

3.3 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

This section describes the parks and recreation resources, uses, and facilities in the study area, as well as the regulatory and planning influences on parks and recreation. Potential impacts that could result from implementation of the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project are analyzed. This analysis of potential impacts includes the ability to access recreation areas from the tourist bed base in the Stateline/South Lake Tahoe tourist core, as suggested in scoping comments.

The primary sources of information used in the analysis are the relevant planning documents, including the Van Sickle Bi-State Park Master Plan and Tourist Core Area Plan in addition to others described below, as well as the following analyses conducted for the project:

- ▲ US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization (Stateline) Project – Caltrans Project Report Traffic Operations Analysis Update (Wood Rodgers 2016; included as Appendix I of this EIR/EIS/EIS);
- ▲ Section 3.7, “Visual Resources/Aesthetics”;
- ▲ Section 3.15, “Noise and Vibration”; and
- ▲ *Resources Evaluated Relative to the Requirements of Section 4(f) and Proposed De Minimis Determination* (included as Appendix D of this EIR/EIS/EIS).

The following issues were dismissed from further evaluation in this analysis because the project alternatives do not include construction of any recreation facilities:

- ▲ creation of additional recreation capacity,
- ▲ potential to create conflicts between recreation uses, and
- ▲ inclusion of recreation facilities or requirement to construct or expand recreation facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Note that issues relating to Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f) properties, which include publicly owned parks, such as Van Sickle Bi-state Park, are summarized in Chapter 4, “Other NEPA-, CEQA-, and TRPA-Mandated Sections,” and addressed in detail in Appendix D.

A number of plans and policy statements administered by federal, state, regional, and local agencies apply to the build alternatives. Relevant planning guidance used to evaluate the potential for park and recreation impacts resulting from project implementation are described below. The policies relevant to the build alternatives are summarized in Section 3.3.2, “Affected Environment.”

This section also describes the park and recreation resources, uses, and facilities in the study area, as well as the regulatory and planning influences on parks and recreation. Potential impacts of the build alternatives are analyzed, and mitigation measures are provided for those impacts determined to be significant.

3.3.1 Regulatory Setting

FEDERAL

Department of Transportation Act (Section 4(f))

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 states that a transportation program or project requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance can be approved only if there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land and if the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from the use to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site. To qualify as a park, recreation area, or refuge, a property must meet all of the following criteria: (1) must be public owned; (2) it must be open to the public; (3) its major purpose must be for park, recreation, or refuge activities; and (4) it must be significant as a park, recreation area, or refuge.

As described in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 774.13(f), trails, paths, bikeways, and sidewalks that are part of the local transportation system and that function primarily for transportation are an exception to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval. The Linear Parkway is determined to not be a Section 4(f) resource, because it is a dual-use facility that primarily serves as a shared-use path in the local transportation network. For these reasons, the Linear Parkway is not discussed further as a Section 4(f) resource here or in Appendix D, but is described below under Section 3.3.2, “Affected Environment,” and impacts on the Linear Park in the context of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA requirements are analyzed in Section 3.3.3, “Environmental Consequences.”

Because the build alternatives that would realign US 50, including the locally preferred action, would require acquisition of a strip of property from Van Sickle Bi-State Park—a property that meets the aforementioned criteria as a Section 4(f) resource—the project is subject to evaluation under Section 4(f). Depending on realignment alternative, an estimated 0.2 to 0.5 acre would be acquired along the frontage of Lake Parkway as part of the right-of-way acquisition process. As documented in Appendix D, “Resources Evaluated Relative to the Requirements of Section 4(f) and Proposed *De Minimis* Determination,” the project would likely result in a *de minimis* impact on Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Refer to Chapter 4, “Other NEPA-, CEQA-, and TRPA-Mandated Sections,” for more information about Section 4(f) issues related to the project.

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

Lake Tahoe Regional Plan

TRPA provides Basin-wide planning and policy direction related to recreation through its Regional Plan and related implementing ordinances and regulations.

Goals and Policies

The heart of the Regional Plan is the Goals and Policies, which are statements of policy to guide decision making as it affects the Tahoe Region’s resources and environmental threshold standards, and are intended to provide opportunities for orderly growth and development consistent with those threshold standards. The Goals and Policies are addressed in six major elements: land use, transportation, conservation, recreation, public services and facilities, and the implementation elements. The Recreation Element of the Regional Plan includes policies that provide for the development, utilization, and management of the recreation resources of the Lake Tahoe Region. Policies pertain to dispersed recreation activities in rural areas and developed recreation activities in urban and rural areas.

Area Plans

The concept of area plans was introduced with the adoption of the Regional Plan Update in 2012, wherein public agencies may prepare plans for their jurisdictions that are consistent with the Regional Plan and assume the responsibility for permitting. The area plans utilize new development allowances for increased

land use intensity in specific community centers. Area plans include development ordinances and zoning designations. These plans are subject to an initial conformance evaluation and ongoing implementation oversight by TRPA. Plan area statements (PASs), community plans, and use-specific master plans remain in effect in the Regional Plan (TRPA 2012b) until superseded by an area plan that is found in conformance with the Regional Plan. Two area plans have been adopted within the study area: the Tourist Core Area Plan (TCAP) in the study area in the City of South Lake Tahoe and the South Shore Area Plan (SSAP) in Douglas County. Because the TCAP and SSAP are developed and implemented by their respective local jurisdictions, they are further described under the “Local” section below.

Code of Ordinances

The TRPA Code of Ordinances (Code) is designed, among other things, to implement the Goals and Policies in a manner that attains and maintains the TRPA environmental thresholds. The Code addresses many subjects, including required permits for development, findings required for approval of projects, development standards, development allocations, resource management, water quality, air quality, and transportation. Chapter 50, Section 50.9 of the Code describes how TRPA regulates the expansion of recreation use in the Lake Tahoe Region by identifying targets for recreation use and regulating development to maintain them.

Environmental Threshold Carrying Capacities

TRPA has established TRPA threshold standards for nine resources, including recreation. The two recreation threshold indicators correspond to two policy statements in the Recreation Element of the TRPA Goals and Policies document (TRPA 2012b:5-1):

- Quality of Recreation Experience and Access to Recreational Opportunities.** It shall be the policy of the TRPA Governing Body in development of the Regional Plan to preserve and enhance the high quality recreational experience including preservation of high-quality undeveloped shorezone and other natural areas. In developing the Regional Plan, the staff and Governing Body shall consider provisions for additional access, where lawful and feasible, to the shorezone and high quality undeveloped areas for low density recreation uses.
- Fair Share Distribution of Recreation Capacity.** It shall be the policy of the TRPA Governing Body in development of the Regional Plan to establish and ensure a fair share of the total Region capacity for outdoor recreation is available to the general public.

The first threshold (i.e., Quality of Recreation Experience and Access to Recreational Opportunities) consists of two parts: (1) preservation and enhancement of a high-quality recreation experience and (2) the provision of additional public access to the lake and other natural features. To determine attainment of the first part of this threshold, TRPA relies on recreation user surveys conducted by recreation providers in the Tahoe Basin to determine whether the standard is being met. Such surveys compare the importance of an identified recreation attribute, such as recreation facilities and conditions, with the experience that the recreationists perceive. To determine attainment of the second part of this threshold, TRPA assesses the extent of public land acquired and the availability of additional amenities that provide public access for low-density recreation uses (i.e., trails and trailheads). Based on the majority of satisfied recreation users surveyed (85.7 percent), consistent increase in the amount of public land available for low-density recreation use, and the number of amenities that provide access to that land, the 2015 threshold evaluation determined that the threshold standard has been implemented and is in attainment (TRPA 2016).

The second threshold (i.e., Fair Share of Resource Capacity) is intended to ensure that a fair share of the Region’s outdoor recreation capacity is available to the general public. Three indicators provide a mechanism for evaluation of this threshold: cumulative accounts of recreation allocations (persons at one time [PAOTs]) when applicable; facility development for recreation projects that do not require PAOT allocations; and public acquisition of lands that support recreation purposes. Overall, the TRPA 2015 Threshold Evaluation Report concluded that an appropriate level of outdoor recreation facility development that is controlled by the PAOT capacity system has been planned (TRPA 2016).

Lake Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

Adopted in 2012, the Lake Tahoe 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), also known as *Mobility 2035*, was prepared by TMPO in 2012. The RTP lists transportation projects and strategies to improve mobility in the Tahoe Region and provide the opportunity for environmental gains related to the following categories: reduction in personal vehicle travel and attendant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; improved air quality; improved water quality; and enhanced recreation opportunities related to bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements. The RTP also includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), pursuant to California Senate Bill (SB) 375, Statutes of 2008, for the California portion of the Lake Tahoe Region to enable attainment of regional GHG reduction targets.

The US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project is included as part of the RTP as a Corridor Revitalization Project, described as follows:

US 50 would be realigned around the Stateline casino corridor area to the east, between Lake Parkway in Nevada and a location southwest of Pioneer Trail in California. The new US 50 alignment would include two travel lanes in each direction with left-turn pockets at intersections. Between Pioneer Trail and Lake Parkway within the casino corridor, US 50 would become a local street and would be converted to two lanes, one way in each direction, with a landscaped median and turn pockets at major driveways and intersections. Expanded sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and traffic signals would be installed to improve the flow of traffic, improve pedestrian safety, and encourage the use of non-auto transportation modes along the roadway (TMPO and TRPA 2012:4-6).

The 2017 Regional Transportation Plan (2017 RTP), which is an update to the 2012 RTP, and its joint CEQA/TRPA environmental document have been circulated for public review. The vision and goals of the 2017 RTP were based on the 2012 RTP. The projects listed in the 2017 RTP are substantially similar to those in the 2012 RTP, and the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project is included in both documents.

Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan

The Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization and TRPA adopted an active transportation plan that involves pedestrian and bicycle facilities with both recreation and transportation values. The *Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan* presents a guide for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining a regional active transportation network that includes innovative infrastructure, support facilities, and awareness programs. The infrastructure network includes on-street bike facilities such as bike lanes, bike routes, and intersection designs that promote safety and convenient travel for bicycling and walking. The network also includes off-street, shared-use paths and sidewalks that appropriately integrate with the roadway and existing and planned land uses. The ATP outlines goals, policies, and actions that support implementation of high priority projects and guides long-term planning that will transform Tahoe's transportation system. Among the network recommendations in the plan is a bicycle trail connecting from Stateline to Edgewood, as part of the Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway (TMPO and TRPA 2016:4-34).

STATE

California

Park Preservation Act

This project would affect facilities that are protected by the Park Preservation Act (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Sections 5400-5409). The Park Preservation Act prohibits local and state agencies from acquiring any property, which is in use as a public park at the time of acquisition unless the acquiring agency pays sufficient compensation or land, or both, to enable the operator of the park to replace the park land and any park facilities on that land.

The Linear Park is primarily used as a shared-use path and not a park. However, TTD would pay sufficient compensation for acquisition of land in the Linear Park (see discussion in Impacts 3.3-1 and 3.3-2) and would reconstruct a portion of the path as described in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives.” TTD would also pay sufficient compensation for acquisition of land in Van Sickle Bi-State Park in addition to reconstructing the park entrance, the pedestrian bridge, and other aesthetic treatments.

California Tahoe Conservancy

The California Tahoe Conservancy was created in 1984 to restore and sustain a balance between the natural and human environments for public and private uses at Lake Tahoe. The Conservancy provides grants to local governments and non-profit organizations for erosion control, public recreation and access, land acquisition, and other projects, and implements a mandate that, among other things, seeks to increase public access to the Tahoe Region’s natural recreational opportunities. In 2002 the Conservancy purchased the land in California that now provides public access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

Nevada

Nevada Division of State Parks

The Nevada Division of State Parks (NSP) plans, develops, and maintains a system of parks and recreation areas for the use and enjoyment of residents and visitors. NSP also preserves areas of scenic, historic and scientific significance in Nevada. Objectives of NSP are to:

- ▲ continue to manage, protect, operate and maintain existing and future units of the Nevada State Park System;
- ▲ acquire, plan for and develop a well-balanced system of areas of outstanding scenic, recreational, scientific and historical importance; and
- ▲ continue to manage and interpret the natural, cultural and recreational resources of the State Park System.

The NSP facility in the vicinity of the project is Van Sickle Bi-State Park, which is managed jointly with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) and the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) (NSP et al. 2005).

Van Sickle Bi-State Park Master Plan

Van Sickle Bi-State Park is located in California and Nevada in South Lake Tahoe/Stateline and is within a portion of the study area. The Van Sickle Bi-State Park Master Plan established the long-term vision and purpose of the park, which is to preserve the outstanding scenic and natural character, historical, archeological, ecological, geological, and other such values of statewide significance and to create opportunities for compatible types of recreation. Projects associated with Phase 1 of the master plan were completed in 2011 with the opening of the park and construction of an access road, utilities, day-use picnic areas, signage, parking and the stabilization of the historic barn and cabin. Future phases could include overnight camping, additional parking, additional trailheads, and a visitor center (NSP et al. 2005).

LOCAL

South Lake Tahoe Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan

The South Lake Tahoe Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan (MIG 2014), provides guidance for maintaining and enhancing parks, recreation facilities and trails for both visitors and residents. The plan discusses the vision for recreation in the City of South Lake Tahoe and eastern El Dorado County, as well as priorities for capital projects, operations, and maintenance of recreation facilities. Priorities listed in the plan that are directly related to the project include: extension of the South Tahoe Greenway Bike Trail, and improvement of bicycle and pedestrian crossings.

Area Plans

Tourist Core Area Plan

The City of South Lake Tahoe, in conjunction with and approval from TRPA, adopted the TCAP on October 15, 2013, which replaced the Stateline/Ski Run Community Plan of 1994 (City of South Lake Tahoe 2013a) in most places. The tourist core stretches approximately 2 miles along US 50 extending from Fairway Drive to the California and Nevada state line and along Ski Run Boulevard from Lake Tahoe to Pioneer Trail. This area functions as the primary visitor and tourist district in the City of South Lake Tahoe and provides direct access to recreation opportunities such as Heavenly Ski Resort, Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, Ski Run Marina, Lakeside Marina, and Van Sickle Bi-State Park. TCAP Policies applicable to the recreation are discussed in the individual impact sections below.

South Shore Area Plan

Douglas County, in conjunction with and with approval from TRPA, prepared and approved the South Shore Area Plan (SSAP) on November 21, 2013 (Douglas County and TRPA 2013). The SSAP replaced the Stateline Community Plan, Kingsbury Community Plan, and a portion of PAS 070A (Edgewood). The SSAP has been developed to build upon the concepts in the South Shore Vision Plan, as well as be consistent with the goals and policies in the 2012 TRPA Regional Plan. The SSAP includes four separate components that are integrated into Douglas County planning documents, including the Douglas County Master Plan, Zoning Map, Development Code, and Design Criteria and Improvement Standards.

City of South Lake Tahoe General Plan

The City of South Lake Tahoe adopted the 2030 General Plan on May 17, 2011. The 2030 General Plan is the city's policy document containing elements that guide land use, transportation, public facilities and services, recreation, natural resources, and other decisions in compliance with the TRPA Regional Plan. General Plan Policies applicable to recreation are listed briefly here and discussed in the impact sections below.

Recreation and Open Space Element

Goal ROS-1 of the Recreation and Open Space Element (City of South Lake Tahoe 2011:ROS-2 to ROS-3) is "To maintain and expand South Lake Tahoe's public park system and recreation opportunities to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors." The general plan accomplishes this goal through policies aimed at promoting full use of recreation facilities (ROS-1.1); improving access and connections to recreation opportunities (ROS-1.2); developing year-round recreation and athletic facilities (ROS-1.3); developing community pool facilities (ROS-1.5); developing playgrounds (ROS-1.11); neighborhood pocket parks (ROS-1.12); and joint-use park facilities (ROS-1.13); and encouraging the expansion and cultivation of community gardens and greenhouses as part of park areas (ROS-1.14). With regard to connectivity, the general plan contains policies for developing an interconnected system of public and private spaces as part of new development and redevelopment of existing sites (ROS-1.9) and requiring inclusion of public trails and plazas in the development and redevelopment of commercial, industrial, public, and multi-family projects (ROS-1.10). Specific facilities are also highlighted, with policies to expanding the Bijou Golf Course (ROS-1.4) and updating the Bijou Park Master Plan (ROS-1.7).

The full text of these goals and policies, along with a discussion of the project's consistency with the goals and policies, is included in Appendix E, "Goals and Policies Consistency Analysis."

Douglas County Master Plan

In addition to the SSAP, Douglas County has adopted a Master Plan, which covers the portion of the County containing the project site. The 15-year update of the Douglas County Master Plan was adopted on March 1, 2012. The Douglas County Master Plan contains several elements with issues, goals, policies, and actions for the future development within Douglas County, Nevada. The Parks and Recreation Element (Douglas County 2012:12), includes PR Policies 1.1 and 1.2 that support planning and providing for residents and visitors access to passive and active parks and recreation opportunities. The full text of these goals and

policies, along with a discussion of the project's consistency with the goals and policies, is included in Appendix E, "Goals and Policies Consistency Analysis."

3.3.2 Affected Environment

EXISTING PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The Lake Tahoe Region contains many facilities and resources that provide a wide variety of high quality recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. The existing recreation facilities and resources near the project site are shown on Exhibit 3.3-1 and described below.

Note that, although the U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) manages recreation facilities throughout the Basin, no project activities would affect properties managed by LTBMU.

Van Sickle Bi-State Park

Van Sickle Bi-State Park is located on the border between California and Nevada in South Lake Tahoe/Stateline and is within a portion of the project site. The park encompasses approximately 720 acres, with the majority of the park located in Nevada (approximately 570 acres). The park is dominated by a Jeffrey pine and white fir-mixed conifer forest with stream environment zones, historic buildings, large granite outcrops, and great views of Lake Tahoe. The park is situated between the casino corridor and Heavenly Ski Resort with the primary access for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles located at the intersection of Lake Parkway/Montreal Road and Heavenly Village Way. A second and less conspicuous pedestrian and bicycle access point is located directly across Lake Parkway from the entrance driveway to Harrah's; a small sign indicates access to the park at this location. Parking is available within the park near the main entrance (NSP et al. 2005). Exhibit 3.3-2 shows the location of existing park features.

The purpose of the park is:

to provide recreation facilities for local residents and visitors to the Lake Tahoe Basin while protecting and showcasing the unique scenic, natural, cultural, and historic features of the site. The park offers a unique opportunity to provide recreation facilities close to the urban casino core of Lake Tahoe where visitors can enjoy the outdoor environment of Lake Tahoe without having to drive from their accommodation (NSP et al. 2005:5).

Van Sickle Bi-State Park is within a short walking distance (about 0.1 mile) from the tourist core and resort-casinos. Currently, pedestrian access is available via a crosswalk at the stop-sign controlled intersection of Heavenly Village Way and Lake Parkway/Montreal Road. The vehicle entrance to the park is also located at this intersection. Existing trails in the park connect to the Tahoe Rim Trail via the Van Sickle Connector and Daggett Trail System. The Tahoe Rim Trail is a 165-mile long-distance hiking trail that forms a loop around the Lake Tahoe Basin that extends through California and Nevada.

The park also ties into the Conservancy-funded Explore Tahoe Urban Trailhead, though presently there is no direct connection (such as a path or signage) between the two locations. In the future, trails within the park will connect with the Conservancy's planned South Tahoe Greenway Shared-Use Path. Interestingly, the Greenway shared-use path alignment through Van Sickle Bi-State Park is located within former Caltrans right-of-way that was intended for a highway bypass but has since been relinquished to the Conservancy.

The park is a day use only facility, open sunrise to sunset. The park is open year round to pedestrians. Vehicle access to the park is limited to between May 1 and October 31, weather permitting. Total annual use at the park in 2012, 2013, and 2014 was 30,148, 51,462, and 44,797 visitors, respectively.

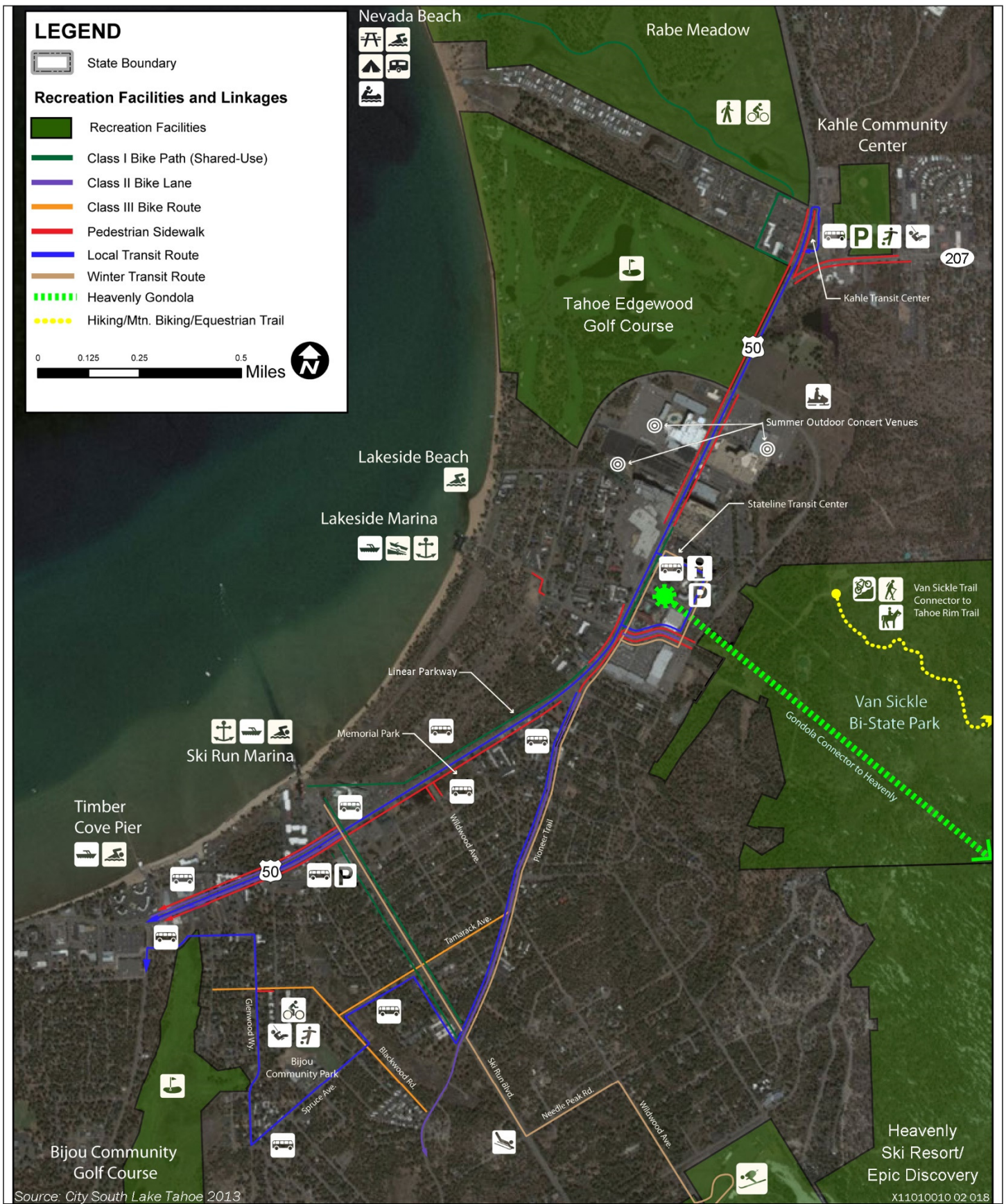


Exhibit 3.3-1

Existing Nearby Recreation Facilities

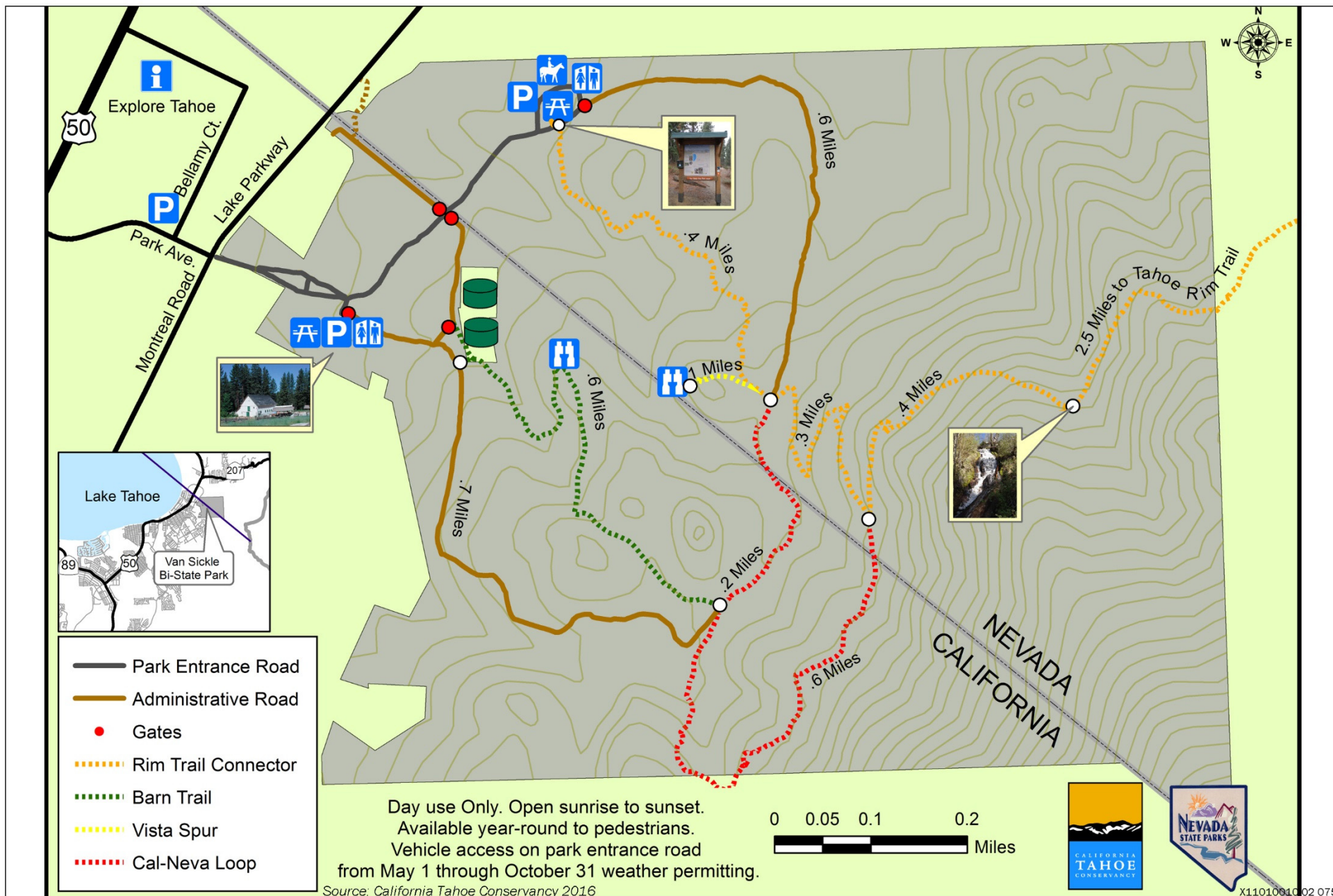


Exhibit 3.3-2

Existing Van Sickle Bi-State Park Features

Rabe Meadow

Rabe Meadow is located on National Forest System lands managed by LTBMU northwest of the project site and SR 207. This location provides dispersed recreation and contains public parking, restrooms, hiking and biking trails, and interpretative signage. Trails within Rabe Meadow connect to Nevada Beach and Round Hill Pines Resort along the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway. The shared-use path extending the length of Laura Drive is the latest component of the bikeway (constructed in 2015).

Linear Parkway

The Linear Parkway (Linear Park) is located within and directly adjacent to the project site. The Linear Park is approximately 2,400-feet long and begins at the end of the Tahoe Meadows historic residential community fence that fronts on US 50, near where Wildwood Avenue meets US 50, and extends east to the Holiday Inn Express driveway. This shared-use path system includes landscaping, a transit stop, benches, public art, and pedestrian lighting (City of South Lake Tahoe 2013a:6-4, 2014:13). The Linear Park is identified in various planning documents as a bicycle trail or a Class I Bicycle Path (City of South Lake Tahoe 2011:TC-13, MIG 2014:13, TMPO and TRPA 2016:2-4).

Lake Tahoe

Lake Tahoe is located outside of the study area. The project site is about four blocks from the Lake at its closest point. US 50 is about seven blocks from the Lake. Access to the Lake in the vicinity of the project site is via several existing streets to the Lakeside Beach and Marina. The beach and marina provide dispersed beach recreation, boat rentals, and a boat launching facility. Nevada Beach is the next closest public beach, located about 1 mile north on National Forest System land managed by LTBMU. It has overnight camping, day use areas, and dispersed beach recreational activities.

Kahle Community Center

The Kahle Community Center is located east of the project site on SR 207. The facility is operated by Douglas County and provides both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, including a gymnasium, weight room, indoor and outdoor tracks, climbing wall, athletic facilities, playground facilities, and picnic areas. The facility is used by residents of Douglas County and the City of South Lake Tahoe, as well as visitors to the area.

South Lake Tahoe Recreation Complex

The South Lake Tahoe Recreation Complex is operated by the City of South Lake Tahoe and contains an indoor/outdoor swimming pool, gymnasium, weight room, a playground, an indoor ice rink, and picnic area. The facility is used by both residents and visitors to South Lake Tahoe.

Heavenly Ski Resort/Epic Discovery

Heavenly Ski Resort/Epic Discovery is a year-round resort that operates on both private lands and National Forest System lands under a special use permit issued by LTBMU. The ski resort and summer features offered by the Epic Discovery facility are owned by Vail Resorts. The resort is located adjacent to the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project study area and is accessed within the study area via a gondola that is located at Heavenly Village. The resort provides winter activities such as skiing, snowboarding, and sightseeing; summer activities provided by Epic Discovery include ropes courses, zip lines, canopy tours, mountain biking, mountain coaster, and an aboveground sky cycle.

Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course

The Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course is an 18-hole course with a driving range, putting green, and a clubhouse with dining facilities and is located within the study area. The Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course is open to the public except during special events, such as the American Century Celebrity Championship.

Bijou Community Golf Course

The Bijou Community Golf Course is a 9-hole course with a putting green and is located west of the project site. The course is operated and maintained by the City of South Lake Tahoe.

Bijou Community Park

Bijou Community Park is a neighborhood park located west of the project site that contains a basketball court, volleyball courts, a skate park, a bike park, a disk golf course, and picnic facilities. This park is operated and maintained by the City of South Lake Tahoe.

3.3.3 Environmental Consequences

METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The evaluation of potential temporary and long-term impacts on recreation is based on a review of recreation-related plans and documents pertaining to the project site and study, site visits to observe recreation use, and consultation with public agency personnel. The information obtained from these sources was reviewed and summarized to understand existing conditions and to identify potential environmental effects, based on the significance criteria. The impact analysis considers the potential effects of project construction and operation on use of dispersed recreation resources and developed recreation facilities in the study area, including disruption of public access, increased demand for and physical deterioration of recreation facilities, and influence on the quality of the recreation user's experience in the study area.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

NEPA Criteria

An environmental document prepared to comply with NEPA must consider the context and intensity of the environmental effects that would be caused by or result from the locally preferred action. "Context" means that the significance of the action must be considered in terms of the region as a whole, affected interests, and the specific locality. "Intensity" refers to the severity of an effect.

Under NEPA, the significance of an effect is used solely to determine whether an EIS must be prepared. The factors that are taken into account under NEPA to determine the significance of an action—in terms of the context and intensity of its effects and, in this case, while also considering the TRPA and CEQA criteria—also include the effect to the recreation experience in the context of the study area as whole.

An alternative is determined to result in a significant impact related to recreation resources if it would:

- ▲ adversely alter or decrease the recreation resource values of the study area to the extent that recreation user experience or opportunity is substantially diminished.

TRPA Criteria

The "Recreation" criteria from the TRPA Initial Environmental Checklist were used to evaluate the recreation impacts of the project alternatives. Impacts would be significant if the project would:

- ▲ create additional demand for recreation facilities; or
- ▲ cause a decrease or loss of public access to any lake, waterway, or public lands.

CEQA Criteria

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, impacts relative to recreation would be significant if the project would:

- ▲ increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreation facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- ▲ include recreation facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreation facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Impact 3.3-1: Temporary disruption of public access to public lands and recreation areas

During the construction period, Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands (i.e., Van Sickle Bi-State Park, the Linear Park, and Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course) as a result of construction activities that could occur along US 50, Lake Parkway, and Montreal Road. Because the Linear Park is within the limits of mixed-use development Site 1 for Alternatives B and C, future redevelopment of this site could prolong the disruption in access to this recreation facility. Alternative E would result in temporary interference with pedestrian and vehicle access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course associated with the option to restripe Lake Parkway on the lake side of US 50. Alternative A would not result in disruption of public access.

NEPA Environmental Consequences: Mitigation Measure 3.3-1 has been incorporated into Alternatives B, C, D, and E to further reduce to the extent feasible temporary disruption of public access to public lands and recreation areas; No Impact for Alternative A

CEQA/TRPA Impact Determinations: Less Than Significant for Alternatives B, C, D, and E after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-1; No Impact for Alternative A

Based on a review of parks and recreation facilities in or near the project site, access to nearby recreation areas could be affected by the build alternatives in the following ways during construction.

Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Alternatives B, C, and D would involve construction-related activities along the new US 50 alignment immediately adjacent to and encroaching on Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Construction of the roadway and intersection improvements, sidewalk installation and improvements, and construction of the pedestrian bridge connecting the urban core and the park are all activities that could affect the park. These construction activities would temporarily disrupt access to the park for vehicles and pedestrians because of the physical barriers caused by construction and the necessary safety zones that surround construction activities using heavy equipment.

Linear Park. Alternatives B, C, and D would involve intersection and roadway construction along the existing US 50 alignment immediately adjacent to Linear Parkway on the west side of the project site. The construction of the relocated US 50/Pioneer Trail intersection and transportation improvements, along with the resulting safety zones around heavy equipment and during installation of signals at the intersection, may temporarily disrupt access to the eastern end of Linear Park for bicycles and pedestrians. Access would be maintained at the western end of the park during construction. Portions of the Linear Park would be narrowed and the shared-use path realigned to the northwest; however, where a realigned path would be constructed it would continue to be 8 feet wide (see Appendix N). Sections of the path would be relocated up to 1 foot away from the wrought iron fence around Tahoe Meadows. Depending on the alternative, between

seven and nine street lamps would be relocated within the Linear Park. The project would not affect public art or benches in the Linear Park and no changes would be made to the fence.

Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. Alternatives B, C, D, and E include an option to restripe Lake Parkway between existing US 50 and Stateline Avenue from two lanes to four lanes; restriping activities would occur immediately in front of the entrance to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. The restriping would not require expanding the roadway width to accommodate the additional lanes. During the restriping process, both pedestrian and vehicle access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course might be disrupted, depending on the timing of the work. However, because the restriping would take less than 4 days to complete in its entirety, interference with pedestrian and vehicle access on this portion of Lake Parkway would be short-term and minimized through implementation of the Transportation Management Plan as discussed in Impact 3.6-6 in Section 3.6, “Traffic and Transportation.”

Heavenly Ski Resort/Epic Discovery. Direct access to Heavenly Ski Resort and Epic Discovery from the study area is provided by the gondola that operates from Heavenly Village. Although Alternatives B, C, and D would involve intersection and roadway construction between Heavenly Village and Heavenly Ski Resort/Epic Discovery, none of the activities would be expected to disrupt access to or operation of the gondola, or access to these mountain top features.

Alternative A: No Build (No Project)

Alternative A would not include any construction-related activities in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, public lands, and/or recreation areas. Therefore, no temporary disruption to public access would result. Alternative A would result in **no impact** on public access for the purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Alternative B: Triangle (Locally Preferred Action)

Transportation Improvements

Alternative B transportation improvements would include construction in the immediate vicinity of Van Sickle Bi-State Park, Linear Park, and Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. These construction activities would produce temporary disruption in access to these recreation facilities. Taken as a whole, the temporary disruptions discussed above for Alternative B would have a short-term **significant** impact on public access to recreation areas and public lands for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into the transportation improvements included in Alternative B to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative B would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives”). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. None of the three mixed-use development sites are located on or adjacent to any recreation area or public lands not already affected by the proposed highway realignment. However, mixed-use development Site 1 includes portions of the existing Linear Park. It is likely that the future construction at this site could create a temporary disruption to public access to this park that could affect a larger portion of the park or could occur over a longer period. Therefore, this impact would be similar to but more intensive than that described previously for implementation of the transportation improvements. Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a short-term **significant** impact for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into the mixed-use development including replacement housing in Alternative B to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative B transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **significant** impact related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into construction of the Alternative B transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Alternative C: Triangle One-Way

Transportation Improvements

As with Alternative B, Alternative C transportation improvements would include construction in the immediate vicinity of Van Sickle Bi-State Park, Linear Park, and Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. These construction activities would produce temporary disruption in access to these recreation facilities. Taken as a whole, the temporary disruptions discussed above for Alternative C would have a short-term **significant** impact on public access to recreation for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into the transportation improvements included in Alternative C to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative C would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, "Proposed Project and Project Alternatives"). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing would have the same impacts as discussed for Alternative C transportation improvements. As with Alternative B, future construction at mixed-use development Site 1 has the potential to create a temporary disruption to public access to the Linear Park that could affect a larger portion of the park or could occur over a longer period than the transportation improvements alone. This impact would be the same as that described above for Alternative B because project construction with Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing would be located mostly in the same locations and would include the same construction effects as Alternative B. For the reasons discussed above, this impact would be **significant** for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into the mixed-use development including replacement housing in Alternative C to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative C transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **significant** impact related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into construction of the Alternative C transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Alternative D: Project Study Report Alternative 2

Transportation Improvements

Alternative D transportation improvements would result in construction activities in the same locations as Alternative B, except in the residential area just west of the Heavenly Village Center; this area does not include any additional recreation areas or public lands used for recreation purposes that are not already affected (see Exhibit 3.3-1) by the roadway improvements. Taken as a whole, the temporary disruptions associated with Alternative D would have a short-term **significant** impact on public access to recreation areas and public lands for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into the transportation improvements included in Alternative D to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative D would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, "Proposed Project and Project Alternatives"). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing would have similar impacts as discussed for Alternative B with mixed-use development. None of the mixed-use sites associated with Alternative D include the Linear Park or other recreation areas. Therefore, the redevelopment of these sites alone would not be expected to disrupt access to such recreation. For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing would have a **less-than-significant** impact related to temporary impacts on public access to recreation areas and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the mixed-use development including replacement housing for Alternative B would avoid or minimize the temporary impacts on public access to recreation areas and

public lands environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **significant** impact related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into construction of the Alternative D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Alternative E: Skywalk

Implementation of Alternative E would result in development of a raised concrete deck over the entire width and length of the existing US 50 ROW between Stateline Avenue and the northern end of the Montbleu Resort, which would be used by pedestrians. As described above under “Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course,” Alternative E includes an option to restripe Lake Parkway in front of Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, which could temporarily interfere with pedestrian and vehicle access to Edgewood. Alternative E would not include any other construction-related activities in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, public lands, and/or recreation areas. However, interference with pedestrian and vehicle access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course from Alternative E would result in a **significant** impact on public access to recreation for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into construction of the skywalk for Alternative E to further reduce to the extent feasible the environmental consequences related to temporary disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands.

Impact 3.3-2: Long-term change in public access to public lands and recreation areas

Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would include improvements that facilitate enhanced access from the tourist core by creating an improved setting for walking and bicycling throughout the core area. Alternatives B, C, and D would increase public access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park and/or Linear Park as a result of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge over realigned US 50 that would increase connectivity for visitors to the tourist core. Alternatives B, C, D, and E would not result in a long-term decrease in public access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, because of the option to restripe Lake Parkway west of existing US 50, which would occur within the existing road footprint.

NEPA Environmental Consequences: The design features of Alternatives B, C, and D would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement; No Impact for Alternatives A and E

CEQA/TRPA Impact Determinations: Beneficial for Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing; No Impact for Alternatives A and E

Based on a review of parks and recreation facilities in or near the project site, permanent access to nearby recreation areas could be affected by the build alternatives in the following ways.

Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Providing enhanced access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park is one of the basic project objectives (see Chapter 1, “Introduction”). Alternatives B and D include the realignment of US 50 right-of-way along the existing Montreal Road and Lake Parkway and widening the existing roadway from two lanes to four lanes, which would increase traffic adjacent to the entrance to Van Sickle Bi-State Park from current conditions and the No Project Alternative (Wood Rodgers 2016). Alternative C would also realign the westbound US 50 right-of-way along the existing Montreal Road and Lake Parkway, although this alternative would not increase the number of lanes over the existing roadway. Alternative C would increase traffic over current conditions and the No Project Alternative (Wood Rodgers 2016).

Alternatives B, C, and D would provide a new, grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle bridge over the realigned US 50 from the tourist core to Van Sickle Bi-state Park near the state line. This would become a new gateway to the park for visitors from the tourist core. Alternatives B, C, and D also include improved signage, paths and trails for bicycles and pedestrians, and two signalized at-grade crosswalks at existing park access points (the crossing near the entrance to Harrah’s has no traffic control, and the existing Heavenly Village Way/Lake Parkway intersection is stop sign controlled). These improvements would better connect Van Sickle Bi-State Park to the tourist core and would make access safer and easier for pedestrians and bicyclists. This would result in beneficial impact on long-term access to the park.

Linear Park. Alternatives B, C, and D would involve intersection and roadway construction along US 50 immediately adjacent to the Linear Park on the west side of the project site. Construction of the new US 50/Pioneer Trail intersection and transportation improvements would require acquisition of somewhere between 0.08 and 0.09 acre, depending on alternative, of the landscaped area and would reduce the width of the Linear Park in certain locations, and would realign a section of the Linear Park Bike Trail (see Appendix N). These alternatives would also include installation of a split rail barrier fence to separate the Linear Park from US 50 in certain locations where the path would be closest to the highway and would not meet minimum separation distances. The proposed transportation improvements and barrier fence would not decrease long-term access to the Linear Park and would retain the width of the existing 8-foot path. Alternatives B, C, and D, provide opportunities for connecting the Linear Park Bike Trail to pedestrian and bicycle facilities through the tourist core to the future segment of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway alignment beginning at the corner of Lake Parkway and US 50.

Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. Alternatives B, C, D, and E include an option to restripe Lake Parkway immediately in front of Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course as described previously. No widening of the roadway would be needed to accommodate the restriping. Restriping this stretch of Lake Parkway would eliminate existing bicycle lanes and roadside parking that is used during special events at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, such as the American Century Celebrity Championship, and at the resort-casinos; however, the existing sidewalk would maintain pedestrian access to the facility. The restriping of the road to four lanes would not impede pedestrian access across the road, as no crosswalk currently provides access across Lake Parkway in this area. Pedestrian crossing could still occur at the US 50/Lake Parkway or Stateline Avenue/Lake Parkway intersections as is provided today. The additional lanes would not impede pedestrian access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course in the long term. Because there would continue to be a sufficient amount of parking at nearby casinos to meet the parking demand during special events at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course (see Impacts 3.6-9 and 3.6-10 in Section 3.6, “Traffic and Transportation”), the loss of on-street parking along Lake Parkway would not result in long-term reduction or interference with public access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course.

Heavenly Ski Resort/Epic Discovery. Alternatives B, C, and D would involve intersection and roadway construction between Heavenly Village and Heavenly Ski Resort/Epic Discovery. These construction activities would not limit public access to these facilities, which are accessed from the project site by the gondola. During winter, off-piste skiing from Heavenly Ski Resort allows skiers to descend into Van Sickle Bi-State

Park. Access to the tourist core for these skiers would be improved with implementation of the pedestrian bridge and signalized crossings over the realigned US 50.

Alternative A: No Build (No Project)

Alternative A would not include any infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, public lands, and/or recreation areas. Therefore, no long-term decrease in public access would result. Alternative A would result in **no impact** on long-term public access to recreation for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Alternative B: Triangle (Locally Preferred Action)

Transportation Improvements

Alternative B transportation improvements would include widening of the roadway and improvements that would enhance access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park (e.g., new pedestrian bridge, two signalized at-grade crossings, and sidewalks). The encroachment into the park, ranging between 20 feet at the pedestrian bridge to 110 feet at the park entrance (acquisition of about 0.5 acre), would not preclude park access. Similarly, this alternative would not decrease public access to the Linear Park, although 0.088 acres of the park would be acquired for the project and 536 feet of the bike trail would be realigned. With implementation of Alternative B, the Linear Park Bike Trail would be connected to the tourist core through either a new cycle track between Park Avenue and Lake Parkway on the west side of existing US 50 or bicycle lanes. Alternative B transportation improvements would not decrease access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course or Lakeside Marina. Taken as a whole, Alternative B transportation improvements would have a **beneficial** impact on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, design features of the transportation improvements included in Alternative B would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative B would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives”). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. None of the three mixed-use development sites, which are being considered for replacement housing, are located on or adjacent to any recreation area or public lands not already affected by the proposed transportation improvements. However, mixed-use development Site 1 includes portions of the existing Linear Park. The Linear Park would be retained through Site 1 with Alternative B and access would not be decreased. Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing would have **no impact** on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the replacements housing with Alternative B would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for long-term changes to public access to recreation areas and public lands as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts on long-term changes to public access would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative B transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing at one or more of the mixed-use development sites would have a **beneficial** impact on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing at the mixed-use development sites as part of Alternative B would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative C: Triangle One-Way

Transportation Improvements

As with Alternative B, Alternative C transportation improvements would include widening of the roadway and improvements that would enhance access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park (e.g., new pedestrian bridge, two signalized at-grade crossings, and sidewalks). The encroachment into the park, up to 85 feet near the park entrance (acquisition of about 0.2 acres), would not preclude park access. This alternative would not decrease public access to the Linear Park, although 0.088 acres of the park would be acquired for the project and 536 feet of the bike trail would be realigned. With implementation of Alternative C, the Linear Park Bike Trail would be connected to the tourist core by bicycle lanes carrying eastbound bicyclists and along the new westbound US 50 with westbound cyclists; connectivity would be enhanced, albeit, with more cumbersome travel patterns for cyclists. Alternative C transportation improvements would not decrease access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course or Lakeside Marina. Taken as a whole, Alternative C would have a **beneficial** impact on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, design features of the transportation improvements included in Alternative C would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative C would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives”). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. None of the three mixed-use development sites are located on or adjacent to any recreation area or public lands not already affected by the proposed highway realignment. However, mixed-use development Site 1 includes portions of the existing Linear Park. The Linear Park would be retained through Site 1 with Alternative C and access would not be decreased. Alternative C would have **no impact** on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands even with development at the three mixed-use sites for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the replacements housing with Alternative C would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for long-term changes to public access to recreation areas and public lands as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts on long-term changes to public access would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement

housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative C transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing at one or more of the mixed-use development sites would have a **beneficial** impact on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing at the mixed-use development sites as part of Alternative C would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative D: Project Study Report Alternative 2

Transportation Improvements

As with Alternative B, Alternative D transportation improvements would include widening of the roadway and improvements that would enhance access and the entry experience to Van Sickle Bi-State Park (e.g., new pedestrian bridge, enhanced entranceway, landscape improvements, aesthetic treatments of retaining walls along US 50, two signalized at-grade crossings, and sidewalks). The encroachment into the park, ranging between 20 feet at the pedestrian bridge to 110 feet at the park entrance (acquisition of about 0.5 acres), would not preclude park access. This alternative would not decrease public access to the Linear Park, although 0.076 acres of the park would be acquired for the project and 1,069 feet of the shared-use path would be realigned. With implementation of Alternative D, the Linear Park Bike Trail would be connected to the tourist core with the addition of new bicycle lanes. Alternative D transportation improvements would not decrease access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course or Lakeside Marina. Taken as a whole, Alternative D would have a **beneficial** impact on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

Because of the reasons stated above, for the purposes of NEPA, the environmental consequences of implementing Alternative D transportation improvements **would not be adverse**.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative D would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, "Proposed Project and Project Alternatives"). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. None of the three mixed-use development sites are located on or adjacent to any recreation area or public lands not already affected by the proposed highway realignment. Alternative D would have **no impact** on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands even with development at the three mixed-use sites for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the replacements housing with Alternative D would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for long-term changes to public access to recreation areas and public lands as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts on long-term changes to public access would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement

housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing at one or more of the mixed-use development sites would have a **beneficial** impact on long-term public access to Lake Tahoe, recreation areas, and public lands.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing at the mixed-use development sites as part of Alternative D would avoid or minimize long-term changes in public access to public lands and recreation areas such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative E: Skywalk

Implementation of Alternative E would result in development of a raised concrete deck over the entire width and length of the existing US 50 ROW between Stateline Avenue and the northern end of the Montbleu Resort, which would be used by pedestrians. The skywalk and the option to restripe the lake side of Lake Parkway from two to four lanes proposed for Alternative E would not result in a long-term decrease in public access to recreation facilities would result. Alternative E would result in **no impact** on public access to recreation for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Impact 3.3-3: Increased demand for or physical deterioration of recreation facilities

To offset displacement of low- and moderate-income housing units acquired to accommodate project construction, Alternatives B, C, and D propose to construct replacement housing as part of mixed-use development at three locations within the South Lake Tahoe portion of the project site. If the number of housing units that are constructed is equivalent to those displaced, there would be no net increase in demand for recreation facilities, physical deterioration of the study area recreation facilities would not increase, and additional recreation resources would not be required.

However, the mixed-use development at Sites 1, 2, and 3 as conceptualized in Alternatives B, C, and D could include construction of additional housing units above and beyond those necessary to replace units displaced by the project. Alternative B could result in a net increase of 139 housing units, Alternative C an additional 144 housing units, and Alternative D an additional 132 housing units. Because the type of higher density development and recreation demand associated with the mixed-use development including replacement housing has already been contemplated in the TCAP environmental review and Regional Plan, Alternatives B, C, and D would not substantively increase demand for recreation facilities, increase physical deterioration, or require additional recreation resources.

Alternatives A and E would not include mixed-use development and the Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would not result in an increase in demand for recreation facilities, physical deterioration of the study area recreation facilities would not increase, and additional recreation resources would not be required.

NEPA Environmental Consequences: The design features of Alternatives B, C, and D would avoid or minimize the recreation demand environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement; No Impact for Alternatives A and E

CEQA/TRPA Impact Determinations: Less-Than-Significant for Alternatives B, C, and D; No Impact for Alternatives A and E

Alternative A: No Build (No Project)

Alternative A does not include a mixed-use development option. As a result, Alternative A would not increase the number of residents in the study area and would result in **no impact** on the demand for or physical deterioration of recreation facilities for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Alternative B: Triangle (Locally Preferred Action)**Transportation Improvements**

Alternative B transportation improvements would also result in enhancing pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in the study area and to nearby recreation resources, such as the Van Sickle Bi-State Park. The new pedestrian bridge extending over US 50 at a point just west of the Harrah's entrance driveway would provide an additional access point to the Van Sickle Bi-State Park from the tourist core. However, the visitors to the park via the pedestrian bridge would be part of the same group of people staying in or visiting the tourist core that currently use the access at the main entrance to the park at the intersection of Lake Parkway/Montreal Road/Heavenly Village Way. Alternative B transportation improvements would not increase the number of people in the study area that could visit the park over that which could occur today under existing conditions. With no increase in housing units, the project would not increase the number of residents in the study area over existing conditions. Therefore, demand for recreation facilities would not increase over that which could occur under existing conditions, physical deterioration of study area recreation facilities would not increase, and additional recreation resources would not be required. For this reason, Alternative B transportation improvements would result in **no impact** on the demand for or physical deterioration of recreation facilities for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative B would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, "Proposed Project and Project Alternatives"). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. Implementation of Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing could increase the number of residents in the study area over existing conditions. Based on the study area's average household size of 2.28 persons per household (see Section 3.4, "Community Impacts"), Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing would increase the population in the study area by an estimated 317 people [(227 total housing units – 88 displaced units = 139 additional units) x 2.28 = 316.9 people].

The potential for an increase in number and concentration of high-density housing units and mixed-use land uses within the study area, such as would result from Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing, was assessed by the City of South Lake Tahoe for the TCAP environmental document (City of South Lake Tahoe 2013b:6) and in the Regional Plan Update EIS (TRPA 2012a:3.11-17 – 3.11-19). Along with the assessment of an increase in housing units and related population increase, those environmental documents also assessed the potential for the increase in population in this area to create additional demand for recreation resources.

The TCAP environmental document states that future development within its boundaries could generate additional demand for recreation resources by increasing the concentration of residents in the area, and that numerous recreation opportunities in and near the tourist core could meet that potential increase in demand (City of South Lake Tahoe 2013b:135 – 136, 138 – 140). The TCAP also includes policies and implementing strategies to support development of new recreation opportunities and enhance public transit, bicycling, and pedestrian linkages to recreation uses in and beyond the boundaries of the TCAP. For example, Policy R-5.1 would require projects of more than 50,000 square feet to provide public gathering spaces for community activities. As discussed in Section 3.3.1 above, the City of South Lake Tahoe General Plan also contains policies that encourage development of neighborhood parks, expansion of city-owned facilities such as Bijou Community Golf Course and Bijou Park, and connectivity by requiring public trails in

private developments. Although Alternative B mixed-use development, including replacement housing, could result in an increase in residents, for the reasons discussed above, it would not substantively increase demand for recreation facilities, increase physical deterioration, or require additional recreation resources. Therefore, Alternative B mixed-use development, including replacement housing, would result in a **less-than-significant** impact for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the mixed-use development including replacement housing as part of Alternative B would avoid or minimize the potential increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for an increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential increase in recreation demand and associated impacts would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative B transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **less-than-significant** impact related to an increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing as part of Alternative B would minimize the increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative C: Triangle One-Way

Transportation Improvements

Alternative C transportation improvements would provide an additional access point to Van Sickle Bi-State Park. The Alternative C transportation improvements would not with no increase in housing units, the project would not increase the number of residents in the study area over existing conditions. Therefore, demand for recreation facilities would not increase, physical deterioration of study area recreation facilities would not increase, and additional recreation resources would not be required. For this reason, Alternative C transportation improvements would result in **no impact** on the demand for or physical deterioration of recreation facilities for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative C would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives”). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. Implementation of Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing could increase the number of residents in the study area over existing conditions. Based on the study area’s average household size of 2.31 persons per household (see discussion in Section 3.4, “Community Impacts”), Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing would increase the population in the study area by an estimated 328 people [(227 total housing units – 83 displaced units = 144 additional units) x 2.28 = 328.3 people]. As discussed for Alternative B above, this increase in residents and the potential for increased demand for recreation were previously assessed in the TCAP and Regional Plan Update environmental documents.

As with Alternative B, the TCAP environmental document states that, while an increase in demand for recreation facilities would be likely, existing recreation facilities would be able to meet that demand. Also, as with Alternative B, mixed-use development would occur within the regulatory framework of the TCAP and the City of South Lake Tahoe General Plan, and that development would be subject to the same policies with regard to recreational opportunities. Although Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in an increase in residents in the study area, for the reasons discussed above, it would not substantively increase demand for recreation facilities, increase physical deterioration of those facilities, or require additional recreation resources. Therefore, Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **less-than-significant** impact for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the mixed-use development including replacement housing as part of Alternative C would avoid or minimize the potential increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for an increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential increase in recreation demand and associated impacts would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative C transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **less-than-significant** impact related to an increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing as part of Alternative C would minimize the increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative D: Project Study Report Alternative 2

Transportation Improvements

Alternative D transportation improvements would provide another access point to Van Sickle Bi-State Park with the new pedestrian bridge; however, it would not increase demand for the park for the same reasons described above for Alternative B transportation improvements. Therefore, demand for recreation facilities would not increase, physical deterioration of study area recreation facilities would not increase, and additional recreation resources would not be required. For this reason, Alternative D transportation improvements would result in **no impact** on the demand for or physical deterioration of recreation facilities for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative D would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives”). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. Implementation of Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing could increase the number of residents in the study area over existing conditions. Based on the study area’s average household size of 2.31 persons per household (see discussion in Section 3.4, “Community Impacts”), Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing would increase the

population in the study area by an estimated 333 people [(224 total housing units – 78 displaced units = 146 additional units) x 2.28 = 332.9 people]. As discussed for Alternative B above, this increase in residents and the potential for increased demand for recreation were previously assessed in the TCAP and Regional Plan Update environmental documents.

As with Alternative B, the TCAP environmental document states that, while an increase in demand for recreation facilities would be likely, existing recreation facilities would be able to meet that demand. Also, as with Alternative B, mixed-use development would occur within the regulatory framework of the TCAP and the City of South Lake Tahoe General Plan, and that development would be subject to the same policies with regard to recreational opportunities. Although Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in an increase in residents in the study area, for the reasons discussed above, it would not substantively increase demand for recreation facilities, increase physical deterioration of those facilities, or require additional recreation resources. Therefore, Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **less-than-significant** impact for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the mixed-use development including replacement housing as part of Alternative D would avoid or minimize the potential increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for an increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential increase in recreation demand and associated impacts would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **less-than-significant** impact related to an increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing as part of Alternative D would minimize the increase in recreation demand and associated environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative E: Skywalk

Implementation of Alternative E would result in development of a raised concrete deck over the entire width and length of the existing US 50 ROW between Stateline Avenue and the northern end of the Montbleu Resort, which would be used by pedestrians near the resort-casinos. Alternative E does not include a provision for mixed-use development, would not increase the number of residents in the study area, and would result in **no impact** on the demand for or physical deterioration of recreation facilities for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Impact 3.3-4: Changes to the quality of recreation user experience

Because Alternatives A and E would not include any infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, public lands and/or recreation areas, Alternatives A and E would not affect the recreation user experience in the study area.

The effects of Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements on the quality of recreation user experience at the Linear Park and Edgewood Companies mountain parcel would not be substantial because recreation user experience at these facilities is currently influenced by similar vehicle traffic on adjacent US 50 and Lake Parkway and the user experience would be similar to existing conditions. The mixed-use development including replacement housing proposed for Alternatives B, C, and D would be located adjacent to or near the Linear Park; however, these alternatives would not result in a substantial change in the quality of recreation user experience at this recreation facility, because the Linear Park is currently adjacent to existing US 50 and the user experience would be similar to existing conditions.

Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would increase traffic and traffic noise levels in some areas of Van Sickle Bi-State Park; however, noise level changes at these locations would not be discernible by users at the park facilities (also discussed in Impact 3.15-3). These alternatives would use design solutions that reflect the local character, is appropriate for the site, and is compatible with the surrounding environment in the changes at the main entrance to the park, the pedestrian overcrossing into the park, and the retaining wall along the mountain side of existing Lake Parkway. For these reasons, and taking into account the park setting in proximity to an urban area, Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would not substantially diminish recreation user experience.

Recognizing the influence of the combination of both detractions and enhancements to recreation resource site conditions (i.e., adverse for forest use, beneficial for access and amenities) and reasonably anticipating that user expectations take into account the setting, nearby urban area, and existing use patterns, the effect of the project's infrastructure improvements would have little effect on the quality of recreation user experiences in the study area.

NEPA Environmental Consequences: The design features of Alternatives B, C, D, and Alternative E would avoid or minimize the change in the quality of recreation user experience environmental consequences such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement; No Impact for Alternative A

CEQA/TRPA Impact Determinations: Less than Significant for Alternatives B, C, and D; No Impact for Alternatives A and E

Outdoor recreation occurs in many outside settings, from wilderness to downtown urban parks, in undeveloped or undisturbed landscapes to developed facilities and highly-altered resorts, and involving a wide variety of activities. The preferences, expectations, and experiences of recreation visitors determine the degree of satisfaction or, in other words, the quality of the outdoor recreation experience. A common measure of recreation experience quality is the degree of congruence between visitor expectations and outcomes. Expectations are defined in a large part by the character of the facility or site being visited and the prior experiences of the visitor.

Van Sickle Bi-State Park, regional trails, bicycle trails, and the Linear Park are the most important and well-used public recreation resources in the study area. The physical and perceptual characteristics of these resources are heavily influenced by existing site conditions, existing demand levels and use patterns, and the setting of nearby urban and tourist uses. All of these resources are a short distance from the most concentrated bed base in the Tahoe Basin. Existing demand for these and other recreation resources near the study area is seasonal, with high use levels during the peak summer season, particularly on weekends, and lower use in the spring, fall, and winter (although winter recreation use can increase with good snow and

weather conditions). The undeveloped property on Edgewood Companies mountain side parcel (northeast of the existing US 50/Lake Parkway intersection) is used by a recreation concessionaire to provide snowmobiling, sledding, and horse-drawn carriage rides when snow levels are sufficient during winter months. Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would include signage near the Montbleu parking lot discouraging people from walking across the realigned US 50 at this location and would direct pedestrians to use the crossing at the US 50/Lake Parkway intersection.

The US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project is intended to improve access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park and enhance connectivity throughout the study area. Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements accomplish this by including substantial pedestrian and bicycle improvements, including the pedestrian/bicycle bridge to Van Sickle Bi-State Park, as described in Impact 3.3-2. The highway realignment would occupy a strip of what is now park property along the frontage of Lake Parkway, comprising between 0.2 and 0.5 acre of the existing, undeveloped forest land. The portion of the park that would be acquired for the project includes the main entrance, but no other park improvements. Alternative E would focus only on accomplishing pedestrian and traffic flow improvements in the tourist core, while minimizing right-of-way needs, housing and business displacement, and encroachment on Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

Alternatives B and D transportation improvements include the realignment of US 50 along the existing Montreal Road and Lake Parkway and widening the existing roadway from two lanes to four lanes, which would increase traffic adjacent to the entrance to Van Sickle Bi-State Park relative to current conditions and Alternative A (Wood Rodgers 2016). Alternative C transportation improvements would also align the westbound realigned US 50 along the existing Montreal Road and Lake Parkway, although this alternative would not increase the number of lanes over the existing roadway. Alternative C transportation improvements would increase traffic over current conditions and Alternative A (Wood Rodgers 2016).

This increase in traffic on present-day Lake Parkway would result in increased traffic noise levels at portions of the park located closest to the realigned highway. The park land closest to the realigned highway is the park entrance road intersection and forested embankments that can support off-trail strolling and nature observation, but otherwise do not contain recreation facilities or amenities. Park amenities used for visitor gatherings and recreational activity, such as picnic areas, the historic barn and cabin, and trailheads leading to the Rim Trail, are set back from the park boundary as depicted in Exhibit 3.3-2; these areas are approximately 700 feet from the edge of pavement of existing Lake Parkway. With Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements, these areas would be about 85 feet closer to the edge of the highway. These areas are also topographically separated from existing Lake Parkway and in most locations a dense stand of trees separates the gathering locations from the roadway.

The noise analysis in this EIR/EIS/EIS (see Section 3.15, “Noise and Vibration”) considered noise impacts at key gathering areas in the park; the locations were determined in consultation with NSP and Conservancy staff and included existing gathering places, as well as future planned day-use and group camping facilities. Noise level changes at these locations would not be discernible at the modeled locations, as shown in Impact 3.15-3 (i.e., less than 3 dB CNEL; people are able to begin to detect sound level increases of 3 dB in typical noisy environments [Caltrans 2013:2-45]). This is due to the setback distance from the roadway edge, the intervening stand of trees, and topographical separation from the vehicles on the highway. As such, Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would not be expected to substantially diminish recreation user experience at these locations from a noise perspective.

The entrance experience to the park would change with Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements because the realigned highway would be wider than the current street and the entrance intersection would be controlled by a traffic signal. Design solutions that reflect the local character, are appropriate for the site, and are compatible with the surrounding environment have been developed with input from NSP and the Conservancy and incorporated into the project to enhance the park entry features for pedestrian and vehicle access. For example, the new pedestrian bridge would serve as a gateway, visibly demarking the California and Nevada state line. It would also enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to the park and provide an arrival experience for park users not currently offered. Retaining walls would include

aesthetic treatments, and the main crosswalk would include grander features than exist today. As described in Section 3.7, “Visual Resources/Aesthetics,” recreationists at Van Sickle Bi-State Park would have little or no view of the highway once inside the park because of screening by existing tree cover and topography. For these reason, Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would not be expected to diminish recreation user experience within the park.

Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements would involve intersection and roadway construction along US 50 immediately adjacent to the Linear Park on the west side of the project site. However, this would not cause a decrease in recreation experience for those individuals using the Linear Park as the park is currently adjacent to existing US 50 and the user experience would be similar to existing conditions.

Recognizing the influence of the combination of both detractions and enhancements to recreation resource site conditions (i.e., adverse for forest use, beneficial for access and amenities) and reasonably anticipating that user expectations take into account the setting, nearby urban area, and existing use patterns, the effect of the project’s transportation improvements would have a less-than-significant effect on the quality of recreation user experiences in the study area.

Alternative A: No Build (No Project)

Alternative A would not include any infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, public lands and/or recreation areas, and as such there would be no change in recreation experience as a result of this alternative. Alternative A would result in **no impact** on recreation experience in the study area for purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

Alternative B: Triangle (Locally Preferred Action)

Transportation Improvements

Implementation of the Alternative B transportation improvements roadway improvements would not result in substantial changes to recreation user experience at the Linear Park or on the Edgewood Companies mountain side parcel because recreation user experience at these facilities is currently influenced by similar vehicle traffic on adjacent US 50 and Lake Parkway.

Alternative B transportation improvements would include widening of the roadway and a corresponding increase in traffic in the immediate vicinity of Van Sickle Bi-State Park. The increase in traffic and shifting the roadway closer to park facilities would increase the traffic noise levels in some areas of the park; however, as described above, topography and densely forested areas separate these facilities from existing Lake Parkway and noise level changes at these locations would not be discernible at recreation sites within the park. Alternative B would also make context-sensitive design solutions to address changes at the main entrance to the park, the pedestrian overcrossing into the park, and the retaining wall along the mountain side of existing Lake Parkway. For these reasons, and taking into account the park setting in proximity to an urban area, Alternative B transportation improvements would not substantially diminish recreation user experience. This would be a **less-than-significant** impact for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements included in Alternative B would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative B would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, “Proposed Project and Project Alternatives”). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. None of the three mixed-use development sites are located on or adjacent to any recreation area or public lands not already affected by the proposed highway realignment. However, mixed-use development

Site 1 includes portions of the existing Linear Park. The Linear Park would be retained through Site 1 with Alternative B and would not change the nature of recreation user experience at this facility from existing conditions adjacent to US 50. Therefore, Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a **less-than-significant** impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts on the quality of recreation user experiences would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative B transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a less than significant impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area.

For the purposes of NEPA, taken as a whole, the design features of the transportation improvements and replacement housing at the mixed-use development sites as part of Alternative B would minimize the effects on quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative C: Triangle One-Way

Transportation Improvements

Alternative C, would include similar transportation improvements near the Linear Park, Edgewood Companies mountain parcel, and Van Sickle Bi-State Park and similar changes in traffic noise levels, changes at the main entrance to Van Sickle Bi-State Park, and new pedestrian overcrossing as Alternative B transportation improvements. For these reasons and the reasons described above for Alternative B transportation improvements, Alternative C transportation improvements would result in a **less-than-significant** impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements included in Alternative B would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative C would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, "Proposed Project and Project Alternatives"). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. Because the mixed-use development including replacement housing associated with Alternative C is in the same location as Alternative B mixed-use development including replacement housing, Alternative C would have the same impacts as discussed above for Alternative B. This would be a **less-than-significant**

impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of Alternative C mixed-use development including replacement housing would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts on the quality of recreation user experiences would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative C transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a less than significant impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area.

For the purposes of NEPA, taken as a whole, the design features of the transportation improvements and replacement housing at the mixed-use development sites as part of Alternative C would minimize the effects on quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative D: Project Study Report Alternative 2

Transportation Improvements

Alternative D transportation improvements, would include similar improvements near the Linear Park, Edgewood Companies mountain parcel, and Van Sickle Bi-State Park and similar changes in traffic noise levels, changes at the main entrance to Van Sickle Bi-State Park, and new pedestrian overcrossing as Alternative B transportation improvements. For these reasons and the reasons described above for Alternative B transportation improvements, Alternative D transportation improvements would result in a **less-than-significant** impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of the transportation improvements included in Alternative D would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Mixed-Use Development including Replacement Housing

Prior to displacing existing residents, Alternative D would construct replacement housing along with supporting commercial uses that could be located at one or more of three mixed-use development sites identified within the project site (see Exhibits 2-9 and 2-11 in Chapter 2, "Proposed Project and Project Alternatives"). If replacement housing is not constructed at any of these sites, then TTD would construct replacement housing at another location in the South Shore area to be determined prior to displacing any residents. None of the three mixed-use development sites are located on or adjacent to any recreation area or public lands not already affected by the proposed highway realignment. For this reason, the mixed-use development including replacement housing associated with Alternative D would not change recreation user experience at recreation sites in the study area. Alternative D with mixed-use development would have a **less-than-significant** impact on recreation user experience for purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of Alternative D mixed-use development including replacement housing would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Construction of replacement housing at a location other than the three mixed-use development sites could result in a similar potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience as described for the replacement housing on the mixed-use development sites. However, because the location of replacement housing elsewhere is unknown, analysis of the potential impacts on the quality of recreation user experiences would be speculative at this time. Full, project-level environmental review of replacement housing somewhere other than the mixed-use development sites would be required prior to construction of replacement housing and displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

For the purposes of CEQA and TRPA, taken as a whole, the Alternative D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing would result in a less than significant impact on the quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area.

For the purposes of NEPA, taken as a whole, the design features of the transportation improvements and replacement housing at the mixed-use development sites as part of Alternative D would minimize the effects on quality of recreation user experience at recreation resources in the study area such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

Alternative E: Skywalk

Implementation of Alternative E would result in development of a raised concrete deck over the entire width and length of existing US 50 between Stateline Avenue and the northern end of the Montbleu Resort that would be utilized by pedestrians along the casino corridor. Alternative E would not include any new infrastructure in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, public lands and/or recreation areas, and as such would not change the recreation experience at any of these locations. Alternative E would result in **no impact** on recreation user experience for purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

For the purposes of NEPA, the design features of Alternative E would avoid or minimize the potential for substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation user experience such that no additional mitigation measures are needed or feasible to implement.

3.3.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 3.3-1: Provide detours and maintain access to recreation facilities and public lands during construction

The following mitigation applies to transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing included in Alternatives B, C, and D, and Alternative E for the purposes of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA.

The project proponent shall ensure that the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) prepared for the project addresses all modes of transportation used to access recreation areas, including vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle modes. To mitigate short-term decreases in access to recreation resources, the TMP shall include detour plans that meet, at a minimum, the following specifications:

1. During construction of the relocated US 50/Pioneer Trail intersection, the pedestrian and bike trail within Linear Park may be required to be temporarily closed in the construction area. If this closure is required, all bicycle and pedestrian traffic shall be detoured to a temporary trail/path on the highway, separated from vehicle traffic by a physical barrier such as "K-Rail." Signage will be provided at the western end of Linear

Park, at the intersection of Wildwood Avenue and US 50, and approaching the construction zone to alert trail users about the timing, duration, and nature of any construction-related closures and detours.

2. During construction of the new US 50/Heavenly Village Way intersection, roadway improvements eastward along the new US 50 alignment, and the pedestrian bridge over the realigned US 50 ROW, vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access to Van Sickle Bi-State Park shall be maintained through the use of detours and traffic control for all modes. Signage will be provided along roadways and sidewalks approaching the construction zone and in parking areas and trailheads within Van Sickle Bi-State Park to alert pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists about the timing, duration, and nature of construction-related closures and detours.
3. During the restriping of Lake Parkway, vehicular access to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course shall be maintained by the use of detours and traffic control.

Measures will be taken to keep the public informed of the project construction activities. When closures and/or detours are required, warning signs and signs regarding restricted access and detours will be posted to ensure adequate public safety. Detour routes will be clearly marked, and construction fencing or physical barriers will be installed to prevent access to the construction site and to clearly delineate the detour route. Full closure of trails or recreation facilities by the contractor(s) will be prohibited from July 1 through Labor Day weekend unless an approved detour has been established. All bicycle and pedestrian detours will be identified in the TMP and will be reviewed and approved by the project proponent, Caltrans, and TRPA before the start of earth-moving activities.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-1 would reduce disruption of public access to recreation areas and public lands to a **less-than-significant** level for Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing, and E for the purposes of CEQA and TRPA.

Because of the reasons stated above, for the purposes of NEPA, the environmental consequences of implementing Alternatives B, C, and D transportation improvements and mixed-use development including replacement housing, and Alternative E with Mitigation Measure 3.3-1 **would not be adverse**.