

Greenway trail in South Lake to expand by 2020

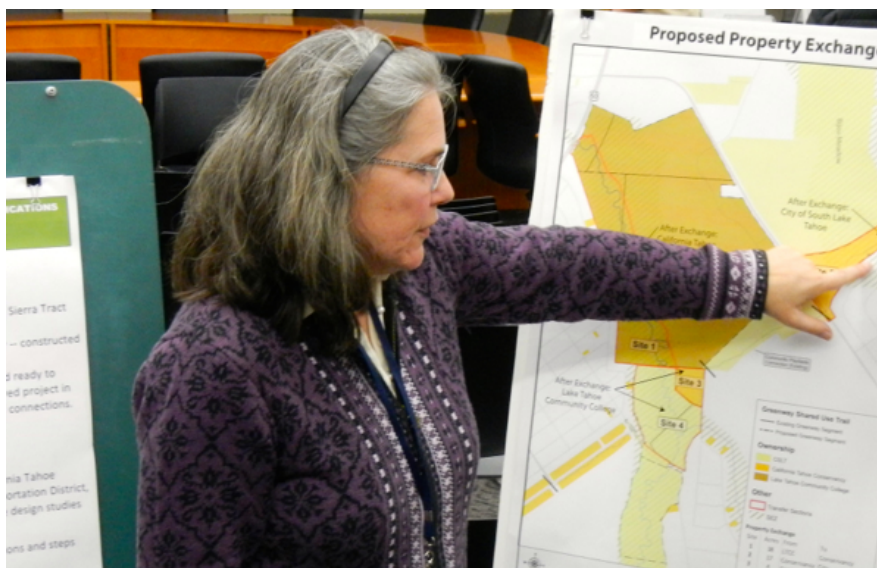
By Kathryn Reed

Bridging the neighborhoods of South Lake Tahoe is one of the primary goals of the Greenway bike path.

By 2020 the residential areas of Bijou and Sierra Tract should be linked so the need to travel on Highway 50 or Pioneer Trail can be avoided.

“By minimizing the number of streets you cross it makes it easier to choose not to be in your car,” Sue Rae Irelan said Thursday night at an open house at Lake Tahoe Community College about the project.

Irelan, who works for the California Tahoe Conservancy, has been leading the charge on this multi-use trail that one day will go from Meyers to Stateline. For now, the project is approved from Sierra Tract to Van Sickle Bi-State Park.



Sue Rae Irelan with the California Tahoe Conservancy talks Jan. 7 about the next phase of the Greenway trail. Photo/Kathryn

Reed

“Winter access is really important in Tahoe,” Sue Rae Irelan said.

This year the Conservancy, South Lake Tahoe and Lake Tahoe Community College are expected to complete a land swap that will allow the next phase of the project to go forward. No money will be exchanged.

The next segment, which should break ground in 2019, will be one mile of trail that starts at Bijou Meadow and connects to Bijou Community Park, and crosses Al Tahoe Boulevard to connect to Lake Tahoe Community College and the community ball field.

The one mile that will be built in the next few years has a \$4 million price tag.

Money for this phase comes from:

- CTC – \$1 million
- LTCC Measure F – \$700,000
- Tahoe Transportation District – \$400,000
- State grant – \$1.9 million.

“This is the most expensive part of the project because of the bridge,” Irelan said.

A 150- to 175-foot span will cross Trout Creek. Then boardwalk will be in the meadow to protect the sensitive terrain.

Much of the trail follows user created trails. The new trail is 10 feet wide, meets ADA requirements and is paved.

Flashing lights will be installed on Al Tahoe, and at Martin and Barbara avenues to make it safer for cyclists and pedestrians to cross those streets to continue on the path.

Winter use of the trail remains uncertain.

“The Conservancy doesn’t plow. We are actively talking to the city about how to cooperatively maintain all of the trails,” Irelan said. “Winter access is really important in Tahoe.”

The challenge is how to pay for it.

In 2015, 0.42 miles of the Greenway was built between Herbert Avenue and Glenwood Way.

Future sections include going from Herbert to Ski Run Boulevard, and then from Ski Run to Van Sickle. When those are completed the trail will be 3.86 miles long.

Funding is the obstacle that must be overcome in order for the next phases to commence.

Because there has been a change in the alignment since the project was initially approved there needs to be an amendment to the environmental documents. The revised CEQA document should be released this month for a 30-day public comment period.