

Letter: CTC land deals need closer scrutiny

To the community:

The California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) is studying for implementation Tahoe Sustainable Communities Investment Program (TSCIP).

From board meeting executive summary: “The 2012 Regional Plan promotes clustering development in the basin’s town centers to create more walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented communities. The Regional Plan also includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).

“TSCIP will refocus the Conservancy’s land acquisition and marketable right programs to: 1) acquire and restore aging developed properties on environmentally sensitive lands and retire or transfer the development rights to town centers; 2) sell, lease, or exchange vacant Conservancy land in these town centers; and 3) acquire the remaining private properties in several of Lake Tahoe’s roadless subdivisions to remove the threat of development.

“Acquiring development rights: Some stakeholders have recommended that the Conservancy become more active in buying and selling development rights directly rather than acquiring them incidentally through purchases of land.

“Acquiring any developed properties: Other stakeholders have recommended that the Conservancy not limit itself to acquisitions of developed property on environmentally sensitive land, since retiring or transferring the marketable rights of any developed commercial property, particularly those outside of town centers, could help to reduce and/or cluster development.

“Acquiring residential properties: The Conservancy has also been urged to consider acquiring developed residential properties on sensitive land (in addition to commercial and tourist accommodation properties) since the floor area of these properties can also be converted into other marketable rights and transferred to town center locations.”

To completely understand this newly proposed program: Tahoe Sustainable Communities Investment Program (TSCIP) and how execution of the TRPA Code of Ordinances is implemented the CTC along with the Regional Plan Implementation Committee must sponsor a joint workshop for the public’s benefit and understanding of the complexity of the program. Many of us dug into the details and still do not completely grasp the TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) program or why the Conservancy should become a commodities broker.

I strongly urge that all community members read the entire proposal.

Additionally the CTC has a program not highly publicized called “Asset Lands Program” that merits communities’ attention.

What are potential asset lands?

Potential asset lands are properties that can be considered for possible sale or trade at some point in the future consistent with the Conservancy’s adopted Asset Lands Program Guidelines. They are not restricted from sale by law or Conservancy board policy.

What types of properties does the Conservancy own that may be considered potential asset lands?

Potential asset lands fit into several broad categories:

- Easement Protected Lands (4): Lands where Conservancy ownership of a conservation easement would be more cost-

effective than full fee title ownership.

- Area Plan Asset Lands (17): Developable parcels in highly urbanized areas that could support sustainable compact development consistent with local area plans.
- Highway 50 Right of Way Lands (85): Developable parcels along the former Highway 50 right of way that could be used to support the South Tahoe Greenway bike trail or be sold or leased to help fund the trail.
- Bulk Acquisition Lands (73): Developable lands acquired as part of “bulk acquisition” of conservation and developable lands from a single seller.
- Residential Land Coverage Parcels (154): Developable lands purchased to acquire land coverage for mitigation purposes or for bike trails or other development projects.

How many Conservancy properties could be considered potential asset lands?

Three hundred thirty-three of the over 4,800 properties fall into the categories above, but only six have been selected by the Conservancy for consideration for sale. Of these six properties, only two have been listed for sale. For a current list of properties for sale go [here](#).

Ellie Waller, TIMBY: Tahoe is my Backyard, my home is in Tahoe Vista