

SLT Chateau site to finally be filled in

By Kathryn Reed

While driving by on Highway 50 it's hard to know the hole still exists, going down one of the side streets in the state line area reveals concrete and rebar are very much a part of the landscape.

The owners of this much maligned piece of real estate in South Lake Tahoe hope to start filling in the back portion next summer.

"It will be consistent with the prior approvals, with changes to where the convention center was to go," Gary Midkiff with Midkiff and Associates told the City Council on Oct. 17. "We anticipate we will come to staff soon for design changes."

The goal is for construction to start in 2018.

Long called the Chateau project, the more than 11-acre site was at one-time going to be the largest redevelopment project in the city's history; a decade ago the price tag was more than \$400 million.

Bankruptcy and the dissolution of the state's redevelopment agency have the future less definitive now.

On Tuesday, though, the council approved the final subdivision map. According to the staff report, this affects the "14 original pre-redevelopment lots, portions of the abandoned public rights-of-way, and parcels located within the Chateau at the Village footprint."

Midkiff said the owner is in preliminary discussions with city staff as to what the future holds. Lodging – 387 units – will still be a substantive component. Whether it's full ownership,

operated like a hotel, condos or something else remains to be seen.

Tahoe Chateau Land Holding LLC, a Chinese-American investment group, earlier this year bought the property from Tahoe Stateline Venture LLC, a subsidiary of Owens Realty Mortgage Inc., for \$45.5 million.

A press release in May said, "The original convention center plan will be eliminated and replaced with smaller meeting rooms targeting incentive and group events."

The goal is that the new development will complement the existing condos – called Zalanta – and retail that fronts the highway. Zalanta opened earlier this year. It is full ownership condos, with the assumption most will be put into a rental pool for tourists.

"As the property manager of Zalanta, Vail Resorts will operate a 24/7 front desk and ski valet for the property in addition to managing both the homeowners' association and vacation rental program on behalf of owners," Kevin Cooper with Heavenly Mountain Resort told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Vail Resorts is well-versed in property management and homeowners' association operations in seasonal mountain resort destinations throughout Lake Tahoe at Heavenly, Northstar and Kirkwood as well as its resorts in Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge and Keystone in Colorado and Park City in Utah."

A second phase of Zalanta is in the works as well, which will be more lodging.

The entire site will include open spaces, being walkable, and more retail.