

**NEVADA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

**APPLICANT:** County of Nevada

**HEARING DATE:** August 25, 2016

**FILE NOS:** GP14-003, GP16-004, Z16-005, ORD14-002 & EIS14-004

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**PROJECT:** Public hearing to consider an Area Plan for the Donner Summit area, including: 1) adoption of the Negative Declaration for the project (EIS14-004); 2) a General Plan Amendment to adopt the Soda Springs Area Plan (GP14-003); 3) a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment to change the land use designation of 51 parcels to remove development constraints that inhibit desired economic growth in order to create a stronger community for local residents (GP16-004); 4) the Rezoning of parcels to align with the proposed General Plan land use designation amendments, including adding the Site Performance (SP) and Rural Center (RC) Combining District zoning overlays to specific parcels (Z16-005); and 5) amending Sec. L-II 4.2.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance to add a reference to the Soda Springs Area Plan design guidelines and standards (ORD14-002).

**LOCATION:** The proposed Soda Springs Area Plan covers those Donner Summit communities connected along Donner Pass Road (old Hwy. 40) between Cisco Grove and the Donner Memorial Bridge in eastern Nevada County. The Area Plan's focus is the 141-acre community of Soda Springs which the County has designated as a Rural Center for the surrounding rural areas.

**APNs, OWNERS, SITE ADDRESSES:** See listing in Attachment 1- Initial Study.

**PLANNER:** Patrick Dobbs, Senior Planner

**LOCATION:** The proposed Soda Springs Area Plan (Area Plan) covers those Donner Summit communities connected along Donner Pass Rd. (old Hwy. 40) between Cisco Grove and the Donner Memorial Bridge on Donner Summit in eastern Nevada County, approximately 12 miles west of the town of Truckee, California. The Area Plan covers an area extending approximately 1.2 miles along Donner Pass Rd. (historic Old Highway 40) from the Soda Springs/Norden Interstate 80 exit to Bunny Hill Rd. The Area Plan's focus is the community of Soda Springs which the County has designated a Rural Center for the surrounding rural area. The Soda Springs Rural Center is approximately 141 acres in size (excluding roadway and railroad rights of way) and the predominant theme of the land use pattern is commercial and residential.

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<b>General Plan:</b>	USF, UMD, HC, REC	<b>Water:</b>	Donner Summit PUD
<b>Region/Center:</b>	Soda Springs Rural Center	<b>Sewage:</b>	Donner Summit PUD
<b>Zoning:</b>	R1, R2, R2-PD, CH, REC	<b>Fire:</b>	Truckee
<b>Flood Map:</b>	FEMA Panels #0500 & 0525, Zone D	<b>Schools:</b>	Tahoe/Truckee
<b>ZDM No.:</b>	114 & 119	<b>Recreation:</b>	Truckee Donner
<b>Project Area:</b>	141 acres	<b>Sup. Dist.:</b>	V

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. ~~Draft Board Resolution for EIS14-004 Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration~~
  2. ~~Draft Board Resolution for GP14-003 General Plan Text Amendments~~
  3. ~~Draft Board Resolutions for GP16-004 General Plan Land Use Map Amendments~~
  4. ~~Draft Ordinance for Z16-005 Zoning District Map Amendments~~
  5. ~~Draft Ordinance for ORD14-002 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments~~
  6. ~~Draft Soda Springs Area Plan~~
  7. Zoning, Vicinity & Public Notice Map
  8. Public Comments
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## **BACKGROUND**

On March 25, 2014, the Board of Supervisors issued Board Order BO-14-02 directing the Advance Planning Division work program priorities for Phase II of the General Plan Land Use Element. The work plan calls for a new Area Plan for the Soda Springs community in accordance with Program 1.2.1.b of the General Plan Land Use Element.

Local efforts to provide input for long range planning on Donner Summit have been underway for more than a decade. There has been consistent and strong support in the Soda Springs community for a coordinated planning effort between Nevada and Placer County and by the Donner Summit Area Association (DSAA). Those efforts have resulted in the Donner Summit Economic Study (2004), the Donner Summit Visioning and Planning Resident Survey (2007), and the Community Prosperity Summit (2008), which provides a base foundation of the Soda Springs Area Plan.

As a result of the construction of Highway 80 in 1964, Soda Springs has become more of a drive-by community than a stop by, or destination itself. Interstate 80 allows potential visitors to pass by enroute to nearby Truckee, Reno, and Lake Tahoe, oblivious to the experiences they might enjoy on Donner Summit. Additionally, time has passed on while the area has been hindered in its economic promotion by the lack of investment and the consequent impacts of some areas of blight in the built environment. Many competing recreational areas further east have better organized and promoted attractions for year-round recreation resulting in Donner Summit being comparatively less competitive for tourist dollars needed to support economic viability.

The current Highway Commercial Land Use Designation is outdated and too restrictive of local uses appropriate for the commercial area and there is a clear need to revitalize the physical appearance and promote the accessibility of the area to increase economic activity. Healthy economic activity, in turn, is key to a healthy social fabric and the conditions to enhance and protect the natural environment. Compounding this problem of the restrictive land use designation is the multitude of political jurisdictions and divided community needs that have resulted in not capitalizing on opportunities that exist in the area such as non-winter uses. Adding to the challenge, consecutive drought years and projected climate changes create uncertainties for the local economy which is historically heavily dependent upon snow fall. The passage of time with consequent deterioration of buildings and infrastructures, the national economic downturn

and the impacts of global climate change present even greater challenges to economic development of the Soda Springs area than was the case a decade ago.

## **PURPOSE**

The Soda Springs Area Plan serves as the comprehensive land use and zoning plan for the Donner Summit region and community of Soda Spring and embodies the expressed goals of residents, business owners, and elected officials and establishes concrete and achievable actions. The drafting of the Soda Springs Area Plan is a tool to advance the goals and policies for the Nevada County General Plan while benefitting the local community. The Area Plan provides long-term guidance that is intended to improve the prosperity of Donner Summit in a way that supports a healthy economy, environment, and social fabric for the residents and general public.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Area Plan covers an area approximately 1.2 miles along Donner Pass Rd. (historic Old Highway 40) from the Soda Springs/Norden Interstate 80 exit to Bunny Hill Rd. on Donner Summit in eastern Nevada County. The area functions as the primary visitor and tourist area on Donner Summit and provides direct access to developed and passive recreation opportunities. The Area Plan's focus is the community of Soda Springs which the County has designated a Rural Center for the surrounding rural area. The Soda Springs Rural Center is approximately 141 acres in size (excluding roadway and railroad rights of way) and the predominant theme of the land use pattern is commercial and residential.

The commercially zoned area of the Soda Springs Rural Center has three primary nodes: on the western edge is the gas station, in the middle is the General Store building, and the eastern edge is the Soda Springs Station condominiums at the flashing light intersection with Soda Springs Rd. The gas station area includes the Sugar Bowl Ski Resort operated Donner Summit Lodge, and Summit Restaurant. The General Store area includes the Soda Springs Post Office, real estate offices and the currently closed Tinker's Station mixed-use building. The Soda Springs Lodge area is primarily residential although it does include some commercial businesses and the Donner Summit Historical Museum. These uses occupy structures ranging in height, age and physical conditions. Most of the buildings are quite old, with many constructed between 1930 and 1950.

The Soda Springs Rural Center is bordered to the north by Interstate 80 and lands owned by Auburn Ski Club associated with Boreal Ski Resort. To the south, the Area Plan is bordered by the Soda Springs Ski Resort and 1,000 lot residential community of Serene Lakes just beyond. Directly west of the Area Plan across the Interstate 80 overpass are the Donner Summit Public Utility District facilities and a few miles down Donner Pass Road is the residential community of Pla-Vada near the town of Kingvale. To the east of the Area Plan is Tahoe National Forest towards Donner Ski Ranch and Sugar Bowl Ski Resort.

## **PROPOSED PROJECT**

The proposed project is an Area Plan that promotes revitalization of the Donner Summit area to be consistent with community values and the County's General Plan, with specific land use

regulations and zoning changes focused on the Soda Springs Rural Center commercial zoning. The Soda Springs Area Plan establishes goals, policies and implementation strategies for providing specific land use guidance for the Donner Summit area. The Area Plan will help achieve the vision of the community by implementing its guiding principles through rezoning land use designations, and development of community design standards. The Area Plan proposes to achieve this through more intensive concentrated mixed use development in the commercial area and flexible design standards to promote revitalization to improve its aging infrastructure, provide for improved recreation access, and diversify commercial retail needs for visitors and residents. The area is envisioned as a regional destination that provides full services for visitors and permanent residents and offers unique experiences related to the many outdoor recreation and natural experience possibilities that abound on Donner Summit. The revitalization of Soda Springs will catalyze the transformation from seasonal winter recreation economy into a sustainable year-round community and outdoor tourism recreational destination with a diversified business base.

The Soda Springs Area Plan defines land use regulations and guidelines for planning decisions. It does this by presenting principles, goals, policies and implementation strategies developed by Nevada County and stakeholders to support a sustainable community that puts its residents first with expanded commercial goods and services, improved trail connections to surrounding recreation areas, support for public areas and facilities, and promotion of the area in the Spring, Summer and Fall. The County also intends to provide direction to property owners, community groups, and interested individuals planning and promoting the area. The proposed plan is intended to provide for mixed-use and concentrated development conditions that provide local commercial needs as well as provide a sense of community and a sense of a stronger place by encouraging public gathering places and locations for community events.

The Area Plan is organized into seven chapters and three attachments. Chapter 1 introduces the Area Plan and summarizes the plan's vision for the future and guiding principles for prosperity and sustainability. Chapters 2 through 7 provide an overview of the Area Plan's existing conditions, opportunities and constraints for development and conservation, and outline the policy direction for the plan, with individual sections for the following plan elements: Land Use; Economic Development; Public Services; Recreation; Natural and Cultural Resources; and Area Plan Implementation. Attachment A establishes specific development standards, design standards and permissible uses that are intended to improve the scenic quality of the built environment, promote a sense of place, and support the community's desired community character. Attachment B lists Assessor's Parcel Numbers within the plan area by zoning district, and Attachment C includes the Area Plan references.

To facilitate desirable economic development, protect historical and rural values, provide quality affordable housing and lodging, create public gathering places, develop neighborhood connecting trails, create gateway signage and branding, provide enhanced vehicle and pedestrian safety, and expand resident and visitor services for improved prosperity and sustainability of the Donner Summit region, Table 1, below, summarizes the beneficial components of the proposed Area Plan.

<b>Table 1: Elements of the Soda Springs Area Plan</b>		
<b>Soda Springs Area Plan Element</b>	<b>Proposed Change from Existing Plans, Maps, and Ordinances</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>
Goals and Policies: All Elements	Adds Goals and Policies specific to Donner Summit	<p>Adds goals and policies to implement the vision and capital improvements identified in the Area Plan, resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ desirable economic development</li> <li>▪ protection of rural lifestyle values and character</li> <li>▪ more services for local residents</li> <li>▪ quality affordable housing and lodging</li> <li>▪ creation of in-town public places</li> <li>▪ trail connections within and around the Rural Center</li> <li>▪ construction of gateway signage and branding</li> <li>▪ improved vehicle and pedestrian safety, and</li> <li>▪ expanded residential and visitor services</li> </ul>
Land Use: Map Amendments	Expand and modify existing Land Use/Zoning District boundaries by removing outdated and unnecessary obstacles to well-planned development	<p>A conscious, directed change in the intensity and type of land uses in the Soda Springs commercial area will be the primary method by which positive community values and strengths can be preserved and the area’s potential realized. Proposed zoning changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1.03 ac. currently zoned R1 (single family residential) rezoned to CH (highway commercial)</li> <li>▪ 2.85 ac. currently zoned R1 (single family residential) rezoned to FR-40 (Forest-40 ac. min.)</li> <li>▪ 1.76 ac. currently zoned R1 (single family residential) rezoned to R2 (medium density residential)</li> <li>▪ 1.13 ac. currently zoned R2 (medium density residential) rezoned to R3 (high density residential)</li> <li>▪ 1.8 ac. currently zoned CH (highway commercial) rezoned to R2 (medium density residential)</li> <li>▪ 4.07 ac. currently zoned CH (highway commercial) rezoned to C1 (neighborhood commercial)</li> <li>▪ 7.55 ac. currently zoned CH (highway commercial) rezoned to C2 (community commercial)</li> <li>▪ 0.78 ac. currently zoned CH (highway commercial) rezoned to M1 (light industrial)</li> </ul>
Land Use: Rural Center (RC) and Site Performance (SP) Combining Zone Districts	Adds the Rural Center (RC) Combining District to the Commercial Area and Adjacent Surroundings and adds the Site Performance (SP) Combining District to the remainder (e.g., Res., Rec., For.)	<p>Focus economic development and improvements in and around the Soda Springs commercial area with the addition of the Rural Center (RC) Combining District which allows for more flexible development standards and permissible uses summarized below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New construction standards on vacant lands:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Protect existing natural features</li> <li>○ Earthtone exterior building colors and materials</li> <li>○ Provide adequate snow storage area</li> <li>○ Utilize native vegetation</li> <li>○ Preserve mountain, forest, and meadow public views from Donner Pass Road</li> <li>○ Site design consideration of solar exposure, climate, noise, safety, fire protection and privacy</li> <li>○ Water-efficient appliances</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Community Development Flexible Design Standards:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Open space reduction for mixed-use building with required landscaping</li> <li>○ Encourage gateway signage that complements natural setting and Donner Summit history</li> <li>○ Allows for up to 50 % offsite parking</li> <li>○ Establishes metal shipping container storage standards (also applies to SP Combining District)</li> <li>○ Wildlife secure garbage facilities</li> <li>○ Allows limited commercial activities within legal non-conforming residences</li> <li>○ Establishes snow removal equipment and outdoor storage screening requirements (also applies to SP Combining District)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Housing Density Standards:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mixed-use projects in the C1 and C2 zone district may utilize a maximum residential density of 6 units/acre.</li> <li>○ Multi-family residential projects may utilize a two unit (duplex) minimum density allowance for parcels zoned R2-RC, subject to zoning compliance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Agricultural Uses such as farmer’s markets and produce stands are permissible subject to approval pursuant to Sec. L-II 3.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance.</li> </ul>

Adoption of the Soda Springs Area Plan includes the following General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments:

General Plan Text Amendments (GP14-003)

General Plan Amendments to adopt the Soda Springs Area Plan and policy framework that will guide future development and redevelopment in the Soda Springs Rural Center toward land uses that focus economic development and create a community and recreation destination that provides a diversity and concentration of resident servicing shops as well as services that also appeal to visitors.

General Plan Land Use Map Amendments (GP16-004)

General Plan Land Use Map Designation Amendments to 51 parcels to remove development constraints that inhibit desired economic growth and create a stronger community for the local residents.

Zoning District Map Amendments (Z16-005)

Parcel rezoning to correspond with the proposed Land Use Map Designation changes; including adding SP (Site Performance) and RC (Rural Center) Combining District zoning to specific parcels.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments (ORD14-002)

Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Sec. L-II 4.2.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance to add a reference to the proposed Soda Springs Area Plan design guidelines and standards that reflect Donner Summit's historic mountain identity while promoting trail connectivity and public plazas, in order to activate the pedestrian streetscape and improve roadway perimeters for both pedestrian and vehicular safety.

**PROJECT ANALYSIS**

Public Services and Facilities

The Soda Springs Area Plan would facilitate a compact land use pattern, with localized increases in density, and the types of development envisioned by the General Plan. The proposed Area Plan does not include any development proposals or infrastructure upgrades that would result in population growth or any other direct or indirect substantial adverse impacts requiring increased public services. Any future development proposals such as tentative maps would undergo environmental review to evaluate impacts related to public services. Therefore, the proposed Area Plan would have little effect on service ratios, response times, or other service objectives of public services.

Truckee Fire Protection District – Station 97 is across Highway 80, approximately 1,000 feet west of the Soda Springs Rural Center. There would not be a need for new or altered fire protection facilities resulting from this project. The resulting changes in population density would be minimal and not have an appreciable effect on the Donner Summit Public Utility District's ability to serve new projects. Expanded trails and parks would require some additional maintenance and policing but would not significantly place a burden on agencies providing this public service.

### Transportation/Circulation

The Soda Springs Area Plan does not alter, revise or conflict with applicable plans, ordinances or policies establishing the measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. Consistent with the General Plan, development and redevelopment associated with the Area Plan evaluated as a whole, and individual projects therein, that would generate a significant net increase of daily vehicle trips or more would be required to prepare a project-level traffic analyses. For any new trips that are generated, Nevada County requires an applicant to offset the potential regional traffic and air quality effects of the new trips by requiring an applicant contribute to traffic mitigation fees to the Air Quality Mitigation Fund and all individual projects would be required to meet all applicable LOS standards for roadways and standards.

Any additional vehicle trips with residents coming from adjacent communities to receive goods and services provided in Soda Springs will be more than off-set by a corresponding reduction of travel to Truckee to meet those needs. Similarly, the increase to residential capacity within the Rural Center (RC) Combining Zone District will provide affordable work force housing choices thereby reducing the need to reside and travel from more distant communities like Truckee. Making Soda Springs a full service destination will largely offset any new trips generated by additional visitors resulting from Area Plan implementation. The circulation system is currently in disrepair and the proposed changes resulting from the Area Plan provide a safer definition of the roadway and safer separation of vehicle and pedestrian traffic

### Land Use

No new structures are proposed with the Area Plan, however there are five new zoning districts proposed that are not currently present within the Rural Center; R3 (High Density Residential), C1 (Neighborhood Commercial), C2 (Community Commercial), M1 (Light Industrial), and FR-40 (Forest-40 acre minimum). These additional land use zoning districts included within the Soda Springs Area Plan and rationale of why impacts of related to land use incompatibility are less than significant are further discussed below.

#### *R3 (High Density)*

There are two vacant parcels on the north side of the intersection of Donner Pass Rd. and Soda Springs Rd. being rezoned from R2 (Medium Density Residential) to R3 (High Density Residential). This change is part of a larger strategy to focus additional residential capacity near the commercial center of town to increase the critical mass of the community, imparting a sense of scale and density that establishes the market center as the focal point for the entire community. The parcels are currently zoned for residential development and will remain zoned for residential development.

#### *C1 (Neighborhood Commercial) and C2 (Community Commercial)*

A conscious directed change in the intensity and type of land uses in the Soda Springs commercial will be the primary method by which positive community values and strengths can be preserved and enhanced. By the County government removing development constraints that inhibit desired economic growth we will create a stronger community for the local residents. It is vitally important (and possible) to do so, while maintaining the rural natural setting.

Located on the western, eastern, and southern gateways of the Soda Springs commercial area, eleven parcels have been rezoned from CH (Highway Commercial) to C1 (Neighborhood

Commercial). As mentioned throughout this section, much of the Soda Springs Rural Center commercial area is currently designated by the County General Plan as Highway Commercial because of its historical role as a service center for travelling motorists. This land use designation is outdated and too restrictive of local uses appropriate for the area's residents.

The Area Plan proposed to rezone twenty-one parcels from CH (Highway Commercial) to C2 (Community Commercial). Changing the current Commercial Highway zoning to Neighborhood and Community Commercial zone districts provides greater flexibility for local commercial businesses. Unlike the current CH zoning, the C1 and C2 zone districts allow for uses like offices and museums which currently exist as non-conforming uses, and community meeting and social event facilities which are strongly desired by the community.

#### *M1 (Light Industrial)*

The extreme weather conditions and self-reliant approach to life of residents requires there be industrial areas. Heavy equipment is scattered throughout the community often giving commercial sites the feel of an industrial site. This plan designates two parcels for light industrial uses near the western end of town in recognition of the current industrial snow removal and telecommunication functions on the sites. Through the use of landscaping and fences (Section L-II 4.2.7.E.2.f.) and more restrictive noise standards (Section L-II 4.1.7.D.4.) Nevada County's Zoning Ordinance includes protections to preserve the quality of life when non-residential development abuts residentially-zoned properties.

#### *FR-40 (Forest-40 acre minimum)*

In the northeastern most corner of the Rural Center along Bunny Hill Road is a 2.85 acre parcel owned by the U.S. Forest Service that is proposed to be re-zoned from R1 (Single-Family Residential) to FR-40 (Forest-40 acre min.), consistent with the zoning of surrounding Tahoe National Forest parcels.

#### *RC (Rural Center) Combining District*

The RC (Rural Center) Combining District zoning overlay provides more flexible development and design standards for the seventy-seven parcels within and adjacent to the Soda Springs commercial core area, that have a base zoning district that is either commercial, multi-family, or industrial. To revitalize the economic vitality of Donner Summit and remove unnecessary obstacles to well-planned development intended to support and valued rural community character, the RC Combining District identifies flexible standards that promote the efficient use of land with incentives for achieving a sustainable community the following Area Plan goals:

- Stem the steady decline and instability of many businesses by allowing a broader range of commercial uses;
- Encourage full service businesses that support a stable year-round occupancy by residents and provide the needs of visitors to the area;
- Provide more job opportunities with workforce wages;
- Focus increased residential density and capacity;
- Capitalize on natural resources by branding the area as a tourist full-stop destination;
- Entice more Highway 80 travelers to take area exits to spend dollars for supplies and services;
- Stimulate increased property values;



- Take steps to reduce visual blight and enhance the scenic values of the area by limiting the extent of outdoor storage of equipment (e.g., snow plows, metal shipping containers) and materials (e.g., commercial fire wood yards); and
- Creation of public gathering spaces, such as a town plaza

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Planning staff prepared an Initial Study for public review with the comment period beginning July 22 and ending August 22, 2016. The proposed Soda Springs Area Plan is a policy and design plan, and does not propose any specific construction projects. All environmental impacts would be less-than-significant, and staff is therefore recommending adoption of a Negative Declaration (ND).

The commitment to preserving the cultural and natural resources and the environment is broadly supported by stakeholders and is seen as a positive step for a brighter future for the area. Because the Area Plan proposes no changes to existing policies regarding aquatic habitats, special status plant or animal communities, or to cultural, historical, and archeological resources, and because federal, state, and County environmental protections are already in place, implementation of the Soda Springs Area Plan would result in less than significant degradation of these resources.

## **PUBLIC COORDINATION**

Local efforts to inform long range planning on Donner Summit have been underway for more than a decade and the foundation of this plan is based on a 2004 comprehensive economic development study conducted for the Donner Summit area. To help guide development in Soda Springs and surrounding Donner Summit area the Advance Planning Division of the Nevada County Planning Department held nine public community workshop meetings between September 2014 and August 2016 and recommended key strategies to be implemented to encourage investment and to achieve environmental, physical, and sustainable economic improvements. Staff has also presented Area Plan updates to Placer County's Donner Summit Municipal Advisory Committee (MAC), the Donner Summit Area Association (DSAA) and the Donner Summit Legacy organizations.

## **ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY**

As a policy document, the Soda Springs Area Plan supplements and becomes part of the General Plan, providing a comprehensive framework for making land use decisions within the Soda Springs Rural Center and influencing decisions in the surrounding Donner Summit geographic area. The goals, policies and design and site development standards contained within this plan reflect Soda Springs unique characteristics, support the local community's vision, and are consistent with the overall themes and goals of the General Plan. The County's General Plan identifies Soda Springs as a Rural Center which is intended to provide for a mix of primary uses grouped together and interrelated to form a functional and community center, and to create a visual identity related to the historic mountain character for the surrounding Donner Summit rural communities.

The Area Plan is consistent with applicable General Plan policies and regulations, including; General Plan Goal 1.3 which calls for the protection and enhancement of community character, land use patterns, rural lifestyle, and economy of Rural Regions in their natural setting. Also General Plan Policy 1.3.13 identifies Rural Region Area Plans as a more specific planning tool to complement and assist further implementation of the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Additionally, General Plan Policy 1.9.2 identifies current development constraints imposed by the Highway Commercial (HC) land use designation within the Soda Springs Rural Center Legacy Community.

## **SUMMARY**

This Area Plan outlines a comprehensive development plan that encourages local initiative and coherence of community spirit to revitalize development consistent with strongly held rural values. A brighter future for the area is dependent on rebranding the region as a destination with full services, aesthetic improvements and promotion of year-round activities that more fully optimize the recreational opportunities provided by the rich natural resources of the area. The Area Plan is a consensus built policy, and design and development plan with a central focus to attract more visitors and investment in infrastructure while honoring resident’s values and protecting the bountiful natural environment.

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- I. Environmental Action: Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the attached Resolution for the Negative Declaration (EIS14-004) for the proposed General Plan amendments (GP14-003), General Plan Land Use Map amendments (GP16-004), Zoning District Map amendments and Soda Springs Area Plan Flexible Design and Development Standards (Z16-005), and Zoning Ordinance text amendments (ORD14-002), pursuant to Section 15074 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines based on findings A-D contained within the Draft Resolution (*Attachment 1*).
- II. Project Actions:
  1. Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the General Plan text amendments to adopt the Soda Springs Area Plan (*Attachment 2*).
  2. Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the General Plan Land Use Map amendments to amend the land use map by changing the designation of 51 parcels within the Soda Springs Rural Center (*Attachment 3*).
  3. Recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the amendments to Zoning District Maps (ZDM) #114 and #119 to coincide the rezoning of 51 parcels to be consistent with the amended General Plan land use map, and to add the “RC” Rural Center Combining

District to 77 parcels, and the “SP” Site Performance Combining District to 193 parcels (*Attachment 4*).

4. Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the amendments to Sec. L-II 4.2.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance to reference the applicability of the Soda Springs Area Plan Flexible Design and Development Standards (*Attachment 5*).

Respectfully submitted,



BRIAN FOSS  
Planning Director