



MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
TRANSPORTATION DIVISION
County of Placer

TO: Board of Supervisors DATE: July 23, 2019
FROM: Ken Grehm, Director of Public Works
Steve Pedretti, Director of Community Development Resource Agency
BY: Ryan Decker, Senior Civil Engineer; Public Works
Crystal Jacobsen, Principal Planner; CDRA

SUBJECT: Transportation / Transportation Demand Management Strategies for North Lake Tahoe

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve the Transportation Demand Management strategies identified in the Final TDM Strategies for North Lake Tahoe report.

BACKGROUND

On December 6, 2016, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the Tahoe Basin Area Plan and certified an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the project. The Tahoe Basin Area Plan was an update of all former community/general plans within the Tahoe Basin.

On December 21, 2016, litigation was filed by the California Clean Energy Committee (CCEC), challenging the County's approval of the Tahoe Basin Area Plan and certification of the EIR/EIS. The lawsuit specifically challenged the EIR/EIS's mitigation or lack thereof for climate, transportation and greenhouse gas impacts associated with adoption of the Tahoe Basin Area Plan.

On January 25, 2017, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board also adopted the Tahoe Basin Area Plan and certified the EIR/EIS. The adoption of the Tahoe Basin Area Plan and certification of the EIR/EIS by Tahoe Regional Planning Agency was not challenged in the California Clean Energy Committee litigation.

Following the December 21, 2016 litigation, the County began to meet in good faith with the California Clean Energy Committee to discuss the claims brought forward in their lawsuit and to work toward resolution. On November 20, 2017 the County and the California Clean Energy Committee entered into a settlement agreement and dismissal and release of the lawsuit.

As a key term and condition of the settlement agreement, the County agreed to retain the traffic consultant, Nelson Nygaard, to prepare a professional report which provides a full range of potential Transportation Demand Management policies and measures for the portion of the Tahoe Basin located within the Tahoe Basin Area Plan. The agreement also requires County staff to bring forward those Transportation Demand Management strategies from the report which are recommended as reasonable and feasible to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. In exchange, CCEC agreed to withdraw its lawsuit.

To that end, on April 3, 2018, the County entered into a contract with Nelson Nygaard and has prepared the attached Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies for North Lake Tahoe report in accordance with the settlement agreement.

Nelson Nygaard began their contracted effort by reviewing eleven existing plans which currently provide direction on goals and policies related to transportation in the region. These plans assisted in focusing the consultant's attention to potential strategies which could be supported and ultimately determined to be feasible within the region. Common transportation and related elements of the plans include improvements to pedestrian and bicycle circulation, transit as a priority, reduce vehicle congestion, parking regulations, environment protection specifically through Greenhouse Gas (GHG) and Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) reductions, energy consumption, enhanced connectivity, and promotion of safety. Additionally, Nelson Nygaard provided examples of transportation demand management strategies which are being successfully implemented in other resort/tourism communities throughout the country, including Breckenridge, Colorado; Nantucket, New York; Park City, Utah; and Yosemite National Park. From this initial work, a list of transportation demand management strategies, in addition to current plans and policies, was identified for further focus.

Two community workshops were held during development of the strategies to seek input from Tahoe community members and stakeholders; September 13, 2018 to aid in identification of community supported strategies and then on April 11th, 2019 for feedback on the draft Transportation Demand Management strategies report. Minor edits in both instances were made to the recommendations of the consultant. Two formal comment letters were received during the public review of the Draft TDM Report and are included below. In addition to the public workshops, County staff provided an on-line community survey with focused questions related to transportation decisions for desired trips, regional transit, shuttles, ridesharing, bicycling and/or walking within the region.

The final Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies for North Lake Tahoe report includes the following key components:

- Transit – expanding service
- Transit Stop Improvements
- Parking Management
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements
- Developing & Improving Mobility Hubs
- Improving Access to Information
- Trip Reduction Ordinance update
- Ride-Matching Service

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, included in the report for the Board's consideration, cover a variety of options which have the potential to further transportation choices to support the economic vitality, environmental preservation and promote health for our communities. If approved by the Board, the Department of Public Works will use reasonable efforts to implement these strategies.

In conjunction with the initial effort to identify feasible strategies to address concerns raised over management of the demand for transportation, the County recently received a grant for development of a Resort Triangle Transportation Plan for the Tahoe region of Placer County. The grant is funded by Caltrans through the Senate Bill 1 Sustainable Communities Grant and Placer County local transportation planning funds. Transportation Demand Management is one of four primary elements of the transportation plan's focus with the intent of advancing your Board's direction on the strategies into a more detailed breakdown and public outreach aimed at implementation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Tahoe Transportation Demand Management Strategies described in the Report is not a project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (C) (3) are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Study).

Any projects based on information or strategies contained in the Report will require separate environmental review and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

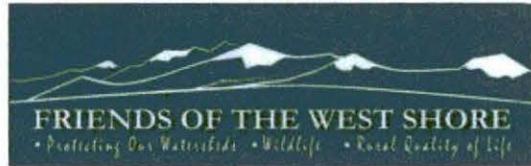
This effort is a planning and feasibility study and therefore has no impact to the current budget. The cost of the Nelson Nygaard study, \$25,000, was previously paid for as part of the settlement agreement. Future projects identified for implementation will be presented through the normal budget process.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 - Friends of the West Shore TDM letter

Attachment 2 - California Clean Energy Committee TDM letter

On file with Clerk of the Board: Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies for North Lake Tahoe Report



Placer County
 Public Works and Facilities
 Attn: Ms. Stephanie Holloway
 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 220
 Auburn, CA 95603

April 9, 2019

Subject: Draft Transportation Demand Management Strategies for North Lake Tahoe

Dear Ms. Holloway:

The Friends of the West Shore appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Transportation Demand Management Strategies for North Lake Tahoe (Report). The Friends of the West Shore (FOWS) works toward the preservation, protection, and conservation of the West Shore, our watersheds, wildlife, and rural quality of life, for today and future generations. FOWS represents community interests from Emerald Bay to Tahoe City.

Our members are extremely concerned about the increased traffic and related congestion along the West Shore in recent years. Increased traffic, especially during peak periods, is more than an environmental concern; it also creates significant threats to public health and safety. Unfortunately, recent fires in California reveal the dangers of what can happen when roads become gridlocked with traffic during emergency situations. In the situation of the devastating Camp Fire in Paradise, California, the evacuation itself created the congestion. During peak periods along the West Shore, congested roadways may be the *starting point*. If a wildfire or other emergency were to occur during peak periods, residents and visitors may be unable to escape and access for emergency responders would be impeded.

We are pleased to see the menu of options included in the Report. While we remain concerned about the extensive traffic entering and exiting the Basin during peak periods (e.g. Sundays and Holidays), the suite of options in the Report will help to encourage a ‘park-once’ approach within the Basin and thereby reduce local transportation impacts. Increasing the ease of getting around the Basin without a vehicle will also make it more desirable for visitors to travel to and from the Basin using alternative modes of transportation (e.g. transit, ride-sharing, etc.). We strongly encourage you to recommend approval of the measures in the Report by the Board of Supervisors.

We have the following additional recommendations and comments:

1. It is imperative that Placer County robustly take action to reduce the traffic associated with visitors entering and exiting the Basin during peak periods. The existing congestion poses significant public health and safety concerns due to the potential to impede emergency access and evacuation routes. The extensive traffic also negatively impacts Lake Tahoe’s water and air quality.
2. Addressing visitor traffic will also require consideration of factors unique to our area. For example, the Tahoe Basin is primarily a drive-up market due to its proximity to large population centers in Northern California and Nevada. Visitors tend to include families and are often bringing along recreational gear, luggage, food, pets, and other items which must be considered with regards to alternative transportation options. Simply increasing bus service

into the Basin, for example, is not apt to encourage many existing drivers to use transit service instead if they are bringing along kids, dogs, gear, etc.

3. New measures such as paid parking must be extensively coordinated with local residents, property owners, and business owners. While the Report refers to parking meters near Lakeside Park and Regan Beach in South Lake Tahoe as a Case Study (p. 2-10), there was significant public controversy and opposition when the meters were installed with many residents feeling they had not been adequately consulted nor had their concerns addressed in advance. As a result, the City's parking program was repealed after voters supported a citizen-led ballot initiative to repeal the program.¹
4. We encourage actions to increase train service to Truckee along with coordinated improved transit from Truckee to the Tahoe Basin, as well as improved support for ride-sharing, taxi, Uber/Lyft, etc. The services provided at the Amtrak station in Truckee are also fairly limited; services and amenities should be expanded along with increasing the number of trips to the depot from the Bay Area, Sacramento Valley, etc.
5. New large developments in the Tahoe/Truckee Region that will contribute to traffic on our roadways should not be approved until these measures are implemented and proven effective. We are especially concerned with the traffic congestion that will certainly result from Squaw Valley's planned expansion of almost 1,500 bedroom units.

We strongly encourage you to recommend approval of the TDM strategies by the Board of Supervisors, as well as their commitment to prioritize the identification of funding sources and implementation of the strategies in the Report. Further, we ask you to recommend that Placer County limit new development that will worsen traffic conditions unless and until the TDM strategies are implemented so that traffic conditions are not made worse.

Please feel free to contact Jennifer Quashnick at jqtahoe@sbcglobal.net if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Judith Tornese,
President



Jennifer Quashnick,
Conservation Consultant

¹ [https://ballotpedia.org/City_of_South_Lake_Tahoe_Parking_Program_Repeal_Initiative_Measure_P_\(June_2014\)](https://ballotpedia.org/City_of_South_Lake_Tahoe_Parking_Program_Repeal_Initiative_Measure_P_(June_2014))

CCEC

California Clean Energy Committee

California Clean Energy Committee | 503 Del Oro Avenue, Davis, CA 95616-0420

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<http://www.californiacleanenergy.org>

April 10, 2019

VIA EMAIL

Ms. Stephanie Holloway, PE, TE
Senior Civil Engineer
Transportation Planning Division
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 220
Auburn, California 95603

Re: Comments on the Draft "Transportation Demand Management Strategies for North Lake Tahoe," dated March, 2019

Dear Ms. Holloway:

Thank you for the work invested by the Transportation Planning Division in the draft "Transportation Demand Management Strategies for North Lake Tahoe," dated March, 2019 ("Strategies Document"). I am writing to provide comments and suggestions on the Strategies Document.

My primary concern is that the document appears to presume that it is unnecessary to address TDM measures that are already proposed by the County or on-going. However, it is not clear that in all cases the measures omitted are fully funded or are necessarily going to be implemented. What we are looking for under the settlement agreement is "a full range of policies that might be feasible now or in the future."

For example, with respect to bicycle network improvements, the key action steps in the Strategies Document include that "Placer County should continue to prioritize gaps in the region's bicycle network for build out." (p. 2-17) This doesn't really answer the question whether there are feasible steps toward additional funding for the network that could be taken as part of the TDM strategy. The statement to "prioritize gaps" is so vague that with

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respect to a key component of the TDM strategy-improvements to the bicycle network- there really is no answer concerning what could be accomplished.

Similarly, in other critical areas of the Strategies Document, where there are on-going programs, the Strategies Document is very light in terms of identifying what are the feasible steps that can be taken.

To the extent that specific measures have already been designed and funded to implement a given component of the TDM program , only a brief reference to the program and its funding is needed. But simply reporting that these things should be prioritized is not really sufficient in my view.

This is important because the Board of Supervisors as part of our settlement made a commitment to implement "reasonable and feasible" TDM measures. There may be a variety of policies and plans that have otherwise been identified by the County or other agencies which should be part of that TDM commitment. These are reasonable and feasible measures which should be included in the Board's commitment.

The Strategies Document falls short in terms of specificity and clarity concerning the policies that can be adopted. Saying things like "continue to prioritize gaps in the region's bicycle network"-in our view is really to no purpose. This is verbiage that will obviously be put on the shelf and disregarded.

Our first goal here is to make sure that these are concrete and specific commitments by the Board that authorize staff to move forward with all of the TDM measures that are reasonable and feasible. Obviously, that includes measures which the County and other agencies have otherwise identified or are implementing.

It should also be noted that the Strategies Document does not address fare-free or reduced-fare transit service. The TART System Plan Update addresses fare-free transit. This is another example of an important TDM strategy that has been left out of the Strategies Document but that appears in other agency planning materials.

At the least the Strategies Document, or a supplement to it, should contain a table listing the primary strategies in the TART System Plan Update and showing the status of each one in terms of funding and implementation and similar material should be included with respect to other plans such as the bicycle plan. These are obviously TDM strategies.

As part of our settlement with the county, we are entitled to expect the "full range" of potentially feasible measures be included in the report. We are further entitled to a recommendation from the Department of Public Works for implementation of all of those measures which are reasonable and feasible and a commitment to pursue those solutions approved by the Board of Supervisors for a period of five years.

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I think there can be a much more productive public conversation if all of the strategies are on the table.

Respectfully submitted,



Eugene S. Wilson

cc: Mr. Clayton T. Cook, Esq.