

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 19, 2023  
To: Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) Incline Village Mobility Committee  
From: TTD Staff – George Fink, Transit System Program Manager  
Subject: Informational Report on the East Shore Express 2023 Season

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**Action Requested:**

It is requested the Committee receive an informational report on the upcoming East Shore Express (ESE) 2023 season.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

All expenditures associated with this item for the fiscal year are in the approved FY23 budget and proposed FY24 budget. The additional conditions required by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's (TRPA) Governing Board for consideration of an extension to the permit have added significant costs to the service.

**Work Program Impact:**

All work associated with this effort is captured under respective elements of the approved FY23 Work Program and will be included in the FY24 work program, with corresponding allotted staff time. This project aligns with Strategic Goal SG-3 Fund and operate regional multi-modal transportation systems.

**Background:**

The ESE is, at its core, a mitigation to the influx of vehicles clogging SR 28 and damaging the environment through uncontrolled roadside parking. Beginning in 2012, TTD partnered with the Nevada Division of State Parks (NDSP) to provide a seasonal shuttle service between Incline Village and Sand Harbor State Park. Since the inception of ESE, ridership has steadily grown. In the last season of operations before the pandemic, ESE carried 36,815 passengers. Service was suspended for two years during the pandemic.

For the ESE to return in 2022, TRPA's Governing Board required a Temporary Use Permit. Staff obtained the required use permit and resumed operations in June of 2022 with a single bus (2019 used three buses). The 2022 season total ridership was 29,161 – 79% of 2019's ridership with only a third of the capacity.

The enduring popularity of the service stressed TTD's limited capacity last season. Some members of the community voiced concern to the TRPA Governing Board that more should be done to avoid impacts to the community. The result was a more extensive and prescriptive list of conditions for future approval of the temporary use permit for the 2023 season.

**Discussion:**

TRPA staff articulated the following conditions that must be addressed before the Governing Board will grant the extension of the temporary use permit. Following each condition is staff's planned approach for meeting each requirement. As the plans and procurements are finalized, staff will provide a written plan of action to the TRPA Governing Board for consideration with the temporary use permit at their May 2023 meeting.

**Condition 1 - Signage:** Improved signage at the project locations, and consideration of the use of changeable message signage on State Route 28 (SR 28) to notify potential customers that the parking lot at the "Old Incline Elementary School" ("OES") is full, informing customers to proceed to the overflow parking available at the current Incline Elementary School (IES).

**Response:** Staff will meet with NDOT and University of Reno, Lake Tahoe to discuss placing changeable message signs (CMS) on their property (SR 431 and the corner of Tahoe Blvd and County Club). Other locations for signage will be on TTD property and coordinated with Washoe County. Staff will first inquire with partners as to whether they have CMS available to borrow. In the event CMS must be rented, staff estimate the cost for the season at \$36,348 (four signs, 13 weeks). Alternatively, CMS could be purchased for \$16,550 each, eliminating the need for future rentals.

**Condition 2 - Training:** Training the staff to provide accurate information, and to enforce the requirements of the permit (e.g., no parking off pavement). Additional training for Nevada State Parks staff, too (see below).

**Response:** Staff will develop a training manual for TTD Parking Attendants, Parking Ambassadors, and State Parks Staff. This training manual will cover the duties of the Parking Attendants, the procedures for opening and closing the facilities, what information to record, when to switch lots, how to operate the CMS signs, and provide contacts if there are questions and much more. These manuals, along with training, will be provided to all TTD parking employees and Road Supervisors.

**Condition 3 – Gates:** Open the gates early enough to allow customers to safely parking before the first bus arrives. This will alleviate potential backup on Southwood Boulevard, which can also back up on to NV SR 28.

**Response:** TTD will hire four Parking Attendants, a doubling of staff from last year, to ensure adequate coverage from 7:00am to 7:00pm (weekdays) or 8:00pm (weekends). This doubling of staff will allow for the gates to open early in the morning and avoid back-ups on Southwood Blvd. Extra staff will also help with improving the general cleanliness of the lot, providing lunch break coverage, and coverage while the CMS messages are rotated throughout the day due to conditions. The doubling of staff will logically double the cost from last year, as well as adding mileage reimbursements for local travel while changing the CMS. Total staffing cost will rise to approximately \$31,200.

**Condition 4 - Local Law Enforcement:** Although it may not be possible for Washoe County Sheriff to ticket any illegally parked vehicles, TTD will coordinate with WCSO to address potentially unsafe parking conditions. Ultimate action will be decided by Washoe County.

**Response:** TTD will coordinate with Washoe County Sheriff prior to the resumption of the ESE to develop a joint plan of action. Staff will participate and fully cooperate with Washoe County Sheriff.

**Condition 5 - Public Participation:** Work with the local groups to get feedback on the additional Special Conditions to be incorporated. Several people mentioned the existing "Incline Village Mobility Committee" as a possible local group to present this information.

**Response:** Staff intends to brief the Incline Village Mobility Committee (IVMC) at their April meeting. Included in the briefing will be the additional conditions, staff response, and an opportunity for the public to comment. All feedback will be evaluated prior to TTD providing a final response to the TRPA Governing Board for consideration.

**Condition 6 - Nevada State Parks:** TTD will work with NV SP to ensure that accurate information is supplied to their staff on a regular and real-time basis. NV SP had apparently been providing inaccurate information to customers coming to the park when it was already full.

**Response:** Nevada State Parks is a critical partner and staff work closely throughout each service day with numerous park personnel. As mentioned above, park personnel will be provided with a training binder and offered the same training Parking Attendants receive prior to the start of the season. Additionally, parks employees will have the phone numbers for all Parking Attendants, Road Supervisors, and the Operations Supervisor and Manger to ensure information flows unimpeded and questions are quickly addressed. Calls and texts will keep everyone connected and in the loop.

**Condition 7 - Parking:** TTD will install parking barriers to prevent vehicles from parking off-pavement onsite.

**Response:** Staff will secure approximately 850 feet of internal borders between paved and unpaved areas to prevent parking on unimproved surfaces. Staff are still evaluating options to efficiently secure the unimproved areas however, initial estimates are the cost will be approximately \$4,500 for some sort of physical barrier.

Additionally, TTD has requested Board approval to lease four low floor buses to address the anticipated demand for shuttle service this season under Consent Item XI.C.

Staff is excited to resume the ESE service this summer and is confident the TRPA Governing Board will accept TTD's responses to the conditions above and approve the temporary use permit for the 2023 operating season.

**Additional Information:**

If you have any questions or comments regarding this item, please contact George Fink at (775) 589-5325 or [gfink@tahoetransportation.org](mailto:gfink@tahoetransportation.org).