

Appendix B *Lakeshore Planning Strategies*

Enhancing Visitor Experience
Along the Shore of Yellowstone Lake
Lake Yellowstone Hotel Area
Yellowstone National Park

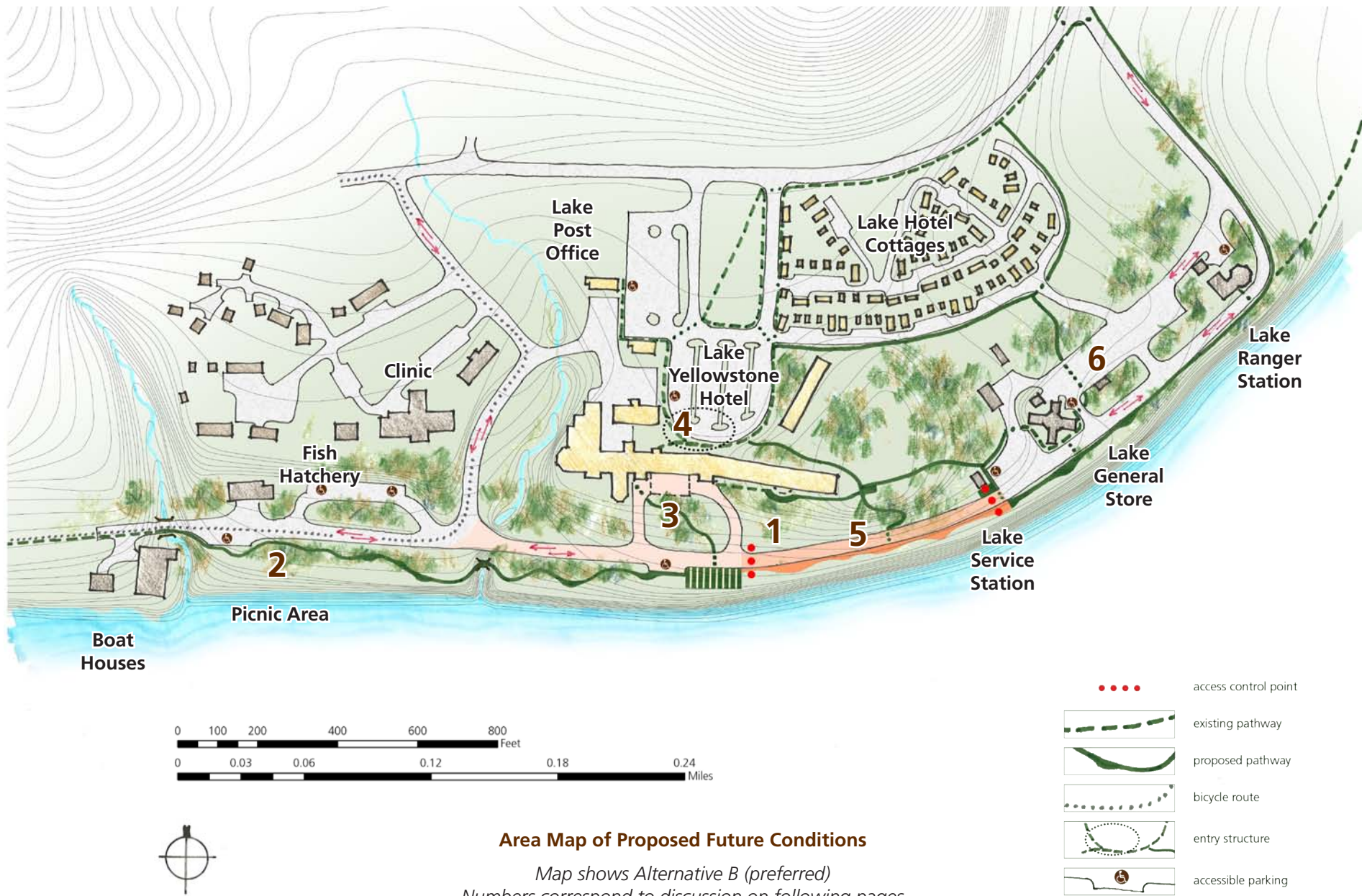
These pages illustrate key strategies for improving visitor experience along the Lakeshore, centered on Lake Yellowstone Hotel, a proposed National Historic Landmark. The section of shore discussed extends from the historic boat houses and Fish Hatchery to the Lake Ranger Station. Strategies are derived from previous planning for the area, public scoping, Lake area NPS and concessioner staff input, and research by the Comprehensive Planning & Design staff.

The shore is a primary destination for visitors, offering opportunities to enjoy the constantly changing panorama of Yellowstone Lake, its fast-changing weather patterns, and the dramatic play of light across the lake's cold waters.



Area Map of Existing Conditions

Numbers correspond to discussion on following pages



Lakeshore Integrated Pathway System

The lakeshore at the Lake Yellowstone Hotel vicinity is an under-utilized opportunity for visitors to experience the splendor of Yellowstone Lake. Along the shore you may:

- Watch the play of light across the lake and experience its dynamic weather patterns
- Spot a wide variety of birds and other wildlife in the air or water and on the land
- Experience the tranquility of the lake in a grand historical setting
- Visit historic structures that provide a variety of services

This plan proposes strategies to enhance the experience for those visitors in the area. It illustrates an integrated pedestrian path system that orients the visitor and enhances the experience along the lakeshore.

Successful pedestrian paths have the following attributes (Alexander):

- a. They connect features at natural points of interest
- b. They vary in shape, providing wider places for people to rest or to congregate
- c. They identify pockets of activity
- d. They provide places for people to watch

Both existing and proposed visitor use paths are illustrated in this document. The following pages discuss each particular section of the lakeshore path in further detail; individual section maps show Alternate B (the preferred alternative).

This plan proposes significant improvements in walking and vehicular surfaces for that portion of the lakeshore path in front of Lake Yellowstone Hotel extending to Lake Service Station. Alternatives presented in the plan would all occur as management options within this area. Benefits of this approach:

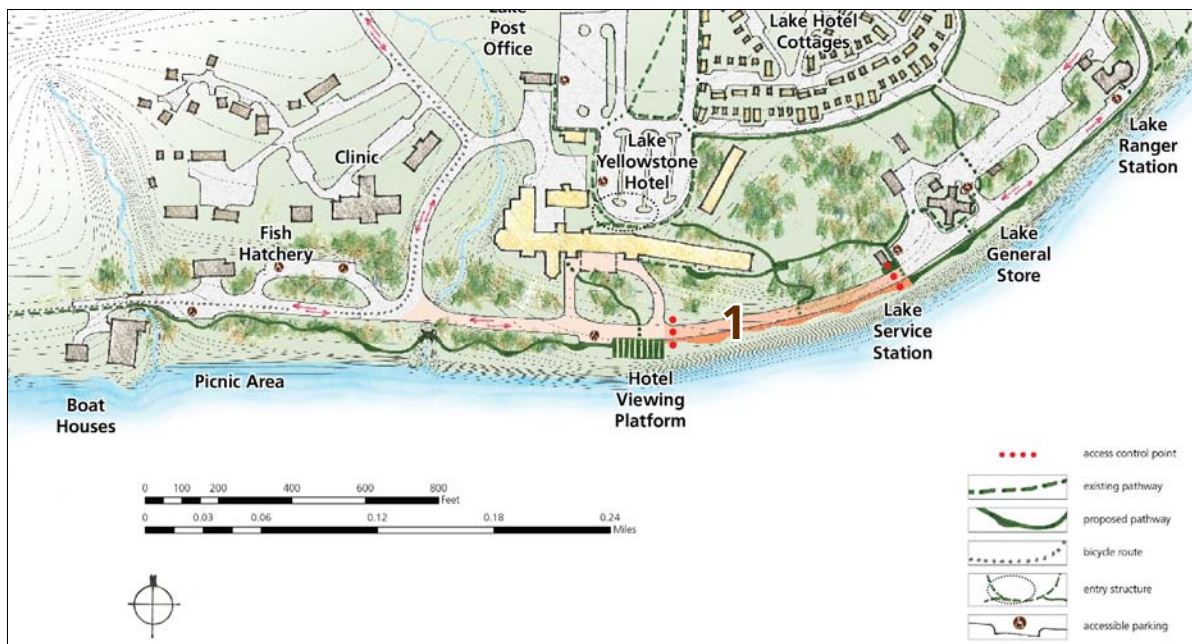
- a. Does not disrupt currently established patterns of pedestrian use
- b. Defines pedestrian activity as the highest priority
- c. Provides amenities for pedestrians
- d. Improves safety and maintains full emergency services access
- e. Preserves the original route of the Grand Loop Road and its relationship to the hotel
- f. Provides flexibility in addressing the future; allows a range of vehicular access options, adjusted in response to pedestrian use.
- g. Clearly identifies this section of roadway as something different from standard driving routes
- h. Slows any allowed vehicular traffic



Lakeshore Path: Carney Architects 2007



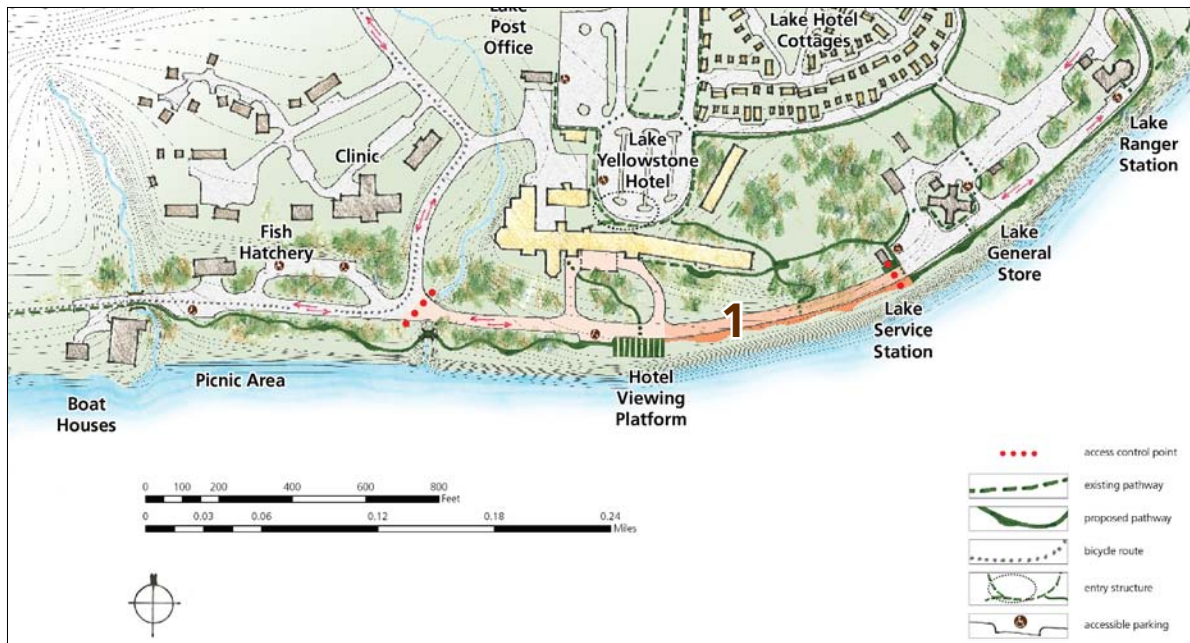
Lake Yellowstone Hotel as seen from the historic Grand Loop Road along the lakeshore



In Alternative B (Preferred) vehicular traffic is removed between Lake Yellowstone Hotel Viewing Platform and Lake Service Station, providing a pedestrian-only area

1 Change vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns along the lakeshore. Action alternatives in this Environmental Assessment propose different ways to alter circulation routes at the front of Lake Yellowstone Hotel. These changes would improve visitor experience and safety. All alternatives include changes in vehicular circulation at the Lake Ranger Station, to provide room for safe pedestrian passage in front of the ranger station.

- a. Alternative B (the preferred alternative) proposes to eliminate vehicular traffic between the hotel viewing platform and Lake Service Station, making this section of the lakeshore pathway pedestrian-only. Visitors may still drive to the front of the hotel.



*In Sub-Alternative B vehicular traffic is also removed from the front of the hotel;
historic Yellowstone tour busses are allowed access to the porte cochere*

- b. Sub-Alternative B proposes to eliminate all vehicular traffic in front of Lake Yellowstone Hotel, as well as between the viewing platform and Lake Service Station. The route through the porte cochere of the hotel would continue to be used by historic Yellowstone buses.



*In Alternative C one-way vehicular traffic is allowed between Lake Service Station
and Lake Yellowstone Hotel, travelling east to west*

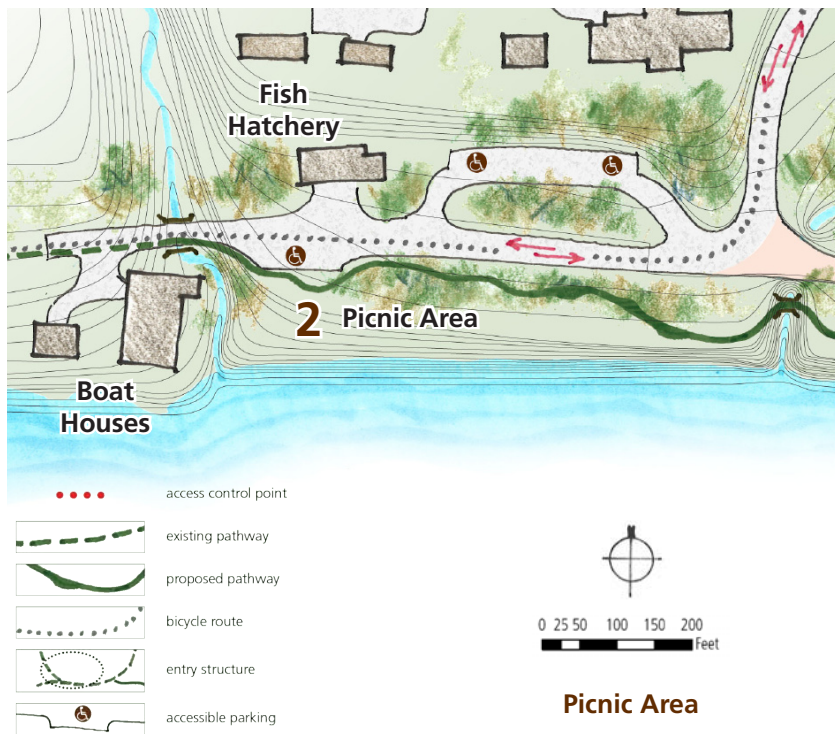
- c. Alternative C proposes restricting vehicular traffic between the Hotel Viewing Platform and Lake Service Station to a one-way system, moving from east to west.



Picnic area looking toward the old boat house



Lake access at the old boat house

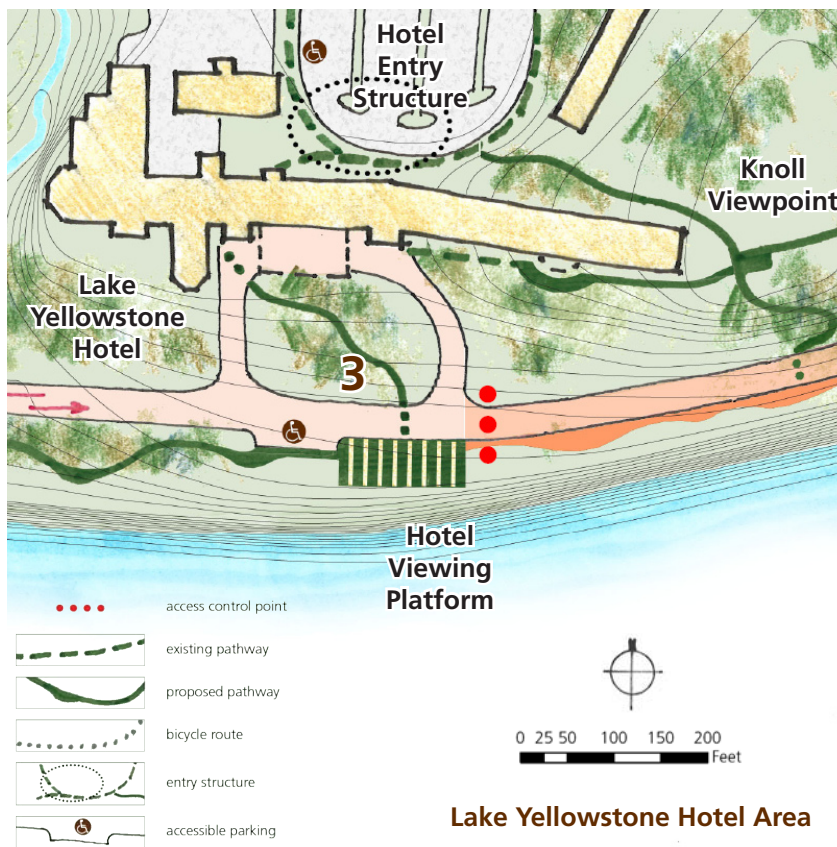


2 Picnic Area. The picnic area is situated at the western end of the planning location lakeshore path; bicycles and pedestrians can continue towards Bridge Bay. A surviving bridge from the original Grand Loop Road crosses Hatchery Creek nearby and is a gateway to the pedestrian/ bicycle trail to Bridge Bay. Bicycles would rejoin the Lake area road system at this point. Neighboring buildings include the historic Fish Hatchery and two historic lakeshore boat houses, which are identified in this plan as having potential for visitor use. Picnic area facilities would be subject to seasonal closure for bear activity. East of the picnic area there is room for the lakeshore path to leave the side of the road and remain in wooded land between the road and the lakeshore. This route opens to views of Lake Yellowstone Hotel, and leads to the hotel viewing platform.

- a. Picnic area improvements:
 - i. Provide more picnic tables
 - ii. Preserve access to the lake
 - iii. Provide minimal restroom facility
- b. Pathway:
 - i. Route in wooded area between road and lakeshore
 - ii. Cross Hotel Creek with a footbridge over the existing roadway culvert



Lake Yellowstone Hotel as seen from the lake



Lake Yellowstone Hotel Area

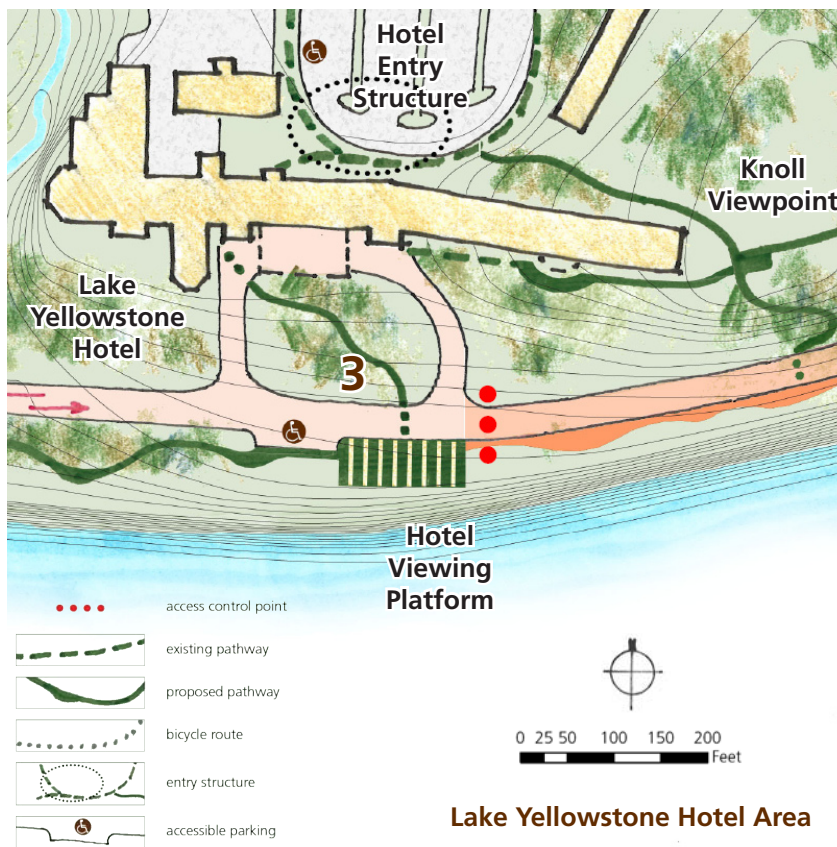


3 Lake Yellowstone Hotel. Built in 1889 and proposed as a National Historic Landmark, the Lake Yellowstone Hotel is the oldest surviving hotel in Yellowstone and the National Parks. From its beginning Lake Yellowstone Hotel influenced tourism patterns, and today its Colonial Revival architecture and lake front location are attractions to visitors. The grand hotel expresses an elegant counterpoint to its wilderness setting.

Many visitors enjoy relaxing in the hotel lobby while looking out over Yellowstone Lake. However, there is an opportunity to enhance the connection to the lakeshore. There is no formal provision for pedestrians to get to the shore from the hotel (most use the road), only a social path diagonally crossing the landscape area in front of the porte cochere, following a natural axis of view from the hotel toward the lake. Opportunity exists to improve this situation, and to establish a more amenable viewing platform that attracts visitors and enhances their experience.



Front of Lake Yellowstone Hotel



Lake Yellowstone Hotel Area



Lake Yellowstone Hotel as seen from viewing platform

3 Lake Yellowstone Hotel (cont.)

The lakeshore path and viewing platform should both reflect the character of Lake Yellowstone Hotel. Extending the hotel's elegant aesthetic to the viewing platform invites the visitor to venture outside the hotel to the lakeshore; intensifies appreciation of both the wilderness and the hotel; and clarifies this vista on the lakeshore path.

a. Hotel Viewing Platform:

- i. Formalize a footpath from the hotel to the lakeshore, following the existing social route
- ii. Construct a new viewing platform at the lakeshore, safe from adjacent vehicular traffic, with ample seating opportunities
- iii. Complete all elements in character that is appropriate to the Lake Yellowstone Hotel experience
- iv. Tie viewing platform directly to adjacent sections of the lakeshore path



Back of Lake Yellowstone Hotel



4 Behind Lake Yellowstone Hotel. The parking area behind the Lake Yellowstone Hotel is the primary orientation point for visitors to the hotel and the lakeshore. Though a visitor may currently drive to the front of the hotel on the lakeshore, or visit other places in the immediate vicinity, they most often park at the back of the hotel and explore the Lake area from there. Previous planning efforts have suggested construction of an entry structure in this area.

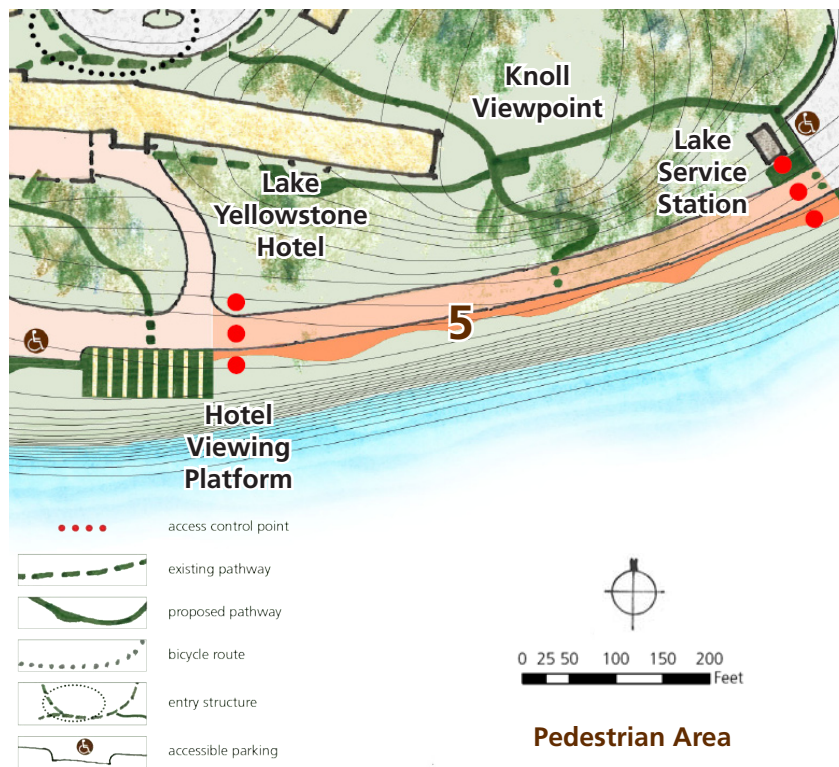
- a. Entry structure:
 - i. Provide weather protection for hotel guests
 - ii. Identify as a major entry to the hotel
 - iii. Formalize the existing east-west social path to general store
 - iv. Follow character that is appropriate to the Lake Yellowstone Hotel experience and respects surrounding historic buildings
 - v. Provides clear signage that directs visitors to the hotel entry, lakeshore, and general store
 - vi. Does not physically connect to Lake Yellowstone Hotel



Hotel Entry Structure: Boylin Cywinski Jackson 2007



Yellowstone Lake as seen from a natural setting

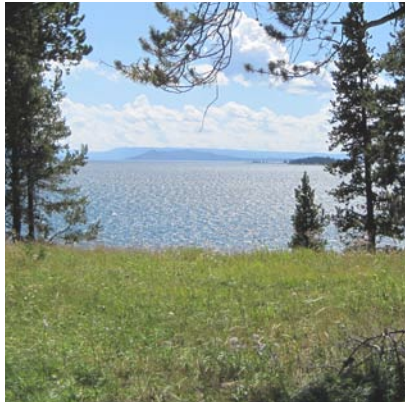


View to the east with knoll at Left

5 Pedestrian Area. This section of the lakeshore path has the least development within sight of the lakeshore. Under the preferred alternative and sub-alternative, it would be free of vehicular traffic. From this part of the path, lakeshore buildings recede from immediate view and the lake itself can be appreciated from a more natural setting.

While walking on this section of the lakeshore path, views toward either end are of nature without buildings; the curve in the shore and the existing tree cover hide structures from sight.

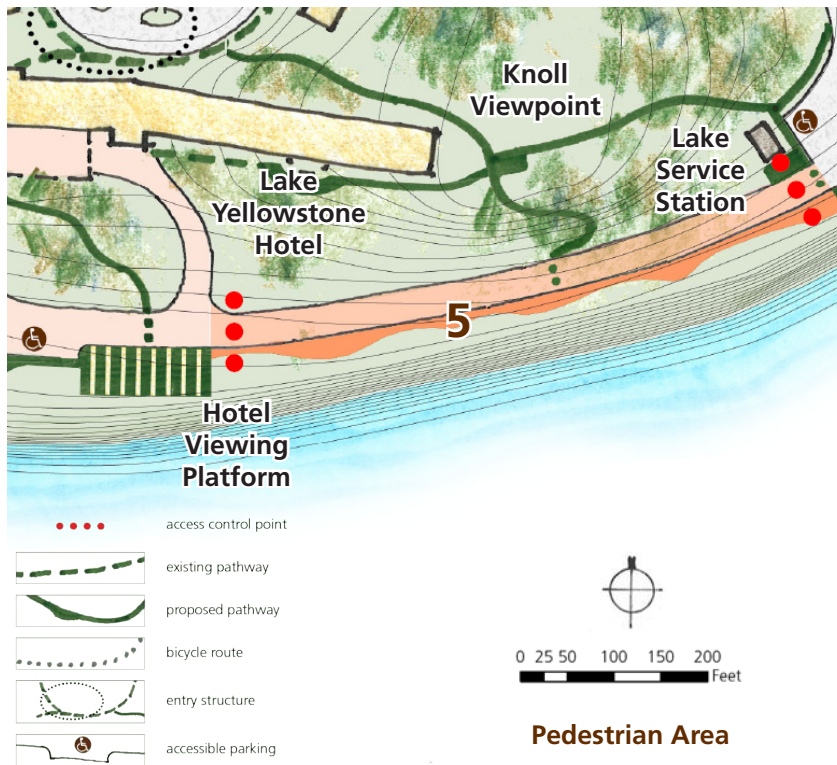
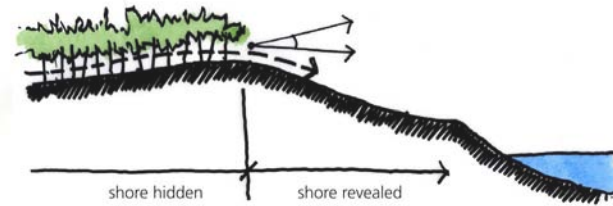
This section of the path is bound at the west end by the hotel viewing platform, and at the east end by Lake Service Station.



View from knoll



View from slope



Pedestrian Area

5 Pedestrian Area (cont.)

Using the path behind the Lake Yellowstone Hotel, approaching the lakeshore directly from the parking area, visitors can enjoy the vastness of the lake from two different perspectives. At the top of the knoll just east of the hotel, the view of the lakeshore itself is hidden, and the lake and surrounding wilderness appear as if the lakeshore path did not exist. Below the top of the knoll, a grassy slope overlooks the lakeshore; from this position both the goings-on of the lakeshore path and the wild expanse beyond are visible.

- Pathway along lakeshore:
 - Reconstruct road with additional path along lakeshore, including ample seating opportunities and picnic tables
 - Ensure clear passage for emergency service vehicles
- Pathway over knoll:
 - Construct viewing area at the top of the knoll, where the lakeshore itself is not visible
 - Complete path down the slope to the lakeshore; design to enhance experience
 - Formalize the existing social path connecting eastwards to Lake General Store and Lake Service Station

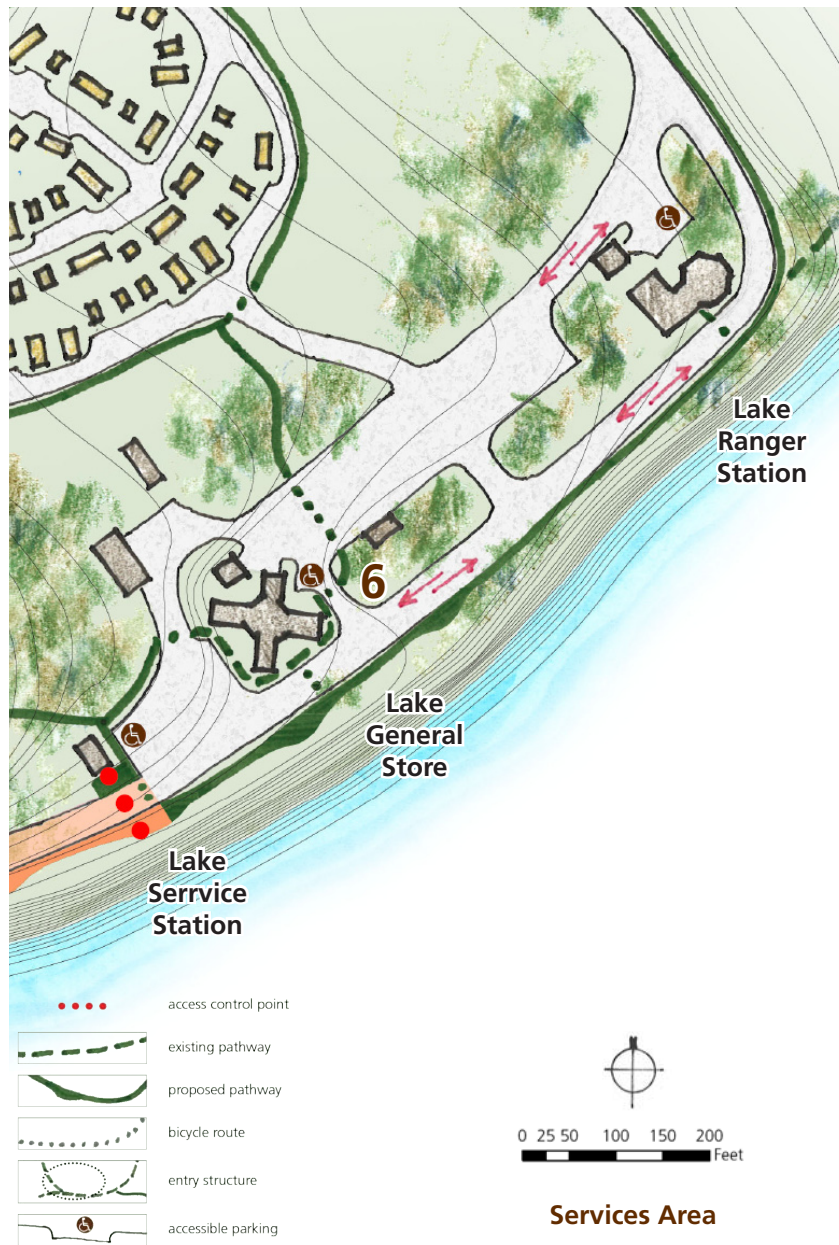


Lake Service Station Coffee Shop: Mithune 2007

6 Services Area. At the west end of this section of the lakeshore path is the Lake Service Station. One suggestion for potential reuse of this building is as a gathering place with limited food services, a spot along the lakeshore for people to relax and share their experiences. This location provides a transition from the pedestrian area to the services area. Nearby is Lake General Store, and further along is Lake Ranger Station, proposed for reopening to the public.

This plan suggests several things in regard to vehicular circulation in this area. Current utilization of existing parking is ineffective and it is likely that additional parking will be required in the future. There also is not enough room to complete the lakeshore path around Lake Ranger Station unless the road and parking are reconfigured.

Immediately outside the Lake Ranger Station is a natural viewing platform on the lakeshore, currently used informally. Other than path improvements to prevent erosion and increase pedestrian safety, this spot is best left undisturbed. Beyond the ranger station, the lakeshore path connects to an existing trail following the original route of the Grand Loop Road around the lakeshore.



Lake General Store



Lake Ranger Station

6 Services Area (cont.)

Many visitors access the services area by foot from Lake Hotel Cottages and Lake Lodge, either using the roads or social paths adjacent to the roads.

- a. Redevelop Lake Service Station:
 - i. Provide minor food and beverage services
 - ii. Include ample open and sheltered seating
 - iii. Becomes gateway to pedestrian area
- b. Construct pathway along lakeshore:
 - i. Provide ample seating opportunities and picnic tables
 - ii. Separate pedestrians from vehicles
- c. Redevelop parking and access:
 - i. Improve signage and pavement marking to better utilize existing parking east of Lake General Store
 - ii. Construct parking expansion toward Lake Ranger Station
 - iii. Complete paths to Lake Hotel Cottages and Lake Lodge