PLACER COUNTY GENERAL PLAN COMMUNITY HEALTH BACKGROUND REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the existing community health resources in Placer County. Topics covered in this chapter include:

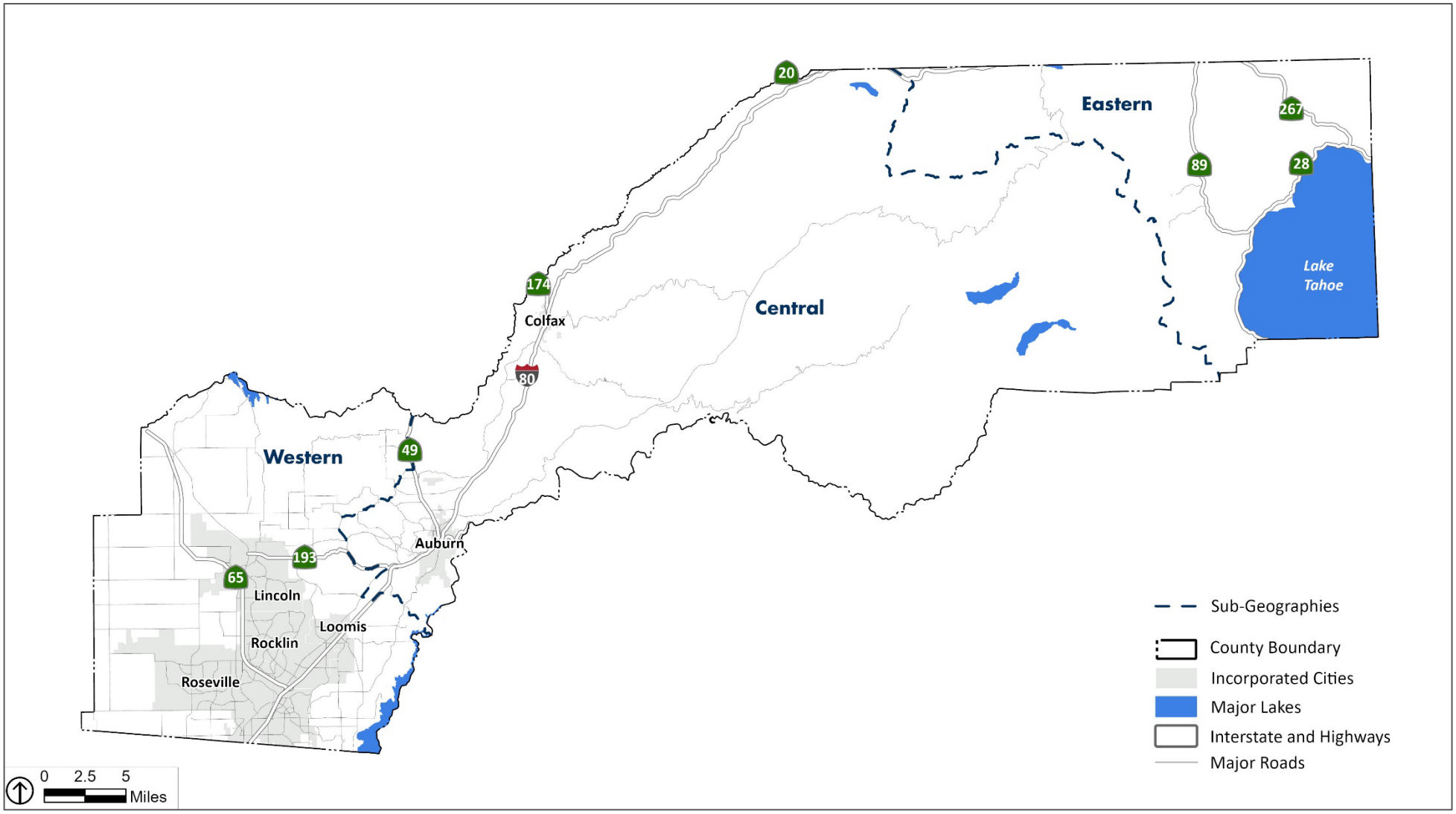
- **County Sub-geographies**. This section explains the three distinct sub-geographies of the eastern, central, and western county.
- **Community Health and Well-Being.** This section provides an overview of health indicators and the community's access to healthy foods, lifestyles, and health care. This section also examines the intersections of access to housing and community health.
- **Environmental Justice.** This section notes the vulnerable populations in Placer County as identified by the Vulnerability Assessment that was done as part of the Placer County Sustainability Plan. It also provides the results of a disadvantaged communities assessment per the state's environmental justice screening tool, CalEnviroScreen.
- **Regulatory Framework.** This section summarizes the state and county regulations that apply for health resources.
- **Opportunities for the General Plan Update.** This section lists policy considerations the General Plan Update should consider based on the information included in this report.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

County Sub-geographies

Recognizing the underlying needs of the General Plan Update team and the diversity of Placer County as a jurisdiction and community, this analysis breaks the unincorporated area into three distinct sub-geographies covering the eastern, central, and western county. As illustrated on **Figure CH-1**, *County Sub-geographies,* western county includes the area west of Auburn and encompasses the unincorporated area bordering the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis. Central county includes the unincorporated area around the city of Auburn, including the urbanized area known as North Auburn, and extends along the Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor past Colfax to just west of Cisco Grove. Eastern county extends over the Sierra Crest to Lake Tahoe and the Nevada state line and includes urbanized areas to the south of the Town of Truckee and Nevada County; a variety of town center areas located within the Lake Tahoe Basin; and the resort communities that exist around the major ski areas like Palisades Tahoe, Alpine Meadows, Northstar, and the Martis Camp development as well as other notable urban nodes.

Figure CH-1 County Sub-geographies



Sources: Placer County Open Data and Applications; PlaceWorks; Esri; 2024.

Community Health and Well-Being

Health Statistics in Placer County

For the year 2023, Placer County was ranked the fourth healthiest county in California by the California Department of Public Health when assessing health outcomes, health factors, and county demographics.[1] The California Health Interview Survey also found that most residents in Placer County are in good or better health based on a self-reported general health assessment. Although this indicates there seem to be positive health behaviors among residents, health issues still exist in the county. The indicators below provide information about the health of the Placer County community. For more information about indicators and other health data, refer to the Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment.

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is the average number of years a person can expect to live. It can be influenced by a variety of factors, such as race/ethnicity and lifestyle behaviors. Placer County's overall life expectancy was 82.3 years from 2018 through 2020. Asian residents had the highest life expectancy of 88.5 years and Black/African American residents had the lowest of 79.5 years.[2]

Birth Weight

Birth weight is one of the most important indicators of infant health. Low birth weight infants are more likely to develop short- and long-term health conditions such as respiratory issues, heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension.[3] Placer County's rate of low birth weight has remained relatively low. However, Black/African American infants, infants with an unknown race/ethnicity, and Asian infants have consistently higher rates of low birth weight when compared to other racial and ethnic groups.[4] This indicates that there may be a need for more prenatal care for the most affected races/ethnicities to ensure that babies are carried to full term and that mothers are receiving adequate care while pregnant.[5]

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[1] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[2] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[3] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[4] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[5] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

Mortality Rates

Examining mortality rates can help determine the severity of different diseases and health conditions in a community and guide the prioritization of prevention strategies. Placer County has a lower death rate when compared to the state. From 2018 to 2022, heart disease was the leading cause of death in Placer County, followed by Alzheimer's Disease/dementia/delirium and cerebrovascular diseases.[6] The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic also led to a substantial increase in the mortality rate in Placer County for 2020 and 2021. It is one of the leading causes of death in the county in the past five years.

Chronic Diseases

Chronic disease is defined as a health condition or conditions that last one year or more requiring medical care or limiting certain daily activities.[7] They include several leading causes of death mentioned above, such as heart disease, dementia, and Alzheimer's Disease. A list of the chronic diseases identified in the Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment follows.[8]

- **Cancer.** Placer County experiences high rates of cancer compared to other counties. Between 2010 and 2020, the incidence of all cancers decreased in Placer County. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 on health services may have resulted in the decrease in cancer incidence rate from 2019 to 2020. Out of the different types of cancer, breast cancer had the highest incidence rate from 2010 to 2020. Prostate cancer and lung cancer also had high incidence rates.
- **Heart Disease.** The rate of heart disease among adults in Placer County has fluctuated since 2015, with a decrease observed from 2019 to 2021, followed by a slight increase from 2021 to 2022. This fluctuation, along with the recent increase, highlights the need for strategies to help residents prevent heart disease.
- **Asthma.** The prevalence of asthma in Placer County has remained relatively high, reaching its peak in 2022. This trend may be attributed to the region's poor air quality and the high risk of wildfire smoke.
- **Diabetes.** Type 2 diabetes is among the top 10 leading causes of death in Placer County. Despite the prevalence of diabetes in adults remaining steady from 2016 to 2022, preventing diabetes is crucial to avoid serious health complications such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, and kidney failure.
- **Obesity**. The rate of obesity in Placer County has fluctuated, but there has been an increase since 2017. This trend highlights a need to address obesity to prevent associated health risks such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, respiratory problems, and joint issues.

[6] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[7] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[8] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

- **Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.** Dementia and Alzheimer's disease were identified as a significant health concern by county residents. From 2018 to 2022, dementia and Alzheimer's were also the second leading cause of death in the county.[9]

While some diseases are not curable, adopting healthy lifestyle choices can help prevent many chronic diseases. Improving access to health goods, open space, parks, recreation, and active transportation are some ways the General Plan update can help promote healthy habits that may help lower the chances of certain diseases.

Mental Health

In Placer County, approximately 75 percent of residents that took the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment reported their mental health as either "very healthy" or "healthy." However, approximately 25 percent reported their mental health as less than healthy, which is associated with a lower quality of life. Despite the generally positive mental health status, there is a risk of depression among adults in the county. In 2021, 17.8 percent of Placer County adults aged 18 and older were experiencing depression. Access to affordable mental health care remains a significant barrier for many individuals seeking treatment for depression.[10]

Placer County Mandarin Hill Orchard

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the mental health of residents, with social isolation being a major impact. Isolation from family, friends, and community members can diminish quality of life and well-being. From 2019 to 2022, the number of older adults living alone in Placer County has increased. While living alone can signify independence, it may also indicate isolation and loneliness, which can affect social, behavioral, and mental health outcomes.

Placer County's Adult System of Care provides mental health services, including group and individual therapy, behavioral and physical healthcare coordination, mental health assessment, peer support and social groups, and other services.

[9] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[10] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

Access to Healthy Foods

The accessibility, availability, and affordability of healthy and varied food options in the community significantly increase the likelihood that residents will maintain a balanced and nutritious diet. Food security refers to the ability of households to access enough food for all members to achieve active and healthy lifestyles. While the food insecurity rate in Placer County is relatively low and has decreased substantially over time, low-income and underserved areas still face limited access to stores that sell healthy food, leading to food insecurity. Food-insecure individuals are more likely to develop chronic health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease, and may also face higher risks for mental and behavioral issues.[11] Therefore, addressing the inequitable access to healthy foods in Placer County is crucial to reduce the incidence of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and obesity in lower-income and underserved areas.

Placer County offers a variety of options for community members to buy local fresh foods through farmer's markets, farm stands, local farms, plant nurseries, wineries, and other sources such as the Community Supported Agriculture subscriptions and PlacerGROWN. For more information about PlacerGROWN, see Chapter 2, Agriculture.

Distribution centers, such as food banks and food closets also help provide food for families or people in need. Food closets and food pantries are often used interchangeably, but a food closet typically refers to a smaller operation run by churches or community centers. Both serve as local distribution centers, providing food regularly or in emergencies to families in need and maintaining close relationships with them. Most food closets and pantries receive their supplies from food banks, which are large warehouses that store and distribute food based on local needs. [12] Feeding the Foothills (formerly Placer Food Bank) is an organization that provides access to healthy foods to in Placer County and other nearby counties. Feeding the Foothills receives food from various sources such as food retailers, manufacturers, farmers, food drives, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Feeding America. Food received is then sorted and distributed to food pantries, faith-based groups, youth programs, and senior programs.[13] The following lists food distribution centers that are located in the unincorporated areas of Placer County:[14]

- Sierra First Baptist Church (food pantry)
- Sierra Reach Ministries (food closet)
- Lord Sabaoth Ministries (food distribution)
- Mountain Folk Food Bank (food pantry)
- Celebration Church (food pantry)
- Celebration Family Worship Center (food pantry)

[11] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[12] Cape May Community Food Closet, What's The Difference?, accessed October 11, 2024, https://www.cmfoodcloset.org/what-is-a-food-closet-and-food-bank.

[13] Feeding the Foothills, Feeding the Foothills, accessed October 11, 2024, https://feedingthefoothills.org/.

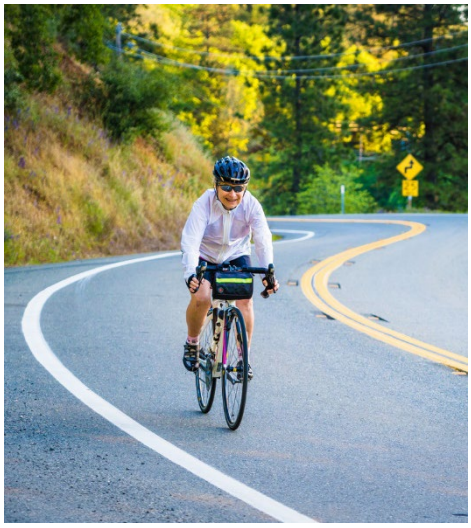
[14] Feeding the Foothills, Feeding the Foothills – Partner Agency Public Food Distribution Schedule, September 2024, https://feedingthefoothills.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/NEW-TEMPORARY-PFB-Partner-Agency-Public-Food-Distribution-Schedule-PFB-WEBSITE-VERSION-9.6.24-Color.pdf.

Health Care Access

People who have reliable and timely access to health care are more likely to be able to prevent disease or detect and address disease during earlier, treatable stages. Delays in necessary care can increase the risk of complications. Placer County residents reported that cost, challenges with insurance, and doctor availability are the primary reasons for their lack of access to health care.[15] To improve health and well-being, interventions that respond to these factors are essential. Access to appropriate medical care and preventative health care can have a dramatic effect on health outcomes. Ensuring people have affordable transportation options is one strategy to help improve health care access.

Active Lifestyles

Physical inactivity among adults in Placer County is a growing concern. In 2022, the county reported its highest rate of inactivity.[16] Promoting the importance of physical activity for all residents is essential to addressing potential health issues and reducing the prevalence of chronic diseases in the county. Efforts to encourage an active lifestyle can lead to a healthier, more vibrant community.



Bicycle Riding in Placer County

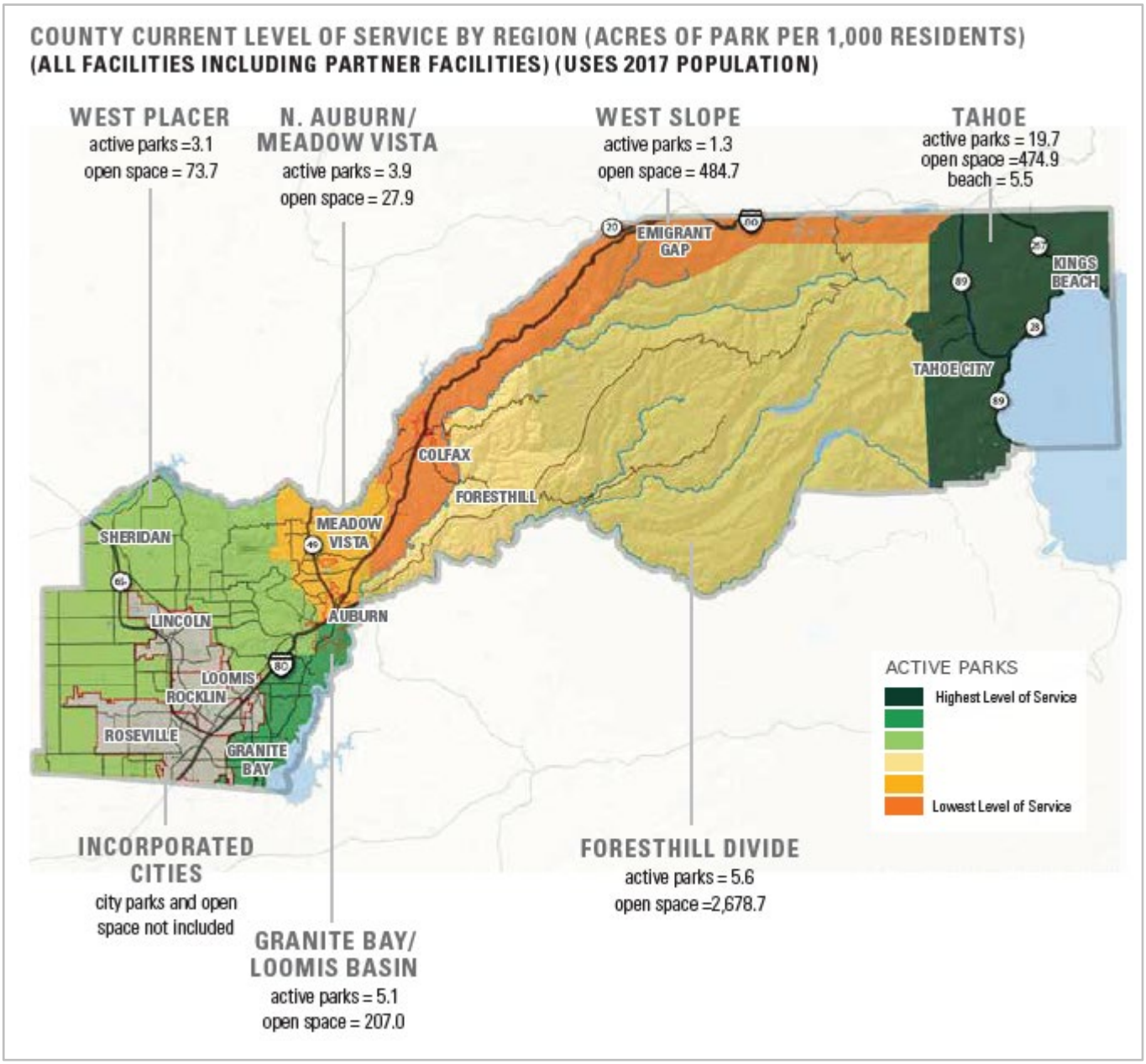
Access to parks and open spaces is essential for promoting physical activity in Placer County. The county has an abundance of open spaces, offering residents a variety of recreational opportunities and scenic natural areas to enjoy. Figure CH-2, *Current Level of Service for Parks*, shows the areas in the county that could benefit from additional parks and open space areas; it should be noted the geographical areas shown on the map below are used for park planning informational purposes and are not the same as the subregions noted throughout the Background Report. As shown by the figure, the western and eastern regions of the county benefit from a higher level of park facilities, and the central areas, including North Auburn/Meadow Vista, West Slope (generally along the Interstate 80 corridor from Meadow Vista to the Donner Summit and shown in orange below), and Foresthill Divide, experience lower service levels. Notably, the West Slope has the lowest level of service in Placer County. Future planning efforts can help address access to parks and open spaces in these areas. Chapter 18, Recreation, Public Lands, and Trails, provides information about parks and recreation opportunities in Placer County. Refer to the Parks and Trails Master Plan for a comprehensive overview of the parks and trails in the county. Other outdoor recreational opportunities are available in the region that are managed by the State and federal government, including the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area, the Auburn State Recreation Area, and the Tahoe National Forest. A segment of the Pacific Crest Trail, a trans-national trail extending from Mexico to Canada, for example, crosses through eastern Placer County.

[15] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

[16] Placer County, Placer County 2023 Community Health Assessment, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/2023_CHA_Final.pdf.

Active modes of transportation, such as walking and bicycling, can also help encourage a healthier lifestyle and physical activity. These modes of transportation are not only enjoyable and affordable but also environmentally friendly. They support individual and community health while reducing the frequency of motor vehicle accidents and related injuries. For more information about Placer County's active transportation, refer to Chapter 19, Transportation and Mobility.

Figure CH-2 Current Level of Service for Parks



Source: Placer County, Placer County Parks and Trails Master Plan, April 2022.

Housing and Community Health

Housing insecurity can influence health in several ways. The extreme stress of housing instability is correlated with negative health outcomes, which can include preterm births or delays in physical, cognitive, or social and emotional development in children.[17] High costs of housing in comparison to income may also cause households to be "cost-burdened," leaving less of the household's income available to spend on things like food or healthcare.[18] Additionally, where housing costs are high, households may elect to live in substandard housing conditions that may expose residents to mold, lead, or other harmful environmental conditions.[19]

Low-income households are more likely to be cost-burdened. Figure CH-3, *Low Income Households,* shows census tracts that have been designated low-income based on the following criteria, using data from the 2016–2020 American Community Survey:

- The poverty rate is at least 20 percent, or
- The median family income does not exceed 80 percent of statewide median family income or, if in a metropolitan area, the greater of 80 percent statewide median family income or 80 percent of metropolitan area median family income.

Low-income communities in unincorporated Placer County are in areas surrounding the City of Auburn as well as to the west and north of Lake Tahoe, including the Kings Beach and Homewood communities.

HUD defines cost-burdened households as those whose monthly housing costs exceed 30 percent of monthly income, while severely cost-burdened households are those whose monthly housing costs exceed 50 percent of monthly income. High housing cost burden reduces remaining household income available for short-term and long-term expenses and financial goals, increasing this population's vulnerability risk.

As is shown on Figure CH-4, *Rent-Burdened Households*, according to the 2017–2021 American Community Survey, rates of renter cost burden are highest in areas close to the Sacramento area. Areas with high concentrations of renter cost burden include the North Auburn community, areas to the west of Lincoln, Rocklin and Roseville, and parts of the Granite Bay community. Areas in the north of the county along I-80 and in the Tahoe area also have moderate to high rates of renter overpayment, with the highest concentration in the Kings Beach area.

Cost burden and high housing costs can also encourage overcrowding, which has the potential to exacerbate housing stresses and substandard housing conditions. As of 2017, approximately 1.4 percent of homes in the unincorporated areas of Placer County were considered overcrowded (having 1.0 to 1.5 persons per room), compared to 1.2 percent of homes in the whole of Placer County. In the same period, 0.5 percent of households in both the unincorporated county and the county as a whole were considered severely overcrowded (having 1.5 or more persons per room). As

[17] San Francisco Public Health Department, San Francisco Department of Public Health Brief: Health Impacts of Family Housing Insecurity, February 2019, https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/EHSdocs/ehsCEHPdocs/Housing_Insecurity_SFDPH_Report.pdf.

[18] US Department of Health and Human Services, Housing Instability, accessed July 17, 2024, https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/housing-instability.

[19] US Department of Health and Human Services, Housing Instability, accessed July 17, 2024, https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/housing-instability.

of 2021, the majority of census tracts in the county had rates of overcrowding of less than 5 percent, with the exception of two tracts in the Lincoln area that had overcrowding rates of 5.1 and 7.9 percent, respectively. Severe overcrowding is also not typical throughout Placer County, though more common in the Tahoe area, where a census tract near the Timberland and Tahoe Pines communities and a tract just south of Truckee have rates of severe overcrowding of 7.9 and 5.1 percent, respectively.

Substandard housing can be measured through several factors related to risks to the health, safety, or well-being of those who live in it. This can include houses that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. The 2017–2021 American Community Survey estimates that in most census tracts in the county, fewer than 2.0 percent of homes are lacking complete plumbing or a complete kitchen. In the Homewood area, 6.0 percent of homes lack complete plumbing and 3.0 percent lack a complete kitchen. In the area northwest of Auburn, 2.3 percent of units lack complete plumbing and the same percentage lack a complete kitchen. In the Tahoe City area, 6.5 percent of homes lack a complete kitchen. Based on age, as many as two-thirds of occupied homes in the county may be in need of some amount of rehabilitation, but not all of these rehabilitation needs constitute substandard conditions. As of 2020, only two code enforcement complaints were classified as health and safety issues due to dangerous or substandard houses in need of major repair.

Homelessness

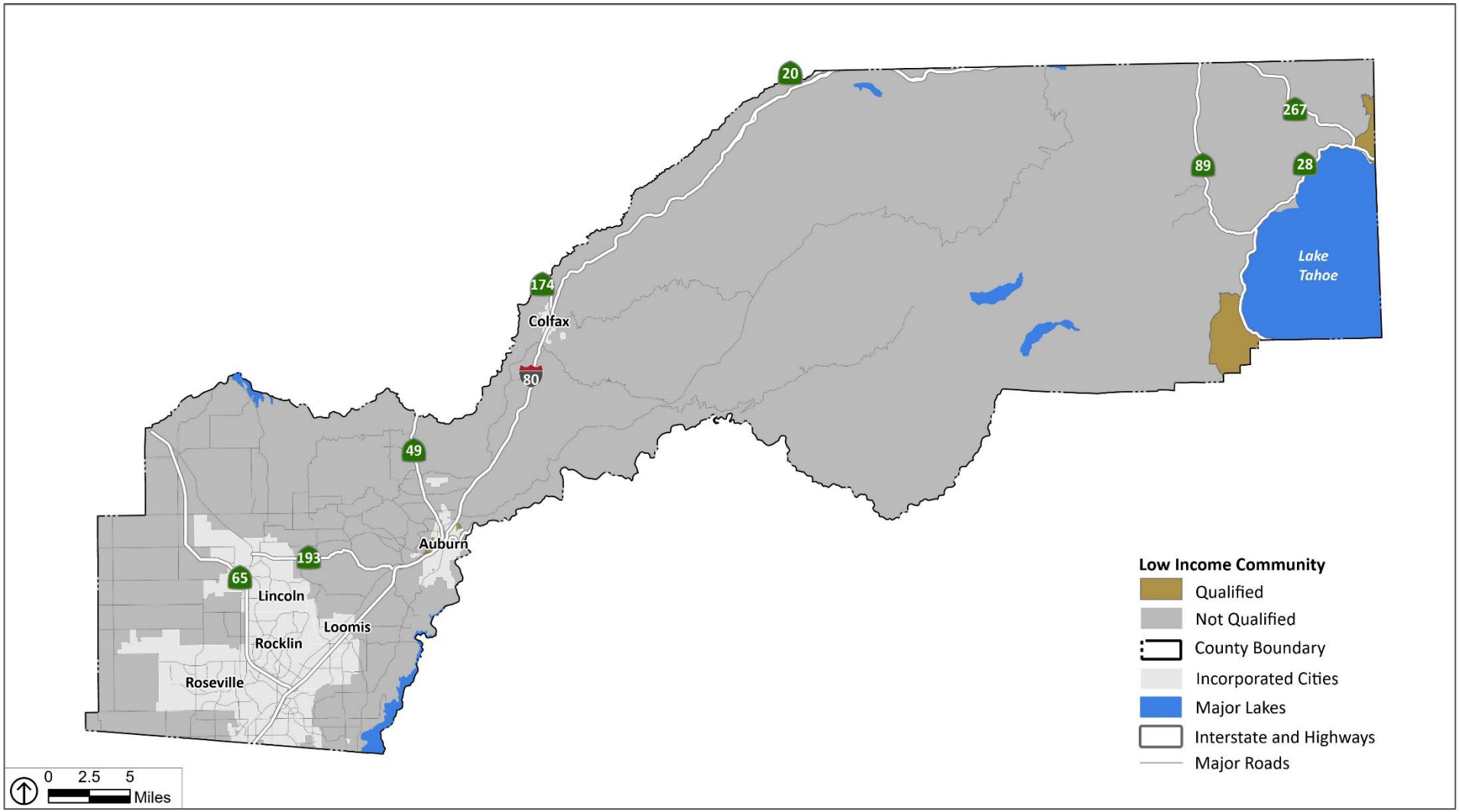
Homelessness is the most extreme form of housing instability, and often comes about due to a confluence of factors, which may include poverty, lack of affordable housing, and financial catastrophes (such as job loss or overwhelming debt). In addition to the health stressors caused by other forms of housing instability, the trauma of homelessness has been shown to cause psychiatric distress, making recovery from mental illness more challenging.[20] Lack of affordable health care, mental illness, domestic violence, and addiction are other major factors that can contribute to homelessness.[21]

Placer County's Continuum of Care organization works closely with the Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras which coordinates homeless services in Placer and Nevada counties. In January 2023, the council conducted a point-in-time count during which counts and estimates of the community's homeless population are made during a one-night period. During the 2023 point-in-time count, 709 individuals were experiencing homelessness in Placer County, of which 407 were unsheltered. Of the homeless population, 264 were considered chronically homeless, meaning that they have been unhoused for one year concurrently or repeatedly over the last three years and are living with mental illness, substance use disorders, physical disabilities, or other medical conditions. At the time of the count, 86 percent of the county's 288 shelter beds were occupied. Similarly, 86 percent of the county's 64 transitional housing units and 96 percent of the county's permanent housing units for formerly homeless individuals or families were occupied.

[20] J. Castellow, B. Kloos, and G. Townley, Previous Homelessness as a Risk Factor for Recovery from Serious Mental Illnesses, *Community Mental Health Journal* 51, no. 6 (Aug 2015):674–84, doi: 10.1007/s10597-014-9805-9, Epub 2015 Jan 8, PMID: 25566947.

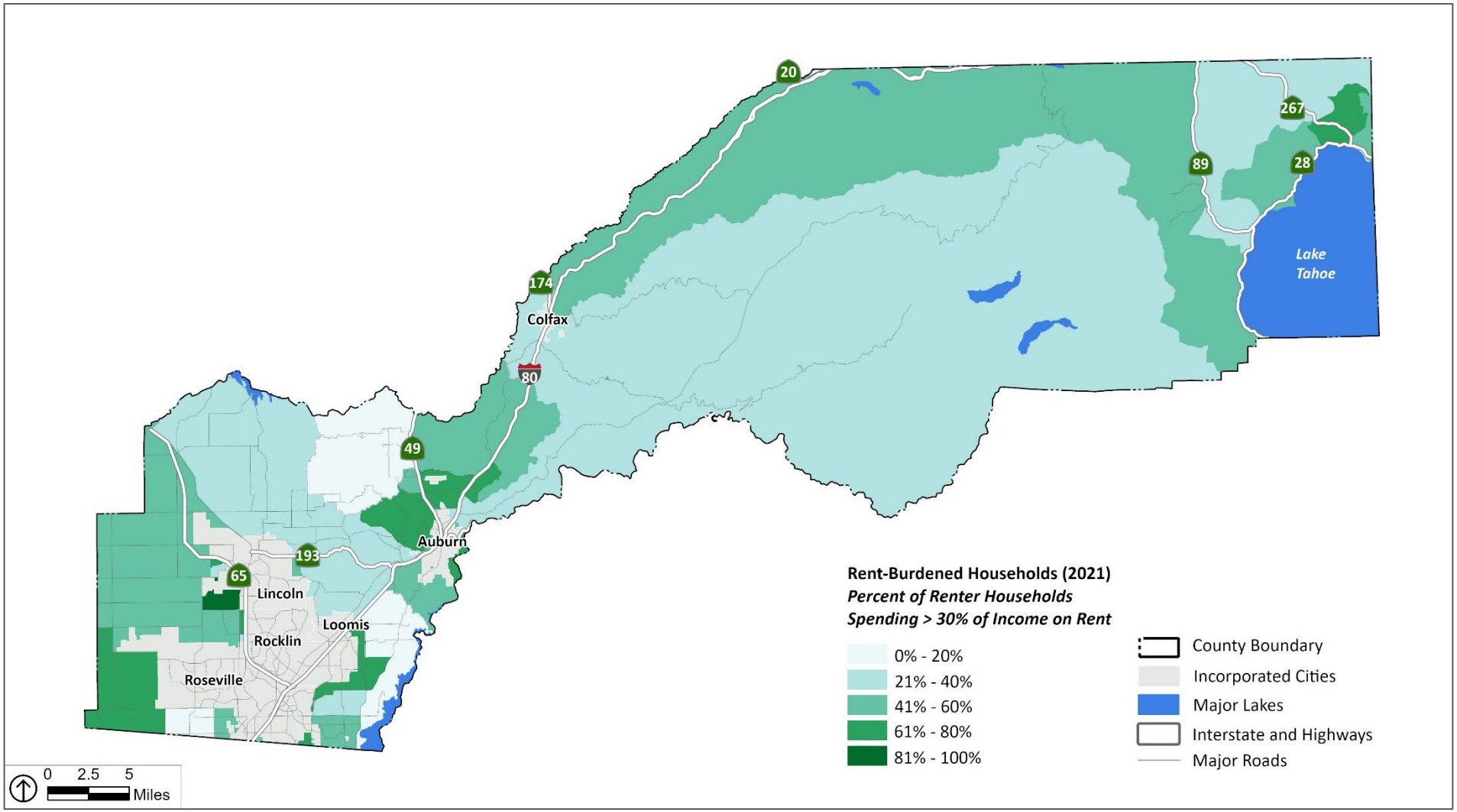
[21] National Alliance to End Homelessness, Homelessness in America, accessed 19 August, 2023, https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/.

Figure CH-3 Low Income Households



Sources: Placer County Open Data & Applications, PlaceWorks, Esri, 2024.

Figure CH-4 Rent-Burdened Households



Source: Placer County Open Data & Applications, PlaceWorks, Esri, 2024.

Placer County's Department of Health and Human Services has a range of services for those at risk of homelessness as well as for community members currently experiencing homelessness. These include outreach programs that connect unhoused community members with resources and rapid rehousing programs that assist unhoused community members in applying for rental housing, paying for move-in costs, and providing rental subsidies. Permanent supportive housing and transitional housing programs across the county help to transition residents from homelessness into long-term housing, and the county has one transitional housing program dedicated to transitional-aged youth (ages 16 to 25) that may be exiting long-term institutional care or the juvenile justice system, or that may be dealing with substance abuse or mental health issues. Housing vouchers, including Housing Choice Vouchers (otherwise known as Section 8 vouchers) can assist community members at risk of homelessness with accessing housing in the community. As of February 2020, the County was allocated 276 Housing Choice Vouchers, of which 245 were leased and 31 were available.

Community Resources

In addition to the services offered by Placer County, community-based organizations and other resources in the community provide services to residents to help improve their health. Community-based organizations play a crucial role in enhancing health and well-being and addressing priority issues such as housing, food security, domestic violence, and social and racial equity. Notable community-based organizations include Stand Up Placer, the Placer Food Bank, KidsFirst, the Latino Leadership Council, Sierra Community House, Granite Wellness Centers, and the Lighthouse Counseling and Family Resource Center. Healthcare in the county includes three major hospitals: Kaiser Permanente Roseville, Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, and Sutter Roseville Medical Center. The Placer Collaborative Network helps bring together community leaders to develop innovative solutions for positive change.[22] The active engagement of residents and the collaborative efforts of organizations ensure that Placer County continues to be a supportive and thriving community.

Environmental Justice

What Is Environmental Justice?

Environmental justice is the idea that all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, have the right to equal protection from environmental and health hazards, and equal access to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Throughout California, low-income communities and communities of color have experienced a combination of historical discrimination, neglect, and political and economic disempowerment. The result is that today they are disproportionately impacted by pollution and associated health conditions, as well as social and economic disadvantages like poverty or housing instability.[23]

Senate Bill 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requires that general plans address environmental justice and respond to inequity by reducing pollution and health impacts and requiring cities and counties to include the

[22] Placer Collaborative Network, About PCN, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.placercollaborativenetwork.org/index.html.

[23] City of San Mateo, "Introduction," Chapter 1 of Strive San Mateo: General Plan 2040, accessed March 18, 2024, https://strivesanmateo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Introduction_03-18-24.pdf.

voices of previously marginalized residents in planning decisions. Senate Bill 1000 has several purposes, including facilitating transparency and public engagement in local governments' planning and decision-making processes; reducing harmful pollutants and the associated health risks in environmental justice communities; and promoting equitable access to health-inducing benefits, such as healthy food options, housing, public facilities, and recreation.[24]

Senate Bill 1000 encourages local agencies to work with community members and stakeholders to consider the available data from other sources, including the lived experience of community members, to refine the boundaries of disadvantaged communities and identify additional communities, if appropriate, to support planning efforts to improve environmental justice. See below for more information on identifying disadvantaged communities and how they relate to Placer County.

Disadvantaged Communities Assessment

The State recommends the use of CalEnviroScreen (California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool) to help identify disadvantaged communities. CalEnviroScreen identifies California communities by census tract that are disproportionately burdened by and vulnerable to multiple sources of pollution by evaluating 20 indicators of environmental justice in the following four areas:[25]

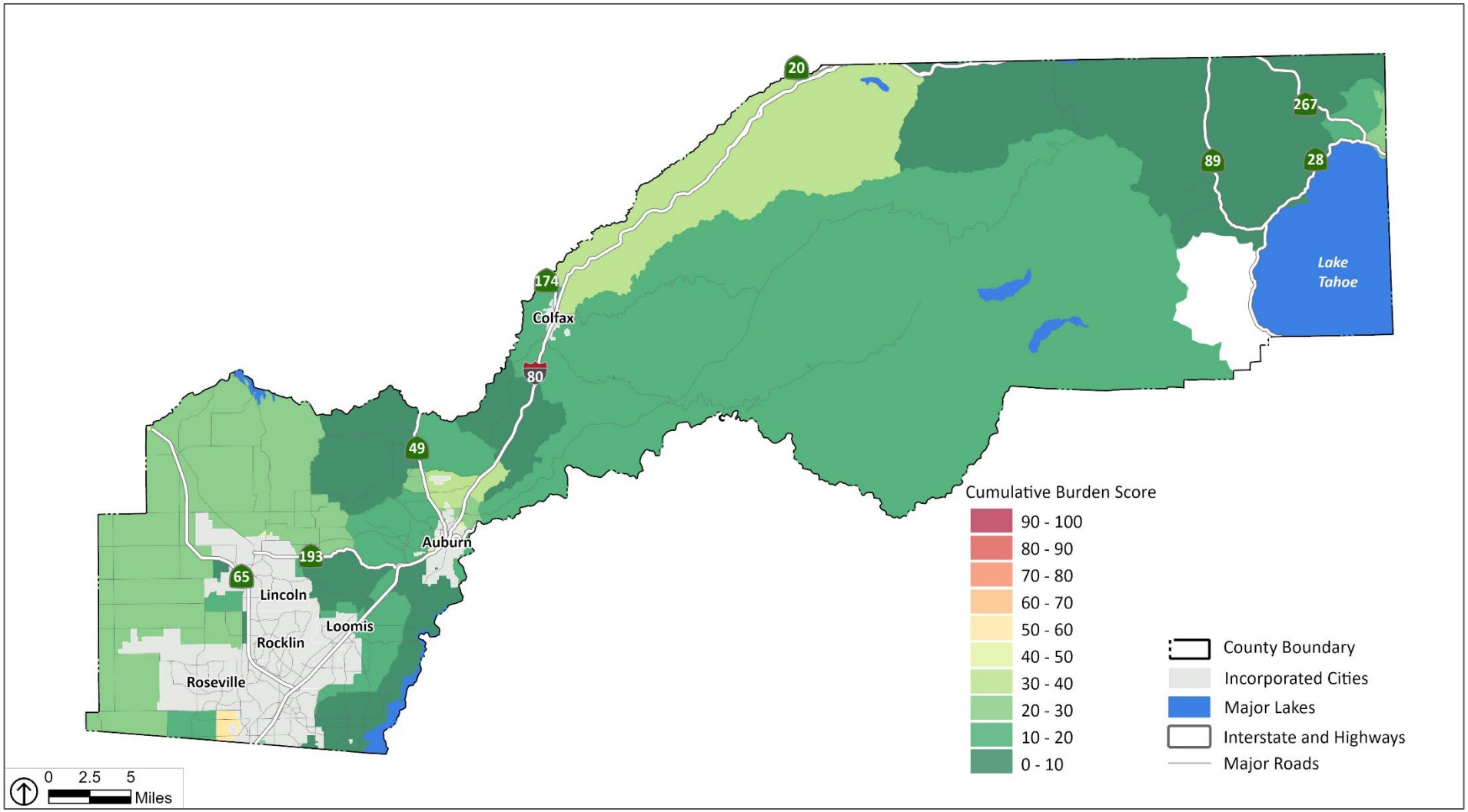
- **Exposure** indicators are based on measurements of different types of pollution that people may come into contact with.
- **Environmental effects** indicators are based on the locations of toxic chemicals in or near communities.
- **Sensitive population** indicators measure the number of people in a community who may be more severely affected by pollution because of their age or health.
- **Socioeconomic factor** indicators are conditions that may increase people's stress or make healthy living difficult and cause them to be more sensitive to pollution's effect.

A cumulative score of 75 or above for key indicators by CalEnviroScreen means the community is considered disadvantaged per Senate Bill 1000. As shown on **Figure CH-5**, *Cumulative Burden Score*, there are no census tracts in the red or dark orange colors indicating the highest percentile scores. This means there are no State-identified disadvantaged communities in Placer County that meet CalEnviroScreen requirements. One known shortcoming of using census data in county geographies is that the total average score of a large tract may obscure local conditions within a smaller neighborhood. To address this, Senate Bill 1000 allows and encourages jurisdictions to make determinations about disadvantaged communities based on other data sources and/or input from residents and community-based organizations.

[24] State of California Department of Justice, Environmental Justice in Local Land Use Planning, accessed May 20, 2024, https://oag.ca.gov/environment/sb1000.

[25] California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, Indicators Overview, accessed May 20, 2024, https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/indicators.

Figure CH-5 Cumulative Burden Score



Sources: Placer County Open Data & Applications, PlaceWorks, Esri, CalEnviroScreen, 2024.

Vulnerable Populations in Placer County

A Vulnerability Assessment was done as part of the Placer County Sustainability Plan adopted on January 28, 2020. As part of this vulnerability assessment, Placer County prepared an analysis called a social vulnerability index, which identifies the specific locations in the county where there are large levels of socially vulnerable people.[26]

The social vulnerability index in Placer County is based on data from the US Census American Community Survey. The Census Bureau divides Placer County into census block groups, which are smaller than the census tracts used in CalEnviroScreen. Each census block group is home to a few hundred to a few thousand people. The social vulnerability index calculates the proportion of people within each block group belonging to each vulnerable population. Highly vulnerable communities have a high proportion of people belonging to multiple vulnerable populations, and areas with a low proportion have only one or a few vulnerable populations. The social vulnerability index does not include homeless persons, outdoor workers, persons with chronic health problems, persons without access to lifelines, and undocumented persons. This is because data on the number of these persons within each block group are not available. The social vulnerability index also treats all persons equally and does not assume that any one group is more vulnerable than another; for example, senior citizens are considered as vulnerable as renters.[27]

The results of the social vulnerability index showed eight communities in the unincorporated areas of Placer County that had very high levels of social vulnerability:

- Sheridan: Sheridan is in the northern part of Placer County's western region, near the Bear River and Camp Far West Reservoir. It has high proportions of households with disabled persons, households living in poverty, English-limited households, and households living in mobile homes.
- North Auburn: The unincorporated areas north of Auburn are split into two areas by State Route 49, each with a unique set of social vulnerabilities. The area west of State Route 49 has high numbers of children, persons in poverty, and rental households. The area east of State Route 49 has a high proportion of senior citizens, households with a disabled individual, and English-limited households. Both parts of North Auburn have a high proportion of households in mobile homes.
- Elders Corner: Elders Corner is beyond North Auburn, in the area north of Bell Road and west of State Route 49. There are a large number of children living in this area, senior citizens (including seniors living alone), households with a disabled individual, English-limited households, rental households, households in poverty, and households in mobile homes.
- Shady Glen: Shady Glen is a community immediately north of Colfax, along the Interstate 80 corridor. It has a large proportion of seniors living alone, households with a disabled individual, persons in poverty, renters, and persons living in mobile homes.

[26]Placer County, Placer County Sustainability Plan Vulnerability Assessment Report, October 2018, https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38338/PCSP-Vulnerability-Assessment-10-30-18.

[27]Placer County, Placer County Sustainability Plan Vulnerability Assessment Report, October 2018, https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38338/PCSP-Vulnerability-Assessment-10-30-18.

- Tahoe Vista: Tahoe Vista is a community on the north shore of Lake Tahoe between Carnelian Bay and Kings Beach. It has a high level of social vulnerability due to a large proportion of children, English-limited households, renters, overcrowded households, and households in mobile homes.
- Kings Beach: Kings Beach is a community clustered along the north shore of Lake Tahoe. It has a high proportion of English-limited households, households in poverty, rental households, and overcrowded households.
- Brockway: Brockway is in north Lake Tahoe along the Nevada state border, directly east of Kings Beach. A high proportion of seniors living alone, English-limited households, rental households, and severely overcrowded households contribute to its social vulnerability.

Tribal communities may also be vulnerable populations due to geographic isolation and limited access to essential services. They may also be susceptible to climate change, often due to a lack of financial resources and access to political authority. The Auburn Rancheria and Auburn Off-Reservation Trust Land located in Placer County are identified as disadvantaged tribal communities by State and federal agencies. The United Auburn Indian Community Tribe is comprised of both Miwok and Maidu Indians which is the tribal government for the Auburn Rancheria. The Auburn Indian Restoration Act was passed in 1994 which led to the restoration of the Tribe's federal recognition and acquisition of land in Placer County, establishing a new reservation and investing in entertainment destinations including Thunder Valley Casino Resort and The Venue. In addition to the United Auburn Indian Community Tribe, other local tribes also exist in the county, including the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe, Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada, and Ione Band of Miwok Indians. Other tribes have also suggested some level of connection to Placer County, including the Wilton Rancheria, T'si-Akim Maidu Tribe, and Shingle Springs Rancheria. Engagement with the tribes is an important part of the General Plan Update process to help ensure the General Plan aligns with the needs of tribal communities.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

State Regulations

Senate Bill 1000 (Planning for Healthy Communities Act)

Senate Bill 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, was signed in 2016 by California Governor Jerry Brown and went into effect on January 1, 2018. Senate Bill 1000 requires every California city and county with a disadvantaged community to address environmental justice in their general plan. This includes identifying policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in environmental justice communities, prioritizing programs that address the needs of these communities, and promoting community engagement in decision-making processes.[28]

[28] California State Association of Counites, "California Department of Justice Issues New Guidance on Senate Bill 1000," October 5, 2023, https://www.counties.org/csac-bulletin-article/california-department-justice-issues-new-guidance-senate-bill-1000#:~:text=Senate%20Bill%201000%20requires%20every,justice%20in%20their%20General%20Plan.

County Regulations

Placer County General Plan

The general plan, adopted in 1994 and updated in 2013, expresses the community's vision for the future and provides a basis for decision making for land use actions. The general plan also includes recent updates to the housing element and health and safety element in 2021. The general plan has goals and policies related to health and disadvantaged communities/environmental justice. Table CH-1, *Placer County General Plan Goals Related to Community Health*, displays the General Plan Goals related to community health resources. It is anticipated that goals and policies related to community health will be amended, or new goals and policies added, through the update process.

Table CH-1 Placer County General Plan Goals Related to Community Health

Goal No.	Goal Description
Health and Safety 8.H.1	To provide municipal-type environmental health services to the unincorporated urban development areas in Western Placer County Policies under Goal 8.H.1 focus on providing one environmental health specialist and controlling diseases transmitted through environmental factors.
Health and Safety 8.H.2	To provide a medical and public health system that proactively addresses human health hazards and inequities in the community. (Addresses California Government Code Section 65302(g)(4)(B)). Polices under Goal 8.H.2 aim to integrate health considerations into planning, prepare medical facilities for increased demand, and ensure widespread access to free or reduced-cost vaccinations for diseases.

Placer County Community Health Improvement Plan

The Placer County Public Health Division and community stakeholders have released the 2017-2022 Placer County Community Health Improvement Plan, an action-oriented document aimed at enhancing health and wellness, healthcare access and behavioral health, and communication and collaboration. The plan includes goals and objectives for the next five years, with periodic updates.[29] These goals include creating a community environment that provides access, opportunities, and encouragement for healthy lifestyles; increasing access to and utilization of comprehensive health and behavioral health services; and fostering an environment of cross-sector collaboration and communication in Placer County.

[29] Placer County Public Health Division, 2017-2021 Placer County Community Health Improvement Plan, September 2017, https://www.placerdashboard.org/content/sites/placer/Placer_County_Community_Health_Improvement_Plan.pdf.

Placer County Community Health Status Assessment

The Placer County Public Health Division conducts a Community Health Status Assessment every three to five years. The community health priorities and results from the assessment guide the strategies, goals, and objectives of the Community Health Improvement Plan. This systematic approach ensures that Placer County remains responsive to its communities' evolving health needs, fostering a healthier and more resilient population. The Placer County Public Health Division, in collaboration with community stakeholders, released the 2023 Placer County Community Health Status Assessment. This comprehensive report highlights the community's health priorities and needs, aiming to enhance the overall health and wellness of Placer County residents. By integrating feedback from community partners and residents with secondary data, the Community Health Status Assessment identifies health barriers, priority populations, and emerging health trends within the community. Health statistics from this report are summarized in the existing conditions section of this report.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

This section identifies policy considerations the General Plan update should consider based on the information included in this report.

- Support physical infrastructure that encourages active transportation to promote public health, such as bike paths, walking paths, and trails.
- Promote opportunities for physical activities, such as walking and biking, and encourage patterns of new development that promote physical activity and encourage bicycling, walking, and transit.
- Help address issues of isolation and isolation-induced depression by providing more spaces that facilitate social connections and can serve as a "third place" where people can interact and exchange ideas outside of home and work. "Third places" could include cafes, bookstores, open space areas with amenities, and other social spaces.
- Encourage programs for youth physical activity and senior mobility.
- Continue to support farmer's markets, farm stands, local farms, plant nurseries, wineries, and other fresh food sources such as the Community Supported Agriculture subscriptions.
- Support collaboration with organizations dedicated to improving health outcomes in the county.
- Encourage grocery stores with fresh foods in areas with limited access to healthy foods.
- Consider community health information, such as the incidence of diabetes or heart disease, when making decisions about the built environment that could affect community health.
- Inventory and map food deserts in the unincorporated county and develop a plan to address identified gaps.
- Continue to support efforts to improve housing conditions and homelessness.
- Promote affordable transportation options that link residents with local health care providers to improve health care access.
- Focus efforts to improve the built environment in areas with vulnerable populations.