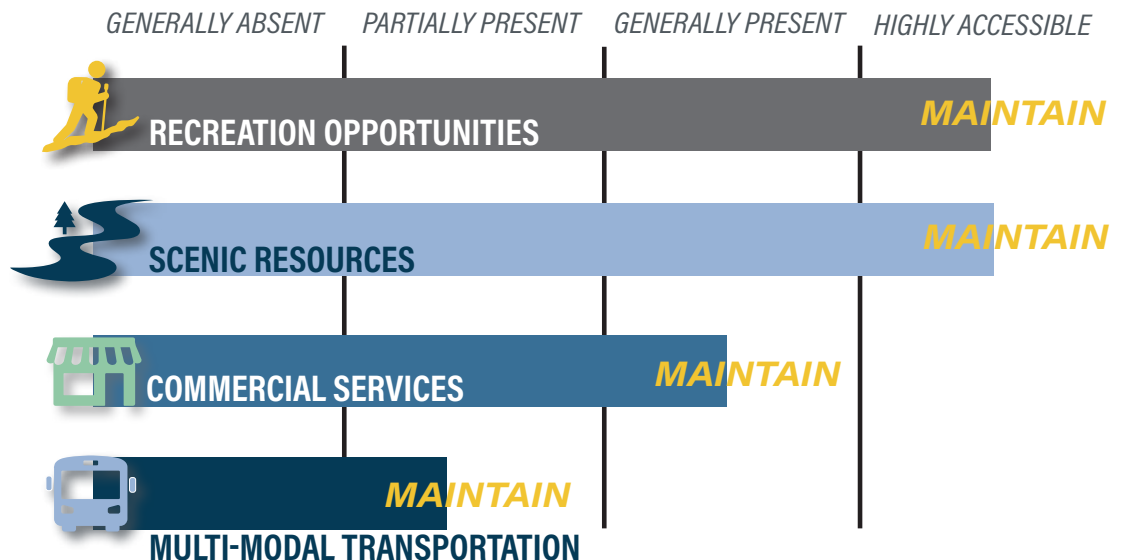


VISION

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.

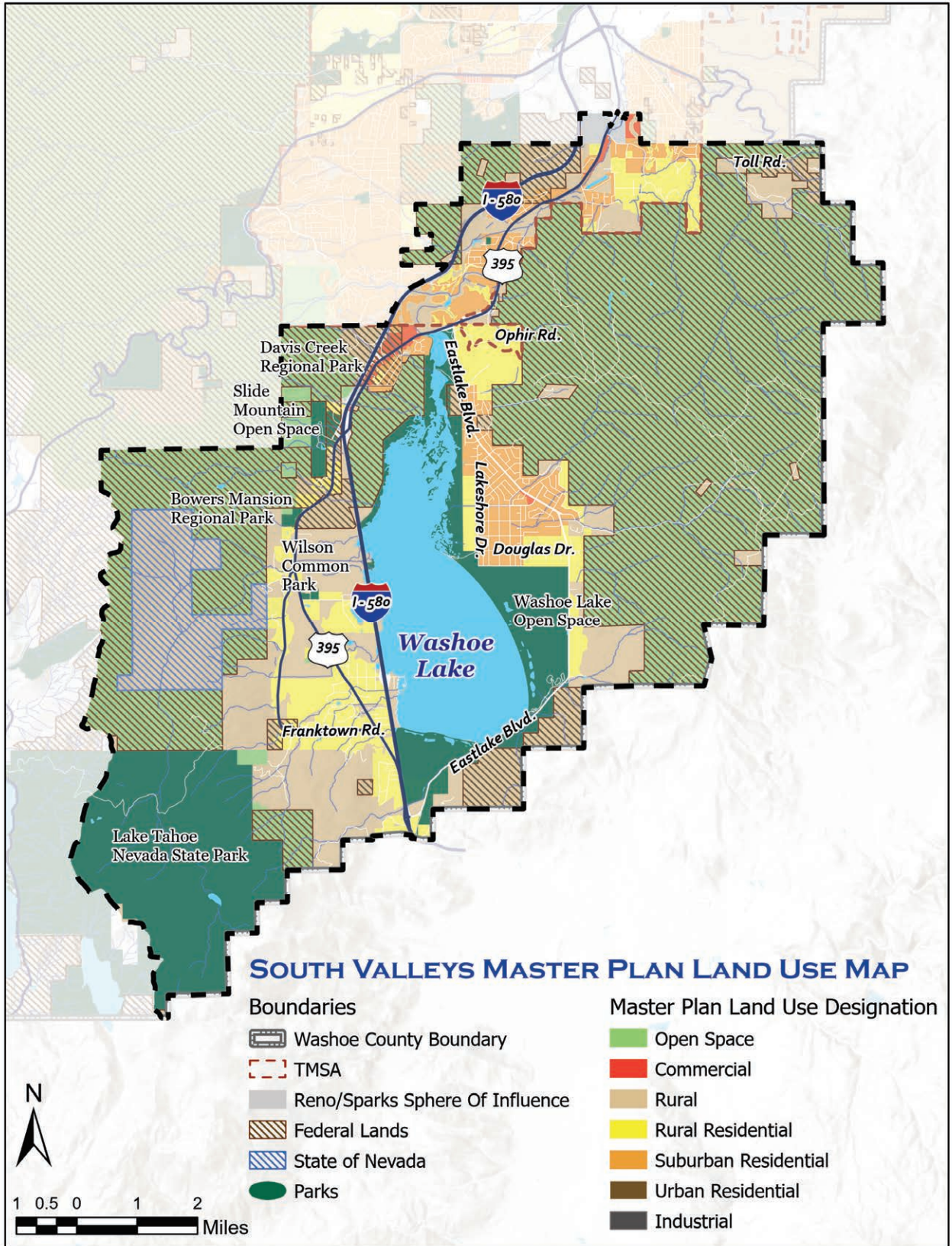
PFS Principle 2. Provide sufficient water to meet the current and future needs of County residents.

- ▶ 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.

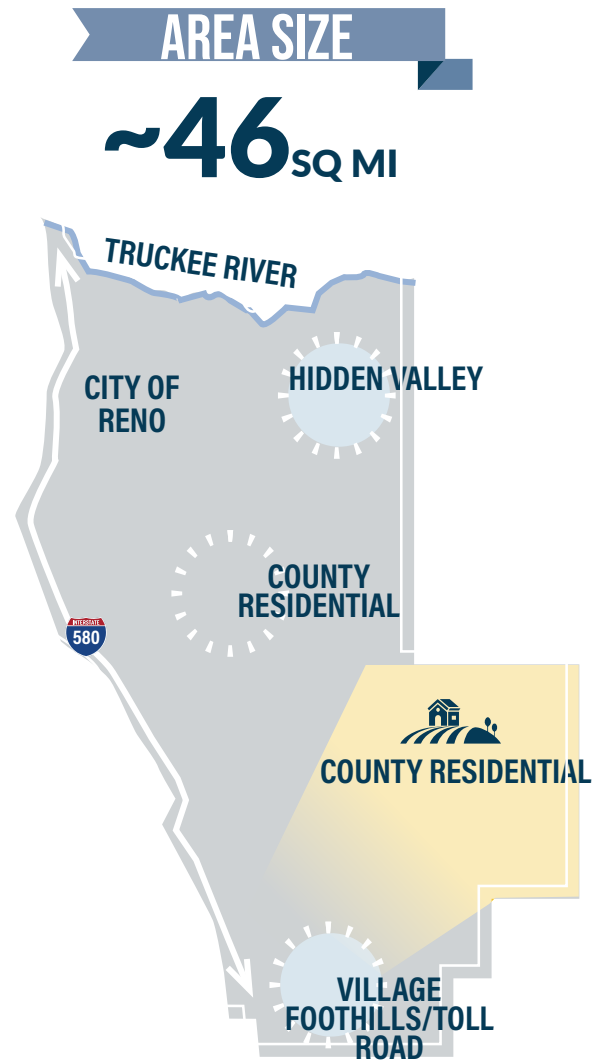
DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Flooding and wildfire risk ▶ Land use conflicts with annexed areas ▶ Few services for aging residents ▶ Lack of public transportation

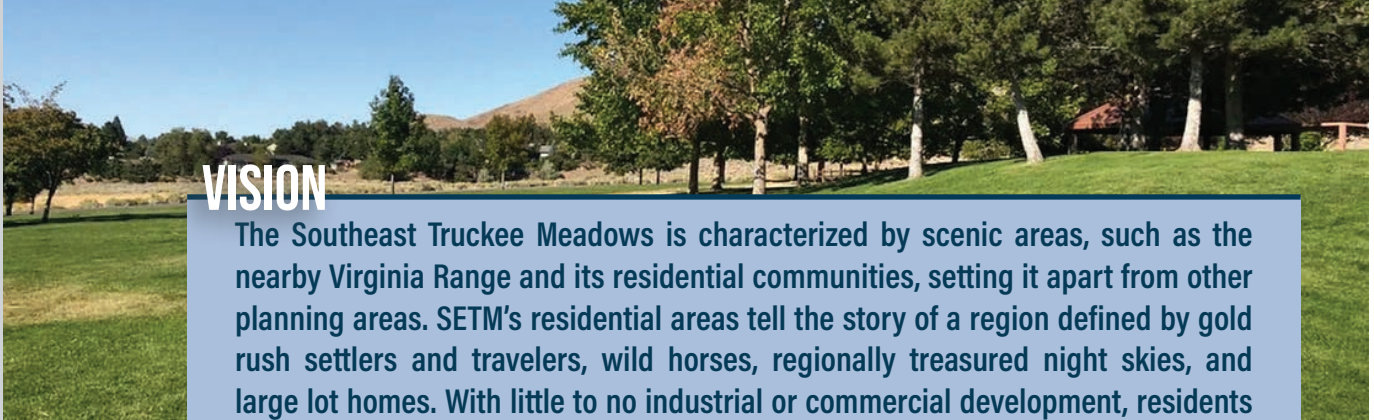
FIGURE 19. SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS KEY FEATURES



SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

SUBURBAN

Photo Credits: Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space

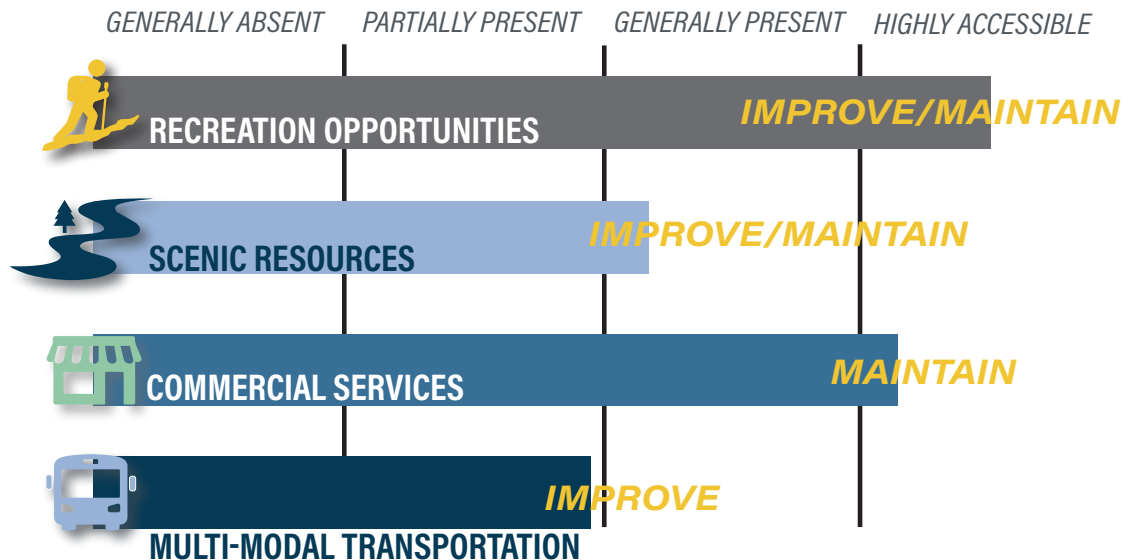


VISION

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.

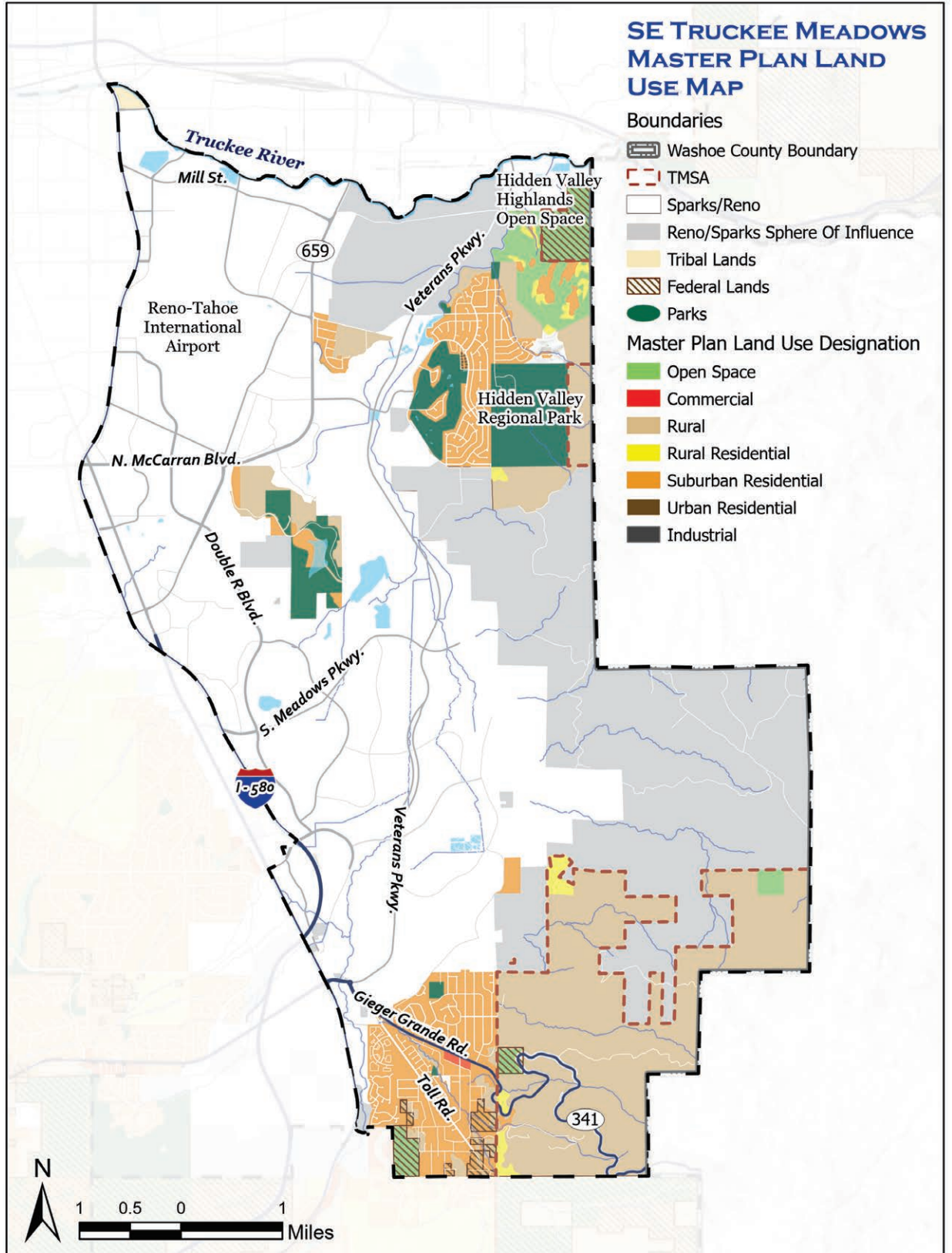
TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ 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.

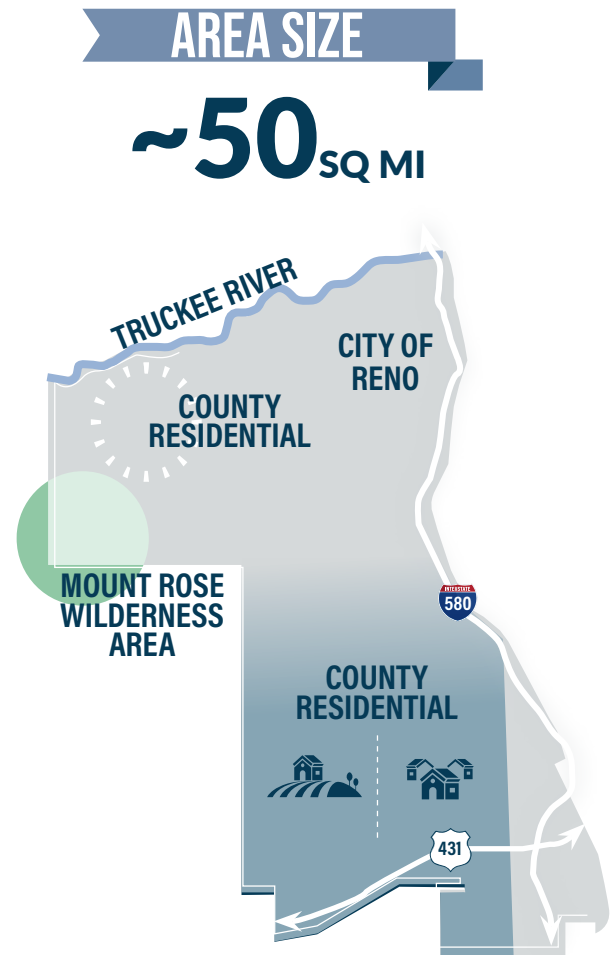
The Southwest Truckee Meadows communities exist in close relation to large blocks of state and public lands. The cultural, natural, and recreational resources on these public lands, as well as on private lands are a key component of the area's character. Residents in this area have expressed a particular 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

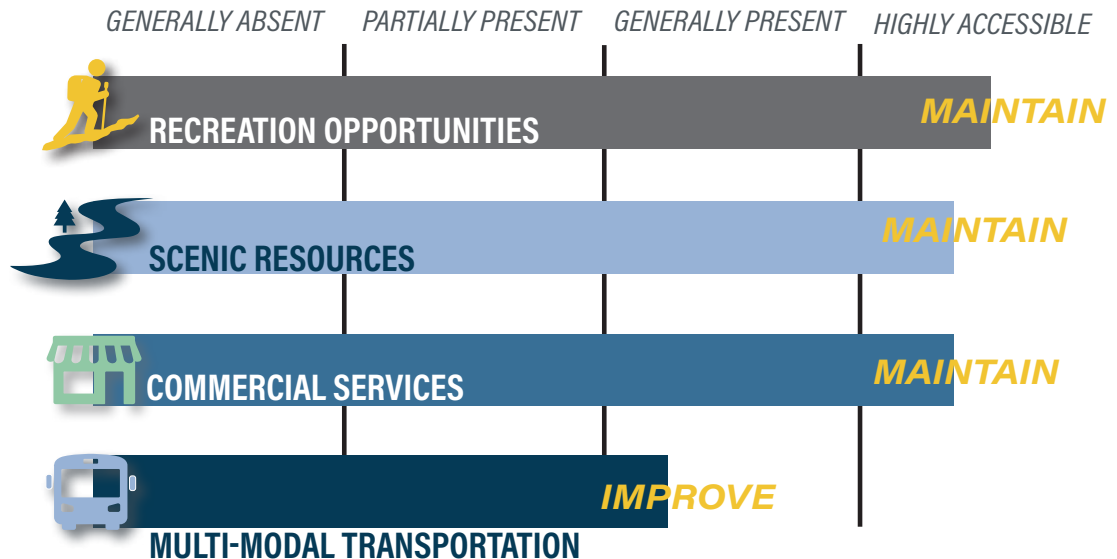


VISION

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.

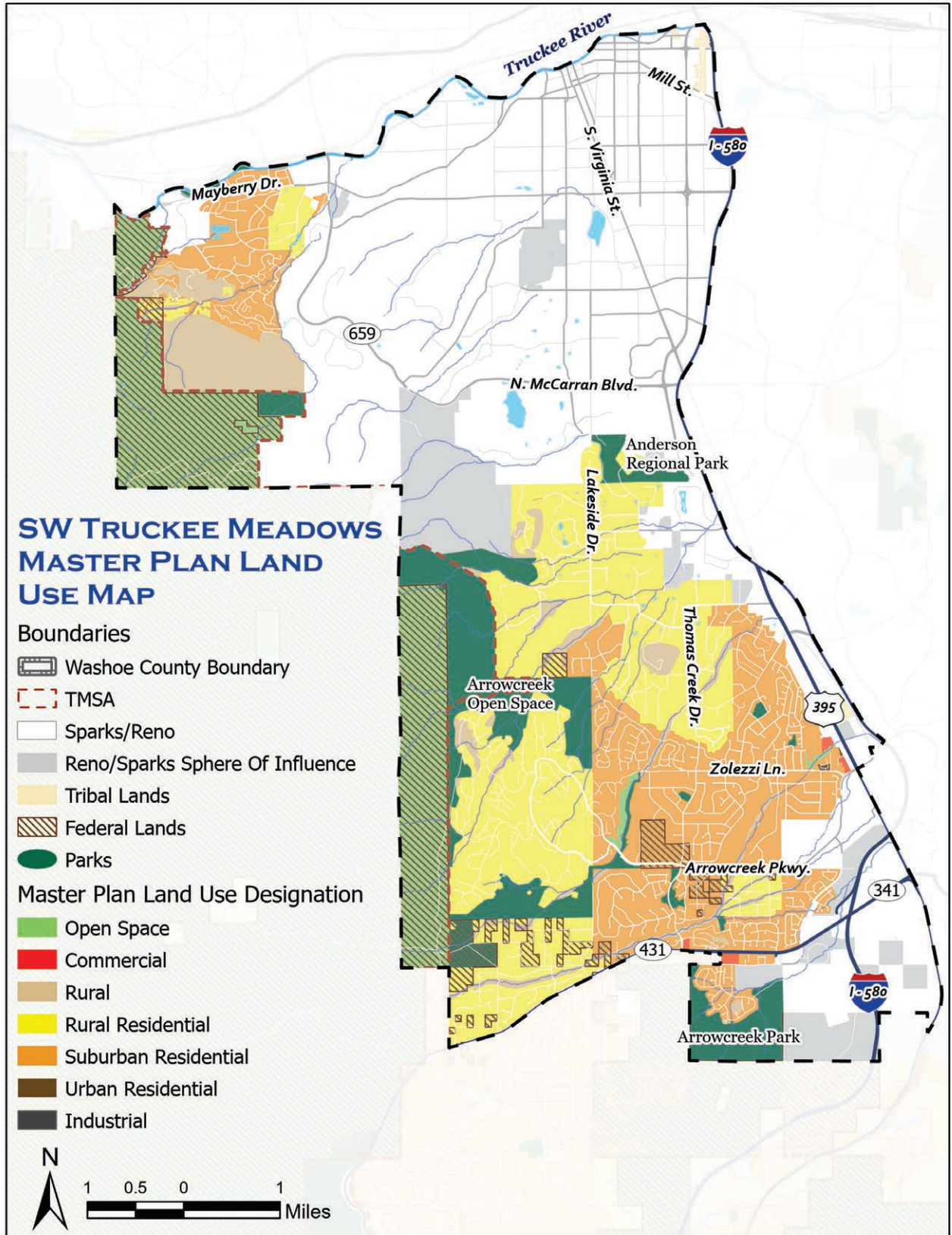
PFS Principle 3. Provide adequate service to developments and maintain a communicative, transparent planning process.

- ▶ 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.

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.

FIGURE 21. SPANISH SPRINGS KEY FEATURES



Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Desire for safer transportation infrastructure ▶ High traffic and congestion

SPANISH SPRINGS

SUBURBAN

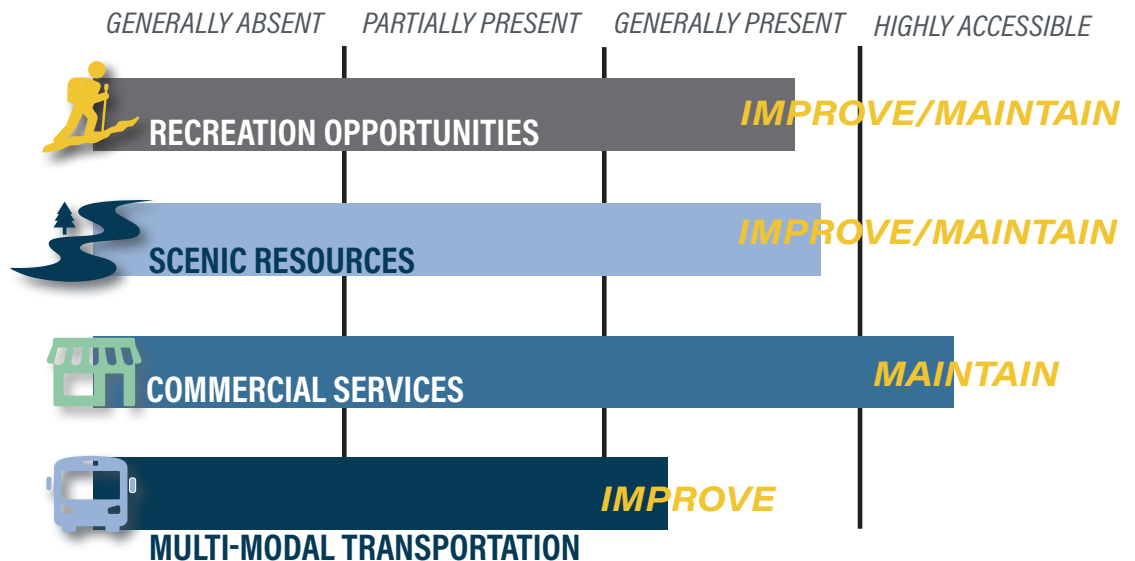


VISION

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.

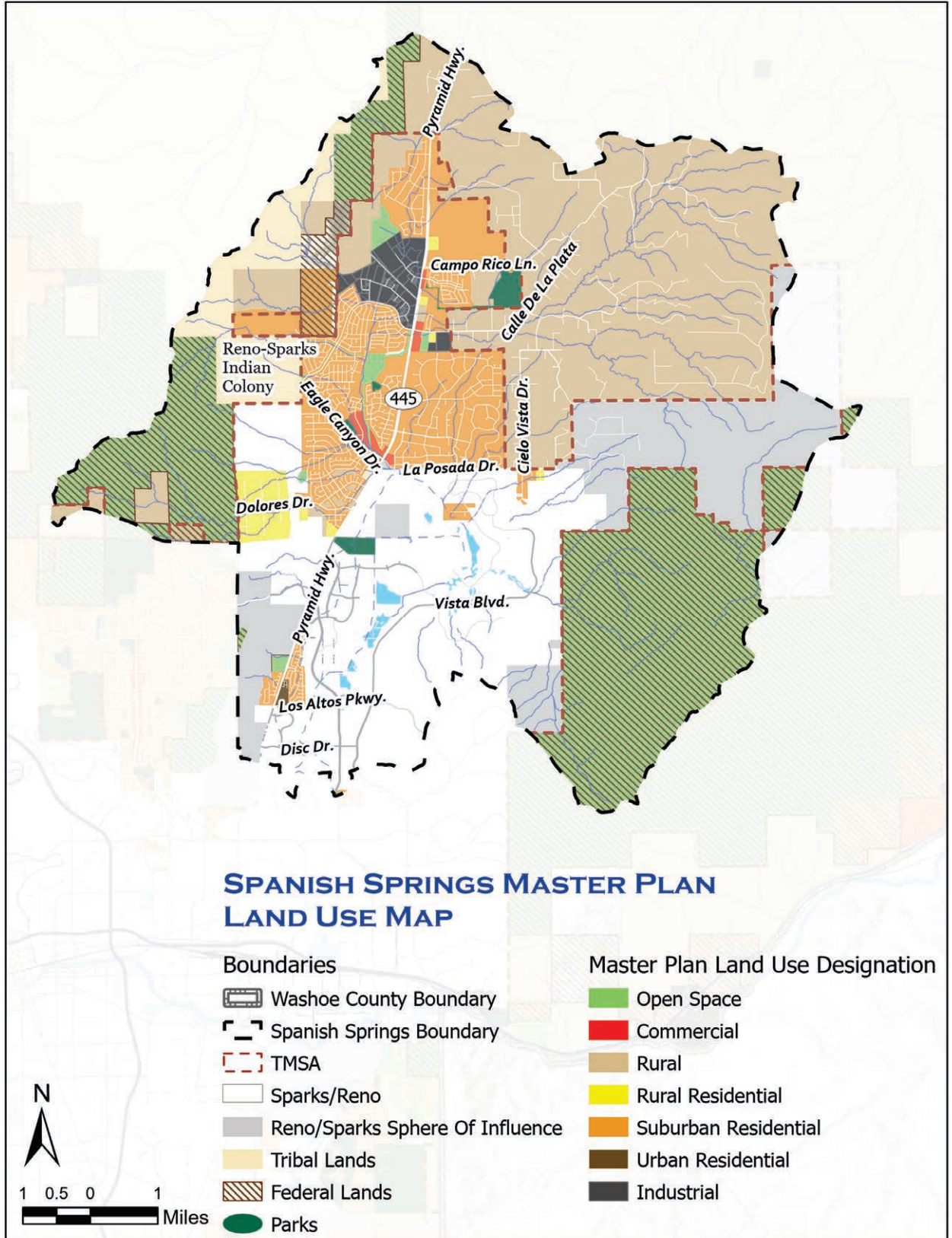
TR Principle 4. Coordinate transportation decisions with regional and local partners.

- ▶ 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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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.

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.

FIGURE 22. SUN VALLEY KEY FEATURES



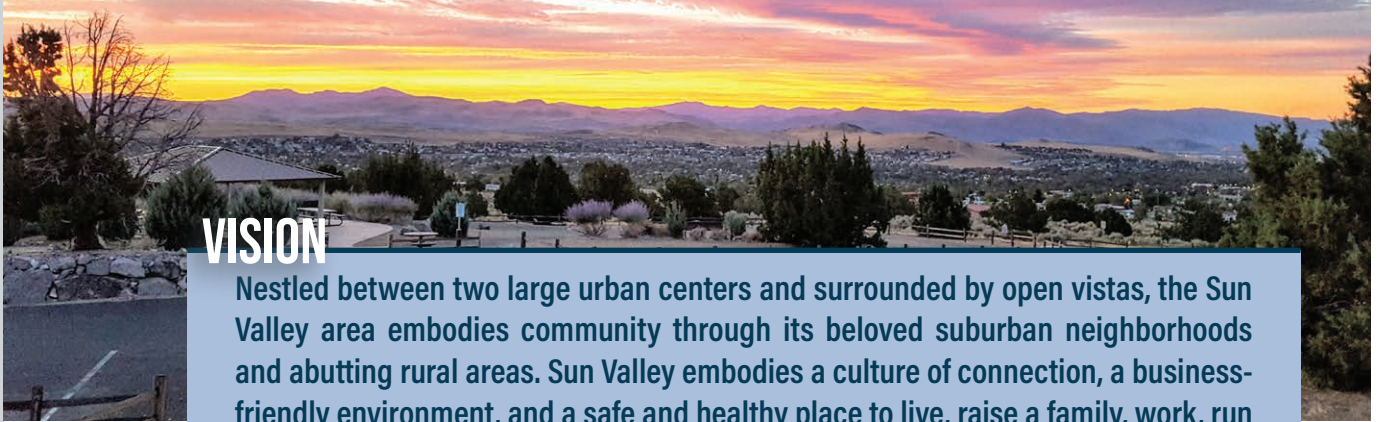
Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Preserve open space and ensure easy access for the community ▶ Attract visitors to the area ▶ Balance single-family homes with higher density housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

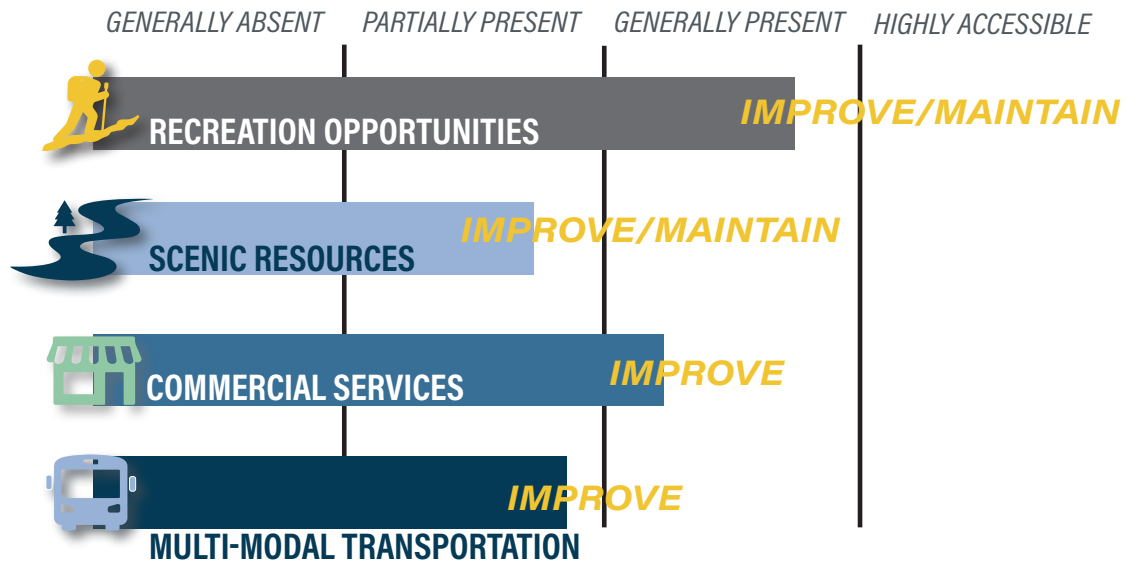


VISION

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.

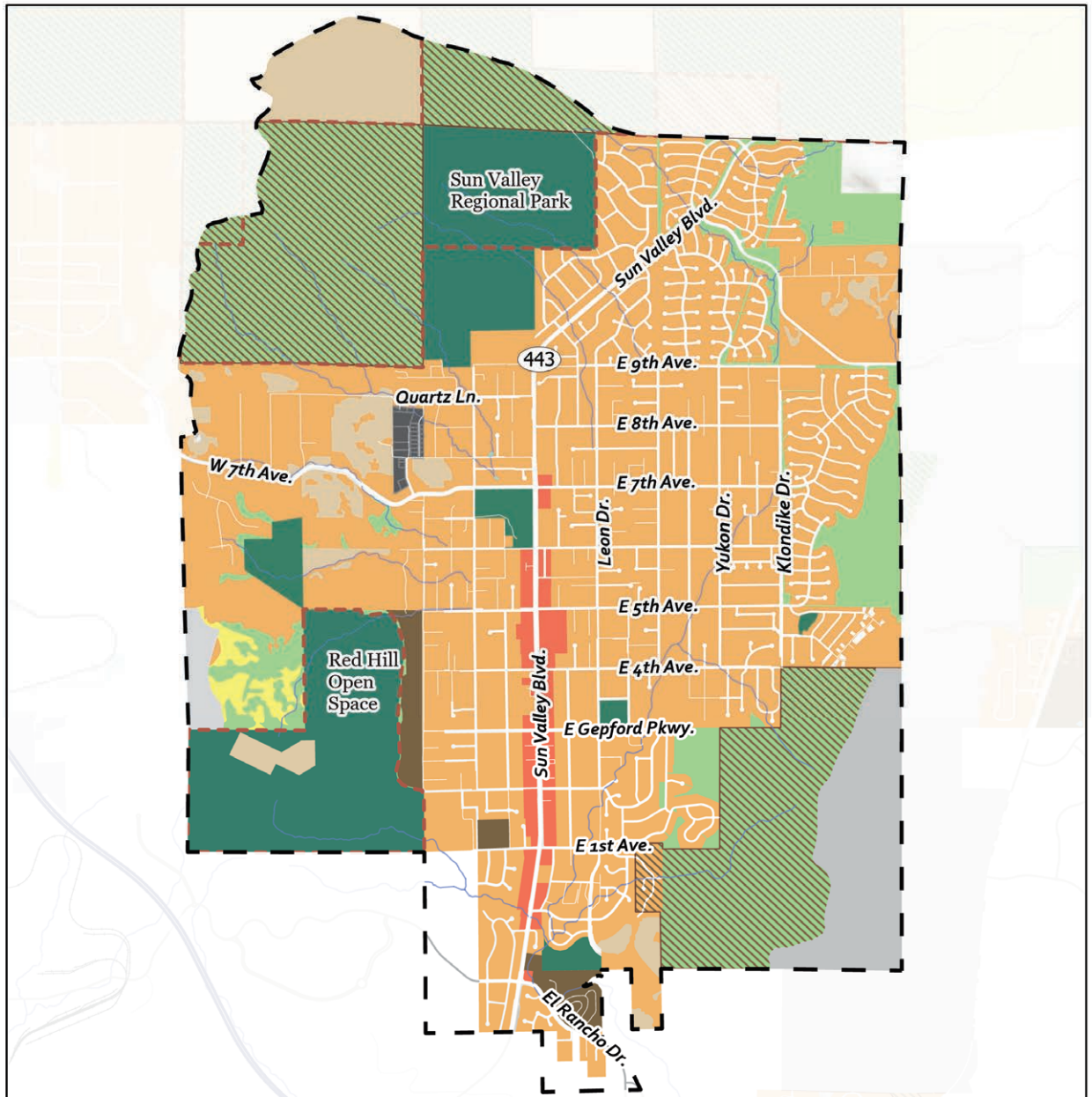
TR Principle 3. Prioritize multi-modal transportation to support healthy communities.

- ▶ 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



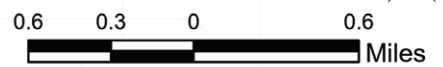
SUN VALLEY MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP

Boundaries

- Washoe County Boundary
- TMSA
- Sparks/Reno
- Reno/Sparks Sphere Of Influence
- Tribal Lands
- Federal Lands
- Parks

Master Plan Land Use Designation

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



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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.

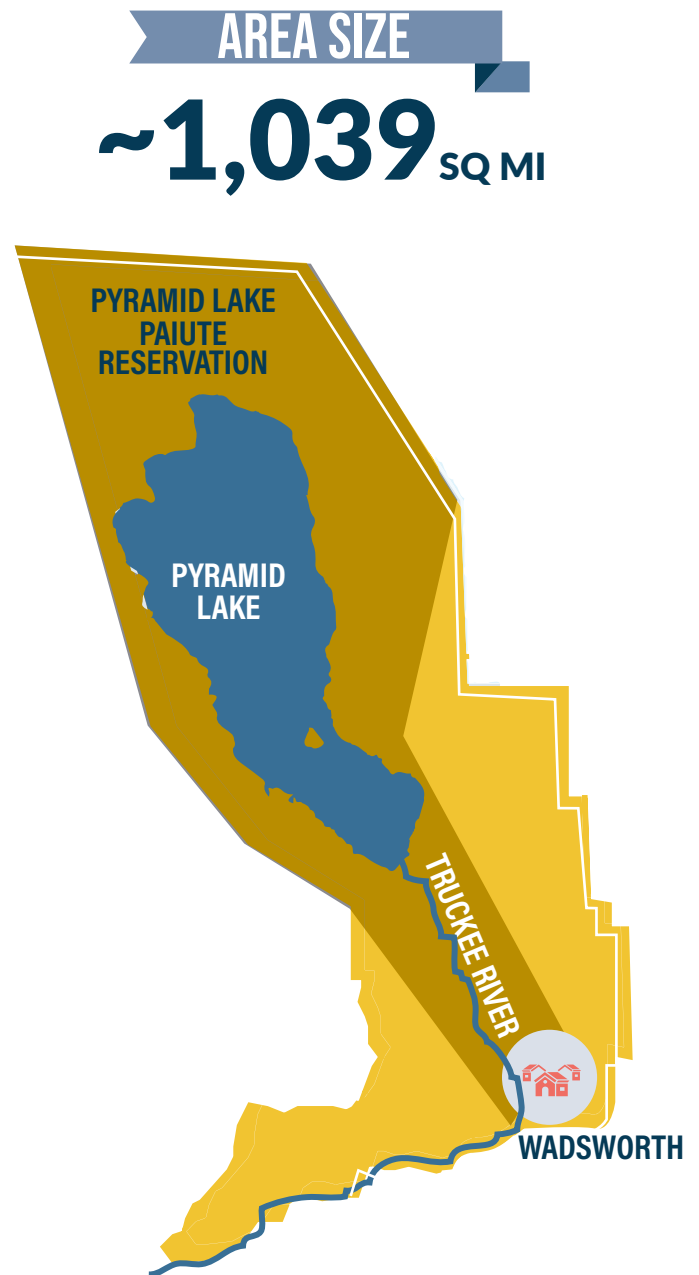
In the Truckee Canyon planning area, soil related constraints include problems of erosion, limitations for septic tank absorption fields and building limitations. The potential for floods caused by winter snow melts, rains, or summer cloudbursts is high in the Truckee Canyon planning area, especially 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.

Opportunities and Constraints

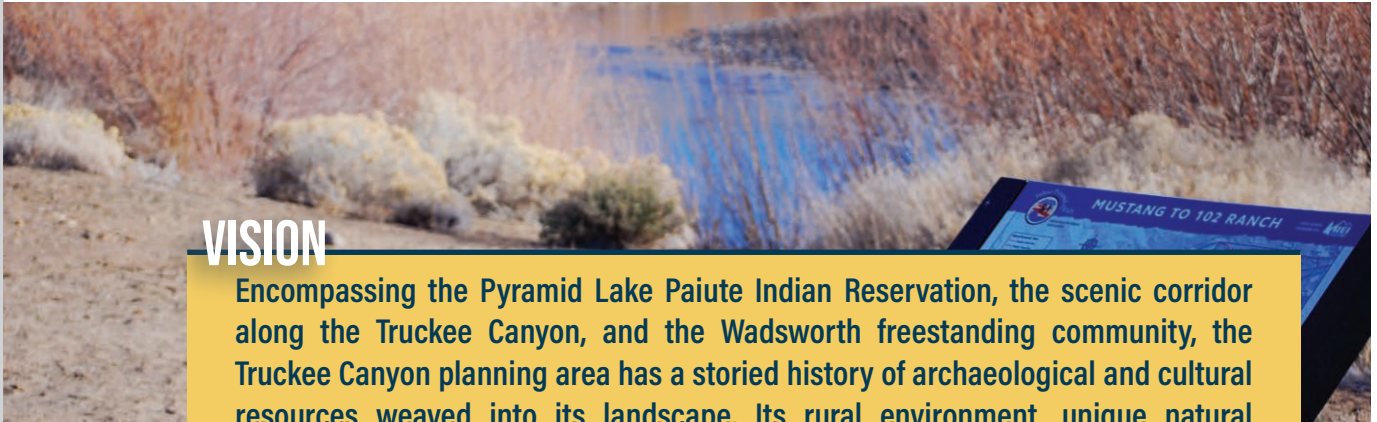
OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Expansion of schools to meet the needs of the community ▶ Trail expansion and access on Peavine Mountain and the Truckee River ▶ Create more wildlife corridors along the highway ▶ Prioritize a community feel with development to create a well-connected town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Limited water resources ▶ Private ownership restricting access to public lands ▶ Lack of road infrastructure in rural areas ▶ Soil constraints

FIGURE 23. TRUCKEE CANYON KEY FEATURES



TRUCKEE CANYON

RURAL

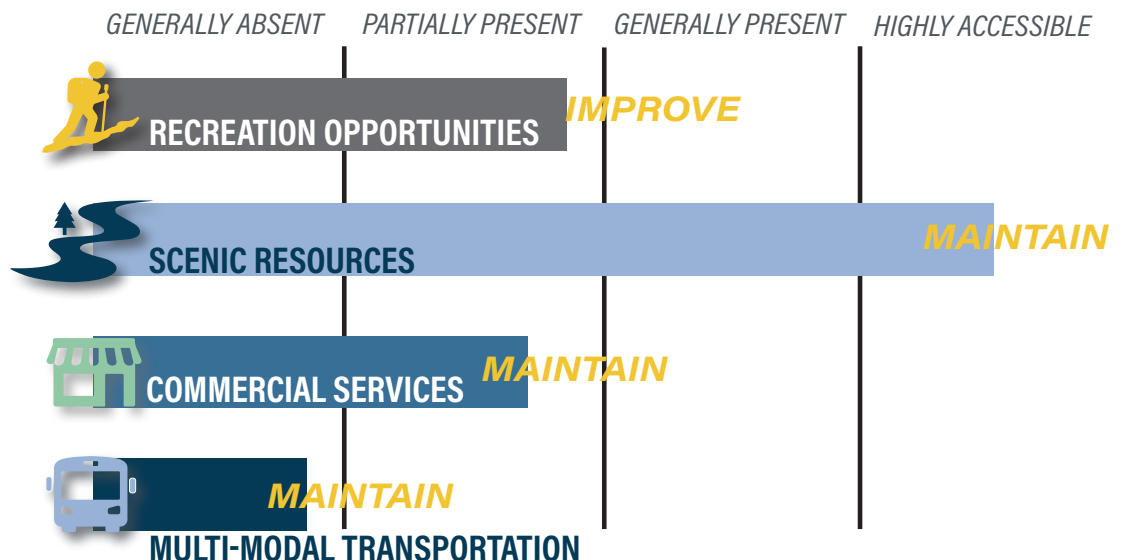


VISION

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 community-oriented, but partially present. 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.

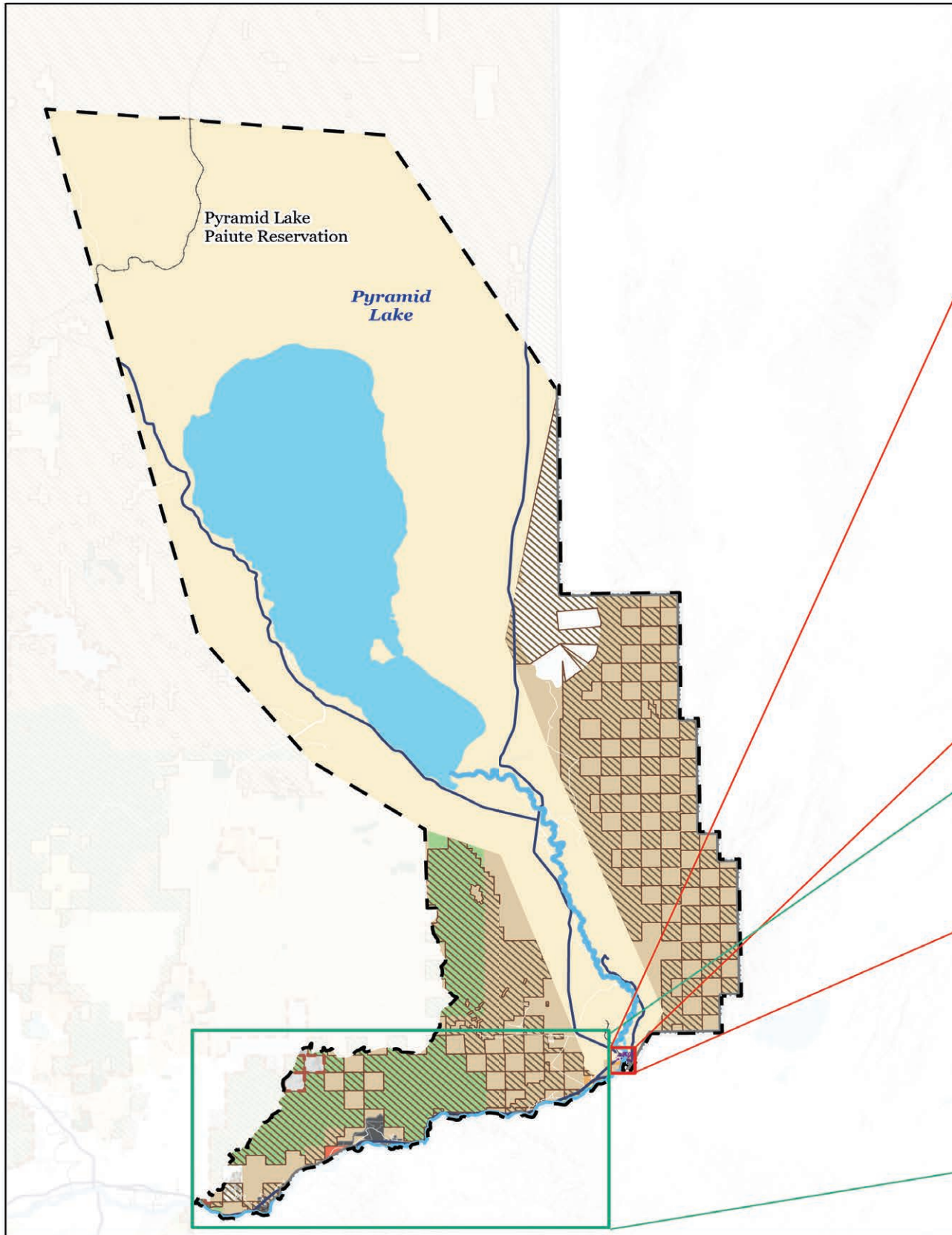
LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ 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.

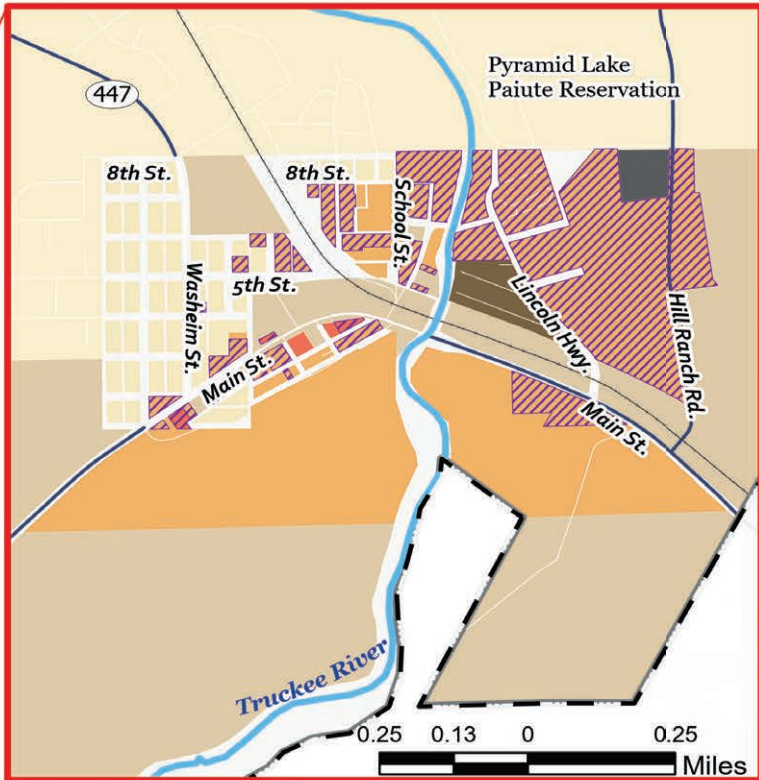
TRUCKEE CANYON

RURAL

MAP 20. TRUCKEE CANYON MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



Wadsworth Inset



TRUCKEE CANYON MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP

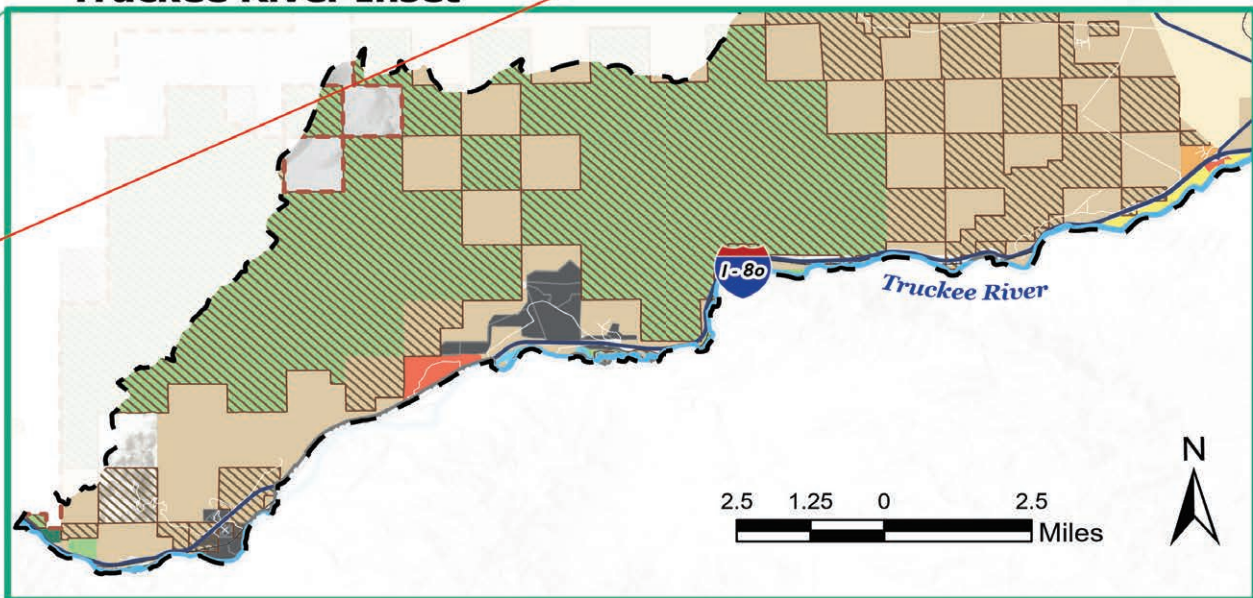
Boundaries

- Washoe County Boundary
- TMSA
- Wadsworth Frees 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





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.

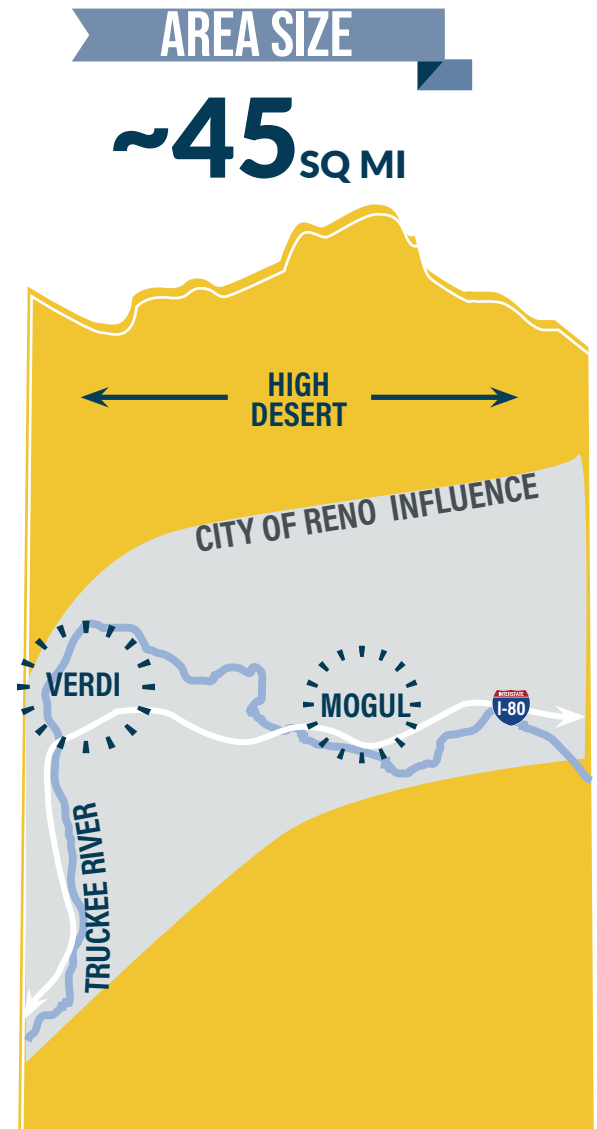
DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

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.

Opportunities and Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Protect and preserve rural land ▶ Provide accessible schools and education ▶ Conserve wildlife habitat for sensitive species ▶ Preserve scenic views and natural landscape along highways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Traffic and lack of safety on I-80 ▶ Access to recreation is dependent on location

FIGURE 24. VERDI KEY FEATURES



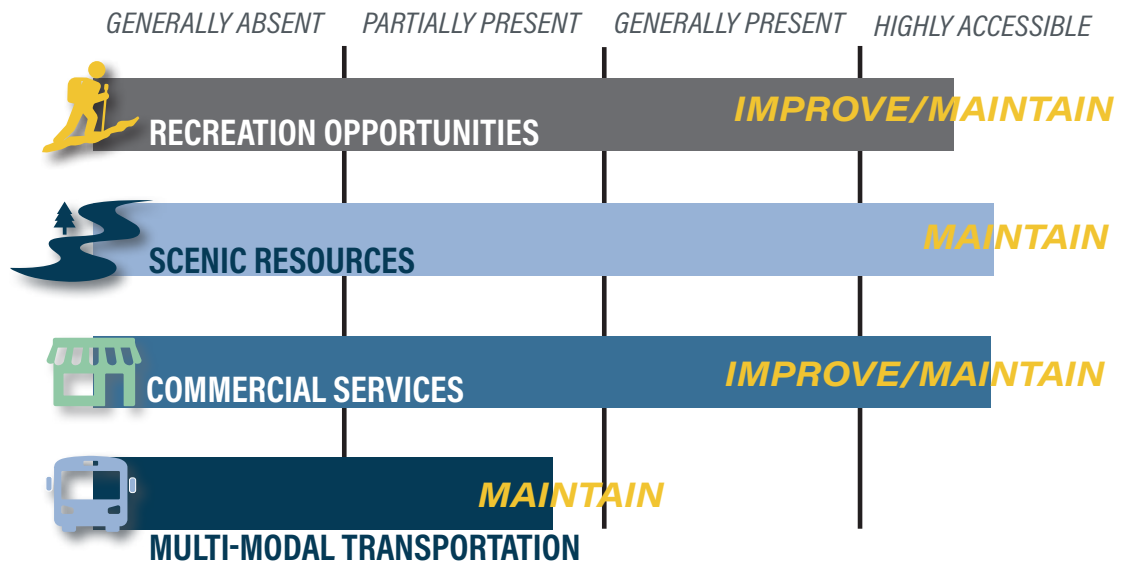


VISION

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.

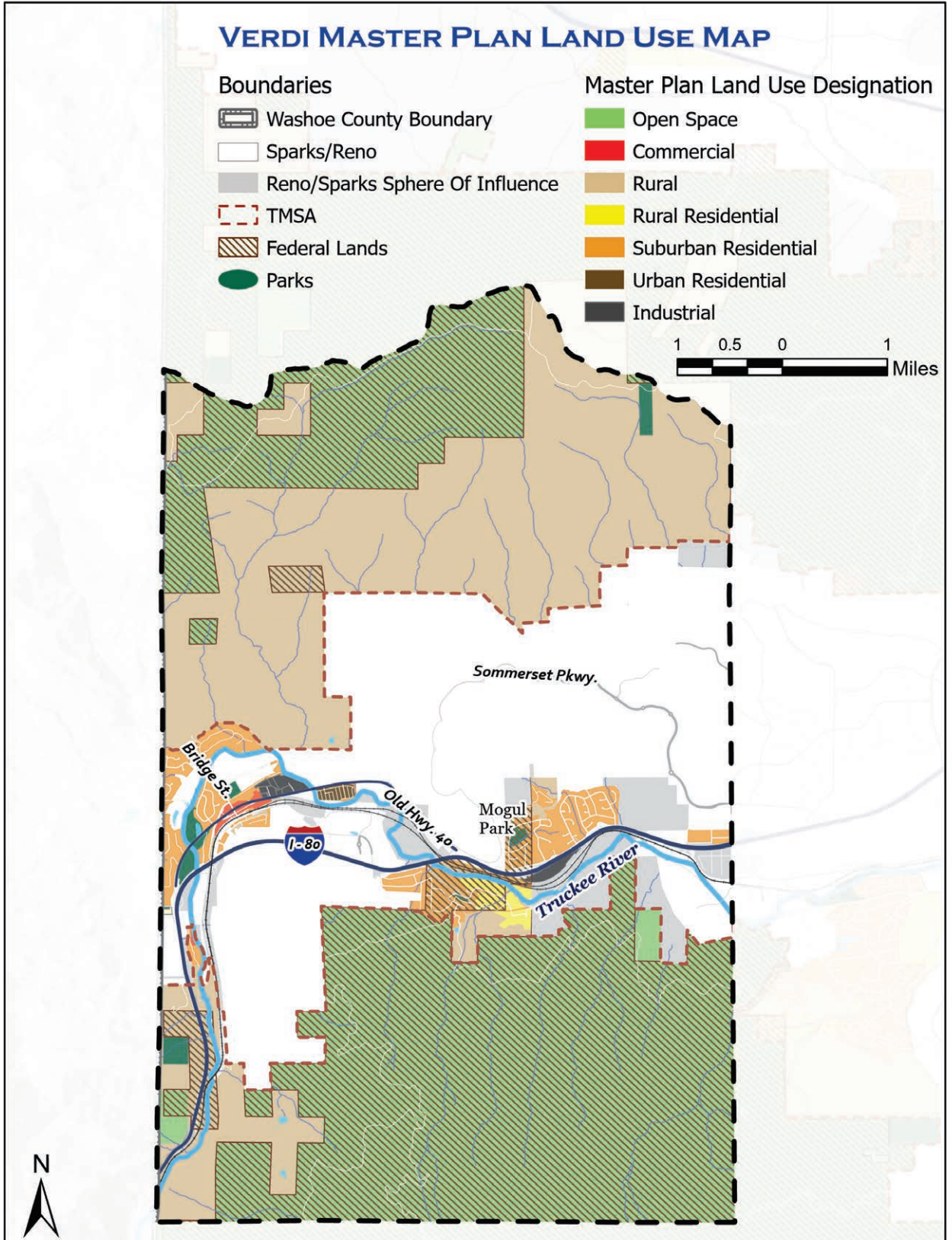
LU Principle 4. Design communities and neighborhoods to create a strong sense of place.

- ▶ 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.

MAP 21. VERDI MASTER PLAN LAND USE MAP



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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.

There are few public facilities and services in the area, and future development will need to provide funding for the creation of schools, parks, and other community facilities. The planning area currently utilizes individual septic systems as well as individual wells, and future growth will need to accommodate for these infrastructure limitations.

Warm Springs Specific Plan

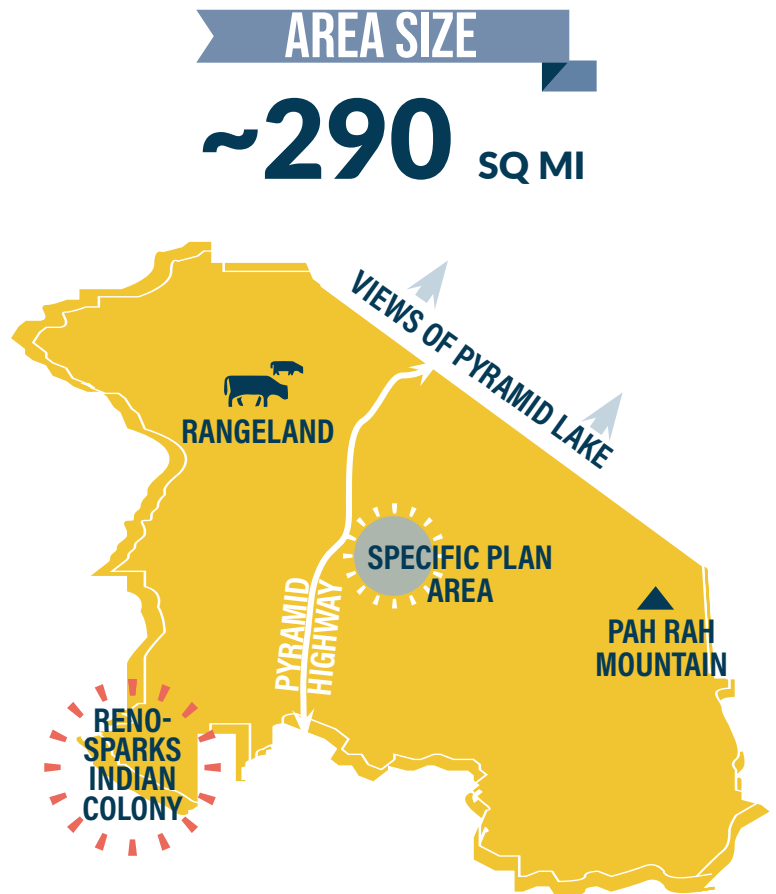
The Warm Springs Specific Plan (WSSP) was adopted in 1992 as a subcomponent of the Warm Springs Area Plan. Although the WSSP is referred to as a “specific plan”, it is not considered a “planned unit development” subject to NRS Chapter 278A or a “specific plan” subject to Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (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.

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

FIGURE 25. WARM SPRINGS KEY FEATURES



WARM SPRINGS

RURAL

Photo Credits: Pat McMurray



water and sewer infrastructure. From the adoption of the WSSP, these costs proved an insurmountable barrier to the 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Protect and preserve rural land ▶ Provide accessible schools and education ▶ Conserve wildlife habitat for sensitive species ▶ Preserve scenic views and natural landscape along highways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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

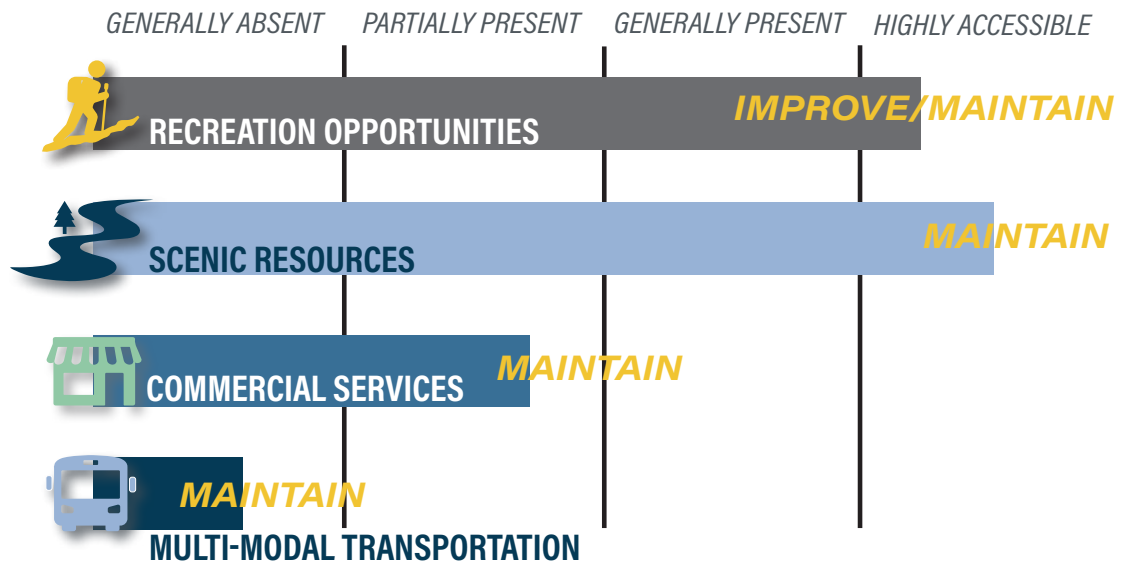


VISION

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.

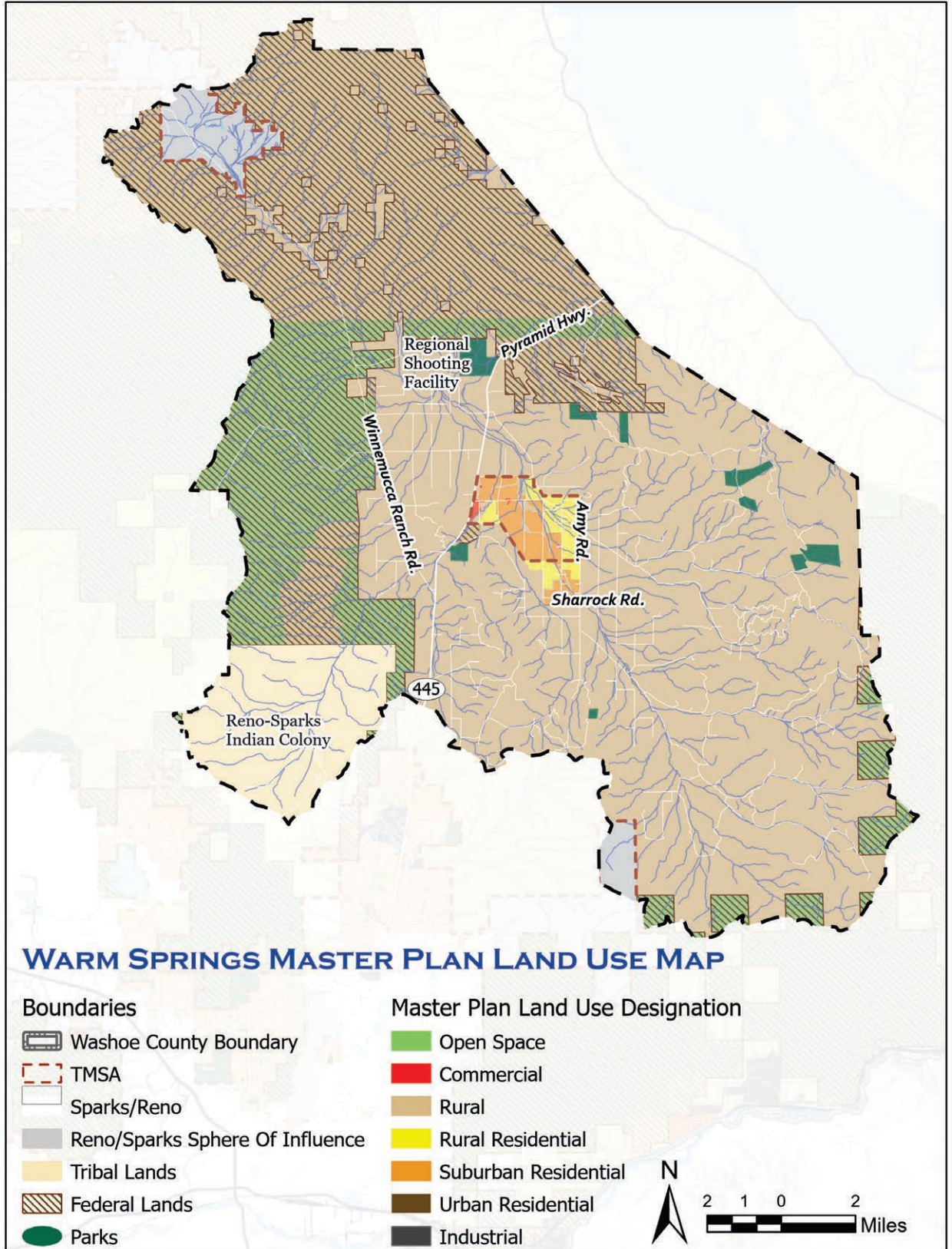
LU Principle 5. Maintain the rural character of communities in the Rural Area.

- ▶ 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.

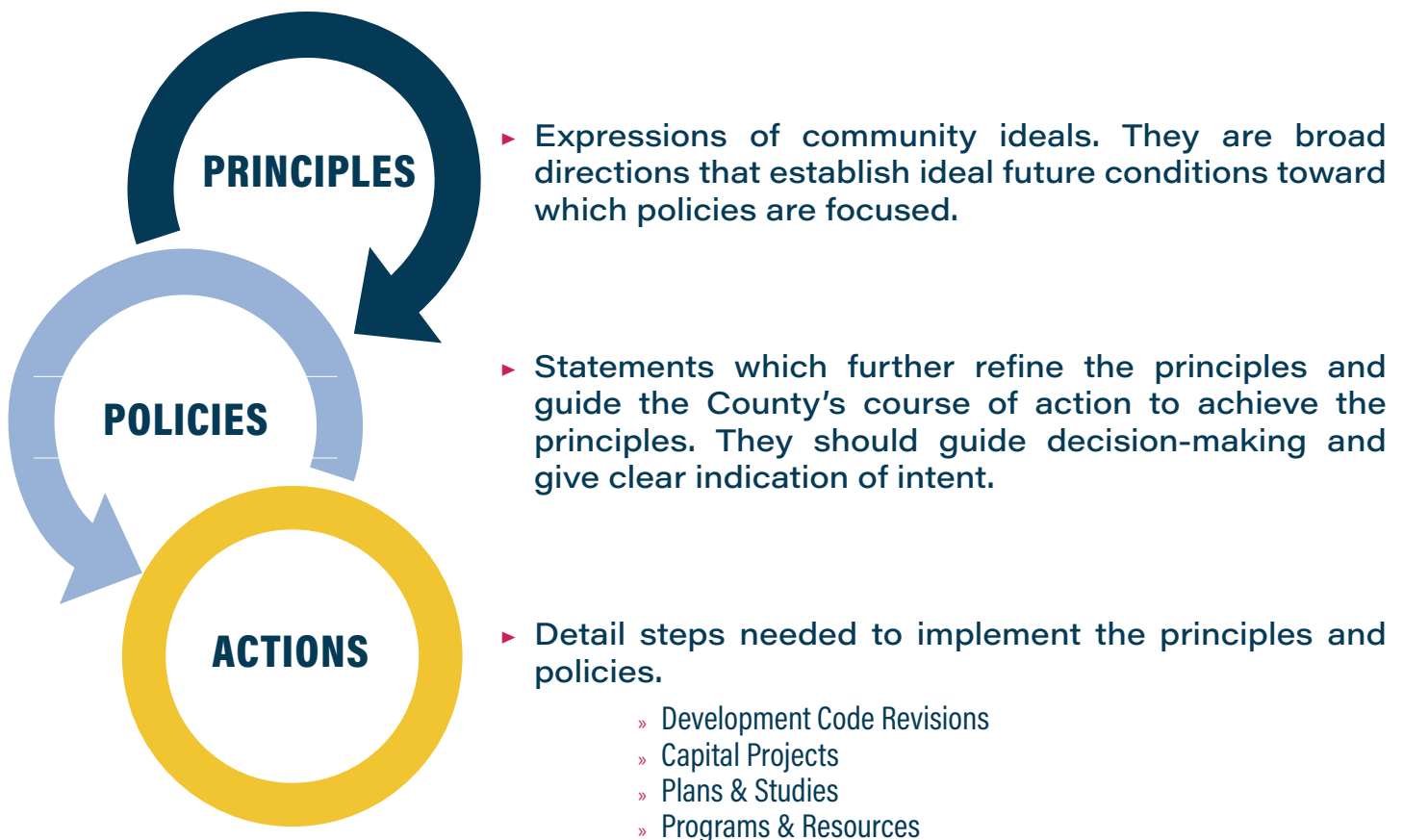
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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 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	\$
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, 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		\$\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
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 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	\$
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	\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
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, 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	\$\$\$
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	AR3.5	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	\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
<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	\$\$\$
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		\$
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	\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
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	\$\$\$
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	\$\$\$

ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	ASSOCIATED PRINCIPLES & POLICIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE
<i>Long-Term Actions</i>					
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	\$
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	\$\$

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 TMRPA 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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APPENDIX 2

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SUMMARY

**CLICK THE TITLE TO
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APPENDIX 3 PLAN AUDIT



**CLICK THE TITLE TO
VIEW THE APPENDIX!**

APPENDIX 4

**CONSERVATION PLAN:
WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL
OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PLAN**

**CLICK THE TITLE TO
VIEW THE APPENDIX!**

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APPENDIX 5

**WARM SPRINGS
WATER
MANAGEMENT
FUTURE POLICY
DISCUSSION AND 2023
WATER RIGHTS
INVENTORY**

Washoe County Master Plan Update

Stakeholder Summary

January 28, 2021

Introduction

The Master Plan Update process relies on broad and representative stakeholder input to establish a unified vision and clearly articulate the shared values of Washoe County's diverse population. This document summarizes that input collected from the stakeholder interviews.

The planning process began by listening and learning from County leaders, staff, and stakeholders about what works in Washoe County and what sets the County apart within the state. Stakeholder interviews were designed to inform and excite community members about the planning process and gather preliminary insights about how the community views Washoe County now and into the future. Below each of the questions are several quotes from the interviews, highlighted in blue.

All twenty participants in the stakeholder interviews live in Washoe County, including some who claim residency in the cities of Reno or Sparks. Several stakeholders moved to the County in 2020 and some have a rooted, family history that goes back several generations within the region.

Who We Heard From

The stakeholders interviewed during this phase included representatives from the following groups:

- Washoe County School District
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- University of Nevada-Reno
- Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA)
- City of Reno Community Development Department
- Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN)
- Food Bank of Northern Nevada (FBNN)
- Nevada Arts Council
- Nevada Housing Coalition (NHC)
- Healthy Nevada Lands
- Ecolutions
- Regenesi Reno
- Stantec
- KLS Planning
- CFA Reno
- Upland Contractors
- SoL Cannabis
- Lifestyle Homes
- Ferrari-Lund Real Estate

Visioning

A preliminary draft vision statement was drafted based on discussions with County staff, the Steering Committee, and stakeholders representing the organizations and departments listed above.

“Washoe County is a place where people come for the unprecedented access to awe-inspiring, natural amenities and stay for the incredible opportunity to make a difference and the ability to experience a rural, small town feel just minutes from a bustling urban environment.”

Steering Committee members were asked to review the draft statement and recommend revisions, some of which included incorporating the theme of resiliency into the vision, in addition to safety and cultural opportunities.

Revised vision statement:

“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 and history, and its rich network of community services.”

What We Heard

Key Takeaways

Stakeholder interviews revealed the following priorities and preferences relating to community values and the future of Washoe County:

- Preserve and enhance access to open space, recreation, 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 county-wide decision making (climate, market, politics, etc.)
- Increase access to public transportation, quality education, and mental health services

“We need a shared regional vision. That is our opportunity.”

“As more development continues, we need to maintain access areas to public lands.”

“Infrastructure, services, healthcare and mental health have been big barriers to attracting employers to the region.”

Interview Questions

What do you love about Washoe County?

Access to nature and recreation was the most common response to the question “what do you love about Washoe County?” The access that residents have to hiking, biking, skiing, and open spaces was stated as the primary reason people were attracted to the area and one of the most important features that speaks to resident retention.

In addition to the recreational amenities, stakeholders 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.

“The fact that it is not so big yet. It is growing but there is potential with that. I could be a medium fish in a medium pond. It’s not too big and you can still make a difference here.”

“The connection that Washoe County has to the outdoors is far and away its biggest strength. The access I have to the outdoors here is what saved my mental health during the pandemic.”

“I stay here because of the proximity to Tahoe and it is a fun place to be. I hope my kids can afford to stay here. The younger generations are getting priced out.”

“I don’t think there’s a house that’s been sold in this area where the brochure or sales material for the house didn’t feature access to Sierra Nevada recreation.”

“Washoe County is a nice, easy place to live that’s less hectic than the bay area. We have big city amenities without the fast pace.”

What are the top challenges or opportunities you would like to see addressed during the Master Plan update?

Stakeholders and Steering Committee members stated that the key issues that require 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.

Balancing the desire for preservation and *access to open space and agricultural lands* requires consideration of the County's growing population and need for *accessible transportation* to move people to and from employment centers, recreation, and housing. In addition to access to housing, recreation and employment, stakeholders stated a need for increased access to food, mental health services, and overall healthcare access.

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.

"I hope we don't lose the outdoor spaces, the parks, trail systems, and the golf courses. The places that keep the beauty here. That is the appeal for people moving and visiting here."

"The Area Plans were created with really good intentions. They get more into code and that needs to be taken out. Too many specifics for design."

"Teachers and students struggle with the cost of housing. Very difficult to even rent here at a reasonable rate."

"I hear some negative comments about too much change, but I still see it from the eyes of someone who grew up in an urban area where we've got a bunch of room to still grow."

"I've watched the slow and steady evolution of the community and in many ways, and believe that these overly prescriptive area plans are choking our ability to grow up into a modern community."

What does resiliency mean to you?

Resiliency is one of the core components of the Master Plan Update. Resiliency does not mean the same thing to everyone, and each stakeholder offered their perspective on what resiliency means to them and the County. To some stakeholders, resiliency translates to the ability to withstand and adapt to changing environments, both related to 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 stakeholders 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 the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the physical and financial well-being of residents.

"We need to build on our commonalities so that we can realize how similar we are, rather than how different we are. Focus on an equitable distribution of resources throughout the region."

"Resiliency equates to preparedness. We have to be prepared for earthquakes, flooding, and the urban heat island effect, to name a few."

"My definition has changed in light of the pandemic. Resiliency is having a plan and sticking to the plan and knowing that you can adapt the plan when factors or environments require it."

"A city in the USA that has the basic attributes that make it a desirable place to live is always going to bounce back from economic disruption. If it is a nice place to live, people are going to come."

"We were told our project job and population growth rates were crazy. They were exceeded. We need to enhance our internet access, access to affordable housing and transportation, and invest in electric vehicles."

What other items or issues should be considered in this update?

Specific comments related to other Master Plan enhancements include:

- Develop a set of metrics to monitor and track the County’s progress towards goals
- Redevelop the Area Plans to be more concise and free of regulatory language
 - Broaden density allowances within Area Plan designations
 - Remove Area Plan modifiers—place within the Master Plan
- Address inconsistencies between the Plan and code.
- Maintain the existing rural areas in the County and direct growth towards urban and semi-urban areas
- Restore the intent behind the character statements
- The North Valleys (Lemmon Valley, Sun Valley, Cold Springs, and Spanish Springs) need more focus
 - Growth rate
 - Flooding
 - Transportation access
 - Food access
- Wildlife corridor protection
- Ensure equity and inclusion in the planning process and in the distribution of services
- Emphasize arts and culture
- Embrace and allow for up-and-coming technologies (solar, EV, wind, etc.)
- Attract skilled, high-wage employment

“Sun Valley is improving but the north valleys continue to be the primary food desert and services deserts in the County.”

“Housing is obviously a big issue in the County. That’s of certain concern to me. It’s a dilemma. You see these places that are so dilapidated and want them to be improved without displacing people.”

“One of the biggest challenges is at the confluence of transportation and housing. We need to keep transportation linked to housing and the employment base.”

“We need to focus on consistency in plans and coordination with shared services being a pillar. Reduce duplication for not only efficiency, but effectiveness.”

“We have food deserts. We have services that are restricted to the urban core but you have people living in non-urban settings that lack access to food and other basic necessities.”

WASHOE COUNTY MASTER PLAN UPDATE

PLAN AUDIT SUMMARY

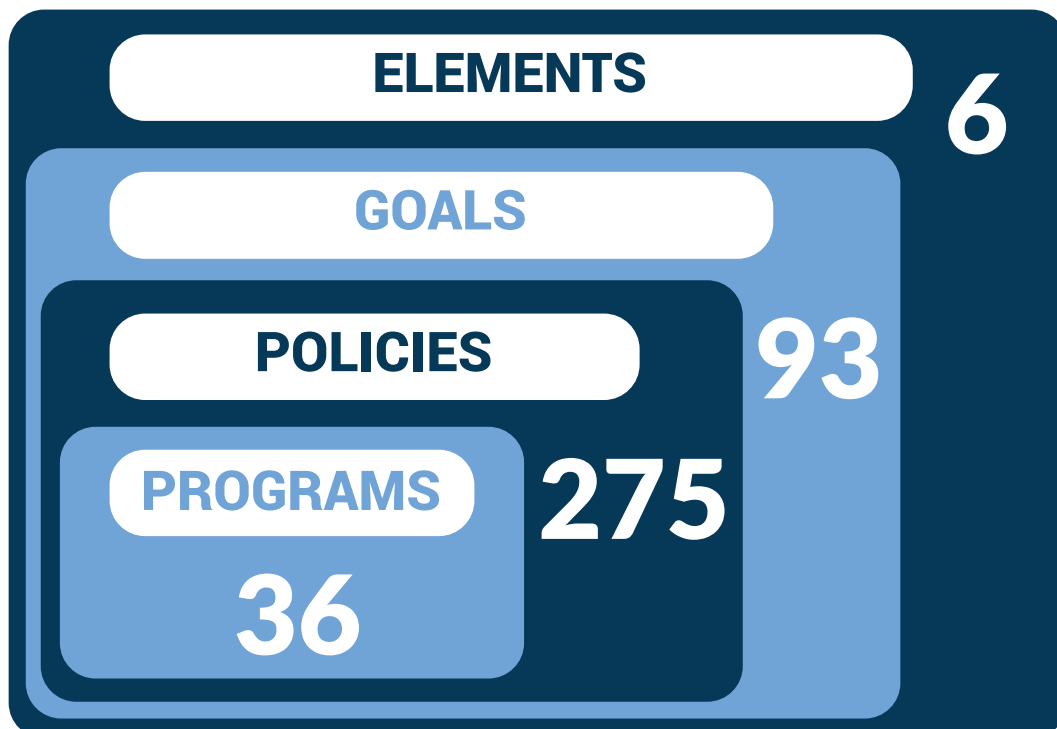
PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

This Plan Audit Summary summarizes the results of the audit of the existing Washoe County Master Plan (WCMP) as part of the Washoe County Master Plan Update process (Envision Washoe 2040). The goal of Envision Washoe 2040 is to update the WCMP to meet the needs of current and future residents of Washoe County and tie off the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan (TMRP) to ensure consistency between the two plans. The first step in aligning the WCMP with the TMRP was an internal audit of the all 6 elements of the existing WCMP, including the 93 goals, 275 policies, and 36 programs described in the WCMP. This audit identifies the goals/policies to be removed or modified, such as goals pertaining to land use code standards and duplicative goals and policies, as well as any additional goals/policies which need to be added to the WCMP to better conform with the TMRP. The focus of this audit summary is to highlight recommended modifications and additions. For a full analysis of which goals and policies are recommended for modification or removal, The full analysis of which goals and policies are recommended for modification or removal is located on the envisionwashoe.org website.

ORGANIZATION

Plan Elements

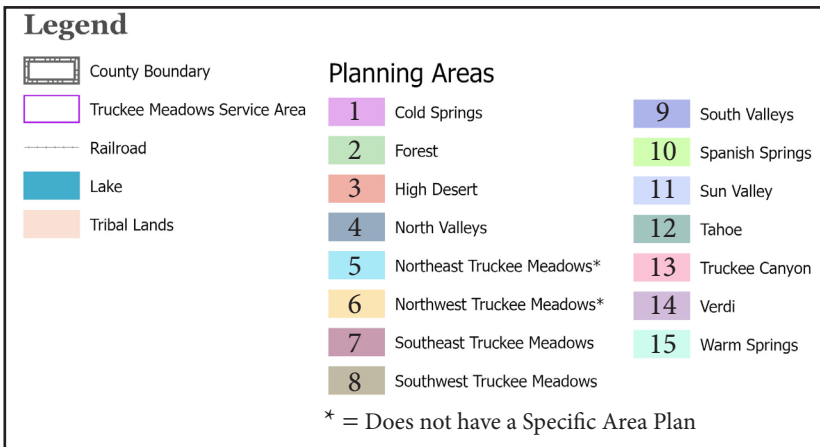
The following pages highlight specific recommendations for Washoe County to incorporate into each of the plan elements of the revised Master Plan. Each section begins with an overview of the number of goals and policies in the specified element of the existing WCMP followed by specific recommendations for each of the TMRP goals (ie. RF 1, PF 1, etc.). Where possible, example goals and policies from other communities pertaining to the TMRP goal were listed for consideration. TMRP goals that were identified as either not-applicable to Washoe County or not requiring modification for conformance of the WCMP with the TMRP were omitted from this Plan Audit Summary (ie. RF 1, RF2, PF 2, etc.).



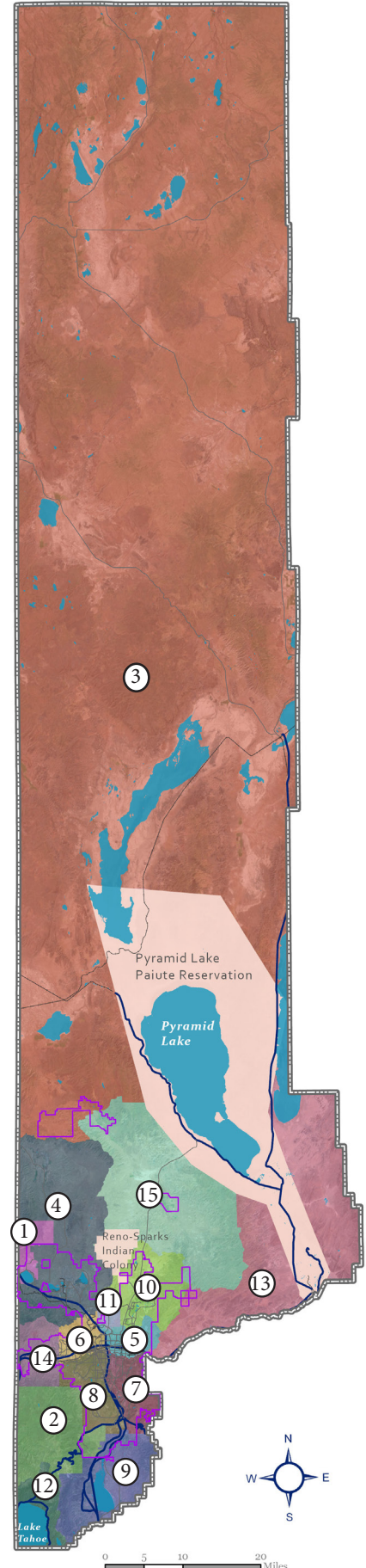
Area Plans

Currently, Washoe County has 15 Planning Areas, 13 of which have Specific Area Plans, which detail area-specific goals and policies that only apply within their specified area boundary. The Northeast Truckee Meadows and Northwest Truckee Meadows planning areas are legacy areas which have not been dissolved but do not have Specific Area Plans. While each of these areas are unique, many of the goals and policies listed in the Area Plans are applicable to the entire County and can be pulled into general goals and policies in each of the Plan Elements. Elevating these goals and policies to overall WCMP goals and policies reduces redundancy in each of the area plans and improves usability by highlighting only the Area-specific goals and policies. Similar to the Plan Elements, it is recommended that all language pertaining to land use code standards be removed from the Area Plans and incorporated directly into the Washoe County Land Use Code.

Each Area Plan has a summary graphic, detailing the existing number of goals and policies, the percentage of goals and policies to be either kept, refined, or dropped from the plan. The “elevate” category encompasses all goals and policies that should be elevated to Plan Element goals and policies. Please note that the “elevate” category percentages do not differentiate between unique and repeated policies from each area plan. Many of the policies within the area plans are repeated for each area, and should therefore be elevated to Plan Element policies. The “refine” category reflects the goals and policies that are unique to the specific area, but may need to be reworded or modified. The “drop” category reflects all goals and policies from the subarea that should be removed from the Plan, including policies that are really action items, standards, and regulations that belong in the land use code, and outdated goals and policies.



MAP 1. PLANNING AREAS IN WASHOE COUNTY



1

COLD SPRINGS

14 Goals & 74 Policies

ELEVATE
61%

REFINE
5%

DROP
34%

Needs Elaboration

Actions

Land Use Code
Standards

2

FOREST

21 Goals & 93 Policies

ELEVATE
56%

REFINE
6%

DROP
38%

Needs Elaboration

Reword for Clarity

State/Federal
Requirements

Land Use Code
Standards

3

HIGH DESERT

20 Goals & 86 Policies

ELEVATE
21%

REFINE
2%

DROP
77%

Needs Elaboration

Reword for Clarity

State/Federal
Requirements

Land Use Code
Standards

4

NORTH VALLEYS

21 Goals & 113 Policies

ELEVATE
36%

REFINE
5%

DROP
59%

Needs Elaboration

Reword for Clarity

State/Federal
Requirements

Land Use Code
Standards

7 SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

20 Goals & 182 Policies



8 SOUTHWEST TRUCKEE MEADOWS

20 Goals & 138 Policies



9

SOUTH VALLEYS

29 Goals & 149 Policies

ELEVATE
19%

REFINE
10%

DROP
71%

Needs Elaboration

Reword as a Policy

Actions

Land Use Code
Standards

State/Federal
Requirements

10

SPANISH SPRINGS

17 Goals & 80 Policies

ELEVATE
22%

REFINE
10%

DROP
68%

Needs Elaboration

Repetitive

Actions

Land Use Code
Standards

11

SUN VALLEY

13 Goals & 71 Policies

ELEVATE
7%

REFINE
32%

DROP
61%

Needs Elaboration

Repetitive

Land Use Code
Standards

12

TAHOE

7 Goals & 59 Policies

ELEVATE
7%

REFINE
44%

DROP
49%

Needs Elaboration

Reword for Clarity

Actions

Land Use Code
Standards

13

TRUCKEE CANYON

5 Goals & 25 Policies

ELEVATE
8%

REFINE
28%

DROP
64%

Reword for Clarity

Repetitive

Actions

Land Use Code
Standards

14

VERDI

29 Goals & 120 Policies

ELEVATE
7%

REFINE
26%

DROP
67%

Needs Elaboration

Land Use Code
Standards

15

WARM SPRINGS

6 Goals & 61 Policies

ELEVATE
5%

REFINE
47%

DROP
48%

Needs Elaboration

Repetitive

Reword for Clarity

Actions

Land Use Code
Standards

REGIONAL FORM & COORDINATION

RF 3 IDENTIFY HOW AND WHERE THE COUNTY WANTS TO IMPLEMENT THE HIGHER DENSITIES THE TMRP PERMITS.

RF 5 WASHOE COUNTY IS DESIGNATED AS “TIER 2 LAND” AND SHOULD TAILOR GOALS/POLICIES TO MATCH TMRP POLICY.

WORK CLOSELY WITH THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES WITH DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA.

SHOWCASE SUCCESS STORIES AS PART OF AN EDUCATION PROCESS FOR LANDOWNERS, DEVELOPERS, AND BUILDERS ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS

CLUSTER NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN EXISTING LOCATIONS

MANAGE GROWTH TO PRESERVE RURAL CHARACTER

RF 6 REVIEW WCMP DENSITIES TO ENSURE CONFORMANCE WITH TMRP DENSITIES.

RF 8 THE MASTER PLAN SHOULD ANTICIPATE THE POTENTIAL FOR THE CREATION OF A RESORT SERVICE AREA IN THE FUTURE.

RF 9 MAPS AND POLICIES SHOULD REFLECT THE FREESTANDING COMMUNITIES OF GERLACH, EMPIRE, AND WADSWORTH.

RF 11 CONSOLIDATE POLICIES INTO ONE STATEMENT AND PROVIDE DETAIL TO ENSURE DETAIL IS CAPTURED AND AID WITH INTERPRETATION.

RC 12 DEVELOP GOALS TO COORDINATE WITH THE TMRPA WHEN A PROPOSAL FOR FEDERAL LANDS DISPOSAL LEGISLATION IS MADE.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

PF 1 DEVELOP GOALS TO ENSURE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE MASTER PLAN AND FACILITY PLANNING TO SUPPORT A MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT OR PROJECT OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE REQUEST.

IDENTIFY BARRIERS TO SERVICE DELIVERY GOALS

DEFINE DESIRED SERVICE LEVELS FROM, AND COORDINATE WITH, INDEPENDENT SERVICE PROVIDERS TO UNDERSTAND THEIR SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS

IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE BEFORE IT IS NEEDED BY PROJECTION THE LOCATION OF FUTURE GROWTH

PF 3 DEVELOP GOALS TO SUPPORT THE TMRPA PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN AND DESCRIBE THE COUNTY'S ROLE.

PF 4 DEVELOP GOALS TO ADDRESS THE TMRP RURAL AREA PUBLIC FACILITY/ SERVICE PROVISION REQUIREMENTS.

PF 5 DEVELOP GOALS/POLICIES TO ADDRESS THE DEVELOPMENT AND ANNUAL UPDATE OF A COUNTY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS (CIP).

PF 7 CONSOLIDATE EXISTING POLICIES WITHIN GOAL PSF 0.1 TO MIRROR REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (RWMP) POLICIES.

PF 16 DEVELOP A POLICY TO ENSURE IN COORDINATION WITH THE RENO TAHOE AIRPORT AUTHORITY OR APPLICABLE AIRPORT OPERATOR.

PF 18 DEVELOP A NEW GOAL SPECIFIC TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION AND HIGHLIGHT TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE.

NATURAL RESOURCES & OPEN SPACE

NR 1 CONSOLIDATE POLICIES/GOALS REFERRING TO SPECIFIC AREAS INTO A SINGLE POLICY WITH A MAP.

NR 2 DEVELOP POLICIES TO SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS SUSTAINABILITY AND ENSURE CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE REGION ARE MET AND TO PREPARE FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE AND UNPREDICTABLE NATURAL RESOURCE CONDITIONS .

POLICIES IN LUT ELEMENT SHOULD BE MOVED HERE

SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES THAT IMPROVE AIR QUALITY AND REDUCE THE EMISSION OF GREENHOUSE GASES (GHG) IN THE COMMUNITY IN SUPPORT OF THE CITY'S STATED COMMITMENT TO GHG REDUCTION AS PART OF THE GLOBAL COVENANT OF MAYORS COALITION.

NR 3 CLARIFY GOALS TO REFLECT THE TMRP REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AREAS.

NR 8 REFINE POLICIES TO REFER TO WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE AREAS.

NR 9 REVISE GOALS TO EMPHASIZE COLLABORATION EFFORTS FOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CONNECTIVITY.

REVIEW AND REFERENCE THE WASHOE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR MULTIMODAL POLICIES

DESIGN NEW COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS AND REHABILITATE EXISTING CENTERS TO FACILITATE SAFE AND CONVENIENT PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS TO AND FROM SURROUNDING AREAS. INCORPORATE TRANSIT STOPS AND OTHER MULTI-MODAL FACILITIES IN COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS WHERE REGULAR TRANSIT SERVICE EXISTS OR IS PLANNED.

NATURAL RESOURCES & OPEN SPACE

NR 10 DEVELOP A POLICY AND SUB POLICIES THAT CONTAIN STRATEGIES TO REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND.

INCLUDE STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION OF THE COUNTY'S TREE CANOPY, PROMOTE COOL ROOF PRACTICES, SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN COOL CORRIDORS/ISLANDS, AND REDUCING THE USE OF HEAT-ABSORBING SURFACES.

NR 12 CONSOLIDATE POLICIES AND REFERENCE RWMP POLICIES AS APPLICABLE.

NR 13 REFERENCE RWMP AS APPLICABLE.

BUFFER WATERBODIES, WETLANDS, AND RIPARIAN AREAS FROM DEVELOPMENT

ADOPT LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID) STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTE THE USE OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STORMWATER FILTRATION AND THE REDUCTION OF IMPERMEABLE SURFACES ON A SITE.

ENCOURAGE PRIVATE/PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS TO INCORPORATE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION, WHICH PROMOTE HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL LANDS.

HOUSING

**Included within the Population Growth section of the TMRP.*

PG 4

THE CURRENT PLAN CONTAINS THE REQUIRED HOUSING POLICIES, BUT THE APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION NEEDS TO BE UPDATED. A CURRENT POLICY APPROACH SHOULD BE DEVELOPED WITH THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP.

REVISE GOALS AND POLICIES TO BETTER ADDRESS THE CREATION OF NEW, AND THE MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING, AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING.

ALLOW ACCESSORY RESIDENTIAL UNITS (ARUS) AND COUNTY GUESTHOUSES

EVALUATE AND UPDATE GUESTHOUSE AND ARU REGULATIONS

ESTABLISH A RELIABLE FUNDING SOURCE FOR WORKFORCE HOUSING PROVISION

EVALUATE AND UPDATE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS TO REMOVE BARRIERS AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE EXEMPTIONS FOR THE PROVISION OF WORKFORCE HOUSING

DEVELOP AN OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR LANDLORDS TO ENCOURAGE LONG-TERM RENTALS INSTEAD OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS

DEVELOP A TARGETED HOUSING STRATEGY TO FACILITATE AND INCENTIVIZE THE CREATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS FOR LOW INCOME RESIDENTS AND ATTAINABLE HOUSING FOR THE CITY'S WORKFORCE. UPDATE THE STRATEGY PERIODICALLY TO ADDRESS CHANGING NEEDS.

PROMOTE A MIXTURE OF HOUSING TYPES (I.E. PRODUCT TYPES, UNIT SIZES, AND PRICE POINTS) IN LARGE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS SEEKING MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS AND/OR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL.

FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY BOARDS AND RESIDENTS TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC NEEDS, DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PILOT PROJECTS AND VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES, MAKE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS, AND OTHERWISE BUILD CAPACITY IN INDIVIDUAL NEIGHBORHOODS.



WASHOE COUNTY
**Regional Open Space &
Natural Resource
Management Plan**

JUNE 24, 2008

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WASHOE COUNTY

Regional Open Space & Natural Resource Management Plan

JUNE 24, 2008

A printed copy of the Washoe County Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan document can be purchased for \$20.00 at the Washoe County Department of Community Development and the Department of Regional Parks and Open Space or found on-line at the departments' websites:

Department of Community Development
www.washoecounty.us/openspace
Department of Regional Parks and Open Space:
www.washoecountyparks.com

In accordance with NRS 376A.020 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, the Washoe County Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan was adopted by Resolution of the Washoe County Commission on June 24, 2008, and found in conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan by the Regional Planning Governing Board on September 11, 2008. Copies of the adopting resolutions are kept in the Washoe County Commission archival files.

FIRST PRINTING, June 24, 2008

Executive Summary

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The Washoe County Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Plan provides the framework, goals and policies for the management of natural resources and open spaces in southern Washoe County. The planning area includes the entire southern portion of the county stretching from the northern shores of Pyramid Lake and Honey Lake south to the boundary with Carson City. This area is over 2,000 square miles and includes the cities of Reno and Sparks. The Plan is designed to be compatible with both cities of Reno and Sparks own Open Space and Greenways Plans and coordination among the three entities plans will be sought by the County, as appropriate and beneficial. The area also contains a wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources and includes alpine lakes and tundra around Lake Tahoe, the sagebrush country of the valleys and the desert lakes and playas in the valley bottoms. This great variety of environments represents 23 of the 27 vegetation communities that exist in the entire state, making this planning area one of the most diverse in Nevada. This diversity of vegetation is accompanied by a broad array of unique animals, from large animals like Mule Deer, Black Bear and Big Horn Sheep to more rare species like Steamboat Buckwheat and the Carson Wandering Skipper.

In addition to the natural wealth of the region our cultural and recreational resources also contribute to the uniqueness of our region. The long history of human societies in the region has left a rich legacy that includes rock art, evidence of occupation sites as well as more recent historic resources that include remnants of mining communities, and other historic structures. This legacy continues on today with cultural activities continuing to be practiced by the tribes of Washoe County. The recreational resources of our region are world renowned, including the famous areas around Lake Tahoe along the Truckee River, the special beauty of Pyramid Lake and the desert features in the county. These areas provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities for those that call the county home, and for the tourists who are excited to visit. The same mountains and ridge tops that provide these recreational opportunities also

define our region's character. These visual resources give us the defining skyline of our communities and also help to maintain their uniqueness.

However, our natural, cultural and recreational resources face challenges as our communities grow. This Plan identifies five key threats to our natural resources and open spaces: wildfire, invasive species, managing multiple uses, development, and acquisition and management. The increase in large wildfires damages both habitats and watersheds and threatens our homes and the biodiversity of the region. The spread of weeds and invasive plants threatens natural species and often increases the chance and intensity of wildfire. The region also faces challenges in managing how people use the land, including illegal dumping and recreational activities that have a higher impact on the landscape. Converting natural lands to new uses for development or infrastructure impact the region's habitats, water and cultural resources. Adding to these challenges is how we balance the complexity of many land owners, federal, tribal, state, local and private, all with different priorities, laws, and budgets.

By recognizing these resources and these threats, this plan strives to protect the region's natural resources and open space through a series of goals and policies that address the following concerns.

Biodiversity: The protection and management of the region's many wildlife and plants and the lands they rely on. Policies include the protection of species and the habitats they depend on as well as the migration routes they need.

Cultural Resources: The protection and management of the history and prehistory of the region as well as the continuing legacy of current cultural uses. Policies include increasing the surveys undertaken to expand our data on the location of these resources and using cooperative agreements to manage these resources.

Natural Hazards: The protection of our communities

from the threats of wildfire, floods and landslides. Policies include a series of methods for reducing wildfire risk on public and private lands and integrating this plan with flood management activities.

Recreational Resources: The provision and protection of recreational opportunities across the region and for many types of users. This plan identifies a base network for a regional trail system and provides guidance on achieving the recreational goals.

Visual and Scenic Character: The protection and management of the region's defining views, and the ridges and landscapes that define our communities. The plan identifies visual and scenic areas and directs the County to protect these through ridgeline protection and coordination with other jurisdictions.

Water Resources: The protection of the water resources on which our communities, wildlife and plants depend. Plan policies include increasing protection for seeps and springs, and assuring that new land acquisitions have adequate water rights to sustain their natural functions.

In addition to these six resource categories, there is a final set of goals that apply universally. These are the goals and policies that facilitate an ecosystem service approach and strive for no net loss of these services. Ecosystem services are the series of benefits and services we depend on from the natural environment, and if they are lost we must replace them. They include natural protection from flooding, the natural filtration and storage of drinking water, and the healthy regulation of disease and fire in our wildlands. When we impact these functions, we often must engineer a solution to replace them, with levees or treatment facilities, for example. This plan strives to assure that these functions are protected and are included in the County's management of the region. Obtaining this goal will allow the region's natural resources and open spaces to provide us many values for now and into the future, while assuring safe and healthy communities.

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Acknowledgements

CHAPTER 1 Introduction to the Plan

*“Everybody needs beauty
as well as bread,
places to play in and pray in,
where nature may heal and
give strength to body and soul.”*

JOHN MUIR

The Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is Washoe County’s vision, direction and commitment to action for the future of the region’s open spaces and natural resources over the next 20 years. This action-oriented plan focuses upon the projects and activities that need to be undertaken to carry out this vision, a set of principles to guide this and future planning efforts, and desired outcomes expressed as achievable goals. The Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is comprised of three components:

- 1. Inventory and Assessment:** The Inventory and Assessment component is a compilation and evaluation of data and identification of issues that serve as the factual foundation for this Plan.
- 2. The Plan:** The Plan presents the summary of issues, the long-term vision for open spaces and natural resources, the principles that are guiding planning for these resources, the long-term goals, and the public policies that Washoe County will champion and follow as it seeks to achieve the Plan’s vision and goals.
- 3. Implementation Plan:** The Implementation Plan is the compilation and prioritization of actions to carry out the Plan’s policies, achieve its goals and realize its vision for the future. As financial resources and the political lay of the land are subject to change, the Implementation Strategy must also be flexible in order to take changing circumstances into account and to take advantage of opportunities that may arise. Accordingly, this component is intended to be a stand-alone tool, one that is continually monitored and regularly updated.

This document is the Plan, the overarching document providing the public policy guidance for the protection, conservation and management of the region’s open spaces and natural resources. It will serve the county by coordinating its actions and provide a framework for partnership with other agencies, the community and the public.



PAUL MANSON

View of Mt. Rose showing some of the region’s natural diversity with wet meadows, Sierran conifer forests, and alpine habitat.

This Plan is a vision-based, outcomes-oriented tool for protecting and managing the region’s open spaces and natural resources, one that aims to protect what’s good, provide a balance of access and choices, and protect the region’s biodiversity for the benefit of future generations. Founded upon science and collaboration among a wide range of planning partners and public, this Plan seeks to achieve a balance between often competing interests. The following sections of this document present the future vision for the state of the region’s open spaces and natural resources, and the planning principles that guided the Plan’s preparation.

Following the statement of the desired future and the principles that shaped this Plan is a discussion of its underlying foundation, the concept of ecosystems services, and a green infrastructure for connecting, effectively managing, and maximizing the value

of the various components of the region’s natural systems and environment.

Next comes a discussion of the goals that Washoe County and its planning partners seek to fulfill, and the policies that will guide their actions and inform their priorities as they work together over time to achieve the vision for the future. These goals and policies for achieving the vision are presented within seven categories: six resource categories, and one which addresses issues that are overarching, transcending this categorization.

Finally, a plan is only as good as its execution. The final section, the Implementation Plan, presents the framework and strategy for carrying out the plan incrementally, over time. This Plan is intended to be regularly monitored for progress in completing



TERMS: OPEN SPACE

OPEN SPACE consists of undeveloped lands with significant natural, cultural and visual resources that are integral to the county’s quality of life.

the actions and achieving its goals. Thus, the Implementation Plan itself is a stand-alone document in order to facilitate this monitoring and updating as public priorities change and as financial resources and other opportunities become available.

What is Open Space for Washoe County?

Open space is a critical component of the quality of life in our region. This includes access to world class recreation near our homes, defining views of the ridges and peaks of the region, and a unique landscape of natural and human history. Open space also serves to define the many communities of the region. Ridges, hills and open space areas all allow for each community’s unique character. The geology of the region provides special places, including springs, unique geological structures, playas and canyons. The county is also home to numerous wildlife and plant species that are found only in Washoe County, and these species depend on the natural functions of open space.

It is these many functions of recreation, biodiversity, cultural resources, water ways and views that define open space for this Plan. Throughout this Plan there is a constant theme of how the land functions and how we depend on it for many things. While open space can be on federal, state, local or private land, it is the functions of the land that the Plan focuses on. By using functions to understand our open spaces, the Plan broadens the discussion about how we evaluate, protect and enjoy our open spaces.

What is the Vision and Planning Principles for this Plan?

The Vision

The vision is a statement picturing a preferred future, an end state featuring desired outcomes and what Washoe County, its planning partners, and its residents want to leave as a legacy for future generations. This desired future vision for the region’s open spaces and natural resources is best expressed as follows:



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Looking east from the Tahoe Rim Trail across Washoe Lake, the region’s biodiversity is evident in the rapid shift from alpine forests through agricultural lands to the sagebrush and montane environments beyond.

In 2030, the region’s open spaces and natural resources will be:

- valued for their recreation, scenic, wildlife and cultural attributes regardless of jurisdictional boundaries;
- recognized for their contribution to the quality of life enjoyed by those who live, work and visit this area; and
- preserved, enhanced and managed by the region’s planning partners through effective, trusting and mutually beneficial relationships.

Through the process of developing this vision statement, it became clear that agencies, jurisdictions, special interest groups and the community-at-large hold a deep sense of value for these regional resources. They want to see them protected and well managed for future generations, and recognize that regional stewardship of such valuable resources requires the building of relationships and stewardship by a network of partners.

Planning Principles

To ensure the planning effort would be focused toward achieving the vision, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the Science Review Team and the broader community developed a set of planning principles and statements reflecting desired outcomes. The planning principles, which also served as criteria against which the success of the Plan would be gauged, are as follows:

- Assure that natural and cultural resources are protected, restored and sustained.
- Ensure sustainable wildlife populations and regional biodiversity on both public and private lands.
- Protect foothills, mountains, canyons, river corridors and other natural features.
- Provide a balance of access and choices for active and passive recreation users while respecting the impacts on nearby residents and natural resources.
- Recognize and manage multiple-use impacts upon the environment.

- Address the impacts of increasing development and recreation on our area's natural, scenic and cultural resources.
- Manage open space and natural resources for the ecological, social and economic functions and benefits they provide.
- Share the responsibility for stewardship of resources through:
 - Plan implementation
 - Maintenance and management
 - Funding

The vision and planning principles provided the foundation for developing the future scenario for open spaces and natural resources within the region, and for the collaboratively developed goals, policies and actions for achieving them.

Why Plan for Open Space and Natural Resources?

In 1991, new state legislation was passed that provided the foundation for the coordinated development of a regional open space plan for Washoe County, with the intended focus primarily being the creation of a regional system of major open space areas linked by trails or open space corridors. In 1994, the Washoe County Regional Open Space Plan was adopted, intended for use by Reno, Sparks and Washoe County in their efforts to preserve open space for current and future generations. This 1994 Open Space Plan provided a wealth of information, including an open space inventory, open space acquisition criteria, and an implementation program featuring an array of tools for potential use by Reno, Sparks and Washoe County for preservation of open space. However, it did not provide the same inventory, assessment, and implementation program for the protection/conservation of natural resources.

The Truckee Meadows Regional Plan (TMRP) was updated and approved by the Regional Planning Governing Board in 2007. It has, among its major



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Sierran rivers and streams bring water from the snow in the mountains and feed streams and springs to the east.

objectives, the intent to preserve designated natural resources and open spaces to help support a sustainable and economically healthy region. The TMRP calls for all local governments within the region to prepare integrated plans to address natural resources and to preserve and restore the values of sensitive land areas, wildlife habitat, open spaces and greenways, cultural and archeological resources, scenic resources, air quality, and water quality and quantity. It further encourages Washoe County, in coordination with its planning partners throughout the region, to secure funding to carry out the regional open space plan and encourages all jurisdictions to establish a coordinated network of open space and greenways. The Cities of Reno and Sparks actively contributed to this plan throughout its development. As this plan was being developed, the City of Reno completed its Open Space and Greenways Plan.

Plans are dynamic documents, subject to change as key

characteristics of the region (demographics, finances, development, changes to the regulatory environment, public preference, public policy, etc.) change over time. It is within the context of this larger area and the changes that have occurred since 1991 that Washoe County has taken the leadership role in collaboratively preparing a plan for managing open spaces and natural resources within the region.

Why Plan on a Regional Level?

With the loss of rural land, there is less undeveloped land, commonly referred to as open space. The southern portion of Washoe County is presently at a stage in its evolution where preserving certain undeveloped lands as open space is critical for both the environment and the economy. The county's attractive landscape, along with numerous outdoor recreational opportunities, is closely linked to our region's quality of life. One of the key quality-of-life factors in the region is the existence

of open space, which can directly and indirectly influence numerous other quality-of-life factors, such as water quality and supply, economic growth, health, educational and cultural opportunities, and leisure opportunities. The region's quality of life attracts both people and economic growth to Washoe County. It is listed time and time again as one of the contributing factors, if not the major factor, for new businesses considering relocating to this area.

The health of the region's tourism industry is also linked to the area's quality of life. Many of the region's businesses emphasize the scenic resources and the recreational opportunities available to visitors and employees in Washoe County. The preservation and management of open space helps provide and enhance these recreational opportunities and quality-of-life benefits. Many communities around the country are capitalizing on this eco-tourism potential by preserving and managing the lands that can provide both passive and active recreational opportunities while contributing to the economic vitality of a community. This Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is intended as a cooperative effort to benefit the entire region, designed to be used as a tool by Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, governmental agencies, non-profit and advocacy groups and the public to assist in the preservation of open spaces and natural resources in the region.

How to Use This Plan

The three components of the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan are intended to serve a number of functions, the three most important of which are reference, vision and policy, and direction.

As a reference tool, the **Inventory and Assessment** component is intended to present the summary of information and issues and the assessment of the state of open spaces and natural resources within the county that informed the development of the Plan's goals and policies. Accordingly, the Inventory and Assessment

The health of the region's tourism industry is also linked to the area's quality of life. Many of the region's businesses emphasize the scenic resources and the recreational opportunities available to visitors and employees in Washoe County.

component can be referred to for the technical information regarding why courses of action are being proposed. A substantial amount of information has been assembled and evaluated, and a diverse array of planning partners worked together to update and assess this information in the preparation of this Plan. New information will be coming to light over the near- and longer-term; accordingly, the maps and graphics associated with this Plan will be updated as new information becomes available. Individuals turning to this plan for information regarding specific areas of the county should contact Washoe County to ensure they are accessing the most current information.

As a vision and policy tool, the **Plan** component provides the county's long-term vision for open spaces and natural resources and the principles that are guiding planning for these resources. This component also presents the long-term goals and public policies that Washoe County and its planning partners will champion and follow as they seek to realize the Plan's vision. Accordingly, the Plan will be used to make informed decisions on the use of property as it relates to the protection, conservation and management of open space and natural resources. Plan policies can be used as evaluation criteria in the review of development proposals, and to guide the making of informed decisions regarding the programming of limited fiscal and personnel resources.

Finally, as a directional tool, the **Implementation Plan** component identifies the tools that can be used, the actions that should be taken, the partnerships



PAUL MANSON

that should be formed, and the changes that should be made to the county's land use regulations to carry out the Plan's policies, achieve its goals, and realize its vision for the future. It also presents potential opportunities for acquisition and retention, and criteria for assisting in making decisions on how to spend limited resources (or to take advantage of opportunities) for acquisition and/or retention. As indicated earlier, financial resources, the regulatory environment, property ownership, and the political lay of the land are subject to change. Accordingly, the Implementation Plan must also be flexible in order to take changing circumstances into account and to take advantage of opportunities that may arise. This is why this component is intended to be a stand-alone tool, one that is continually monitored and regularly updated. This is the document that should be consulted to ascertain the short-term and longer-term actions being proposed and programmed.

Following Pyramid Lake, the Virginia Mountains provide rich recreational experiences and frame the amazing views of Pyramid Lake.

CHAPTER 2 Physical and Planning Context

“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountain is going home; that wilderness is necessity; that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life.”

JOHN MUIR

From the early prehistory and history of the region and the promise of a new life in the West, to the captivating beauty of the canyons and mountains, Washoe County has been defined by what the natural world has provided here. For this reason, the Washoe County Open Space and Natural Resource planning effort was initiated in early 2007 to assess and plan for how to manage these resources. It is at once an effort to update the 1994 Open Space Plan and to create a new Natural Resource Management Plan for the southern portion of Washoe County.

What is the Planning Area?

The planning area covers the southern portion of the county ranging from the eastern boundary with Pershing and Churchill counties to the California border in the west. It stretches north from the boundary with Carson City, to the northern shores of Pyramid Lake. It includes Lake Tahoe, Marlette Lake and Mount Rose in the south. As the study area runs north it includes Peavine Mountain, Peterson Mountain, Hungry Valley and the Pah Rah Range. The northern edge of the study area includes Honey Lake, the Virginia Mountains, and the Needles at Pyramid Lake. Map 1 illustrates the planning area boundaries. The area includes the communities of Reno and Sparks as well as tribal lands managed by the Washoe Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe.

The study area includes the county's urban areas and the interface between private lands and public ownership. The region includes extensive tribal lands as well. This assortment of land ownership and uses has created an increase in competition for resource and open space use. From expanding urban centers and communities, to increased water consumption and conflicting outdoor activities, the region's open space and natural resources are experiencing more pressure and use than before. This plan strives to both create a way to best share the experiences and values from the landscape and preserve them for future use.

The region's natural setting today attracts new employers, residents and tourists looking for a quality of life only our region can provide. The easy and quick access to open spaces, to special places, and for recreation are all contributors to quality of life.

For everyone in the county, the wide open spaces, striking natural skylines, rich natural and cultural history, and unique ecosystems all make Washoe County a special place for those who call it home.

EXISTING ENVIRONMENT: An Overview

Natural Environment Context

This Plan includes all of Washoe County south of the northern shores of Pyramid Lake to the County boundary with Carson City. Two ecoregions are present within the planning area: the Great Basin, and the Sierra Nevada. The Great Basin ecoregion comprises a majority of the study area, and the Sierra Nevada ecoregion covers the southwestern portion. The area has a wealth of biodiversity, from the alpine areas around Lake Tahoe and Mount Rose, down through the canyons and montane woodland, to the sagebrush valleys and playas of the northern portion of the study area.

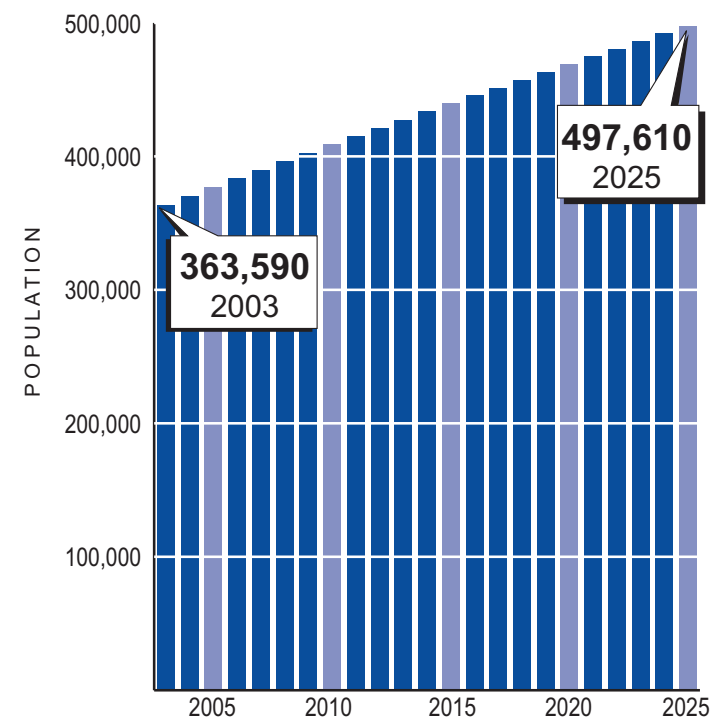
The natural environment of the region is unique in its diversity. This diversity can be found in the course the Truckee River takes. As it flows from the high alpine country of the Lake Tahoe area, through the Truckee River meadows, and on through to the deserts and playas of the Great Basin, an amazing diversity of landscapes can be found in a very short

distance. This transition from ecoregion to ecoregion happens rapidly along the Truckee River as it transects these environments. The history of the region's geology and environment also set it apart. Pyramid Lake, the remnant of the ancient Lake Lahontan, is a rare terminal lake. The waters that flow in from Lake Tahoe, from the flanks of the Virginia Mountains and Lake Range, all end in Pyramid Lake with some diversions upstream. The ancient Lake Lahontan was an enormous inland sea that covered much of southern Washoe and Pershing counties. Today, the remnants of this ancient sea are the playas and deserts of the valley floors.

In addition to the iconic water bodies of Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River and Pyramid Lake are the numerous seeps and springs that are sprinkled across the landscape. Some of these springs are geothermal and bring warmed water to the surface, while others bring cool clear water to the surface. These springs and seeps are critical in the desert environment and allowed for nature and people to survive, adapt and flourish in the region. For this reason, the areas around seeps and springs offer some of the richest occurrences of biodiversity as plants take advantage of the water and host numerous animal species that feed and water in these locations. The water and wildlife that come to the springs also attracted people who have occupied the region, making seeps and springs as rich in cultural and historical resources as they are in natural resources.

Over the course of history, this unique setting of natural and physical resources has been utilized by Native Americans and continues to attract growing communities and new residents. The region's natural setting today attracts new employers, residents and tourists looking for a quality of life only our region can provide. The easy and quick access to open spaces, to special places, and for recreation are all contributors to quality of life. Today, tourism driven by our natural setting is growing rapidly, and employers looking to bring jobs to the region identify the environment as one of their criteria for doing so.

Washoe County Consensus Forecast, 2003-2025



However challenges exist in maintaining this biodiversity. Many of the region's waterways are heavily impacted by pollution and development. Fish habitat has become degraded due to water diversion and sediments carried by urban runoff. In the past, the Truckee River has provided habitat for at least eight native species of fish, which had unimpeded access from Lake Tahoe all the way along the river to Pyramid Lake. The first project of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation can be found along the Truckee River, and this changed the river's habitat and ability to support fish. The original strain of threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout has now been extirpated, and the prehistoric cui-ui, a non-game fish, is listed as endangered.

At the same time the loss of sagebrush habitat threatens the sage grouse populations. Connectivity for mule deer and other large mammals is being lost to development and transportation infrastructure. These developments threaten the continued health of these populations. Many rare and unique plant species, found only in this region, are also at risk. Despite these challenges the region has an impressive wealth of natural areas, but these areas will require continued efforts to protect, conserve and, as needed, restore.

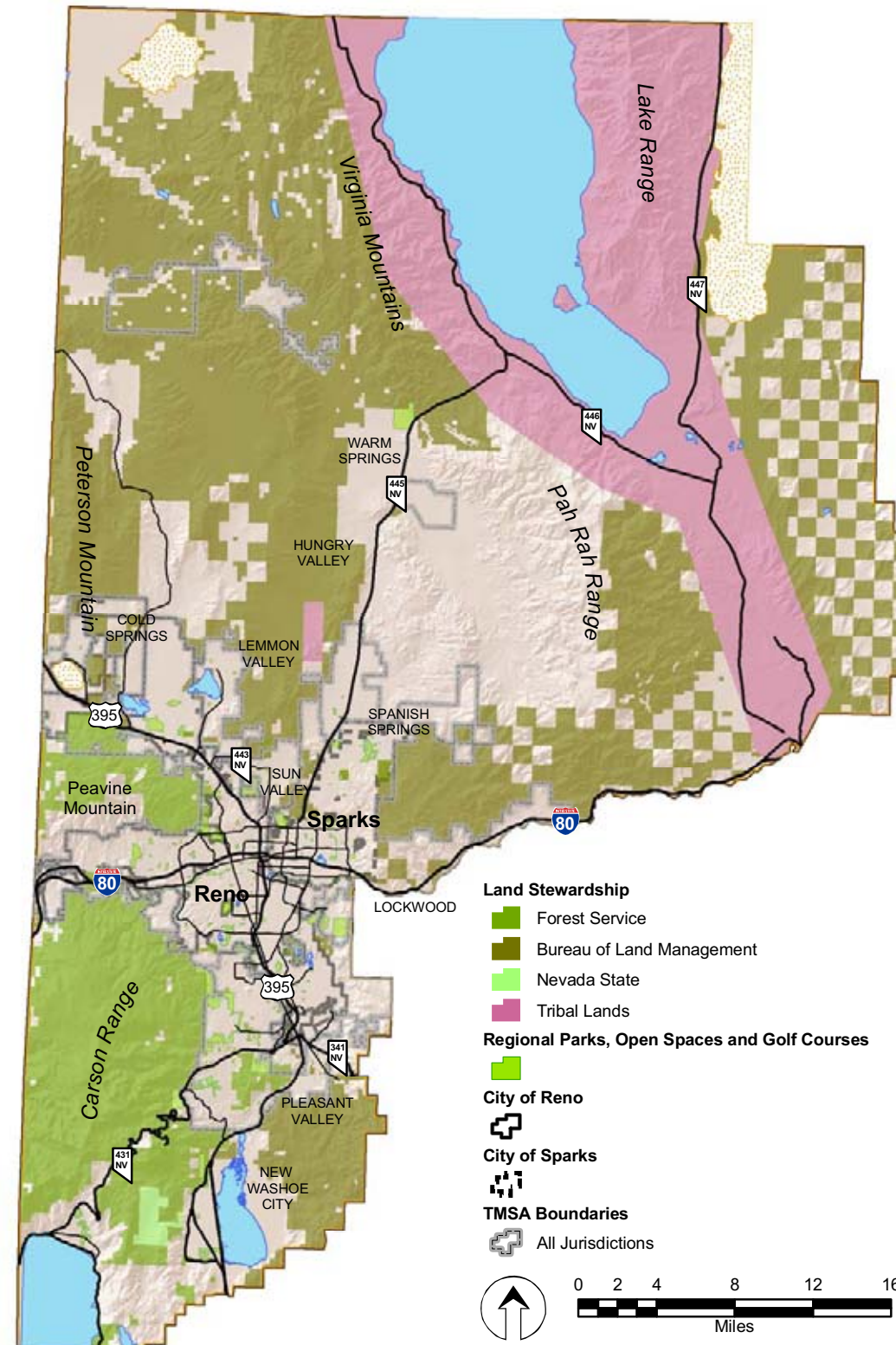
By 2025, over 13 percent of the county's population is expected to be over age 65, compared to 10 percent in 2003.

Built Environment and Demographic Context

Current development is centered around the Truckee River in the City of Reno and City of Sparks and radiates north and south through the valleys. Development densities are low in the region and tend toward lower units or fewer residents per acre. This form of development places a higher pressure on land because development uses more land to accommodate new residents in the region. At the same time, this development is increasing within an area referred to as the urban wildland interface, an area where natural lands and homes mix without a clean break. This interface provides unique challenges in managing natural hazards like wildfire, invasive species and conflicting recreation uses.

According to projections from the *Washoe County Consensus Forecast, 2003-2025* (at left), between 2003 and 2025 the county is projected to grow at an average annual rate of 1.4 percent, increasing in population from 383,000 persons in 2004 to close to 500,000 persons in 2025.

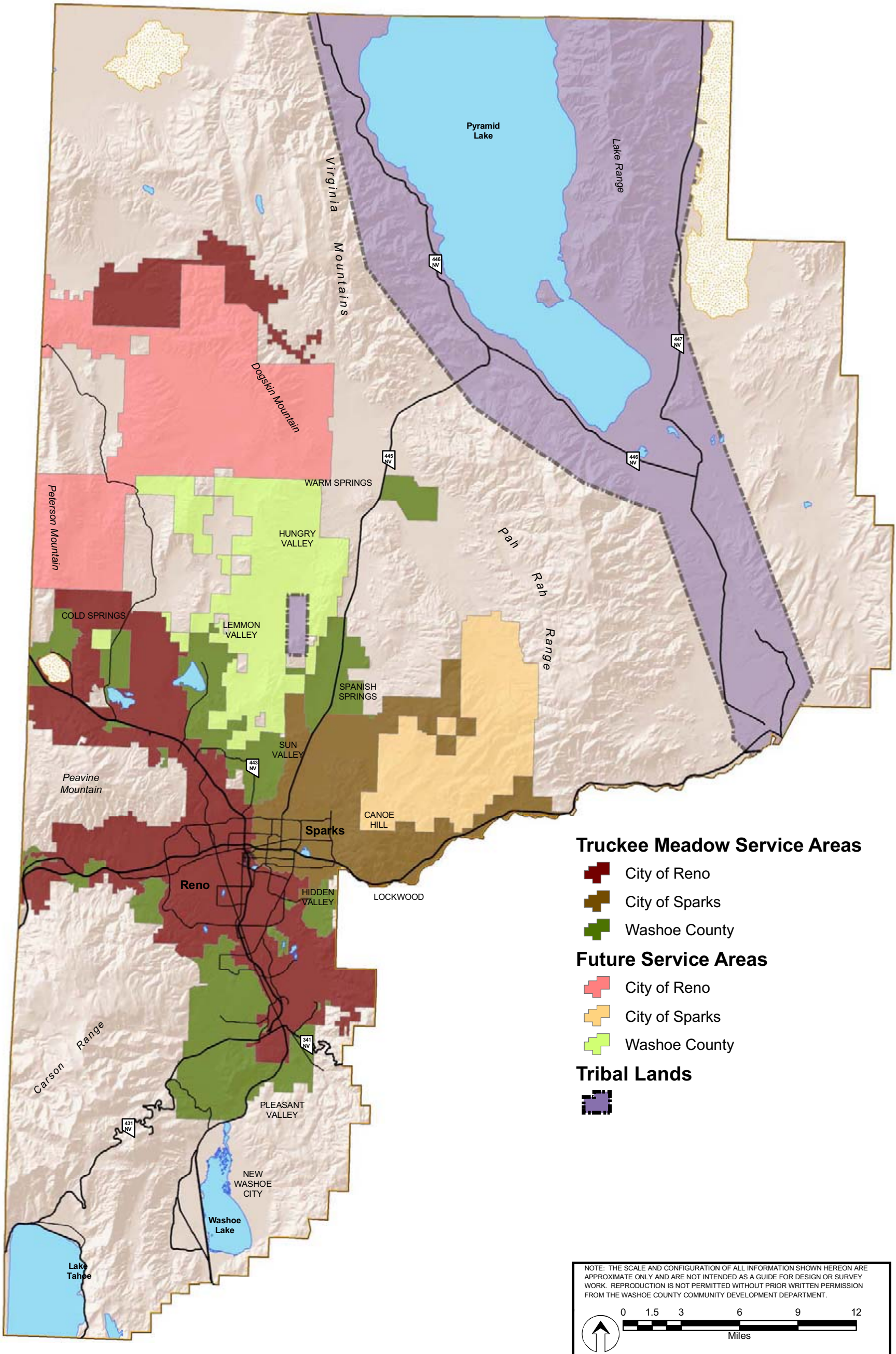
MAP 1
The Planning Area Boundaries



MAP 2

Approved Current and Future Service Areas

This map shows the current and future service areas of the City of Reno and City of Sparks and unincorporated Washoe County. The darker color shows the current areas served, while the lighter shade shows future service areas. These areas are where future development and growth are expected. This development will impact existing open space and generate new demands for parks and recreation opportunities.



Map 2 displays the current and future service areas for Washoe County and the City of Reno and City of Sparks. These areas are where future growth and development will occur. Much of this growth is anticipated in the Spanish Springs area to the north and in the Southeast Truckee Meadows.

This growth in population is continuing to change the once rural landscape of the southern portion of the county. New residents have required more housing, schools, shopping centers, office buildings, roads, water and sewer facilities, and recreational facilities and services. As a result, the once abundant rural landscape is becoming urbanized.

The evolving pattern of growth will influence the number and location of parks and recreation facilities that may be needed in the future as well as the potential for future open space acquisitions to accommodate park-type uses.

A second trend of note is the continued aging of the “baby boom” population and its effect on demand for more passive recreation facilities, such as trails. By 2025, over 13 percent of the county’s population is expected to be over age 65 compared to 10 percent in 2003. The percentage of residents who are young children (under age 4) or school age (age 5-19) is expected to remain roughly constant.

Regional Planning Context

The previous section addressed the larger regional planning framework within which this Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan has been prepared. Within the Truckee Meadows region, there are a number of jurisdictions, agencies and advocacy organizations engaged in planning for the conservation and management of open spaces and natural resources. The responsibilities, efforts and priorities of these agencies, jurisdictions, and interests provide the background and help shape the process and outcomes of this Plan. These partners also participated directly in the preparation of this Plan.

This growth in population is continuing to change the once rural landscape of the southern portion of the county. New residents have required more housing, schools, shopping centers, office buildings, roads, water and sewer facilities, and recreational facilities and services.

While this effort was led jointly by the Department of Regional Parks and Open Space and the Department of Community Development, many more county agencies and offices worked collaboratively to contribute data, resources and energy. This includes the County Manager, Department of Water Resources, Air Quality Division, Geographic Information Systems, and the Truckee River Flood Control Project. The County’s wildfire, water resource and flood planning documents were all consulted, as well as the County’s comprehensive plans, code and policies.

The City of Reno and City of Sparks actively contributed to this plan throughout its development. As this plan was developed, the City of Reno completed its Open Space and Greenway Plan, and the City of Sparks was preparing to start its open space planning process. Additionally the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan was incorporated in the planning effort.

Federal and State agency partners also joined the table with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Each of these agencies has developed plans and protocols for the management of their extensive land holdings in the study area. Their cooperation both now and during the implementation of the Plan will be critical as the



PAUL MANSON

Pyramid Lake is a remnant of the ancient Lake Lahontan.

two largest land managers in the region. The Nevada Department of Wildlife also played an invaluable role, both through the State’s Wildlife Action Plan and through participation in the planning process.

Additionally, the Reno Sparks Indian Colony, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and the Washoe Tribe plus numerous non-profit organizations joined the effort and contributed greatly to the planning effort by participating in the committee reviews and providing information for the Plan.

CHAPTER 3 How Was This Plan Developed?

*“We do not see nature with our eyes,
but with our understandings
and our hearts.”*

WILLIAM HAZLITT

The Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is a regional and collaborative effort, founded upon a partnership between Washoe County, a broad range of planning partners and the public. In developing the Plan, a phased, iterative process was used to move from current conditions to recommendations for the future. Initial research and stakeholder interviews were followed by discussions and brainstorming with project technical and stakeholder committees, leading to agreement on an overall future vision for open spaces and natural resources within the region. This visioning led to agreement upon principles to guide future planning and to development of a set of goals and policies for achieving this vision. The following sections summarize how the county’s practice of forward-thinking set the stage for a collaboratively developed, vision-based, outcomes-driven Plan.

FORMING THE FOUNDATION: Research, Inventory and Assessment

Prior to engaging in looking forward and envisioning a future set of desired outcomes and planning principles, it was necessary to have a firm foundation of information. This provides a starting point for all planning. A number of agencies and jurisdictions have the responsibility for developing and carrying out plans for the development and/or management of resources, facilities and services. These documents were reviewed to determine the existing public policy context within which this Plan was to be developed. In addition, as noted in the following section, a number of stakeholder interviews, project committee meetings and public and special workshops were conducted and summarized throughout the planning process. This information provided a critically important foundation for ensuring that the right issues were being addressed and that community and stakeholder values were being adequately captured.

Finally, three inventory and assessment reports were prepared for this Plan, addressing three major subject



LYNDA NELSON



PAUL MANSON

The planning process considered the different uses of the land and the many different landscapes within the planning area.

areas: natural resources, open space, and parks and recreation. These reports are based on the best available science and studies at this time. No new field data were collected; however, local resource managers, academic researchers and local stakeholders and user groups were consulted to ensure that the best available information was brought into the planning process. These reports helped the project team test local values on open space and natural resources, supported the development of a future scenario, and were intended to serve as stand-alone documents that support planning and decision making on the topics they covered. Among the fundamental assumptions of this Plan is the notion that plans are dynamic, subject to change as information and conditions

warrant. These Inventory and Assessment Reports serve as a platform for revisiting the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan as it is reevaluated and updated periodically in the future.

Stakeholder and Community Outreach

The Plan was developed in conjunction with an active outreach program designed to educate, inform and involve the various publics having an interest or a stake in the region’s open space and natural resource legacy for the future. To help facilitate an initial understanding of the range of issues needing to be addressed by the Plan, a series of stakeholder interviews were conducted and follow-up contacts were made.

The goal of these interviews was to identify overall resource opportunities and challenges in southern Washoe County, while also collecting information that aided in the study of key issues and the development and refinement of the project's vision and planning principles. These stakeholders continued to play an important role in the development of the Plan during individual committee meetings and through public and special purpose workshops.

The County wanted to ensure the Plan had a firm foundation in science, and that it provided an avenue for soliciting input from representatives of a wide range of interest groups and the general public. Accordingly, an outreach program was developed that featured three major components: a Science Review Team, a Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and public workshops. The Science Review Team was comprised of representatives from federal, state, regional and local agencies who would focus on open space and natural resource data and management strategies. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee was comprised of representatives from advocacy and interest groups, and helped to ensure focused discussions on issues and strategies. Workshops were held at various locations throughout the county to provide information, facilitate discussion, and obtain the viewpoints of the general public. Throughout the project, county staff ensured ongoing communication with the public through the county's website, newspaper interviews, and special presentations to smaller groups.

More detailed information summarizing the results of initial stakeholder interviews, materials reviewed with the Science Review Team and Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and materials and summary notes from the four public workshops can be found in the Inventory and Assessment component of this plan.

Outcomes-Based Vision and Planning Principles

A vision is a statement picturing a preferred future, an end state featuring desired outcomes. Too often

future plans are prepared simply to keep up with a projected trend or scenario. By taking the time to look at current circumstances and resources, and entering into a public discussion of desired outcomes for the future, communities and regions can take control of their future. With a clear vision, actions can be taken that fulfill clearly stated community objectives. Washoe County and its planning partners have the culture, the capacity and a history of planning; that provide a natural platform for developing a clear statement about a desired future. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the Science Review Team and the community as a whole examined the foundation of information, and developed a vision, a 20-year look into the future of the region's open space and natural resources. In addition, to ensure the planning effort would be focused toward achieving the vision, these same committees and participants helped develop a set of planning principles, statements reflecting desired outcomes. The principles also serve as criteria against which the success of the Plan can be gauged.

Decision-Making Process

The Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is the product of a true collaboration between Washoe County, its family of planning partners (agencies, federal agencies, tribal governments, local jurisdictions, interest and advocacy groups), and the general public. A truly collaborative process requires asking a lot of questions and sharing information. The decision-making process used in this planning process was carefully intertwined with the public, agency and stakeholder involvement process discussed earlier; both involved three key steps: educate, inform and involve.

The public, agency and stakeholder outreach process has been described in a previous section of this document. A series of meetings with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and Science Review Team and several workshops with the public were instrumental in establishing the vision and associated principles



PAUL MANSON

for the Plan. In these meetings and workshops, the project team worked closely with the stakeholders and the public to determine their values – what they felt to be important with regard to individual resources. Using these principles and values, the project team, stakeholders and the public were able to use an evolutionary process for developing a preferred future scenario for open spaces and natural resources within the region.

Following completion of the draft Plan, Washoe County staff took the Plan on the road, providing briefings to County Citizen Advisory Boards; Reno Neighborhood Advisory Boards; Sparks Citizen Advisory Committee; the City of Reno; the City of Sparks; and the elected and appointed officials of the the Washoe County Planning Commission, Open Space and Regional Parks Commission, Truckee Meadows Regional Governing Board, and Washoe County Board of Commissioners. After receiving and responding to comments from the reviewing parties and adopting and endorsing agencies, a final Plan was prepared.

Streams, seeps and springs provide important refuge for wildlife and include forested or dense vegetation habitat for migrating species.

CHAPTER 4 Setting the Stage: Summary Findings

*“Forests, lakes, and rivers,
clouds and winds, stars and flowers,
stupendous glaciers and crystal snowflakes
– every form of animate or inanimate
existence, leaves its impress
upon the soul of man.”*

ORISON SWETT MARDEN

This initial planning effort was built on a foundation of public outreach along with inventory and assessment reports. The public outreach included stakeholder interviews with key groups and interests in the county as well as public open houses held throughout the process. The public open houses included exercises and surveys to solicit feedback from the public. The inventory and assessment reports studied the current status and trends of natural resources, open space and recreational resources in the study area. These reports all serve as the scientific and technical foundation for the recommendations in this Plan. This section briefly reviews the findings of these efforts.

Findings from Stakeholder Interviews

The stakeholder interviews included over 24 group interviews with two to five participants each. The groups were invited based on resource or policy issues and included state and federal agency representatives, tribal representatives, private developers and realtors, recreation advocates, environmental conservation groups, fire and public safety agencies, and transportation agencies. These groups were all asked to reflect on a series of questions about the role of open space and the region's natural resources. These informal sessions provided the initial direction for identifying key issues for the Plan to address.

Everyone agreed that the region's open spaces provided a critical component in the county's quality of life. Many noted that open space in Washoe County was a way for everyone to have some elbowroom and that it provided a shared backyard for every resident. Others noted how important the region's open space is in attracting visitors and tourists. Many also noted concern over preserving access and connections to these open spaces. Noting the many planning partners in the region, it was clear that coordination and partnership were important tools for the successful management of open space.



PAUL MANSON

Open house events during the planning process included exercises and interactive events to include public feedback.

The status of the region's fish and wildlife was a concern for many as well. It was a concern that the number of species that are protected because of the threat of extinction would continue to grow. This included rare and unique plants and animals as well as larger, more visible species such as mule deer. These concerns also include fears of losing wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities as well as the loss of native plants for gathering, especially by tribal users.

Another concern is that the loss of open space to development is creating challenges for managing floods and water quality. With development farther out from the center of the urban areas, more surface water runoff is being generated, creating more water in flood events and generating more water pollution.

The interviews also suggested several areas that could help improve the management and maintenance of open space areas. Many participants in the interviews recognized that there were many agencies and groups involved in managing open space and

natural resources, and that increased coordination and partnerships were important for the region. Additionally, funding was identified as a challenge. Concerns were expressed that more funding should be available for acquisition, but of more importance to many was the need for funding of operations and maintenance. Operations and maintenance were identified as one of the biggest challenges for open space and included issues of fuels management, illegal dumping, law enforcement, and invasive weed management, among others.

Additionally, education and outreach have also been identified as a key opportunity. As the region's demographics have changed with new residents moving into the area, new expectations and understandings of what open space is and how it is managed are developing. Many suggested increasing interpretive programs, partnerships with non-profit organizations, and educational programs to help teach the public about the natural wealth of the region and the ways to enjoy it without impacting it.

Findings from Public Process

Five public open houses were held throughout the planning process. The first one introduced the planning process to the public and allowed for a general discussion of issues and locations that are of importance to the community. The next two open houses were an opportunity to test the values and issues that were identified in the inventory and assessment process as well as in the stakeholder interviews. The fourth open house provided the public an opportunity to review and comment on the draft goals and policies for the Plan and to work with mapping to view and vote on areas of importance. The final public workshop was held on January 24, 2008, at the May Museum and provided an opportunity for the public to view the entire plan in one document and share their thoughts, concerns and questions.

The key issues identified in the public open houses focused on what resources and areas required protection or action. The resources that were identified included unique hydrological features, wildlife and native plant habitats and migration corridors, and trails and connections. Unique hydrologic features include the Truckee River, Lake Tahoe, Pyramid Lake, the region's playas, and the mountain streams. Concerns were expressed about both the loss of habitat in the region and the loss of connections between habitats, for example, preserving migration corridors for species that spend the winter and summer at different elevations. Recreation and trail connection issues stemmed from public concerns that access and trail connections are being lost through the development of open space, which restricts public recreation.

Areas of concern that were identified in these public events included popular recreation areas and areas that provide scenic backdrops in the region. The Pah Rah Range, Carson Range, Virginia Mountains, Peterson Mountain, Peavine Mountain, Mt. Rose, and the Dogskin Mountains were all identified repeatedly as scenic and recreational resources. As expected, the

Truckee River, Lake Tahoe and Pyramid Lake were consistently identified as important. Additionally, the wide open spaces in the north and the rural character of Washoe Valley were also identified in the exercises. These results aided planning staff as the Plan goals and policies were developed. More information on the public involvement process and the results can be found in the Public Involvement Plan document. This document is available on request from the County.

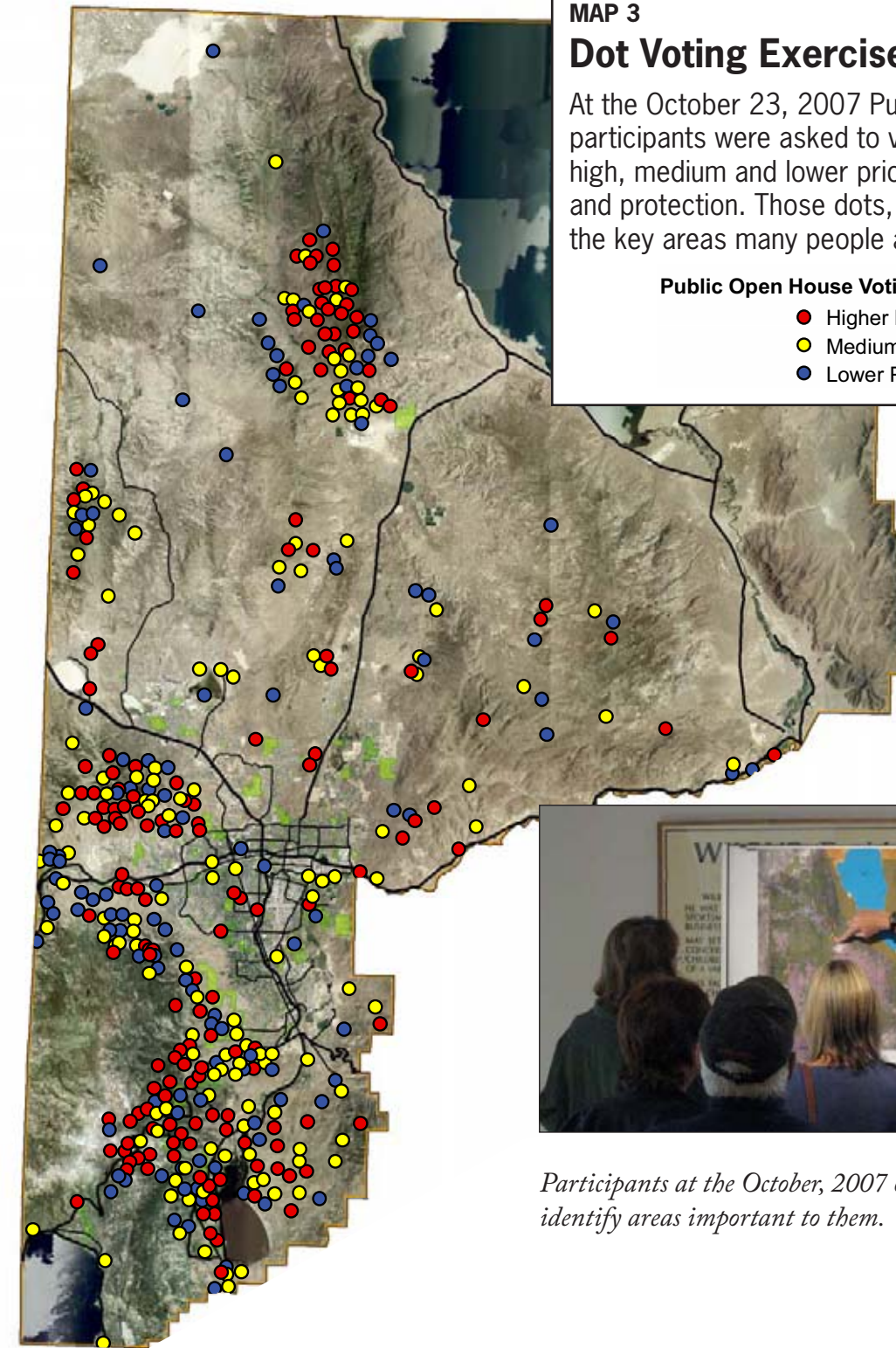
Inventory and Assessment Reports

One of the first steps in the development of the plan, while the public outreach was underway, was a technical review of the region's natural resources, open space and recreational resources. These reports provided the County, the advisory and review committees and the public with the information and foundation to develop this plan. The summary findings of these are given below.

Recreational Resources

The recreational resources inventory and assessment report looked at both the demand for recreation and the supply of facilities to meet it. Population trends in the region include a projected population of 500,000 by 2025 as well as an aging population with different demands and expectations. The shift in the age of the population is expected to increase demand for passive recreation, such as hiking and cycling. These trends were also noted in recent public surveys conducted by the County and included demands for more trails and trail connections, including developed nature viewing areas.

Additionally, population centers are moving north into the Spanish Springs area and south into the Southeast Truckee Meadows area. These changes also bring new challenges in assuring proper levels of service in these new centers. These levels of service are defined by County standards and are currently not being met. However, the region's park availability is comparable



MAP 3
Dot Voting Exercise
At the October 23, 2007 Public Open House participants were asked to vote with dots to identify high, medium and lower priority areas for preservation and protection. Those dots, shown here, help show the key areas many people are concerned about.

Public Open House Voting for Priority Areas

- Higher Priority
- Medium Priority
- Lower Priority



Participants at the October, 2007 open house place dots to identify areas important to them.

to other lower-density cities such as Houston, Tampa and Atlanta. Additionally, open spaces such as federal lands are not included in this calculation.

The unique natural setting and recreational preferences of the region may require a new set of standards to ensure the public's recreational needs are met. Traditional park infrastructure plays a different role in each community, and public desires for trails, hiking, cycling and solitude in outdoor experiences change the way these resources are evaluated. For successful recreational planning, these different values and demands are critical and are discussed further in the Recreational Resources section.

The planning process identified that the region's stated goals of providing formal or traditional parks have not kept up with population growth. Because of the region's open space and natural areas in proximity to where people live, this number may need to be adjusted to meet the values of the residents. Traditional parks provide different recreational activities which are more active, such as organized sports, and may include pools or turf. However, with the noted change in recreational preferences, these may not serve the same interests in the region in the future. As open and green spaces for passive recreation like wildlife viewing, hiking or walking grow in demand, traditional parks will not necessarily serve the same purpose. However, this change will need to also require evaluation of the distance residents are expected to travel from home or work to recreate. If the only passive opportunities are well outside the cities it may require too much travel for users to feel served. Therefore, natural area recreation will need to be protected, restored or developed within urban or suburban areas.

Open Spaces

Open space consists of undeveloped lands with significant natural, cultural and visual resources that are integral to the county's quality of life. These resources include unique geological or water features, areas of

The unique natural setting and recreational preferences of the region may require a new set of standards to ensure the public's recreational needs are met.

critical environmental concern, cultural resources, community-shaping open space, and urban open spaces. Additionally, a defining characteristic of open space in the county is the large amount of land under federal or tribal ownership. The open space inventory and assessment report examined these resources and their relationship to other values such as recreation and natural resources.

Unique geological or water resources were identified in the report. Water resources include the Truckee River, Steamboat Creek, Lake Tahoe, Washoe Lake, and Pyramid Lake. Major playas, perennial streams and ditches make up additional significant features. Geological features include the Incandescent Rocks area as well as the region's geothermal resources, including hot springs.

Areas of critical concern are based on a program the BLM administers to protect special features or species on BLM land. These include protected areas for Steamboat Buckwheat, Carson Wandering Skipper, and Virginia Range Williams Combleaf and for the Pah Rah petroglyphs area.

Cultural resources have been identified throughout the region and are particularly rich near water sources, including seeps and springs. These resources can be traced from the more recent development history of the county back in time to the first inhabitants of the region. There are presently over 5,000 known cultural sites in southern Washoe County. However,

most of these sites have not been formally surveyed or studied.

Scenic and community-shaping areas include visually significant mountain ranges, ridgelines, hills, or individual mountain peaks, as well as the valley floor. These form a significant backdrop and contrast to the more urbanized portions of the county and are a part of the day-to-day "visual experience" for both residents and visitors. If these areas were to fully develop, the quality of this experience would change dramatically. These areas also help to maintain community identity by creating breaks between community developments.

The planning process identified a number of threats and opportunities for open space in the study area. The unique water resources of the region have been impacted by development, diversion and pollution. However, a number of new efforts are underway to improve the quality of these resources, most notably the Truckee River Flood Control project and its restoration goals. But these efforts also include the development of a new open space plan by the City of Reno and the future development of a plan by the City of Sparks. Restoration efforts are underway along Steamboat Creek through the Washoe-Storey Conservation District. Yet other water and geological resources still remain unprotected or at risk of being impaired. This includes the region's wetlands, playas and floodplains. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) are resources that are considered better protected due to their location on BLM lands and regulatory requirements for protection. These designations may also be an opportunity for protecting other resources that are not currently under any protective designation.

Risks for cultural resources include loss or destruction through other land uses or recreation. Often this may be unintentional but, nonetheless, is irreversible. Vandalism and theft also remain a challenge in protecting these resources. Protection of these resources requires identification of resources, and then using various measures to steer impacts away from

them. Cultural resources can also include present day activities such as gathering of traditional materials. For these resources, access is the critical issue. Agreements and measures to maintain or improve access have been developed but still can go further. Scenic and visual areas in the region are highly valued both for providing a defining backdrop and to create distinct community identities within the region. The main threat to this resource is development that builds in highly visible areas and recreation that scars the landscape. A challenge to managing visual and scenic resources is first defining them, and then managing development when the resource may serve many communities and be in any number of responsible jurisdictions. Opportunities for this include developing a regional definition of visual and scenic areas that can allow for a coordinated management effort.

Natural Resources

The Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report focused on three areas: biodiversity, water resources, and natural hazards. These categories provided a framework for the development of goals and policies in this Plan. These three categories also focused on the natural functions of the environment and the landscape's ability to support species, to naturally provide water for human and wildlife health, and to manage floods, fire and storms.

The region's biodiversity resources are uniquely diverse; of the 27 habitat types that occur in Nevada, 23 can be found within the study area. This diversity is reflected in the journey the Truckee River takes from alpine lakes and forests through montane woodlands, to the urban areas of Reno and Sparks and on through the canyons and sagebrush lands to Pyramid Lake. These habitats were studied for the species of wildlife and fish and plants they support and provided valuable information on which habitats are critical for the health of the region's ecosystem. Most of the threats to the region's biodiversity come from loss of habitat because of development or loss of water, the spread

The Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report focused on three areas: biodiversity, water resources, and natural hazards.

These categories provided a framework for the development of goals and policies in this Plan.

of invasive species, impacts of catastrophic fire, and inappropriate recreational uses.

Water resource issues concern both surface water and groundwater, including streams, rivers, and aquifers beneath the surface. These resources are needed to support fish and wildlife and to provide safe drinking water in the region. Threats include the overuse of water due to development, the loss of recharge areas from conversion of natural areas, and pollution from runoff, agriculture and industry. Open space plays a critical role in collecting, filtering and storing water resources.

Natural hazards include floods, fire and landslides. All of these are of critical importance in the region, but conflicts occur where natural occurrences of these hazards meet new development, causing potential threats to homes. Healthy open spaces are a way to buffer and protect our communities from the impacts of these threats.



MARK SHELDON

Streams, creeks and ditches provide opportunities for recreation routes but must include other natural resource goals.

CHAPTER 5 The Plan

*“When one tugs
at a single thing in nature,
he finds it attached
to the rest of the world.”*

JOHN MUIR

This section of the Plan introduces the goals and policies. The section is organized by the key resource categories for open space and natural resource management for our region:

- Biodiversity Support
- Cultural Resources and Sensitive Lands
- Natural Hazards
- Recreation Resources
- Visual and Scenic Character
- Water Resources

The Plan discusses the challenges to and opportunities for each of these resource categories in detail and provides resources for interested stakeholders and members of the public to learn more and become involved in the issues.

In addition to these categories, the Plan recognizes five important and common challenges for open space and natural resources in the region. These common challenges span resource issues across the region – and represent the areas that require the most effort to protect our region’s resources.

- **Wildfire:** Severity and frequency of wildfires have grown above natural levels. These fires threaten property and lives as well as rare and critical biodiversity. The reasons for growth in wildfire are complex and varied, but generally are due to increases in wildfire fuels due to invasive species and to past management practices. However, increased development in the growing wildland/urban interface also contributes greatly to this challenge.
- **Invasive Species:** By pushing native vegetation out, invasive species convert valuable habitat, threaten fish and wildlife species, and provide a dangerous fuel source for wildfires. These species expand rapidly after a wildfire and can

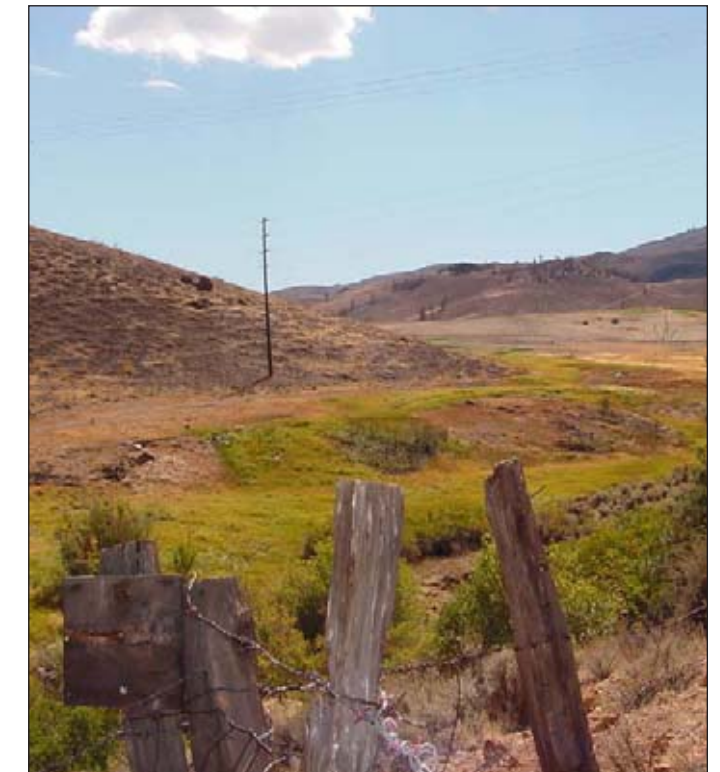


BILL GARDNER

Challenges for open space and natural resources include managing many different impacts, such as utility corridor impacts to views, and managing working landscapes such as agriculture.

also be spread by agriculture, recreation and land disturbance from development.

- **Multiple Use:** The challenge of multiple use is that as the region grows with new residents and more visitors, organizing compatible and incompatible uses will be necessary. Those users also have different impacts on the landscape, and some landscapes are less capable of supporting increased use as demands grow.
- **Development:** The popularity of our region has attracted many new residents, and with them, development has expanded to provide homes, jobs and other opportunities. The location of development will be critical in determining which species and habitats are impacted. Additionally, as development expands it can also create new threats from flooding, wildfire and invasive species if not planned properly.



MIKE BOSTER

- **Acquisition and Management:** The region’s open space and natural resources have increasing management requirements, the same requirements that face private and other landowners. Increasing use leads to managing trails, illegal dumping, and other law enforcement issues. Fuels management as well as invasive species are a continuing challenge. Identifying dedicated funding is necessary to meet these challenges.

Biodiversity Support

What is biodiversity support?

Southern Washoe County has a very diverse landscape which contains 23 of the 27 vegetation communities found in Nevada (as identified in the Nevada Department of Wildlife [NDOW] Wildlife Action Plan), Nevada Natural Heritage Program and the The U.S. Geological Survey Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Project (SWReGAP) data, ranging from desert scrub to alpine tundra, from woodlands to desert playas and ephemeral pools. These vegetation communities are defined by the species that are present or supported by the area. This Plan relies on vegetation communities because they are easier to measure, and they provide support for levels of biodiversity that are otherwise difficult to evaluate. Each of the 23 vegetation communities provides unique functions important to the natural health and environmental sustainability of the region.

Biodiversity support is the ability of these 23 vegetation communities to support species, as well as to provide important functions associated with each vegetation community (e.g., the physical, chemical, and biological processes or attributes of each vegetation community). A particular focus is on those communities that support listed species and species of identified concern such as sage grouse, mule deer, black bear, antelope and bighorn sheep. Biodiversity support also includes the ability of each vegetation community to perform critical ecosystem services for the region and the continued possibility of meeting the needs of future generations.

What are the challenges facing biodiversity support in our region?

Biodiversity support faces a number of challenges caused by the diminishing quantity and quality of vegetation communities and the key functions they perform. All the vegetation communities within the region are being



MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about these resources and to view technical information, please see the Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report, available online at: www.washoecounty.us/openspace.

altered from historic conditions to some degree by actions which include, but are not limited to:

- **Urban and suburban development:** As development occurs, areas are converted from their natural state to one that may no longer support the species that used the area. This may also result in the introduction of new non-native species with landscaping or construction.
- **Recreational activities:** Human use in certain areas or at certain times of the year may discourage wildlife from using the area. Recreation can also impact plants through damage from hiking, biking or motorized activities as well as through the transport of invasive species.
- **Alterations to fire regimes:** Severe fires can replace the vegetation communities within the area burned. This conversion can result in the loss of rare and valuable ones. Fires also create an opening for invasive species to enter and establish, which keeps native vegetation from returning.
- **Construction of dams:** Dams alter the flow of water by changing the times and locations of flows, raising temperatures and preventing passage of fish.
- **Regulation, or diversion, of stream flows:** Levees or other modifications within the

floodplain change the speed and types of flows. This in turn can change the aquatic habitat and remove entire stretches of a river from use by species. Diversions and use of water can also reduce flows, so that the temperature rises dangerously high or does not leave in-stream flow behind for species to use.

- **Industrial discharge:** Pollutants and heated waters can come from industrial users, and this may result in loss of aquatic habitat and poor water quality. These impacts can remove certain species from areas downstream of the discharge.
- **Mining:** Surface mining and subsurface mining both produce and expose humans and wildlife to toxic compounds that may be released due to the mining process. Surface mining, which includes aggregate operations, can also drastically change the landscape through the removal of unique vegetation communities and increased human activity.
- **Livestock grazing:** Intense grazing can result in the loss of land cover and compaction of the ground adjacent to water. Compaction speeds erosion of soil and damages riparian areas. Grazing often includes both the intentional and unintentional introduction of non-native invasive species.

These actions alter key vegetation communities and limit or impair the ability for habitat to support species through:

- Loss of native vegetation
- Introduction of invasive (non-native) species
- Soil erosion and pollution
- Decreased water quality and quantity
- Habitat fragmentation

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is a term that often leads to many definitions or understandings. For the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan, biodiversity is a measure of the number of vegetation communities and species that are present in the region. It is a way of understanding the great variety of plants, animals and insects that are present. Biodiversity support is how the landscape in the region supports this diversity of plants and animals and maintains their healthy populations.

What are vegetation communities?

The vegetation communities that are included in this planning effort are defined by groups of plant communities that occur within areas that share common environmental traits, such as soils, climate, or other natural processes. These communities include both native vegetation communities and altered communities where development, fire or invasive species may have changed the landscape. The vegetation communities classification was developed by a coalition of federal agencies, universities and conservation organizations and is recognized as a high quality tool for conservation planning.

How does biodiversity relate to ecosystem services?

Biodiversity provides the foundation for many ecosystem services. Because biodiversity is a measure of health for the natural world, it is also a measure of how natural processes are able to support our society. A healthy natural system will moderate the size of pest or disease outbreaks that may damage a forest and in turn present a fire hazard to our communities. A healthy riparian or floodplain area provides us with filtering and storage capacity to safeguard our drinking water. By protecting biodiversity we directly support many of the ecosystem services we rely upon for our own health and safety.

How are species protected?

Various plants, animals and insects in the region receive unique protection because they are threatened with extinction or continued loss. These protections include the U.S. Endangered Species Act and the State of Nevada statutes that provide protections for sensitive, threatened and endangered species. These laws prohibit the killing or harming of certain species and may also include the protection of the habitat these species rely upon. Often the species protected by these laws are called **listed species**. This phrase refers to the species included on protection lists by various agencies that administer the laws.

The protection of these species is often best accomplished through protecting the habitats they rely on for healthy populations. That is why this Plan relies on the use of vegetation communities to measure the threats and opportunities for these species.

Listed species are not the only species this plan focuses on. It also includes Mule Deer, Greater Sage Grouse, Black Bear, Big Horn Sheep, Pygmy Rabbit, and Pronghorn Antelope. These species were included in all of the same level of analyses as the listed species mentioned above. It is recognized locally that Mule Deer critical winter habitat is being lost under pressure from development and wildland fires.

These all lead to a loss or conversion of key vegetation communities, loss of natural wildlife habitat areas, the displacement or direct mortality of wildlife, the loss of unique endemic and rare vegetation communities and species, and diminished aesthetic aspects of the region.

Also, on a larger scale, global climate change represents a threat to all vegetation communities within the region. Potential effects of global climate change include a shift in vegetation community locations, conversions of vegetation communities, a loss of these communities, increased occurrences of disease in plant and wildlife species, changes in wildlife distribution, and extirpation of plants and wildlife.

What are our opportunities for biodiversity support?

Evaluation or valuation of opportunities for biodiversity support can be a difficult task and requires decisions that often involve tradeoffs in allocating resources. Thus, this Plan aids the County in the decision making related to the preservation, restoration, enhancement, management, and in some cases, reintroduction of key vegetation communities.

As an example, the Plan identifies next steps to assure seeps and springs are protected and the associated habitats that depend on them. This may involve the County applying for water rights or protesting other applications that may harm a seep or spring. With the County becoming an active owner and participant in the protection and management of these, and other, key vegetation communities within the region, it will benefit fish and wildlife, listed species, such as the Carson Wandering Skipper, and water resources that surrounding communities depend on.

The plan also takes into account not only the preservation and restoration of key vegetation communities for fish and wildlife, but also the value of these areas for recreational, aesthetic, and economic benefits. This may include land trades or acquisition of lands where an area of a key vegetation community may be preserved for

a listed species, such as Steamboat Buckwheat, while another area that is more suitable for recreation can be designated as an area for off-road vehicle use.

What are our policies and goals for biodiversity support?

The Plan provides guidance on ways to protect and manage resources that will justify and set priorities for programs, policies, or actions to protect or restore key habitats and services. Cooperative planning and coordinated implementation will be necessary by multiple entities within the region that are willing to help the County achieve these goals. Federal, state, city and county resources and interests all overlap in the region. Management of the region's biodiversity will not succeed without integration and cooperation of efforts.

The Plan provides the following goals and policies:

GOAL 1: Protect and re-establish migration corridors.

- 1.1 Work with local communities, the public and special interest groups to educate them on the value and need for migration corridors and ways to help reduce impacts on them (such as an "adopt a corridor" type program).
- 1.2 Limit development activities that impede natural migration patterns between habitats on which migratory species depend.
- 1.3 Restore and/or acquire critical migration corridors to assure they are left in their natural state.

GOAL 2: Acquire and restore critical vegetation communities.

- 2.1 Acquire and restore critical areas with particular attention to:
 - 2.1.1 Lake Tahoe restoration projects (including wet meadows within the Tahoe Basin).
 - 2.1.2 Acquisition or cooperative management agreements regarding private in-holdings

in the Warm Springs, Winnemucca Ranch, and Bedell Flat areas for sage grouse breeding and nesting, and for protecting wetlands, springs and seeps in the area.

- 2.1.3 Acquisition of additional private lands to help buffer the Pah Rah High Lakes Basin Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Wandering Skipper ACEC.
- 2.1.4 Steamboat Creek starting at the headwaters in Little Washoe Lake.
- 2.1.5 Habitat for Altered Andesite Buckwheat.
- 2.2 Accept dedications and donations of open space only after evaluating their suitability in meeting the goals and policies of this Plan. Donations that create undue management costs because of invasive species, wildfire risk, or misuse should only be accepted with a pre-identified funding source to mitigate for these issues or if the land serves multiple values as identified in the goals and policies of this Plan.

GOAL 3: Achieve species restoration goals through cooperative efforts.

- 3.1 Work with other agencies and jurisdictions to achieve species restoration goals.
- 3.2 Work with state and federal agencies to identify any potential land exchanges, leases or acquisitions that will add unique habitats to the Washoe County Open Space Plan.
- 3.3 Support partnerships for the use of Southern Nevada Public Land Management (SNPLMA) Funds for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.
- 3.4 Any efforts to dispose of properties through Public Land Bills or other legislation should rely on values based upon scientific assessments.
- 3.5 Support and encourage the passage of local and state bond measures to support future acquisition and management of open spaces and environmentally sensitive lands.

- 3.6 Support the establishment of regionally consistent or complementary conditions of approval for dedication of sensitive lands as open space.
- 3.7 Coordinate with the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) on acquisitions that will benefit species diversity identified in the Nevada Wildlife Action Plan.
- 3.8 Work with all planning partners to develop funding sources and incentives for the acquisition, dedication and maintenance of open space and sensitive lands.
- 3.9 Coordinate with the Regional Transportation Commission and the Nevada Department of Transportation to minimize the location of new transportation corridors through dedicated open space and parks.

GOAL 4: Control invasive non-native species in the region.

- 4.1 The County will support government and private efforts to control the spread of invasive, non-native species throughout the region through eradication, prevention and education activities.

GOAL 5: Protect important habitats from impacts or loss due to development.

- 5.1 Ensure that riparian and environmentally sensitive areas within the County's jurisdiction have adequate buffers from development to protect critical functions.

VEGETATION COMMUNITY

Lower Montane Woodlands

What defines this vegetation community?
It is found in drier landscapes and is normally dominated by piñon-juniper stands. These woodlands provide important cover for wildlife, including areas for nesting and forage. Because of the evergreen cover provided, these woodlands provide protection from summer heat and winter cold. It also provides nut and berry crops important to wildlife species. Piñon nut gathering is a traditional cultural resource for Native American groups in the region and a defining resource for the Great Basin cultures.

The spread of this vegetation community has been encouraged in some areas because of the aesthetic desirability of trees. It has replaced sagebrush in some areas, usually adjacent to development where residents prefer the trees instead of sagebrush. This vegetation community also presents a higher risk for wildfire and when



CAROLYN POISSANT

A view of the foothills in Canepa Ranch.

mixed with development brings homes and the habitat into possible conflict.

Vegetation that can be found in this habitat includes curl leaf mountain mahogany, bitterbrush, serviceberry, snowbrush and manzanita.

What species are dependent on this vegetation community?

- Ferruginous Hawk
- Fringed Myotis
- Spotted Bat
- Townsend Big-eared Bat
- Western Small-footed Myotis


Where is this vegetation community found?
It is primarily located on the sides of the region's mountains and ridges between 5,000 and 8,000 feet elevation. The Pah Rah Range, Dogskin Mountain and the Virginia Mountains contain large and dense areas of this habitat. It is also on the slopes of Peterson Mountain, Peavine Mountain and in the foothills of the Carson Range.

VEGETATION COMMUNITY

Intermountain (Cold Desert) Scrub

What defines this vegetation community?
This vegetation community is found in areas with extreme temperature variation and little precipitation. Plants that grow in this area are limited by the salinity and drainage of soils. The soils also tend to be loose materials such as sand or gravel and provide opportunities for burrowing animals. This soil type also tends to be higher in moisture than adjacent upland areas. This makes it important for migrating species as they move across the landscape.

This loose soil type also means the Intermountain Scrub is susceptible to damage from motorized activities and recreation. This soil type also works to store or slow the movement of runoff after storms. Changes in runoff or surface water flows due to development can reduce the ability of these areas to store water and in turn speed flood waters downstream.



JENNIFER BUDGE

Natural areas within Sun Valley Regional Park.

Vegetation that can be found in this habitat includes sagebrush, bitterbrush, sandberg bluegrass, needle and thread grass, hawksbeard, phlox and Indian paintbrush.

What species are dependent on this vegetation community?

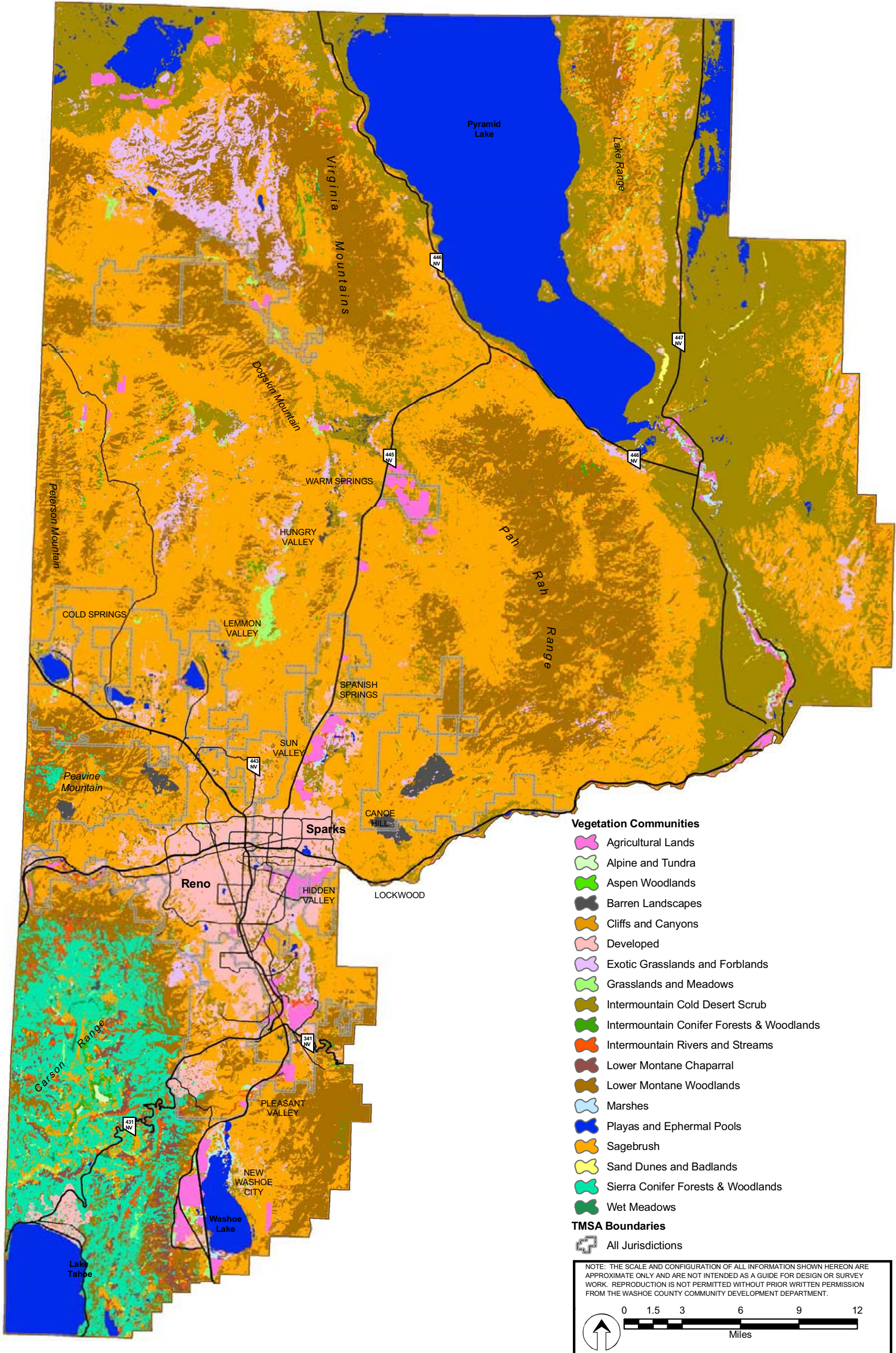
• Bald Eagle	• Loggerhead Shrike
• Brewer's Sparrow	• Long-Nosed Leopard Lizard
• Burrowing Owl	• Pale Kangaroo Mouse
• Dark Kangaroo Mouse	• Pallid Bat
• Desert Horned Lizard	• Sage Sparrow
• Ferruginous Hawk	• Mule Deer
• Great Basin Collared Lizard	• Pronghorn Antelope
• Kit Fox	• Sage Grouse

Where is this vegetation community found?
Intermountain Scrub is primarily in the northern and eastern portions of the study area in the valley bottoms. Areas of this habitat surround Pyramid Lake and Honey Lake and are found along the Truckee River just beyond the riparian corridor.

MAP 4

Biodiversity Resources

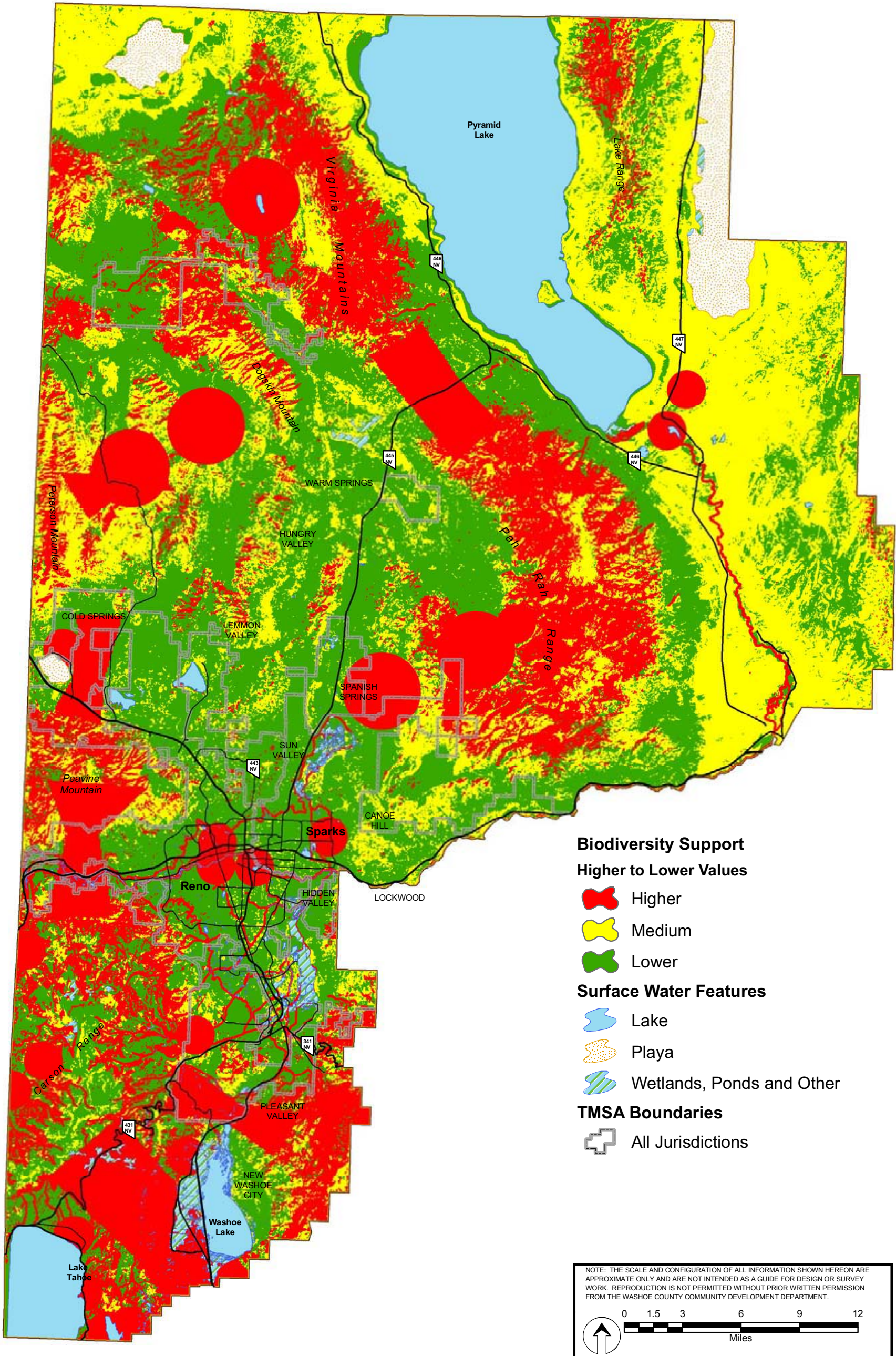
The measure of biodiversity support used in this plan is based on the Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Project (SWReGAP). This project performed a large area analysis to develop mapping of vegetation communities across the Southwestern U.S. This map shows what vegetation communities are present and where. These data provide a basis for connecting plant and animal species to a habitat or area they need to maintain healthy populations.



MAP 5

Biodiversity Values

Through the planning process, the County worked with regional partners including state agencies, local conservation groups and other professionals to identify important features for supporting biodiversity in the region. These features include vegetation communities, migration corridors, important bird areas, and the known location of species protected by law or of particular interest to the County. Areas of high value on this map include vegetation communities that support the most species, provide migration routes, or are a location of a protected species. The lower value areas tend to reflect a loss of habitat quality, either through the spread of invasive plants or weeds, development or recent wildfire.



Cultural Resources and Sensitive Lands

What are Cultural Resources and Sensitive Lands?

Cultural and sensitive landscapes are two of the region's most fragile – and irreplaceable – assets. Once these are destroyed or damaged, as a result of development, vandalism or recreational overuse, they are unable to be replaced, and a part of our history is lost forever.

Cultural resources or cultural landscapes refer to areas that were previously inhabited – from prehistoric times to the immediate past and many of these areas are still utilized and highly valued by Native Americans for their cultural practices. They include remnants of the built environment, settlement, or occupation. They may encompass archaeological sites, where tools, rock rings, or petroglyphs might be found; fishing, hunting, gathering or mining camps, or wintering villages; historic buildings and structures; constructed landscapes, such as irrigation canals, gardens or windbreaks; or any modification to the landscape or manufactured or humanly altered object.

The term *archaeological resource* means any material remains of past human life or activities which are of archaeological interest and cultural significance. These include but are not limited to: pottery, basketry, bottles, weapons, weapon projectiles, tools, structures or portions of structures, pit houses, rock paintings, rock carvings, intaglios, graves, human skeletal materials, or any portion or piece of any of the foregoing items.

Historic resources recorded in Nevada include buildings, structures, objects, districts, and landscapes in addition to archaeological sites. Most often these resources are associated with mining districts, agriculture, transportation corridors, and military bases. Euroamerican settlement in Nevada began in the 1850s when gold and silver were discovered on the Comstock, and as Mormons constructed missions in the southern part of the state. The development of Reno and Sparks,



JENNIFER BUDGE

Rock art from the Court of Antiquities is an example of the wealth of cultural resources in the region.

like other Nevada cities, was largely the result of the construction of transcontinental rail lines.

Traditional and cultural uses of some of these landscapes may persist through time, for example, the gathering of medicinal plants, harvesting of materials for basketry, or conducting religious ceremonies at selected locations. Because many of these uses have been practiced over multiple generations, loss of the ability to perform these functions – by restricting access to the areas in which they are performed or from vandalism or desecration, for example – can affect the continuity of a people's tradition and heritage by modifying the setting and the loss of context.

Sensitive landscapes, for purposes of this plan, include five Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) that have been identified by the Bureau of Land Management. These are landscapes that include very sensitive or rare geologic features, such as areas of rare volcanic rocks or geothermal features; landscapes that support endangered plant species

(e.g., Steamboat Buckwheat, Williams Combleaf) or animals (e.g., Carson Wandering Skipper); or landscapes that include significant concentrations of archaeological resources. Culturally sensitive landscapes are very common in the Washoe County planning area. There is one ACEC identified within the planning area for cultural sensitivity.

The primary benefits to preserving and protecting cultural resources and sensitive landscapes are the opportunity to preserve local and regional heritage, and the opportunity to provide suitable educational and interpretive opportunities that do not compromise the integrity of the resource and allows existing traditional practices to continue.

What are the Challenges for Cultural and Sensitive Resources in our Region?

There are several challenges facing the region's cultural and sensitive resources.



MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about these resources and to view technical information, please see the Open Space Inventory and Assessment Report available, online at: www.washoecounty.us/openspace.

A major challenge is the sheer *magnitude and number of sites*, coupled with the fact that large areas have not yet been mapped or surveyed. There are presently over 5,000 known cultural sites in southern Washoe County; however, this is only a fraction of those that exist. Surveys and studies have not been able to fully capture the wealth of sites in the region. The Cultural Resources and Sensitive Landscapes Map on page 28 shows where there are significant, known concentrations of resources – though actual locations are not shown, to protect the integrity of the resource. Where the map shows a survey grid, it means that something has been discovered within that section, although the entire section may not have been surveyed and the quality of the resource may not yet be documented. Where the map does not show a survey square, it means that no survey has been undertaken, so the resource value is unknown.

It is unrealistic for the County or any entity to survey and evaluate all of these sites; the human and financial resource implications would be significant. It is also unrealistic to expect that public entities would attempt to acquire and maintain all of the affected lands, or that private development or recreational use would be completely prohibited. The challenge posed is thus to find a suitable approach to ensure that as many of these sites are protected as possible while representing a reasonable investment of resources. However, we do know that cultural resources are often clustered around sites such as seeps, springs, or other surface water resources. These resources have always attracted people, and with them, cultural resources were left for present generations to appreciate and learn from. Unique viewpoints or geological formations served a similar function, and can hold many cultural resources not yet known.

A second challenge concerns *continued private development in locations with significant concentrations of cultural resources* – such as the Spanish Springs and Warm Springs Valley – or in proximity to sensitive landscapes such as the Steamboat Creek area. As the map illustrates,

many areas of known or suspected cultural or sensitive resources are privately held. The current development code does not include requirements for protection of these resources; this contrasts with physiographic conditions, such as steep slopes or floodplains, where development is regulated.

The County expects developers to perform surveys of potential cultural resource zones when studying development options. While this responsibility will not be taken lightly, the County also wants to provide opportunities to collaborate with developers, tribes and other agencies charged with protecting cultural resources. It may be possible, through identification of critical buffer zones and through educational programs, to encourage increased voluntary compliance and therefore not require enforcement actions.

A third challenge *concerns unregulated recreational use, including what has been termed “consumptive” recreational use*. Unregulated off-highway vehicle use can affect not only cultural resources but water quality. The Incandescent Rocks area is a popular spot for hiking and exploring, and may warrant additional management actions to ensure that public use does not reach a level where the resource is overwhelmed or degraded. This may become particularly necessary as the North Valleys continue to develop. The Pah Rah High Basin petroglyph area, particularly because of its proximity to a highly developed area east of Sparks, may warrant the same type of management attention.

Underlying this challenge are two somewhat related considerations: first, the multiple jurisdictions that are involved, and second, the lack of adequate staff resources to effectively patrol such large areas. Both will need to be addressed to provide effective protections.

A fourth challenge, suggested above, concerns the *many jurisdictions who are either responsible for these landscapes or have a vested interest in their protection*. These include units of the federal government (BLM and USFS), the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the County,

and area tribes, including the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Washoe Tribe, and Reno Sparks Indian Colony. Federal and state entities have specific missions and enforcement powers against prohibited acts. The County has no defined mission with respect to cultural resource protection and has limited enforcement capability through the Sheriff’s office. Tribal representatives have a strong interest in resource protection and have formed their own patrols, sometimes involving tribal police. Focusing all of these entities around shared problems and management actions might allow limited resources of any one party to go farther.

Recreational use of BLM public lands is growing at a faster rate than for any other lands. For much of the time that BLM has existed as an agency, the BLM lands have been thought to be too inaccessible and undeveloped to support substantial recreation use. Today, BLM lands are fully accessible due to the pervasive use of off-highway motorized vehicles and mountain bikes. This presents new challenges for enforcing laws on these public lands. One senior BLM official noted that *“BLM has complete regulatory ability to control the impacts on cultural resources of its permit applicants; however the greatest threat to cultural resources today is coming from the rapid increase in recreational access, with essentially no regulatory control, or enforcement capacity in place to deal with growing impacts.”* (National Trust for Historic Preservation, May 2006)

What are the Opportunities for Cultural and Sensitive Resources?

Providing effective yet implementable protections for cultural resources and sensitive lands – in developed areas, urbanizing zones, and in traditional open space areas within the county – will be a complex effort that will need to evolve over time. It is also a process that needs to recognize the relationship between cultural resources, cultural practices and other resources such as water and biodiversity. This Plan can help by providing guidance for the various jurisdictions that are a party to this effort, in the following areas:

How does this relate to other resources?

Water resources: Water is essential for life; therefore, it is no surprise that many cultural resource sites are located adjacent to water. The region’s climate has changed over the geologic and human history of the region. Sites that are dry today may have been wet in the past; thus, present day locations of water are not always indicative of where sites could be found. Members of area tribes still gather plants and use some areas ceremonially. Protecting waterway resources provides an opportunity for protection and interpretation of important cultural sites as well as preservation of traditional uses.

Parks, trails, recreation and connections: Many areas that contain important cultural resources or sensitive landscapes are also popular for recreation – not because of their significance, but because they offer challenging rocky terrain and remote locations that appeal to certain recreationists. Careful management of the type and intensity of recreational uses in these areas can help to ensure that resources are not permanently lost or significantly impaired.

- Developing workable mechanisms for identifying and prioritizing the most sensitive resource areas for acquisition, management and protection. Forming an interjurisdictional task force to provide oversight and guidance would be a good first step, as well as ongoing consultation with tribes.
- Developing workable mechanisms for encouraging partnerships, voluntary support and participation in cultural resource preservation endeavors on the part of the private development community and to assure tribal users have access to these resources.
- A comprehensive, broad-based education program to raise awareness about resource significance and actions with especially harmful or illegal impacts. Education may include the naming of historic areas with their Native American place names and outreach to school programs to learn about the tribal history of the region.
- Suggesting strategies for monitoring and controlling “consumptive” recreational uses while still providing for appropriate public access.
- Suggesting approaches for creating working partnerships between affected agencies, organizations, and jurisdictions involved, so that resource protection is elevated in importance in each agency’s mission, responsibilities are clear, and cooperative efforts are made to leverage each agency’s capabilities and staff/financial resources.
- Managing County-owned lands to protect and provide appropriate access to cultural resources and for usual and accustomed practices such as gathering.

What are our Goals and Policies for Cultural Resources and Sensitive Landscapes?

GOAL 1: Ensure that culturally and environmentally sensitive lands are adequately buffered from development.

- 1.1 Designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and known cultural resources



JENNIFER BUDGE

Prominent rock art or cultural resources require our protection from damage by vandalism.

within urbanized areas will be protected through the use of buffers and other appropriate mechanisms.

- 1.2 Develop and update access management strategies to protect cultural resource areas that are open to public recreation, those that are in proximity to developed areas, and those that are in especially remote locations.
- 1.3 Protect cultural resources through the development review process.

GOAL 2: Protect and manage cultural resources within the region’s urban, rural and urban interface areas.

- 2.1 Work in conjunction with 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.

- 2.2 Participate in the ongoing development of policy and tools for the management of cultural resources within the region's urban, rural and urban interface areas.
- 2.3 Regulate recreational damage on culturally sensitive lands and enforce such regulations with appropriate measures and penalties for violation.
- 2.4 Provide incentives for private developers to voluntarily protect cultural resources in sensitive zones.
- 2.5 Encourage ongoing interjurisdictional coordination in cultural resource management.
- 2.6 Identify and support any potential land exchanges, acquisitions or dedications that will add unique cultural resource sites to public ownership.

GOAL 3: Teach citizens about the history, legacy and uniqueness of the region's cultural and sensitive resources.

- 3.1 The County will work with its planning partners to develop and maintain a comprehensive public education program to teach citizens about the history, legacy and uniqueness of the region's cultural and sensitive resources.
- 3.2 Incorporate the tribal legacy and history of Washoe County in the naming of trails and facilities and through interpretive signs to connect users with the context of the land.
- 3.3 Partner with the Nevada Rock Art Foundation and other local partners to plan and develop the Court of Antiquity petroglyph site on the Truckee River as an educational interpretive park.

GOAL 4: Native American tribes will have access to areas used for cultural purposes.

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



JENNIFER BUDGE

Protecting rare cultural resources requires balancing access to enjoy the resource and protections to preserve them for the future.

GOAL 5: Secure public funding for acquisition and protection of culturally sensitive lands.

- 5.1 Work with all planning partners to develop funding sources and incentives for the acquisition, dedication and maintenance of open space and sensitive lands.
- 5.2 Identify important traditional cultural gathering areas and associated plant species; recommend appropriate protection measures for maintaining a sustainable ecosystem.

Who oversees cultural and sensitive resources in the region – at federal, state or local levels?

The Bureau of Land Management

The organic statute governing BLM, the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), established a clear policy of long-term retention and professional management of the lands and resources, including cultural resources, under the BLM. While the general policy of "multiple-use" is BLM's core mission under FLPMA, it was made clear in the statute that rare, special, sensitive, beautiful, or other specific places within the BLM lands could be protected from competing uses, or from destruction by development or overuse, through various special management actions such as designation of "areas of critical environmental concern."

The Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) program is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The program was created by the 1976 Federal Lands Policy and Management Act, which established the first conservation mandate for the BLM. The ACEC mandate directs the BLM to protect important riparian corridors, threatened and endangered species habitat, cultural and archeological resources, and unique scenic landscapes throughout the Southwest that the agency believes need special management attention.

More recently, BLM has administratively organized all of its special management areas (those designated by Congress or the President) into a "National Landscape Conservation System" (NLCS) as a way to give more management attention and direction to these special places and to the significant cultural resources in them. However, there is no statutory basis for the NLCS to be given special status within the agency, and it could be changed by a simple action of the Secretary of the Interior.

The U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service is responsible for compliance with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 470) on Forest Service-owned lands. Each Forest supports a full time Heritage Program committed to the fulfillment of historic

preservation mandates and objectives defined in NHPA Sections 106 and 110 and related authorities, as well as Forest Service Heritage Resource Program goals defined in Forest Service Manual Title 2300, Chapter 2361 (1990) or its successor.

The mission of the Forest Service Heritage Resource Program includes protecting significant heritage resources and contributing relevant information and perspectives to natural resource management. As manager of almost 200 million acres of public land nationwide, the National Forest System is entrusted with the stewardship of a large share of the nation's historical and cultural heritage. Most of the stewardship efforts remain focused on protecting heritage sites from project impacts.

Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs– State Historic Preservation Office

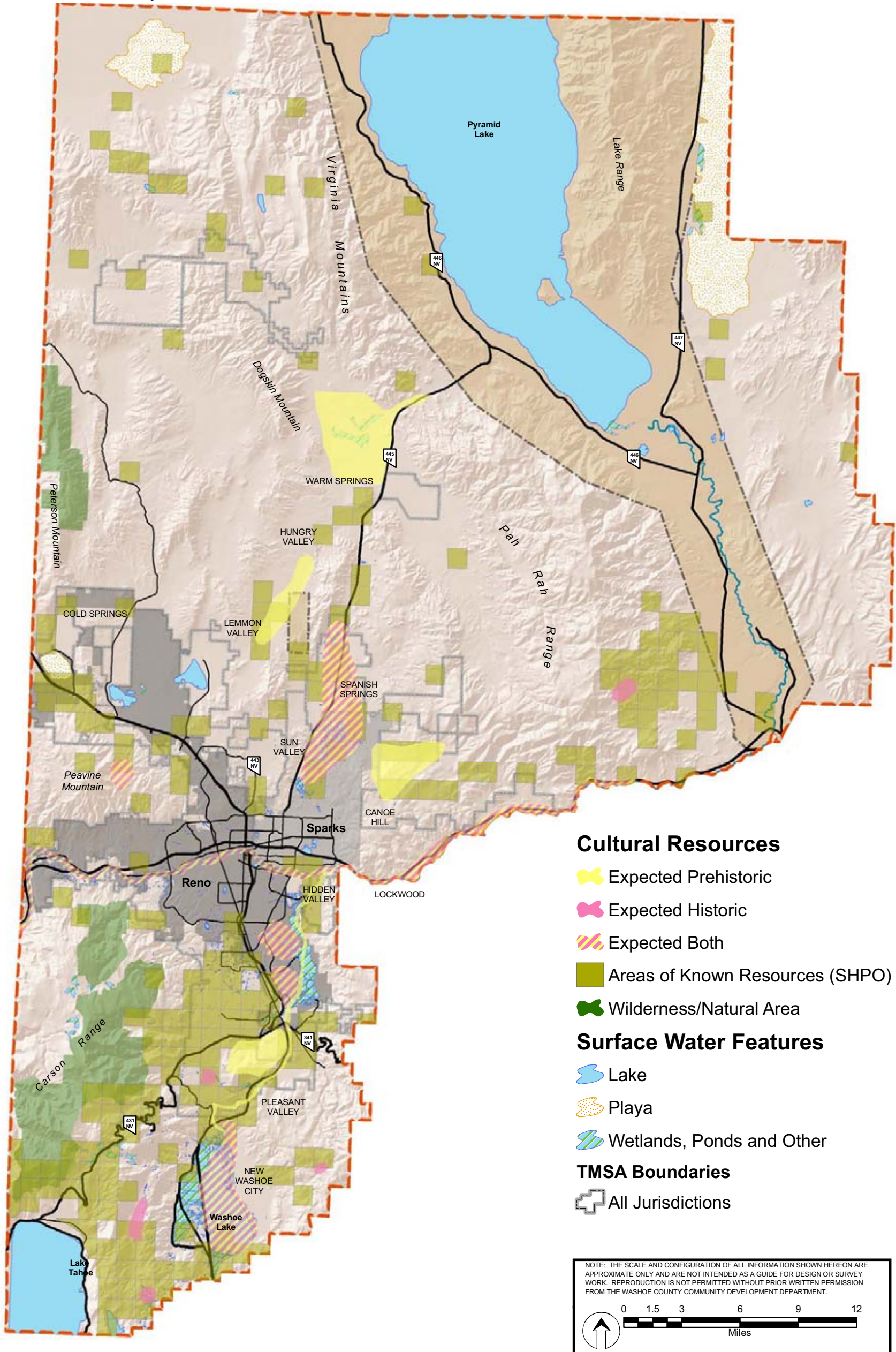
The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) encourages the preservation, documentation, and use of cultural resources through state and federal programs. The agency works to educate the public about the importance of our cultural heritage so that Nevada's historic and archaeological properties are preserved, interpreted, and reused for their economic, educational, and intrinsic values and for future generations to appreciate.

The SHPO's mission is authorized through Nevada Revised Statute 383. Major functions include administering the state's stewardship program, preparation of a statewide historic preservation plan, and consultation on applications for National Historic Register status under the U.S. Department of the Interior's Section 106 guidance. SHPO's authority also extends to duties and actions relative to discovery of Indian burial sites on private lands as well as enforcement against prohibited acts, and protection of historic and prehistoric sites, including penalties for destruction or trafficking in artifacts.

MAP 6

Cultural Resources and Sensitive Landscapes

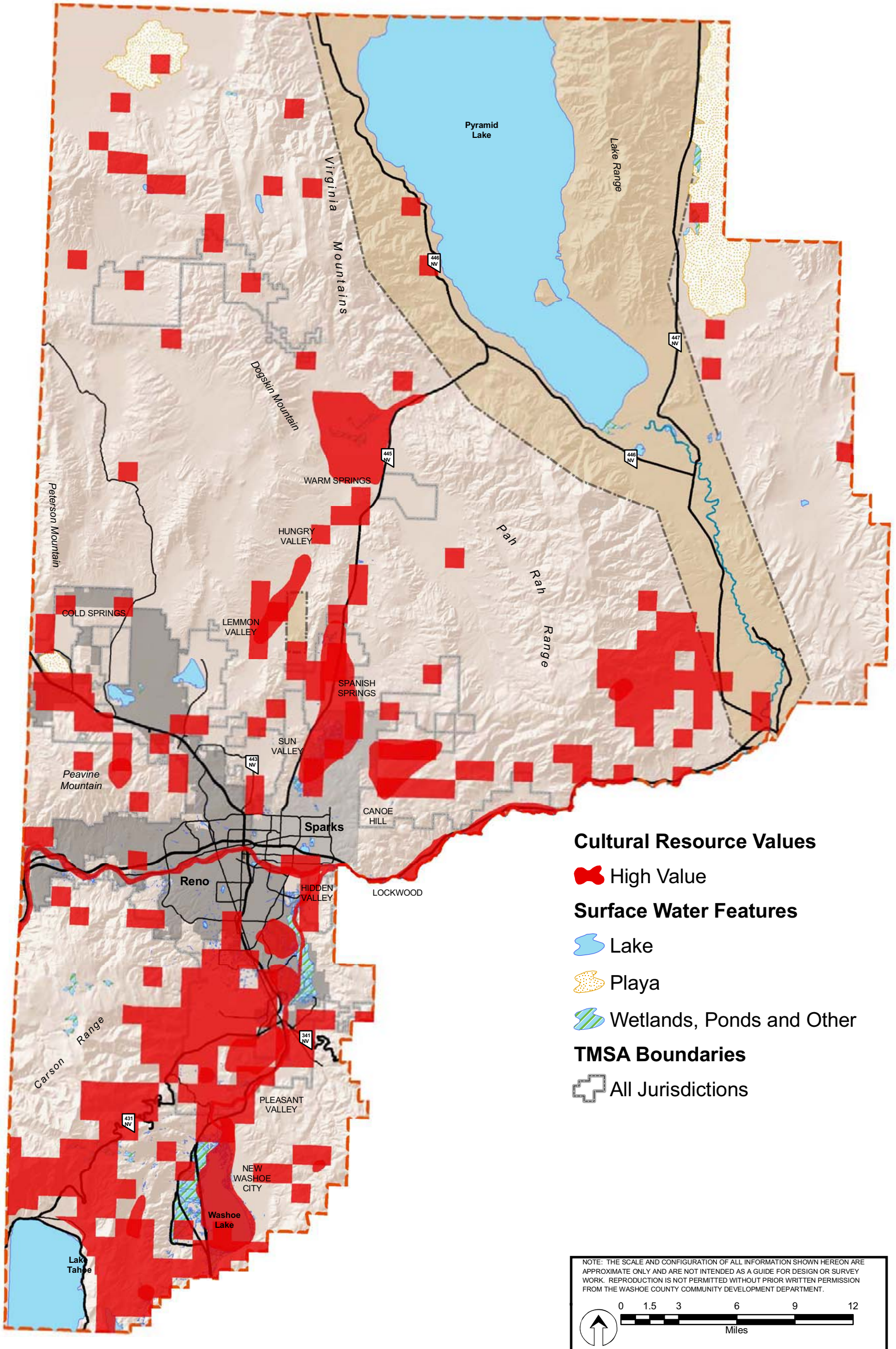
Cultural and historic resources are represented on this map through data provided by the State Historic Preservation Office, the Bureau of Land Management and County data sources. The expected resource areas are based on consultation with professionals and experts on cultural resources and help us understand where resources are likely to be found. Because of the sensitivity of cultural resources, exact locations are not included. The Cultural Grid data shown on this map indicates that a known resource has been documented within that one-mile square. The polygons showing prehistoric, historic and both resources are based on consultation with regional experts and also indicate a general area of cultural resource presence. These locations show only known areas. There are very likely many more sites and resources that have yet to be documented.



MAP 7

Cultural Resources and Sensitive Landscapes Values

All of the areas of expected or known resources were given a high value on this map. This is meant to increase the importance of these lands in decisions about the management, acquisition and retention of open space in the region. As new information or resources are identified, they will also be added to this evaluation.



Natural Hazards

What are Natural Hazards?

Natural hazards are events that can threaten lives and property in our region. Often these events are part of a natural cycle, but some natural hazards have developed into more catastrophic events. This change from a natural system to a more catastrophic one can be due to a number of reasons. Increased development in the floodplain can raise flood levels for development outside the floodplain; in addition, this development can speed the delivery of runoff and cause higher floods with more devastating force. In the case of wildfire, the spread of invasive plants and the removal of natural fire can cause the wildlands to become choked with fuels ready to burn.

As homes move in closer to these areas and as recreation brings more users, the chances increase for fires that threaten life and property and that damage the very ecosystem they were once a natural part of. Critical natural hazards in the region include flooding, wildfire, and seismic events and damage. In addition, other natural hazards include wildlife collisions with vehicles, varying air quality challenges, and to a lesser degree, landslides and avalanches. These examples show how the natural hazards combine with development and management to create challenges for the county.

Wildfire

Fire plays an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Lower-intensity fires remove pests or diseased portions of the forest, leaving naturally fire-resistant stands that can mature and live with these lower-intensity fires. However, as fires have grown more severe, both here in Washoe County and across the Western U.S., fires can be so devastating as to prevent the return of the original forest and cause the loss of rare and valuable habitat. These catastrophic fires bring with them an additional danger. Once the fire is out, recently burned areas may immediately sprout

with non-native invasive species that are more prone to fires and, in some cases, may even move into an annual burning cycle. Additionally, burn areas have a greater potential for increased flash flooding and soil erosion.

The region's fire history shows how over the past century most, if not all, of southern Washoe County has burned at some point. Researchers have found that the Sierra Nevada forests in the western portion of the county have very wide ranges of both burn severity and frequency. While natural, low-intensity burns were always part of the ecosystem, the Sierra Nevada region also naturally experienced large catastrophic fires occasionally, though rarely. Fires throughout the region are predominantly ignited by lightning strikes, though a third or more of the fires are started by human activity, including construction activity, campfires, sparks from vehicles, and arson. Fires occur increasingly in areas that include residential development. This adds to the potential for ignition, contributes more fuels, and creates a scenario where fire crews may risk their lives in unsafe conditions to protect homes. The increased development in the wildland interface means that homeowners play an increasingly important role in the fire safety and ecology of our region.

Flooding

Flooding is a part of life in many communities in the arid West. Our region is no different, with sudden mountain storms and a landscape that does not absorb much water, floods can quickly build and flow through our communities (e.g., the Truckee River flood of 1997). Flooding can threaten residents and cause severe economic loss for our communities, because homes or buildings are allowed in areas known to flood or because the areas that flood grow in size due to changes in how much and how fast runoff reaches the rivers.

The region's fire history shows how over the past century most, if not all, of southern Washoe County has burned at some point. Researchers have found that the Sierra Nevada forests in the western portion of the county have very wide ranges of both burn severity and frequency.

As development of homes, streets and commercial areas convert natural lands to paved or built surfaces, water can more quickly move to streams and rivers, changing the type and levels of flooding for those downstream. Additionally, many of the smaller streams in the region are not fully mapped, so that we do not understand where floodwaters may collect to create threats for life and property. As our communities build out farther into rural or undeveloped areas, these unmapped streams, which seem dry or too small to be a threat, may roar to life during a storm and result in extensive damage or loss of life. In particular, development of the upper portions of watersheds will be a critical flood management concern in the coming years.

Water quality may also be impacted by flooding. As development expands, more runoff is generated by paved or developed surfaces. These surfaces not only speed runoff, but are also a source of pollution as runoff picks up contaminants from parking lots or buildings. Floods can bring nutrients or chemicals that change the health of the streams, or can move large amounts of sediment and change the way rivers flow after a flooding event.



MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about these resources and to view technical information, please see the Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report, available online at: www.washoecounty.us/openspace.

Air Quality

Air quality in the region is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and managed locally by the County Air Quality Management Program. Good air quality assures that our community's public health is not impacted by pollutants or particulates in the air we breathe. Clean air also maintains the panoramic views that attract tourists and contribute to our quality of life. Most of our region's air quality challenges come from four pollutants: carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, ozone, and particulate matter. All four are generally products of combustion, although ozone is also generated when certain compounds such as chemicals in solvents react with exposure to sunlight. The last pollutant, particulate matter (PM), consists of very small particles such as dust, soot, and unburned fuels. Of all air quality concerns, PM is the one this Plan can most directly address.

PM is created by smoke from forest fires and from dust released from land use or development. PM is a uniquely dangerous pollutant because the small particles physically injure lungs, and at the same time the surface of these particles is often coated in other dangerous chemicals, such as the by-products of combustion. The smaller the particle, the more deeply it can make its way into the lungs. In addition, the smaller the particle size, the more surface area is provided by a given quantity of PM, resulting in more pollution attached to this surface area. Children and those with breathing problems are especially vulnerable to the effects of PM, as their respiratory systems are more sensitive.

Wildlife Conflicts

Wildlife and vehicle collisions represent a smaller, but very serious threat to both people and wildlife in the region. These collisions are mainly from automobile traffic, but can also include aircraft which can be more catastrophic. In Southern Washoe County, from 2004 to 2006 the average number of wildlife/vehicle collisions was 79 per year, 85% of which were with deer. Over this same timeframe 12 of the

collisions resulted in injury to the vehicle occupants. Additionally, if it is assumed that each collision with a deer or bear resulted in \$2,000 damage to the vehicle involved, this three-year period witnessed almost half a million dollars in property damage.

Wildlife collisions can be increased or decreased by how roads, habitat and water are located in relationship to each other. Understanding migratory routes and how these interact with transportation corridors and infrastructure is critical. With mule deer populations threatened by other factors, having over 60 deer involved in vehicle collisions each year may place the population past a point from which it can recover.

Conflicts between wildlife and aircraft are also a concern. Some regional projects such as restoration along the Truckee River and Steamboat Creek may attract birds closer to the Reno/Tahoe International Airport. These conflicts can be managed through existing federal guidelines, but they must be considered as restoration proceeds.

Conflicts with bears are also an increasing concern in the region. These conflicts involve bears coming into urban areas and the growth and expansion of development and houses into bear habitat. Conflicts are often worsened by poorly stored household garbage or other food items that attract bears and make them less fearful of humans. As development and bear habitat mix, other conflicts such as vehicle collisions increase. In order to address these concerns and conflicts, the County participates in the regional Sierra Front Bear Working Group. The Working Group is developing a Community Bear Management Plan to reduce conflicts between bears and humans along the Sierra Front.

What are the challenges in managing Natural Hazards?

Wildfire

The primary challenges in managing wildfire are controlling the spread of invasive non-native species



CYRUS BULLOCK

Well-maintained forests greatly reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and minimize losses to homes and property.

and implementing appropriate fire management in the wildland/urban interface by landowners. In addition to invasive non-native species, some native habitat types, namely Piñon-Juniper forests, have encroached into sagebrush areas beyond their historic range and bring heightened fire risk.

Invasive species play a role both in initiating a cycle of frequent and destructive burns and in sustaining this cycle after a burn. Non-native weeds such as Cheatgrass add very flammable fuel to an existing landscape and may introduce an annual burn cycle

during dry years. Once an area burns – with or without invasive species – it is very likely that weeds will take advantage of the cleared area and establish themselves before native species are able to. Managing non-native invasive species requires that landowners who currently have these species work to eradicate them through mechanical or chemical treatments, as appropriate. Lands that become infested with these weeds serve to broadcast the weeds each year, making the task of managing these species very difficult. Additionally, agricultural and recreational activities can spread these weeds as livestock, horses, vehicles and hikers pick up seeds and spread them as they travel across the region.

In the case of recent fires, if plans are not developed to restore a burned landscape with native plants within the first season following wildfire, it will most likely become infested with weeds that will speed the return of another fire to the landscape. Owners and managers of burned lands must act swiftly to create a replanting and management plan and to implement it immediately to prevent the spread of invasive species. This can be difficult where there are multiple landowners or managers, or where dedicated funding does not exist to support the planning and implementation programs.

The expansion of land development into natural areas complicates all of these challenges as small individual landowners come to dominate the landscape. Not all owners properly build or manage their land to provide defensible space and prevent a deadly mix of structures and vegetation; they may even create more dangerous conditions by introducing flammable landscaping or building materials. Increasingly recent residential development has preferred the ideal of a home built in the forest or with vegetation close, versus the classical method of clearing a field and building in the middle. This intermix of construction and fuels creates a dangerous situation for firefighters and creates a higher likelihood that homeowner activities may cause fires that can expand into the surrounding wildlands.

Flooding

The main threat for increased flooding in the region comes from the conversion of natural areas into developed areas dominated by impervious surfaces. This conversion results in a change in how the landscape interacts with surface water after storms. Of particular concern are the drainages and areas farther away from the Truckee River. The Truckee and its floodplain and floodways are mapped and well understood, but the areas farther out that generate the water that flows to the Truckee are less studied. As development occurs, streams or washes that historically played only a small role in moving floodwaters can become raging torrents during storms as adjacent paved surfaces speed more water into the streambeds.

This situation can create new local flooding problems in the drainages that are developed, and it can change the shape and size of flooding in already developed areas like Reno, Sparks and downstream all the way to Pyramid Lake. This occurs because current flood mapping is based on no or little development outside the developed areas. While new development is supposed to demonstrate no effect on downstream flooding, the true effects of such development are not always clear. As flood mapping improves, these threats will be reduced, but the impacts of current development may not be known until the next flood event.

Air Quality

In the context of this Plan, the main challenge to air quality comes from increasing particulate matter from forest fires and construction during development. The soot from forest fires contributes more particulate matter over shorter periods of time, and impacts on regional air quality depend on atmospheric conditions like wind, temperature and time of year. Agencies that regulate air quality in the region already take fires into consideration when they set goals for management. Therefore, any increase in fires will create potential violations of federal air quality laws. The impact from development comes

In the case of recent fires, if plans are not developed to restore a burned landscape with native plants within the first season following wildfire, it will most likely become infested with weeds that will speed the return of another fire to the landscape.

from grading sites and creating sources for dust to be released. This dust can cause very poor air quality close to the site, but dust dissipates with distance.

Wildlife Conflicts

As development grows and new highway development occurs to serve it, animals will be confined to smaller migration corridors, and this will create higher chances for collisions as more vehicles are added. This is of particular concern along Interstate 80 West, U.S. Highway 395 North, the Pyramid Highway, and Mt. Rose Highway. As these stretches see increased traffic volumes, collisions will grow rapidly. For species that are already threatened, such as mule deer, this additional pressure may not allow species recovery. Bears are increasingly attracted by unmaintained garbage stored near homes with no measures to prevent access by bears.

Opportunities for Natural Hazards

Wildfire

The reduction of the severity of wildfires requires a two-part strategy: proper management of public lands and open space, and the proper management of private lands to provide defensible space and to remove invasive weeds or dangerous fuel sources. Based on these two issues, the key opportunities to properly manage wildfires in the region will require:

Educating homeowners about defensible space landscaping and encouraging fire-safe construction methods can go a long way to preventing wildfire risk. Properly managed fuels and homes, in combination with fuels reduction on public lands, will greatly reduce fire in our communities.

- Reduction and removal of invasive non-native species.
- Individual landowner management and responsibility to establish and maintain defensible space.
- Emergency replanting after fires.

Removing invasive species and preventing their return is critical to minimize fire risk in the region, especially in the wildland/urban interface. Invasive weeds have not been managed well in the past, in part because of the labor or cost associated with doing so, but also because many private landowners are not aware of the threats. While it is the responsibility of all landowners, public and private, to manage and remove weeds, the County and this Plan will provide assistance. Assistance may include education and outreach to help landowners in identifying risks. It may also include more direct efforts such as providing chippers or volunteer crews for removing trees, brush and weeds. At the same time, enforcement of existing regulations will remain part of the strategy.

For properties in the wildland/urban interface, homeowners must also make proper decisions about defensible space, landscaping and building materials to prevent wildfires. Educating homeowners about defensible space landscaping and encouraging fire-safe construction methods can go a long way to

preventing wildfire risk. Properly managed fuels and homes, in combination with fuels reduction on public lands, will greatly reduce fire in our communities. Defensible space is also critical for protecting the lives of firefighters if a fire starts.

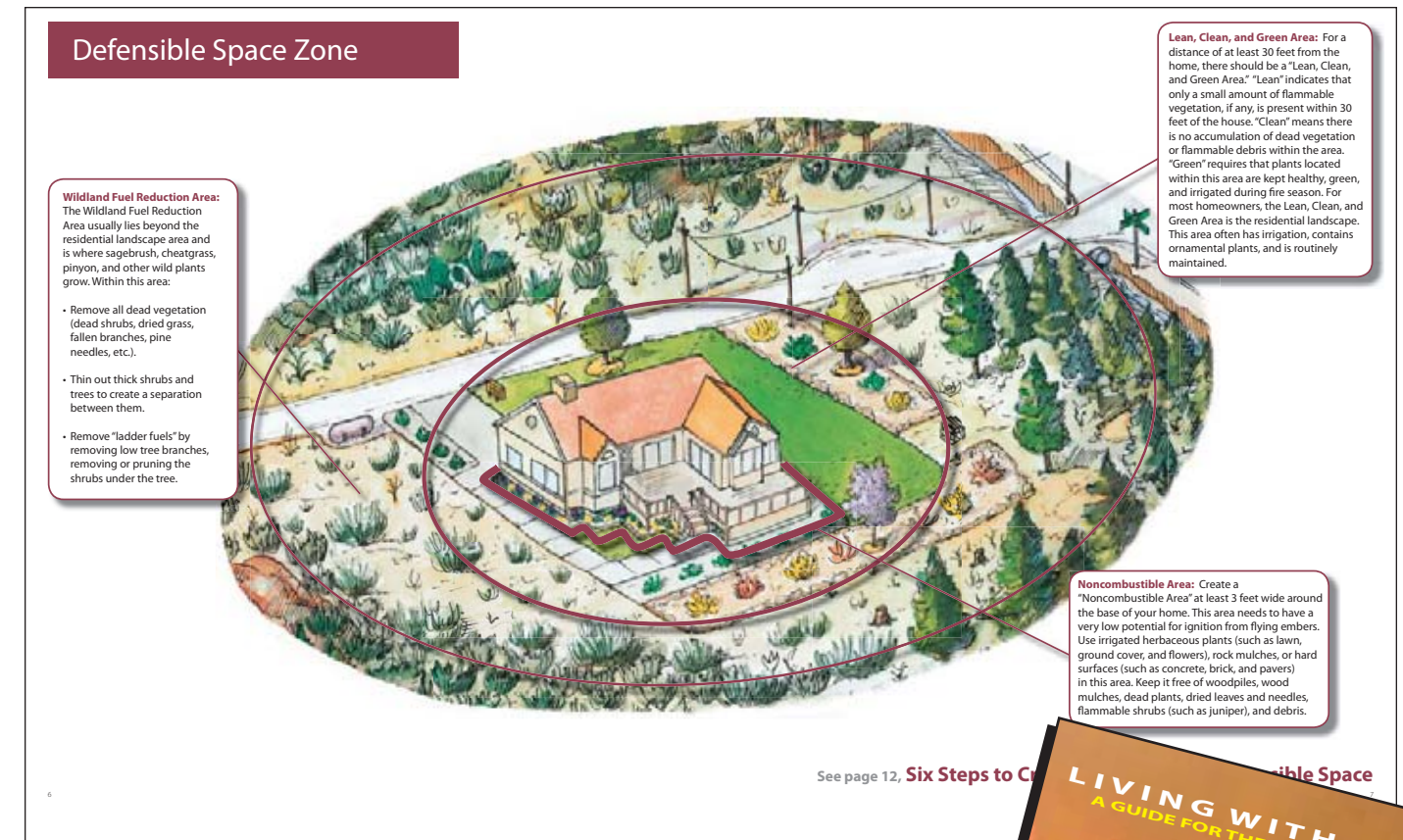
The period of time just after a fire is critical to stopping the cycle of frequent fires and protecting the native habitat. Having restoration planning in place and ensuring that replanting is ready when a fire is burning will allow crews to evaluate and develop a strategy for recovery immediately after the fire is out. Responding quickly after a fire prevents the encroachment of invasive weeds, reduces erosion and its effects on water quality, and gives native species the opportunity to reestablish and thrive.

Flooding

Opportunities to address flooding center on expanding flood mapping and using this information to inform development decisions in the region. Flood mitigation opportunities also exist as some land uses are converted into new uses that can tolerate occasional flooding. An example of this is the conversion of residential or industrial lands into pastures that can tolerate flood waters at certain times in the year. These conversions may allow other residential or industrial areas to stay dry and not require new flood control structures. These types of activities are being pursued along the Truckee River through the Truckee River Flood Management Project, including a series of 11 proposed river restoration projects.

Additionally, some lands may allow for on-site water retention that provides multiple benefits. Siting open space or even parks in the proper location can help reduce flood damage by storing or slowing flood waters. Open space can save adjacent lands from floods and provide all of the amenities of open space. Currently, some flood retention devices act as recreational areas, such as for skateboarders. Parks and natural areas can also serve this role if the users of the area, both

Defensive Space Zone for Eastern Sierra Front



For more information about *Living With Fire*, visit www.livingwithfire.info.

human and natural, are able to accept the occasional flooding. Playas play this role naturally, and may be a habitat type that can be emulated in artificial retention areas that rely on natural functions to store and filter stormwater and floodwater.

Air Quality

The primary opportunity for air quality in this Plan is the possibility of improved management of wildfire fuels to reduce their severity and, therefore, emissions. This is a way to allow for emissions by other sources in the region on a tradable basis. Trading emissions involves guaranteeing that an allowed emission does not occur and shifting this opportunity to



LIVING WITH FIRE
BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



LYNDA NELSON

This Plan strives to manage for multiple goals on the landscape. To assure this occurs, the Plan focuses on lands that provide multiple functions at once.

another emitter who will pay for emission. However, the amount of trading that may occur may be small depending on the risks the region is willing to accept if fires grow out of control and create more pollution than allowed. Another trading opportunity also comes from preserving views. The tourism industry is dependent on clear vistas from around the city, and it may be willing to support converting polluting technologies to clean ones to assure that views stay clear.

Wildlife Conflicts

Vehicle collision reduction through this Plan can be achieved through coordination with transportation development and open space management to assure wildlife have accessible and safe migration corridors. This may include overpasses or underpasses at critical crossings. It also may involve working with private landowners to assure migrations are not blocked and not directed towards developed areas where conflicts can arise.

This Plan supports development and implementation of a plan to limit the number of human and bear conflicts through better garbage storage and disposal practices. The Sierra Front Bear Working Group is developing a work plan to address these issues and implement actions to limit conflicts. The initial activities will include outreach and education, and these are excellent opportunities to further the goal of this Plan to limit wildlife conflicts.

Goals and Policies

GOAL 1: Emphasize fire suppression through the use of defensible space and native habitat restoration.

- 1.1 To allow for fire suppression in developed areas, the provision of defensible space must be required and enforced by appropriate laws, provisions within development codes, and property covenants and restrictions. Defensible space will be defined by International Wildland Urban Interface Code, or other County-approved standards.

GOAL 2: Achieve an awareness of the private responsibility for fuels management.

- 2.1 Encourage an awareness of the private responsibility for fuels management through homeowner education and the development review process.
- 2.2 The County will coordinate with other local agencies and partners in helping individuals learn to live with fire and manage their properties in a “fire-safe” manner by providing educational materials, workshops, technical assistance and other resources.
- 2.3 Fuels management plans should be developed and implemented for County-owned lands.
- 2.4 The County will update the Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment study to guide management of wildfire hazards in urban interface areas.
- 2.5 County open space lands in the wildland/urban interface will be managed for defensible space and will rely on natural fire regimes once fuels are under control.
- 2.6 The County will aggressively manage the spread of invasive weeds.
- 2.7 Decisions regarding fuels reduction in open space areas must weigh the decision’s potential harm to habitats as well as its benefits for fire management. Those areas more distant from development should not be treated as aggressively as those closer to development.
- 2.8 The County and its planning partners should develop and carry out an emergency wildfire response plan and replanting program for all non-federal public lands in the region, modeled after the federal emergency response replanting programs.

GOAL 3: Develop, fund and carry out a region-wide fuels management program.

- 3.1 Coordinate and partner with other agencies and jurisdictions to develop, fund and implement a region-wide fuels management program.

GOAL 4: Integrate regional open space and natural resource management with flood management where appropriate.

- 4.1 Coordinate the activities of the Regional Open Space Program with proposed restoration projects on the lower Truckee River. Riparian habitat and river channel restoration will be supported as an important component of overall flood management planning.
- 4.2 Playas and their floodplains will not be developed and will be considered for acquisition in order to protect their capacity for storing floodwaters and for their role as critical habitat.

GOAL 5: Maintain excellent air quality in the region.

- 5.1 Future air quality planning efforts shall address the impact of wildfires and land cover disturbances such as grading and tilling.
- 5.2 The County recognizes the value of clean air and visibility for the region and will work to preserve visibility.

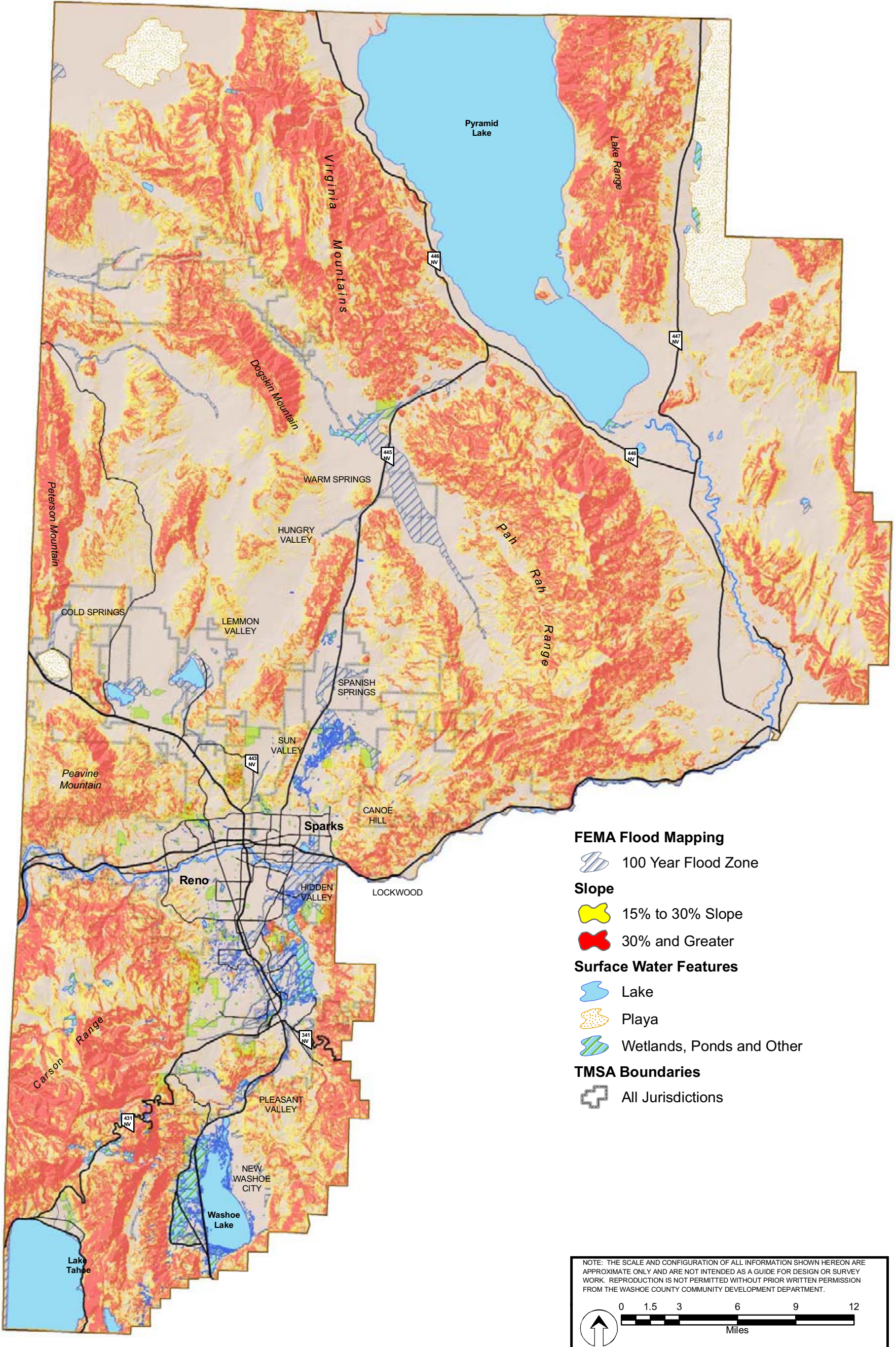
GOAL 6: Wildlife conflicts will be minimized within transportation corridors and in the urban interface.

- 6.1 The County will cooperate with the Regional Transportation Commission and the Nevada Department of Transportation to minimize wildlife conflicts within transportation corridors.
- 6.2 Support and participate in the Sierra Front Bear Working Group’s effort to prepare and implement a Community Bear Management Plan. Provide outreach and education to the community on living with bears in the urban interface.

MAP 8

Natural Hazard Resources

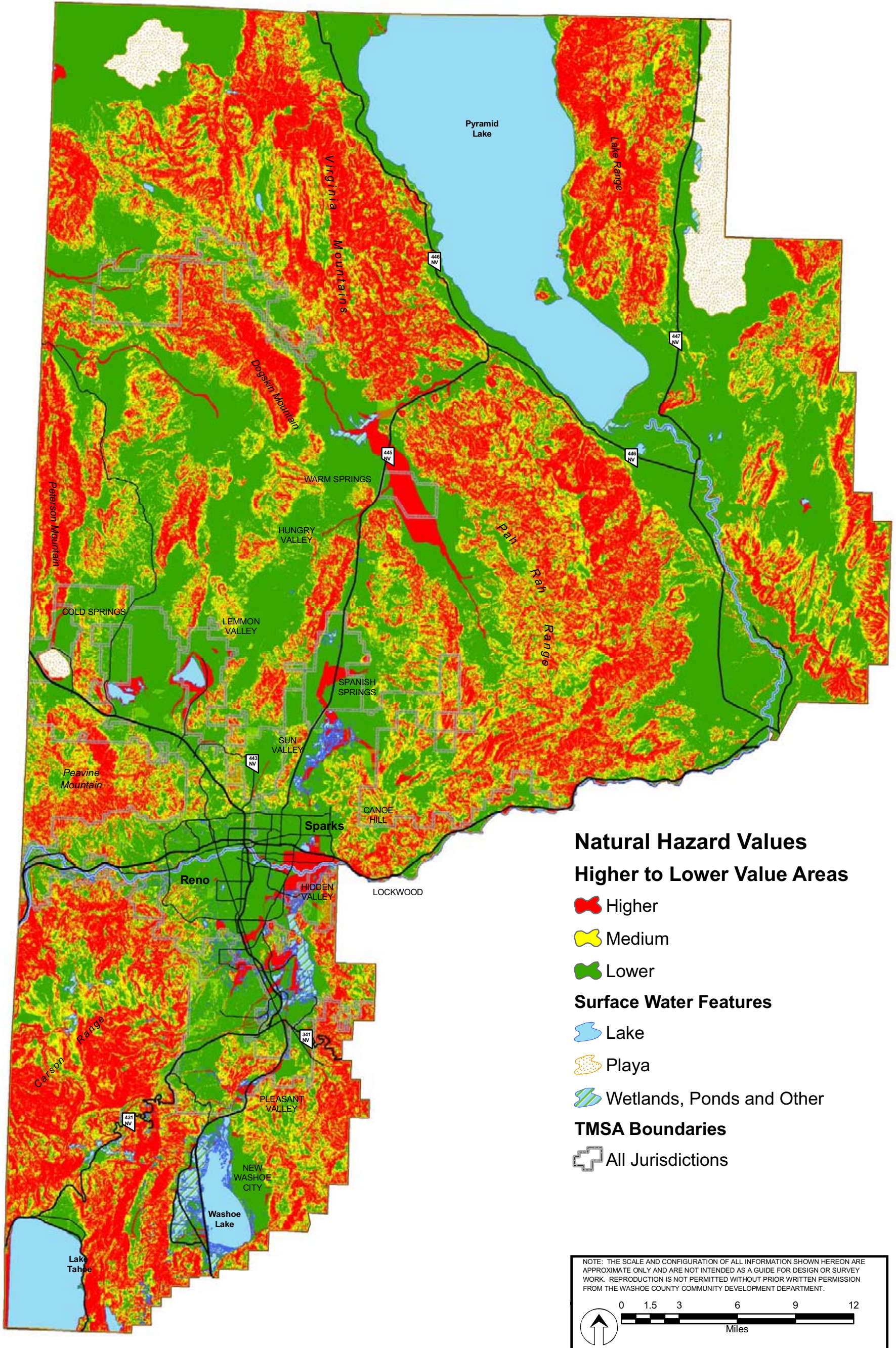
This map shows the region's natural hazards that open space can be used to help manage. The natural hazards mapped include the 100-year flood boundaries and areas with steep slopes that are not suitable for development.



MAP 9

Natural Hazard Values

The features shown on the Natural Hazard Resources map were given values to help weight decisions on land management. Areas within the 100-year flood zone and areas steeper than 30% are valued as the highest, with slopes between 15% and 30% medium.



Recreational Resources

What are Recreational Resources?

Recreational resources within southern Washoe County encompass a variety of facilities and support a very broad range of activities. For planning purposes, recreational resources have been organized into the following four categories:

- Regional, community, and neighborhood parks; depending on the size and scale of the park, these may include open turf lawns, practice and playing fields and associated facilities, playgrounds, and natural open space. Regional parks are ones that are larger than 100 acres, with community and neighborhood parks being typically 5 to 50 acres in size. Facilities are owned and managed by Washoe County, the City of Reno, or the City of Sparks.
- Urban open space and natural areas; these include native areas within the most urbanized portions of the county, areas which may or may not incorporate passive recreational opportunities. These spaces may also serve as buffers between developed areas of the county. Facilities are owned and managed by BLM, USFS, Washoe County, State of Nevada, the City of Reno, or the City of Sparks.
- Remote open space and natural areas; these include County-owned open space as well as Federal (U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management) or State Parks lands located outside the developed portions of the county. These lands may support passive recreation and some, such as Peavine Mountain, also have designated areas for motorized uses.
- Local, regional and remote pathways and trails; these include multipurpose pathways and bike lanes within the developed areas as well as multipurpose and soft surface pathways in

the more remote open space and public lands. Facilities are owned and managed by the cities or the county (within urbanized areas), or by county, state or federal agencies (within more remote parts of the county).

What are the Challenges for Recreational Resources in our Region?

Recreational resources in the region are facing a number of challenges that are driven in part by population growth and competition for the use of public lands. In other cases these challenges stem from the sheer number of agencies involved in managing the region's public spaces. Challenges come from increasing urbanization, conflicting uses on the landscape, the challenges of mixed federal, tribal, state, local and private landowners, and creating a clear network of trails for users. Along with these challenges is the common problem of identifying and maintaining funding to meet recreation goals.

As areas begin to develop beyond the urban core, more people are now living and visiting the region. This increasing urbanization is creating additional pressures, from more visitors in our parks and open space to homes being built closer to valued natural and recreation areas. In some cases, parks, open spaces and trails are receiving so much additional use that they are being "loved to death."

Conflicts and resource degradation associated with inappropriate off-highway vehicle (OHV) use continue to threaten our open spaces. In many areas in and around the Truckee Meadows, inappropriate OHV use has resulted in damage and degradation to the landscape as well as conflicts with area residents and other recreational users. Such inappropriate use also affects those OHV users who ride responsibly on designated trails or public roads, and who invest their own time in maintaining and policing facilities,

How does this relate to other resources?

Water resources: Many of the region's parks and open spaces are located along major waterways, including the Truckee River and Steamboat Creek. Both have associated greenway plans which are in the process of being implemented. The existing irrigation ditch system also could be better integrated into the region's trails system. Protecting water resources and providing for compatible recreational uses are activities that should continue to be carefully integrated with each other.

as their ability to use facilities is often challenged by the actions of a small group of individuals.

The cities of Reno and Sparks, the County, Nevada State Parks, the region's tribes, and the Federal government (BLM and USFS) are involved in administering recreational uses, parks, open space and trails in various ways. These multiple and overlapping jurisdictions require more planning and coordination to accomplish goals, and sometime there are conflicting policies or laws involved. Each agency has its own mission, design standards, maintenance and enforcement resources. Coordination between the affected agencies often occurs on a project- or location-specific basis, as opposed to an issue basis (like the unregulated use of OHVs throughout all public lands within the county). This can result in some operating inefficiencies or in failures to leverage the collective resources of each agency as effectively as might otherwise happen. In some cases, stronger partnerships might allow certain issues to be elevated in importance and actions to address them identified.

In addition to the many public agencies that manage our land, private development and landowners play an important role. Private development adjacent to



BILL GARDNER

Public outreach and developed interpretive sites are critical to helping understand the value of our open spaces.



MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about these resources and to view technical information, please see the Recreational Resources Inventory and Assessment Report, available online at: www.washoecounty.us/openspace.



PAUL MANSON

Recreational activities vary widely in the region, and working to coordinate these different activities is a key goal of this Plan.

public lands has sometimes resulted in blocked access to these public lands or conflicts between homeowners and recreational users. This issue has been most visible and prevalent on the south side of Peavine Mountain, though it has been experienced in other locations as well. In some cases, access has been blocked with fencing or wire, posing an injury or liability risk.

The existing and extensive trails system can be a challenge for users to navigate. The trails system includes a variety of facilities, including recreational trails on public lands, existing county roads, existing presumed public roads, and in the more urbanized areas, a network of sidewalks and bike lanes. While each jurisdiction has its own mapping, the region could benefit from assembling comprehensive mapping that illustrates how these facilities connect with each other and that identifies the level of difficulty and experience associated with major or most popular routes. This would help to organize the trails system around a hierarchy of user experiences, making it more transparent for residents as well as visitors.

Finally, financial resources necessary for maintenance and enforcement of regulations are in short supply, including resources for construction of certain facilities. Each of the agencies involved with the County's public lands system has indicated that resources for maintenance and enforcement need to be enhanced so that they may better fulfill responsibilities. While the County's Residential Construction Tax (RCT) does provide funding for construction of local, neighborhood parks, these funds cannot be used for trail construction, nor can they be used for maintenance of park facilities. This challenge is one that underlies or makes more difficult all of the other challenges noted here.

What are the Opportunities for Recreational Resources?

This Plan is intended to offer the County and its related agency partners practical recommendations for improving the management of recreational resources, including assuring that the recreational opportunities on public lands are protected and that resources are managed for public enjoyment so as to minimize conflicts between different user groups and so that the underlying landscape resources do not become degraded through over-use. Where feasible and appropriate, the plan also suggests new funding mechanisms that could provide resources needed for improved patrolling and enforcement in zones where inappropriate uses are frequently observed.

As an example, the plan suggests identifying or developing multi-purpose trails and pathways that could also function as fire breaks, making them eligible for additional financial resources or even suggesting that a fire management taxing district be created that would perform these functions. Considering trails as "multi-benefit" facilities in this regard could help to address salient wildland/urban interface issues while also providing recreational benefits.

The plan also recommends the need for an ongoing interagency working group, composed of local, county,

state, tribal and federal partners, to oversee the public lands system and make sure that critical resources, including trail connections, are adequately protected and managed to a reasonably consistent set of standards. One of the first issues that such a group might help to address, for example, is inappropriate OHV use in particularly sensitive areas, and the designation of a "close-in" OHV park for those recreationists who are looking for this type of experience rather than a scenic touring experience, which would be accomplished by riding on existing roads within remote locations.

What are our Goals and Policies for Recreational Resources?

The Plan will provide guidance on ways to protect and manage recreational resources in a way that sets priorities for programs, policies or actions that provide beneficial recreational use while protecting the underlying resources. As suggested above, a concerted, ongoing interagency working group is viewed as being instrumental to effective resource management.

The Plan provides for the following goals and policies.

GOAL 1: Sustain effective and ongoing interagency and interjurisdictional working relationships to address the planning, development, operations and maintenance of regional recreational resources, and foster an integrated approach to resource management.

- 1.1 Partner with other public lands management agencies to encourage interjurisdictional compatibility of policies governing public access and use.
- 1.2 Ensure ongoing interagency and interjurisdictional coordination in the planning, development, operations and maintenance of park and recreational facilities, trails, and trailheads and other means of enhancing

regional recreational resource connectivity where appropriate.

- 1.3 Foster and maintain a strategic alliance with other agencies to address lakes, rivers and water-based recreation in particular.
- 1.4 Investigate long-term funding opportunities for acquisition, development and maintenance of parks, trails and other recreational facilities.
- 1.5 Evaluate appropriate levels of recreation and implement a monitoring plan to ensure the sustainability of the natural environment.

GOAL 2: Leverage existing infrastructure opportunities for regional trail corridors and connections.

- 2.1 Maximize the potential for building upon existing and historical infrastructure in the development and connection of trail corridors and facilities.
- 2.2 Support completion of the outstanding segments of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway.
- 2.3 Encourage the use of US 395 mitigation activities to help improve trail corridor connectivity.

GOAL 3: Preserve valuable properties and make strategic acquisitions.

- 3.1 Acquire, develop and maintain a system of regional parks that provide for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

GOAL 4: Create a major regional trail corridor system.

- 4.1 Identify a major regional trail or corridor system that connects the major peaks and ranges in southern Washoe County.
- 4.2 Provide for a water-based trail system through the Truckee River corridor that provides access for fishers, rafters and other recreational users, and for cultural uses of waterways and wetlands.
- 4.3 Integrate interpretation and environmental education into the “base trail” system in order

to interpret and communicate the region’s cultural and mining heritage, natural features, and wildlife. Support the creation of visitor and recreational resource centers and opportunities for disseminating information throughout the region.

- 4.4 Coordinate with the Regional Transportation Commission and the Nevada Department of Transportation to develop bicycle corridors and trails.

GOAL 5: Provide appropriate opportunities and facilities for motorized recreation.

- 5.1 When identifying trails that are suitable for motorized use, the County will consider such factors as width, surfacing, extent of use by nonmotorized users, and the potential for conflicts and unauthorized motorized vehicle use outside of designated areas.
- 5.2 The inappropriate use of off-highway vehicles (OHV) is a high-priority item warranting serious attention. The County will work closely with agencies and jurisdictions to develop positive solutions for encouraging OHV use in appropriate areas and preventing inappropriate use.
- 5.3 The County will support the establishment of a statewide off-highway vehicle registration program, suggesting that it include an educational component.

GOAL 6: Minimize resource pressures posed by development near open space areas.

- 6.1 Strongly discourage high-density development near open space areas and consider the downward transitioning of densities next to or near open space areas in order to minimize resource pressure, fire danger, and other negative impacts.
- 6.2 Require public access easements from subdivisions that are adjacent to public lands.
- 6.3 Fire breaks between developed areas and open space should be provided to minimize wildland

Who oversees recreational resources and public lands within the Region?

Publicly owned lands presently encompass approximately 58 percent of the land area in southern Washoe County.

Federal agencies administer approximately 3,320,483 acres of land in all of Washoe County. The BLM manages the majority of public lands in southern Washoe County, most of them in the North Valleys, along the Dogskin and Virginia Mountains and extending into Hungry Valley. Recreational uses on BLM land include camping, hiking, all-terrain vehicle riding, rock crawling, horseback riding, and shooting. BLM estimates daily usage at roughly 300 visits per day or close to 100,000 visits per year.

BLM also manages land within the Peterson Mountains. Other large areas of BLM land are located in the Pah Rah Range, and on the north side of the Truckee River, east of Sparks. A final expanse of BLM land is located east of Pleasant Valley. BLM’s holdings are generally well-connected to other public lands managed by the state or the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), or to tribal lands.

The U.S. Forest Service Carson Ranger District administers almost 400,000 acres of land with about half of the acreage in Washoe County, primarily in the Carson Range, including the Mt. Rose Wilderness. This 28,000-acre wilderness was designated in 1989 and provides opportunities for non-motorized recreation, including camping and hiking. Bicycles and off-road

vehicles are prohibited. The USFS also manages approximately 18,000 acres on Peavine Mountain. The many old mining roads provide opportunities for hiking as well as OHV recreation. The south side of Peavine Mountain remains in private ownership, and this has raised concerns regarding access to public lands.

The State of Nevada, through its Division of State Parks, and Division of Wildlife, owns just over 35,000 acres of land on the south and east sides of Washoe Lake (Washoe Lake State Park) and on the east side of Lake Tahoe (Lake Tahoe - Nevada State Park).

Washoe County owns and administers 8,277 acres of parks, open space, greenways, special use facilities and golf courses. As of May 2007, the Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space Department was operating and maintaining approximately 2,861 acres of regional parks; 395 acres of community parks; 3,748 acres of open space, greenbelt and trail areas; 677 acres of specialized facilities such as shooting ranges; and 495 acres of golf courses. (Source: Washoe County Geographic Information System, 2007; Regional Parks and Open Space Department Inventory, May 2007).

The City of Reno maintains approximately 622 acres of parks and the City of Sparks maintains approximately 704 acres of parks.

fire danger and minimize other potential urban interface conflicts.

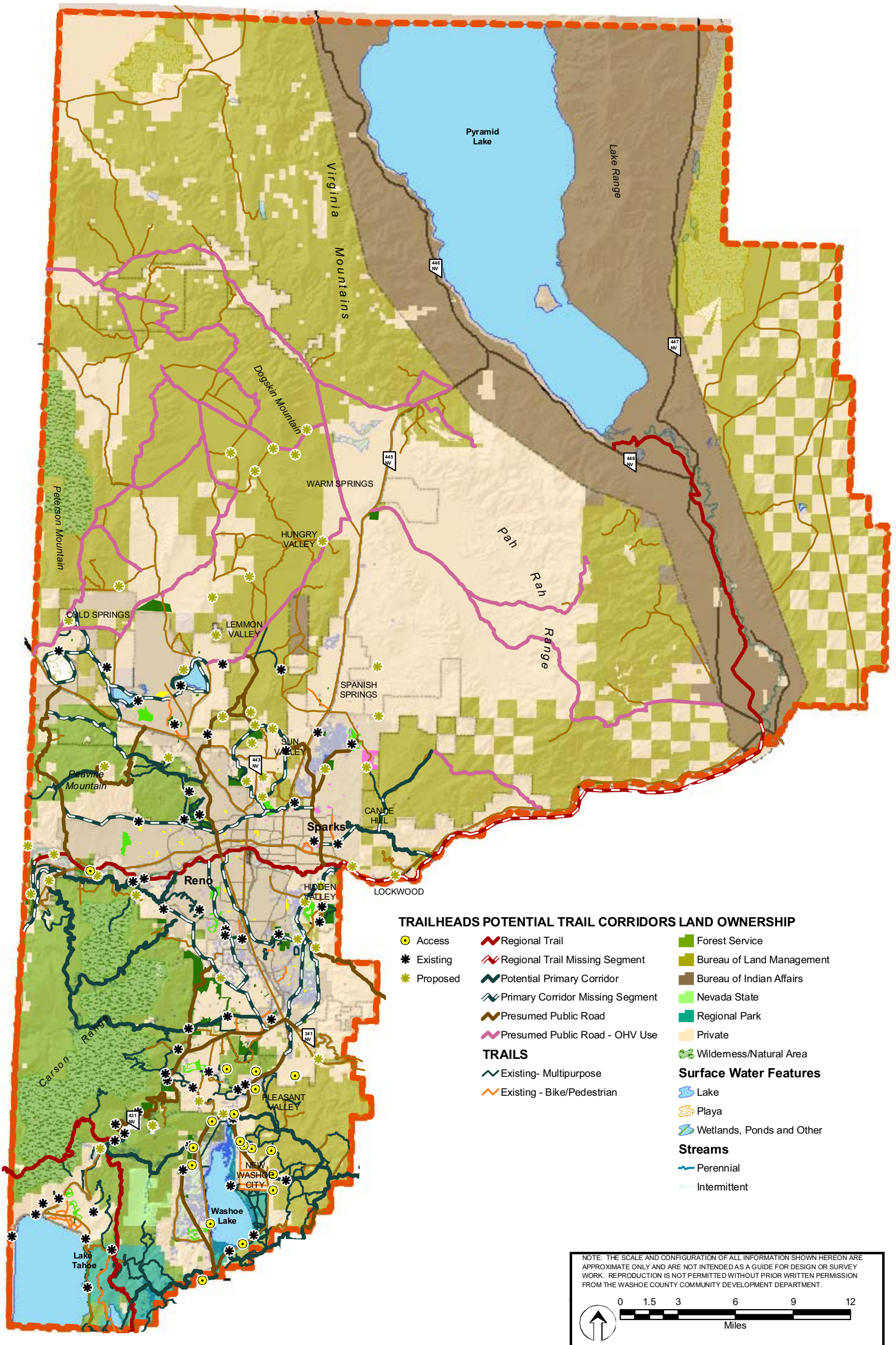
GOAL 7: Promote the use and support of the region’s park and recreation facilities and services.

- 7.1 Market the economic and tourism potential of the region’s system of open spaces and natural resources as an economic driver and asset for the county.

MAP 10

Recreational Resources

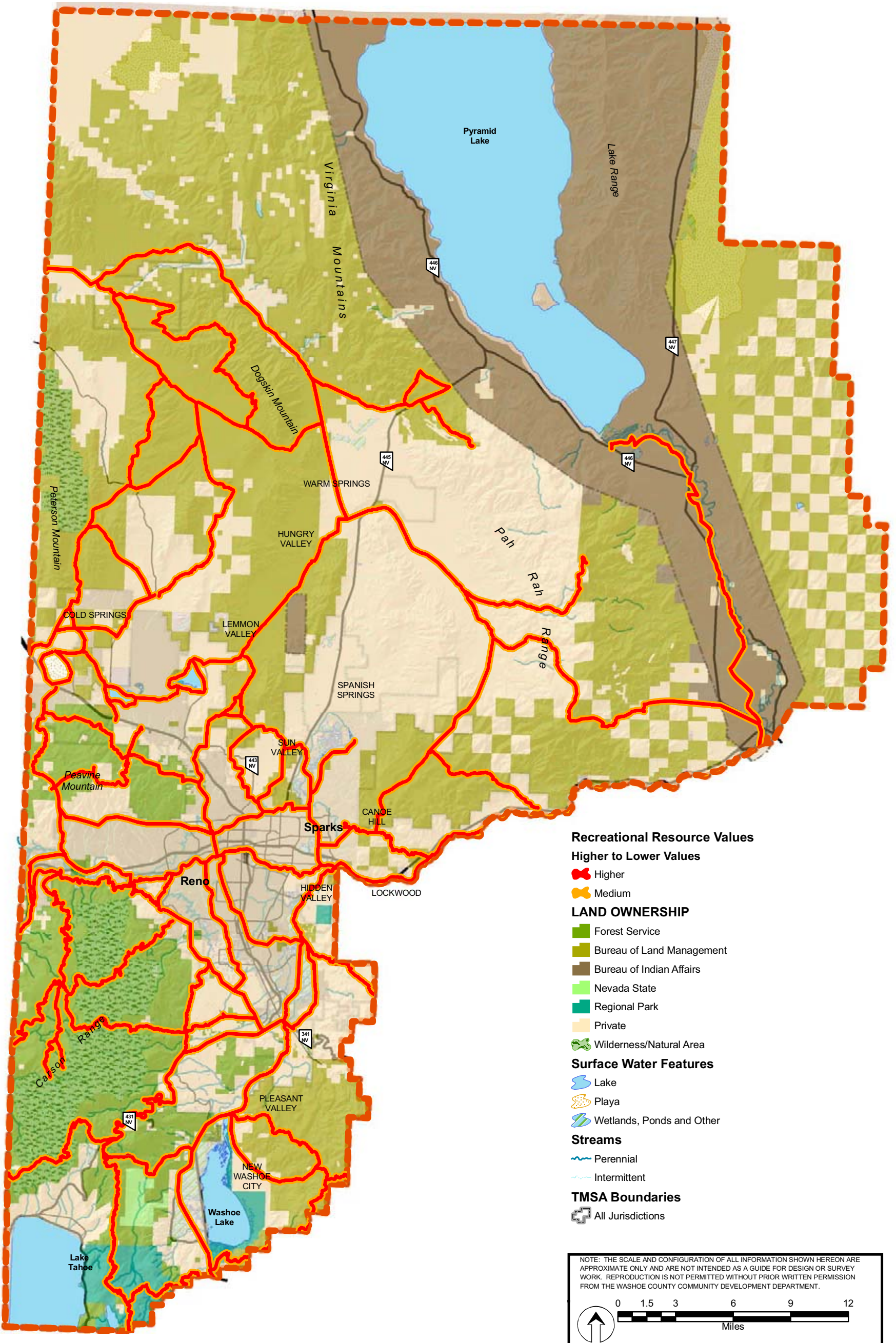
This map depicts the proposed trail corridors and the existing regional trail networks as well as the Presumed Public Roads. The proposed trail corridors serve as a backbone to create connections throughout the regions and between different areas and recreational opportunities. The missing segments are opportunities to develop this base trail network.



Rev. 06/18/2008 BW

Recreational Resource Values

Existing and potential trail corridors are included on this map, plus 500 feet on each side for a high value, and 500 more feet for a medium value. This creates corridors of high value to help identify lands that can either provide connections to complete trail networks or to protect the visual and natural character of existing trails. Smaller corridor buffer widths may be appropriate in the more populated areas and in areas with taller and denser vegetation.



Visual and Scenic Character

What is Visual and Scenic Character?

Visual and scenic character commonly refers to landscapes that provide significant views, or that embody or typify the visual and landscape character of Washoe County, or that provide a buffer between developed areas, or that allow for an experience of nature in the city. A viewshed is an area of land, water, and other elements that is visible from a fixed vantage point or viewpoint. In community planning, for example, viewsheds tend to be areas of particular scenic or historic value that are deemed worthy of preservation against development or other change. The preservation of viewsheds is a goal in the designation of open space areas, greenbelts, and community separators.

Washoe County possesses a unique visual and scenic character that is shaped by the many mountain ranges that encircle the cities of Reno and Sparks and the Truckee Meadows, by the rugged foothills landscapes, and by the dominant plant communities, specifically, sagebrush. The region's character is also influenced by significant riparian corridors along the Truckee River and numerous perennial creeks such as Steamboat Creek, and by the contrast between the Valley landscapes and the foothills and mountain peaks that surround them.

What are the Challenges for Visual and Scenic Character in our Region?

The region's visual environment and landscape character are changing significantly as a consequence of development. Some of the major issues that the region will continue to face include development that impact views in the region, building and development along streams and waterbodies, and the conversion of landscapes from a natural character to a developed one.

Development along ridgelines affects views and the "night sky" landscape by adding lighting along ridges.



JENNIFER BUDGE

Mountain and ridgeline views are one of the most important features cited by citizens as important during planning.



CAROLYN POISSANT

Scenic views can be impacted by illegal trail creation; however, well planned trails can provide recreation opportunities and limit impacts on visual character, such as the Mogul Ditch Trail shown here.

While the County's and both cities' development codes afford some protection for affected ridgelines, development has continued to take place along major ridgelines in the Truckee Meadows. While efforts have been made to ensure that development is visually compatible with the natural landscape, it is still visible, especially in the evening when lights are on. Utility corridors, including aboveground power lines and cell phone towers, can also affect the visual quality of the community in a negative manner. To enhance reception, collections of cell phone towers are often located on ridgelines, to the detriment of the region's scenic character. Uncontrolled off-highway vehicle (OHV) use has resulted in a patchwork collection of trails on mountain flanks, and not only impairs visual quality but contributes to erosion.

Private ownership of foothill flanks and ridgelines presents the potential for continued development of these hilly areas. Some of the most significant areas within private ownership are portions of the Virginia Foothills that form the eastern boundary of the Truckee Meadows, including Rattlesnake Mountain and the Huffaker Hills. Much of the Pah Rah Range is also privately owned and is located at the edge of the City of Sparks' annexation boundary, so pressures from potential development may ensue. Another significant and well-known feature is Peavine Mountain, whose south side is in private ownership. Development on the south side of Peavine (if not planned in a low-impact manner) will have a visual impact on the Truckee Meadows. Peavine Mountain is one of the prominent backdrops in the region.



MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about these resources and to view technical information, please see the Open Space Inventory and Assessment Report, available online at: www.washoecounty.us/openspace.

Development adjacent to the Truckee River and Steamboat Creek affects the visual quality and character of these significant waterways. In such an arid climate, perennial rivers and streams and their associated riparian areas are very significant defining elements, and development in and near these waterways should be carefully oriented to respect views of the water and to limit visual clutter.

Conversion of dominant landscape types (such as the sagebrush ecosystem) to residential development or the introduction of invasive species change the defining landscape many associate with the region. As communities develop, their signature landscapes are often replaced wholesale with landscapes that are not indigenous to the area or that require extensive irrigation to sustain. This has been observed in many subdivisions in southern Washoe County; incomplete landscape restoration projects have also resulted in colonization of large areas with invasive species, including perennial Pepperweed.

A final, and persistent challenge for our region's visual character is illegal dumping. This can include abandoned vehicles, household waste, and cuttings or yard debris. Illegal dumping not only spoils the views of the region, but it also tends to encourage others to illegally dump items. Illegal dumping on county, private, and federal lands also can be a challenge for enforcement and clean-up. Many of these land managers also must divert valuable resources from other important uses to clean up these dump sites, making an impact on other beneficial uses on these lands.

What are the Opportunities for Visual and Scenic Character?

Through this Plan, opportunities exist to install additional protections for some of the region's most sensitive and distinctive visual resources, and to better coordinate efforts among the variety of local, county, state and federal jurisdictions involved in

administration of these resources. For example, the Plan recommends that any ridgeline or "night sky" protection codes and ordinances be coordinated so that the cities and County are working toward a common set of objectives with comparable tools. The Plan also recommends that a comprehensive "visual education" program be developed that describes the importance and significance of visual resources to the community's quality of life and to its tourism potential.

Underlying both of these opportunities, however, is a need to reach consensus on the most significant visual resources within the community; visual and scenic character can be somewhat subjective, and so attempting to better define the principal features that are important to the community's quality of life can help to foster consensus on the measures and tools that may be needed to help preserve them. Understanding the areas that would be affected by any future, strengthened ridgeline protection ordinance, for example, may help reassure municipal and development partners that such an ordinance would not be unduly restrictive.

A regional Illegal Dumping Task Force has been convened to address dumping and abandonment of vehicles. Using cooperative opportunities to expand education, outreach and new waste collection and disposal options, it is hoped that dumping can be eliminated. This task force is composed of representatives from the county, the cities of Reno and Sparks and other partners in the region. Continued support of this task force is important to controlling the problem of illegal dumping.

What are our Goals and Policies for Visual and Scenic Character?

The Plan advocates a variety of goals and policies that are intended to better define the visual resources and character that warrants preserving, and the types of policy and management actions that could be implemented to achieve these goals.



WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Views from the Mt. Rose Trail show the world famous recreational opportunities of the region.

They include the following:

GOAL 1: Protect the region's visual and scenic resources.

- 1.1 Washoe County's visual and scenic resources (viewsheds and community separators) are important to the region's quality of life and must be protected for future generations.
- 1.2 The County will work collaboratively with all planning partners to gain regional consensus on managing and protecting the region's visual and scenic resources.

Where Are Some of the Region's Scenic Areas Located?

Scenic areas are, to some degree, in the eyes of the beholder. Different people may appreciate certain types of landscapes more than others. Within the framework established by this plan, however, the following represent some of the most unique and distinctive resources within the region:

The Mt. Rose Wilderness, and surrounding high elevation national forest lands. The wilderness area encompasses over 28,000 acres and includes 14 distinctive mountain peaks within the Carson Range. This area is a distinctive landscape southwest of Reno and its scenic quality was cited by the general public.

Peavine Mountain, north and west of Reno, which includes both Peavine Peak as well as nearby South Mountain. The southern face of Peavine Peak is in private ownership, and the public has raised concerns about impacts to this resource if this area is allowed to develop further.

The Peterson Mountains, which span the border between Nevada and California, north and west of Reno, and which include the Peterson Mountains Natural Area.

Pyramid Lake, which encompasses 188 square miles and includes SR 446, a National Scenic Byway. The lake is one of the largest lakes in the United States and also the largest remnant of ancient Lake Lahontan that covered much of northwestern Nevada at the end of the last ice age.

The Dogskin Mountains, which are visible to the west from the Pyramid Highway and which also have cultural significance.

The Virginia Mountains and Tule Peak, which are visible along the western edge of Pyramid Lake.

Hungry Valley and Ridge, which parallels a section of the Pyramid Highway and which also has cultural significance.

The Pah Rah Range, to the south of Pyramid Lake which includes Virginia, Pond and Spanish Springs Peaks.

The Truckee River, which flows from west to east and provides a visual experience of nature in the City.

The Virginia Range, which lies on the southeast side of Truckee Meadows and which forms the southeast boundary of our planning area. These foothills, sparsely vegetated in sagebrush and pinon pine/juniper communities, form a very significant backdrop and edge to the county. Also on the east side are the Huffaker Hills, including privately-owned Rattlesnake Mountain, a very significant and recognizable feature within the foothills.

Steamboat Creek and associated wetlands, an area that provides a unique interface between the valley floor and the foothills. The original marsh or bog is the low point in the Truckee Meadows, and was one of the first sights to greet wagon trains as they wound their way up the Truckee River. The Overland Emigrant Trail, which followed the base of the Virginia Range, then along the Huffaker Hills to southwest Truckee Meadows, is still visible in this area in selected locations.

Washoe Lake and Washoe Valley, on the southern edge of the project area and which include Washoe Lake State Park, Bowers Mansion, Davis Creek Park and large agricultural properties such as Winter Ranch.

Lake Tahoe, at the far southwestern edge of the project area.

Bedell Flats in the North Valleys, a large predominantly sage-covered valley surrounded by hills with no human-made structures visible except for a few dirt roads.

Painted Hills and Needle Rock, unique geologic formations located just north of the Incandescent Rocks ACEC.

Swan, Silver and White Lakes, three playas in the North Valleys.

Jumbo Grade, the large undeveloped area of hills east of Washoe Valley that includes Bailey Canyon, Wakefield Peak and McClelland Peak.

The **Mount Rose Highway** (SR 431).

Geiger Grade (SR 341).

U.S. 395 through Pleasant Valley, Washoe Valley and Cold Springs Valley.

1.3 The County will work collaboratively with all planning partners to gain regional consensus on identifying and protecting the region's significant visual gateways as experienced from major interstate travel routes.

1.4 County and local jurisdictional development review processes should be expanded and coordinated to include consistent criteria for the evaluation of visual impacts of proposed projects.

1.5 Any regional parks, facilities or County-owned open space that are impacted by non-park uses, or uses not consistent with this plan, must comply with the Regional Parks & Open Space Granting of Easement Policy and the review process.

GOAL 2: Preserve and protect the visual integrity of our region's hillsides, ridges and hilltops.

2.1 The County will work collaboratively with Reno and Sparks to gain regional consensus on a coordinated approach for managing and protecting hillsides, ridges and hilltops through policies and implementing ordinances.

GOAL 3: Preserve the remaining integrity of our region's dark night sky.

3.1 Develop and implement consistent and comparable ordinances and consistent lighting codes for Reno, Sparks and the county that will help preserve the "dark night sky."

3.2 Development codes should require lighting plans for proposed projects to include ways for reducing any adverse effect of artificial light, including glare, unwanted lighting, decreased visibility at night, and energy waste.

GOAL 4: Protect the region's visual resources from impacts of illegal activities (such as

dumping, abandoned vehicles and illegal trail creation).

4.1 Support and continuously improve coordination among law enforcement agencies to reduce impacts on visual resources from illegal trail creation, OHV use, dumping, and other impacts to public lands from illegal activities.

4.2 Support and participate in the Illegal Dumping Task Force and collaborate to inform the public on dumping, provide information, and improve current efforts to eliminate illegal dumping.

4.3 Coordinate with appropriate agencies to reduce illegal activities through increased fines, public service restoration requirements, and other enforcement measures.

GOAL 5: Educate the public on the values of the region's scenic resources.

5.1 Increase general awareness of the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan, with a focus on building appreciation of the scenic character of our area (coincidental with building appreciation for recreational opportunities and ecosystem services).

5.2 Educate and enlist local and regional organizations and special interest groups in the support and promotion of the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan's direct ties to economic development, the tourism industry, the region's quality of life and our local citizen's sense of pride/ownership.

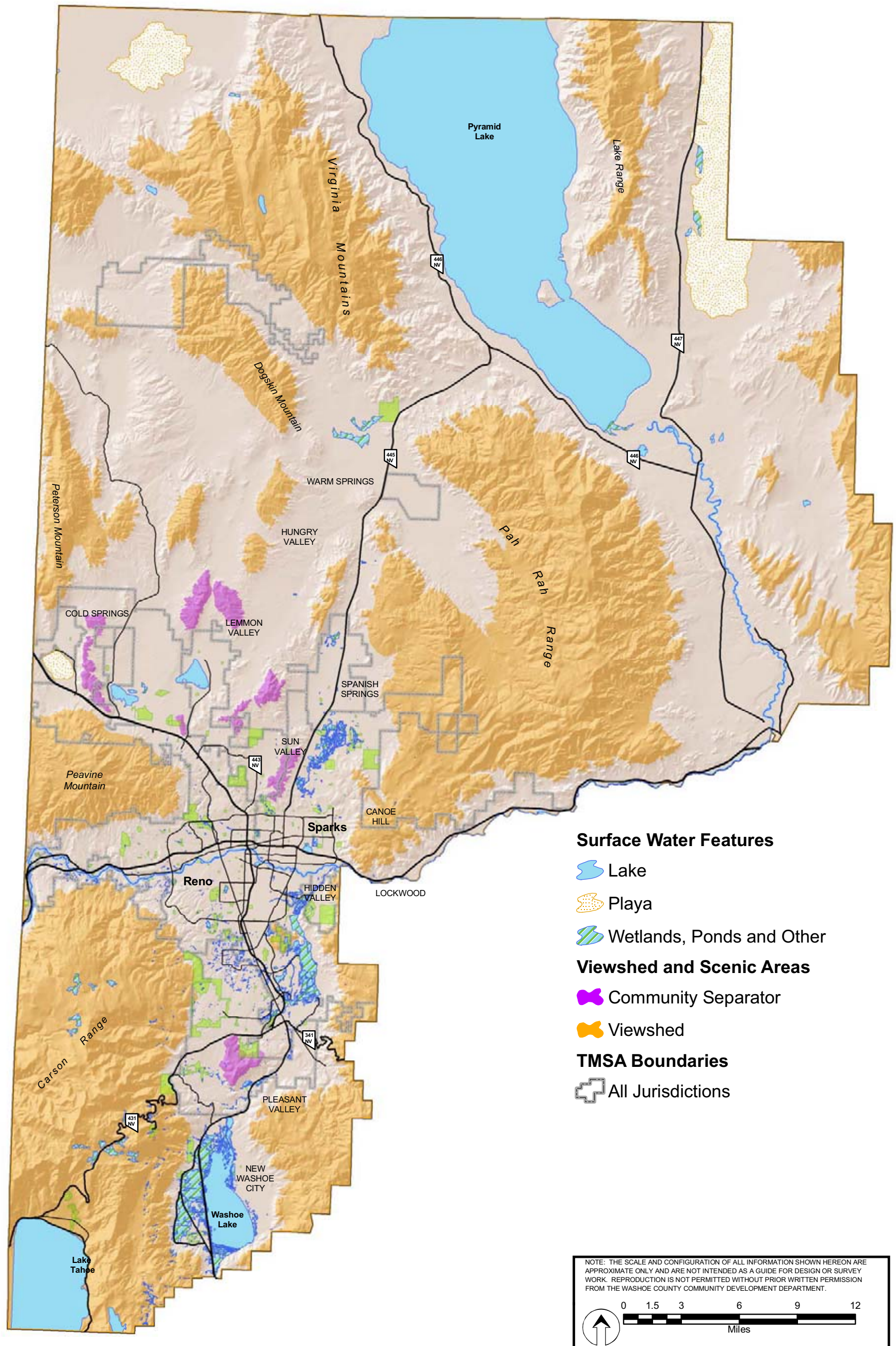
5.3 Work with NDOT and RTC regarding the incorporation of scenic viewpoints into the region's planning for transportation enhancements and funding activities.

5.4 Work with NDOT and RTC regarding the preservation of our area's scenic viewsheds in future transportation planning.

MAP 12

Visual and Scenic Resources

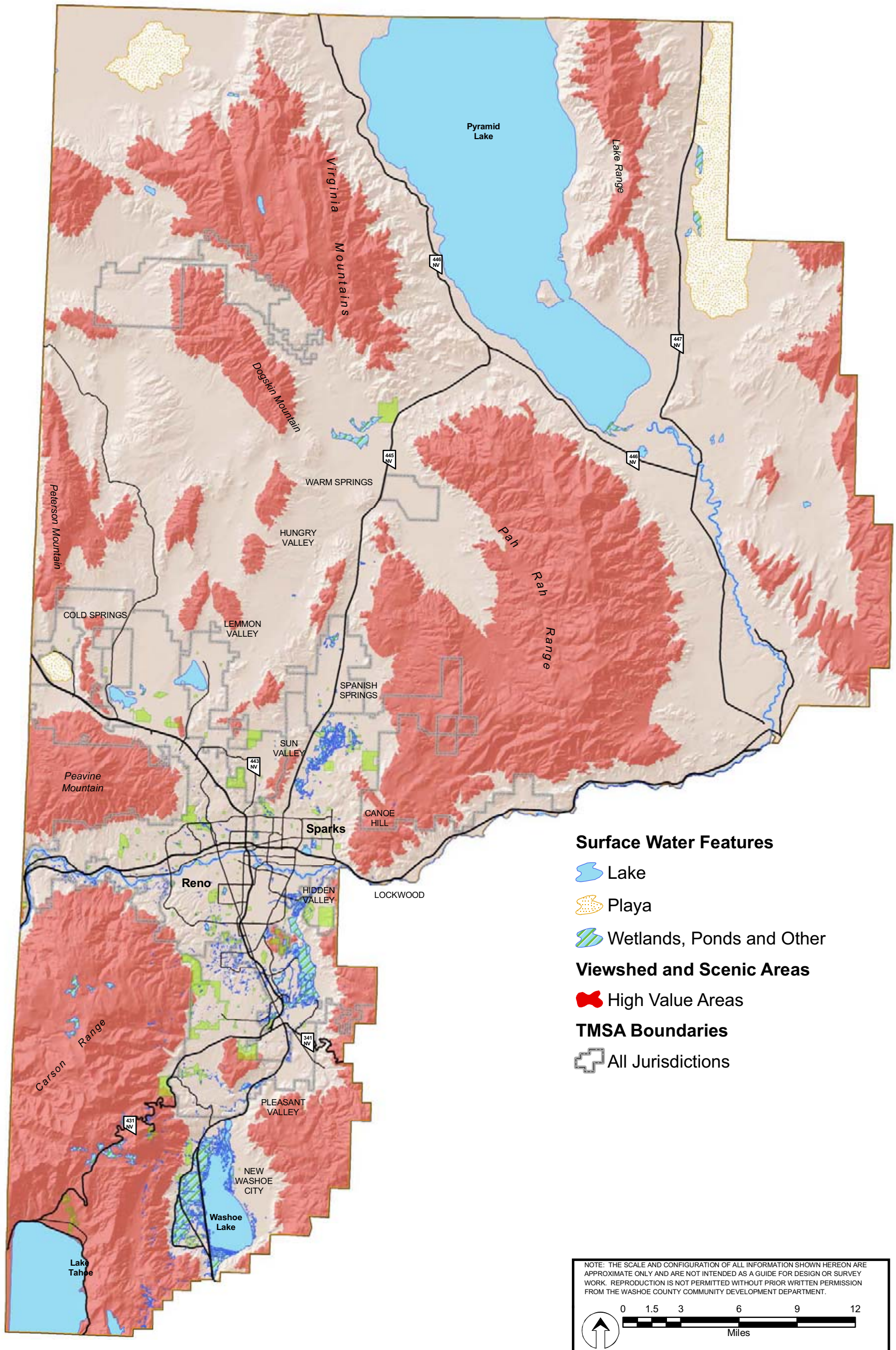
This map shows the visual resources of the region. This includes areas that provide the views that define our region and the ridgelines that help create the individual identity of each community within our region. These areas were developed through a combination of interviews and working sessions along with analysis of the elevations and viewpoints in the region.



MAP 13

Visual and Scenic Values

The visual resources depicted on the previous map are given high values on this map. These areas contribute the highest visual value for the region.



Water Resources

What are water resources?

Water resources include all of the surface water and groundwater in the region: lakes, playas, rivers, streams, seeps, springs, and the network of groundwater aquifers and the subsurface flows that connect aquifers to surface features.

Our landscape is characterized by how precious water is in this environment. Plants and animals have developed unique strategies to take advantage of the water that is available, and our communities have historically been located where these resources are readily available.

The greater Truckee Meadows, the Sierra, and the Washoe Valley area all benefit from the water that finds its way over the divide from the Lake Tahoe region. Key to this is the Truckee River and its Lake Tahoe headwaters, which bring both water for our communities and for fish and wildlife. These conditions have shaped how urban and agricultural development have grown up in the southern half of Washoe County.

What are the challenges for water in our region?

Surface Water

Our water resources face a number of challenges to both quantity and quality. Water quantity is an issue because demand for potable water increases as development expands. As more people move to our region and more homes are built, more water must either come from the Truckee River, its tributaries, or groundwater that is pumped to homes. Our water quality is threatened by increased development that brings polluted stormwater runoff and introduces pollutants into the groundwater in areas with no community sewer systems. Agricultural uses and industry also contribute to these threats through discharges of pollutants or

What is a water resource?

Water resources include surface and groundwater resources. Surface water resources include:

- Lakes and ponds
- Playas and pools
- Rivers and streams
- Seeps and springs
- Washes and intermittent streams
- Wetlands and marshes

Groundwater includes various aquifers and subsurface flows that connect recharge areas with springs, streams and wetlands. Groundwater provides an important source of water for many of our surface water resources. These groundwater flows provide a slower year-round release that keeps seeps, springs, and rivers flowing during dry periods, and supports the adjacent habitats.

contaminated water. This pollution can threaten both human and wildlife health.

Water quantity challenges stem from the laws and history of water development in the region. How much water is available for everyone has been a constant struggle, both here and across the West. In dry periods the use of allocated water may leave little or no water in rivers and streams for fish and wildlife. As demand increases for the residents of the county, long-distance importation of water is being developed from Fish Springs Ranch and is being considered from other areas.

The challenges to how much water we have are also accompanied by issues of how clean the water is. Surface water pollution in our region led to the Truckee River being one of the first rivers in the U.S. to have a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) created under the Clean Water Act. A TMDL manages the allowable

How does this relate to other resources?

Biodiversity: Water resources are key to the success of many of the habitats and their species in the region. Enough water, at the right time of the year, is critical for fish and wildlife alike.

Natural Hazards: Water pollution threatens human health and over-pumping of groundwater can cause land subsidence. Impacts from flooding can change how rivers flow or carry pollutants that may enter aquifers or surface sources for drinking water.

Parks and Trails: Water is a key feature for recreation. Adequate river flows and lake levels permit water recreation and provide a visual amenity.

discharges to waterbodies and is created in response to high levels of pollution. As an example, Steamboat Creek is the largest source of non-point pollution for the Truckee River. Additionally, polluted groundwater not only makes it unsuitable for human use; but as it moves into streams and creeks, it carries the pollution with it. Some of this pollution is naturally occurring, while in other cases it results from industrial chemicals leaking into groundwater supplies.

Our region also has a number of ditches and drains that were built to convey water from one area to another for irrigation or to generate power. These watercourses move both water and pollutants across the region, adding complexity to managing both water quality and quantity. The maintenance of these ditches also presents challenges, because poorly maintained ditches can increase the amount of sediment due to bank erosion and the potential for disastrous flooding.

Our landscape is characterized by how precious water is in this environment. Plants and animals have developed unique strategies to take advantage of the water that is available, and our communities have historically been located where these resources are readily available.



TERMS: SEEPS

SEEPS OR SPRINGS are locations where water oozes from the earth, often forming the source of a small stream. Seeps and springs are hydrologically supported by groundwater and have relatively constant water temperature and chemistry. Springs differ from seeps in that they tend to have a more persistent water source and have fewer dry periods than seeps. Changing groundwater conditions can change seeps to springs and springs to seeps, so they are managed similarly.



MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about these resources and to view technical information, please see the Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report, available online at: www.washoecounty.us/openspace.

Water resources are a highly regulated and studied issue in our region. Most of the focus on managing water is to ensure that homes, agriculture and industry have the water they need.

Groundwater

In addition to the valuable surface water, there is the groundwater that lies beneath our region. Groundwater provides a water supply to seeps and springs, and helps the rivers flow during dry times of the year. Recharge – rain and runoff that filters back into the ground – is critical. If groundwater is pumped out for use and there is not adequate recharge, the aquifer will eventually run dry. In some cases this can cause the ground above to deform and sink. Groundwater is also faced with the same legal challenges as surface water, except that the demand and impacts of use are less well known because of the challenges of measuring groundwater. Groundwater is also vulnerable to pollution. As development occurs, groundwater aquifer recharge is limited, reducing supply, and pollutants can be carried into the ground, making it unfit for human or natural uses.

Well development throughout the region has also increased as private residents drill individual wells to meet their needs. These wells draw from groundwater

sources that may or may not be able to support the demand. If this water is not replaced by adequate recharge, adjacent springs and streams can go dry during parts of the year. Many of these concerns are also discussed in the biodiversity section, because of the impact of losing springs and seeps for species support.

Groundwater also faces threats to quality from both natural and human causes. Natural geothermal activity and highly mineralized aquifers require expensive and difficult treatment to be made potable. Human causes include septic tanks and industrial pollution. Home septic tanks create plumes of nitrates that threaten health standards, while industrial pollutants can include oils and solvents. Of critical concern is the industrial solvent perchloroethylene (PCE), which is present beneath the urban areas of the Truckee Meadows.

What are our opportunities for water resources?

Addressing the water resource challenges of the region is a complex task that will continue to require many parties in the region to agree on the path forward. The Plan can help by directing open space and natural resource management decisions made by the County in such a way as to build on or complement other efforts to maintain our water resources. At the same time, this Plan will help the County to manage land it owns to best maintain the water needed for the land's natural functions and to allow those functions to benefit the region's environmental health.

In order to maintain the integrity of vegetation communities and the natural functions of our region, the County must acquire and preserve water rights to serve fish, wildlife and recreation, both for open space holdings and for the water bodies that flow through our communities. Other opportunities include further development of effluent reuse, which involves treating wastewater to make it suitable for irrigating public amenities such as parks and golf courses or for release to streams in the region. This innovative water option

What do water resources mean for the Plan?

Water resources are a highly regulated and studied issue in our region. Most of the focus on managing water is to ensure that homes, agriculture and industry have the water they need. This plan seeks to expand the scope of water resource management to ensure adequate water for natural uses, including fish, wildlife, plant communities and recreation.

Challenges to these uses come from the overuse or over-appropriation of water, or when water pollution becomes so serious as to harm or kill fish and wildlife that depend on the water.

This Plan seeks to:

- Preserve water in streams and lakes to meet the needs of fish, wildlife and recreation.
- Restore natural processes that help keep water clean.
- Restore or maintain groundwater so it continues to supply water to springs, seeps, wetlands and rivers.
- Where possible, align open space acquisitions with regional goals to protect municipal water resources through land or water rights acquisitions.

is currently in use at North Valleys Regional Park, Sierra Sage Golf Course, South Valleys Regional Park, Swan Lake and Lazy 5 Regional Park, just to name a few, with a planned pipeline extension to the Montreaux Golf course.

The Plan offers guidance to partners in the region on how to manage their land and water resources. This includes the federal land management agencies, USFS and BLM, who manage the largest portions of public lands in the county.

The Plan also identifies next steps to ensure that seeps and springs and their associated habitats are protected. This may require the County or other

Rivers in the region provide important corridors for species migration, transportation and recreation.



CAROLYN POISSANT

entities to apply for water rights or protest other applications that may harm a seep or spring. The Plan directs the County to become an active owner and participant in the water management process in our region, and to do so with the benefit of fish and wildlife as well as recreation in mind.

An additional resource is to work with local agencies such as sewer utilities to develop enterprise funds to finance restoration activities. Currently the City of Reno sewer utility operates an enterprise fund for watershed improvement and restoration. Partnering or creating other similar programs could greatly add to the success of protecting the region's water resources.

What are our goals and policies for water resources?

GOAL 1: Preserve and acquire water rights to support healthy fish and wildlife populations.

- 1.1 Apply for water rights where possible or establish standings in water rights applications to assure sufficient water is available for wildlife and recreation.
- 1.2 Encourage the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and Nevada Department of Wildlife to apply for water rights, or protest applications, in order to assure sufficient water is available for wildlife and recreation.
- 1.3 Support efforts (such as the creation of a water conservancy trust) to purchase and hold water rights for fish, wildlife and recreational uses.

GOAL 2: Provide sufficient water resources to support natural functions of open space.

- 2.1 As open space is acquired, the County or partners should acquire the associated water rights where cost-effective and available. Open space that will not have sufficient water rights to remain in its present condition should not be acquired without a plan to acquire other water rights to maintain its function.

POLLUTION TYPES

Surface,
Ground
and
Point Versus
Non-point

Water pollution in the region can be divided between *surface water pollution* and *groundwater pollution*. Surface water pollution typically results from discharges from agricultural, wastewater or energy facilities or industry. These discharges are regulated and have permits associated with the discharge. Groundwater pollution typically results from the movement of a pollutant through the soil into groundwater aquifers; it comes from a number of sources, including septic tanks and accidental or improper management of chemicals or compounds in industry or natural contamination. Groundwater pollution can also travel underground and flow into surface water, contaminating it as well.

Both forms of pollution can come from *point or non-point sources*. Point sources are discharges from pipes or specific locations that can be more easily measured and monitored. Non-point pollution is typically pollution from many small discharges that are hard to find or track, such as agricultural runoff. It is also harder to assign responsibility for non-point pollution.

- 2.2 As new water sources are made available to replace Truckee River water (such as treated effluent), where appropriate, a portion of the water returned to the natural source should be dedicated to fish, wildlife and recreational use.
- 2.3 As treated effluent is produced and made available for new uses, where appropriate, a portion of treated effluent will be dedicated to natural uses to benefit wildlife and the habitats they depend on.
- 2.4 Water importation proposals should ensure sufficient water remains in the basin of origin to protect biodiversity and the natural functions of the area's seeps and springs.
- 2.5 Seeps and springs will be protected from development and other uses that may damage the surrounding vegetation communities and habitat. A buffer of no less than 100' from the source of any single seep or spring will be established. In areas of seep and spring complexes, an approved seep/spring management plan should be submitted as part of the development proposal to assure water quality, wildlife access and some flexibility of buffering standards.

- 2.6 Where water is currently dedicated for maintenance of wetlands or other natural systems, it should not be rededicated to other uses unless impacts can be mitigated through other efforts.

GOAL 3: Integrate open space acquisition with water resource management where feasible.

- 3.1 Collaborate with the Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission on acquiring open space for watershed protection and to assure buffering for wellhead protection.
- 3.2 When prioritizing open space acquisitions, protect aquifer recharge areas to assure groundwater discharge at seeps and springs, especially in hydrobasins that are expected to be overappropriated in the future or that are presently.
- 3.3 Continue to acquire/retain areas of moderate to high groundwater recharge zones where appropriate. Protect moderate to high groundwater recharge areas where possible through the development review process.
- 3.4 Coordinate open space acquisition and retention decisions with current and future wellhead protection areas.

How is water managed in our region?

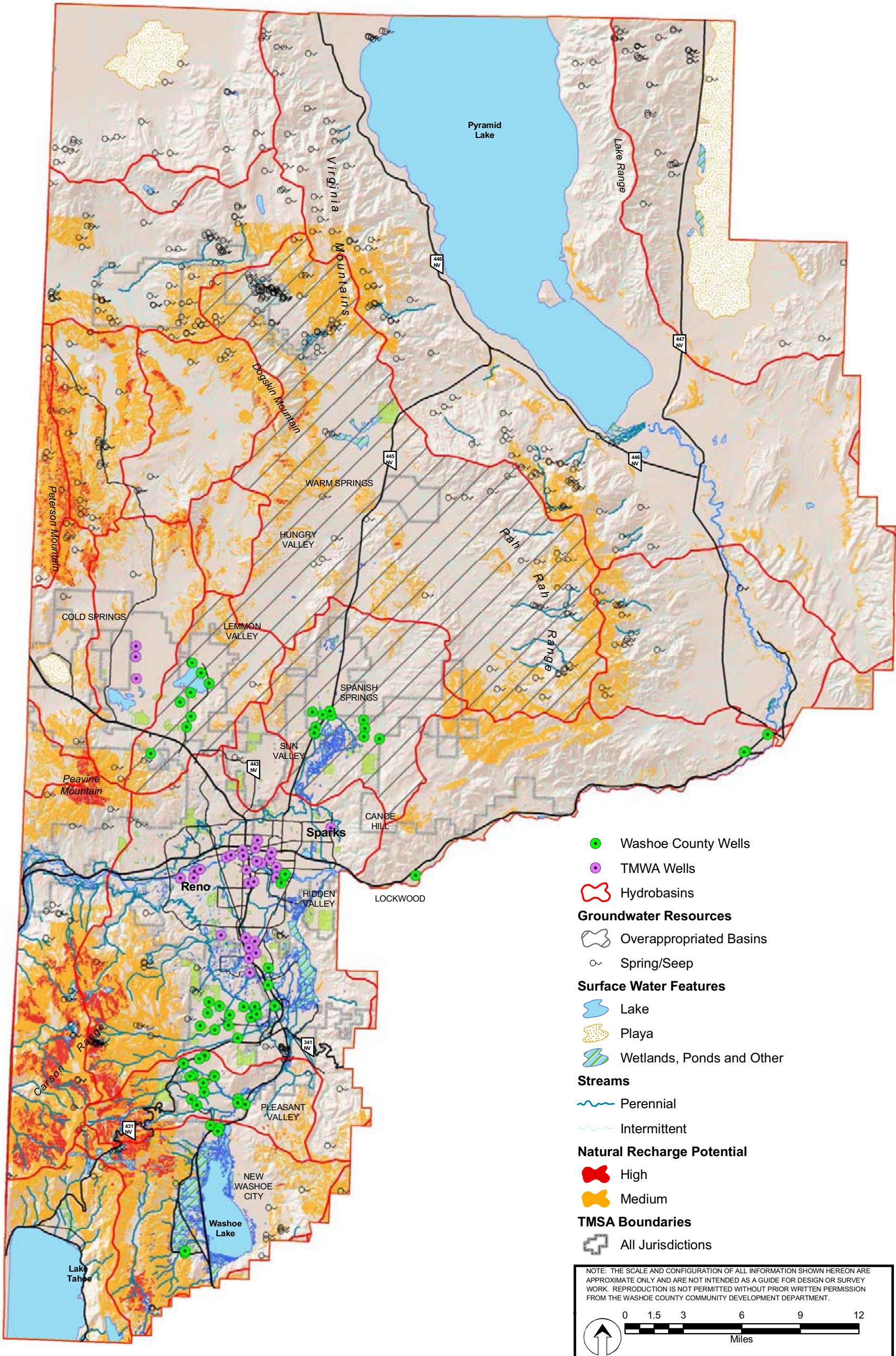
As the West was being settled in the 19th century, a unique set of laws and principles were developed to share the water among users. The key principle of these laws is that a right to water is based on it being used first, before other users. In our region many of the first users were the federal government, Indian tribes, and agriculture. As cities developed they too had to develop a water right. As each right is established they stack on top of each other – each taking out a set amount of water, until the source is completely allocated. This is like putting several straws in a glass at different heights. Each one has access to certain amounts of water; however, in wet years there is more water around, and others may put a straw in. When a dry year comes, the junior rights, the last ones to make a claim for a right, may not get any water.

Our region has many straws, and more and more are near the top. The surface water from the Truckee River is fully appropriated, and now we are drilling more wells and even looking to other parts of the region for water. In all of these cases, it is important to remember that if all of the water is allocated, rivers can run out of water and dry up. The Water Master keeps an eye on these conditions – but it is difficult. What is a dry year and what is a wet one is hard to judge. Some users take water in consistent amounts. Others may use their right fully one year, but only partially the next. At the same time our cities and subdivisions need more water for new homes. All of this demand means our rivers have less water for recreation, fish and wildlife and we are now pumping more water out of the ground. Groundwater that is pumped too heavily causes springs to go dry, and in some cases causes the ground to sink beneath us.

MAP 14

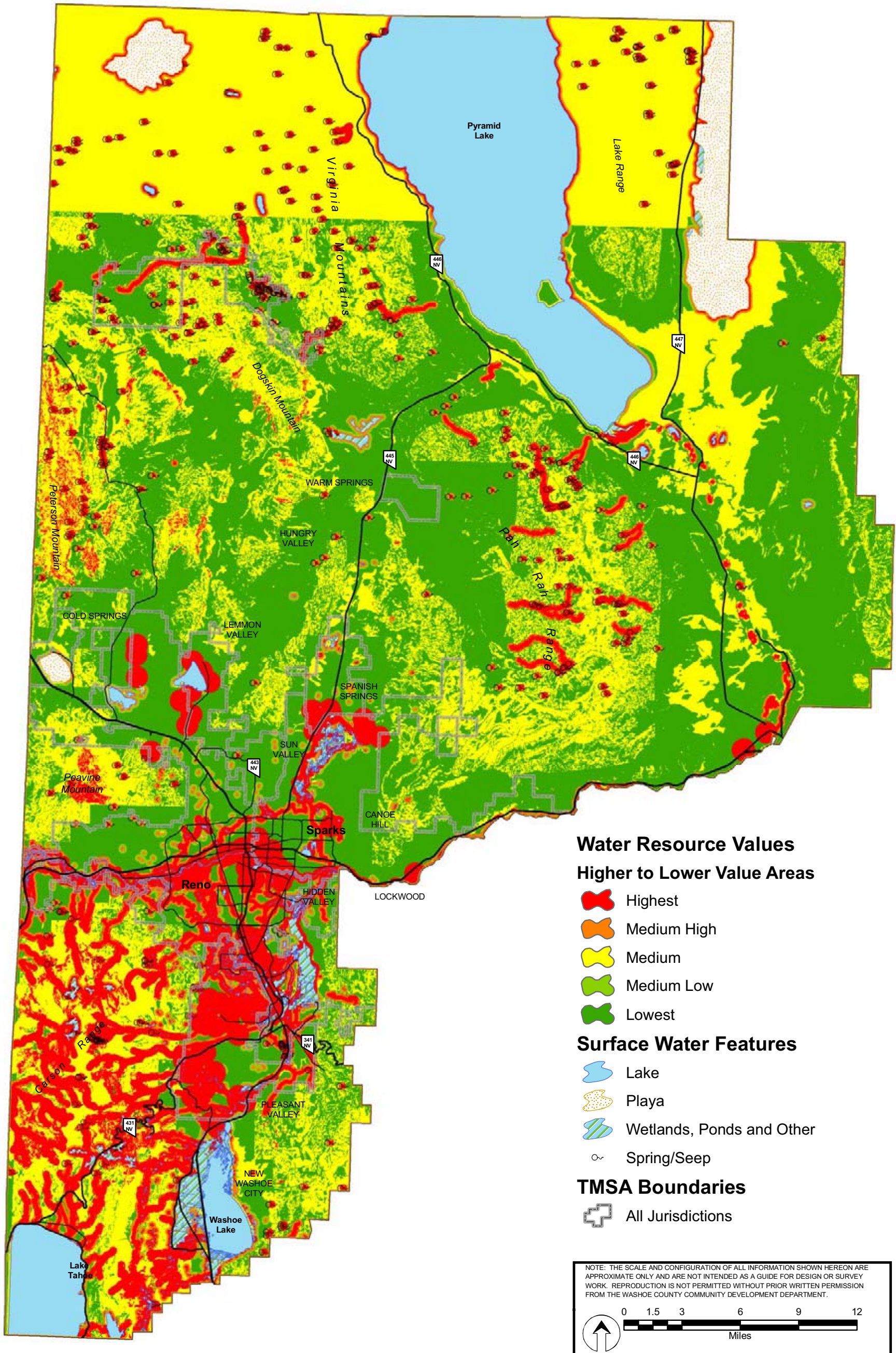
Water Resources

The features on this map show important water resources in the region. Surface water features include rivers, streams, springs, seeps, lakes and wetlands. Groundwater resources include drinking water wells in the region as well as areas with high groundwater recharge potential. In addition to these features, areas with expected groundwater challenges are shown in cross-hatched areas in the north valleys.



Water Resource Values

This map shows the location and types of water resources for planning and resource management purposes. All of the surface water resources were assigned high values, including a buffer that protects and supports the resources. Additionally, groundwater resources were valued based on groundwater recharge potential and by providing a protective ring around groundwater wells. These ranges of values are used to help the County focus efforts in areas that are most critical to protecting water resources.



Sustainability and Ecosystem Services

What is No Net Loss?

The resource categories in this plan capture the key resources that support our communities. These include how the natural landscape provides us with clean water, protection from floods, healthy ecosystems, recreational opportunities, and the visual character of the region. When evaluated across the planning area, this plan calls for no net loss of ecosystem services. The plan recognizes that in some cases ecosystem services may be lost due to infrastructure construction, development or other human activities, but that in these cases the loss must be replaced with restored or enhanced ecosystem services somewhere else in the region. For example, one important service is groundwater recharge. If a development caused an area to no longer be able to let water seep into the ground, then this plan calls for that loss to be replaced by the restoration or enhancement of another piece of land that can provide that recharge. In this way development and environmental protection can be linked and work together to make the best decisions.

While many of the Plan's goals and policies apply to one of the six resource categories, certain goals and policies for the region's open space and natural resources need to stand alone in the Plan. These policies reflect the basic values and goals for the program, which is to preserve and restore as needed the natural functions our communities rely on. These functions are known as ecosystem services. They provide society essential services like clean water, flood protection, fire resistant wildlands, biodiversity, and scenic and recreational values. When lands that provide these services are impacted or modified, society must replace them if they were relied upon. When a floodplain is modified, the natural ability to store water must be replaced by engineered solutions such as levees or dams. Similarly, as groundwater recharge areas are modified and prevent water from recharging aquifers, either new water must be imported or other technologies used to meet demands for water. These examples show how our entire region relies on a green infrastructure to maintain our quality of life. The following sections introduce how this green infrastructure works, and then lists goals and policies to provide for it.

What are Ecosystem Services?

Our open spaces and natural areas have always provided important values for our region: open spaces to recreate, clean water to drink and fish, amazing and sweeping views, and unique wildlife and plants, just to name a few. At the same time we have historically viewed some natural areas as threats or limits on the development of our cities. Flood-prone rivers, wetlands or steep areas were managed as risks or challenges to our communities. We have developed engineered solutions to protect us from these, but sometimes with consequences for the environment – loss of fish habitat, or loss of wetlands, for example.

However, with more studies and science we have come to realize that the natural areas around us support

Flood-prone rivers, wetlands or steep areas were managed as risks or challenges to our communities.

We have developed engineered solutions to protect us from these, but sometimes with consequences for the environment – loss of fish habitat, or loss of wetlands, for example.

our healthy communities better than our engineered solutions can. Today there is a growing awareness that these natural systems form an infrastructure that supports our communities, a green infrastructure.

This green infrastructure performs the same functions as pipes, levees, dams, and other management tools. It includes the natural capacity for the land to hold and store floodwaters and runoff, to maintain healthy pest and fire cycles, and to filter and store drinking water on the surface or in aquifers. This infrastructure also includes such critical functions such as oxygen production and pollination of plants. These functions are known collectively as ecosystem services – in recognition of the fact that the environment provides services that society relies upon for its continued health.

Not all land provides all ecosystem services in the same way. A valley bottom of sagebrush may store flood waters, allow these waters to seep into the ground and recharge wells, and support healthy vegetation that is more fire resistant and supports various wildlife species. To some degree, this land could be converted to other uses such as roads, housing or commercial areas without an impact on flooding, drinking water, fires or wildlife. However, at some point each amount of land lost will start to change the way the natural system works. These changes will require someone to

build flood control devices, water treatment plants, provide fuels treatment for fire prevention, and so on.

This simple example illustrates how the protection of our natural areas in fact provides the best protections for our communities from these common challenges – and often at a lower cost. Additionally, when we modify the landscape, the impacts and costs are not always shared fairly. One piece of land may play a large role in protecting downstream landowners from flooding, and if the protection is lost it sends the cost of flooding downstream.

This Plan seeks to build on this understanding to encourage the protection and enhancement of lands that provide these services. This Plan charters an effort to develop a formal program for protecting, enhancing and restoring these ecosystem services. It is a process that is unique to Washoe County – and one that will require subsequent efforts to develop measures and practices for meeting the Plan's goal of stopping further loss of ecosystem services. By looking at ecosystem services, the Plan can not only meet the recreational, cultural, scenic, and biodiversity goals of the open space program, but can provide additional value for the entire community by being a partner in providing healthy communities, clean water and protection from natural hazards.

How do Ecosystem Services support the goals of this Plan?

Using this green infrastructure framework has informed many of the issues examined in this plan. The resource categories that this Plan addresses are:

- Biodiversity
- Cultural Resources
- Natural Hazards
- Recreation Resources

- Visual and Scenic Resources
- Water Resources

These categories capture the key resources that the Plan has identified as ones of special concern and ones that require attention. These resource categories contain in them ecosystem services that the Plan strives to protect. These services are in turn tied to the landscape and have both policies and tools here to protect them. One of the ways this Plan aims to protect open space is through market-based tools including the purchase and selling of ecosystem services.

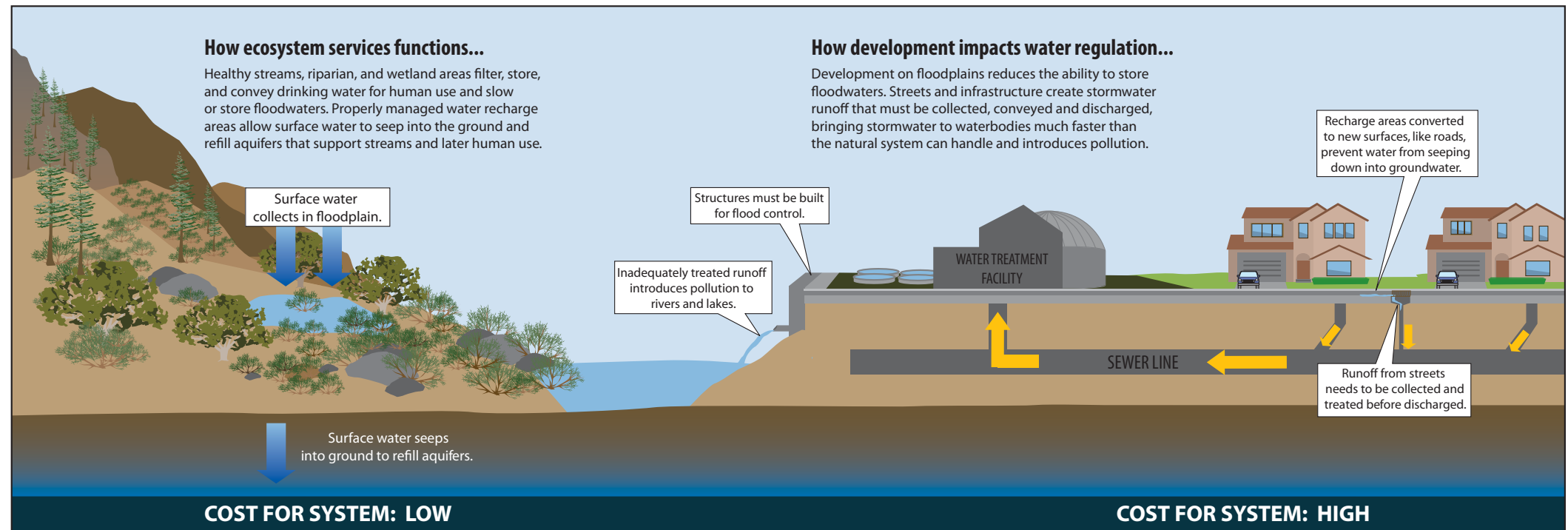
Not all open space areas provide these services and values in the same way. The role of open space in the Carson Range differs from open space in the north valleys or near Washoe Lake. Even within these areas, one piece of land may provide different values than land next to it, because it holds a valuable soil type, habitat type, is in the floodplain, or has other characteristics not shared by the adjoining land. At a very coarse level, this Plan has identified priority areas. But to make the ecosystem services concept really serve the needs of the community, a clear measure of these services and a way to trade them is critical.

Markets for environmental credits have grown in the U.S. and globally in the past two decades. These markets are mainly centered on water or air pollution issues, and usually where there are a few clear polluters that have easily measured discharges. Some special markets for wetlands and endangered species habitat have also developed in the past 10 years. But these examples focus on small opportunities – usually just for one industry or one watershed or one species. However, new models are emerging for these markets, such as carbon markets to address carbon-based climate change and new ecosystem markets to address ecosystem services comprehensively.

Ecosystem markets function as a network of mitigation solutions, effectively connecting entities needing to offset impacts with entities doing restoration projects. The entity seeking the impact offset has a mitigation

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: Water Quality & Regulation

Properly functioning streams, rivers, and other waterbodies control, slow, and store surface water runoff during and after storms. They also assure water levels are sustained year-round for fish and wildlife.



obligation pursuant to one or more regulations, or they may desire to offset ecosystem impacts to meet a green building ethic. Land owners whose restoration activities have been certified by the market can then sell credits to those seeking the offset. Once regulatory structures are in place, the marketplace functions as a trading forum for those who have natural resources and those who need to provide environmental benefits.

The ultimate goal for this ecosystem service program is to foster such a market to support the vision of this plan. In terms of how ecosystem services are provided, not all landowners have the same level of services coming from their land. Some land may be relatively low in value – this is the ideal place to encourage and steer development when compared to higher value lands. However, lands with a higher level of ecosystem services should be invested in to assure these services continue to be provided.

This can happen through market exchanges, public investments or private donors.

The following goals and policies set the stage for the process of developing such a system in our region. The critical components are:

- Convene an oversight body to provide guidance and scientific review;
- Develop an agreed upon accounting method to measure the services provided;
- Establish a framework for trading and exchanges; and
- Develop requirements for participation in the market as appropriate.

The goal of this program is to put in place an agreed upon series of steps required to measure the type and



WASHOE COUNTY

Sustainability is defined by what we do each day.

level of ecosystem services provided by a site. This would normally take the form of an assessment performed by qualified staff. These reviews then generate a report on the services that are being provided or that may be impacted by other uses. This system allows people wishing to be paid for protecting these services to enter the market and trade with those who are unable to avoid impacting them.

As a first step towards this program, ecosystem service assessments are proposed to be required of all major developments. This assessment would provide data and a testing ground for the initial measurement system. It will provide a basic measure of the potential and the challenges that face full implementation. Through examination of the assessments, a measurement system and fully functioning market can emerge and regional goals for service levels defined. Ultimately, future needs for flood protection, drinking water or fire prevention may be provided through investments in restoring or protecting natural areas instead of spending on structures, plants or treatments.

GOAL 1: Institutionalize the concept of ecosystem services within the region.

- 1.1 The County and its planning partners within the region will regard the natural functions our communities rely on as critical ecosystem services providing value as “green infrastructure” which, if impacted, must be replaced.

GOAL 2: Manage open space and natural resources for “no net loss.”

- 2.1 The County, in conjunction with resource experts, will develop a future regulatory structure that requires development, land transfer and open space decisions to demonstrate compliance with the “no net loss” goal for important ecosystem services.
- 2.2 Revenues generated through any offset program

will be managed to fund targeted necessary ecosystem service preservation or restoration projects.

- 2.3 The County will encourage the location of higher density development closer to urbanized areas and support the voluntary limitation on development in rural areas with high biodiversity or ecosystem service value. The County should explore the establishment of a transferable development rights program to provide compensation for landowners in areas identified as not being able to support higher density limits.

GOAL 3: Ensure future open space and natural resource land acquisitions meet as many goals and policies as possible from this Plan.

- 3.1 Future land acquisition or sales will be evaluated using the resource goals, policies and mapping included in this Plan. Acquisition through dedication or donation will strive to acquire the premier lands for preservation as open space and avoid those lands of marginal natural, cultural or recreational value.

Sustainability

Open space and natural resource planning is one part of Washoe County’s commitment to protecting the environment. This commitment is reflected in almost everything we do. Our strategic priorities call for responsible practices, products and policies that result in environmental as well as financial savings.

Our Quality of Life task force, which is comprised of representatives from Department of Regional Parks & Open Space, Public Works, Air Quality, Water Resources, Regional Transportation Commission, Building & Safety, and Libraries, work collaboratively to implement the County’s strategic priorities to “Preserve and Enhance our Quality of Life.”

The Quality of Life task force works to protect and cooperatively plan regional parks, open space, trails

Washoe County has long been a supporter of environmental stewardship in our region.

From protecting thousands of acres of open space for future generations, to enacting a recycle and reuse policy that guides how we conduct business, to environmental restoration of our rivers and wetlands, to incorporating sustainable building practices into our capital projects, Washoe County sets the example for our region that taking care of our environment is everyone’s responsibility and privilege.

KATY SINGLAUB
COUNTY MANAGER

and ecosystems; improve traffic flow in the region; integrate water resources planning and management in regional processes; pursue a leadership role in efforts to maintain an environmentally responsible community; and pursue a leadership role in arts, culture and literacy.

Washoe County has recently gone one step further in their commitment to protecting the environment and has formed the Green Team chaired by Andrew Goodrich, Director of Washoe County Air Quality and the chairman for the State of Nevada Governor’s committee on climate change.

The Green Team will be charged with furthering the vision and mission for Washoe County to play a leadership role in environmental and sustainable policies and practices in all facets of business and the community.

We invite our planning partners and the community to join us in this shared vision for protecting and enhancing our Quality of Life in Washoe County and to work collaboratively for a sustainable future.

Implementation Plan

Introduction

The Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is an action-oriented plan with a 20-year horizon, focusing upon the projects and activities that need to be undertaken to carry out a clearly defined vision, a set of guiding principles, and desired outcomes for the future.

How will the Plan be carried out?

As noted earlier, the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan is a long-term plan for the management of the county’s open spaces and natural resources over the course of the next 20 years, in alignment with the County’s Comprehensive Plan. The Implementation Plan being recommended to carry out the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan focuses on the following:

- Recommended changes to the County’s Comprehensive Plan, Development Code and implementing ordinances to facilitate carrying out the goals and policies of this Plan;
- Recommended actions to carry out the goals and policies for achieving the Plan’s envisioned, desired outcomes;
- Recommended areas for acquisition and retention for conservation, protection and management of open spaces and natural resources; and
- A suggested time frame for initiating key actions and projects.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the County review the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan on a regular basis, and make amendments to the Plan as opportunity or changing community and economic circumstances necessitates. Should there be a desire to change the guiding principles or shift the emphasis of a

This Plan will be implemented in pieces, or components, over time, with some actions in 2008 and others initiated in the years to follow.

particular goal or policy, this plan update process provides the mechanism for doing so within the context of reviewing the plan as a whole.

Finally, realizing that not everything can be done within a short time frame and that there are other community priorities to be addressed, those seen as having the most importance to undertake within the first 3 years are highlighted in a Short-Term Action Plan (see discussion below).

Programming Recommendations

This Plan will be implemented in pieces, or components, over time, with some actions in 2008 and others initiated in the years to follow. An initial list of recommended actions, next steps and projects has been compiled and can be found in the Implementation Plan, one of the three key components of the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan. These recommended actions and projects have been categorized and prioritized with regard to relative timing (e.g., 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years, and longer-term). This list of actions and suggested programming can be found in the Implementation Plan, this Plan’s companion document.

Short-Term Action Plan

As mentioned earlier in this summary Plan, there are many projects and actions recommended for carrying out the Regional Open Space and Natural Resource

Management Plan. A rapidly-growing region such as Washoe County has a number of important projects and programs competing for limited time and financial resources. The Plan’s Implementation Plan includes a summary matrix that shows recommended actions and projects for implementing the Plan over time.

As the County and its planning partners cannot carry out all the projects and actions identified within the Implementation Plan at once, a short-term prescription for initiating those actions which are most critical to the realization of the Plan and its vision is of utmost importance. The recommended projects and actions within this initial short-term period must combine visible improvements with initially invisible efforts that will enable and encourage envisioned change to occur. This smaller list of high-priority projects is intended to respond to the question, “What is the short list of actions that can be undertaken within the first 3 years to initiate and demonstrate movement and set the stage for other actions to follow?” The actions in this initial short-term plan are organized into three categories: process improvements, projects and actions, and organizational or partnership improvements.

This incremental strategy is envisioned to serve as a 3-year, renewable/rolling, short-term action plan that would be annually updated, with a regularly scheduled monitoring and updating process and a supporting budget. A description of how such a program will operate is provided below.

Example: In developing this Incremental Implementation Plan, each of the Plan’s goals and policies would be examined annually to ascertain their current status. Actions for moving ahead in each of the next 3 years would be identified and planned for. The activities for Year 1 would be tied to the county’s annual operating budget. The activities identified for



LYNDA NELSON

The region's landscape is crossed by federal, tribal, state, local and private ownership boundaries, and successful implementation will require partnering among these land managers.

Year 2 and Year 3 would serve as a placeholder or indication of anticipated action-related resource needs for the coming 2 years.

Once Year 1 is nearly complete, the status of activities would be reviewed, and the activities for Year 2 would be adjusted as necessary, as it will become the new Year 1. Year 3 would be adjusted as appropriate in readiness for its becoming the new Year 2, and activities for a new Year 3 would be identified. The County would identify the coordinating body responsible for the monitoring, developing and updating of the Incremental Implementation Plan, and for the coordination of the various County departmental activities to fund and/or carry out the strategy. County staff or the identified coordinating body would provide the Board of County Commissioners with a regularly scheduled status report on implementation activities.

This regular monitoring, reporting and updating will help to keep the Plan's Implementation Plan flexible

and current, keep all county departments focused on carrying out this important public policy objective, and keep the Regional Open Space and Natural Resources Management Plan and its implementation on the "front burner."

It is recommended that the County and its planning partners jointly monitor and review the Plan and its Implementation Plan on a regularly scheduled basis. It is further recommended that the County's jurisdictional and agency planning partners also use the Implementation Plan to inform the development and updating of their budgets and work programs.

As indicated above, in order to maintain the value of this Plan as a stand-alone authority, the initially recommended improvements and actions are not provided here so that the County and its planning partners can revisit and revise the Implementation Plan and Short-Term Action Plan as opportunities arise, priorities change, or the capacity to undertake additional projects increases.

"Angry as one may be at what heedless men have done and still do to a noble habitat, one cannot be pessimistic about the West. This is the native home of hope. When it fully learns that cooperation, not rugged individualism, is the quality that most characterizes and preserves it, then it will have achieved itself and outlived its origins. Then it has a chance to create a society to match its scenery."

WALLACE STEGNER
Sound of Mountain Water

References

In addition to the plans, references and documents used to support the planning process and listed here, the process also developed and relied on three Inventory and Assessment Reports as follows:

- Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report*
- Open Space Inventory and Assessment Report*
- Recreational Resources Inventory and Assessment Report*

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September 7, 2022

Warm Springs Valley Water Management Future Policy Discussion

Background:

Three documents were reviewed by Washoe County Department of Water Resources (W.Co. DWR) staff in 2009 as part of the 2010 update to the Warm Springs Area Plan; The Warm Springs Water Budget, the Warm Springs Area Plan and the Warm Springs Specific Plan. There is considerable similarity and overlap in these 3 documents relative to area water resources. The water budget developed in 1990 was the basis for the land use planning and water rights dedication requirements and policies associated with land development in Warm Springs Valley.

The water budget can be briefly described as a document which analyzed:

- 1) All the ground water rights appropriated within the basin (Table 5 of 1990 water budget)
- 2) Estimates of safe ground water yield within the basin
- 3) Estimates of existing (1990) and potential water demand and use (Tables 4 & 6 of 1990 water budget)

These analyses yielded the following results that were included in the original adopted Water Budget:

- A) The establishment of the “Ground Water Planning Yield” of 4,000 acre-feet per year
- B) “Land Use Designation” map for inside and outside of the Specific Plan Area
- C) “Water Rights Dedication Discount Factor” of 43%
- D) Furthermore, the Warm Springs Specific Plan also provided a contingency Land Use Designation based on 3,000 acre-feet per year of safe ground water yield. The SPA document provided that only 75% of the land use designation within the SPA can be realized until the 4,000 acre-feet yield figure is confirmed by studies and analysis. Table 3 on page 21 of the Warm Springs Specific Plan (SPA) provides a land use designation within the SPA based on the 3,000 acre-feet per year safe yield.

At that time and based on the best available information, the goal of Area Plan was to utilize the water rights discount factor of 43% to balance existing water appropriations with the projected, long term water demand of 4,000 acre-feet per year within the entire basin and leave no surplus water rights (paper water) remaining when the land uses are fully realized and built out.

Safe Ground Water Yield:

In determining a safe yield for the basin, the Warm Springs Water Budget considered the USGS published perennial yield of 3,000 acre-feet per year, other USGS data including the basin outflow estimate of 2,000 acre-feet per year, and even the 1989 pumpage level of 5,190 acre-feet; and used an unnecessarily complex methodology to reach what appears to be a compromise. The water budget concluded that 4,000 acre-feet per year was acceptable as the “Planning Ground Water Yield” for the basin, until future studies, data collection and computer simulation models establish a more accurate estimate.

It should be noted that a State Engineer letter dated August 30, 1990 recognized the USGS established number of 3000 acre-feet per year as the safe yield of the basin. Furthermore a report titled “Hydrology and simulated effects of development in Warm Springs Valley, Washoe County Nevada”, published by Washoe County Department of Water Resources on November 21, 1997, estimates the safe yield of this basin to be between 2,000 and 3,000 acre-feet per year. The author, Mr. Wyn C. Ross, had been employed by both USGS and by DWR as a ground water expert and modeler.

On December 10, 2009 Washoe County DWR staff concluded and notified Washoe County Planning staff that the use of the 4,000 acre-feet per year planning yield is no longer justified nor appropriate and recommended that future Area Plans for Warm Springs should use the recognized number of 3,000 acre-feet for land development and planning purposes.

Land Use Designation:

Table 3 on page 21 of the Warm Springs Specific Plan (SPA) provides a land use designation within the SPA based on the 3,000 acre-feet per year safe yield. This table has been used as an interim land use designation until a final safe basin yield is established. The land use designation outside the SPA is and has been GR (General Rural, 40 acre minimum lot size), therefore no further adjustments can or may be made in these areas.

The 2009 memo from DWR recommended that the land use designation within the SPA be limited to that identified within Table 3 in perpetuity. The reduced densities and total potential residential lots should reduce the water demand, but not to a level which is sustainable long term.

Water Rights Discount Factor:

The water budget established a water rights discount factor of 43% in an effort to balance the ground water appropriations (paper water) with the actual safe yield of the basin. The analysis resulting in the discount factor utilized a total paper water of 5,901 acre feet per year and the safe planning yield of 4,000 acre-feet. 2010

data from the State Engineer's office indicated the total appropriations in this basin are about 7,150 acre-feet per year with a total consumptive duty of about 6,500. This, in addition to Washoe County DWR's conclusion that the planning yield of 4,000 acre-feet per year is no longer valid, suggests that the current discount factor is no longer valid, and its continued use may not result in the desired result of balancing the basin by exhausting all the paper water when the Table 3 land use designation mentioned above is realized.

An analysis conducted by Washoe County DWR in 2010 and sent to the Washoe County Community Development and informally shared with the State Engineer's office, recommended a new discount factor to the Ground Water Rights in Warm Springs Valley to be 23%. This proposed discount factor was not adopted in the 2010 re-write of the Warm Springs Area Plan. Instead, further studies were recommended which have not been initiated nor completed.

2010 water rights discount factor analysis

Existing developments are all those parcels with an existing domestic well or all those existing but unbuilt parcels with a perpetual right granted to them under NRS to sink a domestic well. Table 1 of the 2010 memorandum outlines and defines the magnitude of the future water demand resulting from these parcels to be 1431 acre-feet per year. It must be noted that this estimate is based on a total consumptive use of 1.00 acre-feet from a typical domestic well (taking into consideration septic tanks infiltrations and recharge and other assumptions) and not the 2.00 acre-feet diversion allowed from each and every domestic well under NRS. This approach must be further analyzed to determine its accuracy and applicability.

Other existing water demands within Warm Springs are also outlined in Table 1, and are those water rights owned by BLM, Washoe County and the Reno Sparks Indian Colony. It is assumed that these entities will retain their water rights and they will not be available for conversion to support other developments within Warm Springs. These commitments are 260 acre-feet per year.

If it is determined that the allocation of 2.00 acre-feet diversion for each existing and future domestic well is legally binding, then the water resource commitment above must be changed to 2,862 acre-feet per year. When added to the other existing water demands outlined above, then there will be none of the 3,000 acre-foot estimate available to support any future growth or developments.

The 2010 memorandum and analysis allocated 1.00 acre-foot consumptive use for existing and future domestic wells and determined that the ratio of remaining water rights to the remaining available water resource yield in Warm Springs to be:

5,663.31 water rights/ 1303.94 remaining uncommitted yield = 4.34

OR a discount factor of 23% for all remaining water rights :

4.34 acre-feet of paper water rights x 0.23 = yield (0.9982) 1.00 acre-foot of sustainable water resource.

2022 water rights inventory and discount factor analysis:

It is anticipated that the SPA will be dissolved, and a new vision for Warm Springs is under consideration. Warm Springs Valley still lacks any large-scale developments and retains its rural character, which enables regulators to manage future growth and water resources commitments in a sustainable manner moving forward.

To accomplish this task, future regulations must limit basin wide water demand to 3,000 acre-feet per year for all existing and future developments which will rely on the native ground water resources and ground water rights.

Table 1, “Warm Springs Valley Ground Water Rights inventory, August 2022” and supporting basin abstracts from the Nevada DWR are attached herewith. This recent analysis resembles the 2010 analysis with some slight changes. As in the 2010 analysis, the data suggests that of the total ground water rights appropriations, 5,579.78 acre-feet remains to support future growth, mostly by conversion of irrigation water rights to Municipal and Domestic uses. The data also indicates that of the 3,000 acre-feet available ground water resources, 1,892.78 acre-feet of ground water commitments exists in perpetuity in Warm Springs valley, which leaves 1,107.22 acre-feet of potential future water demand which may rely on the Warm Springs Ground water resources in a sustainable manner.

Based on the developed data and in alignment with Table 1 attached herewith, it is concluded that a new water rights discount factor of 20% is necessary and 5.00 acre-feet of ground water rights would be required to meet a 1.00 acre-foot of water demand for the Warm Springs Ground Water Resources. The process for adoption of this recommendation will follow the adoption of the master plan and with input from the community and subsequent affirmation by the State Engineer.

Water & Sewer infrastructure

Construction of future water supply and sewer treatment infrastructure will affect and potentially alter the 2022 water rights discount factor analysis.

The State of Nevada DWR allocation of 1.00 acre-foot annual water demand and consumption by a typical domestic well assumes that a component of 2.0 acre-feet ground water allowed to be diverted from a domestic well is returned to the

affected aquifer via septic system infiltrations and land application by irrigation. If existing or future residential units (with a domestic well as their source of water supply) utilize a future municipal sewer treatment facility with an associated effluent reuse program, then the above assumption of consumptive use by an individual domestic well may no longer be valid. However, if future municipal water supply and sewer infrastructure support new growth only, without affecting existing residential units, then the discount factor and water budget established here will still be valid. For example, if a town center with subdivisions and commercial projects are proposed and built ion Warm Springs, and demand figures such as TMWA rule 7 are applied to determine water demands, then the water rights discount factor established herein would remain valid.

Water Importation projects

Potential water importation projects envisioned to alleviate challenges associated with the basin water imbalance would also potentially affect and likely alter the 2022 water rights discount factor analysis. Any proposed projects would review the available land uses, perennial basin yield and available water with respect to existing water right dedications and available surplus rights, as appropriate.



Envision Washoe 2040 Meetings

Over the course of the Envision Washoe 2040 process, the project team has conducted meetings with community groups, stakeholders, and advisory committees. Below is a comprehensive list of the meetings held, with links to relevant materials. All this information, including the links, is also available at <https://www.envisionwashoe2040.org/pages/meetings>.

Steering Committee: The steering committee worked early in the process to develop a set of Guiding Principles and Vision for the project. The Steering Committee, made up of County and regional agency representatives, are advocates for the process; act as a sounding board for key concepts and alternatives; and are assistants in the outreach process.

2023

August 4, 2023: [Agenda](#) // [Presentation](#)

May 11, 2023: [Agenda](#) // [Presentation](#) // [Implementation Exercise](#)

February 9, 2023: [Presentation](#)

2022

June 23, 2022: [Presentation](#)

2021

October 21, 2021: [Agenda](#) // [Summary](#)

February 4, 2021: [Agenda](#) // [Summary](#)

2020

November 19, 2020: [Agenda](#) // [Summary](#)

September 30, 2020: [Agenda](#) // [Summary](#)

Technical Advisory Committee: The role of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to ensure that the Plan's response to the community's priorities is technically sound, pursues best practices, and that policies have a real path to implementation. The TAC will review and address each element of the Plan in depth.

2023

August 3, 2023: [Agenda](#) // [Presentation](#)

May 9, 2023: [Agenda](#) // [Presentation](#) // [Implementation Exercise](#)

February 9, 2023: [Presentation](#)

2022

June 9, 2022: [Presentation](#)

February 4, 2022: [Agenda](#)

2021

December 7, 2021: [Agenda](#)

Community Advisory Committee: The Community Advisory Group (CAC) serves as liaisons to the broader County and ensure that the public is heard and engaged. The CAC will review elements of the Plan relating to their specialties and is tasked with educating and encouraging the public to participate in the process. This group provides the most opportunity for public engagement. The group ensures the plans goals, policies and actions remain anchored in the community's values.

2023

August 2, 2023: [Agenda](#) // [Presentation](#)

May 11, 2023: [Agenda](#) // [Presentation](#) // [Implementation Exercise](#)

February 1, 2023: [Presentation](#)

2022

June 9, 2022: [Presentation](#)

February 4, 2022: [Agenda](#)

2021

December 8, 2021: [Agenda](#)

Planning Commission: The Washoe County Planning Commission, under State law and by Washoe County ordinance, reviews and adopts the Washoe County Master Plan, to include area plans. Planning commissioners are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

2023

August 1, 2023: [Presentation](#) // [Meeting Recording](#)

July 5, 2023: [EnvisionWashoe2040 – Master Plan Update Memo](#)

June 6, 2023: [Staff Report](#) // [Presentation](#) // [Meeting Recording](#)

May 2, 2023: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - Master Plan Update Memo](#)

March 7, 2023: [Master Plan Update Presentation to Planning Commission](#) - [Meeting Recording](#)

2022

December 6, 2022: [Master Plan Update Presentation to Planning Commission](#) - [Meeting Recording](#)

November 1, 2022: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - Master Plan Update Memo](#)

October 4, 2022: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - Master Plan Update Memo](#)

September 6, 2022: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - Master Plan Update Memo](#)

August 2, 2022: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - Master Plan Update Memo](#)

February 1, 2022: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - Presentation by Consultants, Logan-Simpson](#)

2021

December 7, 2021: [EnvisionWashoe2040 - PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Community Meetings

2023

September 13, 2023: Planner at the Library – Spanish Springs

September 7, 2023: Board of Adjustment Open House

September 6, 2023: North of the River Open House

September 5, 2023: Planning Commission Open House

August 31, 2023: South of the River Open House

August 30, 2023: Warm Springs Community Meeting

August 28, 2023: Spanish-language Open House

August 26, 2023: Bowers Mansion Bluegrass Festival

August 25, 2023: Sierra School of Performing Arts – The Addams Family

August 23, 2023: Planner at the Library - North Valleys

August 22, 2023: Planner at the Library - Verdi

August 21, 2023: All County Webinar (recording coming soon)

August 17, 2023: Planner at the Library - South Valleys

August 16, 2023: Lazy 5 Music Series

August 14, 2023: North Valleys CAB

August 10, 2023: Gerlach/Empire CAB

May 22, 2023: Spanish Language Area Plan Workshop (Taller en Español del Plan Maestro)

May 1, 2023: [High Desert Planning Area Meeting](#)

April 27, 2023: [All County Area Plan Webinar](#)

March 30, 2023: Warm Springs Planning Area Meeting

March 29, 2023: South Valleys, Forest, Southwest, and Southeast Truckee Meadows Planning Areas Meeting

March 28, 2023: Cold Springs, North Valleys, and Sun Valley Planning Areas Meeting

March 27, 2023: East Truckee Canyon, Verdi, and Spanish Springs Planning Areas Meeting

2022

September 14, 2022: Warm Springs CAB

August 6, 2022: [Sun Valley CAB](#) (Draft Minutes)

August 4, 2022: [South Truckee Meadows / Washoe Valley CAB](#) (Draft Minutes)

September 21, 2022: [Gerlach / Empire CAB](#) (Draft Minutes)

September 18, 2022: [West Truckee Meadows / Verdi CAB](#) (Draft Minutes)

June 13, 2022: [North Valleys CAB](#)

June 6, 2022: [Spanish Springs CAB](#)

March 21, 2022: [West Truckee Meadows / Verdi CAB](#) (Draft Minutes)

March 9, 2022: [Warm Springs CAB](#)

March 5, 2022: [Sun Valley CAB](#)

February 17, 2022: [Gerlach / Empire CAB](#)

February 15, 2022: [North Valleys CAB](#)

February 3, 2022: [South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley CAB with Logan-Simpson Consultant Team](#)

February 2, 2022: [Spanish Springs CAB with Logan-Simpson Consultant Team](#)



Envision Washoe 2040 Stakeholders

Over the course of the Envision Washoe 2040 process, the project team has engaged many stakeholders. These groups/individuals include other county departments, other agencies, and community groups. Below is a list of stakeholders the project team has engaged through meetings, requests for comment, and/or invitations to stakeholder interviews.

Individuals/Groups Within the County

- Washoe County Sustainability Manager
- Washoe County School District
- Washoe County Health District (WCHD) Air Quality
- WCHD Emergency Medical Services
- WCHD Environmental Health
- WCHD Special Events
- Washoe County Division of Engineering
- Washoe County Water Rights Manager
- Washoe County Planning Commission

Partner Agencies

Local

- Reno Sparks Indian Colony
- City of Reno
- City of Sparks
- Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada
- Western Regional Water Commission
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
- Palomino Valley General Improvement District (GID)
- Gerlach GID
- Sun Valley GID
- Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency
- Reno Fire Department
- Sparks Fire Department
- Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
- City of Fernley
- Regional Transportation Commission

Utility

- Truckee Meadows Water Authority
- NV Energy
- AT&T
- Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative
- Sky Ranch Utility
- Southwest Gas

- Utilities, Inc.

State

- Nevada Department of Wildlife
- Nevada Division of Natural Heritage
- Nevada Bureau of Reclamation and Mining
- Nevada Department of Environmental Protection
- Nevada Department of Forestry
- Nevada Department of Transportation
- Nevada Department of Agriculture
- Nevada Highway Patrol
- Nevada State Parks
- Nevada Water Resources
- Nevada State Historic Preservation

Federal

- Bureau of Land Management
- United States Forest Service
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Postal Service

Community Groups/Individuals

- EDAWN
- Small Business Development Center (UNR)
- John Krmpotic
- CFA
- Wood Rogers
- Stantec
- Rubicon Design Group
- Ken Krater
- Jesse Haw
- Robert Sader
- Bob Lissner
- Ed Alexander
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)
- Desert Research Institute (DRI)
- Food Bank of Northern Nevada
- United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra
- Salvation Army
- El Sol
- Ahora Latino Journal
- Actionn

- Nevada Housing Coalition
- Regenisis Reno (YIMBY)
- UNR Agricultural Extension
- Coalition for Health Nevada Lands, Wildlife, and Wild Horses
- Nevada Land Trust
- Shirley Farmers Market
- Friends of Black Rock/High Rock, Inc
- Nevada Arts Council
- Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Committee (CAB)
- South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley CAB
- Gerlach/Empire CAB
- North Valleys CAB
- Sun Valley CAB
- Warm Springs CAB
- West Truckee Meadows/Verdi CAB
- One Truckee River

Table 1

Warm Springs Valley Ground Water Rights Inventory, January 2023

MANNER OF USE	Total Appropriations By State	Not Available for New Development		Available for Development	Remarks
		Parcel Map dedications to W.Co. & Relinquishments	Other		
Commercial	20.9			20.9	Current Commercial activities may cease to exist
Domestic	627.64	627.64		0	Already committed to domestic use by Relinquishment
Environmental	556		556	0	Temporary in Nature, can not be converted to support new development.
Irrigation*	5528.66			4561.1445	With applicable consumptive use reduction by the SEO
Quasi-Municipal	266.77		243.67	23.1	TMFPD, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony , GID & BLM
Recreation	28.16		28.16	0	Washoe Co. Shooting Range (20) & Air Sailing Facility (8.14)
Stock Water	41.07		33.95	7.12	33.95 acre-feet owned by BLM.
Totals	7069.2	627.64	861.78	4612.26	Consumptive Total available for development IF appropriate change application are filed on all irrigation water rights to convert to M&I.
				5579.78	Total Appropriations available for development without SEO consumptive use reduction

Footnotes:

- 1) Hydrographic Basin Summary ran on 8/25/2022 used as the source data for total appropriations.
- 2) State Engineer and Washoe County data used as source for other data in the table.
- 3) All figures in Acre-feet per year
- 4) Warm Springs NIWR is 3.3 af/ac (or 82.5%) which is the consumptive use of irrigation rights. Irrigation rights are supplementally adjusted per Hydrographic Basin Summary. A duty of 4.00 acre-feet / acre is assumed.

Warm Springs Valley Ground Water Resource Inventory

		Acre-Feet		
Total Estimated Basin Perennial Yield		3000		Per USGS, as recognized by the State Engineer and confirmed by Washoe County DWR
Commitments to existing residential parcels with a domestic well or the right to drill one		1587		1.00 acre-feet allocation for annual consumptive use per individual domestic well per the State Engineer's office. A grand total of 1587 lots exists as of August 2022 per W. Co. Community development data.
Quasi Municipal water rights anticipated to be exercised		243.67		See above table for details
Recreation water rights anticipated to be exercised		28.16		"
Stock water rights anticipated to be exercised		33.95		"
Remaining available ground water resources		1107.22		

**Water Rights Dedication required per acre-foot of demand
Without SEO Consumptive use correction/ reduction applied**

5579.78 / 1107.22 = 5.04 acre-feet;

water rights to be relinquished for a newly created parcel with a domestic well will be rounded down to 5.00 acre-feet based on the assumed consumptive use of 1.00 acre-feet per year from typical domestic well

**Water Rights Dedication required per acre-foot of demand
With SEO Consumptive use correction/ reduction applied**

4612.26 / 1107.22 = 4.17 acre-feet;