

To: Town of Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission,  
Commissioners Vanderhurst, Burrows, Chang and Kennedy

CC: Director Moberly, Mayor Salcido, Council Members

Date: May 10, 2022

**Subject: PEDC Resolution for Use Permit 22-002: proposed Limited Access Gate on Callahan Way**

I oppose Use Permit Application 22-002 for the proposed Limited Access Gate on Callahan Way for 3 important reasons: (1.) Insufficient need for gate, (2.) Inadequate gate - safety, and (3.) Inadequate gate design - noise mitigation.

1. First, a gate at this location is not necessary. The Use Permit application claims there is *“Demonstrated need for public safety or security that will be satisfied by the gate”* – There is no demonstrated need for this gate.
  - a) Use Permit application states the gate will *“discourage the use of neighborhood streets as cut-through routes to avoid conjected arterial facilities.”* and *“prevent a cut-through route through the Villas 3 / Obsidian developments.”*
    - Not True: The Obsidian gate off Meridian already prevents cut-through traffic; a second gate does not change that. If the Town needs to prevent cut-through routes for public safety, then why are there no gates on parallel streets e.g., Joaquin Road, Lupin St, Mono St and Manzanita Road?
    - Frankly, the Obsidian I / Obsidian II residents are most likely to use Callahan as a cut-through route, and the proposed gate does nothing to prevent that.
  - b) The application also states the gate will *“prevent non-residents from mistakenly driving into the development”* and thus enhance the safety and security of the Villas 3 residents and guests.
    - False: The gate does not enhance safety; it transfers the safety risk to San Joaquin Villas. While the gate may block non-residents from Villas 3, the gate would funnel those mistaken drivers *into San Joaquin Villas* thereby *decreasing* safety of SJV residents. How does this *demonstrate public safety and security?*
    - In reality, the proposed Villas 3 limited entry gate at Callahan Way will **create a more dangerous situation** for San Joaquin Villas residents since the proposed gate will redirect mistaken drivers *into our* San Joaquin Villas development where our residents have young children who play on our private property, including SJV’s private parking lot. The higher traffic volume caused by the Villas 3 / Obsidian I / Obsidian II will be more dangerous and detrimental to the SJV neighborhood; the proposed gate further exacerbates this issue.
  - c) The application further states the proposed gate at Callahan way will prevent drivers from speeding through the development.
    - Also not true: A gate will cause drivers to slow *at the gate* but has no impact on driver behavior through the rest of the Villas / Obsidian development.

If the proposed gate is truly for resident safety, then it should ensure safety for all residents, including *both SJV and Villas 3*. One solution would be to move the gate farther up Callahan Way to limit traffic from turning onto Callahan in the first place and prevent diverting excess traffic into SJV.

2. **Inadequate Gate Design – Safety:** The inadequate gate design decreases safety for SJV residents.
  - a) The Gate turn-around design does not comply with code as required by MC Section 17.52.130.

b) The Use Permit drawing demonstrates that San Joaquin Villas' private property is required to provide a vehicular turn-around for the proposed Villas 3 gate design. This is absolutely unacceptable; it creates a hazardous situation for SJV and fails to comply with code which requires that adequate turn-around space to be contained wholly within the applicant's property.

3. **Inadequate Gate Design – Noise Mitigation:** The gate design requires additional detail to mitigate noise impact to immediately adjacent SJV residences. The Staff Report states the gate will not have an intercom or gate alarm "in order to limit noise" – while this is appreciated, it does not go far enough to detail appropriate gate design for noise mitigation.

a) Visitor Keypad design and location must limit noise:

- Keypad use must be silent, no confirmation tone. Use visual confirmation only.
- Keypad location: No thought has been put into the detail of the keypad location. Callahan Way is narrow and does not accommodate a center median-based keypad for driver access. Additional details are required to ensure keypad location and design minimize excess noise such as drivers having to exit their vehicles to reach keypad.

b) Gate Operational Noise – gate must be quiet during swing and at full open/closed positions.

- There is inadequate design detail to show what the entry/exit gate stops against at their fully open positions. The Staff Report and Use Permit drawing show a rigid surface at 90-degrees to closed gate but does not provide detail.
- Gate operation must be quiet both during the opening/closing movement and must not impact at the fully open or closed positions. Frequent gate usage in evening, and throughout the night, will create constant noise that impacts the immediately adjacent SJV E-building residents.

These inadequacies must prevent approval of Use Permit 22-002. As a minimum, design changes and additional detail are required and must incorporate mitigations to ensure (1.) the gate design incorporates adequate turn-around space to re-route vehicles without encroaching on SJV property (2.) the gate design ensures (a.) visitor keypad is silent, and (b.) quiet operation during movement and prevents gate impact noise at fully open and closed positions. There must be an adequate gate design accompanying the application, a design that minimizes impact on the adjacent SJV neighbors who will bear the brunt of the gate's existence. Better, still, the PEDC should completely refuse the request for a gate which is clearly not necessary.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Taylor  
SJV #E-6