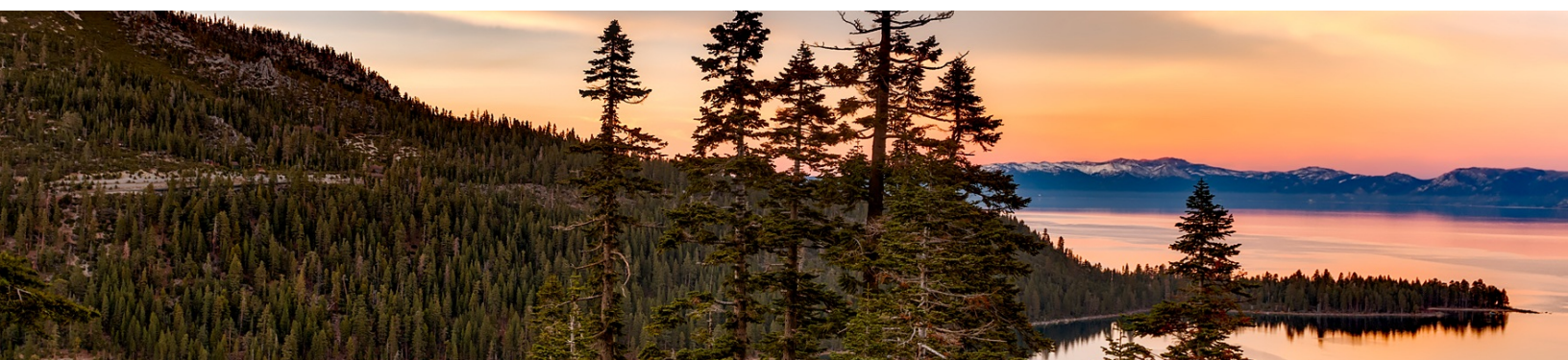


REPORT OF THE VACATION HOME RENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE



**Recommendations to
El Dorado County Supervisor Brooke Laine**

March 6, 2024

**Report of the
Vacation Home Rental (VHR) Advisory Committee:
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REPORT OUTLINE

- I. ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCESS OVERVIEW

- II. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION
 - A. Prioritize VHR Complaint Management & Enforcement
 - 1. Invest in a dedicated VHR enforcement unit
 - 2. Develop a centrally managed complaint tracking and response system
 - 3. Enhance illegal rental enforcement
 - 4. Modify Local Contact requirements
 - B. Reduce the cap for VHR permits in the Tahoe Basin
 - C. Develop regulations for accountability of hosted rentals
 - D. Strengthen compliance standards in the VHR ordinance
 - E. Adjust fines and penalties for VHR and hosted rental code violations
 - F. Request to establish a VHR Commission

APPENDIX A: Facilitator Observations on Divergent Views

In communities across the country and globe, Vacation Home Rentals (VHRs) have become a contentious and divisive issue. So too in El Dorado County. Elsewhere, VHR issues have set factions at odds with “win-lose”, “us vs them” debates that simply deepen divides. With the intent of helping to reduce community divisiveness, the VHR Advisory Committee came together to discover where the community might find common interests and common ground on the design and management of its VHR Program.

I. ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCESS OVERVIEW

County Supervisor Brooke Laine sponsored a series of public forums on VHRs in spring 2023 during which the public offered a wide range of comments both in opposition and support of the County’s VHR policies and Code. Comments included many descriptions of program violations and abuses and suggestions for improvements or remedies.

Supervisor Laine then called for the convening of a citizens advisory committee to make recommendations to her for possible changes to the County VHR program. Thirty-two persons applied and were interviewed by facilitators to participate on an Advisory Committee on Vacation Home Rentals that would make recommendations to Supervisor Laine. The interviews focused on understanding the priorities and interests of each candidate, as well as describing the predicted timeframe and responsibilities of a committee. A summary of interests and comment themes from the public forums and the interviews, written by facilitators, is available as background.

In September, County staff invited 13 applicants to serve on a committee to meet for a period of six to eight months to develop recommendations for improving VHR management. Those invited included a balance of perspectives on VHRs such as neighbors of rental properties, rental property owners, professional property management companies, and an owner/operator of a hosted rental property.

The Committee met for five working sessions in South Lake Tahoe. In between meetings, Committee members self-organized into small workgroups that met many more times, often for hours, to develop draft recommendations for changes to the VHR ordinance as well as to County systems, policy, and procedures.

II. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Effective Enforcement is Essential

Opinions on whether and how VHRs should be allowed to operate diverge widely, with some urging a ban and others strongly opposed to one. The Committee chose instead to focus on finding areas of common ground. **Early and throughout the process, all Committee members agreed that stronger enforcement of code compliance is essential to reduce negative effects of VHRs on residential neighborhoods.**

Consequently, the recommendations reflect that the first line of County action must be responsiveness to continuing constituent calls for improvements to the permitting, management, and enforcement of short-term rental vacation homes in the County.

The Advisory Committee members unanimously request that El Dorado County undertake the following improvements to the VHR Program and regulations as expeditiously as possible:

A. PRIORITIZE VHR COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT & ENFORCEMENT

The success of the VHR Program and all other recommendations hinge on sufficiently funded effective compliance notification, tracking, and enforcement. The County does not currently prioritize sufficient resources toward systems to identify violations, respond to nuisances in real-time, track these incidents, and link violations and bad actors to enforcement and future permitting actions. Meaningful investment in a fully connected and coherent system of compliance reporting, tracking, accountability, and enforcement of the VHR and tax ordinances is needed.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommends:

1. Invest in a dedicated VHR enforcement unit

Develop and invest in an in-house, dedicated VHR unit that oversees VHR complaints, resolution, and program enforcement, which will mitigate the use of law enforcement for routine VHR complaint response. The unit should:

- Act as liaison to all parties impacted by VHRs.
- Be sufficiently staffed to respond to complaints in real time.
- Dispatch resources (or manage a third-party contractor) to respond to complaints.
- Send its field personnel to investigate complaints.
- Initiate, review, and prosecute violations based on substantiated complaints.
- Operate the violation and hearing system to remove bad actors from the program.
- Use the tracking system to communicate with all involved parties in real time.
- Establish and report to a VHR Commission quarterly on progress implementing and executing a BOS-approved implementation plan.

We request that county staff assess and make an initial estimate of FTE requirements for enforcement staffing prior to any public meetings to review this Committee report. Those meetings are expected to occur in March 2024.

2. Develop a central complaint tracking and response system

Effective enforcement and program management requires accurate and comprehensive data collection and utilization.

The system should:

- Be easy to use by landline, mobile phone, or computer.
- Accept complaints 24/7 via text, phone call, email, website, or mobile app.
- Allow submission of emails, photos, videos, and audio recordings.
- Include clear instructions for access on VHR exterior signage and the county website.
- Automate the dispatch and notification function to the local contact, the enforcement team, and if needed, the police, ensuring consistent follow-through.
- Store all complaint information, status, and final disposition.
- Offer transparency to citizens.
- Support query / reporting functions for staff.
- Allow confidential complaints with enough information for evidentiary follow-up.
- Integrate permit status including renewals, holds, past citations.

To implement this system, we recommend investigating other systems and resources, including:

- a. 3-1-1 ecosystem of software, applications, and services (e.g., 311open.com, seeclickfix.com).
- b. Optimization or replacement of Host Compliance.
- c. Rentalscape.com which offers compliance and complaint management solutions.
- d. The City of South Lake Tahoe's dedicated enforcement unit design and resources.

3. Enhance illegal rental enforcement

Illegal rentals create an unequal playing field, reaping the benefits and none of the burdens of operation of properly permitted and operated VHRs. The County must increase reconnaissance of illegal rentals, shut them down, and prevent operators from joining the program.

The Advisory Committee recommends:

- a. Dedicate focus of the enforcement unit on unpermitted rentals.

- b. Amend relevant ordinances to require that TOT payments from any party include the property address and permit number for which the tax was collected. To close the anonymous Airbnb loophole, payments without a permit number should lead to citation and prosecution.
- c. Crawl online advertisements to identify unpermitted listings and operators.
- d. Bar those found to be renting illegally from ever obtaining a VHR permit.
- e. Lien properties to collect delinquent fees and fines owed by either guests or owners.

4. Modify “Local Contact” Requirements

Local contacts may under report or fail to report violations and are not always accessible nor responsive to nuisance complaints.

The Advisory Committee recommends:

- a. Remove local contact information from exterior signage, and instead direct complaints to the single, central intake system, which then dispatches both local contact and enforcement officer(s).
- b. Cite owners for local contacts who fail to respond to dispatch.
- c. Require owners to designate a new local contact if their property receives two violations within 18-months.
- d. Remove the requirement that the local contact report complaints. Under the reformed system, the central reporting system or dispatch will enter the complaint.

B. REDUCE THE CAP FOR VHR PERMITS IN THE TAHOE BASIN

In 2021, the County adopted a 500-foot buffer rule to reduce the number and impacts of dense clusters of VHRs in residential neighborhoods. If this buffer were applied today, the cap of 900 VHR permits is inconsistent with the current permit limit and could not be implemented.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommends:

- Lower the cap to 600 VHR permits in the Tahoe Basin.

C. DEVELOP REGULATIONS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY OF HOSTED RENTALS

The Advisory Committee members agree that there are at least two important differences between hosted rentals and non-hosted short-term rentals. First, hosted rentals provide a community benefit for full-time residents who need to offset high housing costs in the Tahoe Basin to continue to live in, and contribute to, their communities. Second, if resident homeowners are onsite during guest stays, this provides built in response to prevent or address any problems immediately.

Currently, only a business license and some inspections are required to operate a hosted rental. Many who claim to be hosts are neither present nor full-time County residents. The number of bad actors is uncertain because hosted rental violations are not reported to or recognized by the current VHR tracking, reporting, or enforcement system.

The Committee's recommendations close existing loopholes and abuses of the current hosted rental system.

The Advisory Committee recommends the following changes be implemented for the permitting, management, and enforcement of hosted rentals (HR):

1. HR Permit: Develop a parallel but simplified "registration" or "permitting" process for hosted rentals – Application fees, inspections, and requirements may be reduced and simplified for hosted rentals.
2. Sworn proof of permanent residency and occupancy in the County must be provided: Hosted rental permits are limited to bona fide full-time residents of the County; sworn and notarized proof required.
3. HR subject to VHR Enforcement: Integrate reporting, tracking, and enforcement of HR code violations into the VHR enforcement system. Complaints against a hosted rental should be reported and handled like VHR complaints. Fees and penalties for hosted rental code violations can be the same as for other VHRs.
4. Permit Eligibility: The local resident owner must be named on the permit application. LLCs are prohibited. The application must list the local resident host, the normal working hours, and the host's employer.
5. On-site host: The local registered host must be present on-site during nighttime hours when guests are renting. If the registered host's work requirements conflict, then an alternate local host must be present on site and available as the registered host's agent to meet all HR compliance requirements.

6. Occupancy: Limit occupancy and rental terms to 2 persons per bedroom with exemptions for under 5 years of age whether in the home or in an adjacent dwelling unit. Owner/host bedrooms cannot be rented.
7. No separate kitchen: Prohibit separate, full kitchens (includes a stove) in hosted rental spaces. The owner can choose to share the full kitchen of the primary residence with renters.
8. Parking: Like non-hosted VHRs, all visitor (and resident) vehicles to be parked off-street and within the boundaries of the rental property, according to a “permit” approved parking plan.
9. Signage: HR must have exterior signage same as VHR.
10. Require owners and designated backup hosts to pass the local contact course and test.
11. Advertising/Listing requirements: A location must only have one advertised listing at one time. Prohibit listings of different rooms at the same rental location as separate rentals. Only one party can rent a room at one time, even if another room for rent is available.

D. STRENGTHEN COMPLIANCE STANDARDS IN THE VHR ORDINANCE

Visitors can be uninformed and unprepared for common alpine environment challenges. To better address the most negative nuisance effects on neighbors of VHR operators and renters, the Advisory Committee reviewed key elements of the VHR regulations and recommends the following priority adjustments to the codes and requirements for VHR permit eligibility and operation so that the standards of operation and visitor behavior are clearer and can be consistently enforced.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommends:

1. General requirements

- Any updates to the ordinance will apply to all permit holders and be subject to VHR complaint management and enforcement.
- Eliminate conditional use permit eligibility: Prohibit VHR owners or guests from getting conditional or special use permits for events or uses other than lodging.
- Consider a tiered system of VHR permitting according to size/number of bedrooms and characteristics (see Douglas County as an example).

2. Fire Safety (5.56.090 7-I)

- Prohibit the use of all outdoor fire pits and outdoor fireplaces; no wood burning or charcoal use outside.

3. Maximum occupancy (5.56.090)

- VHR occupancy is limited to 2 persons per bedroom.
- Eliminate “+2” when calculating maximum occupancy.
- Children under 5 years of age do not count toward maximum occupancy.
- Occupancy greater than 14 people is prohibited, unless approved through an Occupancy Exemption Request based on showing of special circumstances of the home.
- Occupancy requirements to be in effect 24/7.

4. Parking

- All permit applicants must submit a parking diagram for approval with the VHR permit application.
- All vehicles must be parked off street on pavement according to the approved parking diagram within the boundaries of the rental property.
- Parking requirements for VHRs shall be enforced under the VHR ordinance, codes, and enforcement system.
- Functioning cameras shall be required to make the driveway and number of cars visible by remote monitoring.

5. Noise (5.56.120)

- A noise monitoring system is required for VHRs with 4 or more bedrooms, an outdoor operative hot tub, or any VHR with one or more verified noise complaints. (Consider NoiseAware partnership for discounts to VHR owners.)
When a noise monitoring system is required, it must meet the following:
 - All common indoor gathering areas, including converted garages, and active outdoor areas must have noise sensors that record decibel levels, but do not capture conversations or activities.
 - Each VHR rental unit will require calibration and adjustment which is the responsibility of the owner and/or local contact.
 - Noise records must be kept by local contacts and/or owners for 90 days and must be produced upon request by County enforcement representatives.
 - Exceedance of noise thresholds must be reported to or maintained by the local contact, who must comply with response times and protocols.
 - In addition to stipulated “quiet hours”, guests must avoid and be subject to noise violation compliance and enforcement for loud and disruptive behavior 24/7.

6. Signage (5.56.105)

- EXTERIOR SIGNAGE:
 - All exterior signs must be consistent in design; issued by the County (paid for by the applicant); have standard content; and be readable from the road.
 - The standard content of the sign must include at a minimum:
 - maximum allowed occupancy,

- the number of allowable parked vehicles on site,
 - the central complaint contact number and memorable URL or QR code for incident reporting,
 - notice that on-street parking is prohibited and occupancy can be enforced 24-7.
 - VHR permit number.
- INTERIOR SIGNAGE:
 - As with exterior signage, the County must provide standard educational materials for VHR renters to be posted by VHR owners or operators in a designated prominent location inside the VHR unit.
 - The standard content for interior VHR educational signage should include the following (Note: existing materials from the City of South Lake Tahoe can serve as a model).
 - being a good visitor and neighbor,
 - avoiding fines and eviction,
 - managing noise,
 - proper disposal of trash,
 - parking,
 - snow removal,
 - bear and wildlife guidelines,
 - fire safety and awareness, including dangers of smoking in the forest,
 - leave no trace.

7. Snow Removal

- All VHR permit holders must contract for or provide timely, reliable snow removal for complete ingress/egress to the VHR unit from a local provider for the whole of the winter season.

8. Septic Systems

- For any county properties not serviced by public sewer, septic systems must be inspected and certified according to occupancy requirements and applicable codes.

E. ADJUST FINES AND PENALTIES FOR VHR AND HOSTED RENTAL CODE VIOLATIONS

Currently the fines and penalties associated with code violations are not sufficient to deter operating in violation of the VHR regulations. The costs of fines are offset by revenue from only one or a few nights of rental. Current penalties for code violation allow for repeat bad actors to renew permits after short periods, or in some cases, allow for continued illegal operation.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommends that fines and penalties for violations be strengthened to achieve the goals of the VHR ordinance:

1. **Section 5.56.140, paragraph B:** The County should raise fines for code violations to the maximum allowable by law for infractions posing a threat to health or safety (see Section 25132(e) of the Government Code). Fines for non-health and safety violations should be raised to \$1,000, \$2,000, and \$3,000 for the first, second, and third violations in a one-year period, respectively.
2. **Section 5.56.140, paragraph C:** Three violations of the code within 36 months will result in the revocation of a VHR permit (i.e., eliminate the 6-month suspension in the Code). In addition,
 - a. After revocation, property owners seeking to reapply will be placed in order on the permit waitlist; and
 - b. Any applications for renewed or new permits will be subject to constraints of the 500-foot buffer.
3. **Section 5.56.150 Local Contact**
 - a. Two-Strikes and Out: A Local Contact is disqualified and must be replaced after two instances of non-reporting of and/or non-response to a verified complaint and violation.
4. **Section 5.56.170 Illegal Rentals:** Illegal rentals shall incur a criminal misdemeanor charge and property owners will not be eligible to apply for a VHR permit.
 - a. In addition, the owner of an illegally operating VHR will be subject to a civil fine of \$1000 for each day of operation without a permit.

F. REQUEST FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A VHR COMMISSION

The Committee recommends and requests that the County establish a County chartered VHR commission with formal authority, comprised of community members, business owners, and rental property owners to monitor enforcement and provide input and recommendations on future changes to the VHR ordinance.

This VHR Commission should:

- a. Reflect the diverse points of view in our community
- b. Review program, ordinance, and enforcement data at least quarterly
- c. Recommend future changes to the VHR program
- d. Serve as a semi-final arbitrator for exemption requests, like the Planning Commission

CONCLUSION & THANK YOU

The Advisory Committee thanks the Board of Supervisors, particularly Supervisor Laine, for allowing the Committee the opportunity to weigh in and influence the County practices, policies, and management concerning VHRs. The recommended changes, if adopted, would make meaningful and important improvements in the quality of life and economic security of El Dorado County.

Vacation Home Rental (VHR) Advisory Committee

Notes for Supervisor Brooke Laine

March 6, 2024

APPENDIX A: FACILITATORS' OBSERVATIONS ON DIVERGENT VIEWS

The Advisory Committee prepared a Report of its recommendations. All Committee members endorsed that Report's consensus recommendations. This is a companion document to the Recommendations Report prepared by the Committee's outside facilitators. It is not a consensus document of the Advisory Committee. The following is a summary and characterization of Advisory Committee discussions solely from the perspective of the facilitators who supported the committee.

The goal of this document is to characterize important unsettled topics in VHR regulation, management, and enforcement evidenced during the Committee's extensive discussions:

- A. Differing preferences for strategies to address impacts from clusters of VHRs.
- B. Differences on certain standards for the eligibility, requirements, and permitting of hosted rentals.
- C. Fundamentally different viewpoints regarding the value of, and impacts from, VHRs in El Dorado County neighborhoods.

The facilitators offer this framing of divergent perspectives as additional context for El Dorado County staff, supervisors, and residents as they continue to work to improve VHR regulation and management.

III. DIVERGENT PREFERENCES FOR STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPACTS FROM VHR CLUSTERS

Background on Clusters and "Grandfathered" Permits

The Committee opened, but did not conclude, a discussion about how best to implement the County's 500-foot buffer rule. That rule, adopted in October 2021, says that no new VHR permits may be issued if the applicant property is within 500 feet of another VHR. The intent of the rule was to prevent dense clustering of VHRs. In adopting the rule, the County "grandfathered" existing VHR permits. The effect of "grandfathering" is perpetuating existing clusters of VHRs (i.e., where VHR density significantly exceeds the 500-foot buffer density), relying on gradual attrition through property sales and other transfers (VHR permits are not transferable) as well as enforcement to reduce those clusters to conformity with the 500-foot buffer rule.

Strategies Considered to Address Impacts from Clusters

All Committee Members support the reduction or elimination of negative impacts of dense clusters of rentals. Members discussed two sets of strategies to achieve this. A key difference is in the preferred time frame to achieve the desired result.

One set of strategies involves reducing the number of existing permits to proactively dissolve clusters. This was the preference for those who are experiencing the greatest impacts from VHR clusters and are seeking immediate or near-term relief.

Another set of strategies suggest that the County strengthen and prioritize effective enforcement against bad actors in the near term. With proper enforcement action, in a few years the results data will reveal whether enforcement is reducing legacy clustering and its negative effects.

A summary of interests discussed by the Committee related to each set of strategies is offered here:

Strategy Set 1: Reduce the number of permits in neighborhoods with clusters of VHRS

Those who prefer this strategy cite personal experiences with extreme violations of code by renters. Often, the properties with repeat violations are well known by neighbors and many previous complaints have been registered with authorities. In neighborhoods like Golden Bear, High Meadows, and Cold Creek, some residents are surrounded by VHRs and experience a consistent stream of transient renters. (*See photos appended to these notes*).

While increased enforcement may lead to some attrition of bad actors, owners, and renters, for those residents who have been experiencing impacts for years, confidence is low that enforcement will reduce clusters in the foreseeable future. Those who experience the consistent turnover of visitors report that the character of their neighborhoods is affected even if there are few excessive disturbances and properties are well-managed. The consistent flow of visitors detracts, can make residential neighborhoods feel like commercial zones, and make it difficult to build community among neighbors.

Therefore, those most impacted are seeking immediate relief, especially in areas that greatly exceed the density allowed by the 500-foot buffer. This group began to compare strategies for the revocation or non-renewal of VHR permits to actively dissolve clusters. However, full consideration of any scheme to remove permits from current holders requires much more thorough legal, policy, and implementation analysis.

Strategy Set 2: Focus on complete and effective enforcement to protect neighborhoods, owners, and businesses

Those who prefer this set of strategies to reduce impacts from clusters have experience with responsible actors. They are confident that enforcement by the County against violators can solve livability problems where they exist. They point to the positive contributions VHRs bring to County communities. Some are homeowners who literally share their homes to offset high costs of living allowing them to stay in, and contribute to, the community. For those renting second homes, some are supplementing income, some rely on income from rentals, and some properties are the core asset for retirement planning. VHRs provide important jobs for property management companies, cleaning and repair services, landscaping, and snow removal services, catering and food delivery, and more.

Property owners and managers who are committed to excellent management of rentals are deeply dismayed by the negative effects poorly managed rentals are having on the community and the VHR industry. Effective owners and managers are demonstrating that properties can be managed without repeat violations of codes and without disturbances to neighbors. These responsible actors emphasize that VHR permit holders and managers make long term plans and investments into their properties and businesses on which they should be able to rely.

Therefore, some Committee Members prefer the County first establish a complete and effective VHR enforcement program before any consideration of denying or revoking permits. Supporters of this strategy believe:

- A thorough dataset is needed to understand the full picture, pros, and cons, of VHRs in El Dorado County.
- Strong and effective enforcement may reduce dense clusters over time.
- Most, perhaps all, negative impacts of clusters may be addressed through enforcement and professional rental management.
- Proactive denial or revocation of existing permits without adequate basis will risk strong opposition and/or litigation.

IV. DIVERGENCE ON CERTAIN STANDARDS FOR HOSTED RENTALS

The Committee developed the list of consensus recommendations for hosted rentals, which are detailed in the Recommendations Report.

The necessary condition on which hosted rental program agreements rest is ensuring that the resident homeowners, or specifically qualified delegates, are present onsite during nighttime hours while the visitors are renting space in the occupied home. It is a different model in kind, more akin to a traditional “bed and breakfast” than renting an unsupervised VHR. This category

of rental is oriented to giving true local homeowners the opportunity to supplement income in a high cost of living tourism community.

Despite broad agreements on the hosted rental program, the group was not able to reach consensus on a few standards for hosted rental eligibility and operations. Divergence of interests and perspectives related to hosted rentals are tied to the deeply divided concerns about whether and how to manage dense clusters of VHRs. Considerations for clusters overlapped with hosted rental topics, such as occupancy limits, an independent cap for hosted rentals, and applicability of the 500-foot VHR buffer rule.

On these issues of contention, some consider hosted rentals as a different category of vacation rental in kind; one which exists to favor full-time local residents. Others feel that while hosted rentals may generally be better managed, they nonetheless draw visitors to the neighborhood and therefore contribute to or sustain untenable visitation and dense clusters in neighborhoods.

Therefore, the Committee was not able to provide consensus recommendations on some requirements for the hosted rental program eligibility. For these elements of the program, we describe the options discussed by the Committee:

- **Long term renter eligibility:** The group discussed but could not agree on allowing long term renters, or properties held in trust, to apply for special eligibility to receive a hosted rental permit. In either instance, an identifiable person as the onsite host/full time occupant must be listed on all permit applications as accountable for hosting and compliance.
- **Occupancy limits:** The group debated but could not agree on the number of bedrooms to allow for rent in a hosted rental, with some favoring a strict one-bedroom limit and others who would allow two.
- **Independent cap for hosted rental permits:** Some support creating a cap on permits for hosted rentals, independent of the cap on non-hosted VHR permits in the Tahoe Basin. Those favoring the HR cap note that the number is currently unlimited, and an independent cap sets bounds. The independent cap would assure that bona fide residents have a reasonable opportunity to secure an HR permit without being subject to the VHR wait list. Others note that adding new rentals of any form to densely clustered neighborhoods add to visitor activity and therefore negative impacts. While there is not agreement, the cap limit discussed was 150 hosted rental permits, which is the approximate number already existing.
- **Applicability of 500-foot buffer:** There is disagreement about whether permit eligibility for hosted rentals should be subject to the 500-foot buffer. The ground of this disagreement is the divergence in view for how to address already densely clustered neighborhoods, the issue discussed in Section A, above.

V. DIVERGENT VALUES, INTERESTS, AND PERSPECTIVES GENERALLY ON VACATION HOME RENTALS

In the public discourse on VHRs generally, strongly divided views are quite apparent. Committee members too began with fundamentally different viewpoints on the value of, and impacts from, vacation home rentals in residential neighborhoods. Indeed, one intentional criterion for committee membership was to represent the diversity of views and establish a balance of views between those interests which support, and those that oppose, VHRs in general.

At no point were committee members asked to adjust their fundamentally divergent values or priorities related to VHRs. Instead, the committee oriented itself to developing recommendations to reduce conflict, strengthen community, and support strong economies in the County. In effect, they worked alongside their differences to find consensus on VHR program improvements wherever possible.

In the early meetings of the Advisory Committee, a member asked the question whether a complete ban on VHRs should be considered as a recommendation to be evaluated by the group. The committee instead unanimously agreed to focus on identifying common ground and endeavoring to develop a range of changes to the ordinance and to VHR management which could reduce negative impacts and increase positive outcomes.

Through a considerable amount of work over seven months, facilitated and self-directed, the group succeeded in developing a range of thoughtful and specific recommendations that all Committee members agree, if implemented, will meaningfully improve VHR program outcomes.

While the recommendations of the Committee enjoy consensus support, personal preferences do not appear to have fundamentally shifted during the process. That was in evidence even at the end when some members restated a personal preference that VHRs be eliminated from all residential zoning to protect neighborhood peace and tranquility. Those who expressed this preference emphasize that land use codes are clear and specific, and there is no inherent right of a residential homeowner to establish a lodging business in the form of a VHR in neighborhoods zoned exclusively for residential use. Those with this view believe that even full and effective enforcement will never adequately reconcile the incompatible business use in a residential neighborhood and all business use there should be eliminated.

Other members value the economic and social opportunity of VHRs. They are not only confident that proper management and enforcement can avoid negative impacts, they feel very strongly that vacation homes provide several irreplaceable benefits to regional communities and economies, and give access to family groups wanting to visit and stay together. As such,

some would like to see expanded opportunities for properly managed vacation home rentals in the County.

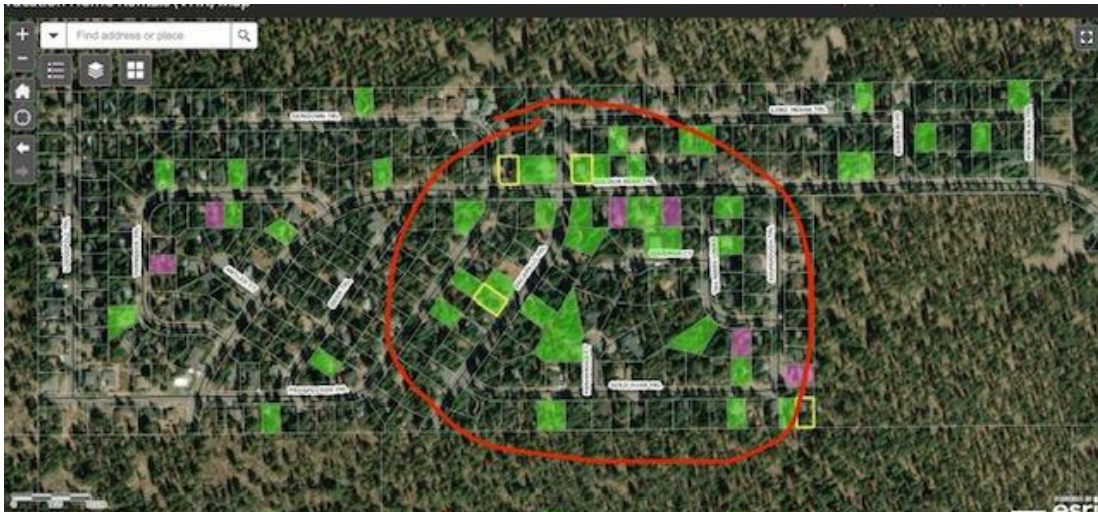
All of this is evidence that a full range of values, interests, and priorities were included in this Committee. Although fundamental values and principles of each of the members may not have shifted, during this process participants developed greater understanding and empathy for the range of personal experiences and interests related to VHRs. Members are to be commended for the wide range of consensus agreements reached, as well as their commitment, time, honesty, and mutual respect for fellow members.

Maps of Vacation Home Rental Clusters

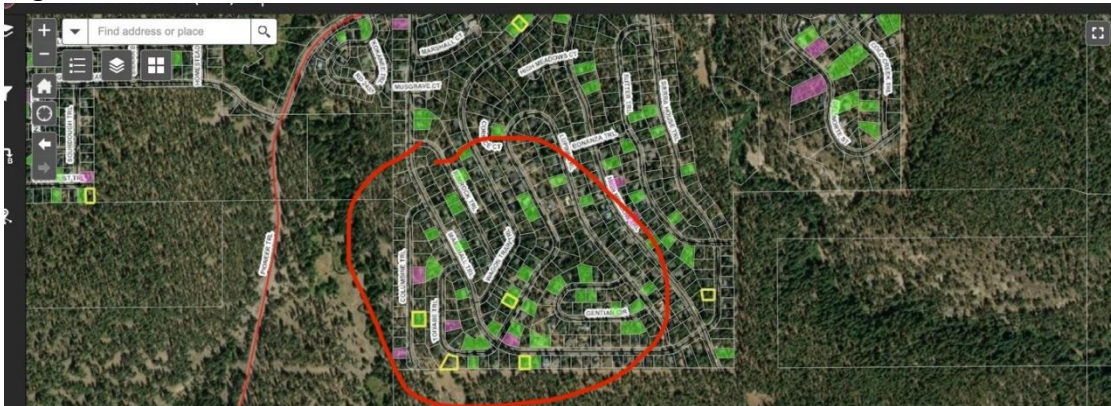
Cold Creek



Golden Bear



High Meadows



North Upper Truckee

