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## 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### 3.3 TRANSPORTATION

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#### INTRODUCTION

This section analyzes the potential use of the proposed Ski Back Trail in the context of the physical design and both the existing and future vehicular, transit, gondola passenger, and down-slope capacity characteristics. This analysis also reviews the project's consistency with the *Town of Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan Update* goals and policies. This analysis is based on data provided in the *Ski Back Trail Transportation Analysis, Mammoth Mountain Ski Back Trail*, conducted by LSA Associates, Inc. updated June 2007. This technical report is available in Appendix A of this Final EA.

#### 3.3.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

As previously described in Section 1.0, Introduction/Purpose and Need, of this Final EA, the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Town) and the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) have a close relationship due to their physical land connection and economic dependency. As such, despite the fact that the Proposed Action does not require approval by the Town, it is necessary to ensure that the Proposed Action is consistent with the relevant Town's plans and policies.

##### **a. Town of Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan Update**

The *Town of Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan Update (General Plan Update)*, includes updated goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures that have been designed to support the Town's Vision Statement, which states:

*The community of Mammoth Lakes is committed to providing the very highest quality of life for our residents and the highest quality of experience for our visitors.*

*To achieve this vision, Mammoth Lakes places a high value on...*

*7. Offering a variety of transportation options that emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to use of personal vehicles with a strong pedestrian emphasis.*

The *General Plan Update* establishes level of service standards for the Town's roadways. Level of service (LOS) is defined as a qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream and the perception by motorists and/or passengers. A LOS definition is generally described through speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort and convenience, and safety. Six levels of service are defined for each type of roadway and are given designations from A to F. LOS A represents the best operation condition and LOS F is the worst. According to Policy 1.7, a LOS D or better must be established or maintained on a typical winter Saturday peak-hour for signalized intersections and for primary through movements for un-signalized intersections along arterial and collector roads. This standard is expressly not applied to absolute peak conditions, as it would result in the construction of roadway improvements that are warranted only with a limited number of days per year and that would unduly impact pedestrian and visual conditions.

There are many goals, policies, and implementation measures from the *General Plan Update* that have been identified and are applicable to the proposed Ski Back Trail, including the following:

**M.3. GOAL:** Emphasize feet first, public transportation second, and car last in planning the community transportation system while still meeting Level of Service standards.

**M.3.A. Policy:** Maintain a LOS D or better on the Peak Design Day at intersections along arterial and collector roads.

**M.3.B. Policy:** Reduce automobile trips by promoting and facilitating:

- Walking
- Bicycling
- Local and regional transit
- Innovative parking management
- Gondolas and trams
- Employer-based trips reduction programs
- Alternate work schedules
- Telecommuting
- Ride-share programs
- Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing

**M.3.C. Policy:** Reduce automobile trips by promoting land use and transportation strategies such as: implementation of compact pedestrian-oriented development; clustered and infill development; mixed uses and neighborhood-serving commercial mixed use centers.

**M.3.D. Policy:** Encourage visitors to leave vehicles at their lodging by developing pedestrian, bicycle, transit and parking management strategies.

**M.4. GOAL:** Encourage feet first by providing a linked year-round recreational and commuter trail system that is safe and comprehensive.

**M.4.B. Policy:** Provide a high quality pedestrian system linked throughout the community with year-round access.

**M.4.C. Policy:** Design streets, sidewalks and trails to ensure public safety such as:

- Adequate dimensions and separation
- Glare-free lighting at intersections
- Directional and informational signage
- Trash receptacles
- Benches
- Shuttle shelters
- Protecting roadway crossings
- Landscaping
- Groomed community trails
- Snow removed from sidewalks

**M.4.F. Policy:** Improve pedestrian safety along State Route 203 by working with Caltrans to incorporate techniques such as sidewalks, highway grade changes or rerouting, and pedestrian crossings.

### 3.3.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Transportation and traffic flow in the Town and specifically in the area of The Village are dependent on the capacity of the MMSA and the alternative forms of transportation that affect the mountain's capacity, specifically, the Village Gondola, public transportation, and pedestrian/ski alternatives.

### a. Auto Traffic

As described in Section 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives, MMSA currently accommodates approximately 13,500 skiers/snowboarders on a typical winter Saturday. A typical winter Saturday is established as the “design day” for purposes of traffic planning, capacity analysis, and LOS standard adopted by the Town. Peak days consist of 10 to 12 days per year in which approximately 19,000 skiers/snowboarders frequent the area during Christmas holidays, Martin Luther King Day, and President’s Day Weekend. A typical Saturday would be approximately 70 percent of the attendance from a peak Saturday.<sup>16</sup>

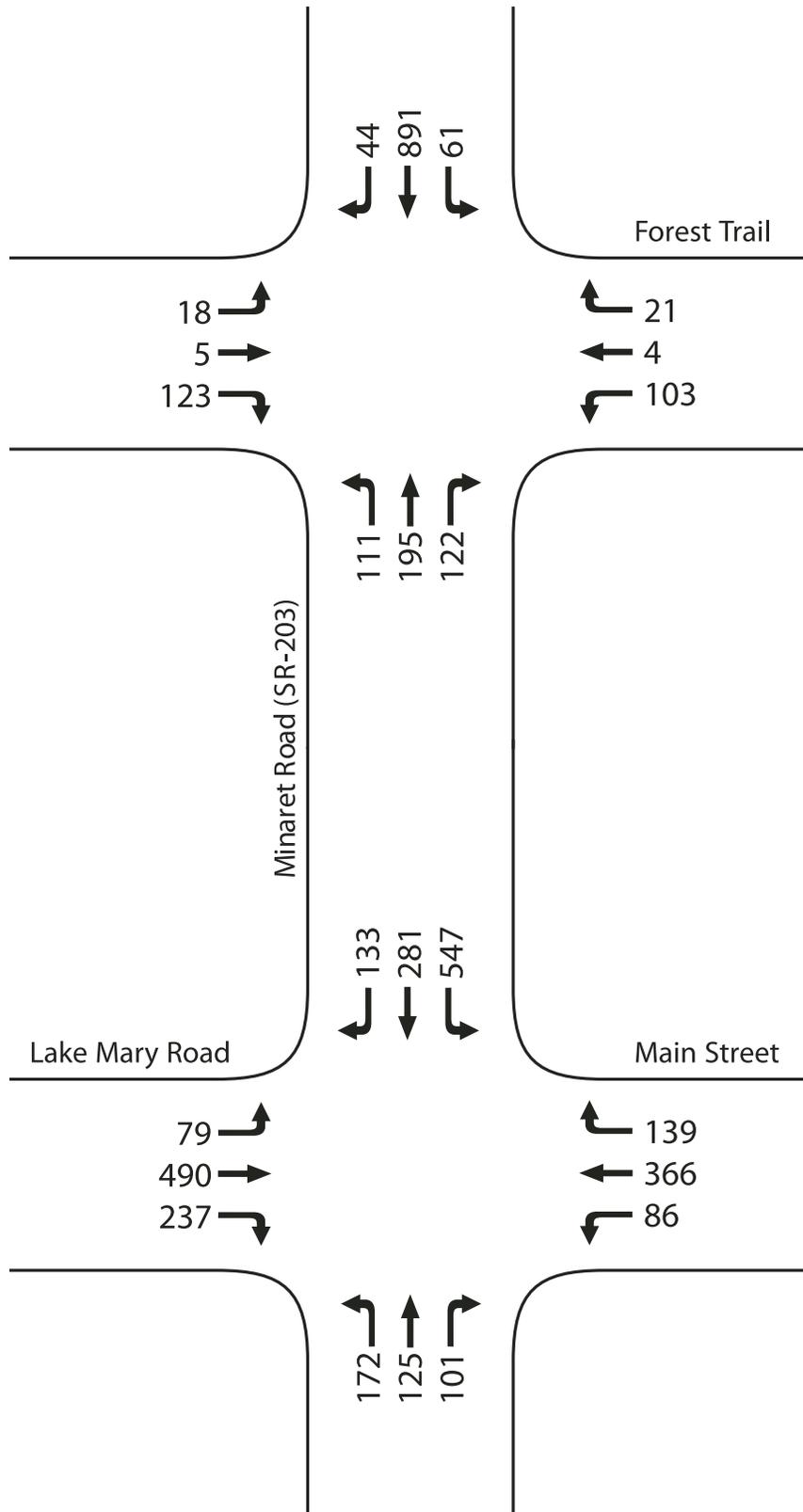
Currently, the LOS at the intersection of Minaret Road/Main Street is LOS C. LOS C represents a V/C ratio between 0.71 and 0.80.<sup>17</sup> However, during peak holiday conditions, the LOS at the intersection is LOS D, which represents a V/C ratio between 0.81 and 0.90. During these peak days, traffic conditions are unstable, which result in congested stop-and-go conditions on Minaret Road from the Main Street intersection, northerly through the Forest Trail Road intersection and up to the Earthquake Fault, particularly for southbound traffic. The LOS at the intersection of Minaret Road and Forest Trail Road is currently LOS F for east and westbound traffic compounded by the back-up from Minaret Road and Main Street. Figure 7 on page 59 presents the existing traffic conditions along the affected roads. In addition, the public parking for The Village is on the east side of Minaret Road causing pedestrian-auto conflicts. In an effort to reduce the congestion caused by pedestrians, the Town has recently developed a marked crossing at Berner Street with pedestrian-actuated flashing beacons to control and group pedestrians crossing Minaret Road. Based on the buildout 2024 traffic analysis in the Environmental Impact Report for the *General Plan Update*, these intersections, when mitigated, will be LOS D with protected turn-lanes at Minaret Road and Main Street and LOS B with a roundabout at Minaret Road and Forest Trail Road.<sup>18</sup> In other words, even with successful traffic mitigations, the future design day conditions will equal today’s peak day conditions at the intersection of Minaret Road and Main Street.

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<sup>16</sup> *Town of Mammoth Lakes, Final Program Environmental Impact Report Town of Mammoth Lakes 2005 General Plan Update, May 2007.*

<sup>17</sup> *A V/C ratio is defined as the volume of cars in relation to the available capacity for the roadway and is measured on a scale from 0 to 1.00.*

<sup>18</sup> *Town of Mammoth Lakes, Final Program Environmental Impact Report Town of Mammoth Lakes 2005 General Plan Update, May 2007.*



No scale

Figure 7  
Existing Traffic Conditions  
Typical Winter Saturday Afternoon

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., July 2007.

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## **b. Public Transit**

The Mammoth Area Shuttle is a free winter transit system operated by MMSA. The shuttle is comprised of five separate but linked lines and serves approximately 65 stops. As shown in Figure 8 on page 61, the five routes serve the four mountain portals of the Main Lodge, Canyon Lodge, Eagle Lodge, and The Village. The Village transfer point connects all of the bus routes (Blue, Red, Orange, and Yellow) with the exception of the Green line, which connects Eagle Lodge to Old Mammoth Road via Meridian Boulevard.

The Red Line, which serves the Main Lodge, The Village, Main Street, and Old Mammoth Road out to the Snowcreek Athletic Club, predominantly affects the traffic demand on Minaret Road. During peak times, 12 buses with a maximum capacity of 60 passengers serve the route with approximately 10 minutes between each bus pick-up/drop-off. During peak afternoon conditions, the buses operate at a full capacity of 45 seated and 15 standing when leaving the Main Lodge. At these capacities, approximately 360 skiers per hour can be transported from the Main Lodge.

The Blue Line currently serves Canyon Lodge and the Village with a 15-minute loop. It is currently served by four buses (with a bus capacity of approximately 45-60 riders), which results in about a seven minute headway or approximately eight trips per hour or 360-480 passengers an hour. On typical winter Saturdays there may be 45-50 people waiting in line for the bus at one time. Adding two additional buses to the Blue Line could transport additional 130-240 passengers an hour; however traffic congestion on peak days would remain a hindrance to the movement of people via bus.

It has been observed by MMSA Transportation Staff at the Main Lodge, that on a typical winter Saturday with good weather conditions, up to approximately 300 skiers wait in line for buses between 3:30 P.M. and 4:30 P.M. On a peak Saturday with good weather conditions up to approximately 400 skiers wait in line.<sup>19</sup> As stated above, on peak days MMSA operates its entire fleet at full capacity to accommodate this peak transit demand to the best of its ability. However, MMSA is limited by the flow of traffic as Minaret Road is the only road servicing the three-mile stretch from the Main Lodge to the Town of Mammoth Lakes. In addition, MMSA operates up to seven parking shuttles along Minaret Road from the Main Lodge to the Chairs 4/20 parking area to pick-up skiers parked along the side of Minaret Road and take them to and from the Main Lodge.

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<sup>19</sup> *Per communications with Paul Weden, MMSA-Senior Transportation Supervisor with LSA Associates, March 4, 2005.*

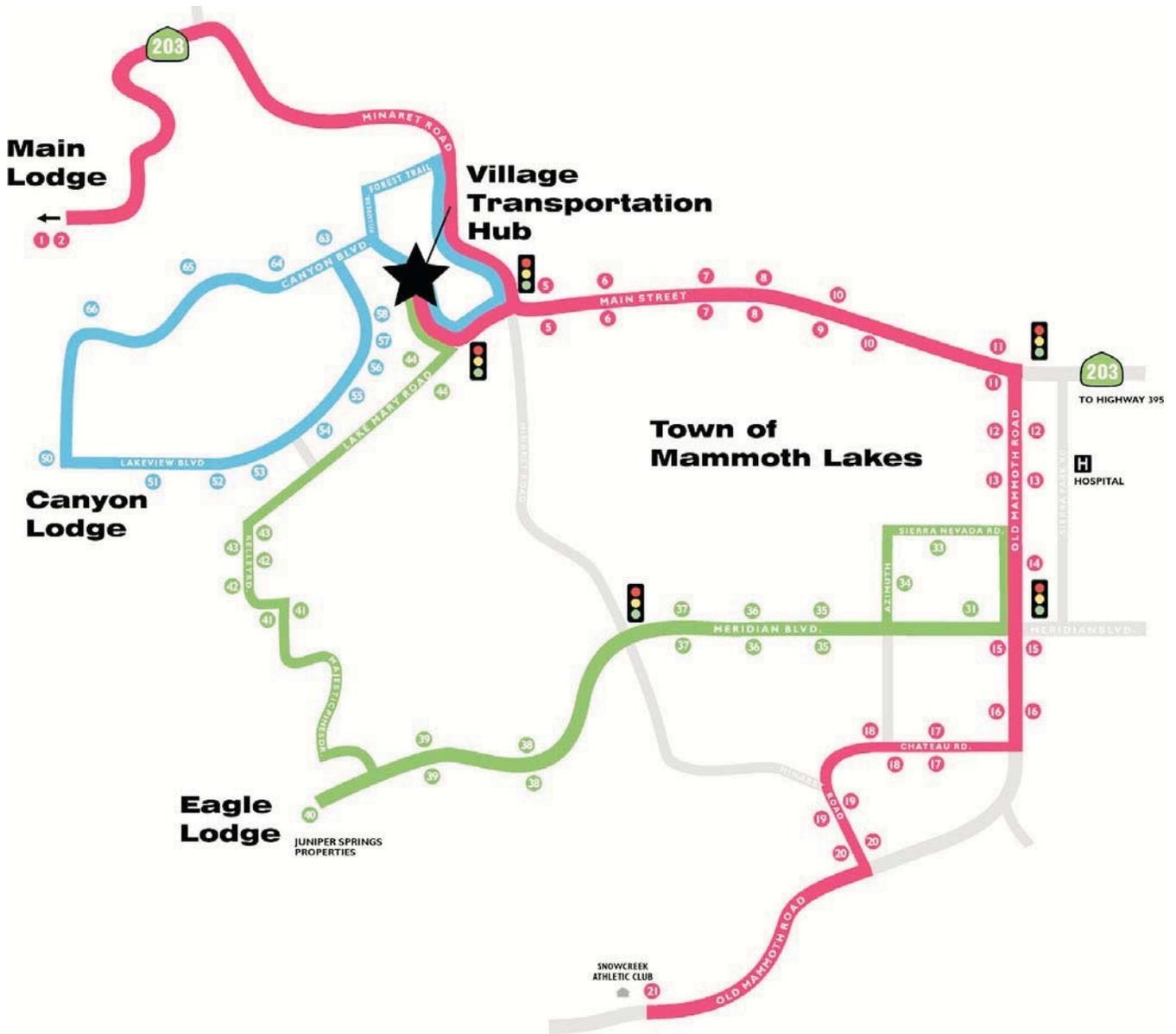


Figure 8  
Mammoth Area Shuttle Routes

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., July 2007.

### c. Village Gondola

The Village Gondola currently provides direct access to the Canyon Lodge from The Village and serves visitors within a walking distance of a quarter-mile, as well as riders arriving via bus to the Village Transfer Station, as noted above.<sup>20</sup> Based on existing bed-base calculations, there are approximately 3,200 peak day skiers that currently originate out of The Village portal. The speed of the Village Gondola is approximately 20 feet per second with a one-way trip taking approximately 4 minutes 15 seconds. The one-way operating capacity of the Village Gondola is approximately 2,200 skiers per hour based on an observed car capacity of 10 to 12 skiers. The maximum capacity of the Village Gondola is 15 skiers per car, though the maximum capacity has not been achieved in practice. During the typical winter Saturday afternoons and peak holidays, there is a high demand for return trips on the Village Gondola to The Village. This is due to the typical ski industry peak up-load, down-load capacity scenario. The Village Gondola adequately up-loads skiers over the two hour period of time between 8:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. with minimal delays. However, it does not have the capacity to down-load skiers in the one hour period of 3:30 P.M. to 4:30 P.M.<sup>21</sup> As shown in Table 6 on page 63, it has been observed that the lack of down-load capacity results in skiers waiting in line for 10 minutes on typical Saturdays and 20 minutes on peak Saturdays. As these existing waits are actual observations by MMSA, it can be assumed that the additional demand of the 3,400 skiers originating at The Village portal is overflow from the transit connection station. In addition, The Village is approximately 50 percent built out and the additional transient style units are expected to come on-line within the next three to five years, doubling the demand for the Village Gondola.

### d. Pedestrian/ Ski Trail Alternatives (Down-Slope Capacity)

Unlike the Main Lodge, Canyon Lodge, and Eagle Lodge ski portals, The Village portal does not have a direct pedestrian/ski access alternative. Therefore, there is no existing down-slope capacity for skiers based out of The Village. It is estimated that skiers staying in accommodations within one-quarter mile radius of a skier base facility will use this alternative and ski/walk to their accommodations, if available and conditions are favorable.<sup>22</sup> It is a goal of the MMSA Master Plan to balance the attractiveness of each of its portals in order to disperse impacts and enhance the recreational experience. Having a pedestrian/skiable alternative is also an identified goal in the *North Village Specific Plan*.

<sup>20</sup> Per communications with LSA Associates regarding industry standard (assumes that any visitors located within a quarter-mile will walk) July 26, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Ecosign, 1997 MMSA Master Development Plan (standard skier up-slope/down-slope capacity paradigm), 1997.

<sup>22</sup> Per communications with LSA Associates regarding industry standard (assumes that any visitors located within a quarter-mile will walk) July 26, 2007.

Table 6

**Observed End of Day Village Gondola Queue**

<b>Total Skiers</b>	<b>Gondola Capacity</b>	<b>Approximate Wait Time</b>	<b>Approximate Skiers in Queue <sup>a</sup></b>
Typical Saturday 13,500 skiers	2,200 skiers	10 minutes	350 skiers
Peak Saturday 19,000 skiers	2,200 skiers	20 minutes	700 skiers

<sup>a</sup> Number of people observed in the queue by MMSA employees in the 2004 ski season.

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., June 2007.

### 3.3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

#### a. Methodology

##### (1) Construction

Construction traffic, including workers travel, and the delivery of construction materials could potentially affect existing traffic in the Town. Construction traffic impacts are analyzed based on the anticipated number of worker and construction trips to and from the site.

##### (2) Operation

To assess operational traffic impacts to the project vicinity, the use of the transit shuttle bus and gondola was compared to the possible reduction of vehicular trips. In order to assess the conservative worst-case scenario for potential skier demand, the physical characteristics of the proposed Ski Back Trail were evaluated for its attractiveness to skiers. Trail attractiveness for the conservative worst-case analysis consists of three main components: (1) physical characteristics; (2) relative travel time; and (3) skier origination.

#### b. Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action

##### (1) Construction Impacts

Construction of the Proposed Action is expected to start in the spring of 2008 and would take approximately six months to complete in which the Ski Back Trail would be in operation for the 2008/2009 winter season. Construction traffic would consist of the construction workers' commute and the single transport of construction equipment and materials on-site at the beginning of construction and off-site at the conclusion of construction. All construction

equipment would be located on-site for the duration of the phase of construction in which it would be used. Construction equipment would include a total of 25 pieces of equipment, including: one large bulldozer, one large excavator, one mid-sized excavator, one or two roller vibrating compactors, one excavator, three off-road haulers, two truck and trailers, six pickup trucks, one water truck, one microdrill rig, one stump grinder, two large size loaders, one to two backhoes, and one compressor.<sup>23</sup> Assuming that the 25 pieces of equipment would be utilized for the five different stages of construction of the Ski Back Trail, at most there would be four pieces of equipment transferred to the site at a time.<sup>24</sup> In addition, it should be noted that the majority of the construction required for the Ski Back Trail would utilize existing MMSA operations staff that already commute to the MMSA everyday, and therefore, would not result in an increase in worker trips, except for construction of the retaining walls. However, in order to provide a conservative worst-case analysis, it is assumed that each piece of equipment would result in 1.25 worker trips per day, for a total of five worker trips per day. Regardless, construction-related impacts would be short-term and traffic generated by the construction crew would be small compared to the existing traffic volumes on Minaret Road and other affected streets. Therefore, there would be no adverse construction impacts and no mitigation measures would be required.

## (2) Operational Impacts

Based on the existing conditions of peak day wait times as noted above for both the Main Lodge transit system and the Village Gondola, there is a need for additional end-of-day mobility capacity. The Proposed Action would add additional down-slope capacity via a Ski Back Trail, which would alleviate some of the existing excess demand and provide a pedestrian/ski alternative. However, in order to determine the conservative worst-case scenario of skiers that would utilize the Ski Back Trail and thus, the potential decrease demand in trips from The Village or Main Lodge, the Ski Back Trail must be evaluated for its attractiveness to skiers. As previously described, trail attractiveness consists of three main components: (1) physical characteristics; (2) relative travel time; and (3) skier origination.

In relation to physical characteristics, the trail attractiveness study performed by LSA Associates assumes that an ideal grade of eight to nine percent would ensure continued skier movement in any snow conditions and a seven percent grade would ensure continued movement on most days. A typical ski trail with eight to nine percent grades and a width of 25 feet would have a capacity of approximately 2,400 persons per hour.<sup>25</sup> In order to achieve as little impact as possible to the existing natural terrain, tree retention, visual impacts, and minimize impacts to the

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<sup>23</sup> Per written correspondence with MMSA Project Team and Construction Manager, March 21, 2007.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Per letter report from Dave Felius, Ecosign Mountain Resort Planners, September 10, 2004.

existing mountain bike trails, the proposed Ski Back Trail includes alternating sections that are steeper and flatter. Although this allows users to pick up speed on the steeper sections and allows them to glide through the following flatter sections, these characteristics limit the proposed capacity of the trail to approximately 900 to 1,200 persons per hour due to the fact that this design is unlikely to be attractive to beginner skiers and beginner/intermediate snowboarders.

As far as relative travel time, skiers utilizing the Ski Back Trail would come from either The Village through Canyon Lodge, as they do today via the Village Gondola or from the Main Lodge in lieu of personal auto trip entirely and/or originating their Red Line transit trip at The Village rather than the Main Lodge. The amount of time it would take to ski the entire length of the 1.5-mile Ski Back Trail would be approximately 10 minutes at an average of 10 miles per hour (mph). However, if starting at the Canyon Lodge as the starting point, the time required to ride either Chair 7 or 17 to gain access to the Ski Back Trail would be an additional six to eight minutes. Similarly, if starting at the Main Lodge, the time associated with riding the Panorama Gondola and skiing down to the trail head would add approximately 20 minutes. Thus, the total time from Canyon Lodge or Main Lodge/Ski Back Trail would require approximately 26 to 28 minutes respectively, to arrive at The Village. As such, from a pure time standpoint and relative to the mode of transport at each portal, the Ski Back Trail would be faster than waiting in line for the bus at the Main Lodge and would take approximately the same amount of time as the Village Gondola on a typical day and is faster on a peak day.

However, in relation to a comparison of skier origination, the relative attractiveness of the trail for skiers from the Main Lodge would be less since they are not originating at The Village. Furthermore, those skiers diverted from the existing Red Line transit and/or from private auto trips at the Main Lodge, would need to perceive that the benefit of avoiding sitting in traffic on Minaret Road is significant enough to improve their overall experience. Specifically, The Village transit connection station would be utilized to get them to their destinations throughout town. For these reasons, it is assumed that it is more likely that more users of the Ski Back Trail would be diverted from the Village Gondola than from the Main Lodge transit system.

In order to relate the trail's attractiveness from these two portals to its ability to reduce congestion by meeting the need for the diversion of excess demand from the Village Gondola and Main Lodge transit system, it was estimated as a conservative worst-case scenario that a minimum of 10 percent of skiers going to The Village from the Canyon Lodge may be attracted to the Ski Back Trail and a minimum of five percent of the skiers from the Main Lodge. In contrast to the recreation analysis, this transportation analysis specifically utilizes the projected worst-case scenario for the estimated daily demand and for the purpose of traffic congestion reduction for the Ski Back Trail on Highway 203. As a result, the projected worst-case scenario estimated minimum daily demand for the purposes of traffic congestion reduction for the Ski

Back Trail would be approximately 250 to 350 skiers on existing design day and peak day and approximately 350 to 500 at build-out, as illustrated in Table 7 and Table 8 on page 67 and 68, respectively.

However, it is also concluded that the Ski Back Trail is unlikely to have an effect on the potential to alleviate congestion from Minaret Road due to the latent demand for transit. Any of the potential 250 to 500 Ski Back Trail users estimated above would not equate to trip reduction due to the fact that there is existing latent demand for the transit and auto trip by those people who would prefer to end their day between 3:30 P.M. and 4:30 P.M., but due to traffic conditions leave before or after. This is a common scenario found in commuter traffic communities such as Southern California. On the other hand, the Ski Back Trail does have the potential to alleviate existing peak demand on the Village Gondola and as future demand increases through planned development in The Village, the Ski Back Trail has enough capacity to continue to allow an alternative to waiting in line.

In conclusion, the Ski Back Trail would not provide relief to traffic congestion on southbound Minaret Road towards The Village but would provide an alternative to waiting in line for public transit and would provide relief to existing and future demand for the Village Gondola. As there would be no adverse operational impacts in regards to the Proposed Action, no mitigation measures are required.

### **(3) Mitigation Measures**

Construction impacts would be short-term and no mitigation measures would be required. There would be no adverse operational impacts and no mitigation measures would be required.

## **c. Environmental Consequences of Alternative 1 – Original Alignment Proposal**

### **(1) Construction Impacts**

The Original Alignment Proposal Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Action with the exception that this alternative would be less consistent with the flow of the existing natural terrain requiring substantially more cut and fill along the proposed alignment, a greater amount of tree removal, would be more visible from the surrounding uses, and cause a greater amount of impacts to the existing mountain bike trails. However, under the Original Alignment Proposal Alternative, construction impacts would be similar to the Proposed Action. Construction equipment would include a total of 25 pieces of equipment, of which approximately four pieces would be utilized per phase of construction. Construction traffic would consist of the construction workers' commute and the single transport of construction equipment, materials on-

Table 7

**Existing Conditions –  
Projected Minimum Daily Ski Back Trail Demand<sup>f</sup>**

	Main Lodge		Village		Total	
	Typical Day <sup>a</sup>	Peak Day	Typical Day	Peak Day	Typical Day	Peak Day
Total Skiers/Snowboarders <sup>b</sup>	5,100	7,300	2,240	3,200	7,340	10,500
Skiers Only <sup>c</sup>	3,060	4,380	1,344	1,920	4,404	6,300
Intermediate Skill Level and Above <sup>d</sup>	2,601	3,723	1,142	1,632	3,743	5,355
Estimated Minimum Ski Back Trail Demand <sup>e</sup>	130	186	114	163	244	349

<sup>a</sup> Typical Saturday is 70 percent of peak Saturday.

<sup>b</sup> MMSA Master Plan, Table II.27 and Table VI.6.

<sup>c</sup> Skiers are 60 percent of total skiers/snowboarders.

<sup>d</sup> Intermediate skill level and above are 85 percent of skiers—MMSA Master Plan, pages II-26–27.

<sup>e</sup> Five percent of Main Lodge potential and 10 percent of Village potential.

<sup>f</sup> Projected minimum daily demand is a conservative estimate of ski back trail demand for the purpose of analyzing the minimum impacts to traffic congestion reduction in the context of the transportation analysis.

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., June 2007.

site at the beginning of construction and off-site at the conclusion of construction.<sup>26</sup> All construction equipment would be located on-site for the duration of the individual construction phases. There would be no adverse construction-related impacts since they would be short-term and traffic generated by the construction crew would be small compared to the existing traffic volumes on Minaret Road and other affected streets and no mitigation measures would be required.

## (2) Operational Impacts

Similar to the Proposed Action, the projected worst-case scenario estimated minimum daily demand for the purposes of traffic congestion reduction for the Ski Back Trail of approximately 250 to 350 skiers on existing design day and peak day and 350 to 500 at build-out would not provide relief to traffic congestion on southbound Minaret Road towards The Village. This is due to the latent transit demand but would provide an alternative to waiting in line for public transit and would provide relief to existing and future demand for the Village Gondola. As such, there would be no adverse operational impacts. No mitigation measures are required.

<sup>26</sup> As previously described, construction of the Ski Back Trail would utilize primarily existing MMSA workers, except for construction of the retaining walls. However, this analysis was conservative and assumed a worst-case scenario of requiring 1.25 trips per the four pieces of construction equipment utilized per day, resulting in a total of five worker trips per day.

Table 8

**Cumulative (Buildout) Conditions –  
Projected Minimum Daily Ski Back Trail Demand<sup>f</sup>**

	Main Lodge		Village		Total	
	Typical Day <sup>a</sup>	Peak Day	Typical Day	Peak Day	Typical Day	Peak Day
Total Skiers/Snowboarders	5,100	7,300	4,480	6,400	9,580	13,700
Skiers Only <sup>b</sup>	3,060	4,380	2,688	3,840	5,748	8,220
Intermediate Skill Level and Above <sup>c</sup>	2,601	3,723	2,285	3,264	4,886	6,987
Estimated Minimum Ski Back Trail Demand <sup>d</sup>	130	186	229	326	359	512

<sup>a</sup> Assumed 2.5 skiers/car Mammoth Mountain Master Plan, Table II.20, page II-58.

<sup>b</sup> Typical Saturday is 70 percent of peak Saturday.

<sup>c</sup> MMSA Master, Plan, Table II.27 and Table VI.6.

<sup>d</sup> Skiers are 60 percent of total skiers/snowboarders.

<sup>e</sup> Intermediate skill level and above are 85 percent of skiers–MMSA Master Plan, pages II-26 and II-27.

<sup>f</sup> Projected minimum daily demand is a conservative estimate of Ski Back Trail demand for the purpose of analyzing the minimum impacts to traffic congestion reduction in the context of the transportation analysis.

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., June 2007.

## d. Environmental Consequences of Alternative 2 – Transit Emphasis Alternative

### (1) Construction Impacts

The Transit Emphasis Alternative does not include the construction of the Ski Back Trail. Instead an increased emphasis would be on transit provisions focused on returning skiers from the Main Lodge, Chair 2/10, and Chair 4/20 to The Village, and other destinations in Town. As the Ski Back Trail would not be developed, no construction-related impacts would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

### (2) Operational Impacts

The increased transit emphasis is roughly equivalent to the projected worst-case scenario estimated minimum daily demand for the purposes of traffic congestion reduction for the Ski Back Trail. This would require four additional buses in the peak hour running only from Main Lodge to The Village. These buses would have a capacity of 240 skiers, which represents approximately 10 percent of the total skiers coming down via private auto from Main Lodge and associated parking areas in the peak afternoon hour. If all transit increases come from private vehicles, a reduction of approximately 96 vehicle trips in the peak hour would occur, again equivalent to approximately 10 percent of the total vehicular traffic in the peak hour.

However, this level of traffic reduction would not likely occur as the demand for additional transit would primarily come from latent transit demand of other transit riders riding before or after the peak hour. Latent transit demands would include transit riders that desire to ride the bus between 3:30 P.M. and 5:00 P.M. but because the buses are all full they either go on an earlier bus or wait in line for a later bus. If more buses are added between the times of 4:00 P.M. and 5:00 P.M., the line of transit riders is reduced, but no change in traffic congestion occurs.

In order to divert vehicular traffic into the transit mode, it would be necessary to develop another strategy to physically limit the number of vehicles accessing Main Lodge and associated roadway parking areas. Even with reduced parking the congestion levels would not necessarily be reduced by the volumes noted. It is more likely that a combination of volume reduction and the duration of congestion would be reduced. In order to accomplish the objectives of this alternative, a reduction of 250 parking spaces would be recommended due to the fact that the potentially available 96 vehicle trips and the four additional buses would be filled with latent peak transit demand. Furthermore, the transit emphasis option would not provide relief for the existing and future demand for the Village Gondola. There would be no adverse impacts and no mitigation measures are required.

#### **e. Environmental Consequences of Alternative 3 – No Action Alternative**

##### **(1) Construction Impacts**

The No Action Alternative would reflect a continuation of existing conditions without changes, additions, or upgrades. Since there would be no development under the No Action Alternative, there would be no construction-related traffic impacts and no mitigation measures are required.

##### **(2) Operational Impacts**

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed Ski Back Trail would not be constructed. As stated above, the roundabout at Minaret Road/Forest Trail intersection is expected to be constructed in 2008, and congestion at the intersection would be improved. Traffic conditions along Minaret Road are influenced and potentially improved by the increased attractiveness of Canyon Lodge and Eagle Base relative to Main Lodge. Existing traffic conditions for a typical winter Saturday are projected to operate consistent with adopted Town standards for LOS D. However, peak conditions will continue to exceed Town standards, resulting in unstable traffic congested conditions. Cumulative effects of the No Project Alternative are similar to the proposed build-out, which as previously described, even with mitigation, the intersection of Minaret Road and Main Street will operate on design day at LOS D. There would be no adverse operational impacts and no mitigation measures would be required.

**f. Conformity with Applicable Plans and Policies**

The Proposed Action, the Original Alignment Proposal Alternative, and the Transit Emphasis Alternative would be consistent with the *General Plan Update* goal to minimize the use of motor vehicles in an effort to support a pedestrian friendly community. With the development of the Proposed Action or the Original Alignment Proposal Alternative, vehicular traffic congestion on southbound Minaret Road would be similar to existing conditions, the demand for the transit shuttle and the Village Gondola would be relieved and a feet-first alternative from the Main and Canyon Lodges to The Village would be available. Under the Transit Emphasis Alternative more buses would be added between the times of 4:00 P.M. and 5:00 P.M., and although the line of transit riders is reduced, no change in traffic congestion occurs. Although the traffic congestion would still be similar to the existing conditions, the Transit Emphasis Alternative would be consistent with the *General Plan Update's* goal in the effort to support a pedestrian friendly community. Furthermore, the Proposed Action and Alternatives would not negatively affect the LOS at the intersection of Minaret Road/Main Street/Lake Mary Road as the LOS would still be at LOS C during typical conditions and LOS D during peak conditions.