

Western Nevada development strategy outlines priorities through 2030, seeks public input

Staff Report

A regional economic development strategy designed to guide growth, strengthen infrastructure and improve quality of life across Western Nevada is now available for public review, giving residents an opportunity to weigh in before the final plan is adopted later this year.

The Western Nevada Development District has released the draft 2026-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a federally recognized planning document that establishes regional priorities while helping communities compete for grants and other federal funding opportunities. Public comments will be accepted through Aug. 10.

The district represents Humboldt, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey and Washoe counties, along with Carson City, the cities of Fallon, Fernley, Lovelock, Reno, Sparks, Winnemucca and Yerington, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and other regional partners.

Rather than focusing on individual projects, the CEDS serves as a roadmap for identifying long-term regional priorities and coordinating efforts among local governments, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and economic development agencies.

According to the draft,

Western Nevada has experienced unprecedented economic growth over the past five years, particularly in the construction and manufacturing sectors. While that growth has created new jobs and investment opportunities, it has also increased demand for infrastructure, workforce housing and community services.

The strategy is organized around four primary areas of focus: infrastructure, workforce, quality of life and government capacity. Within each category, the document outlines goals, recommended actions and potential partnerships intended to strengthen the region's long-term economic competitiveness.

Among the infrastructure priorities are improving highways and freight corridors, expanding broadband access, modernizing water and wastewater systems, increasing utility capacity and supporting transportation improvements that can accommodate continued industrial and commercial growth.

Workforce initiatives emphasize expanding career and technical education, strengthening partnerships between schools, colleges and employers, attracting and retaining skilled workers and increasing access to workforce housing. The plan also encourages continued investment in apprenticeships, job training and programs that prepare residents for careers in manufacturing, mining, construction, healthcare and other

high-demand industries.

Quality-of-life recommendations focus on the amenities that help communities attract residents and businesses, including parks, recreation, healthcare access, child care, downtown revitalization, tourism, arts and cultural resources, and outdoor recreation opportunities.

The final pillar, government capacity, centers on helping local governments better respond to growth by improving regional collaboration, pursuing additional grant funding, modernizing planning efforts and coordinating economic development initiatives across jurisdictional boundaries.

The strategy was developed with input from business leaders, elected officials, chambers of commerce, nonprofit organizations, tribal representatives, state agencies and regional stakeholders. According to the Western Nevada Development District, a 43-member subcommittee representing 12 local governments and numerous public and private organizations helped prepare the draft.

Sparks City Councilwoman Dian VanderWell, president of the WNDD Board of Directors, said the strategy is intended to help communities work together as the region continues to grow.

"This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy serves as a roadmap for regional collaboration

and sustainable growth," VanderWell said in a news release. "By working together across county and municipal boundaries, public and private sectors, and community organizations, the Western Nevada Development District members can capitalize on emerging opportunities, address regional challenges, and build a more resilient and prosperous future."

She noted that rapid growth has intensified pressure on local governments to provide adequate infrastructure, housing and support services, making long-term planning increasingly important.

Although the CEDS does not commit funding to specific projects, adoption of the plan helps position communities throughout Western Nevada to pursue future grants and assistance through the U.S. Economic Development Administration and other federal agencies.

Residents may review the draft strategy and submit comments through Aug. 10 on the Western Nevada Development District website before the document is finalized for the 2026-2030 planning period.

View the document and take a survey visit <https://wndd.org/ceds/>



World's most powerful radio telescope planned for rural Nevada

Staff Report

A remote valley in eastern Nevada could soon become home to the world's most sensitive radio telescope, an enormous scientific instrument designed to photograph the radio sky faster and in greater detail than ever before.

The California Institute of Technology announced in June that its Deep Synoptic Array has passed its final engineering design review and secured construction funding from Schmidt Sciences. The project would place 1,650 radio dishes across northern Spring Valley in White Pine County, northwest of Ely.

Each dish would measure slightly more than 20 feet across. Together, the dishes would stretch across an area approximately 12 miles long and 10 miles wide, functioning as one enormous telescope. Caltech plans to complete construction by 2029, with scientific operations beginning soon afterward.

The project, however, still faces federal environmental review before full construction can proceed on public land.

The Bureau of Land Management approved limited geotechnical testing on approximately 16 acres in April. That testing will allow engineers to examine soil and ground conditions in the proposed project area.

The BLM release emphasized that the decision is an interim approval required for the project's review under the National Environmental Policy Act and is not a final right-of-way grant for the larger telescope array.

Caltech submitted its federal right-of-way application in September 2023. Earlier BLM documents described the proposed project area as approximately 63,250 acres of public land in northern Spring Valley. The agency also established a working group involving state and

federal wildlife officials and Caltech to examine potential effects on wildlife and other resources.

When completed, the Deep Synoptic Array would survey the sky approximately 100 times faster than any existing radio telescope, according to Caltech.

Radio telescopes do not capture ordinary visible light. Instead, they detect radio waves produced by stars, galaxies, black holes and other objects throughout the universe. Scientists combine signals collected by multiple dishes to create detailed images.

The Nevada array's 1,650 dishes would continuously send data through fiber-optic lines to a powerful computer system. The computer would process the signals immediately, producing what Caltech researchers describe as the world's first real-time

"radio camera."

Traditional radio-telescope data can take weeks or months to process into usable images. The new system is intended to produce those images almost instantly.

Caltech estimates that the array will collect raw information at a rate comparable to all internet traffic in the United States. Storing all of that raw data would require approximately 5 million computer hard drives. Instead, the system will process the information as it arrives and save the completed images.

Researchers expect the telescope to identify approximately 1 billion previously unknown radio sources during its first five-year survey. Caltech says the array could match, on its first day of operation, the roughly 20 million radio sources discovered by

all other radio telescopes combined.

Scientists intend to use the telescope to study black holes, pulsars, exploding stars, dark matter, gravity and the expansion of the universe.

It will also search for fast radio bursts, intense flashes of radio energy lasting only fractions of a second. Although astronomers have traced some of the bursts to distant galaxies, their origins remain one of astronomy's major unanswered questions.

The project is expected to detect more than 100,000 of the bursts and identify the galaxies from which they came.

Caltech says images produced by the telescope will be available freely to scientists and members of the public without a proprietary waiting period.



Photo Courtesy Caltech

STATEWIDE RURAL NEWS

White Pine County School District earns Enterprise Risk Management Excellence Program Award

Staff Report

ELY – White Pine County School District has earned the Enterprise Risk Management Excellence Program (ERMEP) Award from POOL/PACT, recognizing the district’s successful implementation of enterprise risk management best practices that strengthen governance, operations and organizational resilience.

The recognition follows a comprehensive independent assessment conducted through POOL/PACT’s Enterprise Risk Management Excellence Program, which evaluates participating public agencies against established enterprise risk management standards.

Through the program’s structured, multi-phase review process, the district successfully met all program requirements and earned the ERMEP Award.

The award was presented during the White Pine County School District Board of Trustees meeting on June 30. As part of the recognition, POOL/PACT presented the district with a \$10,375 award to support future enterprise risk management initiatives.

The Enterprise Risk Management Excellence Program encourages Nevada public agencies to

strengthen governance, improve operational effectiveness and reduce organizational risk through comprehensive reviews of policies, procedures and management practices.

District Leaders Recognized

- Adam Young, superintendent
- Candice Campeau, chair, Board of Trustees
- Krystal Blades, vice chair, Board of Trustees
- Angela McVicars, member, Board of Trustees
- Blaze Griffin, member, Board of Trustees
- Shella Nicholes, member, Board of Trustees
- Terri Borghoff, member, Board of Trustees
- Rebecca Murdock, member, Board of Trustees
- Lindsay Costello, member, Board of Trustees
- Paul Johnson, chief financial officer and project lead
- Terrill Trask, chief financial officer

“The board and staff at White Pine County School District are continually working to ensure our programs and policies serve the best interests of our students, staff and community,” Superintendent Adam Young said. “Receiving this recognition from POOL/PACT



Photo Courtesy of White Pine County School District leaders are recognized following the presentation of the Enterprise Risk Management Excellence Program (ERMEP) Award from POOL/PACT. Pictured, from left, are Alan Reed; Alan Kalt; Caiden Castellano, student board member; Adam Young, superintendent; Candice Campeau, chair, Board of Trustees; Lindsay Costello, member, Board of Trustees; Blaze Griffin, member, Board of Trustees; Krystal Blades, vice chair, Board of Trustees; Shella Nicholes, member, Board of Trustees and Terrill Trask, chief financial officer.

confirms the progress we’ve made and reinforces our commitment to continuous improvement.”

“The POOL/PACT team was professional and highly knowledgeable throughout the review process,” Chief Financial Officer Paul Johnson said. “We’re grateful for their expertise and guidance. We adopted new policies and put several others on track for future approval and implementation.”

Alan Kalt, POOL/PACT’s Chief Financial Officer, presented the Enterprise Risk Management Excellence Program Award during a recognition ceremony honoring the district’s leadership and staff for their commitment to continuous improvement and sound organizational practices.

New federal grant opportunity could bring major investments to local parks across Nevada



Spooner Visitor Center

Provided to the GBS

CARSON CITY – Communities across Nevada could soon have an opportunity to compete for millions of dollars in federal funding to build and improve local parks, trails, playgrounds, sports fields, and other outdoor recreation spaces.

The Nevada Division of State Parks is encouraging eligible local governments to express interest in the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program, a nationally competitive grant program administered by the National Park Service. Individual projects may be eligible to receive between \$300,000 and \$15 million to create new outdoor recreation opportunities or revitalize existing parks in qualifying urban communities.

The funding is designed to increase access to outdoor recreation, improve neighborhood parks, support

conservation, and invest in projects that enhance quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

“This is an exciting opportunity to bring significant investment into outdoor recreation projects across Nevada,” said Janice Keillor, Deputy Administrator for Nevada State Parks. “We want to hear about the ideas communities have for creating parks and outdoor spaces that people will enjoy for years to come.”

To determine whether Nevada will move forward with the program, State Parks is asking eligible local governments to submit a Letter of Interest by July 24, 2026. If enough interest is received, the agency plans to launch a full application process and pursue future rounds of funding as they become available.

Additional information about project eligibility and submission requirements is available from the Nevada Division of State Parks at parks.nv.gov/orlp



NDOT Reminds Drivers to Stay Safe on Rural Roads

Provided to the GBS

CARSON CITY, Nev. – As Rural Road Safety Awareness Week wraps up on July 17, the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) is reminding motorists that safe driving habits are important every day of the year—especially on Nevada’s rural roads.

Nationally, there is a 62 percent higher risk of death in rural crashes compared to similar trips on urban roads. In Nevada, while less than 10% of the population lives in rural areas, nearly one-quarter of the state’s fatal crashes occur on rural roadways.

With safety as its top priority, NDOT encourages motorists traveling through rural Nevada to keep the following safety tips in mind year-round.

Before Driving

- Allow extra travel time.
- Fill your gas tank, as service stations may be far apart.
- Carry water, snacks, and basic emergency supplies.
- Make sure your vehicle is road-ready by checking tires, brakes, and fluids.
- Never drive impaired. If you’ll be celebrating, plan ahead for a designated sober driver.
- Check road conditions at NVRoads.com or by dialing 511 before you leave.

Behind the Wheel

- Buckle up. Seat belts cut crash injury risk in half.

- Slow down. Speed increases crash risk. Drive the posted speed limit or slower when weather, visibility or road conditions require.
- Stay focused. Put your phone away and avoid distractions.
- Pass with caution. Only pass in designated passing zones when the road ahead is clear.
- Leave plenty of space. Maintain at least a 3-6 second following distance and increase it in adverse conditions.
- Stay in your lane and give oncoming traffic plenty of room.
- Scan the road ahead for wildlife, merging vehicles and other potential hazards.
- Watch for wildlife and livestock, particularly at dawn and dusk.
- Use your headlights whenever required by Nevada law or when visibility is reduced.
- Know your location. Milepost markers can help emergency responders locate you more quickly if assistance is needed.
- Watch for farm equipment and other slow-moving vehicles commonly found on rural roads.
- Avoid drowsy driving. Take breaks whenever you begin feeling fatigued.

The state’s Zero Fatalities traffic safety initiative provides traffic safety information and reminders at zerofatalitiesnv.com, @ZeroFatslNV on X and @ZeroFatalitiesNV on Facebook.

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Night in the Country celebrates 25 years

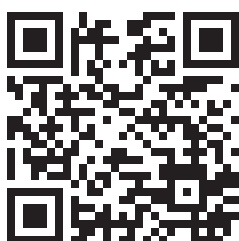
Night in the Country is the largest annual fundraiser for the Boys & Girls

For more information, visit
nightinthecountrynv.org.

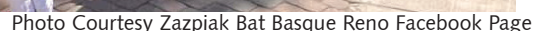


The celebration will kick off on Friday with live DJs, a free concert in the park and racing at Lovelock Speedway. Saturday features the D.A.R.E. French Toast Breakfast, the annual Frontier Days parade, a blood drive, "Lovelock Has Talent", performances by the Nevada Gunfighters, another free concert, and evening races at the speedway. Sunday's schedule includes the Unity of Churches in the Park service, the tractor pull, weight carry competition, kids bike races, scholarship

Those interested in becoming a vendor, sponsor, or volunteers can scan the QR code for more information.



Basque Traditions Return to Reno



Festivities begin with Mass at 10 a.m., followed by Basque dancers at 11 a.m. Lunch will then be served at 12:30 p.m., with traditional weightlifting demonstrations at 2 p.m. More dancing is scheduled for 2:30 p.m., followed by traditional Basque contests at 3:30 p.m., including weight carrying and wood chopping exhibitions. Audience members will also have opportunities to participate in select activities and learn informal Basque folk dances. The celebration continues with a social dance at 8 p.m. at Lead Dog Brewing, featuring music by Izen Gabe.

The Reno Basque Festival is also one of dozens of events featured during Artown, Reno's monthlong arts and culture celebration held each July. Since its founding in 1996, Artown has showcased hundreds of performances, exhibitions and cultural events designed to celebrate the region's artistic diversity. As part of this year's lineup, the Basque Festival offers visitors an opportunity to experience the music, food, traditions and community that have long been part of Northern Nevada's cultural heritage.

Nevada Agricultural Fair brings three days of family fun to Gardnerville

Formerly known as the Silver & Sage Fair, the fair is dedicated to preserving the science of farming, homesteading and livestock production while showcasing the importance of agriculture throughout

Livestock exhibitors will check in on Wednesday, July 16, with public events taking place Friday through Sunday.



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Skills Certificates (SC) are single courses or short sequences of courses which provide basic job skills for employability.

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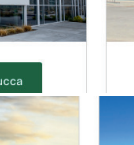
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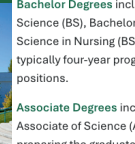
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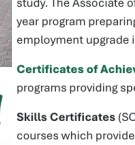
Pahrump Valley



Ely



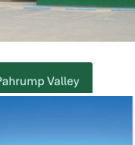
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Other Rural Nevada Towns



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SPORTS

Rural schools earn the Award of Excellence

Provided to GBS

Pahranagat Valley (1A), Lincoln County (2A), Virgin Valley (3A) and Bishop Manogue (4A/5A) earned top honors in their respective classifications, capturing the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association's prestigious Award of Excellence in Academics, Athletics, and Citizenship for the 2025-26 academic and athletic year.

Established in 2001, the NIAA's Award of Excellence recognizes the most well-rounded high school programs across Nevada. Points are awarded based on varsity team performance in the classroom, athletic

competition, and the Citizenship Through Sports initiative. Academics, athletics, and sportsmanship are equally weighted in the scoring system, with boys' and girls' programs combined. Additional points are given for spirit and leadership activities, while penalties are assessed for ejections and unsportsmanlike behavior throughout the year.

Each classification champion receives a commemorative trophy during the NIAA's preseason meetings with athletic administrators, directors, and secretaries. The Association considers this award its highest honor, celebrating schools that exemplify excellence across all facets of student participation.

Wolf Pack lands 13 on Pre-season All-Mountain West teams



University of Nevada Athletics

RENO — Thirteen members of the Nevada Football team earned spots on Athlon Sports' Preseason All-Mountain West Teams, including four to the First Team.

Nevada's first-team representatives included EDGE Dylan LaBarbera, along with offensive linemen Zach Cochnauer and Jack Foster and kicker Joe McFadden.

Returning linebacker EJ Smith and defensive back Aiden Walker were named to the Second Team, while three members of the Wolf Pack earned third-team spots in wide receiver Gary Givens III, running back Herschel Turner and defensive lineman Logologo Va'a.

Offensive lineman Ethan Newman, linebacker Jeremy Naborne-Owens, and defensive backs Joshua Scott and Larry Turner-Gooden were all named to the Fourth Team.

LaBarbera, who also earned spots on HERO Sports Group of Five All-America Team and Pro Football Focus (PFF) All-Group of Six Team for his performance last season, finished last season tied for eighth in the country with 17.0 tackles-for-loss and sixth with 1.42 TFLs per game.

Foster and Cochnauer established themselves as anchors of The Union in 2025, bookending the Wolf Pack line.

Foster, who started all 12 games last season and was named the team's Basalite Big Blocker Award winner by coaching staff, firmed up the left-tackle spot last season while Cochnauer held down right tackle while starting 11 games.

McFadden boosts the Wolf Pack special teams with his return in 2026. His 19 field goals a season ago ranked eighth in Nevada's single-season records, and he was a perfect 20-for-20 on PAT attempts.

Smith will return to his linebacker spot in 2026 looking to build off a promising 2025 campaign which was cut short due to injury after seven games. His impact was felt for the Pack over that first half of the season as Smith had 29 tackles with two interceptions and a forced fumble prior to his campaign's abrupt end.

Walker made an immediate impact for the Wolf Pack defense as a freshman in 2025. The Round Rock, Texas native appeared in 11 games with two starts, making 24 tackles including one for loss.

Walker quickly locked down a corner spot against opposing

offenses, turning back challenges and establishing himself as one of the Mountain West's top returning defensive backs in 2026.

Givens will make his Wolf Pack debut in 2026 after spending the previous two seasons at NIU and Valparaiso, respectively. For the Huskies in 2025, Givens made nine catches for 100 yards and a touchdown following a freshman campaign at Valparaiso during which he caught 23 balls for 352 yards.

Turner, also named to the Third Team, averaged 5.1 yards per carry in his Wolf Pack debut in 2025, going for 353 yards on 69 attempts while starting four of the 10 games in which he appeared.

On defense, Va'a emerged as one of the Wolf Pack's key run-stoppers last season, sharing a sack and recording 2.5 tackles-for-loss while appearing in 11 games.

Four Wolf Pack newcomers made Athlon's Fourth Team, with the offense represented by offensive lineman Ethan Newman. Newman played the 2025 season at Memphis, appearing in 12 games and made one start after appearing in 16 games with one start for Kennesaw State from 2023-24.

On defense, linebacker Naborne-Owens spent the 2025 campaign at Colorado State where he made 36 tackles, 2.0 sacks and 4.0 tackles-for-loss over 12 appearances. In the secondary, Joshua Scott spent 2022-25 at Eastern Michigan before transferring to Nevada ahead of the 2026 season. With the Eagles, Scott broke up 18 passes with four interceptions and made 59 tackles, highlighted by a 2022 campaign in which he posted 30 tackles with a team-best three interceptions and 13 pass breakups. Turner-Gooden spent the past two seasons at San José State, appearing in 22 games making 37 tackles with an interception, a forced fumble and two passes defended.

Last year, he started two of the 10 games in which he played, finishing with 28 tackles and a pick.

Nevada opens the 2026 campaign with two home contests, and three in September. The Wolf Pack hosts New Orleans Bowl champion Western Kentucky Saturday, September 5 at 7:30 p.m. followed by the reigning FCS champion Montana State Bobcats coming to Reno for a 7:30 p.m. kickoff Saturday, Sept. 12. Two weeks later, the Mountain West slate kicks off as Nevada hosts Air Force Saturday, Sept. 26.

Nevada High School Finals Rodeo starts Sunday in Nebraska

By Tony Erquiaga

The National High School Finals Rodeo starts Sunday evening and runs through July 25, at the Sandhill Global Event Center. Nevada will be well represented in the annual event.

The following is a list of Nevada participants:

Bareback

John Buethe, Douglas/Carson

Bull Riding

Aiden Brown, Boulder City

Beau Drake Jr., Washoe

Josh O'Connor, Washoe

Preston Huntsman, Boulder City

Saddle Bronc

Giovanni Berg, Eureka

Rio Segura, Fallon

Cole Whitaker, Elko

Ben Marvel, Humboldt County

Steer Wrestling

Jace Jepson, Pahrump

Eli Lancaster, Battle Mountain

Heston Remington, White Pine

Rio Segura, Fallon

Boys Cutting

Tucker Shippy, Wells

Stix Lee, Fallon

Lane Byrd, Humboldt County

Quaid Spratling, Wells

Tie-Down Roping

Jace Jepson, Pahrump

Wyatt Peak, Fallon

Stix Lee, Fallon

Henery Buchanan, Eureka

Barrel Racing

Riley Danen, Douglas/Carson

Quil Filippini, Eureka

Brooklyn Sena, White Pine

Alyvia Madsen, Moapa

Breakaway Roping

Marianna Mori, Elko

Rylie Genchi, Spanish Springs

Raelee Christian, Alamo

Maggie Van Norman, Elko

Girls Cutting

Matti Delong, Humboldt County

Quil Filippini, Eureka

Kashlin Hill, Fernley

Raelee Christian, Alamo

Goat Tying

Brooke Allison, Fallon

Ryleigh, Coe, Independent

Matti DeLong, Humboldt County

Megan Allison, Fallon

Pole Bending

Quil Filippini, Eureka

Huntley Byrd, Humboldt County

Brooklyn Sena, White Pine

Annie Tibbits, Eureka

Reined Cow Horse

Tucker Shippy, Wells,

Quil Filippini, Eureka

Maggie Van Norman, Elko

Kashlin Hill, Fernley

Team Roping

Stix Lee, Fallon & Jace Jepson, Pahrump

Wyatt Peak, Fallon & Caleb

Edgmon, Fallon

Marianna Mori, Elko & Pete Mori, Elko

Lane Byrd, Humboldt County & Case Steward, Alamo

Trap Shoot

Wyatt McCoy, Humboldt County

Nicholas Bliss, Eureka

Henry Bucjanan, Eureka

Lane Whitaker, Elko

Rifle Shoot

Flint Higbee, Alamo

Nicholas Bliss, Eureka

Peyton Barragan, Spanish Springs

Riley Danen, Douglas/Carson

The unofficial draw can be found at:



Bautista avenges loss to Sandhagen· Winnemucca native looking for title shot

By Tony Erquiaga

This one was personal for Winnemucca native Mario Bautista. After a win in February, the No. 5 ranked bantamweight in the UFC called out Cory Sandhagen for a rematch and made good on it.

Bautista earned a 29-28 unanimous decision this past Friday night at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas. Sandhagen was Bautista's first fight in the UFC in 2019. Bautista, who turned 33 on July 1, took the fight on a week's notice and lost by submission. The fighter has now come full circle in his career.

It was his 10th win in 11 fights and arguably his best victory of his career to improve to 18-3 in MMA and 12-3 in the UFC.

Late in the first round, Bautista took the leg out on Sandhagen and went for a submission move. He controlled the rest of the fight. Bautista continued to

take control in the final five minutes.

As the final round got started, Bautista blasted Sandhagen with a huge left hook that put the former title challenger down on the canvas. Bautista jumped down, looking for the finish but Sandhagen was quick to grab a leg to at least slow him down.

"I think I am the one that gotten better in all the things," Bautista said before the fight. "I really don't look back on that fight and what I could do different. I am a totally different fighter. Ideally, I want to get him on the mat and grapple, that is my strength. I have to mix it up a bit, I just can't been in there and stand up and let him ride out a decision."

In his post-fight interview on Paramount +, Bautista said he is sure what is next for him. He believes he deserves a shot at the champion Peter Yan but also stated that the rest of the bantamweight division will have to figure itself out. Yan is slated to make his return sometime this year.

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the Fernley reporter



The Humboldt Sun



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