Truckee going from 2 to 5 grocery stores



The Nugget grocery store plan received land-use approval from Truckee Planning Commission this week. Photo/Susan Wood

By Susan Wood

TRUCKEE – The number of grocery stores in Truckee is going to mushroom in the near future.

Plans are under way for the town to add three stores to the existing Safeway on Donner Pass Road and Save Mart on Deerfield Drive. From land use and landscaping to architecture and traffic, Truckee is chipping away at the planning intricacies involved with the additions.

In the coming months, the Truckee Planning Commission will bring proposals for a Raley's to the airport area, a grocer

like Whole Foods or Grocery Outlet across from Safeway, and a Nugget Market to the massive downtown Railyard Master Plan that has been in the works for decades.

The Planning Commission this week approved the development permit with revised and added conditions to construct the 34,483-square-foot Nugget Market on a 3.2-acre site where the railyard is located next to downtown. Union Pacific owns the property.

Part of the land use proposal calls for 149 parking spaces built by the Nugget and a 7,500-square-foot plaza to be maintained by the store. The plaza is intended to serve as a gathering place, a growing trend in the supermarket world.

Supplementary improvements include additional pay-to-park spaces agreed to by Truckee Development Associates as well as landscaping, sidewalk and street improvements. The project will even change Donner Pass Road in that area to a new street – Truckee Way.

Phase 1, located on the western side of the Railyard Master Plan, has already been approved.

“This is a big task to do for something requiring a lot of infrastructure to happen to get the project rolling,” town planner Denyelle Nishimori told commissioners Tuesday night.

Phase 2 of the project also lists an extension of Church Street. Concerns, issues, revisions and added changes were discussed Dec. 19, including road access, utilities, the store loading dock, snow on the store roof, parking – including 30 spots agreed to for bicycles – and affordable housing. To mitigate the proposal, 10 housing units are required. Much dialogue centered on architecture and landscaping.

During public comment, many speakers expressed favorable opinions about the project, especially since it runs adjacent to old town. The notion that store customers would venture

into the smaller shops downtown was a given.

More on the grocery store project is expected to come before the commission in February.

“Staff focused on a handful of issues relative to the overall project,” planner Kirk Skierski told *Lake Tahoe News.*

And more work needs to be done, as the conversation about grocery stores doesn’t end with the Nugget.



This is what the Raley’s Truckee could look like. Rendering/Stafford-King-Wiese

From railroad to Raley’s

Plans have also been in the works for years for a 40,000-square-foot Raley’s to be built on a 5.5-acre parcel off Highway 267 at Soaring Way and Joerger Drive near Truckee Airport. JMA Ventures, which owns Homewood Mountain Resort, owns the land.

The Joerger Ranch plan also calls for 19,000 total square feet of retail space and 224 parking spaces on the vacant lot. With

more traffic expected, infrastructure improvements will involve a widening of the highway at that intersection, along with multi-use, paved trails, sidewalks and landscaping.

As part of its real estate strategy, Raley's seeks expansion in regions it's a little familiar with. For example, two exist in South Lake Tahoe on opposite ends of the South Shore. Now it hopes to hit Truckee north off Interstate 80, after having given the Sacramento region a large presence.

"There's a lot of excitement around that," corporate spokeswoman Chelsea Minor said, adding the store is ready to go once all land-use permits are finalized. This project is estimated to go before the Planning Commission in January.

"The growth on the parcel of land makes it exciting," Minor told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The Raley's executive believes there's enough of a market in different sections of town to support a city of 16,000-plus permanent residents. It swells to more than 40,000 on ski holiday weekends.

"All of us are being realistic and thoughtful in designing the stores," she said.

Minor agreed that the latest supermarket trends involve making them a gathering place. Each time her company remodels or builds a supermarket, seating is a usual component along with other amenities. A bar was just put in to the new Santa Clara store. Truckee's may bring a mezzanine-level with seating for small gatherings.

"You may get your book club meeting there," she said.

Truckee's Raley's-anchored proposal spelled music to the ears of Kings Beach resident Shari Wade. For her, it's all about location, location, location.

"That's a good location near the airport for working people,"

Wade told *LTN*, while recently shopping at Save Mart. She works in an office building near the airport and admitted to avoiding Safeway in her hometown and work town based on “the lines being so long.”

At the outset, Wade believes five grocery stores “seems like a bit much” but takes solace in the fact that they’re spread out.

Another Save Mart shopper agreed to a certain degree.

“Truckee could probably sustain one more,” Peter Henry of Tahoe City said. “Yes, Safeway and Save Mart are busy — especially on Friday. They’re jam-packed. But Sunday’s a ghost town.”

Henry looked a little further to perhaps Truckee needing more stores to support more residential development with the upcoming Martis Creek project.

Even Placer County Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery welcomed the new additions, as she shops outside her jurisdiction in Truckee.

“People like me are looking for new choices. Safeway is crazy on the ski weekends. I try not to shop there at all then,” Montgomery told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I’m not sure if we need three, but definitely there’s a need for more.”



A boutique grocery story will go here, with the Truckee Safeway across the street. Photo/Susan Wood

And yet there is more

Another market – boutique in nature – is planned to go in across the very busy Donner Pass Road from Safeway. The store will be announced at a later date, but the Capitol Avenue Development Grocery Store project will involve a 17,568-square-foot store over 1.54 acres. The project will include two residential rental apartments as part of the deal and 44 on-site parking spaces.

Are five stores too much of a good thing?

Town Manager Jeff Loux said staff is used to hearing that question because upon initial mention the number sounds high. Government cannot turn down a project if it meets the land use and zoning qualifications just because there’s competition.

Loux did point out that economically-astute grocers such as Raley's and the Nugget wouldn't be interested if they didn't do their homework. Both chains have discussed their concepts for several years.

"I believe they've done their marketing," Loux told *LTN.*

Michelle Willard of the Greater Sacramento Area Economic Council agreed.

"Unless they have done the analytics, they wouldn't be interested," Willard said.

From a personal standpoint, Willard said when she enters a ski town one of her first stops is the grocery store.

The real challenge lies in traffic control as growth continues and motorists running errands try to get through town.

That's why the locations of the projects are so important to the Truckee Chamber of Commerce.

"Not only is it sustainable (to have more), it's necessary to decentralize the traffic congestion," chamber spokeswoman Colleen Dalton said. "We needed to have a grocery store on the eastern side of town.

Dalton said the business community gives a "thumbs up" to adding a variety of stores in its 11 commercial districts at different sites selling unique food items at varying prices.

The food itself also appears to be changing.

"The next five years in grocery will be more transformative than the last 50," spokesman Dave Heinzinger for inMarket, a company that develops supermarket technology, told *Epicurious*.

The food magazine also pointed out that the new supermarket won't just lure people with products – but will give shoppers a pleasurable experience while there.

So, the idea is to take the dread out of grocery shopping – especially around the busy holiday season.

Incline beach access fight leads to questionable land sales

By Anjeanette Damon, Reno Gazette-Journal

Five years ago, Washoe County handed 87 parcels of land over to the Incline Village General Improvement District, forgiving more than $800,000 in unpaid property taxes on the land in exchange for a promise from Incline Village to use the land as publicly owned open space.

The lots, most of them unbuildable scraps of land, had wound up on Washoe County's delinquent tax rolls because the owners hadn't paid property taxes for at least three years. Under state law, those parcels can be given to another government agency if that agency will use the land for a specific public purpose.

But after telling the county the land would be used for open space, an IVGID official, without approval from the agency's elected board or public notice, sold three parcels to private buyers, a *Reno Gazette Journal* investigation found.

Read the whole story

Mystery power outage in Douglas County

Updated 3:31pm:

NV Energy had no idea why the power is out this afternoon. At one point 4,386 customers at the lake and in the Carson Valley were without power.

The outage affected the Douglas County Commissioners meeting at Stateline on Dec. 21. It had to be halted at 2:30pm because the meeting is supposed to be recorded. There was talk of using a phone to record it, but they weren't sure all the voices would be picked up. Then staff scrambled to find a tape recorder.

By that time the power was restored.

But technology as it is, the rest of the meeting was only audio and not video.

An NV Energy rep said she had no idea why the power was out and at one point tried to convince *Lake Tahoe News* that it had been restored when in fact the room was still dark.

However, the power as of 3:30pm still was out for 2,434 customers. The estimated time line for power to be restored is 5:3opm, even though the company still has no idea what the problem is.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

2 victims of phone scam in Douglas County

The Douglas County Sheriff’s Office is repeating the warning to the public that calls are being made to residents from people claiming they are a member of the department.

The caller stating the resident has missed a court date, or missed jury duty and claim there is now a fine due and a warrant issued. The caller states to avoid incarceration they need to satisfy the bail on the warrant by asking for a credit card or it can be paid by buying gift cards at a store. After the purchase of the gift cards, the victim gives the numbers on the gift card to the scammer and the scammer immediately redeems them.

There have been two Douglas County residents who have been scammed for more than $5,000 each.

The calls may appear local on the resident’s caller ID, but they may be computer “spoofed” to show a local number.

Senior citizens are being targeted.

The Douglas County Sheriff’s Office or any other law enforcement agency will never call the public to notify them that they owe money on a warrant or fine. The public is encouraged to hang up on those calls and never give out personal information on the phone.

Nev. marijuana tax brings in $5.8 million in Oct.

By Chris Kudialis, Las Vegas Sun

Tax proceeds on Nevada's marijuana sales is continuing an upward trajectory, establishing a new monthly high in October during the fourth month of the state's recreational marijuana program, officials announced Wednesday.

The industry brought in more than $5.8 million in October, which includes a 15-percent wholesale tax for both medical and recreational pot, and a 10-percent excise tax on recreational weed sales, the Nevada Department of Taxation said. That's up from about $4.7 million in September, $4.8 million in August and $3.6 million in July for a total of $19.1 million.

Read the whole story

SnowGlobe to cut off Al Tahoe Blvd. to locals

By Kathryn Reed

SnowGlobe is already irritating people and the loud bass that permeates the otherwise tranquil night air of South Lake Tahoe hasn't even started.

A section of Al Tahoe Boulevard, one of the major thoroughfares in town, is going to be closed the better part of the three days of the music festival.

“Just another issue that points out that the play fields are not a suitable location for SnowGlobe,” a local resident told *Lake Tahoe News*.

For some residents wanting to get to the post office, their bank and the shops in the center at Al Tahoe and Highway 50, it will mean driving seven miles or so out of their way.

Johnson Boulevard will be open.

Al Tahoe will be closed from the college entrance at Johnson to Murietta Drive, the road leading to South Tahoe Public Utility District.

This will be the first time in the seven-year history of the controversial festival that the road has had restrictions.

Safety is being the reason given for the closure.

With people driving into crowds becoming almost a norm (the latest incident happening today in Australia), the closure will help prevent that from occurring. It’s only a chain link fence that keeps people out. There are usually 10,000-plus people at the ball fields each of the nights of the Dec. 29-31 event.

An added benefit to the closure is pedestrian safety.

“In years past we have had some concerns with motorists up and down Al Tahoe when SnowGlobe is letting out,” Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News.* “There are big crowds of people up and down Al Tahoe. The intersection with the college is problematic.”

People versus vehicle issues are more of an issue at the end of the night because most of the people leave at once, whereas they trickle in.

The closure will be in place from 12:30pm to 12:30am on Dec. 29 and Dec. 30, with the closure being extended on the morning

of New Year’s Day to accommodate the concert lasting longer.

Those associated with the concert are also warning residents to expect the sound to be an issue this year without snow on the ground. The snow absorbs the bass. One thing neighbors can be thankful about is the concert promoter didn’t get his way with everything; he wanted one of the stages to be in Bijou Community Park. That would have put the noise even closer to residents.

However, SnowGlobe is forcing the closure of Bijou Park starting Dec. 27. It will reopen Jan. 3, assuming things are cleaned up faster than they were a year ago. Because Lake Tahoe Community College doesn’t want much to do with this event any more, the city has allowed this locals’ park to be used by the promoter.

LTVA expanding focus beyond traditional tourist

By Kathryn Reed

Diversifying the types of people coming to the South Shore and the reasons they do so is a goal of local business owners and tourism officials.

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority is making a concerted effort to attract more conventions/meetings to the area. This in turn will ideally put more heads in beds and get the people to spend money on other things during their stay.

To begin with the goal is to work on groups with attendees of up to 400 people.

This isn’t just about getting more people into the Stateline casinos. Plenty of smaller properties have meeting rooms as well which could be good for a few dozen people. The goal is to fill these spaces on both sides of the state line.

“One of our strategic goals is to do what our partners cannot do themselves. In last year’s budget, we allocated a small amount toward a consultant to evaluate our destination as it relates specifically to meetings and make recommendations on how to launch a campaign,” Carol Chaplin, LTVA executive director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Based upon those recommendations, there are things we can do that are very cost effective: build out a better meetings webpage; allocate some staff time to some regional trade shows; create a collateral piece; create a sales committee representative of our destination properties. That’s where we are right now.”

The Nevada Division of Tourism this month gave LTVA a $15,000 grant to develop a marketing plan to attract meetings and conventions to this area. The money could be used on digital display advertising, e-blasts and e-newsletters and website page redesign.

LTVA will convene a group of interested properties to devise a strategy for luring groups to the South Shore. The marketing committee will have a say, and then the proposal will be presented to the board.

This effort is separate from and in advance of anything involving the event center that is being developed in Stateline.

“As we get closer to event center reality, we’ll have the opportunity to tackle the trade show/exhibition segments as well as events. The event center will need its own strategy,” Chaplin said.

New Carson freeway a noisy, unwanted neighbor

By Joe Hart, KRNV-TV

Buffy Ford, her husband and their three horses moved to south Carson City in 2005. The quiet rural neighborhood at East Roland and Ponderosa Street was a perfect fit for their outdoor lifestyle.

They knew the new Carson City freeway was coming. What they didn’t know is that the sound wall designed to minimize traffic noise would end right in front of their home.

“The wall stopped, and now there’s an open space and we feel that a lot of that noise bounces off the opposing wall and comes in,” Ford explained.

Read the whole story

Stolen artwork returned to S. Lake Tahoe gallery



The art has been returned to the gallery.
Photo/Provided

A painting worth more than $1,000 that was stolen from a South Lake Tahoe gallery has been recovered.

Someone stole the artwork on Dec. 9 from the sidewalk display in front of Pacific Crest Gallery in the Heavenly Village. It had a sales price of $1,195.

Gallery staff then saw it for sale on Craigslist.

A South Lake Tahoe police detective posed as a possible buyer, negotiating a sales price of $1,000. Detectives with assistance of El Dorado County District Attorney's Office investigators met the seller at his residence in Sacramento.

The painting was serialized and it was confirmed to be the stolen painting.

The suspect, whose name is being withheld, is cooperating with the investigation. How the suspect came into possession of the painting is still under investigation.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Truckee solidifies new trash program

The Truckee Town Council approved a 10-year solid waste and recycling franchise agreement this month with Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal that includes a host of new, sustainable services for residential and commercial customers.

The previous agreement was set to expire June 30, 2018.

Truckee residents will be moving to containerized recycling and yard waste services over the next three years. All Truckee residents will receive a 64-gallon wheeled blue cart for recyclables and a 96-gallon green wheeled cart for yard waste. Recycling and yard waste carts will be serviced curb-side on alternating weeks. Residents have the ability to opt out of either of these programs and use alternative service options built into the new agreement.

For recyclables, residents can continue to use blue bags which will be picked up weekly with their mixed waste. There will also be two locations for recycling drop-off during the summer months.

Green bags will not be picked up after June 30, 2018. If residents do not want to use green carts, they may rent a 6-yard dumpster for a week from the expanded dumpster rental services through TTSD. Residents may also drop up to 6 yards of yard waste at Eastern Regional Landfill.

Other notable service changes include two free pick ups of large, bulky items per year and four overage pick ups per year where customers can put out up to 96-gallons of mixed waste including yard waste with advanced notice to TTSD.

All Truckee residents will receive yard waste containers in June 2018 to begin use on July 1. Residents can choose to receive up to three 96-gallon containers or opt out of the program entirely. Glenshire residents will receive recyclables carts in September and begin with the new recycling services starting Oct. 1, 2018. The remaining Truckee neighborhoods excluding Tahoe-Donner will start using blue carts in 2019. Tahoe Donner residents will begin with the new recycling services in 2020. All residents will continue to use their current trash cans for mixed waste.

Commercial customers will receive wildlife-resistant food waste carts that will be serviced up to three times a week. These carts will provide more efficient collection of food waste than the current yellow bag program. Businesses will also receive carts for recyclables.