



July 28, 2020

The Honorable David Polivy, Mayor
The Honorable Anna Klovstad, Vice Mayor
The Honorable Jessica Abrams
The Honorable Tony Commendatore
The Honorable David Tirman
Town of Truckee Town Council
10183 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161

**RE: Agenda Item 7.2 – General Plan Update Progress Report –
Public Engagement Discussion including Consideration of Additional Funding**

Mayor Polivy and Council Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on activities related to the General Plan Update. The Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe represents the broad cross section of the construction industry, including builders, subcontractors, suppliers, and professionals like architects, attorneys, and financial institutions. Many of our members live or work in Truckee.

Updating the General Plan is the single most important activity the community can do to prepare for the future. I have shared with GPAC that we are trying very hard to get CATT members involved in the GPU because General Plan decisions affect the construction industry in many ways – their families, their neighborhoods, and their livelihoods are all affected by General Plan policies and programs. We do not want to come in at the end of the process with surprises so we participate early on to help provide a range of perspectives.

The July 28 staff report included statements that appear to reject/minimize/nullify public participation in general and CATT member participation in specific. CATT members did nothing wrong in expressing their opinions. You as the elected leaders can send a different, more welcoming message to those in the community thinking about participation. The Town Vision Statements (in the current 2025 General Plan and draft in the 2040 General Plan) and The Truckee Way respect and embrace citizen involvement and differing points of view. This goes beyond CATT – it applies to any interested individual, neighborhood, or group who have something to say. We look to you to demonstrate that those principles of inclusion and acceptance are still valid and appropriate. CATT members and the community deserve that affirmative message from you.

Giving everyone the opportunity to say what they want for Truckee’s future is very time consuming but doing so insures that decision makers have heard as many voices as possible. Those voices become part of the “stakeholder” world moving forward. Isn’t Truckee fortunate to have caring citizens who want to spend the time on important topics like the GPU?? We think so. As the GPU moves closer to decision points in the timeline, more citizens may get involved and we should expect and welcome that. The

Town exists to serve the community. Including citizens in the process is one way the Town serves the community and that inclusivity should be a desired hallmark of the GPU, something we can all proudly point to as this important task progresses.

The natural result of a broad-based effort to solicit input is that some ideas and preferences do not gain traction and some do. CATT, like any stakeholder group, has to do the work of presenting facts to justify a position. That is a responsibility we take very seriously.

CATT response to points in the July 28 staff report:

1) GPAC Facilitator

CATT strongly believes an independent third party should be kept as an integral part of the team. This person helps GPAC navigate through the complexities of policy discussion and decision making. Having a town staff planning person run the show changes the tone of the meetings – the neutral person is replaced with someone with a direct interest in the decisions and the power to influence projects, for good or for bad. Having an independent party takes away the potential criticism that staff intentionally neglected someone’s point of view or intentionally favored someone’s point of view. That independent party is there to assist GPAC and is money well spent, in our opinion. In an email from Town staff (D. Nishimori to P. Davison 7/26/20), it appears that some monies do remain to pay at least part of a continuing contract for a facilitator: “The cost of Nora for quoted at \$70k originally and we have used about half of that do date.”

2) GPAC

CATT supports the original role and power of GPAC. It should not be up to staff to determine where there is a lack of consensus and define a “major” topic. GPAC needs to resume meeting in August and start making decisions on the policy language in the General Plan elements (at least one meeting). Another meeting can be focused on decisions regarding the Climate Action Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan. The GPAC meetings should be preceded by workshops where information is provided and the public can send in questions as the workshop is being presented. Workshops that allow back and forth Q&A are very helpful. GPAC needs to select a preferred Land Use Alternative – the current schedule shows that happening in October but that should probably be pushed back to November (before Thanksgiving). Planning Commission and Town Council approval of a preferred alternative should be set for January 2021 - after the holidays.

3) Timeline

CATT supports extending the GPU timeline to allow sufficient time for GPAC, community members, staff, consultants and others to pick up where we left off in March when COVID-19 turned our world upside down. We think six months makes sense and could support a longer extension with additional justification. The current schedule shows the final GPU adoption hearing by the Town Council in October 2021. A six month extension makes the new date for the final Council adoption hearing April 2022.

4) Canyon Springs

CATT does not support the ranking of what was called the Canyon Springs area adjacent to Glenshire as the most important land use discussion for the GPU. Singling out that area because it is controversial has made all other specific site discussion disconnected and of secondary importance. Requiring a decision on one site before any other site can be discussed seems arbitrary, especially when community-wide discussion of all sites may result in that area formerly known as Canyon Springs retaining its current land use designation and increasing density range. And if Canyon Springs designation and density does change, there will likely be another area of Town affected so the review of these 280 acres will necessitate another area being included anyway. Decisions can not be made in a vacuum. Remember,

there is no project to consider - this is about determining what the appropriate land use and appropriate range of density is for an area and how that land use and density fits into the overall Town picture. How can the public and decision makers adequately evaluate one area's designation or density without knowing what the designations and densities are of all the other areas? We think a town wide approach is needed.

5) EIR

CATT is comfortable giving this review responsibility to the Planning Commission. The Commission should hold an informational workshop first (a month before the adoption hearing) where the public can send in questions as the workshop is being presented.

6) Public Engagement

CATT strongly supports the hiring of a public relations firm or outreach specialist to focus on public engagement (live Zoom workshops, online and written/mailed surveys, social media ads, info on website, etc). At your March 10 meeting where a GPU update was provided, the staff report notes (page 2): "To ensure that this work can go forward with all of the other Planning priorities and to keep GPAC working, staff will be proposing an additional \$200,000 in the General Plan Update CIP 1903 for FY 20/21 should Council support the hiring of a consulting firm to expand the marketing, outreach and management of the remaining public engagement process." Given the three month temporary budget for FY 20/21 and fiscal uncertainties, we propose that staff return to you in August with a draft public engagement plan and range of costs so decisions can be made with as much information as possible. GPAC should also be asked to provide comment on the public engagement plan.

7) Prioritization

CATT is acutely aware of the heavy load on planning staff. If the GPU is prioritized on the Planning Commission/Council meeting agendas, with no other changes, current planning will be delayed (July 28 staff report page 4). There are numerous negative ripple effects associated with a planning delay and that should be the last resort. Other draconian measures could be employed, such as a moratorium. It is our understanding that Government Code 66300(b)(1) offers guidance on what the Town can or cannot do with a moratorium on residentially zoned parcels:

(b) (1) Notwithstanding any other law except as provided in subdivision (i), with respect to land where housing is an allowable use, an affected county or an affected city shall not enact a development policy, standard, or condition that would have any of the following effects:

(A) Changing the general plan land use designation, specific plan land use designation, or zoning of a parcel or parcels of property to a less intensive use or reducing the intensity of land use within an existing general plan land use designation, specific plan land use designation, or zoning district below what was allowed under the land use designation and zoning ordinances of the affected county or affected city, as applicable, as in effect on January 1, 2018, except as otherwise provided in clause (ii) of subparagraph (B). For purposes of this subparagraph, "less intensive use" includes, but is not limited to, reductions to height, density, or floor area ratio, new or increased open space or lot size requirements, or new or increased setback requirements, minimum frontage requirements, or maximum lot coverage limitations, or anything that would lessen the intensity of housing.

(B) (i) Imposing a moratorium or similar restriction or limitation on housing development, including mixed-use development, within all or a portion of the jurisdiction of the affected county or city, other than to specifically protect against an imminent threat to the health and safety of persons residing in, or within the immediate vicinity of, the area subject to the moratorium or for projects specifically identified as existing restricted affordable housing.

(ii) The affected county or affected city, as applicable, shall not enforce a zoning ordinance imposing a moratorium or other similar restriction on or limitation of housing development until it has submitted the ordinance to, and received approval from, the department. The department shall approve a zoning ordinance submitted to it pursuant to this subparagraph only if it determines that the zoning ordinance satisfies the requirements of this subparagraph.

If the department denies approval of a zoning ordinance imposing a moratorium or similar restriction or limitation on housing development as inconsistent with this subparagraph, that ordinance shall be deemed void.”

The simplest, least stressful way to handle the load is to hire temporary staff. According to town staff (D. Nishimori to P. Davison 7/24/20): “This slowdown (current planning) is likely in the months range not beyond 6 months though. The Council could hire a consultant or another staff planner to either process land use applications or work on the General Plan. Time spent on land use applications is paid for by the project applicant. Time spent on the General Plan is General Fund-funded.” CATT respectfully requests the Town Council direct staff to return in August with some ballpark dollar amount that would be needed for that temporary planning person or consultant i.e. \$50,000 for 6 months.

8) Property Owner Involvement

While this July 28 staff report does include some mention on page 5 about transferring density and avoiding a potential “takings” of private property, the virtual surveys/ land use exercises fall short of potential success because property owners of selected sites were not consulted for input prior to the exercises being released for public comment. There were a couple of references to property owner desire incorporated into the workbook/survey but otherwise, property owner connection was sadly lacking. We explain more about our frustration with this missing critical step in our June 2 letter to the Town. I have added that letter as an addendum to this letter.

9) Housing

Thanks to Town staff for mentioning SB 330 to preserve residential density (page 6 of staff report). This GPU, through the Land Use and Housing Elements, is tasked with finding new sites for residential use or increasing density on increasing sites to house those who want to live here. Rough estimates of our commuter workforce are in the thousands – thousands of people work in Truckee but live elsewhere. If given a chance, they would likely live here. Existing residents live in substandard housing – too small, too large, energy wasters, unsafe – or expensive housing that forces them to forgo other necessities. Given the current housing crisis, we continue to beat the drum that increasing the supply of locals housing must be a top GPU priority and open space conversions that take residentially zoned land out of the housing inventory should be examined very closely.

10) SB 2 Housing Re-Zone Analysis

On June 23, 2020, the Council awarded the bid for this analysis to PlaceWorks. PlaceWorks will concentrate on eight sites as identified in the Town’s Housing Element (pages H-6 and 7):

- The Residences at Jibboom (APNs 019-102-011, -012, -013, -014, -015, and -017);
- Truckee Tahoe Lumber (APN 019-030-051);
- Gateway Site (APN 018-570-063);
- Gray’s Crossing (APNs 019-770-002, 043-010-007, and 043-010-005);
- Joerger Ranch Phase III (APN 019-620-060);
- High Altitude Fitness Gym (APN 018-580-052);
- RPL Properties (APN 018-800-015); and
- Town Riverview Corporation Yard (APN 019-440-079).

PlaceWorks notes on page 27 of their proposal to the Town (page 7 of the June 23 Town pdf) that “The Town Council will select no more than five sites for General Plan Amendments and/or rezoning as well as related environmental review.” And on page 31 of the PlaceWorks proposal (page 11 of the June 23 Town pdf), it is stated, “As shown in the schedule, we anticipate that our work on the project can be completed by February 28, 2021, with adoption hearings in March 2021.” CATT thinks this analysis of Housing sites should be added to the schedule diagram on page 8 of the July 28 staff report so everyone is aware of the additional process and information yet to come.

Thank you for considering our point of view. Please do not hesitate to contact me (pat@ca-tt.com or 530.550.9999) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF TRUCKEE TAHOE



Pat Davison
Truckee North Tahoe Government Affairs Manager

Addendum: CATT June 2 letter re Downtown Specific Plan Land Use Alternatives



June 2, 2020 – added two sentences to Site 2 – page 4

May 29, 2020

Denyelle Nishimori
Director, Community Development Department
Jenna Gatto
Planning Manager
Town of Truckee
10183 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161

RE: CATT response to survey for General Plan/Downtown Specific Plan Update

Dear Denyelle and Jenna:

Thank you for answering our questions on the video, powerpoint, and survey related to an update of the Downtown Specific Plan as part of the Town's General Plan Update. CATT members have spent numerous hours going through these documents and the current Downtown Specific Plan. This letter includes some general comments as well as comments on the six opportunity sites featured in the survey.

Please do not hesitate to contact me (530.550.9999 or pat@ca-tt.com) if you have any questions about our comments. Thank you for considering our perspective.

Sincerely,

CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF TRUCKEE TAHOE

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Pat Davison'.

Pat Davison
Government Affairs Manager

cc: The Honorable Dave Polivy, Mayor

PROPERTY OWNERS AND DEVELOPERS INPUT IN THE SURVEY OPTIONS

The Town presented six opportunity sites with project options. Some of the sites have current development plans or designs in the pipeline (Residences at Jibboom, Old County Corp Yard) or there is no project proposal from an owner (Dependable Tow). These owners and developers should have been consulted prior to the survey. Soliciting comment for General Plan/Downtown changes when the property owner requests that help or agrees to that added step is perfectly acceptable but it is very distressing to see the Town asking for public comment on possible future uses of these sites without the knowledge, and more importantly, the consent of the owner. This adds another burden to an already onerous process.

It minimizes or totally dismisses the input of an owner or applicant, in conflict with The Truckee Way (“When a community concern arises the Town believes its role is to reach out and actively engage all segments of the community in an open and transparent dialogue.”), the 2025 General Plan Vision (“We will promote opportunities for all stakeholders to participate in the land use decision-making process and are committed to balancing community needs and values with the rights of individuals.”) as well as the draft 2040 General Plan Vision (“In 2040, Truckee is a welcoming, inclusive and thriving mountain town ...”).

There will always be differences of opinion but how those differences are handled is the issue here. Circumventing the normal process by subjecting projects to Town-sponsored opinion polling is arbitrary and capricious, to say the least. And of course, experience has taught us that it is extremely difficult to write survey questions that don’t lead respondents’ thinking down a particular path. This method of decision-making brings with it a variety of risks which are very difficult to mitigate.

And to what end – do the survey results get buried in some General Plan Appendix, never to be seen again? Or do they take on new life as an exhibit or evidence of public support or opposition when a formal project for that site gets in front of HPAC or the Planning Commission? Either way, using these six sites as the basis of community discussion limits the energy and focus on the Downtown. That is a lost opportunity.

Instead of unilaterally looking at six sites, why not explore future use of any Downtown site from a partnership perspective – getting the owners to be your partners in suggestions for new commercial, residential, or public uses (parking garage, amphitheater, park, transit center). Conflict and confusion could have been avoided had the Town chosen to act in a more upfront and collaborative fashion, following the guidance in the Truckee Way and Vision statements. What should have been an open and inclusive process is now somewhat tainted.

ADD DOWNTOWN MIXED USE TO GP LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The Downtown Specific Plan already includes “Mixed Use” as a land use designation (Chapter 2, page 6): *“This land use designation is applied to areas appropriate for a mix of commercial, office, lodging, and*

residential uses. In areas of existing mixed-use development, such as in the Commercial Core, a mix of uses should be encouraged, but will not be mandatory. In areas of new development, such as the Old Mill Site, a mix of land uses shall be a required part of development.”

We think it makes sense to add “Mixed Use” as a General Plan Designation – maybe as an overlay for certain areas throughout Truckee like the Downtown. There are seven overlay designations in the existing 2025 General Plan (page 2-13, pages 2-38 to 2-45) but none which feature the Downtown. The Downtown Specific Plan clearly indicates that mixed use is allowed for existing development and required for new development. Including a General Plan “Mixed Use” land use designation provides consistency between the General Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan.

JOBS

We believe Downtown zoning should accommodate and encourage businesses that would offer higher paying jobs and permanent career opportunities

PARKING

Additional parking will be needed for all downtown development to meet existing shortfalls and future needs. Providing additional parking through construction of parking structures and/or additional lots will likely need to be a public project as it will be too costly to put on any single private development project. Timing of the construction of additional parking will need to be in sync with other new development.

INDEPENDENT PLANNING

The Town should not require individual owners to submit a master plan covering multiple different parcels and owners, such as for Hilltop. Each owner should be allowed to move forward with what makes sense for their own parcel and not be dependent on a plan or approval of adjacent owners. It is possible that adjacent parcels could have competing interests and the likelihood of finding a mutually agreeable plan for multiple parcels unnecessarily adds another burden to the process.

Specific comments on the six opportunity sites

1. *Old County Corp Yard + Dependable Tow*

Which option do you prefer?

CATT – We prefer Option A (preserves the current Public Parking land use on the Dependable Tow site and the Commercial land use on the Old County Corp Yard site). The separate study on potential uses of the Old County Corp Yard should address options. That study is a much better vehicle to identify opportunities, constraints, alternatives, and costs than this virtual exercise.

There are potential developers for the Old County Corp Yard and they should be allowed to explore uses through the concurrent study.

What do you like or dislike about your preferred option?

CATT – We prefer Option A because it maintains the current uses until such time as the Old County Corp Yard study is done and owners/potential developers who want to make changes can proceed through the normal planning process. Option B does not appear to have the support of the owners/potential developers, which is a fatal flaw in our opinion.

Are there other land uses we should consider?

CATT – We would consider other land uses for Option B with the voluntary agreement of the affected owners/potential developers.

2. Residences at Jibboom + Post Office Block

Which option do you prefer?

CATT – We have no preference for the Residences at Jibboom because the owner is still refining the actual development proposal, based on public input received through the normal approval process. Neither option is supported by the property owner. The property owner withdrew what the Town calls option A nine months ago and option B was something developed by the consultant without including the property owner. We prefer Option A/B (are the same) for the Post Office Block (redevelopment to include a public parking garage and enclosure and consolidation of existing trash areas in one location).

What do you like or dislike about your preferred option?

CATT – We do not think Residences at Jibboom should be in this exercise. We strongly support the parking garage with residential on the edge for screening in the Post Office Block. The Town’s financing and construction of the parking garage should have a deadline for completion.

Are there other land uses we should consider?

CATT – More parking in the Downtown area (in other locations)

3. CalTrans Corp Yard

Which option do you prefer?

CATT – We do not have a preference of one option over another. We support both high density and medium high density residential for this site. Maximum flexibility should be provided to allow the use to be tailored to the site based on the desires of a future owner.

What do you like or dislike about your preferred option?

CATT – NA

Are there other land uses we should consider?

CATT – No

4. Truckee Tahoe Lumber

Which option do you prefer?

CATT – Option A (relocation of the Transit Center to the Railyard, a new public parking garage, and offices clustered around common green spaces).

What do you like or dislike about your preferred option?

CATT – We like Option A because commercial and office is more appropriate for the Downtown, intensive use is appropriate. Transit Center location is a separate issue than TTL land use – the Transit Center Relocation Study should determine where that use is best situated.

Are there other land uses we should consider?

CATT – NA

5. Truckee Beacon Gas Station

Which option do you prefer?

CATT – We prefer Option A (restaurant with a rooftop deck and a coffee shop providing outdoor seating that is organized around a central plaza) because it is an intensive use for Downtown.

What do you like or dislike about your preferred option?

CATT – We would like the coffee shop removed from Option A so the restaurant can be enlarged with more outdoor seating. We like offsite parking as shown on both options.

Are there other land uses we should consider?

CATT – Find another place on the east side of Town for a replacement gas station.

6. *Hilltop + Reynolds*

Which option do you prefer?

CATT – Keep commercial on Reynolds property (flat, good access) as shown on Option A – is higher intensity use, move residential off arterial road, and combine with less dense residential from Option B

What do you like or dislike about your preferred option?

CATT – Can't tell if the diagrams show enough parking for the commercial area

Are there other land uses we should consider?

CATT – No

7. *End of Survey*

Do you have any other thoughts, ideas, or questions about the Downtown Specific Plan?

CATT – respect property owners – owners were not notified, see introductory comments from CATT

What other workshop topics would you be interested in?

CATT – climate change - information about choices, costs, benefits of various regulatory policies – see CATT request to GPAC Climate Subcommittee (February 5) and Town Council (March 10)

Are you a member of the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)?

CATT – no