

What is a site assessment?

Prior to applying for a permit to modify or expand the footprint of your residence or other types of coverage, you must first determine if you have land coverage available. Land coverage is a man-made structure, improvement, or covering that prevents normal precipitation from directly reaching the surface of the land. Such structures, improvements or coverings could include roofs, decks, paved surfaces, walkways, driveways, parking lots, tennis courts and patios. Land coverage can also include compacted soil used for walking or driving on. TRPA limits the amount of coverage in order to protect lake clarity by itemizing the amount of land available to infiltrate water and filter nutrients.

Do I need a site assessment?

A. Most vacant single-family residential parcels were evaluated under the IPES system starting in 1987 and were assigned a score and percent of base allowable coverage. A site assessment is not needed for properties with an IPES score. If you have a vacant residential parcel that has not yet received an IPES score, you can apply for an IPES evaluation using this form through TRPA at [TRPA IPES Application](#)

B. If land capability or land coverage have already been verified on your property (or was approved as part of a past permit), there is no need for another evaluation. Please note, only stamped plans approved after July 1, 1987 can be used to verify land capability and coverage in lieu of a site assessment. Visit the parcel tracker to view TRPA records relating to land coverage, land capability, and IPES. [Lake Tahoe Parcel Tracker](#) El Dorado County Building Department may also have this information as well. Parcel research requests can be made here: [Parcel Research Request](#)

When is a Site Assessment not Required?

A site assessment is not required if:

(1) A TRPA permit was issued for the property since July 1987, and existing and allowable land coverage for the property has been verified by TRPA or El Dorado County. A site assessment is not required for a vacant parcel with an IPES score. You can find your IPES score here [Lake Tahoe Parcel Tracker](#). A site assessment is also not required for a project which must be reviewed by TRPA. Projects involving the following categories must be reviewed by TRPA, therefore, site assessments will not be necessary for:

- (1) Non-residential properties
- (2) Lakefront properties
- (3) Multi-family dwellings with greater than 4 units
- (4) Parcels within a Planned Development (PD) not approved under current TRPA rules and ordinances

How do I request a site assessment?

Step 1:

Determine what type of evaluation you need. If coverage or land capability information is not available on your property, one of these evaluations will be needed: Full Site Assessment: Verification of both land capability and existing coverage for single-family residential properties built before 1987. The Land capability verification will assign a score ranging from 1-7, based on an evaluation of soil type and slope. This score correlates to a percentage of base allowable coverage (ranging from 1-30 percent). The land coverage verification will determine if the existing coverage legally exists (i.e. created before February 10th, 1972 or created thereafter with a permit and still existing on-site on October 15, 1986). It is possible to have coverage beyond the base allowable be grandfathered on your property.

Step 2:

Prepare a site plan:

The application checklist details all elements that must be included on the site plan. Professional surveys are not required, but the site plan must be accurate and to scale. You can view a sample site plan here [Sample Site Plan](#)

Step 3:

Gather all evidence that the land coverage is legally existing:

Such evidence may include: original appraisal/assessor records from the County Assessor's Office, county/city permit records, utility records, tax records, dated photos or aerial photography. Provide ALL available evidence.

Step 4:

Site assessment full and partial requests can be submitted using this application: [Site Assessment Application](#)

Complete the application form, determine your application fees, gather all required checklist items, and submit to El Dorado County Building Department. Your fees can be found here [Fee Schedule](#)

Step 5:

Site visit:

Once your application is received it will be assigned to a building inspector for field verification and further review. It will not be possible to conduct a site visit when there is snow on the ground.

Step 6:

Receive your results.

Upon completion of site visit and review of coverage your site assessment results will be sent to your mailing address.

Step 7:

Appeal Procedures:

Land Capability can be re-reviewed at any time through the land capability challenge process. You may challenge the land capability through TRPA here: [Land Capability Challenge Application](#)

Land coverage can be re-reviewed at any time through a partial site assessment (only additional evidence will be reviewed). If you disagree with the final staff determination, you may appeal within 21 days of the date the results were issued through TRPA. Appeal applications can be found at: [Notice of Appeal Application.pdf](#)

Is there a site assessment checklist?

- Completed and signed application form
- Application filing fee
- Three (3) copies of the existing site plan (preferred size 24" x 36") showing the following:
 - Property lines, easements, building setbacks, and edge of pavement at street
 - Map scale, north arrow
 - Assessor's Parcel Number (APN), property address, property owner(s) name(s)
 - Topographic contour lines at 2-foot intervals
 - Parcel area in square feet
 - High and low water line, if adjacent to lake
 - Location and dimensions of all existing land coverage (decks, driveways, garage, paths, sheds, building, etc.)

- Existing land coverage calculations with overhead reductions (with breakdown for type of coverage, i.e., buildings, decks, walks, etc.). Please include the calculation
- Trees greater than 14" dbh and rock outcrops
- Evidence that the existing development was legally established. Including the County Assessor's Original Building Records with the drawn sketch by the Assessor that indicates the square footage of the structure. Please note that records retrieved from the Internet are not acceptable. Other records include building records, utility records; tax records, TRPA approved plans/permits and, in some cases, aerial photography. Provide ALL available evidence.

Can land coverage and development rights be saved for future use?

TRPA allows land coverage and development rights to be verified and banked for future use on-site or for transfer to another parcel. Requests for verification and banking can be found here [Banking Verification of Existing Development Uses.pdf](#)