

Investment kick-starts Tahoe City's economy

By Melissa Siig, Moonshine Ink

There was a time this winter when, on the surface, Tahoe City's future looked grim. The downtown commercial core was facing a plethora of empty restaurants and storefronts. The old Zia Lina space in the middle of downtown, vacated last year, was still empty, as well as the adjoining space that once housed Subway. Moe's Original Bar B Que, which had become a bright spot in Tahoe City since it opened in 2014, was leaving its waterfront location that hosted popular music shows. The Burrito Window was preparing to move to Kings Beach in anticipation of the demolition of the Henrikson building, the dilapidated structure at the west gateway to town whose removal seemed forever stalled by bureaucratic red tape and a lawsuit. The Boatworks Mall, which suffered severe water damage last winter, lost its two street-front businesses, making it look almost abandoned, and the Lighthouse Center has been without a major restaurant since Lakeside Pizza closed in 2014. After more than 40 years at the same location, Bank of America shuttered its Tahoe City branch in March.

Yet behind the scenes, a Tahoe City renaissance was in the works, one that is just now bearing fruit. Spurred by the investment of Kila Properties, which purchased the Henrikson building in 2013 to build the much-anticipated Tahoe City Lodge, new energy and businesses are taking root in the small North Shore town that had seen its fortunes wane as those of ski resort villages, like Northstar and Squaw Valley, and Truckee were on the rise. Along with the Highway 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization project, which will improve traffic congestion and create a pedestrian area in town, and the prospects of a new, modern, community-centric building to take the place of the abandoned firehouse in the center of

downtown, things have never looked better for Tahoe City.

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