

Area Plan Development Handbook

October 2024



A Voice for Lake Tahoe

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Lake Tahoe Regional Plan is the blueprint for the Tahoe Region’s sustainable future. The long-term economic and natural health of the region depends on maintaining a balance, or equilibrium, between the natural environment and the human-made environment. The plan establishes a framework for large-scale ecosystem restoration with regional growth and land use strategies to promote communities where people can live, work, and thrive. The Lake Tahoe Regional Plan’s priorities include:

1. **Water quality.** Accelerating water quality restoration and other ecological benefits by encouraging private investment in stormwater systems and delivering restoration projects under the Environmental Improvement Program that achieve erosion control on roadways and restore forests and wetlands.
2. **Transportation.** Creating walkable communities and increasing alternative transportation options.
3. **Environmentally beneficial redevelopment.** Incentivizing improvements to older properties, the transfer of existing development from sensitive or outlying areas to town centers, and restoration of sensitive areas.
4. **Local permitting.** Transitioning local environmental review to the local governments to create one-stop permitting.

Area plans allow other regulatory agencies in the region to implement the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan policies at a smaller scale and with greater flexibility. Area plans are created by local governments with community members and stakeholders at the planning table. These plans can be developed for varying geographical scales – from a local neighborhood or town center to an entire county – and reflect the community’s vision for their future. Area plans are reviewed and approved by the local government and TRPA through a public process. The local government will demonstrate the plan is in keeping with the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan and have annual reviews with TRPA to ensure the plans are working towards regional goals and policies.

This handbook is intended to provide guidance for local jurisdiction planning staff in preparing new area plans or making amendments to existing ones. To date, local governments and TRPA have adopted five area plans for the Lake Tahoe Region. This document presents lessons learned during the preparation of these area plans by planners to help guide local governments initiating and completing an area plan process.

1.1 WHY PURSUE AN AREA PLAN?

1. **Project applicants want one-stop permitting.**

Applying to two different agencies for development permits can be time consuming, confusing, and often redundant. An area plan is your chance to streamline the permitting process. By adopting an area plan, you can take over the authority for completing local environmental review for many types of projects. This creates a more efficient planning system that integrates TRPA requirements into the plans and permits of your local government agency, while reducing the time, cost, and complexity of the entitlement process.

2. Current regulations and design standards are starting to show their age.

Most of the Plan Area Statements that govern local development conditions were written more than 30 years ago. These planning documents may no longer represent current conditions or the vision for the area. By replacing these statements with a modern area plan, you can respond to changing land use patterns, emerging development trends, design standards, and local priorities. Additionally, area plans allow you to consolidate multiple plan area statements into one document.

3. You need more flexibility for your Town Centers to flourish.

Regulations like those addressing height, density and land coverage are integral to protecting Lake Tahoe. Town Centers, however, may need more flexibility to encourage compact, lively, walkable and bikeable development. Area plans provide a mechanism to modify Basin-wide standards and obtain additional redevelopment incentives. By adopting an area plan, a jurisdiction can plan for increased heights, increased density, and increased land coverage¹ in Town Centers.

Incentives to redevelop key properties can be built into an area plan. Redevelopment allows a community to respond to changing economic pressures while also incorporating environmental improvements, like Best Management Practices (BMPs) and fire safe building materials. An area plan can be just the tool you need to convert a blighted area into one that is environmentally sensitive and aesthetically pleasing.

4. You're in the driver's seat.

Area plans are driven by the local jurisdictions, not TRPA. These documents are intended to bridge the Regional Plan and the local jurisdiction's General/Master plan. Area plans can outline the long-term vision for the community and connect that vision to environmental protections in the Tahoe Basin. As the local jurisdiction, you get to decide your approach to developing an area plan that is consistent with the Regional Plan. You can choose to focus an area plan on a critical intersection or gateway area. Alternatively, you can choose to have an area plan cover your entire jurisdiction within the Tahoe Basin. Managing the schedule and plan adoption process remains in your hands. Nonetheless, TRPA has staff available to provide technical assistance and guidance. Before an area plan can be put into effect, it will be reviewed and approved by the local planning commission and/or council and TRPA. To help facilitate this process, you should engage TRPA staff early in the process and ask for feedback at each major milestone.

1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO SUSTAINABILITY

“Sustainability is based on the principle of meeting the needs of today’s population without compromising the needs of future generations. Another definition involves improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems. Sustainability is often thought of in regard to the natural environment and environmental resources, but there are also economic and social aspects of sustainability that are linked to the natural environment.”

—Lake Tahoe Sustainability Action Plan

¹ Increased land coverage requires corresponding reductions in areas with environmental constraints.

The Regional Plan is intended to balance urban development in the Tahoe Basin with environmental capacity. Many of the region's environmental problems can be traced to past and existing development which was built before current regulations were put in place and without recognition of the sensitivity of the area's natural resources. Roughly 72 percent of the fine particles entering Lake Tahoe every year are coming from urbanized areas, such as neighborhoods, town centers, and roadways that contain legacy development. Redevelopment in these areas brings properties up to current standards and helps to attain environmental standards called for in the Regional Plan, such as improvements to stormwater systems, scenic and aesthetic upgrades, and more energy efficient buildings.

Focusing growth in walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented town centers is a crucial strategy to achieving and maintaining thresholds. Consistent with the [Regional Transportation Plan](#), town centers serve to cluster commercial and tourist land uses and create alternative transportation opportunities within a given area. This approach to land use reduces vehicle miles travelled, which results in corresponding reductions in greenhouse gases and improvements to air and water quality.

Area plans address sustainability by providing a platform to:

- Improve environmental conditions
- Create incentives for redevelopment
- Reduce the existing auto-dependent land use pattern
- Provide economic opportunities

Any area plan should address existing regulatory barriers to promoting sustainability. To achieve this, TRPA recommends focusing on the following strategies:

1. **Promote a mix of land uses.** Modify regulations to encourage mixed use development. This could include:
 - a. Allowing and/or requiring mixed use development, depending on the area.
 - b. Requiring that the first floor in core areas be dedicated to active uses (e.g. retail, restaurants, offices).
 - c. Allowing prioritization and variation of active uses in neighborhood centers and key nodes.
 - d. Expanding housing options (e.g. accessory dwelling units, etc.) so that the workforce can live in close proximity to employment centers.
2. **Ensure high-quality development.** Establish improved development and design guidelines that address such things as building site, location of parking, height, orientation, facades, screening, landscaping and defensible space, and pedestrian connections.
3. **Provide for an areawide approach to development.** To provide flexibility and innovation in design, allow for properties within town centers to participate in an areawide approach to coverage limitations and BMPs.
4. **Maintain the character of existing residential and non-urban areas.** Preserve the character of established residential areas outside of centers, while seeking opportunities for environmental improvements.

1.3 APPLICABILITY

Area plans serve as a single land use plan for a specific geographical area. As of 2019, TRPA has adopted five area plans. Each of these area plans were developed by the local jurisdiction (i.e. city or county) to replace former Community Plans and Plan Area Statements. They can cover all or a portion of the jurisdiction's area. This handbook guides the preparation of this type of area plan.

While area plans are primarily intended to be undertaken by local governments to align regional land use planning with their General/Master Plans, Section 13.2 of the TRPA Code also allows other local, state, federal, and tribal governments to develop area plans and receive delegated permitting authority. The contents and scope of these alternative area plans should be established on a case-by-case basis through dialogue between the lead agency and TRPA. Some example of alternative plans that could function as area plans include:

- Corridor plans, such as those prepared by the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization, Tahoe Transportation District, and State Departments of Transportation.
- Land management plans, such as those prepared by the US Forest Service or State Parks.
- Watershed management plans, such as those prepared by a resource conservation district.
- Specific plans prepared for public facilities, such as an airport or community college.

Quasi-governmental entities, such as utility districts, service districts, and general improvement districts are not eligible to prepare an area plan.

2 GETTING STARTED

Jurisdictions interested in developing an area plan should first begin to conceptually scope the plan. In doing this, you may want to consider the following questions:

1. **What geographical area should the plan cover?** – An area plan can be limited to a small neighborhood or Town Center. Alternatively, you can develop an area plan that covers the entire area of the jurisdiction within the Tahoe Basin.
2. **Should existing policies or land uses be kept or should major changes be proposed?** – You can choose to make broad policy and land use changes with an area plan. Alternatively, you can simply consolidate and carry forward existing policies and land uses.
3. **What level of environmental review would be needed?** – The scope of the area plan can determine the level of environmental review. Broad policy and land use changes may require an Environmental Impact Statement, while limited changes could be accomplished with an Initial Environmental Checklist.
4. **Can the area plan address a major development proposal?** – If there's a crucial development site in the area, there may be an opportunity to combine efforts. An area plan can provide a platform to shape policies around projects that benefit the community and environment. Through the area plan process, you can build in flexibility and complete the environmental review up-front. The developer, in turn, can contribute towards costs of developing the area plan.

2.1 DEVELOPING A WORK PROGRAM

Once you have mapped out a concept for the area plan, your first step will be to develop a work program and schedule. TRPA's Long Range Planning Division is available to assist in the development of work programs. Additionally, TRPA has made several templates available for local jurisdictions to use and modify at their option (MS Word .docx format):

- [Work Program Template #1](#) (Area Plan with an Initial Environmental Checklist)
An area plan that consolidates existing policies and land uses with few substantive changes.
- [Work Program Template #2](#) (Area Plan with an Environmental Impact Statement)
An area plan with substantive policy and land use changes, necessitating an Environmental Impact Statement.
- [Work Program Template #3](#) (Area Plan Amendment)
Amendment of an existing area plan, assuming preparation of an IEC. For amendments that may trigger an EIS, follow Template #2.

2.2 ENGAGING WITH TRPA

While area plan development is led by the local jurisdiction, TRPA is here to help throughout the entire process. Once you have a concept for an area plan, we recommend an initial meeting with Long Range Planning staff to discuss the procedure and major policy considerations before solidifying the work plan and schedule. Section 7.2 identifies the specific stages in the process where TRPA staff should be involved in review and commenting to ensure that the plan will be developed in alignment with the Regional Plan.

3 AREA PLAN PROCESS

3.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Local jurisdictions are expected to take the lead during the development of area plans but should work closely throughout the process with TRPA staff. As the lead, the local jurisdiction is expected to be the "public face," guide the process, develop the plan, facilitate community engagement, and complete the environmental review process. TRPA staff can assist in the development of area plans in an advisory capacity to answer questions and ensure an efficient review and approval process. TRPA staff can also help ensure policy and land use decisions are in keeping with the Regional Plan and identify any potential red flags.

There is an expectation that there will be public outreach and engagement (i.e. working groups, public workshops, information posted on website) to inform the development of a draft Plan. The format of public workshops is important; world café style or informational stations are recommended. It is highly recommended that TRPA staff review draft documents associated with an area plan before these are released to the public. TRPA staff can bring its experience reviewing area plans from around the Basin to help inform the success of your plan.

3.2 PROCEDURAL STEPS

A typical development and approval process for a new area plan includes the following steps:

<p>1 Develop Work Program</p>	<p>Put together a work program specifying the schedule, budget, and scope of proposed amendments.</p>
<p>2 Initial Contact with TRPA</p>	<p>Notify TRPA of your intent to develop an area plan. Begin communicating with TRPA Long Range Planning to scope out the amendment process, review the schedule, and discuss environmental review needs.</p> <hr/> <p>Submit to TRPA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notice of intent to develop an area plan (TRPA Code Sec. 13.4.2) 2. Work program and schedule
<p>3 Receive Authorization to Proceed</p>	<p>Follow your jurisdiction’s administrative procedures for initiating a General Plan / Master Plan amendment. Typically, this will involve approval of the work program and funding.</p>
<p>4 Complete Background Research</p>	<p>Compile existing plan documents²; gather data on existing conditions; complete a land use bridge/crosswalk showing new vs. proposed uses; identify which policies and special projects are already complete; produce a background report.</p>
<p>5 Initiate Outreach</p>	<p>Identify stakeholders and begin regularly meeting with them. Hold public workshops as needed to help with visioning and scoping the plan. Include other land managers, TRPA, and regulatory agencies in the development and facilitation of public meetings and workshops. Engage with cultural resource managers and public land agencies (e.g. CTC/NDSL, Forest Service).</p>

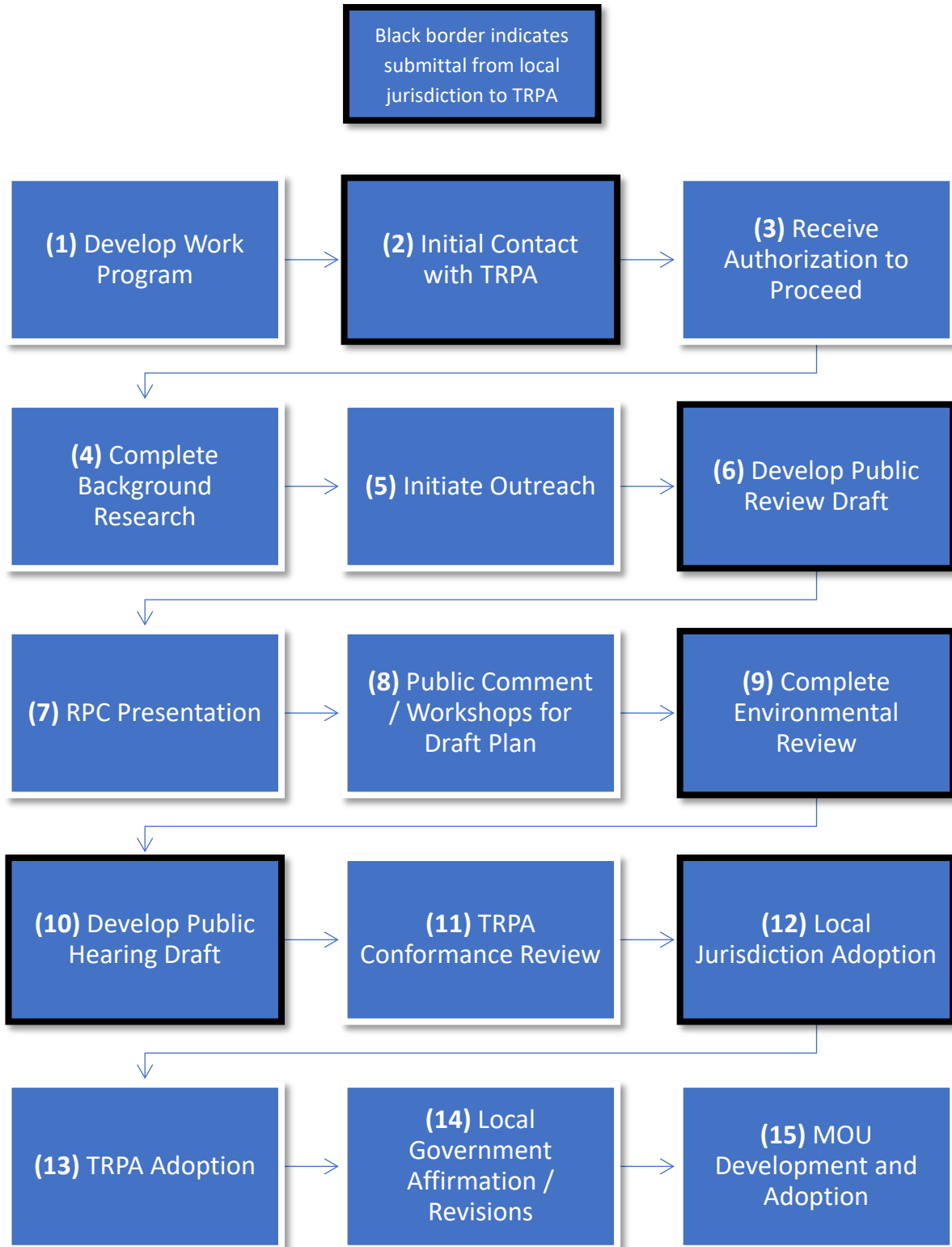
² Area Plans are developed to implement the 2012 Regional Plan Goals and Policies and replace and consolidate the existing Plan Area Statements and Community Plans and associated Design Standards and Guidelines, which were developed to implement the 1987 Regional Plan. The existing plans will need to be evaluated early in the process and existing goals, policies, and development standards that act as “environmental safeguards” should be carried over into Area Plans. In most cases, existing permissible uses should also be carried forward.

<p>6 Develop Public Review Draft Plan</p>	<p>After holding at least one community workshop or receiving input from a steering committee, develop a draft plan and implementing regulations and circulate them for public review and comment. If an Environmental Impact Statement is needed, release a Notice of Preparation.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Submit to TRPA (prior to releasing draft):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft Area Plan 2. Draft Implementing Regulations 3. Conformance Review Checklist 4. Threshold Evaluation and Compliance Measures Evaluation 5. Change Log 6. Updated work program and schedule
<p>7 RPC Presentation</p>	<p>The plan will be previewed by the Regional Plan Committee (RPC) before it goes to the local jurisdiction for adoption. Local agency staff should be available to respond to questions.</p>
<p>8 Public Comment / Workshops for Draft Plan</p>	<p>Hold a public workshop to go over the draft plan and solicit input. If an Environmental Impact Statement is needed, hold a scoping meeting.</p>
<p>9 Complete Environmental Review</p>	<p>Complete a draft of the Initial Environmental Checklist (IEC). Based on the outcome of the IEC, a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may also be required³.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An EIS may not be necessary if the area plan does not deviate from Regional Plan goals and policies, increase development potential, or trigger a significant environmental impact (such as a negative effect on threshold attainment) • Current <i>and</i> relevant EISs may be used as part of the analysis. These could include EISs/EIRs for the Regional Plan Update, Regional Transportation Plan Update, and/or local jurisdiction’s General Plan. • Submit the draft IEC/EIS to TRPA <i>prior to</i> release to the public. <hr/> <p><u>Submit to TRPA (prior to public release):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft IEC / EIS 2. Required Findings 3. Supporting documents (e.g. technical reports)

³ The TRPA environmental review process may be combined with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for jurisdictions in California.

<p>10 Develop Public Hearing Draft Plan</p>	<p>Revise the Public Review Draft, incorporating any mitigation measures and any changes needed to address public input.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Submit to TRPA (prior to public release):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft Area Plan 2. Draft Implementing Regulations 3. Conformance Review Checklist 4. Threshold Evaluation and Compliance Measures Evaluation 5. Change Log 6. List of changes since the Public Review Draft 7. Preliminary GIS mapping data <hr/>
<p>11 TRPA Conformance Review</p>	<p>Submit the area plan, implementing regulations, IEC/EIS, conformance checklist, threshold and compliance measures evaluation, and associated GIS data to TRPA to review for conformance with the Regional Plan.</p>
<p>12 Local Jurisdiction Adoption</p>	<p>Follow the local jurisdiction’s process for adopting a General/Master Plan Amendment. This typically involves a Planning Commission recommendation to be reviewed by the legislative body (City Council, Board of Supervisors, Board of County Commissioners, etc.).</p> <hr/> <p><u>Submit to TRPA (upon local adoption):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Area Plan 2. Implementing Regulations 3. List of changes since the Public Hearing Draft 4. Final IEC / EIS 5. Conformance Review Checklist 6. Threshold Evaluation and Compliance Measures Evaluation 7. Final GIS mapping data <hr/>
<p>13 TRPA Adoption</p>	<p>Once the area plan is adopted by the local jurisdiction, it will be reviewed by TRPA’s Advisory Planning Commission (APC) and Regional Plan Committee (RPC). Recommendations from the APC and RPC will be brought forward to the Governing Board for final adoption.</p>
<p>14 Local Government Affirmation / Revisions</p>	<p>No further action from the local jurisdiction is required if TRPA adopts the area plan without changes. Otherwise, the local jurisdiction’s legislative body will need to affirm TRPA’s approval and formally adopt the associated modifications to the area plan.</p>

AREA PLAN ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT PROCESS



15 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Development and Adoption

Work with TRPA to develop and adopt an MOU granting the local jurisdiction permitting authority. This should be accomplished within six months of area plan adoption.

- TRPA will create policies and procedures based on the MOU and analyze whether the local jurisdiction is equipped⁴ to implement the area plan.
- TRPA monitoring will occur after the MOU is adopted.

3.3 6 MONTH SCHEDULE FOR AREA PLANS

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Formal 180 Day (6 Month) Cycle											
Local Planning Comm. & Governing Body											
			TRPA APC, RPC, & Governing Board								
			Pre-180 Day Cycle Prep.			Formal 180 Day (6 Month) Cycle					
			Staff Coordination & RPC Informational			Local Planning Comm. & Governing Body					
									TRPA APC, RPC, & Governing Board		
									Pre-180 Day Cycle Prep.		
									Staff Coordination & RPC Informational		

⁴ In determining the scope of the MOU, TRPA generally considers a wide variety of factors such as staffing levels, project review procedures, training, inspection protocols, and record-keeping practices.

3.4 CONFORMANCE REVIEW

Each area plan must be found in conformance with the Regional Plan and TRPA Code Chapter 13 requirements. The initial step in the conformance review process is to evaluate a draft area plan and associated code using the [Conformance Review Checklist](#). The checklist evaluates an area plan against each relevant Regional Plan Goal and Policy and Chapter 13 requirement. Local jurisdictions are responsible for submitting a Conformance Review Checklist along with an area plan submitted to TRPA for a conformance review.

Additional information on the Conformance Review process is found in Section 7.

4 AREA PLAN CONTENTS

To demonstrate that an area plan will implement the Regional Plan it must include certain components, including sustainability measures (e.g., bicycle and pedestrian facilities in designated centers). This is confirmed through the conformance review process. Further, these area plans are subject to annual review and certification by TRPA. The specific requirements for area plan preparation, adoption, conformance review, monitoring, etc. are listed in TRPA [Code of Ordinances](#) Chapter 13: Area Plans.

To be found consistent with the Regional Plan, it is recommended that an area plan include the following components (see Appendix A for specific details), though they need not be in the specified arrangement or order:

1	Introduction	This discusses what an area plan is and how it fits in with the Regional Plan and the local jurisdiction’s general/master plan.
2	Current Conditions	This element must describe existing environmental conditions, the amount and type of development, modes of transportation and service levels, public facilities and their service areas and capacities, and current implementation activities.
3	Conservation	This must address water, air, land, cultural, scenic, and other natural resources, as well as attainment of thresholds required by the bi-state compact.
4	Land Use	The land use element includes development constraints, and the types and amounts of different land uses, including physical development standards.
5	Transportation	The transportation element must identify the different modes of transportation used in the plan area, the levels of service, and planned changes in facilities and services.
6	Recreation	Existing and planned parks, trails and other leisure facilities must be included in the recreation element.
7	Public Services and Facilities	This element must address provision of water, sanitary sewer, fire and police protection, telecommunications, and similar public services, and it must be consistent with the land use element.
8	Development Standards and Guidelines	This element establishes development regulations for the area plan, including zoning, permitted uses, density, parking, height, signage, and structural design.

9 Implementation	This must include a link to implementing code, any applicable improvement programs (e.g., local government capital improvements program, the Environmental Improvement Program), and relevant operations and maintenance programs.
OPTIONAL COMPONENTS	
10 Housing	This element should address the area plan’s need for housing to accommodate residents and the workforce, with a focus on replacing old, dilapidated multi-family housing and old hotels with new energy-efficient housing within or near town centers.
11 Economic Development / Prosperity	This element should address ways that an area plan can help to foster environmental redevelopment, sustainability, and economic prosperity.
Other Optional Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areawide BMPs – An area plan can include larger scale water quality treatments and establish funding mechanisms in lieu of site-specific BMP requirements. Such an alternative must achieve equal or greater effectiveness in terms of water quality benefits. • Areawide Coverage Management – An area plan may propose a comprehensive coverage management system as an alternative to the parcel-level coverage requirements established in the Code of Ordinances. Such an alternative must achieve an overall reduction in the cumulative base allowable coverage. • Alternative Parking Strategy – An area plan may include shared or area-wide parking strategies to reduce land coverage and to use land more efficiently for parking and pedestrian uses. • Substitute Standards – An area plan may contain additional or substitute requirements that promote threshold attainment relating to such things as site design, building height, building design, landscaping, lighting, and signage.

The above contents are focused on land use plans undertaken by a city or county. For other types of plans proposed to serve as area plans (e.g. corridor plans), the lead agency should work with TRPA to determine the appropriate contents based on the specific objectives of the plan.

4.1 TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT

The 2012 Regional Plan incentivized the transfer of development from outlying areas to Town Centers. Some existing Plan Area Statements and Community Plans outside of Town Centers also incentivize transfer of development to designated receiving areas for increased density. A local jurisdiction may want to carry over incentives to transfer development into an area plan for properties outside of Town Centers if these incentives are considered appropriate for future development.

4.2 REGIONAL PLAN LAND USE MAP ADJUSTMENTS

Map 1, *Conceptual Regional Land Use Map*, of the Regional Plan reflects the same land use and boundaries established with Community Plans and Plan Area Statements, with some minor amendments that are outlined in the legend. The land use boundaries do not always follow parcel boundaries or rights-of-way. It may be appropriate to

adjust the land use boundaries to follow parcels lines if the adjustment will not result in a significant environmental impact. All Center modifications must also comply with the requirements in Section 13.5.3.G of TRPA Code.

4.3 THRESHOLD GAIN

To ensure a successful adoption of an area plan, it is strongly encouraged that an area plan highlight identified projects or new design standards and guidelines that will result in [environmental threshold](#) gain (area-wide BMPs, area-wide water quality projects, bike trails, undergrounding of utilities, redevelopment projects, etc.) and architectural renderings showing the potential scenic benefits associated with environmental redevelopment. This can be achieved through a combination of text, pictures, graphics, and/or architectural renderings (visioning documents).

5 MAPPING AND GIS

As part of developing the area plan, you will need to generate new maps. TRPA has a wide variety of data available through the [Tahoe Open Data](#) platform to aid in creating these maps. TRPA can also provide a template geodatabase on request.

We strongly recommend consulting with TRPA's Research and Analysis Division before maps are developed to ensure that any new Geographic Information System (GIS) layers can be integrated into TRPA's GIS database and shared with your jurisdiction and all users. To achieve this, once the new layers have been developed, the data should be submitted to TRPA's Research and Analysis Division before it is formally adopted as part of the area plan.

5.1 QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Are any boundary or category changes being made to the Regional Plan Land Use GIS layer as part of the adoption of the area plan?
2. Are boundary changes being made to Town Centers?
3. Are changes being made to add new Special Areas or adjust boundaries of existing Special Areas?

5.2 MAPS AND EXHIBITS

The following maps and exhibits should be included with an area plan:

1. **Existing Conditions** – This includes existing land use, land coverage, building footprints, land capability, etc.
2. **Conservation** – This includes soils, stream environment zones, floodplains, land capability verifications, viewsheds, etc.
3. **Planned Land Use** – This should show both planned land use and required amendments to the existing land use.
4. **Existing and Planned Transportation Facilities** – This includes all modes of transportation.
5. **Parks and Trails** – This includes existing and planned facilities and, where applicable, service areas.

6. **Public Services and Facilities** – This should show existing and proposed water, sanitary sewer, emergency service, telecommunications, and similar services and facilities, including service areas.

A full list of recommended and required maps is included in Appendix A of this document.

5.3 GIS LAYERS

Area plan GIS data should include the following GIS data layers and attributes. TRPA would like to discourage the creation of unique, non-standard layers for the local plans that are not listed below. It is best to fit the regulatory boundaries within the existing system listed below to promote consistency and reliability.

GIS Layer	Attributes
Area Plan Boundary	Plan Name, Plan Type (Area Plan), Jurisdiction
Town Center Boundaries	Name of Town Center, Description (Town Center, Regional Overlay District, High Density Tourist District), Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) Standards (if applicable), Jurisdiction, and Regional Land Use Classification
Zoning District Boundaries	Zoning Name, Zoning Description, Local Plan Name, Local Plan Type (i.e. Area Plan), Local Plan Number or Acronym for Area Plans, Regional Plan Land Use, Number of Special Areas (if applicable), Jurisdiction, Single Family Density, Multi Family Density, Tourist Accommodation Density, Bed and Breakfast Density, Time Share Density, CFA Allowances, Secondary Dwelling Unit Allowances, and Caps of Development Rights (if applicable)
Regional Land Uses for the Area Plan	Regional Land Use Name (paraphrased), Regional Land Use Description (full name), Local Plan Name, Jurisdiction, whether this is an area for Transit Oriented Development, and CNEL (if applicable)
Special Areas (if applicable)	Special Area Type (connecting to the name in the Area Plan document), Local Plan Type (i.e. Area Plan), Local Plan Name, Local Plan ID (Acronym for Area Plans), Jurisdiction, Special Area Number, Regional Land Use Classification, and Shorezone (Y/N)

5.4 GENERAL GIS STANDARDS

1. **Projection.** The standard format used by TRPA is North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) UTM Zone 10.
2. **Coordinates.** The standard for storing coordinates is meters.
3. **File Format.** Data can be delivered in either a shapefile or personal geodatabase format.
4. **Geometry.** Data should be cleansed to remove slivers, geometry errors, and line-work flaws. GIS data should either be snapped to parcel boundaries or follow a documented rationale (e.g. roadway centerline) that would be understandable to another user.
5. **Metadata.** All GIS data should include metadata. Refer to Appendix B for guidance on metadata standards.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

An environmental document will be required for an area plan pursuant to the requirements in Chapter 3: *Environmental Documentation* of the [TRPA Code](#) and Article 6: *Environmental Impact Statements* of the [Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the requirements for the preparation and processing of environmental documents pursuant to Article VII of the [Compact](#). At a minimum, the code requires that a TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist (IEC) be prepared for an area plan. If an IEC does not provide sufficient information to determine whether an area plan will have a significant effect on the environment, then an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required. If an area plan is also subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the local jurisdiction should coordinate with TRPA to prepare a joint environmental review document (refer to Section 6.2 of the [Rules of Procedure](#)).

6.1 BASELINE

The baseline conditions for the purposes of preparing an environmental document will be the current year conditions (at the time of writing of the document) and the adopted Regional Plan, other plans (Regional Transportation Plan, 208 Plan, etc.) and TRPA Code, as well as Plan Area Statements and Community Plans and associated Development Standards and Design Guidelines that will be replaced with an area plan.

6.2 TRACKING OF POLICY CHANGES

In order to adequately assess environmental impacts, it will be important to track all substantive policy changes that will occur as a result of adopting the area plan. Some of the factors to consider include additions, deletions, and changes to:

- Permissible uses
- Densities
- Development standards (e.g. parking, design, signage, etc.)
- Boundaries (e.g. subdistricts, special areas, Town Centers, etc.)
- Special Policies
- Special Designations

TRPA strongly recommends that the jurisdiction maintain a change log. Below is an example:

	Subject	Summary	Current Conditions	Proposed Change	Reference
1	Permissible Uses	Add Snowmobile Courses to Martis Peak subdistrict.	Snowmobile courses are prohibited.	Snowmobile courses would be an (S) use.	Development Code Section 1.3
2	Density	Allow secondary residences in all residential districts.	Secondary residences only allowed on parcels over 1 acre.	Secondary residences allowed regardless of parcel size.	Development Code Section 3.5
3	Boundaries	Merge Incline Village #2 and Incline Village #5 subdistricts.	Presently these are separate residential districts.	Use lists for both districts are merged. Adds "local post office" to allowed uses for Incline Village #5.	Zoning Map, Development Code Section 1.3.3

6.3 TIERING

The Regional Plan Update Environmental Impact Statement (RPU EIS) and Regional Transportation Plan Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (RTP EIR/EIS) are program-level environmental documents that include a regional scale analysis and a framework of mitigation measures that provide a foundation for subsequent environmental review at an area plan level. These documents serve as first-tier documents for the TRPA review of an area plan. To the extent that an area plan is consistent with the Regional Plan and the RTP, for which the program EISs were prepared, the area plan could be found to be “within the scope” of the program EISs. To streamline the environmental review process, environmental documents for area plans should tier from the RPU EIS and RTP EIR/EIS wherever feasible. Environmental analysis will need to focus on new, specific environmental effects resulting from the area plan that were not adequately addressed in the program-level EISs

If a local jurisdiction wants to limit the environmental review of an area plan to an IEC and take full advantage of tiering from the RPU EIS and RTP EIR/EIS, then an area plan will need to be developed that is consistent with Regional Plan, TRPA Code, and associated EIS. Furthermore, existing provisions from Plan Area Statements and Community Plans that act as environmental safeguards will need to be carried forward into an area plan.

Note: As time passes, “tiering” from the 2012 RPU EIS may no longer be feasible.

6.4 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Most local jurisdictions hire consultants familiar with TRPA procedures to prepare the necessary environmental document for an area plan. Justification in the environmental document will need to be provided for all provisions in the existing Plan Area Statements and Community Plans not being carried forward. Engaging a consultant familiar with TRPA in the development of an area plan will help to ensure a more straightforward environmental review process and will likely help to reduce the ultimate cost associated with preparing an environmental document.

6.5 TECHNICAL STUDIES

Jurisdictions should also consider technical study needs in budgeting for, recruiting, and selecting consultants. Technical study needs vary depending upon what changes are being proposed under the area plan. Examples of supporting studies provided for past area plans include:

- Transportation and circulation analysis, considering such things as traffic volumes, trip generation, distribution, levels of service, vehicle miles travelled, roadway safety, and proposed improvements.
- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions modeling.
- Cultural resource assessment / inventory.
- Noise / acoustical analysis.
- Pollutant load reduction modeling.
- Biological resource assessment.
- Visual simulations.
- Natural hazard assessment.

6.6 NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for a joint environmental document should be issued at the same time a draft area plan is released to the public or following the release of a draft area plan to the public. A scoping meeting is required for projects that involve the preparation of an EIS and encouraged for projects that do not. Consolidating the scoping meeting for the draft area plan and the environmental document is encouraged. Public scoping typically takes place in the form of a workshop held at a location and time that are convenient for the community to attend.

Joint scoping meetings covering both the NOP and draft area plan are encouraged.

6.7 TRIBAL CONSULTATION

Local jurisdictions should consult with local tribes and engage with other cultural resource managers at the start of the environmental review and/or area plan process. Jurisdictions in California are subject to specific tribal consultation requirements under Senate Bill 18 (SB18) and Assembly Bill 52 (AB52).

6.8 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

In addition to following TRPA's environmental review procedures, jurisdictions in California must also follow the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Typically, a single document is produced which fulfils both TRPA and CEQA requirements. The local jurisdiction serves as the lead agency for CEQA purposes, while TRPA serves as the lead agency for the TRPA process.

TRPA and CEQA requirements for environmental review frequently overlap; however, there are also significant differences. For example, CEQA uses different terminology and specifies different requirements for public noticing and the contents of the environmental document. CEQA's requirements are contained in the California Public Resources Code and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations). In addition to the statutes and regulations, CEQA also has a rich history of case law. As the lead agency, the local jurisdiction is responsible for CEQA compliance.

It can be a complex undertaking to develop a document that meets both CEQA and TRPA requirements. TRPA staff is available to help develop and scope an appropriate work program. Another helpful resource is a guide published by the Office of Planning and Research on integrating a CEQA document with the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process:

- State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the Executive Office of the President of the United States, Council on Environmental Quality (February 2014). *NEPA and CEQA: Integrating Federal and State Environmental Reviews*.
 - Link: http://opr.ca.gov/docs/NEPA_CEQA_Handbook_Feb2014.pdf

In 2017, TRPA also published a guidance document outlining various lessons learned in developing consolidated environmental review documents. These are a summary of the six lessons, excerpted from *Triple Environmental Documents in the Lake Tahoe Basin: A Review of Best Practices*:

Environmental Review Best Practices

(1) The Dream Team

A smooth process requires an interagency team that is dedicated, motivated, and has experience in environmental documents.

- Designate a project lead.
- Engage the right agencies.
- Engage the right people.
- Keep the team small.
- Designate staff time.
- Involve executives and legal counsel throughout the process.
- Allow “ramp-up” time for outside agencies.

(2) Early Coordination is Everything

Coordination early and often among all players in the foundation is critical for the process.

- Consider developing a memorandum of understanding.
- Gain early-on agreement on:
 - Document structure and layout.
 - Terminology.
 - Project description.
 - Approach to mitigation.
 - Standards of significance
 - Field analysis
 - Heritage and cultural analysis.

(3) Integration of the Document

Integrate and streamline all environmental review requirements into one.

- Don’t lose one (e.g. CEQA requirements) to at the expense of the other (e.g. TRPA requirements).
- Recognize differences in the alternatives analysis.
- Make it clear how requirements are addressed.
- Ensure maps and visuals are consistent.

(4) Choose the Right Type of Document

One of the first decision the team will need to make is what type of document is the most appropriate for the project.

- Project level.
- Programmatic level.
- Performance based.
- Combined approach.

(5) Project Management

Managing a project with multiple agencies and tight timelines can be challenging.

- Ensure the agency is internally in alignment.
- Take a field trip with the project team.
- Do a consistency check.
- Maintain continuity.
- Consider using project management software.
- Schedule time for collaborative group writing, editing, and review.
- Maintain version control.
- Manage and frequently communicate with contractors.

(6) Managing the Schedule

Anticipate and deal with changes in the schedule so the project keeps moving.

- Develop a master schedule and commit to it up-front.
 - Build in flexibility.
 - Collaborate up-front before the formal process is kicked-off.
 - Address common schedule hiccups (e.g. additional hearings, review times over holidays, etc.)
-

7 CONFORMANCE REVIEW

As each area plan is completed it must be found in conformance with the Regional Plan. This conformance review model has been used in many states to ensure that local planning and development review are consistent with and implement a Regional Plan. The exact form may vary from state-to-state, but the concept is the same.

In the Lake Tahoe Region both the area plan and any associated code must be found in conformance with the Regional Plan. Additionally, the local government development review activity is monitored, evaluated, and reported on an annual basis. Any development decision may also be appealed to the TRPA Governing Board.

7.1 CONFORMANCE REVIEW CHECKLIST

The initial step in the conformance review process is to evaluate the local government area plan and associated code using the conformance review checklist. This checklist approach is used to foster a high degree of predictability and consistency in the conformance review process. The checklist evaluates all area plans against each relevant Regional Plan policy.

By utilizing this approach local governments must show how the area plan complies with all policies in the Regional Plan, including those designed to achieve sustainability. Moreover, when TRPA adds or changes policies via an amendment to the Regional Plan, the local governments have a one-year period to amend the area plans, if necessary, to comply with the amendment. This approach ensures that both existing and new sustainability measures in the Regional Plan will be incorporated into and implemented through local area plans. It also ensures conformance with the Regional Transportation Plan and other applicable documents (e.g. Active Transportation Plan).

7.2 TRPA REVIEW OF DRAFT DOCUMENTS

In order to ensure that the plan being developed will achieve consistency with the Regional Plan, TRPA will be involved early on in reviewing and commenting on draft plans. Drafts should be submitted to TRPA for review and comment before releasing these to the public. To help guide this review process, submittal of draft documents should follow the schedule in Section 3.2.

8 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A major benefit of developing an area plan is the ability to assume additional permitting authority from TRPA. This is accomplished by developing and adopting a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU will specify the type and size of development projects that the local jurisdiction may permit. Often, the MOUs are written to phase-in additional permitting authority over time.

8.1 PURPOSE

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's mission is one of a regional nature. Section VI(a) of the Bi-State Compact encourages the agency to focus on matters which are "general and regional in application," while allowing local jurisdictions to develop regulations that conform to the Regional Plan. Area plans serve as a single land use plan that are a component of both the Regional Plan and the local jurisdiction's General/Master Plan. Based on this framework, area plans provide a means for TRPA to delegate permitting authority for most permitting matters to the local jurisdiction. This delegation is formalized through adoption of an MOU.

An area plan in combination with an MOU provide the following benefits:

- It allows TRPA to focus on regional priorities rather than parcel-level permitting activities.
- It provides local jurisdictions with additional autonomy to address issues that are not regionally significant.
- It establishes a more responsive and flexible regional framework for community planning in the Tahoe Region.
- It eliminates inconsistencies between the Regional Plan and the plans of other agencies.
- It reduces duplicative permitting requirements (i.e. separate applications, fees, and public hearings with TRPA and the city/county).

8.2 AUTHORITY

TRPA retains appeal authority on projects delegated to the local jurisdiction. In addition, TRPA does not delegate permitting authority for the following types of projects:

- **Shorezone.** Development within the shorezone of Lake Tahoe.
- **Certain Districts.** All development in the following districts as identified in the Regional Plan land use map:
 - Conservation
 - Backcountry
 - Resort Recreation
- **Development by Size.** All development greater or equal to the following sizes:

	Residential	Non-Residential
Outside of Centers	25,000 square feet	12,500 square feet
Within Town Centers	50,000 square feet	40,000 square feet
Within the Regional Center	100,000 square feet	80,000 square feet

8.3 MOU ADOPTION

Section 13.7 of TRPA Code outlines the procedures for adoption of an MOU associated with an area plan. TRPA and a local jurisdiction must make a good faith effort to get an MOU in place within six months of the Governing Board’s finding of conformity of the area plan. TRPA may grant time extensions beyond six months for good cause. If an MOU is not adopted during this period, the area plan may be suspended.

An MOU will not go into effect until Procedural Guidelines have been developed and local jurisdiction staff is trained. The TRPA Current Planning Division is responsible for working with local jurisdiction on the preparation and implementation of MOUs. The Research and Analysis Division and the Current Planning Division Local Government Coordinator are responsible for monitoring and reporting, respectively.

8.4 CERTIFICATION

After an MOU is enacted, TRPA is required to annually review development permitted by the local jurisdiction under an area plan. As part of this monitoring and evaluation, one of the following results could occur:

- **Certification.** TRPA may certify that permits are being issued in conformance with the area plan.

- **Conditional Certification.** TRPA may require that the local agency implement certain corrective actions within a six-month period in order to maintain certification.
- **Revocation.** If development is not being permitted in conformance with the area plan, TRPA may revoke all or part of the delegation MOU.

In addition to the annual review and certification process, area plans are also subject to a four-year recertification in alignment with the four-year evaluation of the Regional Plan. This recertification review largely focuses on conformance with load reduction plans.

9 AREA PLAN AMENDMENTS

9.1 PROCEDURE

A local jurisdiction may choose to periodically amend an area plan after its initial adoption. Amendments are typically pursued to accomplish one or more of the following:

- Expanding the area plan boundaries to annex adjacent land.
- Modifying boundaries (e.g. Town Centers, sub-areas/zoning, special areas, etc.).
- Changing allowable uses.
- Modifying development standards.
- Editing the text of the plan (i.e. technical corrections or new policy proposals).

TRPA strongly recommends consolidating amendments. Frequent, piecemeal amendments to area plans are discouraged. Amendments should instead be packaged together and submitted as a single proposal. As a guideline, TRPA recommends that an area plan be amended no more often than twice per year.

Area plan amendments follow the same adoption process as the original adoption of area plans (see Section 3.2). The amendments are first adopted by the local jurisdiction and then submitted to TRPA for conformance review.

The process for consideration of amendments falls into two six-month cycles, generally starting July 1 and January 1 of each fiscal year (see Section 3.2).

Private parties who are seeking an amendment to an area plan must apply to the local jurisdiction for a General/Master Plan amendment. If the local jurisdiction is satisfied that the proposed amendment is appropriate for submission to TRPA, the jurisdiction may choose to initiate an area plan amendment following the procedures outlined in this document.

9.2 SUBMITTAL CONTENTS

To initiate an area plan amendment, the lead agency submits the following items to TRPA:

1. Area Plan Amendment Submittal Coversheet
2. Draft revisions to the area plan (strikeout/underline format)
3. Draft revisions to the Implementing Regulations (strikeout/underline format)
4. Draft mapping revisions
5. Draft IEC / EIS

6. Compliance checklist
7. Threshold evaluation and compliance measures evaluation
8. Supporting documentation (e.g. technical reports)
9. Required Findings

10 REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

The Regional Plan, TRPA Code of Ordinances, Conformance Review Checklist, Plan Area Statements and Community Plans, area plan Framework document, adopted area plans, and model MOUs are available on the TRPA website (www.trpa.gov).

One of the most important references will be **Chapter 13** of the Code of Ordinances. This chapter contains TRPA regulations pertaining to area plans.

The following are links to available resources:

1. [Code of Ordinances](#)
2. [Area Plan Webpage](#)
3. [Regional Plan – Goals and Policies](#)
4. [Initial Environmental Checklist](#)
5. [Conformance Review Checklist](#)
(MS Word .docx format)
6. [Threshold Evaluation](#)
7. [Compliance Measures Evaluation](#)
(MS Excel .xlsx format)
8. [Required Findings](#)
9. [Area Plan Amendment Submittal Coversheet](#)
17. [Regional Transportation Plan Initial Environmental Checklist / Initial Study](#)
(2017)

General/Master Plan Guidance

18. [California General Plan Guidelines](#) – Office of Planning and Research
19. [Nevada Planning Guide](#) – APA Nevada
20. [Guide to Local Planning](#) – Institute for Local Government

Lake Tahoe Sustainable Communities Program

10. [Area Plans Framework](#)

Data Sources

11. [BMP Reporting](#)
12. [BMP Mapping](#)
13. [EIP Project Lists](#)

Mapping

14. [Local Plans Maps](#)
15. [Tahoe Open Data](#)

Programmatic Environmental Documents

16. [Regional Plan Final and Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) (2012)

APPENDIX A: REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED CONTENTS

The following is a list of required and recommended elements to be included with an area plan. Items listed as *Required for Regional Plan Consistency* are specifically required in the Code of Ordinances in order for TRPA to make a finding of consistency. Items listed as *Recommended* are not explicitly required but do help to demonstrate Regional Plan consistency. In the absence of the recommended items, additional documentation may be needed to demonstrate Regional Plan consistency.

Please note that this appendix is focused on comprehensive land use plans developed by a city or county. For other types of plans proposed to serve as area plans (e.g. corridor plans), the lead agency should work with TRPA to determine the appropriate contents based on the specific objectives of the plan.

(1) Introduction

Purpose: To discuss what an area plan is and how it fits in with the Regional Plan and the local jurisdiction's general/master plan.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 1.01. Describe the regulatory context (i.e. state laws, local planning framework, TRPA regulations, etc.)
- 1.02. Describe the outreach and public input process.
- 1.03. Summarize the Area Plan and its key features.
- 1.04. Describe the Area Plan's relationship to the Regional Transportation Plan and the Environmental Improvement Program.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 1.05. **Map** showing the Area Plan's boundaries in relation to the local jurisdiction's boundaries and the Tahoe Basin.

(2) Current Conditions

Purpose: To describe existing environmental conditions, the amount and type of development, modes of transportation and service levels, public facilities and their service areas and capacities, and current implementation activities.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 2.01. Describe existing land use and coverage patterns.
- 2.02. Describe the amount and type of development.
- 2.03. Describe the transportation system and service levels.
- 2.04. Describe public facilities, their service areas, and capacities.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

None

(3) Conservation

Purpose: To address water, air, land, cultural, scenic, and other natural resources, as well as attainment of thresholds required by the bi-state compact.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 3.01. Through goals, policies, and programs, address how the Area Plan achieves the Conservation Goals and Policies in the Regional Plan. [[§13.6.5.A\(2\)](#)]
- 3.02. Identify a strategy for protecting and directing development away from Stream Environment Zones (SEZs) and other sensitive areas. [[§13.6.5.A\(7\)](#)]
- 3.03. Identify planned, new, or enhanced Environmental Improvement Projects. [[§13.6.5.A\(4\)](#)]
- 3.04. Identify a strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. [[§13.5.3.E](#)]

Recommended

- 3.05. Summarize the findings of the latest threshold evaluation report.
- 3.06. Discuss Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) projects that have been completed.
- 3.07. Discuss Best Management Practices (BMP) compliance rates.
- 3.08. Develop an area-wide water quality treatment program. [[§13.5.3.B\(3\)](#)]
- 3.09. Discuss coverage and land capability.
- 3.10. Develop an alternative comprehensive coverage management system. [[§13.5.3.B\(1\)](#)]
- 3.11. Discuss SEZs.
- 3.12. Discuss air quality.
- 3.13. Discuss scenic resources.
- 3.14. Discuss vegetation communities.
- 3.15. Identify an urban forestry strategy. [[§13.5.3.C\(2\)](#)]
- 3.16. Discuss fisheries and aquatic resources.
- 3.17. Discuss wildlife resources.
- 3.18. Identify an urban bear strategy. [[§13.5.3.C\(1\)](#)]
- 3.19. Discuss noise.
- 3.20. Discuss cultural resources.
- 3.21. Discuss natural hazards.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 3.22. **Map** showing the location of completed and proposed water quality EIP projects.
- 3.23. **Table** showing the number of BMP certificates and compliance percentage for each land use category.
- 3.24. **Map** identifying parcels with and without BMP certificates, land use, and TMDL catchments

- 3.25. **Table** showing completed TMDL projects, year completed, load reduction estimate, and number of lake clarity credits.
- 3.26. **Table** showing current TMDL projects, year of estimated completion, load reduction estimate, and number of lake clarity credits.
- 3.27. **Map** showing land capability districts.
- 3.28. **Table** identifying greenhouse gas emission sources and emission levels.
- 3.29. **Map** showing shoreline and roadway travel units and scenic quality and travel route ratings.
- 3.30. **Table** identifying vegetation communities, acreage, and land area percentage.
- 3.31. **Map** showing vegetation communities.
- 3.32. **Map** showing fish habitat.
- 3.33. **Table** listing fish species, including location and whether native or non-native.
- 3.34. **Table** listing special status animals and their associated habitat.
- 3.35. **Table** listing historic buildings/sites/districts, date, and location.
- 3.36. **Map** showing natural hazards (e.g. flood hazard, high landslide risk, etc.).

OPTIONAL AREA PLAN INCENTIVES

- **Areawide Water Quality Program**

An area plan can include larger scale water quality treatments and establish funding mechanisms in lieu of requiring stormwater control Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be designed and built on a site-by-site basis. Such an alternative must achieve equal or greater effectiveness in terms of water quality benefits.

- **Alternative Comprehensive Coverage Management System**

An area plan may propose a comprehensive coverage management system as an alternative to the parcel-level coverage requirements established in Chapter 30 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances. Such an alternative must achieve an overall reduction in the cumulative base allowable coverage.

(4) Land Use

Purpose: To address development constraints, the types and amounts of the different land uses, and physical development standards.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 4.01. Through goals, policies, and programs, address how the Area Plan achieves the Land Use Goals and Policies in the Regional Plan. [§13.6.5.A(2)]
- 4.02. Highlight how the Area Plan differs from current plans and identify any major land use or policy changes.⁵ [§13.5.2]
- 4.03. Describe zoning designations and how these designations are consistent with the Conceptual Regional Land Use Map. [§13.6.5.A(3)]
- 4.04. Identify a strategy to achieve environmentally beneficial redevelopment and revitalization in Centers. [§13.6.5.A(5)]
- 4.05. Ensure policies will preserve the character of residential areas outside of Town Centers. [§13.6.5.A(6)]
- 4.06. **TOWN CENTERS:** Identify a strategy to promote walking, bicycling, transit use, and shared parking. [§13.6.5.C(2)]
- 4.07. **TOWN CENTERS:** Address the adequacy of capacity for redevelopment and transfers of development rights. [§13.6.5.C(4)]
- 4.08. **TOWN CENTERS:** Identify an integrated strategy for cover reduction and enhanced stormwater management. [§13.6.5.C(5)]
- 4.09. **TOWN CENTERS:** Address how development activity under the Area Plan will provide for threshold gain, particularly with respect to water quality. [§13.6.5.C(6)]

Recommended

- 4.10. Summarize the development standards and guidelines.
- 4.11. Describe existing land uses and how much of the plan area each use occupies.
- 4.12. Identify major land uses (e.g. colleges, hospitals, schools, airports, etc.)
- 4.13. Provide an overview of any Specific or Master Plans adopted pursuant to TRPA Code Chapter 14.
- 4.14. Describe publicly owned lands.
- 4.15. Discuss development trends and patterns.
- 4.16. Discuss the development rights system and development potential.
- 4.17. **TOWN CENTERS:** Discuss town center character, identify any special areas, and identify key opportunity sites.
- 4.18. Identify an alternative parking strategy aimed at reducing land coverage and using land more efficiently for parking and pedestrian uses. [§13.5.3.B(2)]
- 4.19. For area plans that include a Stream Restoration Plan Area, identify alternative transfer ratios. [§13.5.3.B(4)]

⁵ TRPA strongly recommends that a change log be maintained. For more information see Section 6.2 of this document.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

4.20. **Map** identifying land use categories / zoning designations. [[§13.6.5.A\(2\)](#)]

Recommended

- 4.21. **Table** listing existing land use, acreage, and percentage of area plan.
- 4.22. **Map** showing existing land uses.
- 4.23. **Table** identifying the number of parcels and acreage under different ownership: private, federal, state, local.
- 4.24. **Table** identifying the number of vacant residential parcels and acreage.
- 4.25. **Table** showing transfer of development rights bonus incentives.
- 4.26. **Map** showing the location of vacant residential parcels.
- 4.27. **Table** summarizing Commercial Floor Area (CFA) supply.
- 4.28. **Table** summarizing Tourist Accommodation Unit (TAU) supply.
- 4.29. **Map** showing town center locations.
- 4.30. **Map** identifying key opportunity sites.

OPTIONAL AREA PLAN INCENTIVES

- **Increased Density and Heights in Town Centers**
Within Town Centers, maximum densities and heights are subject to relaxed standards in Section 13.5.3.A(1) rather than those in Chapters 31 and 37, respectively.

(5) Transportation

Purpose: To identify the different modes of transportation used in the plan area, the levels of service, and planned changes in facilities and services.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 5.01. Through goals, policies, and programs, address how the Area Plan achieves the Transportation Goals and Policies in the Regional Plan. [[§13.6.5.A\(2\)](#)]
- 5.02. Identify facilities and implementation measures to enhance pedestrian, bicycling, and transit opportunities along with other opportunities to reduce automobile dependency. [[§13.6.5.A\(8\)](#)]

Recommended

- 5.03. Provide a background discussion on transportation planning, including such elements as:
 - (A) The purpose of a transportation plan.
 - (B) The elements of a transportation system.
 - (C) The linkage between transportation and land use.
 - (D) The linkage between transportation and threshold attainment.
- 5.04. Summarize the overall transportation strategy.
- 5.05. Describe any corridor planning efforts in the area.
- 5.06. Describe the current roadway network and identify planned roadway projects.
- 5.07. Describe the transit network.
- 5.08. Describe the active transportation network (i.e. bicycle and pedestrian paths).
- 5.09. **TOWN CENTERS:** Identify a strategy for pedestrian circulation (e.g. filling in sidewalk gaps).

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 5.10. **Map** showing regional transit routes and stops. [[§13.6.5.A\(8\)](#)]
- 5.11. **Map** showing existing and planned pedestrian and bike infrastructure. [[§13.6.5.A\(8\)](#)]

Recommended

- 5.12. **Table** showing Level of Service (winter and summer) at key intersections.
- 5.13. **Map** showing major roadways and Level of Service at key intersections.
- 5.14. **Map** showing existing infrastructure and proposed transportation improvements.

(6) Recreation

Purpose: To address existing and planned parks, trails, and other leisure facilities.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 6.01. Through goals, policies, and programs, address how the Area Plan achieves the Recreation Goals and Policies in the Regional Plan. [[§13.6.5.A\(2\)](#)]

Recommended

- 6.02. Summarize recreational activities in the planning area.
- 6.03. Identify partner agencies that manage recreational facilities in the planning area.
- 6.04. Explain the plan's recreation strategy.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 6.05. **Table** listing facilities, acreage, operator, and owner – broken town by facility type.
- 6.06. **Map** showing the location of parks, recreation areas, and trails.
- 6.07. **Table** listing existing and proposed multi-use trails, location, and length.

(7) Public Services and Facilities

Purpose: To address provision of water, sanitary sewer, fire and police protection, telecommunications, and similar public services, consistent with the Land Use Element.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

7.01. Through goals, policies, and programs, address how the Area Plan achieves the Public Services and Facilities Goals and Policies in the Regional Plan. [[§13.6.5.A\(2\)](#)]

Recommended

- 7.02. Discuss the water system(s).
- 7.03. Discuss the wastewater collection and treatment system.
- 7.04. Discuss the stormwater system.
- 7.05. Discuss schools.
- 7.06. Discuss law enforcement.
- 7.07. Discuss fire services.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 7.08. **Map** showing water and wastewater service areas.
- 7.09. **Table** listing schools in the planning area, their enrollment, their capacity, and percent above/below capacity.
- 7.10. **Map** showing location of schools, police substations, fire district boundaries, and fire stations.

(8) Development Standards and Guidelines

Purpose: To establish development regulations for the area plan, including zoning, permitted uses, density, parking, height, signage, and structural design.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 8.01. Provide a planning statement for each zoning district. [§§12.7.3.E(2), 11.6.5]
- 8.02. Identify special designations (if any) for each zoning district. [§§12.7.3.E(4), 11.6.3]
- 8.03. Identify any special policies for each zoning district. [§11.6.7]
- 8.04. Define uses or refer to TRPA Code Chapters 21 and 81 for these definitions. [§§12.7.3.E(6), 11.6.8]
- 8.05. Identify allowable (“A”) and special (“S”) uses within:
 - (A) Each zoning district
 - (B) Any special areas
 - (C) Shorezone tolerance districtsAdditionally, define how the local jurisdiction will process (A) and (S) uses and refer to TRPA Code Chapter 21 for projects processed by TRPA. [§§12.7.3.E(6), 11.6.8]
- 8.06. Establish density standards for each zoning district. [§§13.5.3.A, 12.7.3.E(14), 11.6.9]
- 8.07. Establish maximum Community Noise Equivalent Levels (CNELs) for each zoning district, consistent with those in the thresholds. [§11.6.10]
- 8.08. Identify the additional developed outdoor recreation capacity, measured in people at one time (PAOT) for each zoning district. [§11.6.11]
- 8.09. Establish height standards or otherwise refer to TRPA Chapter 37 for areas outside of Town Centers. [§13.5.3.A]
- 8.10. Refer to TRPA Chapter 30 for land coverage standards, or otherwise establish an alternative comprehensive coverage management system. [§§13.5.3.A, 13.5.3.B(1)]
- 8.11. Specify design standards, including the following:
 - (A) Retaining and incorporating existing natural features into the site design.
 - (B) Ensuring building placement, design, and scale are compatible with adjacent properties and planned land uses.
 - (C) Including drainage, infiltration, and grading in site planning considerations.
 - (D) Ensuring access, parking, and circulation are logical, safe, and consistent with the Regional Plan.
 - (E) Establishing buffers for noise, snow removal, aesthetic, and other environmental purposes.
 - (F) Considering viewsheds. [§§13.5.3.F(1), F(3)]
- 8.12. Specify landscaping standards, including the following:
 - (A) Using native vegetation whenever possible.
 - (B) Using vegetation to screen parking and accommodate stormwater runoff.
 - (C) Using vegetation to give privacy, reduce glare and heat, deflect wind, muffle noise, prevent erosion, and soften the line of architecture. [§13.5.3.F(4)]

- 8.13. Specify lighting standards, including the following:
- (A) Minimizing lighting to protect dark sky views.
 - (B) Using cutoff shields to minimize light pollution.
 - (C) Maintaining compatible neighborhood light levels.
 - (D) Prohibiting lighting that blinks, flashes, or changes intensity.
- [\[§13.5.3.F\(5\)\]](#)
- 8.14. Specify signage standards, including the following:
- (A) Prohibition of off-premise signs.
 - (B) Incorporation of signage into building design.
 - (C) Clustering signage to avoid clutter.
 - (D) Regulating the number, size, height, lighting, square footage, and similar characteristics for signs.
- [\[§13.5.3.F\(6\)\]](#)
- 8.15. **TOWN CENTERS:** Specify building, site design, and use standards within Town Centers that address the form of development and promote pedestrian activity and transit use, and include the following:
- (A) Connection to transit stops and the active transportation network.
 - (B) Protection of lake views.
 - (C) Variation in building height and density.
 - (D) Pedestrian-oriented design features.
 - (E) Protection of undisturbed sensitive lands.
- [\[§§13.5.3.F\(1\)\(b\); 13.6.5.C\(1\), C\(3\)\]](#)
- 8.16. **TOWN CENTERS:** Establish height standards in Town Centers, with transitional height limitations along the perimeter of the Town Center. [\[§§13.5.3.A, F\(2\)\(c\)\]](#)
- 8.17. Specify procedures to amend the Area Plan and development standards. [\[§13.6.6\]](#)
- 8.18. Describe which projects can be permitted by the local jurisdiction and which projects are always subject to TRPA approval. [\[§13.7.3\]](#)
- 8.19. Describe the appeal procedure or refer to the TRPA Code of Ordinances. [\[§13.9\]](#)
- 8.20. Establish any standards to implement the greenhouse gas reduction strategy. [\[§13.5.3.E\]](#)
- 8.21. Unless alternative standards are proposed, refer back to the TRPA Code of Ordinances for the following requirements:
- (A) Subdivision, pursuant to Chapter 39.
 - (B) Water quality, pursuant to Chapter 60.
 - (C) Vegetation and forest health, pursuant to Chapter 61.
 - (D) Wildlife resources, pursuant to Chapter 62.
 - (E) Fish resources, pursuant to Chapter 63.
 - (F) Livestock grazing, pursuant to Chapter 64.
 - (G) Air quality, pursuant to Chapter 65.
 - (H) Scenic quality, pursuant to Chapter 66.
 - (I) Historic preservation, pursuant to Chapter 67.
 - (J) Noise, pursuant to Chapter 68.
 - (K) Shorezone, pursuant to Chapters 80 through 85.
- [\[§13.5.2\]](#)

Recommended

- 8.22. Group zoning districts by category and paginate them so that standards for a specific district can easily be separated out.

- 8.23. Develop standards to address any locally salient planning issues (e.g. vacation rentals, secondary residences, wireless transmission facilities, etc.).
- 8.24. Develop standards to implement proposed area plan policies.
- 8.25. Identify which standards may be subject to a Variance (note: standards addressed in the TRPA Code of Ordinances cannot be varied).
- 8.26. Establish any optional standards to implement:
 - (A) The urban bear strategy. [§13.5.3.C(1)]
 - (B) The urban forestry strategy. [§13.5.3.C(2)]
 - (C) The alternative parking strategy. [§13.5.3.B(2)]
 - (D) The alternative water quality management strategy. [§13.5.3.B(3)]
 - (E) The alternative coverage management system. [§13.5.3.B(1)]
 - (F) Alternative transfer ratios (Stream Restoration Plan Areas). [§13.5.3.B(4)]

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

- 8.27. **Map** identifying the boundaries of zoning districts, special areas, and the Town Center. [§13.6.5.A(3)]

Recommended

- 8.28. Additional **maps**, as needed, to show details (e.g. location of a special area within a zoning district.)

OPTIONAL AREA PLAN INCENTIVES

- **Areawide Water Quality Program**

An area plan can include larger scale water quality treatments and establish funding mechanisms in lieu of requiring stormwater control Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be designed and built on a site-by-site basis. Such an alternative must achieve equal or greater effectiveness in terms of water quality benefits.

- **Alternative Comprehensive Coverage Management System**

An area plan may propose a comprehensive coverage management system as an alternative to the parcel-level coverage requirements established in Chapter 30 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances. Such an alternative must achieve an overall reduction in the cumulative base allowable coverage.

- **Alternative Parking Strategy**

An area plan may include shared or areawide parking strategies to reduce land coverage and to use land more efficiently for parking and pedestrian uses.

- **Substitute Standards**

An area plan may contain additional or substitute requirements that promote threshold attainment relating to such things as site design, building height, building design, landscaping, and signage.

(9) Implementation

Purpose: To link policies in the area plan to implementation measures, such as regulations (e.g. development standards and guidelines), implementation programs (e.g. local government capital improvement programs and the Environmental Improvement Program), and relevant operations and maintenance programs.

TEXT

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 9.01. Identify implementation policies.
- 9.02. Describe planned EIP projects.
- 9.03. Identify restoration targets and performance measures.

TABLES AND MAPS

Required for Regional Plan Consistency

None

Recommended

- 9.04. **Table** describing EIP projects and identifying the lead agency.
- 9.05. **Map** showing the location of EIP projects.

OPTIONAL COMPONENT

(10) Housing

Purpose: To address the planning area’s need for housing to accommodate residents and the workforce, with a focus on replacing old, dilapidated multi-family housing and old hotels with new energy-efficient housing within or near town centers.

TEXT

Recommended

- 10.01. Describe the current housing stock.
- 10.02. Describe homeownership patterns and trends.
- 10.03. Develop relevant goals, policies, and programs.

TABLES AND MAPS

Recommended

- 10.04. **Table** showing the number of units occupied, vacant, owner-occupied, and renter-occupied.
- 10.05. **Table** showing seasonal housing units and percentage as a total of all housing units.
- 10.06. **Table** showing median household income.
- 10.07. **Table** showing median housing unit value.
- 10.08. **Table** showing median household income, affordable housing unit cost, and median housing unit value.

OPTIONAL COMPONENT

(11) Economic Development / Prosperity

Purpose: To address ways that an area plan can help to foster environmental redevelopment, sustainability, and economic prosperity.

TEXT

Recommended

- 11.01. Summarize socioeconomic conditions.
- 11.02. Describe a strategy for socioeconomic improvement.
- 11.03. Describe demographic trends.
- 11.04. Discuss employment and commute patterns.
- 11.05. Identify any barriers to environmentally beneficial redevelopment.
- 11.06. Develop relevant goals, policies, and programs.

TABLES AND MAPS

Recommended

- 11.07. **Table** comparing population from the most recent census and prior census and noting percentage change.
- 11.08. **Table** or chart summarizing demographics.
- 11.09. **Table** showing population and percentage in each age category (five-year intervals).

APPENDIX B: GIS METADATA REQUIREMENTS

The following fields should be included with the GIS metadata layers:

Abstract

This item is to be used for a relatively short synopsis (2-4 sentences) of the contents of the dataset. It is intended to give the reader a brief idea of whether the data will be suitable for their needs. It often begins “This feature class contains . . .”.

Be sure to include:

- general content and features
- dataset form (GIS, CAD, image, Dbase)
- geographic extent covered (county/city/area name)
- generally, a time period of content (begin and end date or single date)
- special data characteristics or limitations, although this item may alternatively be stored in the Supplemental Information section.

Purpose

This item is a very brief (one-two sentences) description of the purpose for which the data was originally created. It is a summary of the intentions with which the dataset was developed. This helps establish boundaries of usage for the data so that it might not be used for invalid purposes (e.g. analysis). This may also include warnings about how the data should not be used, although anything extensive should be included below under Use Constraints.

Access Constraints

This item describes any conditions placed on the data to restrict access to view, use and maintain the data. Access constraints may be used for datasets that are exempt from public records laws such as endangered species.

Use Constraints

This is a detailed description of any restrictions placed on the usage of the data. It includes disclaimers, caveats and explanations of warranties or guarantees (or the lack thereof). This can be very detailed. The TRPA staff usually includes something similar to the following:

Geographic information (including this dataset) provided by TRPA is for general reference only, is subject to change, and is not warranted for any particular use or purpose. Although efforts have been made to ensure the information is accurate and useful, the information contained within is derived from several sources of varying quality and accuracy. Therefore, TRPA assumes no responsibility for errors in the information and does not guarantee that the data are free from errors or inaccuracies. Comments on this data are invited and TRPA GIS would appreciate receiving information about inaccuracies found herein. While TRPA GIS endeavors to create the most accurate data available, this data should not be used for site-specific evaluation, surveying, or engineering purposes. It should also not be used beyond the limits of the source scale. Use of this data is considered acceptance of the limitations of this data and that the user has read and understood this metadata prior to its use in any form. This data may be used without further constraint (except as specified in the Access Constraints section of this metadata) provided this entire metadata document accompanies the dataset. This data may not be sold in any form. Acknowledgement of TRPA GIS would be appreciated in products derived from these data.

In addition, when possible including a description of the methods used to create this data would be nice (e.g. *Land coverage information was created based on extensive field work from 2008-2009 that included the collection of 200 training samples and the use of Landsat imagery and Erdas Imagine software. The accuracy level is 85% based on Kappa Statistics.*

OR – Point location data was collected during 2007-2008 using a Trimble GeoXT GPS unit and Pathfinder editing tools – point positional accuracy averages 10 feet.)

Dataset Credit

This item is the name of the agencies, county departments, divisions or sections which are to be credited (recognized) with producing/maintaining this dataset. It should also include other individuals or organizations that should be recognized for their (significant) contributions to the dataset. It may include data development contractors. TRPA uses just “Tahoe Regional Planning Agency”. This is not to be used to identify the sources of the data – that will be covered under Data Quality – Source Information.

Primary Contact

TRPA’s usual practice is to not identify individuals in its metadata except under Data Quality/Process Step/Process Contact. The reasons for this include 1) protection of staff privacy, 2) staff turnover, and 3) minimizing maintenance overhead (i.e. changing this metadata frequently). As a result, the “Organization” radio button in the Primary Contact box is always checked.

Person: left blank

Organization: The full name of the agency, county division or section responsible for maintenance of this dataset: for example, “Tahoe Regional Planning Agency”.

Contact Email Address: The email address which should be used to contact the staff of the agency named in the Organization box concerning usage or other information about this dataset. TRPA usually enters: gis@trpa.org.

Address Type

Select the type of address which describes the entries on this tab. TRPA staff should always use “mailing and physical address” or, if more appropriate, “mailing address”. Note that more than one address can be entered by using the buttons in the bottom left corner of this tab. This feature can be used to enter both mailing and physical addresses if they are different.

Time Period

The information on this tab relates to the relevant date of the data content. This can be a single date, multiple dates, or a range of dates.

Status

Progress (pulldown): Indicate by selecting an item on the pull-down list as to whether this data is “Complete”, “In Work”, or “Planned”.

Update Frequency (pulldown): Indicate by selecting an item on the pull-down list whether this dataset is updated “Annually”, “As Needed”, “Continually”, “Daily”, “Irregular”, “Monthly”, “None Planned”, “Quarterly”, “Unknown”, or “Weekly”.

Keyword

Enter a keyword which represents a subject area for this dataset. Usually, multiple words covering all aspects of the subject matter are entered such as “road”, “street”, “highway”, “access”, “travel”, or “path”.

Place

Geographic location keywords which describe what area this data covers. Keyword: Enter a keyword which represents a geographic area name for this dataset. This may be a political unit (country, state name, state acronym, county, city) or a physical place name (e.g. “Truckee River”). TRPA usually enters the following keywords (individually – one entry for each term) for basin-wide feature classes: “Tahoe Basin, California, Nevada”

Dataset Overview

This is a general summary or description paragraph of the data contained in this feature class. This may be similar to, but probably more extensive than, the Abstract box in the Identification section. For example, for a black and white orthophotograph, you may want to indicate that each pixel will have a gray scale value between 0 (black) and 255 (white).