

Greenbelt in South Lake becoming more defined

By Kathryn Reed

It's like a trove of trails is hiding in broad daylight.

South Lake Tahoe wants to open up the area behind the commercial buildings on the southeast corner at the Y to turn it into a desirable walking-biking network.

Known as the Tahoe Valley Greenbelt, this swath of land will also be reworked so drainage is better.

It's going to take cooperation with the California Tahoe Conservancy and private property owners to make the city's vision become a reality.

On Wednesday night about 20 people gathered at City Hall to discuss the greenbelt – to offer opinions about the proposed trails, signage, open spaces, stormwater elements, play concepts and other aspects of the project. For people who were not at the Dec. 14 meeting, a survey is **online** to give input.

The city has money via the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act to produce the environmental review and 30 percent of the planning. The CEQA document should come out in the spring.

Construction dollars would then be sought. At the earliest, construction could start in 2018.



The area in green will be a scenic corridor in South Lake Tahoe.

Dilapidated paved trails already exist behind what was called the Factory Stores at the Y (now The Crossing) and McDonald's. The plan is to upgrade what is there and create new trails – some class 1, some smaller and more interpretive in nature. They would tie into the neighborhood.

The potential to connect to Barton Health offices exists. And down the road a connector to the Greenway Bike Trail is possible when that gets built.

Plans laid out by the Design Workshop show a major connector coming out on B Street at Highway 50. Caltrans still needs to give its OK to have this be a highway crossing. Otherwise it would mean the nearest crosswalk is at the Y. For people heading west, they would be more apt to be on the wrong side of the street or jaywalk to get to the other side.

The paths won't lead right through The Crossing because that could be dangerous to have people walk/ride into and through a parking lot. However, the trail will border the back of the

center where outdoor seating for a restaurant is planned.

This area behind the commercial center has gradually been thinned by the city to open it up a bit. A creek runs in the area and a meadow of sort exists. The plan is to return some of land to more of its natural setting even though part of it will be paved for trails.

This is also where the bulk of the stormwater improvements will go. The extent of the work to treat runoff will depend on property owners. McDonald's owns some land beyond its footprint because of how coverage used to be calculated. With the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency changing its coverage calculations, the restaurant could sell that "extra" land to the city or grant an easement to the city. If this occurs, a more robust stormwater plan could be built. That aspect could be smoothed out as the franchise owner comes forward with his plans to renovate the existing eatery.

The intent is to also have art and play structures along the greenbelt. Some renderings showed logs that children could scramble on instead of traditional playground equipment. Art could blend in with the natural environment.

Calif. adopts first U.S. energy-saving rules for computers

By Steve Gorman, Reuters

California regulators on Wednesday adopted the nation's first mandatory energy efficiency rules for computers and monitors –

devices that account for 3 percent of home electric bills and 7 percent of commercial power costs in the state.

The state Energy Commission said that when fully implemented the industry-backed plan will save consumers \$373 million a year and conserve at least as much electricity annually as it takes to power all of San Francisco's homes.

Final approval of the standards at a meeting of the five-member commission in Sacramento capped five years spent developing the rules in collaboration with environmentalists, computer manufacturers and consumer groups.

Read the whole story

SLT pot shop landlord faces foreclosure threat

By Kathryn Reed

The commercial strip housing the Tahoe Wellness Cooperative is about to be foreclosed upon.



Patty Olson

A notice of default on the South Lake Tahoe property that is owned by Patty Olson has been filed. It is slated to be sold at auction on Jan. 17.

Cody Bass, founder and executive director of the medical marijuana collective, has been trying to buy the property since earlier this year. He is suing Olson for breach of contract.

Both sides were in mediation for the better part of Dec. 14. However, no settlement could be reached.

A mandatory settlement conference is slated for the end of January, with a trial date set for the first week of February.

It's possible the two sides could reach an agreement at any point. It's also possible for the bank to delay the auction.

U.S. Bank holds the note on the commercial property in the Bijou Center.

Wells Fargo has the loan on the house owned by Olson which is nearby. An escrow has been entered for local businessman Bob Hasset to purchase the house. (Olson now lives in Sparks.) A different local businessman saved the house this fall from being foreclosed on.

Bass is operating his business without a permit from the city. He is unable to get the permit because Olson won't sign the necessary paperwork as the landlord. That brouhaha played out before the **City Council on Dec. 13.**

Lawmakers want to abolish death penalty in Nev.

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Two state legislative leaders have requested a

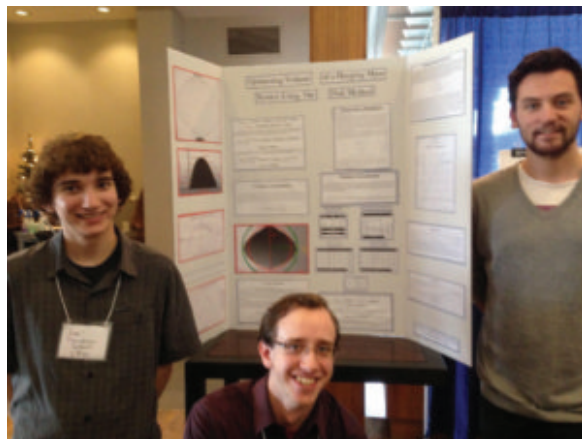
bill be drafted to abolish the death penalty in Nevada.

Bill draft request No. 544 from Assemblyman James Ohrenschall, D-Las Vegas, would make life without the possibility of parole the maximum criminal penalty in Nevada. Sen. Tick Segerblom, D-Las Vegas, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, signed on as a joint requester of the measure.

Ohrenschall had previously indicated he would propose an amendment to the state Constitution to abolish capital punishment, a process that would take five years and a favorable vote of the people to become law.

Read the whole story

LTCC math students score at state contest



Christian Eckert, Mark McCullough and J.C. Stephens

Three Lake Tahoe Community College students grabbed the top prize at a statewide mathematics conference for their poster entry for general math.

The winning poster was designed to explain optimizing volume of a hanging mass system using the disk method. The disk method is a technique borrowed from calculus that can be used to find the volume of a rotating mass system.

Christian Eckert, Mark McCullough and J.C. Stephens built the contraption, rotated it, and collected data from it. They then compared elliptical, polynomial and sinusoidal models to come up with the best fitting model. Finally, they performed the experiment and completed the mathematics by themselves, with a bit of guidance from LTCC math instructor Larry Green.

The students won \$100 at the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges annual conference in Monterey this month.

Caltrans wants Hwy. 50 near Apple Hill to be safer

By Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

State highway officials are laying the groundwork for a \$50 million safety upgrade of Highway 50 east of Placerville, a continuation of decadeslong efforts to modernize one of the oldest mountain highways in the state.

The key element will be installation of two miles of concrete median divider to separate oncoming traffic in the winding and mountainous section between Placerville and the popular Apple Hill area.

Caltrans officials previously added safety features to Highway 50 west of Placerville and improved highway efficiency through the town, although there still are three traffic lights on the

highway.

Read the whole story

Markleeville woman accused of DUI in rollover accident

A 23-year-old Markleeville sustained moderate injuries after being ejected from the vehicle she was driving.

Kaitlin Shanahan was driving north on Highway 89 north Markleeville at an unknown rate of speed on Dec. 11 at 2:10pm when she drifted off the road onto the dirt, rock embankment. The GMC Sierra struck a tree, overturned and ended up on the west descending embankment.

Shanahan was airlifted to Renown Medical Center. She has since been arrested on driving under the influence charges.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

2017 may be bumpy ride for

scooters in Nev.

By Glen Meek, Las Vegas Sun

There are no official numbers, but anecdotal reports suggest a new law could have serious consequences for some commuters on Nevada roads.

The law requires all mopeds (often called scooters) to be registered. While it won't take effect until Jan. 1, the Department of Motor Vehicles began the inspection and registration process Nov. 1 to give riders plenty of time to adjust. As of Dec. 4, 298 mopeds had been registered statewide, 281 of them in Clark County. But how many others will fail the DMV's new test for moped classification?

According to DMV spokesman Kevin Malone, several inspectors have reported that about half of the vehicles brought in so far haven't met the specs. He said the agency wasn't tracking rejections and called the apparent rate merely "noticeable," but if unofficial reports indicate a larger trend, a significant number of scooter riders may have to find a new way to get around or else register their vehicles as motorcycles.

[Read the whole story](#)

SLT stacks evidence against recreational pot

By Kathryn Reed

A one-sided presentation was delivered to the South Lake Tahoe

City Council on Tuesday about how bad marijuana is, with most speakers advocating for the city to have as little to do with recreational aspects of the drug as possible.

What they said:

- Police Chief Brian Uhler: It will hurt the local tourism industry and not help the economy. He cited how the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority is promoting recreation of a different kind. However, the LTVA has not taken a position on recreational marijuana and no evidence was provided whether selling it in town would be economically good or bad. He wants the city to ban the sale of recreational marijuana.

- Barton pediatrician Rhonda Sneeringer: Presented statistics about how mothers who smoke during pregnancy and while breast feeding harm their children; worries about increased adolescent use. Believes in more education. Asked the council to not allow weed to be sold recreationally.

- Barton director of emergency services Lance Orr: Wants to ensure medicinal and recreational marijuana are separate conversations. Presented stats from Colorado, a state that has allowed recreational pot for two years. Traffic fatalities linked to pot use have increased and visits to the emergency room are greater.

- Hannah Greenstreet representing Lake Tahoe Unified School District: Worries even more students will use, stating the numbers are already on the rise. At South Tahoe Middle School in 2015-16 24 students were caught with marijuana, while this school there have been 25 incidents; at South Tahoe High School the numbers are 30 for 2015-16 and 23 this school year. Edibles and vaping pens are rampant now. Doesn't want

it sold here.

· Kelsey Magoon with Drug Free Coalition: Believes marijuana is addictive, that ads will be seen by youth, and that the potency is more harmful today than years' past. Against commercial sales in the city.

What the speakers shared was how bad marijuana is. But that isn't the point because California voters already said yes to recreational weed – and it will be legal Jan. 1. In 2018, storefronts will be allowed. All of the negatives can happen even if pot is not sold here.

The major components missing from the Dec. 13 talk were why selling it in South Lake Tahoe would be bad or good. But that didn't stop the council from agreeing to have the topic on a future agenda to take action. The electeds specifically asked for the language to be voted on to be what the police chief wants – to not allow the sale of recreational marijuana in the city limits.

California voters last month approved Proposition 64, the legalization of marijuana for recreational use. Statewide it passed with 57.1 percent of the vote. In El Dorado County the initiative barely failed with 50.07 percent saying no. However, 65.26 percent of the voters in South Lake Tahoe said yes to recreational marijuana. In district five of El Dorado County, which encompasses the entire South Shore west to parts of Pollock Pines, 62.4 percent approved the measure.

Some of those people might like a place to purchase the weed.

The initiative allows for cities and counties to decide if it would be sold in their jurisdictions. What they can't ban is the use (except in/at public facilities), growing of plants (though there are limits) or transportation (quantities are regulated).

So, even if South Lake Tahoe won't allow a business to sell pot, it can't stop people from lighting up.

Name released in SLT pedestrian fatality

By Ryan Collingwood, Hagadone News Network

Robert Parks toed the California-Mexico border in May, the beginning of his 2,600-mile hiking excursion on the Pacific Crest Trail.



Robert Parks

The 32-year-old Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, man trained for weeks in north Idaho forests for the beautiful and equally arduous journey set to conclude in Canada.

When Parks reached Lake Tahoe, however, he temporarily shelved the trip after falling in love with the outdoor haven.

Tragically, he won't get to finish his endeavor.

Parks was killed this past weekend while crossing a South Lake Tahoe street, the result of a pedestrian-vehicle accident late Saturday night.

Read the whole story