

From: [Elisabeth Lernhardt](#)
To: [Marja Ambler](#)
Subject: public comment
Date: Tuesday, June 13, 2023 10:12:10 PM

From: Elisabeth Lernhardt
To : Marja Ambler
Subject: TRPA meeting 6/14/2014 Changes in Building Codes

Today's agenda is trying to rationalize high-density housing with reduced parking as improvement for our Tahoe community. The proposal plans to deed restrict the use of these units, which provides some reassurance, they do not get turned into high end secondary homes. But what is the reason for the reduced parking? You argue, it would increase the building footprint for the housing part. Yet there are multiple other options, including permeable parking lot surface and parking garages below the condos. Are you planning to reduce houses elsewhere in compensation for the concentrated density? Otherwise it is not a zero sum gain plan, but a drastic increase in population. You claim the lake clarity correlates with the numbers of vehicles on the road, but you have no data to support this! As recent dramatic improvements in Secchi depths from 60 to 120 ft have shown, many factors completely unrelated to your current dogma: MV= pollution= loss of clarity, are creating turbidity in Lake Tahoe. Do you deny the research that TERC/UC Davis is conducting regarding the Asian clams and their contribution to nutrient rich turbidity? Do you deny, that these mussels cause increase of Megaphyton, or invasive algae? Why

was there a decision, not to remove these mussels? And that is just the beginning of the damage invasive species are causing to Lake Tahoe: crayfish, Mysis shrimp, Gold fish, Asian Clams, bullfrogs and many more all are happily destroying the lake, but you blame residents and their cars for the effect. Disappearing native species such as Bosmia and Daphnia plancton are the clean up crew of Lake Tahoe, their resurgence caused the recent clarity improvement, which started last summer!

Rather than listening to the science, you are captive to the resorts and developers. Company towns , employing kids for cheap, displacing local residents and businesses , highrise hotels. Do you really support this business model by Vail Resorts? Their idea of tourism is not the kind Tahoe needs! Do the Colorado resort towns they created appeal to you? Your code proposal will lay the ground work for a Tahoe owned by Mega Companies. I will gladly provide documentation to all the facts I presented today.

From: [juli anderson](#)
To: [Marja Ambler](#)
Subject: Public Comment Regarding Proposed Code Changes to Tahoe Basin
Date: Tuesday, June 13, 2023 9:30:38 PM

June 13, 2023

Marja Ambler, Clerk to the Board
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

Re: Proposed Building Height, Density, and Coverage Code Changes within the Tahoe Basin

Dear Ms. Ambler and Members of the Board,

There are many facets of concern with the direction that opportunistic development is taking the Tahoe basin and the neighboring communities. The rate growth in the greater Tahoe-Truckee area and its environs are impacting the carrying capacity of the basin, and likewise limiting accessibility of Lake Tahoe's attributes, paralyzing roadways, and displacing housing for workforce personnel.

One of the largest challenges for the Tahoe-Truckee area is that Placer County is the governing body of this area. Headquartered in Auburn, California, the Placer County is quick to approve any and all development projects for revenue without consideration to the long-term impacts of the Lake Tahoe environment as well as its residents.

Additionally, there have not been investments in infrastructure to parallel additional growth. The profits generated to Placer County do not seem equally invested to the basin, as evidenced by main access roads various states of disrepair, currently under patchwork repairs. This past winter the Placer County allowed two qualified blower drivers to work in this area for days on end with minimal rest, while the remainder stayed in west Placer County. No new commuter bike paths or improved public transit routes have been implemented, and likewise road traffic has only worsened.

Importantly, the basin needs to address what it has, and what is necessary for responsible growth. Fifty years of fire suppression combined with climate change and greater number of visitors has generated profound risk of fire danger and threats to evacuation routes. There are proposals for more beds but not better escape plans.

Please carefully consider the proposed plans for development in the Lake Tahoe basin and

affected communities, and promote incorporation of smart, sustainable growth, rather than go forward with perceived gluttony.

Sincerely,

Juli Anderson

From: [Niobe Burden Austere](#)
To: [Francisco Aguilar](#); [Shelly Aldean](#); [Belinda Faustinos](#); [John Friedrich](#); [Alexis Hill](#); [Vince Hoenigman](#); [Brooke Laine](#); [Wesley Rice](#); [Cindy Gustafson](#); [Julie Regan](#); [John Marshall](#)
Cc: [Marja Ambler](#)
Subject: Public Comment Item V.A. meeting -June 14, 2023 TRPA Local Government & Housing Committee- and Fiduciary responsibilities in upholding NEPA/CEQA
Date: Tuesday, June 13, 2023 10:27:23 PM

Please accept this email as a record of **public comment to the TRPA Governing Board regarding agenda item V. A. . This comment also relates to TRPA's fiduciary responsibilities to uphold NEPA and CEQA on the California side** with regard to its proposed Amendments to density in the 2012 Regional Area Plan with regard to density New and Redevelopment Projects in the Tahoe Basin. From what I understand, these changes will also impact proposed Amendments by Placer County to the 2017 TBAP which is very concerning with a number of large projects proposed and huge proposed amendments to density.

From the TRPA website -

"The [Bi-State Compact](#) as revised in 1980, gave TRPA authority to adopt environmental quality standards, called thresholds, and to enforce ordinances designed to achieve the thresholds. In 1982, TRPA adopted nine environmental threshold carrying capacities (thresholds), which set environmental standards for the Lake Tahoe basin and indirectly defined the capacity of the Region to accommodate additional land development. In 2021, TRPA adopted an additional threshold, Transportation and Sustainable Communities."

Is TRPA generating a CUMULATIVE IMPACT EIS/EIR to the 2012 Regional Plan, a basin wide environmental cumulative impact analysis study? If so, at what stage is this or is there a timeline?

- If so - Can you give me an outline of the areas which it is considering? Improvements to what Thresholds? Considerations of Fire Safety and Evacuation?

Of the 10 threshold areas stated on the website, are all thresholds being met prior to these proposed Amendments to the Regional Plan. If not, which ones are not being met?

Water quality? - seems to have deteriorated as I see so much new algae on the rocks when I SUP on the lake. I attached a photo taken less than a month ago. The current reporting of increased water quality is a known temporary anomaly according to the scientific community.

Scenic Resources? - the amount of new development I now see (especially monstrous luxury homes) certainly isn't impacting scenic quality positively and I just learned of the ridiculous 14k sqft proposed Buccola plan!

Architectural drawings and elevation plans can be very deceiving. A suggestion I have is something that I learned while living overseas. The **Swiss require a visualization when any new building is being proposed in a community.** They are called "Baugespann" marker frames and they are a common sight in Switzerland and other communities in the EU as well as the UK . **These building poles are used to help the community visualize a proposed building, its height, length, setbacks, proximity to other buildings and impact in the overall area.** Here is a link to an article in English about them with photos - www.newlyswissed.com/building-poles-dotting-swiss-landscapes.com

Is there another Threshold Evaluation Report in the works? when will it be published? The last one being 2019 and they are to be completed every 4 years according to your

website. Also, the 2019 report only indicates two of the ten thresholds are rated as "attained or better than the target" , and some threshold detail shows that there was "insufficient data" - <https://thresholds.laketahoeinfo.org/ThresholdCategory/Index>

I assume that substantiating studies you've conducted would prove that all the thresholds from 2019 have improved? and now "attain the original goals set" or these amendments to density wouldn't be merited.

The purpose of TRPA, first and foremost, is "to adopt environmental quality standards and to enforce ordinances designed to achieve the thresholds....to preserve the lake water quality, the basin environment, quality of life for residents and scenic resources for all".

As a concerned property owner in Tahoe Vista, **I DO NOT AGREE WITH ITEM V. A. "Housing Amendments, including proposed changes to Informational/Possible Page 9 height, density and coverage for multi-family housing** Direction to Staff and accessory dwelling units."

TRPA is advocating for significant changes in the building code, such as increasing multi-family density (240%), coverage (75%), and height (37%). This is dangerous. The suggestion to build 60 units per acre, with 100% coverage and 4 to 5-story buildings, along with a parking ratio of .75 parking spaces per unit, is an unsubstantiated solution.

Do you really think this increased density and decreased parking capacity is going to keep people from wanting to take their private vehicle everywhere? Public transportation is undependable and certainly not incentivized. In Europe where I lived for the past 10 years, it was much more convenient (every 10 minutes) than taking a car but that was in the city. **North Tahoe is not a city**, doesn't have the same resources and we don't want it to be a city! **The comment suggesting "reducing reliance on the private automobile" is highly controversial, speculative, opinionated, not based on substantial data**, arbitrary, capricious and its stated outcomes highly speculative and would require a crystal ball to make such claims).

It's dispicable that these developments are being touted as providing affordable housing. Developments that really address affordable housing address the needs of the workers....**full time workers with families want space and not to live in multifamily complexes like in a city.... rental units are more realistic for seasonal and minimum wage workers....which obviously "won't pencil at affordable rents" and aren't attractive to developers.** It's common sense! The workforce with families that will continue to commute from Carson City and Reno. This is not addressing the issue. **Current property owners (with less overhead) would be more amicable if they had incentives...why not do a survey to ask them what incentives would be attractive? Grant/loan forgiveness programs, property tax abatements, creation of Opportunity Zones for sustainable housing development in sensitive environments ?**

Housing is a worldwide problem from Venice to Hawaii. There are plenty of solutions touted by other areas: reducing short term rentals, limiting house size, visitor reservation systems, or large employers building housing on site (Vail/Palisades should). Before taking the drastic step of increasing height, density and coverage look at other options being implemented in other resort destinations....think outside the box of For Profit Luxury Development.

Regarding Fire Safety and Evacuation with increased density -

"TRPA will coordinate with first responders and public safety agencies to review the policy proposal related to emergency evacuation and develop mitigation measures, if appropriate, during the environmental review process." **TRPA must prepare a roadway by roadway basin wide fire evacuation capacity evaluation based on accurate substantial data. On the California side the proposed code amendments, without providing an EIS containing a roadway by roadway basin wide fire evacuation capacity evaluation violates the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as the proposed actions are "significant" and the environmental and evacuation limitations in the Tahoe Basin are "unique". Plain and simple...it is the fiduciary responsibility of local governments in the basin! We don't want another situation like Paradise!**

Also, TRPA/Placer County are not addressing community character, morphing, or the impacts of STR's yet TRPA is allowing historical structures to be demolished at the expense of huge homes and an entitled population, luxury condos, and impacts to everyone with traffic delays, and permanent changes to the character of our communities. Where is it going to stop! **STR permits need to be more limited giving the alternative incentive to rent long term and developments that have been approved need to have their required housing component enforced! (ie Tonopalo for example)**

Your response is much appreciated as I have serious concerns with the changes I've seen and heard upon my return to the area after ten years living overseas.
Thank you for your time!

We need SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT not OVERDEVELOPMENT.

Niobe Burden Austere

*Concerned property owner in Tahoe Vista
(530)320-2100*

image0.jpeg

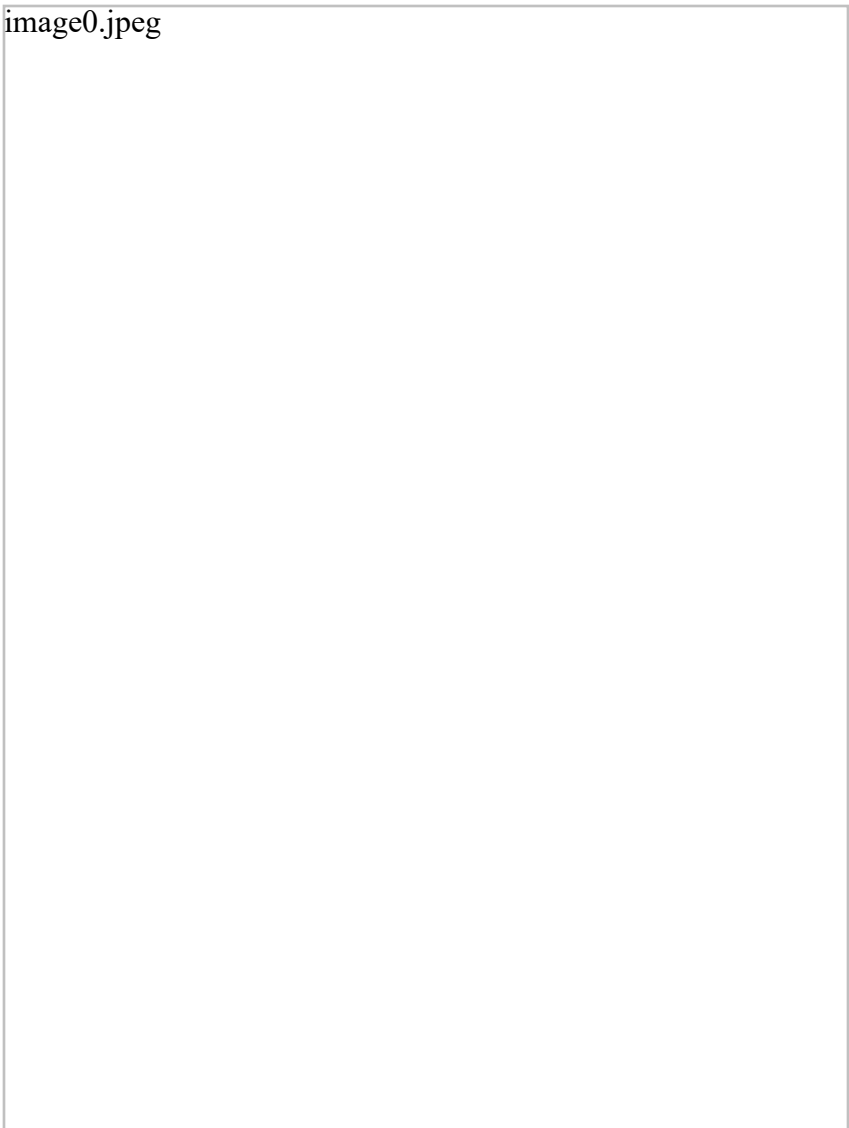


Photo taken May 21 2023 in Carnelian Bay - I have others as well.....

Marja Ambler

From: Niobe Burden <niobe.burden@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 13, 2023 10:06 AM
To: Marja Ambler
Subject: Public comment record for June 14 TRPA meeting

Lake Tahoe rated the #1 worst weekend getaway.....sums it up unfortunately

“ This naturally beautiful area is struggling under the weight of tourism so badly that the roads have become dust, traffic jams are common, and the lake itself has lost its clarity and beauty.

Once a pristine natural destination, the beaches are now packed and the trails are worn, creating a less enjoyable experience and more damage to the environment.”

<https://financebuzz.com/worst-weekend-getaways>

Is TRPA upholding its original intended responsibilities?

Sent from my iPhone
Niobe Burden Austere
Concerned resident in Tahoe Vista

Marja Ambler

From: E&R Straver <straver@charter.net>
Sent: Tuesday, June 13, 2023 6:42 PM
To: Marja Ambler
Subject: Public Comment June 14, 2023 housing meeting-please distribute

Dear TRPA and APC Board Members,

I am asking you to help protect Kings Beach.

Building height can either make or break the character of a town. It affects EVERYTHING from traffic to density and views, from environment to the sunlight itself. As an environmental agency I hope you will understand the dramatic impact that building height can have on so small a town.

Our work (and my work) on the Community Area Plan took years of time and energy from so many in the public. After many years of back forth, changes and amendments, it was finally passed and accepted by the TRPA and the Placer County Board of Supervisors. Please do not discard that work. Keep to the Area Plan, keep our communities livable. Thank you.

Regina Straver



Kings Beach



Incline Village



Say NO
to over development
in Kings Beach.



Tahoe City

Lake Tahoe

Help Preserve Our Environment



Developers want to change
the present guidelines
building heights greater
than 4 stories.

Keep building heights
within the guidelines
of the Area Plan.
4 stories (48') on the mountain side.
3 stories (36') on the beach side.



Date: June 13, 2023

Governing Board Members, TRPA Director and Staff
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Email: mambler@trpa.gov

Cc: Nicole Rinke Nicole.Rinke@doj.ca.gov and Sophie Wenzlau Sophie.Wenzlau@doj.ca.gov

Subject: Item V.A, TRPA Local Government & Housing Committee

On behalf of our over 1,000 members of the Sierra Club's Tahoe Area Group, this letter expresses our opposition to the proposed changes in the building code that would increase multi-family density by 240%, coverage by 75%, and height by 37% until a complete and thorough environmental analysis of the impacts, including cumulative impacts, from such a proposal is performed.

TRPA was formed to protect the Lake Tahoe Basin from overdevelopment. Yet, the trajectory since the last Regional Plan Update has been just that – reckless overdevelopment with mansions replacing much smaller homes and continued approvals of luxury condominiums with minimal to no affordable housing components to this new development throughout the Basin. The TRPA needs to take a step back, proceed with greater caution, and stop all approvals of building code changes, Tahoe Area Plan changes, and approvals of developments (including the large number of developments proposed in the North Basin that could bring more than 8,000 additional people to the Basin) until a thorough Basin-wide environmental analysis is performed. This analysis must review the incremental and cumulative impacts that have occurred since the Regional Plan Update. The environmental analysis should also examine the limits of human carrying capacity in the Tahoe Basin; i.e., the maximum number of humans that can live and/or visit without impacting the Basin's environs, and most importantly, Lake Tahoe.

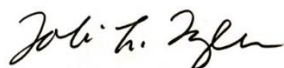
Roadway overcapacity impacts since the 2012 Regional Plan Update have jeopardized the safety and lives of both residents and visitors to the Basin. Increased height, density and coverage, and reduced setbacks and parking will incrementally and cumulatively increase traffic and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on roadways in the Tahoe Basin that are already at capacity. It also degrades the ability of those currently located in town centers to safely evacuate. A roadway-by-roadway fire evacuation capacity evaluation driven by accurate and substantial data is needed and should either be incorporated into the Basin-wide environmental analysis or done separately. As the California Attorney General has recommended in this [Guidance to Local](#)

[Governments to Mitigate Wildfire Risk from Proposed Developments in Fire-Prone Areas](#), there must be a thorough evacuation analysis performed. To quote the Best Practices guidance, “[t]he CEQA Guidelines require an analysis of “any significant environmental effects the project might cause or risk exacerbating by bringing development and people into the area affected,” including by locating development in wildfire risk areas.” Tahoe Basin is obviously and most definitely a wildfire risk area. Therefore, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that this analysis be completed.

Furthermore, representatives from the TRPA, City of South Lake Tahoe, and Counties of Washoe, Douglas, El Dorado, and Placer cannot possibly believe that all this new development that has already occurred, and that which will be proposed and sanctioned by these building code changes, has not and will not continue to increase VMT in the Basin. The 2021 changes to the VMT standard not only allows more VMT in the Basin, but increased the opaqueness of how VMT is calculated to such a degree that both the Governing Board members as well as staff cannot understand or explain the calculations. Yet, increases in construction of new development and its inherent influx of more and more people to the Basin continues unchecked and unmitigated. Continuing to believe that more bike trails will solve the increase in traffic from all this new development is magical thinking at best and completely irresponsible at worst from supposed and intended stewards of the Basin.

In summary, we urge you to take a step back and analyze the impacts of what you are proposing and have already approved. Lake Tahoe is suffering from an increase in algae along its shoreline due to the impacts of 15 million annual visitors. Bringing more and more people to the Basin will only exacerbate the decline in near shore water quality. Please reconsider this proposal for increased height, density and coverage and start acting according to your mandate and the [Compact](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tobi Tyler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Tobi Tyler
Vice Chair, Tahoe Area Group