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STAFF REPORT

Date: February 17, 2021

To: Environmental Improvement Program, Transportation and Public Outreach Committee

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Transportation Sustainable Funding Work Session #1

Requested Action: This item is for Informational purposes. Discussion and staff direction is appreciated.

Background: Regional partners have agreed to seek solutions to accelerate the implementation of Tahoe's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Environmental Improvement Program, Transportation and Public Outreach Committee (EIPTPO) serves as one of several policy forums in the development of a sustainable transportation funding proposal. In parallel with the Tahoe Transportation District's Board of Directors, TRPA's EIPTPO Committee will be asked to provide policy sideboards to guide the technical proposals for how to fund priority transportation projects and programs of the RTP that have been difficult or slow to implement for many decades.

In varied forums over the last four years, a wide range of funding options have been offered for review, but the policy sideboards raised by varied stakeholders for consideration in vetting funding mechanisms have yet to be fully defined or discussed. This month, the Committee will help define and begin discussion of key questions, concerns, and ideas that will need to be considered and resolved in seeking a consensus-based approach to sustainable regional funding needed to achieve the highest priority goals of the RTP. A preliminary list of stated policy considerations is in Attachment A.

Last month, the Committee approved a work plan for the Sustainable Transportation Funding initiative for calendar year 2021. The Transportation Technical Implementation Committee (TTIC), a broad representation of Tahoe's transportation implementers, will use the Committee's policy input to begin to develop proposed approaches for long term sustained transportation funding. TTIC's role is to aid your informed discussion and decision-making by organizing available information, analyzing and assessing input and recommendations, sharing implementation knowledge on capital programming and operations, and offering transportation revenue experience and suggestions.

At this policy committee work session, staff will summarize TTD and TTIC input so far and elicit discussion on policy issues to be considered in developing transportation funding approaches. We will drill down into a subset of the issues outlined in Attachment A. As your policy concerns are affirmed, modified, or refined, this direction will help the TTIC develop "Implementation and Funding Strategies" identified in the workplan. Together with available background information, these products will become the foundation for the broad agreement supporting the final funding proposal.

A second item for discussion this month is a tool to assist consensus-seeking decision making. Other successful consensus processes at Tahoe, including the Federal Advisory Committee advising the allocation of Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA) funds for the EIP, have used the attached consensus scale to aid alignment among diverse interests and points of view (Attachment B).

Contact: For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Nick Haven at nhaven@trpa.org or 775.589.5256.

Attachments:
A. Transportation Sustainable Revenue – Policy Considerations
B: Information about consensus scale

Attachment A

Transportation Sustainable Revenue – Policy Considerations

Attachment A

Transportation Sustainable Revenue

Policy Considerations

WHY does Tahoe need a Dedicated Sustainable Revenue Source for Transportation?

- The Tahoe basin has a transportation problem. Heavy peak visitation is stressing Lake Tahoe's limited transportation infrastructure and impacting the area's pristine natural resources.
- Lake Tahoe's limited year-round population base is insufficient to finance critical transportation projects. With 90 percent of the land in the Tahoe basin in public ownership, a public-private model for transportation investment is critical.
- Local/regional "self-help" funding must work with state and federal initiatives. Leveraging funding shares benefits the comprehensive transportation network.

WHAT is our Vision and Near Term Transportation Priorities?

- A comprehensive transportation system in the Tahoe Basin hinges on key infrastructure investments. Immediate priorities include the Highway 89 and 28 corridors on the California and Nevada sides of the lake, the US 50 South Shore Community Revitalization Project, the Placer Resort Triangle Priority Transit Lanes Project, and free and enhanced transit.
- The distribution of projects regionally will be fair and equitable and correspond with the pressing needs of each community around the lake.

WHAT must be done to Implement the Transportation Vision?

- Develop and illustrate a phased implementation plan of transportation projects and services (roll out schedule, implementation capacity needs for delivery of projects and services).
- Identify other barriers to implementation (non-monetary).
- Identify needed sector commitments to deliver implementation plan.
- Consider the needs, interactions, concerns, benefits, and outreach to communities outside the Tahoe basin (Truckee, Minden-Gardnerville, Carson City).
- Consider and identify concerns, benefits, and outreach to communities within the Tahoe basin.

WHAT Funding Sources are Available?

- Assess existing work on multiple funding sources.
- Identify concerns to address from local/regional/state officials and legislative bodies related to potential funding sources.
- Assess and report on evaluation/screening criteria used for any new potential sources from work that has been done to date.
- Anticipate and consider social equity concerns for any new funding source (means-based, age, veteran, disabled, etc.).
- Assess potential new revenue sources and interplay with other established private, local, state, or federal funding (TOT, BIDs, parking fees, etc.). Identify any conflicts, concerns, and recommendations of how they could be addressed.
- Include how revenue collection methods can provide a tool for objectives like congestion management and vehicle miles traveled reductions.
- Identify education and outreach needs on pricing strategies and other possible funding mechanisms.

WHAT is the Administrative and Oversight Plan for new Transportation Investments?

- Identify what entity will collect funding if a non-traditional source is pursued
- Propose how funds will be distributed and for what project types and services
- Review and propose the project selection process
- Identify and propose how regional equity and distribution is considered
- Outline how rate setting can be modified over time and tracked for performance

Attachment B

Information about consensus scale

Tips in Developing Consensus

If this happens or could happen…	*Then you should /could*
Little Involvement	Lots of brainstorming (structured, unstructured, affinity diagram, catchball, etc.)
Lack of information about the topic	Have relevant information presented Gather additional data Make sure that people are able to talk honestly
Many different perspectives are being voiced /expressed	Use the interest based problem solving process Use active listening (acknowledging, clarifying questions, summarizing, relating others concerns) View differences as a strength to build upon rather than something that holds the group back
Many tasks need to be thought through in a short period of time	Use committees to process/gather information and make recommendation
Different solutions are posed to the same problem	Make sure the group understands the common interests and the common components to the solutions being posed
A "Us-Them" tendency in the group	Use plural language:" What is our common insight or interest here?"
Things are moving too slowly	Establish realistic timeframes Use other tools that speed up the process (visual presentations, small groups, etc.) Identify fall back decision making positions
Things are moving too quickly	Check for group think (i.e., everyone just going along to get it over)
Process gets stuck or is unclear	Appoint individual or group to oversee process Use a neutral facilitator
Not enough time	Check to see if entire group needs to make the decision; hear all concerns, etc. Evaluate timeframe for making the decision

CONSENSUS GAUGE

What it is:

A method for checking to see if the group is in consensus and if not, why? It can be used as a straw poll and/or for final decisions.

How to use it:

- Use it with groups who have decided to make decisions by consensus.
- Make a flip chart:

Consensus Gauge

"1" Yes and I support it

"2" Acceptable and I support it

"3" Can live with it and I suppport it

"4" Willing to step aside and I support it

"5" Blocking , don't support it

"6" Need more information

- Explain to the group how to use the consensus gauge; Ask for clarifying questions.
- Poll the group either by asking each individual person where they are on the gauge or by asking the entire group "How many are at a '1', how many are at a '2', and so forth.
- If individuals register a '5', they must be able to explain why and offer an alternative option.
- If individuals register a '6' they must be able to identify what further information they need in order to know where they are in regards to the decision.

Tips for the facilitator:

- If this is a new group or a group which is reevaluating how they make new decisions, it is often beneficial to schedule some time to discuss decision making in general
- You can also conduct this somewhat anonymously, by asking individuals to write where they are on a slip of paper and pass it forward to you. This generally only works for straw polls, because if someone registers a 5 or 6, it is necessary to get further information from them.

COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING

Source: Rules for Reaching Consensus, Saint & Lawson

We are proud of our democratic heritage where governance is vested in the people instead of a single ruler or class. When collective decisions are warranted or required, we are conditioned to vote using the majority rule. The majority rule means that as few as 51 percent of the members of a group can make the decision.

Traditionally, collective decision making by majority rule has been the domain of community groups, legislative bodies, and other public forum groups. At first glance the idea of collective decision making in private or public organizations appears unreasonable and unworkable. The notion that a group of people can make a quicker or better decision through consensus than a sole decision maker seems to run counter to a hierarchical structure.

However, downsizing, decentralization, and creation of teams are breaking down the traditional hierarchal, command and control, superior-subordinate style of management. Authority is shifting from those in positions of power to those who can apply their knowledge to solve a problem. The role of the manager is shifting from being the sole decision maker to being a builder of teams who makes decisions.

The ideas of teams, team building, and facilitating teams is still relatively new. The greatest problem faced by teams and the team builder is who makes the decision. Does the group act in a consultative capacity to the manager, or is it in a decision-making capacity? If it is in a decision-making capacity, what form of collective decision making does the group use -- majority rule or consensus?

Changing times force us to look at the benefits and misconceptions of consensus decision making.

Consensus is a state of mutual agreement among members of a group where all legitimate concerns of individuals have been addressed to the satisfaction of the group.

Benefits of Consensus

In seeking mutual agreement, the consensus process fosters individual differences, personal self-reliance and self-esteem, creativity and innovation, cooperative attitudes, improved personal communications and relationships, responsibility, and accountability.

As managers and teams follow the process in both its letter and spirit, the organization will change from a counterproductive, internally competitive organization to an internally cooperative, synergistic enterprise. The real competitive advantage of an organization lies in the synergy of its collective work force.

Misconceptions About Consensus

Some managers are reluctant to use consensus decision making because they believe that it takes too much time and that collective decisions are not as good as individual decisions.

Consensus decision making may take more time, since more people will have to mutually agree on a proposal, but the idea that it takes too much time is erroneous. The time it takes a single decision maker to deliberate depends upon his or her personality, experience, and training. Some individuals are more decisive than others. Easy decisions take less time than difficult ones. This is also true of collective decision making, which depends upon the collective makeup, experience, and training of the group in the consensus process.

There is a common misconception that consensus management means that all decisions, no matter how insignificant, must be made by consensus. This is not true. Groups can empower individuals, small representative teams, or large bodies to make decisions.

Everybody in the organization does not have to agree before a decision can be made. Consensus does not mean unanimity or 100 percent agreement on everything by everybody. Consensus is not conformity.

Rather, consensus is the mutual feeling that all concerns have been addressed. What is required is that everyone has been heard and understood. Time lost in collective decision making is regained at the implementation stage. The net increase in productivity is significant and synergistic.

Misconceptions about the quality of collective decisions versus the quality of top-down decisions stem, in part, from traditional beliefs about the roles of managers and workers. While these structures and points of view may have made sense in the nineteenth century, they are no longer valid. Knowledge workers today have a greater intellectual, financial and emotional investment in the needs, purposes, and profits of the organization.

Research indicates that collective decision making actually produces higher quality decisions than those from single decision makers. Collective minds can generate more diverse and creative perspectives. Those who are closest to and responsible for the implementation of decisions are also in the best position to know, understand, and anticipate problems that may arise at the implementation stage.

Many managers sacrifice quality decisions for expediency. There is often an underlying assumption that speedy decisions are more important than good decisions. Too frequently, half-hearted executive decisions are implemented, only to drag on at great cost to organizational cash flow and morale. The best decisions are synergistic and are implemented efficiently and effectively.