

Trail to put cyclists-walkers along waters' edge



Lake Tahoe's multitude of colors can be seen where the Incline trail will go. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

INCLINE VILLAGE – It's possible people won't be able to pedal the Incline Village to Sand Harbor bike trail that is slated to break ground next summer.

And it has nothing to do with the grade – that is expected to be no more than 5 percent. Nor even the length to begin with – it will be three miles when this demonstration plot is finished in what could be 2016.

It's the views that may keep people from progressing far at once. People likely will be pulling over to snap photo after photo.

From the road this windy stretch of Highway 28 looks like it could fall into Lake Tahoe. The truth is there is a wide swath of land before reaching the water – and not just in drought

years. This is where the bike path is going to be built.

The Incline section is one small part of what eventually will be the 30-mile Stateline-to-Stateline Bike Path. It will encompass all of Nevada at the lake. The even larger plan is to have a path around the entire lake.

The first phase of the Stateline-to-Stateline trail was completed in 2013 with 2.2 miles that go from Rabe Meadow in Stateline to Round Hill Pines Beach.

This past summer the Tahoe Fund launched a fundraising drive to secure \$750,000 to help leverage \$12 million in public dollars for the project as well as put some aside for a future endowment fund for maintenance. Tahoe Transportation District is the lead agency to get the trail built, but this section would be Nevada State Parks responsibility for upkeep.



The trail will mean not having to walk along the highway.

The nonprofit raised the money in seven weeks. The 16 vista points ranged from \$15,000 to \$100,000 depending on size and access. Those with more modest budgets can still donate \$100 to have recognition at the start of the trail, and donors will also be recognized at kiosks at different locations.

Near where Tunnel Creek Café sits today will be the addition of 90 parking places. Already a bike trail exists on Lakeshore Drive. Eventually the Stateline trail will go to Crystal Bay.

The section breaking ground in May will head from the café on the mountain side. Where the actual Tunnel Creek flows is where cyclists/walkers will cross Highway 28 – either underground or via a bridge. This is about one mile from the café. People will be adjacent to the lake the rest of the way to Sand Harbor.

Amy Berry, CEO of the Tahoe Fund, said, “It’s like building a highway alongside the highway.”

This is because it will be 10-foot wide, entails potential over and underpasses, cantilever bridges, grades to meet American with Disabilities Act rules, signs and other necessities. Plus, building at Tahoe – and so close to the water – requires hurdles to be leaped before contractors are hired.



Scenery will be a main draw to this route.

People will be walking or riding at a level that is lower than the state highway. And while this may sound noisy, the normal passenger car just made a hum on a recent morning. The beauty, even on a smoky day, could not be interrupted or derailed by anything above.

There will still be spots for motorists to stop, like at Memorial Point.

Stairs descend from the road to the water. Not all of these will be saved or in their same configuration when the trail is built. Besides getting people from Point A to Point B, the route is designed to stop people from parking on the narrow highway, reduce accidents, improve the environment and get

people closer to Lake Tahoe. Estimates are that 100,000 people will use this trail once it is in the ground.

“It is a trail that takes you someplace, but the journey is the destination,” Berry said.