

Washoe County Planning Commission



WTM24-001 and WSUP25-0019 (Sierra Reflections Tentative Map and Infrastructure)

January 6, 2026

Background



- Prior to 1984 these parcels were zoned Tourist Commercial (TC) and General Rural (GR).
- In 1984, the applicant received approval for a project, also called Sierra Reflections, that included a 250-room hotel, a casino, and a 550-unit condominium complex. The land use designation at that time was Resort Hotel and later Tourist Commercial.
- During the 2002 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan update, the City of Reno proposed to include the project within their Sphere of Influence (SOI). The City and Washoe County finally came to the agreement that if the property were “downzoned” to a less intense residential use, the City would agree to roll back the SOI from that area.

Background



- As a result of these talks, the County initiated a comprehensive plan amendment to re-designate the area as residential
- Had the County not acted, the City of Reno would have assumed jurisdictional control over the parcels.
- The comprehensive plan amendment was reviewed and unanimously recommended for approval by the Galena/Steamboat Citizen Advisory Board in May of 2004.
- The comprehensive plan amendment was approved by the Planning Commission in July of 2004, with a vote of five in favor and two opposed, with the total number of dwelling units allowed on the property being 1090.

Background



- The Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing in August of 2004, and a subsequent hearing in September of 2004, which resulted in an approval of land use designations allowing 995 dwelling units.
- The Board of County Commissioners' approval of the comprehensive plan amendment was then reviewed by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency, which found the comprehensive plan amendment to be in conformance with the regional plan.
- In August 2005, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on a request for a special use permit to construct a sanitary sewer line to serve this project. That special use permit was heard by the Board of County Commissioners in September 2005 and was approved

Previous Approval



- Washoe County Planning Commission approved the original Sierra Reflections Tentative Subdivision Map on May 2, 2006
- TMRPC conformance review approval took place on June 14, 2006
- WAC22-0002 extended the deadline to June 14, 2022
- The original Sierra Reflections Tentative Subdivision Map has since expired.
- The current submittal for Sierra Reflections has had to meet all current requirements, greater than what the original approval had to meet.

Request



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Tentative Subdivision Map for a proposed Common Open Space Development

- **Total Area:** 760 Acres over 29 Parcels
- **Lots Proposed:** 940 Lots
- **Regulatory Zones:** Include of Medium Density Suburban (MDS), Low Density Suburban (LDS), Medium Density Rural (MDR), General Rural (GR), and Public-Semi Public (PSP).
- Lots would range in size from 2,876 square feet to 68,008 square feet
- Average lot size is 9,402 square feet
- Associated Grading

Request



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Special Use Permits:

- **Water Tanks** – Two (2) 375,000-gallon water storage tanks.
- **Lift Stations** – Two (2) sewer lift stations.
- **Bridge Crossings** – Three (3) crossings over critical stream buffer of a significant hydrological resource.

Tentative Map



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- Proposing 940 Lots
- Underlying Density allows for 1,083 Units
- Located between Pleasant Valley and Washoe City
- Adjacent to US 395



Density



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Regulatory Zone	DU/AC	Acres	Allowance
Medium Density Suburban	3 DU / AC	328.49 AC	985
Low Density Suburban	1 DU / AC	73.65 AC	73
Medium Density Rural	1 DU / 5 AC	95.75 AC	19
General Rural	1 DU / 40 AC	253.90 AC	6
Public-Semi Public	0 DU / AC	7.90 AC	0
Total		759.69 AC	1,083

Common Open Space Development



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- Article 408, Common Open Space Development allows for minimum lot sizes and minimum lot widths to be modified, and lot setbacks to be modified.
- Lot sizes range from 2,876 square feet to 68,008 square feet with an average lot size of 9,024 square feet.
- Common open space is commonly used to allow for density clustering in an effort to do the following:
 - Preserve or Provide Open Space
 - Protect Natural and Scenic Resources
 - Achieve a More Efficient Use of Land
 - Minimize Road Building
 - Encourage a Sense of Community

Common Open Space Development



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Setbacks Vary Per Lot Size				
Minimum Lot Dimensions	Front	Side	Rear	Closest Washoe County Zoning
1 Acre	30'	12'	30'	LDS
80' x 140'	15'/20'*	8'	30'	MDS
80' x 120'	15'/20'*	8'	20'	MDS/4
70' x 140'	15'/20'*	7'	30'	MDS/4
70' x 120'	15'/20'*	7'	25'	MDS/4
70' x 100'	15'/20'*	7'	20'	HDS
60' x 100'	15'/20'*	6'	20'	HDS
50' x 100'	15'/20'*	5'	15'	HDS
45' x 110'	15'/20'*	5'	15'	HDS
Patio Homes	10'/15'/20'***	5'***	10'	LDU

Projects of Regional Significance



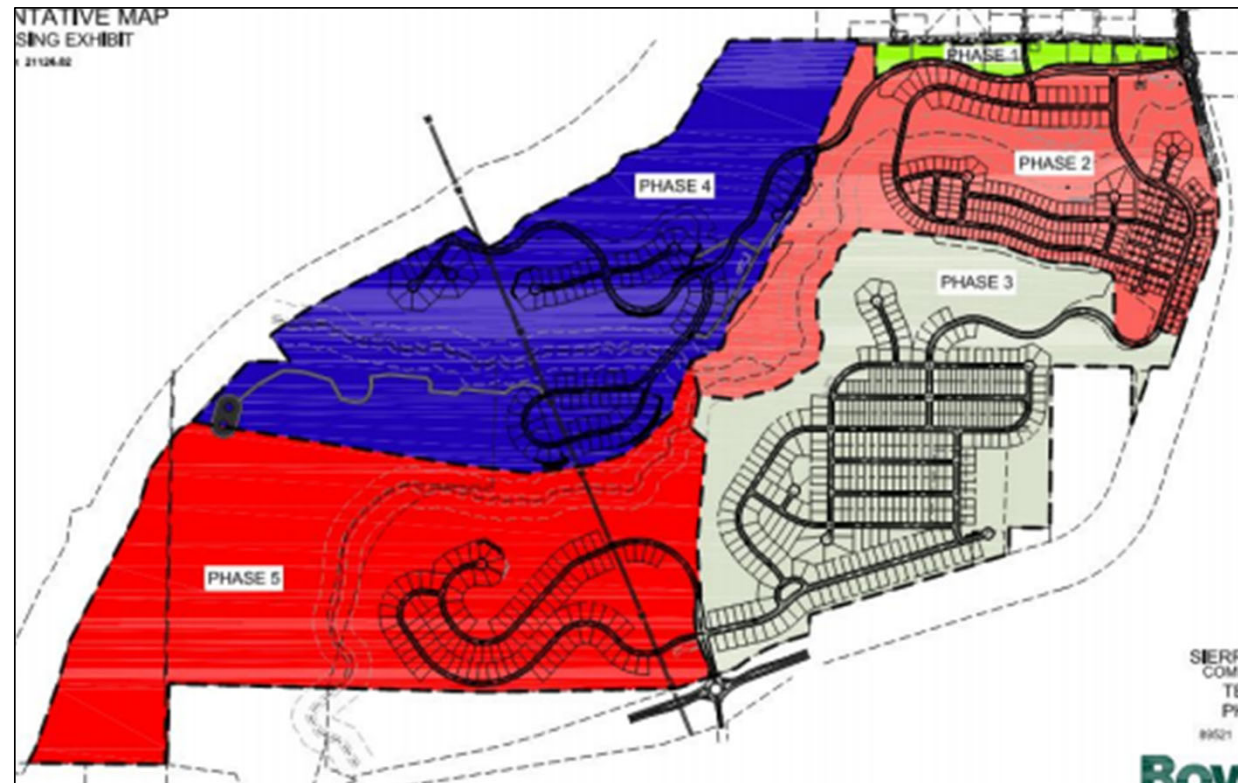
- The proposed development will have more than 625 housing units.
- The proposed development will have sewage use greater than 187,500 gallons per day.
- The proposed development will have water usage greater than 625-acre feet per year.
- The proposed development will have traffic counts greater than an average of 6,250 trips daily.
- Thus, if the Washoe County Planning Commission approves the proposed tentative subdivision map, it will require conformance review with Truckee Meadows Regional Planning and be heard by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission.

Phasing



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- Buildout over 15-20 Years
- This is the desired phasing path, however, they are not subject to this phasing.
- 5 Phases
 - Phase 1 – 8 Lots
 - Phase 2 – 304 Lots
 - Phase 3 – 409 Lots
 - Phase 4 – 104 Lots
 - Phase 5 – 115 Lots

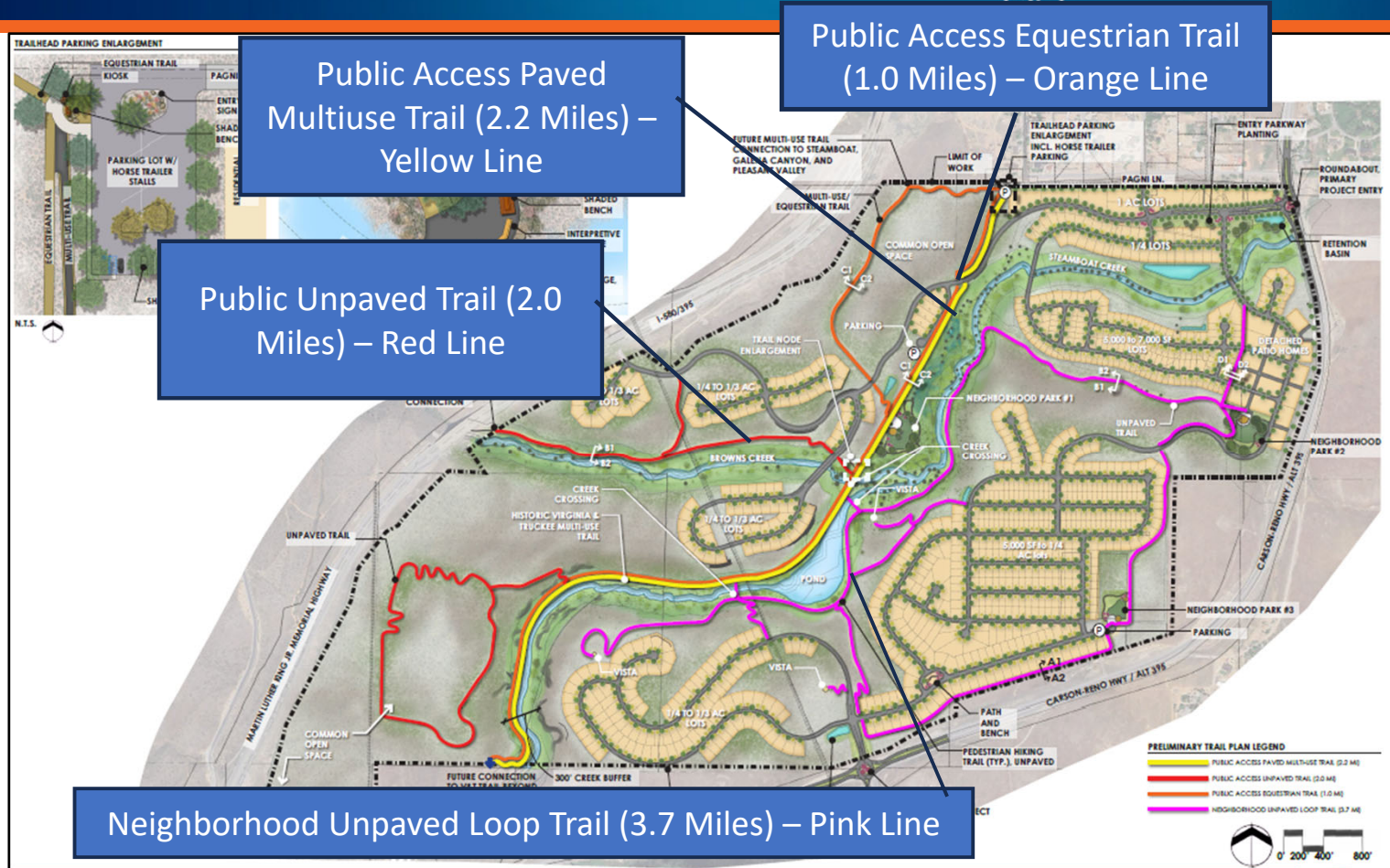


Trails



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- 8 miles of paved/unpaved pedestrian pathways and trails
- 2.2 miles of equestrian trails
 - Includes horse trailer parking
- Maintained by HOA for those areas not dedicated to and accepted by Washoe County.



Parks



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- Three (3) neighborhood parks
- Phased –
 - Neighborhood Park #1 by 500th C of O of entire project (Phase 4)
 - Neighborhood Park #2 in Phases 1 and 2 by 150th C of O
 - Neighborhood Park #3 by 200th C of O in Phase 3
- Parks to include items such as turf area, youth play area, group picnic area, nature play area, social game area, fitness area, neighborhood bandshell/amphitheater, and the paved and unpaved walking trails connecting to community trail network and sidewalks.
- Maintained by HOA for those areas not dedicated to and accepted by Washoe County.



Grading



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Major Grading

- **Excavation:** 3.6 Million cubic yards.
- **Fill:** 4.225 Million cubic yards.
- **Net Fill:** 625,000 cubic yards to be imported.
- **Max Cut:** 66.81 Feet
- **Max Fill:** 67.11 Feet
- 7 Total Major Grading thresholds triggered (Area, Volume, Depth, Driveway/Road over 30%, and any grading in a critical stream buffer).

Hillside Development



- 429 Acres of the site are considered most developable, with slopes ranging from 0 to 15 percent.
- 177 Acres of the site falls within the 15 to 30 percent slope category, which is considered moderately developable
- 153 Acres consists of slopes exceeding 30 percent.
- The applicant has provided all the required materials as required by Washoe County Code Section 110.424.15, Application Requirements and Procedures, which included a complete site analysis.
- We received a signed petition on January 6, 2026 with 1601 signatures.

Biological Resources



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- A Biological Resource Assessment (BRA) dated April 23, 2025, was prepared by UES Professional Solutions.
- Analysis area included the project boundary plus a quarter mile buffer.
- Special status species identified (Table 1) with the potential to occur in analysis area - recommended mitigation measures have been incorporated as conditions of approval (Exhibit A).
- NDOW reviewed and provided comments concerning a Wildlife Mitigation Plan and wildlife-friendly fencing – conditions of approval (Exhibit A) address NDOW comments.

Table 1: Special Status Species with Potential to Occur in the Analysis Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Species Protection	Recommended Mitigation
Migratory Birds	-	MBTA	Nest Clearance Surveys prior to ground disturbance
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	NV-E BGEPA MBTA	
Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	BGEPA MBTA	
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	NV-S MBTA	
Sage thrasher	<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>	NV-S MBTA	
Brewer's sparrow	<i>Spizella breweri</i>	NV-S MBTA	
Peregrine falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	NV-S MBTA	Vegetation survey for milkweed prior to ground clearance
Monarch butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i> <i>Plexippus</i>	ESA-PT	
Mule deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>	NV-G	No action required
Bats	-	NV-P	Snag/tree roost survey prior to any tree removal

Hazardous Materials



- Carson River Mercury Superfund Site (CRMS) as identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Mercury-contaminated soils due to historic mining activities.
- Contamination on the property was analyzed and *449 samples were collected from across the site.*
 - *81 exceeded the residential action level for mercury (7.1 mg/kg)*
 - *16 exceeded the commercial action level (30 mg/kg)*
- Draft Remedial Action Plan was prepared by UES Professional Solutions, which includes:
 - Site characterization activities
 - Remedial action grading plans showing the areas of cut and fill
 - Anticipated extent of cut and locations for beneficial reuse (fill)
 - Information on buried utility locations and depths
 - Addresses remediation of the site by removing and/or **capping mercury impacted soils with an eight (8) foot clean cap** such that shallow soils do not contain mercury above the residential action level of 7.1 mg/kg and roadways do not contain mercury above the industrial/construction action level of 30 mg/kg.

Cultural Resources



- The Desktop Review of Cultural Resource Considerations, prepared by Kautz Environmental Consultants, Inc., concerning historic resources on the property.
- Total of 49 archaeological sites within the project boundaries.
- The Desktop Review concluded with the following statement:

“All previously identified cultural resources that qualified for the NRHP [National Register of Historic Places] have been mitigated and require no further consideration. Those resources that do not qualify for the NRHP also require no further consideration.”
- To mitigate for the possibility of the unanticipated discovery of prehistoric or historic resources, as well as human remains, during grading, conditions of approval (Exhibit A) are being recommended that incorporate notations on the final map, which would be reviewed at the time of a grading or building permit.
- RSIC submitted a letter today (1/6/2025) regarding the project. They are not a regulatory agency, but staff is incorporating some of their conditions.

Geotech/Soils



- A Geotechnical Investigation Report concerning geotechnical aspects for the subject project area was prepared by Westex Consulting Engineers.
- Report analyzed geology, faulting, seismicity, and soils of the site and concluded the following:
 - Site is suitable for development
 - Recommended the infrastructure not contact the fault transect and a 25-foot setback be required from faults for human occupied structures
- Washoe County Engineering reviewed the project submittal and provided the following condition (Exhibit A) concerning faults:

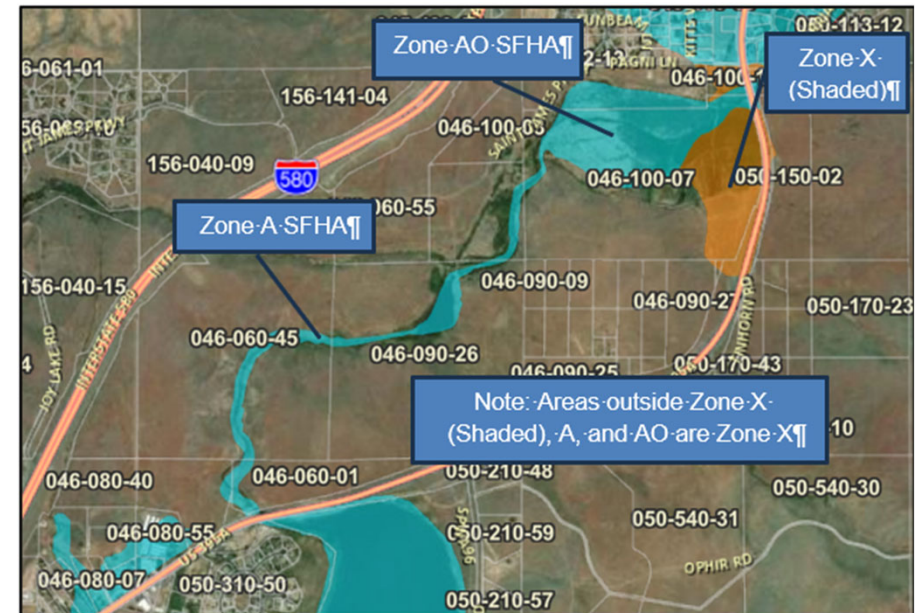
“All mapped Holocene-aged faults within the project area shall be site-specifically evaluated prior to recordation of any final map or issuance of any permits. Appropriate building setbacks shall be identified and depicted on the final map.”

Hydrology and Water Quality



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- Technical memorandum - *Aquatic Resources Screening for the Sierra Reflections Project* - prepared by UES and the finding was determined as a result of the analysis:
 - 6 aquatic resources displayed an Ordinary Highwater Mark (OHWM)
 - 8 relatively permanent waters (RPW's)
 - 9 features presumed to be Waters of the United States (WOTUS)
 - 5 aquatic resources were identified for which additional fieldwork and delineation would be required to understand the jurisdictional status
- Reviewed by Washoe County Engineering - condition provided concerning obtaining the necessary documentation from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for work within wetlands or other waters of the United States.
- The project site is located within FEMA Flood Zone X, Zone X (Shaded), and Zone A and AO Special Flood Hazard Areas (map to the right).
- Washoe County Engineering provided five (5) conditions, which included conditions for floodplain boundaries being shown on each final map and a floodplain study defining the base flood elevation being submitted with the final map.



School District



- **Schools:** Zoned for Pleasant Valley Elementary School, Herz Middle School, and Galena High School.
- No new schools planned with WCSD's Facilities Modernization Plan (FMP) that are anticipated to serve the students generated by the Sierra Reflections development.
- The School District has stated (Exhibit B) that the schools the development is currently zoned for are projected to have available capacity to serve the students potentially generated by the development.

School District Model for Sierra Reflections Proposed Student Generation	
Elementary School	63 Students
Middle School	42 Students
High School	61 Students
Total	166 Students

School District



- The applicant met with the Washoe County School District and has agreed to implement a set of pedestrian and school-safety improvements, including constructing a sidewalk on the south side of Pagni connecting to Kitts and installing a marked crosswalk on the east leg of the Kitts/Pagni intersection, contingent on prohibiting parking on the east side of Kitts Way to maintain safe sight lines.
- These are also conditions of approval.

Fire Service



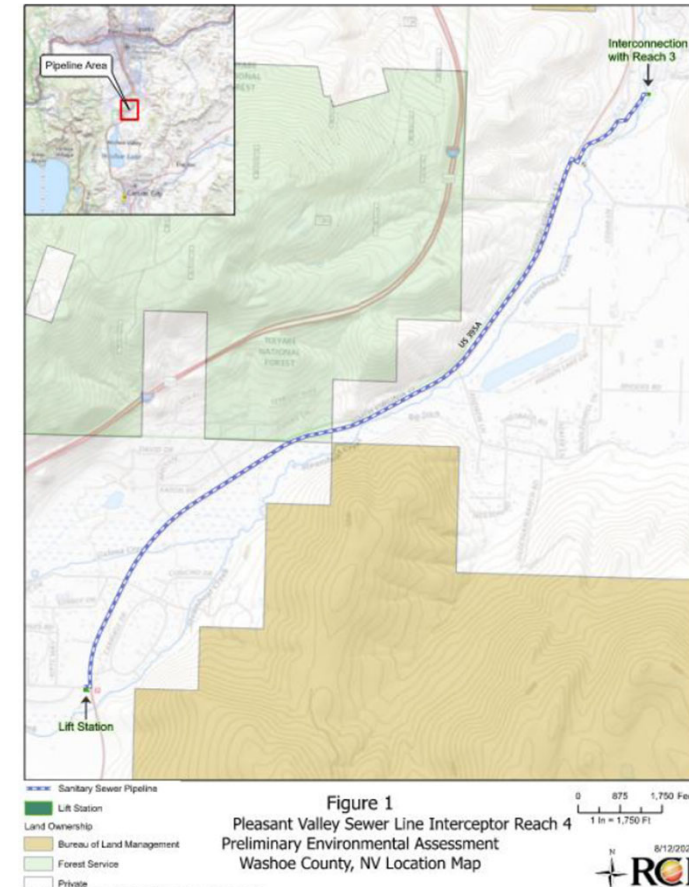
- **Fire:** Emergency fire service for the project area will initially be provided by the East Washoe Valley Fire Station located at 1240 East Lake Boulevard.
- Service is expected to transition to the planned Washoe Valley Consolidated Fire Station, anticipated to be constructed in Washoe City.
- In 2023, Special Use Permit WSUP23-0011 was approved by the Board of Adjustment for the construction of the facility. This is proposed in Washoe City.
- In 2025, Amendment of Conditions WAC25-0013 was approved by the Board of Adjustment for an extension of time to obtain building permits for the facility to July 7, 2029, due to delays in obtaining funding for the project.
- TMFPD is requiring the applicant to explore and evaluate funding mechanisms to support the construction of a consolidated fire station to serve the project area and surrounding community.

Sewer and Water



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- Sewer will end up at STMWRF and STMWRF has capacity.
- The project is responsible to construct the force main through Pleasant Valley to tie to existing Washoe County infrastructure.
- Water will connect through St James Village.



Roadways and Traffic



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- Projected to generate approximately 8,864 daily trips
 - 658 AM peak hour trips
 - 884 PM peak hour trips
- Multilane roundabouts are recommended at the St. James Parkway / US 395A intersection, and at the Eastlake Boulevard / US 395A intersection.
- For buildout without roundabout construction, the LOS would decline to LOS F but the requirement to install roundabouts will bring the LOS back into conformance with acceptable LOS values (above LOS D)



Public Comment



- County staff received:
- 51 emails, and 1 voicemail regarding the Sierra Reflections project.
- Additionally, 37 comments were submitted through the Neighborhood Meeting HUB site.
- The majority coming in July and August 2024 when the application was first submitted to Washoe County.
- All public comment received was in opposition to the proposal.

Neighborhood Meeting



- Three meetings were held in 2024:
- June 20 at the South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) meeting
- July 22 at a neighborhood meeting.
- August 2 at an open house.
- Additional neighborhood open house which was held on April 17, 2025, to provide an update on coordination with the 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.
- All CAB meetings, neighborhood meetings, and open houses were held at the South Valleys Library.

Neighborhood Meeting



- Concerns included:
- **Water Resources:** Potential impacts to existing wells.
- **Traffic and Access:** Increased congestion and winter driving conditions along Old U.S. 395.
- **Schools:** Possible overcrowding of area schools and concern that taxpayers may be required to fund new facilities.
- **Infrastructure Costs:** Perception that taxpayers may be responsible for extending sewer service to the project site.
- **Environmental Health:** Concerns regarding the presence of mercury on the site.
- **Public Safety:** Potential strain on emergency services due to additional growth.

Neighborhood Meeting



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- **Environmental Impacts:** Loss of wildlife habitat and increased light pollution.
- **Community Character:** Perceived increase in crime, the introduction of “high-density” housing types, and the loss of rural character.
- **Lot Sizes:** Concerns regarding the proposed lot sizes, which differ from the lot patterns historically developed in the surrounding area.
- **Recreation and Trails:** Interest in maintaining equestrian trail access.

Amended Conditions



- **Planning is Amending 1 condition to include:**

A note shall be placed on all grading plans and construction drawings stating:

NOTE

Should any cairn or grave of a Native American be discovered during site development, work shall temporarily be halted at the specific site and the Sheriff's Office as well as the State Historic Preservation Office of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources shall be immediately notified per NRS 383.170. **The Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony shall be notified at the same time.**

Amended Conditions



- **Planning is adding 5 additional conditions related to the RSIC letter received today.**
- Upon an unanticipated discovery of human remains or Native American Artifacts, and since project is on private lands, the landowner has the supreme right to donate/bequeath/give/provide its property and the items attached to the land, to another party. The RSIC is requesting to receive any Native American cultural resources that may be excavated off of these private lands. The developer agrees that should any Native American human remains or artifacts be discovered and a dispute arises between the Indian Tribe that has the closest cultural affiliation with the site and the developer concerning the treatment or disposition of the burial site or artifact, the developer will request that the Nevada Office of Historic Preservation mediate the dispute as permitted by NRS 383.160(1)(b).

Amended Conditions



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- Any Native American burial site or artifacts or other material discovered on the property will not be destroyed or removed until SHPO and RSIC have been notified, and the processes set forth in NRS 383.170 will be followed.
- In the event Native American human remains are discovered on the Sierra Reflections site, developer agrees the Indian Tribe with the closest cultural affiliation with the site will be afforded the opportunity to conduct such rites and ceremonies as may be deemed appropriate for the discovery.
- The RSIC and Tribal Monitor shall be included in all discussions regarding a Native American burial site or artifact that the developer has with local, state, and federal government regarding any discovery.
- The applicant or their buyer shall consult with the RSIC prior to the final map recordation on any Native American interests, and cultural resource interests.

Amended Conditions

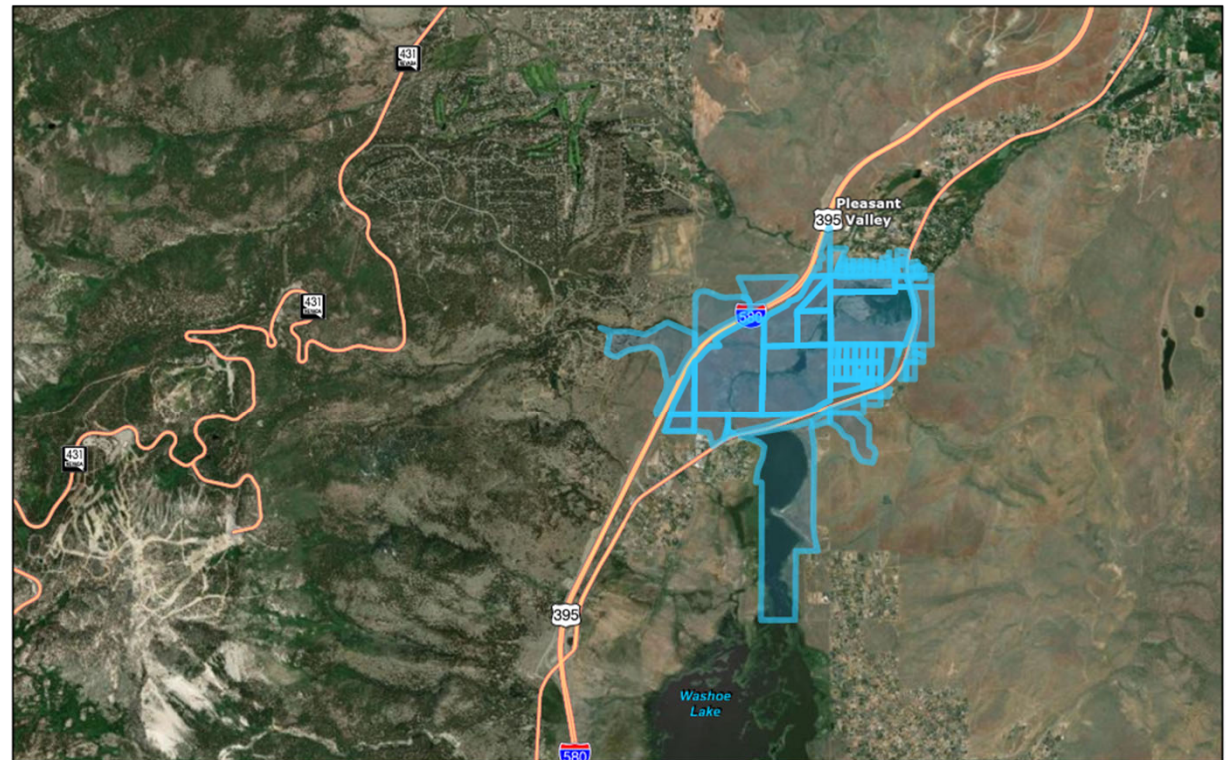


- **Planning is adding a condition under the CC&R's section to include:**
 - **Excavation Depth Limitation.** Due to the mercury remediation on site, no excavation, grading, or intrusive work shall penetrate the finished grade deeper than four (4) feet *with the exception of utilities with the prior approved by the county engineer, and in conformance with the RAP.* Installation of in-ground pools or basements are prohibited.

Noticing



- 58 property owners within 500 feet



December 31, 2025

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Tentative Map Findings



Staff is able to make all required findings and is recommending approval with conditions

- (a) Plan Consistency. That the proposed map is consistent with the Master Plan and any specific plan;
- (b) Design or Improvement. That the design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the Master Plan and any specific plan;
- (c) Type of Development. That the site is physically suited for the type of development proposed;
- (d) Availability of Services. That the subdivision will meet the requirements of Article 702, Adequate Public Facilities Management System;
- (e) Fish or Wildlife. That neither the design of the subdivision nor any proposed improvements is likely to cause substantial environmental damage, or substantial and avoidable injury to any endangered plant, wildlife or their habitat;
- (f) Public Health. That the design of the subdivision or type of improvement is not likely to cause significant public health problems;
- (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;
- (h) Access. That the design of the subdivision provides any necessary access to surrounding, adjacent lands and provides appropriate secondary access for emergency vehicles;
- (i) Dedications. That any land or improvements to be dedicated to the County is consistent with the Master Plan; and
- (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.

Special Use Permit Findings



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Staff is able to make all required findings

- a) Consistency.
- b) Improvements.
- c) Site Suitability.
- d) Issuance Not Detrimental.
- e) Effect on a Military Installation.

Common Open Space Findings



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Staff is able to make all required findings

- a) Preserve or Provide Open Space.
- b) Protect Natural and Scenic Resources.
- c) Achieve a More Efficient Use of Land.
- d) Minimize Road Building.
- e) Encourage a Sense of Community.

Possible Motion for Approval



I move that, after giving reasoned consideration to the information contained in the staff report and information received during the public hearing, the Washoe County Planning Commission approve Special Use Permit Case Number WSUP25-0019 and Tentative Subdivision Map Case Number WTM24-001 for Sierra Reflections, with the condition included as Exhibit A to this matter, having made all twenty findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.810.30, Findings, of Article 810, Special Use Permits; Section 110.408.28, Findings, Article 408, Common Open Space; and Section 110.608.25, Findings, Article 608, Tentative Maps:

Thank you

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Washoe County CSD – Planning Division

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