

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Village at Palisades Tahoe Specific Plan Moves Ahead with Release of Final EIR**

*Plan approval would define land use regulations and roadmap future development in Olympic Valley; new studies and analysis address court and public concerns*

**OLYMPIC VALLEY, Calif. (Aug. 6, 2024)** - The Village at Palisades Tahoe Specific Plan is moving ahead in the process to pursue re-approval following Placer County's release of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). County staff and their environmental consultants have provided more information and completed additional studies and analysis to address questions raised both by the appellate court and the public.

"We are confident that the thorough assessment of this project will satisfy the concerns the appellate court raised, and allow for the plan's re-approval when it goes back before the Placer County Board of Supervisors later this year," said Dee Byrne, Palisades Tahoe president and COO. "It's time for this plan to move forward. For our community and our resort, the cost of doing nothing is significant. We've long been in need of workforce housing, more visitor accommodations in the valley, structured parking for day skiers, and a plan that will generate significant funding for in-valley and regional infrastructure projects that can have a positive impact on us all. This is that plan."

Should the Placer County Board of Supervisors vote to approve the Village Specific Plan, it would not result in immediate construction or the end of the public process. Approval would modify the existing land use designations and zoning, resulting in 58% fewer beds than allowed under the current zoning for Olympic Valley, restrict building heights and setbacks, allow the resort to submit project-specific applications to build on-site workforce housing for up to 300 employees, and more than double the acres of land placed into conservation preservation.

In relation to the five topics the court requested further information regarding, the FEIR concludes:

**Even at full build-out, on average, the Village Specific Plan's water needs represent less than 1% of the total watershed.** Additionally, a water supply analysis completed by the Olympic Valley Public Services District (OVPSD) for the period of 2016-2021 also showed that the water supply replenished itself year-over-year, even during drought years, and is not impacted by what may be occurring in the nearby Truckee River, which is located downstream.

According to Kat Smolen, hydrologist at Hydro Restoration and OVPSD board member, "the OVPSD completed its third quinquennial groundwater assessment for Water Years 2016-2021 to document the status of the groundwater management activities in the Olympic Valley Basin. Hydrologic data shows there is little change in the quantity of water pumped or the ability of the aquifer to fully recover each winter/spring. Further, the Olympic Valley Basin is functioning as expected, and there were no significant changes observed in the aquifer over the 2016 through 2021 Water Year."

Plan approval does not preclude additional water supply evaluation and ongoing confirmation and assessment of an adequate water supply for the valley. A Will Serve Letter from the OVPSD will be required before building permits are issued. This requirement will exist each time a request to proceed on a project within the plan is pursued. The resort is also required to enter into a Development Agreement with the OVPSD that will require test wells and monitoring of wells prior to bringing them online as an additional measure to ensure water supply continues to meet both existing and future consumer demand.

**The plan creates in-valley workforce housing and more lodging for overnight guests to stay in the Valley, reducing trips into and out of the Valley.** It also includes over 450 new employee parking spaces, maintains all existing day skier parking within new parking structures, provides underground parking for overnight guests, and generates millions of dollars for regional transit solutions.

In the meantime, the resort remains engaged and committed to aiding in solutions to the region's long-standing traffic problem. Implementation of the parking reservation program for all resort guests on weekends and holidays, the resort's expanded investment in regional Park & Ride options, and its employee carpool program have all proven successful. The resort will also continue to contribute funding for regional transportation initiatives and maintain its other efforts to reduce the occurrence of gridlock on SR89.

**The FEIR's analysis shows that increased traffic from the project into the Tahoe Basin will not have a significant impact on air or water quality in the Basin.** Nonetheless, Palisades Tahoe has agreed to pay \$2 million into a restricted fund held by TRPA at the time of building permits for future lodging developed under the Village at Palisades Tahoe Specific Plan. In a letter to Placer County that can be found in the FEIR, TRPA said "this amount is a reasonable estimate of mitigation fees that would be required for a similar in-basin project," and that the organization "appreciates the funding mechanism Palisades Tahoe has committed to in consultation with all parties and recognizes that the resulting funds will benefit both the Basin and the surrounding region."

**The FEIR provides further explanation showing how construction noise will attenuate after 50 feet, and additional mitigation to address noise from construction activities.** Importantly,

construction will be intermittent during the years of Specific Plan implementation, as construction will ebb and flow with development approvals and the economy. The “25 years of construction” is a study period and was never meant to represent 25 years of continuous noise and construction.

**New studies and training exercises have been conducted by regional and state agencies related to wildfire and evacuation.** CalFire officials recently said that Olympic Valley [“is a good example of an area that could provide temporary refuge, or safe refuge if the decision is made to shelter-in-place versus evacuating.”](#) They also reported that the North Lake Tahoe region has multi-layered options for the protection of citizens, including controlling traffic with multi-lane options on regional roadways to safely get people out, and several “safe refuge” options in resort communities and other locations throughout the region should they be needed during an emergency event.

In addition, the plan will reduce emergency response times and includes construction standards for hardening structures against fire, additional fuels management, and education. The Village Specific Plan also includes a new fire station in the west end of the Valley, new response vehicles, the hiring of six additional full-time firefighters, and a robust Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan (EPEP) that was created in coordination with local authorities.

“What many people don’t realize is that as it relates to wildfire preparedness, Palisades Tahoe already has a dedicated trail crew of 20-25 employees with an annual budget of approximately \$1,000,000 to manage vegetation between May and October within the resort boundary. This work has been ongoing and annual for over 10 years and will not only continue, but be expanded with this plan’s approval and additional funding,” continued Byrne.

The Village Specific Plan reflects significant public input gathered during over 300 community meetings and participation in the process by more than 5,000 interested individuals. The plan, which would be built almost entirely on existing asphalt parking lots and other disturbed areas, proposes up to 850 lodging units, including a mixture of hotel, condo hotel, fractional ownership, and timeshare units. It also includes new, dedicated on-site workforce housing that will house 300 employees, over 450 new employee parking spaces, new parking structures that will maintain all existing day skier parking spaces, restoration of Washeshu Creek, approximately \$5 million to support parks and recreation in Olympic Valley, and an additional \$7 million in TOT revenue to contribute to regional workforce housing, transportation, tourism mitigation, and other regional priorities.

Get the facts about the Village at Palisades Tahoe Specific Plan and updated studies and analysis included in the FEIR at [future.palisadestahoe.com](http://future.palisadestahoe.com).

*Video: “Unified Command” presentation begins at 1:10:58 in the video (quote topic video timestamp related to “temporary and safe refuge areas” starts at 2:08:46)*

*Video: Evacuation routes and controlling traffic discussion about multi-lane usage of roadways begins at 1:51 in the video.*

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### **About Palisades Tahoe**

Voted by the Wall Street Journal as the best ski resort in the United States, Palisades Tahoe is Lake Tahoe's largest premier resort destination spanning 6,000 skiable acres across eight peaks, now linked by the Base to Base Gondola. Hosting the 1960 Winter Olympics and housing esteemed Olympic and World Cup athletes, the resort enjoys an average annual snowfall of 400 inches, boasting Lake Tahoe's longest season. Referred to as the Spring Skiing Capital®, the resort offers skiing and riding through Memorial Day. The Village at Palisades Tahoe hosts year-round events, entertainment, and a plethora of bars, restaurants, and boutiques. Ski at Palisades Tahoe like never before with the Ikon Pass, granting access to 50+ top ski destinations. Visit the [website](#) or call 1.800.403.0206 to learn more. You can also visit on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Vimeo](#).

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