

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: October 10, 2012
To: Agencies and Interested Parties
From: Placer County
Subject: **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan and Phase I Project**
Review Period: October 10, 2012 to November 9, 2012

Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC (project applicant) is requesting approval of various discretionary entitlements in support of the proposed Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan project (proposed project), located on approximately 101 acres at the west end of Squaw Valley. The proposed project is a mixed-use development that includes resort residential, commercial, and recreation uses as well as parking and other visitor amenities. In addition, the applicant has submitted more detailed plans for the first phase of the project as identified in the Specific Plan, "Phase I." Placer County (County) has prepared an Initial Study to analyze these actions and has identified potentially significant environmental effects. The County will therefore prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the project to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] § 21000 et seq.), and will serve as the lead agency for CEQA compliance.

PURPOSE OF THIS NOTICE OF PREPARATION

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15082), the County has prepared this notice of preparation (NOP) to inform agencies and interested parties that an EIR will be prepared for the above-referenced project. The purpose of an NOP is to provide sufficient information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including mitigation measures that should be considered and alternatives that should be addressed (State CEQA Guidelines 14 CCR Section 15082[b]).

The project location, description, and potential environmental effects are summarized below. A more detailed project description is included in the attached Initial Study.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Specific Plan area (plan area) is located within the 4,700-acre Squaw Valley (also known as Olympic Valley) in northeastern Placer County (Exhibit 1). The plan area is located approximately two miles west of State Route (SR) 89, nine miles south of the Town of Truckee, and seven miles northwest of Tahoe City.

The plan area encompasses an area that totals approximately 101 acres. Most of the plan area is located on existing parking lots used for day parking by skiers, with some of the area also located on undeveloped forest and meadow land. The plan area is generally bounded by Squaw Valley Road and residential development to the north; ski lifts and related ski operations to the south; lodging, single-family residences, and undisturbed areas to the west; and the meadow and golf course to the east (Exhibit 2). Additionally, the plan area surrounds pockets of existing development, including the Squaw Valley Resort (condominium/hotel) and other related uses. Access to the plan area is provided by Squaw Valley Road.



Source: Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC 2012; adapted by Ascent in 2012

Exhibit 1

Regional Location



- Legend**
- (1) Olympic Village Lodge
 - (2) West Parking Lots
 - (3) PlumpJack
 - (4) Olympic House
 - (5) Village
 - (6) Village Check-In
 - (7) East Parking Lots
 - (8) Structured Parking
 - (9) Locker Room
 - (10) Squaw Kids
 - (11) Red Wolf Lodge
 - (12) Red Dog Maintenance
 - (13) Golf Course
 - (14) Meadow
 - (15) Bridge



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Source: Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC 2012; adapted by Ascent in 2012

Exhibit 2

Plan Area Existing Conditions



PROJECT BACKGROUND

The proposed Specific Plan is the first specific plan proposed under the *Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance* (SVGPLUO), which was adopted by Placer County in 1983. The proposed project includes amendments to the land uses previously approved for the site in the SVGPLUO. The proposed project also includes a project-level development proposal, the Phase I Project. The remainder of the proposed phases will be analyzed at a program level.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

(See Chapter 1 of the attached Initial Study for a more detailed project description.)

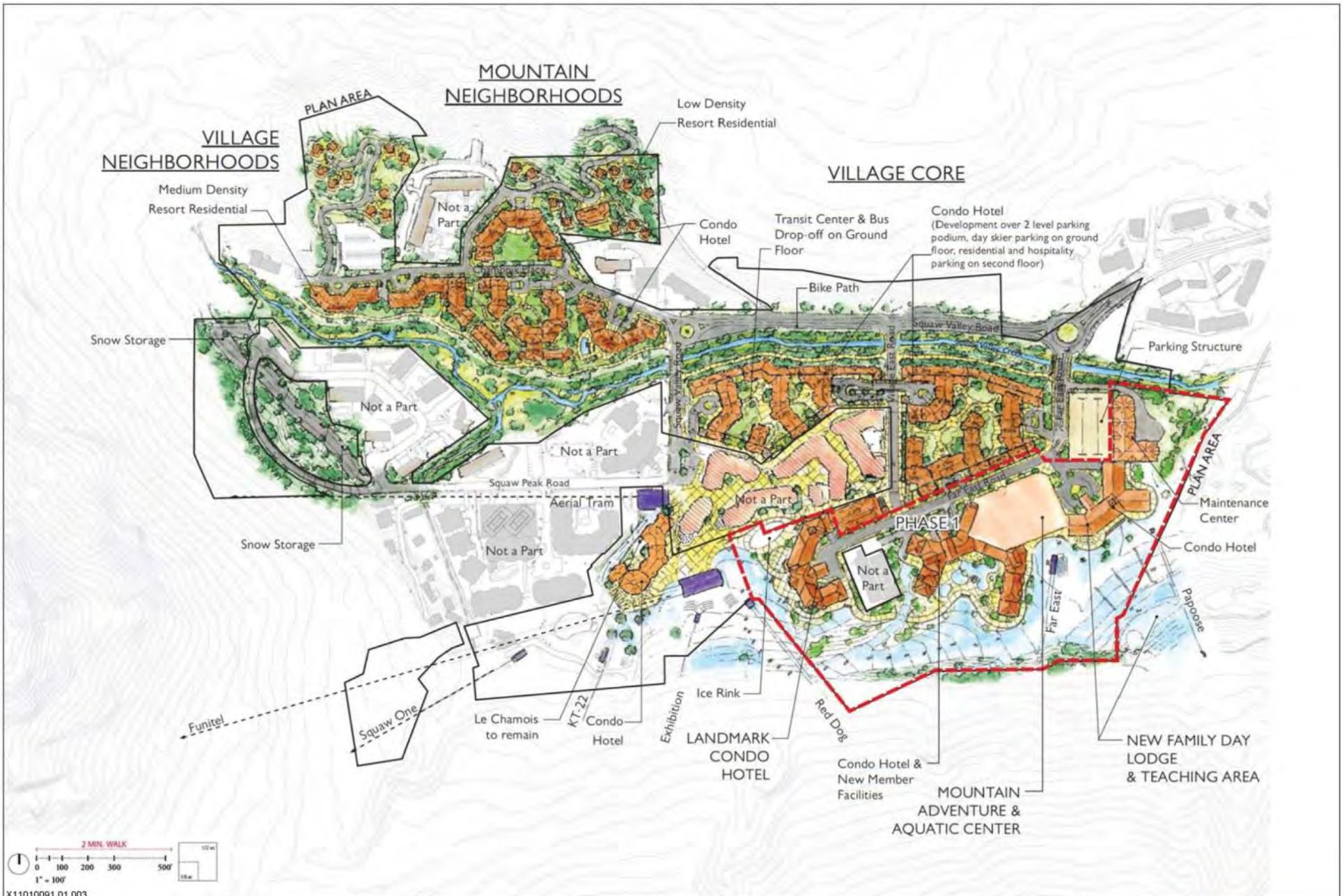
SPECIFIC PLAN

The Specific Plan proposes to amend the SVGPLUO to comprehensively plan development of a recreation-based, all-season, resort community consisting of 1,295 whole and/or fractional ownership resort residential and guest accommodation units that would include hotels, condominium hotels, and semi-attached and detached fractional ownership residential properties.

Specific Plan development would occur primarily through redevelopment of existing surface parking areas in and around the Village Core to the north, west, and east of the existing Village. The Specific Plan would allow for development of commercial, retail, and recreational uses similar to uses currently allowed under the SVGPLUO, including skier services, retail shopping, restaurants and bars, entertainment, and public and private recreational facilities. The developed character of properties in the plan area would be in accordance with parcel by parcel development standards proposed in the Specific Plan Design Guidelines. Buildings in the plan area would range from 2 to 10 stories, or from 40 to 140 feet tall. Some buildings will also have one or two podium parking levels, with the maximum height of podium parking being 21 feet above grade. Therefore, overall building heights will range from 40 feet (2 stories with no podium parking) to 154 feet above ground level (tallest 10-story building with anticipated 14 feet of podium parking above grade)

The plan area would consist of three main zones: the Village Core, consisting of high-density, active, tourist-related mixed-uses; the Village Neighborhoods, consisting of high-density resort residential neighborhoods that accommodate a mix of uses and passive recreational opportunities; and the Mountain Neighborhoods, consisting of low-density resort residential neighborhoods and small-scale neighborhood-serving commercial uses. Residential uses include both transient lodging and ownership, although all ownership will be predominantly fractional (shared); permanent residential occupancy by individuals and families would be limited to the Village Neighborhood. The Specific Plan includes an open space network of natural and pedestrian oriented open space areas that weave through Village areas while maximizing views of the surrounding mountainsides, forest, and meadow. Exhibit 3 illustrates one scenario of how the Specific Plan could be implemented.

The Specific Plan's roadway hierarchy and structured parking system would be designed to be pedestrian oriented, allowing arriving resort visitors to park quickly and stay at the resort without the need for a car. Parking would be provided beneath the majority of lodging and residential buildings (primarily for guests/residents) and in podium parking structures (primarily for day skier/visitors, guests of nearby lodging/residential properties, and operational vehicles). At least one multi-level parking structure would be constructed within the plan area, and off-site parking (primarily for day skier and employee parking on the busiest peak days) may also be constructed. The Lot 4 parking facility near the entrance to Squaw Valley will provide the key off-site parking area for use on peak days by employees and (as needed) by day skiers. Other off-site parking locations are yet to be identified, but may include development of new parking facilities or use of already developed off-site parking facilities in nearby communities. The project may result in development of



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Source: Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC 2012; adapted by Ascent in 2012

Exhibit 3

Concept Plan



other off-site facilities, such as employee housing, though no specific proposal to construct any off-site facilities has been made at this time.

The Specific Plan would be developed in four phases over 12–15 years (Exhibit 4). Construction of the first phase (Phase I) is proposed to begin in 2014 and is expected to be completed in approximately 5 years, depending on the timing of project approvals, market conditions, and environmental factors (e.g., snow fall). Other phases would proceed as dictated by market conditions.

PHASE I PROJECT

The Phase I Project would involve the construction of five buildings totaling up to 908,866 square feet (Exhibit 5). The Phase I area contains approximately 26 acres of the approximately 101-acre plan area.

Parcels A, B, and C would be used for the construction of three condo hotel buildings totaling 720,410 square feet, with up to 390 condominium hotel units and 788 bedrooms. Bedrooms in each unit would have the potential to be locked off to allow unoccupied condominium bedrooms to be rented separately as guest hotel rooms. The ground floor level of each building would include commercial and retail uses such as skier services, member facilities, restaurants, bars, and other retail uses. Parcel F would include the relocated Operations and Maintenance facilities (including the snow making building). Total square footage for non-residential commercial uses, common areas, and operations and maintenance facilities on these four parcels would total 177,105 square feet.

A 132,000-square-foot Mountain Adventure and Aquatic Center (MAAC) is proposed to be constructed on Parcel D. The MAAC would offer activities such as indoor rock climbing and water-based recreation and rides in an extensive indoor/outdoor pool system, and additional entertainment options such as a movie theater, a bowling alley and a multi-generational arcade.

Phase I buildings would range from two to ten stories tall. Overall building heights will range from 40 feet (2 stories with no podium parking) to 154 feet above ground level (tallest 10-story building with anticipated 14 feet of podium parking above grade). Podium parking would provide approximately 725 spaces. An additional 32 surface spaces would be provided outside of Phase I, but within the plan area, for MAAC employees. An off-site parking site has been identified (Lot 4) northwest of the intersection of Squaw Valley Road and Tavern Circle (across from the Squaw Valley Public Services District and Fire Station). Lot 4 could provide up to 541 parking stalls.

Each parcel would include site-specific development standards for setbacks, building height by specific location (defined by polygon area), building intensity, open space, and pedestrian and landscape corridors.

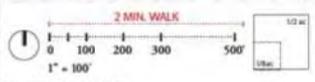
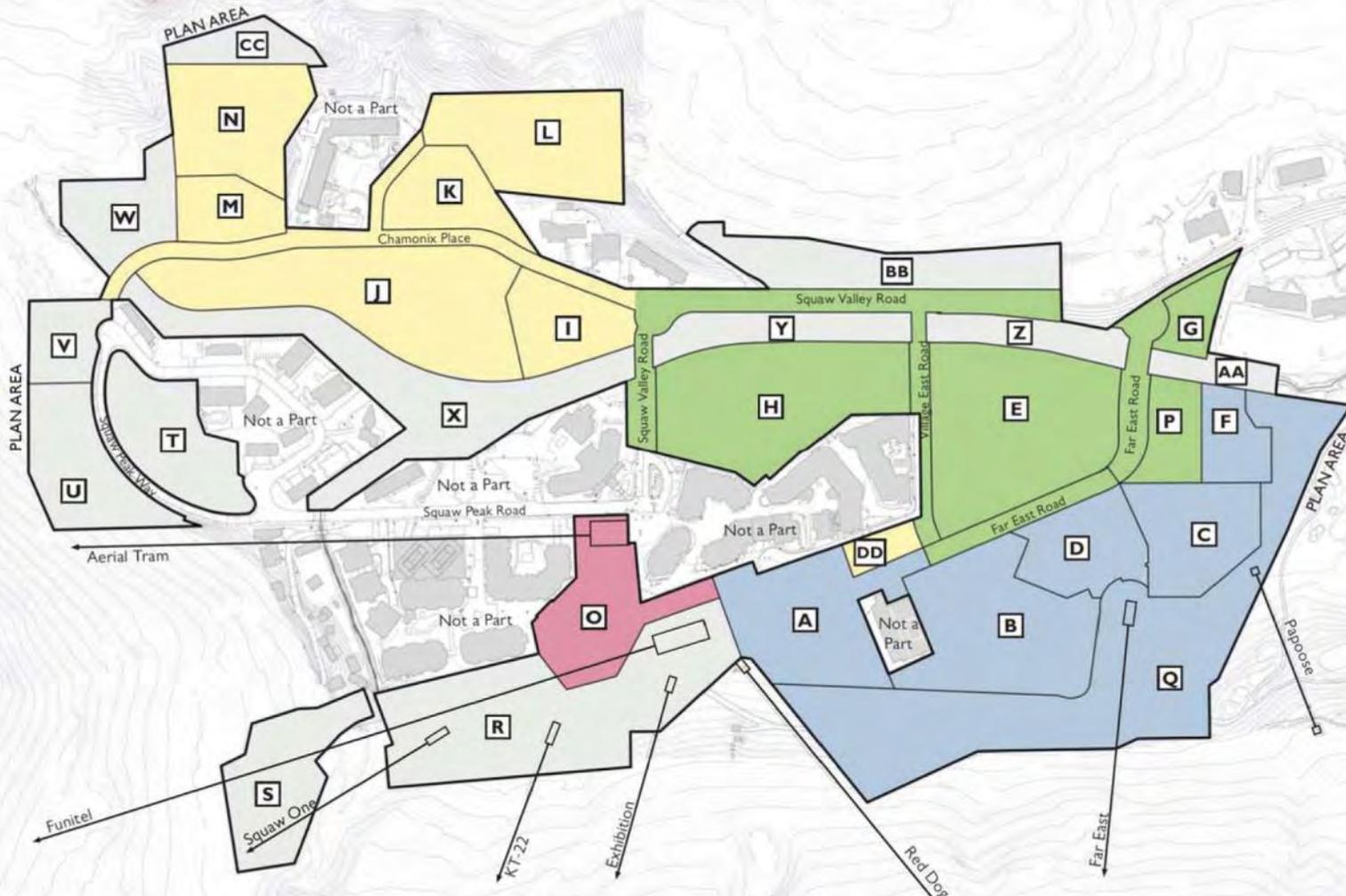
POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The EIR will describe the direct and indirect potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. Based on the results of the Initial Study prepared for the proposed project (and attached to this NOP or available on the County's website), the County has determined that the EIR will result in potential environmental impacts in the following topic areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR:

- ▲ Land Use and Forest Resources
- ▲ Population, Employment, and Housing
- ▲ Biological Resources
- ▲ Cultural Resources
- ▲ Visual Resources
- ▲ Transportation and Circulation
- ▲ Air Quality
- ▲ Noise
- ▲ Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- ▲ Hydrology and Water Quality
- ▲ Public Services and Utilities
- ▲ Hazardous Materials and Hazards Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

Phasing Summary

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Phase III
- Phase IV



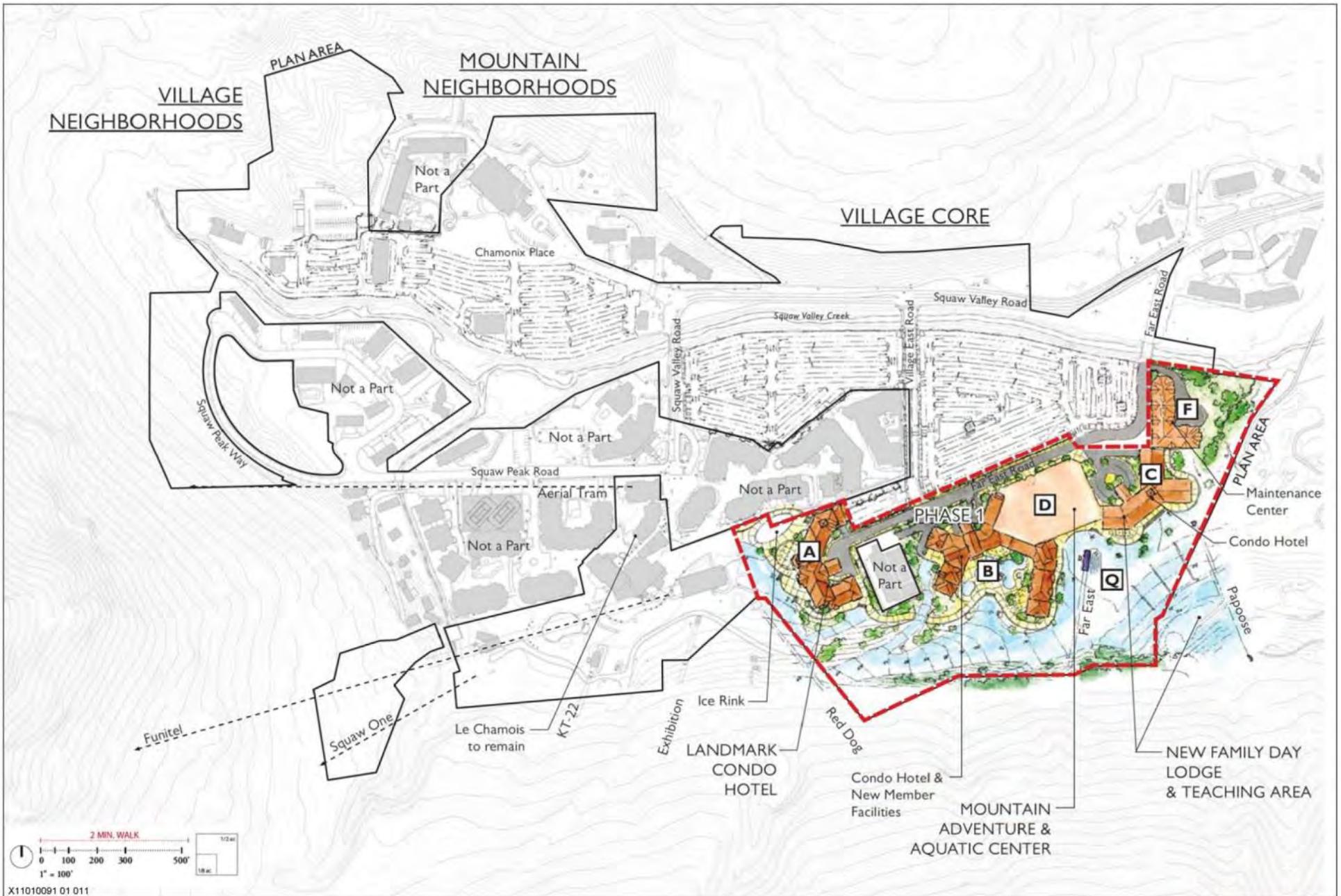
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Source: Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC 2012; adapted by Ascent in 2012

Exhibit 4

Phasing Plan





Source: Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC 2012; adapted by Ascent in 2012

Exhibit 5

Phase I Project: Concept Plan



Land Use and Forest Resources

The proposed land use plan could result in inconsistencies with the *Placer County General Plan* and the SVGLUO, including development of incompatible land uses or land use conflicts. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR. Some tree removal would be required to construct the proposed Specific Plan. Moreover, the proposed project includes rezoning portions of the plan area from Forest Recreation to Village Commercial and rezoning other portions of the plan area from Village Commercial to Forest Recreation. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Population, Employment, and Housing

The proposed project would increase the population of Squaw Valley, although ownership within the plan area would be predominantly fractional so the population would be essentially transient. However, the proposed project would require additional employees, necessitating construction of employee housing, within the Olympic Valley or in nearby communities. Impacts associated with population and employment increases, including the potential for displacement of existing employee housing will be evaluated in the EIR.

Biological Resources

Although most of the plan area is already developed with parking lots and scattered buildings, some undeveloped area is also proposed for development. Special-status plant or wildlife species could potentially occur in the plan area. Squaw Creek flows in a west to east direction through the plan area and could provide habitat for various special-status plant and wildlife species, and may also provide a wildlife movement corridor. Additionally, the surrounding forested mountain areas—while disturbed due to residential development and ski use—could provide habitat for special-status plant and wildlife species, and could be indirectly affected by project implementation (e.g., disturbance of nesting birds during construction). Implementation of the proposed project could result in disturbance or take of special-status species or disturbance or removal of suitable habitat for these species.

Waters of the U.S. identified in the plan area include wetland swale, seep, wet meadow, perennial stream, intermittent stream, and ephemeral stream. The project could potentially remove, fill, or hydrologically interrupt wetlands identified in the plan area.

Placer County's Tree Preservation Ordinance (Placer County Code, Article 12.16) is applicable to all native, landmark trees, riparian zone trees, and certain commercial firewood operations. In accordance with the Tree Preservation Ordinance, a discretionary project shall evaluate the potential impacts to all protected trees sized 6-inches diameter at breast height or larger as part of the development review process. A tree survey conducted for the proposed project indicated the presence of 2,275 trees in the plan area. Build-out of the Specific Plan would include removal of some of these trees, although the exact number is not yet known. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Cultural Resources

The project area is considered archaeologically sensitive, and at least one recorded prehistoric site exists within the project vicinity. An archaeologist conducted a field survey of the entire plan area, and found no prehistoric or historic archaeological resources that would be considered significant. Nonetheless, it is possible that subsurface cultural resources could be located in the plan area, which could be undisturbed beneath the pavement and buildings that cover most of the plan area. Removal of the existing surface material during grading and excavation activities could damage potential subsurface archaeological resources.

Additionally, several buildings located in the plan area and proposed for demolition as part of the proposed project were constructed for the 1960 Winter Olympics and could be considered historical resources. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Visual Resources

The project area is located within a scenic alpine setting, with steep mountains, jagged peaks, meadows, and creeks surrounding a largely paved project site. The proposed project includes development of a Village Core, with buildings ranging from two to twelve stories and other less intensive development that would, nonetheless, alter the viewshed. The project may result in adverse effects to scenic vistas, particularly as viewed from Squaw Valley Road (a County-designated scenic roadway) and from surrounding residential areas. Development of the proposed project would change the existing visual character of the developed portion of the site from a flat, asphalt parking lot into a built-up environment. In addition, the proposed project would include new light sources that could increase light and glare and could adversely affect nighttime views, increasing “sky-glow” and disturbing residents of adjacent areas.. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Transportation and Circulation

Project construction would result in construction worker commute trips and haul truck trips (for delivery and transport of materials and equipment) to and from the project area, resulting in increased traffic levels on local roadways. Traffic associated with project operation would include the trips generated by new employees and guests, thereby increasing existing traffic levels compared to existing conditions. Similar to project construction, long-term project operation could result in adverse roadway conditions, including decreased level of service, an increase in traffic hazards, roadway degradation, and reduced emergency access, due to increase in traffic volumes. A detailed traffic analysis that evaluates local and more regional transportation impacts will be performed for the project, and this issue will be evaluated in the EIR. Impacts associated with potential conflicts with alternate transportation modes will also be evaluated in the EIR.

Air Quality

During construction of the proposed project, criteria air pollutant emissions would be temporarily and intermittently generated. Project construction of this scale could potentially conflict with Placer County Air Pollution Control District’s Air Quality Attainment Plan (AQAP). Operation of the proposed project would result in air pollutant emissions from project-generated motor vehicle trips, area sources such as propane gas consumption, and stationary sources. Project operation could also potentially conflict with the AQAP. Construction- and operations-related emissions could adversely affect sensitive receptors in the vicinity. Nearby sensitive receptors include residences and a school (Squaw Valley Academy). These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Noise

Construction-related noise sources would include both mobile and stationary on-site equipment (e.g., bulldozers, backhoes, front end loaders, graders, pavers, generators, and compressors), as well as impact tools. Construction would also generate truck trips associated with the delivery of building supplies and hauling away of excess fill and construction debris. Construction noise levels could potentially exceed the daytime hourly and maximum standard of 55 and 70 dBA respectively, and/or the nighttime performance standards defined by the Placer County Code. Operation of the proposed project would result in additional guests and employees and associated daily vehicle trips. Additionally, the project includes an outdoor performance area, relocation of the snowmaking building, and potential relocation of the maintenance yard, all of which could generate noise that could disturb nearby sensitive land uses. The project’s long-term operations could result in the exposure of people to additional long-term operational noise levels, and additional noise may exceed the applicable County noise standards. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Several unnamed fault traces run through Squaw Valley. The alignments of these faults have not been fully determined, but one or more might traverse the plan area. If an active fault does exist within the plan area, it could potentially rupture, causing damage to buildings in the immediate vicinity. There are also faults located throughout the Lake Tahoe region. If an earthquake occurred on one of these faults, it could expose people or

structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including ground shaking, ground failure, and liquefaction. The project site could also include unstable or expansive soil units that could affect structures. Also, depending on wind and rain conditions, grading activities and improvements could result in the potential for erosion and sedimentation of site soils both on- and offsite. Finally, portions of the plan area are located within the run-out areas of some avalanche zones and would include construction of new buildings and uses within potential avalanche hazard areas. These impacts will be evaluated further in the EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The plan area drains into Squaw Creek. The Creek runs west to east through the plan area in an engineered channel before flowing into a meadow area/golf course (Resort at Squaw Creek Golf Course) to the east of the plan area, and eventually flows into the Truckee River. The creek is degraded by excessive sediment loads. Construction activities could result in soil erosion, siltation, or flooding. Specifically, construction activities such as grading could result in disturbance of soils and sediments that could be carried into natural water bodies (including Squaw Creek) during storm events. Further, accidental discharges of construction-related fuels, oils, hydraulic fluid, and other hazardous substances could contaminate stormwater flows or increase siltation in nearby water bodies, resulting in a reduction in stormwater quality on or downstream of the plan area. New impervious surfaces that would be constructed as part of the project could increase the volume of runoff coming from the plan area. Runoff could contain oils, grease, fuel, sediments, brake dust, and other potential water pollutants. During storm events, these pollutants could be carried to downstream receiving waters of Squaw Creek and eventually the Truckee River. Use of groundwater to provide water supply for the project could affect water levels within Squaw Creek. Finally, the project proposes to incorporate a grey water system to collect and treat water from baths, showers, hand basins, and washing machines for landscape irrigation use and for flushing toilets. The EIR will evaluate these issues, as well as the potential to place housing or other structures within a 100-year flood hazard area.

Public Services and Utilities

The proposed project would increase the demand for public services, including fire and police protection services. The EIR will assess the degree to which affected public service providers can adequately serve the project. Water supply and sanitary sewer disposal demands will be quantified for the project to determine utility system capacities and evaluate the effect of development on current service levels. A Water Supply Assessment will be prepared under the direction of the Squaw Valley Public Services District to determine the project's water demand and whether available supplies are sufficient to meet project demands. These issues will be evaluated further in the EIR.

Hazardous Materials and Hazards

The plan area is identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a small generator of hazardous waste (EPA 2012). Past operations at the plan area could have resulted in elevated concentrations of hazardous constituents, such as petroleum hydrocarbons, which have been detected in some surface soils and groundwater within the plan area. Several USTs are located in the plan area. Hazardous materials, including various products such as paints, solvents, glues, and cements, would be stored, used, and transported in varying amounts during construction and long-term operation of the proposed project. In addition, the project could generate substantial traffic (both during construction and long-term project operation) and could result in construction-related road closures. For this reason, the proposed project could interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan, such as the Squaw Valley Fire Department's *Emergency Evacuation Plan* (2012). Furthermore, the project would result in the placement of housing and other structures that would contain substantial numbers of people in a wildland area, thereby potentially exposing people and structures to a risk of wildland fire. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

GHG emissions generated by the proposed project during construction would predominantly be in the form of CO₂. Emissions would be associated with mobile-source exhaust from construction worker commute trips, truck haul trips, and equipment used in the plan area (e.g., excavators, graders). Operation of the proposed project would add additional mobile sources of GHGs associated with an increased number of employees and guests. The proposed project would also result in GHG emissions from area sources such as propane consumption (for heating and cooking) and off-site emissions from utility providers. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project could potentially result in significant impacts to the above resource areas. When taken together with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects, the project's contribution to the overall cumulative effect of all these activities could be considerable. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

ALTERNATIVES TO BE EVALUATED IN THE EIR

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15126.6), the EIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that are capable of meeting most of the projects' objectives, and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The EIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered but rejected by the lead agency as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons why. The EIR will provide an analysis of the No-Project Alternative and will also identify the environmentally superior alternative.

POTENTIAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUESTED

The project applicant requests adoption of a Specific Plan. The proposed Specific Plan includes a land use concept plan, development standards, and design guidelines for development of the Specific Plan area. Specifically, the project applicant is requesting the following actions and planning entitlements from Placer County:

- ▲ Certification of a Final Environmental Impact Report;
- ▲ Amendment of the *Placer County General Plan (1994)*;
- ▲ Amendment of the *Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance (1983)*;
- ▲ Rezone of the proposed Specific Plan area to include the Specific Plan (SPL) zoning designation;
- ▲ Adoption of the proposed Specific Plan;
- ▲ Approval of a Development Agreement;
- ▲ Approval of a Large-lot Tentative Subdivision Map; and
- ▲ Phase I Project-Level Entitlements:
 - // Small-lot Tentative Subdivision Maps
 - // Conditional Use Permit

In addition, the project may require permit approvals from Responsible Agencies.

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

The NOP and Initial Study are available for public review at the following locations:

Tahoe City Library
740 N. Lake Blvd
Tahoe City, CA 96145

Truckee Library
10031 Levon Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161

The NOP and Initial Study are also available for public review on Placer County's website:
<http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/EnvCoordSvcs/EIR.aspx>.

In addition, project information including a PDF download of the complete Specific Plan, Phase I project description, and contact link is available for review on Placer County's website:
<http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Planning/TahoePlanning/SquawValleySpecificPlan.aspx>.

PROVIDING COMMENTS

Agencies and interested parties may provide the County with written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the project. Because of time limits mandated by State law, comments should be provided no later than 5:00 PM on **November 9, 2012**. Please send all comments to:

Placer County, Planning Services Division
3091 County Center Drive
Auburn, CA 95603
Attention: Maywan Krach, Community Development Technician
Telephone: (530) 745-3132 Fax: (530) 745-3080
Email: cdraecs@placer.ca.gov

Agencies that will need to use the EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed project should provide the name of a contact person. Comments provided by email should include "Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan Project NOP Scoping Comment" in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email.

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in spring 2013.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

A public scoping meeting will be held by the County to inform interested parties about the proposed project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting time and location are as follows:

November 1, 2012
10:00 a.m.
The Resort at Squaw Creek
400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley

The meeting space is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals needing special assistive devices will be accommodated to the County's best ability. For more information, please contact Maywan Krach (at the contact information above) at least 48 hours before the meeting.

REFERENCES

EPA. See U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Placer County. 1994 (August 16). *Placer County General Plan*. Placer County, CA.

—. 1983. *Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance*. Adopted June 14 and August 30, 1983; reflects modifications through 2006.

Squaw Valley Fire Department. 2012. Emergency Evacuation Plan. Available: <http://www.svpsd.org/fire/images/evacuation/docs/Evacuation%20Plan.pdf>. Accessed July 24, 2012.

Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC. 2012 (September). *Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan, Draft*. Prepared for Placer County.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2012. Enviromapper for Envirofacts Database Search. Available: <http://www.epa.gov/emefdata/em4ef.html?minx=-121.26709&miny=38.74337&maxx=-120.16846&maxy=39.38314&pText=placer%20county>. Accessed March 12, 2012.