

1.10.8 Cultural Resources Subelement

Overview

The Lake Tahoe Basin has a rich cultural and historical background spanning eras from early human use and occupation (around 8000 B.C.) to historical eras categorized as recently as the middle to late 1900s. The many and varied types of cultural and historic sites range from archaeological sites of Indian camps and trails to historical resources such as way stations, residences, resorts and other significant buildings.

The Cultural Resources Subelement provides direction as to the process by which cultural and historic resources are identified, protected, and preserved. Although Cultural Resources is not a threshold program area in the Regional Plan, the Compact specifically requires “a conservation plan for the preservation, development, utilization and management of scenic and natural resources,” including historical facilities.

The existing implementation strategies in the Cultural Subelement will remain in place with the Regional Plan Update. These include the following:

- The Historic Resources Map, which identifies the resources, buildings, and sites that have historic or cultural significance
- TRPA Code Chapter 29’s extension of resource protection to sites, objects, structures or other resources designated as historic, potentially historic, or for which designation is pending
- A project review process (coordinated with the applicable State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), county historical societies, and the Washoe Tribe) that identifies, designates, and protects resources not previously identified
- Standards that prohibit the demolition, disturbance, removal, or alteration of designated sites and resources unless TRPA has approved a resource protection plan
- TRPA Code Chapter 4’s regulation of demolition of structures, improvements, or facilities

Alternative 1—Continuation of Existing Regional Plan

Summary

The intent of the Cultural Resources goal and two associated policies is to provide guidance to identify, protect, and preserve significant historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources.

Goals and Policies

No changes to the 1987 Cultural Subelement Goals and Policies are proposed.

Implementation Measures

No additional implementation measures are proposed for the Cultural Subelement under Alternative 1.

Alternative 2

Summary

Under Alternative 2, the Goals and Policies of the current Plan would be retained or amended. Goals and associated policies would be added to acknowledge the importance of a wider range of the Region's historic and cultural eras of significance.

The Plan under Alternative 2 would identify the need for an updated inventory of significant historic resources. It would focus on identification and preservation of architecture that represents neighborhood character, and it would promote protection of the character of historic districts and structures during rehabilitation and redevelopment.

The concentrated development areas proposed with Alternative 2's land development strategies will place greater focus on redevelopment, potentially leading to accelerated inventory and identification of existing historic and cultural resources. Protection and preservation of these resources will require additional focus and attention.

Goals and Policies

Under Alternative 2, there would be four new or amended goals and associated policies. The first would involve the modification of an existing goal regarding identification and preservation of sites of historical, cultural, and architectural significance. This goal would be amended to extend protection to paleontological resources within the Region. One existing policy associated with that goal would be amended to extend protection from neglect, damage, or adverse alteration for all culturally or historically significant resources and sites, including those that represent historical or community character. Four new associated policies would be added to promote the following:

- protection of the character of historic districts designated as significant on historic registers
- maintenance, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse provisions for historically significant sites and resources
- protection of historically significant underwater resources
- consistent application of criteria, standards and procedures to designated and potential resources.

The second goal would reflect the Pathway process's desired condition for Cultural Resources: to protect, maintain, rehabilitate, and restore significant resources through the combination of private endeavors, public acquisition, adaptive reuse, and SHPO incentives. The existing policy of promoting the preservation and restoration of sites and structures through incentives and exemptions would be moved under this goal and would be modified to include historic districts. A new policy, suggested by the CA SHPO, to encourage planning for and acquisition of publically-accessible properties with associated cultural and historic resource values would be added under this new goal.

The third goal would be for recognized Indian tribes of the region to reestablish their traditional ties to Lake Tahoe. It would emphasize the previously underrepresented influence of the Washoe Tribe. An associated policy would require the consideration of tribal rights and concerns in assessing the impact of plans, projects, programs, and activities on tribal trust resources and cultural or sacred sites.

Finally, the fourth new or amended goal in the Cultural Resources Subelement under Alternative 2 would be to educate the public on the value of the Tahoe Region's culturally rich history. The associated new policy would be to provide interpretation and signage about this history.

Implementation Measures

In addition to maintaining the 1987 Plan's Implementation Measures, the following updates to the historic resource identification criteria, and amendments to the Code of Ordinances would be made to implement cultural resources-related policies described for Alternative 2:

- Develop criteria (in collaboration with the States' Historic Preservation Officers) for identifying and determining the potential historic significance and/or contribution of buildings that represent community character and are referred to architecturally as the "recent past" – the ones that are now or soon will be 50 years old or older. Consider the use of archeological sensitivity maps to assist in development of construction and mitigation protocols.
- Evaluate and add to the TRPA Historic and Cultural Resources Map additional structures and sites that have been identified as historically significant and/or eligible for listing on state and national historic registers.
- Review Chapter 29, with guidance from qualified experts, to identify inconsistencies with the proposed goals and policies and make the modifications needed to update the Code to current historic and cultural resource protection standards.
- Coordinate and consult with the Washoe Tribe during projects' environmental review process to identify culturally significant sites and resources on tribal trust resources or sites.

Alternative 3

Summary

The level of development anticipated for Alternative 3 may increase pressure to develop areas with historic and cultural resources. Therefore, there are changes to the Regional Plan recommended with this Alternative, and they are designed to identify, preserve, and protect cultural and historic resources within the Tahoe Region.

Under Alternative 3, the Goals and Policies of the current Plan would be retained or amended. Goals and associated policies would be added to acknowledge the importance of a wider range of the Region's historic and cultural eras of significance.

The Plan under Alternative 3 would identify the need for an updated inventory of significant historic resources. It would focus on identification and preservation of architecture that represents neighborhood character, and it would promote protection of the character of historic districts and structures during rehabilitation and redevelopment.

Goals and Policies

The goals and policies proposed under Alternative 3 would be the same as those proposed for Alternative 2.

Implementation Measures

The implementation measures proposed under Alternative 3 would be the same as those proposed for Alternative 2.

Alternative 4

Summary

Under Alternative 4, the Goals and Policies of the current Plan would be retained or amended. Goals and associated policies would be added to acknowledge the importance of a wider range of the Region's historic and cultural eras of significance.

The Plan under Alternative 4 would identify the need for an updated inventory of significant historic resources. It would focus on identification and preservation of architecture that represents neighborhood character, and it would promote protection of the character of historic districts and structures during rehabilitation and redevelopment.

Alternative 4's proposal to redirect the Basin's land-use pattern through public acquisition provides additional opportunities to protect and preserve cultural and historic resources.

Goals and Policies

The goals and policies, proposed under Alternative 4 would be the same as those proposed for Alternative 2.

Implementation Measures

The implementation measures proposed under Alternative 4 would be the same as those proposed for Alternative 2 with the following additions.

- Amend Chapter 29 to include maintenance requirements for historically significant buildings within designated historic districts.
- Amend Chapter 29 to require that when structures on the TRPA Historic and Cultural Resources Map are redeveloped, the redevelopment is designed and built within the historical context.
- Amend Chapter 26 and Design Standards for signs to require interpretive signage for designated historic sites on public land.
- Amend Chapters 29 and 54 to require all shorezone and lakezone projects to inventory and protect historic underwater resources.