

1221

**ERIC POULSEN  
P.O. BOX 2491  
OLYMPIC VALLEY, CALIF. 96146**

**JULY 15, 2015**

**PLACER COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE AGENCY  
3091 COUNTY CIRCLE DRIVE, SUITE 190  
AUBURN, CALIF. 95603  
ATTN: MAYWAN KRACH**

**DEAR PLACER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION,**

I have lived in Squaw Valley for over 64 years. My wife and I have raised our three children in Squaw Valley. We own property in Squaw Valley and as well as being involved with several businesses in the Valley. I also have been a director of the Squaw Valley Public Service District for many years and a past volunteer fireman with our Squaw Valley Fire Department.

My father was the co founder of the ski area and my parents raised their eight children here.

Needless to say, I am familiar with Squaw Valley and understand much of it's history. My comments (following) relate to some thoughts about the draft EIR for the proposed Village at Squaw Valley. I make some suggestions for further study and mitigation. I thank you for the opportunity to make comment.

1221-1

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

Transportation and Circulation has been identified as a Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Impact with this project. This includes impacts to Placer County and Caltrans Intersections, Impacts caused by vehicular cueing at Cal Trans intersections with impacts to Cal Trans Highways.

Traffic and Parking is also currently a Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Impact and this would remain the same even without this project. Squaw Valley is blessed to have some of the best skiing in the entire country. Skiers come from all over the country and world to ski Squaw Valley. Over the next 25 years, the population of California is expected to have significant growth and with this growth, there will be increasing traffic impacts regardless of whether this project moves forward or not. Despite this, if developed, this project should actually reduce daily traffic flows by retaining people and vehicles in the valley, thereby reducing the daily in and out vehicle trips as people should tend to stay in the valley and not leave.

1221-2

To reduce impacts from Traffic and Parking consideration needs to be given to changing users habits. So, (1) Somehow we need to get people out of their vehicles and (2) try to get people to travel during non peak hours. Following are some considerations or mitigations that might be considered to help alleviate traffic.

1221-3

**-Changes in Ski Area operations** which might help reduce peak hour traffic flows (Mitigations).

- Open the ski area at an earlier hour. This might bring more day skier vehicles into the valley earlier thereby spreading out the traffic more to reduce traffic during the peak hours.
- The ski area should consider selling a half day morning ticket at a reduced rate to encourage people to end their ski day (mid-day) which might get some of the normal peak hour traffic vehicles on the road at an earlier non peak hour. (This is done in many European ski areas.)
- Other ideas?? This EIR should look into how changing ski area operations might reduce these impacts and change the skier consumer habits.

I221-3  
cont.

**-Increase in public Transportation services** that are dependable and reliable (get people out of their cars).

- Provide free inter-valley (Squaw Valley) transportation service that is dependable and timely. This should help get locals out of their cars thereby reducing in valley traffic.
- Provide HOV bus lanes (where possible) to make public transportation move quicker on local roadways (i.e. Bus lane from Squaw Creek Rd. to Squaw entrance and then bus lane to Truckee??).
- Consider other ways to get public transportation to destinations quicker than other traffic. This will help to get people out of their cars. i.e enlarging and using golf course cart paths and bike trails (Alpine to Tahoe City) where feasible for use in one way directions to speed up bus service (direction of impacted moving traffic). This needs to be studied as a possibility.
- Provide adequate parking at satellite lots (Truckee and Tahoe) so that there are easy access points for buses..
- Consider enlarged parking areas at entrance areas to Squaw Valley and also Alpine Meadows (possibly at the old Deer Park Ski Area) with free efficient public transportation to the lifts from the parking lots. This will help reduce traffic within the Squaw and Alpine Valley's.

I221-4

- Make facilities available within the new village to skiers at peak departure traffic times at reduced rates to encourage people to stay later (after peak departure time). This would help take the pressure off of the roadways during those peak hours.

I221-5

- **Paid Parking?? (bad word)** might encourage people to use Public Transport. Perhaps a portion of, or, all of the charges for this parking would go to help fund the public transportation services.

- **Changes in Hotel Operations at Village** -Encourage renters in the village to arrive and depart on off peak days and by public transportation by charging them

I221-6

less or provide reduced lift tickets prices or other benefits for arriving and departing midweek. (get away from the normal Friday night arrival and Sunday afternoon departure)

I221-6  
cont.

**Squaw Valley Road Design – (a separate issue)** This plan discusses prospective changes to Squaw Valley Road design where it meets Far East Road. It should be noted that a portion of the Squaw Valley roadway is outside of the plan area and the easement areas may not be wide enough to allow the changes that are discussed.

I221-7

**HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

**Creek Restoration and Flooding** – During the late 1950’s, the State of California and the Army Core of Engineers leveled out the area where a major portion of this project is proposed and they also channelized Squaw Creek for a two week event (The 1960 Winter Olympic Games). This channelization of the creek and grading of what is currently the Squaw Valley Ski Area parking lot has had impacts to the creek area, hydrology and water quality. Some impacts include the acceleration of waters and creek flow through this channel and then the sedimentation of the creek channel both of which have impacts to the lower meadow reaches.

One of the prospective benefits of this project is the possible restoration of Squaw Creek in certain areas. The developer and the organization known as the (Friends of Squaw Creek) have had meetings about this restoration and there may be grant funding available to help achieve this. It is my understanding that this restoration may take place downstream of the lower bridge (known as the Far East bridge or the Papoose Bridge in the current Meadow reach area.

While this will be a gallant effort, I believe that it is very important to also improve the portion upstream of this bridge. The channelization and diversions mostly occurred upstream of this bridge.

Some concern has been expressed in this EIR about the safety of the Public Service District sewer line located just downstream (east side) of the Far East Bridge. In looking at the area upstream of this sewer line and bridge it appears that there has been tremendous sedimentation and this has backed up quite a ways up the creek channel. The creek channel above this bridge has also filled in with a lot of new vegetation. In looking at this, the Far East bridge appears to act like a dam holding this new sedimentation back and then accelerating the water through the dam and and possibly washing away the stream and banks downstream.

This is especially of concern because if the creek has major storm events there may be flooding upstream of this bridge area and there might be overflow at this location and

I221-8

areas above due to the new sedimentation, vegetation and the narrowness of this bridge area.

There should be consideration to studying this new sedimentation and removing it and then look at the growth of new vegetation within the channel and possibly restoration of a portion of the area upstream of this bridge and widening of the bridge base to help alleviate the potential for flooding in this area. It might also slow down the water. Currently this bridge looks like it might imitate a fire hose nozzle building up pressure behind it with a powerful spray coming out downstream.

1221-8  
cont.

**OLYMPIC CHANNEL AND THE SEARCHLIGHT POND AREA** – During the late 1950’s / early 60’s a portion of the runoff was also diverted from the areas known as Kt-22 and Red Dog by creating a dam known as the Searchlight pond and then running the water through what is known as the Olympic Channel to Squaw Creek at a location downstream of the Far East bridge.

Currently this diversion removes water that might benefit the aquifer from this area. During major storm events in the past the Searchlight pond has had some overflow. This may be of concern because it could cause flooding to the new Village development proposed for the areas below this.

Consideration should be given this impact with improvements that could benefit the aquifer. This might include providing an improved dam area and Olympic Channel and using the water in such a way that it might make its way into the upper aquifer basin where the valley gets most of its water used for domestic purposes.

- This reservoir could provide benefit to the aquifer and ski area by providing a water storage location for snow making which will in turn improve returning water to the Squaw Valley aquifer during the spring melt from the snowmaking snow.
- Snow is usually made after the time that the vegetation in the valley goes dormant and the aquifer recovers. During this time period water might be pumped to the pond to be redistributed on the mountain as snow. Normally, the Olympic Channel takes this water to a location downstream of where this recharge would naturally occur and the water leaves the valley via the creek.

1221-9

This past winter ski season was very dry and it provided a good test for the benefits of snow making. By recovering this water during the snow making time and using it for snow making there was benefit to using this water to make snow and store it on the slopes so that it could then return the water back to the aquifer during the spring and early summer snow melting time period. This benefited the aquifer as well provided snow for skiing. (We saw this during this past drought winter / spring season.)

This should be studied, keeping in mind that the dam and channel be considered for improvement, thereby limiting potential flooding and providing a source where the stored water in this reservoir might be used for snow making and might make it back into the aquifer as recharge.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment on the EIR.

  
Eric Poulsen

---

**I221**Eric Poulsen  
July 15, 2015

---

- I221-1 The comment is an introductory statement and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. Therefore, a response is not provided here.
- I221-2 The comment suggests that by providing housing and entertainment near the ski resort, more patrons will be encouraged to stay overnight in Olympic Valley versus driving in and out. While the DEIR conservatively does not make such an assumption for either the winter or summer conditions, it is possible that the commenter's assessment could be correct under certain conditions. See response to comment I226-3 for a discussion of how the project itself can be considered a form of transportation demand management (TDM).
- I221-3 The comment suggests options such as opening the ski resort earlier in the day, and selling half day morning lift tickets as potential mitigation measures to reduce peak hour traffic. Regarding opening the ski resort earlier in the day, there are various difficulties with implementing this option to the extent it would reduce morning peak hour trips. According to Squaw Valley personnel, it is logistically difficult to open the resort prior to 8:30 a.m., and this is already a target opening time for peak days such as during the Christmas time holidays. Even so, it is difficult to open the mountain to skiers prior to 9:00 a.m. Sunrise occurs around 7:30 a.m. at this peak time of year, and time is required to ensure safe operating conditions (avalanche control, other safety inspections requiring daylight.) Other peak days tend to occur during or immediately after snowfall, and these are typically the same days where avalanche control may delay opening, or at least prohibit a pre-9:00 a.m. start. Finally, this option would only be needed on the peak days, which would then need to be predicted so that potential ski resort visitors could be notified of the early opening. This kind of prediction is often difficult, particularly trying to predict peak day conditions several days in advance so that skiers that could be reached with an early opening notice would have sufficient time to plan accordingly.
- Selling morning half day tickets could potentially reduce p.m. peak hour traffic, although there is no way to predict the extent to which this could reduce peak hour traffic (if at all). Further, morning half day tickets would require significance additions to resort infrastructure and operations that may be infeasible. Currently, Squaw provides facilities and personnel to check tickets on lifts in the lower part of the mountain, which is where all skiers enter resort. Specific gates are provided at these lower lifts, which scan the tickets and automatically open to let the skier access the lift. The gates, which are costly to install, are not provided on the upper half where a large number of lifts are located. Currently, half-day tickets allow skiing after 1:00 p.m., until the end of the ski day. It is not possible to enter the mountain before 1:00 p.m. because the tickets will not activate the gates prior to this time.
- If morning half-day tickets were sold, these scan-activated gates would be required at every lift on the mountain, otherwise the skiers could purchase only a morning ticket but stay all day skiing a lift that does not have a scan-activated gate. Squaw already experiences fraud with skiers dropping passes from chairs to their friends, where they then use the same pass to ski for free. This phenomenon would likely worsen if a skier is already on the mountain using a half-day morning pass, where they have an "incentive" to cheat the system. The same type of phenomenon is not attendant upon afternoon half-day skiers, because they are already on the mountain for the time they have paid, until the end of the day. Thus, for these reasons and because it is not known if this would result in a meaningful reduction in p.m. peak hour trips, this measure is not considered feasible.

It should also be noted that the expansion of relatively low-cost season passes in recent years has had the beneficial effect of reducing peak-hour traffic volumes, by reducing the desire by skiers to maximize their time on the slopes. A comparison of the existing winter peak-hour traffic volumes presented in the DEIR with those presented in the *Report to Placer County Regarding Squaw Valley Traffic Impacts for the Resort at Squaw Creek*, prepared by Omni-Means in 1990 indicates that winter westbound AM peak-hour traffic volumes have declined by 38 percent along Squaw Valley Road west of SR 89, while winter eastbound PM peak-hour volumes have declined by 22 percent. Even when VSVSP project generated traffic volumes are included, traffic volumes are forecast to be 32 percent lower than they were in 1990 in the eastbound AM peak-hour condition, and 11 percent lower in the westbound PM peak-hour condition.

I221-4 See the Master Response regarding traffic with regard to overall public transit concepts. With regard to a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane for buses that would travel on SR 89, unfortunately there is not sufficient right of way on the highway to add a bus lane without affecting other traffic flow. Widening the right of way would result in adverse effects to the Truckee River and would encroach on camping areas, homes, etc.

The use of the bike path between Squaw Valley and Tahoe City was studied in 1995. It was found to require extensive improvements to structurally accommodate buses, and thus it was determined to be infeasible. In addition, the provision of afternoon traffic management in Tahoe City on peak winter days has eliminated much of the historic delays for southbound SR 89 traffic.

I221-5 See the Master Response regarding traffic for a discussion of transit, off-site parking, and paid parking. With regard to amenities, the proposed project would include new commercial establishments and other amenities that would make extending the ski day more attractive than current conditions, spreading out and reducing the potential peak. Mitigation Measure 9-1b, which provides for a real time traffic information system that would provide data to patrons on travel time/congestion on Squaw Valley Road may also serve to extend the day past peak traffic times for many skiers, thereby reducing peak traffic.

Mitigation Measure 9-7 (Contribute fair share or create a Community Service Area or a Community Facilities District to cover increased transit service) would expand regional transit access to Squaw Valley from existing external parking areas, such as the Tahoe City Transit Center.

I221-6 The comment suggests additional mitigation in the form of hotel packages that encourage off-peak arrivals/departures. Under existing conditions, hotel stays and packages are designed for off-peak arrivals and departures (e.g., check-in and check-out days during week days, off-peak hotel check-in times); this would continue to be the practice with project implementation.

I221-7 A dimensional analysis was performed by MacKay & Somps, project engineers, by overlaying AutoCAD files of the existing and proposed right of way, Squaw Valley Road, and Squaw Creek channel. The result of the analysis using visual inspection proved there to be sufficient easement to complete the improvements for Squaw Valley Road (with a 72-foot cross section) and Far East Road (with a 58-foot cross section).

I221-8 The commenter suggests additional restoration improvements to the Squaw Creek channel. The comment expresses that restoration upstream of the Far East bridge (the eastern-most bridge in that currently accesses parking), in addition to downstream of the bridge, would be beneficial in reducing sedimentation. It is noted that the proposed stream channel restoration is still in its conceptual stage, but does include restoration efforts both upstream and downstream of the Far East bridge. As currently envisioned, restoration activities would

extend from just west of the Squaw Valley Road bridge (western-most bridge currently accessing the parking lot, to east of the Far East bridge at the confluence of the Squaw Creek and Olympic Channel. Stream meanders would be introduced where the channel has been engineered and straightened, and other features would also be introduced (revegetation, grade control, depressional features) that better control sedimentation, provide for groundwater recharge, and extend wetland features. As the restoration plans are refined and formalized, the applicant will seek input to optimize restoration so that it maximizes a return to more natural conditions within the context of manmade modifications upstream and downstream of the restoration plan.

Regarding flood risk, as shown on DEIR Exhibits 13-12, 13-13, and 13-14, the 100-year floodplain in the main Village area is primarily contained within the existing trapezoidal channel, with the exception of an area to the south of the creek that currently extends into the existing surface parking lot. However, the proposed creek restoration includes widening of the trapezoidal channel, increasing its capacity to convey flood waters. The creek restoration is not expected to adversely affect flood risk, and as indicated in the discussion of Impact 13-8 in the DEIR, after restoration is complete, the 100-year flood stage elevation is expected to be contained within the widened trapezoidal channel area.

I221-9

The commenter suggests improvements to the Searchlight pond system, upstream of the project, to benefit snow-making, aquifer recharge, and flood control. While these improvements all have merit, they are related to ski resort operations and are outside the scope of the proposed project.

1222

**Maywan Krach**

---

**From:** Diane <diane@prioleau.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 12, 2015 1:00 PM  
**To:** Placer County Environmental Coordination Services  
**Subject:** Squaw Valley draft EIR

As a homeowner for 47 years in Squaw Valley I am very concerned about the development that KSL is planning The project will have many negative effects on the health, safety, and character of the valley As to the Valley culture KSL has systematically dismissed the history by getting rid of anything related to Alex Cushing the founder and now wants to take away the last of the iconic buildings from the 1960 Olympics At the first presentation that KSL gave, they assured the residents that in the first phase of the development , there would be a restoration of Squaw creek with a walking/bike path into the village. Now they are saying that unless they get approval of the massive build out, it will not happen If the building is to go on for 20 years, it will subject the valley to noise,traffic and dust

I  
I222-1  
I

The other main concern is the availability of water to service the proposed units. In this drought year we are already having to cut back on our usage. How much worse it would be with so many more people.

I  
I222-2  
I

With the wealth of outdoor activities in the valley and in Lake Tahoe , there is no need for a hugh indoor facility

I  
I222-3  
I

Everyone realizes that there is going to be development in the Valley but it is hoped that it will not impact the vibe and vistas as the current plan does.

I  
I222-4  
I

Diane Prioleau  
1539 and 1559 Lanny Lane  
Olympic Valley  
96146

There

Diane Prioleau  
[Diane@prioleau.com](mailto:Diane@prioleau.com)

---

**I222**Diane Prioleau  
July 12, 2015

---

- I222-1 Overall, the comment provides an opinion regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed project and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.
- In particular, the comment expresses concerns about the project's negative effects on the health, safety, and character of the valley. No specifics are offered about these negative effects, so a further response is not provided here. The project's potential impacts are evaluated throughout the DEIR.
- Regarding the two 1960s Olympic-related buildings (the Olympic Valley Lodge and the Far East Center), see response to comment I52-13.
- See response to comment O14-2 regarding timing of creek restoration.
- Finally, see the Master Response regarding the 25-year construction period.
- I222-2 Water supply is addressed in Chapter 14, "Public Services and Utilities," of the DEIR (see Impact 14-1). No specific issues related to the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR are raised in this comment. No further response is provided here.
- I222-3 See the Master Response regarding the MAC. The comment provides an opinion regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed project and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.
- I222-4 Impacts to vistas are addressed in Chapter 8, "Visual Resources," of the DEIR (see Impact 8-1). No specific issues related to the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR are raised in this comment. No further response is provided here.

I223

**Maywan Krach**

**From:** marc prioleau <marc@prioleau.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2015 12:19 PM  
**To:** Placer County Environmental Coordination Services  
**Subject:** Comment on Squaw Valley Village Specific Plan

To the Placer County Board of Supervisors

My family has owned a house in Olympic Valley since the late 60's. We have watched as various developments come and go. In general, the developments have been within the scale and context of the natural beauty of the area. They have helped people enjoy the advantages of this great place without detracting from it so much that changes the look and feel of Squaw Valley.

I  
I223-1  
I

I am opposed to the KSL Specific Plan because it moves away from this balance. You cannot continue to build and develop to meet a short term financial target without destroying the thing that created the value in the first place. We all know that some development is inevitable but the scale of the KSL plan is too much.

Specifically:

- The indoor adventure park is distinctly at odds with the spirit of Squaw valley. Squaw is an outdoor adventure place. Leave the indoor adventure places in Las Vegas.
- The valley does not support the scale that KSL wants. Squaw is in the end a single, limited area valley. There are limited ski trails, limited hiking in the summer. Just because you can squeeze more condos in doesn't mean that this is a good idea.
- The aspect ratio of the proposed buildings will unalterably change the feel of Squaw Valley. The current village is nice but it does not detract from the real scenery of the mountains. On the other hand, when I go to a place that is built like what KSL proposes, you end up in urban canyons that block the views. It's a different feel...better suited for San Francisco than Squaw Valley.

I  
I223-2  
I  
I223-3  
I  
I223-4  
I

I have loved Squaw for over 40 years. I am afraid that KSL's plan will ruin it. Put me down in the "Opposed" list.

I I223-5

Thanks for your careful consideration,

Marc

-----  
Marc Prioleau  
[marc@prioleau.com](mailto:marc@prioleau.com)  
650 814 0824

---

**I223** Marc Prioleau  
July 15, 2015

---

- I223-1 The comment is an introductory statement and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. Therefore, a response is not provided here.
- The comment expressing opposition to the project provides an opinion regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed project and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.
- I223-2 See the Master Response regarding the MAC. The comment provides an opinion regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed project and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.
- I223-3 See response to comment I223-2.
- I223-4 Impacts to views are addressed in Chapter 8, "Visual Resources," of the DEIR. Also see the Master Response regarding the visual impact analysis. No specific issues related to the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR are raised in this comment. No further response is provided here.
- I223-5 See response to comment I223-1.

I224

**Maywan Krach**

---

**From:** Ariana Rampy <ari.rampy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 17, 2015 10:46 AM  
**To:** Placer County Environmental Coordination Services  
**Subject:** Squaw Valley developments

To whom it may concern,  
A friend recently alerted me to the developments you are proposing for Squaw Valley. There are only so many places in the world today where the integrity of our land is being allowed to stay intact. Please, please do not turn this beautiful valley into yet another developed theme park area. The valley is so beautiful, and holds so many very special memories - for myself, I grew up visiting Squaw Valley every summer with my family. The things I loved most about it were not the developed hotels or houses or businesses. They were the quiet sweep of the grass, the rustling of the aspens, the serene, open expanse of this gorgeous, historic valley. There are plenty of developments as it is. Please, please do not ruin Squaw Valley as so many other places have been irreversibly ruined already.

Sincerely,  
Ari Rampy

I224-1

---

**I224** Ariana Rampy  
July 17, 2015

---

I224-1 The comment provides an opinion regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed project and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.

1225

Hello,

My name is Rusty Reams and I am a registered voter and have been a resident of Squaw Valley since 2003. Since the dEIR report was released there has been a lot of talk of potential unavoidable impacts facing Olympic Valley. While these "significant and unavoidable impacts" were theorized by professionals, the purpose of this letter is not to talk about the potential impacts to the valley, but to tell a story living with the impacts of development in the Sierra Nevada Mountains...

It was last year (Fall 2014) and the day was like any other fall day. The sun was bright, the air was crisp, and the colors of the foliage were peaking in color. Under these ideal autumn conditions, I set out on a hike from Olympic Valley up Shirley Canyon. For it was on this day, I found myself in the Sierra Nevada Mountains looking for the quiet solace of nature, only to be met with damaging effects of development

It was somewhere around 9am when the incessant roar of chainsaws began to echo off the canyon walls. Their disharmonious hum was shortly met there after by the thunderous clamor of a helicopter, as it flew through the sky removing trees from the mountain, depositing them on the valley floor. This process continued throughout the day and the operation kept on rolling through the remainder of the week,

Instead of finding harmony, healing and health by the calming and comforting forces of the natural environment, I found myself being confronted with trappings of a developed society. My spirit could not run free up and down the canyon as the helicopter's blade sliced through the silence. The river's sweet song was droned out by diesel engines. The eagle did not soar through the sky, and the bear hid in fear from the unusual uproar that had engulfed the valley.

There are a lot of similarities to be found in this allegory and the proposed development of the Squaw Village. Those that look for peace in the mountains would be denied this experience.

With the timeline that Squaw Valley Ski Holdings has put forth it lends itself to an entire generation of children that upon being born would only know the sound of endless construction through their adolescent lives. The children of the valley would only know upon nature and its dynamic gifts through reading books, rather than experiencing them out their backdoor. It alarms me that an entire generation would only know of years upon years, and decades upon decades of development, destruction, and devastation.

That is why I have written this letter, to speak for a generation that has yet to find its voice. The children of this community should be given access to a place that allows them to relax, restore, and renew. They should be given an avenue by which to learn the lessons of the mountain, and the ways of the natural world. To deny them this unfettered access is to take away the birthright of their Tahoe ancestry. We owe it to the children of Tahoe, and to all those that find peace in the mountains to seek

1225-1

alternatives to “significant and unavoidable impacts” to our immediate environment and our community.

I 1225-1  
cont.

It is with this message that I proudly sign my name and ask of the Placer County Community Development Agency to consider alternatives to the Squaw Valley Ski Holdings Village Development.

I 1225-2

Rusty Reams  
PO Box 2324  
Olympic Valley, CA  
96146

[reamsteam@gmail.com](mailto:reamsteam@gmail.com)  
530-205-3865

---

**I225**Rusty Reams  
no date

---

I225-1

The comment provides an opinion regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed project and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.

In particular, the comment expresses concerns about noise, loss of trees, and the project's construction timeline. These issues are addressed in the DEIR and in the Master Responses in this FEIR. No specific issues related to the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR are raised in this comment. No further response is provided here.

Also, see the Master Response regarding significant and unavoidable impacts.

I225-2

Alternatives to the proposed project are described and evaluated in Chapter 17, "Alternatives," of the DEIR in a manner consistent with the requirements of CEQA. The comment is directed towards the project approval process and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the DEIR. Therefore, no further response is provided here. All comment letters submitted during the DEIR public review period will be reviewed and considered by the Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors before a decision on the project is rendered.

I226

July 17, 2015

Placer County Planning Department  
Maywan Krach, Community Development Technician  
3091 County Center Drive  
Auburn, CA 95603  
cdraecs@placer.ca.gov  
Subject: Proposed Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan Draft EIR

Dear Ms. Krach-

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the May 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) regarding the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan (VSVSP). My name is Greg Riessen and I work for the City and County of San Francisco as a traffic engineer and streetscape designer, and also as a CEQA transportation practitioner for large development projects. I am writing on behalf of myself and not on behalf of my employer. My family has shared a second home in Squaw Valley for 25 years.

This is a summary of my comments. Attached are my specific comments, including tables and figures.

While I support new development in the valley, it is not acceptable for this project to generate traffic-related environmental impacts given today's current climate change crisis. Shrugging our shoulders at traffic growth contradicts existing local and regional policies toward reducing, rather than increasing, vehicle miles traveled.

In fact, the traffic impacts of the VSVSP, and its associated noise, air quality and visual impacts, can be completely mitigated. This would be accomplished by the County imposing a policy of No Net New Vehicle Trips on Squaw Valley Road. Phases of VSVSP development, including the first phase, could only be approved if the sponsor could demonstrate that overall traffic volumes with the added development would not increase above 2015 levels. To achieve this, the sponsor would have to successfully implement transit, carpool, and non-motorized traffic reduction strategies toward both existing traffic generators (e.g. day skiers) and also for the new development. If the sponsor could not demonstrate this, then the project phase could not be approved. With this policy as the mitigation measure, it would be certain that the traffic-related impacts would not materialize.

A commitment to No Net New Vehicle Trips has been proven as an effective and feasible traffic mitigation measure in other California multi-phase development projects and in municipalities, including Stanford University and the University of Washington, and the cities of Santa Monica and Mountain View.

I can support increased development in the village only if the County imposes a policy of No Net New Vehicle Trips on Squaw Valley Road. As shown in the DEIR, unacceptable and unhealthy levels of traffic congestion, traffic noise and air pollution are already present in the valley. These conditions must be remedied, or at least not exacerbated, by this project in order for it to be supportable.

Unfortunately, while the project claims to be pedestrian-oriented, in reality it is literally built upon outdated and unsustainable auto-oriented design, specifically, parking structures and podiums. Virtually all guests and employees would arrive by car and park in large structured facilities, which is unacceptable given the climate change effects that we are experiencing right now. Not surprisingly, the DEIR shows substantial traffic growth, with associated significant impacts to transportation, air quality, noise, and visuals.

In addition to the project's failure to be pedestrian-oriented, the DEIR fails to identify and disclose all of the traffic-related impacts. There is no discussion regarding how more cars would impact the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists crossing Squaw Valley Road or accessing the village, nor how more cars would delay public transit and increase operating costs for TART. There are no visual simulations from on the mountain or Cable Car looking down onto the village, which would reveal more significant visual impacts

I226-1

due to the parking structures. The greenhouse gas analysis only accounts for vehicle travel within Placer County, ignoring the substantial air pollution generated by longer trips from the Bay Area and beyond.

The DEIR also fails to mitigate these impacts, declaring these impacts to be significant and unavoidable, when in fact these impacts can be mitigated. Such measures would include:

- Designating eastbound bus stops along Squaw Valley Road (currently there are only westbound stops, making the shuttle unviable for residents);
- Real commitments to support, publicize, and subsidize regional transit for visitors and employees, such as free regional bus or train tickets packaged with lift tickets and hotel stays;
- Effective carpool incentives such as preferential and free carpool parking for visitors and employees, carpool casual carpool pickup spots in Truckee and Tahoe City, free overnight ski lockers, and publicity that encourages carpooling; and
- Charging for parking for day skiers to encourage carpooling and transit. To ensure that day skiers bear no additional cost associated with the paid parking, daily lift tickets and season passes should be reduced in price correspondingly.

I226-1  
cont.

This project does not have to increase traffic and make life worse for residents and visitors in the valley. Traffic-related impacts can and must be mitigated to less-than-significant levels by this DEIR, otherwise this DEIR is not adequate.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,  
Greg Riessen, PE

## Specific Comments on the DEIR

### No Net New Daily Vehicle Trips Policy

The DEIR determined the project’s vehicle trip generation and parking demand by simply collecting data at the existing resort and then projecting a proportional increase in cars. Not surprisingly, the DEIR identifies substantial traffic growth associated with the project, with traffic-related significant and unavoidable impacts to transportation, air quality, and noise.

I226-2

This approach erroneously equates car traffic to other environmental topics with rigid demand characteristics, like water consumption or stationary noise emissions. However in reality, cars are driven by people responding to the transportation choices available to them. If people are given options beyond driving, they may choose other ways to get around, especially when they are made aware of the costs of driving.

The traffic-related impacts identified as significant and unavoidable in the DEIR are in fact not; they can be completely mitigated by adopting a policy of No Net New Vehicle Trips on Squaw Valley Road. With no increase in traffic, these impacts would not materialize.

I226-3

Under this policy, phases of VSVSP development, including the first phase, could only be approved if the sponsor could demonstrate that overall traffic volumes with the added development would not increase above 2015 levels. To achieve this, the sponsor would have to successfully implement transit, carpool, and non-motorized traffic reduction strategies toward both existing traffic generators (e.g. day skiers) and also for the new development, which are described below. If the sponsor could not demonstrate this, then the project phase could not be approved.

Other pending development projects within the valley that are not associated with Squaw Valley Resort (e.g. Resort at Squaw Creek and Plumpjack) would also be subject to the policy. Traffic data would be collected year-round with a permanent traffic counter installed on Squaw Valley Road just west of the CA-89 intersection. A second counter would be installed on Squaw Creek Road just west of the Squaw Valley Road intersection. With these two traffic counters, the vehicle trip generation characteristics of these two major resort facilities within the valley could be isolated; traffic associated with smaller resort projects could also be isolated with driveway hose counters.

I226-4

The typical summer weekend and typical winter weekend daily traffic volumes along Squaw Valley Road have already been established in the DEIR, with the typical day selected using the procedure described in section 9.1.3. The ongoing traffic counters would be used in the future to determine the typical daily traffic volume at these locations, enabling volumes to be monitored over time. As volumes are observed to reduce due to new traffic reduction strategies, there would be the opportunity for new development to be approved.

A commitment to No Net New Vehicle Trips has been proven as an effective and feasible traffic mitigation measure in other California multi-phase development projects and in municipalities, including Stanford University and the University of Washington, and the cities of Santa Monica and Mountain View.

I226-5

Please revise the DEIR to include a policy of No Net New Vehicle Trips on Squaw Valley Road, and describe how it would mitigate the traffic-related impacts identified for congestion, noise and air quality (and also transit delay as described below) to a less-than-significant level.

**General**

What is the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) and where can it be reviewed? Is it a standalone document? Or is it the text beginning on page 9-36 of the DEIR? Or is it the text beginning on page 5-29 of the VSVSP, which has more elements than are described in the DEIR? Or is it the 3-lane cone protocol for Squaw Valley Road described on page 9-56 of the DEIR? How will the TMP be reviewed, approved, monitored and enforced, and what will be the opportunities for public input?

I226-6

What is the Parking Management Plan and where can it be reviewed? Page 8-3 of the VSVSP states it was completed in July 2014, while page 8-4 and 8-15 state that it will be completed for each phase of development. How will this plan be reviewed, approved, monitored and enforced, and what will be the opportunities for public input?

I226-7

**Pedestrian And Bicycle**

Existing Conditions

The DEIR fails to discuss existing bicycle and pedestrian safety issues around Squaw Valley Road and accessing the existing village. The current pathway terminates east of Christy Hill Road, dumping pedestrians and cyclists into the Christy Hill / Far East Road intersection. This intersection is very large, poorly defined, and with poor approaching visibility. These factors result in high vehicle speeds and hazardous conditions all roadway users. Southeast of this intersection, pedestrians and cyclists must maneuver across the surface parking lot, which is inhospitable both when the parking lot is full of cars and also when it is empty.

There is no discussion of vehicle speeds along the road, especially at the extra-wide segment between Squaw Creek Road and CA-89. According to the UC Berkeley Transportation Injury Mapping System (*tims.berkeley.edu*), there have been at least 26 vehicle collisions along Squaw Valley Road since 2004, with at least 8 involving a pedestrian or bicyclist.

Crossing Squaw Valley Road is challenging and hazardous because there are no marked crosswalks, vehicles proceed at high speeds, vehicle volumes are high, and many vehicles fail to yield to pedestrians. During the 3-lane cone operation, walking across Squaw Valley Road is extremely dangerous due to the “multiple threat” hazard where one traveling car obstructs the visibility between an adjacent car and a pedestrian. Squaw Valley Road is a barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists which prevents the full utilization of the existing pathway, especially for children, seniors, and pedestrians with limited vision, hearing and/or mobility, but the DEIR fails to acknowledge this situation.

I226-8

Along the road between Squaw Creek Road and CA-89, there are no pedestrian facilities and the striped bicycle lanes are faded away. Many pedestrians walk along the shoulders in this segment to access 7-11 and other retail near the CA-89 intersection (the existing pathway proceeds south of Squaw Valley Park, resulting in a circuitous route to 7-11). This is an unsafe place to walk or bicycle, especially during nighttime conditions. Page 9-11 of the DEIR notes that during heavy traffic periods, westbound cars informally form two rather than one westbound lanes (without cones), but the DEIR fails to acknowledge that this situation is hazardous for pedestrians and cyclists traveling along the shoulder.

Please correct the Existing Conditions analysis to describe these pedestrian and bicycle safety issues.



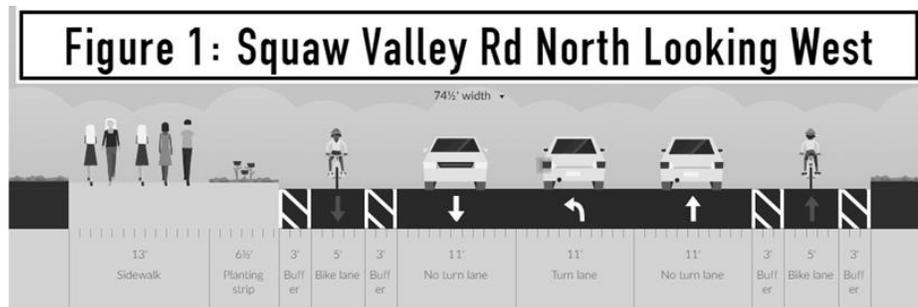
**Roadway Design**

VSVSP Policy CP-8 states: “In order to reinforce the pedestrian environment, vehicular travel lanes shall be the minimum width necessary to provide for safe pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular travel.” However the travel lanes on the roadway sections presented in the VSVSP are too wide, which will encourage excessive speed and traffic noise, and also degrade safety for all roadway users. The street sections should be amended as described below in order to not exacerbate the existing safety concerns regarding Squaw Valley Road.

**VSVSP Figure 5.6 – Section B of Squaw Valley Road north of the village**

This roadway is too wide and the pathway is too narrow. There needs to be at least 5’ of separation between the path and the curb per the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, 2012 Fourth Edition, section 5.2.2. Please see Figure 1 below for a safer street design that would fit within the proposed 74.5’ right of way.

1226-12

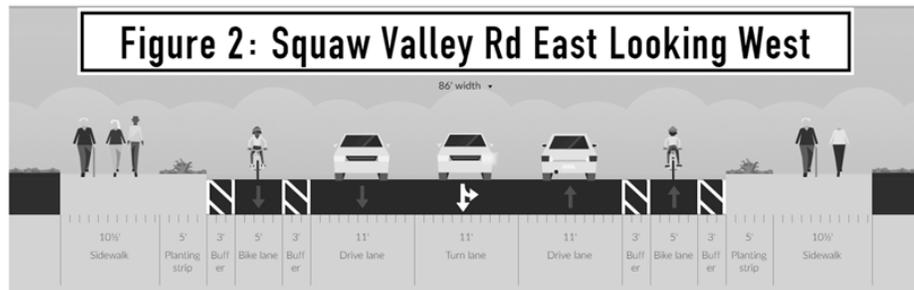


Please revise Section B to a more appropriate design as shown in Figure 1. Otherwise, the DEIR should identify a pedestrian and bicycle safety impact due to unsafe design.

**VSVSP Figure 5.15 – Section M of Squaw Valley Road at the East Parcel**

This five-lane roadway is excessively wide and would enable excessive speeds and traffic noise. There is no need for a westbound right-turn lane to enter the East Parcel parking facilities, because drivers would use the westbound bike lane to decelerate; provision of an unnecessary turn lane would promote excessive speed. As noted above, pedestrians are already observed walking along the north and south shoulders of Squaw Valley Road between Squaw Creek Road and CA-89, because this is the pedestrian access route to the 7-11 and other retail uses near the CA-89 intersection (the existing bike path proceeds south of Squaw Valley Park resulting in a circuitous route to 7-11). The East Parcel development will place many more residents at this location who will walk and bike to the 7-11, but these shoulders are not a safe place to walk. Therefore the sponsor should be required to extend the proposed sidewalk along the north side of Squaw Valley Road to the CA-89 intersection. Similarly, there needs to be a sidewalk along the south side, which will enable safe pedestrian access from existing residential development to the new East Parcel market via a new marked crosswalk. There is room to fit these elements within the proposed 86’ footprint, please see Figure 2 below.

I226-13



Please revise Section M to a more appropriate design as shown in Figure 2. Otherwise, the DEIR should identify a pedestrian and bicycle safety impact due to unsafe design.

**Intersection Design**

Crosswalks

The project would substantially increase traffic volumes along Squaw Valley Road, which would exacerbate the hazardous conditions and barrier effect of this facility on pedestrian and bicycle access. Given the existing pedestrian safety issues on Squaw Valley Road as described above, the DEIR should identify a pedestrian safety impact due to increased traffic volumes.

As a mitigation measure, the sponsor should be required to install high-visibility (i.e. Continental-style) marked crosswalks across Squaw Valley Road at all intersections: Chamonix Place, Christy Hill Road, Eric Road, Wayne Road, Russel Road, Victor Drive, Winding Creek Road, Indian Trail Road, Squaw Creek Road and at the East Parcel Market (these two crosswalks were already proposed by the project), and Creeks End Court.

At the locations where the pathway would cross Squaw Valley Road, these marked crosswalks should be supplemented with pushbutton-actuated flashing beacons. These crosswalks are at Chamonix Place, Village East Road, Christy Hill Road, and Squaw Creek Road. Unclear how to safely design Village East given proximity of bike path to intersection.

Please revise the DEIR to include as a pedestrian safety mitigation measure the installation of marked crosswalks, including flashing beacons, as described above.

I226-14