



Recreation and Open Space Element

INTRODUCTION

This element provides the policy context for the City of South Lake Tahoe to achieve its vision for future recreation and open space. Lake Tahoe is one of the world's most popular tourist attractions. From the picturesque mountains in the backdrop to the numerous recreational opportunities at the lake and at facilities surrounding the lake, there are activities for almost anyone. A majority of tourists visit South Lake Tahoe for recreation, such as boating, camping, and skiing. Outdoor recreation and tourism associated with Lake Tahoe is the primary economic engine of South Lake Tahoe.

The Recreation and Open Space Element contains goals and policies that seek to protect open space and enhance recreational opportunities for South Lake Tahoe residents and visitors. The Element also encourages expansion of eco-tourism as an economic opportunity. Existing parks and recreational facilities are shown on Figure PQP-1, and planned parks and recreational facilities are shown on the land use diagram inserts in Part III-Neighborhood Priority Lists. Goals and policies are organized under the following headings:

- Parks and Recreation
- Open Space

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE VISION

The following is the City of South Lake Tahoe's vision for future recreation and open spaces:

"In 2030 South Lake Tahoe has become the premier tourist destination in the Tahoe Basin. The city attracts nature lovers, adventure sport enthusiasts, and families through numerous recreation and lodging options including the Lakeview Commons project, that provides multiple recreation amenities for residents and tourists alike. The project includes green building design, energy and water conservation measures, public transit, and state-of-the-art water quality improvements. The city has also become a premier ecotourism destination, with multiple businesses

that highlight the natural and cultural environment of South Lake Tahoe. These businesses are also innovators in promoting recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation and other technology innovations.”

PARKS AND RECREATION

South Lake Tahoe has an extensive existing parks system. Many of these facilities either need routine maintenance or major renovations. This section contains policies to provide for the maintenance of existing facilities and for the development of new parkland and facilities throughout South Lake Tahoe to serve all neighborhoods.

Goal ROS-1

To maintain and expand South Lake Tahoe’s public park system and recreational opportunities to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors. Source: GPU Consultant

Policy ROS-1.1: Recreational Services

The City shall design and develop recreational services to promote full use of recreational facilities within their design capacity. Source: Stateline/Ski Run Community Plan

Policy ROS-1.2: Recreational Opportunity Access Improvement

The City shall improve connections and access to a wide range of recreational opportunities, which will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. Source: Sustainability Plan

Policy ROS-1.3: Recreation Opportunities for Multi-Seasonal Conditions

The City shall work with local agencies (e.g., Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Lake Tahoe Community College) and community groups to develop high-quality, year-round recreational and athletic facilities to help combat youth obesity and diabetes, encourage healthy lifestyles, and promote mental health. These can include seasonal inflatable domes over existing facilities and the use of synthetic field surfaces that will also support sustainability and lessen environmental impacts. Source: Staff, Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.4: Bijou Golf Course

The City shall expand the Bijou Golf Course as a high-quality, year-round golf facility for local residents that provides a quality recreational experience while preserving and improving Stream Environment Zones (SEZ). This shall include, but not be limited to, an improved clubhouse, improved parking, a driving range, a chipping and putting area, improved maintenance and operations facilities, improved user amenities, access for winter recreational usage including X-C skiing, and motorized winter recreational activities. Source: Staff, Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.5: Community Pool

The City shall develop high-quality community pool facilities that can be used year-round, which includes such amenities as a permanent/retractable roof, splash pool, therapy pool, pool sprays, pool climbing wall, adventure apparatus and slides.

Source: Staff, Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.6: El Dorado Beach and Boat Ramp

The City shall retrofit the Boat Ramp at El Dorado beach so it can be used at both low and high lake levels. The City shall protect the ramp and beach area from erosion, silt build-up, and high wave levels. Source: Staff, Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.7: Bijou Park

The City shall improve Bijou Park and enhance its value to the local community and visitors through the addition of such amenities as building a new world class level SK8 Park that has the capacity to accommodate both SK8boarding and BMX biking, improving the playground area and dog park, building a tot lot and picnic area, improving user facilities and amenities, and incorporating the disc golf course into all improvements. Source: Staff, Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.8: Lakeview Commons Project 

The City shall develop the Lakeview Commons Project as a vibrant and sustainable community space with a central gathering place for passive and active recreation. Source: Sustainability Plan.

Policy ROS-1.9: Interconnected Public Recreation and Open Space System

The City shall develop an interconnected system of open spaces, community parks, plazas, bike and pedestrian trails, and other types of public and private spaces as part of new development and redevelopment of existing sites. Source: Draft Tahoe Valley Community Plan.

Policy ROS-1.10: Public Trail Incorporation in Private Developments

The City shall require public trails and plazas to be incorporated in the development and redevelopment of commercial, industrial, public, and multi-family projects. Source: Draft Tahoe Valley Community Plan.

Policy ROS-1.11: Playground Development

The City shall develop playgrounds within City-owned parks. Source: Draft Tahoe Valley Community Plan.

Policy ROS-1.12: Neighborhood/Pocket Park Amenity Development

The City shall develop pocket parks in each neighborhood, which may include passive and active recreation, such as picnic tables, basketball and tennis courts, dog areas, and tot lots. Source: Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.13: Joint-Use Facilities in Parks

The City should, as feasible, develop parks as joint-use facilities (e.g., stormwater facilities with ball fields). Source: Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.14: Community Garden and Greenhouse Expansion

The City shall encourage the expansion and cultivation of community gardens and greenhouses as part of park areas. Source: Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.15: Park Maintenance

The City shall encourage neighborhood groups, service clubs, and other organizations to help maintain City parks. Source: Stakeholder

Policy ROS-1.16: Farmers Markets 

The City shall support private farmers markets that promote healthy and locally-grown produce. Source: Stakeholder, Sustainability Plan.

Policy ROS-1.17: Vacant Parcel Consolidation

The City shall explore opportunities to consolidate publically-owned vacant parcels in existing residential neighborhoods in order to develop neighborhood parks. Source: GPU Consultant

Policy ROS-1.18: Vacant Public Land Enhancement

The City shall encourage public agencies that own vacant land within the city to enhance their property with new recreation facilities . Source: Staff

Policy ROS-1.19: Historic Resource Preservation on Park and Recreation Land

The City shall encourage the preservation of historic resources located on parks and other recreational facilities (e.g., Barton Ranch). Source: Staff

OPEN SPACE

South Lake Tahoe has an extensive network of open space that attracts visitors, improves the quality of life for residents, and provides important habitat for species. The policies in this section seek to enhance public access to open space as well as restore, protect, and connect critical habitat.

Goal ROS-2	To provide areas of permanent conservation that include passive recreational opportunities. Source: GPU Consultants
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Policy ROS-2.1: Open Space and Critical Environmental Area Protection

The City shall use the best science and engineering technologies to protect and preserve open space and critical environmental areas. Source: South Lake Tahoe Smart Growth Principles

Policy ROS-2.2: Policy: Riparian Area Preservation and Restoration 

The City shall protect and restore key riparian areas and natural features. Source: Sustainability Plan.

Policy ROS-2.3: Providing Public Access to Existing Open Space

The City shall continue to work with public and private agencies to provide public access to open space in the form of hiking and biking trails. Source: South Lake Tahoe 1999 General Plan

Policy ROS-2.4: Increase Public Access to Lake Tahoe

The City shall increase public access to Lake Tahoe. Source: Stateline/Ski Run Community Plan

Policy ROS-2.5: Functional Open Space in Redeveloped Areas 

The City shall incorporate new functional open spaces in redeveloped areas to serve as both public amenities and to provide opportunities for urban water quality improvements. Source: Sustainability Plan

Policy ROS-2.6: Connecting Surrounding Forests to Urban Open Spaces 

The City shall connect surrounding forests to urban open spaces, parks, natural areas and SEZs when appropriate to further biodiversity and habitat. Source: Sustainability Plan.

Policy ROS-2.7: Publicly-Owned Open Space Maintenance and Preservation

The City shall preserve and maintain publicly-owned open spaces that provides a visual break from the urban environment as well as views of surrounding mountains, forests, and stream environment zones. Source: Draft Tahoe Valley Community Plan.

Policy ROS-2.8: Restoration Effort Protection

The City shall ensure that public access does not jeopardize restoration activities and water quality treatment projects on publicly-owned open space lands. Source: Draft Tahoe Valley Community Plan.

Policy ROS-2.9: Permanent Open Space Protection

The City shall permanently protect as open space areas of natural resource value, including forests, wetlands, stream and riparian corridors, and floodplains. Source: GPU Consultants

Policy ROS-2.10: Sufficient Size Open Space and Natural Areas

The City shall maintain open space and natural areas that are interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity, accommodate wildlife movement, and provide more sustainable ecosystems. Source: GPU Consultants

Policy ROS-2.11: Open Space Funding

The City should continue to seek and obtain local, State, and Federal funding for beach, meadow, and open space acquisition. Source: South Lake Tahoe 1999 General Plan

Policy ROS-2.12: Public Land and Facility Naming Rights

The City shall work with interested parties to establish a program for naming rights and sponsorships regarding open space preserves, parks, and other public lands and facilities. Source: Staff

Policy ROS-2.13: Large Publically-Owned Properties

The City shall pursue means for lessening the financial burden of providing public services to large, publically-owned properties (not City-owned) within the city limits. Source: Staff, GPU Consultants