

4 ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

This chapter consists of twelve sections that evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed Truckee General Plan Update. Each section follows the same format, and consists of the following subsections:

- ◆ The *Existing Setting* section describes current conditions with regard to the environmental factor reviewed, including a summary of laws and policies addressing the specific topic.
- ◆ The *Standards of Significance* section tells how an impact is judged to be significant in this EIR. These standards are based on the CEQA Guidelines.
- ◆ The *Impact Discussion* gives an overview of potential impacts of Plan adoption and implementation, and tells why impacts were found to be significant or less-than-significant.
- ◆ The *Cumulative Impact Discussion* section provides an analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of the 2025 General Plan.
- ◆ The *Impacts and Mitigation Measures* section numbers and lists identified impacts, and identifies measures that would mitigate each impact. A statement regarding the level of significance after mitigation is also included.

A. *Cumulative Impact Approach*

CEQA Guidelines require consideration of the potential cumulative impacts that could result from a proposed project in conjunction with other projects in the vicinity. Such impacts can occur when two or more individual effects create a considerable environmental impact or compound other environmental consequences. In the case of a city- or town-wide planning document such as the 2025 General Plan, cumulative effects are effects that combine impacts from the project's development in the city or town with effects of development in other portions of the region. By definition, no development within the city or town would be considered part of the cumulative impacts; instead, development inside the city or town is part of the project itself.

The cumulative impacts of a General Plan take into account buildout growth projected by the 2025 General Plan, in combination with impacts from projected growth in other parts of the Truckee/Lake Tahoe Region. In each of the following 14 sections, the cumulative impact analysis examines cumulative effects of the 2005 General Plan, in combination with growth projected under relevant community plans such as the Martis Valley Community Plan, and other long-term, larger-scale projects such as the Northstar-at-Tahoe expansion. In some instances, where it is more appropriate to do so, the boundaries of a community services district or agency are considered as the basis for the cumulative analysis.

The potential cumulative effects of the 2025 General Plan are summarized in each of the following 14 sections.

B. Format of Impact Discussion

In subsections 4.1 through 4.13 below, each impact is considered significant prior to mitigation, unless it is specifically identified as less-than-significant. In most cases, goals, policies, and actions have been identified in the General Plan that will reduce significant impacts to less-than-significant levels. Impacts would be less-than-significant through implementation of the General Plan's goals, policies, and actions unless they are noted as significant and unavoidable in the text of this document.

Any mitigation measures in this document are stated with conditional language (“should”) because they are recommendations, and not conditions of approval for the General Plan, unless they are specifically adopted as conditions by the Town. Under CEQA, although an EIR is required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce identified impacts to less than significant levels, a City or Town is not required by State law to adopt these mitiga-

tion measures, even after the EIR is certified.¹ The Town could instead require alternative mitigation measures that are equally effective, or it could find that the identified measures are infeasible and approve the General Plan without mitigation under a finding of overriding consideration. If the Town adopts the suggested mitigation measures as conditions of approval, then their language will be changed from the conditional “should” to the mandatory “shall.”

¹ Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California (CELSOC), 2005, 2006 *California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA Guidelines*. p 4.

TOWN OF TRUCKEE
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