



CITY OF SOUTHLAKE TAHOE

Electronic Version
May 20, 2009

MANAGEMENT OBSERVATIONS

City Vision Statement:

“The City Council exists to represent the public interest, to oversee the City’s operations, and to plan for the City’s future”

CITY GENERAL PLAN – PLANNING THE FUTURE

With the help of community meetings that have been held and ones that are planned in the future, the City Council is laying foundation for the City’s future by developing its City General Plan. The City General Plan protects the natural environment, reduces our carbon footprint, and makes improvements to the built environment to create a sustainable community that is economically strong for all segments of the community and provides the services, housing and facilities desired and needed by the community. The community belongs to the 24,000 people who live here.

Community Workshop
May 21, 2009, 6 pm to 8 pm
Lake Tahoe Community College, Board and Aspen Room

Three alternative land use scenarios are being evaluated. The first is a Base Case Scenario (Status quo planning); The second is a Transect Zoning Option. The third is a Neighborhood Features Option.

Be there if you can or look at the options on the City website and offer comments (www.sltgpu.com)

I am confident that if we do our part as a community and City government to create a well thought out sustainable General Plan that our friends at TRPA and its Governing Board will applaud and support our work and efforts and make our local plan part of the adopted Regional Plan.

IT'S ABOUT THE ECONOMY

There is no doubt that tourism is our primary economic resource. City government contributes funding to operate Explore Tahoe, contributes funding for the maintenance of Heavenly Village through PADMA, operates a parking garage required when Heavenly Village was built, provides a building for a tourism center, actively advertises City recreation programs to residents and visitors, and contributes hundreds of thousands of dollars to operate an improving transit system in cooperation with public and private partners. There is much to do and be done.

However, we must not lose sight of the chance we have in the General Plan and emerging Tahoe Valley Community Plan to develop a strong green business economy for the City to grow local jobs, provide livable wages to people who live here, and allow all to share in the benefits of our community. We must create land use regulations and building rules that first and foremost do no harm to the environment but do allow us to create a sustainable community. We need to focus on projects and activities that improve the economy. We need to encourage new investment in our community. We need to make the strengthening of the economy first if we are going to create a sustainable community. We can have prosperity and environmental protection. They go hand in hand.

The focus of attention needs to be on growing the local economy, helping existing businesses grow and allowing business desired by the community to locate in town. In addition, we cannot discount or ignore the value of using a community-oriented redevelopment financing tool to help build needed new infrastructure in the City without adding new tax burdens to the people.

It is all about the economy, and we need to stay focused on growing it.

STATE BUDGET NEEDS TO BE FIXED WITHOUT TAKING LOCAL GOVERNMENT MONIES

I don't blame the Governor for the loss of most of the State propositions. At least he is trying to fix the State budget mess. He cannot do it alone. The propositions at best were marginal. Now State government will have to start over to balance the budget and it will not be pretty.

We need to let our Governor and legislators know ***that it is not desirable or acceptable*** for them to take hard earned locally generated property tax revenues because the State cannot balance its budget. Doing so potentially deprives our City residents and businesses dollars needed to provide services. It is not acceptable to balance the State budget on the backs of this city or other cities that have been responsible in their financial policies and financial practices.

Some people say we cannot have an impact on what the State does with the budget. I've heard this said before. Some say the State will do whatever it wants to do and we have nothing to say about it. I don't believe in pre-determination. We are not victims. We are citizens who have a right to be heard, and we will be heard. It will not be easy, but we all must take responsibility to voice our opinions to our legislators and tell them to allow us to keep locally generated tax dollars to maintain services to the community.

I agree with Robert Kennedy's statement when approaching this issue, *"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total; of all those acts will be written the history of this generation."*

Locally, the City Council's Finance Committee (Mayor Birdwell and Council Member Cole), City Manager and Finance Director will be meeting shortly to discuss our approach to the new 2009-2010 budget in light of the failure of State propositions. We must be prudent and mindful of steps we need to take to protect our community, provide needed services, and still be financially prudent. We will continue our dialogue and discussion with members of employee unions and associations as well.

DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA – THE DILEMMA

This is a topic of great interest and passion on both sides of the matter. We can't act like the issue doesn't exist and government cannot disobey the Law. We need to understand the dilemma we face in local government.

The distribution of marijuana for medicinal purposes is legal in California under guidelines outlined by the Attorney General. Federal law does not recognize this State exemption. The City of South Lake Tahoe codes requires businesses operating to comply with both Federal and State law. The conflict in law needs to be resolved and City government cannot resolve it. Federal and State officials need to come to agreement on this matter.

THE CONVENTION CENTER

Meetings are continuing with the developer to see what progress he has made to secure funding for the project. We know from the city's own financial advisors that the private capital market is very tight nationally and locally.

In addition, City officials are following up with U.S. Senator Feinstein's Office to see if there is any chance to get a loan from the Federal government to build the Phase I part of the project. City government officials have already made an \$85 million loan request to Senator Feinstein for this "ready-to-go-project." The project will not only create hundreds of construction jobs but would also create 300 permanent jobs once built. We know the Senator will do what she can to help us. Hopefully, her colleagues in Congress will agree .

Shop Locally

Business must provide the best service, product, and best pricing possible and when they do, locals should shop locally.

DAVID JINKENS, MPA
City Manager