

## **City of South Lake Tahoe**

### Agency Profile

The City of South Lake Tahoe (City) is a general law city located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe, encompassing approximately ten square miles. The City was incorporated in 1965 and is empowered to provide various municipal services, including the following:

- Fire suppression
- Maintenance of all public roadways within the City's boundaries, including snow removal services in the winter
- Law enforcement
- Parks and recreation services
- Airport Administration
- Public Transportation
- Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration
- Administration and enforcement of contracts, covenants and restrictions (CC&Rs)

Of the services listed above, the City has not and does not currently provide CC&R administration and enforcement. Although the City as a municipality is empowered to provide various services, only the seven active services listed above will be used to determine the City's sphere.

### *Land Use Character*

The City is located within the southern portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin, bordered on the northwest by Lake Tahoe and on the northeast by the California/Nevada line. Elevations range from 6,200 feet at lake level to 10,000 feet at Freel Peak. Major access roads include California Highways 50 and 89 and Nevada Highway 207. The City has a significantly developed core area that hugs Highways 50 and 89 to the north and Pioneer Trail along the southern edge.

Current population estimates range from 25,800 to 23,600 residents, with little growth expected to occur within the City through 2030 due to Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) regulations. Through a TRPA ordinance, there is a moratorium on any new subdivisions on previously undeveloped land. Consequently, no significant growth is anticipated by the City.

The predominant land uses within the City are residential (single- and multi-family properties), commercial, recreational and conservation. Tourism and recreational uses are the primary bases of the Lake Tahoe economy. Local business and industry occupations provide employment for approximately 12,000 workers, distributed among several sectors such as retail, health and social services, and arts and entertainment. In addition, the area has a significant number of part-time residents and experiences population influxes due to seasonal tourism.

*Level of Service*

*Fire Suppression*

The City provides fire suppression and emergency medical services to City residents, spending an average of \$199.16 per capita in Fiscal Year 2003-2004. Funding for these services comes primarily from the City's General Fund, followed by revenue from the Safety Sales Tax Fund and the CalTahoe Joint Powers Authority. The South Lake Tahoe Fire Department operates three fire stations that are organized, equipped and trained to perform fire suppression duties in structural fire fighting, vehicular fires and initial attack for most related events.

*Road Maintenance*

The City appears to provide an adequate level of road services based on the City's self assessment, as determined by adherence to the City's own roadway repair and maintenance standards. The City's current roadway infrastructure includes approximately 130 centerline miles of roadway, which consists of 45 arterial, 126 collector, 657 residential/local, and nine other sections, for a total of 837 pavement sections. Several of the City's streets connect to US Highway 50 and State Highway 89, which intersect the City. The City recently conducted a Pavement Management Study, determining the Pavement Condition Index for the City streets. The City's streets averaged a score of 54, which is in the "fair" category. Road maintenance is funded through the City's General Fund, property taxes, local State taxes and gas tax revenue.

*Law Enforcement*

All law enforcement services in the incorporated area are provided by the City of South Lake Tahoe Police Department. The City's Police Department operates out of a single station, housing all operations including dispatch, administration, records, parking, evidence and storage. The Police Department aims to maintain response times of three minutes for high priority calls.

*Parks and Recreation*

Parks and recreation services are provided by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, which is a part of the Community Development Department. The City has various recreation facilities available for use by the public, including a Recreation and Swim Pool Complex, the South Tahoe Ice Arena, the South Tahoe Senior Center, various parks, bike trails, campgrounds and a golf course.

*Airport Administration*

The City owns and operates the Lake Tahoe Airport (Airport), which is a small, general aviation airport that receives an estimated 18,000 non-commercial flights per year. The City has planned a substantial amount of improvements at the Airport, including the rehabilitation of the runway and terminal area ramp, which is expected to be funded primarily by the FAA and State. The Airport receives revenue from hangar rentals and a portion of airplane tie-down fees and fuel sales. The amount of revenue received by the Airport is directly related to Airport usage, and in recent years, the Airport has not generated sufficient revenue to cover its costs (including depreciation).

Public Transportation

The City is part of a consortium of public and private entities called “BlueGo,” which provide transit and on-demand transportation service to the area. The City manages its contract for services with Area Transit Management (ATM) for public transit services within the City limits. The City also operates transit centers at Heavenly Valley and the “Y” commercial center. Both facilities serve public transit needs. The Heavenly Village Transit Center also provides information about tourist attractions in the basin as part of a collaborative effort with Federal and State agencies called Explore Tahoe. The City receives an annual State sales tax subvention from the Local Transportation Fund that is to be used for transportation purposes. The City has an internal policy to allocate all of its Local Transportation Fund revenue for transit operations contracted with ATM. All other costs of the City’s transit system are paid from fares and other transportation grants.

Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration

The cable franchise agreement with Charter Communications allows the City to regulate rates for “basic cable service.” The City’s basic cable rate is currently \$20. The City does not separately account for cable related revenues and costs, nor does it dedicate any staff to perform the City’s responsibilities under the cable franchise. Customer service complaints are handled through the City Manager’s Office. The City received approximately \$300,000 in revenue from the cable franchise in 2006.

Services Not Provided

Although the City is empowered to provide a variety of public services, according to the General Government Services II Municipal Services Review, adopted by the Commission on December 5, 2007, the City does not provide CC&R administration or enforcement. Therefore, the Commission should consider this power as authorized but not currently utilized by the City.

Commission’s Policies and Guidelines

LAFCO Policy 4.4 requires the Commission to review the following topics before making sphere of influence determinations. The Commission’s review of fire suppression and emergency services, road maintenance and general government services addressed these requirements as noted below. All citations are from the *Countywide Fire Suppression and Emergency Services Municipal Services Review* (Fire MSR), adopted by the Commission on August 23, 2006, the *Streets and Highways Municipal Services Review* (Road MSR) and *General Government Services II Municipal Services Review* (GGSI), adopted by the Commission on December 5, 2007 and the *General Government Services I Municipal Services Review* (GGSI), scheduled to be considered by the Commission on February 27, 2008.

**1. Service capacity, level and types of services currently provided by the agency, and areas where these services are provided**

- Fire Suppression – Refer to the Fire MSR, pages 218 to 219, “Services and Programs;”

- Road Maintenance – Refer to the Road MSR pages 2.5-3 to 2.5-4, “Section III – Infrastructure;” and page 2.5-9, “Section X – Infrastructure;”
- Airport Administration, Public Transportation and Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration – Refer to the GGSII MSR pages 33 to 34, “Determinations Section 1 – Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies;”
- Law Enforcement and Parks and Recreation – Refer to the GGSI MSR pages 2.5-2 to 2.5-5, “Section III – Infrastructure;” and pages 2.5-11 to 2.5-12, “Section X – Infrastructure.

**2. *Financial capabilities and costs of service***

- Fire Suppression – Refer to the Fire MSR pages 227 to 229, “Funding and Budget;”
- Road Maintenance – Refer to the Road MSR pages 2.5-4 to 2.5-5, “Section IV – Financing and Rate Restructuring;” pages 2.5-5 to 2.5-6, “Section V – Cost Avoidance Opportunities;” page 2.5-9, “Section X – Financing Constraints and Opportunities;” pages 2.5-9, “Section X – Rate Restructuring;” and page 2.5-9, “Section X – Cost Avoidance Opportunities;”
- Airport Administration, Public Transportation and Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration – Refer to the GGSII MSR pages 36 to 37, “Section 3 – Financing Constraints and Opportunities;” and page 38, “Section 5 – Opportunities for Rate Restructuring;”
- Law Enforcement and Parks and Recreation – Refer to the GGSI MSR pages 2.5-5 to 2.5-7, “Section IV – Financing and Rate Restructuring;” pages 2.5-7 to 2.5-8, “Section V – Cost Avoidance Opportunities;” and page 2.5-12, “Section X – Financing Constraints and Opportunities,” “Section X – Rate Restructuring,” and “Section X – Cost Avoidance Opportunities.

**3. *Topographic factors and areas of social and economic interdependencies***

- Fire Suppression – Refer to the Fire MSR pages 217 to 218, “Background and History;”
- Road Maintenance – Refer to the Road MSR page 2.5-1, “Section I – Setting;”
- Airport Administration, Public Transportation and Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration – Refer to the GGSII MSR page 33 “Description;”
- Law Enforcement and Parks and Recreation – Refer to the GGSI MSR page 2.5-1, “Section I – Setting.

**4. *Existing and planned land uses, land use plans and policies, consistency with county and city general plans, and projected growth in the affected area***

- Fire Suppression – Refer to the Fire MSR pages 217 to 218, “Background and History;”

- Road Maintenance – Refer to the Road MSR page 2.5-1, “Section I – Setting;” pages 2.5-1 to 2.5-3, “Section II – Growth and Population;” and page 2.5-9, “Section X – Growth and Population;”
- Airport Administration, Public Transportation and Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration – Refer to the GGSII MSR page 33 to 34, “Section 1 – Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies;” and page 35, “Section 2 – Growth and Population;”
- Law Enforcement and Parks and Recreation – Refer to the GGSI MSR page 2.5-1, “Section I – Setting;” pages 2.5-1 to 2.5-2, “Section II – Growth and Population;” and page 2.5-11, “Section X – Growth and Population.”

**5. *Potential effects on agricultural and open space lands***

The unincorporated area within City’s sphere of influence primarily includes residential uses and designated open space that is within the Tahoe Agricultural District. Secondary uses include commercial, industrial, recreation and tourist facilities. Aside from open space areas, there is very little territory within the City’s sphere that is designated and actively utilized for agricultural purposes, including Timber Preserve Zones. The area is simultaneously under the jurisdiction of the TRPA, which regulates growth near Lake. Residential, commercial and tourist areas are concentrated within the City and along major roadways (Highways 50 and 89). Building within the City is severely restricted, and only approximately 115 residential permits are issued within the entire Lake Tahoe Basin each year. Consequently, it is extremely unlikely that the land use within the City will change significantly in the near future.

**6. *A description of the services that will be provided to any areas which may be added to the sphere and the timing and method for funding expansion of facilities or services***

- Fire Suppression – Refer to the Fire MSR page 219, “Infrastructure and Facilities;”
- Road and Road Maintenance – Refer to the Road MSR pages 2.5-3 to 2.5-4, “Section III – Infrastructure;” and page 2.5-9, “Section X – Infrastructure;”
- Airport Administration, Public Transportation and Cable Television Franchise Fee Administration – Refer to the GGSII MSR pages 33 to 34, “Determinations Section 1 – Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies;”
- Law Enforcement and Parks and Recreation – Refer to the GGSI MSR pages 2.5-2 to 2.5-5, “Section III – Infrastructure;” and pages 2.5-11 to 2.5.12, “Section X – Infrastructure.”

**7. *An analysis of the effects of a proposed sphere of influence on other agencies and their service capabilities:***

Should the City expand its boundaries in the future, any area annexed into the City would also require detachment from County Service Area #3 to prevent overlapping services, most notably drainage and road maintenance services.

**DETERMINATIONS**

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425(e) requires the Commission to consider and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to four factors. Staff recommends the following determinations for updating the sphere for the City:

**1. *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.***

Present land use in the area includes residential, recreational, commercial and tourist-related uses. Primary residential areas tend to follow the major highways and roads that bisect the City's sphere. Growth and development potential is limited largely by TRPA regulations and there are not expected to be any substantial changes in the planned land use as a direct result of this review.

**2. *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.***

Present needs for public facilities and services are currently being met. Probable needs for public facilities and services are not currently anticipated to vary from present needs, as future demands are expected to remain relatively the same. No significant growth or population increases are currently anticipated to affect the City's ability to provide of services. The City does not have any major plans for future expansion of boundaries.

**3. *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.***

The present capacity of public facilities and municipal services provided by the City is adequate to serve the incorporated community. The City appears to have sufficient personnel, infrastructure and equipment to provide a variety of services to its residents. At this time the City has no major plans for future expansion of services of major infrastructure and facilities that would necessitate a change in the current City boundary; however, the City is in the process of launching a new General Plan update and indicates that it will work with partner agencies during this process should the City identify areas for possible expansion.

**4. *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.***

Social or economic communities of interest in the area do not extend beyond the City boundaries, which is the primary residential and commercial center of the region. Due to TRPA land use regulations, the City's population is expected to remain relatively stable.

Based upon the information contained in this document, it is recommended that the City of South Lake Tahoe Sphere of Influence be updated to affirm its current sphere, as shown in the map labeled "Exhibit A" and attached to Resolution L-2008-12.