

# Tahoe City Public Utility District

---

## TAHOE CROSS-COUNTRY LODGE REPLACEMENT AND EXPANSION PROJECT

### FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

---

**Board Meeting - February 25, 2021**



# Introductions

---

**Matt Homolka / TCPUD**

*Assistant General Manager/District Engineer*

**Kim Boyd / TCPUD**

*Senior Management Analyst*

**Jessica Mitchell/Ascent Environmental, LLC**

*Project Manager*

**Zach Miller/Ascent Environmental, LLC**

*Transportation Planner*

**Nanette Hansel / Ascent Environmental, LLC**

*Senior Project Manager*

**Gordon Shaw / LSC Consultants, LLC**

**Don Heapes / Tahoe Cross Country Ski Education Association**

**Steve Gross / Porter-Simon**

*District General Counsel*



# Purpose of Today's Meeting

---

After hearing and considering all public comment received, the Board consider adopting Resolution No. 21-05 to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report, adopt CEQA Findings and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and approve the Project\* for the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project

*\* Project = Proposed Project = Site D – Full Project Alternative*



# Meeting Process

---

- **Open the Hearing**
- Presentation
  - Tahoe Cross Country Ski Education Association (TCCSEA)
  - Outreach/History/CEQA Distribution/Project Overview
  - Final Environmental Impact Report
  - Project Approval/Next Steps
- Board Questions / Clarifications
- Public Comment
- Break – Staff Review of Comments
- Responses to Public Comments (at Board Discretion)
- Close the Hearing
- Board Consideration/Deliberation/Discussion
- Possible Board Action - Adopt Resolution No. 21-05



# Presentation by TCCSEA

---



# Public Outreach

---

- Extensive Pre-CEQA Public Outreach to communicate, understand, and discuss the Project
  - Project elements and design, justification, TCPUD involvement, alternatives development, CEQA process, and community concerns
- Phases:
  - TCCSEA Outreach Efforts (Early 2017)
  - TCPUD Outreach (April 2017 – June 2018)
  - CEQA Outreach (June 2018 – Today)
  - Project Development (Upcoming)
- Nine (9) Board meetings (including CEQA process and today)
- Four (4) Neighborhood meetings (TCPUD and TCPUD/TCCSEA)
- Six (6) TCCSEA-sponsored meetings
- TCPUD Project specific website (updated throughout process)
- Extensive and broad reaching notification for all via email, hard copy mailing, and personal contacts



# Project History and Past Actions

---

- December 9, 2014: P&R Committee – TCPUD supports Recovery Plan and Adaptive Re-Use of the Schilling Residence (Letter to TRPA)
- Apr 17, 2015: TCPUD Board Meeting – Board executes Resolution 15-11, “intends to provide site for the new lodge, once appropriate CEQA review and permitting are complete”
- May 2015 – Schilling Lodge is donated to TCCSEA
- Oct 21, 2016: TCPUD Board Meeting – Board approves Letter of Intent, “to negotiate in good faith with TCCSEA a formal lease agreement to provide use of Highlands property for the new lodge”
- January/February 2017: Extensive outreach conducted by TCCSEA to get public input on Candidate Sites for new lodge
- Apr 21, 2017: TCPUD Board Meeting – Board passes motion to “designate three Project Alternatives (Site D, Site A, and No Project) for environmental review...cooperate with TCCSEA and Placer County in developing a plan and funding program to complete environmental review...bring to the Board a recommendation on any District further action”
- Aug 18, 2017: TCPUD Board Meeting – Board approves CEQA Work Plan, consultant selection process, and authorizes continued District staffing expenditure



# Project History and Past Actions - continued

---

- Sep 3, 2017: **Highlands HOA Meeting** – District staff and TCCSEA make presentation
- Oct 20, 2017: **TCPUD Board Meeting** – Board authorizes execution of Reimbursement Agreement with TCCSEA for CEQA expenditures, and authorizes execution of Professional Services Agreement with Ascent Environmental for the preparation of CEQA documents
- Jan 22, 2018: **Highland Neighborhood Meeting** – TCPUD hosts focused neighborhood meeting
- February 2018: TCPUD staff and TCCSEA finalize draft Project Objectives and development of site plans for new Project Alternatives
- Mar 6, 2018: **Highland Neighborhood Meeting** – TCPUD hosts broader neighborhood meeting
- Mar 16, 2018: **TCPUD Board Meeting** – Board designates the 'Proposed Project' and authorizes five (5) Project Alternatives
- March 15, 2019: **TCPUD Board Meeting** – Board discusses proposed business and operations model
- August 31, 2019: **Highlands HOA Meeting**





# CEQA Distribution and Timeline

---

- June 22, 2018: **Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report**
- June 22, 2018 – July 25, 2018: Public comment period on scoping of EIR
  - Two (2) public scoping meetings – July 17, 2018 (10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.)
  - 33 scoping comments (28 from individuals, 5 from agencies)
- September 2018: Scoping Summary Report completed
- September 2018 – June 5, 2020: Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
- June 5, 2020: **Notice of Availability (NOA) announcing availability of DEIR for review**
- June 5, 2020 – July 24, 2020: Public comment period on DEIR
  - **Board Meeting** – July 17, 2020 – Review DEIR, comments received, and solicit comments
  - 86 comment “letters” received (Agency and Public)

*All above were noticed extensively (CEQA, County, SCH, property owners, email blasts)*



# CEQA Distribution and Timeline

---

- February 8, 2021: **Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) published**
  - Contains all comments, response to comments, revisions to the Draft EIR and an Appendix.
  - A notification of it's availability on the TCPUD website was sent to:
    - Responsible, trustee, and interested agencies (direct mail and email)
    - Property owners in the Highlands Neighborhood (direct mail)
    - The interested parties list (199 total by email)
    - The District's Constant Contact email lists (2,184 total by email)
- Save-the-Date email sent February 1, 2021 for today's hearing
- Comments received will be summarized later



# Project Overview

---

- **Detailed Project Description and the Project Objectives are provided in the Draft EIR**
  - Relocate, expand, and adaptively reconstruct the historic Schilling residence into a new building (the Schilling Lodge);
  - Construct associated improvements, including a driveway and parking lot, utilities, landscaping, and outdoor community areas; and
  - Relocate the functions and operations of the Tahoe Cross-Country Center (Tahoe XC) to a new location
  - Retain the existing Highlands Community Center for TCPUD use similar to other TCPUD community facilities.



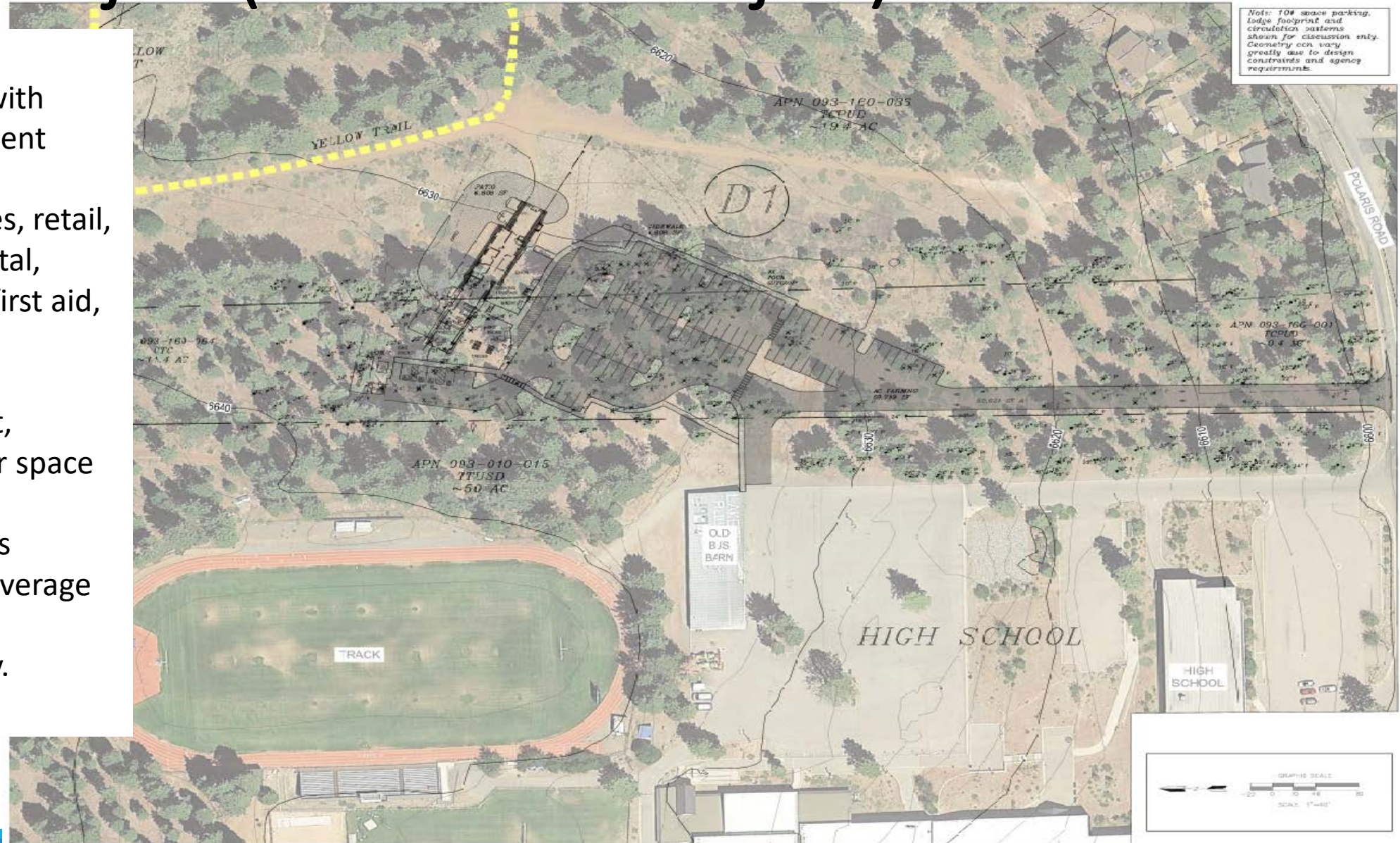


# Proposed Project (Site D – Full Project)



## Site Summary

- Schilling Structure with addition and basement (10,154 sf)
- Use includes tix sales, retail, mtg room, café, rental, storage, staff area, first aid, lockers, family area, gym/mtg space, snowmobile carport, community/outdoor space
- 100 parking spaces
- 2 bus parking spaces
- Parking driveway coverage 59,799 sf
- Fairly level site (elev. ~6,636')





# Project Location



Highlands  
Park and  
Community  
Center  
Property

★ Proposed Project

▲ Existing Lodge



# Final EIR – Ascent Environmental

---



# Relevant CEQA Steps

---

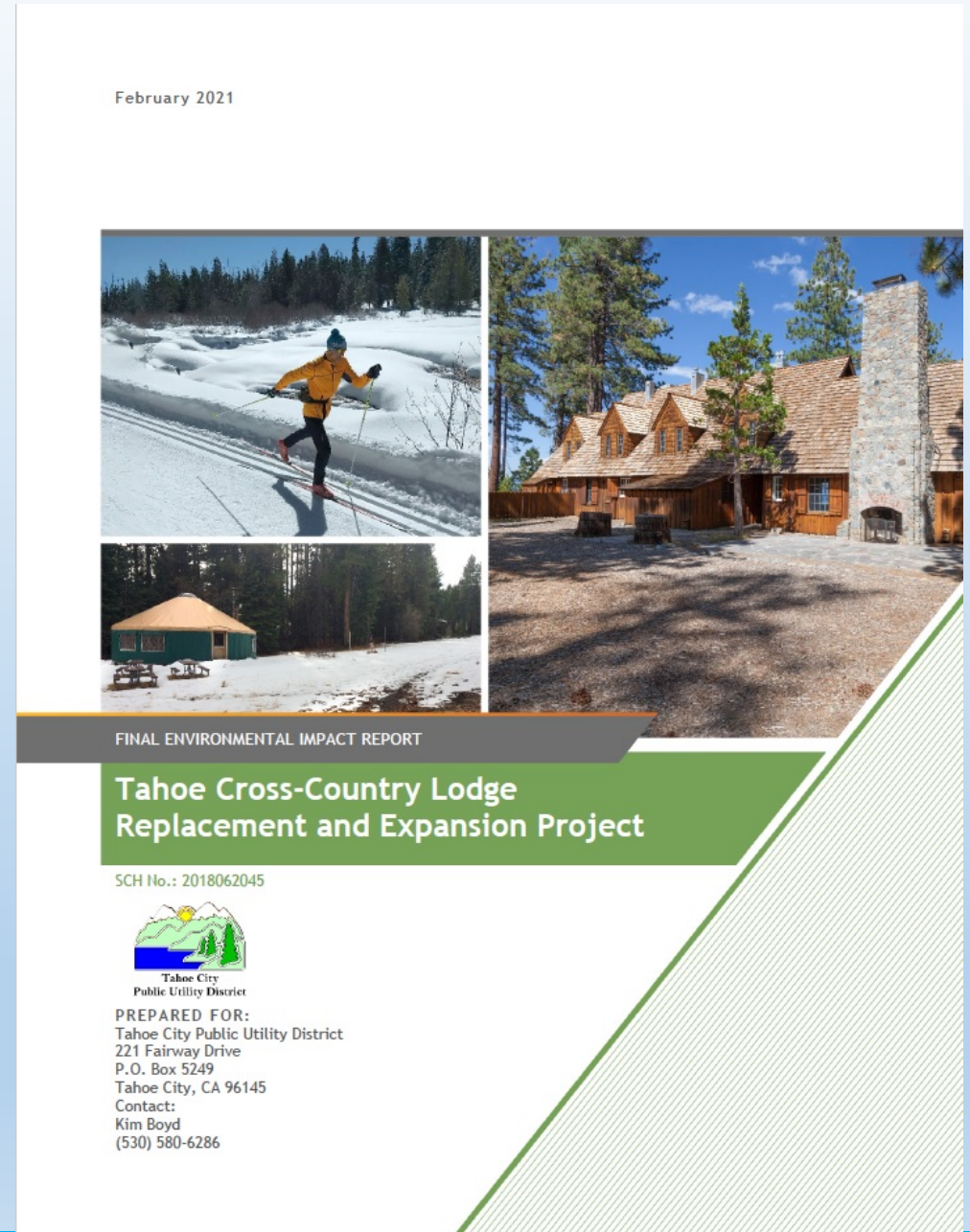
- Draft EIR
  - Discloses physical environmental effects
  - Identifies mitigation that reduces, avoids, minimizes, or compensates for those effects
- Final EIR
  - Revisions to the Draft EIR (Ch. 2)
  - Responses to comments (Ch. 3)
- Board action today
  - Certify EIR
  - Adopt Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Findings of Fact





# EIR Findings

- All potentially significant impacts (9) reduced to a less-than-significant level
- Comments on the Draft EIR
  - 80 comment letters received
    - 3 agency letters
    - 1 organization letter
    - 76 letters from individuals
  - 6 commenters at public meeting
  - 40 letters and 3 oral commenters expressed support for the project
- No changes made to the proposed Project or Alternative A





# Summary of Comments on Draft EIR

Environmental resource comments included:

- **Traffic safety**
- **Traffic analysis**
- **VMT mitigation**
- **Cumulative impacts**
- **Historic preservation**
- **Tree removal**
- **Alternatives analysis**
- Land use compatibility
- Emergency response and evacuation
- Hazardous materials

Other comments not related to the adequacy of the EIR:

- Ownership/funding
- Financial viability
- Alcohol
- Project justification
- Consistency with TCPUD function/service
- Effect on TCPUD utility rates
- Expansion/increase in facility and use
- Project name
- Property value



# Revisions to the Draft EIR

Some clarifications and minor revisions were made to:

- Project description
- VMT analysis and mitigation measures
  - Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan analysis (see Final EIR, Appendix A)
- Mitigation for greenhouse gas emissions
- Cumulative impact analysis for Dollar Creek Crossing project



# Transportation Study

- Trip generation analysis was based on observed Tahoe XC traffic activity on busy winter and summer days. Current site generates 372 1-way vehicle-trips on a winter weekend day.
- A 10% increase in customer levels is assumed with the new lodge, along with 2 new weekend winter employees, a 65-attendee winter special event, and re-use of the existing building as a community center. Winter net increase of 149 1-way vehicle-trips per weekend day, of which 58 are in the peak-hour.
- At Site D, 272 daily 1-way trips would be added on Polaris Drive west of Old Mill Road on a winter weekday and up to 489 on a winter weekend day. Maximum daily total volume would be 1,642, below Placer County standard of 2,500.
- Cumulative traffic analysis reflects forecast growth in through-traffic on 28 (19.3% winter and 13.8% summer), Dollar Creek Crossing (assumed 169 units) and 29 additional homes around the neighborhood.
- All of the study intersections were found to attain Placer County LOS standards, for both sites, for winter and summer and for both existing-plus project and cumulative-future-plus-project conditions. Various access options for Dollar Creek Crossing were evaluated that found LOS to be acceptable under all options.

# Traffic Safety

- **Driver sight distance at Site D driveway** – 40' short of the 385' needed for corner sight distance but does attain stopping sight distance of 250'. Placer County standards allow a Design Exception for approval in this condition.
- **Speeds on Polaris Road**
  - Posted Speed = 25 mph
  - Average Speed = 26 mph
  - 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed = 30 mph
  - Design Speed = 35 mph
- **Polaris Road** – 13 reported crashes over 10 years, resulting in 4 injuries (no fatalities).
- **Old Mill Road** – 5 reported crashes over 10 years, with none including an injury or fatality. A relatively high rate of total crashes, but relatively low severity of crashes.
- **SR 28/Fabian Way** – 14 reported crashes over 10 years, including 6 resulting in minor injuries (no severe injuries or fatalities). Crash rate is 131% higher than statewide average for similar intersections. Proposed project would increase total traffic by 3% winter / 1% summer for Site D, and 5% winter / 5% summer for Site A.
- **Bicyclist/pedestrian crashes** – 3 reported crashes over 10 years resulting in a bicyclist or pedestrian injury (2 on Polaris, 1 at 28/Fabian). None occurred on school days.

# Biological Resources

## Potentially Significant Impacts

- Tree removal: potential conflict with TRPA policy to prohibit the removal of trees larger than 30 inches dbh in westside forest types in lands classified as recreation
- Disturbance or loss of special-status plants and wildlife
- Potential establishment and spread of invasive plants

Tree Removal Associated with the Proposed Project and Alternative A						
Size Class (inches dbh)	Proposed Project			Alternative A		
	Fir or Pine	Species of Limited Occurrence	Subtotal	Fir or Pine	Species of Limited Occurrence	Subtotal
<14	28		28	35		35
14 – <24	103		103	23		23
24 – <30	37		37	12	2	14
≥30	14	1	15	7		7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>79</b>





# Cultural Resources

## Less-than-Significant Impact

- Relocation of the Schilling Residence would occur without altering its historic integrity



## Potentially Significant Impacts

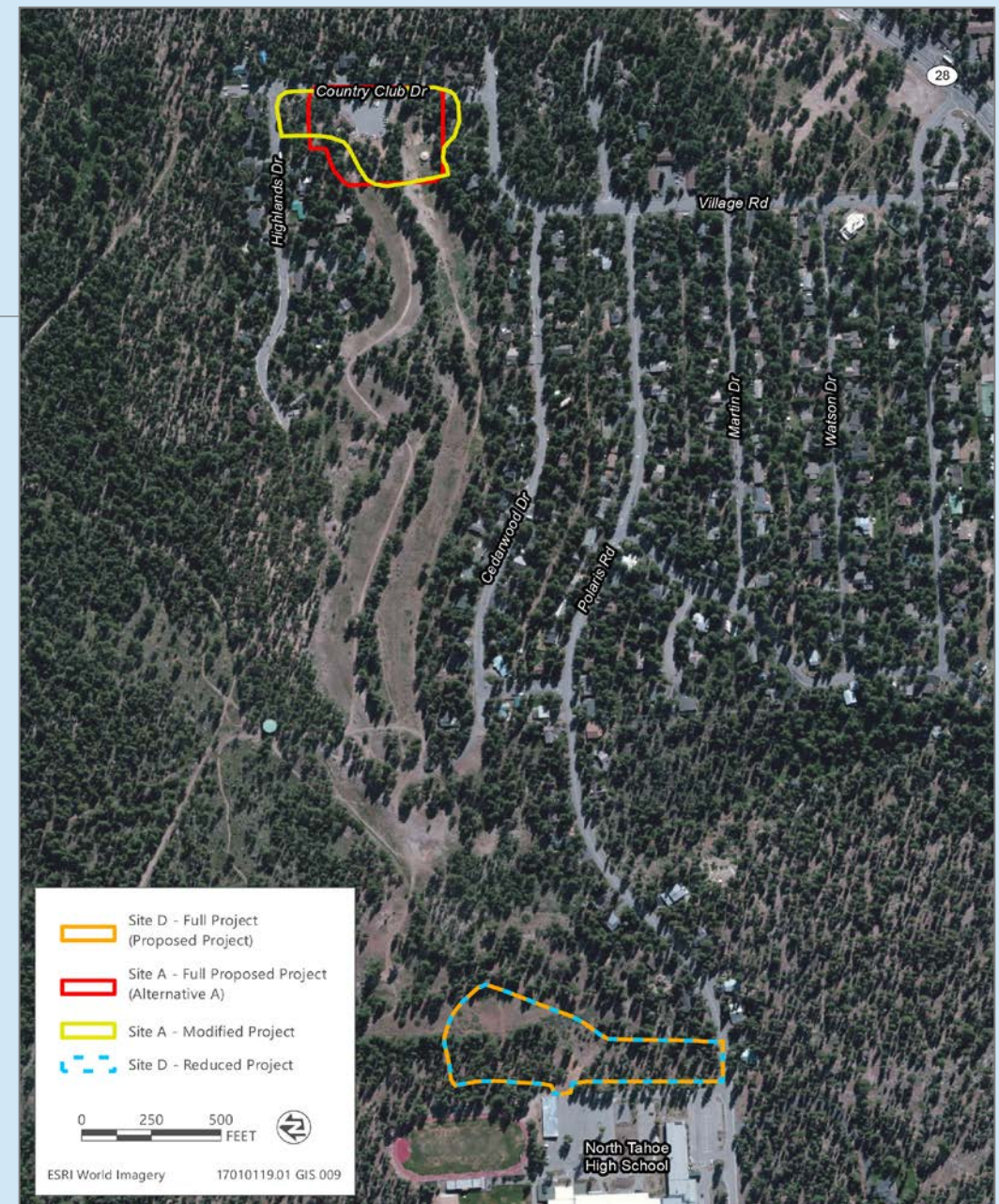
- Unique archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources or ethnic and cultural values
- Mitigation includes halt ground-disturbing activity upon discovery of subsurface archaeological features, assess discovery, and implement measures that will mitigate potential impacts on archaeological resources



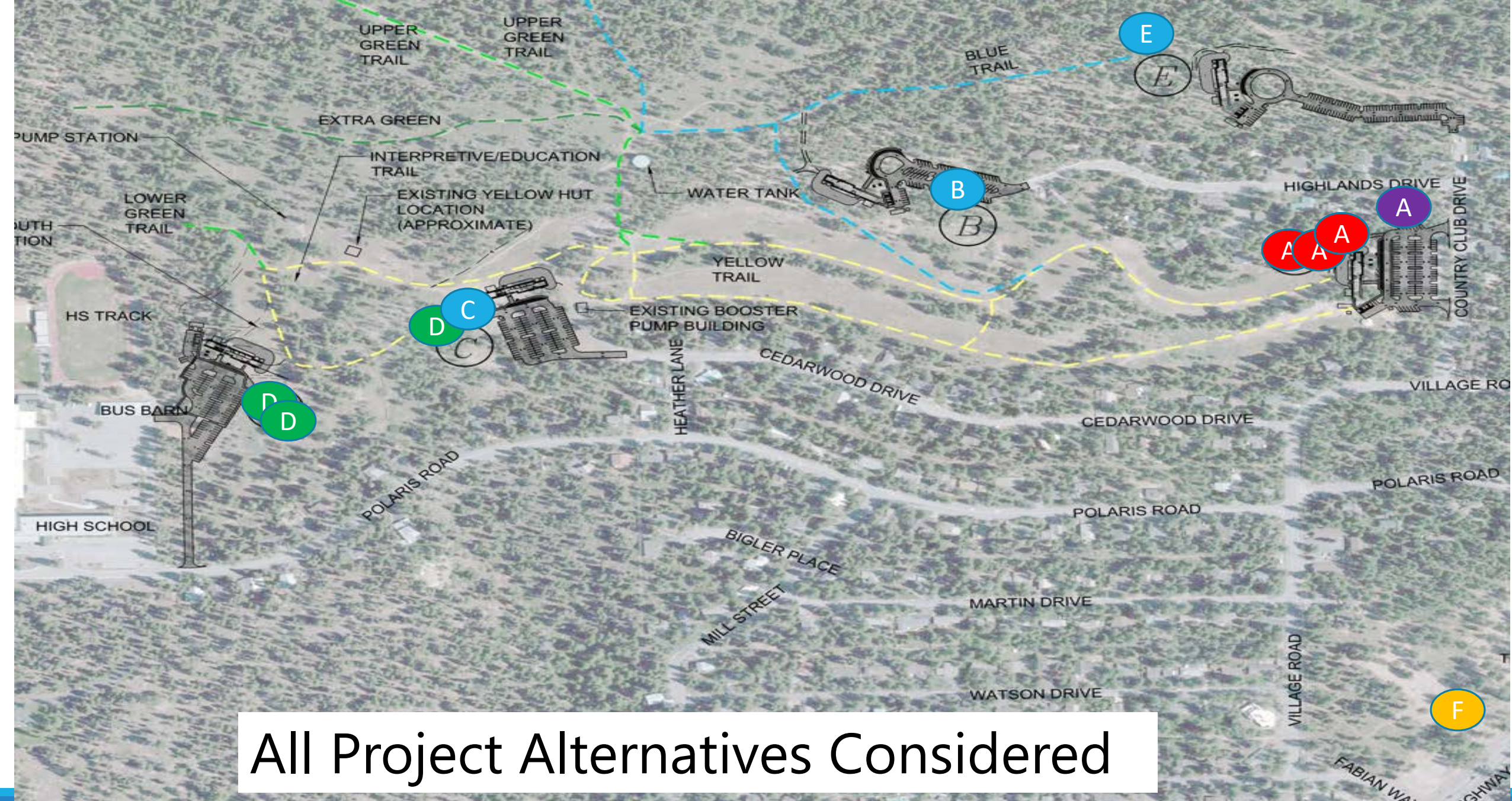


# Alternatives Analyzed in Draft EIR

- Site D – Full Project (Proposed Project)
- Site A – Full Project
- Alternatives evaluated at a comparative level of detail:
  - No Project Alternative
  - Site A – Modified Project
  - Site D – Reduced Project







# All Project Alternatives Considered



# Next Actions

---

- TCPUD Board of Directors
  - Consider certification of EIR
  - Adopt MMRP and Findings of Fact
  - Consider project approval
- Approvals outside of the CEQA process
  - Placer County permits
  - TRPA permit
  - California Tahoe Conservancy land exchange approval



# Project Approval

---

- **Recommendation: Approve the Proposed Project (Site D – Full Project Alternative)**
- What does Project Approval mean?
- In this decision, the Board should consider all comments, including “non-CEQA” comments.
  - “...noted for consideration by the TCPUD Board during the review of the merits of the Project.”
- Some things to consider:
  - Is it relevant to today’s decisions or is it better resolved later?
    - (negotiation, community engagement, Board policy, permitting, design, etc.)
  - Is it subjectively different between the alternatives? (The EIR can provide data)
  - Will it be subject to compliance with regulation or law?



# Project Approval – Differences

---

- Full vs. Reduced/Modified
  - Desire of the Project Applicant
- Differences between Site D and Site A:
  - Desire of the Project Applicant
  - Proximity to NTHS/MS
  - Connection to Ski Trails / Lesson and Program Area Space
  - Distance to and number of neighboring residences
  - Support and Opposition for the Project
  - Other:
    - Elevation
    - Data in the EIR
    - Environmentally Superior Alternative



# Next Steps – If Approved

---

- File Notice of Determination (TCPUD)
- Public Outreach/Engagement – (TCPUD / TCCSEA)
  - Establish Affected Neighbors Group for Input
  - Implement Project accommodations where feasible
- Fundraising (TCCSEA)
- Financing/Funding Plan (TCCSEA)
- Ownership/Lease/Operating Negotiations (Continue March 15, 2019 Board Discussion) (BOTH)
- Property Rights Acquisition (CTC Property Exchange) (TCPUD)
- Permitting (TCCSEA)
- Design (TCCSEA)
- Construction (TCCSEA)
- Operation (TCCSEA)



# Board Questions or Clarifications?

---



# Correspondence/Comments Received Recently

---

- Since the Save-the-Date email and publication of the Final EIR:
  - Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup> – Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12 pm - included in Board Packet
  - Subsequent letters until 4:30 pm yesterday February 24<sup>th</sup> - provided to Board and posted to Granicus and website last night
  - Since last night
- All have been provided to the Board of Directors and are a part of the record
- All have been reviewed in detail by staff and Ascent Environmental, LLC



# Correspondence/Comments Received Recently

---

## TOPICS:

- Traffic Volume
- Traffic Safety
- General Safety
- Emergency Evacuation
- Hazardous Materials
- Alcohol
- Weddings
- Ownership
- Operations/Lease/Allowed Uses
- Schilling Lodge Re-Use
- Zoning

- Motives of the parties
- Justification
- Viability

## GENERAL:

- Process and timing
- Responses provided in Final EIR
- Draft EIR Analyses/Env. Impacts
- Mitigation Measures

- Support in Various Forms

- **What Have I Missed?**



# Public Comment

---

- Time Limit:
  - 3 minutes (individual)
  - 5 minutes (organization/agency)
- One oral comment per person/organization/agency
- **“Raise hand” in Zoom or Dial \*9 on your phone**
- You will be called on for your turn to speak
- Response to comments or questions at Board’s discretion after public comment





# RECESS

---

- Staff/Ascent review of comments received



# Responses to Public Comments

---

- Staff summary from recess
- Board directed responses/answers
- Staff suggested responses/answers
- Close Public Hearing



# Board Deliberations and Possible Action

---

- Board Deliberation
- Additional Board Questions or Comments
- Recommended Board Action – **Adopt Resolution No. 21-05**
  - Certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report; Adopting CEQA Findings of Fact; Adopting a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and Approving the Project for the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project



---

# THANK YOU

