



28 February 2024

Placer County
Community Development Resource Agency
Environmental Coordination Services
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Auburn, CA 95603
Contact: Shirlee Herrington
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Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO Box 5310
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449
Contact: Brandy McMahon
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RE: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Boatworks Redevelopment Project; 740, 760, and 790 North Lake Boulevard, Tahoe City, Placer County, California; APNs 094-090-001, -033, -036, -042, and 065; TRPA File # ERSP2022-0953

Dear Ms. Herrington and Ms. McMahon:

The Friends of the West Shore (FOWS) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the subject Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Proposed Boatworks Redevelopment Project (Project).

Friends of the West Shore supports the revitalization of the Town Centers and the creation of long-term workforce housing. We have continued concerns that public safety and cumulative environmental impacts are not being adequately addressed by the County and TRPA. We want to see the execution of a successful project in Tahoe City, however a proper and complete environmental analysis must be conducted and impacts mitigated.

Overall Concerns on the project:

- Development too big overall – too much intensification of use on the site.
- The residential component architecture is not “Old Tahoe”.
- Viewshed corridor reduced by ~70%
- Too much building mass and scale at the SR 28 roadway
- Proposed parking less than current (155 vs. 174) with intensification of use on site
- Intensification will increase traffic, particularly wintertime traffic to the ski areas (no viable shuttle, public transit alternative or bike alternative offered).

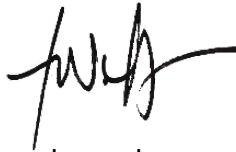
- Current parking is used by the general public within Tahoe City. New configuration will limit access to public parking (residence and hotel guests only), impacting parking and traffic flow in all of Tahoe City.
- Massive excavation to create 46' height of hotel from natural grade – lake facing façade is 56' or more.
- Addition of hotel and condo units without retiring corresponding STR permits from the pool of visitor accommodations.
- Provide a comprehensive & detailed evacuation plan to include departure points, evacuation routes, etc. as part of the EIR/EIS – this should not be “tiered-off” from the scope of analysis.

Detailed comments are enclosed. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,



Judith Tornese,
President



James Lyon,
Board Member

Comments on the Notice of Preparation:

Project Characteristics: The project includes 79 hotel lodging units and 29 residential condo-hotel units:

Owners of the condominiums would be restricted to a maximum stay of up to 90 nights per year. The condominium units would be subject to transient occupancy taxes (TOT) for those nights where the condominiums are rented to the public.

Will the project require TAU's to be allotted by TRPA?

Will the residential units require a STR permits if they are rented in the market?

Will a corresponding number of STR permits be removed from the remaining STR permit pool for new hotel units?

It is our position that equivalent STR permits should be removed from the remaining pool allocation for the for condos and hotel room to achieve the Counties goal of concentrating visitors in the town centers.

The condos are proposed single owner with an entirely unenforceable 90 day stay minimum. Timeshares, by definition, are multi- owner, thus enforcing minimum stays. In addition, there is an option to put the key to the lock off in the hotel key pool, but no requirement. They are proposing to use 2 TAUs per condo due to the lock off room. However, none of these are in any way guaranteed to be used as tourist accommodation. More details are needed on the operation and management of the proposed limited use condos.

Trip Reduction Features as described:

The project includes the following trip-reducing features: amenities that support active transportation (e.g., employee changing facilities, employee lockers, and bicycle parking and storage); bicycles for use by lodge guests; on-site electric vehicle charging stations; and private and public transit connectivity/shuttles to recreational and sightseeing opportunities.

The NOP states the project "includes" certain features but does not say whether it will improve/expand such features. For example, will the project provide shuttles or other means to **enhance** existing transit services in the area, or merely rely on the existing (inadequate) transit options? The concentration of hotel and condo units will adversely impact traffic in the winter as guests drive to ski areas and the summer as guests visit popular destinations. Is there a reasonable expectation that guests at "*high-quality tourist accommodations*" will use facility provided shuttles or public transit? We believe the answer is "no".

We have concerns with the Project Objectives, specifically:

Provide high-quality tourist accommodations and amenities located in Tahoe City;

Objectives are very specific to "high quality tourist accommodations and amenities" allowing easily dismiss alternatives that would include other benefits like affordable housing, transportation improvements, etc., by saying those do not meet objectives of the project.

Per the TBAP IR 2.04, this area is designated for mixed use. Existing conditions are an excellent representation of this, with tourist accommodation, retail, restaurant, and other commercial amenities as well as a library. The new proposed use is a massive resort with a tiny percentage of commercial development. Consequently, businesses in Tahoe City will have nowhere to go locally, resulting in adverse impacts on VMT for both owners, employees, and patrons of the businesses.

The Project Objectives should include additional objectives that actually benefit community and transportation/etc. Merely providing potential TOT funds and more low-wage jobs does not necessarily translate to presumed benefits, as history shows. The community is suffering the a lack of workforce housing and intolerable public safety risks base on the current strategy of developing "high quality tourist accommodations". This economic model is broken.

Promote economic growth through the creation of additional jobs, increased property and transit occupancy (TOT) taxes, sales tax and other positive economic outcomes for the local and surrounding communities;

Please provide the economic analysis that supports this objective, including 25 year tax revenue projections, job creation projections and work force housing needs projections.

Create a project that can fund environmental improvements and is sensitive to scale and massing of the project site and Tahoe City;

Define what environmental improvements will be made, the total cost of the improvements, the funding from this project to complete those improvements and the timing of the improvements as related to the project's overall schedule.

Act as a catalyst project to assist in the economic revitalization of Tahoe City

Define what is meant by this objective and how it will be measured in real outcomes.

Create a project that maintains the project site's locally accessible recreation opportunities and connectivity to pedestrian, bicycle, and multi-modal transportation opportunities;

A project of this scale should **improve** accessibility to recreational opportunities. Please provide specifics of improvements.

Reduce impervious surfaces in the Bliss Creek SEZ and improve water quality, including capturing fine sediment and reducing the current encroachment into the Bliss Creek SEZ.

Provide detailed analysis of impervious surface reduction, benchmarks and targets for water quality improvement, ongoing monitoring plan and mitigations if targets are not met.

The rationale for dismissal of these topics from detailed evaluation will include tiering from the analysis in the Tahoe Basin Area Plan EIR/EIS in addition to other supporting documentation, as applicable.

Tiering from the old analysis results in all the same concerns and legal arguments Friend of the West Shore has about the recent Tahoe Basin Area Plan (TBAP) amendments.¹ The project EIR/EIS analysis should not dismiss analyzing impacts to public services, recreation (e.g. adding more people to areas already beyond maximum capacity) and wildfire (public safety). TRPA/Placer always have the circular argument on this - EIR/S documents always say there will be additional analysis at the project level, but then projects simply 'tier off' the plan-level documents as proposed by the NOP. We want to ensure the EIR/EIS has nothing tiered off and request that an analysis of cumulative impacts from other proposed projects in the pipeline in the Tahoe City are included within the EIR/EIS.

Further, we cannot emphasize enough the concerns for public safety. Tahoe Basin is unique with its overcapacity roadways, extreme 360 degree high hazard severity wildfire and wildland urban interface zones, overcapacity two lane and traffic calming roadways, and its demonstrated wind and slope environment, the EIS/EIR must include a comprehensive analysis of new information as discussed in the California Attorney General's October 2022 Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act. This information was not available during the TRPA 2012 Regional Plan or the 2019 Placer County Area Plan.

Despite repeated pleas from the public to do so, Placer County and the TRPA have failed to substantially address wildfire and wildfire evacuation in relation to individual and

¹ https://www.friendswestshore.org/campaigns/view-campaign/_m7MS0Jmn9FZlnqYzEFebazGL5DaBdECyEkbdcm4_1StpAVz8acytD80UlwdfGgaduUPpooradx-qnj1H-T8HIK_zZtwMMZ

cumulative new information and changed circumstances. We request a comprehensive & detailed evacuation plan to include departure points, evacuation routes, etc.

Transportation. Implementation of the proposed project could impact traffic on SR 28 through the increase in density of uses at the site or changes to site access. As summarized above under "Project Characteristics," the project includes trip-reduction features that support active transportation;

Define all additions to the transportation system. Will the project provide shuttles or other means to enhance existing transit services in the area? The concentration of hotel and condo units will adversely impact traffic in the winter as guests drive to ski areas and in the summer as guests drive to popular recreation areas. Is there a reasonable expectation that guests at "high-quality tourist accommodations" will use facility provided shuttles or public transit? We believe the answer is "no". Is there any evidence or will there be limitations on guests that would support this expectation?

Current parking is used by the general public. New configuration will limit access to public parking (residence and hotel guests only), impacting parking and traffic flow in all of Tahoe City

- Proposed parking less than current (155 vs. 174) with intensification of use on site – provide detailed analysis of current parking as used and proposed development new use.
- Intensification will increase traffic, particularly wintertime traffic to the ski areas (no viable public transit alternative or bike alternative).
- Current parking is used by the **general public**. New configuration will limit access to public parking (residence and hotel guests only), impacting parking and traffic flow in all of Tahoe City. Where will a comparable amount of parking for the public be provided once this area is no longer available to the general public?
- 2017 Placer Tahoe Basin Area Plan Implementation Regulations (Section 3.07.A.5.f) are discretionary:

Section 3.07.A.5.f: Town Center Parking. Until a fee in-lieu of constructing all required parking spaces or other parking management program is in effect, the Placer County Design Review Committee may approve a 20-percent reduction in the amount of required parking for mixed-use, retail, transient lodging, and restaurant projects/uses within a Town Center.

We request that Placer County deny any reduction in parking and does not grant any in-lieu fees.

Population and Housing. The project would increase employment opportunities at the site and the corresponding demand for employee housing. It is understood that the proposed project would be required to offset the new employee demand for housing consistent with Placer County General Plan Policy C-2 that requires new development in the Tahoe Basin to house 50 percent of the full-time equivalent employees generated by the development.

Will housing be provided prior to employees starting their jobs? It is our understanding that Placer's development of employee housing with mitigation fees is far behind. Project should REQUIRE housing be identified and constructed such that it is available when the jobs start. Will the housing be affordable/achievable and/or market rate? Also, would 40 new FTEs be 40 full-time jobs or would this be 80 part-time jobs? Would housing for 50% of the "FTE" jobs equate to just 20 units? In this case, where would the other 60 employees be able to afford to live? This needs to be thoroughly analyzed in the EIS/R.

Please specify the jobs, wages, and extent of housing to be required. Also, do we really need to introduce more typically low-wage service industry jobs yet only provide for 1/2 (or 1/4th) of the housing? And, if housing is not onsite, then what measures will ensure it is available within the Tahoe Basin? The project should plan for adequate in-Basin housing so that commuting employees do not add to the already over-capacity traffic conditions along SR 89 between Tahoe City and Truckee or other congested roadways. Employees should also not be expected to sit in multi-hour traffic in private vehicles or on a bus to get to or from work.

Scenic Resources. The proposed project would be visible from SR 28 and Lake Tahoe. Key scenic concerns include increased height and visual mass on the redeveloped site. The EIR/EIS will evaluate scenic impacts of the project alternatives in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, Chapter 66 of the TRPA Code, the adopted TRPA Scenic Resource Threshold Standards, local and regional plans/design guidelines, height limits and findings, and nighttime views in the area. The evaluation will characterize the existing conditions and the project's impact on the applicable scenic roadway travel unit, shoreline travel unit, scenic resources, recreation areas and bike paths, as well as community character. The impact analysis will utilize visual simulations of the project from viewpoints along SR 28, the Lakeside Trail, and Lake Tahoe.

Include multiple viewpoints from every source. Alternatives should include 2 and 3 story options, buildings with horizontal separation, reduction in mass and scale, etc.

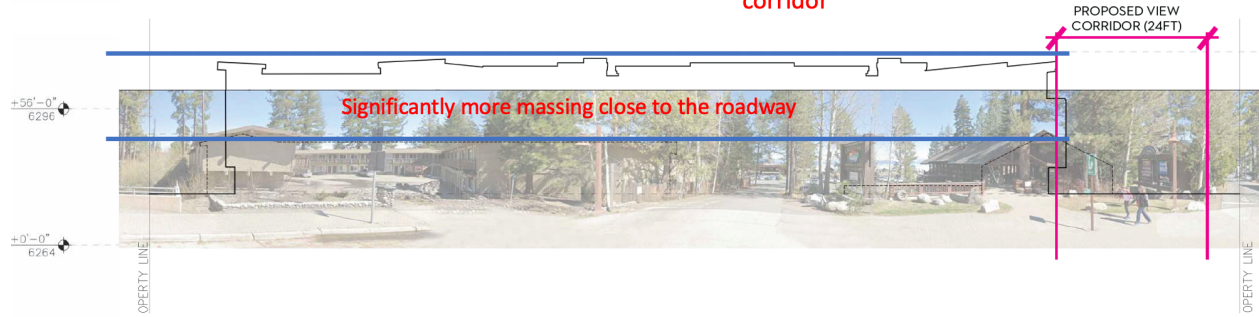
In addition, the TRPA visual scoring (Code of Ordinances 66.3.3.E) has strict standards, with only 2,200 square feet of building on the shorezone, with some exceptions that do apply to an extent, however this proposal does not seem to comply. Renderings where either the dock or a hillside between the lake and building screen the first two stories or so, however this is completely unrealistic and the visual impact is unacceptable.

Install "story poles" to outline the height, mass and scale of the project for 14 days of public viewing prior to initial public hearings in addition to visual graphic simulations. Post signboards with graphic simulations on site for 30 days prior to all public hearings.

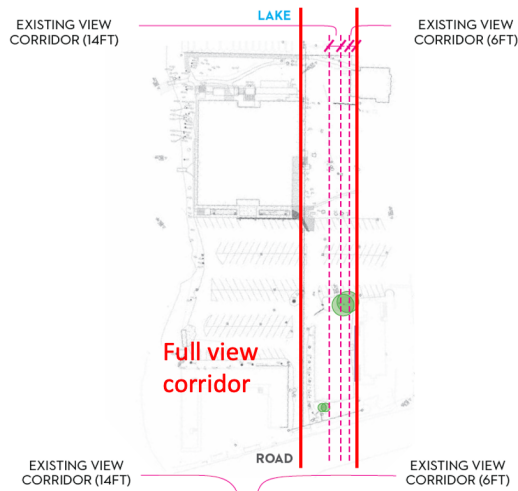


EXISTING CONDITION

This is also view corridor



PROPOSED DESIGN

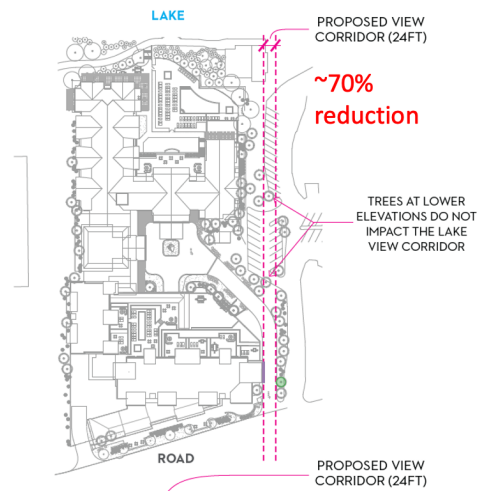


EXISTING VIEW CORRIDOR (14FT)

EXISTING VIEW CORRIDOR (6FT)



EXISTING CONDITION (TOTAL VIEW CORRIDOR 20FT)



PROPOSED VIEW CORRIDOR (24FT)

PROPOSED VIEW CORRIDOR (24FT)



PROPOSED DESIGN (TOTAL VIEW CORRIDOR 24FT)

CONDITION	TOTAL VIEW CORRIDOR
EXISTING	20FT
PROPOSED	24FT
INCREASE	4FT (20%)

— BUILDING CONSTRAINT
● TREE CONSTRAINT

Existing View Corridor



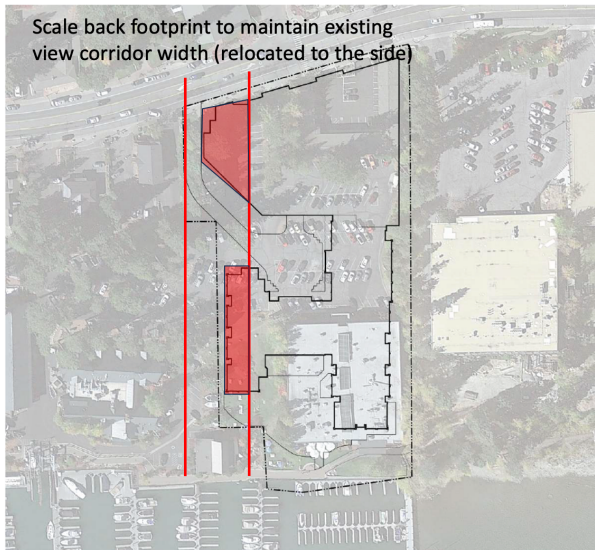
EXISTING CONDITION

Proposed View Corridor
~70% reduction



PROPOSED DESIGN

View Corridor reduced by ~70%



Hydrology and Water Quality: The EIR/EIS will include project-level analysis of the hydrologic effects of the proposed project, including impacts relative to existing and proposed impervious surfaces, the potential for increased runoff, and the ability of existing and proposed drainage facilities to convey runoff. The proposed project will be evaluated in terms of potential sources of water quality pollutants, with particular emphasis on nutrient and sediment loads transported off-site to Lake Tahoe and Bliss Creek, and their control (e.g., proposed best management practices) relative to existing conditions and Lake Tahoe Basin regulations and standards. This will include an assessment of source and treatment controls over a range of hydrologic conditions, consistent with the Lake Tahoe and Truckee River Total

Maximum Daily Loads. Potential impacts associated with excavation for the underground parking as it relates to interference with groundwater flows and consistency with TRPA and Placer County regulations will be assessed in the EIR/EIS. Mitigation measures (temporary and permanent) will be proposed, if needed.

The Lake Tahoe TMDL is only based on mid-lake clarity, not nearshore clarity (which has continued to deteriorate²), was designed roughly fifteen years ago based on then-historical data that no longer applies and was based only on treating the runoff for 20-year storms. It is unclear whether climate change impacts have been adequately addressed in updates to the TMDL, however the types of storms that have been seen historically and during the years of the TMDL's development have changed, with more extreme flooding events, rain on snow events, etc. The potential for existing systems designed for what were previously categorized as the "20-year storm" to become overwhelmed with runoff and not function properly is further exacerbated by regulatory changes allowing for more coverage in compacted areas.

The Project should require stormwater treatment for the 50-year storm (not just 20-year) as climate change has and will continue to lead to more extreme weather events. This was a big component for Community Enhancement Program (CEP) projects like the Homewood Mountain Resort first discussed in 2006. Eighteen years later Tahoe is seeing more of the extremes from climate change and scientists continue to warn that the extremes are expected to worsen, yet agencies are still considering new projects that won't treat enough stormwater (even if perfectly maintained, which is unrealistic) during extreme events and worse yet, located right next to the lake with little to no land in between to help mitigate the impacts of overflowing treatment systems.

Additionally, no snow storage plan has been provided. Provide a comprehensive "50-year snow season" snow removal and storage plan, including the impacts on melt runoff.

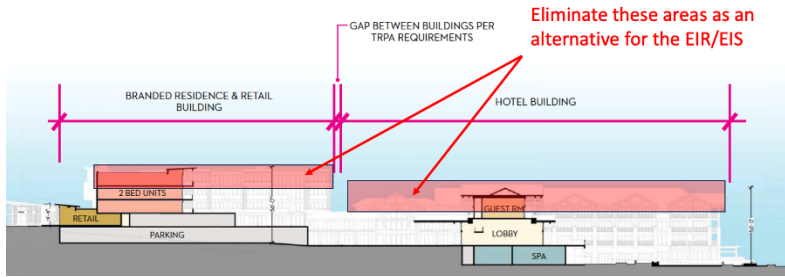
EIR/EIS Alternatives:

The NOP did not include anything beyond a "no project alternative". We request the following alternatives be included in the EIR/EIS:

Alternative 1: Scaled down project:

- Reduce residential units to 14-16 units by eliminating 4th floor, pulling back from the street to reduce mass, scale and bulk at the street.
- Reduce hotel rooms: Eliminate "Level 3: Roof Event and Guest Room" level
 - (estimated at 21 hotel rooms and 6 suites, lounge and event space)

² <https://tahoe.ucdavis.edu/stateofthelake>



Alternative 2: Inclusion of work force housing in addition to a scaled back hotel project as noted in Alternative 1:

- Eliminate “for sale” condo unit and replace with affordable work force housing. Analyze impact on transportation.

--END--