



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: March 10, 2026

DATE: February 9, 2026

TO: Board of County Commissioners

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SUBJECT: Public Hearing: Appeal of the Washoe County Planning Commission's denial of Tentative Subdivision Map Case Number WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and Special Use Permit Case Number WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure) for a common open space tentative subdivision map for a 940-lot common open space development, with lots ranging in size from 2,876+/- square feet to 68,008+/- square feet. The project will include major grading of 3.6 million cubic yards of excavation, and 625,000 cubic yards of fill. This project meets the standard for a project of regional significance because it contains housing of more than 625 units, sewage use greater than 187,500 gallons per day, water usage greater than 625-acre feet per year, and traffic counts greater than an average of 6,250 trips daily; as such, any approval by Washoe County is provisional subject to the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission's finding that the project is in conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. The applicant also seeks approval of Special Use Permits for utility services (water tanks and two lift stations) and three bridge crossings over the Sensitive Stream Zone and Critical Stream Zone buffers for Steamboat Creek and Browns Creek. The applicant and appellant is World Properties, Inc. The proposed project is in the South Valleys Planning Area, to the west of old 395, south of Pagni Lane, between Pleasant Valley and Old Washoe City.

The property owner is World Properties Inc, the total acreage is 759.7 acres, and the APN's associated with the proposed subdivision are: 046-080-40, 046-060-47, 046-060-45, 046-060-55, 046-090-26, 046-090-25, 046-090-24, 046-090-23, 046-090-18, 046-090-17, 046-090-16, 046-090-15, 046-090-14, 046-090-13, 046-090-12, 046-090-11, 046-090-10, 046-090-09, 046-090-08, 046-090-07, 046-090-06, 046-090-05, 046-

AGENDA ITEM # _____

090-04, 046-090-01, 046-100-07, 046-100-02, 046-100-03, 046-100-04,
046-100-10

The Board shall consider the appeal based on the record on appeal and testimony and materials submitted at the Board's public hearing. The Board may affirm, modify or reverse the Planning Commission's decision. If the Board reverses the decision of the Planning Commission, it may remand the matter back to the Planning Commission with instructions or the Board may directly grant the application.

(Commission District 2.) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

The appellants are appealing the decision of the Planning Commission to deny a common open space tentative subdivision map for a 940-lot common open space development, with lots ranging in size from 2,876+/- square feet to 68,008+/- square feet. The project will include major grading of 3.6 million cubic yards of excavation, and 625,000 cubic yards of fill. This project meets the standard for a project of regional significance because it contains housing of more than 625 units, sewage use greater than 187,500 gallons per day, water usage greater than 625-acre feet per year, and traffic counts greater than an average of 6,250 trips daily; as such, any approval by Washoe County is provisional subject to the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission's finding that the project is in conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. The applicant also seeks approval of Special Use Permits for utility services (water tanks and two lift stations) and three bridge crossings over the Sensitive Stream Zone and Critical Stream Zone buffers for Steamboat Creek and Browns Creek.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Economic Impacts: Meet the needs of our growing community.

PREVIOUS ACTION

January 20, 2026: Appellant, World Properties, Inc, submitted an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision denying WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure)

January 6, 2026: The Washoe County Planning Commission reviewed WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure) and denied the application.

PRIOR HISTORY ON THE PROPERTY

The subject property has a lengthy and complex permitting history that includes multiple entitlements, followed by a settlement agreement that led to the current zoning on the property today. A portion of that history is provided within this report in order to offer important context leading up to the current proposal.

In 1984, the St. James Resort (Sierra Reflections) received a conditional special use permit for a resort containing a 250-room luxury hotel, small casino, fitness center, 550 condominium units and an 18-hole golf course. This special use permit was amended in 1991 to expand the hotel to 350 rooms and reduce the total condominium units to 400.

In 2004 Washoe County initiated a comprehensive plan amendment (CP04-008) to change the land use designation on twenty-six parcels that were originally designated Tourist Commercial (TC) and General Rural (GR) to Medium Density Suburban (MDS), Medium Density Rural (MDR) and General Rural (GR).

As the comprehensive plan amendment was being processed these properties were at the time, located within the City of Reno's sphere of influence. The settlement agreement stems from a regional plan lawsuit in 2002 in which Washoe County and the Sun Valley General Improvement District filed a writ of mandamus against the Regional Planning Governing Board to prohibit the implementation of the 2002 Regional Plan. The case included Washoe County, City of Reno, City of Sparks, Verdi property owners, the Sun Valley General Improvement District, and Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Governing Board. The parties met for settlement negotiations in fall of 2002, and after approximately 4 weeks of discussions, all parties agreed to abide by the Regional Plan lawsuit Settlement Agreement. One of the tasks outlined in the settlement agreement was to roll back the City of Reno and City of Sparks sphere of influence in a number of areas around the region.

In regard to the Sierra Reflections properties, the Settlement Agreement stated that **if no action is taken by Washoe County, the City of Reno will not roll back the Sphere of Influence and will assume jurisdiction of the Tourist Commercial portion of the property and several thousand acres north of the subject property.**

To address the Regional Plan Settlement Agreement, County staff was directed to initiate an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The Washoe County Board of Commissioners provided directions to staff to amend the land use on the subject parcels to one of the following three options:

- Option One - create a new land use designation for destination resorts or rural resorts that complies with policy 1.1.6 and re-designate the tourist commercial sector of the St. James Resort to this new designation.
- Option Two - remove the tourist commercial designation and replace it with a series of existing Washoe County land use designations such as Neighborhood Commercial, Open Space, and General Rural to fit the approved components of the project.
- Option Three - Designate the site as a residential use with a density of no more than three units per acre.

Options one and two required the County to accommodate an approved project known as St. James's Resort, whereas option three established a residential land use not to exceed three units per acre. Additionally, the third option would result in the revocation of the approved Major Project Review (MPR) for the St. James's Resort.

In 2004, staff favored the third option because it provided an expiration for the St. James's Resort project, which had no expiration date, and it allowed for residential development of the property.

As proposed, CP04-008 would establish a land use map of no greater than three units per acre. The three designations identified on the proposed land use map were Medium Density Suburban (MDS), Medium Density Rural (MDR) and General Rural (GR). The proposed land use designations related to the existing slopes on the property. The MDS designation generally identified slopes under 15%, the MDR designation identified slopes between 15% and 30%, and the GR designation identified slopes greater than 30%. Based on the proposed land use map, the density would allow a maximum of $\pm 1,090$ lots on the property.

The proposal was unanimously recommended for approval by the Galena/Steamboat CAB, approved by the Planning Commission, and approved by the Board with a partial reduction in the maximum number of units allowed (up to 995 instead of the original 1,090). In September 2004, this proposal was found in conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan.

To provide clarity and context for the Board, subsequent key actions associated with the project are summarized below.

August 2005: The Washoe County Planning Commission held a public hearing on a request for a Special Use Permit to construct a sanitary sewer line to serve the Sierra Reflections subdivision project, TM06-001.

May 2, 2006: The Washoe County Planning Commission unanimously approved the 938-lot Tentative Subdivision Map for Sierra Reflections, Case Number TM06-001.

June 14, 2006: The project received final approval from the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission, as a project of regional significance.

March 18, 2008: The Board approved a development agreement extending the deadline for filing a final map until June 14, 2009. The filing deadline was further extended in accordance with that agreement by the Director of Planning and Building until June 14, 2010.

May 25, 2010: The Board approved an amendment of the 2008 development agreement, extending the deadline for filing a final map until June 14, 2012. The filing deadline was further extended in accordance with that agreement by the Director of Planning and Building until June 14, 2014.

September 9, 2010: Initial adoption of the South Valley's Area Plan.

May 13, 2014: The Board approved an amendment to the 2008 development agreement, extending the deadline for filing a final map until June 14, 2018. The filing deadline was extended in accordance with that agreement by the Director of Planning and Building until June 14, 2020.

2016: Washoe County and World Properties, Inc. entered into a sanitary sewer dedication agreement requiring the developer to design, construct, and fund sewer infrastructure connecting the project to the County's existing system for treatment at the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility.

April 28, 2020: The Board approved an amendment and restatement of the 2008 development agreement, thereby extending the deadline in NRS 278.360 for filing a final map until June 14, 2022.

April 26, 2022: The Board chose to not introduce an amended development agreement that would have extended the final map deadline for Sierra Reflections, a residential subdivision originally approved in 2006 (Tentative Map TM06-001).

May 31, 2022: The Community Services Department issued a letter rejecting the first final map submittal for Sierra Reflections.

June 9, 2022: Applicant appealed the rejection of the first final map to the Board.

October 25, 2022: The Board, pursuant to NRS 278.0235, took action to reject the first final map submittal for Sierra Reflections and allowed additional time for a revised final map submission to be recorded on or before June 22, 2023, or it would expire.

February 15, 2023: Applicant submitted for final map for Sierra Reflections Village #1.

September 12, 2023: As a result of the submission of the revised final map for Sierra Reflections Village #1 being rejected, the second appeal to the Board of County Commissioners of final map for Sierra Reflections Village #1 is withdrawn by applicant and, subsequently, expiration of the project occurred on June 22, 2023, as no final map was recorded.

January 30, 2024: The Envision Washoe 2040 Master Plan was adopted.

BACKGROUND

Planning Commission Decision related to the current project requests, WTM24-001 and WSUP25-0019:

On January 6, 2026, the Washoe County Planning Commission denied the applicant's request for a 940-lot common open space tentative subdivision map and special use permits for utility services (water tanks and two lift stations) and three bridge crossings over the sensitive stream zone and critical stream zone buffers for Steamboat Creek and Browns Creek. In order to approve the request, the Planning Commission must make all findings within WCC Section 110.810.30 (Special Use Permits), Section 110.408.28 (Common Open Space Development), and Section 110.608.25 (Tentative Subdivision Maps). However, the Planning Commission was unable to make the majority of these findings. The findings they were unable to make are identified below:

Article 810, Special Use Permit

- 1) Consistency. That the proposed use is consistent with the action programs, policies, standards and maps of the Master Plan and the South Valleys Planning Area;
- 2) Improvements. That adequate utilities, roadway improvements, sanitation, water supply, drainage, and other necessary facilities have been provided, the proposed improvements are properly related to existing and proposed roadways, and an adequate public facilities determination has been made in accordance with Division Seven;
- 3) Site Suitability. That the site is physically suitable for major grading, and for the intensity of such a development;
- 4) Issuance Not Detrimental. That issuance of the permit will not be significantly detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare; injurious to the property or

improvements of adjacent properties; or detrimental to the character of the surrounding area; and

Article 408, *Common Open Space*

- 1) Preserve or Provide Open Space. The development preserves existing steep slope areas, developmentally constrained areas, and heavily treed areas from development and provides future residents with an option for open space above and beyond any applicable minimum requirements of Article 432.
- 2) Protect Natural and Scenic Resources. The development identifies and protects natural and scenic resources, including but not limited to ridgelines, waterways, large diameter trees, and habitat for special status species.
- 4) Minimize Road Building. The development is designed in a manner that reduces the overall linear distance of roadways (e.g. cul-de-sacs).
- 5) Encourage a Sense of Community. The development provides community amenities such as trail connectivity, bike trails/walking trails, dog parks, playgrounds, pocket parks, etc.

Article 608, *Tentative Subdivision Maps*:

- 1) Plan Consistency. That the proposed map is consistent with the Master Plan and any specific plan;
- 2) Design or Improvement. That the design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the Master Plan and any specific plan;
- 3) Type of Development. That the site is physically suited for the type of development proposed;
- 4) Availability of Services. That the subdivision will meet the requirements of Article 702, Adequate Public Facilities Management System;
- 6) Public Health. That the design of the subdivision or type of improvement is not likely to cause significant public health problems;
- 9) Dedications. That any land or improvements to be dedicated to the County is consistent with the Master Plan; and
- 10) Energy. That the design of the subdivision provides, to the extent feasible, for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities in the subdivision.

Please see the Planning Commission Action Order (Attachment A), and a full staff analysis of the project and required findings within the Planning Commission Staff Report (Attachment C). The Planning Commission staff report provides more details of the overall project and staff's evaluation of the findings. Of note, although the Planning Commission was unable to make the required findings to approve this application, as presented in Attachment C staff was able to make the required findings and recommended approval of the application. This Board is charged with considering the same findings required by WCC 110.810.30, 110.408.28, and 110.608.25.

If this Board can make all required findings in WCC 110.810.30, 110.408.28, and 110.608.25, the decision of the Planning Commission should be reversed, and the tentative subdivision map and special use permit approved with conditions or remanded to the Planning Commission with instructions. If this Board cannot make all required findings required in WCC 110.810.30, 110.408.28, and 110.608.25, the Board should affirm the Planning Commission's decision to deny WTM24-001 and SUP25-0019.

Appellant/Applicant:

The appellant is World Properties, Inc. and the actions being appealed are the entirety of the Washoe County Planning Commission's January 6, 2026, decision for denial of Tentative Subdivision Map Case No. WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and Special Use Permit Case No. WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure).

The appellant/applicant contends that the Planning Commission's January 6, 2026, denial of WTM24-001 and WSUP25-0019 was arbitrary and that it constituted an abuse of discretion arguing that it disregarded substantial evidence in the record, including staff's approval recommendation and expert analyses addressing geotechnical conditions, remediation, hydrology, aquatic resources, cultural resources, traffic, and fiscal impacts.

Instead, the appellant/applicant argues "*the decision from the Planning Commission relied on unsubstantiated public opposition, elevated aspirational Master Plan policies over long-standing zoning that permits up to 995 dwelling units, and, after more than forty years of reasonable, investment-backed expectations, effectively deprived the property of its economic value without compensation*".

The appellant/applicant requests that the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners reverse the Planning Commission's January 6, 2026, denial and approve WTM24-001 and WSUP25-0019, based on a de novo review recognizing the project's conformance with zoning, the Master Plan, and Development Code.

The appellant/applicant states that the current application is substantially similar to the previously approved 2006 tentative map (TM06-001) but includes several refinements, including an increase in preserved open space from 54 percent to 61.6 percent, a reduction in stream crossings from four (4) to three (3), and the incorporation of updated design and infrastructure elements. This includes mercury remediation, avoidance of critical and sensitive stream zones except at three bridge crossings, dark skies compliant outdoor lighting, and implementation of planned utility extensions and infrastructure upgrades. That appellant/applicant argues that the current proposal reflects updated development standards while still maintaining consistency with the site's established development framework.

The appellant/applicant contends that the Sierra Reflections site has been subject to long term planning and entitlement activity with initial approvals in 1984, which authorized a resort-oriented development consisting of a 250-room hotel/casino, 550 condominium units, a health club, and an 18-hole golf course on land designated Resort Hotel (later Tourist Commercial). Washoe County approved an amendment in 1991 which allowed for a 350-room hotel/casino, 400 condominium units, a health club, and an 18-hole golf course. During the 2002 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan Update, the City of Reno sought to include the property within its Sphere of Influence, which resulted in an agreement between the City of Reno and Washoe County to down-zone the site to lower intensity residential

uses in exchange for withdrawal of the Sphere of Influence boundary, establishing the framework for subsequent residential development.

The appellant/applicant describes that the residential development concept for Sierra Reflections advanced through multiple public review and entitlement actions in the mid-2000s. In 2004, Washoe County approved a comprehensive plan amendment redesignating the site for residential use, resulting in land use designations permitting up to 995 dwelling units and a determination of Regional Plan conformance by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency. Infrastructure approvals followed in 2005, including approval of a special use permit authorizing construction of a sanitary sewer line to serve the project area and the adjacent St. James's Village development.

The appellant/applicant states that the Sierra Reflections project has been subject to multiple development agreements and deadline extensions related to environmental review, infrastructure coordination, and regulatory compliance. Beginning with approval of Development Agreement DA08-003 in 2008, the Board approved several amendments extending final map filing deadlines through 2020 to accommodate required studies, agency coordination, and permitting. In 2020, the Board adopted an amended development agreement extending the deadline to June 14, 2022, and updating conditions to reflect current service providers and fire safety standards. The tentative map subsequently expired in 2023 without further map recordation.

Staff Recommendation for Planning Commission: To grant the application, all findings set forth in Section 110.608.25, Findings, Article 608, Tentative Subdivision Maps, Section 110.810.30 Findings, and Article 810, Special Use Permits, and Section 110.408.28, Findings, Article 408, Common Open Space must be made. Although the Planning Commission was not able to make all required findings, staff evaluated the proposed applications and determined that it is in compliance with the required findings and recommended approval. Staff conducted an extensive review in coordination with local, regional, state, and federal agencies. These agencies provided technical analysis and subject-matter expertise to ensure that proper infrastructure, environmental considerations, and overall public service considerations were evaluated. The resulting recommendations and conditions of approval were incorporated into the project, and form the basis for staff's determination that the required findings can be met. Staff's evaluation is summarized as follows:

Findings

Between Washoe County Code Sections 110.810.30, 110.408.28, and 110.608.25, a total of twenty (20) findings must be made for project approval. Recognizing that the record for this project is extensive, a summary of the relevant analysis from staff and agency partners is provided below for each finding.

Article 608, Tentative Subdivision Maps

(a) **Plan Consistency.** That the proposed map is consistent with the Master Plan and any specific plan;

Staff Comment: The proposed tentative map and supporting infrastructure is consistent with the Washoe County Master Plan, including the South Valleys Planning Area. The project implements applicable plan policies through clustered

residential development, substantial common open space, and buffering between new development and surrounding uses. The site's land use designations and zoning allow residential development at the proposed intensity. A priority policy within the South Valleys Planning Area is Policy 3.3 which is to incentivize residential clustering and common open space developments to permanently protect open space and valued natural resources. While the South Valleys Planning Area encourages future residential development to mirror existing development patterns and densities, the subject property is governed by existing zoning that allows up to three dwelling units per acre. The density was addressed at the regional level when the Comprehensive Plan Amendment took place in 2004, and Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency reconfirmed that the allowed density within the proposed development does not exceed the density allowed by the zoning on the properties.

- (b) Design or Improvement. That the design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the Master Plan and any specific plan;

Staff Comment: The subdivision design incorporates public infrastructure, parks, trails, buffering, and open space in a manner consistent with the Master Plan and Washoe County Code. Conditions of approval address cultural resources, landscaping, and long-term open space maintenance to ensure continued compliance. The layout includes appropriately designed roadways, utilities, and crossings necessary to serve the development while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses.

- (c) Type of Development. That the site is physically suited for the type of development proposed;

Staff Comment: The site is physically suitable for the proposed residential subdivision. Environmental and physical constraints, including slopes, floodplains, wetlands, and mercury contaminated soils have been identified and addressed through avoidance, clustering, and mitigation measures. Development is concentrated within the most suitable portions of the site (generally 0–15 percent slopes), while approximately 468 acres, or over 61 percent of the site, are preserved as common open space. Historic features, including the V&T Railroad grade, are retained within open space and incorporated into the trail system. When considering the mercury contaminated soils, the use of clean fill capping is a standard remediation practice and has been included as part of the proposed design. Mercury remediation standards require residential areas to contain no more than 7 parts per million (ppm) of mercury from the surface to a depth of eight feet, and roadway areas to contain no more than 30 ppm based on an eight-hour time weighted average. This is more stringent than the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidance, which generally requires a minimum two-foot cap with allowable concentrations of up to 80 ppm beneath the cap.

- (d) Availability of Services. That the subdivision will meet the requirements of Article 702, Adequate Public Facilities Management System.

Staff Comment: The project demonstrates adequate capacity and provision of public services, including water, wastewater, and roadway infrastructure. Relevant agencies, including Washoe County Engineering, Northern Nevada Public Health, and Truckee Meadows Water Authority, reviewed the proposal and provided

comments that have been incorporated as conditions of approval. With these conditions, the project meets the requirements of the Adequate Public Facilities Management System.

Further discussion with Washoe County Engineering occurred between the Planning Commission meeting and the Board of County Commissioners meeting on March 10, 2026. Washoe County Engineering provided the following information regarding this proposed subdivision.

“110.702.10 – Adequate Public Facilities Determination - It is determined that adequate public facilities will be made available concurrent with the impacts of that development. New development is responsible to design, construct and offer for dedication all onsite and off-site wastewater and potable water infrastructure necessary to support the proposed project demands. This includes all infrastructure improvements necessary to support the project, or project phases, that were planned and approved during the tentative map process. Washoe County reserves the right to review and approve phases of projects as they are submitted for final approval and when sufficient treatment and effluent management capacity is permanently available.

Specific to the proposed Sierra Reflections residential development, Washoe County and World Properties, Inc. entered into a sanitary sewer infrastructure dedication agreement in 2016 that obligates World Properties or their successors to design, construct and pay for all infrastructure to convey sewer flows to a point of connection to Washoe County’s existing sanitary sewer collection system for conveyance to the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility for treatment and effluent management. Washoe County is concurrently completing the next incremental phase of treatment capacity improvements within the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility and increasing conveyance capacity within the Pleasant Valley Sanitary Sewer Interceptor.”

- (e) Fish or Wildlife. That neither the design of the subdivision nor any proposed improvements are likely to cause substantial environmental damage, or substantial and avoidable injury to any endangered plant, wildlife or their habitat;

Staff Comment: *The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) reviewed the project and required a Wildlife Mitigation Plan, which is incorporated into the conditions of approval. A Biological Resources Assessment prepared by a consultant, hired by the applicant, evaluated the potential presence of special-status species and identified appropriate mitigation measures. Mitigations outlined within the Biological Resources Assessment are included in the conditions of approval. This finding can be met through implementation of agency-required conditions and mitigation.*

- (f) Public Health. That the design of the subdivision or type of improvement is not likely to cause significant public health problems;

Staff Comment: *Potential public health concerns, including mercury-contaminated soils, have been addressed through site design and mitigation measures, including placement of residential lots in areas with lower contamination levels and the use of clean fill caps. This determination was made after over a year of extensive review and coordination between Northern Nevada Public Health, the project’s*

engineering team, and other stakeholder agencies. Adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is conditioned, and air quality permitting and mitigation will occur during construction. Tree shaded pavement and reduced impervious surfaces, due to the density clustering, further reduce potential heat-related impacts. As a result, no significant public health impacts are anticipated.

- (g) Easements. That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will not conflict with easements acquired by the public at large for access through, or use of property within, the proposed subdivision;

Staff Comment: *There are no existing public access easements crossing the property. Proposed roadways will be constructed in accordance with Washoe County Engineering standards. New easements, including those for public-use trails, will be created as part of the subdivision, improving connectivity and public access without conflicting with existing rights.*

- (h) Access. That the design of the subdivision provides any necessary access to surrounding, adjacent lands and provides appropriate secondary access for emergency vehicles;

Staff Comment: *The project provides two primary access points from US 395A and a gated emergency access connection via the St. James Parkway extension. Proposed roundabouts enhance traffic operations and safety, while the emergency access improves evacuation capability. Washoe County Engineering, NDOT, and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District reviewed the access design, and conditions of approval ensure compliance with access and emergency response standards.*

- (i) Dedications. That any land or improvements to be dedicated to the County is consistent with the Master Plan;

Staff Comment: *Roadways and other improvements proposed for dedication will be constructed to County standards and consistent with the Master Plan. Any future dedications of roads, trails, or land will comply with applicable County requirements.*

- (j) Energy. That the design of the subdivision provides, to the extent feasible, for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities in the subdivision.

Staff Comment: *The project's clustered, common open space design reduces roadway length, impervious surface area, and vehicle miles traveled. These design features reduce heat retention and energy demand, supporting passive cooling opportunities and improved energy efficiency relative to more dispersed development patterns.*

Article 810, Special Use Permits

- (a) Consistency. The proposed use is consistent with the action programs, policies, standards and maps of the Master Plan and the applicable area plan;

Staff Comment: *The proposed common open space development is consistent with the Washoe County Master Plan, including the South Valleys Planning Area. The project implements applicable policies through clustered residential development, preservation of a substantial amount of open space, and buffering between new*

residential lots and surrounding use types. It should be noted that the Master Plan anticipates future development and population growth, and adequate public facilities are required to support it, the special use permits are specifically for those very public facilities that will support the subdivision. The proposed project is located within the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA), which is an area planned for services typically found in a more urban environment, as a result water and wastewater infrastructure is anticipated and required as outlined in the conditions of approval.

- (b) Improvements. Adequate utilities, roadway improvements, sanitation, water supply, drainage, and other necessary facilities have been provided, the proposed improvements are properly related to existing and proposed roadways, and an adequate public facilities determination has been made in accordance with Division Seven.

Staff Comment: The subdivision design provides the necessary public infrastructure to serve the development, including water and sewer facilities, roadways with bridge crossings, sewer lift stations, water tanks, parks, and an interconnected trail system. Conditions of approval address compliance with Washoe County Code and Master Plan policies related to cultural resources, landscaping, and long-term open space maintenance. With these conditions, the proposed improvements are appropriately related to existing and planned facilities and meet adequate public facilities requirements.

- (c) Site Suitability. The site is physically suitable for the type of development and for the intensity of development;

Staff Comment: The project as submitted is a common open space development and utilizes parcel clustering to account for site constraints while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding area. Common open space developments are permitted within the Washoe County Development Code, specifically Article 408. The proposed overall density of approximately 1.24 dwelling units per acre is below the maximum density permitted by zoning (1.43 du/ac). More than 61 percent of the site (approximately 468 acres of the ±759 acre site) is preserved as open space, allowing development to be concentrated in the most suitable areas and ensuring that environmental constraints and topography are appropriately addressed. The proposed bridge crossings improve circulation and safety, water storage facilities ensure adequate water supply, and sewer lift stations facilitate connection to the main wastewater system, protecting groundwater and surface water resources.

- (d) Issuance Not Detrimental. Issuance of the permit will not be significantly detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare; injurious to the property or improvements of adjacent properties; or detrimental to the character of the surrounding area; and

Staff Comment: Potential public health concerns associated with mercury-contaminated soils are addressed through site design and mitigation measures, including placement of residential parcels in areas with lower contamination levels and the use of clean fill caps. Adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is provided, and air quality mitigation will be implemented during construction. Tree shading and reduced impervious surfaces help minimize heat effects. With respect to area character, the project includes buffering along the northern edge using lot sizes consistent with nearby development, while other portions of the site primarily abut highways or open areas. The extensive common open space and network of

publicly accessible trails preserve rural character and provide access to natural settings, maintaining compatibility with the surrounding area.

- (e) Effect on a Military Installation. Issuance of the permit will not have a detrimental effect on the location, purpose or mission of the military installation.

Staff Comment: There are no military installations within the area of the project.

Article 408, Common Open Space

- (a) Preserve or Provide Open Space. The development preserves existing steep slope areas, developmentally constrained areas, and heavily treed areas from development and provides future residents with an option for open space above and beyond any applicable minimum requirements of Article 432.

Staff Comment: The project preserves areas of steep slopes and other constrained lands by concentrating development in more suitable areas and reserving substantial acreage as common open space. Critical and sensitive stream zone buffers, as defined in Article 424, are avoided and will remain undisturbed with the exception of the three bridge crossings. Tree removal is primarily limited to areas requiring remediation of mercury-contaminated soils, where clean fill capping is necessary; trees within Steamboat and Browns Creek corridors are retained except where limited disturbance may be required for cleanup, fire safety, or maintenance. Overall, the project provides open space in excess of minimum standards.

- (b) Protect Natural and Scenic Resources. The development identifies and protects natural and scenic resources, including but not limited to ridgelines, waterways, large diameter trees, and habitat for special status species.

Staff Comment: Approximately 61.5% of the site is preserved as open space, protecting waterways and associated buffers along Steamboat and Browns Creeks. The plan incorporates a multi-use trail along the historic V&T Railroad grade, additional trails to scenic vistas, and trail segments paralleling creek corridors. Trees within critical and sensitive stream buffers are retained, and equestrian trail access is included. These elements protect and enhance natural and scenic resources while integrating them into a broader trail network.

- (c) Achieve a More Efficient Use of Land. The development utilizes density clustering to further protect and preserve open spaces.

Staff Comment: The project incorporates common open space development components such as clustered development with reduced lot sizes to concentrate development within the most suitable areas of the site. This approach reduces the overall development footprint, limits infrastructure needs, and preserves moderate to steep slope areas as open space for trails and pedestrian amenities. The clustering strategy results in a more efficient use of land while meeting open space objectives.

- (d) Minimize Road Building. The development is designed in a manner that reduces the overall linear distance of roadways (e.g. cul-de-sacs).

Staff Comment: The project is a common open space development, which includes the clustering of parcels and parcels of varying sizes (lots ranging in size from 2,876+/- square feet to 68,008+/- square feet). As a result of the clustering of parcels and common open space design, the total roadway length required to serve

the project is reduced. For example, Phase 2 of the proposed development requires approximately thirty (30) feet of roadway and public infrastructure improvements per parcel. Additionally, the project has a total of twelve (12) cul-de-sacs to serve the entire 940-lot subdivision in order to reach inefficiently shaped areas due to the design goal of remaining within the lesser sloped portions of the property (0% to 15% slopes).

- (e) Encourage a Sense of Community. The development provides community amenities such as trail connectivity, bike trails/walking trails, dog parks, playgrounds, pocket parks, etc.

Staff Comment: Residential clusters are connected by an integrated system of pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails, including a trail following the historic V&T Railroad right-of-way. The project includes approximately 8 miles of pedestrian trails, 2.2 miles of equestrian trails, and required sidewalks along County roadways. Three neighborhood parks are also provided. Together, these amenities support walkability, recreation, and community interaction consistent with common open space development objectives.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

One neighborhood meeting was required for the proposed project, but four were held. A summary of those meetings was provided to the Planning Commission and is available starting on page 63 in Attachment C, Planning Commission Staff Report.

June 20, 2024. The applicants presented the project information at the South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley Citizens Advisory Board (CAB).

July 22, 2024. A neighborhood meeting was conducted at the South Valleys Library, and 111 individuals signed in attendance.

August 2, 2024. The applicants hosted an open house at the South Valleys Library.

April 17, 2025: The applicants held an additional neighborhood open house to provide an update on coordination with Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) and Washoe County staff regarding mercury containment, and to present revised information on the proposed site layout, access, and parks/trails/amenities plan. Eighty-six individuals signed in as in attendance.

Public Comment at Planning Commission Hearing

During the Planning Commission meeting on January 6, 2026, 44 public comments related to the proposed tentative subdivision map were heard. Some of the public comments related to the seismic report, mercury contamination, perception of the developer's history of promises and lack of development occurring, fire service in the area, homeowners' insurance coverage, viewsheds, tree removal, and historical sites.

There were concerns related to the well report and groundwater extraction; however, TMWA provided a response stating that TMWA has made significant efforts to use more surface water in this area. TMWA is also implementing several actions in this area, including the requirements that are outlined in the discovery. As a result, TMWA does not anticipate long term negative impacts to the groundwater levels.

Of the 44 public comments at the hearing, six public comments referenced impacts to endangered species, Lahontan cutthroat trout and other fish species being present on the project site, in addition to the Carson Wandering Skipper Butterfly being present on the site.

A Biological Resource Assessment (BRA) (Exhibit E of Attachment C) dated April 23, 2025, was prepared by Ben Klink, Biology Program Manager, and Tessa Behnke, Project Biologist, UES. The purpose of the BRA is to identify endangered, threatened, candidate, and/or sensitive species at or in the vicinity of the project site. A list of potentially occurring special-status wildlife species was compiled based on a desktop review and site visit to validate conditions identified during the desktop review.

Based on the BRA, nine (9) special-status wildlife species – Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Loggerhead Shrike, Sage Thrasher, Brewer’s Sparrow, Peregrine Falcon, Monarch Butterfly, Mule Deer, and bats – were determined to potentially occur in the study area.

The BRA concluded that the “Project contains suitable habitat for some protected species” and “...the Project would pose no measurable threat to these species if appropriate mitigation measures are applied prior to construction...” Conditions of approval are required to ensure that appropriate biological surveys are conducted prior to any ground disturbance or tree removal, which include the submission of a Wildlife Mitigation Plan to the Nevada Department of Wildlife, pre-construction nest clearance surveys for migratory birds, vegetation surveys for milkweed to avoid impacts to monarch butterflies, and snag/tree roost surveys, all to be completed by a qualified biologist and submitted to the Planning Program and the Nevada Department of Wildlife for review and concurrence. Incorporation of the conditions of approval and required pre-construction nesting surveys, the project would be adequately mitigated to avoid significant impacts to biological resources.

Additional public comment referenced the intent of the South Valleys Planning Area Vision Statement within the Envision Washoe 2040 Master Plan, including language encouraging future residential development to mirror existing development patterns and densities while maintaining open space, supporting agriculture-related uses, and providing trail connections.

It’s important to note that the Vision Statement provides a guiding policy framework and is intended to be implemented through project design and regulatory tools, rather than as a prescriptive density cap. While it expresses a preference for development patterns that reflect the surrounding area, the area plan does not alter existing zoning designations on specific parcels. Additionally, the area plan places equal emphasis on preservation of open space, protection of scenic and cultural resources, and creation of connected trail systems. The proposed project advances these core objectives through substantial common open space preservation, clustered development that limits visual and environmental impacts, buffering from adjacent uses, and an integrated trail network. Based on these design elements and the project’s compliance with underlying zoning, staff determined that the proposal implements the intent of the South Valleys Vision Statement and is consistent with the Master Plan and was therefore able to make the required finding of Master Plan consistency.

There were concerns regarding Article 424, Hillside Development. The Sierra Reflections subdivision is consistent with the intent of Article 424 (Hillside Development) as the project design responds to site topography. Development is clustered within areas that are

flat, or contain gentle and moderate slopes, while areas exceeding 30 percent or greater slopes are largely preserved as open space. The project also includes roadway designs that are responsive to the site topography, by following the topography which is intended to further reduce required grading and visual scarring.

There were numerous comments related to school impacts. The Washoe County School District (WCSD) reviewed the project and provided information regarding current attendance zoning, planned facilities, and projected student generation. Current enrollment estimates from WCSD have indicated that the schools serving the development will have sufficient capacity at full buildout of the Sierra Reflections development. WCSD has established capital funding mechanisms and long-range planning tools to accommodate anticipated regional growth and is not in need of a school site within the development pursuant to NRS 278. WCSD's Facilities Modernization Plan has scheduled the schools serving the development to receive some sort of renovation or modernization within the next 15 years, including a potential modernization project at Pleasant Valley Elementary School in the 2029-2031 timeframe. This modernization project will evaluate current and projected enrollments at that time. If capacity issues arise, WCSD has options such as zoning adjustments to balance enrollment if necessary. WCSD does not currently anticipate capacity issues due to the proposed Sierra Reflections development.

Additional comments during the public hearing included questions as to whether the proposed number of units for the project meet Truckee Meadows Regional Plan standards related to development constrained areas. However, the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency has affirmed that the Sierra Reflections site can accommodate the proposed density after removal of the development constraints areas and public facilities.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Notice for tentative subdivision maps and special use permits must be given in accordance with WCC 110.608.16 and WCC 110.810.25. Owners of all real property to be noticed are owners identified on the latest County Assessor's ownership maps and records.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board of County Commissioners should review the whole of the record and consider the record, and any testimony, materials and evidence submitted at the Board's public hearing. The Board may take one of the following actions:

1. Affirm the Planning Commission's decision and deny WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and Special Use Permit Case No. WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure); or
2. Reverse the Planning Commission's decision and approve WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and Special Use Permit Case No. WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure), subject to the conditions of approval provided in Exhibit A of Attachment C; or
3. Reverse the Planning Commission's decision and remand the matter to the Planning Commission with instructions.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS

Three possible motions are provided depending on the Board's preferred action:

1. Move to affirm the Planning Commission's decision and deny WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and Special Use Permit Case No. WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure); or
2. Move to reverse the Planning Commission's decision and approve WTM24-001 (Sierra Reflections) and Special Use Permit Case No. WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Infrastructure), subject to the conditions of approval provided in Exhibit A of Attachment C;
3. Move to reverse the Planning Commission's decision and remand the matter to the Planning Commission with instructions.

Whether approving, denying, or modifying, the Board must articulate the factual evidence that enables or prevents it from making the findings required by WCC Section 110.810.30, 110.408.28, and 110.608.25.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments A through E Constitute the Record on Appeal:

- A. Planning Commission signed Action Order dated 01/09/2026
- B. Appeal Application received 01/20/2026
- C. Planning Commission Staff Report with Attachments
- D. Staff PowerPoint Presentation to the Planning Commission
- E. Applicant PowerPoint Presentation to the Planning Commission
- F. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.
- G. Video Recording of Board of Adjustment Hearing
- H. Public Comment for the Planning Commission Meeting
- I. Tribal Conditions

cc: Appellant: World Properties, Inc.
Attn: Doug Thornley
Owner: World Properties, Inc.