

South Shore struggling to be more than it is

By Kathryn Reed

Connecting the dots of the South Shore is getting closer, but what the end picture will look like remains to be seen.

Tuesday night was the third economic forum in the last year focusing on gathering people to discuss visions for the area and starting the dialog to be able implement ideas. (The other meetings were Oct. 23, 2012, and March 5.)

On Oct. 22, 12 speakers gave brief overviews of what their entities are doing.

They were:



South Shore is trying to figure out what will be the solution for a sustainable economic future.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

- Jason Drew – Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce – talking about the chamber's vision for 2020 and being active politically.

- Tom Greene – Tahoe Prosperity Center – the need for a substantial digital delivery system.
- Kim Kerr – El Dorado County – Meyers plan and recreation on the South Shore.
- Mimi Moss – Douglas County – South Shore area plan, recreation.
- Lew Feldman – attorney – next phase of Chateau project should be done in July.
- James Grant – Vail Resorts – zipline at Heavenly should open in December, rope courses next summer.
- Nancy Kerry – South Lake Tahoe – recreation plan under way, Harrison Avenue next summer, tourist core plan to TRPA in November.
- Carl Hasty – Tahoe Transportation District – loop road progressing, Stateline bike trail ready to ride, bus shelters going in, ferry service to begin environmental study phase.
- Kindred Murillo – Lake Tahoe Community College – planning for next 40 years, becoming an education and cultural center, four-year education, desire for new facilities.
- Mike Cook – Caltrans – projects on South Shore continue through 2019.
- Ivone Larson – South Tahoe High School – unparalleled opportunities through new programs in state-of-the-art facilities.
- Cindy Martinez – Bijou Community School – two-way immersion program.

A common thread weaving through their presentations is one builds upon the other. It's about education, having a knowledgeable workforce, providing recreation activities for

locals and tourists, and having the transportation-infrastructure to move people from place to place.

The more than 100 people at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel were asked to use one word to describe what they heard from the speakers. They said – vision, recreation, implementation, progress, community, positivity and education.

Then it came time for four predetermined ideas to be discussed. And while recreation was a common theme at the start of the meeting, it had nothing to do with the four ideas.

The ideas were an outdoor music venue, business incubator-accelerator-innovation center, interpretive discovery center, and arts identity.

The four speakers each gave three examples of other locations that have brought the same ideas to fruition and then they talked a bit about what it took for those venues to prosper.

When it came time to find out what the audience thought should be done going forward there was not overwhelming consensus. However, more hands went up for believing a music venue would have the greatest impact on the area, while creating an arts identity would be easiest to do.