

## Notice of Preparation

---

### Notice of Preparation

To: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

\_\_\_\_\_ will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study ( ☐ is ☐ is not ) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to \_\_\_\_\_ at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

**Project Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Applicant, if any:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference:** California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

# Draft Initial Study/Negative Declaration

City of South Lake Tahoe  
Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan  
Amendment

August 2021



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	About CEQA .....	2
1.2	Project Summary .....	2
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Project Description.....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Project Overview.....	4
2.2	Project Objectives .....	6
2.3	Project Background .....	6
2.4	Proposed Amendment Specifics.....	6
2.5	Project Location, Setting, and Surrounding Land Uses.....	12
2.6	Required Permits and Approvals .....	12
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Environmental Factors Potentially Affected .....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1	Determination.....	13
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Evaluation of Environmental Impacts .....</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1	Aesthetics .....	16
4.2	Agriculture & Forest Resources .....	17
4.3	Air Quality .....	18
4.4	Biological Resources .....	19
4.5	Cultural Resources.....	21
4.6	Energy .....	22
4.7	Geology & Soils .....	23
4.8	Greenhouse Gas Emissions .....	24
4.9	Hazards & Hazardous Materials.....	26
4.10	Hydrology & Water Quality .....	27
4.11	Land Use & Planning.....	28
4.12	Mineral Resources.....	29
4.13	Noise .....	30
4.14	Population & Housing .....	31
4.15	Public Services.....	32
4.16	Recreation.....	33
4.17	Transportation .....	34
4.18	Tribal Cultural Resources.....	35
4.19	Utilities & Service Systems.....	36
4.20	Wildfire .....	37
4.21	Mandatory Findings of Significance.....	38

5.0	References .....	40
-----	------------------	----

## Figures

**Figure 2.1.** Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan Zoning Districts

## 1.0 Introduction

---

This Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) has been prepared to address the potential environmental effects of amending the Tourist Center Gateway (TSC-G) District, Special Area 1 of the City of South Lake Tahoe Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan (TCAP).

### 1.1 About CEQA

The IS/ND has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, Cal. Pub. Res. Code §21000 et seq. CEQA requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects they propose to implement, or over which they have discretionary authority, before implementing or approving those projects. An Initial Study (IS) is a preliminary environmental analysis that is used by the CEQA lead agency as a basis for determining whether an Environmental Impact Report, a Mitigated Negative Declaration, or a Negative Declaration is required for a project under CEQA guidelines. As specified in Section 15367 of the CEQA Guidelines, the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project is the lead agency for CEQA compliance. The City has principal responsibility for approving the proposed project and is therefore the CEQA lead agency for this IS/ND.

As summarized in Section 4.0, Environmental Checklist, this Initial Study determined that the proposed amendment to the TCAP would not have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore a negative declaration is proposed. Therefore, this document is an Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND).

The IS/ND contains a project summary, project description, and identification and explanation of environmental effects – including the Project’s consistency with existing, applicable land use controls.

### 1.2 Project Summary

Project Title:	City of South Lake Tahoe Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan Amendment
Lead agency name and address:	City of South Lake Tahoe, 1052 Tata Lane, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Contact person and phone number:	John Hitchcock, Planning Manager, (530) 542-7472
Project Location:	City of South Lake Tahoe, Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan, Tourist Center Gateway District – Special Area 1 (see Figure 1)

Project sponsor's name and address:	City of South Lake Tahoe 1052 Tata Lane, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
General plan description:	Town Center
Zoning:	Zoning District: TSC-G. Zone Name: Tourist Center Gateway, Special Area 1.
Description of Project:	Refer to Chapter 2.0, Project Description
Surrounding land uses and setting	The amendment concerns the Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan, Tourist Center Gateway District, Special Area 1. Special Area 1 is bound by Lake Tahoe to the north, US 50 to the south, and beachfront hotels to the east and west. Land uses in the district are mostly commercial including a pharmacy, restaurants, dry-cleaning business, hotels and private pier. Special Area 1 also includes a public beach. Special Area 1 is 162 acres.
Other public agencies whose approval is required	Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

## 2.0 Project Description

---

### 2.1 Project Overview

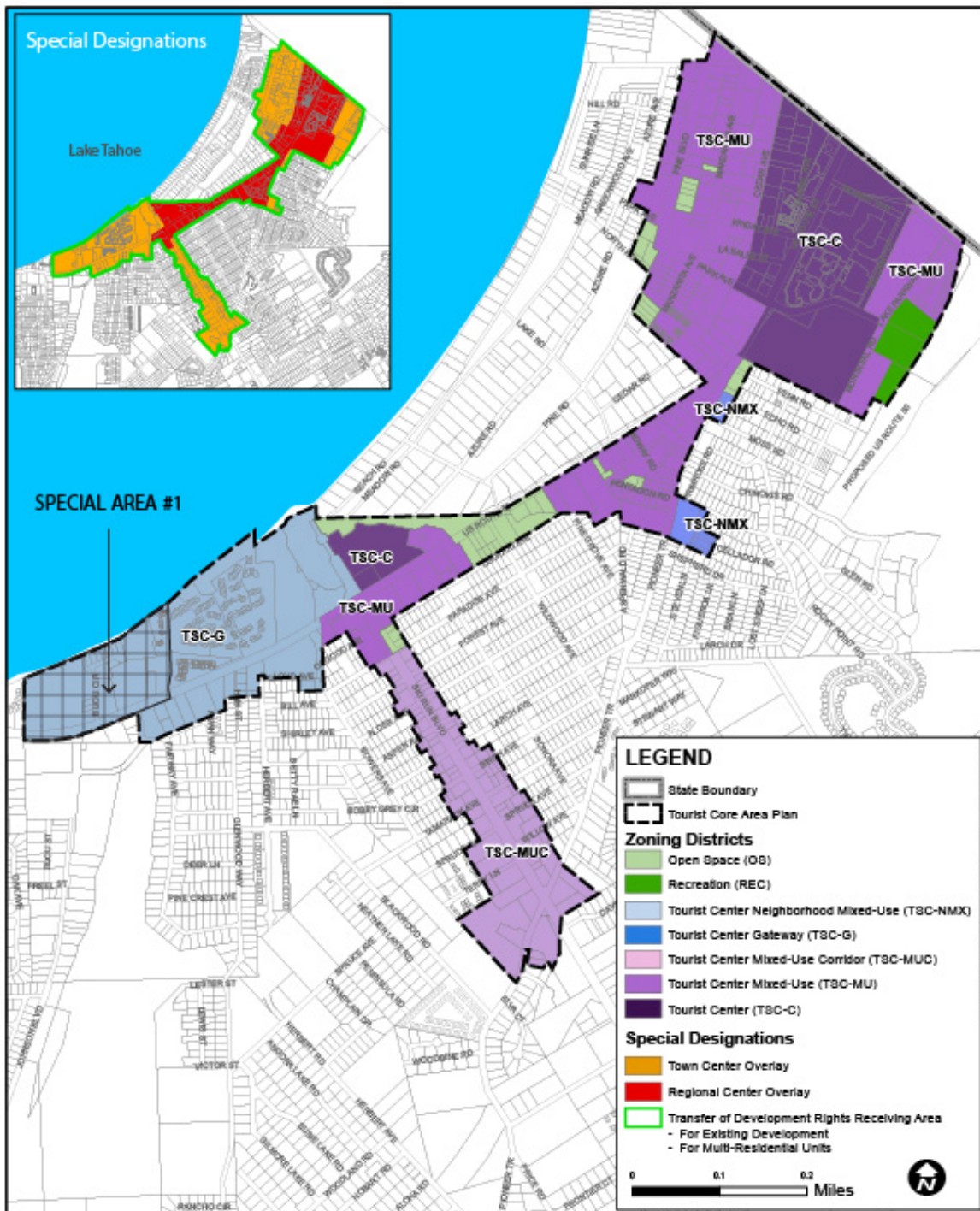
This proposed project (Project) would amend the City of South Lake Tahoe’s (City) Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan (TCAP). Specifically, the proposed amendment would add the following uses as a special use in the TCAP Tourist Center Gateway (TSC-G) District, Special Area 1: industrial services; wholesale and distribution; and small-scale manufacturing. The proposed amendment specifies that each of these new special uses would be allowed only in connection with a retail commercial use where the new use will enhance the visitor experience. The proposed amendment also specifies that the additional special use shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space.

As part of this amendment the City would modify the existing land use definition of “industrial services,” and would add a definition for “wholesale and distribution” (not a currently defined use in the TCAP). The proposed definitions for each of these uses is as follows:

- **Industrial Services.** Establishments providing light industrial services to an associated retail commercial primary use while providing educational and/or demonstration opportunities to the public.
- **Small Scale Manufacturing.** Establishments primarily engaging in retail sales and secondarily as a fine art or craftsman demonstration workshop of light industrial nature such as sculptor, potter, weaver, carver, jeweler, or other similar art that requires artistic skill. Outside storage or display would require approval of a Special Use Permit.
- **Wholesale and Distribution.** Retail commercial establishments engaged in, as a secondary use, the storage of merchandise and distribution of products for sale.

The proposed amendment would modify TCAP Permissible Use List (TCAP Appendix C – Table 1) and List of Primary Uses and Use definitions (TCAP Appendix C – Table 2). The proposed amendment does not involve any other changes to the TCAP, and does not involve any changes to existing policies, or to any development or design standards, or maps. Figure 1 display the zoning districts of the TCAP including TSC-G Special Area 1.

*Figure 2-1. Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan Zoning Districts*





## 2.2 Project Objectives

The City’s objective is to facilitate the development and redevelopment of a wide range of tourist related commercial uses (i.e., light industrial demonstration workshops and product production) that are related to a primary retail commercial use and enhance the tourist destination goals of the Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan.

## 2.3 Project Background

The TCAP was adopted by the City of South Lake Tahoe on October 14, 2013 and by the TRPA Governing Board on November 11, 2013. The TCAP has been amended since, including in January of 2014 to incorporate amendments requested by the TRPA Governing Board; in April of 2020 when the City Council adopted an amendment to incorporate 1.61 acres immediately adjacent to the TCAP boundary to facilitate development of affordable multi-family housing; and in September 2020 to add Special Area 1 as a sub-area of the TSC-G District.

The TCAP provides land use guidance for future development and redevelopment and addresses land use regulations, development and design standards, transportation, recreation, public service and environmental improvements for the area. It encourages general improvement and enhancement for the built environment and provides a framework to change the existing conditions into opportunities for redevelopment with a focus on achieving environmental improvements, encouraging a mixed-use land use pattern that includes tourist accommodation, residential, commercial, public facilities, public spaces and opportunities for housing in close proximity to job centers. The TCAP is the center of tourist services and recreation access and has traditionally been the area with the highest concentration of services and density.

The process of amending a specific plan is provided in CA Government Code Section 65359 and generally follows the general plan amendment process outlined in Sections 65350 through 65358. This includes public hearings with public notice, and adoption by resolution or by ordinance. Specific plans may be amended as often as necessary by the local legislative body, but the amendment itself must be consistent with the adopted general plan for the area.

The TCAP serves as a comprehensive land use plan, consistent with the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan (Regional Plan) and the City of South Lake Tahoe General Plan (General Plan). The TCAP Vision Statement was developed by the community through a series of public workshops, and is stated below:

*“The area is envisioned as a central destination that provides full services for tourists and permanent residents and offers unique experiences related to the many outdoor recreation possibilities that surround the core area. The Revitalization of the South Shore will catalyze the transformation from a failing and vestigial gaming economy into a sustainable outdoor tourism recreational destination by incorporating active streetscapes, shopping, entertainment and outdoor dining opportunities. In addition, transit and alternative travel will provide an essential part of the envisioned destination resort experience resulting in significant environmental gain and improved scenic quality.”*

## 2.4 Proposed Amendment Specifics

Appendix C of the TCAP sets out the development standards, design standards and permissible uses for the land use district of the TCAP to achieve its desired urban form. There are two tables in Appendix C: **Table 1** lists the permitted primary land uses by district for the TCAP; **Table 2** provides the land use definitions. Under the proposed amendment these tables would be revised. The entirety of Table 1 and the applicable land use definitions of Table 2 are included below. Language that would be added under the proposed

amendment is **red** and underlined. Language that would be deleted is **blue** and is struck through. No other changes to the TCAP are proposed.

## 2.4.1 Proposed Changes to Permissible Uses

Table 1: PERMITTED USES BY ZONING DISTRICT								
Permitted Uses Key: "A" – Allowed Use "S" – Special Use "T" – Temporary Use "TRPA" – TRPA Review Required "–" – Use Not Permitted	TSC-C	TSC-MU	TSC-MUC	TSC-NMX	TSC-G	TSC-G Special Area 1	REC	OS
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>								
Domestic Animal Raising	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
Employee Housing	S	S	A	S	S	S	A	
Multiple Family Dwelling	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	-
Multi-Person Dwelling	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Single Family Dwelling (includes condominiums)	A <sup>8</sup>	A	A	A	A	A	S <sup>1</sup>	-
<b>TOURIST ACCOMMODATION</b>								
Bed & Breakfast Facilities	-	A	A <sup>9</sup>	S	A	A	-	-
Hotel, Motel, Other Transient Dwelling Units	A	A	A <sup>9</sup>	S	A	A	-	-
Time Sharing	A	A	A <sup>9</sup>	S	S	A	-	-
<b>RETAIL COMMERCIAL</b>								
General Retail and Personal Services	A	A	A <sup>9</sup>	S	A	A	-	-
Building Material & Hardware	S <sup>6</sup>	-	-	-	-	S	-	-
Nursery	-	-	A <sup>9</sup>	-	-	S	-	-
Outdoor Retail Sales	A	-	S <sup>9</sup>	-	-	S	-	-
Eating & Drinking Places	A	S	A <sup>9</sup>	S	A	A	-	-
Service Stations <sup>11</sup>	S	S	-	-	S	S	-	-
<b>ENTERTAINMENT COMMERCIAL</b>								
Amusement & Recreation	S	S	-	-	-	A	-	-
Privately Owned Assembly and Entertainment	S	S	-	-	-	S	S	-
Outdoor Amusements	-	S	S	-	S	S	S	-
<b>SERVICE COMMERCIAL</b>								
Business Support Services	A <sup>7</sup>	S	S <sup>9</sup>	-	S	A	-	-
Health Care Services	A <sup>2,5</sup>		A <sup>9</sup>	-	A	A	-	-
Professional Offices	A <sup>3,4</sup>	A	A <sup>9</sup>	A	A	A	-	-
Schools – Business & Vocational	S	-	S <sup>9</sup>	-	S	A	-	-
<b>LIGHT INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL</b>								
Small Scale Manufacturing	S	S	S <sup>9</sup>	S	-	<u>S<sup>12</sup></u>	-	-

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

<b>Table 1: PERMITTED USES BY ZONING DISTRICT</b>								
Permitted Uses Key: “A” – Allowed Use “S” – Special Use “T” – Temporary Use “TRPA” – TRPA Review Required “-” – Use Not Permitted	TSC-C	TSC-MU	TSC-MUC	TSC-NMX	TSC-G	TSC-G Special Area 1	REC	OS
<u>Industrial Services<sup>11</sup></u>	-	-	-	-	-	<u>S<sup>12</sup></u>	-	-
<b>WHOLESALE/STORAGE COMMERCIAL</b>								
Vehicle Storage & Parking <sup>11</sup>	S	S	S <sup>9</sup>	S	S	S	-	-
<u>Wholesale and Distribution</u>						<u>S<sup>12</sup></u>		
<b>GENERAL PUBLIC SERVICE</b>								
Religious Assembly	-	S	S <sup>9</sup>	-	S	A	-	-
Cultural Facilities	S	S	S <sup>9</sup>	-	S	A	-	-
Daycare Centers/Preschool	A	A	A <sup>10</sup>	A	A	A	-	-
Government Offices	-	-	A <sup>9</sup>	-	-	S	-	-
Local Assembly & Entertainment	S	S	-	-	-	S	-	-
Local Public Health and Safety Facilities <sup>11</sup>	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Public Owned Assembly & Entertainment	S	S	-	-	-	-	S	-
Public Utility Centers <sup>11</sup>	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Service Organizations	-	-	A <sup>9</sup>	-	A	A	-	-
<b>LINEAR PUBLIC FACILITIES</b>								
Pipelines & Power Transmission	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Transit Stations & Terminals	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Transportation Routes	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Transmission & Receiving Facilities	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>RECREATION</b>								
Cross Country Ski Courses	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
Day Use Areas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Group Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
Outdoor Recreation Concessions	-	-	-	-	S	S	-	-
Participant Sport Facilities	S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Riding and Hiking Trails	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
Rural Sports	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
Snowmobile Courses	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
Visitor Information Centers	S	S	-	-	S	A	-	-
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>								

**Table 1: PERMITTED USES BY ZONING DISTRICT**

Permitted Uses Key: "A" – Allowed Use "S" – Special Use "T" – Temporary Use "TRPA" – TRPA Review Required "-" – Use Not Permitted	TSC-C	TSC-MU	TSC-MUC	TSC-NMX	TSC-G	TSC-G Special Area 1	REC	OS
Forest and Timber Resource Management	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Vegetation Resource Management	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Water Quality Improvements and Watershed Management	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Wildlife and Fisheries Resource Management	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Range Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	-
<b>OPEN SPACE</b>								
Allowed in all areas of the Region	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
<b>SHOREZONE (Tolerance Districts 1 and 4)</b>								
Water Oriented Outdoor Recreation Concession					TRPA-A	TRPA-A		
Beach Recreation					TRPA-A	TRPA-A		
Water Borne Transit					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Boat Launching Facilities					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Tour Boat Operations					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Safety and Navigation Devices (Shorezone District 4)					TRPA-A	TRPA-A		
Marinas					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Buoys					TRPA-A	TRPA-A		
Piers					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Fences					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Boat Ramps					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Floating Docks and Platforms					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		
Shoreline Protective Devices					TRPA-S	TRPA-S		

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

<b>Table 1: PERMITTED USES BY ZONING DISTRICT</b>								
Permitted Uses Key: “A” – Allowed Use “S” – Special Use “T” – Temporary Use “TRPA” – TRPA Review Required “-” – Use Not Permitted	TSC-C	TSC-MU	TSC-MUC	TSC-NMX	TSC-G	TSC-G Special Area 1	REC	OS
Water Intake Lines					TRPA-A	TRPA-A		

Note: In the Regional Center all residential projects equal to or exceeding 100,000 square feet of new floor area or non-residential projects equal to or exceeding 80,000 square feet of new floor area require TRPA review and approval. In the Town Center all residential projects equal to or exceeding 50,000 square feet of new floor area or non-residential projects equal to or exceeding 40,000 square feet of new floor area require TRPA review and approval.

1. Caretaker Residence Only
2. All Health Care Services are allowed except emergency outpatient or urgent care facilities which shall only be considered along Heavenly Village Way, formerly Park Avenue.
3. Allow Realty Offices within the district and limit financial services to ATMs.
4. Allow consideration for placement of Realty Offices within the district, and only when operated in conjunction with approved Park Avenue Redevelopment fractional ownership tourist accommodation projects. Such use shall occupy no more than five percent (5%) of the commercial floor area with any project area within the district.
5. All Health Care Services uses permissible throughout special district; provided that any Health Care Services uses proposed to front on either side of US Highway 50 and/or the intersections of Heavenly Village Way (formerly Park Avenue) and Stateline Avenue are limited to second floor or higher. See TRPA Ordinance 2009-05 Exhibit 2 for specific limitation locations.
6. Outdoor storage and display is prohibited.
7. Shall not front on US Highway 50.
8. Condominiums only.
9. Use not permitted in Special Area #1, which comprises of APNs 028-081-02, 028-081-04 & 028-081-15.
10. Daycare center allowed as an accessory use.
11. Land use category is identified in TRPA Code Section 60.3 as a “possible contaminating activity,” triggering special requirements pursuant to TRPA Code Section 60.4 if located within a Source Water Protection Zone.
12. Use only allowed in connection with a retail commercial use where it will enhance the visitor experience and is limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space.

<b>Table 2: LIST OF PRIMARY USES AND USE DEFINITIONS</b>	
<b>USE</b>	<b>DEFINITIONS</b>
<b>LIGHT INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL</b>	

**Table 2: LIST OF PRIMARY USES AND USE DEFINITIONS**

USE	DEFINITIONS
Industrial Services	<u>Establishments providing light industrial services to an associated retail commercial primary use while providing educational and/or demonstration opportunities to the public.</u> <del>Services establishments providing other businesses with services, including maintenance, repair, service, testing, publishing, and rental. This includes establishments such as: welding repair, armature rewinding, and heavy equipment repair, vehicle repair, (except vehicle repair; see "Auto Repair and Service"); research and development laboratories, including testing facilities; soils and materials testing laboratories; equipment rental businesses that are entirely within buildings (for equipment rental yards, see "Sales Lots"), including leasing tools, machinery and other business items except vehicles; and other business services of a "heavy service" nature. Outside storage or display is included as part of the use.</del>
Small Scale Manufacturing	Establishments primary engaging in retail sales and secondarily as a fine art or craftsman demonstration workshop of light industrial nature such as sculptor, potter, weaver, carver, jeweler, or other similar art that requires artistic skill . Outside storage or display would require approval of a Special use Permit.
<b>WHOLESALE/STORAGE COMMERCIAL</b>	
Vehicle Storage & Parking	Service establishments primarily engaged in the business of storing operative cars, buses, or other motor vehicles. The use includes both day use and long-term public and commercial garages, parking lots, and structures. Outside storage or display is included as part of the use. The use does not include wrecking yards (see "Recycling and Scrap").
<u>Wholesale and Distribution</u>	<u>Retail commercial establishments engaged in, as a secondary use, the storage of merchandise and distribution of products for sale.</u>

## 2.4.2 Summary of Proposed Changes

As shown in the tables above, the proposed amendment applies only to Tourist Center Gateway District (TSC-G) Special Area 1. As “special uses” (designated with an “S” in the table) the proposed new uses would be subject to approval of a Special Use Permit. A Special Use Permit requires discretionary approval by the City Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator following review and a determination that the nature of the proposed use, at the location proposed, is not detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood. To obtain a Special Use Permit, the applicant must generally show that the contemplated use is compatible with the zoning ordinance and land use standards. Findings that such use would be essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare, and will not

impair the integrity and character of the zoned district or be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare are required. A special use is in contrast to an allowed use. An allowed use does not require a Special Use Permit and is an allowable use subject to zoning and development standard compliance. An allowed use is one that can be established as the primary use of a building.

As defined in the footnotes to Table 1 (see footnote number 12) the new special uses would only be allowed in connection with a retail commercial use where they will enhance the visitor experience and shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space.

## **2.5 Project Location, Setting, and Surrounding Land Uses**

The TCAP functions as the central tourist destination in the South Lake Tahoe area. The boundaries of the TCAP are entirely within the City of South Lake Tahoe, located centrally along US Highway 50 and Ski Run Boulevard between Stateline and Fairway Avenue on US Highway 50 and between US Highway 50 and approximately Pioneer Trail along Ski Run Boulevard. This area serves as a direct recreation access point to Heavenly Mountain Ski Resort, Edgewood Golf Course, Ski Run and Lakeside Marinas, and Van Sickle Bi-State Park, and as such is predominantly tourist related, with numerous hotels, motels, restaurants, and retail land uses. The area is served by two transit routes: Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) Routes 50 and 55, including a Route 50 stop at Beach Retreat & Lodge at US 50 and Takela Drive and at Safeway at US 50 and Johnson Blvd., and a Route 55 stop at Ski Run Blvd. and Spruce, with links to other TTD routes. Additionally, the South Shore water taxi stops at Timber Cove, among three other stops within the South Shore area. A bike lane within US 50 and multi-use path parallel to US 50 run through the City and link to other bike lanes, bike routes, and multiuse trails in the South Shore with connections extending to Stateline, Meyers, Tahoe Keys, and Camp Richardson.

The proposed amendment affects only the Tourist Center Gateway (TSC-G) District, Special Area 1 (Project area). As shown in Table 1, above, TSC-G and Special Area 1 already allow for a variety of uses – commercial, residential, entertainment and others, making the Project area one of mixed-use zoning. Special Area 1 is bound by Lake Tahoe to the north, US 50 to the south, and beachfront hotels to the east and west. The Beach Retreat & Lodge occupies the parcel at the western edge of Special Area 1 and Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge and Spa occupies the parcel on the eastern edge. The center of Special Area 1 is dominated by the Bijou Center shopping area comprised of a large parking lot and commercial businesses currently occupied by CVS pharmacy, several restaurants, a cannabis dispensary, dry-cleaning business and other small shops. Special Area 1 includes several residential parcels along Bal Bijou Rd adjacent to Lake Tahoe. Special Area 1 also includes a public beach and the Timber Cove Pier. Special Area 1 is approximately 20 acres and is located in the SW ¼ of Section 33, T13N, and R18E and the NW ¼ of Section 2, T12N, R18E of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) South Lake Tahoe Quadrangle map.

## **2.6 Required Permits and Approvals**

Any amendment of the TCAP requires approval by the City of South Lake Tahoe City Council, and also approval by the TRPA Governing Board. This is because the TCAP was prepared by the City of South Lake Tahoe in collaboration with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to implement the City's 2030 General Plan and TRPA's 2012 Regional Plan. As such, any amendment of the TCAP requires approval by both agencies. To approve the amendment the City and TRPA must independently find that the amended TCAP is in conformance with both the City's General Plan and TRPA's Regional Plan.

Projects that may move forward as a result of the implementation of this amendment, such as development of a new or expanded commercial structure, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project-level environmental review and may also, depending on the scope and location of the Project, require approval from federal, state, regional and local agencies with permitting authority including TRPA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region, and El Dorado County Air Quality Management District.

## 3.0 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The IS identifies physical, biological, and social factors that might be affected by the Project. If environmental factors are checked below, there would be at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. As discussed and documented in the IS checklist, there are no environmental impacts associated with the amendment.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture and Forest Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Geology / Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazards / Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology / Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Population / Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildfire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Significance
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	None with Mitigation Incorporated

### 3.1 Determination

Pursuant to Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, and based on the information contained in the attached IS, the determination is made that the Project would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment.

**Project Name:** City of South Lake Tahoe Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan Amendment

**Project Location:** City of South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County, California

**Project Description:** This proposed project (Project) would amend the City of South Lake Tahoe’s Tourist Core Area Plan/Specific Plan (TCAP). Specifically, the proposed amendment would add the following uses as a special use in the TCAP Tourist Center Gateway (TSC-G) District, Special Area 1: industrial services; wholesale and distribution; and small-scale manufacturing. The proposed amendment specifies that each of these new special uses would be allowed only in connection with a retail commercial use where they will enhance the visitor experience, and that the additional special use shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space.

As part of this amendment the City would modify the existing land use definition of “industrial services,” and would add a definition for “wholesale and distribution” (not a currently defined use in the TCAP). The proposed definitions for each of these uses is as follows:

- **Industrial Services.** Establishments providing light industrial services to an associated retail commercial primary use while providing educational and/or demonstration opportunities to the public.
- **Small Scale Manufacturing.** Establishments primarily engaging in retail sales and secondarily as a fine art or craftsman demonstration workshop of light industrial nature such as sculptor, potter, weaver, carver, jeweler, or other similar art that requires artistic skill. Outside storage or display would require approval of a Special Use Permit.
- **Wholesale and Distribution.** Retail commercial establishments engaged in, as a secondary use, the storage of merchandise and distribution of products for sale.



**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

The proposed amendment would modify TCAP Permissible Use List (TCAP Appendix C – Table 1) and List of Primary Uses and Use definitions (TCAP Appendix C – Table 2). The proposed amendment does not involve any other changes to the TCAP, and does not involve any changes to existing policies, or to any development or design standards, or maps. Figure 1 display the zoning districts of the TCAP including TSC-G Special Area 1.

**Findings:**

**Determination:** On the basis of this initial evaluation,

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

**Signature:**  \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** John Hitchcock

**Date:** August 17, 2021

**For:** City of South Lake  
Tahoe

## 4.0 Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

---

This Initial Study is a public document being used by the City to determine whether the project may have a significant effect on the environment. This section evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, followed by the CEQA Mandatory Findings of Significance. The degree of change from existing conditions caused by the project is compared to the impact evaluation criteria to determine if the change is significant. Existing conditions serve as a baseline for evaluating the impacts of the project.

During the completion of the environmental evaluation, the City relied on the following categories of impact noted as column headings in the IS checklist:

- A) No Impact: A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- B) Less than Significant Impact: "Less than Significant Impact" applies where the Project's impact creates no significant impacts based on the criterion or criteria that sets the level of impact to a resource and require no mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts.
- C) Less than Significant Impact after Mitigation: "Less than Significant Impact after Mitigation" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from potentially "Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- D) Significant Impact: "Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect is potentially significant, as based on the criterion or criteria that sets the level of impact to a resource. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

## 4.1 Aesthetics

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Highway 50 from Stateline to the Wye is identified as an eligible state scenic highway. However, the viewshed from US 50 toward Special Area 1 is not identified as a scenic vista in the TCAP, and US 50 from its intersection with Pioneer Trail west past Special Area 1 is not in attainment with TRPA scenic thresholds and is targeted for restoration in TRPA’s Scenic Quality Improvement Program (SQIP).

Views of Special Area 1 from US 50 are dominated by a large parking lot and aging commercial and retail structures – particularly the large one-story, gabled roof commercial building within which the CVS pharmacy and adjoining businesses are located; and by a secondary large one-story warehouse-style building adjacent to CVS that includes the cannabis dispensary. The overall visual character of the area is urban, with little uniformity. The lake is not visible from US 50 as it passes through Special Area 1.

### Impact Analysis

Though the amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards (including design standards), and requirements of the TCAP as under existing conditions. The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction. In addition, because the new uses made permissible by this amendment (industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and/or small-scale manufacturing) are “special uses” (as opposed to “allowable uses”) applicants would also be required to demonstrate that the new uses would not impair the integrity or character of the district.

The TCAP includes detailed design standards that are intended to ensure that the built environment complements the natural appearing landscape in the Tahoe Region while improving the quality of life and promoting livability, sustainability and walkability. The TCAP specifically regulates building form, materials and colors and includes the following: buildings shall provide adequate articulation and detail to avoid a bulky box-like appearance; a unified palette of quality materials shall be used; colors shall be used to help delineate windows and architectural features of interest; a variety of natural-appearing materials should be used on building facades to create contrast; colors should blend with the setting, with limits on

bright colors; and roofs and roof-mounted equipment shall have a non-glare, earth tone finish. In so much as new projects (e.g., additions, new or redeveloped) incentivized by this amendment would be required to conform with TCAP design standards, such projects could improve the visual quality of the area compared to existing conditions.

The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction. Because any project would be required to meet the same codes, ordinances, standards and policies as proposed projects under existing conditions, and because these standards include detailed design standards intended to ensure that the built environment complements the natural appearing landscape, the proposed amendment would have no impact to aesthetics.

#### **Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to aesthetic resources.

## **4.2 Agriculture & Forest Resources**

<b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially significant impact</b>	<b>Less than significant with mitigation</b>	<b>Less than significant impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>
Convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance (farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the farmland mapping and monitoring program of the California resources agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in public resources code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by public resources code section 4526), or timberland zoned timberland production (as defined by government code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### **Environmental Setting**

Special Area 1 is a modified urban environment with little vegetation. The amendment is not located in an area identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and is not located in an area zoned for agricultural use or involving a Williamson Act contract.

### Impact Analysis

The Project does not involve conversion of any land, is not within a forested or agricultural area (though management of natural resources of all kinds is a permissible use in the district), and would not result in any loss of forest land or conversion of forest land.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to agricultural or forestry resources.

## 4.3 Air Quality

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

The Lake Tahoe Region is in attainment or designated as unclassified for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and is designated a nonattainment/transitional area for ozone and nonattainment for the PM10 California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS) (CARB, 2021). In the Project area, these pollutants relate to automobile use and potential impacts measured with vehicle miles travelled (VMT) calculations, and wood burning fireplaces and stoves.

### Impact Analysis

Special Area 1 is currently zoned for broad suite of special and allowable uses encompassing most residential, tourist accommodation, entertainment commercial, service commercial, and general public services, and is therefore a mixed-use zoning district. Historically zoning has often been used by cities, especially in the US, to separate industrial and manufacturing uses from residential or commercial uses because, in part, of the emissions often associated with industrial uses such as factories. This separation of uses has become increasingly unpopular in part because of environmental laws and regulations that have dramatically reduced localized adverse environmental impacts associated with industrial and manufacturing uses. While no projects are proposed with this amendment, and the details of future projects are not known at this time, it is reasonable to consider whether new industrial uses or uses associated with light manufacturing would create adverse localized air quality conditions. In this case, as new uses would require a Special Use Permit, applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would be required to show (and the City to agree) that the contemplated use is compatible with TCAP zoning and land use standards. In addition, in its approval of the

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

Special Use Permit, the City would be required to find that the new use is essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare, and will not impair the integrity and character of the zoned district or be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare. Such findings would be hard or impossible to make for new proposed uses that exceed El Dorado County Air Quality Management District's (EDCAQMD) recommended air quality thresholds of significance, result in cumulative considerable increases of any criteria pollutants, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or create objectional odors affecting a substantial number of people. Because the type of new uses is unknown and because the new uses would be discretionary and require the City to make these findings, new uses associated with this proposed amendment would be not anticipated to have any long-term impacts to air quality.

In addition to emissions associated with a change in use, the proposed amendment may also impact the total VMT to and within TSC-G. Generally, retail uses attract more traffic than industrial, warehouse, or small-scale manufacturing uses; therefore, it is reasonable to assume that VMT to and around Special Area 1 would stay the same or decrease if all existing retail spaces converted up to 30% of their space to one of the new special uses. Any decrease in VMT would be negligible and unlikely to have any impact to local air quality.

The proposed amendment provides the opportunity to, but does not necessarily encourage, a change in use from existing conditions. Consistent with existing conditions, any interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new projects proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses would be subject to applicable City building codes and approvals. Projects involving ground disturbance, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting, which would necessitate environmental analysis, including evaluation in comparison to EDCAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. If the project exceeds applicable thresholds, emission-reduction measures sufficient to reduce potentially significant short-term air quality impacts to less than significant levels would be required. The proposed amendment would not alter, revise, conflict or obstruct regulations pertaining to air quality and propose no changes to air quality policies.

**Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to air resources.

## **4.4 Biological Resources**

<b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially significant impact</b>	<b>Less than significant with mitigation</b>	<b>Less than significant impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>
Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California department of fish and game or U.S. fish and wildlife service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California department of fish and game or us fish and wildlife service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by section 404 of the	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

clean water act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) Through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				
Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Environmental Setting**

Special Area 1 is a 20-acre urban area bound by Lake Tahoe to the north and US 50 to the south. Special Area 1 is comprised of mostly impervious surfaces including parking lots, commercial businesses, lodging, and residential parcels along the shoreline. There is only minimal existing landscaping within the Project area consisting of a few trees and shrubs concentrated on the residential block on the north side of Bal Bijou Road. As such, habitat in the core commercial area (Bijou Center) is poor. No areas within Special Area 1 serve as wildlife corridors, and Special Area 1 is not within an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or any other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan.

### **Impact Analysis**

Though the amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new projects by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements and policies of the TCAP as under existing conditions. The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction.

Because the new uses are allowed only in connection with a retail commercial use and shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space, most applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would likely be requesting a Special Use Permit associated with redesigning or remodeling the interior of an existing space to accommodate one of the new uses (industrial services, wholesale and distribution, or small-scale manufacturing). These types of projects would have no impact to any species. Larger projects, such as development of a new or expanded commercial structure, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting, at which time the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and TRPA regulations pertaining to the protection of special status species, riparian areas, wetlands, and to protection of the shorezone (for any properties or projects within the shorezone of Lake Tahoe). The proposed amendment does not conflict with any existing ordinances, including any policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. There are no impacts to biological resources associated with the proposed amendment.

### **Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to biological resources.

## 4.5 Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

The TCAP was subject to archaeological survey during the preparation of the Stateline/Ski Run Community Plan and South Shore Redevelopment Plan EIR/EIS, which resulted in no evidence of intact, potentially significant prehistoric, archaeological or Washoe cultural sites, or historical sites. Cultural resources in the TCAP are regulated at the TRPA, federal, state, and local levels.

### Impact Analysis

The changes proposed by this amendment are limited to the addition of identified special uses to Special Area 1. The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction. Applicants proposing projects made possible by this amendment would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements of the TCAP as under existing conditions.

Because the new special uses are allowed only in connection with a retail commercial use and shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space, most applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would likely be requesting a Special Use Permit associated with redesigning or remodeling the interior of an existing space to accommodate one of the new uses (industrial services, wholesale and distribution, or small-scale manufacturing). Remodeling the interior of an existing structure would not alter the footprint or foundation of existing buildings, and would not involve any new ground disturbance. As such, new uses associated with this amendment would be unlikely to have any impact to any tribal, cultural or archeological resources in Special Area 1.

Larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting, at which time the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, AB 52, and TRPA Code Chapter 67. Because previous studies have indicated no evidence of intact, potentially significant prehistoric, archaeological or Washoe cultural sites, or historical sites; and because any new ground-disturbing projects would be required to comply with existing federal and state cultural and tribal resources protection regulations, this amendment would have no impact to cultural resources.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to cultural resources.



## 4.6 Energy

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation incorporated	Less than significant impact	No impact
Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 is currently served by existing electric and gas infrastructure. Electrical services are provided by Liberty Utilities. Natural gas services are provided by Southwest Gas. Commercial businesses account for the majority of energy consumption within Special Area 1.

In 2020, the City adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which serves as a long-term plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from community activities. The CAP provides several specific greenhouse gas reduction strategies and measures, including building energy strategies such as weatherization, deep energy retrofits, building electrification, and the installation of renewable energy in new construction.

### Impact Analysis

Implemented projects associated with the new uses – industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and small-scale manufacturing – may produce less or more energy use than under existing conditions. Because the new uses are allowed only in connection with a retail commercial use and shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space, most applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would likely be requesting a Special Use Permit associated with redesigning or remodeling the interior of an existing space to accommodate one of the new uses. Consistent with existing conditions, new construction would be subject to permission and review by the City, and would be required to demonstrate compliance with current building codes, including codes and policies pertaining to energy use and efficiency. In general, updating buildings to comply with modern code requirements usually results in an increase in energy efficiency compared to existing conditions. However, energy efficiency improvements could be offset if the proposed use is more energy intensive than the existing use. Certain special uses such as wholesale and distribution use may result in less energy consumption overall.

The proposed amendments would not conflict with or obstruct state or local renewable energy goals. Larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting at which time the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and TRPA regulations pertaining to energy. Energy consumption may temporarily increase as a result of construction activities associated with any construction. However, such increases would be limited in scope and duration. The proposed amendment would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation and would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have a less than significant impact to energy.

## 4.7 Geology & Soils

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
I) rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zoning map issued by the state geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to division of mines and geology special publication 42?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
li) strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
lii) seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iv) landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Be located on expansive soil, as defined in table 18-1-b of the uniform building code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 is located within the Sierra Nevada-Great Basin seismic belt. Four known faults run through the City of South Lake Tahoe, including one located in the general vicinity of Ski Run Boulevard. These faults are not known to be active, and do not meet the criteria for building restrictions under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act. The topography in Special Area 1 is characterized by gentle slopes of 10% or less. The majority of the area consists of impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and buildings. Per the Swelling Clays Map of the Coterminous United States, the Tahoe Basin Region is underlain with little to no clays with high shrink/swell potential (USGS, 1989).

### Impact Analysis

The Project would add industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and small-scale manufacturing as permissible special uses to Special Area 1 of the TCAP. Though the amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements and policies of the TCAP as under existing conditions.

Larger projects, such as new commercial structures or additions, proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the new permissible uses, would likely involve ground-disturbing activities. According to the California Building Code (CBC), the Special Area #1 is located in Seismic Zone D, and as such, all structures must be designed to meet the regulations and standards associated with Zone D hazards as set forth in the CBC. Compliance with these existing regulations would ensure that all new or redeveloped structures would be capable of withstanding anticipated ground shaking and would not create significant public safety risks or property damage in the event of an earthquake. The proposed amendment would not create new risks associated with earthquake safety, soil erosion, or landslide hazards, or involve ground disturbance that could directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to geology and soils.

## 4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are global pollutants and addressed on a regional scale through the City's General Plan (updated 2011) and Climate Action Plan (CAP) (adopted in October 2020). According to the results of the City's 2015 and 2018 GHG communitywide emissions inventory, the largest sources of emissions are as follows (in order of magnitude): transportation, residential energy, and nonresidential energy.

The City's General Plan contains policies and specific, enforceable requirements or restrictions and performance standards applicable to the TCAP amendment area that reduce VMT and air quality emissions such as construction and operational-related GHG emissions. These policies promote the use of alternative fuels, alternative transportation, energy conservation, and include strategies to reduce travel demand and promote sustainable development. The General Plan also contains sustainability policies including measures such as energy conservation, sustainable development, and green building, as well as actions to reduce VMT and mobile-source GHG emissions.

In 2017, the City adopted a resolution (City of South Lake Tahoe Resolution 2017-26, Establishing Renewable Energy and Carbon Emissions Reduction Goals) establishing a goal to achieve 100% renewable electricity citywide by 2032, and to reduce GHG emissions 80% below baseline by 2040. The CAP provides strategies and GHG reduction actions to achieve these goals including energy strategies such as weatherization, deep energy retrofits, building electrification, and the installation of renewable energy in new construction.

### **Impact Analysis**

As discussed in Section 4.3, Air Quality, above, the only changes proposed are the addition of identified special uses to Special Area 1. Though this amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements and policies of the TCAP as under existing conditions.

Implemented projects associated with the new uses – industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and small-scale manufacturing – may produce less or more GHG emissions associated with energy use than under existing conditions. In general, applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would likely be redesigning or remodeling the interior of an existing space to accommodate one of the new uses. New construction would be subject to permission and review by the City, and would be required to demonstrate compliance with current building codes, including codes and policies pertaining to energy use and efficiency. In general, updating buildings to comply with modern code requirements usually results in an increase in energy efficiency compared to existing conditions and therefore supports reduction of GHG from buildings. However, energy efficiency improvements could be offset if the proposed use is more energy intensive than the existing use. Overall, any increases in GHG associated with a change in use of 30% of an existing retail space would be negligible.

Other long-term changes in local emissions associated with the new permissible uses may be related to vehicle miles travelled. Generally, retail uses attract more traffic than industrial, wholesale and distribution, or small-scale manufacturing uses. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that VMT to and around Special Area 1, and emissions associated with vehicles, would decrease if all existing retail spaces converted up to 30% of their space to one of the new special uses, though this decrease would be negligible. Any local decrease in VMT and vehicle emissions caused by the partial conversion on an existing retail use would not necessarily translate to a reduction in regional emissions. As introduced above, GHGs are global pollutants. It is unknown whether the conversion of some existing retail space to a different type of use would, overall, decrease or increase vehicle emissions compared to existing conditions. However, given the size of the area and the available space that would be converted, any increase or decrease associated with vehicle emissions would be negligible.

### **Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have a less than significant impact to greenhouse gas emissions.

## 4.9 Hazards & Hazardous Materials

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to government code section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 currently contains multiple commercial businesses, including several restaurants, a cannabis dispensary, a dry-cleaning business, and other small shops. The operation of these businesses may require the use of small amounts of hazardous materials such as cleaners, paint, pesticides/herbicides, and oil. There are no known contamination hazards in the project area that may result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment (DTSC, 2021).

### Impact Analysis

Though the amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment or interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements as under existing conditions, including compliance codes and policies pertaining to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. In addition, because the new uses made permissible by this amendment (industrial services, wholesale and

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

distribution, and/or small-scale manufacturing) are “special uses” (as opposed to “allowable uses”) applicants would also be required to demonstrate that the new uses are “not injurious to the neighborhood.” Demonstrating a ‘not injurious to the neighborhood’ finding would require consideration of potential hazards and their effects.

Larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting. As part of this review the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and TRPA regulations pertaining to hazardous materials.

**Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to hazards and hazardous materials.

## **4.10 Hydrology & Water Quality**

<b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially significant impact</b>	<b>Less than significant with mitigation</b>	<b>Less than significant impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>
Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would:				
I) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, or risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 is an urban area consisting of a large amount of paved impervious surface. Historically, Bijou Creek, an intermittent drainage fed by melting snow from the 1,300-acre Bioju Creek Watershed (City of South Lake Tahoe, 2011), flowed through what was the southern end of Bijou Meadows (currently the Bijou Center parking lot) and into Lake Tahoe. Today, the drainage basin for Bijou Creek conveys snowmelt flows through a managed stormwater system (constructed by the City in 2013 and 2014) that includes an underground system of stormwater conveyances and treatment vaults to trap sediment and other pollutants carried in runoff, and a pump back system that conveys the treated runoff nearly one mile further up into the Bijou Creek watershed to a system of vegetated water quality treatment/infiltration basins. Treated runoff is eventually released into Lake Tahoe via an underground culvert at an outfall on the beach behind the Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge and Spa.

### Impact Analysis

The changes proposed by this amendment are limited to the addition of identified special uses to Special Area 1. Though this amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements and policies of the TCAP as under existing conditions. The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction

Existing retail commercial uses seeking to modify their retail space to accommodate one of the new uses would not have physical impacts on the existing environment. These types of projects may involve redesigning or remodeling existing buildings to accommodate the new use, would not alter the footprint or foundation of existing buildings, and would not involve any new ground disturbance. As such, new uses associated with this amendment would be unlikely to have any effect to any hydrological resources in Special Area 1.

Larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting. As part of this review the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and TRPA regulations, including as pertaining to protection of water quality, drainage, and groundwater. New development within Special Area 1 would likely be permitted only with implementation of water quality best management practices that would improve drainage of the existing largely impervious Project areas. Such modifications would improve area hydrology from existing conditions.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to hydrology.

## 4.11 Land Use & Planning

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	--

### **Environmental Setting**

The Tourist Center Gateway (TSC-G) District (Special Area 1) is an urban area approximately 20 acres in size. As described in Section 2.5, Project Location, Setting and Surrounding Uses, Special Area 1 is bound by Lake Tahoe to the north, US 50 to the south, and beachfront hotels to the east and west. The center of Special Area 1 is dominated by the Bijou Center shopping area, which is comprised of a large parking lot and commercial businesses currently occupied by CVS pharmacy, several restaurants, a cannabis dispensary, a dry-cleaning business, and other small shops. The special and allowed uses permissible within Special Area 1 are detailed in Table 1 and Table 2 in Section 2.4. Special Area 1 is currently zoned for broad suite of special and allowable uses encompassing most residential, tourist accommodation, entertainment commercial, service commercial, and general public services.

### **Impact Analysis**

The proposed amendment would add industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and small-scale manufacturing as special uses to Special Area 1. In accordance with the terms of the proposed amendment, the addition of these uses must be associated with a retail commercial use. The new special uses would not divide an established community because the tourist core is an established tourist/commercial center that promotes a land use pattern that further enhances the area as a destination and recreation center. The TCAP is the land use plan applicable to Special Area 1 and the City and TRPA are the agencies with jurisdiction over the Project area. With City Council approval of this amendment, the proposed new uses would become officially permissible special uses and therefore would not conflict with the TCAP or associated policies and regulations.

### **Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to land use.

## **4.12 Mineral Resources**

<b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially significant impact</b>	<b>Less than significant with mitigation</b>	<b>Less than significant impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>
Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Environmental Setting**

There are no known mineral resources within the TCAP, nor does any specific plan or other applicable plan identify any sites within the TCAP as an important mineral recovery site.



### Impact Analysis

Because no known mineral resources or mineral recovery sites exist within the Project area, the Project would not impact these resources in any way.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to mineral resources.

## 4.13 Noise

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

The TCAP sets forth goals and policies pertaining to noise within the Tourist Core. Goal LU-7 is to reduce exposure of harmful and annoying effects of excessive noise and groundborne noise levels within the overall Tourist Core. This goal is supported by several policies that establish both qualitative and quantitative noise reduction measures, including a mandatory review process when noise-sensitive land uses are proposed in certain areas, potential vibration impact analysis for all construction activities that include impact equipment within 200 feet of existing structures, and the implementation of project-specific measures to ensure noise/land use compatibility.

Currently, noise in Special Area 1 is commensurate to the average noise levels generated by commercial retail businesses and restaurants.

### Impact Analysis

The proposed amendment would not make any changes to the noise policies set forth in the TCAP. The TCAP specifies a maximum community noise equivalent level (CNEL) for each zone within the Tourist Core Area, which is 60 within Special Area 1 (55 within the shorezone). The proposed amendment would not change the CNEL; therefore, exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies would not occur. Maximum levels for groundborne vibrations or noise levels are also regulated in the TCAP. Construction operations must be designed to avoid or mitigate for vibrations above 0.02 inches/second. Ambient noise levels are not expected to increase substantially as a result of the proposed amendment, because the new special uses are only permissible in connection with a retail commercial use where they will enhance the visitor experience and shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space. In addition, certain special uses such as wholesale and distribution may decrease ambient noise levels.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to noise.

## 4.14 Population & Housing

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 is predominantly comprised of commercial businesses, with the exception of one residential block on the north side of Bal Bijou Road. All residential uses with the exception of Domestic Animal Raising are considered permissible uses within Special Area 1.

### Impact Analysis

The new special uses included in the proposed amendment are limited to commercial businesses and would not result in any impacts to existing housing. No changes to residential uses will take place and limits on development through the TRPA Regional Plan prevent unplanned population growth, resulting in insignificant potential for future population growth. Because Special Area 1 is already heavily developed, new construction of one of the proposed special uses in favor of new housing is likely low. Because the amendments do not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP new uses, associated with a retail commercial establishment would not induce population growth compared to existing conditions. The proposed amendment is also unlikely to result in an influx of new employees to Special Area 1 that may require housing elsewhere.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have a less than significant impact to population and housing.

## 4.15 Public Services

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

One fire station is located in the general vicinity of the Project Area, Fire Station #1, which is located at 1252 Ski Run Boulevard. Fire Station #1 is owned by the City and services the Ski Run and Stateline area with response time between three and five minutes. Fire Station #1 houses an Advanced Life Support (paramedic) engine company. The Fire Department also has mutual aid agreements with the other fire and emergency response agencies in the Tahoe Region.

California Tahoe Emergency Services Operations Authority (Cal Tahoe) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that contracts for ambulance service to the Tahoe South Shore service area and parts of northwestern Alpine County. The JPA's administrative offices are located at City Fire Station #2, 2951 Lake Tahoe Blvd. Cal Tahoe JPA operates three full-time ambulances and maintains two reserve ambulances that are dispatched by the City of South Lake Tahoe Police Department.

Police protection is provided by the South Lake Tahoe Police Department. The South Lake Tahoe Dispatch Center handles an average of over 10,000 emergency calls and 65,000 non-emergency calls for service every year. The Dispatch Center currently answers 100% of 911 calls within 15 seconds (City of South Lake Tahoe, n.d.).

Public facilities within Special Area 1 are limited to the beach and all land below the high-water mark. There are no schools in Special Area 1.

### Impact Analysis

The new special uses included in the proposed amendment are limited to commercial businesses and would not result in any impacts related to governmental facilities. The new special uses would not result in an increase in

population to Special Area 1, and would therefore have no impact on service ratios, delayed response times, or decreased access to public facilities.

**Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to public services.

## 4.16 Recreation

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Recreational facilities within Special Area 1 include Timber Cove Pier and the adjacent public beach. Recreational activities along the lake include boating, swimming, and fishing. Action Watersports at Timber Cove Marina, which is a private business that operates in Special Area 1, provides rentals for boats, jet skis, parasailing, kayak, and standup paddleboards. The City owned Bijou Golf Course is immediately south and adjacent to Special Area 1.

**Impact Analysis**

Though the amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition

The addition of these special uses to Special Area 1 is a policy change that could have a physical impact to the existing environment associated with expansion of and/or new retail commercial uses. However, these changes would not increase the demand for use of the recreational facilities within Special Area 1, nor would these changes involve the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

**Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to recreation.

## 4.17 Transportation

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 is centrally located in the City of South Lake Tahoe and contains commercial, lodging, and residential land uses. Bijou Center is located to the north of the intersection of U.S. 50 and Fairway Avenue. Fairway Avenue is the primary signalized access route to U.S. 50 that serves the Bijou residential area. Existing roadways within or adjacent to the Special Area 1 include: US 50, the main thoroughfare in the City of South Lake Tahoe, and Bal Bijou Road, a local roadway located along the west and north side of Bijou Center. Bal Bijou Road intersects U.S. 50 and is controlled with a stop sign. Bal Bijou Road provides access to lodging, residential, and commercial land uses, including a secondary access to the Bijou Center.

The adopted Regional Plan, Regional Transportation Plan and the City General Plan all include goals and policies that encourage a land use pattern that promotes the use of alternative modes of transportation. Transportation-specific goals in the TCAP include promoting the area as a pedestrian and transit-oriented center and seeking to establish development and design standards that improve the pedestrian and transit environment through complete streets. Recent improvements in the vicinity include enhanced pedestrian sidewalks and bike lanes along U.S. 50.

### Impact Analysis

The Project is a policy change with no relationship to transportation or traffic features, and would not change any emergency access conditions. Applicable transportation and general plans including the Regional Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, the City General Plan, and the TCAP, and their associated goals and policies, would continue apply to any new project proposed associated with the new special uses. For larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses, this consistency would be assured by project level environmental review and permitting that would include consistency evaluations of proposed projects with applicable transit, pedestrian and bicycle goals and policies.

Applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would be decreasing their existing retail space by up to 30% to accommodate one of the new uses. As discussed previously, retail uses generally attract more traffic than industrial, wholesale and distribution, or small-scale manufacturing uses, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that VMT to and around Special Area 1 would decrease if all existing retail spaces converted up to 30% of their space to one of the new special uses. Though any change in VMT from existing conditions would be negligible, any decrease in VMT would be consistent with local, regional and state plans and regulations, many of which are focused on reducing VMT and associated traffic congestion and vehicle

emissions. Likewise, the new uses would not conflict with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, which relates to VMT thresholds of significance.

#### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to transportation.

## 4.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resource Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)? ; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Environmental Setting

As discussed under cultural resources in section 4.5, the TCAP was subject to archaeological survey during the preparation of the Stateline/Ski Run Community Plan, which resulted in no evidence of intact, potentially significant prehistoric, archaeological or Washoe cultural sites, or historical sites. Cultural resources in the TCAP are regulated at the TRPA, federal, state, and local levels.

Consistent with the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 52, the City completed formal consultation request with applicable Native American Tribes in February of 2021. Native American Tribes contacted were the Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada; Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians; and United Auburn Indian Community. These Tribes were sent a tribal consultation invitation letter that included information about the proposed amendment, including specific locations for proposed improvements, and the process for initiating a consultation. The Tribes have the opportunity to consult at any time during the environmental review process but has not requested consultation to date.

#### Impact Analysis

The changes proposed by this amendment are limited to the addition of identified special uses to Special Area 1. The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction. Applicants proposing projects made possible by this amendment would be required to adhere to the same

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements of the TCAP as under existing conditions.

Because the new special uses are allowed only in connection with a retail commercial use and shall be limited in size to 30% of the associated retail space, most applicants proposing uses made permissible by this amendment would likely be requesting a Special Use Permit associated with redesigning or remodeling the interior of an existing space to accommodate one of the new uses (industrial services, wholesale and distribution, or small-scale manufacturing). Remodeling the interior of an existing structure would not alter the footprint or foundation of existing buildings, and would not involve any new ground disturbance. As such, new uses associated with this amendment would be unlikely to have any impact to any tribal, cultural or archeological resources in Special Area 1.

Larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting, at which time the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, AB 52, and TRPA Code Chapter 67. Because previous studies have indicated no evidence of intact, potentially significant prehistoric, archaeological or Washoe cultural sites, or historical sites; and because any new ground-disturbing projects would be required to comply with existing federal and state cultural and tribal resources protection regulations, this amendment would have no impact to tribal cultural resources.

**Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to tribal cultural resources.

## **4.19 Utilities & Service Systems**

<b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially significant impact</b>	<b>Less than significant with mitigation</b>	<b>Less than significant impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>
Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future developments during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Within Special Area 1, water and wastewater services are provided by South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD). Solid waste services are provided by South Tahoe Refuse (STR). Electricity services are provided by Liberty Utilities. Gas services are provided by Southwest Gas. Telephone and cable services are provided by AT&T and Charter Communications.

### Impact Analysis

Though the amendment is a policy change and in itself would not change the physical environment, the addition of the identified special uses may trigger interior remodels, building additions, redevelopment, and/or new structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses. These changes could result in changes to the environment, however, applicants proposing such projects would be required to adhere to the same building codes, zoning ordinances, land use standards, and requirements and policies of the TCAP as under existing conditions. The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction. The proposed amendment does not conflict with any existing ordinances, including any policies or ordinances pertaining to utilities and service systems.

The new special uses included in the proposed amendment, particularly light industrial and small-scale manufacturing, may result in increased demand for water, wastewater treatment, or power. However, the 30% size limit of new special uses within an associated retail space would ensure that this increased demand is negligible. Larger projects such as building additions, redevelopment, and/or new commercial structures proposed by applicants seeking to take advantage of the additional permissible uses, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting. As part of this review the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and TRPA regulations pertaining to management and distribution of water and wastewater and with solid waste reduction goals.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to utilities & service systems.

## 4.20 Wildfire

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				
Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Environmental Setting

Special Area 1 is located within a very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ) (CAL FIRE, 2021). Special Area 1 is also located within the urban core of South Lake Tahoe and within are adjacent to a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Special Area 1 is comprised of mostly impervious surfaces including parking lots, commercial businesses, lodging, and residential parcels along the shoreline. There is only minimal existing landscaping within the Project area consisting of a few trees and shrubs concentrated on the residential block on the north side of Bal Bijou Road.

South Lake Tahoe Fire Rescue provides fire prevention, fire suppression, and life safety services to Special Area 1. The nearest fire department is Fire Station #1, which is located at 1252 Ski Run Boulevard. Fire Station #1 is owned by the City and services the Ski Run and Stateline area with response time between three and five minutes. Fire Station #1 houses an Advanced Life Support (paramedic) engine company. The Fire Department also has mutual aid agreements with the other fire and emergency response agencies in the Tahoe Region. The City General Plan identifies requirements for future development that may increase demand for fire protection to ensure adequate fire protection services.

### Impact Analysis

The Project would add industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and small-scale manufacturing as permissible special uses to Special Area 1 of the TCAP. The addition of these special uses is a policy change that would have no physical impact to the existing environment associated with wildfire risks. The proposed amendment does not include any changes to roads, land uses, or structures that may impair evacuation routes, nor would it require the installation of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk.

The proposed amendment would not change the location, height, size or density of potential development within the TCAP and does not modify development and design standards applicable to all new construction. New future projects, such as development of a new or expanded commercial structure, would, consistent with existing conditions, be subject to subsequent project level environmental review and permitting at which time the applicant would be required to demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and TRPA regulations pertaining to wildfires, defensible space, structure hardening, and emergency vehicle access and turning radius for emergency response. The proposed amendment does not conflict with any existing ordinances, including any emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

### Level of Significance

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have no impact to wildfire.

## 4.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Would the project:	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**City of South Lake Tahoe – Tourist Core Area Plan Amendment/Specific Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration**

reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				
Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Impact Analysis**

The resource analysis of Section 4.0 determined that the Project would have no impact or a less than significant impact on all resources. Therefore, the Project does not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment. The analysis determined that for all resources the Project would have no impact except for energy use and GHG. As discussed, implemented projects associated with the new uses – industrial services, wholesale and distribution, and small-scale manufacturing – may produce less or more energy use and associated GHG than under existing conditions. In either case, the increase or decrease in energy use and GHG would be negligible given the size and space limitations of Special Area 1. As such the Project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable. The analysis found that the Project would not have any environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings either directly or indirectly.

### **Level of Significance**

Implementation of the proposed amendment would have less than significant impacts.

## 5.0 References

---

- CAL FIRE. 2021. FHSZ Viewer. Available at: <https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>
- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2021. Air Quality Data Statistics. Available at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/index.html>
- City of South Lake Tahoe. 2013. Tourist Core Area Plan. October 15, 2013. Available at: <https://www.cityofslt.us/720/Tourist-Core-Area-Plan>
- City of South Lake Tahoe. 2011. Bijou Area Erosion Control Project – Phase I, Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Environmental Checklist. June 2011.
- City of South Lake Tahoe. n.d. Dispatch. Available at: <https://cityofslt.us/1045/Dispatch>
- Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2021. EnviroStor web map. Available at: <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map>
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Code of Ordinances. September 9, 2020. Available at: <https://www.trpa.gov/regional-plan/#code>
- United States Geological Survey (USGS). 1989. Swelling clays map of the conterminous United States. Available at: [https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/Prodesc/proddesc\\_10014.htm](https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/Prodesc/proddesc_10014.htm)