TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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STAFF REPORT

Date: March 18, 2026

To: TRPA Regional Plan Committee (RPC)

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Informational briefing on the Tahoe Keys Marina Redevelopment and Expansion Project and associated code amendments to TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapters 37 & 90, 2435 Venice Drive, City of South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 022-210-021, -032, -040, -041, & -044, TRPA file number ERSP2025-0602.

Summary:
Suntex, the owner and operator of the Tahoe Keys Marina ("TKM" or "the Applicant"), is proposing landside and waterside redevelopment of the existing marina facility. Landside redevelopment includes new buildings, parking area, entrances, and utilities, including upgraded water connections to South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) mains in Venice Drive and Tahoe Keys Boulevard. The waterside redevelopment includes the relocation of the existing boat ramp and the addition of 66 boat slips in accordance with the Settlement Agreement ("Agreement") approved by the TRPA Governing Board on November 20, 2024. The Applicant is also seeking amendments to the TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapters 37 and 90. This item is informational only.

Background:
Suntex acquired TKM in early 2022. Following the acquisition, Suntex requested TRPA verification of boat slips and upland coverage. TRPA's review found 305 boat slips operating, which exceeded the 239 slips recognized in the Tahoe Keys Marina Master Plan (adopted in 2001 and amended in 2002). Additionally, TRPA identified the condition of several slips and dock infrastructure as a potential threat to water quality and public health and safety. Suntex worked cooperatively with TRPA to resolve numerous compliance issues at the marina, all of which predated Suntex' ownership. Under the Settlement Agreement, Suntex agreed to seek approval for the previously unrecognized slips and address other compliance matters. The proposed redevelopment project is intended to implement certain elements of the Agreement. More information regarding the Agreement is available in the Governing Board's November 20, 2024 meeting materials.

Project Description:
The Tahoe Keys Marina Redevelopment Project is intended to revitalize marina facilities and operations. The proposed project would demolish all existing upland structures and ancillary facilities and replace them with new buildings, parking area, entrances, and utilities. The upgrades to utilities would include upgraded water connections to STPUD mains on Venice Drive and Tahoe Keys Boulevard. Proposed buildings include a new indoor boat storage facility with indoor water storage tanks, a boat sales showroom, a harbor master's building, restaurants, retail and office space, workforce housing units, and a public restroom facility. A public promenade that extends the length of the property between the

lagoon and the buildings is also proposed. The existing boat ramp and gantry would be relocated on-site, and the bulkhead would be replaced in some areas. Water quality BMPs would be installed, as well as various methods to control Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).

Proposed Code Amendments:

In order to facilitate the project, the applicant is proposing amendments to the TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapters 37 and 90. The project, as proposed, includes building heights beyond the current allowances of Chapter 37 of the TRPA Code. The proposed amendments would be narrowly tailored to allow additional building height for certain buildings in inland marinas that are not visible from Lake Tahoe and whose primary use is recreation, up to a maximum of 42 feet.

The applicant is also proposing an amendment to strike "Venice Boulevard" from the Chapter 90 definition of "Major Arterial." Venice Drive is incorrectly named "Venice Boulevard" in Chapter 90. The City of South Lake Tahoe's General Plan designates Venice Drive as a local road (Figure TC-1 *Circulation Diagram* – City of South Lake Tahoe General Plan). Venice Drive East is approximately one-quarter mile in length from where it intersects with Tahoe Keys Boulevard and extends east where it dead-ends at the beginning of the Cove East Trailhead. The road does not serve as a connector or through-road.

Tahoe Keys Marina Master Plan:

The Tahoe Keys Marina Master Plan was adopted by the TRPA Governing Board in June of 2001 and was amended May 22, 2002. In 2018, the TRPA Governing Board adopted a comprehensive, updated Shoreline Plan. The plan and supporting code did not carry forward the requirement for marina master plans. Instead, projects proposing modification or expansion of existing marinas must comply with the standards set forth in TRPA code section 84.6. The proposed project will be reviewed for consistency with the current TRPA Code and will replace the 25-year-old master plan with a permit for the redeveloped marina.

Project Benefits:
The applicant has indicated that the goal of the project is to replace aging facilities and infrastructure and improve marina operations. The redevelopment would install adequate stormwater management infrastructure and provide the public with high-quality services for lake access and recreation. Objectives described by the applicant include:

- Protect water quality through stormwater BMPs and AIS management/controls.
- Provide public amenities including a waterfront promenade, non-motorized recreation access, public restrooms, and community gathering spaces.
- Relocate the existing boat ramp and gantry to improve site circulation and AIS management practices.
- Replace an aging bulkhead.
  Provide on-site boat storage to reduce the need for vessels to be towed to off-site or out-of-basin storage locations.

Interception of Seasonal High Groundwater:
Seasonal high groundwater levels are historically high in the Tahoe Keys, and the marina site sits approximately two to four feet above the lake water level. Based on the geologic profile of the site and geologic seismic hazards identified in a report prepared by Schaefer Engineering (February 28, 2026), it

is recommended that the proposed structures be placed on a pile foundation system, and the pilings will likely encounter groundwater. In accordance with TRPA Code of Ordinances section 33.3.6, excavation is prohibited if it interferes with or intercepts the seasonal high groundwater table. An exception to this prohibition may be granted if TRPA makes certain findings consistent with TRPA Code of Ordinances section 33.3.6.A.2.

Scenic Quality:

The applicant proposes redevelopment of the existing Tahoe Keys Marina, including new structures, parking areas, a boat storage facility, boat ramp relocation, and landscaping improvements. Based on current analysis, the marina redevelopment does not appear to be visible from TRPA roadway scenic units, or TRPA-designated public recreation areas or bicycle trails, and therefore scenic standards specific to those resources may not apply. In addition, the site is not located within the shoreland of Lake Tahoe and is approximately 1,900 to 3,000 feet from the shoreline.

Potential visibility from Lake Tahoe occurs primarily within Scenic Shoreline Unit 33 (Truckee Marsh). From this shoreline unit, intervening marsh vegetation and the distance between the project site and shoreline viewpoints substantially screen the marina site. Visual simulations prepared for the project indicate that the darker colors of the proposed structures, combined with existing vegetation and proposed landscaping, would make the redevelopment difficult to discern from shoreline viewpoints and would not be expected to reduce existing scenic threshold ratings.

The marina redevelopment may modify views of Basin ridgelines from certain viewpoints along Venice Drive, from the public trail providing access to the California Tahoe Conservancy's Cove East Beach, and from nearby Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association residential areas. From some nearby viewpoints, the building may partially block ridgeline views; however, views remain available along most of Venice Drive and from other locations, and the effect would be temporary for viewers traveling along the roadway or trail. While some ridgeline views from certain locations may be modified, the project would also improve the visual character of the site through the removal of outdoor boat and equipment storage, replacement of aging structures with cohesive building design, and installation of landscaping that would soften views of marina facilities. Overall, while review remains ongoing, the proposed redevelopment is not expected to result in significant scenic impacts under TRPA's scenic evaluation framework.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Julie Roll at 775-589-5247 or jroll@trpa.gov. To submit a written public comment, email publiccomment@trpa.gov with the appropriate agenda item in the subject line. Written comments received by 4 p.m. the day before a scheduled public meeting will be distributed and posted to the TRPA website before the meeting begins. TRPA does not guarantee written comments received after 4 p.m. the day before a meeting will be distributed and posted in time for the meeting.

Attachment:

A. Proposed Site Plan

Attachment A

Proposed Site Plans