

# Introduction to the Strategy

Truckee has worked diligently in the past decade to build a strong center for the community that is a vital part of the economy and a cultural and symbolic focus for the quality of life that the region offers. This effort builds on a framework of historic resources, circulation systems and streetscape enhancements that has garnered recognition nationally. A key element is the Truckee River which runs east west through the downtown area. It has shaped town development providing water, food and recreation. Today the community seeks to make better use of lands and resources along this portion of the river. This plan lays out a vision and strategy for doing so.

This is a master strategy, which establishes a vision for development along the edges of the Truckee River as it courses through downtown. It describes actions to revitalize underutilized lands, abate environmental degradation and redevelop the community's neglected waterfront. As such, it outlines a framework of circulation and land use that will establish a climate for investment, both for the public and private sectors. The economic conditions that support redevelopment are also outlined, and strategies for implementation are included.

## Purpose

The purpose of the strategy is:

- To provide overall direction for public and private investment,
- To establish priorities for phasing and for public actions,
- To identify areas of teamwork and collaboration,
- To coordinate implementation strategies.

This strategy is not a regulatory plan or document and does not have a legally binding effect on later actions and activities that the Town may take. It is a study/report that assists the Town Council, Planning Commission, other Town review bodies, and Town staff in identifying, analyzing, prioritizing, and implementing future actions that the Council may consider.



The plan provides strategic direction to implement the *Downtown Specific Plan*, which was adopted following certification of a program EIR. The strategies provided in this plan support the *Downtown Specific Plan* and EIR. Additional environmental review and discretionary decisions may be required prior to the approval and construction of the actual projects identified in this plan.

View looking west along the Truckee River.

## A. Objectives...



View looking north to downtown from the Cottonwood Restaurant.

The term “habitat enhancement” as used in this strategy includes the restoration and protection of habitat and recognizes that damaged habitat may need to be manipulated in order to provide an enhancement of the habitat.

## Themes

The strategy focuses around three themes - social, environmental, and economic conditions in the area. A fundamental precept is that any actions should provide improvements in each of these sectors. It is within this context that a variety of planning variables is considered, including land use, transportation, historic preservation, parks and open space.

## A. Goals and Objectives

The recommendations in this *Downtown River Revitalization Strategy* are intended to accomplish these goals:

### Environmental Goals

- Protection and enhancement of the Truckee River is a high priority.
- Enhance the environmental educational opportunities for residents and visitors alike, and increase restoration and beautification opportunities of the river corridor.
- Maintain a healthy ecosystem.
- Provide a healthy riparian environment by protecting and improving the river corridor with sensitive river access.
- Protect a living corridor and functioning ecosystem.

Best practices for natural resource management are expected as well. The strategy identifies ways in which the Town can continue to collaborate with public agencies and other natural resource advocates to incorporate development concepts that will promote revitalization of natural habitats.

### Social Goals

- Protect the natural habitat/environment while improving public access.
- Increase community interaction using the river as a venue.
- Create gathering spaces/areas for people to socialize, recreate and learn.
- The river is a place for both social gathering and quiet refuge and connection with the natural world.
- Protect, interpret and educate the public of the archaeological and historic uses of the Truckee river corridor.

Encouraging people to celebrate their sense of community is a fundamental objective.

### Economic Goals

- Promote appropriate redevelopment of the riverfront corridor.
- Encourage visitor-oriented business along the river corridor while finding appropriate locales for the existing businesses.
- Promote economic diversity and prosperity for residents.
- Provide mixed use opportunities encompassing a variety of housing, light industrial, retail, office and cultural spaces.

Economic development strategies serve a key role in the strategy. A fundamental objective is to establish a climate for investment, for private developers, for the town itself and for other governmental agencies and non-profit organizations. An understanding of overall market potential and the feasibility of selected development is therefore included. Job creation also is projected.

## B. The Scope of the Strategy

Achieving these goals requires considering a variety of land planning, urban design, transportation, resource management and economic development strategies in an integrated way, such that all elements combine to reinforce an overall vision for the project area and assure its efficient servicing and operation.

The strategy includes concepts for housing, mixed use, lodging and industrial facilities as well as open space, trails and habitat enhancement. These concepts promote fundamental principles of good urban design. Among these are concerns for the character of the pedestrian experience, a sense of the quality of public spaces, compatible streetscapes, a positive business environment and a sense of identity.

As a strategic plan, general concepts are outlined. More detailed designs will be developed in later phases of implementation and, along the way, refinements and adjustments will occur. Nonetheless, the essential elements should remain intact and any future development should be consistent with its policies.

The strategy provides strategic direction to implement the *Downtown Specific Plan*, which was adopted following certification of a program EIR. The strategies provided in this plan support the *Downtown Specific Plan* and EIR. Additional environmental review and discretionary decisions may be required prior to the approval and construction of the actual projects identified in this strategy.

### The Planning Area

The strategy covers the segment of the Truckee River that runs through downtown, which extends from the confluence of Donner Creek at the western end to the intersection with Trout Creek on the eastern end. It sets the vision for public improvements, including trails and open space, as well as for enhanced private development opportunities. It also addresses the potential relocation of some existing uses. (See map on page IN-7.)

## C. Policy Base

The *Downtown River Revitalization Strategy* draws upon these existing policies and regulations:

### The General Plan

In 1996, the town adopted the *Town of Truckee General Plan*. It recognizes the Truckee River as one of the town's primary assets, and envisions development that is pedestrian-oriented and provides public access to recreation and open space. It also states that circulation should be improved through an enhanced road system and by encouraging alternative means of transportation.

## B. Scope...



Workshop participants mapped key assets along the corridors.



Stake holders assigned preferred uses to sites along the river corridor in public workshops.

## C. Policy Base...



Workshop 2a



Workshop 2a

## The Specific Plan

Later, in 1997, the Town of Truckee adopted the *Downtown Specific Plan*, which charts a direction for development in the core of the community that builds on its more important assets. These include the historic resources of Downtown Truckee and the Truckee River. The plan outlines design standards for the river edge, and envisions it as a corridor of amenities that serves as a core for public and private investment.

The specific plan also mentions public access, in-stream enhancements and other amenities. A river trail, parks and public access points are ideas set forth in the specific plan. Additional pedestrian crossings are also described, with the intent of more closely knitting the two sides of town together and providing alternative modes of access to the downtown core. Some of the specific policies are included in the margin notes of the *Downtown River Revitalization Strategy*.

## Design Guidelines

In 2003, the town then adopted *Historic Downtown Design Guidelines*. These include guidelines for the river corridor, which envision new buildings that respect the context and promote site improvements that value the natural resources of the area. The guidelines also acknowledge that some stone walls and other features along the river edge may have historic significance.

## Placer County River Planning

More recently, Placer County has engaged in the creation of a plan for portions of the river outside of town. This project, currently underway, addresses natural resources and connections to regional trail systems.

Each of these documents contributes to the policy base for river enhancement. Now, a more detailed plan is needed to achieve the vision for the downtown portion of the river. That plan must reflect community wisdom, address technical environmental and engineering issues and establish a climate for investment through creative design, regulation and organization.

## D. The Planning Process

This *Downtown River Revitalization Strategy* is a product of community efforts brought together through a variety of meetings, workshops and on-site analysis. While the key ideas stem from the *Downtown Specific Plan* and even earlier *General Plan* policies, the focus of planning effort extended from November 2004 through May 2005 and included the following activities:

### Public Outreach

The planning process included a range of methods for stakeholders to contribute their ideas.

#### ***Focus Groups***

In an effort to solidify key stakeholder input, two focus groups were formulated. The first group, which consisted of affected property and business owners, was

created in order to identify constraints and other issues associated with working and operating a business along the Truckee River and within the town overall. The second group, which consisted of professionals, experts and regulatory bodies, helped to identify Federal, State and local regulations as well as existing conditions related to the Truckee River watershed. The primary task of the second focus group was to establish a knowledge base for opportunities and constraints for future implementation program.

### **Resource Panel**

In conjunction with the stakeholder groups identified above, a panel of people representing a range of Truckee's diverse population met to provide local insight and input. The resource panel included a wide range of community members, including technical experts and professionals, special districts and utilities, non-profit and for-profit organizations, property and other interested citizens.

### **Self-guided Walking Tour**

As a precursor to public workshops that were planned, a self-guided walking tour was created to encourage one-on-one interactions with the river and surrounding area. Tour participants were encouraged to visit a selection of places along the river, in order to review issues and opportunities. They then were invited to report their findings at the next public workshop. Although many participants had lived and worked in Truckee for several years, they were energized by the opportunity to look closer and identify areas in need of improvement, preservation, protection and reuse.

### **Public Workshop #1**

On December 7, 2004, the community participated in a workshop in order to identify assets and issues associated with the planning area and to draft statements envisioning its character for the future. During the workshop, participants placed cutouts representing open space, residential, commercial and industrial uses on a map of the river corridor. Participants then outlined policies for their favorite locations, as a precursor to the following Workshop #2.

### **Public Workshop #2a**

In a second workshop in January 2005, more than 50 people gathered to generate development concepts for a selection of key sites and to coordinate these in an overall framework strategy. In this session, they worked with other cutouts that represented uses for specific "Opportunity Sites."

### **Public Workshop #2b**

In February 2005, another 30 citizens joined in a replay of the second workshop, in which they generated plan framework concepts. The findings from this workshop reinforced those set forth in the previous January meeting.

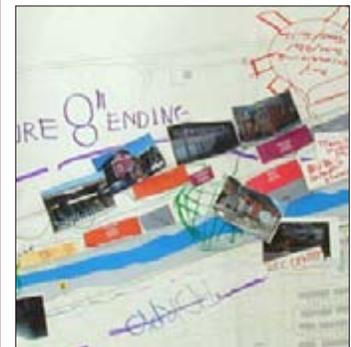
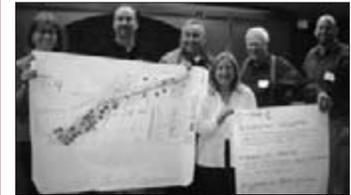
### **Public Workshop #3**

The ideas generated in the previous workshops were synthesized into a set of framework concepts and development principles, which were discussed in a public workshop on March 31, 2005. At this session, participants helped to refine the proposals and then outlined priorities for implementing the plan recommendations.

### **Website**

Workshop exercises were also posted on the town's website and citizens were

## **D. Planning Process...**



Participants at the workshop sessions presented their ideas verbally and graphically.

## E. Organization...

Goal  
The Town of Truckee  
Downtown Specific Plan

“ Truckee River Corridor :

- Establish a park on State owned property along the south side of the River.
- Establish a bicycle/pedestrian trail along the south side of the River.
- Link the Downtown Commercial Core with the Truckee River.
- Provide suitable access for river recreation.
- Improve views from the river corridor.
- Improve the appearance of the Bridge Street bridge with architectural details and paint.
- Improve the quality of wildlife and fishery habitat in the Truckee River and its tributaries.
- Support a Truckee River Day.
- Protect and improve water quality in the Truckee River and its tributaries.
- Design environmentally sensitive and aesthetically pleasing new pedestrian/bicycle bridge crossings.
- “Cluster” new residential development along the River.
- New projects adjacent to the river must mitigate any adverse visual impacts.
- Increase the visibility of the River.”

invited to submit their ideas via the internet. Summaries of workshop findings and strategy draft materials were also posted on the web site.

## Professional Analysis and Synthesis

The planning work generated by members of the community was supported by analyses from members of a consulting team as well as numerous town staff. This work was summarized in several orientation presentations during the public workshops and focus group meetings as well as the summary of findings presented in this report.

## E. Strategy Organization

### Basic Organization

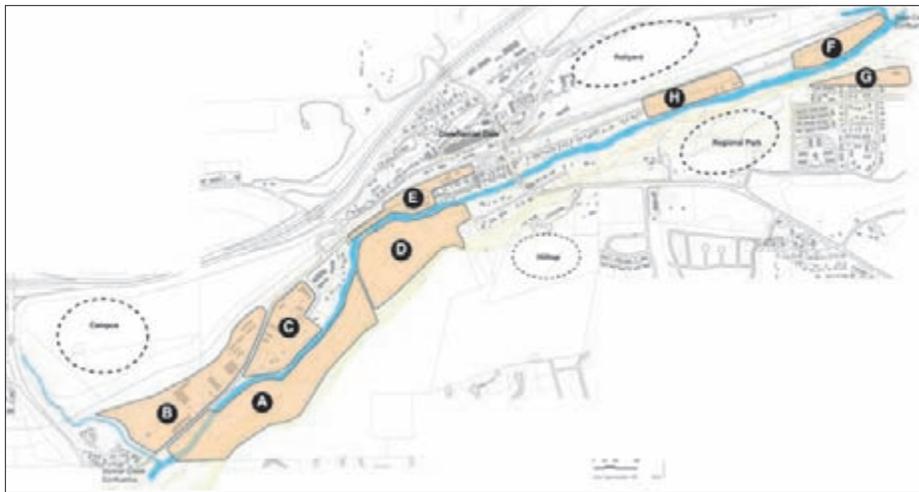
The strategy is presented in four major divisions as well as a set of appendices. Chapter 1, “Existing Conditions,” summarizes the current status of social, environmental and economic conditions. The inefficient use of some lands, environmental concerns and assets to be valued are described in it. Then, Chapter 2, “Framework Plan,” presents the basic concept for improvements. This focuses on a pedestrian and bicycle circulation system of trails and walkways that shape a “figure eight” to link properties in the planning area. It also links three activity centers, or “nodes,” around which public and private improvements are to be focused. Chapter 3, “Opportunity Sites,” then describes potential improvement scenarios for 22 specific locations. Chapter 4, “Implementation Approach,” then outlines a set of criteria for setting priorities to implement the strategy and also summarizes some of the development tools that may be used, including actions the town can take and a range of funding programs that may be considered. Finally appendices provide additional information about the river itself and employment generation benefits that may accrue from implementing the strategy. Fold-out maps at a larger size also are provided at the end of the document.

### Illustrations

Throughout the document, sketches illustrate the potential character of some selected improvement projects and photographs from other communities provide suggestions for the potential character of some of the proposed land uses. It is important to note that these images are intended to convey a general approach to improvements, not specific design solutions, and that more detailed analysis, design and discussion would be necessary before any actual work would occur.

Four maps also appear in the strategy. The first map identifies the groupings of Opportunity Sites. (See the page that follows.) The second map (Appendix D, Framework Map) illustrates the basic framework concept in Chapter 2. This map also shows the basic circulation systems and the location of the nodes of activity. The third map (Appendix E, Future Land Use Map) builds on the framework by adding recommendations for uses and public sector improvements. The fourth map (Appendix F, Zoning Map) shows the current zoning of properties in the study area.

# Opportunity Sites



The strategy provides concepts for approximately 140 acres of land. Within this there are 22 “Opportunity Sites,” for which specific recommendations are made. These are labeled using an alpha-numeric system. The individual sites are then organized into seven groupings, labeled A through G. This labeling system is used throughout to refer to these sites. Occasionally, the current owner name is also added as a supplement to this coding system.

(This map reappears in Chapter 3 to facilitate reference to the discussion of the individual sites that is presented there.)

Site	Acre	
A-1	44.50	Fish & Game
A-2	1.98	
B-1	20.11	Henderson property
B-2	2.46	
B-3	5.46	
C-1	7.24	Arnold property
C-2	1.75	
C-3	6.51	
C-4	2.94	
D-1	7,85	Bright property east
D-2	17.78	Bright property west
E-1	1.48	Town-owned
E-2	0.56	
E-3	0.57	
E-4	1.90	
F-1	1.25	
F-2	1,25	
F-3	2.00	
G-1	5.00	Town-owned
H-1	0.75	
H-2	1.10	
H-3	2.50	Union Pacific Railroad
	<b>136.94</b>	Total acreage of all sites

Note: These figures are approximate.

This page is blank, for double-sided copying.