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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I am submitting the following comments in support of the Golden Peak expansion. Vail Mountain has a long and storied history of providing first class training accommodations to local and international athletes. This attribute of the mountain provides both value to the athletes and promotes the resort as a first class ski destination. It is no doubt an important factor in the growth of the city and resort over the past 50 years. The growth of both the competitive training programs and other instructional options has driven both visitors and local families to not only use the mountain recreationally, but to weave it into the fabric of their sporting lives. Our family moved to Denver in 2002 and began coming to Vail shortly thereafter, driven at the time by the Vail Devo program. As our children advanced in skill we eventually moved to one of the Ski and Snowboard Club Vail competitive programs. During this period, we eventually purchased property in Vail and now call it home for a significant percentage of the year. We have seen firsthand both the benefits of a first class training opportunity at multiple levels and the need for more training space to improve training efficiency and create more useable space for resort patrons.

As it now stands the training locations are congested and inefficient. As evidenced by the need to utilize public resort space to accommodate training, the programs are successful, in demand and will fuel the continued economic development of Vail mountain. While the courses themselves provide advanced training terrain, they are interwoven with public space, reducing the available space to non-competitive athletes and resort patrons, while routing athletes to public lifts, increasing wait times for all patrons. The time loss to athletes of skiing to public lifts and then working across the mountain to their training terrain reduces training time on course by a significant percent. A dedicated training area and accompanying lift would both increase training efficiency and relieve congestion at various lifts, including Avanti Express. The increased training efficiency may draw additional competitive athletes to Vail, enhancing its international reputation, while at the same time reducing lift congestions.

Some of the arguments suggested in opposition to the expansion, such as traffic congestion, parking, and mass transit service problems, do not present a compelling case for a delay or rejection of the project. The ability to utilize additional terrain should not lead to a substantive traffic increase, as the proposal will not by itself create more traffic in the area. While it may create more demand for training in Vail, the benefits to local residents and the general public will outweigh any increase in traffic. Currently there is no general parking in the area and while traffic can become congested during drop-off/pick-up times at both the Children's Center and Ski and Snowboard Club Vail, during a majority of the day when benefits will be realized the Golden Peak area is relatively easy to navigate. Aesthetically, there is no reason to assume that a landscape change will either improve or detract from the current mountain view. The increased territory for training will more likely be seen as a promotional feature of the mountain and may attract more economic growth as competitive event space will increase.

For the above reasons, we support the Golden Peak Expansion project.

Thank You,

Steven Price