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STAFF REPORT

Date: October 16, 2024

To: TRPA Transportation Committee

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Presentation and possible endorsement of the approach to the financial forecast, strategies, and projects of the Regional Transportation Plan (Connections 2050)

Summary:

Staff will present an overview of the transportation strategies, including projects and programs for the Connections 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and associated funding forecast assumptions. This is a discussion and feedback session in preparation for the release of the draft RTP in the Spring/Summer of 2025. No action is requested.

Background:

The Transportation Committee is the designated steering committee for Connections 2050 as specified in the committee work plan adopted in June 2024. TRPA as the Metropolitan Planning Organization is required to prepare a Regional Transportation Plan - Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connections 2050) every four years. Some of the major components presented previously or that will be addressed in the meeting this month include:

- Performance-Based Planning – presented to the Transportation Committee in April.
- Regional transportation goals and policies – presented to the Transportation Committee in June.
- Land use and demographics forecast – to be presented to the Transportation Committee in October.
- Projects and Financial elements – to be presented to the Transportation Committee in October.

Public Process:

Connections 2050 development officially began in May 2024. However, over the past two years updates to foundational plans such as the Vision Zero Strategy and Active Transportation Plan provided key input for developing the project list and tools like the high-injury network to support project planning. These essential plans, projects, and tools were developed through public outreach and stakeholder meetings, incorporating the Transportation Equity Study to ensure transportation needs for vulnerable populations are identified and prioritized. Considering these plans while developing the 25-year draft project list provides the needed foundation to meet transportation goals and regional needs.

Over the past four months, staff have reached over 597 total participants, 62 of which are Spanish speaking, at 22 events on the north and south shores. The draft project list is based on general feedback from these public meetings, review of the previous RTP, review of active projects in various stages of planning and environmental review, feedback on project priorities from 320 RTP survey participants, and an assessment of how well each project meets the goals and policies of the plan. Most recently staff convened the Tahoe Transportation Implementation Collaborative (TTIC), made up of project

implementers, to ensure alignment with partner capital improvement programs, gather feedback on the draft project list, and affirm local and state revenue forecasted funding.

Funding:

Connections 2050 provides the full transportation vision for the region, including projects and programs that advance that vision. As the MPO, TRPA is required to develop a financial element that provides comprehensive detail on the anticipated future funding that is then used to divide the project list into those that can be funded with the anticipated revenue and those that will require additional funding. Some of the anticipated future funding sources are already committed to specific projects or programs. This financial forecast identifies the fiscally constrained “envelope” into which the funded and highest priority projects and programs must fit. The RTP then identifies which projects and programs have foreseeable funding and are included on the *fiscally constrained project list*, and the *illustrative list* (i.e., those that have completed initial planning but do not have identified funding or a schedule for implementation). Currently \$2.35 billion is anticipated to be available over the 25-year life of the plan across all sectors (Federal, State, Local, and Private) and constitutes the fiscally constrained envelope. Staff will provide an overview of the funding assumptions for Connections 2050 for consideration by the committee.

Projects:

Connections 2050 envisions a region with an efficient, interconnected transportation system with options that serve all users. The RTP will identify several projects and programs categorized within four strategies - transit, trails, technology and towns to realize the vision. The projects in the RTP represent a mosaic of local priorities and regionally significant investments that have had an initial level of planning and support local, state and regional goals. The following project highlights are from the draft fiscally constrained list.

Transit – local, recreation, and regional services

The 2050 vision includes reliable, safe and convenient transit that connects all neighborhoods to town centers, town centers that connect to recreation sites around the lake, and regional services that connect Tahoe to the mega region including Reno and Sacramento.

Foreseeable funds are anticipated to cover vanpool programs, existing local, limited regional, and micro transit services. Revenues for realizing the full vision of enhanced frequency, coverage, and expanded transit services have not been identified. The constrained 2050 vision mirrors the services on the ground today.

Trails – walking, bicycling, rolling and other non-auto modes of travel

Achieving the vision through a comprehensive network of interconnected, low-stress and accessible bicycle and pedestrian facilities that will be maintained for year-round use such as:

- Sidewalks on the south side of US50 connecting Lake Parkway to Kingsbury, a Class I trail on 4H Road/Laura Drive, and bike lanes and sidewalks on Kahle Drive.
- Safety improvements along Pioneer Trail and US50, including new enhanced crossings and additional lighting. New trail connections between the Wye/Barton area and the Tahoe Sierra neighborhood, providing alternative access to US50.
- Closing gaps in the Tahoe City and Kings Beach bicycle network within and between the town centers.
- Closing gaps in the east shore bicycle network from Crystal Bay to Incline Village, extending the network from Secret Harbor to Spooner, and adding bike lanes to Mt Rose Highway.

Technology – maximizing technology for real time information, data collection and system efficiencies

The goal is to leverage technology to better connect people with information about travel and parking options for everyday trips, recreation visits, and emergency needs. Additionally, building out broadband connectivity and electrical vehicle charging so that vehicle trips, when needed, generate lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

The region will maximize limited resources, increase efficiencies in travel, and improve emergency communications through improvements in traveler information via message signs and phone applications, traffic management, parking reservation systems, streamlining transit operations and real time data collection.

Town Centers and Corridors – activity centers, mixed use, complete streets

Town Centers are where all strategies coalesce. Regional and local buses and smaller on-demand shuttles will connect neighborhoods, town centers, jobs, and recreation. The town center strategy emphasizes connectivity via sidewalks, protected bicycle infrastructure, real-time parking with some parking reservation options, and vibrant mixed-use areas thus reducing the demand for auto travel. Corridors connect town centers and recreation “hot spots.” Corridor projects will provide non-auto connections for pedestrians and bicycles, transit options, and parking management to keep all travelers safe.

The vision for town centers and corridors will be achieved with multi-benefit projects such as:

- Complete streets projects in Meyers and at Stateline Avenue with enhanced sidewalks and bike lanes to connect people to employment and recreation.
- Managed parking, improvements in pedestrian and bicycle access, and safety improvements on Northwood Blvd.
- The east shore mobility hub at Spooner Summit with managed parking, and transit and trail connections to recreation destinations along SR28.
- Parking management and transit at Emerald Bay and completing the next segment of the West Shore Tahoe Trail from Meeks Bay.

The plan also includes critical operations and maintenance programs for each jurisdiction, such as street sweeping, annual road repair, snow clearing on paths, and maintenance of sidewalks and paths.

Regional Plan Compliance:

The RTP is the transportation element of the Regional Plan. Connections 2050 will comply with all federal and state planning requirements and will be consistent with the other components of the TRPA Regional Plan, including supporting goals and policies to implement the Regional Plan.

Staff will present an overview of the draft strategies and examples of regional projects, including the future anticipated funding to be included in the public draft plan. Staff are seeking feedback for preparation, release, and adoption of the final RTP in the Spring/Summer of 2025. The Draft Connections 2050 plan is scheduled for public release in the spring of 2025 with complete environmental analysis for public comment. Several committee meetings are scheduled to provide additional opportunities for feedback. The formal public comment period is expected to occur in March and April, with Governing Board approval in June 2025.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Michelle Glickert at (775) 589-5204 or mglickert@trpa.gov.

To submit a written public comment, email publiccomment@trpa.gov with the appropriate agenda item in the subject line. Written comments received by 4 p.m. the day before a scheduled public meeting will be distributed and posted to the TRPA website before the meeting begins. TRPA does not guarantee written comments received after 4 p.m. the day before a meeting will be distributed and posted in time for the meeting.