

DOWNTOWN TRUCKEE INVESTORS, LP

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September 5, 2024

Town of Truckee
10183 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161

Re: Justification Letter to allow Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation to use ground floor spaces 1, 2 & 3 totaling about 3,119 square feet at Truckee Artist Lofts for gathering, meeting and office space until November 10, 2041

Dear Town of Truckee:

We are the owners of Truckee Artist Lofts situated at 9848 Donner Pass Road, Truckee. We request amendments, variances, or other approvals necessary to allow The Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation to use ground floor spaces 1, 2 & 3, totaling about 3,119 square feet, at Truckee Artist Lofts for office, meetings and gatherings until November 10, 2041.

When we, with stakeholders including the Town of Truckee and Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, envisioned TAL in 2015, everyone expected other Railyard projects would soon follow TAL. More recently in 2019 when the Town and TTCF recommitted their generous financial support to help finance TAL, no one expected the Railyards would sit vacant six years later with TAL the only project built out of the Railyard's 65,000 square feet of retail, 35,000 square foot grocery store, 750 set movie theater, hotel and over 285 market rate residential units.

Neither did anyone anticipate COVID pandemic and the impact on retail.

This void of undeveloped land surrounding TAL, and COVID's impact on retail, have had a significant and material impact on our ability to lease the 3,119 square feet of ground floor space zoned Downtown Business Extension under the Railyards Master plan. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, Azzie Youssefi, a partner of TAL, began marketing efforts in the Fall of 2020 a year before TAL received a certificate of occupancy. Ali Youssefi, the founding vision behind TAL, believed that playing a personal role in finding tenants from the Truckee community was crucial to finding the right fit that would align with the overall vision of TAL.

Early on, multiple prospective tenants and local brokers passed on TAL because of the lack of commercial row foot traffic. The Railyards development grinding halt has only intensified the problem. Only two of the over 75 prospective retail tenants Azzie met with over multiple years were willing to take the leap and sign a lease and even then it took way below-market rents and generous lease terms. The two local tenants we did sign ultimately cancelled the leases. Despite several years of marketing at below market rate rents, TAL has been unable to secure retail tenants.

The Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, a California not for profit public benefit corporation, has been focused on social and environmental impact for the North Tahoe Truckee region for more than 25 years. TTCF works with nonprofits, public agencies, and the community to attract and align critical resources to address some of Truckee's most pressing problems and catalyze innovative solutions.

TTCF is focused on transitioning from a traditional office space to a gathering (meeting) space that advances their mission of community benefit and activates our downtown. TTCF has identified, and intends to lease, for up to 15 years, the 3,119 square feet of ground floor of the Truckee Artist Loft (TAL) as their preferred location for both historical and cultural priorities.

TTCF's Intended Use

In 2018, TTCF piloted a meeting space to gather diverse community stakeholders to make connection and explore opportunities. "The Annex" helped launch and nurture dozens of community level solutions and cultural gatherings, including: Forest Futures, On-the-Verge Leadership Training, the merger of Sierra Community House, Mountain Housing Council, Board Governance Training, Unlike-minded Speakers Series, Pecha Kucha nights, and much more. To facilitate their transition, TTCF will divide the space into three areas:

The Gathering Space: A non-commercial cafe/bar type environment with flexible meeting room elements and seating which will host casual conversation in a cafe-like setting and provide training in a class-room style setup, or host a poetry-slam in a lounge-like environment. This space includes the main gathering space, hostess bar, storage, and bathrooms. The space has an occupancy code A-3.

Facilitators Bull-Pen: Space for TTCF's staff and hosting partners to prepare for convenings, facilitate planning, communications and marketing, and other organizing work that makes for successful collaboration and solutions building. A full battery of organizing tools will be available and stored along with quiet work spaces for individuals and groups and a private bathroom. The space has an occupancy code B.

Organizers Offices: Private office space for private conversations and meetings. Three spaces include two private offices and a phone space. The space has an occupancy code B.

Social Impact Collaboration will occur in the gathering space which will host the collaborative networks focused on social impact in the region. Currently, TTCF convenes nearly twenty collaborative working groups and task forces. This includes Community Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee (a private membership group), Housing Funders Network, Forest Futures Salons, First Five Working Group, Suicide Prevention Task Force, Homeless Coalition, and others. The community members involved in these groups are key players in our region and deserve an inspiring location to collaborate and ideate on the solutions to our most pressing challenges. Social Impact Collaborations may occur as frequently as 5 days a week, Monday – Friday.

Community Belonging will occur in the gathering space as well as the facilitators bull pen. As TTCF demonstrated at "The Annex," their pilot project space, there is a community desire for an inclusive and creative meeting place to gather... something that doesn't feel like a conference room but instead inspires creative thinking and social engagement. TTCF plans to offer cultural activities for broader community enjoyment. Such as: the *Unlike-Minded Series* where TTCF can bring together disparate conversations and with the intention of cultivating civil civic discourse rooted in the *Speak Your Peace Campaign*. Or, such as the *Pecha-Kucha* events that feature artists, photographers, writers and travelers to share their passions with community members in dynamic presentations, celebrating the wisdom within our own community. Additionally, TTCF is planning on inviting community collaborators to host pop-up game nights, poetry slams, and networking events.

TTCF sees this Community Belonging as a natural expansion of the Truckee Artist Lofts, providing a space for artistic and cultural exchange. These community belonging events would occur 2 to 3 times a month.

The Facilitators Bull Pen would also host TTCF's staff of 15 employees who, though mostly working remotely, would use the space.

The Organizers Office is traditional professional office space dedicated to private office space for private conversations and meetings. Three spaces include two private offices and a phone space.

TTCF does not intend to sell food or drinks. In the case of those types of events, a temporary liquor license will be pursued.

TTCF will apply for an outdoor seating permit to expand the gathering space for networking and downtown activation.

Events hosted at TAL will target TTCF's partners, donors and friends with some activities open to community members.

TTCF will pilot paid-to-attend cultural events in the evenings and on the weekends.

Permitted USES Under the Railyards Master Plan, Requested Amendment

TTCF's use of the space maybe covered by 3 of the permitted uses in the Downtown Extension District zone under the Railyard Master Plan Table 5.1: **Membership Organization Facilities** and **Community Centers** and **Office, Business & Professional**.

The Town's Development Code defines **Membership Organization Facilities** as *Permanent, headquarters-type and meeting facilities for organizations operating on a membership basis for the promotion of the interests of the Members*. TTCF's intended use for the space most closely aligns with the development code definition of Membership Organization Facilities use. The space would be TTCF's headquarters and meeting facility for their donors and affiliated organizations, much as a Membership Organization does for their members. However, TTCF is a not for profit, public benefit corporation. It is not a member owned entity. If the Town determines that TTCF qualifies as a Membership Organization Facilities use, and this covers both the occupancy code B and A-3 uses for the space, then no further action is needed as this is a permitted use.

If the Town determines that TTCF does not qualify as a Membership Organization Facility, then the Office Business and Professional use would apply to the Organizer's Office and the Bull Pen both of which are occupancy code B.

We ask the Town to determine whether the Gathering Space with an occupancy code of A-3 would also be a Office Business and Professional Use or Community Center use. TTCF will use the Gathering/meeting space 2 to 3 times a month for Community Belonging events such as poetry reading, training, flexible meetings, etc., and 5 days a week for Social Impact Collaborations dealing with region issues.

Both the Community Center and Office Business Professional use are subject to Railyards Master Plan Table 5-1 Footnote 4, "*...(4) Use not allowed within 30 feet depth of ground floor building frontage on Primary Street. However, to facilitate initial leasing, the Town may allow these uses on the ground floors of buildings on Primary Streets in DE for a period of up to five years from issuance of the building's final certificate of occupancy.*" This does not provide sufficient time for the permitted use to cover the life of TTF's 15 year lease to recoup the significant expense of improving the space.

Though we defer to the Town to determine the correct use designation and changes/amendments that are required to permit TTCF's intended use, we suggest considering amending footnote 4 in table 5-1 to read,

"...(4) Use not allowed within 30 feet depth of ground floor building frontage on Primary Street. However, to facilitate initial leasing, the Town may allow these uses on the ground floors of buildings on Primary Streets in DE for a period of up to five years from issuance of the building's final certificate of occupancy, excepting the Truckee Artist Lofts building, situated at 9848 Donner Pass Road, where the Town may allow these uses until November 10, 2041."

Consistency with Town's 2040 General Plan and Railyard Master Plan

We believe the request is consistent with the Town's General Plan and Railyard Master Plan goals, policies and actions elements for the following reasons.

2040 General Plan Policy	Consistency Finding
LU 1.3 Infill Development Encourage infill development within existing developed areas, including commercial centers and corridors, to promote sustainability, environmental protection, and equitable development patterns.	The proposed tenant improvement will build out a currently vacant space on the important Donner Pass Road frontage within an existing building, TAL. This is the last vacant space at TAL. TAL is a Platinum certified green building. Approving the request reduces vacant store front on Donner Pass Road, fills a space in a sustainably designed building providing environmental protection and equitable development.
LU 1.5 Land Intensification Approve amendments to the Land Use Map that increase intensities and/or densities of a property only if it is found that such amendment will provide community benefits, such as affordable housing, public open space, or trail improvements.	The proposed tenant improvement will provide a community benefit by supporting the affordable housing at TAL. The rental revenue from TTCF will strengthen the finances of TAL.
LU3.1 Mixed Use Development Strongly encourage mixed use development to support compact pedestrian friendly districts in appropriate locations, including the Downtown, the West River District, and the Gateway District.	The space is in the Downtown Extension District. TTCFs use for office/meeting/gathering is a mixed use with residential apartments above. TTCF's space is on the ground floor at TAL which has pedestrian and bike friendly connectivity to the older Downtown.
LU 3.2 Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Discourage new "strip" commercial development and require new commercial projects to provide for pedestrian/bicycle access and proper building scale and proportion relative to the pedestrian realm.	The proposed tenant improvement is situated on the ground floor with pedestrian/bicycle access and completed pedestrian/bicycle connections to the older Downtown.
LU 6.1 Mix of Uses Encourage a mix of uses that help to complete the Downtown by: increasing opportunities for a variety of infill housing, enhancing the pedestrian orientation and activity in the Downtown, improving river access, and providing an environment that fosters street level activity and social interaction.	TTCF's intended use with regular and frequent meetings and gatherings will activate the street level and encourage pedestrian traffic to and from the older Downtown and this newer part of Downtown.
LU 6.2 Support the Central Community Hub Continue to support the desirability of the Downtown as a central community hub with a strong four season economy serving locals and tourists.	TTCF's intended use with regular and frequent meetings and gatherings is focused on Truckee community nonprofits, public agencies, and other community organizations serving locals
LU 6.3 Variety of Businesses and Local Gathering Places Encourage a diverse mix of businesses and local gathering places that create a variety of reasons for people to come to the Downtown.	TTCF's intended use will act as a magnet drawing a diverse audience to the ground floor space at TAL. TTCF will be one of the few non profits with headquarters in downtown. TTCF convenes nearly twenty collaborative working groups and task forces. This includes the diverse mix of Community

	Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee (a private membership group), Housing Funders Network, Forest Futures Salons, First Five Working Group, Suicide Prevention Task Force, Homeless Coalition, and others. TTCF will turn the ground floor at TAL into a local gathering place.
LU 6.5 Active Ground Floor Uses Encourage active ground floor uses and discourage ground floor office uses in buildings in the Downtown core.	TTCF's intended use as a meeting/gathering space will activate the ground floor space at TAL with Social Impact Collaborations occurring as frequently as 5 days a week, Monday – Friday and Community Belonging events occurring 2 to 3 times a month. The office use comprises a minority of the space. Most of TTCF's 15 employees work hybrid at offsite locations but when at the TAL space would work to facilitate and organize the meetings and gatherings. TTCF's hybrid use of the space is consistent with the intent of 6.5 because it activates the ground floor in the downtown and office use is ancillary to the meeting/gathering use. The 3,119 sf of ground floor space at TAL represents about 3% of the 100,000 square feet of retail in the Railyards. Making the suggested change to footnote 4 in Table 5-1 of the Railyards Master plan, has no impact on the remaining 97,000 sf of retail.
LU 6.7 Affordable Residential Development Accommodate additional residential development in the Downtown, including affordable workforce housing.	The proposed tenant improvement accommodates workforce housing because TAL is an affordable work force housing project and the rental revenue from TTCF will strengthen the finances of TAL.
LU 6.8 Public Spaces and Art Continue to promote the creation of new small public spaces and art installation to activate Downtown streets.	TTCF's intended use of the space will include pop up poetry events and other activities consistent with Truckee Artist Loft vision of promoting Arts.
CC 2.2 Exterior Lighting Implement outdoor lighting standards to minimize light pollution, glare, and light trespass into adjoining properties:	TTCF's intended outdoor seating will have exterior lighting consistent with the dark sky standards.
CC 3.4 Pedestrian Oriented Design Encourage pedestrian oriented design	TTCF's space at TAL is oriented to Donner Pass Road with access from entry doors which lead directly to the sidewalks connecting TAL to the older downtown. The exterior design will incorporate outdoor seating in front of the display windows highlighting the gathering/meeting spaces within improving the visual interest of TAL from Donner Pass Road.
CC 3.5 Spaces to Encourage Social Interaction Encourage opportunities for social interaction and community activity through the creation of well designed, accessible public spaces located	TTCF's intended use as a meeting/gathering space with Social Impact Collaborations occurring as frequently as 5 days a week,

throughout the town and by encouraging commercial uses that support community interaction, such as cafes and restaurants, performance and arts spaces, and child activity centers.	Monday – Friday and Community Belonging events occurring 2 to 3 times a month, will encourage social interaction among a diverse group of community members
CC 3.I Railyard Master Plan and Coldstream Specific Plan Prior to expiration of the Development Agreement or during any amendment of the Development Agreement for the Coldstream Specific Plan or Railyard Master Plan, review and update the plans to include objective development and design standards and to further the goals of the General Plan related to encouraging mixed use developments and a variety of housing types and sizes.	The Railyard Master Plan began in 2002 and received its last major update in 2019. It is written in ink not cut in stone. The land use definitions are old and do not address changes in the post covid world. TTCF's use is consistent with the intent and policies of the Railyards Master Plan but not the letter of the definition of use, in particular of "Membership Organization" and "Office". Approving the request permits TAL to sign a lease with TTCF thereby encouraging mixed use development by filling a ground floor commercial space with affordable residential above.
CC 6.4 Community Events Encourage and support community wide and cultural events, including performing arts, that bring Truckee's population together.	TTCF's intended use as a meeting/gathering space with Social Impact Collaborations occurring as frequently as 5 days a week, Monday – Friday and Community Belonging events occurring 2 to 3 times a month, will bring diverse groups of community members together and will have a component, such as poetry readings focused on art consistent with TAL's vision.
CC 6.5 Support Services Support the work of community institutions, government agencies, nonprofits, and the Tahoe Forest Health System to enhance desired community services, including a library, parks and recreational amenities, childcare services, health clinics, and wellness gardens.	Approving the request will support Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, one of Truckee's most venerated not for profit public benefit corporations which has been focused on social and environmental impact for the North Tahoe Truckee region for more than 25 years.
CC7.3 Community Focal Point Enhance Downtown as a community focal point by creating a diverse array of opportunities for shopping, services, community events, entertainment, and recreation.	TTCF's space is located in the Downtown Extension. It's intended use as a meeting/gathering space with Social Impact Collaborations occurring as frequently as 5 days a week, Monday – Friday and Community Belonging events occurring 2 to 3 times a month, will be a community focal point and provide diverse opportunity as TTCF will be one of few no profits located Downtown.
CC 7.5 Local Oriented Services Encourage the establishment of service uses in the Downtown to maintain a variety of businesses serving full time and part time residents as well as visitors. .	TTCF's Social Impact Collaborations and Community Belonging events are a service to the community and will be situated in the Downtown Extension.
ED5.2 Downtown Redevelopment Efforts Continue redevelopment and improvement efforts in Downtown Truckee, including programs to expand upon the Downtown's vibrant mixed use character, and to develop projects that differentiate	TTCF's tenant improvement will build out a currently vacant space on the important Donner Pass Road frontage within an existing building, TAL. This is the last vacant space at

Downtown Truckee from other commercial areas in the town and the surrounding trade area. .	TAL. Approving the request reduces vacant store front on Donner Pass Road, and fills a void in a sustainably designed building in Downtown.
ED5.3 Downtown Community Events Support public activities and community events in Downtown Truckee that complement Downtown brick and mortar businesses. .	TTCF's Social Impact Collaborations and Community Belonging events will bring activity and people to TAL which has pedestrian and bike connection to the older downtown. The attendees of TTCF's events will likely stroll down to and patronize the services in the older Downtown
ED 5.4 New Downtown Mixed Use Development Enhance the economic viability, walkability, and sustainable nature of Downtown Truckee by encouraging new mixed use development that includes housing, employment, and services in the Downtown core. .	TTCF's meeting/gathering/office use on the ground floor of TAL encourages mixed use development by filling a ground floor commercial space in a building with affordable residential above.
ED 5.5 New Public Amenities Downtown Support the addition of new public amenities within the Downtown to enhance the walkable, sustainable nature of Downtown Truckee by providing additional amenities to draw the residents and visitors to the Downtown core. .	TTCF's Social Impact Collaborations and Community Belonging events will draw locals to TAL and its pedestrian connection to the older downtown.

Approving the proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience or welfare of the Town because the request will not impose any new demands on public services that have not been previously studied and addressed with the approval of the Railyard Master Plan and the approvals for Truckee Artist Lofts.

Approving the proposed request will not cause the loss of any residential density as the request concerns vacant, commercial ground floor space.

Once this request is approved, the TTCF proposed use and tenant improvements will be allowed and complies with all applicable provisions of this Development Code, the Municipal Code and the Public Improvement and Engineering Standards.

The Zoning Clearance approval is in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and there would be no potential significant adverse effects upon environmental quality and natural resources that would not be properly mitigated and monitored. These were studied, approved and mitigated under approvals for and construction of the Railyards Master Plan and Truckee Artist Lofts.

There are adequate provisions for public and emergency vehicle access, fire protection, sanitation, water and public utilities and services to ensure that TTCF's proposed use and tenant improvements would not be detrimental to public health and safety. These were studied, approved and built under approvals for the Railyards Master Plan and Truckee Artist Lofts. All roads, emergency vehicle access, fire protection, sanitation, water, power and gas and communication have already been installed with adequate capacity to serve the use. The agencies with jurisdiction over the services have provided approval, fees have been paid, and are ready to set meters upon request.

TTCF's proposed use and tenant improvements is consistent with all applicable regulations of the Nevada County Environmental Health Department and the Truckee Fire Protection District for the transport, use and disposal of hazardous materials. There will be none. This is the improvement of existing vacant space within TAL. During TAL's construction, the hazardous soils present on TAL's site were mitigated and disposed of in compliance with regulations.

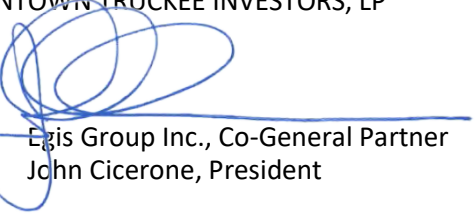
Once this request is approved, the TTCF proposed use and tenant improvements will be consistent with the General Plan, any applicable Specific Plan and/or Master Plan, the Trails Master Plan, the Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and the Particulate Matter Air Quality Management Plan. This is the improvement of existing vacant space within TAL. Airport approval, and other agency approval, was obtained during the approvals for TAL.

TTCF's proposed improvements are consistent with the design guidelines, and achieves the overall design objectives of the design guidelines and would not impair the design and architectural integrity and character of TAL nor the surrounding neighborhood.

This is the improvement of existing vacant space within TAL and TAL was approved and is adequate in size and shape to accommodate this use. Fences and walls, landscaping, loading, parking, yards and other features required by the Development Code were built with TAL and approved by the Town when TAL received its Certificate of Occupancy on November 10, 2021.

Sincerely,

DOWNTOWN TRUCKEE INVESTORS, LP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned over the typed name and title.

By: Egis Group Inc., Co-General Partner
John Cicerone, President

From: jrcvest@aol.com
To: Yumie Dahn
Cc: cdyinc@yahoo.com; stacy@ttcf.net; arzie.cdy@gmail.com
Subject: Public Notice posted for Artist Lofts Railyard Master Plan Amendment-
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 7:21:07 AM
Attachments: image004.png
image005.png
image003.png

Fr: John Cicerone cell 415-259-7727

Stacy - are you OK with the March 18th PC meeting? It works for me.

Hi Yumie - Thanks so much for moving this forward. I am Ok with March 18 meeting as long as it works for Stacy. My comments to your 2-24 email are:

Regarding, "**a 100% affordable housing development**", TAL has 77 units, 76 rentable-affordable and one exempt manager's unit. That to me is the same as 100% affordable as the 100% refers to the rentable units but wanted you to be aware.

Regarding, "**For purposes of this definition, at least two-thirds of the total floor area for the project is required to be dedicated to the 100% affordable housing development.**" I assume you have, but can you please confirm TAL meets this 66% requirement? Please remember we have one 530 sf exempt Mgr's unit that is not affordable. I think it does. Based on the info available to me, I get 70%.

Could the staff report please comment on:

Membership Organization: The justification letter asked if staff could approve TTCF as a Membership Organization which is a permitted use at TAL in table 5-1. To me, TTCF's use is the same as a chamber of commerce or other such membership group that have office staff and hold meetings and gatherings. I understood the only reason this could not be done is a technicality, TTCF is a non profit public benefit corporation and not a member group.

Office: Staff's elegant recommendation is a better solution than my request to amend the office as a permitted use to Dec 2041. I withdraw my request to amend the office use. Please keep it simple; just have a vote on staff's recommendation, adding a line item to Table 5-1 for "Nonprofit office and gathering space".

Let me know when you confirm the hearing date so we can add it to the notice in the window.

Anything else you need from me?

- John