

Mono County Community Development

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Planning Division

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The following comments were received after 3:00 pm, April 15. Due to the timing, Planning Commissioners did not receive copies of the letters prior to the April 16 meeting.

All comments have been entered into the record of public comment for the April 16 Planning Commission meeting.

Comments less than 250 words were read to the Planning Commission by staff. Comments over 250 were summarized by staff to the Planning Commission.

From: [John Anderson](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on the Tioga Inn proposal
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 3:45:29 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to protest the proposal to develop and expand the "Tioga Inn" site. I have been voting the Mono Basin since 1978, first as a researcher on the gull population, later to expose my family and my students to the marvellous landscape. The proposed inn development would have serious visual impacts on the lake environment, detracting from the enjoyment of the entire region. In addition, I am concerned by the effects of additional light pollution in the basin. Dark skies are a valuable resource for humans and non-humans alike. In what ways do the developers propose to mitigate the effects of their development on the basin's night environment? has adequate work been done on possible impacts to migratory birds and bat? I urge you to reconsider this proposal.

Sincerely

--

John Anderson FLS
W.H. Drury Professor of Ecology/Natural History
College of the Atlantic
105 Eden St
Bar Harbor
ME 04609

From: [Paul Ashby](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn proposal - public comment
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 9:14:49 PM

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I'm Paul Ashby. I live in Orinda, CA.

I'm a landscaper, photographer, writer & musician. I visit LV at least five times a year, staying for a week each time. Mono Basin is irresistible, on many levels.

There are also levels by which I need to address the Tioga Inn proposal now before you.

Safety:

CalTrans has stated it has no plans for traffic mitigation. 395/120W intersection is considered dangerous at present. There's no pedestrian or bicycle connectivity to LV from the site. Consider the influx of traffic when Tioga Inn opens.

Piecemeal approach:

This proposal has had many elements grafted onto it since 1993, and now it resembles a Frankenstein monster of a project. It needs to be re-examined -- as a whole -- before seriously considered.

Housing:

Is it a hotel? Is it workforce housing? Re: the latter -- "Market rate" means it won't be affordable for the majority of those in Mono County. And the off-season? Will these empty spaces become condos? Mammoth-fication-style?

Funding:

Will TI be sold to a major multinational resort upon completion? (yes). Who's funding this multi-million dollar project, a silent partner? The ultimate operator would certainly have a huge staff of lawyers; can the County afford to litigate when TI decides to go in a (likely) direction other than that which is on file with the County?

I cannot endorse the Tioga Inn project in its present state. Tripling or quadrupling the population of LV is not sustainable, nor desirable -- by anyone, except those who would profit from this project.

I trust you will reject this proposal. Thanks.

From: [Murphey's Motel LLC](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Proposal - Please Vote NO on Resolution R20-01
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:51:42 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Mono County Planning Commission,

My name is Cecily Audenried, and I have been a Lee Vining resident for almost 7 years. My husband and I run two family businesses in Lee Vining, Murphey's Motel LLC and Mono Cup Coffee LLC.

I am writing to you in regards to the Tioga Inn Proposal. As a resident of Lee Vining, I am aware of the current shortage of housing in our community. If approved a project of this size, would triple our town's population. A small community of 400 people to triple its size is unheard of. There are numerous negative results from a drastic change of this size. Due to an explosion of people to our community the following would be adversely affected:

1. The housing shortage in our community would continue to expand. The project estimates 187 employees, but only 100 housing units. Also, the project discusses the housing would be for its employees use. This does not aid in our current community shortage of housing, but is now only going to increase the shortage, because there is not enough housing even for the employees needed to run the new proposed property.
2. Our volunteer fire department has already expressed concern of the population increase. They have clearly expressed, on a previous Tioga Inn community meeting, that they would be unable to accommodate safety and community needs if the population were to increase to the size proposed. They do not have the equipment or amount of people to accommodate this change. This is a very serious issue that needs to be addressed before continuing with this project.
3. As a mother to 2 children. I am currently familiar with the schools in our community. If this project were to go through, our schools would be bombarded with loads of new families. This year, I saw a shortage in teachers first hand with my daughter's class. If this proposed plan is to happen, I do not feel our schooling system would be able to handle the influx to our schools. Which would negatively affect our children's learning.
4. Traffic, accidents, and fatalities, will absolutely occur with this new proposed project and expansion of workers and now tourists. Highway 120 and US 395 intersection, will significantly change with this project. The amount of congestion in this intersection will need to be addressed to prevent serious safety concerns to travelers.
5. Also, the proposed project is to be located right outside of the community of Lee Vining. All the new employees who plan to reside on the provided housing within the project will most likely come to the community of Lee Vining for food, supplies, postal needs, schooling needs, and more. The traffic to our small community will not be able to accommodate the new amount of population. We do not have the parking

spaces/capacity to handle the amount of people who may be coming to our town on a regular basis. Our town is merely not big enough to handle a change of this magnitude. Due to the multiple concerns listed above, I strongly urge you to vote NO on Resolution R20-01. The community of Lee Vining cannot handle a change of this size due to safety concerns, housing shortages, schooling concerns, and more. Please seriously consider my concerns for the future of our town.

Thank you for your time.

Cecily Audenried

Manager,
Murphey's Motel LLC
Local: 760-647-6316
Toll Free: 1-800-334-6316
Fax: 760-647-6457

From: [Colleen Balch](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: comments on R2001
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:21:21 PM

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As a former Lee Vining resident and an ongoing regional resident, I am deeply grieved that we continue to face assaults on the viewshed of the Mono Basin, on the infrastructure of Lee Vining, on safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and on the character of one of the most iconic small towns in the eastern sierra. Affordable housing is critically important to all east side communities, and has been for decades. But, this development fails to provide for this need while attempting to force damaging change to both the human and natural communities in the Mono Basin.

Please vote no on the current resolution.

My best,
Colleen Balch

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Janet Barth](#)
To: [Michael Draper](#)
Cc: [Lynn Boulton](#); [Janet Carle](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 7:54:37 AM

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From:
Janet R Barth
26241 Highway 6
Benton, CA

To the Mono Co Planning Commission,

For the past three years I have been a Mono Lake docent spending Sunday mornings at Navy Beach answering questions and educating kayakers to avoid osprey nests. The south shore of Mono Lake is unique in so many ways, but one thing that makes it especially so is the fact that you can stand at the shore and view a landscape that is breathtaking in its beauty and almost totally devoid of visual human incursions. Other than the kiosk and parking lot at South Tufa, there are no other buildings, no visible roadways, no power lines. Lee Vining, the Visitors Center, the Mobile are all hidden. This level of purity of view scape is extremely rare, particularly at a heavily visited tourist destination.

Recently I participated in a service project in Death Valley. Our goal was to use a new park survey form created to assess park view shed as to wilderness quality and to be able to assign a numerical value. The highest numerical value possible would be 50 points. The view from Telescope peak received a 45. Using the Death Valley protocol, the view from South Lake would easily rate the same number. As you consider the plans for the Tioga Inn, please keep the purity of the Mono Lake view shed in mind.

Janet R Barth

Sent from my iPad

From: [phyllis benham](#)
To: [Michael Draper](#)
Subject: R20-01
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 5:25:53 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Phyllis Benham and am a long time resident of Mammoth Lakes. I have been a volunteer at the Boardwalk at County Park where visitors from all over the world have an intimate view of Mono Lake.

They comment on the beauty of the Basin, and are awed by it's expanse.

The Tioga Inn project proposes to place a poorly designed resort with elevated buildings within the view shed of the most visited locations in the Mono Basin, including County Park, affecting visitor experience and diminishing the awe.

I urge the Planning Commission to vote NO on R20-01

sincerely,

Phyllis Benham

From: [Alex Bittel](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Input regarding the Tioga Inn project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:22:05 AM

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To the Planning Commission:

I imagine that you will receive a great deal of input with regards to the specific problematic elements of the current proposal. To this point, I do agree - the current proposal does little to address the substantial environmental and cultural impacts that this project will entail. However, I would like to bring to your attention a broader issue that is represented by this discussion, and that is the debate over the degree to which private individuals can encroach on that which belongs to and benefits all of us.

Mono Lake as an entity, which is biologically and aesthetically inseparable from the larger Mono Basin (such that anything that impacts the Basin will absolutely impact the Lake), includes resources both physical (such as wildlife and ecosystem services) and cultural (which includes the beauty of the landscape of which it is apart). These are resources that do not need to be developed to be enjoyed, they exist as they are in a state that provides their benefits. Any harm done to these resources would, thus, amount to a harm to those who have the right to benefit from them.

In my opinion, the current proposal would do just this. The intrusion of this building project not only monopolizes a significant portion of this stunning landscape and ecosystem for almost exclusively private benefit, it also degrades it. It will mar the visual landscape and night sky, and, more seriously, will almost certainly damage the fragile and valuable ecosystem of which it is a part.

What would the benefit of this be, and who would reap those benefits?

The current community of Lee Vining will likely see as much harm as good - any economic benefit will be countered by substantially increased housing costs, and the increased traffic will be more than an inconvenience, it presents a real increase of physical danger.

Would the public from outside the community benefit by improved access to Mono Lake? I would argue that a degraded landscape alone would decrease that benefit substantially, in addition to the larger issues of actual degradation that Mono Lake may experience. If this degradation in fact occurs (do you have honest, substantial evidence that it certainly would not?), the benefit to the public would be lessened and would continue to erode as Mono Lake itself degrades.

Again, I urge the members of the Commission to consider who it is that they are serving, whether it is private or public interests, and who this decision will disproportionately affect. It is clear where I personally stand on this issue - I believe that public goods, like Mono Lake, must be protected from those private interests that may threaten its integrity and detract from public enjoyment and benefit. If any element of this project poses this kind of threat, I again strongly urge the Commission to consider what may be lost if this goes forward and to balance

that against what may be gained.

Mono Lake can stand, for generations, for centuries, as a natural wonder that inspires awe and from which we can learn more about the world. I myself have benefited from Mono Lake in just this way, and though it was many years ago, I remain impacted by its intricate beauty and the unique ecosystem it contains to this day (which is why I took time to write this email). Failure to ensure its continued, unharmed existence would rob countless people, for generations to come, of these resources to which they, as American citizens, have a right.

I appreciate that you took time to read my opinion. I wish you wisdom in the decision you must make, as well as luck and health to you and your loved ones in these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Alex Bittel

From: [Daniel Bittel](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Fwd: Tioga Inn plan
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:01:18 AM

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Rod Bittel <rodbittel@gmail.com>
Date: April 15, 2020 at 10:07:58 PM PDT
To: bartshe@monolake.org
Cc: Daniel Bittel <13dbittel@gmail.com>, Rod Bittel <rodbittel@gmail.com>
Subject: **Tioga Inn plan**

We are Rod and Pat Bittel and ask the Planning Committee to vote no on Resolution R20-01.

Mono Lake and surrounding area is a unique and an iconic piece of Nature that needs to be protected and respected.

We were introduced to Mono Lake by our son, Daniel Bittel, who works at Yosemite Park. We were awestruck at the beauty and magic on the first visit as well as all other following visits.

Any development needs to be thoroughly thought out designed to align with Mono Lake and Lee Vining. There should be nothing built that takes away the scenic, visual resources and beauty that is Mono Lake.

As members of the Planning Committee vote no on Resolution R2-01. You have something that deserves to be protected, respected and preserved. Accept nothing less.

Sincerely,

Rod and Pat Bittel
Mono Lake members.

From: [JESSICA BITTEL](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Say no!
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:20:05 AM

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I do not agree with the Tioga development- the permanent effects of this development will negatively impact the environment, integrity, and ecology of Mono Lake. It is our job to protect what little undeveloped land and natural resources our beautiful country has left. Please vote no!

From: [PatRod Bittel](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Please vote "NO"
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:35:59 AM

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I have just heard about the proposal to build a housing development in Lee Vining and I'm shocked and saddened to think this could actually happen.

I am imploring that everyone who is in the position to vote on this project to please vote NO. There are so many reasons why this is just a bad idea. This is a small, unique community that would not be able to sustain a housing development in anyway, without totally destroying the fragile ecosystem there as well as the unique culture and way of life for those who call it home and those who work so hard to maintain the environment there.

Our family (who live in Kansas) was introduced to the Lee Vining area a couple of years ago. We have taken several family vacations to that area since then to enjoy the peaceful, pristine nature there and in the surroundings. We maintain membership in the Mono Lake Conservation group.

We beg you to stop this development. Should this project go through, the entire area around Lee Vining will be permanently, negatively changed forever.

Sincerely,

Kaitlin Bittel
Lawrence, Kansas

From: [Mary Bittel](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Project FSIER PROJECT
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 1:42:27 PM

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We vote no on the proposed project for the following rationale

- there will be obvious man-made distractions
- the night sky will be impacted negatively by mitigating sunrise reflections and nighttime flow
- another obstacle is the lack of attention paid to the mule deer migrating path. This is hazardous for both human and deer by collisions.
- riding bikes and walking will become more dangerous and that includes students walking to school. This undermines the environment of the current residents greatly.
- the specific reason for visiting this area is the magnificent views. The Tioga Inn project greatly diminishes this beauty and at some points in the year could actually detract from the town economy
- the plan is haphazard based on elements from 27 years ago. The plan seems to be constant flux and unpredictable. Unforeseen problems will obviously with virtually no solutions in place
- humans are stewards of the earth and therefore we have a responsibility to protect it's natural beauty and treasures
- this project must be tabled for opportunities for intelligent forethought and planning.
- you cannot thrust this haphazard plan upon this small town basically tripally its size. All changes must be supported by the local residents and with respect the gorgeous wildlife

We ask that you vote NO against the project.

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [Sam Bittel](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Lee Vining development
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:34:53 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am in strong opposition to the proposed development in Lee Vining. This area represents a special and unique ecological treasure to not only California, but the United States and our planet. Lee Vining, as a community, is a special place that retains its beautiful setting and old Northern California feel, by avoiding over-development. Allowing a large development will just make Lee Vining another cookie cutter town, which will also threaten the Mono Lake area.

I am not a Californian. I visit from my home in Kansas. If Lee Vining allows this development, I will no longer be inclined to visit this area. The beauty that is only achieved through conservation and a lack of development are truly a prize that draws people to visit. These prizes will be gone forever if you allow a large development. Unfortunately, we have fewer and fewer special places with each passing year. You should not make the same mistakes we have seen in other areas by sacrificing your gifts for the possibility of financial reward. The rewards you have now are greater than money, which are the gifts bestowed to you. These gifts are yours to protect.

You are in a special place and time. You have been given the chance to protect somewhere unique. You are at a crossroads, so I strongly urge you to make the right choice. If you make the wrong choice by allowing development, the gifts we are lucky to enjoy will no longer be there for our children and grandchildren. There will be no turning back.

I appreciate you taking the time to consider my comments.

Sincerely,
Sam Bittel

Comments from Carmen Borg, AICP on Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment #3

I am a certified urban planner with the law firm of Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP, where I have advised clients on planning and CEQA issues for nearly 20 years.

In my opinion, the proposed Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment #3 is not in keeping with current best planning practices. The project would develop 100 residential units on a site with no safe way for residents to walk or bike the 0.5 miles into Lee Vining, which has schools, services, and retail that all new residents will need to access. As a result, residents must choose between driving into town, thereby adding to the region's vehicle miles traveled ("VMT") and greenhouse gas emissions, or walking/biking on the shoulder of the highway, creating a significant safety hazard. There is also no current or proposed public transit option or shuttle service.

This design conflicts with the purpose of SB 375, which directed local governments to use smart growth land use policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and VMT. It also runs counter to state and regional attempts to create "safe routes to school" by making walking and biking to school safer and more attractive. Local governments routinely require developers to provide safe school routes. It is surprising that Mono County is not doing the same here.

Unless the applicant provides a safe way for residents to walk or bike into town, this project will be the type of "sprawl" development California planners have sought to avoid for the last 20 years.

April 16, 2020

Planning Commission
Mono County
PO Box 347
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
cdritter@mono.ca.gov

RE: Comments on the Final Subsequent EIR for the Tioga Inn Project

I would like to point out that the Gibbs Siphon Road would be a better emergency exit road than the one described in the amended SEIR. It is maintained because it is the access to the communications tower. It is flat. It is wide enough for vehicles to pass in both directions and to see them coming. The other route is not maintained, is narrower, has a steep section that could erode and make the exit difficult for street vehicles or trailers. Please consider changing this part of the plan.

Lynn Boulton
Lee Vining Resident

The better, safer road and faster exit—Gibbs Siphon Road:



well graded, nice and wide, flat...with many pullout places

The less used road in the plan:



it used to be a road...but sagebrush now grows down the middle, and it has a steep part at the end...

From: [sb9794](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn Project...comment by email
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 7:22:10 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We urge you to vote against the Tioga Inn Project.

The Tioga Inn Project is not in compliance with the Mono Basin Community Plan. When citizens follow a process for land use development, it needs to be respected.

We have spent countless weeks and months over many years camping in Lee Vining. We are drawn to the absolute unique beauty of Mono Lake, the uniqueness of this eco system, and to the kind people who make Lee Vining their home. It is a place we always recommend to others who are planning travels towards Yosemite.

The majestic night sky that visitors associate with Lee Vining and the Mono Basin area will be permanently destroyed unless you vote against this Tioga Inn development. The elevated location of the proposed inn makes the destruction of the night sky even more extensive as it will extend across the Mono Basin.

Especially during this era when we are trying to survive the coronavirus, citizens everywhere are more concerned about the quality of our environment. With less driving everywhere, skies are clearer. The importance of this is becoming our new normal.

We urge you to vote against the Tioga Inn development. Protect Lee Vining and the Mono Basin as the treasures they are.

Respectfully,

Sandra J. Bowman

Nicholas D. Parish

3617 Oas Dr W

University Place, WA 98466

From: [E Brown](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 3:49:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon

While listening to the commissioners deliberations it was discussed the the hotel/restaurant was going forward no mater if the housing was approved or not. My concern is do we have any guarantees that the hotel is going to be built in the near future? What if the proponent decides not to build the hotel.

From: [Liam Caulfield](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Plan Comment
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 2:01:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

The current Tioga Inn Community Housing Plan as is, simply does not address the needs of the community. In a time of COVID-19, it provides an opportunity to analyze the limits and constraints within a community. This project would add significant issues to current medical facilities and school facilities, exacerbate an already tedious housing situation, and transform the true soul of the area. With the current proposal, these limits within this community will become untenable and degrade the foundation of the community itself. The unmitigated issues tied to this resolution create hazards for the safety and longevity of Lee Vining's culture and citizens. Lee Vining is a staple within the Greater Sierra Range and we simply cannot risk stretching this community too thin. Please reject Resolution R20-01 and help save the Mono Basin. Thanks you.

Save the Birds,

Liam Caulfield

From: [Don Condon](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Project should be Net Zero
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:09:28 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

California's goals to reduce fossil fuel use are 40% by 2030 and 100% by 2045. It makes no sense to heat these buildings with propane. As a matter of fact the Ca. Building Code requires residential buildings to be Net Zero effective Jan. 2020. I request that if any EIR Document is approved today that an exception be made as to how it's energy is generated. Solar panels and electric heat pumps should be considered for heating requirements.

Don Condon
condon.don@gmail.com
510 467-2197

From: [martha davis](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); [Bartshe Miller](#)
Subject: Resolution R20-01, Regarding Tioga Inn Specific Plan and SEIR
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 5:58:01 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Attn: Mr. Scott Bush
Chair, Mono County Planning Commission
And Members of the Mono County Planning Commission

Dear Chairman Bush,

I am writing to oppose the Tioga Inn Specific Plan and Subsequent Environmental Impact Report, as currently proposed, and to ask that the Mono County Planning Commission vote no on Resolution R20-01.

As the former Executive Director of the Mono Lake Committee and someone who has worked for almost 40 years to protect the spectacular resources of the Mono Basin and Mono County, I am deeply concerned about Mono County's own finding that the Tioga Inn Specific Plan proposal will have significant, unavoidable and unmitigated adverse impacts on the community of Lee Vining, the environmental resources of the Mono Basin, and on the quality of the visitor experience to Mono Lake and the surrounding basin.

I am astonished that despite the considerable correspondence and detailed constructive advice that the project proponents have received from the Lee Vining community and from the larger public in the past year, the proposed Specific Plan has NOT been adequately modified to address the significant concerns raised about the project's environmental impacts. At this juncture, the Specific Plan STILL:

- Is NOT consistent with the critical elements of the Mono Basin Community Plan;
- Results in significant visual impacts from key visitor vista points in the Mono Basin;
- Fails to adequately reduce night sky impacts;
- Causes significant cumulative impacts to the Lee Vining Canyon deer herd; and
-

Exposes both community members and visitors to vastly increased hazardous travel conditions along Highway 120 and at the intersection of Highways 120 and 395.

I want to be clear that I support the development of more workforce housing as long as it is appropriately designed for the site and is fully consistent with the Mono Basin Community Plan. Yet, not only is the Tioga Inn Specific Plan design fatally flawed with respect to the significant adverse and unmitigated environmental impacts it will impose on the Mono Basin, it is also proposed to be built at a scale that will triple the population of Lee Vining and forever change the rural character of this community -- and it would be done in violation of the Community Plan that was adopted for the Mono Basin.

This is not an acceptable proposed Site Plan nor is it acceptable level of planning to address the real needs of Mono County. There are many options that the project proponents could have been pursued to improve the project plan design so as to mitigate its environmental impacts, but to date they have not done so. As a result, I am asking that your Planning Commission to vote no on Resolution R20-01.

Sincerely,

Martha Davis
Box 508
Nicasio, CA 94946

--

mlcmarthadavis@gmail.com

From: [Robert Di Paolo](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Planning Commission Comment
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:58:29 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns,

I've been a resident in the Mono Basin for the last 6 years and I am deeply concerned with the Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment and Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report. I wrote a comment letter last August and I had three main concerns that I had hoped the project could sufficiently address in an amended impact report:

1. The Mono Basin's night skies and views of the Sierra are unique and valuable resources that should be preserved.
2. The increased traffic associated with project would result in more collisions with Mule Deer and additional mitigation should be done.
3. The report did not clearly define what "workforce housing" meant.

The amended project will still create significant and unavoidable impacts on scenic views from major visitation sites (e.g. South Tufa shore) and will still have a negative impact on Mono Basin night skies. With regards to the "workforce housing" (now community housing), it appears that not only is the affordability ill-defined, but the 100 units would have the capacity to house only 2/3rds of the on-site staff, for whom the housing would be prioritized for, which would likely only further exacerbate the housing shortage in neighboring communities.

The amended report fails to mitigate and address my concerns and fails to clearly define several key aspects of the project. I am therefore asking the Planning Commission to vote no on Resolution R20-01.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Robbie Di Paolo
Mono City, CA

From: [Kirk Dixon](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 6:19:48 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Realizing this is private property someone has the right to develop, it seems like it is the wrong project for this location. Water concerns, view impairment and night sky are all concerns here.

Have been traveling and living in this area since 1981.

Thank you for your time here. All the best, Kirk Dixon (Gardnerville, NV resident)

From: [Deanna Dulen](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Cc: [deanna Home](#)
Subject: Comments for Today's Meeting on Tioga Inn to Read into the Record
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:45:20 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Tioga Inn Comments submitted by Deanna Dulen, Lee Vining Resident since 1991.

Preserving Lee Vining's Sense of Place

There are many factual issues about the impacts of the proposed Tioga Inn development that all make this proposal worthy of dismissal. These include but are not limited to, adverse impacts on watershed, migratory corridors for wildlife, congestion issues and increased traffic accidents and roadkill. Social impacts include but are not limited to impacts on community services including our fire departments and emergency services that are volunteers from the community and worthy. As far as the "so-called" affordable housing, it is a ruse, as the owner of the property has already raised the rent of the current residents in the half dozen plus rental homes with the justification that he needed to cover the increased costs of the environment analysis.

If the rationale for affordable housing is sincere, then deed restrictions should be put in place as counties and Town of Mammoth Lakes have described in many Affordable Housing analysis. It seems part of the need for affordable housing is for winter seasonal employees working for the out-of-town corporate interests. Exporting the issues of the lack of affordable housing generated in Mammoth and June Ski resorts is not respectful of the rural character of Lee Vining. Again, the affordable housing rationale is a ruse. Therefore, I want to address an element of the heart of the issue that embraces the core values and what is the fate of the rural communities in Mono County in particular here and now, Lee Vining and our Sense of Place.

The various scenarios of the proposed development all accelerate the urbanization and visual blight on the gateway community and the loss of the charming, nostalgic, rustic rural character of Lee Vining integrated into the natural landscape. I have lived here for 3 decades, and Lee Vining is one of the last best places in the west.

WE ALL LOSE when the rural character from the Eastern Sierra is compromised. Across the west, the increased development pressure impacts unique rural communities. Each loss impacts the character of Eastern Sierra that is woven into the open space and "Wild by Nature" landscape we all value. This character is appreciated by residents and visitors from urban areas. If this irrevocable change happens, the community losses and primarily wealthy investors profit. A tale repeated again and again that the justification is more money is needed by a few outside investors that will trickle down to some, and that more tax revenues are needed for beleaguered county budgets.

Several planning and community documents have affirmed the irreplaceable value of the rural character of Lee Vining including the Mono Basin Vision, and perhaps in Mono County General Plan? I recall the trapeze and swing at Mobil Mart, this blight on the scenic vistas of Mono Basin put a circus face at the edge of the beauty of our "Wild by Nature" Mono County. There appears to be a reticence to have standards for preserving the viewsheds. An integrated and comprehensive plan is needed to address the cultural resource of rural communities that integrates specific indicators and standards to protect the integrity of the natural and cultural landscapes. A quick internet search identified a worthy goal,

“...to grow gracefully, in a manner consistent with the traditional character of the community, so that new development fits harmoniously in the town fabric and helps to reinforce the local sense of place” (Arendt et al., 1994: 8). There are many publications, tools, techniques, subject matter experts, and references to guide us in this need.

In conclusion, I hope and pray that the value of preserving the “Sense of Place of Lee Vining, Mono County, CA” will be at the forefront of the decision made about the fate of Lee Vining.

Sincerely,

Deanna Dulen

P.O. Box 349

Lee Vining

From: [Henry Feilen](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Subject: Res #R20-01 Tioga Inn
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 3:42:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission: I would like to submit the following comments regarding the Tioga Inn Hotel and Housing Project.

I am a 40+ year property owner in Mammoth Lakes during which time I have observed the still ongoing over development of the area to the detriment of the overall living conditions by residents as well as visitors all in the name of so-called progress, development for developments sake and the chase for the almighty dollar. Along with another couple, my wife and I bought a 60's vintage A-frame in Mammoth in the late seventies and still use it as much as possible. We have spent many a day skiing, hiking, fishing, shopping, photographing and eating (including at the Whoa Nellie Deli that's not as good as it used to be under the original owner) while visiting Lee Vining and surroundings. I have attended every Chautauqua.

The subject project you are considering has been in the works for over 25 years. And now the applicant wants to again make more revisions. This project should have had a sunset provision that expired long ago such that it would have to be started fresh. Most unfortunate and short sighted. The continued expansion of the scope of this project is not in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Community Plan and contrary to most of the Plan's values, policies, goals and objectives. It threatens to overpower and ruin the small, rural character of Lee Vining by tripling the population. At the same time it won't provide for the resulting needed improvements in services and goods such as medical and groceries that the increased population will require. The nice little market will be totally inadequate and at the same time it won't be financially practical to build something larger. And where would that be as well? The nearest medical/dental services are in Mammoth/Bishop and those in Nevada even more remote. Look at what has happened in Mono County with the Corvid 19 virus. I'm not even allowed to go up to my cabin now, which I understand and fully agree with.

I understand the desire and intent and legal right that a landowner has to develop his property but that is the risk he takes in speculative investing and at some point it has to be curtailed for the sake of the greater good.

Thank you for your consideration,

Henry Feilen
Chino CA

From: [Cambo Ferrante](#)
To: [Michael Draper](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:52:15 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Helo,

I am writing to express my concerns about the Tioga Inn Project and the inevitable impact on environmental, scenic and visual resources within the Mono Basin. This area is a known migration path for many species, most notably the Mule Deer. The increased traffic and human activity would drastically impose upon the migration path for this animal, as well as create more car related incidents to the Mule Deer herd.

On top of it being an eyesore, it would largely take away form the rustic, small town charm that Lee Vining is know for.

Thank you,

Cameron Ferrante

From: [Ruth Garland](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:08:21 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am opposed to this hotel development as it is out of character with the natural preservation of Mono Lake. Tourists come from all over the world for the natural scenery and do not want to see a big hotel sitting on the hill spoiling the view and lighting up the dark night sky
Please do not allow this to go through as it is

Thank you,
Ruth Garland

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ruth Garland](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 2:31:27 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

People are sleeping in their cars along the access road because they like to camp there not because they are homeless
Please do not buy into this argument
Ruth

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Broc Graves](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: No on development
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:17:46 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I do not agree with this development and it should go through!!!!

Broc Palmer Edward Graves
B.A. Religion and Culture
William Jewell College, 2016
(660) 973-4056
palmeredward12@gmail.com

From: [Will Hamann](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Public confusion is reasonable
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 4:06:10 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

I have been in and out of this meeting a couple of times for my school classes, so I apologize if this has already been mentioned. I think the confusion that the public had between the construction of the Inn and Housing is totally fair, considering that it has been on the shelf for 27 years. We have become more environmentally aware over the years, and the fact that the SEIR doesn't expire makes no sense. The public's reaction is reasonable and I do not think that they should be faulted, because this project basically rose from the dead, and is a surprise to many people.

Sincerely,

Will Hamann

From: [Robin Hartmann](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Revised comment on Tioga Inn project. Please read this one, not my earlier email
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 1:05:56 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Robin Hartman. I have been a regular visitor to the Mono Lake Basin for over 30 years, enjoying camping, hiking, birding, cycling and kayaking.

When I heard about this proposed project I felt like crying. Mono Lake and Lee Vining are special, sacred places, entwined with each other. It is my strong opinion that the proposed Tioga Inn project would create an eyesore to the basin, having a severe negative impact on the view shed of the basin, day and night. It would create an increase of traffic, with no provisions made for pedestrians and cyclists to and from town. Wildlife, specifically the Mule Deer herd in Lee Vining canyon would face certain danger from the increased traffic.

This proposal strikes me as an ill conceived real estate deal with no consideration given to the current inhabitants and visitors to Mono Lake Basin. I urge the planning commission to vote no.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Dan Haxton](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: I am strongly opposed to the Tioga Inn project.
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 9:36:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I love recreation in the Mono Basin -- mostly I go backpacking and skiing. I frequently access the Inyo National Forest via the trailheads near Lee Vining for hiking, and also sometimes I ski Tioga pass from the Eastern side, always passing through Lee Vining.

I am dismayed to learn of the Tioga Inn project:

<https://monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/tioga-inn-specific-plan-seir>

The environment surrounding Lee Vining is very fragile and we must not have any more development in this region. This region must be preserved with no more development. Mono County's latest analysis of the project concludes the project will cause significant, unavoidable impacts in four areas of major concern.

Furthermore, we must preserve the aesthetic sense of the Mono basin. It is one of the best-preserved areas, and the accumulation of tourist lodging in this place will destroy its wonder.

I am asking the Planning Commission to vote no on Resolution R20-01.

Best regards

Daniel J Haxton
38000 Camden St Apt 15, Fremont CA 94536
415-412-9508

From: [Steve Henricksen](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Cc: [Melissa Wendt](#)
Subject: RE: LVHAC Call-In
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:47:40 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning CD,

Could you please add Melissa Wendt (cc'd) to the LVHAC distribution list?

Thank you.

Regards,

Steve Henricksen

From: CD Ritter <cdritter@mono.ca.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 9:08 AM
To: Steve Henricksen <shenricksen@ORMAT.COM>
Cc: Nick Criss <ncriss@mono.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: LVHAC Call-In

CAUTION: External Sender, Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

No worries. Just wanted you to know it's there in case you need it!
~ CD

From: Steve Henricksen <shenricksen@ORMAT.COM>
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 8:57 AM
To: CD Ritter <cdritter@mono.ca.gov>
Cc: Nick Criss <ncriss@mono.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: LVHAC Call-In

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thanks CD. I guess I should've looked at the agenda before asking.

Regards,

Steve Henricksen

From: CD Ritter <cdritter@mono.ca.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 8:52 AM
To: Steve Henricksen <shenricksen@ORMAT.COM>
Cc: Nick Criss <ncriss@mono.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: LVHAC Call-In

CAUTION: External Sender, Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Good morning Steve,
As shown on agenda, teleconference number is 408-638-0968, access code 760-924-1800. Please join us by teleconference.
~ CD

From: Steve Henricksen <shenricksen@ORMAT.COM>
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 8:10 AM
To: CD Ritter <cdritter@mono.ca.gov>
Subject: LVHAC Call-In

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning CD,

Some of the Ormat contingent may not be able to make it down to the LVHAC next week and I was wondering if we can get a phone number to call-in to for the meeting?

Thanks.

Best regards,

Steve Henricksen
Manager, Business Development

T (775) 356-9029 x32247 M (775) 229-5197
6140 Plumas St. Reno, NV 89519

Confidentiality Warning:
The information contained in this e-mail is confidential and subject to certain laws pertaining to the protection of proprietary information. It is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the authorized agent thereof, the reader is hereby notified that retention or any dissemination, distribution or copying of this transmission is strictly prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify us immediately by reply e-mail or by telephone, and delete all copies of the original message.

From: [Virginia Hilker](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); [Bartshe Miller](#)
Subject: Mono County Planning Commission
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 6:53:45 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

from Virginia Hilker
2661 Tallant Rd ME625
Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105

To Mono County Planning Commission
regarding the Tioga Inn Project.
As a faithful visitor and supporter of the
Mono Lake Committee and Mono Basin,
I strongly support the Mono Lake Committee
positions of this subject.

Sincerely,
Virginia Hilker

Dear Planning Commission-

I'm a professional photographer and biologist and a considerable amount of my work takes place in the Mono Basin. This includes my own personal photography and leading workshops. I strongly oppose the Tioga Inn Project for several reasons. First, the unavoidable visual impact of the project from numerous viewpoints in the Mono Basin is detrimental to the visitor experience in the area. Second, the light pollution emanating from the project will not only detract from the night sky viewing opportunities but also negatively affect night photography, a big draw to the Basin and a component of my work. Third, as a naturalist/biologist, the unavoidable negative impact to the local deer population is unacceptable. Furthermore, the project will take away from the charming and rural character currently present in Lee Vining. As a result, this project will have a negative impact on the experience of visitors to the Mono Basin as well as travelers on their way to Yosemite. Developing the gateway communities to the park is essential but should be done in a manner that lines up with the goals and nature of the community while minimizing environmental impacts. With better planning and project design, the Tioga Inn project could meet these criteria, but as it stands now, it does not. I strongly urge you to vote against resolution R20-01.

Yours Truly,

Robb Hirsch

Groveland, California

From: [Robert J. Hutchins](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 7:20:32 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board,

My concern is what the developers are actually planning to do. Will this be a motel/restaurant or an apartment complex for rent or sale.

Will it actually provide affordable housing for local workers, or just be an opportunity for the developer to sell units to wealthy part time residents.

If the latter, it will offer no tangible benefits to the local community other than perhaps helping expand the Mono County tax base.

But even with that, will the county end up spending more to support it than it will receive in taxes.

Either way, this is a bad idea for many reasons and should not be allowed to continue.

Thank you

Robert J. Hutchins

Mono Lake Supporter and Fan

From: [Shelly Hutchinson](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Subject: Tings Inn Project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 3:11:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm writing to express my concerns and reservations regarding the referenced plan. My family has visited this area almost annually since I was a teenager and visits now include my grandchildren. This area has a very special place in our hearts, and the Lee Vining area will never be the same if this project goes through. I think it preferable to focus on the project for the hotel and restaurant, revisiting any updates and amendments needed since the project was first OK'd quite some time ago.

Additionally, although more housing is needed, I think the Tioga project is not the right place to put new housing. The project will tarnish the beauty of the place, changing forever traffic, light and sound pollution, and wildlife habitat. Please put your energies into finding a more suitable location for a housing project.

I am asking the Planning Commission to vote NO on Resolution R20-01.

Thank you,

*Shelly Hutchinson
880 Mallard St
Redding, CA 96003
shelbell03@aol.com*

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail
Get the new AOL app: mail.mobile.aol.com

From: [Renee Jones](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:06:57 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Significant impacts still remain:

27 years ago approved, never started. Freq. changes tried to slip through.

Cal trans says not safe.

Not safe for pedestrians and no solution

Not actually supplying enough housing for the employees. Creates more housing problems.

Significant visual, light, wildlife impact.

This Tioga Inn project is in direct conflict with the Mono Basin Community Plan, contrary to the Plan's values and goals.

From: [Renee Jones](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Re: Project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:33:16 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

And the Planning Commission might consider that the world has changed drastically since 1993. The personal and world forces that have stood in the way of the developer's plan should be taken as great advice from Mother Nature, don't do it!

On Thu, Apr 16, 2020 at 11:06 AM Renee Jones <reneejones0418@gmail.com> wrote:

Significant impacts still remain:

27 years ago approved, never started. Freq. changes tried to slip through.

Cal trans says not safe.

Not safe for pedestrians and no solution

Not actually supplying enough housing for the employees. Creates more housing problems.

Significant visual, light, wildlife impact.

This Tioga Inn project is in direct conflict with the Mono Basin Community Plan, contrary to the Plan's values and goals.

From: [Janet Keller](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 5:47:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My grandmother was an early settler here. My father was raised here on the Mattly ranch. My entire family is buried at the cemetery here. I've been coming here for 62 years and it's rugged beauty still takes my breath away. I come here frequently to appreciate the dark starlit skies and the quiet, captivating views. Mono Lake has a magical quality unlike anywhere else. It is both wild and serene. This is due to the fact it has remained relatively undeveloped. Please, please reconsider how this development will ruin this place forever! Once it happens, it can never go back. It becomes one more blight in a most sacred, beautiful place. Please consider the negative effect this will have for all of us and for future generations. Thank you,
Janet Keller

Sent from my iPad

From: ek95014@aol.com
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn project comments
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 8:22:28 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Ellen King. I have lived in Mono County for 13 years, the last 8 in Mono City. I work in Lee Vining.

I have many concerns about the Tioga Inn project. What began as a hotel and a restaurant has now morphed into what is being touted as community housing that may or may not be joined by the aforementioned hotel and restaurant. Housing is indeed a problem in Mono County, as it is in most of California. But this project is defined as housing for the workforce on site, not for the workforce in Lee Vining or Mammoth or elsewhere in the County. And the proponent has publicly acknowledged that the housing will not be adequate for the workforce that would be required if the project were fully built out. So in effect the project could add to, not solve, the housing shortage in Mono County.

Combine that with its placement directly in line with wildfires, at a highway intersection prone to accidents, in a community with limited services, with no mitigation of any of the known negative impacts, in a spot that exemplifies Mono County's "Wild by Nature" motto, and it's obvious that this is a project that should not move ahead.

I am asking the Planning Commission to vote no on Resolution R20-01. Thank you.

From: [Whitney Larsen](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Comments on Resolution R20-01
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:15:29 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

My name is Whitney Larsen I am a resident of Northern California.

I am deeply concerned about the significant, unavoidable impacts to the scenic and visual resources of the Mono Basin, and the valuable dark-sky resources of the Mono Basin. The Tioga Inn project will bring significant visual impacts to the shores of Mono Lake, the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area, and Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve.

These adverse impacts could have been addressed by better project planning and design but there are insufficient mitigations required in the project documents.

I am asking the Planning Commission to vote no on Resolution R20-01.

Thanks,
Whitney

--

Whitney Larsen

Chapter Co-Leader
Citizens Climate Lobby - San Francisco

Cell: 973-768-4277

whitney.larsen2@gmail.com

From: [Mark Liljegren](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:58:57 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The environmental impacts this planned development will have in the Mono Lake Basin the negative effects far outweigh the positive benefits. Mark Liljegren
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Beth Long](#)
To: [Michael Draper](#)
Subject: comment
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 2:06:05 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Commission:

We can do better to create a win-win situation. I have significant concerns about the proposed project as presented, specifically with regard to its misalignment with Mono Basin Community Plan. I would like to thank the planning commission for working to balance private property rights and our community's best interests. I have enjoyed the Mobil for many years and would like to thank Dennis and acknowledge his upfront financial investment in our community. I consider the Mobil, the people, the community up there to be my friends, neighbors, and good community members. Kind regards, Beth Long

From: [Karen Loro](#)
To: [Wendy Sugimura](#); [CD Ritter](#); [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment #3 Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 8:44:54 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission, Director Sugimura, and Secretary Ritter:

As a citizen and long time supporter of Mono County beauty and recreation opportunities , I read with interest the analysis of the Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment #3 Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report by WINTER KING , AttorneyKing@smwlaw.com .

I understand that there are extensive reasons that County cannot lawfully certify the FSEIR or approve the Project in its current form.

The FSEIR is flawed, fails to inform the public of the Project's impacts, and fails to adopt feasible mitigation that could reduce the severity of those impacts. The County must revise the FSEIR to include an adequate discussion of impacts, alternatives, and all feasible mitigation measures. Given that 27 years have already passed between the 1993 Specific Plan approval and the present, and there are no signs of imminent action to build the hotel or restaurant, the County should take the necessary time to revise its environmental analysis and do it right. I support that the goal and impacts of the proposed project are unclear and encourage the Board of Superivisors to reject it and require the above named recommendations be fulfilled .

Karen Loro ,
Nevada City ,Ca.

From: [Dave Marquart](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Dave Marquart Statement R20-01
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 1:04:48 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Dave Marquart. I've been a Mono City resident and owner of several properties in the Mono Basin for several decades.

The unmitigable impacts of this proposed development are of great concern to me, especially the impact on the scenic resources and the night sky. If you google the words "Mono Lake night sky" you'll see that our dark sky is known far and wide.

I recently retired, after 37 years, from a job where I personally spoke with countless numbers of visitors who were asking where they can go here at Mono Lake to best photograph the night sky. Most of those who photograph it do so at the South Tufa Area at Mono Lake's south shore. The proposed Tioga Inn development and its nighttime glow are directly in the line of sight from the shore at South Tufa where summer interpretive star programs are held.

Mono County's dark sky regulations (specifically chapter 23) are such that this project cannot be built without violating them.

Living on the bluff in Mono City, I live in a direct line-of-sight of the proposed development, but it's not just about me, it's about the changes, as a result of this project, to our Mono Basin community and environment. If you approve this project you'll be asking Mono Basin residents to accept a project that could triple the population of Lee Vining. That's an unreasonable request.

"Mono County: Wild by Nature;" sound familiar? It's Mono County's official slogan. I respectfully request the planning commission honor the spirit of that phrase by opposing this resolution.

Thank you for considering my comments.

From: [George Mellon](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 6:55:17 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear commission,

Although we need more housing in this county this project does not fit in this area. Too many units in the wrong area. Find somewhere less impacting to the overall topography and closer to needed services.

Thank you,

George Mellon

Mono Lake Committee Statement

Tioga Inn Project Planning Commission meeting
April 16, 2020

VERBAL COMMENT:

COMMISSIONERS, I respectfully wish to record my opposition to the Tioga Inn Specific Plan currently under consideration for your approval or denial.

My name is Joe Migliore. I am a lifelong resident of California and member of the Mono Lake Committee.

I have been visiting Lee Vining, Mono Lake Basin and the Tioga Pass entrance area to Yosemite repeatedly all my life. This area truly has a special place in my heart. I know it well as a hiker, backpacker, visitor and still active naturalist interpreter.

Up until the last 20 years or so I have been visiting Yosemite, from home in Southern California, almost annually. Then I stopped. Why? The crowding diminished my experience beyond acceptable. No matter the efforts for mitigation, it may never be quite the same!

I am so concerned that if the Tioga Inn Project is allowed to go ahead as planned the same thing will happen to the Mono Lake/LeeVining area. The very character and resources that have attracted developers to propose the Tioga Inn Project which will almost certainly be consequent and irreversibly diminished, followed by a cascade of more development.

Please vote NO on Resolution R20-01, Tioga Inn Project.

Respectfully, Joe Migliore

Joseph Migliore
jayseem@dc.rr.com
69655 Valle de Costa
Cathedral City 92234
760-202-3705
cell: 760-641-1040

From: [Rafe Miller](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 7:21:21 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Two nights ago I was camped out on BLM land off the Test Road. The night sky was spectacular. The day vistas awe inspiring. As a Mono Basin lover for over 50 years, I am opposed to the current Tioga Inn project. The project will cause significant, irreversible, negative impacts on the scenic beauty of this unique landscape. I implore the planning commission to vote not on the Tioga Inn project which will forever diminish this land.
Rafe Miller

Dr. Malcolm and Ellen Mosher
1054 Lundy Lake Road
Lee Vining, CA 93541

April 15, 2020

Mono County Planning Commission
CD Ritter
Post Office Box 347
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Commissioners,

My wife and I had been coming to the shores of Mono Lake and environs every year for the last 42 years. I am a landscape photographer by avocation, and my wife and I enjoy being along the shores at South Tufa, Old Marina, and other areas both during the day and during the evening. For years we dreamed of being able to live out there, and finally we were able to buy a property on Lundy Lake Road and build a house on it in 2012, and reside there six plus months during the year. In building that house, we strictly adhered to the requirements of the county, and we built a house that would have the least impact visually as well as physically to the environment. This our background for our response to the proposed Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment #3 & Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report.

This is the third time now that I have responded to proposed Tioga Inn plan. I attended the first public hearing on the proposed plan at the Community Center in Lee Vining several years ago, I raised a variety of issues. For the last round of hearings I wrote a detailed letter citing a large number of reasons why we are 100% against the Tioga Inn plan. My wife and I are completely opposed to this project, and our reasons have been documented in that first public hearing and in my lengthy letter. These have now been incorporated in the formal response of the Mono Lake Committee to this proposed project, and it serves no value to you for me to summarize my reasons all over again when the Mono Lake Committee's response states the position my wife and I have.

I will, however, state that Mono Lake and the surrounding areas have become an international mecca for photographers from around the world, and on a scale of 1 to 10 it is internationally regarded as a "10," meaning that it is a must-see, much like Yosemite Valley, the Grand Canyon, and other National Parks like these. From a photographer's perspective, the spectacular sunrises, mid-day light, sunsets, and shooting after dark around the lake are what draw international photographers as well as tourists to Mono Lake. These vistas are now seriously threatened by a hotel that will blight the area by being visible 24 hours a day and it will ruin photographic vistas from So. Tufa, the County Park, and Black Point to name just some of the photographic areas that will be forever affected if the latest plans of this property owner are approved. Let me cite

just one issue here. When we built our house in 2012, the County required *dark sky lighting* so that our lights would not light up the environment at night. Today, for tourists coming in from urban areas, Mono Lake and the Mono Basin afford the rare opportunity for them to see dark skies uncompromised by lights at night. Hotel lighting on that promontory will light up the night sky and be visible for miles.

It was an egregious mistake by the Planning Commission to allow the original proposal by the property owner in 1993, and now this property owner wants to propose enormous expansion of the 1993 proposal, a plan that will degrade the environment in the immediate vicinity of Lee Vining, the scenic vistas around Mono Lake, and a significant part of the Mono Basin. This owner has heard all aspects of the opposition to his proposal, and at the public hearing at the Community Center several years ago he stated that he welcomed comments for his consideration. The latter has proven to be just a lot of talk because he has not made any significant changes to his proposed changes that would address many of the valid points that have been raised against the project.

The conclusions that the Mono County Planning Commission makes will have a dramatic effect on the environment around the town of Lee Vining as well as a major part of the Mono Basin. There is obviously so much more than photography that has been marshaled up against this proposed plan, be it the environment, traffic and traffic safety, the impact on business in the town, the impact on the school system, the Volunteer Fire Department, the Highway Department, and the Sheriff's Department. Your approval of the proposed plan will have an irreversible and deleterious effect on the community and the environment.

Please, do not compound the mistake that the Planning Commission made 27 years ago.

Please, preserve the scenic beauty of the area for future generations of tourists and photographers who come to Lee Vining all year round.

Please, do not allow any of the changes this property owner wants to make. He was unfortunately given approval in 1993. Let him adhere to the 1993 approval. Please do not approve his latest plans that adversely affect the community and the environment so much more so than the plans of 1993. By his disregard of the community opposition to his proposal, he has proven that he cares not for the welfare of the community and the environment. Rather, he cares only about profiteering at the expense of the community and the environment.

Sincerely,
Dr. Malcolm and Ellen Mosher

From: [marty mosman](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Cc: [marty mosman](#)
Subject: No on R20-01
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:48:12 AM

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My name is Martha Mosman. I've been a regular visitor to Mono Lake and a Mono Lake Committee member for 25-30 years. I am addressing the visual impact of the proposed housing area on the ridge line above Mono Lake.

It is essential that the county lucky enough to be home to Mono Lake, its community and its mountain vistas, protect this precious resource against business interests that would squander it. The ridge line has an out-sized impact, being visible from iconic locations throughout the basin. Tourists do not come to Lee Vining just to see the lake. They come---I come--to see and be a part of the whole Ancient Landscape. Mono Lake is a place of Long time. This carelessly designed residential area will negatively impact the experience of nearly everyone who comes to Mono Basin. It needs to NOT be visible--but that mitigation is not written in to the plan.

To preserve the incredible Ancient Beauty of the Mono Basin, I am asking the planning commission to vote NO on resolution R20-01.

From: [Gary Nelson](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 9:41:39 AM

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1. The hotel project has been approved for 27 years, has been shopped around to hotel chains, and other developers with no takers. This is probably due to the Lee Vining economy being moribund for half of the year.
 2. The current pandemic, combined with the very real specter of future pandemics, Has hardly improved the economic climate here.
 3. The hotel project offers only theoretical justification for the workforce housing, which must be evaluated as a stand-alone project.
 4. Phase 1 (30 Units) could Provide needed workforce housing for Mono Basin residents if rents were kept low enough. However supply vs. demand would most likely make these units unaffordable for most of the service employees.
 5. If Phase 1 is approved, the clearing and grading of land should be limited to the minimum amount necessary for Phase 1.
 6. Mono County should consider how much infrastructure they will have to provide for this project; i.e. paths to allow safe walking or biking to and from Lee Vining stores and services.
- Thank You, Gary Nelson Mono City

From: [Ivan Olsen](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: from ivan olsen whoes mic is not working
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 1:12:01 PM

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From Ivan Olsen whoes mic is NOT working, even though i am signed to zoom to chat
Due to the seasonal nature the actual need for
employee housing would be better suited to be Bedroom style Employee Housing,
Like the Forest service offers for its seasonal workforce every year.

From: [Lily Pastel](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn comments
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 9:15:47 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mono County Planning Commission,

My name is Lily Pastel, I am a Mono City homeowner and I have been a resident of the Mono Basin for the last 6 years. I have chosen the Mono Basin as my home because of its scenic beauty and the small-town community. The proposed Tioga Inn project threatens both characteristics with significant and unavoidable impacts to the Mono Basin's scenic values and to the safety of residents and visitors at the junction of HWY 120 and 395.

The Mono Basin's dark sky is valuable to both tourists and locals of Mono County. This housing project will increase the ambient light pollution in the Mono Basin, and resident headlights will also sweep the basin ruining our dark night sky for locals and visitors.

The Tioga Inn housing also poses an increased safety risk by not including improvements connecting the new housing to town. Without the addition of crosswalks and sidewalks there will be no safe way for pedestrians to get to Lee Vining from the housing. Simultaneously additional cars being used by residents will increase accidents with wildlife and other vehicles. Our small volunteer fire department may be strained by these changes making it harder for them to protect our community.

These adverse impacts could have been addressed by better project planning and design but there are insufficient mitigations required in the project documents. I am asking the Planning Commission to vote no on Resolution R20-01.

From: [Daro Quiring](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Cc: monolakecommittee@monolake.org
Subject: Planning Commission - Resolution R20-01
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 3:18:25 PM

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Every year for the past 34 years, I have frequently backpacked in the Mono Basin Area, enjoying it every time.

I have many concerns about the proposed project, but the two most important to me are:

- (1) The proposed project will have irreversible impacts to the scenic nature of the Mono Basin National Forest.
- (2) The proposed project contains no provisions or promises for affordable housing, nor does it help solve the housing shortage in the region.

I ask the Planning Commission to vote NO on Resolution R20-01.

Sincerely,
Daro Quiring

April 13, 2020

To whom it may concern:
Mono Lake Committee

I am writing to let the Planning Commission know I do not recommend the poorly planned Tioga Inn Community Housing Development.

I want to maintain the integrity of Lee Vining and Mono Lake and preserve the natural landscapes of this unique area.

This project sets a poor example of change to this beautiful, rural, scenic, gateway community. It will significantly increase traffic, the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians, and lead to increased fatalities and accidents.

Sadly, the vast night sky in this area will be negatively impacted. I am concerned about the cumulative impacts to the mule deer, the bear habitat, mountain lions, and other migrating animals.

I do not want this (eyesore) project to go forward. This is some of the most beautiful and natural areas in the Sierras, let's keep it that way!

There are many other issues, however, at this time I will close.

Respectfully,
Carole L. Reimer

From: [Melinda&Terry](#)
To: [CDD_Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:07:43 PM

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To Whom it May Concern

These comments are from Antero and Melinda Rivasplata and are submitted for the Final SEIR for the Tioga Inn.

The responses to our comments on the draft SEIR are inadequate and do not improve the problems noted in our comments. We'll address the County's responses in turn.

Comment 1: We recommend recirculation of the draft SEIR precisely because the EIR is inadequate and conclusory in nature. This is pointed out by the vast amount of non-pertinent material included in both the regulatory setting and the impact analysis. The examples given by the County in its response are perfect examples of this. SGMA does not apply to Mono County; discussion of it is not pertinent. FERC regulation of the Tioga Lake dam relates to Southern California Edison's license to produce power from that dam - again, not pertinent to Tioga Inn. While the project may be subject to FAA approval, the Lee Vining Airport is very small, has no facilities other than a couple of storage buildings and a portable toilet. TSA has no facilities there, nor can it be reasonably foreseen that the TSA would ever have facilities there. Attached is a recent photo of the airport showing the two buildings and a charter flight. There were no other planes at the airport at the time of this flight in early March.



Comment 2: While the project calculations of VMT may use CalEEMod software, the key shortcoming of the analysis is the underestimating of daily vehicle trip generation. Because the project can reasonably be foreseen to include workers from Mammoth and June Lake during winter months, when Lee Vining is essentially dormant, the numbers entered into CalEEMod are incorrect. This results in an undercount by the software. We believe that the revised VMT in Appendix E of the final SEIR is similarly underestimated because it fails to account for longer trips, at least during the winter. Further, simply because VMT thresholds have not been set does not mean that the project will not have significant effect. The project reflects a substantial change in the environment. The project will add over 1,189,000 VMT to the site per the County's revised estimate, even with the underestimate noted above. This is a substantial change in the miles travelled. Because CEQA considers a substantial change in the existing environment to be a significant impact, the project will result in a significant, unavoidable impact. Per the Court of Appeal decision in *Citizens for Positive Growth v. City of Sacramento*, analyses should be considering VMT as a transportation impact now.

Comment 3: See Comment 2. The 3,000 MT GHG impact threshold has no basis in substantial evidence and is an arbitrary number. As noted above, the project substantially increases VMT and therefore will substantially increase GHG emissions for the area. Because GHG is a cumulative impact, the project will have a cumulatively considerable impact.

Comment 4: Our comments regarding deferred mitigation remain. There are mitigation measures that lack performance standards to ensure their feasibility and effectiveness. These include: GEO-5.1(a-1), GEO-5.1(a-2), GEO-5.1(c), HYDRO-5.2(a-1), and HYDRO-5.2(a-3) all of which provide for future studies and contain no performance standards, such as standards for effectiveness (e.g., definitions of "kept to a minimum").

Thank you for your consideration.

Antero and Melinda Rivasplata

From: [will_ Rowe](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:51:05 AM

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Greetings Mono County and Public

I have previously corresponded with the County regarding elements of this project which are incompatible with both the setting and consequences of this proposed project. I am a frequent visitor to the Mono Basin, attracted to the stunning, nearly pristine views and dark skies. My visits to Mono Basin entail using local retail businesses, restaurants, hotels, and coffee shops. My attraction to the Mono Basin will be impaired by the Tioga Inn project as proposed since it will essentially destroy elements of the stunning views and reduce the darkness of the night skies. In other words, my reason for visiting the Mono Basin will be eliminated.

I recognize the need for additional housing in Mono County. However, this project will needlessly destroy visual assets. Housing can be a priority, however it must be located and constructed in a fashion which does not impinge on the very assets so many visitors come to enjoy.

My previous comments are summarized. Chiefly:

Light Pollution: The revised DEIR does not protect against light pollution which will degrade the Mono Basin's asset of dark skies.

Visual Quality Destruction: The revised DEIR does not sufficiently protect the iconic view of the Sierra Nevada front range and local features. The project will present a glaring intrusion on the visual assets which are so characteristic of the Mono Basin.

Precedent: If your agency approves this DEIR and the project proceeds, precedent for future such development will be established. The Mono Basin, particularly near Lee Vining, could become visually destroyed, thereby destroying the entrance to Yosemite National Park.

If Mono County decides that this development is suitable as proposed in the DEIR, the county will lose the significant visitor-derived income from those of us who purposefully travel to the Mono Basin to enjoy the very assets which this development will destroy. If the county approves visual blight and destroys its unique visual assets, there will no incentive to make Mono County and Mono Lake a destination.

In summary: Provide worker housing in a fashion which does not degrade the assets which make the Mono Basin worth visiting and which does not set a precedent for future development which degrades the basin's assets.

Thank you for your consideration,

Will Rowe
Chico, CA

From: [will.rowe](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Project
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 10:04:44 PM

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Dear Mono County Planning Commission.

I have previously corresponded with the Commission regarding elements of this project which are incompatible with good planning and the future of the Mono Lake Basin as a destination. My previous comments still pertain. Chiefly:

Light Pollution: The revised DEIR does not sufficiently provide protection against light pollution which will degrade the Mono Basin's asset of dark skies.

Visual Quality Destruction: The revised DEIR does not sufficiently protect the iconic view of the Sierra Nevada front range and local features. The project will present a glaring intrusion on the visual assets which are so characteristic of the Mono Basin.

Precedent: If your agency approves this DEIR and the project proceeds, precedent for future such development will be established. The Mono Basin, particularly near Lee Vining, could become visually destroyed, thereby destroying the entrance to Yosemite National Park.

If Mono County decides that this development is suitable as proposed in the DEIR, the county will lose the significant visitor-derived income from those of us who purposefully travel to the Mono Basin to enjoy the very assets which this development will destroy. If the county approves visual blight and destroys its unique visual assets, there will no incentive to make Mono County and Mono Lake a destination.

In summary: do not acquiesce to developer pressure and thereby protect your county's visual assets and economy.

Sincerely,

William Rowe
P. O. Box 8165
Chico, CA 95926

From: [Raymond F. Skryja](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 3:59:41 PM

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My name is Raymond F. Skryja

As currently proposed I have some concerns that are inadequately addressed in the Tioga Inn permitting process. 1) Dark sky as observed from anywhere near Mono Lake will grossly be compromised by the lighting as designed. I suggest contacting the International Dark Sky Association for advice on fixture selection and acceptable luminosity. 2) Building above the ridge line as viewed from South Tufa would be an unacceptable intrusion to the expansive NATURAL views that help make Mono Lake the respite that it is. 3) The housing and traffic provision numbers do not add up. The employees of the inn cannot be accommodated adequately as proposed and the challenging lack of affordable housing in the area will worsen. Similarly, especially in the peak summer season busy roads will border on jammed. Let's not compromise the ambiance and beauty that is intrinsic to the Mono Basin with a poorly planned project.

Thank you

R.F.Skryja

From: [Allison Smyth](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Resolution R20-01
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:36:24 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi, I'm writing today to express my concern about the Tioga Inn Project and it's impact on Lee Vining. I am a seasonal employee in the Eastern Sierra and have frequented Lee Vining for the past three summers since moving to California. I agree with countless comments that have been brought up by the public in today's meeting including issues about public safety, connectivity, environmental impacts (short and long term), and school resources. There is no doubt that we need more affordable housing in the Mono Basin, but this project is not a viable solution. The public outcry around this project proves it goes against what residents want for the future of the community as laid out in the Mono Basin Community Plan. This would set a precedent for future commercial development and begin a domino effect to ruin the small town charm of Lee Vining. Not only that, but the proponent has built facilities without compliance in the past, therefore we should not be approving vague, outdated plans laid out before us now. Please listen to the community, please consider the young voices that have come forward because it will directly effect their future, and vote no on Resolution R20-01. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,
Allison Smyth

From: jsollitto@socal.rr.com
To: [Michael Draper](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:32:40 PM

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Dear Mr. Draper:

Having read many of the public comment letters directed to you regarding this project, I don't wish to be redundant as far as the many excellent reasons for opposition that they contain.

Instead, I will leave it at this: For the love of God, don't do it.

Thank you,

Jordan Sollitto
June Lake Cabin Owner

From: [David Strelneck](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: school district input
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 2:16:49 PM

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Dear colleagues,

It seems material that the letter just summarized into the record from the Superintendent of the ESUSD school district refutes the written evidence which the current assessment uses to address prior public comments, specifically including mine as noted on Comment #18 page 245 of the Subsequent EIR report.

Therefore please be sure that the accurate and current input from the Superintendent of the school district is used as basis for decision on this point, rather than the previous and apparently inaccurate input from a previous school district staff person.

Thank you,
David Strelneck

From: [Sarah Taylor](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Written comment
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:04:21 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Sarah Taylor and I've lived in Lee Vining full-time for more than 20 years (and seasonally starting in 1990). I have a short comment that I hope convinces you **not** to approve the Tioga Inn project.

Does Lee Vining need more affordable housing? Yes. Would the Lee Vining schools and community benefit from some new residents? Yes. Do we have a beautiful and friendly small town with an amazing, open landscape? Yes. Did countless community members already give input about how we could build the workforce housing and meet all these needs? Yes.

Would the currently envisioned Tioga Inn Project provide affordable housing? No. Would the project benefit our schools by increasing our student population in very large numbers with no increased funding? No. Would the project increase the beauty of our open landscape? No. Did the revised project plans address the real needs of our community and schools? No.

Planning Commissioners, please vote no on the current plans proposed for the Tioga Inn project and ask the developers to address the real issues and provide the necessary funds to the community and schools to make the project work as a benefit to all.

Thank you,
Sarah Taylor

From: [George Todd](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment & Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:42:35 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Honorable Members of the Mono County Planning Commission;

If I may, I would like to make our feelings heard on the Tioga Inn Expansion Project.

I first was first introduced to the beauty of the Mono Basin in the early 1950s and began visiting regularly then and do so currently as do my siblings and their families. My own family and I moved to Bridgeport in 1976 and we lived there until 1984. We had decided that the overcrowding, traffic and development of Southern California was not an environment in which to raise children and also it began to turn ugly visually and lose its' rural atmosphere. The natural world was being erased and replaced with concrete and the structures of Man.

After relocating to Mono County, and purchasing a house in Bridgeport, we lived our lives well in that small community and raised our children in the unparalleled environment of the area. We look back on it as the best time of our lives. We had traded material wealth for a beauty which uplifted ones' spirit and we have never regretted it.

I was a practicing fine Artist during our time in Mono County and was (and still am to this day) inspired by the singular beauty which surrounded us. We have during all of this time made untold trips up and down U. S. 395 to and from Southern California and points North. We have also traveled many times on Hwy 120 from Benton to the East and the Central Valley to the West over Tioga Pass and are very familiar with Lee Vining and the area in which the subject of the Environmental Report is located.

The proposed project is way out of character with the area and the surrounding environment. The size and especially the location of it and the ensuing ruination of the aesthetic beauty would be a terrible and permanent loss. A project of this size is not warranted and seems to only benefit the Principal involved. The additional housing seems to only benefit the employees who would be brought in to work there and not to provide housing needed by the community. The additional traffic load and demand on services in Lee Vining would be considerable.

I would request that the Planning Commission send the project back to the Developer to be modified to fit the character and needs of the community and in keeping with the incredible beauty of the area. It is irreplaceable.

To quote Joni Mitchell in her song Big Yellow Taxi, "...they paved Paradise and put up a parking lot."

Once it is gone, it is gone FOREVER!

Sincerely,

George and Gayle Todd
gwtoddart@earthlink.net



Eastern Sierra Unified School District

P.O. Box 575 – 231 Kingsley Street
Bridgeport, CA 93517
Telephone (760) 932-7443 – Fax (760) 932-7140

Heidi Torix

Superintendent

Board of Trustees

Ann Aylesworth
Jimmy Little
Ricky McCoy
Tim Sullivan
Bob Tems

April 14, 2020

Wendy Sugimura
Mono County Community Planning Commission
Community Development Director
PO Box 347
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

RE: Tioga Community Housing Plan and the impacts on the Eastern Sierra Unified School District

Ms. Sugimura and the Mono County Community Planning Commission,

Here at Eastern Sierra Unified School District (ESUSD), we open our doors and welcome each child as they come to us. Aside from student safety, our primary job is to educate our students to the best of our ability. In order to do so, the district must ensure we have properly credentialed teachers, appropriate supplies and facilities, and appropriate class sizes (student-to-teacher ratio). ESUSD is funded by our property taxes (Basic Aid), not by ADA (Average Daily Attendance, or the number of students we have in seat). Since ESUSD is a Basic Aid school district, and because of our limited means of revenue, I'd like to address a few items put forth in the Subsequent Environmental Impact Reports dated June of 2019 and March of 2020.

As found in pages 5.5-22 and 5.5-23 (which addresses goal 12.A Improving Community-School Support), the plan points out that ESUSD will receive enough developer fees to cover a variety of costs including new facilities and community programs. To clarify, ESUSD would receive developer fees that could possibly cover the need of an additional portable classroom. These fees are restricted from being used

for salaries, which would be the on-going, unfunded cost the district would incur. Specifically, for grades K-3, California schools must follow Class Size Reduction which means that our class sizes cannot handle more than 24 students without having to hire an additional teacher. If we see an influx of students in our primary grades, the dollars don't automatically come with those students; instead, the district is forced to hire an additional teacher(s) with limited tax dollar revenues. Any additional programs that might've been mentioned in the creation of this plan are not budgeted in the districts multi-year budget; these programs would also be additional costs to the district.

Specific numbers of students and the impact on our Lee Vining schools is mentioned beginning in section 5.8 of the Environmental Impacts and Mitigating Policies and Actions Impact Services. Though ESUSD cannot predict the number of students this project could possibly bring, it should be stated that any influx of students will also have an impact on class sizes other than K-3. One must look at the significant difference of educating a classroom with less than 20 students versus a classroom with many more. Communication that occurred with our prior CBO, Mollie Nugent, (as mentioned in comments coming from ESUSD) should not be the sole basis of communication with the district. As noted, the discussion involves the infrastructure immediately needed should the project go through, not the on-going staff costs the district would incur.

It is not my intent to deter growth in Mono County as the school district is responsible for educating students, not building infrastructure. However, I want to be clear that as the Superintendent of ESUSD, I can say for certainty that additional students without equal funds to support staffing could put a great financial burden on our district.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (760) 932-7443, or email me at htorix@esUSD.org.

Sincerely,

Heidi Torix

Cc: Michael Draper, Planning Analyst
Cetera Rohl, ESUSD Chief Business Officer
Eastern Sierra Unified School District Board of Trustees

From: [pam Tumbusch](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga inn
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 7:12:55 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mono County Planning Commission,
Please consider the wide ranging impact the Tioga Inn will have on Mono County, especially Lee Vining and the Mono Lake area. My family has been enjoying the area since the 1960s. We have witnessed other areas, such as June Lake and Mammoth become crowded with too much development. This brings with it overcrowded roads and recreation areas. If you allow one resort to become established on the outskirts of Lee Vining, how many more will you allow to be built. The area is a rural and scenic paradise, which host a multitude of natural wonders. It needs to stay as it is, so future generations may enjoy the natural splendor of the area.

Sincerely, Pamela Tumbusch

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Helen Vajk](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Subject: Mono Lake Project meeting
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:38:45 AM

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I have to leave this meeting. But, want to add my voice to NOT support this project at all. Better expressed by others, but this can't be a runaway train.

Problems:

- 1) No improvement in affordable housing.
- 2) Serious impact on Lee Vining size and character.
- 3) Serious impact on natural beauty and ecology. It you degrade this, you cannot get it back. Stop now.

From: [Alicia Vennos](#)
To: [Wendy Sugimura](#)
Subject: FW: Comment - Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 3:23:08 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Wendy – here you go. It’s fairly neutral but certainly indicates that there is a definitive need for housing based on workforce issues faced by 80% of local businesses county wide.

Alicia

From: Alicia Vennos
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 12:54 PM
To: cddcomments@mono.ca.go
Subject: Comment - Tioga Inn Specific Plan Amendment

I would like to share some findings from the Mono County Business Retention & Expansion Survey, conducted in 2018 with assistance from Long Research Consultants. Survey respondents include 80 businesses in unincorporated Mono County and 51 in Mammoth Lakes. June Lake and Lee Vining businesses represent 28% of the total respondents.

Regarding workforce issues faced by our business community, almost half (47%) of businesses report difficulty recruiting seasonal employees, and 44% have difficulty recruiting year-round employees. Retention is somewhat less problematic but still 28% have challenges keeping year-round employees.

Housing is cited as the greatest barrier to workforce retention and recruitment with almost 80% (79%) of businesses attributing availability/affordability of housing as the overriding barrier. Housing is most critical for seasonal frontline employees according to 62% of businesses, however nearly as many (59%) mention housing scarcity for year-round employees. Almost 40% of businesses attempt to address housing issues by providing some employee lodging but only 34% of those say the amount is adequate.

The findings from Mammoth Lakes alone compared to the other communities in Mono County are statistically similar.

Although we are facing challenging economic circumstances for an uncertain period of time, Tourism, the County’s primary economic driver, is expected to rebound. This rebound will be gradual but is anticipated to reach levels equal to or greater than those we saw prior to the pandemic. Workforce and housing issues will continue to be a challenge for our communities; the timing of this project appears to be ideal to help address future needs.

Alicia Vennos, Mono County Economic Development Director.

Alicia Vennos

Economic Development Director/Film Commissioner

Mono County

PO Box 603

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From: cjvondriska@gmail.com
To: [CD Ritter](#)
Subject: Tioga Inn Project Comments
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 9:58:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Mono County Planning Commission,

I am writing to give input on the Tioga Inn development proposal pending before you. Three generations of our family stay in Lee Vining every summer. We enjoy and respect your community. We have befriended your residents, we stay in a local hotel, we dine in your restaurants, we support your Visitor Center, and we are members of the Mono Lake Committee. That Committee is one of the finest environmental nonprofits to which I belong; and I am actively involved in several. The opinion of the Committee on this proposal is substantive, informed, and compelling.

In reviewing the massive development proposal pending before you, I ask that you consider its significant negative impacts. What may appear in the short run to be a tempting tax revenue source, appears instead to present a credible threat to your actual tax base: tourism. Our family spends approximately \$10,000 a year in Lee Vining, including all relevant taxes. If Lee Vining succumbs to the concrete sprawl that has happened throughout California, fewer tourists will come and stay. You risk converting your community from residential tourism to Yosemite-bound “gas and go” traffic.

I understand that it is difficult to decline a tax revenue source. We live in the Ojai Valley, a community much like Mono County. Our economy relies heavily on tourism. People come here to get away from urban sprawl. They come here to experience an environmentally vulnerable area and all that makes it special. As a community, we long have warded off threats of the magnitude currently pending before you. Indeed, in recent history our community fought of a development proposal for 10,000 homes in our watershed and viewshed. A short-sighted vision for our community may have approved that development under the guise of “more must mean better.” The ensuing impacts on traffic, air quality, and our environment would have been crippling – the resulting impact on our economy a direct, and foreseeable, one.

Our leaders have been forward-thinking and strong, and history has been kind to them.

In the Mono County Economic Development and Visitor Impact Study posted months ago on the county website, your consultant concluded that 84% of your visitors were satisfied due to the scenic beauty of Mono County. That is significant – your scenic beauty is your natural resource. Protect that resource.

Your Planning Department’s mission is “to provide efficient, responsible, and innovative public service through teamwork.” Please partner with your team – the residents and community you serve – to provide responsible public service. *Disapprove this proposal.* The long-term economic health of your community needs your leadership now more than ever.

Thank you very much for considering my input.

Carolyn J. Vondriska
Ojai, CA

From: [Rebecca Waters](#)
To: [CD Ritter](#); bartshe@monolake.org
Subject: Tioga Plan
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:33:56 AM

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This may be somewhat late given the meeting is this morning but here are my thoughts.

I am a photographer and any sight along highway 395 is my preferred setting for my landscape photography. Mono Lake and its tufas have been a subject of many of my photographs. I am very concerned that development as a result of the Tioga Inn will have an extreme negative impact on Mono Lake and its surroundings, the landscape and wildlife. So many beautiful areas in California have been impacted by the growth of consumer needs. Mono Lake should be kept as pristine as possible for generations to come.

Rebecca Waters

www.rwatersphotography.com

From: [Christian Wyatt](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: housing development
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:27:45 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my deep discomfort with the effort to destroy Lee Vining with high-end development. This is an embarrassing effort to turning a beautiful small town into yet another weekend playground for rich Angelinos. Please do the right thing. Please protect one of the most unique ecosystems in the world.

-Christian Wyatt

From: [Jeff W.](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Fwd: 4-16-20 Planning Commission comments, to read
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 11:23:03 AM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jeff W. <jeffwyneken@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Apr 15, 2020 at 10:06 PM
Subject: 4-16-20 Planning Commission comments, to read
To: Jeffrey Wyneken <jeffwyneken@gmail.com>

I'm Jeff Wyneken, homeowner in the Mono Basin for 25 years.

The proposed development could double the community's population, with significant and unknown impacts on services, infrastructure, and safety. I can't think of any community, large or small, in California, that would proceed with this scale of growth without long-term planning, consensus, and careful implementation. As the project stands, our community will have to live with the results, whatever they may be. We require more than a few letter-writing windows. This out-sized project requires ongoing involvement of all stakeholders.

Further, the community and its location serve as a historic gateway to two renowned natural and scenic public lands. The impact of an unregulated surge in population and construction on the health of our portal community, and on the scenic and natural resources of its environs, would clearly be significant and irreversible. Absent careful planning and implementation, and without genuine, ongoing community involvement, we are at the verge of permanently compromising our unique resources, without our collective consent.

There are published reports and recommendations on rural gateway communities. Lee Vining has been listed as a model gateway community, retaining its historic character and size. By contrast, witness the appalling degradation of other gateway communities; Gatlinburg, Tennessee, portal to the Smoky Mountains NP, comes to mind. The Mono Basin has already said no to this in its Community Plan.

I urge suspending this project until full community planning and resource mobilization have been undertaken and guaranteed. Please vote No on Resolution 20-01.

From: [Andrew Youssef](#)
To: [CDD Comments](#)
Subject: Comment letter
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:29:53 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mono County Planning Commission,

I have been a Mono Basin resident for 5 years, in Lee Vining and currently Mono City. I am writing in opposition of Resolution R20-01, as the significant, adverse, and unavoidable visual impacts of this project are too great for it to move forward as planned.

After reading the FSEIR and the New Preferred Alternative 6, the proposed mitigations are still inadequate for a project of this size. I have led both walking and canoe tours at Mono Lake and visitors often comment on and are amazed by the seemingly endless wild landscapes of the Mono Basin where you can look in any direction from South Tufa and see nearly no human development whatsoever. The Tioga Inn project would still be plainly visible from South Tufa, Mono County's most popular visitor destination (as well as several other key locations in the Basin). People enjoying sunrise at the lakeshore will see sun reflections from the prominent structures in the project area as they look toward the Sierra escarpment. During the day, visitors will see the buildings and wonder how such a massive project was approved adjacent to the first-ever designated National Forest Scenic Area. Additionally, dark night skies will be forever negatively altered by the lights from this project.

Mono County can do better than this and I urge the Planning Commission to vote no on this resolution until more significant mitigations to the project's visual impact can be addressed.

Respectfully,

Andrew Youssef