

NOT NECESSARILY IN THE NEWS

A Public Policy Newsletter and Commentary August 8, 2024 - Volume 138

“The main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing.”

Stephen Covey

**DAVID JINKENS, CANDIDATE FOR SOUTH LAKE
TAHOE CITY COUNCIL**

**CANDIDATO AL CONCEJO MUNICIPAL DE
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE**



**ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON PROTECTING THE
REGION AND SOUTH LAKE TAHOE FROM
CATASTROPHIC FIRE**



A few weeks back I wrote to the TRPA Executive Director about catastrophic fire prevention in the Tahoe Basin. I recently received a reply and I appreciate her taking the time to respond. A copy of her letter is attached. The remainder issue that needs focus and attention in my view and that of others are the special risks associated with electrical fires coming from utilities and cell towers and facilities in the forested areas

Further conversation and engagement on this matter is needed with regional officials. To further reduce the risk of catastrophic fire, we need support from regional officials, local governments, and Federal and State officials. I will be providing additional information on the subject about the risk from electrical experts. I appreciate the willingness of the TRPA Executive Director to have additional conversation on the topic.

I learned recently that the CTC has been funneling a large amount of grant funds to fire agencies for fire prevention. This is good news, and I would encourage the CTC to make this positive work to prevent fire on their lands more publically known. I urge them as well to continue to make their properties more fire safe. I have been critical of the CTC in the past for them not maintaining their lots in the city. More needs to be done but this is progress. In addition, City officials in South Lake Tahoe have heeded the advice of city fire professionals and strengthened their ordinances and programs to prevent fires. We are fortunate with the professional fire team we have in place.

It is important that regional and local government agencies, and Federal and State officials take a hard look at developing more safe routes in the Tahoe Region in the event of catastrophic fire during peak visitor travel to the area. The lack of such routes must be factored into a complete environmental review process by planning officials when proposals are made to increase densities residential in the city and elsewhere. Typically, if done right, this consideration would be made part of the environmental review process under California and Federal law. However, I fear that this risk is not yet being treated seriously enough.

Rumor has it that the USFS had adopted a “Let It Burn” strategy on forested lands nationwide to reduce fuel loads. However, local fire officials have stated that they will not accept this approach to fires originating in our Basin. I was told the USFS Basin officials have agreed that all fires on their land will be extinguished as fast as possible. I am seeking verification of this statement from Congressman Kiley and Federal officials.

Finally, I am being told by fire officials that we need a full-time presence of fire support aircraft at Lake Tahoe Airport to ensure that we are ready to fight any fire that started in a timely manner. I fully support this addition to our safety protocol. Regional and local officials should do the same. I ask my readers to please express your support of this safety enhancement to local, state, and Federal legislators.

We do not want a Park Fire here!

Los Angeles Business, **Largest US wildfire grows to over 600 square miles in California**

The largest wildfire in the United States has expanded to over 600 square miles, surpassing the size of Los Angeles, fire officials in California reported on Tuesday.

by [Gary Monroe](#), August 2, 2024

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The blaze, known as the Park Fire, continues to rage in a wilderness area north of Sacramento, necessitating the efforts of thousands of firefighters.

Massive Firefighting Effort

More than 5,500 firefighters from California and other states are working tirelessly to combat the Park Fire, which is burning in the State's Central Valley, about 90 miles north of Sacramento.

The fire has grown to 385,065 acres (155,830 hectares), making it the fifth-largest wildfire in California's history.

Record-Breaking Blaze



The Park Fire has surpassed the size of the 2020 Creek Fire in Fresno County, which burned nearly 380,000 acres.

However, it remains smaller than California's largest wildfire on record, the August Complex fire of 2020, which consumed over 1 million acres across seven counties in northern California.

Challenging Conditions

Fueled by dry grass, brush, and timber, the Park Fire is fast-moving and challenging to control. Fire Capt. Dan Collins of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) noted the difficulty of accessing the fire.

"This fire has lots of fuel that is receptive to burning, and it's hard to get to," he said. "Our fire line is 260 miles around, that's the size of three Lake Tahoe's. It can take two to three hours to get personnel in there over the terrain."

LOCALS FIRST PREFERENCE NOT IN PLACE FOR FIRST PHASE OF SUGAR PINE?

Many months ago, I urged that City leaders take the steps necessary to give existing working residents and seniors in need preference with the new Sugar Pine housing project. *I applauded the City Council when they said they would adopt a **local first** policy.*



However, I am now learning that for the first phase of the Sugar Pine Project that will be completed in September, the **local first** preference will not be used. If true, this situation needs to be fixed, locals in need who have been waiting a long time need to get a preference for these first units to be opened. It is not the job of City government and local taxpayers to build affordable housing for nonresidents when we have locals in need.

I am told that future phases of the project will provide a preference, but the first phase should as well. Again, I encourage my readers to reach out to the city council to voice a local's preference even for Phase I at Sugar Pine. There has to be a way to achieve this goal.

MEASURE N (VACANCY TAX) NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED BY ALL PARTIES

For the record, I do not support in any way shape or form the proposed tax on second homeowners. I believe the proposed tax is not only unfair, but it is also likely illegal under Federal and State law. Also, I, for one, do not want the City to defend an arguably illegal (not authorized in State law for a general law city) tax measure with public funds against people who are community members and supporters who do not live here full time. I do not want our City government forced to create a massive snooping bureaucracy to monitor



every full-time resident's movement to prove their residency. *This tax apparatus applies to every homeowner.*

Lastly, I do not support the tax because there are other tools in California law that can be used to help finance our city's share of affordable housing and infrastructure programs without raising taxes, and these tools need to be used.

Having said this, I would like to see an organized panel of pro-tax and anti-tax residents debate the merits of the proposal to better inform voters of the issues. This can and should be done in a civilized manner. ***We do not need to hear propaganda or name calling, just discuss the facts.***

EVERY COMMUNITY IN THE TAHOE REGION AND MAJOR EMPLOYERS SHOULD TO DO THEIR PART...COME TO THE TABLE!

We all still need to know when governments making up the Tahoe Region and large employers are going to do their part to support the delivery of affordable housing to workers and their communities and bear their fair share of the cost for affordable housing. *The taxpayers of the City of South Lake Tahoe have already done their share. Now other public and private organizations need to do their part.*



WHERE DAVID JINKENS STANDS ON THE ISSUES - You should know where I stand before you vote.

David Jinkens for City Council 2024

“WE DO NOT NEED PERMISSION TO GOVERN OUR CITY”

No New Taxes, Fees, or Charges of any kind – Now is not the time. City government must live within its means.

Be the leaders in prudent land use planning and all aspects of public safety.

Create a positive business and resident friendly community. Grow the economy and create jobs.

Collaborate with existing affordable housing providers to help meet the needs of the community.

Ensure that police and fire have the resources they need to protect us.

Make certain that all roads are repaired every year as needed.

Use existing tools in State law to assist in the delivery of affordable housing for working locals and seniors in need *without new taxes*.

Work with landowner to fix the hole in the ground using existing tools in State law.

Protect our residents, visitors, and environment from catastrophic fires starting on private **and public lands**. All land in the city limits must be made as fire safe as possible.

Ensure that we have adequate evacuation routes in the Region in the event of major fires,

Establish a full City Multicultural/Latino Affairs Advisory Commission

Escucha a todos los miembros de la comunidad. (*Listen to all members of the community.*)

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Sunray Motel example

CHAIN LINK FENCING ON PROPERTIES IS NOT ATTRACTIVE

The City's existing commercial area and corridors sees an ever-increasing number of properties that are surrounded by chain link fencing and poorly maintained (e.g. former Rinnels service station, Sunray Motel, Motel 6 etc.). These properties are unattractive and blighted. Owners of the properties need to be

motivated by local officials to clean up their mess in the near term. They detract from our

community and the business owners and operators who do maintain their properties. We cannot allow blight to beget more blight. here are tools and programs in State law that can help if they are used.

Espero que todos disfruten de buena salud y buena fortuna.

David Jinkens, MPA
Good Government Advocate

SI, PODEMOS