



## **OPINION: Why my business supports NLTRA's proposed Tourism Business Improvement District**

*By Brendan Madigan, Alpenglow Sports*



Our North Lake Tahoe communities have long-standing and dire infrastructure shortcomings, extending from traffic congestion in peak seasons to a lack of achievable housing options for the workforce that sustains our local businesses. As a retailer located in Tahoe City since 1979, we are also affected by the dips in visitation during spring and fall, having to amend staffing, inventory and revenue goals to account for months of slow business.

There is an opportunity for local business owners that benefit from tourism (activity providers, retailers, restaurants) and TOT certificate holders (lodging properties, vacation rentals) to implement change, offering solutions to the challenges outlined above. The proposed Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) is a chance to not only rally our North Shore community around one vision, but more importantly, allows locally generated funds and directives to be managed by those who understand our needs the most -- the North Lake Tahoe business community.

The formation of a Tourism Business Improvement District would provide an abundance of resources to improve our region, and with 109 successful TBID's in California, we know it is a model that works. By definition, a TBID is a mechanism for funding tourism promotion and economic development activities that are designed to increase revenues for the assessed businesses. TBID member businesses will essentially collect a small assessment from customers which will then be utilized to fund programs and initiatives that support economic vitality and directly promote the assessed businesses. As an additional benefit to the formation of a TBID, over \$4 Million of TOT dollars will be freed up and redirected to workforce housing and transportation initiatives in the North Lake Tahoe region -- with all funds being managed by the local business community.

Over the past twelve months, the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association (NLTRA) has worked with Civitas Advisors to develop a Management District Plan that will guide operation of the TBID with a wide range of input from local stakeholders. The plan has been approved (and is available to download on [NLTRA.org](http://NLTRA.org)), and the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association has initiated a TBID petition drive. I encourage business owners, lodging properties and property management companies to support this effort wholeheartedly by signing the petition.

TBID dollars will be managed by the NLTRA with oversight from the NLTRA Board of Directors and corresponding committees. Having served as President of the Tahoe City Downtown Association as well as on the NLTRA Board of Directors, I have full confidence that the range of industries in North Lake Tahoe will be adequately represented and our business community will have a voice like never before.



As a 41-year old specialty mountain shop, Alpenglow Sports exists as a community anchor in Tahoe City. We employ a community-centric business model that actively seeks to give back to those who have supported the shop for over four decades. This is done through a litany of free events, such as our nine-day Alpenglow Mountain Festival, in-store Tailgate Talks and our very popular Winter Speaker Series. We derive so much fulfillment through these events, many of which have been financially supported by the NLTRA. These are events that both locals AND visitors get to enjoy for free, and we're excited to grow these for the benefit of the North Lake community by having the opportunity to utilize more funds that originate right here, in our own community.

I think it is paramount that we gain control of the money we generate and infuse those dollars more effectively into our community. With a solid governance structure in place that is reflective of businesses large and small, this is our chance to make a positive change for North Lake Tahoe.