



Martis Valley West is Bad Development

Stop Tahoe-Truckee Sprawl

The Lake Tahoe area, including its roadways and precious natural resources, is under immediate threat. Developers are preparing to break ground on Martis Valley West, a massive 20-year construction project that would replace pristine forest on Brockway Summit with 75-foot tall condos abutting the Tahoe Rim Trail and overlooking the lake. This shocking example of poor planning must be stopped.

Mountain Area Preservation (MAP) has partnered with the League to Save Lake Tahoe and Sierra Watch to file a lawsuit challenging the approval of Martis Valley West. MAP is in need of \$300,000 to fight this project that would change the character of our region forever.

Sprawl costs the U.S. economy roughly \$600 billion dollars a year in direct costs related to inefficient land usage and car dependency, with another \$400 billion in indirect costs due to traffic congestion, pollution and other factors. It's distressing that the world-renowned natural beauty and rural character of the Tahoe - Truckee region is threatened by this typically suburban problem.

This development will do irreparable damage to our beloved community:

8000+ additional vehicle trips will be added to our roadways

While the Placer County environmental review estimates 3,985 additional vehicle trips daily added to Lake Tahoe's existing traffic, independent reviewers from MRO Engineers have established that the real numbers are much worse: In reality, over 8000 additional vehicle trips could be added to North Lake Tahoe and Truckee roadways daily. As we saw this winter, our local roadways are already strained to the breaking point. That doesn't even consider construction of the development which will involve thousands of logging and construction equipment vehicles coming and going via one constricted intersection on Highway 267, impacting all traffic around Northstar and Truckee for the next 20 years.

"Knowing the Town of Truckee plans to maintain HWY 267 to 2 lanes in Nevada County, creating a four lane road from the Placer County Line to Brockway Summit is only going to create a funnel affect," said Placer County Planning Commission Member, Wayne Nader. "I'm troubled that ... this project is only compounding (an already serious) situation."

Save TAHOE

The development is in a high-severity fire danger zone

Should the unthinkable happen, the Martis Valley West development would be a severe liability for everyone trying to evacuate the Tahoe – Truckee area via Highway 267. According to independent reviewers, it would take more than three hours just to get everyone out of the development, and every one of those cars would be adding to the congestion on a critical escape route. Furthermore, the Martis Valley West site is located in steep, rugged and densely wooded terrain, making it an extremely dangerous place to be during a wildfire or other emergency.

“No evacuation ever goes textbook smooth,” said John McEldowney, Placer County Office of Emergency Services Program Manager. “In Tahoe, worst case scenario would be if we had to evacuate the entire basin on a holiday weekend. There is no question that would be a challenging thing for the entire first responder community to pull off.”

Lack of environmental protections will damage our air & water quality

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is charged with protecting Lake Tahoe from bad projects that would adversely impact either the Lake’s character or its legendary quality. Because Martis Valley West is located just outside of the TRPA’s jurisdiction, the developers would get the benefits of proximity to Tahoe without doing anything to care for it. While they claim that the project won’t drain towards the lake, that’s simply not true: Parts of the terrain will flow into Lake Tahoe, impacting water quality without consequences or oversight.

“The Martis (Valley West) proposal goes against all of the (TRPA’s 2012 Regional Plan Update) plan’s projections,” according to Darcie Goodman Collins, League to Save Lake Tahoe Executive Director. “If this project was proposed within the Tahoe Basin, the developers would not only have to resolve threats to the Lake, but would have to provide associated benefits for Tahoe.”

Light pollution will devastate our spectacular night skies

“The Stars Shine Brighter in Truckee” is a favorite local slogan, but the spectacle will no longer be as dramatic if 760 units, plus commercial buildings, light up one of the most prominent hillsides south of Truckee. Night photographers, stargazers and everyone who seeks solace in the peace of star-filled mountain evenings stands to lose one of the most cherished aspects of high mountain living should Martis Valley West be built.

The Claimed “Biological Improvements” Are a Lie

Martis Valley West’s developers have made a big deal out of the land swap that preserves the east side of the valley while opening up a parcel on the west side. In fact, the so-called “preserved” land will continue to be logged and animal habitats



on both sides of the valley will be disrupted. You can forget about public access as well. There is no deal for the land trust organizations to purchase, protect and make publicly available the east side of the property. Meanwhile, the Brockway Parcel portion of the property is subject to yet another development proposal.

Martis Valley West Faces Widespread Opposition

The Martis Valley West proposal has drawn large-scale public opposition, including from California's Attorney General, numerous environmental organizations, and hundreds of community members who have signed petitions, written over 150 comment letters, and made over 90 public hearing comments addressing numerous environmental and public safety concerns. In light of the public outcry, the Placer County Planning Commission recommended the denial of the project.

Unfortunately, this strong local opposition was ignored by the Placer County Board of Supervisors, who voted four-to-one in favor of the project (Tellingly, the lone board member who voted against the development, Supervisor Montgomery, is the only member who represents the Tahoe – Truckee portion of the county. Board members who represent Roseville, Rocklin and Auburn, and are therefore out of step with the local community, cast the votes in favor of the development).

Mountainside Partners would like you to believe that this project was the result of collaboration between developers and environmental organizations and community interests. In reality, Mountainside Partners and landowner, Sierra Pacific Industries, have shown no interest in compromise and have thwarted efforts at constructive dialog while drawing attention away from the project's many serious issues.

Mountain Area Preservation, Sierra Watch and The League to Save Lake Tahoe would prefer to negotiate a fair compromise, and our track record supports this, but Mountainside Partners have forced our hand and we cannot allow this destructive proposal to move forward. We need your help now to fight the biggest fight we have fought in over 10 years.

Sprawl harms us all. Let's stop it before it's too late!



Good Development vs. Bad Development

Thoughtful development enhances communities. Bad development pulls them apart. It's useful to compare Martis Valley West to another major new project: The Truckee Railyard Project, which is an excellent example of how good development can positively impact a community.

Truckee RailYard

Martis Valley West

<p><i>Infill and Redevelopment:</i> The Railyard Project takes advantage of under-utilized space directly adjacent to Truckee's existing historic downtown. The development will expand and enhance the existing downtown experience, not compete against it. Furthermore, its proximity means the project can utilize existing infrastructure including roads, electricity, water, etc.</p>	<p><i>Sprawl:</i> Martis Valley West would be situated on undeveloped acreage in steep, pristine forested land that is not adjacent to any existing development. All infrastructure – roads, power, water, etc – will need to be built.</p>
<p><i>Accessibility:</i> The Railyard is situated along existing walking and biking trails that extend throughout the North Lake Tahoe – Truckee region. In addition, the site is adjacent to mass transit in Downtown Truckee.</p>	<p><i>Car-only access:</i> Martis Valley West is not near any local transit hubs, so there's little way to mitigate the significant traffic impacts of travel to and from the location.</p>
<p><i>Community Buy-in:</i> The Truckee Railyard developers worked closely with local government and community representatives to shape a compelling vision with input from all.</p>	<p><i>Community Opposition:</i> Martis Valley West has been opposed by most local community groups from the outset, and huge numbers of locals have added their voice to the opposition by signing our petition (link), donating to our litigation fund (link) and appearing at public hearings.</p>
<p><i>Mix Use and Mixed Housing:</i> By including different types of housing – including low-income units – the Railyard Project helps address a severe shortage in affordable housing for the local workforce. The project also blends retail, community and residential uses in ways that will encourage vibrant, active spaces that will extend and enhance the existing downtown scene.</p>	<p><i>Gated Community:</i> Unlike mixed use developments that support our community, Martis Valley West would be a gated community of high-end expensive second homes with limited employee housing.</p>
<p><i>Flat Site:</i> The Railyard project is situated on level, treeless ground perfectly suited for a high-density, walkable project. New buildings and landscaping will dramatically enhance the existing site and surrounding downtown area.</p>	<p><i>Steep Topography:</i> The proposed Martis Valley West site is in densely forested, steep terrain. Access to the development would be via a single steep road that could be difficult to navigate during winter weather events, and it would take over three hours just to evacuate the development itself during an emergency.</p>