

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

TRPA
Zoom

December 13, 2023

Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Member Hoenigman called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m. on December 13, 2023.

Members present: Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Friedrich, Ms. Hays, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman.

Members absent: None.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Regan stated there were no changes to the agenda.

Member Hoenigman deemed the agenda approved as posted.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Mr. Hoenigman nominated Ms. Hill to be Chair and John Friedrich to be Vice Chair of the Transportation Committee.

Public Comment

None.

Mr. Aguilar made the motion to elect Ms. Hill to be Chair and John Friedrich to be Vice Chair of the Transportation Committee.

Ayes: Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Friedrich, Ms. Hays, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

III. TRPA TRANSPORTATION OVERVIEW

Julie Regan, TRPA's Executive Director, introduced the committee's inaugural meeting focused solely on transportation, a key aspect of the environmental improvement program. She highlighted the complexity of Tahoe's transportation challenges, influenced by the area's rural nature and high influx of visitors.

The transportation system faces issues due to its constraints, inadequate funding, and struggles to reduce dependency on private automobiles as mandated by the by-state compact. The

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system's limitations impact the region's economy, quality of life, safety, environmental health, and mobility.

Regan emphasized the unique role of Tahoe as an NPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) despite not meeting typical population criteria. She discussed the challenges associated with federal funding and the ongoing efforts to obtain recognition for visitation in population metrics.

She stressed that transportation has been a pressing concern within the community, necessitating action. The committee's goals would include discussions on funding, acknowledging the importance of the equity study and the recent recognition of the team's work with the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award.

Ultimately, she welcomed the committee members and expressed a commitment to ensuring the committee's work is engaging, meaningful, and impactful.

Nick Haven, the MPO Director for TRPA's Transportation Program, outlined the significance of the committee and its partnership potential in addressing vital transportation issues. He expressed the intention to share information without overwhelming the committee and encouraged their input for advancing policy, projects, and funding.

Mr. Haven provided an overview of TRPA's role in transportation, explaining its comprehensive responsibilities as a metropolitan planning organization. TRPA aims to create a cohesive transportation vision that aligns regional and local priorities, involving various partners, local governments, and state DOTs.

He discussed TRPA's involvement in long-range transportation planning through the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), corridor planning, project selection, funding allocations, and project monitoring. Haven emphasized the collaborative nature of TRPA's role, working closely with partners throughout different planning stages and project implementation.

Using a visual spectrum, he illustrated TRPA's involvement at different stages of transportation planning, highlighting the coordination among various partners for effective project development and implementation. Haven stressed the importance of this partnership throughout the transportation planning cycle, reflecting the integrated nature of TRPA's approach.

He concluded by indicating that while they wouldn't delve too deeply into topics during that session, future presentations would offer more context for the committee's decision-making process within this transportation framework.

Mr. Friedrich inquired about the intended role of the committee in shaping TRPA's planning, regional vision, goals, and strategies. He sought clarification beyond merely carrying out administrative actions or approvals, aiming to understand how the committee could actively contribute to informing and deliberating on the broader vision of the organization.

Nick Haven highlighted that the committee's timing is opportune as TRPA is in the process of updating its transportation plan. He emphasized the importance of the committee's input in shaping the strategies and goals related to transportation. Nick also mentioned that they would keep the committee updated on funding releases, seek their support in obtaining funding, provide updates on corridors, and showcase tangible progress on the ground to illustrate the

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results of planning efforts. He expressed the intention to bring in partners to showcase successes and demonstrate the real-world impact of their planning initiatives.

John Hester explained the role of the committee, likening it to the Regional Planning Committee (formerly RPIC) that examines Regional Plan and code amendments. He specified that this new committee would primarily handle the review process for the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy updates, indicating that they would be the key group providing feedback and discussing these updates.

Julie Regan highlighted the committee's role as a partner bridging connections with the community, aiming to engage their constituencies more effectively in transportation matters. Additionally, she emphasized the significance of funding, noting Member Hayes' experience and connections in Washington, stressing the need to refine strategies for securing more infrastructure funding for Lake Tahoe.

Michelle Glickert, the Transportation Planning Program Manager, outlined the interconnectedness of various planning elements in transportation at Lake Tahoe. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) stood at the core, encompassing regional goals, a funding plan, a 20-year vision, and a project list developed through associated planning.

She touched on various programs feeding into the RTP, including active transportation plans, travel demand management, transit planning, technology integration, performance planning, corridor planning, public participation, and transportation equity.

Ms. Glickert also previewed upcoming topics for committee consideration, such as safety strategies, updates to the active transportation plan, federal transportation improvement amendments, and performance evaluations. Finally, she highlighted the role of the committee in overseeing the transportation planning and improvement teams' work for the next fiscal year, primarily focusing on RTP development and project implementation.

Mr. Friedrich inquired about opportunities for the committee to engage in the earlier stages of planning rather than just being presented with fully developed plans for approval. He sought ways for the committee to be involved in the formative stages of planning, akin to being part of the baking process of a cake rather than just being asked to approve the finished product.

Michelle Glickert emphasized that although the planning process may seem a bit advanced, there are ongoing collaborations with agency staff to shape various plans. She highlighted active meetings with public works groups to discuss project lists, potential policies, and new directions for upcoming plans like the Active Transportation Plan and the Safety Strategy. Ms. Glickert pointed out that while certain plans are in progress, the Regional Transportation Plan remains a focal point where committee involvement is crucial in merging all these initiatives.

Nick Haven added that while the planning efforts involve extensive information, the focus is on refining policy decisions rather than inundating the committee with extensive volumes of text. He highlighted the importance of these documents stemming from previous discussions within governing boards and EIP committees. Nick mentioned the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as an example, noting that instead of presenting finalized chapters, they aim to bring forth key policy decisions for discussion and refinement with the committee.

Julie Reagan, TRPA Executive Director, expressed the significance of engaging the committee

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effectively and meaningfully, considering potential workshops to discuss transportation projects, funding, prioritization, and costs. She highlighted the significance of the constrained and unconstrained project lists within the \$2.5 billion regional transportation plan and proposed potential joint meetings with the Transportation District board, leveraging Member Hill's dual role. Julie emphasized openness to the committee's ideas and plans to return with concrete examples on how to utilize the committee's time effectively.

Commissioner Hill expressed interest in adopting goals for the committee, drawing from the approach used at the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD). Emphasizing the need for this committee to have specific objectives, she highlighted the importance of goal-setting, possibly in a workshop format. Additionally, she proposed aligning the committee's discussions with TTD's plans, specifically mentioning the short-range transit plan, aiming to ensure the committee is informed about TTD's initiatives and enhancing communication between TRPA and TTD.

IV. RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF THE 2024 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (RTIP)

Nick Haven presented the Regional Improvement Program Funding, an administrative item recurring every two years through the state of California. This funding consists of a 75% regional and 25% interregional allocation. TRPA had an advance from eight years ago to fund Kings Beach commercial core improvements, which is now being paid off, leaving a remaining \$1.2 million. However, this amount isn't enough to fully fund a project or phase of work, so they plan to roll it over to couple with future allocations. The request made was to approve the Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) funding of \$165,000 over five years, which supports project tracking and administration, essential for budgeting and staff support. The proposed resolution would go to the governing board for approval before submission to Cal Trans and the California Transportation Commission.

Public Comment

Pamela Tsigdinos raised concerns regarding the committee's role in addressing the primary transportation challenge in the Tahoe Basin: facilitating evacuation during emergencies. She sought clarification on how this critical aspect would be integrated into the committee's responsibilities. Additionally, she highlighted the practicality of planning in a region often affected by icy and snowy conditions for up to six months, expressing the need for realistic transportation planning that acknowledges these challenges rather than simply emphasizing the creation of multiple paths.

TRPA Executive Director, Julie Regan addressed the concerns raised about evacuation during emergencies, highlighting the ongoing efforts to evolve discussions around fire evacuation. She mentioned that the Environmental Improvement Program would be holding briefings on Forest Health and the work of the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, integrating these aspects into transportation planning, safety, and regional transportation processes. Additionally, she acknowledged the challenge of ensuring year-round access to pathways, emphasizing the agency's goal to keep pathways accessible throughout the year despite the significant cost implications.

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Commissioner Hill made a motion to recommend the TRPA Governing Board adopt Attachment A, Resolution 2023 - ____, approving the 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

Ayes: Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Friedrich, Ms. Hays, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

- V. RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2023-2024 STATE OF GOOD REPAIR PROJECT LISTS FOR THE TAHOE TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT (TTD) AND TAHOE TRUCKEE AREAT REGIONAL TRANSIT (TART) AND AUTHORIZE THE ALLOCATION OF FY 2023-2024 TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT FUNDING FOR TTD, TART, AND TRPA.

Kira Richardson, TRPA Senior Transportation Planner, presented on the approval of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds for administrative purposes to TRPA, and for transit capital and operations expenses for TTD and TART. She provided background information on the TDA, established in 1971 to fund transit capital and operations in California. The funds are derived from various sources such as a quarter-cent general sales tax, a statewide sales tax on gasoline, and the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017.

Kira explained the allocation breakdown for the last five fiscal years and the fluctuations in funding from different sources due to variations in gasoline purchases, sales taxes, and the relatively steady State of Good Repair funding. She highlighted the requirement for approving the State of Good Repair project list for fleet maintenance and vehicle purchases.

The presentation included a breakdown of TDA allocations for the fiscal year 2023 and 2024, with each fund source requiring its own resolution, along with an additional resolution for approving the State of Good Repair project lists. Kira invited questions after the presentation.

Committee Questions/Comments

John Friedrich inquired about the Local Responsibility Funds (LRF) and confirmed their status as unprogrammed to date. He acknowledged ongoing discussions regarding the potential use of these funds in the upcoming year, noting the flexibility in their allocation for the 2023-2024 budget period.

Ms. Richardson responded that there were ongoing discussions between the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) and the South Shore Transportation Management Association regarding the potential allocation of a portion of their funding to support the expansion of micro transit on the South Shore. She clarified that although amendments to the claim application submitted by TTD could be made once funds are allocated, there was a procedural necessity to proceed with board approval for funding allocation to ensure timely payment from the state to the operator. Thus, the current timing was crucial for this procedural step.

Mr. Friedrich confirmed his understanding of the process, acknowledging the ongoing conversations and the flexibility regarding the allocation of funds. He highlighted that these discussions weren't finalized and emphasized that there was room for adjustments or changes as things progressed.

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Public Comment

None.

Mr. Friedrich made a motion to recommend adoption the attached resolution (Attachment A) (Attachment A) approving the allocation of FY 2023-2024 Local Transportation Fund funds to the TRPA, TTD, and TART, attached resolution (Attachment B) approving the allocation of FY 2023-2024 State Transit Assistance funds to TTD and TART, attached resolution (Attachment C) approving the FY 2023-2024 State of Good Repair project lists submitted by the Tahoe-Truckee Area Regional Transit and Tahoe Transportation District, and attached resolution (Attachment D) approving the allocation of FY 2023-2024 State of Good Repair funds to TTD and TART.

Ayes: Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Friedrich, Ms. Hays, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

VI. RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO ALLOCATE FISCAL YEAR 2023/24 CALIFORNIA TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM AND ZERO EMISSION TRANSIT CAPITAL PROGRAM FUNDING

Nick Haven discussed the recent allocation of emergency funding by the state of California to boost transit agencies' recovery post-COVID. This funding aims to support transit services, enhance ridership, and focus on electrification. The allocated funds consist of two components: the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program and the Zero Emission Transit Capital Program.

He outlined the allocation of approximately \$5.7 million for the Tahoe region through this funding, highlighting its significance for transit electrification and service enhancements. Nick highlighted the focus areas for funding, including supporting emerging services like micro transit, investing in charging infrastructure, and transitioning to electric vehicles.

He emphasized the need for comprehensive operational analysis (COA) to support service planning, grant applications, and transit improvements. Additionally, he explained the strict timing and reporting requirements for these funds and the necessity of meeting the submission deadline by December 31st to the California State Transportation Agency.

Mr. Haven stressed that while this allocation was for one year, there would be ongoing efforts to secure funding for subsequent years, promising continued updates and proposals for future funding cycles.

Committee Questions/Comments

Chair Hill expressed excitement about the recent developments, particularly in partnership with Placer regarding microtransit. They highlighted the opportunity for Placer [County] to move forward with vehicle procurement, expressing appreciation for the team's efforts in making this happen. Chair Hill emphasized the significance of this progress, deeming it a potential game-changer as they aim to reduce costs associated with microtransit by owning their own vehicles.

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John Friedrich sought clarification on the flexibility of funding allocation, specifically mentioning the \$3 million intended for micro transit vehicle procurement infrastructure for TDD. He inquired whether the ultimate recipient of that funding could extend beyond TDD, possibly redirecting to SSTMA or the City for vehicle purchases. Friedrich emphasized the need to confirm the fluidity of the ultimate recipient, ensuring it wasn't pre-programmed.

Nick Haven responded that the actual recipient of the funding needs to align with the guidelines, indicating that the eligible entities receiving funds should be the ones designated by TRPA. While TTD might initially purchase the rolling stock, agreements could enable its use for micro transit elsewhere. Mr. Haven emphasized the intent to procure vans for micro transit on the south shore and suggested that operating agreements might facilitate this process.

John Friedrich restated that currently, there's no existing plan for a distinct micro transit operation directly under SSTMA's purview?

Carl Hasty, District Manager for TTD, highlighted several reasons for considering the use of funds. One crucial aspect involves ensuring TDA funds support the existing transit service. There's an ongoing effort to integrate the South Shore micro transit service with TTD's operations. This integration involves exploring funding avenues, especially for essential transit services like pair transit. Discussions revolve around the flexibility the district has in finding an arrangement that benefits all involved parties, aiming for an integrated approach that combines assets to optimize micro transit services and enhance overall integration.

John Friedrich emphasized the availability of funds to electrify and expand fleets. He highlighted ongoing discussions with SSTMA, the city, and other stakeholders about programming the available 3 million dollars within specified buckets. The focus is on determining how these funds can be utilized to meet operational needs, aligning efforts toward this goal.

Mr. Hasty agreed and reiterated that he doesn't have the final details yet but that is how TTD is looking at various solutions.

Chair Hill highlighted the upcoming discussions within the TTD board throughout the next year, emphasizing their focus on programming available funds and the relationships between TTD, the city, and TMA. Chair Hill acknowledged that TTD is currently the sole entity able to procure these funds, there's ongoing dialogue regarding the flexibility of allocating these resources. There's a collective effort to align various aspects, including available funds for micro-transit, optimizing their use to provide the desired coverage for the community's needs. The emphasis lies on flexibility in approaching these discussions and decisions.

Public Comment

Gavin Feiger, representing the League to Save Lake Tahoe, highlighted SSTMA's commitment to developing microtransit on the South Shore. Collaborating with partners like the city and TTD, they're focused on expanding and electrifying services in the region. They're set to expand the service in mid-January, aligning efforts with Douglas County and the city's matching funds. They've secured grants for infrastructure like an overnight charger powered by solar energy, emphasizing the transition to electric vehicles. Gavin expressed confidence in their partnership dynamics and operational models, anticipating more vehicles and electric ones on the roads by the next summer, appreciating the funding and support.

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Ellie Waller emphasized the need to address microtransit coverage issues in Douglas County, particularly pointing out that the current service zones don't adequately cover the area. She highlighted the involvement of a county commissioner, Charlotte Hales, in the South Shore Transportation Management group and expressed concerns about the imbalance in service compared to the funding contributions coming from Douglas County.

Marta Michilizzi inquired about the efficiency and performance of electric vehicles in Tahoe's cold weather conditions, noting the emphasis on electric vehicles and expressing curiosity about available data regarding their functionality in such climates.

Ann Nichols raised concerns about the lack of a financial analysis regarding transit services, citing Placer County's comprehensive study on ridership and usage. She emphasized the need for transparency regarding the public's responsibility and questioned the allocation of costs, such as transportation for ski area employees and teenagers' use of micro-transit for daily trips, which she noted cost around \$17 per ride. She expressed a desire for a more detailed discussion and information regarding this financial aspect beyond Placer County's analysis.

Nick Haven responded to some of the public comments and acknowledged the complexities of electric vehicle (EV) adoption in the Tahoe area due to factors like topography and access requirements. He highlighted TTD's experience with heavy-duty EV buses, acknowledging that full electrification might not be immediately feasible given vehicle availability and suitability for the terrain. He assured a methodical approach to electrification by TART and TTD. Regarding the South Shore micro-transit, he mentioned the potential cost reduction once the organization owns its vehicles and suggested checking the South Shore TMA for available metrics on their service performance, indicating that similar data could be accessed upon request.

Mr. Friedrich highlighted his experience with electric vehicles (EVs) in the area, referencing the Lake Tahoe Unified School District's operation of electric school buses. He emphasized the increasing presence of EVs, including medium and heavy-duty vehicles, in mountain communities, stating his personal experience with EVs since 2014 without any incidents. Mr. Friedrich noted slight battery capacity reductions in cold weather but assured that route planning compensates for this. He discussed the performance similarities between EVs and traditional vehicles, citing all-wheel drive capabilities and strong torque. Additionally, he mentioned the availability of funding and incentives like California's HVIP program, providing economic benefits for transitioning to EV ownership.

Mr. Friedrich made a motion to adoption of Resolution 2023-__ as shown in Attachment A.

Ayes: Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Friedrich, Ms. Hays, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

VII. UPCOMING TOPICS

Michelle Glickert revisited a previously displayed slide and welcomed suggestions or additional input from the committee members regarding the agenda and plans for the upcoming year. She encouraged board members to contribute, ask questions, or

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propose any additions or modifications to the agenda for discussion.

V. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

VI. PUBLIC INTEREST COMMENTS

Ellie Waller expressed anticipation for the revival of the bi-state consultation on transportation that occurred in 2017, led by the directors of Nevada's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and California's Secretary of Natural Resources. Ms. Waller emphasized the importance of their input at the committee level and urged their appearance before this committee or any regional discussions regarding the 777 funding framework. She voiced concerns about the substantial financial commitment required from local jurisdictions over two decades, particularly emphasizing the need for transparent legislative processes, especially in Douglas County where significant backlog maintenance in transportation and roads exists. Ms. Waller looked forward to robust discussions and detailed consultations at both local and committee levels.

Carl Hasty, representing the Tahoe Transportation District, extended a warm welcome to the committee, highlighting their focus on transportation matters. He emphasized their commitment as a bi-state partner exclusively dedicated to transportation issues. Mr. Hasty noted the significant overlap in board membership between the two entities and expressed a desire for increased dialogue, especially as they approach discussions in the spring about future plans. Additionally, he mentioned the upcoming fiftieth anniversary of public transit initiation at Lake Tahoe in 2024, signifying an opportune moment to reflect on past achievements and look ahead to future endeavors.

Cindy Gustafson expressed the importance of the committee seeking presentations from various jurisdictions to comprehend the complexities between TMAs, transit operations, and the expansion of micro mass transit due to bus driver shortages. She highlighted the significant contributions from ski areas to funding transportation projects through TOT and TBID funds, totaling over 4.5 million dollars recently allocated by the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Gustafson emphasized understanding how each jurisdiction surpasses the private share of funding for transportation initiatives.

Ms. Hill acknowledged the support for microtransit from various organizations like the North Lake Tahoe Tourism Board, RSCBA, and Washoe County. She expressed anticipation for discussions with IVGID due to their involvement in a ski resort.

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VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Friedrich moved to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Katherine Huston
Paralegal

The above meeting was recorded in its entirety. Anyone wishing to listen to the recording may find it at <https://www.trpa.gov/meeting-materials/>. In addition, written documents submitted at the meeting are available for review. If you require assistance locating this information, please contact the TRPA at (775) 588-4547 or virtualmeetinghelp@trpa.gov.