



# Town of Truckee

Townwide Operational and Service Delivery  
Review

Project Report of Observations and  
Recommendations

April 2025







April 7, 2025

Ms. Jen Callaway  
Town Manager  
Town of Truckee  
10183 Truckee Airport Road  
Truckee, CA 96161

Dear Ms. Callaway:

Baker Tilly is pleased to transmit this project report, which contains our observations and recommendations on the Town-wide operational and service delivery review.

We note that Truckee is still extremely young for an incorporated community, and it continues to wrestle with many of the contentious land use and development issues that created the desire for self-government and control back in 1993. It takes many years for a city to mature and for systems and shared understandings to emerge into a stable community consensus. Truckee is still in its infancy in this regard. During these early growing years, it is natural for the Town organization to undergo many evolutions and changes; this has indeed been true for Truckee.

This report offers numerous recommendations for the Town to bring more structure and organization to its work. An important finding of our analysis is that the Town is understaffed and under-resourced in numerous areas. This makes the work environment difficult for staff. Addressing this will be challenging as resources are limited. Yet, much progress can be made by strategically introducing technology to improve productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, and this is an important thread running through this report. An additional important element will be introducing management and communication systems throughout the organization, especially within the land use entitlement processing functions so that better services can be provided.

There is outstanding work being undertaken by the Town and its dedicated staff. Most of the problems observed are simply a result of trying to do too much with too little, a task the Town will have to address over time, but tackling the problems begins first with acknowledging them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Jacobs".

Carol Jacobs, Managing Director  
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## Executive Summary

The Town of Truckee engaged Baker Tilly to conduct a comprehensive operational and service delivery review of its overall management system and all departments and divisions. The purpose of this review is to conduct a high-level assessment of staffing needs, organizational structure, and systems, as well as focused assessments of each department and division, refined based on feedback provided by Town leaders.

This report provides Baker Tilly's observations and recommendations for improving Town operations and will be followed by action plans for each department to facilitate the implementation of our recommended improvements.

### Stakeholder Engagement

Significant stakeholder engagement is an essential component of this comprehensive review. To date, more than 100 individuals within and outside the organization have been engaged in one-on-one conversations and small group discussions to hear about what is and is not working well and opportunities for improvement.

From the feedback received, there is general satisfaction with the Town's operations, which is consistent with periodic community survey responses going back to 2008. However, there are clear concerns among internal and external stakeholders about workload capacity and the ability to effectively address Town Council priorities. These concerns stem from the perception that the Town government is understaffed; systems, policies and procedures need to be updated, and technology needs to be better integrated/coordinated.

Additionally, there is a widespread concern among the development and construction interests in the community with the land development process in the Town -- and more specifically with planning, and to a lesser extent engineering and building processes -- that result in delayed entitlements and construction for various reasons as explained throughout this report, which negatively impacts local businesses and impedes progress on the Town's economic development and workforce housing priorities.

(On the converse side of this issue, three public opinion polls conducted since 2019 all identified that limiting growth and development is one of the top three things that Truckee residents believe the Town should do to make Truckee a better place to live. This creates a dichotomy of competing interests within the community that the development services functions of the Town must navigate.)

### Major Observations

- A.** *The Town as an incorporated place is relatively young compared to most cities and has the opportunity to continue to grow and develop to its full potential. Likewise, the Town organization has important areas for improvement to address to develop to its full potential. For example:*
- The Town lacks comprehensive performance management and measurement systems, and while annual audits have not identified internal controls as a material weakness, they can be strengthened to achieve industry best practice levels.
  - Many of the Town's administrative management systems are manual and inefficient.
  - The Town government is significantly understaffed compared to other jurisdictions.
  - Portions of the Town organization are atypically structured, such as separate departments for the "Assistant to the Town Manager Department" and a "Town Clerk" department that performs traditional purchasing functions and provides administrative support to operating departments.

- B. As relayed by Town leaders and community stakeholders, the primary reasons for the Town's incorporation included local control of land development decisions and effective street maintenance with a priority focus on snow removal, which now compete with other priorities, including the development of workforce housing, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and environmental sustainability, enhancements to public outreach to facilitate community cohesion, and investments in infrastructure and community connectivity, and emergency preparedness.*
- C. There is an overall sense expressed by community members, elected officials, and staff members that the Town generally works well operationally, but there are concerns about workload capacity and burnout that negatively impact employee morale.*
- D. There are consensus concerns among internal and external stakeholders about challenging land development and building processes in general, and the planning process in particular, which require short- and longer-term actions to effectively address the issues.*
- E. Cultural clashes (internal and external to the organization) over evolving community and operational priorities affect effective governance and present resource allocation challenges.*
- F. The Town prides itself on having a strong culture of collaboration and communication; however, efforts to reach as many stakeholders as possible result in lost messaging and challenges in managing service delivery expectations.*
- G. Many special districts and private entities such as homeowners' associations located within the Town's boundary and immediately proximate to it bifurcate service delivery across a multitude of agencies which requires significant coordination and complicates the Town's operations.*

## Key Recommendations

1. Implement town-wide accountability and control structures, especially in internal financial controls, human resources management, and performance management and measurement systems.
2. Create short- and longer-term phasing and funding plans for each Town department to ensure adequate staffing and organizational structures are in place to sustainably manage Council priorities and effectively deliver services.
3. Reassess means, modes, and methods of communication and collaboration and make necessary adjustments.
4. Reorganize and rebrand the Assistant to the Town Manager Department to elevate its organizational authority to better reflect the array of services provided and their level of importance to Town leaders and elected officials.
5. Develop a strategic plan for the deployment of technology throughout the Town (an IT strategic plan) to leverage technology to become as efficient and effective as possible.
6. Conduct facilitated problem-solving workshops with Community Development Department staff members and members of the development community to improve processes and procedures and address negative perceptions internal and external to the organization.

## Organization of the Report

The remainder of this report is organized into five sections and related subsections as follows:

- Town of Truckee Background
- Approach to the Engagement
- Town Management System
- Department Profiles
- Conclusion

## Town of Truckee Background

The Town of Truckee is located in Nevada County in the northern Sierra Nevada Mountain range near the California-Nevada border. Proximate to Lake Tahoe, Truckee is a tourist destination that leads to significant fluctuations in population. It is estimated that approximately 50% of Truckee's housing stock is comprised of vacation homes for part-time residents and short-term renters. With a full-time population of approximately 17,000 residents, the Town's daytime, weekend, and peak season headcounts can increase to 50,000, presenting unique operational challenges during peak visitation periods, which typically occur in the summer months and during major holidays.

Truckee's adopted General Fund budget for fiscal year 2024-25 is approximately \$37 million. Town operations are provided by approximately 140 full-time permanent employees, augmented in the current fiscal year by 13 part-time employees, several interns and contractors, and approximately 25 seasonal workers mainly associated with snow removal.

### Incorporation and Governance/Organizational Structures

Truckee is a Charter City operating under a council-manager form of government that was incorporated in 1993, largely in response to a combination of dissatisfactions over road maintenance and snow removal service levels and efforts by a big-box retailer to locate in the Town over significant objection of community interest groups and the advisory planning body in place at the time. At the time of incorporation, governance priorities were established around land use planning and building, road maintenance, and snow removal, which form the basis of the Town's organizational and governance structures. The Town's Police Department was created in 2001. In prior years, the Town contracted for police services with the Nevada County Sheriff's Department.

Truckee is not a full-service locality that provides a complete suite of operations. Services such as fire suppression, libraries, parks and recreation, public utilities, and sanitation are provided by special districts in and around the Town's geographical boundary and that were created prior to the Town's incorporation. Other governmental and quasi-governmental stakeholders in Truckee's sphere of influence include a regional airport, two county governments (Nevada and Placer), a tri-county school district, a major healthcare district, and a tri-county wastewater treatment plant.

For context, it is important to understand that as an incorporated city, Truckee is quite young. There are 482 incorporated cities in California, and Truckee is the 15th newest city in the State. It takes many years for a local government to mature in terms of systems, shared understandings and traditions, and Truckee is still "getting its footing" in many ways.

In addition, it is important to recognize that the Town operates in a very fragmented service delivery environment (with many special districts having critical service responsibilities operating separately from the Town) and has a population profile that varies radically depending on the season. This makes for a very challenging service delivery and communication proposition for the Town's staff.

### Organizational Structure

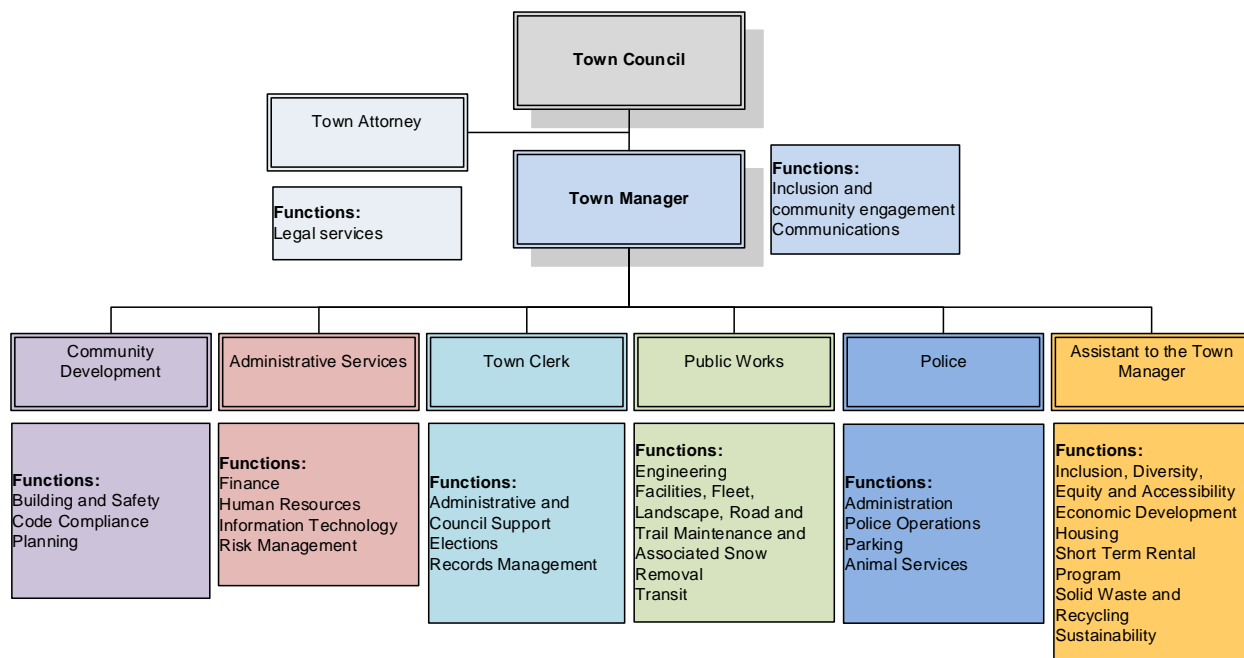
The Town is organized into eight departments as follows:

- Administrative Services
- Assistant to the Town Manager
- Community Development
- Police
- Public Works
- Town Attorney

- Town Clerk
- Town Manager

Figure 1 shows the basic organizational structure of Town departments and the functions for which each department is responsible.

*Figure 1. Town of Truckee Functional Organization Chart*



The Town's core internal services of finance, human resources, and information technology are provided by the Administrative Services Department, while external operational services are provided by the Community Development, Police, and Public Works departments. The Town Attorney and Town Manager departments provide legal services and inclusion and community engagement and communications services, respectively. The Town Manager supervises all department heads and functions as a liaison between the Town Council, the community, and all of the Town's functions.

We note that the Town Clerk Department provides records management as well as election management and support, which is typical, but also provides administrative support to other departments and divisions, including procurement and contracting functions, which is atypical. Another atypical structure is the Assistant to the Town Manager Department, which provides an array of services, some of which are directly related to Council priorities.

Subsequent sections of the report provide details on each department's structure.

## Approach to the Engagement

Baker Tilly's approach to comprehensive organizational assessments includes stakeholder engagement to hear perspectives on what is and is not working well, to learn about distinctive circumstances regarding services and service delivery within and among departments and the community, and to help identify where opportunities for improvement exist. Our specific techniques for the engagement include the following:

- Data and document review
- Individual interviews
- Focus groups
- Peer agency comparisons (benchmarking)
- Comparisons to best practices
- Organizational structure, business process, and service delivery analyses

### A Note About Engagement Focus

An engagement such as this is focused on documenting opportunities for organizational improvement. As such, the final report does not dwell on the many well-functioning services and excellent staff work observed by the consultant team in Truckee, of which we found many examples. The employees who work for the Town are hard-working and committed to their work, and they do an excellent job. As in any organization, there are systems and procedures that can be improved. The documentation of these opportunities should not be taken as a criticism of the work of the Town staff. In fact, in our experience, higher functioning organizations, those striving for improvement, are more likely to engage in this type of study than others, and Town staff should be commended for making the effort at setting an agenda for continuous improvement, and by undertaking this effort in the first place.

### Data and Document Review

Given the comprehensive nature of our review, Baker Tilly requested and reviewed a large volume of data and documents, including:

- Organization charts and staffing information
- Operating and capital budgets
- Community development-related documentation
- Department workplans
- Administrative and operational policies and procedures
- Interagency memoranda of understanding, joint powers authorities, and other operating/service agreements
- Management letters and Grand Jury responses

### Broad Stakeholder Engagement

As desired by Town leaders, our engagement was scoped to include robust stakeholder participation, consisting of the following outreach methods:

- Internal stakeholders: Up to 31 confidential/individual interviews and small group meetings with the Town Council and staff members.
- External stakeholders: Up to 10 community and regional stakeholder input sessions, including focus groups and community workshops held in English and Spanish.



- Community survey: One statistically valid community survey, to be conducted by the Town's preferred survey consultant, to develop baseline data to measure progress over time.

Table 1 summarizes outreach efforts to date.

*Table 1. Summary of Stakeholder Engagement*

Meeting Format	Date(s)	Number of Participants
<b>Town core team individual interviews:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department heads and senior managers</li> </ul>	May 14 and 15, 2024	15
<b>Town Council member individual members</b>	May 14 and 15	5
<b>External stakeholder focus groups (4):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business community representatives</li> <li>Commission/committee members</li> <li>Nonprofit group representatives</li> <li>Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe</li> </ul>	June 11, 12, and 17	30
<b>Internal stakeholder focus groups (2):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Development Department</li> <li>Public Works Department</li> </ul>	June 11 and 12	11
<b>Individual stakeholder interviews:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Former Town officials</li> <li>Nonprofit group representative</li> </ul>	June 11 and 12	3
<b>Site visits and virtual meetings:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police Department</li> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Administrative Services Department (Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology Divisions)</li> <li>Community Development Department</li> </ul>	June 10 and 11 and June 20 and 21	30
<b>Additional external stakeholder meetings:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development community members</li> <li>Nonprofit group members</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	Between June 10 and February 26, 2025	8
<b>Follow-up discussions with staff members:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Development Department</li> </ul>	September 16, 17, and 25	5
<b>Total Stakeholders Engaged</b>		<b>107</b>

While the scope of services for this assessment included a statistically valid community survey and community workshops, both of which may have provided additional insights for this study, neither were completed due to competing priorities and scheduling challenges of the Town, as well as significant time spent engaging with internal and external stakeholders on planning issues.

### Prior Community Surveys

It should be noted that four statistically valid community surveys have been conducted in the past five years by a survey consultant who has assisted the Town with public opinion voting related to (successful)

recent voter-approved revenue measures that can be used to develop baseline criteria and data points for surveys going forward. (The surveys included questions on the overall quality of life in Truckee and the level of satisfaction with the Town's service provision. An average of 86% of respondents indicated that the quality of life was excellent or good, and an average of 80% of respondents felt that Town service provision was satisfactory.) Similar sentiments were expressed in a 2008 survey.

The fact that the Town has been consistently successful at obtaining voter approval for revenue measures is also a powerful signal that the community as a whole is supportive of the Town and believes it is doing a good job of delivering services.

### **Other Intergovernmental Stakeholders**

Additionally, a portion of the Baker Tilly scope of work included engaging with the Town's many intergovernmental stakeholders. Based on the level of stakeholder engagement to date, especially associated with the land development process, there is little scope capacity to perform this work. Following completion of the project report and implementation actions plans, Baker Tilly and Town leaders can jointly determine if targeted follow-up with specific stakeholders may be useful in areas where contracting for services is desired or improving intergovernmental collaboration is required.

### **Common Themes from Stakeholder Engagement**

Developing common themes from stakeholder engagement processes such as confidential one-on-one interviews and small group meetings is essential in conducting organizational reviews. In these settings, meeting participants are in the best position to provide candid feedback on what is and is not working well and where opportunities for improvement may exist.

### **Town Core Project Team Interviews**

At the outset of our engagement, the Baker Tilly project team conducted interviews with each Council member and the Town's executive leadership and senior management staff. Common themes heard during the initial interviews include the following:

- There is an overall sense that the Town works well, but there are concerns about workload capacity and the ability to address Council priorities.
- There are signs of burnout at all levels of the organization, negatively impacting staff morale.
- There is a near-universal sentiment that the Town government is understaffed.
- There are differing perceptions on the effectiveness of communication from Town leaders to staff members.
- The biggest operational concern is land development and, more specifically, the planning process.
- There is a sense that the Town over-collaborates/communicates and is process-heavy, which results in lost messaging and an inability to adequately manage service delivery expectations.
- Longer-tenured employees are, in some instances, not comfortable with service delivery changes that are occurring, such as diversity, equity and inclusion and environmental sustainability efforts that are not consistent with the Town's original core operational service areas.
- There is a strong "us vs. them" mentality in the community among long-time and newer residents, primary/secondary homeowners, and owners and renters. This makes Town management and governance challenging for all concerned.

### **Internal Stakeholder Focus Groups with Department Staff Members**

Following the initial interviews, two internal stakeholder focus group meetings were held in mid-June with staff members from the Community Development and Public Works departments. When conducting focus group sessions, Baker Tilly facilitators customarily begin with an icebreaker. For these sessions,

attendees were asked to use one word to describe the Town operation/service delivery. The most common words used to describe working for the Town include the following<sup>1</sup>:

- Frenetic/Scattered
- Hardworking
- Fun
- Camaraderie
- Coordinators

Overall, positive sentiments were expressed about working for the Town, the level of inter- and intra-departmental communication and collaboration to address operational issues that occur, and the experience of operational staff and their ability to address issues that arise.

Common areas of concern identified by the groups include the following:

- There are communication challenges within and across departments
- Differences in work schedules are a source of frustration in some departments
- There are concerns about workload
- Contracting and purchase order processes are inefficient and confusing
- Administrative support on budget/finance matters and financial system challenges can be improved
- The use of outdated and disparate/siloed systems and manual processes impacts operational efficiency and effectiveness
- Meeting structures/schedules are inconsistent

**Note:** At a contextual level, it is important to appreciate that Truckee emerged as an incorporated town into a largely developed but fragmented service delivery environment, without the revenue options that older municipalities enjoyed, and has had to deal with controversial and politicized land use issues from its inception. Given this complex environment, it is not surprising that the staff exhibit a certain amount of stress and describe the work environment as frenetic. Truckee's beautiful setting masks the fact that it can be a challenging place to work. Recognizing the reality of the Town's environment is important to understanding durable solutions.

## External Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups<sup>2</sup>

A series of focus group meetings and individual interviews were held in mid-June with external stakeholders. The meetings were held to hear perspectives on what is and is not working well with the Town and where there may be opportunities for improvement. The focus groups included the following stakeholders:

- Business Community – Attendees included representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Truckee Downtown Merchants Association, and Visit Truckee Tahoe
- Town Commissions and Committees – Attendees included representatives from the Planning, Historic Preservation Advisory, Public Art Commissions, and the Chief's Advisory and River Revitalization Steering Committees

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<sup>1</sup> Other words used to describe the Town included "fires," "relaxed," and "get it done."

<sup>2</sup> Though the external stakeholder interviews and focus groups were designed to discuss all Town operations, much of the discussions focused on hearing complaints and concerns about land development decisions and processes.

- Nonprofit Groups – Attendees included representatives from the Sierra Business Council, Sierra Community House, and the Truckee Donner Land Trust

The same one-word icebreaker was used to begin the sessions, with the following most common words used to describe the Town<sup>3</sup>:

- Frustrating
- Dichotomy
- Divided/Disconnected
- Inconsistent
- Acceptable/Okay

Overall, positive sentiments were expressed for the Town Manager's collaborative leadership style and Police and Public Works operations. Overwhelmingly, negative sentiments were expressed for Community Development operations, specifically, planning processes, underscored by a strong sense of wariness and mistrust of Department leadership. Perhaps most important, concerns were consistently expressed that the Town workforce housing and economic development priorities are not effectively addressed.

**Note:** These sentiments, both positive and negative, were echoed by the external stakeholders who were interviewed individually.

#### Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe

Following the initial external stakeholder focus group meetings, several of Baker Tilly's core project team members virtually attended a meeting of the Local Government Affairs Committee (LGAC) of the Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe (CATT). The same negative sentiment about Town land development processes was expressed and amplified.

### Addressing the Consensus Organizational/Operational Challenge

Baker Tilly has conducted hundreds of departmental, divisional, and organization-wide assessments for cities, counties, special districts, and towns. While there are similarities among localities, each assessment has its unique characteristics and challenges. For Truckee, there is a clear consensus among internal and external stakeholders that the biggest organizational/operational challenge facing the Town is its land development processes.

More specifically, there is a vocal segment of the business community, particularly in the development business, that is dissatisfied with the planning process and deeply distrustful and palpably angry at what it perceives as obstructionist practices to slow or stop development.<sup>4</sup> This "steady drumbeat" will grow absent corrective actions and will negatively impact Town operations.

The issue cannot be considered surprising, as it is rooted in one of the Town's elemental reasons for incorporation – to control land use decisions. Prior to incorporation, the County took a much more limited role in regulating or controlling development. Understandably, Town leaders and elected officials sought to control and regulate development following incorporation by adopting and strengthening strict design/development standards, and there is a significant segment in the community that continues to highly value this sentiment. At the same time, however, there are perceptions within the business

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<sup>3</sup> Other words used to describe the Town include "ever evolving," "efficient," "inefficient/wasteful," "thorough," "fear," "mysterious," and "challenged."

<sup>4</sup> When conducting reviews of Community Development departments, it is typical to encounter permit applicants who are frustrated with / angry about slow processes. It is less common, and also concerning, to encounter applicants with the level of anger, dissatisfaction, distrust, and resentment associated with Truckee's planning process.

community that the Town's present-day priorities associated with economic development and the construction of workforce housing units are not being fully met.

The land development and entitlement process sits between the competing objectives of maintaining Truckee's rural sense of place and its need to develop new housing and business opportunities; the friction between these objectives is a very real business challenge that the Town must develop solutions to mitigate. A complicating factor observed by Baker Tilly, and not uncommon in local jurisdictions, is a sense of entitlement by some members of the development community who use their frustration with the process to justify building without permits and publicly or privately asserting wrongdoing with misleading/incorrect information.

While there is dissatisfaction with the planning process from a vocal segment of the business community, it bears repeating that respondents to the Town's (statistically valid) opinion polling since 2008 have consistently registered high levels of satisfaction with municipal services and quality of life. This dichotomy helps to highlight the importance of addressing the Town's challenge with development services customer issues while continuing to effectively regulate development. In addition, it should be noted that approximately 400 workforce/affordable housing units are currently entitled in various stages of pre-development, and the Town has several programs specifically designed to increase long-term rental housing for residents and workforce and promote home ownership for first-time buyers/members of the local workforce.

The [Community Development Department](#) section of the report focuses on recommended solutions to address this consensus challenge.

## Peer Agency Comparisons

When conducting organizational assessments, it is helpful to survey peer agencies to see how they are structured and staffed relative to the agency under review. Comparator agencies are typically selected on demographic factors such as population, land area, median income, operating budget, and services provided. However, it can be challenging to find close matches, especially with jurisdictions such as Truckee with its combination of large land area relative to its population, its relatively high median income, geographic isolation and seasonal tourism offerings.

Additionally, each of the Town's peers provides services to their residents, such as airports, parks and recreation, and utilities that are provided by special districts within or proximate to Truckee's borders. As such, adjustments have been made to the full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing comparisons in this section and throughout the report. For example, Truckee's Public Works Department mainly provides capital project management/engineering and facilities/fleet/roadway/sidewalk/trail maintenance and snow removal and does not provide services associated with airports, parks and recreation, or utilities. To draw apples-to-apples staffing comparisons among public works departments, headcounts associated with airports, parks and recreation, and utilities have been removed from the peer agencies providing those services.

The following five jurisdictions were selected as peer agencies, in large part due to seasonal tourism and similar operational challenges such as snow removal during the winter months:

- Breckenridge, CO
- Durango, CO
- Mammoth Lakes, CA
- South Lake Tahoe, CA
- Steamboat Springs, CO

## High-Level Analysis

It is essential to note that the following comparisons are high-level and based on publicly available information obtained by reviewing each jurisdiction's webpages and budget documents available online. Key learnings and observations (observations) noted below on staffing levels are not meant to be *conclusive*. Rather, these observations are *instructive and suggestive* and help provide insights into areas where Truckee may be under-resourced.

Table 2 provides basic demographic information for Truckee and the selected peer agencies. While we typically endeavor to locate peer agencies that are more comparable in size, it was important to find jurisdictions with similar attributes, especially around seasonal tourism patterns. We note that Truckee's General Fund spending and full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) per 1,000 population are the lowest among the six agencies, with General Fund spending approximately 50% lower than the peer average, and per capita staffing less than half the observed peer average. This suggests the Town is under-resourced. It should be noted that Truckee's land area is more than double the peer average, which requires a higher level of effort to provide services in the field as compared to the peer agencies.

*Table 2. Peer Agency Comparisons: Full-time Positions and General Fund Budget Per 1,000 Population*

City/Town	Population	Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	FTE Per 1,000 Pop	Median Income	General Fund Budget	General Fund Per 1,000 Population
Breckenridge, CO	5,078	5.08	42.33	\$49,500	\$34,513,879	\$6,796,747
Durango, CO	20,720	20.72	19.69	\$68,550	\$54,013,534	\$2,606,831
Mammoth Lakes, CA	7,365	24.87	12.63	\$60,900	\$32,781,587	\$4,450,996
South Lake Tahoe, CA	21,200	10.16	10.09	\$42,401	\$56,299,840	\$2,655,778
Steamboat Springs, CO	12,435	12.44	23.72	\$47,380	\$69,100,422	\$5,556,930
Truckee, CA	17,100	32.32	8.18	\$79,971	\$37,042,787	\$2,166,245
<b>Average (peers)</b>	<b>13,359</b>	<b>13.53</b>	<b>21.69</b>	<b>\$53,746</b>	<b>\$48,896,295</b>	<b>\$4,413,456</b>

Figure 2 shows the number of full-time equivalent positions among all jurisdictions. Truckee provides Town services with 140 full-time equivalent positions, augmented with seasonal positions (similar to the peer agencies). Truckee's full-time headcount is substantially lower than the peer agency average of 245. Municipalities are often compared by full-time staff per 1,000 population comparisons. Truckee falls significantly below the peer average in this comparison and is actually nearly 20% lower than the next lowest jurisdiction, Mammoth Lakes, CA, in this metric. This provides some fairly strong evidence of understaffing in Truckee.

*Figure 2. Peer Agency Comparisons: Number of Full-time Equivalent Positions*

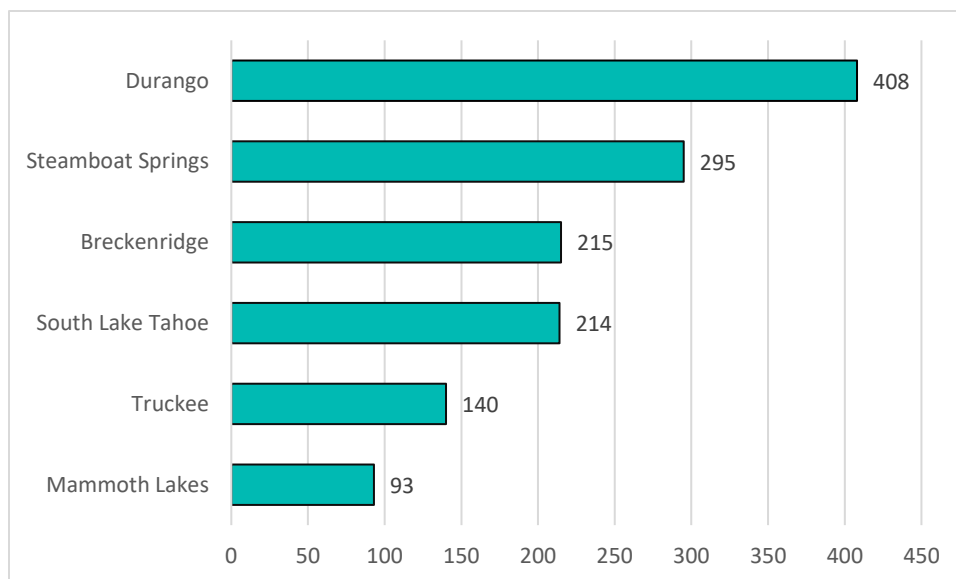
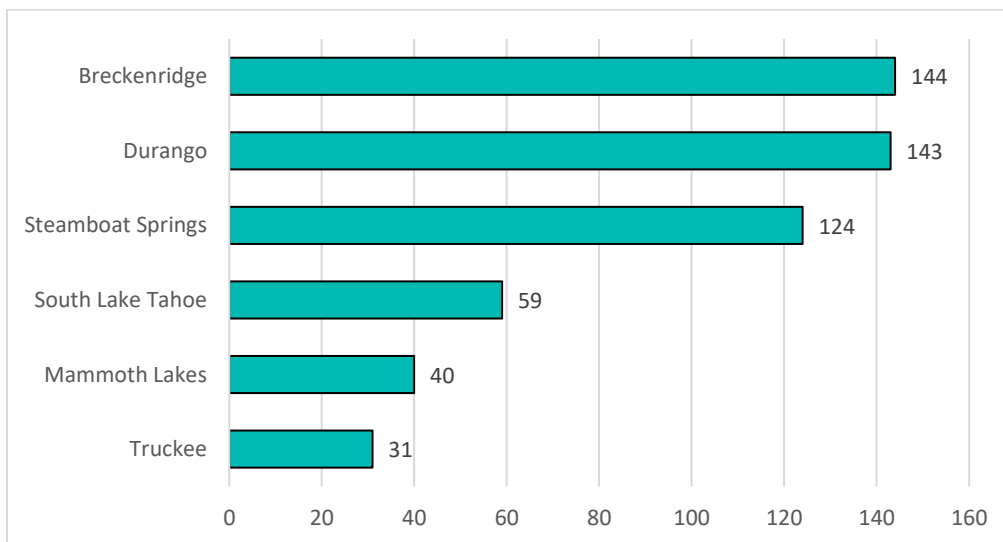


Figure 3 highlights the relative age of each jurisdiction via the number of years incorporated. The peer average is 102 years compared to 31 for Truckee. To put this another way, the peer agencies have been in existence on average more than three times Truckee's lifespan as an incorporated town. We also note that the California jurisdictions are considerably younger than their Colorado counterparts, with average ages of 43 and 137, respectively.

*Figure 3. Peer Agency Comparisons: Number of Years Since Incorporation*



It is important to note that local agencies evolve over time; older entities tend to have more mature governance models than their younger counterparts. From this perspective, Truckee's relative youth as an incorporated entity correlates to its workforce size and organizational structure and is an important consideration for understanding why the organization may be under-resourced. Truckee emerged as a town without the ability to generate revenues that older cities enjoyed and in an environment that contained several special districts that had already obtained access to limited property tax and other



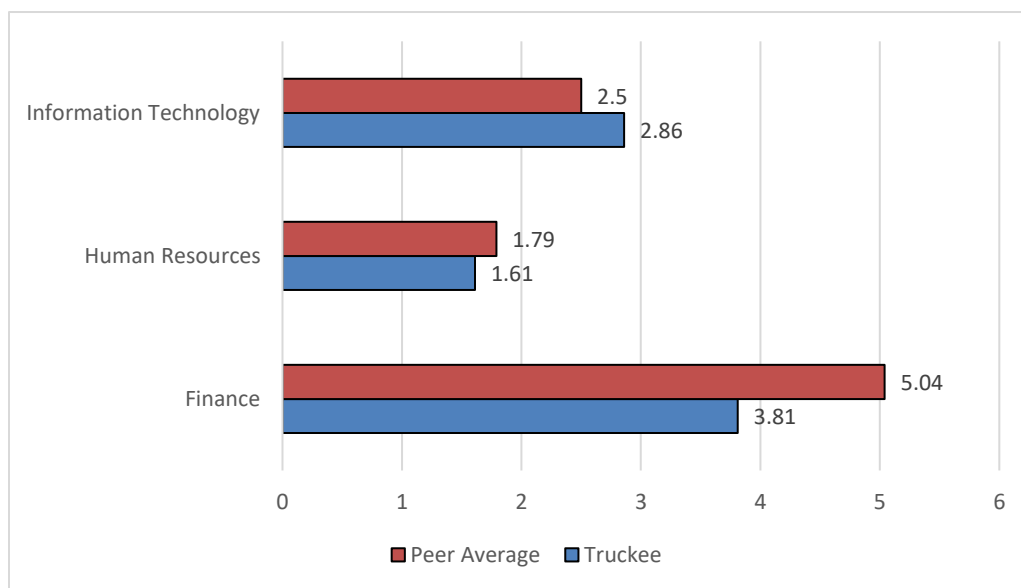
revenue support. The remainder of this section includes high-level peer agency staffing comparisons, which help to illustrate this point.

### High-Level Staffing Comparisons

Figures 4 and 5 include peer agency comparisons for the three internal service functions of Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology; and for the Community Development, Police, and Public Works departments, with each figure followed by key learnings and observations from the data comparisons.

Our comparisons are based on staffing data in each jurisdiction's operating budget. Each agency has full-time, part-time (which could include benefited and unbenefited positions that may or may not be included in an agency's full-time equivalent (FTE) headcount), and seasonal staffing components. To draw the most accurate comparisons, our analysis is limited to full-time permanent positions as identified in the operating budgets, also referenced as FTEs throughout the report.

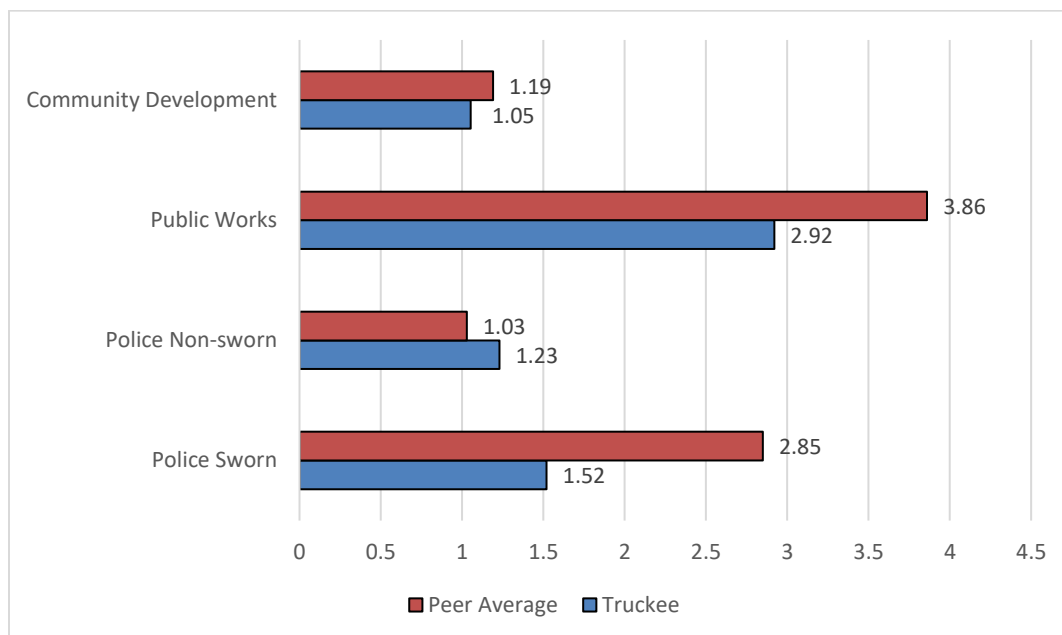
*Figure 4. Full-time Equivalent Positions Per 100 Employees: Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology Departments*



### Key Learnings and Observations

- The peer average per capita staffing number for Finance positions per 100 full-time equivalent employees is approximately 32% higher than Truckee, suggesting additional resources are needed.
- Similarly, the peer per capita staffing ratio for Human Resources is approximately 11% higher. While the difference is not significant, we note that Truckee's HR function is staffed with 2 FTEs, which is insufficient to provide a full array of personnel duties.
- On the other hand, Truckee's Information Technology per capita staffing ratio of 2.86 is approximately 14% higher than its peers, which relates to the addition of staff following a ransomware attack that occurred in 2021.
- The internal service functions in several peer agencies are structured at the department level, not at the division level, and are discussed in greater detail in the Department Profiles section of the report.

Figure 5. Full-time Equivalent Staffing Per 1,000 Population: Community Development, Police and Public Works Departments



### Key Learnings and Observations

- The peer average per capita staffing ratio of sworn officers for every 1,000 residents (2.85) is approximately 87% higher than the Truckee average of 1.52, suggesting the Town is under-resourced in this area.<sup>5</sup>
- Similarly, the peer average staffing ratio of Public Works employees per 1,000 population (3.86) is approximately 32% higher than Truckee's average (2.92), again suggesting that the Town is under-resourced.
- The peer average staffing ratio of Community Development staff per 1,000 population (1.19) is approximately 13% higher than Truckee's ratio of 1.05. However, a portion of the hours of a principal planner and a senior planner are budgeted in the Assistant to the Town Manager (ATTM) Department to assist with affordable and workforce housing, which suggests that Community Development staff is similar to the peer agencies.
- Truckee's non-sworn staffing ratio in the Police Department is approximately 19% higher than the peer average, which suggests that Truckee has made the entirely logical calculation to leverage sworn capacity by adding some less costly civilian staffing.

Peer comparisons for other Truckee departments, namely Town Attorney, Town Manager, Assistant to the Town Manager, and Town Clerk, are included in their respective summary profiles.

### Addressing Staffing Needs Over Time

As noted, our observations on Truckee's staffing levels relative to peer agencies are not meant to be conclusive but do help to highlight areas where the Town may be under-resourced. And while the peer comparisons suggest that Truckee is under-resourced in several operational areas, it is important to evaluate opportunities for efficiency improvements and gaps in service provision before definitively

<sup>5</sup> At the time of its formation in 2001, the Truckee Police Department was staffed with 25 sworn officers. Today's sworn staffing level represents a net increase of 1 sworn officer in 23 years.

concluding how many positions may be needed. That said, we believe the Town must make significant investments, over time, in both human and technological capital to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

In terms of staffing additions, the need is most apparent in the Police Department, followed by the Assistant to the Town Manager Department, the Administrative Services Department, the Public Works Department, and the Town Manager and Town Attorney departments, for a potential total of 20 positions as shown in Table 3. Even with adding 20 positions, Truckee would only reach a level of 9.36 FTEs per 1,000 population, still the lowest on the list of peer jurisdictions, but much closer to the level observed in Mammoth Lakes, CA which has a staffing level of 10.09 FTE per 1,000 population and is arguably a similar jurisdiction to Truckee.

*Table 3. Recommended Position Changes by Town Department\**

Department	Recommended Position Changes	Net Full-time Equivalent Budgeted Increase
<b>Police</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add one Unhoused Outreach Officer (sworn)</li> <li>Add one Investigator (sworn)</li> <li>Add one Sergeant (sworn)</li> <li>Add one School Resource Officer (sworn)</li> <li>Add one Administrative Clerk (civilian)</li> <li>Add one Community Outreach Coordinator (civilian)</li> <li>Add one Emergency Services Technician (civilian)</li> <li>Eliminate one Administrative Manager (civilian)</li> </ul>	6
<b>Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality</b>  (renamed from Assistant to the Town Manager)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add one Director of Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality</li> <li>Add three Program Managers (Economic Vitality, Housing, and Short-Term Rental Program)</li> <li>Add one Program Analyst (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility)</li> </ul>	5
<b>Administrative Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add one Procurement Analyst</li> <li>Add one Information Technology Business Analyst</li> <li>Add one Accounting Technician</li> <li>Add one Human Resources Technician</li> </ul>	4
<b>Public Works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add two Engineers (Engineering and Transportation)</li> <li>Add one Safety Coordinator</li> </ul>	3
<b>Town Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add one Executive Assistant</li> </ul>	1
<b>Town Attorney</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add one Executive Assistant</li> </ul>	1
<b>Community Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	Not applicable
<b>Town Clerk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	Not applicable
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>

\*Table 3 does not include recommended reclassifications of existing positions or suggested movement of positions from one department to another.

## Implementation Action Planning

Following the completion of this project report, our final deliverable includes a set of Implementation Action Plans (IAPs) for the Town's management system and individual departments that takes each recommendation for improvement and suggests implementation steps, assigns a short-, mid-, or longer-term priority for implementing the recommendations, and identifies a staff member responsible for ensuring implementation. The IAPs are delivered in draft format to be used by the Town as planning and

project management documents that can be updated to reflect current and future funding and operational realities.

The remainder of the report focuses on observations and recommendations for the improvement of the Town's management system and individual departments, taking into account the methodologies discussed above.

## Town Management System<sup>6</sup>

This section of the report discusses, from a macro level, how the Town is managed and resourced. It discusses how work is prioritized, its resources, accountability and control structures, performance measurement, human resource management, communications and support systems. These factors support direct service delivery and are the backbone that the Town organization depends on.

A management system can be thought of as the array of policies and practices used to comprehensively plan, manage, and assess the work of an organization and the performance of staff in achieving results. It encompasses the full range of processes that a management team uses to operate the government. This can include:

- Strategic Planning
- Business/Work Planning
- Operating Budget Planning
- Capital Improvement Program
- Information Technology Planning
- Internal Control Framework
- Financial Sustainability Planning
- Executive Management
- Departmental Management
- Project Management
- Communication
- Performance Management and Measurement Systems
- Administrative Policies and Procedures
- Organizational Development
- Hiring and On-boarding
- Succession Planning
- Employee Relations
- Employee Recognition
- Performance Appraisal Process

Clearly defining the management system helps agency leaders identify what is working well, where gaps exist, and what can be improved. While Truckee has implemented or is implementing measures for managing Town operations, it could benefit from improvements that provide a) clarity of Town Council policy direction, b) overall organizational alignment with the Town's mission and professional values<sup>7</sup>, c) clearer organizational structures, d) improvements in accountability, and, in some cases, e) the cultural will and/or resources necessary to achieve and sustain effective work across disciplines consistent with current governance and operational priorities. These concepts are further explored to varying degrees throughout each section of the report.

### Reconciling Past, Present and Future Priorities

With the existence of many special districts at the time of incorporation, the Town's founding was narrowly focused on managing land development and roadway maintenance/snow removal, with law enforcement added through the establishment of a Police Department in 2001 that transitioned policing from a contract with Nevada County. Consequently, Truckee is limited in the array of services it provides. These factors have impacted the way Truckee has developed as a government entity and must be reconciled with the Town's evolving and expanding strategic focus into priority focus areas such as community connectivity, workforce housing development, and climate action planning/environmental sustainability (more fully outlined below).

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<sup>6</sup> Our engagement includes an overall management system review as well as reviews of each department and division. In that certain organization-wide concepts or functions such as internal financial controls or human resource management require attention, they are addressed here rather than in the individual department sections of the report.

<sup>7</sup> Town-Council-Reference-Guide-PDF, Page 54 of 73.

## The Truckee Way

Since its founding, Town leaders, staff members and elected officials have operated under a set of operating principles known as "[The Truckee Way](#)."<sup>8</sup> The following set of core values underpins the operating principles:

- Clear Priorities
- No Surprises
- Community Outreach, Involvement and Transparency.
- Non-adversarial Decision Making

The Town's webpage associated with The Truckee Way identifies the following priorities and acknowledges changes over time:

- Land use planning and building
- Law enforcement
- Road maintenance and snow removal
- Bike paths and trails
- Solid waste
- Transit support

In addition to the priorities outlined above, the Town Council undertakes a two-year strategic priority-setting process.<sup>9</sup> The 2023 to 2025 planning horizon includes the following focus areas:

- Actively support the development of workforce housing.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become a leader in environmental sustainability.
- Enhance communication and public outreach to facilitate community cohesion.
- Invest in key infrastructure and community connectivity to enhance the quality of life for everyone.
- Enhance partnerships and investment for emergency preparedness, including wildfire readiness and mitigation.

The Town considers all Council priorities equally important, with no single priority taking precedence over the others. Under this approach, the strategic priorities are designed to move the Town toward "becoming a sustainable, safe, inclusive and connected community, while also addressing the need for affordable and workforce housing."

It is commendable that the Town has established a core set of operating principles and associated priorities and implemented a two-year strategic priority-setting process. However, having two sets of enumerated priorities that do not say the same thing is confusing and does not promote a consistent message of what the Town's priorities are and that is easily understood by the community and staff members.

### **Recommendation 1. Update and reaffirm The Truckee Way as the Town's operating principles.**

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<sup>8</sup> During our stakeholder outreach sessions, we were asked multiple times if we were aware of The Truckee Way or were otherwise encouraged to assess whether the Town government adhered to its own set of core values and operating principles, *especially as they relate to the land development process*.

<sup>9</sup> Truckee transitioned from a one-year to a two-year Council priority-setting process under the current Town Manager's leadership.

While The Truckee Way defines the “How” of the Town’s work with and for the community, the Council’s Strategic Priorities represent the “What” that the Town will focus on carrying out with and for the community. Updating and reaffirming The Truckee Way is a necessary first step in strengthening the Town’s management system – followed by other important recommendations associated with strategic and business planning that are wholly consistent with The Truckee Way.

From a best practices perspective, strategic planning is fundamental to successfully implementing established priorities. It enables the goals of an organization to be aligned with the annual budgeting process and helps guide prudent resource allocation. For maximum effectiveness, strategic plans are adopted over a multi-year period, are focused internally and externally, have organization-wide and departmental components, and include enumerated goals tied to budget allocations and outcome-based metrics. Additionally, periodic review and updating of the strategic plan will help ensure that current realities (internal and external) are taken into consideration and appropriately factored into the operations of the organization.

**Recommendation 2. Develop a five-year strategic plan.** The strategic plan would replace the current two-year priority-setting process and establish a longer-term vision, mission, values and goal statements that are aligned with allocated resources.

**Recommendation 3. Implement a department-based annual business planning process and establish associated performance metrics with a consistent methodology.**

Economic development, or more specifically the desire to place more of a focus on community business vitality, emerged as an internal and external stakeholder theme during our interviews. A specific, proactive, comprehensive, and coordinated economic development strategic plan developed with the collaboration of community and regional partners would support expressed desires by stakeholders to improve efforts in this important area. The General Plan 2024 includes an economic development element (Chapter 6), and the fiscal year 2024-25 budget includes a special project for updating the Town’s Economic Development Strategic Plan. Every effort should be made to ensure a robust plan is developed on schedule.

**Recommendation 4. Ensure the economic development strategic plan is updated as planned.**

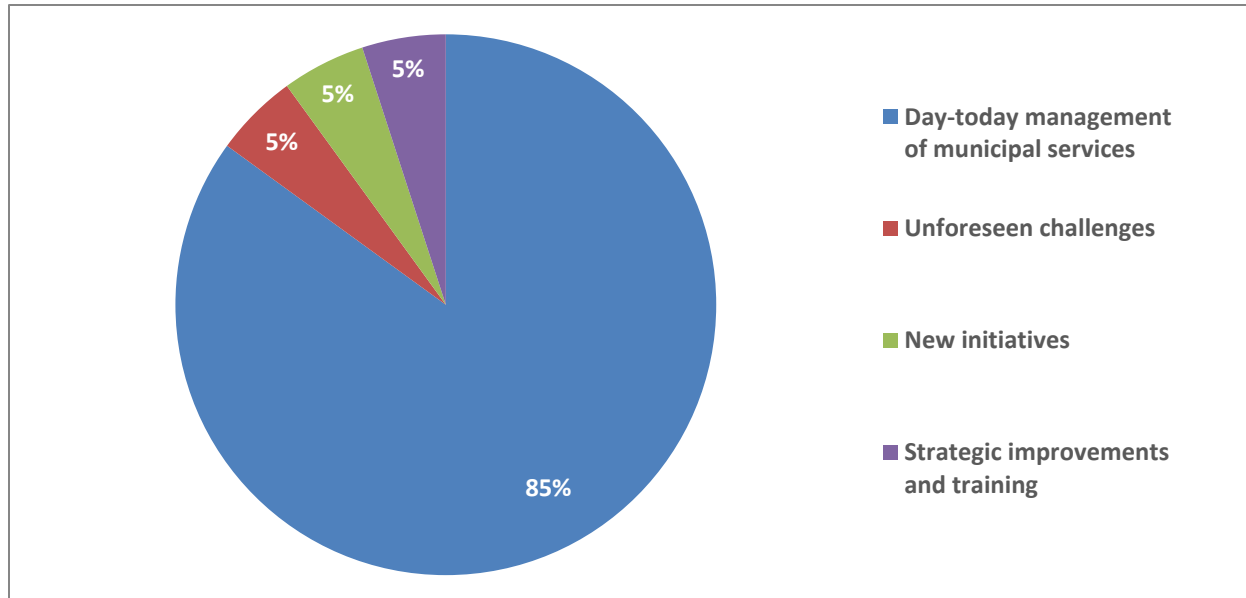
## **Managing Expectations**

Truckee’s array of services has expanded over time as Council priorities have shifted, broadening service offerings without necessarily building a sustainable organizational structure to effectively deliver them. This has impacted workload capacity and resulted in mismatched organizational structures such as the Assistant to the Town Manager Department, which is colloquially referred to as the “Salad Bowl.”

A common concern expressed by staff members at all levels of the organization is workload capacity and the ability to effectively address Council priorities, along with corresponding signs of burnout that are negatively impacting employee morale. Figure 6 includes a pie chart that Baker Tilly created as an estimate for any local government that provides perspective on how a department head or mid-manager should spend his or her time, which largely consists of managing data-to-day operations at 85%, with the remaining 15% divided among unforeseen challenges such as emergencies or new mandates, strategic improvements and training (recruiting/training new staff, anticipating challenges and needs, strategic planning, financial forecasting), and new initiatives.



Figure 6. *How Management's Time Should Be Spent*



Town leaders can use this tool to evaluate workload capacity as it relates to delivering core legacy services and newer priorities to help determine gaps, inform how priorities are established, and set realistic limits on what can and cannot be accomplished within anticipated timeframes.

**Recommendation 5. Evaluate existing priorities and service levels and make necessary adjustments where gaps in workload capacity exist.**

While it must be understood by all Town staff members that it is entirely appropriate for Council to set priorities, given the expressed concerns about staff burnout and morale, the Town must evaluate its existing initiatives, projects, and services and the ability to deliver them before considering new priorities. It is equally important that Town leaders assess whether current service levels are realistic and sustainable and where process pauses or recalibrations may be required.

When conducting the Council strategic priority setting sessions, Town leaders use visual tools and techniques such as the pie chart in Figure 6, placing lower priority items on a “bike rack,” and workload capacity discussions. Enhancing practices currently in use with additional best practice criteria can help with establishing realistic priorities and implementation timeframes and managing workload capacity.

**Recommendation 6. Enhance current practices to be followed when considering the addition of new initiatives.**

Such enhancements could include the following criteria/considerations:

- An initiative/project is needed to address an emergency or urgency, e.g., major equipment or facility failures.
- A multi-agency opportunity presents itself that cannot be delayed.
- An outside funding opportunity has emerged that is time-sensitive and requires action.
- An initiative is needed to address a near-term community safety or security issue.
- A change in state or federal law or mandate requires immediate attention.

Since its incorporation and adoption of The Truckee Way, the Town has prided itself on developing and nurturing a strong culture of collaboration, communication, and consensus-based decision making. However, as heard during the stakeholder outreach portion of the engagement, there is a sense among engaged community stakeholders that even though feedback is sought and welcomed, suggestions for changes/improvements are disregarded.

This sentiment suggests there is a misalignment in what Town leaders indicate is their desire to collaborate and engage with the community and what is occurring. Additionally, the community's sense of mixed messaging, i.e., seeking feedback but not implementing suggested changes, presents a challenge for effectively managing expectations. (The most oft-cited example provided by community stakeholders was the 2040 General Plan update process.)

Further, stakeholders internal and external to the organization perceive that the Town's service delivery approach to certain priorities such as diversity, engagement, equity and inclusion, and sustainability is perfunctory, i.e., tasks are completed so that a box can be checked without an actual cultural commitment to change.

**Recommendation 7. Evaluate the interests, means and methods used to engage the community and make necessary adjustments.** In order for community engagement to be successful, it must be part of the organizational culture. Implementation of this recommendation could include the establishment of a townwide community engagement way of doing business that clearly articulates goals and expectations.

## Sustainable Resource Allocation

When performing operational assessments, it is typical for staff members to express the need for more staffing resources, a sentiment commonly expressed throughout this engagement. Baker Tilly's approach is to assess/understand opportunities for efficiency improvements, especially those involving automation, in conjunction with evaluating staff levels. In Truckee, we believe there are numerous opportunities for such efficiency improvements, but it is also apparent that the Town is under-resourced.<sup>10</sup>

Another sentiment expressed by stakeholders, to which we concur, is that certain organizational structures (departments) such as the Assistant to the Town Manager and Town Clerk are atypical in some respects, more fully discussed in the departmental sections of this report.

**Recommendation 8. Create short- and longer-term phasing and funding plans to ensure adequate staffing and structures are in place to efficiently, effectively, and sustainably manage Council priorities and service delivery goals/expectations.** Additional details on recommendations are included in the Department Profiles section herein.

## Strategic Funding Options

Baker Tilly is cognizant of the ongoing cost implications of upgrading systems and increasing staffing levels. It is imperative that Town leaders employ a strategic focus for sustainably funding services without necessarily tying ballot measures to current or shorter-term priorities.

As one example, the Town proposed a half-cent sales tax measure on the November 2024 ballot, which passed. The measure is anticipated to raise approximately \$3.5 million annually in General Fund revenue. As a general tax that requires a simple majority to pass, the additional revenue could be used

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<sup>10</sup> We note that the Town has increased its total FTE count by 50% in the last ten years. However, compared to its peers and given the relative youth of the Town organization, it is apparent that additional staffing resources are needed in most departments. We also note that the Town's human resource system needs upgrading, which will produce longer-term efficiency/effectiveness gains but require upfront costs.

for any “general governmental purpose.” However, the Town intends to use the additional funding for wildfire/natural disaster preparation, reliable transit funding, environmental sustainability, and workforce housing, all of which directly relate to the Council’s 2023-25 priorities. The tax will sunset after 15 years, unless it is renewed by another vote of the people.

As another example, Town voters approved Measure U in 2022 to renew and increase a trails tax to fund the repair and maintenance of trails, multi-use paths, and lanes for biking, walking, and hiking that generates approximately \$3 million annually. (In the same year, Nevada County voters turned down a measure that would have provided an estimated \$12 million annually to incorporated and unincorporated areas with funding for wildfire prevention.)

Additionally, the Town’s current Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) rate was increased by voter approval to 12% in 2020, but this amount reverts to 10% in 2041. Similar sunsets apply to prior sales tax measures. Services that are enhanced while tax increases are in effect add substantial ongoing costs that may or may not be sustainable once the revenue source sunsets. Conversely, the loss of a significant revenue source requires difficult decisions on which services can continue to be funded or curtailed.

Finally, the Town has established several Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) to fund sidewalk maintenance and transit services, and traffic and facilities impact fees are assessed to help offset costs associated with increased development.

**Recommendation 9. Evaluate and implement prudent and sustainable funding options.**

Options worth considering for enhancing tax and fee revenues include the following:

- Explore resource-sharing opportunities with intergovernmental partners.
- Increase the TOT rate from 12% to 14% or 15% without a sunset provision to fund core services.
- Evaluate general tax increases, such as the Real Property Transfer Tax.
- Establish a business license tax.<sup>11</sup>
- Renegotiate/revisit the solid waste franchise fee structure for the next renewal period.
- Ensure major General Fund revenues are regularly audited.
- Conduct periodic cost-of-service studies to ensure maximum cost recovery.
- Implement a General Plan maintenance fee.
- Adopt an affordable workforce housing impact fee or other impact fees not currently assessed.
- Seek renewal of existing sales tax levies that have a sunset, without sunset provisions and without express linkages to spending priorities.

## Accountability and Control Structures

Recommendations 10 through 19 focus on key elements of the Town’s core internal services related to Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology, where management system improvements are required to strengthen accountability and control structures and maximize organization-wide efficiency and effectiveness.

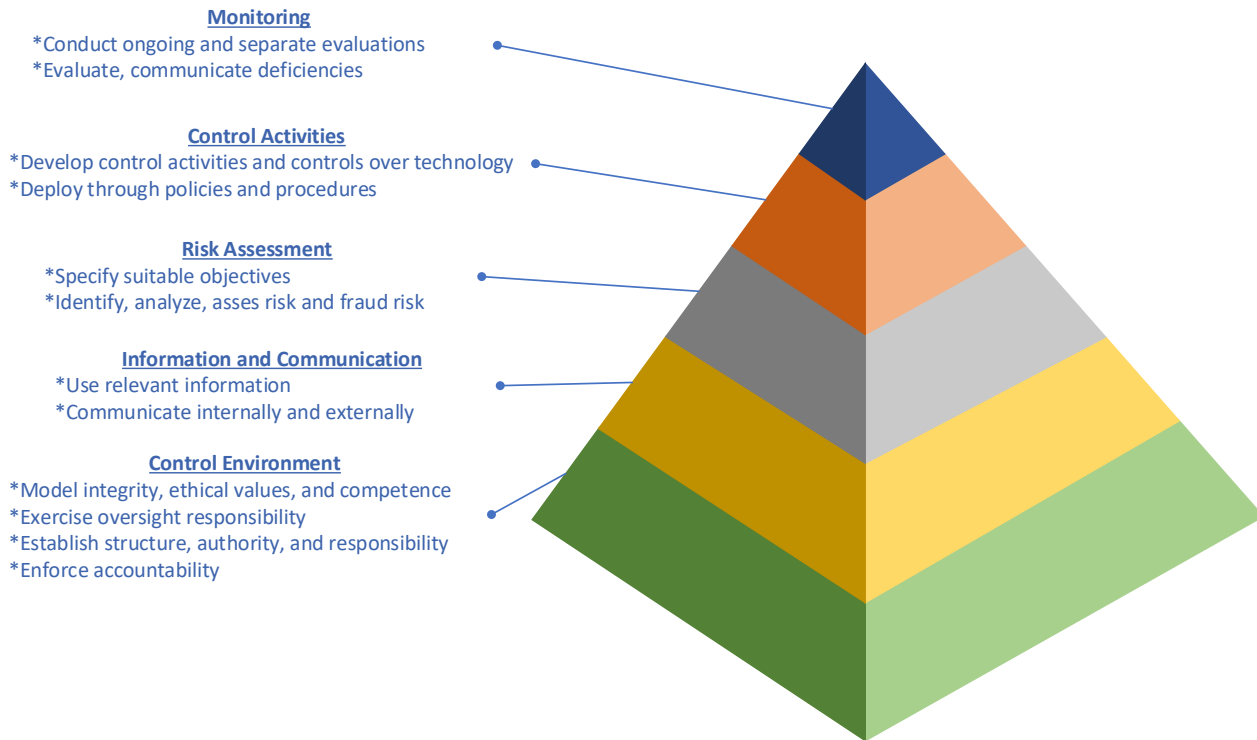
During the engagement, we learned the Town has not formally adopted an internal control policy framework such as that recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), which is

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<sup>11</sup> Business license programs benefit the issuing agencies as well as its local businesses. Key benefits can include tax and regulatory compliance, enhanced business credibility, streamlining new business openings, facilitating zoning clearances and access to funding opportunities, reduced business costs through wholesale purchases, and bidding on government contracts.

based on a structure designed by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO) Internal Control-Integrated Framework (2013). Adopting the COSO internal control framework is a best financial management practice and a fundamental governance element in well-run local agencies. The COSO Framework is based on the five components and their associated guiding principles shown in Figure 7.

*Figure 7. Committee of Sponsoring Organizations Integrated Internal Control Framework*



While the Town's management system structure contains elements of the COSO framework, it lacks a formalized policy structure on integrated internal financial controls that help safeguard agencies from risk. Adoption of the COSO framework and incorporation of its principles into the Town's financial policies provide a visual reminder to staff members and the public at large that the Town values prudent fiscal management.<sup>12</sup> Additional details on internal controls and the control environment can be found on the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) website: <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/internal-control-environment>.

**Recommendation 10. Formally adopt an internal control policy framework as a basis for designing, implementing, operating, and evaluating internal controls.**

<sup>12</sup> As required by state law, Truckee completes an annual external financial audit that tests internal controls, with no deficiencies identified in the last several years. We note that such annual reviews, however robust, may be effective for identifying internal control weaknesses, but they do not insulate agencies from the occurrence of waste, fraud, and abuse. According to the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), external financial audits typically find evidence of fraud in only 4% of cases.

The Town has also not implemented an encumbrance system that connects contractually obligated expenses to approved budgeted amounts through its financial system, which is a best practice form of internal control and helps to mitigate risks associated with waste and fraud.

**Recommendation 11. Implement an encumbrance system to appropriately account for budget to actual expenses and mitigate the risk of waste and fraud.**

The Town's procurement function is completely decentralized with user departments managing all aspects of the procure-to-pay cycle. Procurement is considered by GFOA to be a core financial service, but it is often not viewed as such by local governments, especially those entities with decentralized systems that tend to view the function as more of a payment-processing system.

In Truckee, the Finance Division does not have procurement subject matter specialists on staff and has limited capacity to perform policy compliance checks. The combination of complete decentralization and limited capacity for compliance monitoring is inconsistent with prudent practice, creates more potential for non-compliance with policy requirements, and exposes the Town to waste, fraud, and abuse.

Additionally, the responsibility for establishing written contracts and coordinating the signature execution process rests with the Town Clerk Department rather than the Finance Division or user departments as is typical in most agencies, which confuses operating departments. Given the absence of an encumbrance accounting system and robust compliance oversight, the Town would benefit from a comprehensive review of its decentralized procurement system.

**Recommendation 12. Conduct a comprehensive best practice review of the decentralized procurement function.** The review should include an assessment of purchasing card use.

## Performance Measurement System

Performance measurement is the process used to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of an agency's priority initiatives, programs, and service delivery by measuring progress/success against desired outcomes, goals and objectives. Many agencies, Truckee included, track or report on progress in terms of "outputs," i.e., workload data, without critically assessing the efficiency/effectiveness of the outputs as they relate to measurable outcomes.<sup>13</sup> Table 4 helps to highlight this difference.

*Table 4. Comparison of workload indicators to performance measures*

Output/Workload Indicator	Performance Measure
Number of annual building inspections completed	95% of annual building inspections completed within one day of request
Number of priority 1 calls for service responses	95% of priority 1 calls for service are responded to within five minutes
Number of formal competitive solicitations issued	95% of formal competitive solicitations are completed within three months

Measuring what is done, the quality of the work, and the cost of doing so is critical to assessing how well available resources are being used and whether they are focused properly. Performance measures help ensure accountability and focus discussions on what is most important. They assist organizational leaders and staff in quantifying the cost and effectiveness of their services and allocating appropriate resources to support them. This, in turn, can help executive management and policy decision makers

<sup>13</sup> Truckee reports/tracks outputs through a variety of means but does not comprehensively or consistently do so for annual budgeting purposes.

determine how better to utilize limited financial resources, identify where the gaps may be and where adjustments should be made based on priorities.

**Recommendation 13. Develop performance measures for each department to report progress and inform resource allocation decisions.** The measures should be included in the annual operating budget and reflected in department director work plans.

## Human Resource Management

A common theme heard during this engagement was a concern about succession planning and leadership and supervisory development training. Currently, succession planning is done on an ad hoc basis, but there is no formal program in place. For example, the positions of Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant Public Works Director were established and filled ahead of anticipated retirements of the Town Clerk and Public Works Director.

From a best practice perspective, a formal, agency-wide succession planning program would be led by a human resource professional in collaboration with each operating department, aiming to address succession planning for key positions. However, current staffing levels and workload in the Human Resources (HR) Department limit its ability to do this effectively.

To address these concerns, options include adding an HR staff member so the plan can be completed internally or hiring an outside consultant specializing in succession planning to create a formal written plan with a “train the trainer” component to ensure ongoing monitoring and updating. Developing a town-wide succession planning program would involve cross-training department staff members to prepare them for future advancement. A critical component of a successful succession planning program is an effective training program. A best practice is to have a structured training program in place and ensure that all training is tracked by the Town. Ideally, Human Resources should record all employee training in their personnel files.

**Recommendation 14. Develop a town-wide succession planning program aimed at cross-training existing staff and preparing them for future advancement.**

Currently, Truckee does not have any HR-specific software programs. Most HR functions are performed manually, which is labor-intensive and impacts staff workloads. By purchasing and implementing HR software, manual operations could be computerized, leading to faster and more efficient processing times and freeing up staff to focus on more proactive work. An applicant-tracking system would be a key program to consider first.

**Recommendation 15. Procure and implement an applicant tracking system as soon as practical.**

Employee performance evaluations are managed manually, with HR sending notices to the operating departments and following up when necessary. However, performance evaluation software such as those offered by solution providers such as NEOGOV and part of the newer Tyler Munis payroll system can automate this process, providing prompts and follow-up reminders and allowing evaluations to be completed electronically. Implementing such software will lead to more consistent and timely evaluations while also fostering regular interaction between employees and their supervisors. This will also help reduce HR’s need to manually monitor performance due dates and allow them to spend time on higher priority activities.

**Recommendation 16. Assess available performance management software to determine if purchasing such a program is practical and financially feasible.**



The form, function, and ongoing costs of such a system should be considered in the context of town-wide technology needs as discussed below in the Information Technology Planning and Systems section.

## Information Technology Planning and Systems

Truckee suffered a debilitating ransomware attack in 2021 that crippled the Town's information technology systems and impeded access to critical data. Following the incident, the Town created a Chief Information Security and Technology Officer (CISTO) position which has led efforts to improve system security. Though system security improvements have been made, the Town's information technology planning and systems infrastructure is lacking in key areas.

Currently, the Information Technology (IT) Division does not have a structure for obtaining input from other departments or divisions when evaluating projects or planning future initiatives. The absence of such input impacts the Division's ability to allocate internal resources effectively and limits early insight into departmental initiatives that will require IT support. Conversely, initiatives planned by IT may impact other departments and otherwise require departmental resources.

From a best practices perspective, many local government agencies establish IT governance structures with key stakeholders to evaluate planned or unplanned solutions so that technology needs are considered holistically from an ongoing cost perspective and to ensure that purchases conform to IT infrastructure requirements. Importantly, such a governance structure helps to balance resource allocation needs for IT as well as other departments.

### **Recommendation 17. Establish a town-wide information technology governance structure.**

As learned throughout our engagement, many of the Town's systems are not automated or need upgrading or better utilization, such as applicant tracking, budgeting, financial, and permitting. Without a governance structure or strategic plan to help guide information technology purchases, Town departments have procured many software solutions or subscriptions without evaluating the total costs of ownership, resource impacts, and whether efficiencies or ongoing cost savings could be gained by consolidating systems. For example, the Police Department has 20 different information systems in use, and there are at least 20 public works-related systems in use. Accordingly, a review is necessary to determine where opportunities exist to consolidate systems in use and achieve better overall value.

### **Recommendation 18. Conduct a comprehensive review of software solutions, subscriptions, and systems currently in use.**

The CISTO prepares an annual workplan that outlines anticipated activities for each IT staff member. As it stands, the workplan is granular and technical, and although the plan provides valuable information, it lacks direction regarding planning or growth for the Division and Town as a whole, is likely daunting to staff members, and relays technical content that could be difficult to fully grasp by others in the organization. For these reasons, we recommend that the Division replace the annual workplan with a three- to five-year strategic plan that establishes technology governance goals that link to Council priorities and key system initiatives.

### **Recommendation 19. Prepare and fund an information technology strategic plan to help guide system solution decisions.**

Because the Town IT infrastructure has been developed in such an ad-hoc and fragmentary way, the arrival of the CISTO, coupled with the development of a robust information technology strategic plan, probably offers the most important opportunity to drive efficiency improvements across the entire organization and reduce long-term labor cost requirements. The Town should make this effort a top priority.



## Effective Communications

Communication in any complex organization is challenging. Communication within high-performing teams requires a strategic focus aligned throughout an organization, the free flow of information, a shared agreement that no topic is off limits, and frequent and respectful interactions among team members and other individuals in the organization.

Under the current Town Manager's leadership, several methods of communication are employed to ensure information is shared throughout the organization, including regular meetings at the executive leadership level and a "cascading messaging system" designed to share information on operational and administrative decisions meant to flow down to staff members at all levels of the organization. A periodic newsletter, "Talk From the Town," is also posted to the Town's website.

However, as learned during the staff members' interviews, information is not consistently shared across all Town departments, and there are no organization-wide requirements that departments hold regularly scheduled "all hands," division management, and work unit meetings.

### **Recommendation 20. Ensure department heads implement formal meeting structures.**

In discussions with Town staff members, it is our understanding that there are no agency-wide customer service standards for responding to internal or external inquiries, and some employees do not routinely check emails or other forms of information dissemination to help stay informed of Town operations. That said, other staff members recognize the importance of customer responsiveness and endeavor to promptly return emails and voicemails.

In our experience, establishing organization-wide expectations for responding to customer inquiries helps set the tone for service excellence. A common measure would be to return all calls and voicemails within one business day, even if the initial response simply acknowledges receipt with a "reply by" date.

### **Recommendation 21. Establish customer service standards for responding to internal and external inquiries.**

Although Town leaders consistently communicated concerns about workload and burnout/morale, as well as the need for additional staffing, some are hesitant to share their thoughts with staff members for various reasons. As noted, we believe the Town is under-resourced in human capital and shares similar concerns about workload and morale that cannot be overlooked. As such, a confidential employee satisfaction survey should be conducted at the earliest opportunity, with results openly shared with all staff members.

### **Recommendation 22. Conduct a confidential employee satisfaction survey to better understand concerns about morale and workload.**

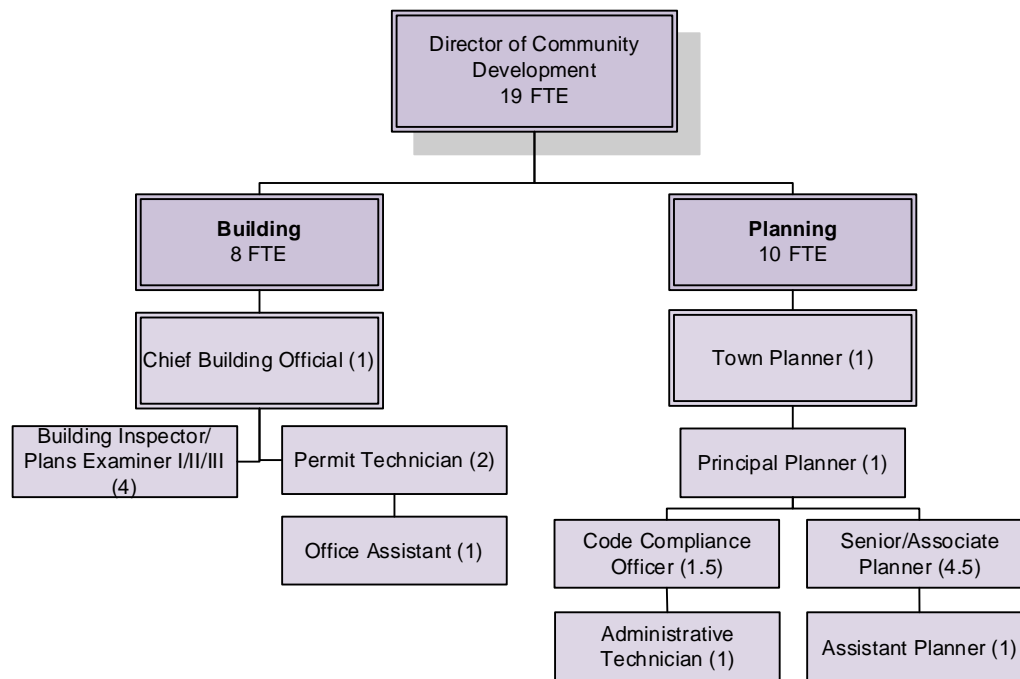
## **Department Profiles**

The remainder of this report focuses on observations and recommendations for improvement for each Town department, including staffing, structural, operational/functional and other changes.

## Community Development Department

The Community Development Department is responsible for planning, building, and code compliance functions for the Town and is staffed with 19 budgeted full-time equivalent positions, as shown in Figure 8.<sup>14</sup> The Planning Division is also supported by two contract positions, a Town Surveyor (0.2 FTE) and a Housing/Grants Administrator (0.5 FTE).

Figure 8. Community Development Department Organization Chart



### Department Background

The functions of this department, which shape the growth and development of the Town, are among the principal reasons for the original incorporation movement; these functions are of critical importance and high visibility to Town residents.

The Department's principal functions are administered by the Building and Planning Divisions. The Planning Division is responsible for development review, entitlement processing and long-range planning, public information-related activities, and Development Code compliance. The Division also provides staff support to the Town Council and the Planning and Historic Preservation Advisory Commissions.

Located within the Planning Division, the Code Compliance function is responsible for coordinating with Town divisions on compliance issues, abatement of nuisances such as litter or solid waste issues or illegal construction, permitting of temporary signs, assisting with Transient Occupancy Tax collection/

<sup>14</sup> A portion of the principal planner's time and that of one senior planner is allocated to the Housing Division in the Assistant to the Town Manager Department (0.5 FTE of each position). The full-time equivalencies for each position are included in the organization chart due to the reporting structures, i.e., the positions report up to the Community Development Director, not the Assistant to the Town Manager. However, 1 FTE has been removed from Table 4 to reflect that portion of planner position time spent devoted to housing programs. Similar downward adjustments in FTEs have been made to the peer agencies to ensure apples-to-apples comparisons are being made.

Short-term Rental Ordinance compliance, stormwater regulation, and cannabis regulation compliance. The Town Planner is responsible for managing the work unit.

The Building Division is responsible for monitoring and enforcing State and Town codes and regulations concerning the safety of buildings and structures built and maintained within Town limits. Principal activities include intake and routing plans to appropriate Town staff, checking plans for engineering and code compliance, coordinating comments for Town departments, issuing permits, answering code questions, providing information to the public, and inspecting new and existing buildings and structures within the jurisdiction.

## Peer Agency Comparisons

As reflected in Table 5, the peer average per capita staffing ratio is approximately 13% higher than Truckee. While this difference shows that Truckee is less resourced than its peer comparators on a per capita basis, we believe that efficiency and other improvements in Planning detailed below will obviate the need for additional resources to maintain existing service levels.

*Table 5. Peer Agency Comparisons: Community Development Department Per Capita Staffing Ratios*

City/Town	Population	Community Development FTE	Community Development FTE Per 1,000 Population
Breckenridge, CO	5,078	12.0	2.36
Durango, CO	20,720	11.0	0.53
Mammoth Lakes, CA	7,365	11.0	1.49
South Lake Tahoe, CA	21,200	13.0	0.61
Steamboat Springs, CO	12,435	12.0	0.97
Truckee, CA	17,100	18.0	1.05
Average (peers)	13,359	11.80	1.19

It should be noted that the Community Development Departments in the jurisdictions of Breckenridge, Durango, and South Lake Tahoe have divisions and/or full-time positions associated with services other than Building, Code Enforcement, and Planning within their respective Community Development departments. The positions are associated with services related to housing, childcare, open space and trails, and economic innovation and have been removed from the FTE counts.

Currently, economic development and workforce housing functions in Truckee are administered by the Assistant to the Town Manager Department, while work associated with trails management is provided by Public Works. Recommendations associated with these functions are contained in those respective department profiles.

## Planning Process Improvements

The Planning Division within the Community Development Department is charged by the municipal code with (among other tasks):

- Providing the Town Manager with technical assistance on planning matters and presenting information and recommendations to the Council on enforcing “zoning regulations and land use matters in general.”
- Assisting the public with “advice and guidance to develop and use property within the requirements of applicable state and local laws and the General Plan.”

As described in the fiscal year 2024-25 operating budget, Planning Division resources are budgeted to:

- Process land use and zoning applications
- Review building permits and inspect development projects
- Prepare environmental documents
- Provide public assistance
- Implement the 2040 General Plan Update
- Prepare development code amendments for consistency with the General Plan, Downtown Truckee Plan and Council priority workplan tasks

In general, Planning (and often Building & Safety) is a service line that routinely receives scrutiny in towns, cities and counties. It is a complex function responsible for all matters pertaining to land use within a given jurisdiction, summarized in Figure 9.

*Figure 9. Responsibilities Associated with Local Government Planning Function*



Throughout this organizational assessment, Baker Tilly encountered an overall negative sentiment from the members of the business/development community specifically related to the Planning function. This sentiment was acknowledged by current and former Town leaders, current and former elected officials, and staff members throughout the organization.

Clearly, the biggest organizational/operational challenge facing the Town is how to effectively address the negative sentiment about how and when planning decisions are made. Town leaders must address the issue immediately, as it detracts from the overarching goal of implementing the community vision for land use, growth, and development while maintaining and enhancing the quality of life and unique community character.

Additionally, there is at least the perception of an adversarial relationship between certain property developers and current Town staff responsible for making land use decisions. This relationship has intensified over time and is rooted in deep-seated mistrust and likely includes lingering sentiments from interactions with and actions taken by past officials no longer with the Town.

Through scheduled interviews, focus groups, follow-up meetings, and unsolicited contacts, perspectives shared by customers (i.e. Planning and/or Building & Safety applicants) included what is *perceived* to be the inflexible application of regulations, excessive fees/exactions, project delays over periods of many months or years resulting in substantial carrying costs, lapses of entitlements, permit expirations, etc.,

that require economic staying power, patience and persistence.<sup>15</sup> Baker Tilly also found that some members of Truckee's development community feel justified in taking actions that violate development codes because of the challenges of navigating the Planning and/or Building & Safety process, which results in projects taking unreasonable amounts of time to get approved. Such actions are counterproductive and serve to perpetuate the level of dysfunction now occurring.

Baker Tilly suspects that public sentiment towards Planning may also stem from pre-incorporation, when Truckee had fewer regulations and less code enforcement, compared to now with more regulations and more consistent application of the codes. (Prior to incorporation, land use decisions affecting Truckee were made by Nevada County, whose approach to land development at that time has been characterized as lax. Additionally, the Town's design and development standards have become more stringent over time, reflecting changes at the state and local levels.)

As learned during the information gathering phase of the engagement, the Town's action to incorporate was related in part to efforts to construct a big-box retailer, and there was a reaction by Town leaders to limit development through a no/slow growth mindset. Presently, there are both pro- and anti-growth voices in the community, which puts the Planning Division in a very difficult position of balancing the competing perspectives. For example, while some members of the business community feel that Planning impedes development, during the 2025 General Plan process, the Planning Division was called out for being pro-growth by community members averse to change. As another example, the Planning Commission voted no on recommending adoption of the 2040 General Plan out of concerns over density and intensity of land uses.

While there may still be no/slow growth voices in the community, there is a desire by community business leaders and contractors to develop commercial and residential property to contribute to Truckee's economic vibrancy. This sentiment is supported by elected officials who have also established workforce housing as a top priority. In support of this objective, the Town is making progress on workforce/affordable housing development with more than 400 units currently entitled in various stages of pre-development. However, Truckee's strict design and development standards and building seasonality lengthen the time it takes to construct housing units and can ultimately result in projects not proceeding. These development challenges are counterbalanced by the Town's programs to increase long-term rental housing for residents and the local workforce and promote home ownership for first-time buyers or members of the local workforce (over the last several years, the Town has housed more than 1,000 program participants).

Baker Tilly's assessment is that the Town's present-day priorities associated with economic and workforce/affordable housing development must be more meaningfully met; the organizational changes recommended in the [Assistant to the Town Manager Department](#) section of this report will help facilitate greater progress.

The vocal and frustrated sentiment toward the Town's Planning function, also tied to concerns with the Building & Safety and Engineering functions, presents a significant challenge to Town leaders, Town staff, and the Truckee community. Therefore, process stakeholders associated with land development inside and outside of the organization share responsibility for working toward solutions to mitigate the current state of negativity.

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<sup>15</sup>An oft-repeated assertion by contractors and business leaders is that Planning decisions are made in an arbitrary and capricious manner. Equally repeated assertions include tendencies by Planning staff to "move the goalposts" on planning decisions; provide conditions of approval (COA) without sufficient review time before scheduled Planning Commission meetings; continue to assess development exactions after COA approval; unreasonably charge for staff time to review applications; and communicate verbally rather than in writing. Baker Tilly cannot attest to the veracity of these examples or the frequency of their occurrence. What is clear, however, is that business representatives who engaged with us during the project strongly perceive that the cited examples are more than just "one off" occurrences.

## **Perception or Reality**

When conducting comprehensive engagements such as this, it can be challenging to validate the truthfulness of specific examples of expressed concerns, some of which are due to the confidential nature of our one-on-one and small group discussions. For example, an external stakeholder indicated that they were aware of a project where Planning staff significantly undercalculated an impact fee, the error of which was discovered after entitlements were approved, which ultimately led to lost financing for the development.

When the information was shared with the Town staff, we learned that the fee was calculated correctly, but a significantly lower amount was incorrectly referenced in an email from planning staff to the applicant following the Planning Commission meeting when the Conditions of Approval were considered.

Clearly, what was communicated to Baker Tilly was an inaccurate portrayal of what actually occurred. We suspect that other examples were similarly inflated. However, the considerable dysfunction that currently exists should be the overriding consideration for engaging stakeholders and implementing meaningful improvements. From this viewpoint, it should be understood by Town leaders that “perception is reality.”

On a positive note, Planning staff members as well as members of CATT have expressed a willingness to engage in conversation to discuss ways to facilitate communication and collaboration and come to mutually agreeable solutions.

## **Moving Forward**

Overcoming the chasm between developers, builders and contractors and the development-related functions of the Town will require clear policy direction from the Council and complete commitment by staff members and the Truckee development community members to acknowledge that each plays a role in perpetuating the dynamic that is occurring and therefore each must play a role in implementing sustained improvements.

Public service is a privilege and a duty, and as a service, it is the responsibility of public servants to continuously seek to improve the delivery of services to the public served. Implementing improvements to change negative sentiment will require a cultural shift on the part of all Truckee staff members at all levels of the organization – there is a need to establish a universal service-oriented mindset that exudes (in communications and actions) efforts to timely facilitate successful projects consistent with adopted policy and regulations. To accomplish positive change, the Town can adopt a service excellence approach and a commitment to strengthening public trust.

Thus, the Town shoulders the leadership role to improve the operations of the Planning function and consistently and effectively engage and communicate with customers to positively change this dimension of the Town’s public service. As a high-level framework for navigating this challenge and strengthening public trust, the following framework – in conjunction with the recommendations in this organizational assessment – can help:

1. The Town Council provides clear and unambiguous policy direction (i.e., expectations) to the Town Manager towards facilitating development review, elevating customer service, and engaging with the public – including amending conflicting policies, restating supportive policies, and establishing new policies as needed. This policy direction should be consistent with the Town’s mission and professional values, strategic priorities, as well as The Truckee Way.
2. The Town Manager assigns responsibility to and holds accountable applicable department leaders for carrying out the Town Council’s policy direction and recommendations for improvement about Planning and/or Building & Safety. As necessary, the Town Manager requests resources and policy clarification from the Town Council to support applicable departments.

3. Applicable department leaders, working with staff and customers, develop, coordinate and carry out improvements based on responsibilities assigned by the Town Manager consistent with Town Council policy direction. Progress should be reported to the Town Council at least quarterly to maintain forward motion.

**Recommendation 23. Implement a suite of improvements to advance service excellence and strengthen public trust.**<sup>16</sup> The first suite of improvements is grouped under the heading of “Adopting a Service Excellence Model”, and Baker Tilly details associated recommendations below:

### **Adopting a Service Excellence Model**

Customers and the Town need a tool to monitor customer satisfaction with development review services so that such services can be consistently improved to meet the needs of the community.

**Recommendation 23a. Measure customer satisfaction.** Employ a feedback tool, such as [www.happy-or-not.com](http://www.happy-or-not.com), to allow online and in-person customers to communicate their satisfaction with the services provided. Implementing this insights tool in the near term would be beneficial for creating a baseline to track the impacts of changes and measure progress.

**There is a need to institutionalize customer communication standards.** This standard of service is a topic vocalized frequently by internal and external customers and one that would benefit the Town and the public by being an applicable organization-wide standard. This standard of service can be facilitated and reinforced through technology employed by the Town, such as Dialpad, Outlook, Teams, cellular phones, etc. This recommendation should be accomplished through administrative procedures approved by the Town Manager and provided to, and acknowledged by, staff in all Town departments in the very near term.

**Recommendation 23b. Response standards for customer communications.** Establish performance standards to acknowledge all communications by phone, email or text within one business day and, as applicable, accompanied by a “by when (date)” commitment of when follow-up with a more specific or thorough response will occur.

Several planning processes can be improved for efficiency and effectiveness. We suggest three discrete processes below. Once “as is” (current state) processes are completed, prepare “process improvements” (future state) for each, along with an implementation action plan needed to result in the “process improvements.” The Town Manager should determine the role(s) of customers (e.g., working side-by-side with staff or in a review capacity for the “current state” and “future state” process maps) in these process improvement efforts. Of note, the following should be addressed as part of the process improvements:

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<sup>16</sup> Implementing a suite of improvements to advance service excellence and strengthen public trust can be universally applied to other operational areas. Our focus here is on land development processes, including those outside of the Community Development Department, such as Engineering, which are collectively the most important to address in the short term, given certain public sentiment and the widespread acknowledgment by all process stakeholders engaged that this area is the most problematic to address.



**Recommendation 23c. Process improvements.** Initiate in the near term with completion in 12 to 18 months, undertake process mapping exercises involving all Town development review disciplines to identify “as is” (current state) process for most common Planning and Building & Safety applications that factor in not only Town staff and external agency needs, but also the “lens of the customer” - those improvements that would benefit the external customer.

**Examine the current preliminary application process.** Specific provisions in the Truckee Development Code (Municipal Code – Title 18) can be considered that structurally require certain application types to participate in a preliminary application process that includes: a) a fee-based option credited to an actual application submittal for early input through conceptual or limited review (with limited verbal comments by all Town departments provided to applicants) or b) a fee-based option (credited to an actual application submittal) for comprehensive coordinated review (with written comments by all Town departments, special districts and outside agencies provided to applicants for concurrence within one-week of in-person meeting).

The process could be staffed by a dedicated committee of representatives from Town departments, special districts and outside agencies, including an administrative professional to create an agenda, take meeting notes, and prepare follow-up correspondence to accurately document what was communicated.

Incorporating ways to accommodate fee-based expedited plan check services during times of heavy workload with the intention of cutting review times in half should be considered. Town leaders have been hesitant to establish fee-based services due to the perception of “pay to play.” However, in our experience, fee-based programs that are well-managed can be effective for expediting plan reviews.

**Eliminate the routine practice of concurrent review of Land Use Permits and Building Permits.** This is not a best practice of towns and cities and often creates a source of conflicts with applicants and inefficiencies (e.g., when a setback must be adjusted via the Land Use Permit process, it can cause an undesirable redesign of the building plans that are concurrently being reviewed as part of the Building Permit process). Develop Town Council-approved criteria for special conditions when this concurrent practice can occur (e.g., high-priority economic development projects, etc.), along with the requisite “at-risk” agreements for the applicant to acknowledge and sign.

Turnaround times need to be made more explicit and uniform and communicated to applicants, which is an accepted best practice. Specifically, the Department must clarify, communicate transparently, uphold, and enforce the timelines of the Permit Streamlining Act (Government Code § 65920 et seq.), the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) and the Subdivision Map Act (Government Code § 66410 et seq.) including such things as the 30-day clock upon submittal to determine if the application is complete, etc. The Town Manager should regularly review the plan and check turnaround stats.

**Recommendation 23d. Uniform Turnaround.** In the near term, establish uniform plan check turnaround times to ensure all Town teams return plan review comments by the same date, creating efficiency, certainty, and transparency for customers.

Currently, it can be difficult for applicants to ascertain the status of their building permit application. Applicants should be able to use a self-service tool to do so, which would improve the customer experience and reduce information inquiries to staff. The system could allow applicants to look up information on their property, submit projects, permit applications and electronic plans from the comfort of their office or home, obtain real time status updates, pay fees, schedule inspections, and more – without a visit to Town Hall, and saving time and money for the applicant and staff. The system selected should allow for all project applications and related submittals to occur online, no matter the size or complexity of the project, ensuring the Town maintains resilient services and continuity of operations under any condition.

Town staff can use these systems to easily run reports and avoid the time-intensive efforts to create and manually update dashboards. Increasingly, AI is being integrated within systems to elevate efficiencies. Initiating this step should occur after a very thorough scoping of the needs of decision makers, staff and customers to ensure the procurement effort accurately captures the functionality needed by all. Initiate this effort in the near term with the expectation that implementation could take several years depending upon multiple factors.

**Recommendation 23e. Processing Convenience.** Procure and implement useful technology that integrates with other Town systems and includes a user-friendly public permit portal that provides customers with remote access 24/7 to the Town team for every step of the process.

To help illustrate the suite of recommendations outlined above, consider their application to the process of developing and approving Conditions of Approval (COAs) from the standpoint of collaboration and communication between staff and applicants. At the time of a pre-application meeting, staff should be prepared with either COAs that have been associated with a recent project of similar nature or a largely complete draft / working draft standard set for the project type along with any potential COAs given unique attributes.

As COAs evolve, staff should communicate with applicants and have a dialogue about the COAs. Addressing COAs proactively benefits applicants as well as staff. If a proposed development is inconsistent with the General Plan and zoning code, or noncompliant with state law, applicants should know as early in the process as possible whether the project is likely or unlikely to receive staff support, and why. This “no surprises” approach and mindset should be the standard.

### **Strengthening Public Trust**

The second major suite of recommendations for the Community Development Department deals with the need to rebuild public trust in the services provided. Over time, and probably stemming from the adversarial atmosphere that existed before and after incorporation, entitlement processing has become unnecessarily hostile between the Town and some members of the development community. This benefits neither party in the long run. The situation of mistrust that currently exists has evolved over a long period and is not a function of individuals; it is more a function of adversarial perspectives shaped over many years of experience and assumptions about the process, which have been shaped almost irrespective of staff members.

An important first step is to engage with the Planning staff to talk about the problems and chart a path forward.

**Recommendation 23f. Facilitated Workshop.** Conduct a facilitated workshop with Planning staff to identify short- and longer-term procedural and structural improvements to streamline land development processes.

Following staff engagement, the next step will be to meet with the development community.

**Recommendation 23g. Customer Engagement.** Engage contractors and business leaders to discuss planned improvements and identify consensus solutions that developers working with Planning can implement.

Building on this engagement process, Baker Tilly recommends that consideration be given to establishing a standing committee to work on issues. The standing committee would also be informed on upcoming updates to process or development code provisions, etc., and would be queried about how to effectively communicate with the public to support a “No Surprises” approach. This committee would also be charged with holding to account the implementation of identified improvements and reporting progress to the City Council a minimum of two times per year.

**Recommendation 23h. Continuous Customer Feedback.** Establish a standing facilitated committee of regular participants in the development process (e.g., representatives from the design professions, the development community, builders and contractors [including Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe – CATT], etc.) who, along with staff from the Town Manager's Office and applicable development-related functions of the Town, can constructively identify and problem-solve challenges/issues.

To mitigate any perceived conflicts of interest or unintended misunderstandings about decision making, there should be some consideration to recalibrating a system of checks and balances concerning the Department. Specifically, as structured, it is difficult if not unfair to have the Community Development Director oversee staff who provide information for a decision while also making the decision; this creates a perceived conflict of interest. This recommendation clarifies the separation of duties and creates checks and balances that contribute to improved public sentiment and trust.

**Recommendation 23i. Reinforce Checks and Balances.** Adjust the responsibilities of the Community Development Director by amending the Town Municipal Code to re-assign the role of Zoning Administrator and other roles with quasi-judicial proceedings to a qualified external professional (i.e., public hearing officer or administrative judge).

The Truckee Municipal Code relating to development (Title 18) could be streamlined and simplified to reduce ambiguity and clarify procedures with the process improvement efforts outlined above.

**Recommendation 23j. Review Development Code.** Undertake a comprehensive review of Truckee Municipal Code – Title 18, Development through a consultant-led process that relies upon the work and guidance of a committee comprised of staff and customers (e.g., Planning Commissioners, regular participants in the development process, etc.) and has goals to reduce unnecessary provisions and processes, add objectivity and certainty to existing provisions, clarify ambiguities, and make overall improvements for purposes of efficacy and efficiency.

To rebuild trust, it is necessary to redouble efforts at communications. For example, simple “explainer videos” can cost-effectively convey frequent topics discussed with staff, FAQs, or helpful practices for different parts of the process, such as “Why Zoning?” and “Why Do Building Codes Exist?” to “What designers unfamiliar with Truckee need to know” and “What is a Quality Submittal?”. This could begin implementation in the near term and involve Town staff from all development-related functions and customers.

**Recommendation 23k. Invest in Expanded Public Communications pertaining to Planning and Building and Safety.** It is important to public trust to communicate in a multi-media manner topics of importance to customers.

Finally, there is concern over how fees and exactions are applied. Common themes relayed during the external stakeholder engagement process pertain to amounts paid for plan review, fee miscalculations, and timing and nexus of assessments. Specific examples were shared with Baker Tilly throughout our engagement, and the veracity of each example has not been validated. While such validation is necessary to ensure accuracy, there is, at the very least, a perception in the development community that the Town's fee/exaction methods, amounts, and practices warrant a comprehensive review.

Several staff members also expressed the need for a comprehensive fee study. Baker Tilly concurs with the benefits of undertaking such a study and notes that a fee study has not been conducted in many

years. Implementing this recommendation upon completion of process improvements will benefit trust-building between the Town and its customers. A regular update to the fee study should occur as part of any efficiency efforts implemented (e.g., online plan submittal and plan check, uniform plan check timelines, etc.).

**Recommendation 23I. Conduct a comprehensive review of development-related fees, exactions, and fee methodologies.**

### **Other Process Improvements**

While most of Baker Tilly's recommendations for the Community Development Department fall under the heading of either adopting a service excellence model/ establishing best practice operating policies or rebuilding public trust in the Department (these are the most important areas for improvement), there are several other discrete areas for improvement which are outlined below.

Currently, Code Compliance falls under the Planning Division. This separates the code function from the other field-based Community Development functions of Building. It would generate efficiency to re-align Code Compliance under Building to take advantage of field-based synergies.

**Recommendation 24. Move Code Compliance under the Building Division to align the in-the-field regulatory responsibilities of each.**

An established best practice in entitlement processing is for Planning staff to meet with applicants before an application is filed so that potential applicants understand the requirements and what is expected as part of the process.

**Recommendation 25. Establish a routine pre-submittal meeting structure to ensure the Town and the applicant are aligned on project goals and regulatory requirements.**

Another best practice is to meet in the field before beginning grading or demolition activities. This would be particularly important in Truckee, where environmental mitigations are important to protecting freshwater sources.

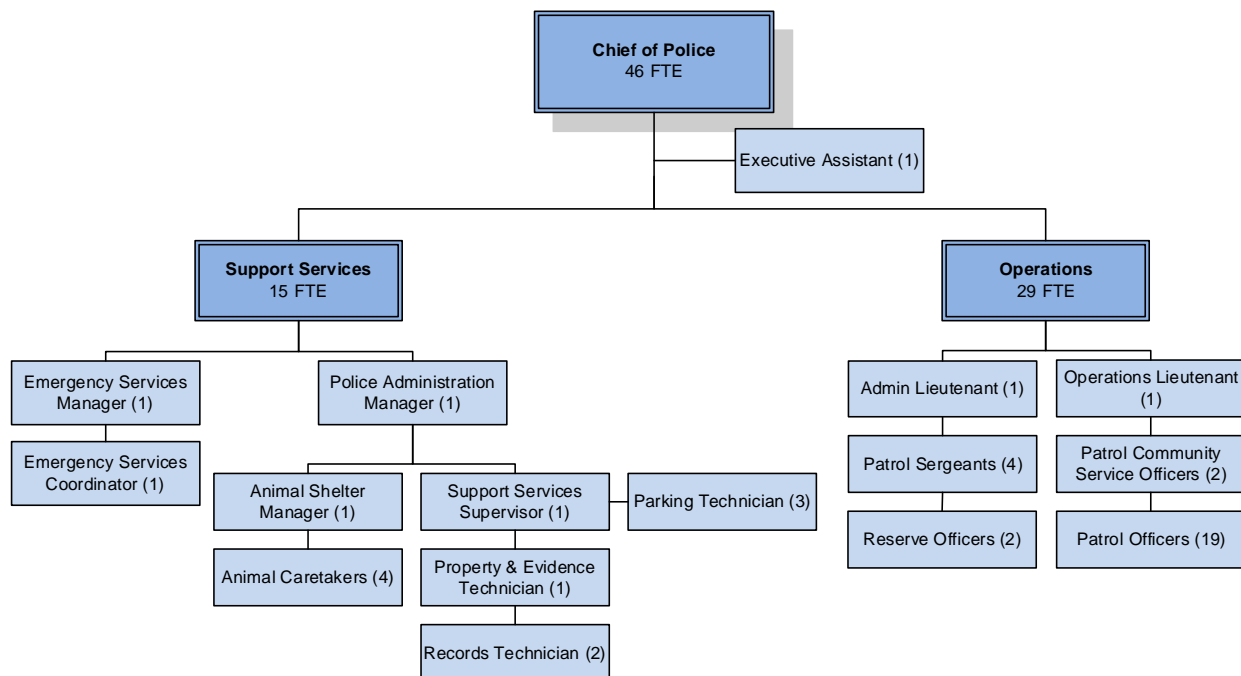
**Recommendation 26. Establish routine pre-grade and pre-demo meetings to coordinate all site work.**

Establishing and routinizing pre-planning and building processes to engage applicants will enhance collaboration and public trust.

## Police Department

As Figure 10 shows, the Truckee Police Department (PD) is a full-service police agency with 46 budgeted full-time equivalent positions (26 sworn and 20 non-sworn) that provides a wide range of services for the Town. These include Patrol, Investigation, Traffic, School Resource, Emergency Services, Parking Enforcement and Animal Shelter. The Department contracts with the Nevada County Sheriff's Department for dispatching services and receives critical incident assistance from the Sheriff's Tactical Response Team as necessary.

Figure 10. Police Department Organization Chart



### Department Background

The Truckee Police Department facility is located within the Truckee Town Hall, occupying space on both levels. The facility suits the current needs of the Department, but future growth may require some expansion. The Department is structured within two divisions – Operations and Support Services, as shown in Figure 10.

The Department has undergone organizational structure changes many times since its inception.<sup>17</sup> Until recently, the Department operated with four distinct divisions. Currently, the largest division is the Operations Division, led by a Police Lieutenant and primarily responsible for front-line field services. The Town's organization chart currently includes emergency services staff as part of the Support Services Division, but Emergency Operations is considered by the Department to be its own division. The Administrative Division is responsible for criminal investigations, school resources, and oversight of Department training and personnel matters. A Police Lieutenant also leads this division. The Support Services Division is comprised of non-sworn employees in support roles such as Records, Evidence, and Parking Enforcement. The Animal Shelter is also included in this division.

<sup>17</sup> While the incumbent chief has been in the position for several years, there had previously been several chiefs who changed the organizational structure to address perceived needs at different points in time. The incumbent chief inherited the current structure.

The Support Services Division was previously overseen by the Administrative Manager, a non-sworn position. However, earlier this year, that position became vacant. In the interim, the Police Chief has combined the Administrative and most of the Support Services Division into a single division led by a Police Lieutenant. However, the Animal Shelter was temporarily moved into Operations. A three-division structure, including Emergency Operations, is more suited to the Truckee Police Department's size and scope of operations. The interim structure put in place by the Police Chief should become permanent. The vacant Administrative Manager position is no longer necessary and can be eliminated.

**Recommendation 27. Make permanent the interim organizational structure for three divisions: Operations, Support Services, and Emergency Operations.**

**Recommendation 28. Eliminate the vacant administrative manager position.**

The oversight of operational divisions within a police department is a significant responsibility when considering the number of resources and varied duties involved in service provision. In Baker Tilly's experience, such oversight is provided by a command-level position occupying a higher rank than lieutenant. To recognize the scope of assigned responsibilities at the Town of Truckee, a classification study could be completed to determine if those leading each division should be reclassified to the rank of Police Captain. Such an assignment is more reflective of their true role and is consistent with modern municipal policing structures.

**Recommendation 29. Complete a classification study to determine if the two police lieutenants should be reclassified to police captains.**

## Peer Agency Comparisons

As shown in Table 6, the peer average ratio of sworn police positions per 1,000 population (2.85) is much higher than Truckee's average of 1.52. Further, at 32.32 square miles, Truckee's land area is more than double the peer average. The peer average for the number of sworn officers per square mile is 3.05, which is roughly 3 times higher than Truckee's ratio of 0.80 per square mile. While we note that Truckee has a considerable amount of undeveloped area, which may account for the significant difference between Truckee's officers per square mile and the peer average, we do not think that additional comparisons would change the basic calculus that the Town is under-resourced in its level of sworn staffing.

These peer comparisons strongly suggest that the Police Department may require more sworn staff resources because the comparisons show that Truckee is considerably below any of the peers in the FTE per 1,000 comparisons. None of the other communities are below 2.17 FTE/1,000, and Truckee is at 1.52/ 1,000. Truckee may have less of a tourist impact than some of the other communities, but this is still a very large difference. While Truckee has leveraged sworn officer staffing by using Community Service Officers, and this is considered a best practice for stretching sworn staffing resources, it is not a substitute for adequate sworn resources.

Given that sworn staffing has increased by only one FTE since the Police Department's inception, the Town should consider increasing public safety resources in this area. Position additions and other recommended operational changes are discussed in greater detail below.

*Table 6. Peer Agency Comparisons: Sworn Staffing Per 1,000 Population and Square Mile*

City/Town	Population	Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	Sworn FTE Per 1,000 Population	Sworn FTE Per Square Mile
Breckenridge, CO	5,078	5.08	4.73	4.72
Durango, CA	20,720	20.72	2.65	2.65

City/Town	Population	Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	Sworn FTE Per 1,000 Population	Sworn FTE Per Square Mile
Mammoth Lakes, CA	7,365	24.87	2.17	0.64
South Lake Tahoe, CA	21,200	10.16	2.36	4.92
Steamboat Springs, CO	12,435	12.44	2.33	2.33
Truckee, CA	17,100	32.32	1.52	0.80
<i>Average (peers)</i>	<i>13,359</i>	<i>13.53</i>	<i>2.85</i>	<i>3.05</i>

## Operations Division – Patrol

The Truckee Patrol Unit provides patrol services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Generally, three patrol officers and a patrol supervisor are on duty at any given time. During weekdays, traffic officers can supplement patrol, and other resources are available for emergencies, such as command staff, investigators, and the School Resource Officer (SRO).

Per department policy, but only in exceptional circumstances, there may be one patrol officer and one supervisor between the hours of 2:00 and 6:00 a.m. When staffing is at this level, it is extremely difficult to handle more than one call for police service at a time, and officer-initiated activity can slow down to remain available for calls. It may be necessary at times for officers to break off prematurely from an ongoing incident to respond to a higher priority incident. At times of lower staffing, should a large-scale or critical incident occur, assistance may be needed from outside agencies, such as the Nevada County Sheriff's Department or California Highway Patrol (CHP).

Baker Tilly conducted a patrol workload analysis utilizing over five years of data provided by the department. Typically, such data would consist of all police incidents, including calls for service, officer-initiated activities, and administrative time spent by officers. The analysis would include an examination of response times and time spent per incident by each officer, among other factors.

In conducting the analysis, Baker Tilly identified several key gaps in available CAD data. Areas of concern included a lack of data on all responding officers per incident, inconsistencies in the assignment of call priority, incident records lacking time stamps, including time of arrival, and incorrect incident disposition codes. As a result, the analysis necessarily includes partial conclusions and some assumptions.

Baker Tilly was able to calculate response times for incidents in which the appropriate time stamp information was available. For such incidents, the response time average was approximately fifteen minutes from the time of dispatch. The inconsistencies in call prioritization designation precluded a specific assessment of emergency response time. However, emergency response times are likely a much shorter drive time than the fifteen-minute average for all incidents. If average response times are calculated starting at the time a phone call or incident was received by dispatch, the total average is approximately 25 minutes. This is due to an approximate ten-minute average pre-dispatch time period at the Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center. This is the time between a request for service being received in the dispatch center and officers being dispatched. Several factors can impact pre-dispatch time, but it is possible that improvements can be made in this area. It is recommended that the Police Department work with its Nevada County dispatch partner to explore opportunities to reduce pre-dispatch times.

### **Recommendation 30. Engage in discussions with Nevada County Regional Dispatch to facilitate improvements in pre-dispatch times.**

A review of incident data in relation to the location of activity indicates the current Truckee patrol beat areas are adequately dividing the workload. The activity level is split nearly in half by the two-beat deployment areas.

A complete and comprehensive patrol workload analysis was limited due to the identified gaps in available data. While the volume of calls for service and officer-initiated activity can be generally determined, other key data points within those incidents are incomplete. Likewise, administrative time spent by individual officers is not captured adequately to make a determination of how much of that time makes up a percentage of a typical officer's shift.

### **Rule of 60 Applicability**

Workload staffing allocations in municipal policing can be based on different metrics, but a model developed in conjunction with a study by the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) Center for Public Safety Management has become a standard in such assessments. ICMA concluded that a "Rule of 60" can be applied to assess police staffing with a goal of maximizing effectiveness. The Rule of 60 examines three specific metrics: Percent of Sworn Positions in Patrol, Percent of Time Spent Handling the Workload, and Amount of Time Spent on Each Call for Service.

Although Truckee's workload data is incomplete, the Rule of 60 can be applied to an extent. First, regarding the percentage of sworn personnel in patrol, ICMA concluded that the patrol function should constitute approximately 60% of a department's sworn officer total. Truckee currently staffs approximately 68% of its sworn resources, specifically in patrol, including patrol supervisors. This is slightly elevated, although within an acceptable margin for a department the size of Truckee's Police Department. However, Baker Tilly has recommended the addition of four sworn positions in other units of the department. This would bring the total percentage of sworn patrol officers to approximately 59%.

It is in the next two metrics of the Rule of 60 in which its application is limited in this assessment based on the available data. The Rule of 60 states that patrol officers should spend no more than sixty percent of their time handling the workload, which can be referred to as allocated time. This includes calls for service, self-initiated activity, and administrative time. Administrative time is defined as miscellaneous tasks designed to maintain organizational or employee functions. It includes briefing time, meal and rest breaks, and report writing or similar tasks. Patrol officers with 60% or less allocated time then have at least 40% unallocated time to be devoted to preventative patrol work.

In reviewing the data, it became apparent that administrative time is not being tracked thoroughly by Truckee PD. Time spent on these duties is not being captured in CAD data. Therefore, administrative time could not be added to the analysis. Additionally, identifying and including time spent on incidents *per officer* was also problematic. In incidents that may have involved more than one officer, time spent by every officer involved is not identified in the data; only the time log for the primary handling officer is captured. No record of the number of secondary officers is available. This means that time spent by assisting officers or supervisors is not being captured.

Baker Tilly did analyze the data figures that were available. To conduct an analysis, assumptions or projections of time spent had to be made on incidents and administrative duties. This included calculating the projected time spent per incident by assuming a certain percentage of two-officer incidents. For purposes of this calculation, Baker Tilly assumed 50% of all incidents as two-officer incidents. This number may be high since the incident sample includes officer-initiated activity, which is most often single-officer incidents. However, assuming a higher number provides a projection of Truckee's present ability to handle a higher workload and still meet Rule of 60 standards.

To these two-officer incident projections were added assumptions of administrative time spent. Since it is not possible to make an accurate calculation of administrative time, assumptions must be applied. While administrative time naturally varies shift to shift based on activity level on a particular day, it can be projected that officers typically spend approximately 1.5-3 hours per shift in that category. Baker Tilly applied a 2.25-hour administrative time assumption to its calculations.

Throughout most of the sample period, Truckee was below 60% allocated time. Baker Tilly drilled the data down to peak hours of activity (9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) as well as seasonal samples. At peak hours, specifically during summer months, the workload is at approximately 62% utilizing the described



assumptions. No other combination of peak activity and season resulted in an assumed percentage greater than 60%.

The final metric of the Rule of 60 states that officers should not spend, on average, more than sixty minutes handling a call or incident. The same limitations noted above regarding identifying time spent by each officer assigned to an incident impact a complete analysis of time spent per call or incident. However, knowing the time spent by the primary officer, it can be assumed with high confidence that other assisting officers spent no more time than the primary. Utilizing data figures that are available, it appears Truckee officers spend, on average, approximately 31 minutes per call or incident.

Based on our analysis, it appears the Police Department is adequately staffed in the Patrol unit. However, this is based on limited data and assumptions to fill in data gaps. It is slightly possible that during periods of peak incident volume during the summer season, some additional resources in Patrol may be beneficial. This can potentially be accomplished by utilizing SRO position(s) during periods of school closure, as well as occasionally assigning some patrol responsibilities to the Traffic officer. However, adding Patrol positions for that possibility does not appear to be necessary.

It is recommended that Truckee seek solutions with the Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center staff to improve its data collection, including the Police Department's ability to quickly access CAD data generated in Truckee. It is possible that training for Truckee personnel in this area can improve data accessibility, but it is also possible that the current CAD system utilized by Nevada County agencies is limited in functionality. Once data collection has been improved, Truckee can conduct a complete patrol workload analysis, utilizing the ICMA Rule of 60 to determine if staffing adjustments or additions are necessary.

**Recommendation 31. Improve CAD data collection through engagement with Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center.**

Implementation of this recommendation will require ongoing training and oversight of Truckee end users.

## **Operations Division – Animal Shelter**

The Town of Truckee and the Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe (Humane Society) have a long-standing partnership for the care and sheltering of domestic animals in Truckee. The Truckee animal shelter is jointly operated by the two parties in a building at the Town's Corporation Yard. Employees from each organization work side by side at the facility. Town animal shelter workers primarily handle responsibilities related to the Town's Animal Services Municipal Code sections, including pet licensing and duties stemming from animal interactions in the field by Truckee police officers and community service officers (CSO). These duties include some veterinary services on site. Humane Society employees are primarily responsible for the care and sheltering of lost or abandoned animals and adoption events and proceedings.

The shelter has a sterling reputation for providing exemplary service to the public and the animals for which it cares. The Humane Society takes in animals from other shelters across western states due to that reputation and its success in adoptions.

Despite its success, there are long-range challenges ahead for the shelter and animal services in Truckee. The Town's current Animal Shelter Manager, a licensed veterinary technician who performs veterinary services under the license of a local veterinarian, is regarded as a key reason for the success of the shelter. However, the manager has recently expressed a desire to leave her position. Her skill set and experience will be extremely difficult to replace, and it is likely the veterinary service she currently provides would have to be absorbed in some fashion by the Humane Society. The current success of the shelter and its services depend greatly on the presence of the individual in the position of Animal Shelter Manager rather than the position itself or the structure of the organization. This creates a substantial sustainability challenge.

Additionally, there is a significant disparity in compensation and duties between the Town employees and the Humane Society employees with whom they work side by side. Although those employees generally work well together, that disparity has occasionally caused hard feelings among the employees.

The placement of the Animal Services Division within the Police Department can also be problematic. The oversight of shelter and animal services is not an area typically overseen by municipal police departments, in part due to a lack of training and experience among police administrators in the specifics and nuances of such operations, and as it is not a core law enforcement function. In Truckee, the success has been primarily a result of the skills and expertise of the shelter manager and Humane Society, rather than Police Department oversight.

Acknowledging these challenges, the Town and the Humane Society determined that a new partnership for animal shelter services was needed. As of January 5, 2025, the Humane Society's role will expand to include oversight of sheltering operations, veterinary services, and community outreach, with the Town retaining building maintenance and information technology responsibilities.

### Operations Division – Animal Control Services

Currently, all field services related to domestic animals are handled by the Truckee Police Department. These services include stray animals, animals in distress, animal bites, or other complaints from the public. During daytime hours, most calls are answered by Community Service Officers (CSOs), who have relevant training and equipment for responding. The origin of the CSO positions within the Department was directly related to animal control services. Overnight or during other times when a CSO is not available, these calls are handled by Truckee police officers, whose training and equipment are limited.

Non-sworn positions such as CSO can be used as a valuable supplement to Patrol operations. This is especially true during periods of limited staffing. In many police agencies, CSOs provide operational support through duties such as taking crime reports in the field and at the public counter, conducting basic crime scene investigations, providing traffic control, and supplementing parking enforcement. Performance of such responsibilities by CSOs frees patrol officers for more pressing duties, such as conducting preventative patrol, enforcement activities, or handling more urgent calls.

The use of County animal control services is a common method for municipalities to provide field services related to animals rather than providing those services themselves or adding such duties to existing staff. Such arrangements typically provide 24/7 availability provided by highly trained animal control officers equipped with all necessary vehicles and tools. Currently, Placer County Animal Control contracts with the Town to utilize the Truckee Animal Shelter for needs in eastern Placer County. Its animal control officers are familiar with the region and shelter operations. The Town has considered approaching Placer County about contracting animal control services but concluded it was not a good fit for the community. However, it is unknown if a hybrid approach was considered, such as contracting for services on an as-needed basis for significant after-hours events that cannot be handled by Truckee officers. Such on-call services could be provided by the County or by agreement with the Humane Society.

#### **Recommendation 32. Consider establishing an on-call contract for after-hours animal control services.**

### Outreach to the Unhoused

Responding to and assisting unhoused individuals and families is a challenge faced by government entities throughout the country, particularly in California. Police agencies are often the public resources responsible for managing these issues. This challenge is greater in Truckee, given its geographic isolation and distance from County resources.

Such a response must be provided with compassion and empathy balanced with the enforcement of laws and maintaining a high quality of life within the community. Often, unhoused persons are suffering from mental illness or are addicted to substances, or both. Responders must be provided with the necessary training and resources most likely to produce positive outcomes.

In some police agencies, including Truckee, responses to complaints regarding unhoused persons are handled by patrol officers. Truckee PD has required all officers to undergo crisis intervention training, which is critical when responding to unhoused persons, particularly those afflicted with mental challenges. However, due to constraints of time and the need to respond to other types of law enforcement incidents, patrol officers are frequently unable to provide meaningful support and conduct lasting problem solving for unhoused persons. Available resources for the unhoused, such as sheltering, medical attention, and addiction counseling are often updated with new eligibility requirements or outright eliminated in some circumstances; such changes are usually unknown to officers who only occasionally and quickly interact with unhoused persons.

In recent years, many police agencies have transitioned to a model of a full-time outreach police officer to handle public complaints and interact with unhoused persons. Such officers receive advanced training related to their duties and meet and coordinate regularly with stakeholders such as county agencies, non-profits, and other support services specific to the needs of unhoused persons. This position is not assigned to normal patrol duties but rather is the primary officer dispatched to address unhoused concerns. The result is a highly proficient outreach officer who is free to dedicate the time necessary to apply problem-solving techniques toward placing an unhoused person into a shelter or transitional housing. These officers can form positive relationships with unhoused persons by taking the time to learn about them and their condition, especially chronically unhoused individuals who are frequently contacted. Additionally, outreach officers also build working relationships with community members, including residents and business owners, who are impacted by unhoused persons.

An added benefit to the outreach officer is their availability for emergency response to other types of incidents when necessary. However, that should be reserved for only extreme circumstances so that the outreach officer is able to devote most of their time to unhoused issues.

**Recommendation 33. Add the sworn position of Unhoused Outreach Officer.**

### **Operations – SWAT/Tactical Response**

Critical incident response is a challenge for many police agencies but can be especially challenging for smaller agencies or those somewhat isolated geographically. Truckee faces both concerns. Critical incidents may include active shooters, barricaded suspects, violent crimes, or vehicular pursuits. The Truckee Police Department does not have a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team or other dedicated critical incident response assets. When a need for such a response arises, the Nevada County Sheriff's Department is the closest available resource. A response can take several hours; Truckee officers are tasked with providing containment or otherwise handling an incident with standard patrol equipment and less critical incident training than SWAT.

The size of the Department and the number of incidents that may necessitate a SWAT-type response do not require a full Truckee Police Department SWAT element. However, the Department should seek to close gaps in critical incident response, either through a potential partnership with other agencies to enlarge regional SWAT capabilities and/or add equipment and training to increase the capabilities of Truckee officers to make an initial response.

The Town should consider engaging in discussions with the Nevada County Sheriff's Department, Grass Valley PD, and Nevada City PD in the interest of formulating a regional SWAT element for Nevada County agencies. Such an agreement would share costs for equipment and training. A regional SWAT model is a long-established, successful method of addressing such needs through shared resources rather than funding and staffing an individual team.

Additionally, Truckee could begin providing more extensive training for its personnel in critical incident response, combined with an expansion of the available tactical equipment to be used in such incidents. Such equipment could include modernized ballistic helmets, less-than-lethal apprehension tools, drones, or the purchase of a tactical response vehicle.

**Recommendation 34. Explore opportunities for a regionalized SWAT element in Nevada County.**

**Recommendation 35. Provide advanced critical incident response training and modernized tactical equipment to police officers.**

### **Operations – Dispatch**

The Truckee Police Department utilizes the Nevada County Sheriff's Office Regional Dispatch Center (RDC) as the Town's public safety answering point (PSAP) for 911 and other incoming calls and dispatching services.

Currently, the Department shares a single frequency channel with all the agencies in Nevada County, including the Sheriff's Office, Grass Valley PD, and Nevada City PD. During peak times for calls for service and other activity, this makes radio communication difficult at best, and not possible at times. During critical incidents or emergencies, such communication issues can be highly dangerous for the public and police officers. Each agency can request a 'lockdown' of the single channel during a critical incident in their jurisdiction. When this happens, only that agency can utilize the channel. All other agencies have no radio communication during that time. This diverts important information sharing to a phone or mobile data terminal (MDT). Again, safety is severely compromised when this occurs. It also discourages proactive activities by field officers during those times.

Previously, in its agreement with Nevada County, Truckee PD enjoyed its channel and dispatcher dedicated solely to Truckee police activity. That format was eliminated due to staffing concerns in the sheriff's office, resulting in the current format. The dedicated channel and dispatcher model worked well for Truckee, and that option should be explored again within the current contractual agreement with Nevada County.

An alternative to contracting dispatch services to Nevada County is a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with Grass Valley and/or Nevada City to operate a dispatch center. This would be a significant undertaking, likely requiring upfront costs related to facility, technology, and staff. However, such an agreement would provide the Town with more influence and decision-making authority over these services. It would also provide an opportunity to select a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management System (RMS) more suited to the modern needs of the Truckee Police Department. Under the current model, the department has no ability to choose a CAD provider and few options to upgrade its RMS system.

**Recommendation 36. Engage Nevada County in discussions to contract for a Town-dedicated frequency channel and dispatcher.**

Another alternative could include exploring the potential for a JPA with other municipalities to provide dispatch services, but this option would be more costly and likely take longer to implement.

### **Operations – Aquatic Invasive Species Permits**

The Truckee Police Department is responsible for the issuance of aquatic invasive species inspection stickers. All boats operating on Donner Lake are required to display a sticker. The current process is a self-inspection by the boat owner, who then files an attestation at the public counter of the Police Department to receive a sticker. While the workload varies based on the time of year, the current process is manageable by the Police Department Records Unit.

Should the Town decide to expand the program to include physical inspections by Town employees, such services should be managed outside the Police Department, either by another Town department or division or another local agency or district. Current police staffing levels would not support a service-level increase in this area, yet adding additional staff for inspections would primarily be seasonal and, therefore, difficult to recruit and retain.

**Recommendation 37. Maintain the aquatic invasive species sticker program at the current service level.** An increase in service level will require additional resources or the transference of duties to another entity.

### Support Services Division – Investigation

Currently, Truckee PD staffs two Investigator positions, which are responsible for most criminal investigations. (The SRO handles investigations involving juveniles, although their availability to assist is limited during the school year.) In addition, Investigators are tasked with oversight of sex registrants, probationers, search warrants, arrest warrant due diligence, court filings, and crime analysis duties. Since evidence is not always available at the time of the report, investigators often must later collect and review digital evidence or make further evidentiary requests related to forensic evidence such as DNA or fingerprints.

Splitting investigative duties between two positions brings challenges for completing investigations successfully and promptly. Often, cases require multiple contacts with potential suspects, interviews and interrogations, surveillance, search warrant services, or arrests. Such actions necessitate at least two investigators for officer safety and effectiveness. When the two investigators are required on the same investigation, one of their caseloads and other duties go unattended for periods.

Additionally, for significant or high-profile crimes involving large scenes, multiple victims, or the necessity of a fresh pursuit of a suspect, an investigative unit of two has challenges covering all aspects of that investigation. Truckee utilizes a Major Investigative Team (MIT) comprised of investigators and other members of the Department on an adjunct basis. However, that requires the availability of those members at the time of the incident, and their training is not that of a full-time Investigator.

The Town should add an Investigator position, bringing the total to three. A third position would ease the workload of the current two, add a fully trained Investigator for major incidents, and provide another resource for the safe conduct of investigative actions. For example, an Investigator who is particularly engaged in a crucial investigation need not leave that investigation to assist another Investigator since another is available. A third position also provides coverage when one is away on leave time or training.

The additional position provides a career development opportunity for Truckee officers. Experience in specialty assignments is important for skill development and viability for promotion. Currently, there are only five positions for line-level police officers outside of Patrol. This can be limiting when the Department is identifying and promoting future Police Sergeants and above.

**Recommendation 38. Add an investigator position to the Support Services Division.**

### Additional Support Services Resources

#### Police Sergeant

The Support Services Division is currently under the command of a Police Lieutenant. This is the only sworn supervisor position in the Division. Consequently, the commander must double as a line-level supervisor for the Investigators and SRO, as well as handling all oversight of training, recruitment, personnel matters, and special events, among other duties.

A line-level supervisor between the commander and line-level sworn officers should be added. This should be a police sergeant position and would be responsible for the direct supervision of the Investigators and SRO. The sergeant becomes another Investigative resource and can provide oversight at large-scale investigations, search warrant service, and other investigative activity. The sergeant would coordinate scheduling in the Division, handle training request approvals, assist with recruitment and personnel investigations, and could be tasked with coordinating police resources for special events.

This position would relieve the commander of many lower-level responsibilities and free the commander to focus on administrative oversight of the entire Division, including organizational growth and development initiatives, forecasting needs, budgeting, etc.

**Recommendation 39. Add a Police Sergeant to the Support Services Division.**

**Crime Analysis**

There is no current position within Truckee PD dedicated to crime analysis work. The analysis is mainly done by Investigators, among their other duties, time permitting. However, Investigators do not have the necessary training and experience in effective crime analysis to conduct such work.

Crime analysis takes many forms. These include link analysis to connect a series of crimes and suspects, method of operation analysis to project likely targets of crime, and providing heat maps or other data to assist patrol officers in conducting their proactive and preventative patrol function, among other analytical products. Trained analysts can also assist with the collection and sorting of digital evidence and assist the Department with periodic review of operational directives such as patrol beat maps or planning traffic enforcement operations. In short, a crime analysis can be a valuable tool for all areas of the Department.

While an employed crime analyst is usually the preferred way to conduct such work, the size and workload of Truckee do not necessarily require a full-time analyst. Due to geographical challenges in Truckee, recruitment of specialized positions may be difficult. A Crime Analyst does not need to be located within the police facility to function effectively. With current technologies, analytic work can be done primarily remotely, particularly for a town and department of Truckee's size.

**Recommendation 40. Consider contracting with a trained/experienced crime analyst for part-time or on-demand analytical work.**

**School Resource Officer**

The Truckee Police Department staffs a single School Resource Officer (SRO). This position works closely with all schools in the Town, providing police services during the school day and extracurricular activities as requested or necessary, as well as occasional classroom instruction and building positive relationships with students and school district employees. The SRO is also involved in criminal investigations related to juveniles. This single position is assigned to eight schools, from elementary to high school, and the SRO is extremely busy throughout the school week.

The funding for the SRO position is shared equally by the Town and Tahoe Truckee Unified School District. This provides each entity with a valuable resource at a reduced cost for each. The SRO is a sworn, fully trained police officer. During times when schools are not in session, such as holidays and summer recesses, the SRO is available to supplement Department operations as needed. Also, the SRO can be deployed as an additional resource for emergency operations or critical incidents. Thus, the position is a force multiplier for the Town at a reduced cost.

Members of the Police Department indicated the school district has expressed a desire to add another SRO position under the same cost-sharing format. A second SRO would split duties for the eight schools. This would permit more time for handling school policing matters and problem solving at school sites. More important, it will result in more extensive interactions at all schools between officers, students and staff, allowing greater opportunity for relationship building. As noted, it will provide the Department and community with another available resource.

**Recommendation 41. Engage in discussions with the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District to add a second School Resource Officer position under the current cost-sharing agreement.**



### **Administrative Clerk**

Most internal administrative duties are solely handled by the Police Chief's Assistant. This includes payroll, invoicing and purchasing, budget accounting, maintenance of contracts, and social media content and monitoring, among others. These duties are in addition to assisting and supporting the Police Chief and his office. The heavy administrative workload for the Chief's Assistant is currently necessary since there are no other positions within the Department specifically available to assist with that workload.

Other administrative duties throughout the Department are performed by various positions in conjunction with other primary responsibilities. For example, the Administrative Lieutenant manages departmental training, including scheduling and record maintenance. That command position is already tasked with myriad other responsibilities and should not be handling these duties. Clerical responsibilities related to training, including California Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) requirement compliance, can be handled by a civilian position and allow the Lieutenant to provide more focus on Department operations. The addition of another administrative position can also take on workload related to payroll timekeeping, purchasing, recruitment processing, and Aquatic Invasive Species permit processing. Recordkeeping assistance for Emergency Services is another potential role for a new administrative position.

**Recommendation 42. Add an Administrative Clerk position to the Support Services Division to lessen the clerical workload currently performed by higher-level positions.**

### **Community Outreach Coordinator**

The Truckee Police Department utilizes several social media platforms to connect with the community. Oversight of those responsibilities fell to the Administrative Services Manager, a position now vacant. Content has been created by various members of the Department. By all accounts, this arrangement of duties has adequately maintained the Department's digital presence.

In today's environment, community members primarily seek to communicate with their public service providers in a digital format via online and social media connections. While this often includes using digital communication to request services such as reporting, permitting, or information requests, it also includes receiving important information related to Town matters, including emergencies, special events, and safety tips. While there still exists a need for phone conversations and face-to-face interaction, the immediacy of digital communication is desired by and beneficial to community members, including full-time residents and businesses, seasonal residents, and tourists. This is especially true during potential emergency conditions, such as fire or extreme weather.

A full-time position dedicated to information and outreach would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department's efforts in those areas. A non-sworn Community Outreach Coordinator would be responsible for all digital communications with the community, including social media platforms and the Department's online presence. This includes all content creation designed to inform the public in emergencies and regarding police activities, share crime prevention tips, conduct recruitment marketing, and maintain the Department's positive relationship with its community. The Coordinator would work closely with Emergency Services to create and distribute content on emergency preparedness. The Department may wish to explore the development of an app to provide additional options for the public to report information, request records, receive updates, or digitally conduct other business. The Coordinator would lead any effort to create and manage an app. Current Department members who assist in social media content can continue to participate in a social media "team" under the coordination of the Community Outreach position.

In addition, this position would serve as the Department's Press Information Officer (PIO) for most media-related needs. A command-level officer would still be required to serve as the face of the Department during critical incidents, but the PIO will be the clearinghouse for most media inquiries and communications.

**Recommendation 43. Add a full-time police Community Outreach Coordinator position to oversee all digital and media communications.**

**Property and Evidence**

Property and Evidence services are provided by a single department employee at a facility off-site from the current Truckee police facility. The operation is efficiently handled. However, should there become a short-term vacancy due to leave or other circumstances, there currently exists no specified redundancy to temporarily fill those duties. Such redundancy need not be an additional position, but rather an existing employee or employees who are cross trained to handle the most important daily duties of the Property and Evidence Technician. Evidence sections in a Police Department can be high in liability for the Department and, therefore, require focused work on a near-daily basis. The Department should provide training in such duties to other members of the support services staff, such as a Records Technician, Parking Technician, or CSO. This also provides potential succession planning options for future vacancies.

**Recommendation 44. Identify and cross-train one or more staff members in Property and Evidence duties.**

The Property and Evidence unit is assigned a vehicle for periodic use to collect substantial evidence from crime scenes or other field calls. The current vehicle is a standard passenger SUV with a limited cargo area that was repurposed for this use. It is not designed for evidence use or other utility purposes. Consequently, when needed, it must be quickly loaded with necessary supplies and equipment for collection, reducing the room for evidentiary items. A utility vehicle, such as a commercial van or similar, would be better suited for this purpose. With lockable cabinets and other storage solutions, it can be maintained in ready condition with all necessary materials and tools for evidence collection. Such a vehicle would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Property and Evidence operations.

**Recommendation 45. Purchase a more appropriate utility vehicle for the Property and Evidence Unit.**

**Emergency Services Division**

The Town's Emergency Services Division is located within the Police Department. It is a third division of the Department and is directly reportable to the Police Chief. The Division consists of a single employee, the Emergency Services Manager. The office of the Manager and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) are both located on the second floor of Truckee Town Hall.

Truckee's geographic location brings substantial emergency management challenges not faced by many towns and cities of similar size. These challenges include a broad wildland interface and a significant, related threat of wildfire in summer and fall months, and the potential for extreme winter weather impacts of excessive snow and cold temperatures. Truckee's isolated location and limited ingress and egress increase the difficulties posed by such conditions. Road closures can hamper the processes of evacuation or bringing emergency resources into town.

There are several special districts and other governmental agencies within Truckee or within its sphere of influence. All are impacted by emergency conditions, and therefore, coordination between the Town and each district and agency is crucial. The Truckee Emergency Services Coordinator must manage those relationships closely. This requires regular meetings, communications, and maintenance of written agreements throughout the year.

Other responsibilities of the Coordinator include hazard mitigation plans, grant acquisition and management, evacuation route updates, disaster training requirements for all Town employees, community engagement on preparedness, and disaster recovery, among other duties.



In towns and cities of similar size in urban or heavily populated suburban areas, a single emergency services position is usually sufficient since those communities do not face the same amounts and types of hazards as Truckee. In those situations, emergency services are primarily about earthquake preparedness, ensuring compliance with employee training requirements, and EOC readiness.

The current workload of the Truckee Emergency Services Coordinator is likely unsustainable for one position. As the frequency of weather-related emergencies increases, that workload will increase as well. A second position would spread duties and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Division. The Town should add a technician or similar position to work under the supervision of the Coordinator.

**Recommendation 46. Add a second position within the Emergency Services Division.**

**Technology**

The Truckee Police Department currently utilizes a computer-assisted dispatch/ records management system (CAD/RMS) that has been in use for many years and is potentially outdated. Unfortunately, as previously noted, the Department has no choice in the CAD system it must use. Since the Department receives 9-1-1 and dispatching services from the Nevada County Sheriff's Department under a contractual agreement, it must utilize the CAD system selected by the Sheriff's Department. (This is also true for the Grass Valley and Nevada City Police departments.) The Department does not have unlimited or easy access to important data generated by CAD. This includes data related to the volume of calls, response times, dispositions, etc. For purposes of this assessment, Baker Tilly requested that data and more. However, the Department had difficulty retrieving the data and had to rely on the vendor and Sheriff's Department rather than directly accessing it.

The Department's RMS is provided by the CAD vendor and integrated into CAD. On the RMS side, the Department has much more access to its data, and the system is generally adequate, although it may need modernization. An important component of any police RMS is a case management module. This is a system for internal oversight of criminal investigations and investigator workload. A robust case management system provides at-a-glance data on the number of assigned and open cases, case clearance totals, investigative work time, and investigator case notes. Such information is key for performance management, staffing decisions, and efficient casework.

In discussions with police staff, Baker Tilly was told the case management module in the current system does not suit the Department's needs and does not make it easy to retrieve necessary data. This may be related to the age of the system. Consequently, the module is not utilized. Baker Tilly requested data specific to case management, but the Department could not provide much of what was requested due to this issue.

The Department is in a difficult position due to the contractual Dispatch service arrangement with Nevada County. Barring changes in that arrangement, the Department cannot explore alternatives to its current CAD system. That means the current RMS most likely cannot be changed either, since maximum effectiveness and efficiency require full integration between the two.

CAD/RMS vendors are highly protective of their proprietary systems. Thus, it is unlikely the current vendor would permit a secondary RMS vendor to interface with CAD. Since a change in systems is not likely, the Department should engage the current vendor in directed troubleshooting and training to better utilize the entire system, and particularly case management.

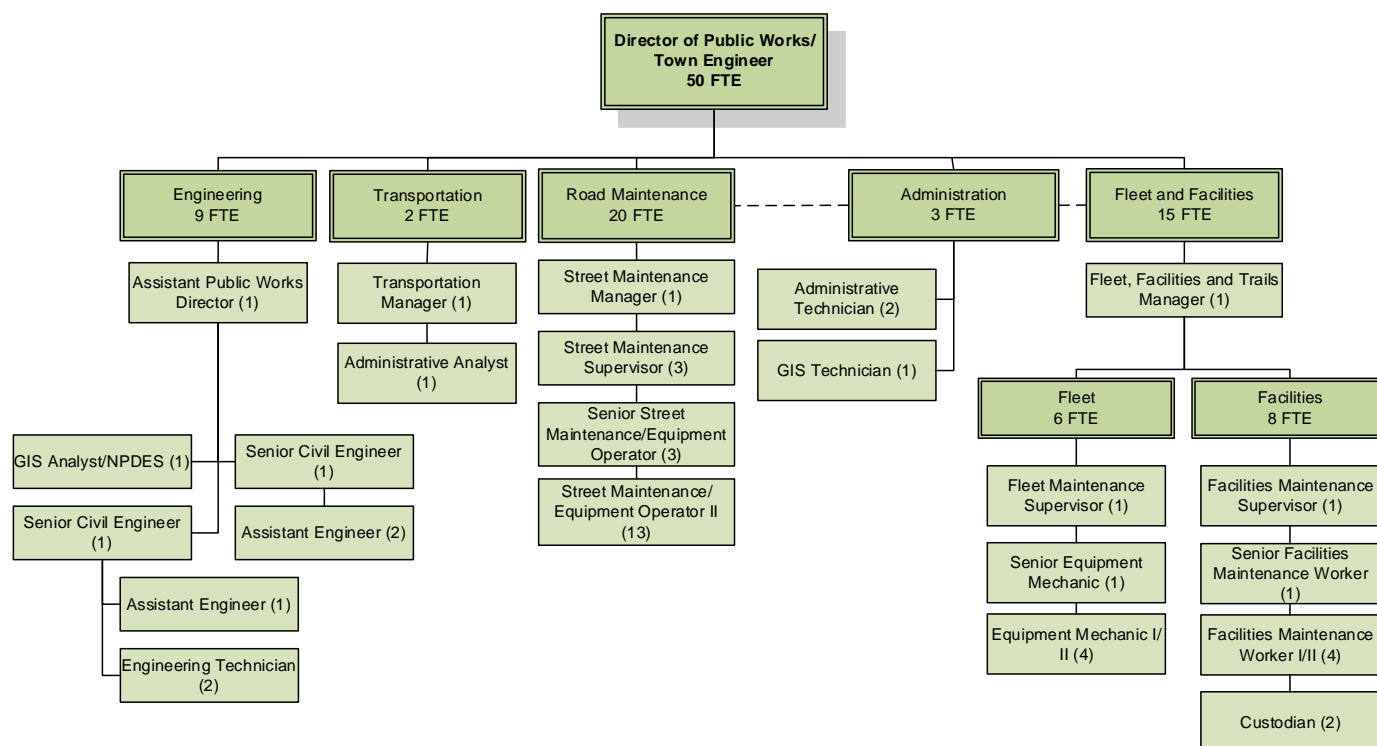
As a long-range solution, the Town may want to engage in discussion with the County and the County's other Dispatch customers on finding a replacement CAD/RMS. It is likely that the other agencies have similar concerns.

**Recommendation 47. Engage the current CAD/RMS vendor and Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center in discussions to seek greater access to Police Department data and to better utilize available system modules.**

## Public Works Department

The Public Works Department's principal operations consist of engineering and capital construction and maintenance services associated with roads, fleet, facilities, sidewalks, street landscaping, downtown parking (including management of the Downtown Parking District), and trails. Snow removal is an important component of the road, facility, sidewalk, and trail maintenance programs. Additionally, the department is responsible for transportation planning and transportation services. The Department's current headcount is 50 FTE, with 20 to 25 seasonal positions added during the winter months. The Department's current (budgeted) organizational structure is shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Public Works Department Organization Chart



### Department Background

The Public Works Department is spread over two locations: Administration and Engineering are located at Town Hall, while field operations are conducted from the Corporation Yard facility located several miles from Town Hall. The Department maintains approximately 160 street miles and a substantial number of culverts and drainage ditches with a major focus on snow removal during the winter months; 22 miles of trails; and increasing numbers of sidewalks, medians, roundabouts, parking lots, and a new downtown park opening to the public in 2025. In 2022, the Town (along with other local partners) initiated a micro transit pilot program known as "TART Connect," a popular service that has 15 years of sustainable funding through a recently passed half-cent sales tax measure.

The TART Connect service is provided by the Town through a contract with the third-party transportation company "Downtown." Regional transit services are provided through a contract with Placer County, and Truckee local transit services are provided by the Town, which hires a third-party contractor that supplies bus drivers to drive the Town-owned and maintained transit fleet.

## Peer Agency Comparisons

Table 7 provides comparisons of public works staffing per 1,000 population. At 3.86, the peer average is approximately 32% higher than Truckee's ratio of 2.92. As shown in the table, Breckenridge and South Lake Tahoe are outliers at 6.89 and 1.79, respectively. If removed, the average of the remaining three jurisdictions drops to 3.54, which is still 21% higher than Truckee. In terms of FTEs per square mile, the peer average of 3.71 is approximately 140% higher than Truckee's ratio of 1.55. Similar to the Police comparisons, Truckee is under-resourced in this operational area.

It should be noted that headcounts for the peer agencies have been adjusted downward to draw apples-to-apples staffing comparisons to Truckee, i.e., the staffing ratios reflect each jurisdiction's FTEs associated with administration, capital improvements/engineering, facilities maintenance, fleet maintenance, and streets maintenance/ snow removal (part-time and seasonal positions are not included in the analysis).

*Table 7. Per Agency Comparisons: Public Works Full-time Equivalent Staff Per 1,000 Population*

City/Town	Population	Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	Public Works FTE Per 1,000 Population	Public Works FTE Per Square Mile
Breckenridge, CO	5,078	5.08	6.89	6.89
Durango, CA	20,720	20.72	3.05	3.04
Mammoth Lakes, CA	7,365	24.87	3.91	1.17
South Lake Tahoe, CA	21,200	10.16	1.79	3.74
Steamboat Springs, CO	12,435	12.44	3.67	3.70
Truckee, CA	17,100	32.32	2.92	1.55
<b>Average (peers)</b>	<b>13,359</b>	<b>13.53</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>3.71</b>

## Engineering Division

Under the leadership of the Assistant Director, the Engineering Division is staffed with two Senior Engineers, one Associate Engineer, two Assistant Engineers, one GIS Analyst, and two Engineering Technicians. The Division is responsible for:

- Implementing capital improvement projects (CIPs)
- Reviewing/approving subdivision maps, encroachment permits, and improvement plans
- Advising the Town Council and Planning Commission on traffic, drainage, trails, sidewalks, and other infrastructure needs related to supporting private development projects.
- Designating the signage and marking of Town streets for traffic safety purposes
- Managing the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS)
- Ensuring compliance with the Town's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit
- Serving as liaison with other governmental agencies on engineering and infrastructure matters

Like other operational areas, Engineering staff members report that they enjoy their work and have a high level of camaraderie with co-workers. They also feel as if they are continually operating in "fire drill" mode, mainly attributed to what they report as evolving Council priorities that have resulted in the increased desired to deliver infrastructure projects such as streetscape improvements, roundabouts, trails, sidewalks, parking improvements, parks, new buildings to house expanded transit fleet and operations, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and watershed restoration. The desired improvements are being

planned and delivered without a corresponding addition of project management staff to construct the volume of projects desired by the Town Council.

Several of the projects have required or will require the creation of additional Community Facilities Districts to help fund construction and/or maintenance of the facilities/infrastructure as appropriate. Creation of these districts is time consuming and requires substantial coordination and engagement with the property owners who will benefit from their creation.

As the number of capital projects has increased in volume and complexity, staffing levels have not been adjusted to keep pace with the demand. In particular, the need is apparent for an engineer whose position can be dedicated to managing the construction of Town facilities.

**Recommendation 48. Establish an engineer position focused on implementing facilities infrastructure projects.**

During the engagement, we learned that the Engineering staff manually enter data from developer submittals into its software systems rather than requiring applicants to submit information in desired electronic formats, which is inefficient. Additionally, permit processes for development projects are manually tracked via email and various methods employed by staff. Further, the Division does not have a unified filing/recordkeeping system for capital projects, which is a best practice.

**Recommendation 49. Modernize processing and tracking systems associated with private development and public infrastructure projects.** Implementation of this recommendation would require electronic applicant submittals.

The Engineering Division has not comprehensively updated its Public Improvement and Engineering Standards (PIES) and Standard Specifications for construction in more than 20 years. Updates have been worked on intermittently over the last several years, but higher-level priorities associated with infrastructure improvement and private land development have taken preference. From a best practices perspective, these documents should be updated periodically to reflect changing conditions and requirements associated with design, construction, and improvement standards for public improvements and private improvements affecting public infrastructure.

**Recommendation 50. Update engineering standards for designing and constructing public improvements and private improvements affecting public infrastructure.**

## **Electric Vehicle Implementation Strategy**

The state has established aggressive regulations that will require local governments to convert their mid-duty and heavy-duty fleets (defined as vehicles with a GVWR in excess of 8,500 pounds) to electric vehicles, which currently affects vehicles in the Public Works fleet; vehicles in other departments are below the weight threshold.

Beginning in 2024, local governments are required to ensure that 50% of mid- and heavy-duty vehicle purchases are zero-emissions, with either 100% of new purchases being zero emission by 2027, or with agencies committing to transitioning their entire fleets to certain percentages of zero emission vehicles by certain dates (commonly referred to as the "milestone option"). Based on certain exceptions to the requirements relating to vehicle type and geographic region, Truckee does not need to comply with the 2024 mandate. However, the Town must comply with the 2027 requirements.

The Town must decide ahead of the 2027 deadline whether it desires to attain regulatory compliance by committing to certain percentages of its entire fleet being zero-emission vehicles, or by purchasing zero-emission vehicles going forward. However, converting the entire fleet from hydrocarbon-based fuels to electric is not currently possible because technology does not yet exist for the bulk of the Town's large equipment that is used in street maintenance and snow removal operations.

As noted, environmental sustainability, including GHG reductions, is an important Council priority. Therefore, establishing a coordinated implementation strategy that meets state requirements and Town priorities, establishes phasing and funding plans, and incorporates staff training programs to facilitate the transition is something that will require staff and/or consultant resources to implement.

**Recommendation 51. Create an electric fleet conversion implementation action plan.**

### Transportation Division

Per the Department's organization chart, the Transportation Division is staffed by one Program Manager and one Program Analyst. However, according to the budget personnel detail, the Program Manager is budgeted at 75% while the Program Analyst is allocated 55% to the Division. The remaining time for these positions is allocated to Economic Vitality, Engineering, and Parking, presumably spent on transit-related program support.<sup>18</sup>

Currently, the Transportation Division coordinates the provision of several transit options (with multiple funding sources), such as fixed routes within Truckee, a Dial-a-Ride reservation-based system, interregional service, special event shuttles, and micro transit. Additionally, the Division is responsible for managing the Downtown Parking District, coordinating Bikeshare services, processing special event permits, and hearing appeals related to parking and animal services.

Many local agencies have a Transportation Engineer or Planner on staff to assist with the provision of transit and transportation projects and programs. To the extent the Town is planning for additional transit-related infrastructure via the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and/or increasing service levels for transit-related programs, additional resources in this Division may be required.

**Recommendation 52. Evaluate the need to establish a Transportation Engineer or similar position to assist with managing transit-related projects and programs.**

Evaluating staffing needs will require conducting cost-benefit analysis of current contract service models as compared to providing services in-house; evaluating options for sustainably funding fixed route, dial-a-ride, and micro transit services; and assessing workload for supporting increased transportation-related capital investments and Downtown Parking District management.

### Field Operations Divisions

#### Fleet, Facilities and Trails Divisions

As the title suggests, these Divisions are responsible for maintaining the Town's vehicle fleet, its facilities, and trails. The Fleet Division maintains the Town's fleet of 185 vehicles, including police marked and unmarked vehicles, a boat, loaders, snow blowers, light- and heavy-duty trucks, trailers, and pool and smaller passenger vehicles. This is a large and relatively complex fleet for a town the size of Truckee. Fleet is currently staffed by six FTEs, including a Supervisor, a Senior Mechanic, and four Mechanic I/II's. A Fleet, Facilities and Trails Manager leads the Division.

Maintenance of the Town's facilities, trails, landscaping, and Town maintained sidewalks is handled by the Facilities and Trails Division whose maintenance responsibilities include Truckee Town Hall, five Town Public Works facility buildings, the animal shelter, three public restrooms, sidewalks within several Community Facilities Districts, the Railyard Mobility Hub, the Downtown Depot, bus shelters, trail facilities constructed by the Town, and landscaping around medians and roundabouts. The Division is staffed with

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<sup>18</sup> The practice of allocating position hours across departments or divisions to reflect where their time is budgeted is not atypical in local government, but it can be concerning in under-resourced agencies where staff can be spread too thin to keep pace with workloads. A detailed analysis of each of these situations is beyond the scope of this report.

eight FTEs, including one Supervisor, a Senior Maintenance Worker, four Maintenance Worker I/II's, and two Custodians.

From a funding perspective, Fleet functions as an internal service fund, Facilities is funded by the General Fund; Trails (and sidewalk maintenance) is funded through a special sales tax and the General Fund; and landscaping is funded by a combination of the General Fund and special assessments (Assessment/Community Facilities Districts).

The most rapid area of infrastructure expansion in Truckee is related to trails, sidewalks, new building facilities, and parks, with the Town adding 13 miles of trail maintenance, nearly 1.5 miles of new sidewalk, two new public restrooms, and a community park in the past two years. Additionally, the provision of snow removal services on trails and sidewalks requires substantial resources in winter months. The current staffing was developed when the amount of sidewalk and trail infrastructure was significantly less and when snow removal on trails and sidewalks was not occurring.

In our experience, local facilities divisions typically focus on maintaining buildings, not landscapes or sidewalks and trails, which are customarily managed through street maintenance or park operations.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, we recommend establishing a work unit in the Road Maintenance Division responsible for maintaining sidewalks and trails. The unit can be staffed by moving two maintenance workers from the Fleet and Facilities Division, with workload capacity assessed over time to determine what additional resources are warranted.

**Recommendation 53. Establish a work unit for maintaining sidewalks and trails.**

Currently, the Town does not employ skilled positions such as electricians, heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) technicians, or plumbers, nor does it have a formal/written preventative maintenance program. (Facilities staff recently implemented an asset management system solution that collects data on the different equipment in each building, allows preventative maintenance schedules to be established, and creates work orders.)

**Recommendation 54. Establish a formal preventative maintenance program.**

The skilled position services currently contracted out potentially add unnecessary costs for work that could be performed by Town employees. On the other hand, many local governments contract out services such as landscape maintenance where it is fiscally prudent to do so. While the Town has had mixed results with contracted services in the past, including landscaping maintenance currently provided by Town staff (who perform snow removal during the Winter months), staff should continue to evaluate the cost effectiveness of providing services in-house.

**Recommendation 55. Continue to conduct cost-benefit analysis to determine the optimal mix of contracted and in-house maintenance work.**

Implementation of Recommendations 54 and 55 could include the addition of skilled positions to do electrical, plumbing, and building management system work.

## **Road Maintenance Division**

The Road Maintenance Division is responsible for maintaining asphalt roadways; guardrail maintenance; street sweeping; striping of roads, parking stalls, bike lanes, and crosswalks; and signage. The Division also cleans culverts, maintains drainage ditches and coordinates associated litter abatement.

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<sup>19</sup> Park and recreational opportunities are provided by the Truckee-Donner Recreation and Park District, but the Town has been incrementally adding its own amenities.

Approximately half of division operations are related to winter snow removal/plowing/snow blowing and snow hauling over 160 road miles and the Downtown Parking District lots.

The Division is staffed with a Street Maintenance Manager, three Street Maintenance Supervisors, three Senior Street Maintenance/Equipment Operators, and 13 Street Maintenance Worker IIs. During the winter months, the Division augments its workforce with a combination of up to 20 seasonal and on-call temporary maintenance positions to meet established snow removal service levels during the winter months.

The Division routinely operates heavy equipment and must be sufficiently trained to do so, which is currently achieved through a multitude of training sessions. Currently, the Street Maintenance Manager and Street Maintenance Supervisors have joint responsibility for implementing and tracking safety trainings and associated certifications. As training efforts have grown over time, the level of effort required to maintain programming has increased in kind. Additionally, documentation associated with the current safety program is decentralized across different guidelines. Combining them into a single manual would be beneficial, as would the creation of a Safety Coordinator position to provide a higher level of focus training and establish a single point of responsibility for assurance that all personnel are completing required trainings.

**Recommendation 56. Adopt a formal Safety Program and staff it with a Safety Coordinator.** The person in this position could coordinate safety training in all divisions within the Department.

### Department Administrative Support

During the staff interviews, it was communicated to Baker Tilly that Department managers and professional staff are responsible for performing administrative tasks that are typically performed by analysts or clerical staff members. While the Department has two analysts in the Engineering and Transit Planning Divisions and two clerical support technicians in the Administration Division, administrative staff in the Town Clerk Department are relied upon to perform administrative tasks. It should be noted that the Town Manager and Town Attorney have *no* administrative staff and must rely on support from the Town Clerk Department or clerical staff in other departments.

As indicated in this report, administrative staff in the Town Clerk Department also perform procurement functions that require further review. As the Town considers overall staffing needs, it may be prudent to reallocate one clerical support position to the Public Works Department.

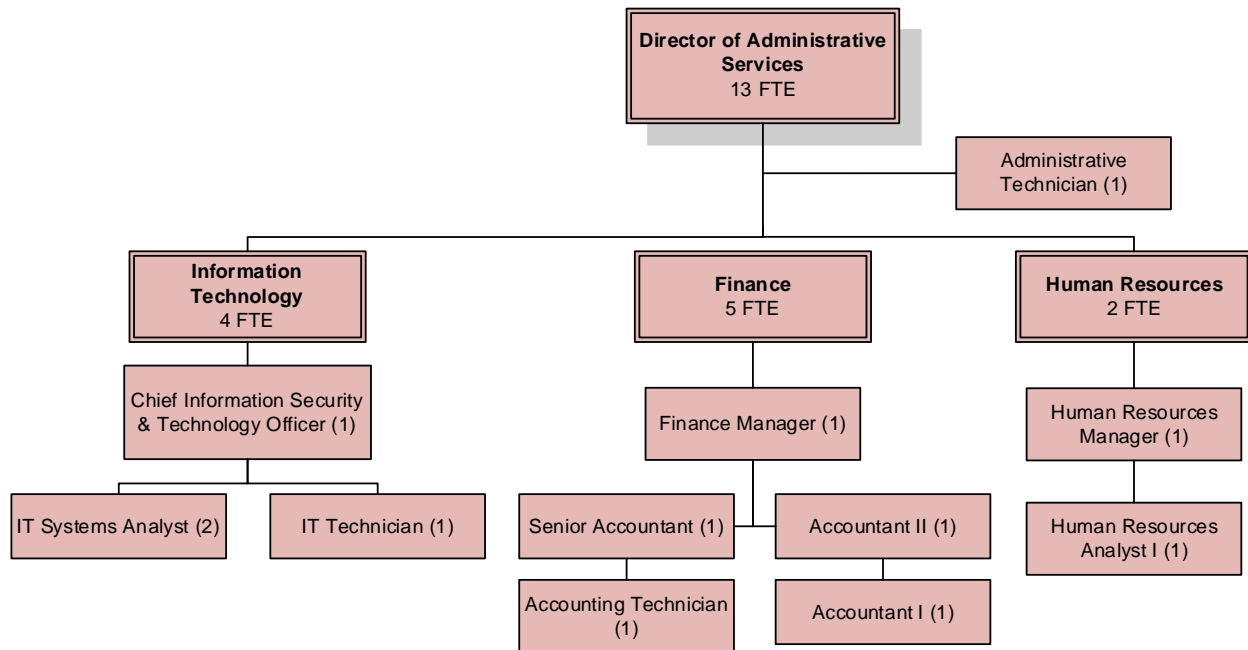
**Recommendation 57. Consider reallocating an Administrative Technician from the Town Clerk Department to the Public Works Department.**



## Administrative Services Department

The Administrative Services Department consists of the Finance (5 FTEs), Human Resources (2 FTEs), and Information Technology (4 FTEs) divisions. Including the Department Director and an Administrative Technician, the Department's total headcount is 13 FTEs, as shown in Figure 12. Department staffing is augmented by a summer intern and up to 960 hours for an on-call accountant. Background information on each division is provided in relevant sections below.

Figure 12. Administrative Services Department Organization Chart



## Peer Agency Comparisons

As indicated in the Approach to the Engagement section of the report, Truckee internal staffing is lower than the peer agencies in Finance and HR, while staffing in IT is slightly higher than the peers, as shown in Table 8. We would also note that because Truckee generally has a lower number of FTEs than the peer jurisdictions, the lower-than-average staffing is more concerning since there are typically some economies in support departments as the number of overall employees in an organization increases.

Table 8. Peer Agency Comparisons: Full-Time Equivalent Positions (FTEs) for Internal Service Divisions

City/Town	Total FTE	Finance FTE Per 100 Employees*	HR FTE Per 100 Employees	IT FTE Per 100 Employees
Breckenridge, CO	215	3.72	2.33	1.4
Durango, CO	408	4.17	1.72	4.17
Mammoth Lakes, CA	93	8.49	2.15	NA
South Lake Tahoe, CA	214	4.21	1.4	1.4
Steamboat Springs, CO	295	4.61	1.36	3.05
Truckee, CA	140	3.81	1.61	2.86

City/Town	Total FTE	Finance FTE Per 100 Employees*	HR FTE Per 100 Employees	IT FTE Per 100 Employees
<b>Average (peers)</b>	245	5.04	1.79	2.50

*\*Positions associated with utility billing/ customer service have been removed from the FTE counts from the peer agencies that provide utility services.*

In reviewing the internal service organizational structures of the peer agencies, we note the following distinguishing characteristics:

- Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology are separate departments in the towns of Breckenridge and Durango.
- In South Lake Tahoe, Finance is a separate department that includes an Information Technology Division, and Human Resources is a division in the City Manager's Office.
- The Town of Mammoth Lakes contracts with Mono County for Information Technology services.
- In Steamboat Springs, Information Technology is a division under a deputy city manager, and Human Resources is located in the City Manager's Office.

## Finance Division

The Truckee Finance Division is responsible for the accounting and financial reporting, accounts payable, budgeting, payroll, and treasury/certain risk management functions of the Town. Though the Town's adopted budget document indicates that the Administrative Services Department is responsible for providing "Purchasing to the Town Council, Town Manager, and Town Departments," it is not resourced to provide procurement services. However, the Finance Division does issue purchase orders, but as noted, they are used mainly as a vehicle for invoice payments and not for budget/expense control, e.g., the Finance Division does not have an encumbrance system, which is inconsistent with best practice.

Finance staff members responsible for accounting and accounts payable perform compliance checks on Town purchases, but this is sometimes done after invoices are received, not before purchase orders are issued, which suggests policy non-compliance by the department and can result in payment delays.

Also, as noted, the responsibility for establishing written contracts rests with the Town Clerk Department rather than the Finance Division or user departments, as is more typical in most agencies, which causes role confusion and frustration in operating departments.

In general, the Finance Division perceives itself to be an effective internal service provider that desires to assist internal customers, but this sentiment is not necessarily shared by staff members in Town departments, which suggests that there are unmet needs or a desire for a higher level of customer service that would be challenging to provide at the Division's current staffing level. As one example, if department staff members have questions about functionality or need to troubleshoot an issue with the Town's enterprise resource planning (ERP or financial) system, they may be asked to contact the software provider directly rather than relying on Finance staff for assistance. As another example, the Division relies on departments to pull budget-to-actual reports from the financial system rather than generating and posting the reports as an internal service for use by managers and supervisors, which is a best practice.

**Recommendation 58. Conduct an internal customer satisfaction survey to determine if service level adjustments are needed.**

**Recommendation 59. Ensure that departments receive monthly budget to actual reports to facilitate revenue and expense management and enhance accountability.**

## Policies and Procedures

When conducting organizational reviews, it is important to determine if a division or department under review has well-developed, current policies and procedures. This is especially true for internal services divisions such as Finance. During our review, we noted that the Division has adequate written policies for investments, reserves/fund balances/surplus, and purchasing/payables, but has insufficient detail for, or completely lacks, the following written best practices financial policies:

- Pension and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)
- Capital budgeting
- Debt management
- Fees for service/cost recovery
- Cost Allocation Plan (CAP)
- Cash management
- Accounting, auditing and financial reporting
- Capital asset management
- Fraud, waste and abuse

**Recommendation 60. Ensure financial policies are complete and consistent with best practices.** The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) provides useful information and examples of best practices financial policies.

As indicated, the Truckee Finance Division is resourced lower in comparison to its peers. Budgeted positions in the current fiscal year include a Finance Manager, a Senior Accountant, two Accountants I/II, and one Accounting Technician.<sup>20</sup> In addition, aside from the department director, most staff members in Finance are relatively new, with tenures of three years or less. The combination of thin staffing and less tenured staff members who are still learning Town systems makes it difficult to meet current service demands, which results in the Division being more reactive than proactive and is a source of frustration among user departments.

We note that Town procurement and purchasing activities are highly decentralized and, to some degree, located in the Town Clerk function. This is atypical and can impact the efficiency and effectiveness of Finance's compliance and internal control functions. Therefore, we recommend the placement of a procurement analyst and accounting technician in Finance to support procurement activity and provide other finance-related services.

**Recommendation 61. Add a procurement analyst position and an accounting technician position to support Town purchasing and payment activities and enhance internal financial controls.**

## Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division consists of a Human Resources (HR) Manager, a Human Resources Analyst I/II and a part-time Administrative Technician for ten (10) hours per week, or 2.25 FTEs. The two full-time positions are responsible for all human resources-related duties and responsibilities of the Town, including job recruitment, pre-employment screening, new employee orientation, employee benefits

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<sup>20</sup> According to Town staff, the adopted budget includes two Senior Accountants, one of which was underfilled with an Accountant-level position following a challenging recruitment. However, the fiscal year 2024-25 adopted budget does not include two Senior Accountant positions.

coordination, personnel records management, workers' compensation benefit coordination, employee training, classification and pay, and employee relations.

The HR Manager and the HR Analyst have a full workload, leaving them with little capacity for additional duties, assignments, or proactive functions such as succession planning, and leadership and supervisory training development. Additionally, the Administrative Technician position's part-time status precludes it from assuming more duties, which contributes to lower-level tasks not being completed. As a result, this work is typically performed by higher-level staff, which is inefficient and is not the best use of their time.

Based on our interviews and review of documents provided, it is apparent that the essential HR functions are being completed and are in compliance with all legal requirements for HR practices. However, the Division is reactive due to its high workload, and, over time, this can slow down and interfere with optimal HR practices.

From a per capita perspective, Truckee's HR staffing ratio of 1.61 per 100 employees is higher than two of its peers (Steamboat Springs at 1.36 and South Lake Tahoe at 1.4) and is only about 10% lower than the peer average of 1.79. However, we believe Truckee is under-resourced in this internal service area. For example, little time is spent on key HR responsibilities such as succession planning, town-wide leadership and supervisory development or strategic planning in support of employee retention and resilience.

**Recommendation 62. Add one Human Resources Technician to provide staff support to the HR Manager and Analyst and increase capacity for strategic planning, citywide training, and other employee relations matters.**

Adding an additional position at the HR Technician level will allow the manager and the analyst to become more proactive and allow for lower-level duties to be performed by the technician, freeing up the analyst and the manager to focus on more strategic and higher-priority projects.

Communication between HR and the operating departments has been described as improving, with overall feedback indicating it is generally positive and effective. The Town prioritizes communication and emphasizes its importance across all levels. However, feedback suggests that challenges remain. Some departments continue to struggle with cascading communication throughout their department or effectively communicating with HR. This is a common issue in many organizations, which is why staff often identify communication as an ongoing challenge.

To enhance communication between HR and the departments, it is recommended that HR hold quarterly meetings with each operating department. These meetings would enable more proactive discussions and help prevent communication breakdowns. It is considered a best practice to include department directors, mid-level managers, and other relevant personnel in these meetings. This approach ensures that information is disseminated throughout all levels of the department and that potential issues are addressed before they escalate. Creating joint agendas for these meetings can also foster a more interactive environment, moving beyond mere information sharing to encourage active participation and problem solving.

**Recommendation 63. Establish quarterly meetings between HR and operating departments, creating joint agendas and including Department Directors, mid-management staff and other appropriate personnel.**

It should be noted that the current workload in HR does not adequately allow for these types of meetings, although the HR staff expressed a desire to be able to conduct them. HR does its best to meet with the departments, but most communication occurs one-on-one, which is important and necessary but ineffective and should be done in conjunction with more formal department/HR meetings.

## Information Technology Division

Information Technology (IT) is another division within the Administrative Services Department. It is currently staffed with a Chief Information Security and Technology Officer (CISTO), two IT Systems Analysts, and an IT Technician, for a total headcount of 4.0 (the Division also includes a part-time intern). The CISTO position was established following a ransomware attack in 2021 that crippled the Town's IT infrastructure. Considerable progress has been made to bolster security following the event.

While Truckee's per capita staffing ratio of 2.86 IT staff per 100 employees may be higher than the peer average of 2.50, the current array of job classifications, as well as the Division's organizational structure, is inadequate and unsustainable for an IT work unit of the Town's size and scope. The following observations help illustrate this point:

- The title of CISTO typically connotes a "C-suite" or executive-level position, but the classification is that of a division manager in Truckee.
- The Division has one IT Technician to staff the Help Desk, which can require triage by the CISTO and can impact that position's ability to focus on oversight and strategic guidance.
- The generic title of "IT System Analyst" does not accurately/adequately capture areas of industry specialty such as network administration or cybersecurity analytics that may require certain credentials/certifications and ongoing specialized training.
- Current staffing, and the associated level of expertise, is insufficient to address needed technology improvements and system upgrades.

We also note that all IT staff members have public safety experience/backgrounds and currently maintain physical office hours in the Police Department, which is atypical for a work unit the size of Truckee's and likely draws IT resources from other operational areas.

To better reflect strategic resource needs, it would be prudent to evaluate the need for an analyst position to help ensure planned technology improvements are made in a timely fashion.

**Recommendation 64. Evaluate the need for an Information Technology Business Analyst position to help ensure planned improvements and system upgrades are made in a timely fashion.**

## Strategic Planning

The hiring of a CISTO position is a huge step forward for the Town, and meaningful results have already been made from this decision. However, to complete the technological overhaul, the Town critically needs to take a big step towards greater efficiency and effectiveness; it will be important to commission a townwide information technology strategic plan.

A townwide IT strategic plan is a roadmap that aligns business goals and objectives with technology needs and support services. It establishes a vision and mission for technology at the local jurisdiction and defines specific goals and supporting strategies to guide technology investment decisions. A typical IT strategic plan will include discussion and direction concerning needed infrastructure and modernization needs, staffing and training needs for IT and departmental staff, service standards, and probably a project portfolio section that will inventory and prioritize the applications that the Town will need to procure and deploy to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Emphasis is generally placed on automating functions to the maximum extent practicable. Completing a townwide IT strategic plan should be a top priority (see Recommendation 18).

An important sub-component of this master planning work should be the standardization of the IT systems used by the Humane Society with those used by the Town.

## **Systems Monitoring**

With regard to systems monitoring, we learned that the IT Division does not regularly conduct scheduled failover testing designed to simulate a system failure and verify that it can recover and continue to operate effectively. It is our recommendation that bi-annual (twice a year) disaster recovery failover tests be conducted to ensure the reliability of organizational backups and to become comfortable with failover processes and practices. The Town has made a conscious effort to address cybersecurity deficiencies, and the implementation of a failover practice is paramount to ensure that organizational assets are protected should they be subject to another cybersecurity event.

**Recommendation 65. Implement formal disaster recovery procedures with bi-annual testing.**

## **Budget and Project Management**

Many local government agencies, particularly those without robust IT organizational structures, do not adequately involve information technology staff when considering large-scale projects that have technological components. Consequently, decisions related to technology are made without the initial awareness or input of IT subject matter experts – decisions ultimately requiring changes to project workplans that can impact total cost and lengthen implementation timelines. We suspect this is occurring given the IT Division's relative size and stature in the organization and focus on cybersecurity and Police operations.

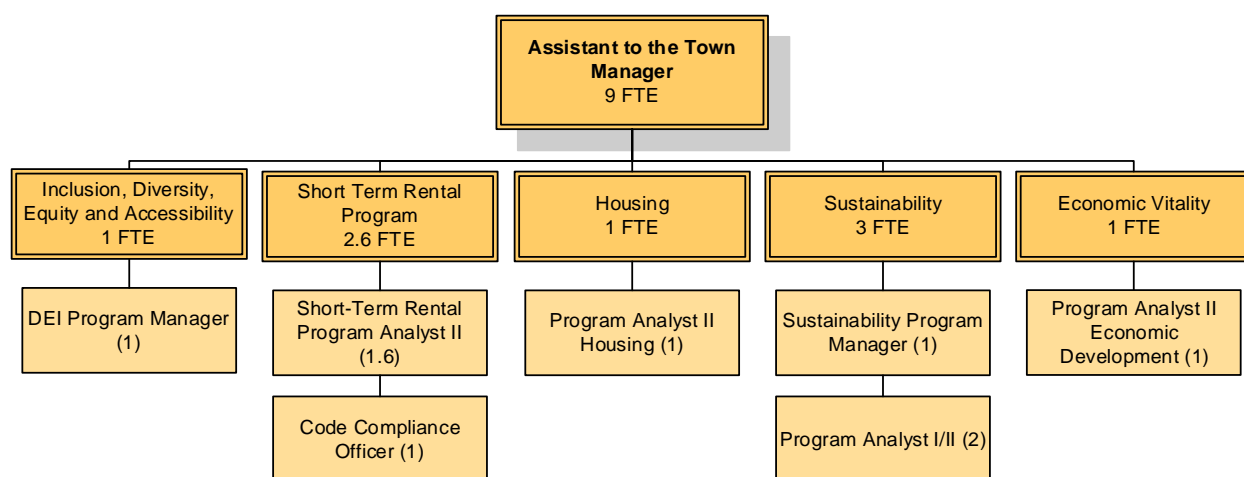
Additionally, it is our understanding that the Town lacks standard project management procedures and tools that are consistently employed for implementing projects with technology components. Use of such tools is important to help guide successful implementation and retain automated records for monitoring progress.

**Recommendation 66. Formalize the Information Technology Division's role in providing project management, consultation, and evaluation services when considering projects that include technology components.**

## Assistant to the Town Manager Department

The Assistant to the Town Manager (ATTM) Department is staffed by 9.6 FTEs and consists of several distinct areas of focus, as shown in Figure 13. While the Department's main focus areas may appear disparate, they directly relate to Town Council priorities. Additionally, the Department takes the lead on legislative advocacy.

Figure 13. Assistant to the Town Manager Organization Chart<sup>21</sup>



### Department Background

The Assistant to the Town Manager Department (abbreviated as the ATTM Department) is led by an Assistant to the Town Manager who oversees the following Divisions:

- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility
- Short-Term Rental Program
- Housing
- Sustainability (Keep Truckee Green)
- Economic Vitality

Established in fiscal year 2021-22, the Department and its leader, the Assistant to the Town Manager, are relatively new to the Town's organizational structure, evolving over the last several years to administer new and existing community services and to ensure the Council's priorities are being addressed. Each Division is briefly described below.

Globally, Baker Tilly is recommending that the Assistant to the Town Manager Department be renamed to the Department of Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality, headed by a department director (with the Assistant to the Town Manager position moving to the Town Manager Department). The rationale for these changes is explained below. In terms of the nature of the department, Baker Tilly would recommend that it primarily be seen as a home for the short-term rental program, housing initiatives, sustainability programs, and economic development activities. It would also be home for Town Council

<sup>21</sup> The Housing Division is supported by a portion of a principal planner and a senior planner not reflected here. A portion of each planning position is budgeted in the ATTM Department but the positions report up through the hierarchy in the Community Development Department.

priority special projects and the incubation of new programs that can migrate to operating departments where it makes organizational sense to do so.

### **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Division**

In 2022, the Town Council adopted a strategic priority to “enhance communication and public outreach to facilitate community cohesion”. To support this strategic priority, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Program Manager was created in late 2022, recently retitled as the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Division. In fiscal year 2023-24, the Town’s operating budget identified an Inclusion and Community Outreach Division consisting of the DEI Program Manager and a Communications Program Manager reporting directly to the Town Manager. As of fiscal year 2024-25, the DEI Program Manager position is included in its division within the ATTM Department.<sup>22</sup> Although the current year’s budget reflects the inclusion of a Public Information Officer (PIO) within the Division, this position is the Communications Program Manager who oversees the Town’s public information efforts and reports directly to the Town Manager.

The IDEA Division and is currently staffed (underfilled) by an analyst following the departure of the Program Manager. The Program Analyst’s role is focused on external community engagement, particularly with communities of focus, including seniors, youth, Hispanic and Latinx community members, LGBTQIA community members, low-income community members, and veterans. The Town’s draft IDEA Action Plan, which will be finalized in 2025, will provide a mix of both community engagement-focused actions and internal actions. The Town does not currently have a staff position designated to lead internal IDEA activities.

### **Short-Term Rental Program**

The Short-Term Rental Division is responsible for administering the Town’s short-term rental ordinance adopted in 2020. The purpose of the ordinance is to provide a framework for addressing nuisance issues associated with short-term rentals. The Division is also responsible for administering the Town’s Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and is staffed by a Program Analyst II and a Code Compliance Officer. A part-time Program Analyst II also assists the Division.

Currently, code compliance is staffed during office hours Monday through Friday with no weekend coverage, and a third-party hotline is available on a 24/7 basis for complaints.

### **Housing Division**

The newly created Housing Division is responsible for implementing the Town’s Housing Action Plan, the Housing Element of the General Plan, and related activities. The overall goal of the Division is to increase the inventory of homes that the local community and workforce can afford to rent or buy. The Division is staffed by one Program Analyst II, with support provided by half-time portions of the Principal Planner and a Senior Planner in the Community Development Department.

In addition to the activities established in the operating budget, the Division is responsible for five special programs included in the capital budget as follows:

- Incentivizing loans and grants to assist homeowners in creating accessory dwelling units or permitting established unpermitted units
- Facilitating the Lease to Local program to leverage existing housing units as long-term rentals
- Preserving workforce housing rentals long-term through the recently launched Rooted Renters program
- Supporting affordable and workforce housing developments

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<sup>22</sup> At the beginning of our engagement, we learned that the DEI Program Manager was leaving the Town’s employ, with the vacancy underfilled with an analyst in Fall 2024.



- Purchasing deed restrictions to preserve housing stock and support affordability through the Truckee Home Access Program
- Coordinating housing solutions with regional partners such as the Truckee Tahoe Workforce Housing Agency

### **Sustainability Division**

The Sustainability Division, also known as Keep Truckee Green, is staffed by a Sustainability Program Manager and two Program Analysts. The Division is funded by the General Fund (sustainability programs) and Solid Waste Fund (recycling programs and solid waste collection/disposal).

The Division works to implement the Town's climate action and adaptation plans, adopted in fiscal year 2022-23 and fiscal year 2020-21, respectively, and 100% renewable electricity and energy goals set by the Council in 2017. An important priority of the Division is to encourage behavior change and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction within the Town government and among the community at large. A 17-member Sustainability Committee comprised of staff members from all Town departments leads sustainability efforts within the Town's operations.

As part of the Town's GHG reduction strategies, the Division is currently finalizing an Existing Building Decarbonization Roadmap. This Roadmap is anticipated to recommend a suite of potential policies and programs to address equitable building decarbonization. Under current staffing levels, the Division has limited capacity to develop and implement new programs. If the Town Council and community's expectation is to aggressively implement these types of programs, additional staffing will be needed.

The solid waste portion of the Division funds programs and staffing related to managing the Town's solid waste collection and disposal contract, ensuring compliance with state regulations regarding refuse disposal, and supporting waste reduction measures that promote a culture of reuse. It should be noted that new State requirements, including Senate Bill (SB) 1383, have significantly increased the required scope of work of solid waste management over the past several years. Division staff are tasked with significant ongoing community and business outreach, education, monitoring and reporting responsibilities.

In recent years, the Town Council has adopted two ordinances to reduce the use of single-use items: a single-use foodware ordinance that went into effect in January 2024 and a single-use water bottle ordinance that will go into effect in April 2025. Staff from this division are responsible for business and community engagement to support the implementation of these policies. To enforce these ordinances effectively, ongoing staffing support will be necessary. Current staffing levels do not allow for consistent ongoing outreach and enforcement.

### **Economic Vitality Division**

The Economic Vitality Division is mainly responsible for implementing programs in support of the Council's priorities and addressing goals and actions in the Economic Development Element of the General Plan, including the current fiscal year effort to update the Town's Economic Vitality Strategic Plan. The Division is staffed by one Program Analyst II.

The economic development plan is relatively new, but it is a very important part of Truckee's effort to diversify its tourism-dependent economy and develop employment opportunities for a broader range of the population. It is anticipated that this programmatic area will grow and become an important and integral part of this new department.

### **Peer Agency Comparisons**

While many local agencies are staffed with one or more "assistant to" positions to add analytical/generalist capacity to a chief executive office and provide a career development pathway, in our experience, it is less common to establish a standalone departmental structure headed by a position whose salary is set below the department head range.

In addition, City/Town Manager Departments and responsibilities assigned to assistants are variable in structure and function based on unique agency needs. For example, some agencies establish “service areas” of department-level functions and place them under the auspice of an Assistant City Manager. Other agencies are structured with assistants in the chief executive’s office who are assigned programmatic responsibilities. The following observations on peer agency structures help to highlight these differences and how they compare to Truckee.

- Overall, the Colorado peers have more robust chief executive management structures:
  - Durango is staffed with two Assistant City Managers: one over “sustainability programs” consisting of the Departments of Community Development, Public Works, and Information Technology and the City Clerk’s Office; and one over the Police, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and Library Services Department.
  - Steamboat Springs has a separate Deputy City Manager Department headed by a Deputy City Manager identified as “second in charge” responsible for Administration, Intergovernmental Relations, Waste Reductions and Recycling, City Clerk, IT/Graphic Information Systems (GIS), Facilities, and Communications.
  - Breckenridge has a “second in charge” Deputy City Manager position located in the City Manager’s Office.
- South Lake Tahoe has one Assistant City Manager located in the City Manager’s Office, principally responsible for City communications, policy development, program planning, and strategic implementation of economic development initiatives and special projects.
- Mammoth Lakes is the only peer that does not have a Deputy or Assistant Town Manager position. The Town Manager is supported by an Assistant to the Town Manager.

## Potential Organizational Structure and Staffing Recommendations

With the exception of the Sustainability Division headed by a Program Manager and staffed with two Program Analysts, the work units within the current ATTM Department are essentially staffed with one FTE and are currently led by non-managerial, analyst-level positions, which require substantial support from the Assistant to the Town Manager, stretching that position’s workload capacity.<sup>23</sup>

In our experience, departments or broader service areas charged with implementing the Council’s most important priorities are typically led by a Department Head or Assistant Town Manager, with Program Managers leading work efforts, while an “Assistant To” position provides primary analytical and programmatic support directly to an agency’s chief executive. To better reflect the array of services provided and their level of importance to Town leaders and elected officials, we recommend renaming the department and establishing a department director position that can operate at a higher level of organizational authority than the Assistant to the Town Manager.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, establishing a department director position and adding program management staff (see Recommendation 72) would create workload capacity at the ATTM position for providing direct analytical and programmatic support to the Town Manager. Consequently, we recommend moving the Assistant to the Town Manager position to the Town Manager Department under a more traditional structure.

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<sup>23</sup> The Short-Term Rental Program Division includes 2.6 FTEs, but one full-time position is dedicated to code compliance, with one full-time and one part-time analyst assigned to administering short-term rental activities.

<sup>24</sup> Similar to the Town Clerk, the Assistant to the Town Manager is considered to be a Department Head position but is paid a lower rate than the Town’s other directors. And though the ATTM may function as the Acting Town Manager in the Town Manager’s absence, the position is paid less than the positions of Assistant Public Works Director and Police Captain, which implies a lower level of stature in the organization.

**Recommendation 67. Rename the Assistant to the Town Manager Department to the Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality Department.**

**Recommendation 68. Establish the position of Director of Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality.** The annual salary should be set, at minimum, at the level currently established for the Community Development Director.

**Recommendation 69. Move the Assistant to the Town Manager position to the Town Manager Department.**

As learned from the peer agency comparisons, three jurisdictions in particular (Breckenridge and Durango, CO, and South Lake Tahoe, CA) have robust housing and/or economic innovation units staffed by program managers and supported by analyst/coordinator/planner positions, as shown in Table 9.

*Table 9. Services In Addition to Building, Code Enforcement and Planning Provided by Peer Agencies*

City/Town	Division/Positions
<b>Breckenridge, CO</b>	<u>Housing and Child Care, 6.0 FTEs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Program Manager (2.0)</li> <li>Planning Manager (1.0)</li> <li>Housing Administrative Coordinator (1.0)</li> <li>Housing Specialist (2.0)</li> </ul>
<b>Durango, CO</b>	<u>Economic Innovation, 2.5 FTEs<sup>25</sup></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Opportunity Manager (1.0)</li> <li>Planner III (1.0)</li> <li>Administrative Analyst (0.25)</li> <li>Administrative Associate (0.25)</li> </ul> <u>Housing Innovation, 3.0 FTEs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Innovation Program Manager (1.0)</li> <li>Planner III (1.0)</li> <li>Housing Coordinator (1.0)</li> </ul>
<b>South Lake Tahoe, CA</b>	<u>Housing, 4.0 FTEs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Manager (1.0)</li> <li>Planner/Housing Series (2.0)</li> <li>Associate Management Analyst (1.0)</li> <li>Program Coordinator (1.0)</li> </ul>

It should be noted that the economic development and housing functions are located in each peer agency's Community Development Department. We do not believe this makes sense for Truckee at this time. In Truckee, operational improvements are needed in Community Development, and these need to be the top priority for implementation and for consistent results to be maintained. Also in Truckee, the neighborhood-level importance of the management of short-term rentals cannot be overlooked, nor can the need for housing development and these factors argue for placing these functions in a neighborhood-oriented department.

From our perspective, given the level of community import associated with economic vitality and workforce and affordable housing in Truckee, staffing these areas with analysts alone is insufficient. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Town establish division-level manager positions in the Economic

<sup>25</sup> Durango's Economic Innovation Division also includes 100% of the Community Development Director's position, but it has been removed here for comparison purposes.

Vitality, Housing, and Short-Term Rental divisions to report to the department director. The program managers can increase workload capacity, facilitate higher-level programmatic oversight, and supervise the program analysts.

**Recommendation 70. Establish program manager positions in the Economic Vitality, Housing, and Short-Term Rental divisions.**

Currently, the IDEA Division is staffed by one employee. Although a division action plan has been created and is very thorough, it seems to require significant staff time and more than one individual to implement effectively. In addition, feedback regarding the IDEA program indicates that many Town staff are unclear about its purpose and necessity (which makes sense because inclusivity efforts are focused almost exclusively on community programs with minimal internal attention). Adding one analyst position would help facilitate action planning for implementing meaningful inclusivity programs inside and outside of the organization. Once fully staffed and matured, the IDEA Division can be evaluated for reallocation to Human Resources.

**Recommendation 71. Add one analyst to the IDEA Division.**

Although the Sustainability Division includes a Program Manager and two Program Analysts (and is therefore better staffed relative to other divisions in the ATTM Department), the work unit carries a substantial workload associated with the Town's "Keep Truckee Green" programs and associated comprehensive efforts for climate action planning and meeting sustainability goals. For example, the Division tracks the following metrics:

- Energy use:
  - Number of small-scale rooftop solar installations
  - Community energy usage
  - Municipal renewable electricity and energy usage
- Community and municipal greenhouse gas emissions
- Community participation in "Keep Truckee Green" programs and hosted events
- Trails and transit
  - Numbers of trails, bike lanes, sidewalks, transit riders and electric vehicle charging stations
- Trash and recycling
  - Trash disposal and recycling rates
- Open space and natural resources
  - Collection of roadway sediment
  - Water consumption
  - Wetland and meadow restoration
  - Forest health and fire protection
  - Open space acreage
- Housing
  - Number of units within one half mile of transit
  - Number of affordable housing units

The close linkages between economic development, housing and the Sustainability Division are worth noting and are another reason for clustering these functions in the new Neighborhood Services and

Economic Vitality Department. As the Town seeks to meet or exceed its sustainability goals over a long-term planning horizon, it will be necessary to evaluate workload capacity to determine when additional staffing resources may be necessary.

**Recommendation 72. Evaluate the need for additional staffing to ensure sustainability goals are met or exceeded.**

## Other General Government Departments

This section of the report focuses on the general government functions of the Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Town Clerk.

### Town Manager

As the agency's chief executive, the Town Manager is ultimately responsible for all Town operations and ensuring that policy directives of the Council are carried out. The Department of the Town Manager is staffed by the Town Manager, with nominal hours budgeted for the Town Clerk (0.10 FTE) and Assistant to the Town Manager (0.15 FTE).

For a municipality with an annual general fund budget approaching \$40 million and over 140 FTEs, staffing in the Town Manager's office is quite limited. In our experience, most City/Town Managers with this level of operations have a full-time analyst and administrative support staff members to assist with leading and managing the day-to-day operations of the local government. As noted with Recommendation 71, moving the Assistant to the Town Manager into the Town Manager Department under a more traditional structure would help ensure adequate support for the agency's chief executive.

Over the longer term and once organizational structural changes are made and improvements assessed, the Town may wish to consider reclassifying the Assistant to the Town Manager to an Assistant Town Manager to provide additional executive leadership and create a succession pathway.

### Town Attorney

Legal services are provided by the Town Attorney Department, staffed by a Town Attorney and augmented with \$125,000 in the current fiscal year for outside counsel services.

Under the terms of an employment agreement through December 30, 2025, Truckee's Town Attorney is permitted to serve as the Town Attorney to Mammoth Lakes and to "represent small clients which cumulatively impose minimal demands," provided that such representation does not conflict with or is detrimental to performance for the Town.

There may be benefits to the Town Attorney serving as the Attorney for Mammoth Lakes, and it is not uncommon for contract city attorneys to serve more than one small jurisdiction. However, it is relatively unusual for a public employee working as a city or town attorney to also serve private clients. It is our understanding that the Town Attorney does not currently represent private clients. To eliminate the appearance of a potential conflict of interest, Baker Tilly recommends modifying the employment agreement to remove the provision that indicates the Town Attorney can represent private clients.

#### **Recommendation 73. Eliminate the provision in the Town Attorney's employment agreement that allows representation to private clients.**

It should be noted that neither the Town Manager nor the Town Attorney has designated clerical staff and must rely on administrative support from other employees in other departments, which is atypical for local government jurisdictions and can lead to gaps in administrative assistance for two of the most prominent positions in the organization.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Recommendation 74. Establish executive assistant positions in the Town Manager and Town Attorney departments.**

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<sup>26</sup> We note that an Executive Assistant is budgeted in the Police Department.

## Town Clerk

The Town Clerk Department provides an array of services in support of the Town Council and its meetings, municipal elections, and public records access and management. The Town Clerk Department also performs several tasks not typically associated with traditional clerk functions, including the following:

- Administrative support to several departments, including the Assistant to the Town Manager, Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Public Works (Engineering Division)
- Administrative activities associated with the Redevelopment Successor Agency and the Truckee Public Financing Authority
- Preparation of contracts for Town purchases and other purchasing-related tasks
- Organization/coordination of Town and community events

Department staffing consists of the Town Clerk (0.9 FTE), one Deputy Town Clerk, and three Administrative Technicians. There is nothing inherently inappropriate with the atypical clerk functions, but as Baker Tilly has already recommended, the Town would benefit from a more robust procurement function that should be transitioned into the Finance Division.

## Conclusion

A relatively new and small jurisdiction such as Truckee would be expected to face several organizational challenges because that is the nature of newly incorporated communities and small communities, particularly those with intensely committed citizens fiercely protective of the special “sense of place” connected with a community like Truckee. So, it is no surprise that Truckee faces many organizational issues, as presented in this report.

The good news is that the Town has many very dedicated staff members and elected officials who have addressed the challenges and growing pains with grit, determination, and, above all, a dedication to the special nature of Truckee.

We have found a local government organization that is generally under-resourced in all areas and where workload stresses impact service delivery on a daily basis. Concerted efforts will need to be made to build the service delivery capacity of the Town, and staffing additions are particularly needed in some areas. The staffing additions will need to be coupled with organizational development efforts and technology deployment so that efficiency and effectiveness can be improved as the organization grows.

Building out this three-legged stool of targeted staffing growth, coupled with dedicated organizational development work and planned strategic investments in technology, should be the focus of the next three to five years of the organization’s growth and development.



## Attachment A – List of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1.** Update and reaffirm The Truckee Way as the Town’s operating principles.
- Recommendation 2.** Develop a five-year strategic plan.
- Recommendation 3.** Implement a department-based annual business planning process and establish associated performance metrics with a consistent methodology.
- Recommendation 4.** Ensure the economic development strategic plan is updated as planned.
- Recommendation 5.** Evaluate existing priorities and service levels and make necessary adjustments where gaps in workload capacity exist.
- Recommendation 6.** Enhance current practices to be followed when considering the addition of new initiatives.
- Recommendation 7.** Evaluate the interests, means and methods used to engage the community and make necessary adjustments.
- Recommendation 8.** Create short- and longer-term phasing and funding plans to ensure adequate staffing and structures are in place to efficiently, effectively, and sustainably manage Council priorities and service delivery goals/expectations.
- Recommendation 9.** Evaluate and implement prudent and sustainable funding options.
- Recommendation 10.** Formally adopt an internal control policy framework as a basis for designing, implementing, operating, and evaluating internal controls.
- Recommendation 11.** Implement an encumbrance system to appropriately account for budget to actual expenses and mitigate the risk of waste and fraud.
- Recommendation 12.** Conduct a comprehensive best practice review of the decentralized procurement function.
- Recommendation 13.** Develop performance measures for each department to report progress and inform resource allocation decisions.
- Recommendation 14.** Develop a town-wide succession planning program aimed at cross-training existing staff and preparing them for future advancement.
- Recommendation 15.** Procure and implement an applicant tracking system as soon as practical.
- Recommendation 16.** Assess available performance management software to determine if purchasing such a program is practical and financially feasible.
- Recommendation 17.** Establish a town-wide information technology governance structure.
- Recommendation 18.** Conduct a comprehensive review of software solutions, subscriptions, and systems currently in use.

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- Recommendation 19.** Prepare and fund an information technology strategic plan to help guide system solution decisions.
- Recommendation 20.** Ensure department heads implement formal meeting structures.
- Recommendation 21.** Establish customer service standards for responding to internal and external inquiries.
- Recommendation 22.** Conduct a confidential employee satisfaction survey to better understand concerns about morale and workload.
- Recommendation 23.** Implement a suite of improvements to advance service excellence and strengthen public trust.
- Recommendation 24.** Move Code Compliance under the Building Division to align the in-the-field regulatory responsibilities of each.
- Recommendation 25.** Establish a routine pre-submittal meeting structure to ensure the Town and the applicant are aligned on project goals and regulatory requirements.
- Recommendation 26.** Establish routine pre-grade and pre-demo meetings to coordinate all site work.
- Recommendation 27.** Make permanent the interim organizational structure for three divisions: Operations, Support Services, and Emergency Operations.
- Recommendation 28.** Eliminate the vacant administrative manager position.
- Recommendation 29.** Complete a classification study to determine if the two police lieutenants should be reclassified to police captains.
- Recommendation 30.** Engage in discussions with Nevada County Regional Dispatch to facilitate improvements in pre-dispatch times.
- Recommendation 31.** Improve CAD data collection through engagement with Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center.
- Recommendation 32.** Consider establishing an on-call contract for after-hours animal control services.
- Recommendation 33.** Add the sworn position of Unhoused Outreach Officer.
- Recommendation 34.** Explore opportunities for a regionalized SWAT element in Nevada County.
- Recommendation 35.** Provide advanced critical incident response training and modernized tactical equipment to police officers.
- Recommendation 36.** Engage Nevada County in discussions to contract for a Town-dedicated frequency channel and dispatcher.
- Recommendation 37.** Maintain the aquatic invasive species sticker program at the current service level.
- Recommendation 38.** Add an investigator position to the Support Services Division.
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- Recommendation 39. Add a Police Sergeant to the Support Services Division.**
- Recommendation 40. Consider contracting with a trained/experienced crime analyst for part-time or on-demand analytical work.**
- Recommendation 41. Engage in discussions with the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District to add a second School Resource Officer position under the current cost-sharing agreement.**
- Recommendation 42. Add an Administrative Clerk position to the Support Services Division to lessen the clerical workload currently performed by higher-level positions.**
- Recommendation 43. Add a full-time police Community Outreach Coordinator position to oversee all digital and media communications.**
- Recommendation 44. Identify and cross-train one or more staff members in Property and Evidence duties.**
- Recommendation 45. Purchase a more appropriate utility vehicle for the Property and Evidence Unit.**
- Recommendation 46. Add a second position within the Emergency Services Division.**
- Recommendation 47. Engage the current CAD/RMS vendor and Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center in discussions to seek greater access to Police Department data and to better utilize available system modules.**
- Recommendation 48. Establish an engineer position focused on implementing facilities infrastructure projects.**
- Recommendation 49. Modernize processing and tracking systems associated with private development and public infrastructure projects**
- Recommendation 50. Update engineering standards for designing and constructing public improvements and private improvements affecting public infrastructure.**
- Recommendation 51. Create an electric fleet conversion implementation action plan.**
- Recommendation 52. Evaluate the need to establish a Transportation Engineer or similar position to assist with managing transit-related projects and programs.**
- Recommendation 53. Establish a work unit for maintaining sidewalks and trails.**
- Recommendation 54. Establish a formal preventative maintenance program.**
- Recommendation 55. Continue to conduct cost-benefit analysis to determine the optimal mix of contracted and in-house maintenance work.**
- Recommendation 56. Adopt a formal Safety Program and staff it with a Safety Coordinator.**
- Recommendation 57. Consider reallocating an Administrative Technician from the Town Clerk Department to the Public Works Department.**
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- Recommendation 58.** Conduct an internal customer satisfaction survey to determine if service level adjustments are needed.
- Recommendation 59.** Ensure that departments receive monthly budget to actual reports to facilitate revenue and expense management and enhance accountability.
- Recommendation 60.** Ensure financial policies are complete and consistent with best practices.
- Recommendation 61.** Add a procurement analyst position and an accounting technician position to support Town purchasing and payment activities and enhance internal financial controls.
- Recommendation 62.** Add one Human Resources Technician to provide staff support to the HR Manager and Analyst and increase capacity for strategic planning, citywide training, and other employee relations matters.
- Recommendation 63.** Establish quarterly meetings between HR and operating departments, creating joint agendas and including Department Directors, mid-management staff and other appropriate personnel.
- Recommendation 64.** Evaluate the need for an Information Technology Business Analyst position to help ensure planned improvements and system upgrades are made in a timely fashion.
- Recommendation 65.** Implement formal disaster recovery procedures with bi-annual testing.
- Recommendation 66.** Formalize the Information Technology Division's role in providing project management, consultation, and evaluation services when considering projects that include technology components.
- Recommendation 67.** Rename the Assistant to the Town Manager Department to the Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality Department.
- Recommendation 68.** Establish the position of Director of Neighborhood Services and Economic Vitality.
- Recommendation 69.** Move the Assistant to the Town Manager position to the Town Manager Department.
- Recommendation 70.** Establish program manager positions in the Economic Vitality, Housing, and Short-Term Rental divisions.
- Recommendation 71.** Add one analyst to the IDEA Division.
- Recommendation 72.** Evaluate the need for additional staffing to ensure sustainability goals are met or exceeded.
- Recommendation 73.** Eliminate the provision in the Town Attorney's employment agreement that allows representation to private clients.
- Recommendation 74.** Establish executive assistant positions in the Town Manager and Town Attorney departments.
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