

Letter to the Editor: Community's railyard plan approved

Darin Dinsmore APA Regional Planning Partners

Tues, August 13, 2009

<http://www.sierrasun.com/article/20090813/OPINION/908139995&parentprofile=search>

The approved Railyard master plan is the community's plan that was shaped with input from hundreds of participants through an extensive public process. The plan was developed over a multi-year process that engaged the community, neighbors, stakeholders and dozens of design professionals and experts.

The plan and process was awarded grant funding to be a model sustainable infill project for the State and most recently and American Planning Association Award for Comprehensive Planning.

Creating a redevelopment plan for the Railyard was a complex process that involved more than three years of study, analysis and design. The road alignment as proposed is a key element in creating one downtown that is connected together as a whole and that will evolve over time toward the east. After working on this plan for many years, I believe this is the best plan for the downtown that implements the vision set forth in the Downtown Specific Plan.

During past workshops, four planning concepts were supported and confirmed:

- 1) Create a pedestrian friendly and walkable extension to the existing downtown;
- 2) The visual and physical link between the existing downtown and the railyard is critical to the success of creating and supporting mainstreet;
- 3) The project needs to provide accessible parking and create a "park once environment";
- 4) Public safety is important to the Town of Truckee. Squaring the intersection at Church Street and the new Donner Pass Road Extension will improve turning movements, reduce the design speed of the road, and improve safety for both automobiles and pedestrians.

Following many years of work and the unanimous approval from both the Planning Commission and Town Council there is a group proposing an alternative to the traffic circulation plan.

The development of the alternate circulation plan featured in an advertisement in the Aug. 5 edition of the Sierra Sun did not take into consideration many factors including:

- the public process, and approved design principles for the plan;
- existing grades and vegetation;
- property ownership and phasing; and
- Trout Creek crossing location environmental impacts.

The plan as approved was development through an open and transparent process with the best experts in their fields and represents the best plan for the Railyard and the downtown. This is an opportunity to reinvest in our downtown, improve our community, and to create new jobs.