

# Project S.N.O.W.

SIERRA NEVADA OLYMPIC & WINTER  
SPORTS MUSEUM

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## Vision and Approach 2020

**SQUAW VALLEY  
SKI MUSEUM  
FOUNDATION**









## Our Mission

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*Our mission is to **preserve** the winter sports and Olympic history of the Sierra Nevada Region, to **share** stories of the legends of winter, and to **inspire** generations to experience the wonder and passion of our unique mountain spirit.*

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*U.S. Ski Team Tom Corcoran 1960 Olympic Games Mens Slalom. Photo credit Eddy Ancinas.*

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

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*Dear Supporters and Friends of the S.N.O.W. Sports Museum,*

*First off, I would like to thank you for your continued support and ongoing interest in the S.N.O.W. Sports Museum project. Together we share a commitment to our community that is driven by our passion for adventure and love for the history of our sports. However, there is no place to celebrate the achievements of those who helped build the mountain culture we all enjoy today. If we don't become more active stewards to protect our winter sports heritage, including the milestone 1960 Winter Olympics, and we don't work harder to protect the environment that supports that industry, our vision to preserve our history for future generations will be lost. The S.N.O.W. Sports Museum will be the hub and heart of our innovative community's commitments.*

*We are excited to share our 2020 Vision Report, along with our successes and goals, which include the museum's new name: The Sierra Nevada Olympic & Winter Sports Museum (The S.N.O.W. Sports Museum). With ongoing support from the community and a matching grant from Placer County, we have completed key elements of the application for land use within Squaw Valley Park on Highway 89, and with the help of our board members, advisors and consultants, we have produced our Five-year Vision and Strategic Plan to guide our activities.*

*This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the 1960 Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley and Lake Tahoe. We celebrated this milestone by sharing day-by-day summaries of events and results on our newly launched website. We also organized a sold out 700-person event at Squaw Valley featuring a distinguished panel of professional athletes and Olympians; and although the event was postponed, we captured the panel discussions on video and will post to our website soon!*

*In the Spring, we paused fundraising for the museum and pivoted our support to the front lines of health and wellness for our community. Although we don't know when we can physically gather again, we are actively gathering more stories of our legends of winter, building our Athlete Ambassador Program and creating opportunities for legacy donors to be a part of the most inspiring museum to be built in California in decades.*

*We are a small team with a big vision. Your support—whether it's through a financial donation, as a volunteer, or by sharing our stories with your network—is vital to our success. Please dig in to the following pages of our inaugural report to learn about the background for the project, its key features, the vision for the building and to acknowledge our generous benefactors. We are more motivated than ever and eager to share our enthusiasm with you.*

*Sincerely,*



**Jill Short Milne**  
Executive Director, S.N.O.W. Sports Museum

[TheSnowMuseum.org](https://TheSnowMuseum.org)  
[Jill@TheSnowMuseum.org](mailto:Jill@TheSnowMuseum.org)



## BACKGROUND

The Squaw Valley Ski Museum Foundation was founded in 2008 to fulfill the vision of creating a museum of local, regional and international significance, where the story of the 1960 Winter Olympic Games in Squaw Valley and the unique history of winter sports in the Sierra Nevada would be preserved and explored in a modern, technologically advanced building.

In the ensuing years, the foundation worked diligently to pursue its vision. It commissioned architects, museum planners and engineers to prepare feasibility studies, and teamed up with local agencies to gather community support. It applied for grants and developed marketing strategies while continuing to gather meaningful historical artifacts from individuals.

One of the greatest challenges for the foundation was selecting the best site for the museum. In 2015, after thorough analysis and input from consultants and community, a site in the Squaw Valley Park at the entrance to Olympic Valley near Highway 89 was selected. Since then, the foundation has worked with Placer County and the community on zoning amendments, environmental questionnaires, parking surveys and studies to secure the location.

In 2019, the name of the museum was changed to the Sierra Nevada Olympic & Winter Sports Museum (The S.N.O.W. Museum), reflecting a broader vision of regional winter sports history. A new website ([TheSnowMuseum.org](https://TheSnowMuseum.org)) increases awareness for the project with timely updates and colorful stories being collected about the people and events that shaped our history and economy.

Currently, the S.N.O.W. Museum is working closely with the U.S. Olympic Committee to earn international recognition and support. In 2020, the foundation is poised to receive final approvals to secure the location and begin a capital campaign to build the museum.



## THE MUSEUM CONCEPT

When the VIII Olympic Winter Games came to a close in Squaw Valley in 1960, skiing in California and the West was forever changed. That event catapulted the region into international fame and bestowed a second seasonal economy in the area, making life in Tahoe more viable for year-round residents.

Today, from Sugar Bowl to Kirkwood to Mt. Rose to Homewood, the Tahoe area has the highest concentration of ski areas and winter sports facilities in the Western Hemisphere. This region has produced more Winter Olympians and World Cup athletes than any other region in the United States—**yet it remains the only Winter Olympic Games site without a proper museum.** Lake Placid, Park City, Calgary, and Vancouver all have thriving Olympic museums. In 17 years, the Park City museum went from 50,000 visitors the first year to an average of 500,000, with 86% of visitors from out of state.

*Our vision is to establish a place where the evolution of winter sports in the Sierra Nevada and the 1960 Winter Olympics can be researched, studied, and displayed in an environmentally inspiring building.*

*We will create a space where local legends can be recognized and celebrated, and where both residents and visitors from all over the world can gather and experience the pioneering spirit that built this magical place.*



## Key Features

A **Cultural Center** that will tell the history of winter sports in the Sierra Nevada—from the Washoe people traveling on handmade snowshoes up the mountains to 19th-century gold miners racing down on 14-foot longboards to our modern-day World Cup athletes.

An **Olympic Museum** to commemorate the seminal events of the 1960 Winter Olympic Games held in Squaw Valley and Lake Tahoe and the ensuing effects on regional and western ski history. Plus, we will invite traveling exhibits from other world-wide collections to augment the Olympic experience.

An indoor-outdoor **Community Event Space** where residents and visitors can enjoy films, lectures, conferences and meetings within the state-of-the-art facilities.

An **Education Center** that provides schools with year-round programming and field trips to support curriculum for regional history, arts and culture, technology and environmental awareness.

A **Snack Bar and Gift Shop** offering delicious snacks as well as replicas of historic maps and posters, memorabilia, and an array of historical literature and gifts.

A **Visitor Center** with regional information for recreational and cultural activities, events, trail maps and suggestions for where to stay, where to play and where to eat.

An **Environmentally-Inspired Building** designed to fit naturally into a small footprint in an existing park and engineered to incorporate California's guidelines for sustainability and net-zero energy-use goals.

### A Far West “Hall of Fame”

The Hall of Fame will honor regional athletes, leaders and legends who have participated in the events and stories of our western ski and snowboard history. Inductees will be selected by a voting panel of writers, historians and community leaders and celebrated at an annual grand gala event.



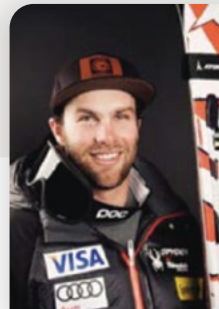
Wayne Poulsen



Tamara McKinney



Alex Cushing



Travis Ganong



Star Walton Hurley



## THE BUILDING CONCEPT AND SITE

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### Museum Site Selection

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Early on, the board recognized the importance of location. With funds from the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, planning consultants conducted a six-month study resulting in a detailed site analysis of 15 potential locations. Using criteria such as parcel size, location, buildable area, access and ownership to parking, environmental concerns, and snow storage, consultants arrived at six recommended sites:

1. “Far East” parcel owned by Squaw Valley
2. The “Old Fire Station” parcel owned by Squaw Valley Public Service District
3. The “Triangle” across from the Bear Pen, owned by Poulsen family
4. “Squaw Valley Stables” owned by Pavel family
5. The “7-11” parcel owned by Poulsen family
6. The “Park” parcel owned by Placer County

After more research into ownership, parking and development issues, the committee eliminated the “up valley” locations 1-4. Realizing that this collection would represent not only the 1960 Winter Olympic Games at Squaw Valley, but the history of skiing from all Far West ski areas, the museum board determined that the museum needs to be an independent historical institution located outside of a ski area with year-round access to all visitors to the North Lake Tahoe Area. To succeed financially, consultants and committee members agreed maximum year-round public access and visibility were high priorities.

***In June 2010, the committee voted to select the location within the park at the entrance to Olympic Valley on Highway 89, behind the Olympic Tower of Nations.***

July 2015 was a turning point for the museum when the Placer County Supervisors voted to allow the SVSMF “to move forward with placing the Olympic Museum on the Squaw Valley Park site.” After additional fundraising support and grants, the foundation worked with museum planners, architects, and engineers to apply for the land, complete studies, and seek final site approvals.

### Plan Overview

*The site plan at right shows a building, nestled into a sharp grade change (formerly a rock processing and concrete batch plant), partially hidden in the pine trees and respecting the granite outcroppings that are a prominent feature in the natural conditions of the surrounding park.*

*The Olympic Tower of Nations will be moved from across the road and integrated into an “Olympic Park” in front of the proposed museum, where it will serve as an anchor to the park and the museum—a much improved (and safer) photo op than its present location.*



*This location was also favored for its access to Highway 89, with existing public transit stops, and the growing network of public bike paths and hiking trails.*





## Proposed Floor Plans

The 16,000 square foot building will have a footprint of 10,000 square feet distributed over two levels. From the entrance level, it will appear to be a single story building. Limited loading functions will be located within the lower level of the building, accessed through the lower parking area as the footprint takes advantage of the natural topography.

### Two-Level Design

In this conceptual illustration, visitors enter the upper level of the museum from the upper parking lot. Inside, a stone column, rising to the ceiling will display Hall of Fame members. The reception area will contain a small education-driven retail space and a regional visitor center for the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association. With a snack bar for museum staff and visitors on one side, a multiple-purpose meeting space for lectures, classes, films and meetings will be available for community use and public events.

The lower level will provide extended space for exhibitions and the administrative office space for museum staff.



## FAQs

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# Your Questions Answered

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**Q** *How will SVSMF fund the construction of the museum and how much will it cost?*

**A** *Development costs (including exhibits and fixtures) are estimated to range from \$900-\$1,100 per square foot. With that in mind, our goal is to raise between \$16-\$17 million dollars.*

**Q** *How will the museum operate and be funded?*

**A** *The museum will be operated on a 501 c (3) charitable non-profit basis. Approximately 80% to 90% of the annual operating expense will be generated through modest entrance donations (to the curated exhibits), a museum gift shop with educational book sales, scheduled social and educational events, classes and seminars, and an annual Ski Hall of Fame fundraiser. The board is exploring museum models that offer free attendance vs. voluntary entry donations.*

**Q** *How many visitors will the museum have annually?*

**A** *With the museum located in The Squaw Valley Park, the 2009 master plan predicted 90,000 visitors by year three of operation. However, 50,000 is anticipated for budgeting. Heritage tourism is very popular as detailed in North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's 2008 "Investing in Heritage Tourism: Ensuring Placer County's Place in Olympic History".*

**Q** *Does the current park zoning of forest recreation allow museums?*

**A** *SVSMF will propose a zoning amendment that will allow a land use category of "Libraries and Museums" subject to a Conditional Use Permit. The amendment will be included in the project application and would be narrowly written to only apply to the SV park land.*

**Q** *Would a privately funded Museum located in the park violate the deed restriction from the USFS prohibiting private commercial uses?*

**A** *No, the SVSMF legal advisors and the Placer County Counsel have issued legal opinions that a non-profit museum dedicated to winter sports history and culture of the Sierras is anything but commercial. In December of 2011, SVSMF posed that question, along with a legal opinion, to the USFS and they responded suggesting the decision rests with Placer County. The legal opinion supporting the non-commercial status of the museum is contained in supporting documents.*





## PROGRESS AND PLANS

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### 2019 Key Accomplishments

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- Brand Development reflecting greater appeal to the region
- Architecture and Engineering / Surveys / Studies
- Board and Advisors completed our 5-year Strategic Plan
- Grants and Donations / TTCF Storytelling Initiative Seed Funding
- Partnerships / Resorts / Grand Pacific Resorts PR and Video
- New Web Site and Email Marketing System Platform
- Ongoing Acquisition of Historical Artifacts / Olympic Torch
- Completed Environmental Questionnaire for the Park Site

### 2020–2021 Goals

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- Secure and staff formal office and create student intern program
- Complete the Land Use Applications for Placer County
- Support activities and events for the 60th Anniversary of the 1960 Olympics
- Increase the awareness of the S.N.O.W. Project locally and worldwide
- Build programs for corporate sponsorships, partners, and athlete ambassadors
- Accelerate the 'Storytelling Initiative' and collection of historical artifacts
- Launch Capital Campaign efforts to State (CA & NV) and Federal level
- Develop the Educational Platform / Environmental Awareness (CA & NV)
- Identify Family Legacy donors





***Thank you to our 2019 Donors, our  
Founding Donors and Supporting  
Partners and Organizations:***

**2019 Donors**

Eddy and Osvaldo Ancinas  
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John Wilcox  
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**2019 Supporting Partners  
and Organizations**

Far West Ski Association  
Kiwanis North Lake Tahoe  
Rotary Club of Truckee  
Queen of Hearts  
Women's Fund  
Tahoe Truckee Community  
Foundation

**Founding Donors**

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Cushing Foundation  
Rick and Janice Ganong  
Gary and Virginia Nagle  
William Nagle  
Poulsen Family Trust

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Eric Poulsen (*Olympian*)  
Lynn Suter  
Starr Walton-Hurley (*Olympian*)

**Executive Director**

Jill Short Milne





## Help Us Build It

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[www.TheSnowMuseum.org](http://www.TheSnowMuseum.org)  
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S.N.O.W. Sports Museum / SVSMF  
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SVSMF is the Squaw Valley Ski Museum Foundation (former name).  
All donations are tax deductible.