

Letter: Meyers catalyst project must be shelved

To the community,

Having read the 71-page catalyst project paper, I am appalled and disheartened. If we could take a poll of Meyers residents, I bet the outcome would be this: we like our community the way it is. We moved here to live in the county, not the city. We don't care if big crowds of tourists stop here.

The catalyst project amounts to "taxation without representation" because ultimately it will be the residents or "stakeholders" that will pay the enormous debt on these bonds. If the debt is not serviced, will the project end up as a time share? This does not benefit the residents in any way whatsoever.

After the wildly unsuccessful debacle at Stateline, that is, an attempt to build a convention center where none was needed, many parallels exist here. Without a real airport, a convention center was not viable. There are few nonstop flights to Reno and then the traveler faces a 90-minute bus ride to South Lake Tahoe. From Southern California, it's far easier to travel elsewhere to ski or recreate. That leaves a narrower market of Northern California, primarily Sacramento and San Francisco Bay Area. Snow country does not attract routine conventions that have to be canceled at the last minute due to weather, so winter months further decrease usability. These are but a few of the myriad reasons for the failure at Stateline.

Likewise, the proposed training center for world class athletes – is this really feasible? Professional athletes will seek treatment from elite physicians and facilities that already exist. World-class doctors will be at big city

hospitals or university settings; I can guarantee they will not reside in Meyers and maintain a thriving business. Other training centers exist such as Salt Lake City where the 2002 Olympics were held and others like it are well established. Therefore the need for ancillary businesses such as restaurants is a pipe dream because they would be underutilized. This center is not for residents – it's for outsiders. We don't want a mega resort or mega anything. The right of eminent domain is to be used for public highway or structure, not an enterprise. We don't want big businesses; we would like to support small businesses that are here. Give equal signage and road access, be fair with the little guy as much as a popular gas station.

The dictate to “park and go” arises from an ecological ideal, but undermines the very freedom of citizens. Also in question is how well these required electric vehicles with low ground clearance and 2-wheel drive can negotiate a snowstorm and who will be liable for accidents. Charging private residents a fee to use their own vehicles amounts to extortion. Meyers does not want to be the parking garage for the basin. Another idea to build a “bridge to nowhere” over highway 50 would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars is simply a waste. The grandiose ideas outlined in the catalyst project are unreasonable and extremely expensive, and wrong. It's wrong to take away people's homes, churn up a community by a handful of people and spend millions and millions of dollars that will not suit our community. This is big money at its worst. To trust the same people who were involved at Stateline to do another project is foolhardy.

Elizabeth Swope, Meyers