



To: Town of Truckee Planning Commission

From: Laura Dabe, Senior Planner

RE: Planning Application #2025-00000002 (High Altitude Fitness Project Amendment); 11798 Donner Pass Road (APN 018-800-009); Applicant/Owner: Jason Burd/JB Northwood LLC; Agent: Martin Wood, SCO Planning and Engineering

Approved by: Denyelle Nishimori, Community Development Director

Recommended Action: That the Planning Commission adopt Resolution 2026-09, taking the following actions:

- 1) Determining the project to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines (Existing Facilities); and
- 2) Approving amendments to the previously approved High Altitude Fitness project to allow construction of 15 additional parking spaces, based on the recommended findings and subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Project Summary: The applicant is requesting approval of amendments to the High Altitude Fitness project located at 11798 Donner Pass Road (APN 018-800-009). The Planning Commission approved the project on April 17, 2018 (Town of Truckee Application #2017-00000157/DP-SP; Commission Resolution 2018-07) and adopted an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (State Clearinghouse #2018032044). Modifications to the project were approved by the Planning Commission on July 17, 2018 (Town of Truckee Application #2018-00000094/AMD; Commission Resolution 2018-13). Construction of the 25,156 square foot climbing gym and 106 parking spaces was completed in 2021. The applicant is requesting Project Amendment approval to construct 15 additional parking spaces on the project site pursuant to Development Code Section 18.48.040.E (Excessive parking), which states that the review authority for a project may approve up to a 20 percent increase to the number of required parking spaces when additional landscaping and pedestrian improvements are provided.

Planning Commission's Role: Development Code Section 18.84.070 (Changes to an Approved Project) states that major changes to an approved project shall only be authorized by the original review authority for the project. The Planning Commission was the original review authority for the High Altitude Fitness Project; therefore, the Commission is the review authority for the requested project amendments.

Location/Setting: Location/Setting: The project site is located at the intersection of Donner Pass Road and Northwoods Boulevard, behind the Dickson Realty building (11798 Donner Pass Road; APN 018-800-009). The 6.98-acre project site is located in the CMU (Corridor Mixed Use) zoning district. The project location is shown in Figure 1 below:



Figure 1: Project Location

Project Site Information:

General Plan Designation: Corridor Mixed Use
Zoning District: CMU (Corridor Mixed Use)
Parcel Size: 6.98 acres
Utilities: Public sewer and water

Discussion/Analysis:

Background

On April 17, 2018, the Planning Commission approved a Development Permit and Sign Plan for the High Altitude Fitness Gym project and adopted an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project (Town of Truckee Application #2017-00000157/DP-SP; Commission Resolution 2018-07). The approved project featured a two-story building with 27,500 square feet of floor area and 119 parking spaces. The applicant proposed to share parking and a main site entrance with the Dickson Realty building at the corner of Donner Pass Road and Northwoods Boulevard. The existing driveway on Donner Pass Road was proposed to be shifted to the east and the current driveway abandoned, revegetated and frontage improvements installed. Secondary two-way access off Northwoods Boulevard was also proposed. The approval specified that if the residential component of the project was developed in the future (on the parcel donated to the Town for the



Figure 2: Rendering from April 2018 Approval

purpose of constructing future affordable housing units), that project could include access off Edmunds Drive. A pedestrian trail providing access to Edmunds Drive through the project site was also approved. (See Attachment #4 for links to the April 17, 2018 Commission meeting documents.)

Minor changes to the project design (including modifications to the height, floor plan and elevations) were approved by the Community Development Director on May 15, 2018 under Development Code Section 18.84.070 (Changes to an Approved Project), which states that the Director may approve minor changes to a site plan, architecture, or nature of an approved use.

In June 2018, the applicant team submitted a request for additional changes to the approved project, which included: 1) A reduction in the gross floor area of the building to 26,520 square feet, which reduced the parking demand for the project to 106 spaces; 2) A reduction in the approved number of parking spaces from 119 spaces to 106 spaces; and 3) Removal of the pedestrian trail that was required for the approval of excess parking in the original project approval. Due to the fact that the pedestrian trail was a specific project feature that was considered by the Planning Commission in taking action in the approval of the land use permits for the project, staff determined that removal of this feature was a major change to the approved project and that review by the Commission was required. The proposed changes were reviewed and approved by the Commission on July 17, 2018 (Town of Truckee Application #2018-00000094; Commission Resolution 2018-13). (See Attachment #5 for links to the July 17, 2018 Commission meeting documents.)

Construction of the climbing gym facility and 106 parking spaces was completed under Building Permit #2019-00000216, which was completed on August 31, 2021. Through the building permit process, the size of the building was revised, with a decrease in floor area from 26,520 square feet to 25,156 square feet (a reduction of 1,364 square feet).



Figure 3: Image of Constructed Project

Project Description

After operating the climbing gym facility since 2021, the applicant has identified a need for additional parking to support the business. The Project Amendment application was submitted to request a parking increase by the Planning Commission pursuant to Development Code Section 18.48.040.E (Excessive parking), which states that the review authority for a project may approve up to a 20 percent increase in the number of required parking spaces when additional landscaping and pedestrian improvements are provided.

As noted above, the Planning Commission approved excess parking as part of the original project approval; however, the amount of required parking was later reduced through the Project Amendment process, when the building size and amount of required parking were reduced and the pedestrian trail was removed from the project scope. The pedestrian trail was originally proposed to provide access to the project site from the property on Edmunds Drive, which at the time was owned by the applicant. The Edmunds Drive parcel was subsequently donated to the Town of Truckee, and an affordable housing project (Edmunds Lofts) was approved on the site by the Planning Commission on July 29, 2025 (Town of Truckee Application #2025-00000087; Commission Resolution 2025-11).

As part of the current request, the applicant has requested a new approval for excess parking to allow construction of 15 additional parking spaces on the project site. The applicant's justification letter states that with the success of the business, parking has been found to be deficient and a limiting factor to the full utilization of the classes and peak period usage by the gym's members. The letter identifies that the proposed parking spaces are configured in the northeasterly corner of the existing site, similar to the originally approved project, and that two outdoor tables with soft surfaced paths have been integrated into the landscaping as a pedestrian element for use by patrons of the club or employees of the business. The applicant believes that this project amendment request is necessary to the continued long-term success of the business and its ability to meet the needs of its members. (See Attachment #2 for the applicant justification letter.)

Land Use Approvals

Development Code Section 18.84.070 (Changes to an Approved Project) states that major changes to an approved project shall only be authorized by the original review authority for the project. A major change includes modifications to any feature of the project that was a basis for conditions of approval for the project or that was a specific consideration by the review authority in taking action in the approval of the land use permits for the project. The Planning Commission reviewed and approved the High Altitude Fitness Gym project in April 2018 and is therefore the review authority for proposed changes to the conditions of approval for the project. The Commission may approve the amendments to the approved land use entitlements, with or without conditions, only if all the required findings can be made. Draft Resolution 2026-09 (Attachment #1) includes a set of recommended findings in support of the amendments to the approved project.

General Plan and Specific Plan Consistency

The High Altitude Fitness project was approved under the 2025 General Plan. On May 9, 2023, the 2040 General Plan was adopted. Staff reviewed the Project Amendment application for consistency with the current General Plan policies and standards, as discussed below.

At that time of project approval, the land use designation of the project site was Commercial. With adoption of the 2040 General Plan, the land use designation was changed to Corridor Mixed Use. This designation allows a range of uses, including multifamily residential, retail, office, service commercial, and public uses. The designation identifies that buildings should be oriented toward the street, and parking should be provided in the rear or on the side of the building to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Horizontal and vertical mixed-use development is allowed; stand-alone residential is not

permitted. The allowed density is 6-18 dwelling units per acre and the maximum allowed floor area ratio (FAR) is 1.0.

In addition to encouraging a diverse range of uses in the Gateway area, including commercial and public uses, the 2040 General Plan also includes policies related to accommodating recreational uses. One of the guiding principles of the Conservation and Open Space Element is to “ensure the availability of a diverse range of recreational opportunities for Truckee’s existing and future population.” While many of the policies in the General Plan focus on outdoor recreation opportunities and public recreational facilities, an indoor climbing gym is another type of recreational facility that provides recreational opportunities to the community.

It is staff’s opinion that the project is consistent with the intent of the Corridor Mixed Use land use designation to provide a variety of uses in the Gateway area, as well as the policies related to supporting a diverse range of recreational uses, and that the required findings to approve the project related to General Plan consistency can be made.

Development Code Consistency

At the time of project approval, the zoning of the project site was CG (General Commercial). Following adoption of the 2040 General Plan, the zoning of the project site was changed to CMU (Corridor Mixed Use). The Development Code has been amended a number of times following approval of the original project in 2018. Staff reviewed the Project Amendment application for consistency with the Development Code standards that were in place at the time that the project was deemed complete for processing on December 22, 2025, including the CMU zoning district standards, and has determined that the code updates do not necessitate any changes to the project conditions of approval, except as discussed below.

Parking

The original project proposed a total of 119 parking spaces, including five ADA-accessible spaces, six electric vehicle charging spaces, nine compact spaces and 98 standard spaces. Under Development Code Chapter 18.48 (Parking and Loading Standards), the parking demand for a health/fitness facility is one space per 250 square feet of gross floor area. Based on the building square footage of 27,500 square feet, a total of 110 spaces were required for the project; therefore, the applicant requested nine excess spaces as part of the original approval.

Under Development Code Section 18.48.040.E (Excessive Parking), off-street parking spaces in excess of the standards may be approved only in conjunction with a land use permit, and when additional landscaping and pedestrian improvements are provided. The review authority may allow up to 20 percent more spaces than otherwise required. With the original project, staff determined that the proposed landscaping exceeded the minimum requirements for landscaping required under Development Code Chapter 18.40 (Landscape Standards). To address the required pedestrian improvements, the applicant proposed to add pedestrian trails through the project site to Edmunds Drive. Based on these additional benefits provided by the project, the Commission approved the excess parking of nine additional spaces.

Following the project approval, the applicant team reconsidered the need for additional parking for the project. A reduction in the building square footage to 26,520 square feet reduced the required parking demand to 106 spaces, which the applicant team determined to be sufficient for the project. Due to the fact that excess parking was no longer proposed, staff determined that the additional landscaping and pedestrian improvements were no longer required because the applicant was proposing to meet the parking demand for the project without excess parking. The Commission approved the amendments in July 2018 to reduce the building size, reduce the amount of required parking, and remove the pedestrian trail from the project.

As noted above, the building size was further reduced through the building permit process. Based on the constructed floor area of 25,156 square feet and parking demand of one space per 250 square feet of floor area, the following parking demand calculations apply to the project:

- **Existing Parking Demand:** $25,156 / 250 = 101$ spaces.
- **Excess Parking Calculation:** A 20% increase in the number of parking spaces would allow 20 additional parking spaces (101×0.20).
- **Existing Excess Parking:** A total of 106 parking spaces were approved by the Planning Commission in July 2018 based on the originally proposed building size. These spaces have been constructed. Therefore, the project has existing excess parking of **5 spaces** (106 existing spaces - 101 spaces based on existing parking demand).
- **Additional Parking Allowed:** Based on the above information, the number of additional parking spaces that could be constructed with a 20% increase is **15 additional spaces** (20 additional spaces allowed - 5 excess spaces already constructed).

Through the current Project Amendment application, the applicant team is requesting approval to construct 15 additional parking spaces on the project site (11 standard spaces, three compact spaces and one ADA space). The spaces are proposed to be located behind the existing building and to the rear of the current parking lot on the east side of the project site. Additional landscaping is proposed, along with seating areas with picnic tables for use by staff and guests of the project. The proposed layout of the additional parking, landscaping and seating areas is shown below in Figure 4 (for a full-size set of the proposed plans, see Attachment #1, Exhibit B):



Figure 4: Proposed Layout of Additional Parking and Landscaping

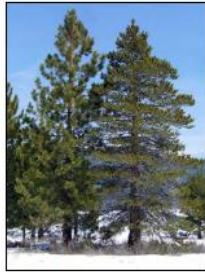
Landscaping

The applicant provided a landscape plan (see Attachment #1, Exhibit B) proposing additional landscaping as part of the proposed site improvements. The plans include the plant mix shown below:

TREES



CRAB APPLE



PINE TREE



BLUE SPRUCE

SHRUBS/ PERENNIALS



WESTERN COLUMBINE



SIERRA CURRENT



SULPHUR FLOWER BUCKWHEAT



SHASTA DAISY



LAVENDER



MOUNTAIN SPIREA



MULES EAR

Figure 5: Proposed Plants

If the Commission determines that the additional landscaping is adequate to meet the requirements of Section 18.48.040.E, staff recommends Condition of Approval #5 requiring review and approval of a final landscape plan prior to grading permit issuance, and the installation of the landscaping in compliance with the approved plan prior to permit final.

Pedestrian Access

Development Code Section 18.50.060 (Pedestrian Connections) states that pedestrian and bicycle access should be designed to physically and visually link the site to the public sidewalk and bikeway system, and provision should be made for direct pedestrian links between the project and adjoining projects and residential areas, whenever appropriate.

As part of the approved conditions of approval, the applicant was required to construct frontage improvements, including a minimum eight-foot-wide sidewalk along the Donner Pass Road project frontage and on Northwoods Boulevard. In addition, a pedestrian connection between the proposed buildings and public sidewalks was required. The original site plan showed pedestrian access throughout the project site, including around the building and between the building and public sidewalks on Donner

Pass Road and Northwoods Boulevard. Access to the adjacent commercial businesses in the Dickson Realty building was proposed through the shared parking and pedestrian facilities.

In addition to these required pedestrian improvements, the originally approved pedestrian trail also provided access to the neighboring Donner Trail subdivision, a connection that was no longer provided once the trail was removed from the project scope. When the 2018 Project Amendment was reviewed by the Commission, staff noted that while removal of the trail would reduce the connectivity between the project site and adjacent residential neighborhood, the required frontage improvements still provided pedestrian access between the project site and adjacent commercial business, as well as connections to the Donner Pass Road and Northwoods Boulevard public rights-of-way, consistent with the Development Code requirements. Additionally, it was noted that removing the pedestrian trail would potentially help address concerns raised by a neighboring property owner regarding the location of the pedestrian trail in relation to a developed residential property adjacent to the project site.

In staff's opinion, the previously approved frontage improvements and other pedestrian walkways within the site, including access to the adjacent commercial businesses and public rights-of-way, were sufficient to ensure that the project met the minimum Development Code requirements for pedestrian access. While the pedestrian trail provided an additional pedestrian benefit, in staff's opinion it was not necessary in order for the project to remain in compliance with the Development Code.

The currently proposed landscape plan identifies two new decomposed granite paths that provide access to seating areas within the new landscape area adjacent to the proposed parking. If the Commission determines that the proposed pedestrian improvements are sufficient to meet the requirements of Section 18.48.040.E, staff recommends Condition of Approval #2.B documenting the parking requirements for the projects and the approval of excess parking to construct 15 additional parking spaces.

Hillside Development

The project site includes steep slopes at the rear of the project site, including slopes between 20-30% and slopes over 30%. Disturbance of slope areas over 20% would require approval of a Use Permit by the Planning Commission and compliance with the Town's Hillside Development Standards (Chapter 18.36), and disturbance of slopes over 30% is prohibited. The applicant team included a slope analysis as part of the site plan (see Attachment #1, Exhibit B) to demonstrate that the additional parking area will not disturb any steep slopes on the site. Therefore, approval of a Use Permit is not required.

Bicycle Parking

Under the Development Code standards that were in place when the original project was approved, the project was required to provide a total of six bicycle parking spaces. Current Development Code standards for bicycle parking require non-residential projects to provide bicycle parking spaces at a rate of 15 percent of the number of vehicle parking spaces required under Development Code Section 18.48.040 (Number of Parking Spaces Required), with a minimum of three parking spaces required in all cases. Under the current standard, a total of 15 bicycle parking spaces is required ($25,156 / 250 = 101$ spaces $\times 15\% = 15.15$, rounded down to next whole number per Development Code Section 18.03.020.C). Staff recommends Condition of Approval #2.C, requiring an additional nine bicycle parking spaces to be provided for the project.

Snow Storage

As part of the proposed parking area, the applicant team has prepared an updated snow storage plan. Development Code Section 18.30.130 states that in areas with a snow load less than 200 pounds per square foot, the required snow storage area shall equal at least 50 percent of the total parking and driveway area, and at least half of the required snow storage area must be provided onsite. With 45,630 square feet of vehicle parking and maneuvering area, at least 22,815 square feet of snow storage area

is required (45,630 x 50%). The applicant is proposing 22,966 square feet of snow storage area (50.3%). The Engineering Division reviewed the snow storage plan as part of the project routing and provided feedback to the applicant team on revisions that were required, which the applicant addressed with a revised submittal in March 2026. The Engineering Division provided condition language requiring final review and approval of the snow removal/storage plan prior to grading permit issuance, which is included in the draft resolution as Condition of Approval #9.

Site Design

Development Code Table 2-11 (Mixed Use District General Development Standards) provides standards for site coverage in the CMU (Corridor Mixed Use) zoning district. Table 1 below summarizes these standards as they relate to the proposed project modifications:

	Development Standard	Proposed	Consistent?
Floor Area Ratio	Maximum 1.0	0.083	Yes
Site Coverage	Maximum 70%	23.3% (70,878 sf)	
Height	50 feet or 3 stories, whichever is less	43'10" average	Yes
Landscaping	As required by Chapter 18.40 (Landscaping Standards)	Additional proposed for excess parking approval	Yes
Parking	101 spaces required (25,156 / 250); 20 excess parking spaces allowed (101 x 20%) with PC approval	121 spaces	Yes, with Commission approval
Snow Storage	50% of vehicle parking and maneuvering areas (50% x 45,630 sf = 22,815 sf)	50.3% (22,966 sf)	Yes

Tables 2 below provides a summary of the project iterations, including the original project approval, the 2018 Project Amendment approval, and the constructed project square footages:

	April 2018 – Approved	June 2018 – Approved	May 2026 – Constructed
Parcel Size	6.98 acres (304,049 sf)		
Building Footprint	16,120 sf	16,095 sf	16,210 sf
Total Square Feet	27,500 sf	26,520 sf	25,156 sf

With the current Project Amendment application, the applicant proposes the following modifications as noted in the site statistics table on the site plan:

LAND USE & PARKING STATISTICS									
LAND AREA							PARKING		
EXISTING			PROPOSED						
	Sq. Ft.	Acres	%	Sq. Ft.	Acres	%		Existing	Proposed
Bldg Footprint	16,210	0.37	5.1	16,210	0.37	5.1	ADA	4	5
AC Parking Lot	40,645	0.93	12.8	44,208	1.01	13.9	EV /VAN	9	9
Concrete/Pavers	10,350	0.24	3.2	10,460	0.24	3.3	Standard	83	94
Landscape/OS	250,913	5.76	78.9	247,240	5.68	77.7	Compact	10	13
TOTAL	318,118	7.30	100	318,118	7.30	100	TOTAL	106	121

Staff has determined that the Project Amendment complies with the Development Code development standards for the CMU (Corridor Mixed Use) zoning district as discussed above. In staff's opinion, with incorporation of the recommended conditions of approval, the project remains in compliance with the Development Code and the required findings to approve the Project Amendment related to Development Code consistency can be made.

Special Districts and Utilities

All applicable special districts, utility companies, and Town departments with an interest in this application have been notified. No objections were filed and all conditions of approval have been incorporated. The Nevada County Environmental Health Department (NCEHD) noted in its comment letter that the originally approved project plans identified a food service area which had not been subsequently permitted by NCEHD; however, the applicant clarified that the food service area was not included in the constructed project. The project will be required to be in compliance with all utility and special agency requirements. Copies of all agency comment letters are included as Attachment #3.

Environmental Review: An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted for the High Altitude Fitness Development Permit and Sign Plan (State Clearinghouse #2018032044). It is staff's opinion that the mitigation measures developed for the project are adequate in meeting the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as well as the goals and policies of the General Plan. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission find the Project Amendment exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines (Existing Facilities), which applies to projects with negligible or no expansion of the former use. Staff has determined that the project qualifies for this exemption due to the fact that the construction of additional parking spaces represents a negligible expansion of the former use.

Public Communication: The public hearing notice was published in the *Sierra Sun* on May 8, 2026, and mailed on to all affected property owners within 500 feet of the project site as shown on the latest current tax roll of Nevada County. The applicant posted an onsite sign indicating a notice of application, and information was posted about the date and time of the public hearing. As of the date of publication of this staff report, no public comment has been received on the application.

Staff Summary and Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the requested amendments to the High Altitude Fitness project as described in this staff report. These amendments would allow for the construction of 15 additional parking spaces for the project, along with additional landscaping and pedestrian improvements, consistent with the requirements of Development Code Section 18.48.040.E (Excessive Parking). The proposed amendments are consistent with the previous approvals and do not create any new potential compatibility issues or environmental impacts. All relevant conditions of approval from the previous approval have been incorporated into Draft Planning Commission Resolution 2026-09,

and new or revised conditions of approval have been proposed to address any standards that have been amended since the time of the previous project approvals to ensure the project's ongoing consistency with Town standards, including the 2040 General Plan and Development Code. With incorporation of the recommended conditions of approval, it is staff's opinion that the required findings to approve the Project Amendment can be made.

Alternative Actions: Other actions that the Planning Commission may take as an alternative to the recommended action include:

1. Continue the public hearing to a date and time certain. The Planning Commission may request additional information from the applicant and/or staff. (If new information is presented at the next meeting, the public portion of the hearing must be reopened on the new information submitted.)
2. Find that an exemption to CEQA is not suitable and require additional environmental review.
3. Land Use Permits
 - a. Approve the Project Amendment subject to adding, modifying, or eliminating any provision or condition of approval of the project.
 - b. Deny the Project Amendment on the basis that one or more of the required findings cannot be made.

Attachments:

1. Draft Planning Commission Resolution 2026-09
 - Exhibit A – Conditions of Approval
 - Exhibit B – Proposed Plans
 - Exhibit C – Findings
2. Applicant-Provided Letter of Justification
3. Agency Comment Letters
4. April 17, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Links:
 - [Staff Report](#)
 - [Resolution 2018-07](#)
 - [Meeting Minutes](#)
5. July 17, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Links:
 - [Staff Report](#)
 - [Resolution 2018-13](#)
 - [Meeting Minutes](#)