

Signs designed to make navigating Tahoe roads easier



Wayfinding signs in Reno have more latitude because of not being on a state highway.

By Kathryn Reed

The forces behind creating informational signs on the South Shore that are relevant and prominent will bring what they hope are the final designs to the South Lake Tahoe City Council on Sept. 15.

Then Caltrans needs to give its blessing before installation begins next summer. A maintenance agreement between the city and Caltrans will be part of next week's discussions.

Wayfinding, as the national movement is called, is about creating signs with words and symbols to help direct people to various destinations. The problem with doing it on Highway 50 is Caltrans has a whole lot of rules without much wiggle room.

This means from Meyers to the state line the signs will be blue, brown and green, with white lettering. They have to be a certain number of feet high, lettering height is regulated and

other state highway rules apply.

Signs on Pioneer Trail, Ski Run Boulevard and other city-county streets allow for more latitude in creativity.

Symbols on the highway will be somewhat generic – a skier, hiker, tent for camping, swimmer for beach access, fork and knife for restaurants. No fun stuff like San Francisco where an outline of Italy symbolizes North Beach.

In 2007, the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce was given an \$88,000 grant from the city and \$42,500 from El Dorado County to create the program. Nancy Kerry when she was at the chamber was the lead on the project and continued to be so when she became a city employee.

When the new signs are in place, what is in place now will be taken down.