



mountain area preservation
ESTABLISHED IN 1987

MAP MISSION:

Our mission is to preserve the Truckee region's community character and the natural environment for present and future generations.

A grass-roots environmental advocacy non-profit working since 1987

STAFF:

Alexis A. Ollar, MS & GISP
Executive Director

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Development Director

June 27, 2017

Truckee Tahoe Airport Board
10356 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161

RE: Workforce Housing Agreement with Rick Lee

Dear Chair Wallace and fellow Board Members,

Mountain Area Preservation appreciates this opportunity to comment and share our thoughts on Rick Lee's housing project up for discussion and consideration on Wednesday, June 28. We applaud the commitment you are showing towards the housing crisis facing our region. This is not a new issue, nor is it one that will go away any time soon but every option is worth investigating and the Airport is on the right track.

We met with Rick Stephens a month ago to discuss this project and we have reviewed the staff report. While the intent of this project is commendable, we have concerns about the details and how it is being marketed to the Airport for financial support. The locals' restriction is a great concept and for at least 15 years it will hopefully ensure that people who work in the region will live in one of the units, as long as this is being monitored and implemented properly.

As this project is seeking public dollars to subsidize its construction, we feel the need to share our thoughts. In our opinion this is not an affordable/workforce housing project. Those terms are used for projects that either provide housing at a greatly reduced cost with state and federal subsidies or at are least reduced in such a way as to make it financially accessible to those in the workforce. This is often for those in public service fields of work, teachers, firefighters, police officers, etc. This project is neither of these and should not be marketed in this way. This is a locals' market rate housing project. At \$750 per bedroom, we are not sure who will be able to afford the rent. A small family could possibly afford the two bedroom at \$1500 per month, but the larger units of 3 or 4 bedrooms will be a stretch at \$2250-\$3000. To put it in perspective, there are a few 3 bedroom homes for rent today in Glenshire and Sierra Meadows that rent for \$2200-\$2800 per month. Our sense is that this is designed as a dormitory style housing project where the rooms will be separately rented out, possibly to two people per room in order to cover the rent.



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The staff report outlines a timeline of 15 years for the local deed restriction as well as the \$750 per bedroom rent, not including cost of living adjustments. Our concern with this is the loss of units that were intended to address a need, will now be part of the ski lease, non-local housing pool in just 15 years. Most projects that receive subsidies or community funding support are required to maintain affordability, or some deed restriction for between 35-99 years. Also there is no indication in the staff report or accessory documents outlining what happens if there are no locals who can afford the \$750 rent. Will the rent go down until the units are rented or will the project cry foul and become open to non-locals? These are questions that should be answered before the Airport Board commits any public funds to this project.

The concept of storage containers as a mechanism for building housing is appealing and we are excited to see this type of construction utilized as a way to bring housing costs down. We are concerned with the proposed phasing plan for the development as it outlines over 4 years for this project, with only one constructed unit in the first phase and not even on the main building site. This seems incongruous with the notion of modular building where it would make sense to build many units at once to streamline costs. We request the Airport Board consider this issue prior to any approvals and better understand the rationale behind such a long and spread out construction schedule.

While MAP believes this project has merits and the intent of bringing housing to the local workforce is laudable, there is still work to be done to better understand if the benefits of this project warrant public dollars. A precedent will be set by the Airport should you choose to move forward with a funding commitment to a project that has many unanswered questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and share our thoughts.

Sincerely,

Nikki Riley

Mountain Area Preservation

Development Director