



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

Jen Miller

[jmiller@winterparkresort.com](mailto:jmiller@winterparkresort.com)

303-638-9626

## **Winter Park Resort Opens Workforce Housing Complex to First Residents**

*Addresses the resort community's housing crunch for seasonal and year-round workers*

**WINTER PARK RESORT, Colo., Jan. 11, 2024** – Residents of Winter Park Resort's much-anticipated workforce housing complex, [Conifer Commons](#), have started to move in. They are the first employees to live in this local housing project, hailed by industry professionals and community leaders as "a national model for other ski resorts."

Recognizing the crisis-level need for local housing for seasonal and year-round workers, [Winter Park Resort](#) completed construction of Conifer Commons in December of 2023. From inception to completion, Conifer Commons has been applauded for its community-wide approach, and Winter Park Resort has quickly become a leader in addressing employee housing. The project is noted for working collaboratively with key partners; aligning with the Town of Winter Park's housing-needs assessment and strategy; moving quickly with modular construction to maximize short building seasons; subsidizing for affordability; and repurposing vacant land on the resort property.

"As one of the largest employers in the area, we wanted to make sure our seasonal and year-round workers have affordable housing that provides essential accommodations – and that also supports our core values around people and community. After all, Winter Park Resort is as much about our people and quality of life, as it is about our unspoiled forest and slopes," said Sky Foulkes, Winter Park Resort president.

Conifer Commons is located just yards away from Winter Park Resort's Cabriolet lift, which accesses the mountain's base area, just off U.S. Highway 40 and Winter Park Drive. Winter Park Resort wanted the workforce housing to be on the resort property, so it repurposed (and then relocated) a parking area, to ensure the complex was near to slopes, convenient, walkable, and accessible to public transportation.

Conifer Commons is a joint effort between Winter Park Resort, Alterra Mountain Company (Winter Park Resort's parent company), Town of Winter Park, Winter Park Recreation Association (the agent of the City and County of Denver), Winter Park Water and Sanitation, and Saunders Construction. The project cost totaled approximately \$60 million.

### ***About Conifer Commons: Facts and Narrative***

[Winter Park Resort](#) has completed construction of one of Colorado's largest [workforce housing](#) complexes. The following narrative and facts reinforce the importance of this community-wide approach and workforce-housing solution -- a local project with national impact and industry vision.

#### **SITUATION: National Workforce Housing Shortage**

While workforce housing in ski towns has been a national concern for decades, the issue has escalated more recently with a mix of increasing home prices and post-pandemic labor shortages. As a result, the workforce gets pushed out, and ski resorts can find it difficult to keep the employees who help their mountain towns thrive living locally and affordably. This is a national problem with local implications that mixes industry, housing, and workforce.

#### **SOLUTION: Winter Park Resort's Workforce Housing Complex**

Winter Park Resort took a community-wide approach, leading conversations with their employees, the Town of Winter Park, government officials, partners, and construction companies to identify a creative and accessible solution. While its Workforce Housing Complex started as a local effort to address the resort's housing challenges, Winter Park Resort has quickly become a leader in this initiative and a model for other ski resorts around the U.S. – thinking differently and productively, working collaboratively, moving quickly with modular construction, subsidizing for affordability, and repurposing vacant land on the resort property.

- **Community Priority**: The new workforce housing project is the culmination of community discussion, needs-based research, and feasibility studies between the Town of Winter Park, Winter Park Resort, the resort's parent company, Alterra Mountain Company, and other key stakeholders. As a result of the collective recognition of this urgent need, Winter Park Resort and Alterra Mountain Company made workforce housing a priority ahead of future plans to expand the resort's offerings for guests.
- **Collaboration**: Throughout the planning and construction process, the resort thoughtfully ensured that the concept aligned with the town's housing needs assessment and workforce housing strategy. The timing complements the efforts of

community leaders to create a regional housing authority that is broadly addressing workforce needs in Winter Park and in surrounding Grand County.

- **Modular Construction**: The modular construction was faster and more controlled, so the snowy season and weather constraints did not interrupt the building process in a mountain community. Winter Park saw this modular method as an innovative solution that accelerated the project for more-immediate housing needs, and that kept costs down for more-affordable options.
- **Land Use**: Winter Park wanted the workforce housing to be on the resort property, so they repurposed (and then relocated) a parking area, to ensure the complex location was convenient, walkable, and accessible to public transportation.
- **Values**: With a commitment to community, people, environment, inclusiveness, innovation and affordability, Winter Park Resort is providing a solution that also represents its values and forward-thinking approach to workforce housing.

#### **KEY BENEFITS: Workforce Housing for the Future**

- **Walkable**: This workforce housing complex is onsite, meaning residents will easily be able to walk to work, transit, and recreation.
- **Private and Communal Living**: There are 330-plus beds in a mix of studios, and single units, which means Winter Park Resort is able to accommodate workers and professionals each in their own private, lockable units. There are communal kitchens, living spaces, and bathrooms on each of four floors in two buildings.
- **Year-round**: It's designed for both seasonal and year-round workers, and Winter Park subsidizes rent, helping to keep local housing affordable for employees.
- **Sustainable**: It was modular construction, which reduced waste and other resources, and which made it a more environmentally-sustainable approach to new development.

#### **FACTS: Project Details**

- Construction was completed in the Fall of 2023.
- Nashua Builders built the project at their facilities in Idaho, and then shipped the components to Winter Park where the modular boxes were assembled and completed on site.
- Each of two buildings that make up the complex are comprised of 96 modular components that are stacked side-by-side and on top of each other. It took roughly 60 days for both four-story buildings to go from foundation to roof installation.
- According to project leaders, Conifer Commons is one the largest modular projects in the country.

- Key partners include: The Town of Winter Park, Winter Park Recreation Association (WPRA), the team at Alterra Mountain Co, Winter Park Water and Sanitation and Saunders Construction.
- Other construction partners include the following:
  - Shears Adkins Rockmore (Architect of Record)
  - Saunders Construction (General Contractor)
  - Nashua Builders (Modular Contractor)
  - JVA Consulting Engineers (Civil Engineer of Record)
  - Lochsa Engineers (Structural Engineer of Record)
  - Wenk Associates (Landscape Architect)

**ABOUT WINTER PARK RESORT:**

Winter Park Resort, Colorado’s quintessential mountain and ski resort, is located less than 70 miles from the city of Denver. Flanked by the dramatic Continental Divide, the resort is defined by its pure, natural environment and authentic, Colorado adventure culture. Winter Park is known to receive some of the state’s most consistent snowfall across its 3,000+ acres of world-class terrain and has been voted one of USA Today’s top ski resorts in North America for multiple years. During the summer, the resort is home to the renowned Trestle Bike Park, and the town itself has consistently been named as Colorado’s Top Adventure Town. For more information, visit [www.winterparkresort.com](http://www.winterparkresort.com).

**INTERVIEW AND PHOTO REQUESTS**

For interviews and photos, contact Jen Miller at [jmiller@winterparkresort.com](mailto:jmiller@winterparkresort.com) or 303-638-9626.

# # #