

Kings Beach Town Center Field Tour Introduction

Ms. Regan said it's one thing to see something on paper as you review projects and programs but there is no substitute for seeing things on the ground. It's also an opportunity for the Governing Board and Advisory Planning Commission to connect with each other and the communities. We'll see in practice some of the concepts we talk about on a policy level from behind the dais. You heard discussion this morning and in April's retreat about complete communities. During the Active Transportation Program about complete streets that just don't accommodate cars but also pedestrians, bikes, and other forms of transportation. This also includes lighting, landscaping, and sidewalks. We've been going down that path for a long time to make Tahoe have more complete streets because we were developed as an auto centric community. To go back and to retrofit a community that was developed that way is exceedingly difficult and expensive. We're now taking that concept into the communities and integrating better all those elements that deal with pedestrians, bicycle infrastructure, and parking. Also, with affordable workforce housing and stormwater collection and treatment. We were doing green development and ever before there were terms around LEED certification and low impact design, TRPA was a leader in land coverage, open space, and land quality measures. Over the course of the decades, that industry has innovated, and we are trying to catch up our standards to more modern stormwater collection and treatment and at the same time revitalize our communities and provide more housing options.

Ms. Holloway, Deputy CEO, Placer County said Placer County staff Ms. Jacobsen, Ms. Tabor, Mr. Decker, and Ms. Beckman will be assisting with the tour today to provide information and help answer your questions. A lot of conversation around transportation, housing, communities and is the focus of today. The vitality of our communities is like an ecosystem. Our ecosystem, community, and vitality are out of balance. We haven't seen a lot of change in our communities although there has been a lot of infrastructure and public improvement dollars that we've put into the communities. The basis behind that was to try and elevate the private investment dollar along with that.

Slide 1 shows the population data with the dark blue being the overall basin population over the years. The light blue is the eastern Placer in the basin. Green is the employment. Both of those metrics are key for our economy and the viability of our communities is trending downwards since the turn of 2000.

Another metric they use is school enrollment shown on Slide 2. From the turn of 2000 they saw a significant dip over the ten years. That has climbed back out but then has become more stable. Slide 3 shows a constant trend in growth up to around 2000 and since then they've seen a 16 percent decline in the full time resident population.

There's been population decreases but they also have an increase of housing upwards of 100 percent in different areas and almost 200 percent in areas within the region. One of the challenges of that is the concept of supply and demand. There are a lot of factors that influence that. Increasing costs but the overall availability of housing has become a big challenge.

Slide 4 compares income levels to the cost of housing. In 2012, home prices were approximately six times the household incomes. Fast forward ten years, that has almost doubled.

Slide 5 shows some metrics around Transient Occupancy Tax. These are certificates in the region for short term rentals and other tourism related stays in the region. That has increased over the years but has been relatively flat over the past couple of years. Part of that was sophistication in their tracking mechanisms. Housing occupancy has trended more towards that seasonal occupancy as opposed to the full time resident. Those homes aren't changing but the use of those homes is changing significantly.

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Some of the outside influences that affect them on a day to day basis are shown on slide 7. The drive up communities, not a lot of growth, rather a decline of population. Those communities that are within driving range are where there is significant growth. They know that there are a lot of visitors coming from those regions and will continue into the future. Vehicle miles traveled is something they are continuing to track the relation between the growth and the distance between those growing communities in the basin.

Slide 8 shows the vehicle count stations for the North Shore. There's not a significant change and a little bit of a downward trend. They are counting cars and not necessarily how far they travel. This data shows that these vehicles are moving around and coming in and leaving from different points but generally the overall count data seems to be consistent.

Today's field tour focus is on the community. Strong, vital communities thrive on an awareness of the industry. Our industry is tourism and need to recognize that. Housing is one of the biggest barriers and housing translates into people and those people translate into workers in the region and that affects our businesses. Then this affects the visitor experience. They'll walk through some of the older developments, some dilapidated developments, public investment dollars on the road and infrastructure. Their team is working hard on providing services as well. They've talked a lot about microtransit, the TART Connect Program, and other services that they are trying to stand up in the region.

Mr. Drake, Placer County, Advisory Planning Commission representative and a member of the North Tahoe Business Association Economic Vitality Committee. He currently has a brewery and is now doing manufacturing and retail in the Tahoe Basin and employees about 60 people. He moved to Kings Beach in 2004 and left for Truckee for a few years and moved back in 2008. Kings Beach is an ideal planning case study. It was laid out in the 1920s. Super compact lots, high density residential area, and abuts up to National Forest with trails and mountain recreation. It flows into a tight commercial core downtown. That flows into the State Beach which is a huge draw for tourism and a great asset for locals. There's mountain recreation, beach recreation, and then a high density community in between. Kings Beach is still one of the most affordable communities in the area.

If we were to go back and think about how to design a complete community today, we wouldn't change too many things. Kings Beach is set up for success. There's southerly aspect, the snow melts pretty quickly. There's a school, a mixed-use downtown, and fairly flat topography. Kings Beach should be Lake Tahoe's prime example of a vibrant walkable beach, mountain community and a magnet for tourism.

Public investment of around \$50 million that occurred about eight years ago for traffic calming, pedestrian, stormwater, American Disabilities Act, and frontage improvements. All the investment that they thought they needed to revitalize and catalyze investment in Kings Beach, and it hasn't happened. Sales tax revenue has been flat for over a decade. There are still about 30 vacant buildings and properties in a one mile radius. There's no simple answer, obviously there's economic and demographic headwinds some of which Ms. Holloway spoke about. While we have outdated policies that need an overhaul, they need more than policy changes, they need a shift in mindset to a different style of planning and thinking about implementation that moves the needle.

There's an organization called Strong Towns that has six guiding principles. The first one is a based resource from community prosperity is built and sustained. It must not be squandered. Tahoe doesn't have a lot of developable land. The development and business activities taking place on the land need to pay for themselves. They need to support the services that we need to keep that area vital. Every block or project can be thought of as either cash flow positive or negative. A simple way to encourage cash

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flow positive development is to mandate density and to limit parking. In general, they've been doing the opposite in Tahoe for a long time. Every time we allow a cash flow negative development style to occur, we're setting ourselves up for failure and will not be able to do the maintenance that's needed to maintain that vitality. Things like replacing broken lights, snow plowing, and sidewalk maintenance, etc.

The next principle is job creation and economic growth are the results of a healthy local economy, not substitutes for one. An analogy is we do a lot of big game hunting, and we need to be doing a lot more economic gardening. We're looking to outside deep pocket project proponents to come into Tahoe to create hotel beds to create jobs. We have some of those happening and that's a blessing. We need to be looking for opportunities to plant seeds to grow local businesses. What is we focused staff resources on cultivating the growth of successful small businesses in Tahoe that can go and create jobs. The number one thing that needs to change is more boots on the ground and personal engagement from staff in the communities and not just Kings Beach but all of the communities.

The next principle is that government is a platform for citizens to collaboratively build a prosperous place. We need small scale bottom up actions more than we need top down systems which is the way we've been planning forever. Bottom up actions are incremental actions, small bets with a high return on investment and minimal risk of unintended consequences. There are tons of opportunities to take small actions that can move the needle. For example, maybe alleviate some public concern and then we can scale the successes that we can learn from the failures without catastrophic failures.

Ms. Regan said these principles and concepts have come up a lot in her conversations with the community. There is a disconnect, there is a feeling of overwhelm that isn't squaring with a declining population base. It's not a feeling of less traffic, there's a feeling of more traffic. The patterns are shifting and it's creating this desinence that she hopes these kinds of opportunities will allow us to get to the bottom of and continue to work through.