



Planning area for West Lionshead.

V a i l H o m e o w n e r s A s s o c i a t i o n

Letters to Vail

Planning for West Lionshead and Cascade Village February 25, 2025

The Town of Vail (TOV), Vail Resorts (VR), and East West Partners (EWP) are moving forward with their joint planning and redevelopment agenda for West Lionshead. A well-qualified nationally recognized [planning firm](#) has been hired and a [work program](#) has been agreed upon. In a joint communique, the parties laid out their [mission, vision, and values for the plan](#). The communique anticipates that the plan will include new housing for 1,100 full-time residents. The [TOV 2024 Mobility Master Plan](#) calls for 1,000 parking spaces to support commercial activities on what is conceived as an additional major commercial and residential hub with lift access to Vail Mountain. The groundwork has been laid in accordance with TOV regulations, and it appears to allow ample opportunity for public participation in the review and approval process for the redevelopment.

Cascade Village, which abuts West Lionshead to the west, is a commercial and residential hub with mountain lift access. It was developed in the late 1970s and 1980s. There is strong interest in redeveloping the area. Unlike the orderly planning process for West Lionshead, there appears to be a dysfunctional relationship between the developer and some of the area's residents about the size, use, and location of [proposed new and redeveloped buildings](#). Also, there are [property access issues](#) involving the developer and the [Cascade Village Metropolitan District](#) which operates the lift. The concern is that the developer is not adequately interacting with the area's property owners to discuss issues of mutual concern. These are clear signs that the TOV planning procedures are not being correctly acknowledged. Why? How can the planning process be organized to be more collaborative? Whose responsibility is it to bring order to the muddle of competing self-interests?



VHA advocates for reasonable development that is compatible with the community’s existing neighborhoods. VHA is monitoring proposed redevelopment in West Lionshead (yellow), Cascade Village (pink) and the potential effect upon Donovan Park (green). Included are the effects upon lifts (red) and the need for a I-70 pedestrian crossing (blue) connecting West Timber Ridge workforce housing with future and existing community amenities on Donovan Park and Vail Village on the south side of I-70.

Ultimately, it is the TOV’s responsibility. The Town Council has the final say in what the future holds for Cascade Village and its residential neighborhoods. If the TOV is willing, it needs to define a planning process predicated on the original master development plan, which it approved on [March 2, 1976 \(Ordinance 5, series 1976\)](#) for the initial development of Cascade Village as a Special Development District (SDD4), and, as such, is the underlying zoning for SDD4. When the SDD was formed, the area had recently been annexed into the Town of Vail. At the time, and currently Eagle County zoning does not have any jurisdiction or binding relevance to any subsequent zoning proceeding within the Town of Vail.

The planning authority of the Cascade Village Metropolitan District should be recognized in this redevelopment process. The Metropolitan District was created as a special district in the 1980s as the governmental authority to finance, build, and operate the Cascade Village lift. As a special district, aka Metropolitan District, under [Colorado statutory law](#), the Cascade Village Metropolitan District has broad powers to provide for and operate park and recreation amenities. These functions have been and are being carried out by a Board of Directors under the guidance of qualified electors, who are Colorado register voters and who own property within the district. The district operates according to Colorado legislation in collaboration with the municipal (TOV) government in which it is located.

The Cascade Village Metropolitan District (CVMD) is well-informed and it may be appropriate for an agenda to be prepared that gives direction to the District’s Board of Directors about how to address impacts on the District’s functions resulting from redevelopment. These functions include cultural and educational uses, in addition to recreational amenities, which are part of Cascade Village’s legacy and intent of its originating master development plan. Further, it may be appropriate for the Metropolitan District to engage with the TOV in a joint effort, using the expertise of the planning firm retained for the West Lionshead project.

It may also be appropriate to include Donovan Park in this planning effort as these open space lands were acquired, in part, to be parks, wildlife habitats, and recreational assets for the residential property owners of Cascade Village in addition to the neighborhoods in West Vail. It is common practice among collaborating governing entities to provide funds jointly for the operation of mutually beneficial amenities and services. If collaboration were to occur between the TOV and CVMD, the financial and operational burdens would fall upon the entire community which is justifiable in that Cascade Village and Donovan Park are critical recreational amenities in the evolving vision of Vail.

VHA [invites letters of interest](#) to provide assistance in its membership and reader development efforts.

VHA is a member and reader-supported non-profit funded by voluntary annual dues and contributions of its paid subscribers and readers. Many members are part-time resident property owners from Vail's founding generation, their children, and succeeding generations of first-time owners who have discovered the intangible qualities that Vail brings to their lives. As Vail grows, traditional assumptions of political activism have become more complicated and costly.

Memberships and contributions fuel the VHA reports, *Letters to Vail*, and help VHA respond to important issues, expand our reach, and ensure transparency. VHA is thankful for support and participation from the Vail community. We pledge to remain at the forefront of advocating on behalf of the mutual interests of full and part-time residents and property owners.

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