

South Tahoe devising plan for state line area

By Kathryn Reed

Remove development on the lake to provide better views. Have hotels near bike-pedestrian paths. More access to public transportation. Boardwalks. More kayaking. Decrease the number of driveways at Bijou Center. Make Lakeside Beach public.

Those are some of the ideas the public came up with at a meeting Wednesday night in regards to the tourist core area, aka the state line section of South Lake Tahoe. The plan goes from Ski Run Boulevard to the Nevada border.

The city is on a mission to have the area plan for this part of town go to the Planning Commission in May, the City Council in July and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board in August.



South Lake Tahoe planner John Hitchcock talks March 20 about the Tourist Core Area Plan. Photo/LTN

“The intent of the area plan is not a vision plan, it’s an implementation plan,” John Hitchcock, planner for the city, told the approximately 40 people who were at the March 20

meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport.

Hitchcock went over how area plans are TRPA's latest version of community plans, but with the goal of being more functional. With a new TRPA Regional Plan in place, area plans come with redevelopment incentives, increased height allowances in town centers and the goal of revamping what's in place for environmental gain.

South Shore resident Jerome Evans is concerned no one has asked business owners if they want to move to what are being called town centers; and wonders why an economic study to prove or disapprove this approach to planning is good or bad was not done.

One goal of the plan will be to harness and capitalize on the recreation areas that exist – Heavenly Gondola; Van Sickle Bi-State Park – including access to the Tahoe Rim Trail; Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course – and the beach that will be public after the lodge is built; the lake; and Ski Run and Lakeside marinas.

After the nuts and bolts were talked about, the mass of people went into the lobby area to write on maps, fill out comment cards and ask officials questions. The three main areas were land use planning and community design; conservation-water quality; and transportation-recreation.

Sharon Doughty, co-owner of the Ski Run Center that is anchored by the Red Hut Café, told City Manager Nancy Kerry after the group session that she is worried the plan will eliminate mom and pop businesses. Doughty fears the town centers will be high rent districts.

“Our goal is not to get rid of anything except something that is on very sensitive land,” Kerry said. “We don't want to plan for the outcome, but instead plan for the opportunity to occur.”

