

1 INTRODUCTION

Consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, this final environmental impact report (Final EIR) for the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project (Project) has been prepared under the direction of the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD), as the lead agency, according to the requirements of the CEQA (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq. [14 CCR Section 15000 et seq.]).

This Final EIR contains responses to comments received on the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR). The Draft EIR evaluated the environmental impacts of relocating, expanding, and adaptively reconstructing the historic Schilling residence into a new building, with construction of associated improvements, including a driveway and parking lot, utilities, landscaping, and outdoor community areas. The Final EIR consists of the Draft EIR and this document (response to comments document), which includes comments on the Draft EIR, responses to those comments, and revisions to the Draft EIR.

1.1 OVERVIEW

The Project is located along the northwest shore of Lake Tahoe near Tahoe City in Placer County (see Figure 2-1 in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR). The proposed Project (Site D – Full Project) would relocate recreation and community uses currently provided at the existing Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge (Existing Lodge) to a new lodge site off Polaris Road adjacent to the North Tahoe High School and North Tahoe Middle School (see Figure 2-2 in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR), approximately 0.65 mile from the Existing Lodge site.

The proposed Project would address existing operational deficiencies relative to circulation and parking, storage, staff facilities, and community space; better accommodate existing and future recreation demand; and improve the quality of the recreation user experience. Additionally, the Project would consolidate the existing accessory buildings (primarily storage) into a single facility, eliminate or minimize spillover parking on adjacent residential streets, and provide more amenities to serve guests and employees. These improvements would better serve additional recreational opportunities and community needs, especially in non-winter seasons. With construction of the Project, the Existing Lodge at the Highlands Community Center building would remain in its current location and continue to TCPUD community needs and functions. No changes are proposed to the existing Highlands Park trail system or adjacent trails on state property.

1.2 PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

On June 5, 2020, TCPUD released the Draft EIR for a 50-day public review and comment period. The Draft EIR was submitted to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to reviewing agencies; posted on the TCPUD website (<https://www.tcpud.org/capital-improvement-projects/tahoe-cross-country-lodge-replacement-and-expansion>); and one paper copy of the document was available outside the administrative office at 221 Fairway Drive in Tahoe City, California during business hours. A notice of availability of the Draft EIR was published in the Sierra Sun newspaper on June 5, 2020; submitted to the State Clearinghouse; and distributed to a mailing and email distribution list maintained, by TCPUD, for the Project.

A public meeting was held on July 17, 2020, to receive input from agencies and the public on the Draft EIR. The public meeting was recorded as part of the regular TCPUD Board meeting and posted to the TCPUD website. Oral comments submitted at the public meeting were recorded and are included in Chapter 3, "Responses to Comments," in this Final EIR.

As a result of these notification efforts, written and oral comments were received from federal and local agencies, organizations, and individuals on the content of the Draft EIR. Chapter 3, "Responses to Comments," identifies these commenting parties, their respective comments, and responses to these comments. None of the comments received, or the responses provided, constitute "significant new information," as defined by CEQA standards (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5).

1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS FINAL EIR

CEQA requires a lead agency that has prepared a Draft EIR to consult with and obtain comments from responsible and trustee agencies that have jurisdiction by law with respect to the Project, and to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR. The Final EIR is the mechanism for responding to these comments. This Final EIR has been prepared to respond to comments received on the Draft EIR, which are reproduced in this document; and to present corrections, revisions, and other clarifications to the Draft EIR, including Project clarifications, and revisions made in response to these comments as a result of the lead agency's ongoing planning efforts. The Final EIR will inform the TCPUD Board of Director's decision regarding whether to approve the proposed Project.

This Final EIR will also be used by CEQA responsible agencies to inform their decisions whether to approve permits or authorizations over which they have jurisdiction. Responsible agencies include the California Tahoe Conservancy, Placer County, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THIS EIR

This Final EIR is organized into chapters, as identified and briefly described below.

Chapter 1, Introduction, this chapter, provides the purpose of the Final EIR, summarizes the proposed Project, provides an overview of the CEQA public review process, and describes the contents of the Final EIR.

Chapter 2, Revisions to the Draft EIR, presents revisions to the Draft EIR text made in response to comments, or to amplify, clarify or make minor modifications or corrections. Changes in the text are signified by ~~strikeouts~~ where text is removed and by underline where text is added.

Chapter 3, Responses to Comments, contains a list of all parties who submitted comments on the Draft EIR during the public review period, copies of all comments received, and responses to the comments.

Chapter 4, References, identifies the documents and individuals used as sources for the analysis in this Final EIR.

Chapter 5, Report Preparers, identifies the preparers of the document.