



# FLEXIBLE PARKING STANDARDS

for Affordable through Achievable Housing Development  
in the Lake Tahoe Region

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**To be considered by all jurisdictions and agencies responsible for setting and approving flexible parking standards for development within the Lake Tahoe Region. This recommendation is made because:**

1. Providing flexible parking standards is a necessary priority to further affordable through achievable housing development in the region; and
2. All jurisdictions and agencies governing parking requirements should consider altering their parking policies accordingly.

This recommendation recognizes that, upon review, jurisdictions and agencies may adopt policies offering more or less flexibility than recommended or effect no change.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Affordable through Achievable Housing:** to maintain consistency throughout South Tahoe and the entire Tahoe Basin, this terminology corresponds with TRPA's definition of affordable housing (<80% AMI), moderate/workforce (81% to 120% AMI), and achievable (above 120% AMI up to 195% AMI depending upon Tahoe area).

**Near-term:** actions that apply to affordable through achievable housing development in the pipeline as needed or requested to make them feasible to construct.

**Mid-term:** actions that can and should be completed within the next 3 to 6 months to support both near-term and longer-term affordable through achievable housing development.

**Long-term:** actions that, by their nature or necessity, will take 6 months or more to implement, but are necessary to support future affordable through achievable housing development.

## HOW THE FLEXIBLE PARKING RECOMMENDATION HELPS:

**Adoption of these recommendations will help incentivize the development of affordable through achievable housing by:**

- Reducing the costs associated with providing surface or covered parking. The average construction cost per space, excluding land cost, in a parking structure in the United States is about \$24,000 for above ground parking and \$34,000 for underground parking. In an affordable housing project with a tight budget, every required parking space means less money that can be spent on housing.
- Reducing coverage occupied by surface parking as part of a project, providing many benefits by:
  - Requiring less additional coverage to be purchased/obtained (where applicable) and
  - Allowing more units to be constructed on-site, thereby permitting some developments to build to zoned density limits. Many parcels in the City cannot build to zoned densities due combined coverage, parking and height limitations. In South Lake Tahoe, each on-site surface parking space requires 200 sq. ft. of coverage. Reducing on-site parking requirements means more housing units can be constructed within the same coverage area;
- Eliminate the need for project-by-project parking studies to receive reductions, which adds cost and time to development.
- Providing certainty to developers and planners when designing/proposing affordable through achievable housing rather than utilizing uncertain, discretionary parking review when reductions are needed.
- Encouraging affordable through achievable housing production in City core and transit-oriented areas where parking reductions are tied to transit access. A review of developments funded through the Department of Housing and Community Development's Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Program (TOD program) shows that lower income households drive 25 to 30 percent fewer miles when living within one-half mile of transit than those living in non-TOD program areas. When living within one-quarter mile, they drove nearly 50 percent less.
- Allowing developers to construct more housing units with public and private resources rather than unneeded parking spaces. A parking study of Sierra Gardens Apartments in South Lake Tahoe showed that, at peak parking periods, only 81 cars are parked in the 111 required parking spaces (i.e., over 25% of spaces are vacant). This usage equates to 1.07 vehicles per unit.
- Linking reduced parking needs of affordable through achievable units with VMT reductions. This is a growing priority of the state Attorney General and will help support other local housing incentives, such as land use dedications (CTC, etc.).



## NEAR-TERM POLICY RECOMMENDATION (current/pipeline projects)

Near-term Policy Update	Roles		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow all proposed affordable through achievable housing units to utilize <b>the lesser</b> of parking standards specified in the current California Density Bonus Law (California Government Code Sections 65915 – 65918) and AB 744 or local codes. State law standards are as follows:</li> </ul> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>California Density Bonus Law</b></p> <p>Studio/1-bedroom units: 1 space            2- and 3-bedrooms units: 2 spaces            4+-bedroom units: 2.5 spaces</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>AB 744 (if within ½ mile of a major transit stop)</b></p> <p>If 100% affordable/achievable: 0.5 spaces/unit            If mixed-income development: 0.5 spaces/bedroom</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Define “major transit stop” per AB 744 as “access to operational transit within ½ mile walk,” pursuant to the existing TRPA transit-oriented development (TOD) standard (see TRPA code § 11.8.4.C.1.a). This definition reflects the realities of transit service in South Tahoe and will ensure a consistent definition throughout the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursuant to the current City of South Lake Tahoe Parking Code             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define “technically adequate” as it pertains to individual project parking studies that are required under current parking requirements and help or subsidize the ability for applicants to meet this criteria, including:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist developers in using existing parking studies within the Region to fulfill parking study requirements and/or</li> <li>Subsidize the cost of individual project parking studies that are required.</li> </ul> </li> <li>If a non-profit developer, waive the Use Permit fee required as part of a reduced parking request, as permitted by the current code.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>California Density Bonus Law</b></p> <p>Studio/1-bedroom units: 1 space            2- and 3-bedrooms units: 2 spaces            4+-bedroom units: 2.5 spaces</p>	<p><b>AB 744 (if within ½ mile of a major transit stop)</b></p> <p>If 100% affordable/achievable: 0.5 spaces/unit            If mixed-income development: 0.5 spaces/bedroom</p>	<p>City of South Lake Tahoe lead; Counties (consistency); TRPA support</p>
<p><b>California Density Bonus Law</b></p> <p>Studio/1-bedroom units: 1 space            2- and 3-bedrooms units: 2 spaces            4+-bedroom units: 2.5 spaces</p>	<p><b>AB 744 (if within ½ mile of a major transit stop)</b></p> <p>If 100% affordable/achievable: 0.5 spaces/unit            If mixed-income development: 0.5 spaces/bedroom</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate flexibility into TRPA code as it relates to jurisdictional parking requirements. More specifically, revise code to generally refer to the most recently adopted jurisdictional parking requirements – generally defer to local jurisdictions.</li> </ul>	<p>TRPA lead;            City, Counties support</p>		

<sup>1</sup> No transit stops in South Tahoe meet the more urban definition of “major transit stop” in AB 744: “a site containing an existing rail transit station, a ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service, or the intersection of two or more major bus routes **with a frequency of service of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods.**”



## MID- TO LONG-TERM POLICY RECOMMENDATION (Over 3 months)

Mid- to Long-term Policy Update	Roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate a basin-wide parking study to support reduction of parking standards for affordable through achievable housing; promote consistency across the Region.</li> <li>Ensure study relates reductions to VMT. This will support more than just parking reductions (see last bullet on page 2, above).</li> <li>Ensure study provides the information needed by the City to support adoption of reduced Parking Code standards, including specified additional reductions for other developer-proposed parking mitigation measures (shared parking, car share, shuttle service, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p>TRPA lead; City, Counties support</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement changes to Parking Code requirements to, at a minimum:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the base level of parking required for affordable through achievable units;</li> <li>Specify additional by-right reductions permissible by various mitigating options (shared parking, car share, shuttle service, etc.).</li> <li>Remove the Use Permit requirement when projects seek parking reductions. If the code is updated to make parking reductions by-right through revised base parking level requirements and through specified reductions for parking mitigation measures (shared parking, etc.), then Use Permit review would be unnecessary. Even if some discretion is retained, parking reduction review can and should occur as part of the development review process, rather than a separate (and additional) Use Permit process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>City of South Lake Tahoe lead; Counties (consistency); TRPA support</p>

## RECOMMENDATION SUPPORT OPTIONS

**Option 1:** Adopt all of the above: Seek approval to research and implement the near- and mid- to long-term Policy changes as they pertain to [AGENCY].

OR

**Option 2:** Adopt each separately: Seek approval on each of the near-, mid- to long-term Policy changes as they pertain to [AGENCY]. (Near-Term recommendation (vote), Mid- to Long-Term recommendation (vote), etc.)

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## **HOUSING TAHOE PARTNERSHIP PARTNERS**

(Alphabetical order)

ADVANCE	Mortgage Companies
Bank of America	Mountain Housing Council
Barton Foundation	Placer County
Barton Health	Private Developers
Business Owners	Progress for Tahoe
CA Tahoe Conservancy	Property Management Firms
City of South Lake Tahoe	South Tahoe Alliance of Resorts
Community Members	Sierra at Tahoe Ski Resort
Darke Marketing	South Lake Tahoe Chamber
Douglas County	South Tahe PUD
Edgewood Companies	St Joseph Community Land Trust
El Dorado County	South Tahoe Association of Realtors
El Dorado Community Foundation	Tahoe Beach Club
Family Resource Center	Tahoe Chamber
Lake Valley Properties	Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation/MHC
Lakeside Inn-Casino	Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
League to Save Lake Tahoe	Tahoe Transportation District
Lake Tahoe Community College	USBank
Lake Tahoe Unified School District	Vail (Heavenly and Kirkwood)
Real Estate Brokers/Companies	Workforce and Affordable Housing Developers





TAHOE PROSPERITY CENTER

**ABOUT US:**

Tahoe Prosperity Center is the region's only community and economic development organization. We bring all six government jurisdictions, agencies, business, education, and non-profits together to tackle the region's toughest problems. Housing for Tahoe's workforce is one of those problems. The Tahoe Prosperity Center is the facilitator of the Housing Tahoe Partnership – a collaborative effort to find solutions so that local residents and workers can live, work and play in Lake Tahoe. We convene key stakeholders, identify current barriers, recommend solutions and promote projects that provide local housing.

**VISION:**

Transforming local housing options so that residents and workers can live, work and thrive in Lake Tahoe.

**MISSION:**

Accelerating housing solutions to produce, maintain, upgrade, reuse and unlock homes attainable for residents and workers in Lake Tahoe.