



# Full Steam Ahead

## Truckee railyard project moves forward

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**DOWNTOWN EXTENSION:** This drawing shows what Truckee's Railyard Project, with a grocery store and housing, could look like. Images courtesy of Holliday Development

More than five years after the Truckee Railyard Master Plan was approved, and a number of obstacles later, the developer of the railyard project submitted a preliminary application to the town on Oct. 2. The conceptual plans include some notable changes, including keeping the balloon track, which would require a master plan amendment.

The pre-application for Phase I development in the Downtown Extension District includes a 30,000 square foot movie and performing arts theater, a distillery or brew pub, a grocery store, artists housing, and workforce housing. Rick Holliday, developer of the project, said it will take three to six months to secure developers and funding for the project, but he hopes to break ground next summer. After town planners review the application and submit their feedback, Holliday will have to submit a formal application for approval.

“This is a very important project,” Holliday said. “I think we are going to get going this year.”

After California Gov. Jerry Brown dissolved all of the state’s redevelopment agencies in 2010, funding for initiatives like the railyard project dried up.

Holliday needs \$16 million for infrastructure alone. The project was awarded \$4 million in grant funding from the state, so he’s looking to secure \$12 million in the next couple of months.

Truckee Planning Manager Denyelle Nishimori called the current site plan “highly conceptual,” noting that the town still needs to provide feedback on the project. She said the master plan has the Union Pacific Railroad balloon track facility, storage tracks, and operations building moving, but the application leaves them in and has Church Street extending to Glenshire Drive. Since the balloon track, which was an area where trains turned around, was going to move, Donner Pass Road was also going to be changed, but the new plan has the road untouched.

“In effect, the inside of the balloon track allows the Downtown Extension District to spread out over a larger area so that all of the uses that the town and public so strongly desire, namely a theater, a hotel, new restaurants, and a grocery store, can be provided and more of the allowable development can be built, without the scale of buildings required being inappropriate to Truckee’s historic character and context,” stated the preliminary application from Truckee Development Associates, a subsidiary of Holliday Development, which is Holliday’s firm.

Holliday said when the master plan was approved in 2009, it was thought that Union Pacific would not allow development on the track, but the railroad has agreed to the new plan, he said. “Keeping the rail operations in the center of the development emphasizes Truckee’s history as an industrial rail town,” the application states.

Additionally, a hotel was originally considered for the site but has been replaced with an eight-screen movie theater and arts theater. Holliday said he is in talks with a theater

operator, as well as grocers, and an artist housing developer from Sacramento. He said having a grocery store and more housing downtown is important.

“This will support existing downtown and not compete with it,” Holliday said.

Although there are still more approvals needed, Holliday is hopeful the project can get off the ground in 2015.

“It’s exciting because it provides more housing opportunities and more shopping opportunity that will further support downtown,” Nishimori said.