

## SNOWMASS CENTER: *A Place for Locals*

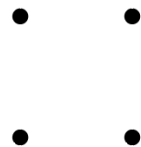


Anyone who's spent time in Snowmass knows the local ritual: residents drive to the Snowmass Center, pick up their mail at the post office and maybe a few groceries, then meet in the hallways to debate local political issues or just shoot the breeze. Sure, it's an easy way for a community with no mail service or a true downtown to congregate regularly (especially in the quiet off-seasons) — but the experience could be a lot better, one local development group believes.

Led by partners and local residents Rob Cairncross and Jordan Sarick, Eastwood Snowmass Investors is currently deep into the Town land-use review process for its proposal to transform the Snowmass Center into a Main Street-style village core, with a 40% increase in commercial space, lots of pedestrian connections, better transit and parking alternatives, and a wide range of new residential options targeting primarily year-round residents. At the proposal's heart is a major makeover of the 40-yr old Center which "was clearly identified as an area ripe for redevelopment," notes Cairncross.

Along with an expanded post office and grocery store, the redevelopment would add a few new businesses to the current local-serving mix, including a couple of restaurants and, in particular, a café offering mail-fetching residents an alternative to standing around in the halls. Retail activity would occupy buildings along both sides of a Main Street, anchored by Mt. Daly views.

Strategically planned around a Main Street are on-street and underground parking, transit and lodging shuttle stops, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and trail links that improve connectivity within the Center and to nearby neighborhoods. The pedestrian-friendly master plan, "creates community because all people in proximity can walk there for their morning coffee," says Chris Touchette, a principal with CCY Architects working on the Snowmass Center project.



And there will be a lot more people living in proximity to the Center's commercial core if the project is approved. Up the hill from the Center, 78 new multifamily units (68 free market, 10 deed-restricted) will be spread over multiple buildings, with various architectural styles and layouts, catering to a range of buyers: empty nesters, people downsizing from Aspen, families moving from downvalley so their kids can attend Aspen schools, and full-time working singles and couples.

"It's important this doesn't feel like a project but feels like a place," says Touchette, explaining the variety of tones, textures, and finishes and the use of multiple designers to achieve different looks and types of housing based on lifestyle needs.

The Council's preliminary plan review is expected to continue through this spring, with final review anticipated in Spring 2021 - meaning the earliest groundbreaking could occur would be around Spring 2022. When complete, "the Center will remain for locals and be an easier place for locals to come and go," concludes Cairncross. "We are locals, and decisions are made locally. We don't answer to shareholders."

