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STAFF REPORT

Date: April 5, 2023
To: Advisory Planning Commission (APC)
From: TRPA Staff
Subject: Briefing on the Lake Tahoe Region Vision Zero Strategy

Staff Recommendation:

No staff recommendation at this time. Staff will provide an informational update on the Lake Tahoe Region Vision Zero Strategy.

Required Motion:

There is no required motion.

Project Description/Background:

Staff are commencing an update to the 2019 Lake Tahoe Region Safety Strategy, in line with the guiding principles and elements of Vision Zero and transportation goals in the Regional Plan. The strategy will support and accelerate achievement of the 2020 Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy safety goals. The strategy is also in line with the strategic initiative Keeping Tahoe Moving, which aims to provide transformative changes to Tahoe's transportation system, including complete streets and communities, pedestrian-friendly town centers, and improved safety. Vision Zero is a strategy that seeks to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all. In the Tahoe Region, from 2017-2021 there have been approximately 19 fatalities and 109 severe injuries; an average of 4 fatalities and 22 life-changing severe injuries on our roads each year. These fatalities and severe injuries are preventable through shared responsibility and a systemic approach including roadway design that takes human error into consideration. TRPA has a role in achieving significant impacts on these numbers and improving the safety of our region through safety planning, regional stakeholder coordination, and setting and reporting on federally mandated safety performance targets.

While this update is focusing an emphasis on Vision Zero, it will also build upon the efforts of the previously approved Safety Strategy and revisit its recommendations. One recommendation was to re-evaluate Tahoe Region Safety Performance in three to five years to gauge the impact of the actions taken as a result of the Safety Strategy. With an update in 2023, TRPA is in alignment with this recommendation. The update will include new elements, including equity considerations, to align with new and existing transportation funding sources. One new funding source established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over the next five years. Local agencies within the region will be eligible to apply for implementation funds with the TRPA's Vision Zero Strategy.

Overall, the strategy seeks to achieve four objectives:

1. Achieve significant declines in roadway fatalities and serious injuries, with a long-term goal of vision zero;
2. Support and accelerate attainment of the goals of the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy;
3. Establish a method to measure progress in meeting Objective 1 over time; and
4. Enable local agencies in the Tahoe Basin to be eligible for new and existing funding to implement safety improvements.

The plan will be developed utilizing a Technical Advisory Committee, comprised of over 15 local agencies and organizations to provide feedback on the direction of the strategy. Public involvement and engagement will be integral to the success of vision zero in Tahoe, and staff seek to involve the public throughout the strategy development by including surveys, pop-up events, and standing meetings such as the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Look Ahead:

Later this calendar year, staff will be seeking a potential resolution from the Governing Board committing to a long-term goal of zero fatalities and severe injuries on Tahoe's roadways by 2050. This target is in line with both states' vision zero commitments. Caltrans has a Director's Policy committing the department to the Safe System approach and reaffirms the vision of reaching zero fatalities and serious injuries on state highways by 2050. Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), together with the Nevada Department of Public Safety, have set a goal of zero roadway fatalities by 2050. Staff will be seeking feedback and support of this goal from both the Governing Board and local agencies.

Contact Information:

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