



October 13, 2020

Nevada Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation
Mr. Robert Ostrovsky, Chairman

Public Comment for Commission Meeting of 13, October 2020 3PM
RE CCCHP-19-24 Grant Award to Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society

Dear Chairman Ostrovsky, Commissioners, and Nevada State Historic Preservation Office Staff:

I submit these public comments at today's meeting in the spirit of appreciation for your years of support.

At your June 9th, 2020 meeting, during the final public comment period, the Commission heard a last-minute appeal by Lyon County for additional funds for its Carson Colorado Railway Depot project. In an unprecedented move, the Commission reduced Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society's award by \$35,000 and increased Lyon County's award by the same amount.

As that was a Zoom meeting and my input was muted by the moderator, this member of the public could not speak during the remaining public comment period and explain the detrimental impact the Commission's action would have on Thunderbird. As Lyon County's award is on today's agenda, I would like the opportunity to voice what I was not afforded to do so back in June.

By the Commission reducing Thunderbird's award in the amount of \$35,000, Thunderbird forfeited a much needed 100% matching gift. With the original award of \$150,000, the matching funds would let Thunderbird wrap-up this project. This would also mean never having to bring this project to the Commission again and free-up future award funds to the pool of applicants. In other words: by you re-granting \$35,000 today, Thunderbird obtains the private partnership matching funds to complete this project, and CCCHP potentially saves \$100,000+ in future grant awards to Thunderbird.

Lyon County's depot project was a worthwhile endeavor, and we understand the Commission has absolute discretion to award the grants in any manner or amount it sees fit.

Now sadly, fate has intervened. The Carson Colorado Railway Depot, for which Lyon County applied for funding, has burned to the ground. As a citizen who loves Nevada history, I would rather the Depot still be here. However, as the Depot is gone and statute precludes the funds from being used to construct a replica structure, **I appeal to the Commission to restore the \$35,000 diverted from Thunderbird** so that we may access the matching grant funds and complete this essential work at Thunderbird Lodge.

With a favorable ruling by the Commission, Thunderbird may reapply for its matching funds, prepare a budget, and advance this project in a way that will not otherwise be possible.

With gratitude,

Bill Watson
Chief Executive and Curator

George Whittell Estate National Historic Site • Thunderbird Lodge • *Thunderbird* Yacht