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## 10.0 SCENIC RESOURCES

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This chapter discusses impacts of the Proposed Project and Alternatives on the scenic resources in the Homewood Mountain Resort (HMR) Ski Area Master Plan Area (Project area), specifically impacts and thresholds related to visual contrast, public view obstruction or loss of public views from travel routes. This section also evaluates changes in scenic quality resulting from loss or alteration of a specific scenic resource (such as a designated scenic road), and identifies potential mitigation to address adverse changes. To provide a basis for scenic evaluation, the setting section describes the regional landscape character and the existing scenic conditions of the Project area. Sensitive scenic routes/travel ways and other scenic resources designated in local and regional plans are identified.

### 10.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### 10.1.1 Regional Setting

The scenic vistas and visual resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin are widely valued by residents and visitors to the area. As summarized in the TRPA *1986 Regional Plan: Goals and Policies* (TRPA 1986):

Scenic quality is perhaps the most often identified natural resource of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Basin affords views of a magnificent lake setting within a forested mountainous environment. The unique combination of visual elements provides for exceptionally high aesthetic values. The maintenance of the Basin's scenic quality largely depends on careful regulation of the type, location, and intensity of land uses.

CEQA guidelines identify the Lake Tahoe Basin as an area of critical environmental sensitivity for its scenic as well as its ecological and recreational value. Federal policy, under the U.S. Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f), provides that “special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreational lands, wildlife, and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.” The TRPA Compact states that the “Maintenance of the social and economic health of the region depends on maintaining the significant scenic values provided by the Lake Tahoe Basin” (TRPA Compact 1980). TRPA guidelines and regulatory requirements to protect scenic quality are described below in section 10.2, Regulatory Setting.

The Lake Tahoe Region is a unique alpine destination offering immense vistas and vast amounts of natural beauty and scenery. The scenic beauty of the region is recognized as a national treasure. Because of this natural beauty, alpine setting, and large lake, the region is a popular recreation and vacation destination offering boating, skiing, hiking, and tourist accommodations as well as residential and commercial land uses that create a mixture of aesthetic characteristics throughout the Lake Tahoe Region (TRPA 2007).

The region offers a variety of natural settings and vistas. Some areas are characterized by meadows, while others include rocky outcrops and forest vegetation. As a basin, mountain peaks and ridgelines are visible around the lake. Most mountainsides lack structural development with the exception of ski facilities where straight, vertical swaths of cleared forest can be seen from roadways, communities, and the lake.

Most development along with major roads are concentrated on more gentle topographic settings near lake level. Development surrounds much of Lake Tahoe, with the north and south shores generally more

developed than the west or east shores. Amongst the array of trees, is a mixture of parks, beaches, residences, and commercial development often located along the shoreline of the lake.

The architectural character of the region is a mixture of old and new “alpine elegance” structures, rustic wood cabins, mid-century modern and generic modern architecture. While the maintenance and promotion of alpine elegance architecture are emphasized, the variety of existing architecture persists and creates pockets where visual cohesion is lacking.

Designated Scenic highways in the Lake Tahoe Basin include federal U.S. Highway 50 (US 50) and California State Routes 89 (SR 89) and 267 (SR 267).

### 10.1.2 Project Area Setting

The Project area includes the HMR ski resort, with accessory food, rental, and retail uses, parking lots, and operation and maintenance facilities. Ski slopes and facilities in the Project area are visible from SR 89 and local streets in Homewood, and from Lake Tahoe. There are no existing tourist accommodation or residential units on-site. Structures on-site include the 7,300 square foot South Base lodge, 3,884 square feet vehicle shop/maintenance facility, and 242-space parking lot. The rustic, wooden, two-story North Base lodge is 13,943 square feet in area and includes 700 surface parking spaces adjacent to and visible from State Route (SR) 89. None of these structures reflect current design standards as they consist primarily of flat planes, with little to no landscape screening or architectural interest (TRPA 1989b, 1987). HMR includes a temporary white tent used as a warming structure, which is located mid-mountain. The ski area includes eight ski lifts, including one quad chair, three triple chairs, and four surface lifts. HMR has 62 numbered ski trails covering 441 acres, and five miles of summer hiking trails. Overhead utility lines are present on-site.

Homewood is characterized with a mix of natural landscapes, residential developments, relatively small-scale tourist operations, and support services such as real estate offices, restaurants and marinas, also, there is a U.S. Post Office, fire station, and other small-scale commercial uses in the immediate area. Development is clustered close to SR 89 and includes structures on both sides of the roadway. Existing development limits views of the lake and mountains from the roadway; however, there are areas of unobstructed views from SR 89. The community of Homewood in the Project vicinity is primarily residential with single-family homes interspersed among large pine and fir trees. The ski resort is the largest tourist/recreation feature in the area and small lodges, restaurants, boating operations, and other small retail or commercial offices are scattered along SR 89 near the Project area.

The Tahoe Maritime Museum is located adjacent to the North Base area on the mountain side of SR 89. The West Shore Café/Lodge, which includes six hotel suites, and The Homewood Hi and Dri Marina occupy the lakefront across from the North Base area. North of the Café, there are three existing interval ownership units and an additional six units are under development on the lakefront. Between the North and South Base areas the commercial core of Homewood includes the Post Office, small restaurants, Obexer’s Marina and other commercial uses.

Homewood lacks a dense commercial core area, so the roadside view consists mostly of natural vegetation and topography mixed with single-family homes, often set back from the roadway, with both natural and “residential” landscaping.

Vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic is relatively low compared to more densely developed and heavily used tourist areas on the north and south shores of Lake Tahoe.



### 10.1.3 TRPA Scenic Resource Inventories

The TRPA established a baseline inventory of the scenic resources in the Lake Tahoe Basin (Wagstaff and Brady 1983, TRPA 1993). The Basin was divided up into separate roadway, shoreline, and recreation area scenic units, and each unit was given a scenic resource rating and threshold. Scenic resource thresholds were developed using an inventory of subcomponents for specific types of scenic resources within each roadway, shoreline, and recreation area unit. The TRPA prepared a *Scenic Quality Improvement Program for the Lake Tahoe Basin* (SQIP) to maintain or upgrade the scenic quality of recreation areas, roadway views, and Lake Tahoe (TRPA 1989a) which consist of the following:

#### **SR-1 Travel Route Ratings**

The TRPA travel route ratings track long-term, cumulative changes to views from State and federal highways in urban, transition, and natural visual environments in the region. The ratings track changes to shoreline views from the surface of Lake Tahoe. Roadways are divided into 53 travel segments (called “travel units”), each representing a continuous, two-directional viewshed of similar visual character. Lake Tahoe’s shoreline is divided into 33 shoreline units. TRPA uses the following six criteria to determine travel route ratings for each Roadway Travel Unit. Criteria 1, 5, and 6 are used in rating Shoreline Travel Units. Roadway units have a possible score of 30 (5 points for each criteria) and shoreline units have a possible score of 15.

1. Human-made features along roadways and shoreline;
2. Physical distractions to driving along roadways;
3. Roadway characteristics;
4. Views of the lake from roadways;
5. General landscape views from roadways and shoreline;
6. Variety of scenery from roadways and shoreline.

#### **SR-2 Scenic Quality Ratings**

The purpose of the TRPA scenic quality threshold is to maintain or enhance views of individual, existing scenic resources. The scenic resources in the Lake Tahoe region include:

- Foreground, middle-ground, and background views of the natural landscape from roadways;
- Views to Lake Tahoe from roadways;
- Views of Lake Tahoe and natural landscape from roadway entry points into the region;
- Unique landscape features, such as streams, beaches, and rock formations that add interest and variety, as seen from roadways;
- Views of the shoreline, the water’s edge, and the foreground as seen from the lake;
- Views of the backdrop landscape, including the skyline, as seen from the lake; and
- Visual features seen from the lake that are points of particular visual interest on or near the shore.

Numerical scenic quality ratings are derived for each mapped scenic resource using four visual indicators as subcomponents of the composite rating:

- 1) Unity – the extent in which a landscape feature can be described as cohesive,
- 2) Vividness – a memorable or distinct quality,
- 3) Variety – the intermixture of interesting elements of a landscape unit, and
- 4) Intactness – the extent to which a landscape retains its natural condition.

These four indicators are each rated on a scale from zero (absent) to three (high), and summed to yield the scenic quality threshold rating. Each resource is defined by the length of the resource and the areas seen from that unit.

### ***SR-3 Public Recreation Area Scenic Quality Thresholds***

The TRPA public recreation area scenic quality threshold applies to specific public recreation areas, including beaches, campgrounds, ski areas, and segments of Class I bike trails and Class II bike lanes. Public recreation areas with views of scenic resources are valuable because they are major public gathering places, hold high scenic values, and are places where people are static (compared to people on the travel routes) and, therefore, have more time to focus their attention on the views and scenic resources. Public recreation area scenic quality threshold ratings consider the four criteria of unity, vividness, variety, and intactness. Scenic resources viewed from public recreation areas include:

- Views of the lake and natural landscape from the recreation area;
- Views of natural features in the recreation area; and
- Views of human-made features in or adjacent to the recreation area that influence the viewing experience.

### ***SR-4 Community Design Threshold***

The TRPA Community Design threshold policies apply to the built environment and are intended to ensure that design elements of buildings are compatible with the natural, scenic, and recreational values of the region. The community and redevelopment plan process can be used to develop design standards and guidelines specific to the needs and desires of individual communities. These standards and guidelines are considered “substitute” standards because they replace all or portions of TRPA Code of Ordinances (TRPA 1987) that would otherwise regulate the same subject. Site planning and design principles contained in the ordinances are implemented as part of individual development projects, and are reviewed and approved by TRPA and local governments.

### ***Scenic Quality Improvement Program***

The TRPA SQIP (TRPA 1989a) rates scenic quality to identify areas where scenic quality ratings in travel route corridors fall below adopted thresholds. Scenic quality ratings are scored on factors of unity, vividness, variety, and intactness, while travel route ratings are assigned based on six criteria: 1) man-made features; 2) roadway physical distractions; 3) road structures; 4) views of the lake; 5) landscape views; and 6) variety.

#### 10.1.4 Viewer Sensitivity - TRPA Scenic Resource Units

The Project area is located in the following Scenic Resource Inventory Units:

- Scenic Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood),
- Shoreline Unit 12 (McKinney Bay);
- Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 20 (Ski Homewood) – HMR Ski Area North Base area, and
- Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl) – HMR Ski Area South Base area.

The following is a summary of the baseline Scenic Resource Inventory and recent monitoring for each unit.

##### ***Scenic Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood)***

The views on the west side of SR 89 in Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood) are dominated by the views of the HMR North Base area parking lot and lodge, and by dense conifer forests. Views on the east side of SR 89 include retail and commercial buildings, a marina, docks, homes, and a panorama of Lake Tahoe (Wagstaff and Brady 1983).

Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood) is categorized as a “rural transition visual environment.” The HMR Ski Area is the most dominant feature and its steep, unforested slopes provide contrast with the otherwise enclosed corridor characteristic of the scenic unit (TRPA 1982, 1983, 1989a, 2001a). Commercial developments are the primary visual concern, including the HMR North Base area. Setbacks, building materials, signage, and landscaping generally do not meet current standards (TRPA 1989a). Inadequate parking, signage, and overhead utility lines are common problems in the commercial areas near HMR. Openings in the forest cover provide visual interest and variety, but the North Base area parking lot, general layout, and design of resort facilities have a negative visual impact (TRPA 1989a). The SQIP recommends ski area improvements such as landscaping along SR 89, the parking lot, and around buildings; creating a cohesive architectural style that is complementary to the natural setting and man-made environments; updating signage to comply with Codes of Ordinances Chapter 26; relocation of maintenance facilities to a less visible area; and undergrounding utility lines (TRPA 1989a).

TRPA monitoring has determined a threshold composite score of 12 for Scenic Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood). The Unit is in nonattainment and considered at risk. EIP Project 86 calls for improved architectural features, added landscaping and sidewalks, and undergrounded utilities in a portion of Unit 11 to improve the man-made features score and overall aesthetic character (TRPA 2007). The reduction in lake views due to new large residences at the north end of the unit and the unscreened modular structure at HMR produce negative effects on man-made features (TRPA 2007). Consequently, Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood) has a threshold composite score of 12, which is below the threshold attainment status, which requires a score of greater than 15 out of 30 points possible (TRPA 2007). Scenic quality travel route ratings are listed in Table 10-1. Figure 10-1 provides a map of Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood).

Topographic map of the Tahoe area. The map shows Unit 10 and Unit 11. A route is marked with numbered arrows (1-7) starting from a point near Homewood, passing through Unit 11, and ending near Chambers Lodge. The map includes contour lines, roads, and landmarks like Chambers Lodge and Quail Lake. A scale bar at the top indicates 15 N and 12 N. A north arrow is also present.

## Scenic Roadway Threshold Travel Route Ratings, Unit 11 (Homewood)

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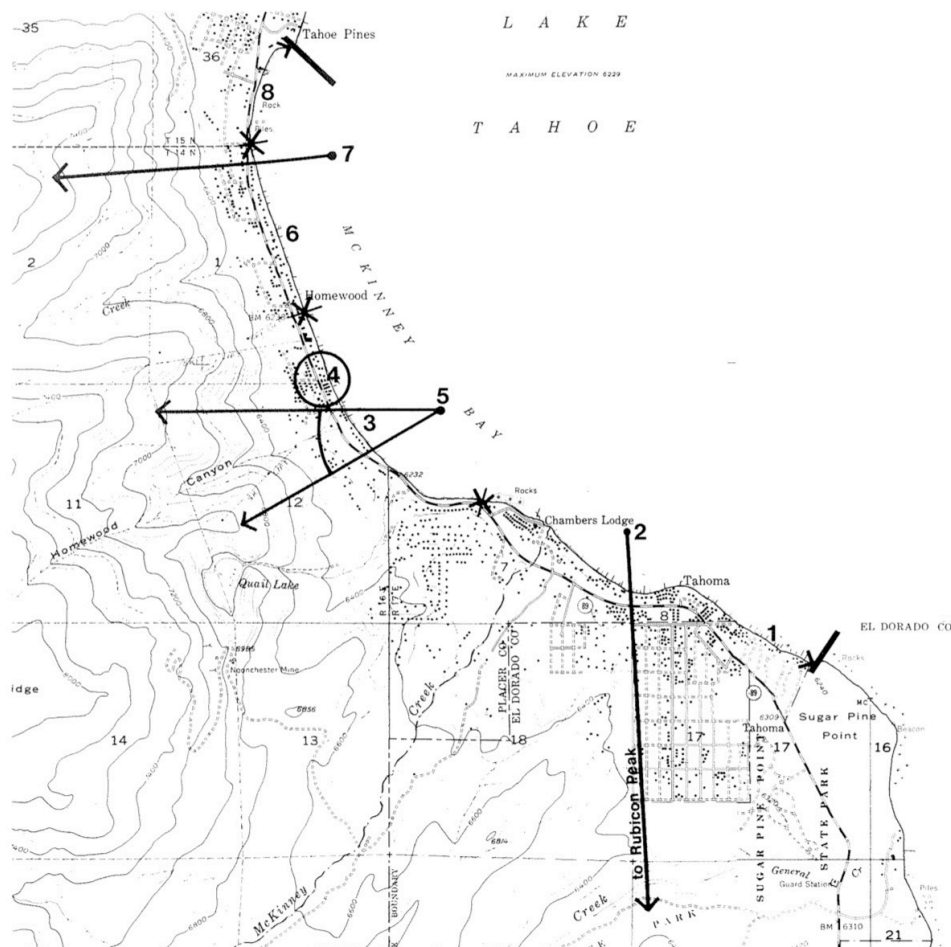
Source: TRPA 2007, 2001a.

### Shoreline Unit 12 (McKinney Bay)

The shoreline unit rating is based on the values of the backdrop landscape or skyline or ridges and peaks, the character of the shoreline foreground, and natural and man-made feature of interests on or near the shore as viewed from Lake Tahoe (TRPA 1982, 1983, 1993, 2001b). Background views in Shoreline Unit 12 (McKinney Bay) consist of Rubicon Peaks, the HMR Ski Area slopes and lifts, and forested ridgelines. Shoreline views consist of gravel beaches and private residences among conifer trees, Obexer's Marina and marina buildings, small piers and boat houses, and segments of SR 89. Figure 10-2 provides a map of Shoreline Unit 12 (McKinney).

TRPA monitoring has determined that Shoreline Unit 12 (McKinney Bay) is in non-attainment with a threshold composite score of 8 out of a possible 15 (TRPA 2001b, 2007). Shoreline views are primarily of homes and other structures interspersed with trees, boat storage areas, and the mid- to upper mountain views of ski runs, lifts, and ridgelines. The large residences, boat storage, ski lifts, erosion, grasses and low shrubs, and road scars, in addition to an overall high density of manmade structures has resulted in moderate scenic quality ratings (TRPA 2007). Table 10-2 provides scenic resource ratings.

**Figure 10-2: Shoreline Unit 12**



**Table 10-2****Scenic Shoreline Threshold Travel Route Ratings, Unit 12 (McKinney Bay)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Monitoring year</b>					
	<b>1982</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2006</b>
Man-made Features	3	3	3	3	2	2
Landscape Views	3	3	3	3	3	3
Variety	3	3	3	3	3	3
Threshold Composite	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Status</b>	<b>Attainment</b>	<b>Attainment</b>	<b>Attainment</b>	<b>Attainment</b>	<b>Non-attainment</b>	<b>Non-attainment</b>

Sources: TRPA 2007, 2001b.

**Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 20 (Ski Homewood)**

Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 20 (Ski Homewood) consists of the North Base area of the HMR Ski Area and is considered to be in attainment but does not possess outstanding scenic resources (TRPA 1982, 1993, 2001c). The 1993 Scenic Resource Evaluation of Unit 20 summarizes:

“The Homewood Ski Area does not possess outstanding scenic resources. The ski slope and forest provide a pleasant but unremarkable backdrop and there are no significant views from the site. The dominance of the parking area creates a visually sterile and unwelcoming appearance. It also creates a predominantly man-made feel to the area, which is compounded by the proximity of Highway 89 and roadside development. The structures in the recreation area do not show a clear sense of organization or relationship to one another (TRPA 1993).

Elements contributing to the scenic quality of the Homewood Ski Area include the vertical rise of the ski slope, the dense conifer forest bordering the ski slope, and mature conifers in the parking area. Elements found to detract from scenic quality include the following (TRPA 1993):

- The expansive, visually dominant parking lot along SR 89;
- Overhead powerlines;
- Visually prominent bright blue ski lift towers, emphasizing the alterations to the natural landscape;
- The highly visible maintenance area with vehicles and equipment;
- Structures lacking coherent architecture and rational siting that compete with, rather than complement, the natural landscape;
- The lodge in need of repair; and

- Lack of buffering or screening between SR 89 and Ski Homewood, which negatively influences views from the roadway and the ski area because man-made elements are more visually prominent than natural features.

To maintain the scenic qualities of views to the north and south of Ski Homewood, the TRPA (1993) recommends preserving trees as visual screening, maintaining structures below tree canopy height, avoiding structures and vegetation removal that alter views of the ridgeline, using building materials that blend with the natural environment, such as non-reflective surfaces, hues of natural vegetation or earth tones, and color values darker than the surrounding landscape.

Within Ski Homewood itself, the TRPA (1993) recommends reducing the size and visual prominence of the parking lot by adding a landscaped buffer and parking strips, undergrounding utility lines, repainting lift towers to blend into the landscape, relocating the maintenance area to a less visually prominent site, creating a coherent architectural style, and upgrading architectural details. Table 10-3 provides scenic recreation area ratings for Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 20. Figure 10-3 provides a map of Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 20.

### ***Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl)***

The former Tahoe Ski Bowl consists of the South Base area of the HMR Ski Area. Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl) is considered to be in attainment and has moderate scenic quality (TRPA 1982, 1993, 2001c). The 1993 Scenic Resource Evaluation of Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl) summarizes:

The Tahoe Ski Bowl portion of Ski Homewood is an area of moderate scenic quality which lacks distinctive features necessary to make it truly memorable. The dominant visual feature is the dense conifer forest which encloses the recreation area. The forest, however, also ensures that there are no distant views out from the site. Little disturbance has occurred around the ski area, so that it is surrounded by landscape of good scenic quality. The recreation facilities are well designed and fit well into the surrounding environment, considering the alterations necessary to accommodate alpine skiing (TRPA 1993).

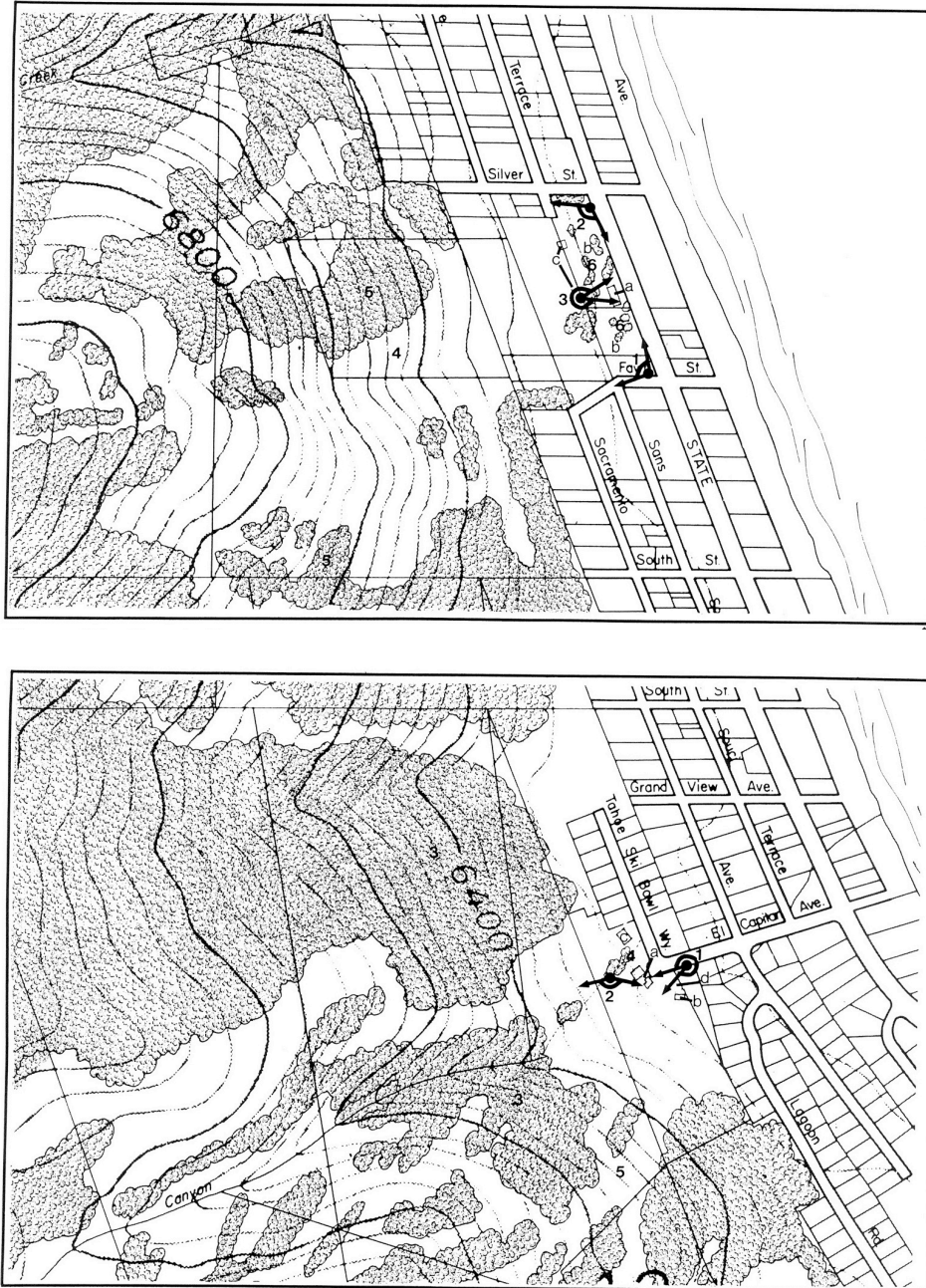
Elements contributing to the scenic quality of the Unit 21 include the vertical rise of ski slopes, the dense conifer forest surrounding the ski area, and stream and riparian vegetation along Homewood Creek. Elements found to detract from scenic quality include the following (TRPA 1993):

- The expansive parking lot undifferentiated from other areas;
- The highly visible private homes on the eastern edge of the parking lot;
- Visually prominent bright orange ski lift towers, emphasizing the alterations to the natural landscape;
- The abrupt transition from pavement to structure, lacking landscaping or other visual softening;

To maintain the scenic qualities of views to the north and south of Unit 21, the TRPA (1993) recommends preserving trees as visual screening, maintaining structures below tree canopy height, avoiding structures and vegetation removal that alter views of the ridgeline, using building materials that blend with the natural environment, such as non-reflective surfaces, hues of natural vegetation or earth tones, and color values darker than the surrounding landscape.

Within Unit 21, the TRPA (1993) recommends better defining the parking area with landscaped borders, a landscaped divider between the entry road and the parking area, vegetative screening between the parking area and private homes, foundation planting around buildings, and repainting lift towers to blend into the landscape. Table 10-3 provides scenic recreation area ratings for Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 21. Figure 10-3 provides a map of Scenic Recreational Resource Unit 21.

**Figure 10-3: TRPA Recreation Units 20 (top image) and 21 (bottom image)**





**Table 10-3**

**2001 Scenic Recreational Area Ratings of Ski Homewood (Unit 20)  
and Tahoe Ski Bowl (Unit 21)**

<b>Views from the Recreation Area</b>						
<b>Scenic Unit</b>	<b>Unity</b>	<b>Vividness</b>	<b>Variety</b>	<b>Intactness</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Status</b>
20-1	2	2	3	2	9	Attainment
20-2	2	2	3	2	9	Attainment
20-3	2	2	3	1	8	Attainment
21-1	3	3	3	3	12	Attainment
21-2	3	4	3	3	14	Attainment
<b>Natural Features of the Recreation Area</b>						
<b>Scenic Unit</b>	<b>Unity</b>	<b>Vividness</b>	<b>Variety</b>	<b>Intactness</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Status</b>
20-4	3	2	2	2	9	Attainment
20-5	3	3	3	2	11	Attainment
20-6	1	3	3	2	9	Attainment
21-3	4	4	3	3	14	Attainment
21-4	4	3	3	4	14	Attainment
21-5	4	3	3	2	12	Attainment
<b>Man-made Features of the Recreation Area</b>						
<b>Scenic Unit</b>	<b>Coherence</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compatibility</b>	<b>Design Quality</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Status</b>
20-a	2	2	2	2	8	Attainment
20-b	2	3	2	2	9	Attainment
20-c	2	2	2	2	9	Attainment
21-a	4	4	4	4	16	Attainment
21-b	4	4	3	3	14	Attainment
21-c	4	4	4	4	16	Attainment
21-d	3	4	3	3	13	Attainment

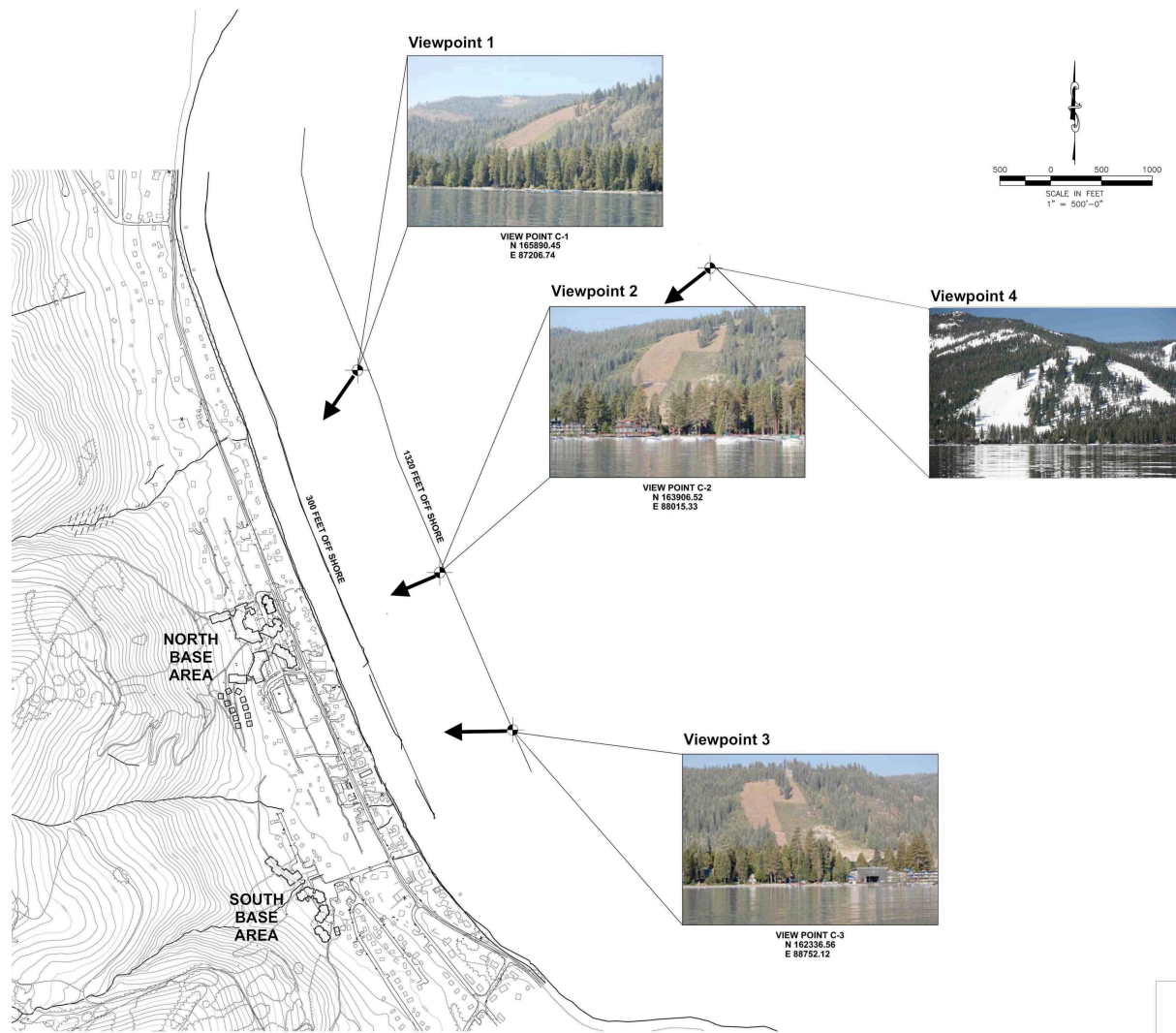
Sources: TRPA Threshold Ratings for Recreation Areas 2001 (TRPA 2001c, 2007).

### 10.1.5 Specific Landscape and Viewshed Conditions

A photographic inventory of the Project area and vicinity was conducted and reviewed with TRPA and Placer County staff to select viewpoints that illustrate existing conditions and allow for an evaluation of potential impacts to existing visual quality. Three viewpoints from SR 89 and four viewpoints from Lake Tahoe were selected to document views of proposed development at the North Base area and Mid

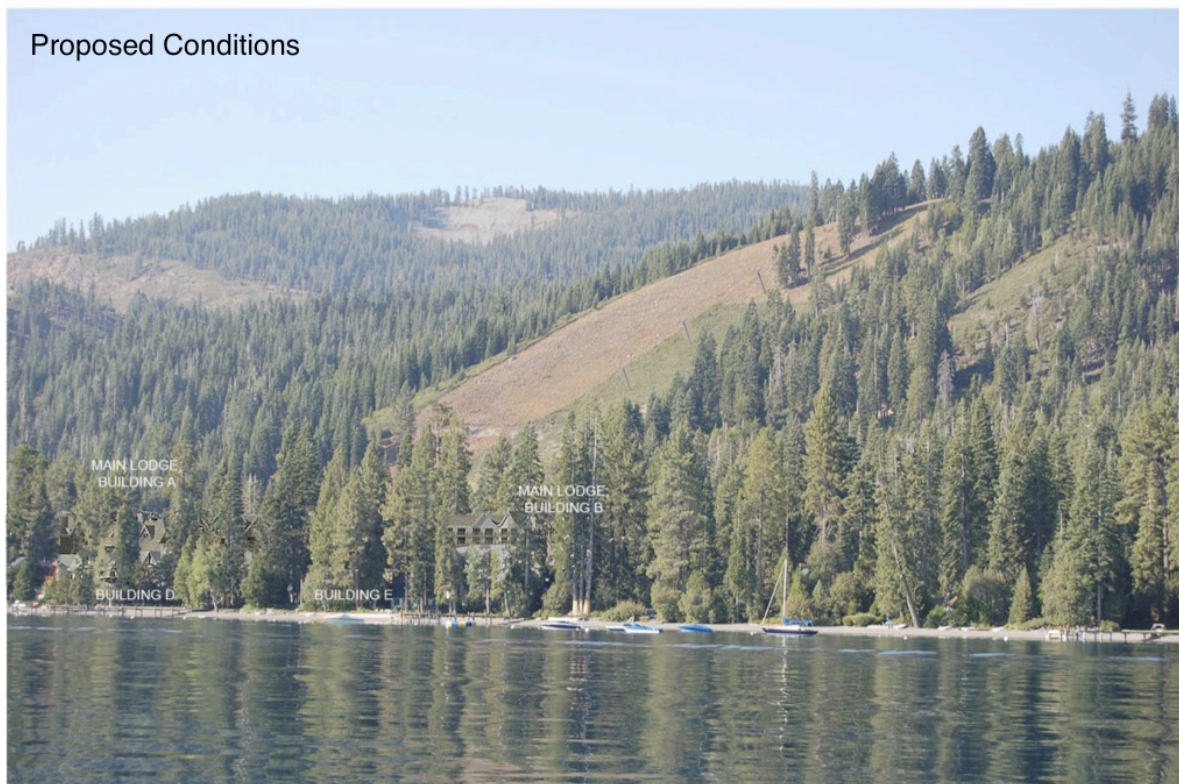
Mountain area. No viewpoints were selected for the South Base area, because development at the South Base area is not visible from identified scenic resources (e.g., SR 89 or Lake Tahoe). Figure 10-4 shows the locations of viewpoints from Lake Tahoe near Homewood, situated approximately 1,300 (viewpoints 1, 2 and 3) and 5,200 (viewpoint 4) feet from the shoreline. Figures 10-5 through 10-8 provide photographs of existing conditions and simulations of views with the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) from the selected viewpoints in Lake Tahoe.

**Figure 10-4. Scenic Viewpoint Locations from Lake Tahoe**



As seen from Lake Tahoe viewpoints 1-3 (Figures 10-5 through 10-7), the lower ski run “The Face” and the Madden Triple Chairlift towers immediately above the North Base are highly visible from Lake Tahoe. Conifer trees and structures between the North Base area and the shoreline obscure views of the existing base structures and parking areas. Forests and topography obscure views of other ski runs, lifts, and the existing Mid-Mountain Base area from viewpoints 1-3.

**Figure 10-5. Lake Tahoe Scenic Viewpoint 1 (1,300 Feet from Shoreline) – Alternative 1.**





**Figure 10-6. Lake Tahoe Scenic Viewpoint 2 (1,300 Feet from Shoreline) – Alternative 1.**



**Figure 10-7. Lake Tahoe Scenic Viewpoint 3 (1,300 Feet from Shoreline) – Alternative 1.**

From Lake Tahoe viewpoint 4 (Figure 10-8), The Face and Madden Chairlift remain visible. The Quail Chairlift and lower ski runs “Exhibition” and “Double Trouble” immediately above the South Base area are highly visible as well. The Mid-Mountain Base area is visible near the top of the ridgeline against a backdrop of conifers, along with the mid-mountain area ski run “Chute.” The pine and fir forest and other urban development located between the HMR Project area and the shoreline obscures existing North Base area buildings and parking lots.

Figure 10-9 depicts viewpoints from SR 89, and Figures 10-10 through 10-13 provide photographs of existing conditions and simulations of views with the Project from the selected viewpoints.

With little vegetative screening, the existing HMR North Base area parking lot, lodge, ski trails, ski lifts, and aboveground utility lines are clearly viewed from SR 89 under existing conditions. The 700-space paved expanse of the parking lot dominates the foreground views from SR 89 and further opens views from the roadway. Views of the South Base area structures and ski runs are obscured from SR 89. The South Base area is set back 0.25 mile from the roadway, and dense forest vegetation obscures views from this segment of SR 89. Consequently, no photographs or simulated views of the South Base area from SR 89 are provided.



**Figure 10-8. Lake Tahoe Scenic Viewpoint 4 (5,200 Feet from Shoreline) – Alternative 1.**

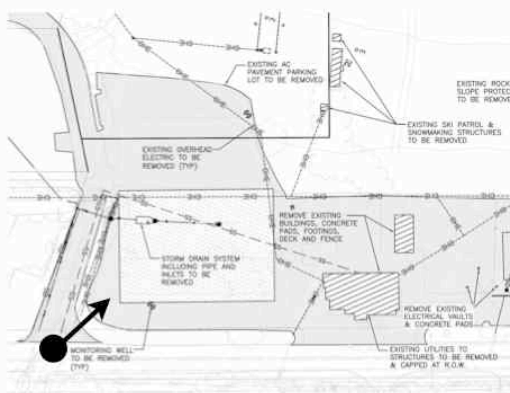
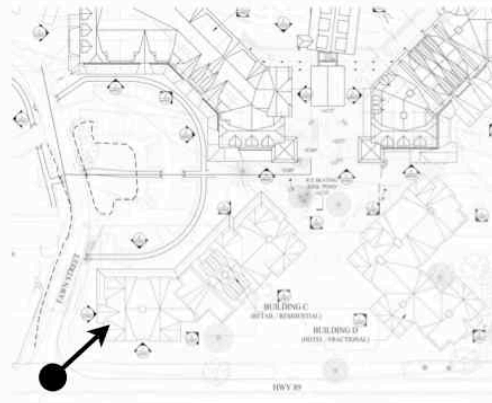




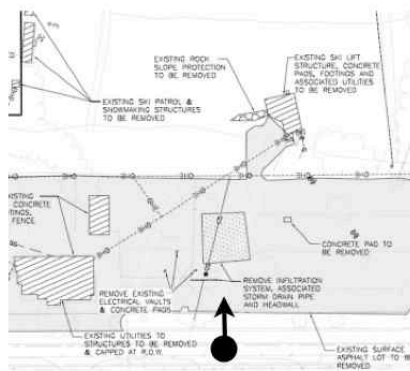
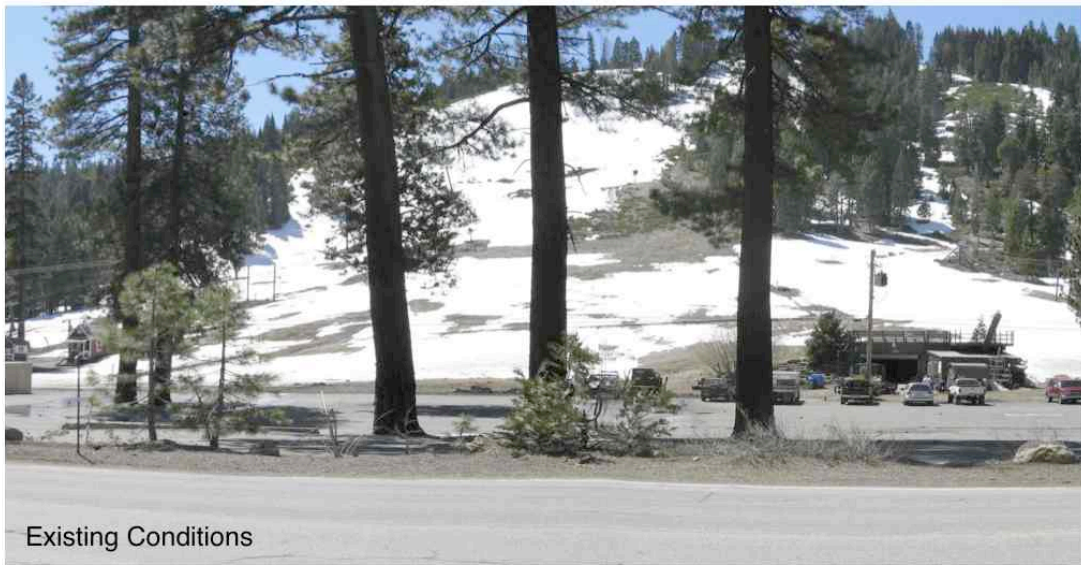
**Figure 10-9. Scenic Viewpoint Locations from SR 89.**



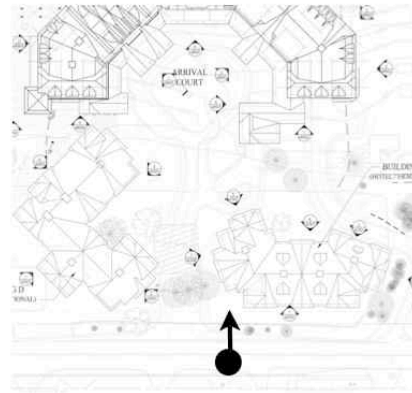


**Figure 10-10. SR 89 Scenic Viewpoint 1 of North Base Area – Alternative 1.****Existing Conditions****Proposed Conditions**



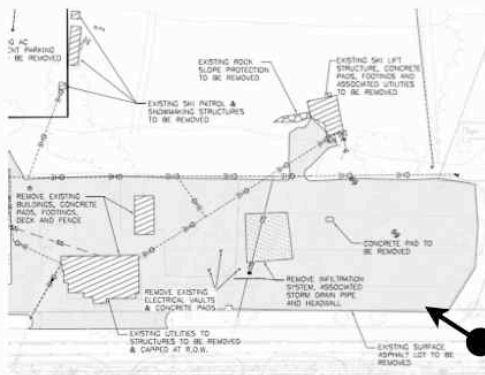
**Figure 10-11. SR 89 Scenic Viewpoint 2 of North Base Area – Alternative 1.**

Existing Conditions

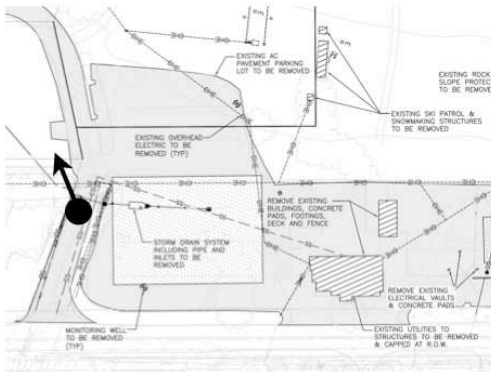


Proposed Conditions



**Figure 10-12. SR 89 Scenic Viewpoint 3 of North Base Area – Alternative 1.****Existing Conditions****Proposed Conditions**



**Figure 10-13. Scenic Viewpoint 4 of North Base Parking Structure – Alternative 1.**Existing  
Conditions

Existing Conditions



Proposed Conditions

Proposed  
Conditions

## 10.2 REGULATORY SETTING

### 10.2.1 Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

The TRPA Regional Plan establishes Environmental Threshold Carrying Capacities (ETCCs) for scenic resources and sets forth policies, programs, and ordinances to ensure that these standards and capacities will be achieved and maintained. The SQIP (TRPA 1989a), Design Review Guidelines (TRPA 1989b), and the TRPA Code of Ordinances (TRPA 1987) provide scenic standards applicable to the Project. TRPA scenic quality thresholds represent the minimum standards for scenic quality in the Basin. The SQIP provides a comprehensive threshold attainment program to improve the overall visual quality of the built environment in roadway and shoreline scenic units that do not meet the scenic quality threshold. Scenic goals and policies are also addressed in Chapter 4.0, Relationship to Existing Land Use Plans, Goals and Policies.

#### ***TRPA Thresholds***

TRPA adopted ETCCs in August 1982 to maintain and improve resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin (TRPA 1982). Specific thresholds were developed to improve and protect the scenic resources of the area. Where attainment of thresholds has been reached, TRPA standards require maintenance of threshold rating values and compatibility with the natural environment for roadway and shoreline travel routes, recreation area scenic resources and individually mapped scenic resources. For non-attainment areas, TRPA standards require mitigation actions to contribute to reaching attainment.

#### ***Scenic Quality Improvement Program***

The TRPA SQIP identifies areas where scenic quality ratings in travel route corridors fall below adopted thresholds and prescribes scenic improvements required to improve the scenic quality ratings.

#### ***TRPA Code of Ordinances***

##### ***Signage***

Chapter 26 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances (TRPA 1987) provides regulations for signage. Under §26.10.A, primary use signage may be 1.0 square foot per linear foot of building frontage up to a maximum of 40 square feet. Freestanding signs are allowed dependant upon project size, and nonconforming signs shall be removed if the business is modified or expanded.

##### ***Height***

Allowable building heights are regulated under the TRPA Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22 – Height Standards (TRPA 1987). The maximum height of a building is the difference between the point of lowest natural ground elevation along an exterior wall of the building, and the elevation of the coping of the highest flat roof, the deck line of the highest mansard roof or the ridge of the highest hip, gable, gambrel, shed or other pitched roof, whichever is highest (§22.2.A). The standards mandate a maximum allowable building height of 26 feet unless specific criteria are met for additional height (§22.3.A(1)). Additional heights up to those listed in Chapter 22, Table A, are allowed if the TRPA makes a finding that the project is consistent with §22.7(1). Depending on the location and use of the proposed building, additional heights are allowed if the

TRPA makes a finding that the project is consistent with one or more criteria in §22.7. The list of findings applicable to this project required for additional height is provided below.

Residential building heights up to those listed in Table A for buildings with roof pitches of 5:12 may be allowed if the project is consistent with §22.7 findings 1, 2, and 8. The same additional heights for other buildings are allowed if the project is consistent with §22.7 findings 1, 2, 3, and 8 (§22.3.A.1).

Under §22.4.A(1), the TRPA allows heights above those listed in Table A, for tourist accommodation unit (TAU) buildings or buildings with a primary use related to downhill ski recreation. Building heights may be increased, up to a maximum height of 38 feet, for buildings with TAUs if the TRPA makes §22.7 findings 1, 2, and 3, and for buildings with downhill ski recreation use if the TRPA makes findings 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7. The TRPA also allows an additional foot in building height for every 5% reduction in land coverage by a project, up to a maximum building height of 42 feet, and if the TRPA makes §22.7 findings 1, 2, 3, and 5 (§22.4.A(2)).

Under §22.4.A(3), the TRPA allows buildings with recreation uses to reach 42 feet in height if they are not visible from Lake Tahoe and are not within 1,000 feet of a Scenic Highway Corridor (e.g., SR 89 pursuant to TRPA Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22 – Design Standards, §30.13).

In adopted ski area master plans, recreation building heights may be increased above Table A heights if they are not visible from Lake Tahoe and are not within 1,000 feet of a Scenic Highway Corridor (e.g., SR 89 pursuant to TRPA Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22 – Design Standards, §30.13), and if the TRPA makes §22.7 findings 1, 3, 4, 7, and 8 (§22.4.A(4)). Building heights may be increased by 14 feet up to a maximum of 56 feet, if the project applicant demonstrates that snow depths make the additional height necessary. Building heights may be increased by 10 feet up to a maximum of 56 feet, if the project applicant demonstrates that a roof pitch in excess of 4:12 is necessary.

TRPA Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22 – Height Standards, §22.7 List Of Findings (TRPA 1987):

(1) When viewed from major arterials, scenic turnouts, public recreation areas or the waters of Lake Tahoe, from a distance of 300 feet, the additional height will not cause a building to extend above the forest canopy, when present, or a ridgeline. For height greater than that set forth in Table A for a 5:12 pitch, the additional height shall not increase the visual magnitude beyond that permitted for structures in the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15.G, Additional Visual Magnitude, or Appendix H, Visual Assessment Tool, of the Design Review Guidelines.

(2) When outside a community plan, the additional height is consistent with the surrounding uses.

(3) With respect to that portion of the building which is permitted the additional height, the building has been designed to minimize interference with existing views within the area to the extent practicable.

(4) The function of the structure requires a greater maximum height than otherwise provided for in this chapter.

(5) That portion of the building which is permitted the additional height, is adequately screened, as seen from major arterials, the waters of lakes, and other public areas from which the building is frequently viewed. In determining the adequacy of screening, consideration shall be given to the degree to which a combination of the following features causes the building to blend or merge with the background:

- (a) The horizontal distance from which the building is viewed;
- (b) The extent of screening; and

(c) Proposed exterior colors and building materials.

(6) The building is located within an approved community plan, which identifies the project area as being suitable for the additional height being proposed.

(7) The additional height is the minimum necessary to feasibly implement the project and there are no feasible alternatives requiring less additional height.

(8) The maximum height at any corner of two exterior walls of the building is not greater than 90% of the maximum building height. The maximum height at the corner of two exterior walls is the difference between the point of lowest natural ground elevation along an exterior wall of the building, and point at which the corner of the same exterior wall meets the roof. This standard shall not apply to an architectural feature described as a prow.

(9) When viewed from a TRPA scenic threshold travel route, the additional height granted a building or structure shall not result in the net loss of views to a scenic resource identified in the 1982 Lake Tahoe Basin Scenic Resource Inventory. TRPA shall specify the method used to evaluate potential view loss.

### ***Design Standards***

Chapter 30 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances (TRPA 1987) includes numerous design standards to ensure that projects are designed and constructed consistent with the Community Design Subelement of the Land Use Element and related elements of the Goals and Policies.

### ***Community Enhancement Program***

Projects must meet specific criteria to be accepted as a Community Enhancement Program (CEP) project. In regard to height and design, the greatest height must be significantly set back from streets and located toward the center of the development. Based on the CEP Resolution for Homewood, the “TRPA may consider an alternative method of measuring height in sloped situations” and that “Site context, varying step backs, roof pitch, and articulation must be considered for additional height to be appropriate for this location”. A maximum height of 50 feet at the highest envelope/slope may be appropriate depending on the elevation and slope. Substantial land coverage reductions must occur to compensate for the additional height and a scenic analysis demonstrating how the project enhances the scenic travel route rating and mitigates potential impacts is required.

### ***Tree Removal, Vegetation Protection and Revegetation***

Chapters 65 and 71 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances (TRPA 1987) set forth standards for tree removal and protection, while Chapter 77 establishes revegetation standards. Chapter 71 states that tree removal for the purposes of development may be approved by TRPA and must be accomplished according to TRPA management techniques. Under §65.2E of Chapter 65 of the Code of Ordinances, trees may be removed when approved for construction activities involving soil compaction, excavation or paving encroachment into more than 25% of a tree's dripline. Chapter 77 requires revegetation plans for areas that are damaged by project development. These plans must include: descriptions of the site; the number, size, and types of plants to be used for revegetation; descriptions and schedules of revegetation methodology; and specifications for long-term care. Revegetation plant species must be TRPA approved and appropriate BMPs must be employed.

### **Placer County West Shore Area General Plan**

The 1998 West Shore Area General Plan (County of Placer 1998) provides guidance for development within the West Shore Area of Lake Tahoe, including Homewood. In terms of scenic assessment and guidance, the West Shore Area General Plan defers to TRPA guidelines and does not include direction specific for the West Shore Area. An analysis of the consistency of the Project with West Shore Area Plan goals and policies is provided in Chapter 4 of this EIR.

### **Placer County General Plan**

The 1994 Placer County General Plan sets forth goals and policies for visual resources related to the siting and design of development, and preservation of natural resources, in Placer County. An analysis of the consistency of the Project with General Plan goals and policies is provided in Chapter 4 of this EIR.

### **Placer County Standards and Guidelines for Signage, Parking, and Design**

In 1994, Placer County and the TRPA adopted the *Placer County Standards and Guidelines for Signage, Parking, and Design in the Lake Tahoe Region* (County of Placer 1994b, adopted March 7, 1994 by Placer County and February 24, 1994 by the TRPA). The document includes standards and/or guidelines for site design, grading and drainage, landscaping, lighting, architecture, snow design, energy conservation, utility and service areas, historic buildings, scenic highway corridors, shorezones, parking, access, circulation, parking lot landscaping, disabled parking, loading areas, and signs. These standards and guidelines reflect those established in the TRPA Design Guidelines (TRPA 1989b, 1987).

## **10.3 EVALUATION CRITERIA WITH POINTS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Table 10-4 presents the evaluation criteria for Scenic Resources. These criteria are drawn primarily from local plans, adapted where necessary to reflect CEQA and TRPA requirements. For the purpose of this analysis, the stated applicable points of significance determine whether implementing the Project will result in a significant impact. These points of significance are based upon Appendix G of the State of California CEQA Guidelines and the TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist. A Scenic Resource impact is significant if implementation of the Project exceeds the point of significance shown in Table 10-4.



**Table 10-4****Evaluation Criteria with Point of Significance - Scenic Resources**

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Significance Threshold</b>	<b>Justification</b>
SCENIC-1. Will the Project be inconsistent with a County General Plan or TRPA thresholds, regulations, standards, or guidelines applicable to the Project area?	Non-compliance with TRPA or Placer County scenic resource thresholds, goals, policies, standards or ordinances.	TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist II (18d, e); CEQA Appendix G Checklist I (a); TRPA Regional Plan, Goals and Policies, Chapter II, Community Design Subelement; TRPA Threshold Carrying Capacities (Resolution # 82-11); TRPA SQIP; TRPA Design Review Guidelines; TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapters 22 (Height Standards) and 30 (Design Standards).
SCENIC-2. Will the Project be visible from or cause an adverse effect on foreground or middle ground views from a high volume travel way <sup>5</sup> , recreation use area <sup>6</sup> , or other public use area <sup>7</sup> , including Lake Tahoe, TRPA designated bike trail, or State or federal highway?	a) Creation of a strong visual contrast <sup>1</sup> b) Reduction in scenic vista viewed area <sup>2</sup> from foreground <sup>3</sup> or middleground <sup>3</sup> c) Degradation in visual quality or elimination of a specific scenic resource <sup>4</sup> d) Reduction of adopted scenic thresholds or standards (e.g., TRPA scenic travel route ratings).	a) CEQA Appendix G Checklist I (c); TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist II (18e); TRPA SQIP; TRPA Design Review Guidelines; b) CEQA Appendix G Checklist I (a, c); TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist II (18a, b, c); TRPA SQIP; c) CEQA Appendix G Checklist I (b); TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist II (18c, e); TRPA SQIP; d) TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist II (18e); TRPA Threshold Carrying Capacities (Resolution # 82-11); TRPA SQIP.
SCENIC-3. Will the Project create an unacceptable new light source or cause glare or affect day or nighttime views in the area?	a) Substantial increase in night lighting or glare entering adjacent residences.	a) CEQA Appendix G Checklist I (d); TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist II (7 a, b, c, and d); TRPA Design Review Guidelines.

Source: Hauge Brueck Associates 2009.

- <sup>1</sup> Strong Visual Contrast - (one or more of the following) regraded land forms are flat with little to no contour: line of major ridgeline is altered and not consistent with surrounding ridgelines or minor ridgelines are eliminated; inconsistent color with adjacent landscape character; elimination of landscape texture created by exposed soil or removal of vegetation; form of project grossly exceeds scale of natural land forms.
- <sup>2</sup> Viewed area defined as area of landscape (i.e., everything except sky) as shown in a photograph from the closest sensitive viewpoint, taken with a normal (50 mm) lens.
- <sup>3</sup> Foreground: 0-1/2 mile; middleground: 1/2-3 miles
- <sup>4</sup> Specific Scenic Resource - (one or more of the following) landscape component that creates striking feature; Landform - steep (>60%) undulating/dissected slopes, distinctive rock outcrops, or pronounced ridgelines; Water - major bodies of water that provide reflective qualities and irregular shorelines, or major/permanent streams/rivers with diversity of meanders, flows, rapids, rock outcrops, or river-banks; Vegetation - mature stands of native or cultural species (conifers and

aspen) in natural groves or distinct planted patterns (i.e. trees along roads or as planted wind breaks); Man-made development - historic structures;

- 5 High volume travelways: State highways and 2-lane County highways serving direct connections with settlements named on United States Geological Service 7½-minute topographic quadrangle maps;
- 6 Recreation use areas: Designated recreation sites, parks, trails, or other areas managed for public recreation.
- 7 Public use area: Downtown areas, cemeteries, community centers, attracting the public on a daily or regular basis.

## 10.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDED MITIGATION

**Impact:** **SCENIC-1. Will the Project be inconsistent with a County General Plan or TRPA thresholds, regulations, standards, or guidelines applicable to the Project area?**

**Analysis:** *Significant Impact; Alternative 2 (No Project)*

No changes to existing conditions will occur under the No Project (Alternative 2). Existing structures and site layout will remain in their current configuration and architecture. The existing site layout, design, and landscaping do not comply with TRPA Design Guidelines (TRPA 1989b) or the Placer County West Shore Area General Plan (County of Placer 1998). Structures lack character, relation to each other, or design quality prescribed for the area in the Design Guidelines and General Plan goals and policies. Landscaping is not present for aesthetic quality or screening. The parking lots are the dominant visual features of the North Base and South Base areas, and maintenance areas are highly visible.

The Project area does not meet thresholds for attainment of ETCC's for scenic resources. The Scenic Roadway Threshold Travel Route Rating for Unit 11 (Homewood), and the Scenic Shoreline Threshold Travel Route Rating for Unit 12 (McKinney Bay) are below the attainment threshold (TRPA 2007, 2001a, 2001b). Although there is no action to address the existing visual issues on the site to bring the site into attainment status with TRPA scenic resource standards, the No Project (Alternative 2) creates no changes or new inconsistencies with existing plan documents. However, this impact is considered to be significant and unavoidable because of inconsistencies with existing standards and guidelines.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is possible.

**After**

**Mitigation:** *Significant and Unavoidable Impact; Alternative 2 (No Project)*

Since no action is proposed under the No Project (Alternative 2), no changes to the existing conditions will occur. The existing features and structures that are not in compliance with current TRPA and Placer County regulations, standards, and guidelines will persist.

**Analysis:** *Significant Impact; Alternative 1*

Proposed Project (Alternative 1) building heights do not comply with TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards (TRPA 1987). Consequently, the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) is not consistent with existing TRPA Regional Plan Goals and Policies, Land Use Element, Community Design Subelement, Goal 2, Policy 1 (TRPA 1986). However, a height amendment to TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 is

proposed that includes a new height calculation methodology for sloped areas. The buildings included in the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) would be in compliance with the amended height standards. The analysis below concludes that the Proposed Project would not result in adverse impacts on scenic quality, but would result in improvements to existing scenic quality ratings for SR 89 to help move the existing TRPA roadway travel route unit towards threshold attainment.

The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) is consistent with other applicable goals and policies related to visual resources, community design, and scenic corridors in the TRPA Regional Plan, Placer County General Plan, and West Shore Area General Plan. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in Chapter 4 - Relationship to Existing Land Use Plans, Goals and Policies, provide evaluations of Project consistency with applicable goals and policies. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) is consistent with the following elements of the *Placer County Design Standards and Guidelines for the Lake Tahoe Region Including the Community Plan Areas* (Placer County 1994): 1) Site Plan, 2) Grading and Drainage, 3) Landscaping, 5) Architecture, 6) Design for Snow, 7) Energy Conservation, 8) Utility and Service Area, 9) Historic Buildings, 10) Scenic Highway Corridors, 11) Shorezone, 12) Parking, 13) Access, 14) Circulation, 15) Parking Lot Landscaping, 16) Parking for Disabled Persons, and 17) Loading (County of Placer 1994b).

Although specific lighting and signage materials, dimensions, and locations are not currently identified, it is assumed that the Proposed Project will comply with TRPA and Placer County standards in order to obtain necessary approvals and permits prior to construction. As analyzed in Chapter 4, it is assumed that the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) is consistent with policies related to 4) Lighting and 18) Signs.

To address compliance with height standards, the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) proposes to amend TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards by adding new §22.4.G and amending §22.7(6) to allow additional building heights for special projects located in a Ski Area Master Plan and designated through TRPA Governing Board Resolution 2008-11. A copy of the proposed Chapter 22 amendment is provided in Appendix F. Table 10-5 provides data on the heights for individual buildings with the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) in relation to the proposed amendments to Chapter 22.

The height amendment, if approved, will allow building heights up to 77 feet as currently measured using TRPA Code Chapter 22 height measurement methods. However, the amendment proposes an alternative method for measuring height in circumstances where large footprint buildings are stair stepped up a hillside. The proposed amendment to chapter 22 would adopt the Placer County methodology of measuring height. Under this method, the height would be measured at the point of average natural grade (point between highest and lowest grade along the building footprint) and height would be the distance from the ground elevation at that average point of natural grade to the peak of the highest ridge or roof line of the building. Using the proposed method to measure height (taking the difference between highest roof ridge and average natural grade rather than lowest point of natural grade), no proposed building would exceed 50 feet in height. As shown in Figure 10-14, the visual impact of large attached buildings located on a slope is similar to detached buildings located on the same slope. Revising the height calculation methodology to use the average slope to roof pitch instead of the lowest grade to roof pitch, results in a similar overall visual effect, but would allow one large building rather than smaller buildings stepped up the hillside. Therefore, the amendment will not allow greater visual impact or overall height, rather it revises the calculation methods to

better reflect the true height of large footprint/attached buildings on sloped areas. The amendment is limited to qualifying ski area master plan areas addressed by TRPA Governing Board Resolution 2008-11, which solely includes the HMR Ski Area. Consequently, the code amendment would not apply to other parts of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Under the amendment, new structures requesting additional height along SR 89 need to be setback at least 40 feet from the edge of SR 89 pavement. Two- to three-story buildings would be allowed closest to SR 89, while buildings up to four stories would be allowed at the rear of the site. Under the proposed height measurement methodology, no building would be allowed to exceed 50 feet in height. Using the proposed measurement method for the HMR Ski Area, the proposed amendment would allow maximum permissible height for structures with a minimum setback of 40 feet from the SR 89 edge of pavement to be 42 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 5:12. Buildings setback at least 200 feet, but not more than 675 feet, would be allowed to have heights up to 50 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 2:12. The South Base area would have a maximum height of 50 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 5:12. The maximum height for structures located in the Mid-Mountain Base area would be 35 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 2:12.

To qualify for additional height under the proposed §22.4.G amendment, buildings must meet the eligibility requirements included in the amendment and comply with §22.7 findings 1, 3, 6 (with proposed amendment to allow additional height in ski area master plans as well as Community Plan areas), 8, and 9. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) must also meet the following required conditions included in the Ski Area Master Plan to be eligible for additional building height under the amendment:

Additional Height Eligibility Criteria	Alternative 1 Compliance
1. The project incorporates Pedestrian Transit-Oriented Design Features consistent with Subsection 13.7.D(3) (specifically a-e), including buildings to be oriented to the street, sidewalks, alternative parking strategies, mixed uses, integration of the private and public open spaces and circulation routes.	Master Plan proposes an alternative transportation plan that increases pedestrian and bike paths and improved alternative mode choices other than the private automobile. Mixed uses and buildings oriented to the public street are also proposed.
2. The project located within the Special Height District retains and treats the 50-year, one-hour storm utilizing on-site and off-site systems incorporating best available technologies.	Master Plan Alternative 1 proposes a stormwater system to treat the 50-year, one-hour storm event. Stormwater treatment systems are proposed for the North Base, South Base, Tahoe Ski Bowl Way extension, Mid-Mountain area and off-site Caltrans/Placer County/HMR EIP project.
3. The project shall implement a minimum of two Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) projects.	Master Plan proposes to implement or contribute to EIP projects #86, 632, 725, 775, 855, and 996.
4. The project shall be certified under the United States Green Building Council's Leadership I Energy and Environment Design (LEED) or under an equivalent sustainable/green building program.	The Master Plan proposes to pursue LEED certification. The North Base area has been accepted into and will be designed under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development Pilot Program as an example of exemplary green and sustainable

	development. The South Base area, although not a part of the LEED for Neighborhood Pilot Program, will be designed to stringent sustainable development standards using the LEED criteria as a template.
5. The project shall ensure the required public benefit(s) set forth above and in the master plan are implemented consistent with the provisions of Subsection 22.4.D(5) of the TRPA Code of Ordinances.	The Master Plan proposes to obtain necessary permits and funding prior to construction. HMR will provide TRPA with assurances regarding the intent and ability to complete the project prior to permit acknowledgement.
6. The project results in a permanent reduction of no less than 10 percent of existing land coverage within the project area.	Master Plan proposes a minimum of 13 % land coverage reduction. At least 10% of the land coverage reduction will be permanently retired.

With the Proposed Project (Alternative 1), North Base Buildings A (skier services), B (hotel/lodge), and P (parking structure/affordable housing) are set back more than 200 feet from SR 89 and meet the criteria for the 50-foot height limit. These buildings would be 47, 47, and 48 feet in height as measured using proposed Codes. Project Buildings C, D, and E are setback at least 40 feet, and would have allowable heights up to 42 feet. These buildings would be 42, 31, and 33 feet in height (Table 10-5). South Base area Buildings A, A1, and B are not visible from SR 89 and are located more than 650 feet from the edge of pavement. Therefore, these 49-foot buildings meet the conditions for the 50-foot height limit in the proposed height amendment.

**Table 10-5**

Proposed Project (Alternative 1) Building Heights in Relation to  
Amended TRPA Height Standards (§22.4.G).

Building	SR 89 setback <sup>1</sup>	Maximum allowed height with setback <sup>2</sup>	Proposed Building height	Meets required findings for additional height under §22.7 (Y/N)?				
				1	3	6 <sup>3</sup>	8	9
North Base Area								
A (Skier Services/ Residential)	283	50	47	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
B (Hotel/ Residential)	248	50	47	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
C (Retail/ Residential/Fractional)	53	42	42	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
D (Residential/ Fractional)	42	42	31	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
E (Residential/ Fractional)	45	42	33	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
P (Parking/Affordable Housing)	237	50	48	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
South Base Area								
A (Residential/Skier Services)	650-1,200	50	49	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
A1 (Residential)	650-1,200	50	49	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
B (Residential)	650-1,200	50	49	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mid-Mountain Base Area								
Gondola	n/a	35	24	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gondola Entry/ Skier Services	n/a	35	33	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Restaurant	n/a	35	31	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: HMR and Hauge Brueck Associates, 2010

Notes.

1. Setback as measured from edge of pavement.
2. Maximum building heights with setbacks as provided in proposed §22.4.G. amendment.
3. Pursuant to finding 6 in §22.7A(6) as under the proposed amendment.

To allow additional height per the proposed amendment, findings 1, 3, 6, 8, and 9 under TRPA Code §22.7 must be made. A discussion of potential findings for the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) are provided below:

TRPA Code §22.7 Findings for the Proposed Project (Alternative 1)

*1. When viewed from major arterials, scenic turnouts, public recreation areas of the waters of Lake Tahoe, from a distance of 300 feet, the additional height will not cause a building to extend above the forest canopy, when present, or a ridgeline. For height greater than that set forth in Table A for a 5:12 pitch, the additional height shall not increase the visual magnitude beyond that permitted for structures in the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15, Additional Visual Magnitude, or Appendix H, Visual Assessment Tool, of the Design Review Guidelines.*

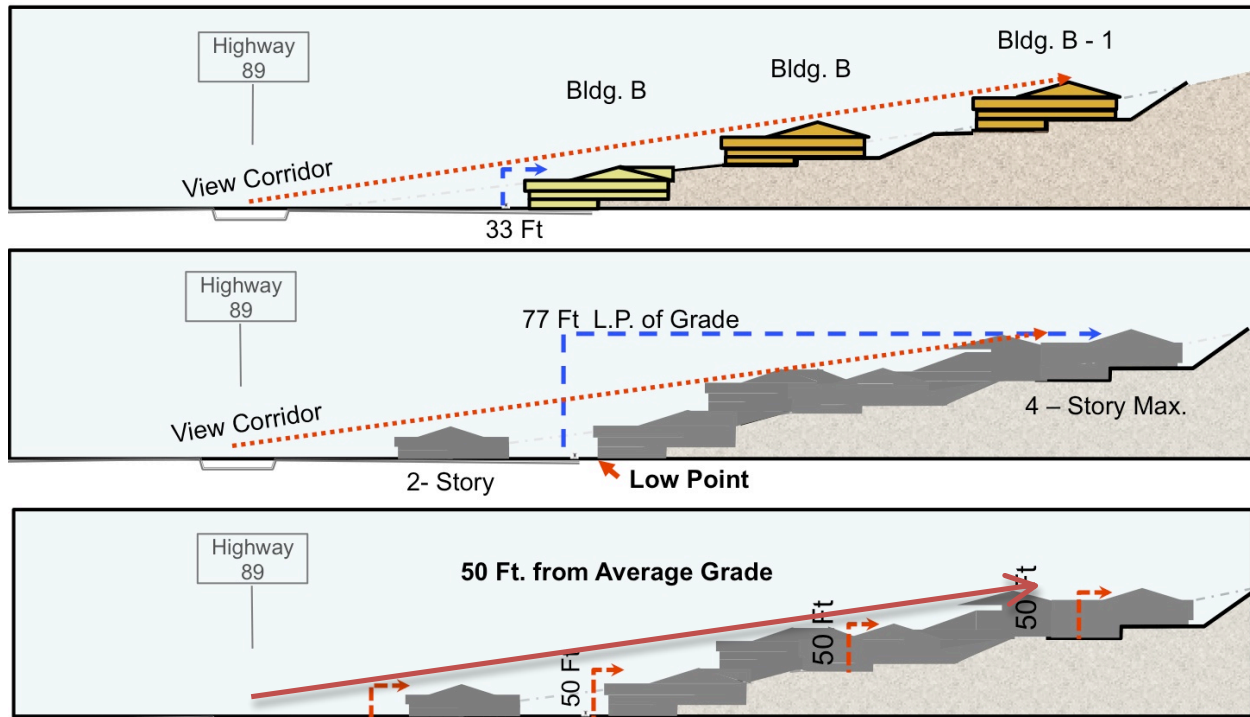
The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) is not located within the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15. The visual simulations documented in Figures 10-5 through 10-8 are from viewpoints in Lake Tahoe, and Figures 10-10 through 10-13 depict simulated views from SR 89. As shown, Project buildings will not exceed the forest canopy level or be visible above a ridgeline as viewed from a distance of 1,300 feet. As a result, the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) buildings are consistent with finding 1.

*3. With respect to that portion of the building which is permitted the additional height, the building has been designed to minimize interference with existing views within the area to the extent practicable.*

The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) scenario places shorter, two- and three-story buildings adjacent to SR 89 and larger 3.5-storied buildings graduated up the base of the mountain slope. Since the larger buildings are stepped up the naturally occurring slope, the proposed development avoids view interference within and from the public ROW toward the mountain. Structures are angled to afford views into the ski area without creating a long wall that blocks existing views through the Project area. The proposed parking structure and employee housing units to be located within the existing gravel parking lot are depicted in Figure 10-13. The structure would modify existing views toward Lake Tahoe from adjacent residential home sites located along Fawn Street, but would not block existing views of Lake Tahoe because intervening trees and other structures currently block views of the lake. As a result, the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) buildings are consistent with finding 3.

*6. The building is located within an approved community plan or Ski Area Master Plan, which identifies the Project area as being suitable for the additional height being proposed.*

The Project area will encompass the proposed HMR Ski Area Master Plan boundary, and consequently will meet the amended finding 6. The Master Plan states that a height amendment is needed to allow structures of an adequate size to serve the recreational and accommodation needs of the community and tourists, while reducing the amount of land disturbance that would otherwise be needed. Since the site is located on mountain slopes, the topography limits building structure and requires buildings to step up slopes. Based on how height is currently calculated by TRPA, structures are calculated to be taller than the actual height of any one exterior wall location. Figure 10-14 provides an example of how a large attached building stepped up a hillside can visually appear the same as a group of smaller detached buildings placed at intervals up the hill under TRPA's existing height measurement methods. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) buildings are consistent with finding 6 under the proposed Code amendment.

**Figure 10-14 Height Calculation Examples**

8. The maximum height at any corner of two exterior walls of the building is not greater than 90% of the maximum building height. The maximum height at the corner of two exterior walls is the difference between the point of lowest natural ground elevation along an exterior wall of the building, and the point at which the corner of the same exterior wall meets the roof. This standard shall not apply to an architectural feature described as a prow.

Based on a review of Project Building elevations, no corner of two exterior walls of a building will be more than 90 percent of the proposed building height. Project buildings are consistent with finding 8.

9. When viewed from a TRPA scenic threshold travel route, the additional height granted a building or a structure shall not result in the net loss of views to a scenic resource identified in the 1982 Lake Tahoe Basin Scenic Resource Inventory. TRPA shall specify the method used to evaluate potential view loss.

Project buildings are consistent with finding 9 under the amended code. Travel Route Unit 11 is currently a nonattainment area. Identified features that detract from the scenic quality include the parking lot and existing structures at HMR as well as overhead utility lines (TRPA 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2007). The amended building height standard will not adversely affect scenic roadway or shoreline travel route ratings for the following reasons.

- The amendment is limited to the HMR Ski Area Master Plan project, and would not be available for other projects in the Basin;
- The amendment requires taller Project buildings to be setback a substantial distance from SR 89 (at least 200 feet for the North base area);



- Views from Lake Tahoe and SR 89 of buildings at the South Base area are obscured by dense conifer forest, as illustrate in Figures 10-5 to 10-8;
- North Base area Buildings C, D, and E are closest to and most visible from SR 89 and are limited to two- to three-story buildings, consistent with adjacent development to the north, east, and south;
- Buildings C, D, and E and landscaping would predominate views from SR 89 and obscure views of taller Buildings A and B under the amendment;
- Buildings A and B are stepped up the slopes at the base of the ski area, and so views of the buildings would be set against the more prominent backdrop of ski slopes and forested hillsides;
- The photosimulations prepared for the Project (Figures 10-5 to 10-8) show that North Base area buildings are largely obscured from Lake Tahoe viewpoints by conifer trees and existing shoreline structures; and
- The Proposed Project incorporates several elements that would address existing deficiencies in the scenic quality of the Project area as identified by the TRPA (1989, 2001a, 2007), including
  - Removal of existing sub-standard buildings,
  - Design and construction of buildings with a cohesive architectural theme that complements the natural landscape and setting of HMR,
  - Removal of existing surface parking and installation of vegetative screening,
  - Relocation of maintenance facilities,
  - SEZ restoration, and
  - Upgrading ski lifts.

In addition to lighting, signage and height standards, and visual resource goals and policies, tree removal policies should also be considered in relation to visual impacts and policy compliance. Tree removal can alter the character of a site and increase views of structures. Tree removal, as discussed in Chapter 8, is considered to be a significant impact. Table 8-6 identifies a total of 33 trees 30" or greater for removal for the Proposed Project (Alternative 1). Of these 33 trees, a total of nine trees have been noted to be saved in the North Base area based on a memorandum from Nichols Consulting Engineers dated May 21, 2009. However, at present, it cannot be determined with certainty that these trees can be retained based on potential modifications to construction activities or building locations and potential damage to tree roots and adjacent topography.

TRPA Code Section 71.2.A(6) allows the removal of trees larger than 30 inches dbh within existing TRPA-approved master plans for facilities that are consistent with that master plan. Trees may be removed when it is demonstrated that the removal is necessary for the activity. Section 71.2.C can also be applied, which states a private landowner may follow Section 71.2.A or one of the listed planning processes to achieve or maintain old growth thresholds, goals, and policies. The planning processes include the preparation of a limited forest plan if 10% or less of the trees over 30 inches dbh are proposed to be cut in the life of the plan.

The removal of 33 trees larger than 30" dbh would be much less than 10% of the total large trees in the Project area and therefore Subsection 71.2.C(2) could be applied for the Project. However, because a limited forest plan has not been generated for the Project area, this impact is considered significant and mitigation is required.

Mitigation: **BIO-10: Prepare Forest Plan and Tree Protection Plan For Homewood Mountain Resort**

Details of the proposed mitigation measure are found under Impact BIO-10 in Chapter 8, Biological Resources.

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Proposed Project (Alternative 1)*

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-10 will ensure Homewood Mountain Resort will comply with TRPA regulations regarding removal of trees larger than 30" dbh prior to construction. This impact will be less than significant after mitigation.

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternative 3*

The Alternative 3 (No Code Amendment for Height) is consistent with a majority of goals and policies related to visual resources, community design, and scenic corridors in the TRPA Regional Plan, Placer County General Plan, and West Shore Area General Plan. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in Chapter 4 - Relationship to Existing Land Use Plans, Goals and Policies, provide evaluations of consistency with applicable goals and policies. Alternative 3 is consistent with the following elements of the *Placer County Design Standards and Guidelines for the Lake Tahoe Region Including the Community Plan Areas* (Placer County 1994): 1) Site Plan, 2) Grading and Drainage, 3) Landscaping, 5) Architecture, 6) Design for Snow, 7) Energy Conservation, 8) Utility and Service Area, 9) Historic Buildings, 10) Scenic Highway Corridors, 11) Shorezone, 12) Parking, 13) Access, 14) Circulation, 15) Parking Lot Landscaping, 16) Parking for Disabled Persons, and 17) Loading. Although specific lighting and signage materials, dimensions, and locations are not currently identified, it is assumed that Alternative 3 will comply with TRPA and Placer County standards in order to obtain necessary approvals and permits prior to construction. As analyzed in Chapter 4, it is assumed that Alternative 3 is consistent with policies related to 4) Lighting and 18) Signs.

No height amendment is proposed under Alternative 3. Building designs are intended to comply with existing TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 - Height Standards (TRPA 1987). Table 10-6 shows building heights under Alternative 3 in relationship to TRPA standards. Under §22.4.A, additional height above established base heights may be granted with appropriate findings. An additional four feet for buildings not exceeding 38 feet may be granted under §22.4.A (1) if findings 1, 2, and 3 are made for TAU buildings or findings 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 are made for recreation facilities. Up to two feet of additional height, not to exceed 42 feet, for tourist accommodation and certain recreation buildings is available under §22.4.A (2) if TRPA can also make §22.7 finding 5. As demonstrated in Table 10-6, proposed building heights comply with maximum building heights currently allowed in Section 22.4.A of the TRPA Code of Ordinances.

North Base area buildings A, B, and P have either recreational uses or include TAUs and are eligible for additional height, while Buildings C, D, and E are primarily residential and not eligible for additional height. South Base area residential condominiums do not

include recreational or tourist uses, and are not eligible for additional height. Required findings for Alternative 3 are provided below:

TRPA Code §22.7 Findings for the Alternative 3 (No Code Amendment for Height)

*1. When viewed from major arterials, scenic turnouts, public recreation areas of the waters of Lake Tahoe, from a distance of 300 feet, the additional height will not cause a building to extend above the forest canopy, when present, or a ridgeline. For height greater than that set forth in Table A for a 5:12 pitch, the additional height shall not increase the visual magnitude beyond that permitted for structures in the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15, Additional Visual Magnitude, or Appendix H, Visual Assessment Tool, of the Design Review Guidelines.*

The visual simulations for the Project in Figures 10-5 to 10-8 are from viewpoints in Lake Tahoe, and Figures 10-10 to 10-13 depict simulated views from SR 89. As shown, Proposed Project (Alternative 1) buildings will not exceed the forest canopy level or be visible on a ridgeline as viewed from a distance of 1,300 feet. With building heights equal to, or less than proposed Project buildings, Alternative 3 buildings are expected to be further below the tree canopy as Project buildings shown in the simulations. Alternative 3 buildings are consistent with finding 1.

*2. When outside a community plan, the additional height is consistent with the surrounding uses.*

The Project area is not located within a community plan; therefore, the additional height must be consistent with the surrounding uses. Building heights proposed for Alternative 3 would be similar to height for adjacent commercial buildings, and would be consistent with structures and surrounding uses in the Project vicinity. As a result, Alternative 3 is consistent with finding 2.

*3. With respect to that portion of the building which is permitted the additional height, the building has been designed to minimize interference with existing views within the area to the extent practicable.*

Similar to the Proposed Project (Alternative 1), Alternative 3 has shorter, predominantly two-story buildings near the roadway and larger buildings located behind and graduated with the mountain slope. Buildings C, D, and E are located near SR 89 and will not block views of the mountain due to setbacks from the road. Buildings C, D, and E are angled to afford views into the ski area and hillsides and avoid creating a structural wall that blocks views. Alternative 3 buildings are consistent with finding 3.

*4. The function of the structure requires a greater maximum height than otherwise provided for in this chapter.*

As a destination resort with high intensity, mixed uses, the structures require additional height to meet project objectives, accommodate intended uses, and to reduce the existing land coverage. Alternative 3 buildings are consistent with finding 4.

*7. The additional height is the minimum necessary to feasibly implement the project and there are no feasible alternatives requiring less additional height.*

Alternative 3 was designed with a greater number of shorter buildings than Alternative 1 to reduce the height of proposed buildings. As a result, Alternative 3 requires a greater area (and land coverage) to accommodate the development levels proposed for the Master

Plan. In order to keep buildings within the location of previous development at the North and South Base areas, Alternative 3 buildings need the maximum additional height available under existing Code Chapter 22.4. The Alternative 3 buildings have been designed with the minimum height necessary to substantially meet project objectives while avoiding development on steeper hillsides above the existing base areas. As documented in Table 10-6, building designs comply with existing height limitations. Therefore, Alternative 3 buildings are consistent with finding 7.

*8. The maximum height at any corner of two exterior walls of the building is not greater than 90% of the maximum building height. The maximum height at the corner of two exterior walls is the difference between the point of lowest natural ground elevation along an exterior wall of the building, and point at which the corner of the same exterior wall meets the roof. This standard shall not apply to an architectural feature described as a prow.*

Based on a review of Alternative 3 Building elevations, no corner of two exterior walls of a building will be more than 90 percent of the proposed building height. Alternative 3 buildings are consistent with finding 8.

Based on the existing code requirements and findings, Alternative 3 buildings would comply with existing TRPA Height Standards and would be designed to comply with TRPA Code and Design Guidelines and the Placer County West Shore Area General Plan regarding appropriate building size and layout, landscaping, tree preservation, screening, lighting, signage, parking and circulation design, energy conservation, grading and drainage, and architecture. This is considered a less than significant impact for compliance.

Although the proposed height of Alternative 3 buildings are less than significant, tree removal, as discussed in Chapter 8, is significant. Table 8-6 identifies a total of 33 trees 30" or greater for removal for Alternative 3. Of these 33 trees, a total of nine trees have been noted to be saved in the North Base area based on a memorandum from Nichols Consulting Engineers dated May 21, 2009. However, at present, it cannot be determined with certainty that these trees can be retained based on potential modifications to construction activities or building locations.

TRPA Code Section 71.2.A(6) allows the removal of trees larger than 30 inches dbh within existing TRPA-approved master plans for facilities that are consistent with that master plan. Trees may be removed when it is demonstrated that the removal is necessary for the activity. Section 71.2.C can also be applied, which states a private landowner may follow Section 71.2.A or one of the listed planning processes to achieve or maintain old growth thresholds, goals, and policies. The planning processes include the preparation of a limited forest plan if 10% or less of the trees over 30 inches dbh are proposed to be cut in the life of the plan.

The removal of 33 trees larger than 30" dbh would be much less than 10% of the total large trees in the Project area and therefore Subsection 71.2.C(2) could be applied for the Project. However, because a limited forest plan has not been generated for the Project area, this impact is considered significant and mitigation is required.

**Table 10-6****Alternative 3 (No Code Amendment for Height) Building Heights in Relation to Existing TRPA Height Standards**

Building	Slope (%)	Roof pitch	Max. Ht. under §22.3, Table A <sup>1</sup>	Primary Building type <sup>2</sup>	Eligible for additional height under §22.4.A (Y/N)? <sup>3</sup>	Meets §22.7 findings (Y/N)?							Allowed Additional Height and Code	Maximum building height with findings	Proposed Building Height
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
North Base Area <sup>5</sup>															
A	15%	6:12	34'-08"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	40'-08"	40
A1	20%	6:12	36'-02"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	42'-00"	33
B	11%	3:12	30'-01"	T	Yes	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	36'-01"	36
B1	11%	3:12	30'-01"	T	Yes	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	36'-01"	36
B2	20%	3:12	32'-07"	T	Yes	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	38'-07"	38
B3	18%	3:12	32'-01"	T	Yes	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	38'-01"	38
C	3%	6:12	31'-08"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			31'-08"	31
D	2%	6:12	31'-08"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			31'-08"	31
E	1%	6:12	31'-02"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			31'-02"	31
P	1%	2:12	26'-05"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	32'-05"	32
South Base Area															
A	4%	6:12	32'-02"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	38'-02"	38
A1	6%	6:12	32'-08"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			32'-08"	32
A2	25%	6:12	37'-02"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			37'-02"	37
A3	25%	6:12	37'-02"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			37'-02"	37
B	5%	6:12	32'-02"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			32'-02"	32
B1	25%	6:12	37'-02"	R	No	-	-	-	-	-	-			37'-02"	37



## HOMEWOOD MOUNTAIN RESORT SKI AREA MASTER PLAN EIR/EIS

Building	Slope (%)	Roof pitch	Max. Ht. under §22.3, Table A <sup>1</sup>			Meets §22.7 findings (Y/N)?									
				Primary Building type <sup>2</sup>	Eligible for additional height under §22.4.A (Y/N)? <sup>3</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	7		Allowed Additional Height and Code	Maximum building height with findings	Proposed Building Height
Mid-Mountain Base Area															
Gondola	23%	2:12	31'-11"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	37'-11"	34
Gondola Entry/ Skier Services	23%	2:12	31'-11"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	37'-11"	37
Restaurant	23%	6:12	36'-08"	S	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		4' - §22.4.A(1) 2' - §22.4.A(2)	42'-00"	42

## Notes.

1. Allowable additional height per TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards, §22.3 (TRPA 1987), Table A for buildings in compliance with TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 30, §30.12, to maintain or improve Roadway and Shoreline Unit Scenic Quality Ratings in 1982 Scenic Resources Inventory (Wagstaff and Brady 1983).

2. Building primary use type: S = recreation downhill ski facilities; T = tourist accommodation; R = residential, as defined under TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards, §22.4.A.

3. Additional height for tourist accommodation and certain recreation buildings is available under §22.4.A (1) if TRPA can make §22.7 findings 1, 2, and 3 for tourist accommodation uses and findings 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 for recreation uses. Additional height for tourist accommodation and certain recreation buildings is available under §22.4.A (2) if TRPA can also make §22.7 finding 5.

Mitigation: **BIO-10: Prepare Forest Plan and Tree Protection Plan For Homewood Mountain Resort**

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 3*

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-10 will ensure Homewood Mountain Resort will comply with TRPA regulations regarding removal of trees larger than 30" dbh prior to construction. This impact will be less than significant after mitigation.

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternative 4*

Alternative 4 will result in closure of HMR and the establishment of 16 residential estate lots and one commercial lot. The commercial lot fronts SR 89 and would be highly visible from the roadway. Some residential lots may be visible from SR 89, and some residential structures may be visible from the lake. However, no structural designs are established for these lots and any proposed structures by future applicants will be subject to design standards and guidelines established by TRPA. No height amendment is proposed under Alternative 4. Since no structural designs have been established, there are no features by which to measure compliance of the commercial development or the individual homes with design regulations, standards, or guidelines. Although specific materials, dimensions, and locations are not currently identified, it is assumed that Alternative 4 will comply with TRPA and Placer County standards in order to obtain necessary approvals and permits prior to construction, as analyzed in Chapter 4. This impact is less than significant because Alternative 4 must comply with the TRPA Code and Design Guidelines and the Placer County West Shore Area General Plan regarding appropriate building size and layout, landscaping, tree preservation, screening, lighting, signage, parking and circulation design, energy conservation, grading and drainage, and architecture. In addition structures would be designed to include the following:

- The commercial structure would include appropriate setbacks from SR 89 to accommodate pedestrian oriented design and include extensive vegetative landscaping and screening within the parking areas, service areas, and along the SR 89 frontage.
- Utilities would be placed underground.
- Landscaping would surround and screen structures where needed.
- The commercial development and residences would reflect the "Old Tahoe" architectural style and include natural materials, exposed beams, and natural, dark colors.
- Reflective materials would not be used. Structures would use non-reflective materials and low reflective windows. Residential structures would include architectural details, such as overhangs, that reduce window reflectivity.
- Decommissioned ski resort facilities and structures would be removed and former ski runs revegetated with an appropriate mix of native trees, shrubs, and ground cover.

Although Alternative 4 is anticipated to comply with County and TRPA visual thresholds, guidelines, policies, and standards, tree removal, as discussed in Chapter 8,

has the potential to be significant. Since no building designs or footprints have been established, the number and size of trees to be removed is unknown. As discussed for Alternatives 1 and 3, Section 71.2.C can be applied, which states a private landowner may follow Section 71.2.A or one of the listed planning processes to achieve or maintain old growth thresholds, goals, and policies. The planning processes include the preparation of a limited forest plan if 10% or less of the trees over 30 inches dbh are proposed to be cut in the life of the plan.

It is anticipated that the number of trees larger than 30 inches dbh would be much less than 10% of the total large trees in the Project area and therefore Subsection 71.2.C(2) could be applied for the Project. However, because a limited forest plan has not been generated for the Project area, this impact is considered significant and mitigation is required.

Mitigation: **BIO-10: Prepare Forest Plan and Tree Protection Plan For Homewood Mountain Resort**

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 4*

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-10 will ensure Homewood Mountain Resort will comply with TRPA regulations regarding removal of trees larger than 30" dbh prior to construction. This impact will be less than significant after mitigation.

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternative 5*

Alternative 5 building heights do not comply with TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards (TRPA 1987). Consequently, Alternative 5 is not consistent with TRPA Regional Plan Goals and Policies, Land Use Element, Community Design Subelement, Goal 2, Policy 1 (TRPA 1986). However, a height amendment to TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 is proposed that includes a new height calculation methodology for sloped areas. Building heights and locations (e.g., four story buildings immediately adjacent to SR 89) proposed for the North Base area under Alternative 5 would not be consistent with findings required for the amended height standards.

Alternative 5 is consistent with other applicable goals and policies related to visual resources, community design, and scenic corridors in the TRPA Regional Plan, Placer County General Plan, and West Shore Area General Plan. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in Chapter 4 - Relationship to Existing Land Use Plans, Goals and Policies, provide evaluations of Project consistency with applicable goals and policies. The Project is consistent with the following elements of the *Placer County Design Standards and Guidelines for the Lake Tahoe Region Including the Community Plan Areas* (Placer County 1994): 1) Site Plan, 2) Grading and Drainage, 3) Landscaping, 5) Architecture, 6) Design for Snow, 7) Energy Conservation, 8) Utility and Service Area, 9) Historic Buildings, 10) Scenic Highway Corridors, 11) Shorezone, 12) Parking, 13) Access, 14) Circulation, 15) Parking Lot Landscaping, 16) Parking for Disabled Persons, and 17) Loading (County of Placer 1994b).

Although specific lighting and signage materials, dimensions, and locations are not currently identified, it is assumed that Alternative 5 will comply with TRPA and Placer County standards in order to obtain necessary approvals and permits prior to construction. As analyzed in Chapter 4, it is assumed that Alternative 5 is consistent with policies related to 4) Lighting and 18) Signs.

To address compliance with height standards, Alternative 5 proposes to amend TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 height standards by adding new §22.4.G and amending §22.7(6) to allow additional building heights for special projects located in a Ski Area Master Plan consistent with TRPA Resolution 2008-11. A copy of the proposed Chapter 22 amendment is provided in Appendix F. Table 10-7 provides data on the heights for individual buildings with Alternative 5 in relation to the proposed amendments to Chapter 22.

The height amendment, if approved, will allow building heights up to 50 feet with minimum setbacks from SR 89 and if the building height is stepped up slopes. However, the amendment also proposes an alternative method for measuring height in circumstances where buildings are stair stepped up a hillside. As discussed in the analysis for Alternative 1, the proposed amendment to Chapter 22 would adopt the Placer County methodology of measuring height. This method takes the difference between highest ridge or roof line of the building and average point of natural grade rather than lowest point of natural grade. As shown in Figure 10-14, the visual impact of attached buildings on a slope is similar to detached buildings on a slope. Revising the height calculation methodology to use the average slope to roof pitch instead of the lowest grade to roof pitch, results in a similar overall visual effect. Therefore, the amendment will not allow greater visual impact or overall height, rather it revises the calculation methods to allow large footprint/attached buildings on sloped areas. Using the proposed method to measure height, no proposed building would exceed 54 feet in height; however, the amendment limits the maximum height to 50 feet and some Alternative 5 buildings are not in compliance as discussed further below. The amendment is limited to qualifying ski area master plan areas addressed by TRPA Governing Board Resolution 2008-11, which solely includes the HMR Ski Area. Consequently, the code amendment would not apply to other parts of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Under the amendment, new structures requesting additional height along SR 89 need to be setback at least 40 feet from the edge of SR 89 pavement. Using the new measurement method, no building would be allowed to exceed 50 feet in height. Under the proposed height methodology, the proposed amendment would allow maximum permissible height for structures with a minimum setback of 40 feet from SR 89 edge of pavement to be 42 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 5:12. Buildings setback at least 200 feet but not more than 675 would be allowed to have heights up to 50 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 2:12. The South Base area would have a maximum height of 50 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 5:12. The maximum height for structures located in the Mid-Mountain Base area would be 35 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 2:12.

To qualify for additional height under the proposed §22.4.G amendment, buildings must meet the eligibility requirements included in the amendment and comply with §22.7 findings 1, 3, 6 (with proposed amendment to allow height in ski area master plans), 8, and 9. Alternative 5 does not meet each of the following required conditions to be eligible for additional building height under the amendment:

Additional Height Eligibility Criteria	Alternative 5 Compliance
1. The project incorporates Pedestrian Transit-Oriented Design Features consistent with Subsection 13.7.D(3) (specifically a-e), including buildings to be oriented to the street, sidewalks, alternative parking strategies, mixed uses, integration of the private and public open spaces and circulation routes	Master Plan proposes an alternative transportation plan that increases pedestrian and bike paths and improved alternatives to the private automobile. Mixed uses and buildings oriented to the street are also proposed.
2. The project located within the Special Height District retains and treats the 50-year, one-hour storm utilizing on-site and off-site systems incorporating best available technologies	Master Plan Alternative 1 proposes a stormwater system to treat the 50-year, one-hour storm event. Stormwater treatment systems are proposed for the North Base, South Base, Tahoe Ski Bowl Way extension, Mid-Mountain area and off-site Caltrans/Placer County/HMR EIP project.
3. The project shall implement a minimum of two Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) projects	Master Plan proposes to implement or contribute to EIP projects #86, 632, 725, 775, 855, and 996.
4. The project shall be certified under the United States Green Building Council's Leadership I Energy and Environment Design (LEED) or under an equivalent sustainable/green building program	The Master Plan proposes to pursue LEED certification. The North Base area has been accepted into and will be designed under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development Pilot Program as an example of exemplary green and sustainable development. The South Base area, although not a part of the LEED for Neighborhood Pilot Program, will be designed to stringent sustainable development standards using the LEED criteria as a template.
5. The project shall ensure the required public benefit(s) set forth above and in the master plan are implemented consistent with the provisions of Subsection 22.4.D(5) of the TRPA Code of Ordinances	The Master Plan proposes to obtain necessary permits and funding prior to construction, and provides TRPA will assurances regarding the intent and ability to complete the project.
6. The project results in a permanent reduction of no less than 10 percent of existing land coverage within the project area. Existing land coverage must be reduced by 10% and permanently retired	Master Plan proposes a minimum of 23 % land coverage reduction.

Under Alternative 5, North Base Buildings A (skier services), B (hotel/lodge), C (residential) and P (parking/affordable housing) are set back at least 200 feet from SR 89 and Buildings A, B, and P meet the criteria for the 50-foot height limit. These buildings would be 27, 20, 54 and 37 feet in height, respectively, as measured using proposed Codes. Since Building C would be 54 feet, it would exceed the 50-foot height limit. Alternative 5 Buildings D (retail/residential) and E (residential) are setback 40 feet, and would have allowable heights up to 42 feet; however, these buildings would be 54 and 50

feet in height (Table 10-7). The Mid-Mountain Base area gondola, gondola entry and restaurant buildings under Alternative 5 would be identical to Alternative 1 and 3 and would be 24, 33, and 31 feet in height, respectively. The South Base area would be subdivided into 16 individual single family residential lots and there are no specific building plans or designs available for review. However, building heights for the single family homes would be permitted consistent with existing building height standards.

**Table 10-7**

**Alternative 5 Building Heights in Relation to  
Amended TRPA Height Standards (§22.4.G).**

Building	SR 89 setback <sup>1</sup>	Allowed height with setback <sup>2</sup>	Building height	Meets findings for additional height under §22.7 (Y/N)?				
				1	3	6 <sup>3</sup>	8	9
North Base Area								
A (Skier Services)	283	50	27	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
B (Hotel/Lodge)	248	50	20	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
C (Southern Most Residential)	247	50	54	Y	NO <sup>4</sup>	Y	Y	Y
D (Retail/Residential)	41	42	54	Y	NO <sup>4</sup>	Y	Y	Y
E (Residential)	41	42	50	Y	NO <sup>4</sup>	Y	Y	Y
P (Parking/Affordable Housing)	237	50	37	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mid-Mountain Base Area								
Gondola	n/a	35	24	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gondola Entry/ Skier Services	n/a	35	33	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Restaurant	n/a	35	31	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: HMR and Hauge Brueck Associates, 2010

Notes.

1. Setback as measured from edge of pavement.
2. Maximum building heights with setbacks as provided in proposed §22.4.G.
3. Pursuant to finding 6 in §22.7A(6) as under the proposed amendment.
4. In order to use previously disturbed areas (e.g., existing parking lots) for all of the residential units, the Alternative 5 design places residential Buildings D and E along SR 89 in the location of the existing paved parking lot, and Building C in the existing gravel parking lot. Because there would be fewer uses in buildings above the existing parking areas, Alternative 5 results in lower height structures (skier services Building A and hotel Building B) away from SR 89. Placement of taller structures near SR 89 blocks views through the Project area to the ski terrain and mountain side views associated with the ski resort. Buildings C, D, and E also exceed proposed height limits included in the Code Chapter 22 amendment.



To allow additional height per the amendment, findings 1, 3, 6, 8, and 9 under TRPA Code §22.7 must be made. To allow the additional height under existing Code Section 22.4.A.1, findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 are required, depending on the type of building (e.g., recreation or tourist accommodation). Findings for Alternative 5 are provided below:

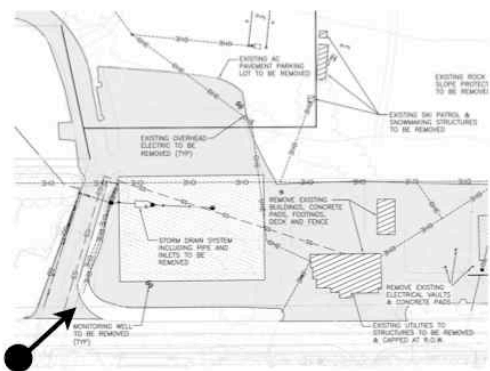
TRPA Code §22.7 Findings for Alternative 5

*1. When viewed from major arterials, scenic turnouts, public recreation areas of the waters of Lake Tahoe, from a distance of 300 feet, the additional height will not cause a building to extend above the forest canopy, when present, or a ridgeline. For height greater than that set forth in Table A for a 5:12 pitch, the additional height shall not increase the visual magnitude beyond that permitted for structures in the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15, Additional Visual Magnitude, or Appendix H, Visual Assessment Tool, of the Design Review Guidelines.*

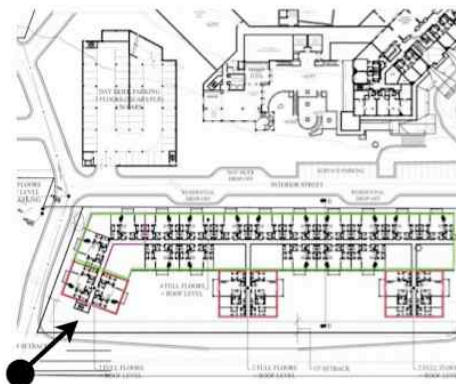
Alternative 5 is not located within the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15. The visual simulations in Figures 10-5 through 10-8 are of the Project from viewpoints in Lake Tahoe, and Figures 10-15 through 10-17 depict simulated views of Alternative 5 from SR 89. As shown, Project buildings will not exceed the forest canopy level or project above a ridgeline as viewed from a minimum distance of 1,300 feet. This is true for Alternative 5 as well. As a result, Alternative 5 buildings are consistent with finding 1.

*3. With respect to that portion of the building which is permitted the additional height, the building has been designed to minimize interference with existing views within the area to the extent practicable.*

Under Alternative 5, taller residential structures D and E are placed adjacent to SR 89, with lower buildings farther up the hill behind the residential structures. In order to use previously disturbed areas (e.g., existing parking lots) for all residential uses, the Alternative 5 design places tall residential Buildings D and E along SR 89 in the location of the existing paved parking lot, and Building C in the existing gravel parking lot located behind the Maritime Museum. Because there would be fewer uses in buildings above the location of the existing parking areas, Alternative 5 locates shorter structures, skier services Building A and hotel Building B, away from SR 89. Placement of taller structures near SR 89 blocks views through the Project area to the ski terrain associated with the ski resort. In addition, Buildings C and D with heights of 54 feet exceed the maximum amended height limit of 50 feet. When considering setback limitations, Buildings D and E should not exceed 42 feet, yet they are 54 and 50 feet, respectively. Consequently, Alternative 5 would create more interference with existing views as compared to the Proposed Project and Alternative 3. As a result, Alternative 5 Buildings C, D, and E are not consistent with finding 3.

**Figure 10-15. SR 89 Scenic Viewpoint 1 of North Base Area – Alternative 5.**

Existing Conditions

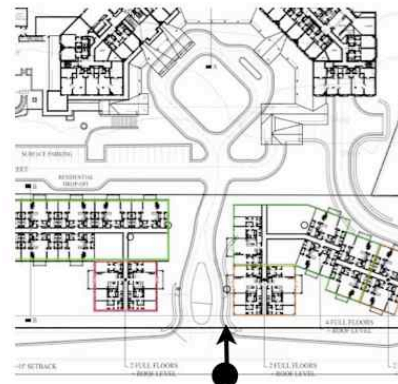
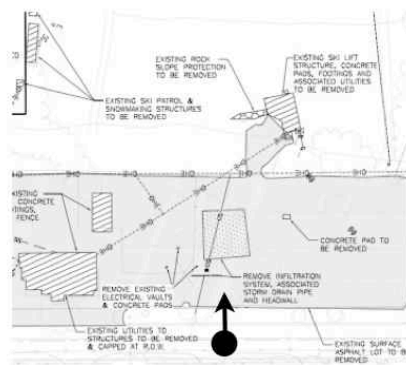


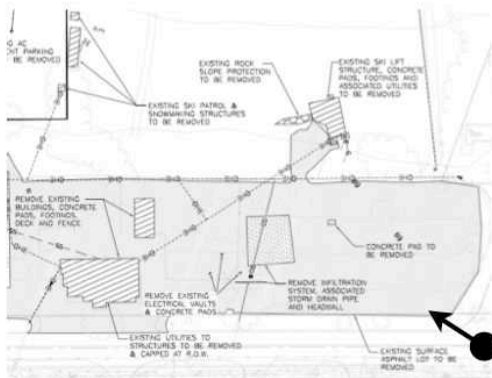
Proposed Conditions



Proposed Conditions



**Figure 10-16. SR 89 Scenic Viewpoint 2 of North Base Area – Alternative 5.**

**Figure 10-17. SR 89 Scenic Viewpoint 3 of North Base Area – Alternative 5.****Existing Conditions****Existing Conditions****Proposed Conditions****Proposed Conditions**



*6. The building is located within an approved community plan or Ski Area Master Plan, which identifies the Project area as being suitable for the additional height being proposed.*

The Alternative 5 Project area is located within the proposed HMR Ski Area Master Plan boundary, and consequently will meet the amended finding 6. The Master Plan states that a height amendment is needed to allow structures of an adequate size to serve the recreational and accommodation needs of the community and tourists. Since the site is located on mountain slopes, the topography requires buildings to step up the slope. Based on how height is currently calculated by TRPA, structures are calculated to be taller than the actual height of exterior walls. Figure 10-14 provides an example of how a large attached building located on a hillside can visually appear the same as a group of smaller detached buildings placed at intervals up the hill under TRPA's existing height measurement methods. Alternative 5 buildings are consistent with finding 6 under the proposed amended code.

*8. The maximum height at any corner of two exterior walls of the building is not greater than 90% of the maximum building height. The maximum height at the corner of two exterior walls is the difference between the point of lowest natural ground elevation along an exterior wall of the building, and the point at which the corner of the same exterior wall meets the roof. This standard shall not apply to an architectural feature described as a prow.*

Based on a review of Alternative 5 building specifications (e.g., proposed roof pitches), no corner of two exterior walls of a building will be more than 90 percent of the proposed building height. Building P includes affordable housing units and a parking structure with horizontal barriers located on the top level of the parking structure. However, the building also includes elevated roofing over the stair and elevator shafts to break up the horizontal features of the parking levels. As such, Alternative 5 buildings are consistent with finding 8.

*9. When viewed from a TRPA scenic threshold travel route, the additional height granted a building or a structure shall not result in the net loss of views to a scenic resource identified in the 1982 Lake Tahoe Basin Scenic Resource Inventory. TRPA shall specify the method used to evaluate potential view loss.*

As documented above for the Proposed Project (Alternative 1), Alternative 5 buildings are generally consistent with TRPA goals and policies. However, the placement of four-story plus buildings immediately adjacent to SR 89 under Alternative 5 would decrease scenic travel route ratings. Alternative 5 Buildings D and E are setback approximately 40 feet from SR 89, which is not sufficient to mitigate view degradation from buildings of 54 and 50 feet in height (the project area in this location is relatively flat). This is considered a significant impact, and mitigation is required under Alternative 5.

In addition to height compliance impacts, tree removal, as discussed in Chapter 8, is potentially significant. Table 8-6 identifies a total of 33 trees 30" or greater for removal for Alternative 5. Of these 33 trees, a total of nine trees have been noted to be saved in the North Base area based on a memorandum from Nichols Consulting Engineers dated May 21, 2009. However, at present, it cannot be determined with certainty that these trees can be retained based on potential modifications to construction activities or building locations.

TRPA Code Section 71.2.A(6) allows the removal of trees larger than 30 inches dbh within existing TRPA-approved master plans for facilities that are consistent with that master plan. Trees may be removed when it is demonstrated that the removal is necessary for the activity. Section 71.2.C can also be applied, which states a private landowner may follow Section 71.2.A or one of the listed planning processes to achieve or maintain old growth thresholds, goals, and policies. The planning processes include the preparation of a limited forest plan if 10% or less of the trees over 30 inches dbh are proposed to be cut in the life of the plan.

The removal of 33 trees larger than 30" dbh would be much less than 10% of the total large trees in the Project area and therefore Subsection 71.2.C(2) could be applied for the Project. However, because a limited forest plan has not been generated for the Project area, this impact is considered significant and mitigation is required.

Mitigation: **SCENIC-1a. Alternative 5 North Base Area Building Height Reductions**

To comply with the proposed Chapter 22 Code amendment, Alternative 5 Buildings D and E shall be redesigned to be no more than 42 feet in height due to their setback distances of 40 feet from SR 89. In addition, the buildings shall be redesigned to include an additional view corridor through the project area from SR 89. There are several feasible approaches that may reduce the height and visibility of these buildings, including removing one or more floors, decreasing roof pitch, or greater excavation of the foundation. New designs shall be submitted to TRPA for review and approval prior to the issuance of building permits for Alternative 5.

**BIO-10: Prepare Forest Plan and Tree Protection Plan For Homewood Mountain Resort**

After  
Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 5*

Implementation of Mitigation Measure SCENIC-1a would bring Alternative 5 North Base structures into compliance with TRPA and Placer County design standards and regulations such that Alternative 5 would be consistent with goals and policies related to scenic resources in the TRPA Regional Plan, Placer County General Plan, and West Shore Area General Plan.

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-10 will ensure Homewood Mountain Resort will comply with TRPA regulations regarding removal of trees larger than 30" dbh prior to construction. This impact will be less than significant after mitigation.

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternative 6*

Alternative 6 building heights do not comply with TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards (TRPA 1987). Consequently, Alternative 6 is not consistent with TRPA Regional Plan Goals and Policies, Land Use Element, Community Design Subelement, Goal 2, Policy 1 (TRPA 1986). However, a height amendment to TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 is proposed that includes a new height calculation methodology for sloped areas. Alternative 6 would be in compliance with the amended height standards.

Alternative 6 is consistent with other applicable goals and policies related to visual resources, community design, and scenic corridors in the TRPA Regional Plan, Placer

County General Plan, and West Shore Area General Plan. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in Chapter 4 - Relationship to Existing Land Use Plans, Goals and Policies, provide evaluations of Project consistency with applicable goals and policies. Alternative 6 is consistent with the following elements of the *Placer County Design Standards and Guidelines for the Lake Tahoe Region Including the Community Plan Areas* (Placer County 1994): 1) Site Plan, 2) Grading and Drainage, 3) Landscaping, 5) Architecture, 6) Design for Snow, 7) Energy Conservation, 8) Utility and Service Area, 9) Historic Buildings, 10) Scenic Highway Corridors, 11) Shorezone, 12) Parking, 13) Access, 14) Circulation, 15) Parking Lot Landscaping, 16) Parking for Disabled Persons, and 17) Loading (County of Placer 1994b).

Although specific lighting and signage materials, dimensions, and locations are not currently identified, it is assumed that Alternative 6 will comply with TRPA and Placer County standards in order to obtain necessary approvals and permits prior to construction. As analyzed in Chapter 4, it is assumed that Alternative 6 is consistent with policies related to 4) Lighting and 18) Signs.

To address compliance with height standards, Alternative 6 proposes to amend TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards by adding new §22.4.G and amending §22.7(6) to allow additional building heights for special projects located in a Ski Area Master Plan consistent with TRPA Governing Board Resolution 2008-11. A copy of the proposed Chapter 22 amendment is provided in Appendix F. Table 10-8 provides data on the heights for individual buildings with Alternative 6 in relation to the proposed amendments to Chapter 22.

As discussed under Alternative 1, the height amendment, if approved, will allow building heights up to 50 feet with minimum setbacks from SR 89 and if the building height is stepped up slopes. As shown in Figure 10-14, the visual impact of attached buildings on a slope is similar to detached buildings on a slope using this method. Revising the height calculation methodology to use the average slope to roof pitch instead of the lowest grade to roof pitch, results in a similar overall visual effect. Therefore, the amendment will not allow greater visual impact or overall height, rather it revises the calculation methods to allow large footprint/attached buildings on sloped areas.

Under the amendment, new structures requesting additional height along SR 89 need to be setback at least 40 feet from the edge of SR 89 pavement. Using the new measurement method, no building would be allowed to exceed 50 feet in height. Under the proposed height methodology, the amendment would allow maximum permissible height for structures with a minimum setback of 40 feet from the SR 89 edge of pavement to be 42 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 5:12. Buildings setback at least 200 feet but not more than 675 feet would be allowed to have heights up to 50 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 2:12. The South Base area would have a maximum height of 50 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 5:12. The maximum height for structures located in the Mid-Mountain Base area would be 35 feet, with a minimum roof pitch of 2:12.

To qualify for additional height under the proposed §22.4.G amendment, buildings must meet the eligibility requirements included in the amendment and comply with §22.7 findings 1, 3, 6 (with proposed amendment to allow additional height in ski area master plans), 8, and 9. Alternative 6 meets each of the following required conditions to be eligible for additional building height under the amendment:



Additional Height Eligibility Criteria	Alternative 6 Compliance
1. The project incorporates Pedestrian Transit-Oriented Design Features consistent with Subsection 13.7.D(3) (specifically a-e), including buildings to be oriented to the street, sidewalks, alternative parking strategies, mixed uses, integration of the private and public open spaces and circulation routes	Master Plan proposes an alternative transportation plan that increases pedestrian and bike paths and improved alternatives to the private automobile. Mixed uses and buildings oriented to the street are also proposed.
2. The project located within the Special Height District retains and treats the 50-year, one-hour storm utilizing on-site and off-site systems incorporating best available technologies	Master Plan Alternative 1 proposes a stormwater system to treat the 50-year, one-hour storm event. Stormwater treatment systems are proposed for the North Base, South Base, Tahoe Ski Bowl Way extension, Mid-Mountain area and off-site Caltrans/Placer County/HMR EIP project.
3. The project shall implement a minimum of two Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) projects	Master Plan proposes to implement or contribute to EIP projects #86, 632, 725, 775, 855, and 996.
4. The project shall be certified under the United States Green Building Council's Leadership I Energy and Environment Design (LEED) or under an equivalent sustainable/green building program	The Master Plan proposes to pursue LEED certification. The North Base area has been accepted into and will be designed under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development Pilot Program as an example of exemplary green and sustainable development. The South Base area, although not a part of the LEED for Neighborhood Pilot Program, will be designed to stringent sustainable development standards using the LEED criteria as a template.
5. The project shall ensure the required public benefit(s) set forth above and in the master plan are implemented consistent with the provisions of Subsection 22.4.D(5) of the TRPA Code of Ordinances	The Master Plan proposes to obtain necessary permits and funding prior to construction, and provides TRPA will assurances regarding the intent and ability to complete the project.
6. The project results in a permanent reduction of no less than 10 percent of existing land coverage within the project area. Existing land coverage must be reduced by 10% and permanently retired	Master Plan proposes a minimum of 20 % land coverage reduction.

With Alternative 6, North Base Buildings A (skier services), B (hotel/lodge), C (residential) and P (parking structure/affordable housing) are set back more than 200 feet from SR 89 and meet the criteria for the 50-foot height limit. These buildings would be 47, 40, 42, and 37 feet in height, respectively, as measured using the proposed Codes. Project Buildings D, and E are setback at least 40 feet, and would have allowable heights up to 42 feet. These buildings would be 42 and 38 feet in height (Table 10-8). South Base area Building B, which is not visible from SR 89, would be 49 feet. The Mid-

Mountain Base area buildings measure 24, 33, and 31 feet, all of which are below the 35 feet maximum height for that area. Each of the Alternative 6 buildings meets the limits proposed in the height amendment.

**Table 10-8**

Alternative 6 Building Heights in Relation to  
Amended TRPA Height Standards (§22.4.G).

Building	SR 89 setback <sup>1</sup>	Maximum allowed height with setback <sup>2</sup>	Building height	Meets required findings for additional height under §22.7 (Y/N)?				
				1	3	6 <sup>3</sup>	8	9
North Base Area								
A (Skier Services/ Residential)	283	50	47	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
B (Hotel/ Residential)	248	50	40	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
C (Retail/ Residential/Fractional)	53	42	42	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
D (Residential/ Fractional)	42	42	42	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
E (Residential/ Fractional)	45	42	38	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
P (Parking/Affordable Housing)	237	50	37	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
South Base Area								
B (Residential)	650-1,200	50	49	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mid-Mountain Base Area								
Gondola	n/a	35	24	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gondola Entry/ Skier Services	n/a	35	33	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Restaurant	n/a	35	31	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: HMR and Hauge Brueck Associates, 2010

Notes.

1. Setback as measured from edge of SR 89 pavement.
2. Maximum building heights with setbacks as provided in proposed §22.4.G.
3. Pursuant to finding 6 in §22.7A(6) as under the proposed amendment.

To allow additional height per the proposed amendment, findings 1, 3, 6, 8, and 9 under TRPA Code §22.7 must be made. A discussion of potential findings for Alternative 6 are provided below:

TRPA Code §22.7 Findings for Alternative 6

*1. When viewed from major arterials, scenic turnouts, public recreation areas of the waters of Lake Tahoe, from a distance of 300 feet, the additional height will not cause a building to extend above the forest canopy, when present, or a ridgeline. For height greater than that set forth in Table A for a 5:12 pitch, the additional height shall not increase the visual magnitude beyond that permitted for structures in the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15, Additional Visual Magnitude, or Appendix H, Visual Assessment Tool, of the Design Review Guidelines.*

Alternative 6 is not located within the shoreland as set forth in Section 30.15. The visual simulations documented in Figures 10-5 through 10-8 are of the Project from viewpoints in Lake Tahoe, and Figures 10-15 through 10-17 depict simulated views of Alternative 5 from SR 89. As shown, Project buildings will not exceed the forest canopy level or be visible above a ridgeline as viewed from a distance of 1,300 feet and the taller Alternative 5 buildings will not exceed the forest canopy as viewed from SR 89. As a result, Alternative 6 buildings are consistent with finding 1.

*3. With respect to that portion of the building which is permitted the additional height, the building has been designed to minimize interference with existing views within the area to the extent practicable.*

Similar to the design concept for Alternative 1, the Alternative 6 scenario mostly places shorter, two- and three-story buildings adjacent to SR 89 and larger multi-storied buildings graduated up the base of the existing ski resort mountain slope. Building D would be located closest to SR 89 and would measure 42 feet, which is taller than some buildings that would be located further from the road. However, most of the North Base area buildings would be similar in height, only looking taller from some viewpoints based on their location up the slope (e.g., Building A). Since the larger buildings are stepped up the naturally occurring slope, the proposed development avoids view interference within and from the public ROW toward the mountain. However, under Alternative 6, structures are larger and more linear along SR 89, blocking a greater amount of views into the ski area than Alternative 1. As a result, Alternative 6 buildings D and E are not consistent with finding 3 and mitigation is required.

*6. The building is located within an approved community plan or Ski Area Master Plan, which identifies the Project area as being suitable for the additional height being proposed.*

The Project area will encompass the proposed HMR Ski Area Master Plan boundary, and consequently will meet the amended finding 6. The Master Plan states that a height amendment is needed to allow structures of an adequate size to serve the recreational and accommodation needs of the community and tourists, while reducing the amount of land disturbance that would otherwise be needed. Since the site is located on mountain slopes, the topography limits building structure and requires buildings to step up slopes. Based on how height is currently calculated by TRPA, structures are calculated to be taller than the actual height of exterior walls. Figure 10-14 provides an example of how a large attached building stepped up a hillside can visually appear the same as a group of smaller detached buildings placed at intervals up the hill under TRPA's existing height

measurement methods. Alternative 6 buildings are consistent with finding 6 under the proposed amended code.

*8. The maximum height at any corner of two exterior walls of the building is not greater than 90% of the maximum building height. The maximum height at the corner of two exterior walls is the difference between the point of lowest natural ground elevation along an exterior wall of the building, and the point at which the corner of the same exterior wall meets the roof. This standard shall not apply to an architectural feature described as a prow.*

Based on a review of Alternative 6 building specifications (e.g., proposed roof pitches), no corner of two exterior walls of a building will be more than 90 percent of the proposed building height. Building P includes affordable housing units and a parking structure with horizontal barriers located on the top level of the parking structure. However, the building also includes elevated roofing over the stair and elevator shafts to break up the horizontal features of the parking levels. As such, Alternative 6 buildings are consistent with finding 8.

*9. When viewed from a TRPA scenic threshold travel route, the additional height granted a building or a structure shall not result in the net loss of views to a scenic resource identified in the 1982 Lake Tahoe Basin Scenic Resource Inventory. TRPA shall specify the method used to evaluate potential view loss.*

Alternative 6 buildings are consistent with finding 9 under the amended code. Travel Route Unit 11 is currently a nonattainment area. Identified features that detract from the scenic quality include the parking lot and existing structures at HMR as well as overhead utility lines (TRPA 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2007). The amended building height standard is not expected to adversely affect scenic roadway or shoreline travel route ratings for the following reasons.

- The amendment is limited to the HMR Ski Area Master Plan project, and would not be available for other projects in the Basin;
- The amendment requires taller (greater than 42 feet) buildings to be setback a substantial distance from SR 89 (200 for the North base area);
- Views from Lake Tahoe and SR 89 of buildings at the South Base area are obscured by dense conifer forest, as illustrate in Figures 10-5 to 10-8;
- North Base area Buildings D and E are closest to and most visible from SR 89 and are limited to two- to three-story buildings, consistent with adjacent development to the north, east, and south;
- Buildings D, and E and landscaping would predominate views from SR 89 and obscure views of taller Buildings A and B under the amendment;
- Buildings A and B are stepped up the slopes at the base of the ski area, and so views of the buildings would be set against the more prominent backdrop of ski slopes and forested hillsides;
- The photosimulations prepared for the Project (Figures 10-5 to 10-8) show that North Base area buildings are largely obscured from Lake Tahoe viewpoints by conifer trees and existing shoreline structures (Alternative 6 buildings would not exceed the heights of Alternative 1 buildings from the simulated viewpoints); and

- Alternative 6 incorporates several elements that would address existing deficiencies in the scenic quality of the Project area as identified by the TRPA (1989, 2001a, 2007), including
  - Removal of existing sub-standard buildings,
  - Design and construction of buildings with a cohesive architectural theme that complements the natural landscape and setting of HMR,
  - Removal of existing surface parking and installation of vegetative screening,
  - Relocation of maintenance facilities,
  - SEZ restoration, and
  - Upgrading ski lifts.

In addition to height compliance impacts, tree removal, as discussed in Chapter 8, is potentially significant. Table 8-6 identifies a total of 33 trees 30" or greater for removal for Alternative 6. Of these 33 trees, a total of nine trees have been noted to be saved in the North Base area based on a memorandum from Nichols Consulting Engineers dated May 21, 2009. However, at present, it cannot be determined with certainty that these trees can be retained based on potential modifications to construction activities or building locations.

TRPA Code Section 71.2.A(6) allows the removal of trees larger than 30 inches dbh within existing TRPA-approved master plans for facilities that are consistent with that master plan. Trees may be removed when it is demonstrated that the removal is necessary for the activity. Section 71.2.C can also be applied, which states a private landowner may follow Section 71.2.A or one of the listed planning processes to achieve or maintain old growth thresholds, goals, and policies. The planning processes include the preparation of a limited forest plan if 10% or less of the trees over 30 inches dbh are proposed to be cut in the life of the plan.

The removal of 33 trees larger than 30" dbh would be much less than 10% of the total large trees in the Project area and therefore Subsection 71.2.C(2) could be applied for the Project. However, because a limited forest plan has not been generated for the Project area, this impact is considered significant and mitigation is required.

Mitigation: **SCENIC-1b. Alternative 6 North Base Area Building Redesign**

To comply with the proposed Chapter 22 Code amendment, Alternative 6 Building D shall be redesigned to include an additional view corridor through the project area from SR 89. New designs shall be submitted to TRPA for review and approval prior to the issuance of building permits for Alternative 6.

**BIO-10: Prepare Forest Plan and Tree Protection Plan For Homewood Mountain Resort**

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 6*

Implementation of Mitigation Measure SCENIC-1b would bring Alternative 6 North Base structures into compliance with TRPA and Placer County design standards and regulations such that the Alternative 6 would be consistent with goals and policies related to scenic resources in the TRPA Regional Plan, Placer County General Plan, and West Shore Area General Plan.

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-10 will ensure Homewood Mountain Resort will comply with TRPA regulations regarding removal of trees larger than 30" dbh prior to construction. This impact will be less than significant after mitigation.

**Impact: SCENIC-2. Will the Project be visible from or cause an adverse effect on foreground or middle ground views from a high volume travel way, recreation use area, or other public use area, including Lake Tahoe, TRPA designated bike trail, or State or federal highway?**

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternative 2*

Under the No Project (Alternative 2), no change will occur to the scenic quality of the area. The Scenic Roadway Travel Route Rating along SR 89 in Homewood is in a non-attainment area, and the TRPA has identified recommended actions in the SQIP to improve scenic quality (TRPA 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2001b, 2007). Recommendations include landscaping the parking area and frontage, architectural improvements and unification, relocation of maintenance facilities, undergrounding utility lines, and signage improvements. Under the No Project Alternative, scenic quality improvements would not be implemented and the non-attainment status would remain. Therefore, this impact would remain significant under the No Project Alternative.

Mitigation: No mitigation is possible.

After

Mitigation: *Significant and Unavoidable Impact; Alternative 2 (No Project)*

Since no action is proposed under the No Project (Alternative 2), no changes to the existing conditions will occur. The existing features and structures that result in non-attainment of scenic quality ratings will persist.

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternatives 1, 3, and 6*

Relative to existing conditions, the changes to scenic quality with the Proposed Project (Alternative 1), Alternative 3, and Alternative 6 are expected to be similar, and the impacts are addressed together. For Alternatives 1 and 3, the buildings located closest to SR 89 are of similar height and design and buildings farther away from SR 89 are at a similar roof top elevation, but laid out differently as depicted in Figure 10-14. Alternative 6 also places shorter buildings closer to SR 89, and taller buildings farther away from SR 89; however, the buildings closest to the road under Alternative 6 are taller than similarly located buildings under Alternatives 1 and 3. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1), Alternative 3, and Alternative 6 include new structures that are visible from scenic resources and include recommended actions identified by the TRPA to improve the scenic quality of the area (TRPA 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Wagstaff and Brady 1983).

Alternative 3 will include the same uses identified under the Proposed Project (Alternative 1), but will result in a larger building area with additional structures due to reduced building heights. Compared to the Proposed Project (Alternative 1), four additional structures will be developed upslope of Buildings A and B at the North Base area. Two additional structures will be developed upslope of Buildings A and B at the South Base area.

Alternative 6 will include a different mix of uses proposed for Alternatives 1 and 3. More residential condominiums would be located at the North Base area and fewer hotel (TAU) units would be located in that area. At the South Base, single family residential lots would replace most of the condominiums proposed for Alternatives 1 and 3. Building D, which would be located along SR 89, would be longer and slightly taller under Alternative 6. Building heights would be taller as compared to Alternative 3, but fewer structures would be present.

As shown in Figures 10-5 through 10-8 and 10-10 through 10-13, the Project area is visible from Scenic Roadway Travel Unit 11 (Homewood) and Scenic Shoreline Travel Unit 12 (McKinney Bay). These units currently do not meet scenic quality thresholds for attainment (TRPA 2001, 2007). The Project area is located in TRPA Recreation Areas 20 (Ski Homewood) and 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl). Dense conifer forest is expected to obscure views of the South Base area from Lake Tahoe and SR 89, but the North Base area is visually prominent along SR 89. From Lake Tahoe, the North Base area is mostly obscured by existing shoreline development and conifer forest, and is minimally visible. The Mid-Mountain Base area is not visible from SR 89, but is partially visible through the conifer forest from one of the four analyzed viewpoints from Lake Tahoe. The Mid Mountain lodge and gondola top station are not visible from the three closest Lake Tahoe viewpoints because of intervening topography.

The TRPA recommends the following actions to improve scenic resources at HMR and to bring Scenic Roadway Travel Unit 11 (Homewood) and Scenic Shoreline Travel Unit 12 (McKinney Bay) into attainment (TRPA 1989a, 1993):

- Landscaping in and around parking lots and buildings;
- Reduce size and visual prominence of parking lots;
- Architectural improvements and cohesiveness, including the use of materials and designs to current design standards to complement the natural landscape;
- Removal of structures that do not meet design standards;
- Paint ski lift towers to reduce visibility;
- Relocation of maintenance facilities;
- Undergrounding utilities; and
- Signage improvements.

Table 10-9 analyzes the consistency of the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 with the recommendations listed above.

Variation in the location of the ski lifts, particularly the gondola, would not alter the visual character, particularly since many ski runs or portions of runs to remain in use would be rehabilitated and improved with vegetation. The bike path along SR 89 also would not result in a substantial visual change. The location of the path parallel to the



roadway and the proposed structures would reflect the travel corridor and the urban development. The addition of landscaping along the path would improve views while expanding the public viewshed. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of ski lift development or removal or the development of the bike path.

**Table 10-9**
**Evaluation of Consistency with Scenic Improvement Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Alternatives 1, 3, and 6 Improvement Actions</b>
1. Reduce visibility of parking lot with landscaping and size reduction	Most parking will be underground. Each Alternative will include 50 surface parking spaces at the North Base area located between the proposed retail uses in Building C and the skier drop off area at Building A. The lot will include landscaping around and within the lot, and will be mostly screened from SR 89 viewpoints by buildings fronting SR 89.
2. Landscape screening between residential and recreation areas	North and South Base area buildings and parking areas include landscaping to screen structures and complement the natural setting.
3. Underground utilities	Utilities on the site and along SR 89 will be placed underground.
4. Ski lift tower color improvements	Lifts located at the North Base area will either be removed or replaced. New lifts will conform to TRPA color guidelines.
5. Maintenance area relocation and screening	The maintenance area will be relocated to a screened area at the Mid-Mountain Base area.
6. Architectural improvements	Old structures will be removed and new structures will integrate the “Old Tahoe” architectural style with hipped/gabled roofs, dormers, exposed timber, and natural materials. New structures will be clustered and set at angles to reduce their visual prominence, complement the natural setting, and preserve views.
7. Screening between residences and ski area	North and South Base area buildings and parking areas include landscaping to screen structures and complement the natural setting. Tree removal is minimized.
8. Structures below tree canopy	As shown in the simulations, new structures are located below the tree canopy height.
9. Ridgelines	No facilities are proposed at a ridgeline or that visually obstructs or interrupts ridgeline views. The Mid-Mountain Base area is located on a slope, and where it is visible from Lake Tahoe, it is seen against a backdrop of a forested slope and ridgeline.
10. Non-reflective and appropriately hued building materials and colors	Natural materials and dark colors that conform to Chapter 30 – Design Standards (TRPA 1987) will be used on resort structures.

Source: HBA 2010

Roadway Unit 11 has an overall scenic quality rating of 2 (TRPA 1989a). Scenic quality rating indicators are rated 2 for unity and 1 for the remaining three indicators which include: 1) Unity – the extent in which a landscape feature can be described as cohesive, 2) Vividness – a memorable or distinct quality, 3) Variety – the intermixture of

interesting elements of a landscape unit, and 4) Intactness – the extent to which a landscape retains its natural condition. Based on the improvements to urban design within the Project area, the overall increase in building mass will not decrease existing scenic quality ratings, and the rating for variety will improve. The unity of the natural landscape can be described as intermixed with urban development. Under the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6, unity will not change substantially, as the site remains predominantly urban, but new landscaping and undergrounding utilities will result in improvement along SR 89.

The vividness of the area will not change substantially with the proposed development. Within the Project area, the distinct character is mixed-use development. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 will improve this indicator with architecture that meets TRPA Chapter 30 – Design Guidelines (TRPA 1987), complements the natural setting, and is enhanced with landscape improvements.

The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 will improve variety in Roadway Unit 11. The new buildings, relocation, and minimization of the parking lot, and landscaping will improve the quality of the urban character. The replacement of existing surface parking lots and existing structures with new buildings and landscaping that will have a cohesive architectural style and meet TRPA Chapter 30 – Design Guidelines (TRPA 1987) will increase interest for passing pedestrians and motorists. Intactness will remain the same. Undergrounding existing utilities and landscaping will also help maintain this indicator. Each Alternative may also remove informal parking along SR 89 used for boat trailers during summer by allowing adjacent marina businesses to store boat trailers in the proposed parking structure.

Implementing TRPA recommendations will enhance scenic quality at HMR (TRPA 1989a, 1993). Design improvements and architectural unity along with landscaping and utility undergrounding will improve the quality along SR 89. Unified structures with cohesive architectural character will replace the barren parking lot and mismatched buildings. The integration of landscaping with the structures will create visual interest while reflecting the natural vegetation and beauty of the Project area.

Table 10-10 documents the changes to scenic roadway and shoreline unit travel route ratings for Alternatives 1 and 3. Roadway Unit 11 will have a 2-point improvement to the threshold composite rating with the increased scoring for man-made features, roadway distractions, and landscape views. The man-made features travel route rating will improve from 2.5 to 3.5 as a result of the removal of man-made distractions including overhead utilities, the large non-landscaped surface parking lot, and the existing non-uniform and unsightly buildings (uses). This improvement is limited to 1 point because of the increase in overall man-made features, including buildings along SR 89 frontage. The landscape views rating will improve from 2 to 2.5 as a result of the proposed landscaping along SR 89. The roadway distractions travel route rating criteria will improve from 1 to 1.5 with redesigned access and pedestrian amenities along SR 89 that will improve pedestrian-auto safety.

Table 10-11 documents the changes to scenic roadway and shoreline unit travel route ratings for Alternative 6. Roadway Unit 11 composite will have a 1 point improvement for a slight increase in the scoring for man-made features and roadway distractions. The man-made features travel route rating will improve from 2.5 to 3.0 as a result of the removal of man-made distractions including overhead utilities, the large non-landscaped parking lot, and the existing non-uniform and unsightly buildings (uses). This improvement is limited to 0.5 point because of the increase in overall man-made features,

including linear building massing and height along SR 89 frontage. The roadway distractions travel route rating criteria will improve from 1 to 1.5 with redesigned access and pedestrian amenities along SR 89 that will improve pedestrian-auto safety. Other ratings will remain unchanged even though the overall project will replace aging and dilapidated structures with new and unified development. The increased massing of the buildings in Alternative 6 offsets some of the improvements that are realized under Alternatives 1 and 3.

The rating for Shoreline Unit 12 will remain unchanged as shown in Tables 10-10 and 10-11. The visible structures at the North Base area and Mid-Mountain Base area will not adversely impact the “man-made features” and “landscape views” ratings because the visible portion of the structures will not dominate existing views of shorezone vegetation in the foreground and the cleared ski resort trails located in the background. Views of the Project area from the shoreline (e.g., approximately 1,300 feet from the shoreline) will include glimpses of the structures at the North Base area through the trees and between existing shoreline buildings. The tops of the buildings will be below the existing tree canopy and the colors used on the structures will blend with the color of the surrounding trees and other vegetation.

**Table 10-10**

**Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternative 3 Scenic Roadway and Shoreline Unit  
Travel Route Ratings Changes**

	<b>Roadway Unit 11</b>		<b>Shoreline Unit 12</b>	
	Existing Rating	With Project and Alt. 3	Existing Rating	With Project and Alt. 3
<b>Man-made Features</b>	2.5	3.5	2	2
<b>Roadway Distractions</b>	1	1.5	--	--
<b>Road Structure</b>	3	3	--	--
<b>Lake Views</b>	1.5	1.5	--	--
<b>Landscape Views</b>	2	2.5	3	3
<b>Variety</b>	2	2	3	3
<b>Threshold Composite</b>	12.0	14.0	8	8
<b>Status</b>	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment

Sources: TRPA 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Hauge Brueck Associates 2009

**Table 10-11****Alternative 6 Scenic Roadway and Shoreline Unit Travel Route Ratings Changes**

	<b>Roadway Unit 11</b>		<b>Shoreline Unit 12</b>	
	Existing Rating	With Alt. 6	Existing Rating	With Alt. 6
<b>Man-made Features</b>	2.5	3	2	2
<b>Roadway Distractions</b>	1	1.5	--	--
<b>Road Structure</b>	3	3	--	--
<b>Lake Views</b>	1.5	1.5	--	--
<b>Landscape Views</b>	2	2	3	3
<b>Variety</b>	2	2	3	3
<b>Threshold Composite</b>	12.0	13.0	8	8
<b>Status</b>	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment

Sources: TRPA 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Hauge Brueck Associates 2009

The Mid-Mountain Base area will be visible from one of the four viewpoints from Lake Tahoe, which is located approximately 5,200 feet from the shoreline. The gabled roofs, exposed timber, and dark color of the proposed building blend well into the surrounding forested area and make the structure less dominant. However, the lodge will not be completely hidden by intervening topography or screened by trees. Although the structures at the base areas will not substantially alter views from the lake, they will increase the amount of man-made structures visible in the viewshed. Views of the rest of the mountain will remain relatively unchanged because of limited ski resort facility improvements and will see continued improvement to vegetative cover on the previously cleared ski runs based on the proposed on-mountain vegetation restoration program included in the Master Plan. However, without the introduction of large trees common in the adjacent forested areas, ski runs will remain visually prominent because of the color and texture contrast with the surrounding forests and will likely remain a prominent visual feature as long as HMR is operated and tree growth is restricted on ski runs.

The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 will result in changes to the Scenic Recreation Area ratings for TRPA Recreation Area Units 20 and 21. Building development will result in positive changes to man-made features. Removal of existing substandard structures and large expanses of surface parking, and the development of new buildings with a cohesive architectural theme that meets current design standards will improve ratings of coherence, condition, compatibility, and design quality to a level of 4. The addition of the Mid-Mountain area structures will create a new man-made feature. While the condition and design quality of the building will get high ratings, the placement and massing of the structure at a prominent location slightly reduce the coherence and compatibility ratings. The ski slopes and stream rating will not change (Units 20-4, 21-4, and 21-5). Little noticeable change will occur to the trees at the base slope or edge forest (Units 20-5 and 21-3) and the ratings to unity, vividness, variety, and intactness will be retained.

Views from the recreation areas (Units 20-1, 20-2, and 20-3, and 21-1 and 21-2) will experience change due to building development. Currently, there are few structures, particularly at the North Base area to obstruct views. Units 20-1 and 20-2 contain views across the parking lot, which consists of random buildings, pavement, scattered trees, and views of the treeless ski slopes. The presence of two-story (Alternative 1 and 3) and two- and three-story (Alternative 6) structures will limit views of the bottom slope area; however, these buildings will improve the overall unity, vividness, and variety of the view. This scenario will be the same for Units 21-1 of the South Base area parking lot and 21-2 of the South Base ski runs. Unit 20-3 addresses views from the mid-portion of the North Base area parking lot toward the lake. Views of the lake from this position will be more obscured by landscaping and structures; however, views of the lake from this point are already limited by existing shorezone development and vegetation screening. Unity and variety will increase while intactness will not change. While there are primarily positive changes, site alterations and presence of clustered structures in a relatively open area will result in future changes to areas that are defined as scenic units within the recreation area. Some of the existing units will cease to exist and will be replaced with new units and viewpoints. Overall, the existing ratings for Units 20 and 21 will not be adversely affected.

Development of the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 is expected to improve the scenic quality ratings of Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood), and Recreation Areas 20 (Ski Homewood) and 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl). The rating for Scenic Shoreline Travel Unit 12 (McKinney Bay) will not change, but the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 will increase the visibility of man made structures at the North Base and Mid-Mountain areas as viewed from Lake Tahoe. As such, the visibility of the Mid Mountain lodge from distant Lake Tahoe viewpoints should be reduced to ensure it stays visually subordinate to the natural landscape. Because of the potential for the Mid Mountain area lodge and gondola top station development to dominate the natural landscape, this impact is considered to be significant.

Mitigation: **SCENIC-2a. Slope Vegetation Management**

To reduce the prominence of man-made features as viewed from Lake Tahoe viewpoints, HMR shall implement management actions to improve the visual quality of the existing Face ski run (located just above the North Base area) as viewed from Lake Tahoe. These measures shall include vegetation management with the goal of matching vegetation patterns of the northern (dark green) portion of the ski run (as seen in Figures 10-5 through 10-7). The Face ski run has well established vegetation but is more visually prominent as viewed from Lake Tahoe when the vegetation is cut back on portions of the ski run and the vegetation color changes from dark green to light brown in color. During future permitting for vegetation management, HMR shall work with agency staff to develop procedures to ensure that the entirety of the Face ski run appears more uniform in color/texture when viewed from Lake Tahoe viewpoints.

**SCENIC-2b. Mid-Mountain Lodge Redesign**

The Mid-Mountain Lodge design shall be finalized with a goal of reducing the reflectivity of glass panes and roofing materials, and placement of landscaping to reduce its visibility from Lake Tahoe. Building materials shall be pre-approved by TRPA and Placer County planning staff consistent with existing design review guidelines. Natural materials and dark colors that conform to Chapter 30 – Design Standards (TRPA 1987) will be used on resort structures. Placement of new trees directly downslope of the



structure, as feasible among existing ski trails, will reduce its visual dominance from identified lake views.

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternatives 1, 3 and 6*

Implementation of Mitigation Measures SCENIC-2a and SCENIC-2b will address visual quality issues identified for the shoreline unit and reduce potential impacts to a level that is less than significant by maintaining the existing scenic quality ratings. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 would address several of the recommended actions in the SQIP to improve scenic quality, including landscaping, cohesive architecture, and undergrounding utilities. These improvements, along with avoidance or minimization of impacts from new development, will maintain or improve existing scenic quality ratings.

Analysis: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 4*

Alternative 4 will close HMR and create 16 residential estate lots and one commercial lot. The commercial lot will replace the parking lot at the North Base area adjacent to SR 89, while the residential lots will be located on the lower (eastern) portion of the Project area. The lots will accommodate one home per lot, leaving large natural areas between residences. No architectural plans identifying the size, style, or other features of the residences or commercial structure have been established; however, each structure will be subject to design review by TRPA for compliance with TRPA Codes and Ordinances Chapter 22 – Height Standards, Chapter 30 – Design Standards, and other applicable codes and policies (TRPA 1987, 1986).

Decommissioning HMR will result in the elimination of Scenic Recreation Areas 20 and 21 and therefore would not affect the recreation unit ratings. No ski lift additions or bike trails would occur under this alternative.

Views of the Project area from SR 89 will consist primarily of the commercial development proposed at the North Base area. Partial views of several new residences located above the North Base area will be likely. The commercial lot will include surface parking; however there is no detail established as to the location of parking, landscaping treatments, signage, architectural treatments, utilities, or other features that affect scenic quality ratings.

Alternative 4 would improve Scenic Roadway Unit 11 rating and would maintain Shoreline Unit 12 ratings as shown in Table 10-12 because of required compliance with TRPA Code and Design Guidelines as well as Placer County standards. Based on the likely improvements to the North Base area urban design through the use of “Alpine Elegance” architecture or other architectural features approved by the TRPA on a new commercial use, the overall increase in building mass will not decrease existing scenic quality ratings for Roadway Unit 11, and the rating for variety may improve.

Roadway Unit 11 will see at least a 1-point improvement to the threshold composite with the increased scoring for man-made features, roadway distractions, and landscape views. The Roadway Unit 11 man-made features travel route rating criteria will improve from 2.5 to 3.0 as a result of the removal of distractions including the large, barren parking lot, and the existing non-uniform and unsightly buildings. This improvement is limited to 0.5 point because the architecture and layout of Alternative 4 structures is unknown. The parking lot closest to SR 89 will be a commercial lot and built as one development, so the architecture and building relation and orientation will be in new condition and cohesive

based on the TRPA Design and Planning Statement Guidelines, which will improve the man-made features rating. With closure of the ski facilities, shrubs and conifer trees are expected to increase along ski runs, generally reducing the visual contrast between the ski runs and the forested areas and improving the landscape rating from 2 to 2.5 with vegetation restoration on the mountain.

**Table 10-12**
**Alternative 4 - Scenic Roadway and Shoreline Unit Travel Route Ratings Changes**

	Roadway Unit 11		Shoreline Unit 12	
	Existing Rating	With Alt. 4	Existing Rating	With Alt. 4
<b>Man-made Features</b>	2.5	3	2	2
<b>Roadway Distractions</b>	1	1	--	--
<b>Road Structure</b>	3	3	--	--
<b>Lake Views</b>	1.5	1.5	--	--
<b>Landscape Views</b>	2	2.5	3	3
<b>Variety</b>	2	2	3	3
<b>Threshold Composite</b>	12.0	13.0	8	8
<b>Status</b>	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment

Source: TRPA 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Hauge Brueck Associates, 2009

Changes in views from Lake Tahoe would consist primarily of new residences. With the closure of the HMR, the increase in vegetation on the hillside will reduce the appearance of erosion and scarring from active management of the ski trails. However, it is important to consider that estate residences will likely be designed to maximize views of the lake. This could result in the increased visibility of structures in the Project area from Lake Tahoe and potential for scarring as a result of cut and fill areas to take advantage of views, if design guidelines and standards are not followed. Windows and reflective materials may further alter the view, creating glare visible from the lake at certain hours of the day. There will be an opportunity to improve the shoreline unit view through vegetation restoration, and to avoid adverse visual effects by complying with TRPA Code and Design Guidelines and Placer County standards. Without designs of proposed homes or structural design and details for Alternative 4, it is assumed that structures will comply with design guidelines and standards to maintain the man-made feature rating of Shoreline Unit 12. Impacts associated with scenic ratings are therefore less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Analysis: *Significant Impact; Alternative 5*

Alternative 5 includes new structures that are visible from scenic resources and includes recommended actions identified by the TRPA to improve the scenic quality of the area (TRPA 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Wagstaff and Brady 1983).

Alternative 5 differs from the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3 and 6 by including 16 single-family residential lots and a small skier services structure in the South Base area, while the North Base area would be developed at a greater density with a hotel, residential condominiums, commercial and skier services, and a small surface parking lot. Residential condominiums and retail structures will be located closest to SR 89, with some surface parking, skier services and the hotel located behind these structures. Alternative 5 is more dense than Alternatives 1, 3, and 6 due to the more confined layout of residential structures at the North Base area and as a result, has greater height for buildings fronting SR 89. The Mid Mountain area would be the same as Alternatives 1 and 3.

Variation in the location of the ski lifts, particularly the gondola, would not alter the visual character, particularly since many ski runs or portions of runs to remain in use would be rehabilitated and improved with vegetation. The bike path along SR 89 also would not result in a substantial visual change. The location of the path parallel to the roadway and the proposed structures would reflect the travel corridor and the urban development. The addition of landscaping along the path would improve views while expanding the public viewshed. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of ski lift development or removal or the development of the bike path.

As shown in Figures 10-5 through 10-8 and 10-15 through 10-17, Alternative 5 is visible from Scenic Roadway Travel Unit 11 (Homewood) and Scenic Shoreline Travel Unit 12 (McKinney Bay). These units do not meet scenic quality thresholds for attainment (TRPA 2001, 2007). The Project area is located in Recreation Areas 20 (Ski Homewood) and 21 (Tahoe Ski Bowl). Dense conifer forest is expected to obscure views of the South Base area from Lake Tahoe and SR 89, but the North Base area is visually prominent along SR 89. From Lake Tahoe, the North Base area is mostly obscured by existing shoreline development and conifer forest, and is minimally visible. The Mid-Mountain Base area is not visible from SR 89, but is partially visible through the conifer forest from one of the four analyzed viewpoints in Lake Tahoe. The Mid Mountain lodge and gondola top station is not visible from the three closest Lake Tahoe viewpoints because of intervening topography.

The TRPA recommends the actions listed in Table 10-13 to improve scenic resources at HMR and to bring Scenic Roadway Travel Unit 11 (Homewood) and Scenic Shoreline Travel Unit 12 (McKinney Bay) into attainment (TRPA 1989a, 1993). Table 10-13 analyzes the consistency of Alternative 5 with the recommendations.

Roadway Unit 11 has an overall scenic quality rating of 2 (TRPA 1989a). Scenic quality rating indicators are rated 2 for unity and 1 for the remaining three indicators which include: 1) Unity – the extent in which a landscape feature can be described as cohesive, 2) Vividness – a memorable or distinct quality, 3) Variety – the intermixture of interesting elements of a landscape unit, and 4) Intactness – the extent to which a landscape retains its natural condition. Based on the improvements to urban design within the Project area, the overall increase in building mass will not change most existing scenic quality ratings, as discussed below, although the rating for intactness may worsen. The unity of the natural landscape can be described as intermixed with urban development. Under Alternative 5, unity will not change substantially, as the site remains predominantly urban, but new landscaping and undergrounding utilities will result in slight improvement along SR 89.

The vividness of the area will not change substantially with development. Within the Project area, the distinct quality is mixed-use development. Alternative 5 will improve

this indicator with architecture that meets TRPA Chapter 30 – Design Guidelines (TRPA 1987), complements the natural setting, and is enhanced with landscape improvements.

**Table 10-13**

**Evaluation of Consistency with Scenic Improvement Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Alternative 5 Improvement Actions</b>
1. Reduce visibility of parking lot with landscaping and size reduction	Most parking will be underground and surface parking would be located behind residential buildings that front SR 89. The surface parking lot will include landscaping around and within the lot, and will be mostly screened from SR 89 viewpoints by buildings fronting SR 89.
2. Landscape screening between residential and recreation areas	North Base area buildings and parking areas include landscaping to screen structures and complement the natural setting.
3. Underground utilities	Utilities on the site and along SR 89 will be placed underground.
4. Ski lift tower color improvements	Lifts located at the North Base area will either be removed or replaced. New lifts will conform to TRPA color guidelines.
5. Maintenance area relocation and screening	The maintenance area will be relocated to a screened area at the Mid-Mountain Base area.
6. Architectural improvements	Old structures will be removed and new structures will integrate the “Old Tahoe” architectural style with hipped/gabled roofs, dormers, exposed timber, and natural materials.
7. Screening between residences and ski area	North and South Base area buildings and parking areas include landscaping to screen structures and complement the natural setting. Tree removal is minimized.
8. Structures below tree canopy	As shown in the simulations, new structures are located below the tree canopy height.
9. Ridgelines	No facilities are proposed at a ridgeline or that visually obstructs or interrupts ridgeline views. The Mid-Mountain Base area is located on a slope, and where it is visible from Lake Tahoe, it is seen against a backdrop of a forested slope and ridgeline.
10. Non-reflective and appropriately hued building materials and colors	Natural materials and dark colors that conform to Chapter 30 – Design Standards (TRPA 1987) will be used on resort structures.

Source: HBA 2010

Alternative 5 will improve variety in Roadway Unit 11. The new buildings, relocation, and minimization of the parking lot, and landscaping will improve the quality of the urban character. The replacement of existing surface parking lots and existing structures with new buildings and landscaping that will have a cohesive architectural style and meet TRPA Chapter 30 – Design Guidelines (TRPA 1987) will increase interest for passing pedestrians and motorists. However, under Alternative 5, Intactness will not improve and may worsen. Undergrounding existing utilities and proposed landscaping improvements will help improve this indicator, but the additional massing and height of buildings proposed along SR 89 under Alternative 5 will dominate the views into the Project area and obscure the natural landscape to the west.

Table 10-14 documents the changes to scenic roadway and shoreline unit travel route ratings for Alternative 5. Roadway Unit 11 composite will remain unchanged but will see a slight increase in the scoring for man-made features, and slight decrease for landscape views. The man-made features travel route rating will improve from 2.5 to 3.0 as a result of the removal of man-made distractions including overhead utilities, the large non-landscaped parking lot, and the existing non-uniform and unsightly buildings (uses). This improvement is limited to 0.5 point because of the increase in overall man-made features, including substantial building massing and height along SR 89 frontage. The landscape views rating will decrease from 2 to 1.5 as a result of the building mass and height located along SR 89 and its effect on views of the natural landscape to the west of the North Base area. Other ratings will remain unchanged even though the overall project will replace aging and dilapidated structures with new and unified development. The overall massing of the buildings in Alternative 5 offsets the improvements that are realized under Alternatives 1 and 3.

**Table 10-14****Alternative 5 Scenic Roadway and Shoreline Unit Travel Route Ratings Changes**

	<b>Roadway Unit 11</b>		<b>Shoreline Unit 12</b>	
	Existing Rating	With Alt. 5	Existing Rating	With Alt. 5
<b>Man-made Features</b>	2.5	3	2	2
<b>Roadway Distractions</b>	1	1	--	--
<b>Road Structure</b>	3	3	--	--
<b>Lake Views</b>	1.5	1.5	--	--
<b>Landscape Views</b>	2	1.5	3	3
<b>Variety</b>	2	2	3	3
<b>Threshold Composite</b>	12.0	12.0	8	8
<b>Status</b>	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment	Non-attainment

Sources: TRPA 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Hauge Brueck Associates 2009

The rating for Shoreline Unit 12 will remain unchanged as shown in Table 10-14. The visible structures at the North Base area and Mid-Mountain Base area will not adversely impact the “man-made features” and “landscape views” ratings because the visible portion of the structures will not dominate existing views of shorezone vegetation in the foreground and ski resort trails located in the background. Views of the Project area from the shoreline (e.g., approximately 1,300 feet from the shoreline) will include glimpses of the structures at the North Base area through the trees and between existing shoreline buildings. The tops of the buildings will be well below the existing tree canopy and the colors used on the structures will blend with the color of the surrounding trees and other vegetation.

The Mid-Mountain Base area will be visible from one of the four viewpoints in Lake Tahoe, which is located approximately 5,200 feet from the shoreline. The gabled roofs, exposed timber, and dark color of the proposed building blends well into the surrounding



forested area and make the structure less dominant. However, the lodge will not be completely hidden by intervening topography or trees. Although the structures at the base areas will not substantially alter views from the lake, they will increase the amount of man-made structures visible in the viewshed. Views of the rest of the mountain will remain relatively unchanged because of limited ski resort facility improvements and will see continued improvement to vegetative cover on the previously cleared ski runs based on the proposed on-mountain restoration program included in the Master Plan. However, without the introduction of large trees, ski runs will remain visually prominent because of the color and texture contrast with the surrounding forests and will likely remain a prominent visual feature as long as HMR is operated and tree growth is restricted on ski runs.

Alternative 5 will result in changes to the Scenic Recreation Area ratings for Recreation Area Units 20 and 21. Building development will result in positive changes to man-made features. Removal of existing substandard structures and large expanses of surface parking, and the development of new buildings with a cohesive architectural theme that meets current design standards will improve ratings of coherence, condition, compatibility, and design quality to a level of 4. The addition of the structures at the Mid-Mountain Base area will create a new man-made feature. While the condition and design quality of the building will get high ratings, the placement and massing of the structure at a prominent location slightly reduce the coherence and compatibility ratings. The ski slopes and stream rating will not change (Units 20-4, 21-4, and 21-5). Little noticeable change will occur to the trees at the base slope or edge forest (Units 20-5 and 21-3) and the ratings to unity, vividness, variety, and intactness will be retained.

Views from the recreation areas (Units 20-1, 20-2, and 20-3, and 21-1 and 21-2) will experience change due to building development. Currently, there are few structures, particularly at the North Base area to obstruct views. Units 20-1 and 20-2 contain views across the parking lot, which consists of random buildings, pavement, scattered trees, and views of the denuded ski slopes. The presence of four-story structures will limit views of the bottom slope area; however, these buildings will improve the overall unity, vividness, and variety of the view. This scenario will be the same for Units 21-1 of the South Base area parking lot and 21-2 of the South Base ski runs, which will improve with the removal of surface parking and old lodge structures. Unit 20-3 addresses views from the mid-portion of the North Base area parking lot toward the lake. Views of the lake from this position will be more obscured by taller structures located closer to the Lake under Alternative 5 than under Alternatives 1 and 3. Unity and variety will increase while intactness will not change. While there are primarily positive changes, site alterations and presence of clustered structures in a relatively open area will result in future changes to areas that are defined as scenic units within the recreation area. Some of the existing units will cease to exist and will be replaced with new units and viewpoints. Overall, the existing ratings for Units 20 and 21 will not be adversely affected because the existing conditions at the base areas are so poor.

Development of Alternative 5 is expected to maintain the existing scenic quality ratings of Roadway Unit 11 (Homewood) and Shoreline Travel Unit 12 (McKinney Bay). However, Alternative 5 will increase the visibility and massing of man made structures at the North Base area compared to Alternatives 1 and 3 and will have similar impacts at the Mid-Mountain Base area. As such, the building massing and height of structures along SR 89 at the North Base area and the visibility of the Mid Mountain lodge from distant views in Lake Tahoe should be reduced to ensure it stays visually subordinate to the natural landscape. This is considered a significant impact.

Mitigation: **SCENIC-1a. Alternative 5 North Base Area Building Height Reductions**  
**SCENIC-2a. Slope Vegetation Management**  
**SCENIC-2b. Mid-Mountain Lodge Redesign**

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 5*

Implementation of Mitigation Measures SCENIC-1a, SCENIC-2a and SCENIC-2b will address visual quality issues identified for the shoreline unit and reduce potential impacts to a level that is less than significant by maintaining or improving the existing scenic quality ratings. Alternative 5 would address several of the recommended actions in the SQIP to improve scenic quality, including landscaping, cohesive architecture, and undergrounding utilities. These improvements, along with avoidance or minimization of impacts from new development, such as avoidance of tree removal or other natural features, are expected to maintain or improve existing scenic quality ratings.

**Impact: SCENIC-3. Will the Project create an unacceptable new light source or cause glare or affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

Analysis: *No Impact; Alternative 2*

No change from existing conditions will occur under the No Project (Alternative 2). Existing lighting fixtures, structural elements, and building materials will remain the same. Therefore, there will be no new light sources or glare that could change day or nighttime views. No impact will occur under the No Project (Alternative 2).

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Analysis: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternatives 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6*

Although a list of building materials is not defined, the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) will pursue LEED certification and will utilize green materials for the North Base mixed development area. This will include high efficiency, low reflective windows to reduce glare on-site. In compliance with the TRPA Design Guidelines (TRPA 1989b) and Placer County West Shore Area General Plan (County of Placer 1998), non-reflective roofing materials will be used. Landscaping trees and architectural elements such as balconies, overhangs, and shutters will reduce the overall visual presence, reflectivity, and glare caused by windows.

Windows can be reflective, and the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6 could result in a higher intensity of reflection since there are very few existing windows in the Project area. To avoid or minimize this effect, Alternatives 1, 3, 5, and 6 use setbacks and variations in the upper floor plan of most buildings, and overhangs and other architectural details to reduce reflectivity. Non-reflective glass may also be required based on compliance with TRPA and Placer County design standards. Designs for residential and commercial structures under Alternative 4 have not been developed; however, it is assumed these or similar architectural features would be used for residential estates because they must comply with TRPA Code and design guidelines and Placer County standards. Overall building development density will be much less under Alternative 4 than the other action alternatives.

Lighting fixtures will add glare and affect nighttime views in the Project area. Minimal lighting currently exists on the Project area, and the amount of lighting will substantially

increase with development under the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6. Lighting will be located on structures for safety and will be located at building entrance and exit locations, along the internal streets, at parking lot entrances and within the residential and commercial areas. The increased number of structures will increase the amount of light emitted within the Project area. Use of multistory landscaping, particularly tall trees and the preservation of tall trees on site will help to reduce negative effects of increased night lighting by screening lit views from the travel route and lake and reducing light splay. Because the types of fixtures and materials used, as well as their placement, must comply with TRPA Code and design guidelines and Placer County standards, this impact is considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

## 10.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

**Impact:** **SCENIC-C1: Will the Project have significant cumulative impacts to scenic resources?**

**Analysis:** *Less than Significant Impact; Alternative 2*

Various developments and redevelopments are proposed throughout the west and north shores of Lake Tahoe. Combined, these projects have the potential to improve the overall scenic quality of the area or greatly alter the natural character and scenic quality of the area. The No Project (Alternative 2) will not result in a change to existing conditions. Since no improvements will be made, the No Project (Alternative 2) will not contribute to a cumulative scenic benefit where a combined architectural and urban scenic quality is achieved. While it will not impede the ability of other projects to achieve this goal, it also will not contribute to that goal and retains the qualities that detract from scenic resources along the west shore and in the Basin.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

**Analysis:** *Significant Impact; Alternatives 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6*

The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6 will result in improvements to the west shore urban area along SR 89 and when combined with other projects in the Homewood area, has the potential to improve the overall urban character of the west shore. Existing development in the Project area detracts from the scenic quality with poorly designed and unattractive structures that reflect a lack of architectural unity and character, and that do not meet current TRPA design standards (TRPA 1989b, 1987). By redeveloping the Project area in the “Old Tahoe” style and implementing appropriate site design and landscaping, the Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6 will contribute to the trend toward traditional and characteristic architecture of Lake Tahoe and bring the site design into compliance with design standards and guidelines.

The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3, 4, 5, and 6 will include structures visible from Lake Tahoe. The Proposed Project (Alternative 1) and Alternatives 3, 5, and 6 will construct the Mid-Mountain Base area and Alternative 4 will result in new on-mountain estate residences visible from the lake. North Base area buildings will be partially screened by conifer trees and existing structures on the shoreline. However, the proposed structures will contribute to a general feeling of urbanization of the lake environment. While the visibility of one or two additional

structures at one location may not result in a considerable change in the overall views from the Lake on the west shore, the increased visibility of structures around the lake creates a noticeable effect. Combined with other nearby planned, proposed, or recently completed projects that may also be visible from the lake, the urban view will intensify and the natural beauty of the area must compete with these structures. This is considered a cumulatively considerable impact.

Mitigation: **SCENIC-1a. Alternative 5 North Base Area Building Height Reductions**  
**SCENIC-1b. Alternative 6 North Base Area Building Redesign**  
**SCENIC-2a. Slope Vegetation Management**  
**SCENIC-2b. Mid-Mountain Lodge Redesign**

After

Mitigation: *Less than Significant Impact; Alternatives 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6*

Implementation of the mitigation measures listed above will reduce the visual presence of structures from the lake view. Through implementation of recommended actions designed to improve scenic quality in the Project area (TRPA 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2007), elements of Alternatives 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are expected to maintain and improve the scenic quality ratings in the Project area. Implementation of scenic resource mitigation measures is expected to avoid or minimize potential adverse scenic quality impacts from new development, and therefore maintain scenic quality ratings. By making structures secondary to the natural environment and concealing their presence with appropriate design features and landscaping, the action alternatives will not contribute to an adverse cumulative impact on scenic resources.

## 10.6 REFERENCES

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