

1.11.4 General Recreation Subelement

Overview

A broad spectrum of recreational opportunities can be enjoyed both in nonurban and urban settings, and numerous opportunities exist to provide varied and quality recreational experiences in the Lake Tahoe Region. High-quality recreational opportunities often depend on limiting conflicts between uses and ensuring that uses are compatible with the affected resources. Common issues between urban and nonurban recreation facilities lead to development of General Recreation as a new subelement for the action Alternatives 2, 3 and 4. The new General Recreation Subelement goals and policies would apply to a broad spectrum of recreation opportunities throughout the Tahoe Region.

The broad application of General Recreation goals and policies would focus efforts across dispersed, developed, and urban recreation facilities to provide a coordinated approach to ensure that the design of new recreation structures is sensitive to users and to the environment, provide public access to recreation sites through public land acquisition, and minimize impacts that limit access to existing public access points. A new policy to encourage the development of a Regional Recreation Plan would guide planning, design, and management of recreation opportunities on a regionwide level.

Alternative 1

Summary

Because the General Recreation Subelement is newly proposed for the Regional Plan Update, and Alternative 1 is the “No Action” Alternative, this Subelement would not be included (and there would be no Goals, Policies, or Implementation Measures).

Alternatives 2, 3, and 4

Summary

The three “action” alternatives’ addition of a General Recreation Subelement is the result of public and other agency input through the Pathway process. This new Subelement serves to consolidate the general issues applicable to the Dispersed, Developed, and Urban Recreation Subelements.

Goals and Policies

The General Recreation Subelement consists of two Pathway Desired Conditions. These will become two new goals, and they will be accompanied by eight policies. The first new goal is to provide a suitable spectrum of high-quality recreational opportunities while sustaining Tahoe’s natural setting. This captures the intent of the 1987 Dispersed Recreation goal (regarding the provision of high quality recreation opportunities) that was removed from the Dispersed Recreation Subelement.

The second new goal echoes the intent of the Recreation Threshold Policy Statement by seeking to provide additional high-quality access to natural areas where access is lawful and feasible, consistent with natural resource conditions and user expectations.

Four policies currently in Developed Recreation Subelement are amended and relocated to General Recreation, and four new policies are incorporated into this Subelement. The amended policies involve the following:

- expansion of recreation facilities in response to demand
- expansion of bike trails to provide alternatives for travel
- recreation development shall be consistent with the special resources of the area
- regulate intensity, timing, type, and location of use to protect resources and keep incompatible uses separate

The new policies address issues covering a variety of topics, including:

- development of a comprehensive Regional Recreation and Open Space Master Plan
- design requirements for new recreation facilities to be consistent with the landscape setting while meeting the needs of all users and responding to changes in recreation trends and technology
- supporting additional land acquisition for the purpose of public access
- considering the impact of public access due to limitations based on resource management purposes

Implementation Measures

The 1987 Regional Plan policies that are relocated into General Recreation for Alternative 2, 3, and 4 are currently being implemented by regulations in Chapter 33, Growth Management (for expansion of recreation in response to demand, for recreation development consistent with special resources of the area, for regulating intensity, timing and type of use to protect the resource and to separate incompatible uses) and Chapter 20, Land Coverage. The following additional measures are proposed to implement goals and policies relating to General Recreation:

- A separate process for rights-of-way and public easement abandonments to require TRPA approval would be added to Chapter 41, Subdivision and Chapter 53, Shorezone Tolerance Districts. The goal is to preserve public access to the shoreline of Lake Tahoe and other public lands, except when conveyed to a public agency for protection of a natural resource or other overriding public purpose.
- A new finding would be added to Section 33.6, Growth Management that requires new or expanded recreation facilities to demonstrate non-motorized connectivity (walkability) between nearby residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and recreation projects.
- Code Section 20.3.B(7), Coverage Standards, would be updated to add an accessibility requirement for new and existing recreation facilities.

Alternative 4 contains the following additional implementation measure:

- Update definition of “bike trail” to be separate from “transportation route.”