



CHAPTER 3

Transportation & Circulation Element

The Transportation and Circulation Element is a supplement to the TRPA Regional Plan, TRPA Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan and to the Transportation Element of El Dorado County's General Plan. Consistent with these plans, this chapter lists the specific policies applicable to the Area Plan and describes the improvements necessary to implement these policies. Additional detail on capital improvements can be found in Chapter 7, Implementation.

A. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

U.S. Highway 50 (US 50) and California State Route 89 (SR 89) serve as the primary highway links in and through the Meyers Area Plan boundary (Meyers). US 50 enters the Tahoe Basin a short distance away over Echo Summit. US 50 into Meyers is the busiest gateway into the Tahoe Basin and provides the main south shore point of access from the Bay Area, west slope and central valley population centers. US 50 is a two lane highway with a continuous, two-way center turn lane between SR 89 and Santa Fe Street. Pioneer Trail, classified as a minor arterial roadway, intersects US 50 immediately north of Meyers. It is an important intersection in the area connecting Meyers to South Lake Tahoe, CA and Stateline, NV. Eight collector streets serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods and intersect either US 50 or SR 89. SR 89 also provides entry into the Tahoe Basin from Hope Valley and outlying communities in Alpine County.

US 50 and SR 89 are designated as state scenic highways through the Area Plan. Both are designated as TRPA regional scenic highway corridors. The TRPA designation includes all lands visible within one thousand feet from the edge of right-of-way for both highways.

Perhaps the most significant physical feature in Meyers is the US 50 right-of-way. Originally planned to contain a four lane, limited access freeway and frontage roads, it contains only two travel lanes and a center turn lane. The right-of-way varies in width from approximately 100 feet at the east end of Meyers to 280 feet near the west end of Meyers. Undeveloped land within the right-of-way is mostly disturbed and has adversely affected the community in terms of circulation, water quality, site planning, architectural design and business activity.

TRANSIT SERVICE

The Sierra at Tahoe ski resort operates seasonal shuttle services between the ski resorts, Meyers, and locations in the City of South Lake Tahoe. The Tahoe Transportation District offers demand response transit service within the boundaries of Cave Rock in the north, Christmas Valley in the south, Fallen Leaf Lake to the west, and within ¾ mile of the Pioneer and US Highway 50 north intersection near Heavenly Village on the east between 5:15 am and 12:45 am.

PARKING FACILITIES

Most existing uses have on-site parking and the supply of parking for individual uses generally is adequate. However, very little public parking is available to promote transit use, ride-sharing, “park once” pedestrian activity, or to facilitate special events in Meyers.

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES

A Class I shared-use trail, known as the Pat Lowe Memorial Bike Trail, runs along both sides of US 50 from Pioneer Trail to SR 89. On the north side of US 50, the Class I shared-use trail continues along US 50 towards the City of South Lake Tahoe. This trail is proposed to be continued providing non-motorized transportation connectivity between Meyers and South Lake Tahoe and Stateline. Other shared-use trails, bike routes, and bike lanes are proposed in the Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan to improve connectivity between Meyers and surrounding residential areas and recreation sites. Additional conceptual safety, and access trail connections are shown in Figure 3-1. Other informal dirt paths connect Meyers to adjacent residential neighborhoods or nearby open space.

Traffic conditions and a lack of improved pedestrian crossings across US 50 present a major impediment to pedestrian activity in Meyers. Some pedestrian infrastructure is provided by individual businesses throughout Meyers and a crosswalk was constructed in 2015 at the intersection of US 50 and Apache Avenue. An additional crosswalk and roundabout is expected to be constructed at the intersection of US 50 and SR 89 by Caltrans in 2018 or 2019 and this Area Plan identifies the need for two additional pedestrian crossings (Figure 3-1), and the relocation of the crosswalk at US 50 and Apache Avenue to the west side of Apache with installation of a Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon. Caltrans is also contemplating a roundabout improvement at Pioneer Trail/US 50 north of the Area Plan and improvements at US 50/Apache Avenue. Bicycle and pedestrian trails are typically not maintained during winter months limiting their year-round use; however, the class I trail was maintained for year-round use in 2016/17, and is expected to continue to be maintained year-round through use of the measure R/S funds.

EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

There are two distinct sets of traffic conditions in Meyers: free flowing and congested. Most of the time vehicle traffic on US 50, SR 89 and intersecting side streets flows freely. This generally occurs during weekday periods throughout most of the year except for holidays which fall or are observed on a weekday.

Congested traffic conditions generally occur during seasonal weekends and holidays. The normal pattern involves visitors entering the basin on Fridays and Saturdays and leaving the basin on Sundays or on weekday holidays. It causes severe backups and queues on US 50 for motorists travelling back and forth over Echo Summit. During winter snowstorms the situation can be easily compounded by chain-up and snow removal procedures. Congestion caused by US 50 traffic exiting the basin produces backups at intersections within Meyers including SR 89 and most side

streets. This is especially true for vehicles (generally local residents) attempting to make left turns. During periods of particularly bad congestion, the backup of traffic on US 50 traffic leaving the basin can extend all the way into the City of South Lake Tahoe. When this occurs, traffic in Meyers can become gridlocked.

Caltrans and TRPA traffic counts (count data collected in 2014) on US 50 through Meyers indicate peak hour traffic (peak month summer weekend) of 1,900 vehicles. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for peak season (August) weekdays is estimated at 17,200 ADT along US 50 just east of the SR 89 intersection, and 5,600 ADT along SR 89 south of US 50.

Level of service (LOS) standards for roadways in Meyers are prescribed in the TRPA Regional Plan, and the Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan. Roadways must maintain LOS "D" with exceptions during peak periods when LOS "E" may be acceptable for no longer than four hours a day. Individual projects may cause these standards to be exceeded only when multi-modal amenities (i.e. the Transit Service and Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities listed in section C, below) are provided to mitigate the traffic generation. As of 2010, US 50 through Meyers operated at LOS "E" for up to four hours per day during high season, peak travel. As such, the roadway meets the level of service standard but could exceed the standard if the Transportation and Circulation Implementation Actions listed in section C, below are not implemented concurrently with increases in traffic. Current data on the LOS at the un-signalized intersection of US 50 and SR 89 is not available, but congestion observed at this intersection on peak weekends indicates that it likely operates at LOS "E" for periods of time.

TRPA administers regional programs to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and achieve regional VMT standards in the Tahoe Basin. Data on VMT specific to Meyers is not available, but implementation of measures to reduce VMT contained in this Area Plan (Transportation Element and Land Use Element), are important components of the regional VMT reduction effort. TRPA will monitor LOS standards and VMT, and make short-term projections of future conditions every four years. If short-term projections indicate that LOS or VMT standards are likely to be exceeded, TRPA will take actions to ensure standards will be achieved, and may not release additional development allocations until those standards are met.

B. TRANSPORTATION GOALS & POLICIES

TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION VISION

Redevelop the transportation system within Meyers to achieve complete streets, reduce reliance on the private automobile, improve circulation and provide opportunities to experience Meyers as a pedestrian or cyclist.

Goals and Policies:

1. *Goal:* Implement transportation and circulation improvements in Meyers to improve existing conditions and achieve the plan's transportation and circulation vision.

Policy 1.1: El Dorado County, TRPA and Caltrans shall implement transportation improvements called for in the Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan and the Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan.

Policy 1.2: All uses within the Area Plan with 50 or more employees shall implement transportation demand management strategies (TDM) including, but not limited to,

employer-based trip reduction programs, ride sharing programs and transit incentives.

Policy 1.3: Utilizing monitoring data collected by various Lake Tahoe Region agencies, El Dorado County and TRPA will periodically assess the effectiveness of the long-term implementation of mobility strategies within the Plan area.

Policy 1.4: Concurrent with TRPA's four-year Area Plan recertification process, should actual vehicle trips surpass the Area Plan vehicle trips projected for travel into and within the Plan area, as shown in the 2017 MND/IEC for the Area Plan, El Dorado County and TRPA shall jointly revise mobility strategies in the Area Plan transportation chapter to address the increased vehicle trips.

Policy 1.5: El Dorado County and TRPA shall prioritize additional mobility strategies in a manner consistent with TRPA's Congestion Management Process required by federal regulation (23 CFR 450.320) for urban metropolitan planning organizations.

2. *Goal: Identify opportunities to reduce traffic speeds through Meyers without adversely affecting air quality. Consider using right-of-way improvements and traffic controls to achieve the objective.*

Policy 2.1: Maintain Level of Service of "D" or better at US 50/Pioneer Trail and US 50/SR 89 intersections consistent with the Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

3. *Goal: Encourage El Dorado County, transit providers and recreation area shuttles to increase transit service to and from Meyers. Provide high quality transit stops and facilities which encourage ridership and are designed consistent with the Meyers Area Plan Design Standards and Guidelines (Attachment A).*

Policy 3.1: Strategically locate transit stops in each land use district as the need and demand is demonstrated.

Policy 3.2: Transit shelters shall be provided at all transit stops. Transit shelters shall be designed consistent with the Meyers Area Plan Design Standards and Guidelines (Attachment A).

Policy 3.3: Support implementation of the Meyers transit service improvements in the Linking Tahoe: Tahoe Transit Master Plan, 2017.

4. *Goal: Provide park and ride opportunities in Meyers. Encourage the use of shared community parking areas which can serve the land use districts.*

Policy 4.1: Develop a community plaza within the Town Center area which can be served by transit and recreation area shuttles.

5. *Goal: In consultation with Caltrans, TRPA and the California Highway Patrol cooperatively redesign the chain-up areas and modify chain-up procedures including short term truck parking, along US 50. Consider developing a chain up area that is separated from the travel lane and can serve as public parking and recreational access during non-winter months.*

Policy 5.1: Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol, TRPA and other interested parties shall develop an action plan to improve chain control operations which minimize adverse impacts to circulation and traffic flow and provide safe and efficient chain-up

opportunities. This may include developing a designated chain-up area(s) along US 50, including chain up areas that serve as public parking or trailhead access during non-winter months.

6. *Goal: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle linkages between land uses. Accommodate pedestrians throughout the Area Plan by providing safe, functional pathways.*

Policy 6.1: Continue to participate and support the TRPA and Lake Tahoe Unified School District Safe Routes to school program.

Policy 6.2: Support development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities identified in the Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan including, but not limited to, the Greenway Multi-Use Trail, and the Upper Truckee River crossing at San Bernardino Avenue.

Policy 6.3: Support operations and maintenance of transportation infrastructure consistent with year-round non-motorized access from commercial and residential access points.

Policy 6.4: Consider the development and maintenance of a bicycle lane and shared-use trail down SR 89 and along the South Upper Truckee Road.

Policy 6.5: Support year round operations and maintenance of South Upper Truckee Road to Luther Pass.

Policy 6.6: Promote a safe pedestrian crossing of US 50 within the Meyers Town Center including consideration of a non-interface/grade separated facility.

Policy 6.7: Promote non-motorized trail access between residential areas including the North Upper Truckee and Country Club Estates neighborhoods, Meyers Town Center, and recreation sites.

7. *Goal: Reduce the number of vehicular access points and other points of conflict along US 50. Encourage the use of shared driveways along US 50. Coordinate the access locations with the planned US 50 center median.*

Policy 7.1: Encourage the consolidation of access points along US 50 to improve traffic flow and eliminate vehicle conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists. This policy shall apply to uses with more than one US 50 access and to adjoining uses with access points less than 100 feet apart where the site layouts will accommodate the combined access without major modification.

8. *Goal: Recognize the status of US 50 and SR 89 as state and regionally-designated scenic highway corridors. Maintain and improve the scenic quality of the corridors and their viewsheds.*

Policy 8.1: Transportation projects shall be designed consistent with the Meyers Design Standards and Guidelines.

Policy 8.2: Request Caltrans to implement a snow removal and snow haul program to remove plowed snow from in front of US 50 businesses. Assist in developing alternate snow storage sites and funding sources.

9. *Goal:* Reduce the visual dominance of the US 50 highway corridor through Meyers.

Policy 9.1: Request Caltrans to make available for sale or other means of transfer, excess right-of-way along US 50 to adjacent property owners or El Dorado County.

Policy 9.2: Develop an enhanced center lane along US 50 through the Area Plan which provides access and visibility to adjoining land uses, and permits turn movements at cross street intersections.

C. TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The following actions or improvements are necessary to implement the policies listed above. Several of the actions reflect items listed in the Environmental Improvement Program, Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan, or the Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan. See Figure 3-1, Transportation Map for the conceptual location of improvements. Additional detail on each action or improvement is provided in Chapter 7, Implementation.

STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

1. US 50 Right of Way. Facilitate the relinquishment of unused portions of the US 50 right of way, or coordinate with Caltrans to gain authorization for additional uses within the right of way. Implement pedestrian and bicycle improvements, landscaping, and public art within the unused portions of the right of way.
2. Agricultural Inspection Station. Relocate the agricultural inspection station to outside of the Meyers Area Plan to improve community character, scenic quality, traffic flow, and pedestrian and bicycle safety.
3. US 50 Center Lane Improvements. Construct center lane improvements such as stamped concrete to reduce the visual dominance of US 50, calm traffic, and improve pedestrian safety.
4. Intersection Improvements. Develop and implement intersection improvements such as traffic signals or roundabouts at the following intersections: US 50 and SR 89, US 50 and Pioneer Trail, construct turn lanes or similar improvements at US 50 and North Upper Truckee, and US 50 and South Upper Truckee. Intersection improvements should maintain or improve level of service, improve traffic flow, reduce vehicle emissions associated with traffic delays, and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.
5. Snow Removal and Storage Improvements. Develop and implement improvements to snow removal and storage operations along US 50 to improve the visibility of businesses, improve pedestrian safety, and protect native vegetation.
6. Consolidate Driveways. Reduce and/or consolidate existing access points along US 50 consistent with the access policy listed above under Goal 7.
7. Chain Control Improvements. In consultation with Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol, develop and implement improvements to chain control procedures along US 50. The improvements may include operational changes as well as site improvements to

facilitate chain-up while maintaining traffic flow and turning movements. Site improvements should provide multiple benefits, including public parking and access when not needed for chain up purposes.

8. Reduce Traffic Speeds. Implement traffic calming measures to encourage reduced vehicle speeds along US 50 through Meyers, and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.
9. Improve Traffic Efficiency. Implement new technologies consistent with the Federal Intelligent Transportation Systems Program, and the Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan to improve the efficiency of circulation through Meyers. Priorities for new technologies include traffic management (including variable signalization for peak and non-peak periods), traveler information, and emergency management.

TRANSIT SERVICE

10. Transit Center. Develop an appropriately scaled transit center to reduce vehicle trips and promote multi-modal transportation. Locate the transit center with or adjacent to public parking facilities, commercial establishments, and bicycle amenities.
11. Improve Transit Service. Improve transit service between Meyers and the City of South Lake Tahoe and/or areas outside of the Tahoe Region, consistent with the Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan and the Linking Tahoe: Lake Tahoe Basin Transit Master Plan.
12. Transit Shelters. Construct transit shelters at transit stops to promote additional use of public transit and increase safety.

PARKING FACILITIES

13. Public Parking Facilities. Develop one or more public or shared-use parking areas adjacent to the transit center, commercial establishments, and/or trailheads to promote a “park once” pedestrian environment. Public parking and trailhead facilities should be developed along US 50 at the east and west end of Meyers. At least one additional public parking area should be centrally located in the Meyers Community Center District. During the project planning and permit approval process, identify and address the need for end-of-trip facilities including bicycle parking, water fountains, benches, and restrooms at commercial, tourist, recreational, transit, lodging, and government centers.

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES

14. Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities. Construct the bicycle and pedestrian facilities proposed in the Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan to promote non-motorized transportation. Construct, upgrade, and maintain active transportation facilities along major travel routes as part of all roadway improvements. Projects should be designed to maximize visibility at vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian conflict points through increased safety signage, sight distance, and other design features, as appropriate.
15. Additional Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails. Develop and construct additional pedestrian and bicycle improvements to provide non-motorized connections between residential areas, recreation sites, and commercial areas. Conceptual connections are shown on

Figure 3-1, and should be developed in coordination with landowners and incorporated into the Linking Tahoe: Active Transportation Plan.

16. Pedestrian Crossings. Maintain at least three designated pedestrian crossings on US 50 within the Meyers Area Plan Boundary and implement traffic calming measures to improve pedestrian safety and promote non-motorized transportation. Pedestrian crossings should be spaced throughout Meyers and include at least one non-interface crossing.
17. Snow Removal. Continue to implement snow removal operations on bicycle and pedestrian trails within the Meyers Town Center and eliminate snow storage on trails to promote year-round non-motorized transportation and pedestrian activity.
18. Recreation Access Trailheads. Construct recreational trailheads to provide access to public lands.
19. Pedestrian Amenities. Develop and construct additional pedestrian amenities such as benches or lighting along major bicycle and pedestrian trails and between commercial businesses and US 50 to promote pedestrian activity.
20. Informal Trails. Inventory the existing network of informal trails surrounding the Area Plan, and coordinate with land owners to preserve trails that provide non-motorized transportation benefits.

FIGURE 3-1: MEYERS TRANSPORTATION MAP

