

From: [Niobe Burden Austere](#)
To: [Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Misrepresented Flash Survey results from September - Placer Parking Enforcement Job Example
Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 9:05:52 PM

You don't often get email from niobe.burden@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please accept the following Public Comment for the NV Legislative Committee meeting on January 23 2024 for the record and distribute as necessary

No response or even acknowledgement of the following public comment was considered by TRPA or staff with regard to TRPA Housing Amendments.

Amendments were passed despite public outcry over increased height of building and the definition of "achievable" and whether these Amendments are really addressing the need of the local workforce and its ability to pay or the developer's pockets.

Thank you,
Niobe Burden Austere
Concerned North Shore resident
Tahoe Conservation Photographer

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Niobe Burden Austere [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, Dec 5, 2023 at 11:41 AM
Subject: Public Comment - Misrepresented Flash Survey results from September - Placer Parking Enforcement Job Example
To: Cindy Gustafson <cindygustafson@placer.ca.gov>, Hayley Williamson [REDACTED], Ashley Conrad-Saydah [REDACTED], Vince Hoenigman [REDACTED], John Marshall <jmarshall@trpa.gov>, Brooke Laine <BOSFive@edcgov.us>, Megan Hays [REDACTED], John Friedrich <jfriedrich@cityofslt.us>, Francisco Aguilar <cisco@sos.nv.gov>, Alexis Hill <AHill@washoecounty.us>, Wesley Rice <wrice@douglasnv.us>, Julie Regan <jregan@trpa.gov>, Belinda Faustinos [REDACTED], Shelly Aldean [REDACTED], Marja Ambler <publiccomment@trpa.gov>, Jessica Diss <jdiss.trpa@gmail.com>, Alexandra Leumer [REDACTED], James Settelmeyer <jsettelmeyer@dcnr.nv.gov>, Hilary Roverud <hroverud@cityofslt.us>, Kevin Hill [REDACTED], Judith Simon [REDACTED], Kevin Drake [REDACTED], Brendan Ferry <brendan.ferry@edcgov.us>, Jennifer Carr <jcarr@ndep.nv.gov>, Ben Letton [REDACTED], Garth Alling [REDACTED], Crystal Jacobse <cjacobse@placer.ca.gov>, Ellery Stahler <estahler@lands.nv.gov>, Serrell Smokey <Executive.assistant@washoetribe.us>, Susan Chandler [REDACTED], Jason Drew [REDACTED], Eric Young <eyoung@washoecounty.us>, Steve Teshara <steveteshara@gmail.com>, Heather Ferris <hferris@carson.org>, Kate Moroles-O'Neil <kmoneil@douglasnv.us>, Chad Stephen <stephen@lakevalleyfire.org>
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Please accept this as Public Comment for TRPA APC 12-6-23 and 12-13-23 TRPA Governing Board on TRPA Housing Amendments

STILL QUESTIONS LEFT UNANSWERED

Dear Committee Members,

Please see below my email to Housing and Community Revitalization Program Manager, Karen Fink. Again, I will reiterate..... I can see plenty of people being able to **"qualify"** for the three housing options (achievable, moderate, affordable) but how many will **be able to actually "afford" the housing** that would be allowed to be built by a private developer. WE ALL know that Affordable Housing is not a private developers domain. It needs subsidies and concessions and although I agree with some of the proposed details, I have submitted separate public comments where I disagree with details and want "loopholes" to be closed. There needs to be a definitive ALLOCATION OF BONUS UNITS BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY - 1BDRM-STUDIO RENTALS vs FOR SALE BY SIZE/#BEDROOMS and what types of buildings they will reside in. These BONUS UNITS ARE LIMITED with NO MORE DEVELOPMENT BEING ALLOWED...They need to be allocated wisely.

What's the real need of the community and what does the community want? The information below was not presented fully transparent to RPIC at the last meeting.

1. The **Flash survey put out by TRPA** in late September indicated the following questions -

Q2

Which of the following, if any, do you think are the best options to provide more housing in the Tahoe Basin (Choose all that apply)

Had the most votes -

Small multi-family buildings (up to 10 units) - **66%**

NOT 5-story-65' - 10+ unit buildings

Please see [link to the survey](#) for details and read the more than 600 free text comments, it's quite enlightening.....

Q3

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

"I would be OK with taller and larger buildings in and around our town centers if that created more affordable housing options"

This question does not indicate any actual height, yet the largest percentage of 31.9% indicated that they strongly disagree.

Workforce housing can be built without increasing heights to 65' in town centers. Affordable Housing developments will still NOT be attractive to private developers unless there are loopholes, and such projects should be treated in a different way.

2. The TRPA Achievable Housing webpage

- <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/62ae9110d85c43ecb381eb3f3ccec196>

the webpage shows NO actual renderings at 65' (5 stories) and it talks about AMI but doesn't clarify that it's actually based on a **3 person household income** - [source](#) - when **most of the "needed" workforce housing is for 1 or 2 person households**

There is a disconnect between being able to "qualify" and being able to "afford" anything that a private developer would develop and still be able to make a profit. The public is confused about AMI and what it is based on (1, 2, or 3 person households?). Only when you dig deep into the "TRPA Residential Bonus Unit Fact Sheet" above, do you realize this when the only rental example I've seen is \$2450/mo rent for a 650sqft unitis this meant to be for 3 people?

In this same report there are "suggested sales prices" but there are no suggested rental calculations based on the determined AMI percentage - why not?

These rental calculations should not be too difficult to determine for examples, so that the proposed housing solutions are transparent to the public (let alone to your decision making).

Rental Price Guidance in the report indicates - pg 7 of the report - [link](#)

"TRPA requires that deed restricted units be rented and/or sold to a household that meets the income category restrictions of the deed restriction; depending on the specific language of the deed-restriction, **rental prices of these units are sometimes left to the discretion of the property owner and the lessee. In this case the rental price should be based on the area median income (AMI)** and the requirements of applicable state and federal law, **including the recommendation that a household not pay more than 30% of their monthly income in rent and utilities.** Because homes may be occupied by households of varying sizes, **federal guidance provides for rents to be set by number of bedrooms.** TRPA suggests using **Fair Market Rents by number of bedrooms to develop rents, published by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).** Fair Market Rent is calculated by HUD annually using census estimates and can be found here. Other methodologies may also be appropriate.

Can we see rental calculation parameters from TRPA based on the NEED for a 1 bedroom/studio - based on available calculations of the **Fair Market Rents by number of bedrooms, published by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)?**

The example I asked Karen Fink about below for the **recently published Placer County Parking Enforcement Officer starting at \$29.70/hr** indicates that although **he/she may qualify**, a rent of \$2450/mo for a 1 bedroom/650 sqft unit **would not be affordable as the rent is 60% of his/her take home pay before utilities. What "suggested parameters" for rents will be in the ordinance?**

Thanks for your consideration of this investigation into the details of these Housing Amendments.

kindly,
Niobe Burden Austere

----- Forwarded message -----

On Mon, Oct 23, 2023 at 1:56 PM Karen Fink <kfink@trpa.gov> wrote:

Hi Niobe,

Thanks for your e-mail. We did not end up having a Tahoe Living Working Group meeting in October, and the next group that will consider the amendments is the APC, on November 8. Let me know if you would like me to include your comment as part of the public comments that accompany the packet for that meeting.

I included responses to your questions, in red, below.

Karen Fink, AICP

Housing and Community Revitalization Program Manager

Office: 775-589-5258

kfink@trpa.gov



From: Niobe Burden Austere [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 10:33 AM
To: distHousing <housing@trpa.gov>
Subject: Information for your meeting today

Hello Tahoe Living Working Group,

As we've heard from the public, there are many concerns about what truly is "affordable" in the eyes of your group.

An Example -

Yesterday, there was this job posting for a county employee-

Parking Enforcement Officer Recruitment #2023-16601-01 \$29.70 - \$37.09/hour;
\$61,776.00 - \$77,147.20/year + \$1,000/mo Tahoe Assignment Premium

<https://www.jobapscloud.com/Placer/sup/BulPreview.asp?R1=2023&R2=16601&R3=01>

Would this Placer Parking Enforcement officer be able to afford ANY of the proposed housing options?

Depending on how many people are in this employee's household, they may be able to qualify for any of the three income categories that TRPA requires for deed-restricted housing. See the income limits in our [Residential Bonus Unit Fact Sheet](#). However, they would likely qualify for "moderate" or "achievable." For a 3-person household, the income limit in Placer County to qualify for "moderate-income" housing is \$123,000. For a 1-person household, it's [\\$95,700](#). There is no income limit for our "achievable" deed-restriction, only a local workforce requirement.

Would they qualify for housing rent assistance? If they got a raise or promotion to the higher end of this job classification would they still qualify.....what's that income level of qualification? Less than \$70k annually?

TRPA does not oversee rental assistance, but some counties may have different programs to provide rental assistance. As noted above, the “achievable” deed-restriction does not have an income limit, just a local workforce requirement. So, even if they received a promotion at their job they would not become unqualified for the housing. TRPA’s deed-restrictions have these clauses:

4. An owner-occupant household of a Property who has provided all required annual compliance reports and who has had an increase in income so that it no longer meets the income eligibility requirements for Achievable Housing may apply to TRPA and receive an exemption to the income requirement until the unit is sold. To receive the exemption, the owner must either continue to be the occupant and provide annual compliance reports to remain eligible for the exemption and not be subject to the annual fine; or rent the unit only to an income qualified renter if no longer the occupant. When the unit is sold it may only be sold to a qualified buyer.

5. A renter household which has had an increase in income or change in circumstances such that it no longer meets the qualifying criteria may remain in the home for up to one year, after which time the household is required to re-locate if qualifying factors have not been re-established.

I did a quick calculation if they could afford (starting out) what I've seen as proposed:

\$2450/mo rent - 650sf 1bdm BOX in a 5 story building

Starting out - \$29.07/hr - \$61,776 before taxes

If you're single and live in California

Fed 2022 taxes - 6359

FICA taxes - 4726

State 2022 taxes - 2163

Total taxes - 13,248

Retirement contributions - 0

Take-home pay \$48,528

Allowance for housing

Divided by 12 = \$4,044 / month

4,044 x 40% of take home pay = \$1,617 (Higher than Housing allowance per standard bank lending practices)

4,044 x 50% of take home pay = \$2,022

4,044 x 60% of take home pay = \$2,450

This is a good paying job. More than most earn at administrative jobs at Tahoe Forest Hospital which start at \$23/hr. Try that example and see how much they can **AFFORD**.

Not everyone has a partner nor wants to **share a bedroom with a roommate.?!**

"Achievable" housing for sale isn't where the need is and it is quite obvious that subsidiary funds are necessary to build affordable rental housing in this community like it is nationwide. What funding sources are being looked at?

We all know it takes alot of work and red tape but it is where the need is.

The feasible rent calculations that were shown as part of the Cascadia analysis are meant to demonstrate how much a developer would need to charge to make a project pencil under our current regulations, and how much that cost could be lowered with changes to our regulations. It is not intended to show the rental rates that TRPA would allow or require. As you note, subsidies will likely still be needed, particularly for deed-restricted "affordable" and "moderate." So far, most subsidies have come in the form of land donations or grants. The solutions for providing housing for our communities and workforce will need to come from a variety of solutions.

STRs -

The community also doesn't understand why Placer County doesn't lower the cap for STRs immediately. The number of STR permits has hovered between 3200-3300 for a year now and defensible space inspections aren't being completed by lazy STR property owners. It's time to lower the cap in Placer County by 500-1000 and attrition the permit holders who are only benefiting their pocketbook. At the same time this change happens, the option of incentives to rent to the local workforce needs to be marketed to these property owners to consider housing the workforce. This could take immediate effect and provide some relief.

The Flash Survey-

Please read the 2 day TRPA flash survey put out in late September. There were 1255 respondents, 631 free text comments. They are worth reading!

TRPA staff indicated to the TRPA Regional Plan Implementation committee on Sept 27 that the flash survey indicated a 50/50 split regarding approval of height (not even indicated). When in fact, the largest percentage of respondents strongly disagreed with the question 3 - "I would be OK with taller and larger buildings in and around our town centers if that created more affordable housing options" - a BLATANT LIE to the COMMITTEE who is relying on the staff to summarize for them.

See comments under each question for the real concerns that community members couldn't vote on with this survey. Especially pay attention to the 403 comments under question 5....a good summary of how the community feels. These results are available for the following meetings, but again most committees are relying on TRPA staff to summarize.

WE the PUBLIC encourage you to READ the Comments and make your own deductions and then question TRPA.

Also remember, people who come to Tahoe to work, do not expect to live in a box apartment in a 5 story building. They come to enjoy living in a cabin, in law unit, small older house with a trail behind their dwelling where they can take a walk in the woods or a bike ride from their door. Please also **consider storage for recreational equipment (at least bikes/skis/SUP), it's a way of life here in Tahoe, don't you think?**

Thanks for your consideration and hard work.

Niobe Burden Austere
Advocate for Sustainable Development in Lake Tahoe

Property Owner in Tahoe since 1998

