

Millions being spent to reinvigorate Kings Beach



A new water filtration system has been installed near the obsolete pier that State Parks wants to replace in Kings Beach. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – Millions of dollars in state money has been funneled into Kings Beach to improve aesthetics, keep sediment out of Lake Tahoe and upgrade the infrastructure. Even more work is planned for the area, which in large part will be designed to upgrade the recreation opportunities.

The California Tahoe Conservancy board and others on Sept. 17 went on a tour to see sites that are done, ones that are a work in progress and what is planned.

Standing on the pier that only covers sand, Steve Muillami with State Parks in Sacramento told the group that when the general plan process starts next month for the Kings Beach State Recreation Area it begins an in depth analysis of what

should be done with the 12½ acre site. Also included in the planning will be the plaza area.

“The difference with this plan is that it goes beyond what we typically do,” Muillami said. “This plan will be much more detailed. We will be looking at how elements fit together. Environmental documents will look at the project level.”

The general plan is expected to be completed in December 2017. One of the main things to be looked at is replacing the pier. The goal is to build one that can be used more than a few months a year, if not year-round. The drought has made it useless 12 months a year.

Today the boat ramp ends at sand, not water. That too will be addressed in the general plan. With Boating and Waterways now being part of State Parks instead of a standalone agency, the ramp will seamlessly be incorporated into the general plan.



The community voted on design features of road improvements like colored pavers.

The last time this area had a general plan written was in 1980. The new document is expected to have a 20-year lifespan.

An environmental impact report and environmental impact study will be done to satisfy state and Tahoe Regional Planning

Agency mandates.

How best to incorporate special events at the property while also allowing visitors to use the area will be studied. Events like this weekend's Lake Tahoe Ironman and last weekend's Bike Big Blue bike ride use the Kings Beach State Recreation Area annually. It's the start site for the triathlon swim and a major stop for the biannual bike rides put on by Curtis Fong.

Property ownership in the area is a mishmash including State Parks, CTC, Placer County, North Tahoe Public Utility District and private entities. It makes putting together a cohesive plan difficult at times. The beaches the CTC owns are now managed by State Parks.

The goal is to make things seamless for the public so there is no obvious property boundary – at least among the public parcels.

State Parks is working with Placer County to make the gateways on either ends of its property blend, which will be a future project.

Dan LaPlante, an engineer with the county, pointed out some of the more than \$51 million worth of work that is being done in town. Some of that funding came from the CTC – so the board and staff were able to see how that money has been spent.

Near the start of the pier is a redesigned outfall that uses new technology, along with planting native plants. Rock is at the end of the pipe. Today it looks like stormwater will just run onto the beach. When the lake returns to a more normal level, that water will flow into it.

Stormwater vaults have been installed to the right of the events center. This is where filters called jellyfish have been placed to capture the fine sediment before the water flows under the paving stones of the walkway and into the lake via the new outfall.

This is one of seven treatment systems in Kings Beach.



Highway 28 went from four lanes to three through Kings Beach.

Besides water quality, the goals of the improvements throughout the core area were to improve the look of the town, and increase the walkable-bikeable options.

With Highway 28 being decreased from four lanes to three, the county also initiated traffic control plans in neighborhoods.

The current phase of the project is slated to be done by Nov. 1, with overall completion at the end of the next building season.

CTC is the agency that started the funding for this work.

Because a county snowplow driver was injured and the rig damaged last year going through one of the roundabouts, all of them have been altered this summer. The curbs were flattened two weeks ago to solve the problem.

Another component of the project is the development of six community parking lots. Two are being built now. The county accomplished this by purchasing lots in the last 10 years. The money to do so came from the former Redevelopment Agency and

North Lake Tahoe Resort Association.

A benefits assessment district was voted into place by the property owners to pay for the maintenance of the sidewalks and other public places through town. Placer County will be responsible for doing the actual work.