

## **Tahoe City Public Utility District Advocacy Priorities 2023-2024**

The 2023-2024 Advocacy Priorities serve as the basis for the District's advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels, and provide guidance for staff to focus efforts and allocate resources on legislation that impacts the District operations, services, and customers. The Priorities outline general areas of focus as well as targeted efforts on key issues and specific proposals with enough flexibility to (1) support, watch, or oppose legislation; (2) address and provide comments on policies and regulations; and (3) protect District local authority, resources, and customers.

The Priorities outlined below for the 2023-2024 legislative session support the District's mission, vision and strategic priorities, and support and supplement the District's Policy No. 1005 – Legislative Advocacy Policy. Because the Priorities are approved for the two-year legislative session, it is not always possible to anticipate additional legislative, regulatory and/or budgetary issues that may arise during that period, therefore the Board may review and modify this document as necessary.

To achieve the Priorities as effectively and efficiently as possible, the District participates in local and regional advocacy partnerships. These partnerships leverage broad coalitions of agencies and non-profit organizations to increase awareness on prominent issues, share resources, and build relationships with state and federal representatives.

### *California Tahoe Alliance*

A partnership of local agencies, special districts, and non-profit organizations on the California side of the Tahoe Basin. These partners coordinate strategies to work with members of the State Legislature and Administration on state and local funding efforts to support a broad range of project priorities designed to protect and restore Lake Tahoe's natural resources through coordinated implementation of the Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program.

### *Climate Transformation Alliance*

A regional public-private partnership of local governments, special districts, community organizations, businesses, and individuals. The partners are committed to the development of local policy and initiatives that promote the resilience of the community and its physical and social infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, reduce net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and advance the sustainable economic development of our region.

### *Tahoe Water for Fire Suppression Partnership*

A bi-state collaborative of Lake Tahoe Basin water agencies that formed following the catastrophic Angora Fire in 2007. The Tahoe Basin Fire Commission found that public and private water distribution infrastructure were inadequate to provide fire flows necessary to meet fire agency needs. The partnership responded by pursuing collaborative funding to accelerate the installation of critical water infrastructure for fire suppression.

### *California Special Districts Association (CSDA)*

A not-for-profit association formed to promote good governance and improved core local services through professional development, advocacy, and other services for all types of independent special districts. The District participates in programs and services provided by CSDA to enhance the District's management and operational effectiveness of the organization. Additionally, the District monitors CSDA's legislative advocacy and joins important coalitions that address legislation impactful to our customers.



*Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)*

ACWA represents the largest statewide coalition of public water agencies in the country. The District participates in ACWA's programs and services for the benefit of shared reliable scientific and technical information, tracking and shaping state and federal water policy, and advocating for sound legislation and regulation. The District's General Manager serves on the Region 3 Board of Directors to promote shared interests and solutions to challenges, and advance legislative and regulatory action relevant to rural mountain communities.

**Water & Wastewater**

*Water & Wastewater Operations* – Oppose performance standards and operational restrictions that are infeasible and not substantiated by science and data and other efforts that hinder or limit local control. Support the development of standards that address applicability, impact, and feasibility in the context of rural mountain resort communities.

*Water Quality* – Support the development of state or federal programs/eligibility requirements that fund septic-to-sewer conversion, sewer line rehabilitation/relocation and other water quality infrastructure improvement projects which protect groundwater and surface water drinking sources.

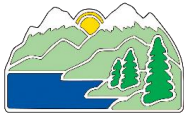
*Water Affordability* – Oppose water affordability legislation that would create unreasonable, inefficient and ineffective statewide low-income water rate assistance programs that could place unnecessary financial burdens on public water systems. This includes legislation aimed at state evaluated water rate structures and administrative costs to public water systems for implementation of low-income assistance programs.

*Water System Consolidation/Acquisition* – Support efforts to provide funding for public agency acquisition or consolidation of private water systems with deficient infrastructure. Support efforts to require investor-owned utilities to improve infrastructure to protect ratepayers and taxpayers while excluding grant funded asset improvements from the fair market value of the system in the case of a transfer.

*Water Infrastructure* – Support measures to defray the costs of planning, financing, constructing, and rehabilitating all types of water infrastructure system improvements. This includes grant programs and policies that create eligibility for water infrastructure improvement projects necessary for drinking water and wildfire suppression.

*Water Conservation* – Support policies and legislation that facilitate a science-based and data-driven approach to water conservation mandates that allow for flexibility and local control, and support the development of standards that address applicability, impact, and feasibility in the context of resort communities.

*Water Rights* – Monitor proposed changes by the State Water Resources Control Board that would impact the District's water rights and oppose measures that would create further difficulty, inefficiencies, and uncertainties in the review and reporting associated with the District's existing water rights and new applications for water rights.



## **Parks & Recreation**

*Parks & Recreation Infrastructure and Administration* – Support efforts that provide funding for the rehabilitation, development, and capital improvements for park and recreation facilities that enhance both active and passive recreational infrastructure. This includes funding for District sponsored projects for parks, multi-use trails, and recreational programming. Oppose legislation that has a negative impact on the administration of park and recreation services including the sale of park lands and open space, relaxations of park dedication fee requirements and the imposition of regulatory or statutory requirements with no added protections or benefit to recreational consumers.

*Recreation Opportunities & Access* – Support programs that increase the public’s access to physical activity, proper nutrition, and healthy lifestyle options through the promotion of active transportation, complete street implementation, healthy foods, youth programming and maximization of green space in urban/suburban and rural settings for personal enjoyment.

## **Special District Governance**

*Local Control* – Support measures that improve the District’s ability to continue its fiscal stability, and financial independence; protect local control and authority; improve delivery of services; and create operational efficiencies. Oppose measures that hinder or limit the District’s ability to self-govern.

*COVID-19* – Support policies and initiatives that provide special districts with flexible and efficient regulations governing workplace response to COVID-19.

*Unfunded Mandates* – Support measures which provide equitable funding for state or federal mandated programs. For newly mandated federal and state costs or regulatory actions, support legislation that requires federal and state governments to provide reimbursement to local governments.

*California Public Records Act Reimbursement* – Support legislation that would allow local governments to charge requesting parties for reimbursement of staff time involved in fulfilling Public Records Act requests.

*California Environmental Quality Act* – Support legislation that improves and streamlines the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and provides funding to assist local agencies in implementing CEQA.

*Cyber Security* – Support legislation that promotes and provides increased capacity to manage technology, adhere to regulatory compliance requirements, and reduce the risk of cyber-attacks.

*Surplus Lands* – Oppose legislation that removes local control of the use and dispensation of special district owned lands.

*Revenue Protection* – Oppose legislation that would shift or divert special district revenues, including property tax, without the consent of the affected districts.

*Public Works Requirements* – Oppose restrictive one-size-fits-all public works requirements that increase costs to taxpayers and reduce local flexibility.

*Electric Vehicle (EV) Transportation initiatives* – Oppose policies and regulations that do not recognize the unique, specialized fleets required to maintain critical infrastructure for public safety



and emergency response in the Tahoe – Truckee region. Seek and support funding and financing guidelines for passenger vehicle EV charging station projects.

### **Local Community Priorities**

*Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation* – Support programs, legislation and funding for strategies to mitigate fire danger in the Lake Tahoe Basin and in wildland urban interfaces (WUIs), including funding for forest management, community hardening, and water infrastructure for firefighting.

*Climate Adaptation/Resilience* – Support legislation that advances policies and grant programs to address climate change implications through implementation of regional, multi-sectoral climate adaptation projects.

*Disadvantaged Communities* – Seek or support legislation or administrative action to improve the definition of Disadvantage Communities (DACs) to allow for rural areas, like the Tahoe Basin to better compete for funding. Support efforts to align DAC funding formulas with relevant community needs that do not undermine affordability for all ratepayers, including middle income ratepayers.

*Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP)* – Support strategies to secure funding for the implementation of Lake Tahoe EIP projects that address deficient water infrastructure of fire suppression, promote sustainable recreation initiatives, and protect Tahoe’s natural resources.

*Achievable Local Housing* – Support efforts that achieve the goals of the Mountain Housing Council Policy Platform, so long as the efforts are in alignment with other priorities of the District.