



City of South Lake Tahoe



Adopted Strategic Plan 2011 / 2014

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The Strategic Planning document contains the strategies, key initiatives, performance measures and expected outcomes the City will focus on over the next few years.

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City Manager's Introduction



City of South Lake Tahoe

"making a positive difference now"

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers:

I am pleased to present to the City Council the attached preliminary City of South Lake Tahoe Strategic Plan for the City Council's review and modification. The Strategic Plan is a collaboration of the City Council, City staff, and community to create a shared Mission, Core Values, Strategic Priorities, strategies and key intended outcomes to move the community and City organization forward over the next four years.

The foundation of the Strategic Plan is built on the on the following Strategic Priorities:

- Economic Development
- Fiscal Sustainability
- Improve the Built Environment
- Public Trust
- Partnership Development

These Strategic Priorities are the collaborative result of a Citizen Survey and City Council assessment of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the community and organization. The Strategic Plan offers direction and focus on issues that are critically important to improving South Lake Tahoe. The Plan sets priorities, establishes strategies and most importantly includes performance measures to monitor and measure Plan progress. The Strategic Plan will require the City Council and staff to consider the Plan when developing policies, delivering city services, and processing requests for fiscal resources.

The following critical steps are how we will move from words to action and ensure alignment of the City's policies, budget, departments, and staff work plans:

- Create an annual Business Plan with specific action-oriented goals, work activities and performance measures for every City department and employee, aligned with the Strategic Plan.
- Focus City Council policy initiatives and discussions on the Strategic Priorities.
- Link Senior Management and employee performance evaluations and rewards with the Strategic Priorities.
- Monitor the Strategic Priorities Performance Measures to hold ourselves accountable for making measurable progress in achieving the strategic commitments.
- Communicate quarterly to the City Council and annually to the public through a Strategic Plan Progress Report.
- Periodically review the Strategic Plan to ensure that it continues to focus City government on the issues most important to the community.

Upon City Council review and modification, the Strategic Plan will be brought back to the City Council for formal adoption. Upon adoption, the Plan will be communicated to the community and city staff. Quarterly progress reports will be provided to the City Council and an annual progress report will be provided to the public.

I would like to thank the community, City Council and staff for having the foresight and dedication required to develop shared purpose and plan to achieve significant and sustainable success for the City of South Lake Tahoe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony O'Rourke".

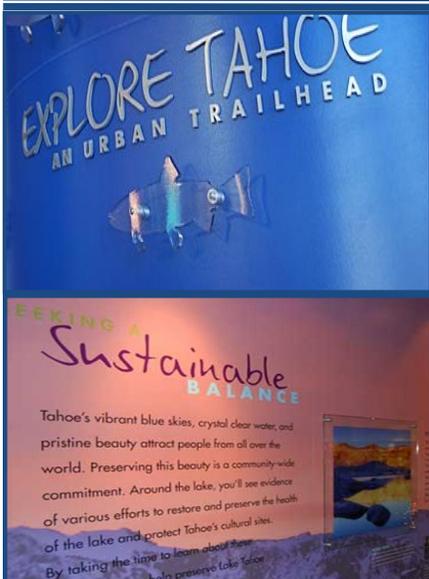
Tony O'Rourke
City Manager

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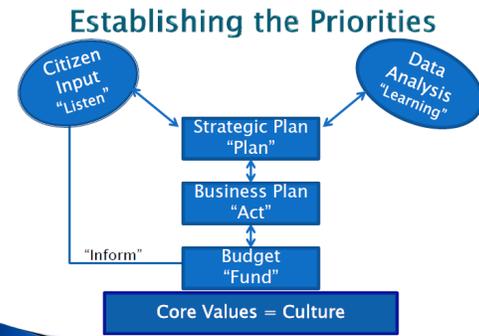
Strategic Planning Process

“Strategic vision provides direction to both the formulation and execution of strategy. It makes strategy proactive, rather than reactive, about the future. Strategy is the crossover mechanism for moving from the world as forecasted to the world of our vision.” - Colonel Bruce B.G. Clarke



Understanding the needs of the City’s customers is the foundation from which this Strategic Plan has been developed. The City undertook a variety of processes to assess community needs, interests and expectations.

The City surveyed the local community, gathered baseline data from which to develop meaningful performance standards, conducted workshops with the City Council to assess Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, surveyed City employees and conducted a comprehensive strategic planning development review with the City Council.



Community Input - “Listening” to the Customer

The City mailed a customized National Citizen Survey to 1,200 City citizens in December, 2010. The survey provided information to allow the City Council to establish priorities in direct response to the needs of the citizenry. Survey results are highlighted throughout this document.

Data Analysis - “Learning” What the Facts Are

Information from various sources was utilized to provide background for the development of the Strategic Priorities. Data was gathered from school districts, Visitors Authority, Chambers of Commerce, US Census, California Departments of Finance and Labor, local crime statistics, and real estate threats and forecasts.

Establishing Core Values in the Organization

To accomplish a set of strategic priorities, the organization needs to establish a set of shared core values that govern the activities, behaviors and expectations of the organization. A first-ever Employee Survey was conducted in December, 2010 in which nearly all employees participated. Results were shared with City Council, staff and the community. The Core Values identified in this Strategic Plan were derived from the both the employee and resident survey.

Economic Conditions

The Great Recession impacted the City’s residents and businesses significantly as evidenced by reduced sales and lodging occupancy. The City’s revenues are all down significantly.

Developing Strategic Priorities

In January 2011, the City Council met and evaluated the information gathered and recognized “The Case for Change” had been made. They established the five Strategic Priorities identified in this Strategic Plan, which are designed to address the serious economic conditions, meet community expectations, build on the community’s strengths and interest in the City, restore the community’s trust and move the City from recession to recovery.



Mission and Core Values

We are dedicated to providing essential, outstanding and cost-effective services that enhance the vitality and quality of life of our residents, businesses and guests.

Mission

We treat each other and those we serve with courtesy, consideration, and value.

Respect

We welcome and find new and better ways of conducting business and providing services.

Innovation

We take ownership of our decisions and responsibilities for our conduct and performance.

Accountability

We are honest, trustworthy and committed to doing the right thing.

Integrity

We strive to deliver services that produce the highest level of value, results and satisfaction for our customers.

Customer – Focused

We will create an organizational culture built on outcomes and “keeping score” of our results.

Results – Driven



Economic Development

The national economic downturn has had an adverse effect on South Lake Tahoe's financial condition and local gaming and hospitality industries. The unemployment rate as of January, 2011 is 17% and lodging occupancy, sales tax and property values are all down. To stimulate economic recovery and vitality the City will undertake the following strategies.



90%
of residents
surveyed rated
"Economic
Development"
is an Essential or
Very Important
priority for the City.

STRATEGIES:

- Support implementation of the Prosperity Plan.
- Collaborate with local (El Dorado County, Douglas County), regional (state and federal) economic development agencies to attract, retain and expand City businesses.
- Create innovative public-private Business Development partnerships to foster business support, growth and enhancements, and quality affordable housing.
- Initiate collaborative local and regional partnerships to create more special events and activities to stimulate tourism, retail, restaurant and lodging demand.
- Enforce City codes to protect and enhance property values, and attract and retain businesses within the framework of a business-friendly regulatory environment.
- Secure a developer for the Chateau project.
- Expand retail opportunities.
- Expand and Improve Airport Operations:
 - Initiate actions and improvements necessary to accommodate commuter air service and the financial performance of the airport.
 - Initiate plan to create a business park adjacent to the airport.
- Pursue investment and development opportunities for redevelopment areas.
- Initiate opportunities with telecommunications providers for citywide access to WiFi and emerging technologies.
- Complete the City's General Plan and Tahoe Valley Community Plan.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

	Current	2011-12
Increase the Resident Rating of those who rate the City's Employment Opportunities as Excellent /Good	7%	12%
Lower Unemployment Rate	17%	14%
Increase the City Lodging Occupancy Rate	23%	32%
Increase the Number of new Business Licenses	3,000	3,150
Increase the Number of New Special Events Produced	0	6
Increase Sales Tax Revenue Growth	2%	4%
Increase TOT Revenue	3%	5%
Adopt the City's General Plan Update	n/a	Dec, 2011
Adopt the Tahoe Valley Community Plan	n/a	Dec, 2011



Fiscal Sustainability

The future financial status of the City of South Lake Tahoe will be one of limits and constraints compared to the past. Revenues are stagnant or declining and the public has no appetite for new taxes or fees. The City must adhere to a fiscally prudent course that ensures quality core services and capital investments while living within its means. This financial course necessitates a paradigm shift to a new business model that works better and costs less. Given its limited resources, the city must focus on a “vital few” strategic priorities that will result in the most significant and sustainable successes for the City.

To the that end, we recommend the following strategies to ensure the City is a wise steward of the public’s resources and maintains long-term financial viability.

STRATEGIES:

- Right-size the City organization for long-term sustainability and success.
- Prioritize program and services to ensure delivery of strategic and essential services within a balanced budget.
- Develop public-private partnerships to leverage City resources.
- Annually prepare a balanced, transparent and user-friendly budget.
- Develop a balanced **Five-Year Financial Plan**.
- Operate within budgeted expenses 100% of the time.
- Project revenues on a conservative basis, given the protracted nature and volatility of the economy.
- Maintain a 25% operating reserve for valid emergencies.
- Diversify tax and revenue sources.
- Implement a **Financial Trend Monitoring System** comprising key financial and economic indicators as an “early warning system,” regarding the financial and economic health of the City.
- Identify long-term cost savings and cost-containment opportunities, including:
 - * *Operational efficiencies*
 - * *Joint partnerships*
 - * *Level of service adjustments*
 - * *Staff consolidation*
 - * *Alternative service providers*
 - * *Productivity gains*
- Appoint a **Fiscal Sustainability Committee** composed of public and private sector business and community members to work with senior staff and City Council to ensure the City’s fiscal activities (budget, capital plan, financial policies, investments, health plan, pension, risk management) are justified, efficient, effective, transparent and sustainable.
- Invest in the City’s appearance and infrastructure.
- In partnership with the City’s collective bargaining units, look at shifting City’s employee compensation system from a longevity-based step plan to a pay-for-performance system that rewards results.

(continued next page)



70%
of residents
surveyed
do not support
a tax increase
to pay for
City services .

Fiscal Sustainability (con't)



82% of residents surveyed said South Lake Tahoe's recreational opportunities are excellent/good, which likely contributes to why the same percentage said it is a Great Place to Live.

STRATEGIES (CONTINUED):

- Enhance utility and transparency of Monthly Financial Report.
- Increase revenues and decrease costs in the City's Airport and Parking Garage operations.
- Implement employment policies and practices that will enhance the City's ability to attract, reward and retain top talent.
- Initiate a Renewal and Replacement fund for the City's capital assets including systems, buildings and equipment.
- Allocate at least \$5 million annually to Capital Improvement needs subject to City Council and/or public approval.
- Conduct an Asset Mapping and Evaluation of City assets and related TRPA commodities.
- Have the Parks & Recreation Commission evaluate all existing Parks & Recreation fees to ensure 75% cost recovery.

Fiscal Sustainability strategies will be measured by the following performance measures.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

	Current	2011-12
Maintain Operating Reserve as % of General Fund Expenditures	25%	25%
Maintain a Balanced Budget	Yes	Yes
Maintain a zero percent (0%) Expenditure Budget Variance	0%	0%
Reduce percentage of General Fund revenues committed to salaries and benefits.	78%	74%
Allocate at least \$5 million annually to Capital Improvement needs (roads, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, facilities, rolling-stock) over the next five years, subject to City Council and voter approval.	No	Yes
Reduce airport annual subsidies by 20%.	\$623K	\$500K
Reduce parking garage and parking enforcement operating costs by 10%.	\$430K	\$390K



Improve the Built Environment

“The City’s overall appearance and infrastructure are critical components of the public’s perception of community quality and integrity. The current physical environment lags behind the natural beauty of Lake Tahoe. The restoration of the built environment is a necessity. There is a compelling need to restore and unify the visual quality of the community, as well as, ensure the provision of essential infrastructure.

Through the following strategies, the City will identify key opportunities to improve the City’s “First Impression” and ensure investment in community and tourist infrastructure.

STRATEGIES:

- Enhance the **Heart of the Community** by updating the appearance and infrastructure on State Highway 50/Lake Tahoe Boulevard including:
 - * *Caltrans improvement on State Highway corridor,*
 - * *Harrison Avenue Enhancements.*
 - * *Lakeview Commons improvements,*
 - * *Business façade and streetscape improvements.*
- Create a **timeless entry experience** for residents and guests that captures the natural spirit of South Lake Tahoe as an “alpine resort community in harmony with nature,”
 - * *Create gateway monument signs at entrances to the City.*
 - * *Enhance landscaping and planting palette which responds to all four seasons, including at the Linear Park .*
 - * *Create a series of entry statements to key City neighborhoods consisting of retaining walls, landscaping, alternative paving, materials and signage, which will complement the City’s major entry statements.*
- Leverage our partnership with the California Tahoe Conservancy to build more bike paths.
- Invest in summer flowers, landscaping, neighborhood parks and community gardens to create a strong *first impression* of the City.
- Review and modify existing sign ordinances and City codes to ensure the aesthetic integrity of South Lake Tahoe by working in partnership with businesses and residents. Link enforcement with redevelopment of State Highway 50 improvement phases. Review and streamline existing City Codes related to appearance and signage.
- Create **Neighborhood Service Teams** consisting of all City operating departments, and neighborhoods to enhance neighborhood appearances and improve a sense of community.
- Work in partnership with the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Lodging Association and local Chambers of Commerce to create a **Lodging Quality Initiative** to inspect, rate and encourage renovations of South Lake Tahoe lodging properties.
- Invest \$5 million annually to improve City roads, lighting, landscaping, curb, gutters and signage, subject to general obligation bond election requiring City Council and voter approval
- Facilitate the establishment of new and additional **Business Improvement Districts**.



81%
of residents
surveyed rated
Community
Appearance
and
Infrastructure
as an
Essential or
Very Important
Priority for the City.



Improve the Built Environment (con't)



74%
of residents surveyed said the City's Overall Appearance is poor or fair

Strategies to improve the Built Environment will be measured by the following, and possibly additional, performance measures.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

	Current	2011-12
Improve Resident Rating of the City's Overall Appearance as Excellent / Good	26%	30%
Improve Resident Rating of the City's Cleanliness as Excellent / Good	40%	45%
Reduce Number of non-conforming or illegal signs in the City	62%	50%
City Council support to enforce City signage and codes	No	Yes
Adopt Complete Streets Master Plan and Financial Plan	No	Yes
Adopt Action and Financing Plan for Harrison Avenue	n/a	Yes
Adopt Lodging Quality Initiative	No	Yes
Complete Lakeview Commons Project on time and within budget	n/a	Yes
Increase the number of Monument Entry Statements	0	2
Expand number of Business Improvement Districts	1	3



Public Trust & Accountability

Community residents and businesses want a City government that is responsive, accountable and welcoming. In the 2010 South Lake Tahoe Citizen Survey, the citizenry made it clear they want to participate with the City in discussing and solving the community's challenges and living within constrained resources. Similarly, the City needs to actively seek feedback from citizens on initiatives, actions and plans for the community. The community wants accountability and accessibility from City leaders as they make decisions affecting the lives of current and future residents of South Lake Tahoe.

To that end, the City is committed to having engaged, well-informed and involved citizens to strengthen a shared sense of community, belonging, participation and public trust. We will achieve this by listening to, understanding, engaging and fostering mutual trust with the community. The following strategies are designed to enhance civic engagement and maximize information outreach.

STRATEGIES:

- Create and implement a comprehensive **Public Communications Strategy** and function to inform and encourage participation in civic affairs for the entire community.
 - * *Communication products and platforms should include monthly electronic newsletter, annual State-of-the-City report, Budget-in-Brief report, cable television call-in interactive shows, City Service Guide and website and social media updates.*
- **Enhance Public Engagement** in the City by expanding or establishing:
 - * *Citizens Academy,*
 - * *Community surveys,*
 - * *Advisory Committee,*
 - * *Neighborhood Advisory Councils, and*
 - * *Media partnerships.*
- **Nurture Citizen Involvement** through the creation of Volunteer opportunities in the City by:
 - * *Assigning existing staff to serve as a Volunteer Coordinator.*
 - * *Identify service volunteer opportunities and training requirements.*
 - * *Examples of Volunteer opportunities include:*
 - ⇒ *Code Enforcement Rangers,*
 - ⇒ *Neighborhood Advisory Councils,*
 - ⇒ *Police Support Services,*
 - ⇒ *Partners in Parks,*
 - ⇒ *Fiscal Sustainability Committee.*
- Create a **24-hour online and voice-mail service** to receive ideas, suggestions, issues and concerns from residents; City will respond to all calls within 24 hours.
- Create a cable television one-hour live call-in talk show each month to discuss issues related to City government.
- Institute a system to measure the performance of the City and report results to the community.
- Evaluate customer satisfaction with City services, openness, responsiveness and results on a regular basis



81%
of residents surveyed said the City does a poor or fair job at welcoming citizen involvement.



Public Trust & Accountability (con't)



85%
of residents surveyed indicated the direction the City is headed is poor or fair.

Strategies to improve the Public's Trust of local government and be Accountable to the Public will be measured by the following performance measures.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

	Current	2011-12
Improve Resident Rating of the City's Welcoming of Citizen Involvement	19%	25%
Improve Resident Rating of those who Agree the City is Headed in the Right Direction	15%	22%
Improve Resident Rating of the City's Ability to Get Information to the Public	40%	50%
Improve Resident Rating of the City's Overall Image and Reputation	50%	55%
Improve Resident Rating of the Sense of Community	47%	55%
Improve Resident Rating of the City as a Great Place to Live	71%	75%
Improve Resident Rating of Opportunities to Participate in Community Matters	52%	60%
Increase percentage of residents who visit the City's website	47%	60%
Produce Quarterly City Progress Report	No	Yes
Conduct Annual Citizen Survey	Yes	Yes
Provide Annual "State-of-the-City" Report	Yes	Yes
Produce regular "Budget-in-Brief" Reports	Yes	Yes
Increase number of Community Outreach Forums	0	12
Increase number of Neighborhood partnerships or Councils	0	10



Partnership Development

The City of South Lake Tahoe will build cooperative and reciprocal partnerships with local, regional, state and federal public, non-profit and private entities to enhance the vitality and quality of life of City residents, businesses and guests.

STRATEGIES:

- Create Neighborhood Advisory Councils to provide residents and businesses the opportunity to partner with City staff including police, fire, public works, community development, code enforcement, building, parks and recreation in addressing neighborhood concerns and opportunities for improvements.
- Facilitate a South Lake Tahoe Clean-up And Revitalization Efforts (CAREs) Program in conjunction with Clean Tahoe, South Tahoe Refuse/Waste Service and community neighborhoods to improve neighborhood appearances and vitality.
- Promote, enhance and increase community-based partnerships in Crime Prevention, Fire and Public Safety, emergency preparedness and community policing.
- Create a legislative strategy and partnership with the League of California Cities, State of California, State of Nevada and the Federal government to address City needs and opportunities.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of City Council appointments to public and non-profit community, regional, state and federal organizations.
- Partner with PADMA, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Gaming Alliance and local Chambers of Commerce in creating more community events and activities that foster community and neighborhood engagement, inclusion, and pride.
- Partner with other local governments, community organization and the private sector in optimizing delivery of essential and affordable services to South Lake Tahoe residents.
- Create community partnerships to support events and activities that provide a positive outlet for youth.
- Partner with the Latino community to address the needs and expectations of the growing Latino population in the community.
- Partner with public, private and non-profit organizations to address the socio-economic needs of the community.
- Ensure the City Council meets directly with the governing boards of the following organizations annually:
 - * Barton Hospital
 - * California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC)
 - * Douglas County
 - * El Dorado County
 - * Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - * Lake Tahoe Unified School District (LTUSD) and Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC)
 - * Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority (LTVA)
 - * South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce
 - * South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD)
 - * Tahoe Chamber.org (Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce)
 - * Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)
 - * Other agencies as deemed appropriate (eg League to Save lake Tahoe).



“When people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others, they not only achieve great partnerships, they achieve their own greatest success.”

- Steven Covey



Partnership Development (con't)



“Our success has really been based on partnerships from the very beginning.”

- Bill Gates

STRATEGIES (CONTINUED):

- Strengthen the City’s partnership with Heavenly Resort to address issues of mutual concern and benefit (eg: resort appearance, parking, redevelopment, special events, annexation, etc.)
- City Councilmembers shall provide written reports monthly on their partnership assignment.

Strategies to improve the Public’s Trust of local government and be Accountable to the Public will be measured by the following performance measures.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

	Current	2011-12
Establish Partners-in-Parks Program for Recreation Services	No	Yes
Establish CAREs Program	n/a	Yes
Increase number of Neighborhood partnerships or Councils	0	10
Improve Resident Rating of percentage who Participated in Recreation Program or Activity	62%	68%
City Councilmembers annually meet with local governing boards	0	6
Increase number of South Lake Tahoe Community / Neighborhood Clean-up Days	2	10
Conduct a Partnership Survey to establish baseline measures of involvement and annually thereafter	n/a	Yes
Build inclusive Partner Directory to strengthen relationships, share information and leverage local and regional resources	n/a	Yes
Establish Code Enforcement Rangers Program	No	Yes
Conduct Needs Assessment and Develop Responsive Action Plans for underrepresented groups and community members	No	Yes
Promote Partnerships in City communication materials (website, newsletters, workshops and forums)	No	Yes
Produce Quarterly Partner Progress Report	No	Yes



Implementation of the Strategic Plan requires Action to ensure its success. The City Manager in conjunction with the City's Leadership Team, Department Managers and staff will develop a 2011 Business Plan that will include specific actions to accompany each strategy.

BUSINESS PLAN

A streamlined Business Plan to immediately implement the Strategic Plan for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2010/11 will be presented to the City Council in April, 2011, thereafter, the Business Plan will be presented to the City Council at the beginning of each fiscal year.

The Business Plan as it is developed will be communicated to all employees, community groups, stakeholders and City partners to strengthen development and ensure its success.

DEPARTMENTAL ACTION PLANS

The Business Plan will be aligned with departmental action plans and teams assigned to carry out the actions for each strategy. Employee evaluations will be aligned to support the Strategic Plan.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

The public will be able to measure the City's performance and track results through regular reporting including:

- *Monthly E-Newsletters*
- *Quarterly Progress Reports*
- *Community workshops and meetings to solicit input*
- *Annual Citizen Survey measuring City's performance*
- *Annual Report to City Council and Community*