

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING  
REGIONAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Via GoToWebinar

January 27, 2021

**Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chair Mr. Yeates called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Members present: Ms. Aldean, Mr. Bruce, Ms. Gustafson, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Yeates

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Yeates deemed the agenda approved as posted.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Aldean moved approval of the December 16, 2020 as presented.  
Motion carried.

V. Item No. 3: Informational Presentation on the Meeks Bay Restoration project and environmental alternatives

TRPA team member Ms. Cremeen, Mr. Lewandowski, Ascent Environmental, and Ms. Heller, US Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit provided the presentation.

Ms. Cremeen said staff last presented this item to the full Governing Board in the Fall of 2018 when the Forest Service scoped the project. During that scoping period the Forest Service did receive a number of comments and concerns about the proposed action. Given that high level of interest and importance of this restoration opportunity the Forest Service stepped back to focus on public engagement prior to beginning the environmental analysis. The Forest Service and TRPA entered into a cooperative agreement whereby TRPA would manage the environmental and facilitation contract.

Over the past year, the planning team worked with the stakeholder group and conducted public workshops to develop a range of project alternatives. Today's presentation is largely focused on these alternatives.

The project will be analyzed under a joint triple environmental document with the Forest Service as the land manager and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) lead. TRPA will act as the contract manager for the environmental analysis, public engagement, and ensuring the project meets TRPA's thresholds. The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead.

They're currently at the end of project development of the alternatives. The next phase is working on the environmental document which is anticipated to be released for public review this fall. The project would then be taken for final approval in the Spring of 2022.

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The purpose of this project is to move the Meeks Creek stream channel and the wetland lagoon below State Route 89 to a more natural condition and restore the stream to a functioning ecosystem prior to the way it was before it was dredged for a marina.

This area is managed by the Forest Service with a couple of concession contracts and on the north side of the creek is the Meeks Bay Resort operated by the Washoe Tribe. To the south is California land management camping area and day use. The project area extends into the meadow above the State Route 89 bridge.

Ms. Heller said the need for project is to improve the hydrologic function within the creek, lagoon, and flood plain. The stream below Highway 89 in its current condition deeply incised and eroding. The lagoon has been altered into a highly unnatural configuration with dredging of the marina. There's a need to restore the degraded aquatic riparian and wetland habitats and barrier beaches to provide high quality habitat that is resilient to climate change. In its current degraded condition, it's vulnerable to any changes in hydrologic regime. There's a need to promote threatened endangered sensitive species such as Tahoe Yellow Cress which is currently found near the mouth of Meeks Creek and Lahontan Cutthroat Trout which was historically present in the watershed.

Fish passage will need to be improved through the State Route 89 stream crossing and control or eradicate current populations of terrestrial and aquatic invasive plants and animal species. The current marina configuration is very friendly to aquatic invasive species. The Forest Service is currently undergoing a project to remove Eurasian Watermilfoil from the marina which has been an ongoing multiyear project. Then there are other warm water invasive fish species that get it to this area.

There's a need to replace the Caltrans bridge to allow for aquatic organism passage. Without the organism passage under the highway the stream ecosystem will not be fully functional. Passage is also a key component to native species restoration.

They'll need to improve access to Lake Tahoe and National Forest Service lands which is part of the primary mission of the Forest Service and there is a need to provide sustainable recreation opportunities consistent with functioning ecosystems. This area has a long history as a recreation site and is important to continue to provide that benefit to the public. There's a need to enhance educational and interpretive opportunities as this area has a rich cultural history in addition to the ecological importance of the stream lagoon. There's a need to enhance species of value to the Washoe Tribe. The Meeks Creek watershed is an important area to the Tribe as they work in conjunction with the Forest Service to manage and cultivate culturally significant species in Meeks Meadow upstream from the project. The Washoe Tribe is also current manager of Meeks Bay Resort.

Mr. Lewandowski said the planning process began with the environmental scoping in 2018. At that time the Forest Service released a preliminary proposed action and sought public comments. That preliminary proposed action was an initial proposal for the restoration project. It included full restoration of the creek and lagoon and recognized that the restoration of the lagoon would require the permanent removal of the marina. To offset the loss of motorized boat access from the marina, the preliminary proposed action included a pier and boat ramp at the south end of Meeks Bay. Many of the comment during the scoping period opposed the

proposed pier and boat ramp, citing concerns about safety and recreation impacts of introducing motorized boat launching into what is an existing swimming area. There were also concerns about traffic, noise, and dedicating recreational land to boat trailer parking. Most of the comments supported the restoration but some comments advocated to keeping the marina and noted it was an important recreation resource. To better understand the different viewpoints and concerns and to identify some potential solutions, the project team conducted a stakeholder assessment. Consensus Building Institute was hired as a neutral third party mediator and facilitator who interviewed many nearby residents, organizations and agencies. They then established a stakeholder forum which included a group of stakeholders with different interest and viewpoints of Meeks Bay. This stakeholder forum met in four half day virtual meetings open to the public. One of the roles of the stakeholder forum was to make sure all the relevant issues and concerns were considered in the development of the alternatives as well as to engage dialogue about the best possible alternative designs. They also gathered input at two virtual public workshops where participants took surveys, provided comments, and participated in small group discussions.

This input was considered through an iterative design process working with stakeholders to develop the alternatives. The alternatives are an attempt to balance the issues and considerations that were brought up in the public comments. The detailed input that was received through the stakeholder forum meetings as well as the alternative feasibility. They wanted to ensure that all the proposed features and approaches were realistic and feasible. They also considered whether the proposed alternatives and features would meet the purpose and need of the project and allow for the restoration of Meeks Creek. The project team decided to no longer pursue the original proposed action as it was released in 2018 and instead developed four alternatives that we proposed to evaluate through the environmental review process.

The first is the no action alternative which is status quo. It represents what would happen if the project were not approved. This no action alternative will be evaluated in the environmental review and will be treated the same as all the action alternatives. There are about 76 campsites between the north and the south campgrounds, there's the existing boat ramp and marina that hasn't been operational for several years but does include capacity for approximately 120 boat slips. Also, there is the West Shore bike trail that comes in from the north and ends at Meeks Bay. There would be no restoration with the no action alternative. The marina would remain and could be operational based on lake level. There would be water quality BMP installation around parking areas and other facilities but no other changes to the upland facilities.

There were three action alternatives developed. There were a number of features that were either included in that original proposed action or that came up through the alternative development process that made sense to include in all of the action alternatives. All three action alternatives will all have the full restoration of the creek and lagoon. They'll include shoreline stabilization and replacement of some deteriorating rock gabions, reconfigured parking and circulation, aquatic invasive species control, water quality best management practices, and all will include the replacement of the State Route 89 bridge to improve fish passage.

All of the alternatives will include an interpretive trail near the restored lagoon as well as other interpretive features. They'll include utility infrastructure relocation that's necessary to allow for the restoration as well as the marina infrastructure and the boat ramp. It would include onsite

paddle craft storage as well as a bike path along the highway and spur path that would go into Meeks Bay to provide some connectivity through the project area.

The major differences between the action alternatives are summarized on page 331 of the staff packet. The key differences relate to whether there's a pier and how that pier is designed as well as the size and configuration of campgrounds, parking, and day use areas.

Alternative 1 would include the removal of the marina and full restoration of the creek and include a boating pier on the north side of the creek near where a historic pier was located decades ago. That pier would allow for boats to access Meeks Bay but would not allow motorized boat launching from Meeks Bay. To reach a navigable water depth even during low lake conditions, this pier would need to be about 300 feet long. The pier would include one boat lift that could be used to store a firefighting boat which could improve emergency response capabilities. This alternative would not change the number of camp sites, but it would separate the RV sites from the tent sites with dedicated RV camping on the north and tent camping on the south. Where possible, it would reconfigure the campsites to provide more privacy and better access, reconfigure and expand the day use area near the pier on the north and south sides. On the north end of Meeks Bay this alternative would include the removal of one of the existing motel style cabin units that are on the Lake and would replace it with several standalone cabins set further back from the beach. This would allow for expanding the area of natural beach for recreational use. This alternative would also include the connected bike paths, interpretive features, paddle craft storage and all the other features that are common to all the alternatives.

Alternative 2 would also include the same full restoration of the creek and lagoon. It would include a pedestrian pier in the same location as the boating pier was proposed in Alternative 1. This would be a smaller pier that would be universally accessible and would allow people to get onto the lake but wouldn't be accessed by motorized boats. It could be shorter in length of about 100 feet and could be designed as either a floating pier or a traditional pier design. Like alternative 1, it would reconfigure the campgrounds with no change in the number of campsites. It would reconfigure and expand the day use areas to include the connected bike paths, the interpretive features, paddle craft storage, and all those other features common to the other alternatives.

Alternative 3 includes the same full restoration of the creek and lagoon. This alternative would include no pier but would have a small paddle craft launch structure on the south end. This would be an accessible structure that would allow for kayak and paddle board launches but not for motorized boat access. This alternative would reconfigure the campgrounds and expand them by adding a total of 20 campsites with ten on the north and ten on the south side within a larger campground footprint. It would reconfigure the parking on the south side and would move the parking closer to the highway and would have a drop off area closer to the beach. This parking design is intended to provide more direct access between the campground, the beach, and the day use areas. This would also buffer the campground from the road noise by providing space between the highway and campground. Like alternatives 1 and 2 this would also reconfigure and expand the day use areas, include connected bike paths, bridge replacement, interpretive features, and all the other elements.

The exact design of the paddle craft storage and launch structures do not have a final design yet

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but the paddle craft launch is included in Alternative 3. It would be a small structure that would provide accessible launching opportunities for paddle craft. Kayaks and paddle boards could still be launched from anywhere on the beach. The paddle craft storage feature is proposed as part of all the action alternatives and would be a place where individuals could lock up their kayaks or paddle boards on site. This is intended to make it more convenient for paddlers and may allow some to walk, bike, or take transit to Meeks Bay.

There were several suggestions that came up through the development of the alternatives that were considered but were not incorporated into an alternative. The project team and the stakeholders recognized that the existing marina is an important recreational resource for those individuals that moor their boats there. Much of the time at the stakeholder meetings and throughout the design process was focused on a way to continue to provide motorized boat mooring or launching opportunities while restoring the lagoon and preserving the high quality beach recreation and camping opportunities. Through the planning process they considered a variety of options for boat ramps, buoys, marinas. The most viable option was a smaller restoration project and smaller marina separated from the restored lagoon. They looked at whether this concept would be feasible but wasn't carried forward into one of the alternatives because even a small marina would reduce the effectiveness of the restoration project. Creating a small marina in this location would involve a substantial cost to construct, operate, and maintain the facility and at the most would accommodate 20 to 40 boats. The cost and impacts of creating a small marina would outweigh the benefits and wouldn't be something that the Forest Service would realistically build or operate and is not consistent with the projects purpose and need. They realize that some would like to see motorized boating or boat mooring at Meeks Bay but after careful consideration, these facilities aren't feasible or consistent with the purpose and need of the project, so they are not proposed to be carried forward in the action alternatives. However, the no action alternative is a viable option and will be treated the same as the action alternatives in the environmental review. This would maintain the existing marina.

They acknowledged that there are several related plans that would affect the project. The alternatives have been developed to be consistent with the shoreline plan which regulates piers and other facilities. As well as the State Route 89 corridor plan which includes a vision for transportation and access along the project area, and lastly the Lake Tahoe West restoration initiative which includes a strategy for large landscape restoration along the west shore.

This project would also complement the Mayala Wata meadow restoration project that's being implemented by the Washoe Tribe and the Forest Service. It's located directly upstream of the Meeks Bay restoration project on the meadow on the west side of the highway.

Information on this project can be found at [www.meeksbayproject.org](http://www.meeksbayproject.org).

Presentation can be found at:  
[RPIC-Item-No.-3-Meeks-Bay.pdf](#)

#### Committee Comments & Questions

Mr. Lawrence asked how this project ties into the State Route 89 corridor plan and which alternatives are more or less conducive. They're finding on the east shore at Sand Harbor that

with the growth and recreation in that area they are having to reconfigure the entrance in order to accommodate shuttles.

Ms. Cremeen said they've been coordinating with the State Route 89 planning team. The various designs of the bike trail will ultimately connect with the west shore trail that's currently being designed. They will ensure that the Meeks Bay alignment will connect with that. Some of the parking reconfiguration on the site will help alleviate some of the congestion that's on the roadway now.

Mr. Lawrence said they've had challenges with drive in traffic at Sand Harbor and trying to get the buses in and are having to rethink traffic circulation there. He asked if the Meeks Bay parking lot designs envision a shuttle system and are there park and ride areas at either end of the State Route 89 corridor.

Ms. Cremeen said there are some transit stops planned at Meeks Bay.

Mr. Lewandowski, Ascent Environmental said to date, there haven't been any issues identified with the existing entrances off of the highway that would be of concern for transit. The internal circulation within the project area is being designed to accommodate buses, RV's and the range of vehicles that are expected. The other big relationship to State Route 89 corridor is the bike path and parking. For the most part Alternatives 1 and 2 maintain about the same parking capacity onsite but is reconfigured for better use of space. Alternative 3 does increase the parking capacity by about 14 parking spaces. That would potentially alleviate some of the roadside parking that's an issue.

Mr. Marshall said Mr. Lawrence's comments are well taken in terms of ensuring that the design of the selected alternatives is analyzed and the likely increase in shuttle activity be taken into account.

Ms. Gustafson said in Alternative 1 the pier is shown with the fire boat access. She asked if there was any discussion about waterborne transit and getting people around the lake in multi-modes. Alternative 1 would allow for that but it didn't appear that Alternative 2 was set up for that.

Mr. Lewandowski, Ascent Environmental said that comment has come up through the public workshops and stakeholder meetings. This project doesn't propose any type of transit facilities, or specific design for water transit. It is correct that the pier in Alternative 1 is large enough to accommodate some type of transit connection or a water taxi service. Alternative 2 would strictly be a recreational pedestrian pier and wouldn't go far enough into the water to accommodate water transit of any kind.

Ms. Gustafson said the waterborne transit shuttle that was used was very small and allowed people to bring bikes and seated about eight individuals. This would not be a "San Francisco" style ferry but rather looking at smaller watercraft and the fire emergency response boat would be great in that area of the Lake. She agreed with Mr. Lawrence's comments on ensuring that we're designing this to consider getting people out of their vehicles and making this blend into the State Route 89 corridor plans and overall Regional Transportation Plan. We need to have as much mobility thought of now and thoroughly vetted. Otherwise, she feels that all the

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alternatives, particularly Alternative 1 looks really good.

Mr. Yeates said this seems to be the typical kind of federal environmental review where they put out three action alternatives, but at what point does the Forest Service select the project. This might help Mr. Lawrence and Ms. Gustafson when there's a sense of which one the applicant is going to propose as the project. That changes how you compare some of the alternatives. There are three fairly nice alternatives but until one is selected, he's unsure which is the real project.

Ms. Heller, US Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit said the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) selects the preferred alternative, the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) doesn't select a preferred alternative. They analyze all the alternatives equally and in the end the Forest Supervisor chooses the alternative that is the action. It's important to note they are also not necessarily beholden to accept any of these alternatives as a standalone action which can make this much more confusing and gets farther away from what you're asking for. They could in some sense mix and match alternatives in the final decision.

Mr. Yeates said then there would be subsequent environmental review after the Forest Service selects the alternative. Also, in the final environmental impact statement there would be that analysis of that project. We need to try and figure out how to best accommodate the traffic and better design the circulation going into and out of these popular areas. He's trying to determine as we proceed what we'll see in the end for TRPA to make a decision.

Mr. Lewandowski, Ascent Environmental said the desire was to use the environmental analysis to help inform that selection of alternatives. There was a fairly recent California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) case law that does require that a preferred alternative or proposed project be selected before the draft environmental impact report is released. They'll go through as much of this as they can on all three of the alternatives at an equal level then using that environmental analysis to select a preferred alternative at least for the purposes of CEQA. That then would be identified before the draft environmental report comes out. There will be the ability to refine that in response to comments or to mix and match elements from the various alternatives to get to the project that will go for approval consideration with the final environmental document.

Ms. Aldean said she'll support the preferred Alternative. She understands that there are people who want to enjoy areas like Meeks Bay without noise and interruption from boats but there's an existing marina there now. Boats are part of the equation but eliminating the marina has environmental benefits. A nice compromise is to install this 300 foot length pier which will enable people who are motorized boaters to also enjoy the facilities. It's a very well balanced alternative. It's difficult to come up with something that's harmonious and addresses everyone's concerns and desires. She agreed with Ms. Gustafson that the preferred alternative from her perspective not only addresses the environmental needs but addresses a variety of recreational demands.

Ms. Cremeen said a preferred alternative has not been selected yet. Alternative 1 is equal to Alternative's 2 and 3. Alternative 1 is the proposal with the pier.

Ms. Aldean said based on her reading of the material, Alternative 1 seems to be the one that has

garnered the most interest and support. Maybe that's not a valid observation, but "her" preferred alternative is number one.

Mr. Yeates said the presentation was thorough and appreciated the work on the restoration of that lagoon. Also, he was heartened by the involvement of the Washoe Tribe with that meadow work and management of this area.

#### Public Comments & Questions

Bill Lyons, President of the Meeks Bay Vista Property Owners' Association which represents approximately 100 property owners in Meeks Bay and Rubicon Bay Area. He lives there and are major stakeholders that have been very active in the process with both verbal and written comments. He said please refer to the Consensus Building Institute's interviewee list where they had four or five participants on that list. As the families and property owners who live there strongly lean towards Alternative 3. Their initial comment on Alternative 3 would be to try and move the pedestrian pier to the north which could then maybe serve as an emergency pier also. They support the restoration of the creek and lagoon and upgrade the utilities. Alternative 3 expands Meeks Bay's day use from 76 to 90 and increases parking spaces and campsites. They feel that the pier being proposed is destroying the unique Meeks Bay experience. He urged the commissioners to go there on a July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend when the bay is completing filled with family oriented activities. They don't believe that a motorized boat launch serves the local community or uniqueness of Meeks Bay. The Consensus Building Institute's report, almost entirely stakeholder comments are against a motorized pier. It's a paddlers oasis and a safe and family friendly beach and don't want that disrupted. They feel that there will be issues with noise, pollution and visual impacts. It's one of the most unique places on the Lake where there's an unimpaired view across the lake without boats and buoys. He urged for the consideration of Alternative 3 based on the input received from the majority of people that the Consensus Building Institute interviewed. They suggested that meetings be held during the summer or late spring so people could attend who use Meeks Bay.

#### Committee Comments & Questions

Ms. Aldean said she didn't see a reference in the meeting materials where Alternative 1 had a boat launch. Wasn't that eliminated for Alternative 1?

Mr. Lewandowski, Ascent Environmental said that is correct there is no boat launch in Alternative 1. It's just the pier that people could access if they launched elsewhere on the Lake.

Ms. Aldean said as result, there is no need for trailer storage. Mr. Lyon's referenced the boat launching and she understands how that could that create a lot of traffic congestion. But having day visitors park at the pier is entirely different than having an active launch site.

#### Public Comments & Questions

Bob Boldt, Board member of the Tahoe Lakefront Owners' Association said he's speaking on behalf of himself. He's strongly in favor of Alternative 1 but might include some of the nice features of Alternative 3 in Alternative 1 such as the expansion of the campgrounds and perhaps the paddle board launch area. His reservation about Alternative 1 is he doesn't understand why

the pier needed to be placed where it is bisecting the beach. That would bring boats right into the middle of the beach area and feels that there could be a much better location of the pier that would reduce some of the concerns. Meeks Bay belongs to all of us including boaters, paddlers, swimmer's, and sightseers. The more avenues that we have for allowing people to come into Meeks Bay and use it on a day basis the better. He hopes that there will be environmentally friendly water shuttles in the future that will cut down some of the traffic on the roads. It should be an objective to have as many transportation alternatives into Meeks Bay as possible by the largest number of people including those who like to do it by boat.

Gavin Feiger, League to Save Lake Tahoe said thank you for the opportunity to provide their support for the project today. The League is dedicated to protecting and restoring the environmental health, sustainability, and scenic beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. In connection with their mission, they advocate for projects to restore meadows and marshes and the natural hydrologic function of Lake Tahoe's tributaries. Restoration helps prevent fine sediment the leading cause of Lake Tahoe's dramatic clarity loss over the past half century from entering Lake Tahoe and gives the Lake the tools to combat the impacts of the changing climate. They also advocate for stormwater improvement projects, sustainable shoreline planning, and control of aquatic invasive species, and all elements of the proposed Meeks Bay restoration project.

They've been involved in the development of this project since the process started. They've discussed the primary goals which is the restoration of the lagoon and creek including improved fish passage past the bridge, restoring the stream environment zones, controlling aquatic invasive species, and improving educational opportunities. Those are the main goals of the project. Most of these alternatives would achieve all these goals and restore the only beach barrier lagoon system in the Tahoe Basin. Alternative 3 represents the rare opportunity for a watershed scale environmental restoration at Tahoe which is key to building ecosystem resilience to climate change. Throughout 2020, they participated in the stakeholder working group. There were a lot of public workshops and a lot of great feedback and engagement. This is one of the better processes they've seen especially during Covid. They also support the focus on nonmotorized use. The campground and day use enhancements, the bike and pedestrian trails and the connectivity add to the environmental sustainability of the project. The interpretive signage analyzed across all alternatives will also be a benefit. Alternative 3 currently appears to be all of the project's goals and is able to provide some those additional upland benefits without straying far beyond the scope of the project. So far, based on feedback from those public meetings, the community seems to agree. The consideration of a pier needs to be considered carefully. There hope is that this project can strike a balance between the types of uses, reduce the potential for user conflict on and off the water, and restore a functioning ecosystem and habitat. They hope that Alternative 3 and the nonmotorized focus goes forward.

Jennifer Quashnick, Friends of the West Shore said this has been a very positive process and a lot of engagement with the public. They've been a participating stakeholder and attended the public workshops. Overwhelmingly, the public feedback from these workshops has been for nonmotorized use. They also surveyed their members who represent over 500 members and supporters. The results of their survey indicated the support for nonmotorized. This is the only large easily accessible sandy beach for the public between Tahoe City and Baldwin Beach and should be treasured as such. It's a unique opportunity to protect an area and support the nonmotorized uses along with the restoration.

They favor Alternative 3 which blends best with the feedback they've received from their members as well as the majority of people from the workshops. They encouraged the committee to view the webinars from the public workshops. One item they've been looking at is the proposed nonmotorized boat launch being on the south side of the beach. There are concerned with having the nonmotorized boat ramp and putting more people in an area that is already congested. They haven't seen information about the need for having a ramp since many launch from the beach. If there's a need then they would recommend that it be placed closer to the north end of the beach where there are other amenities already such as watercraft rentals, food, restrooms, etc. They would like that to be reconsidered for Alternative 3.

Kirk Robinson said his family owns the cabin directly across from the entrance to the south beach adjacent to the project area upstream from the highway's bridge. All members of his family support the basic concept of Alternative 3. He encouraged them to look forward to what Meeks Bay can become rather than looking to the past and trying to replicate what Meeks Bay once appeared to be for many and that is a haven for power boats and so on. The problem that we often face when we try to accommodate every form of recreation is some of them are potentially mutually exclusive. He says this principally in response to the power boaters. He understands their desire to keep what has always been but basically power boaters have the run of the lake anyway. Whereas places people can swim and enjoy the lake from the beach or possibly paddle boards or kayaks. As soon as you introduce the power boats, it scares the others off. There was a time when the power boats were all across the beach and it made it uncomfortable to go and swim amongst them. It was asked earlier why providing nonmotorized facilities was a challenge, he would think that providing facilities for power boats would be more of a challenge in terms of operational costs.

Julie Hutchinson said her family has resided in the West Shore for about 70 years. She appreciated an opportunity to be part of the forum and some of the outreach that has occurred with the public. There's still quite a bit more to be done moving forward to ensure that we incorporate everyone in the area. Through this forum, she's found they had goals in common especially protecting Meeks Creek. Restoring that to protect the Lake is the critical goal in this process. There are many who want to see this remain nonmotorized. Since the marina has been determined to not be feasible, she believes TRPA has the ability to replace those boat moorings in other areas of the west shore so people can have the same recreation experience of having their boat stored somewhere. What we're trying to replace is boat moorings for people who live in the area or are camping and want to store their boats rather than for more boats to come into the bay just to anchor at a dock and take over the beach. TRPA may have an opportunity to fill that void by reallocating some of those spaces by finding partnerships with homeowners' associations or other marinas on the lake to incorporate those moorings.

The pier doesn't replace the marina. She's concerned about a pier the length of a football field being placed anywhere in Meeks Bay as it doesn't seem feasible or environmentally sound. A pier would forever alter the bay, create noise and safety issues and doesn't meet the need of the project. It's not consistent with the nonmotorized uses. Her other concern is the consideration for the need to store a fire boat. That must be assessed further. Just having an opportunity to get a boatlift due to the restoration project doesn't demonstrate that this is the right location for this resource. There must be a comprehensive fact based and informative public process with the fire agencies, boards, and communities as well a lake wide master plan for who has what responsibilities in the Lake. This becomes a mission creep and some unfunded

liabilities for the different agencies without a master plan for how to handle emergencies on the lake. This specialty type of equipment and jurisdictional responsibilities must be considered and to validate that Meeks Bay is even the best location. There's a lot of unintended consequences for the communities with regards to public safety if these decisions are based merely on an opportunity versus a thoughtful fact based strategic and operational plan. The public served by the Meeks Bay Fire Station must understand the consequences of un-staffing the fire station to respond to an emergency or training on the lake will leave their communities without emergency response for extended periods of time. It's a slippery slope for each property owner and the community regarding emergency response if this isn't validated to be the right place for that resource.

She's also concerned about merging the two beaches rather than separated with distinct beach feelings and keeping crowds separated. She doesn't support the movement of the south beach parking lot; it will create additional traffic and congestion and will disrupt the campground even more than before. She encouraged TRPA and land use decision makers to take a thoughtful approach based on what Meeks Bay is and avoid trying to create some other destination. Protect existing uses and avoid disenfranchising those who live in the bay and adjacent communities nearby and the generations that have recreated here by attempting to bring more tourist as they've been at capacity for years.

Maureen Montgomery said she lives in the Glenridge subdivision but isn't speaking on their behalf today. There are about 45 homes in that neighborhood and only seven are year round residents including herself. She supported keeping Meeks Bay nonmotorized and the aspect of having a pier doesn't seem to be very useful idea. The length of a 300 foot pier negates the idea of not having motorized boats pulling up. She enjoys swimming in the bay and having the swimming area sectioned off and not having boats coming in and out is a pleasure. She encouraged the restoration of the lagoon but don't want any additional boats in the bay.

Steve Teshara, Sustainable Community Advocates assists the Tahoe Basin Fire Chiefs with grant funding and planning matters. He's been actively engaged in the planning process for the Meeks Bay restoration project including the development of an initial range of project alternatives. He wants to focus our collective attention today on the importance of including a pier with a fire boat lift in the preferred final alternative. As discussed, this element of the project is currently described in Alternative 1. During the process of developing its new shoreline plan that was adopted by the Governing Board in October 2018, the board formally recognized the importance of allowing for emergency access to the lake based on specific regulations and guidelines.

There is currently no formal emergency access pier or boatlift serving the west shore. According to the Meeks Bay and North Tahoe Fire Protection Districts officials, over a three year period there were 164 emergency incidents on the lake, beach, dock, marina, or shoreline locations within the combined 35 miles of shoreline served by these two fire districts. There's clearly a need for formal emergency access to the lake on the west shore. Meeks Bay is an ideal location, it is the home of Meeks Bay Fire Station 61 along with a fire station operated by the Forest Service. The proposed pier and fire boat lift would be in close proximity to Station 61 which is staffed year round. There's also backup if a crew has to go out to an emergency. Meeks Bay Fire and North Tahoe Fire are partners in serving the west shore north of Emerald Bay.

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North Tahoe Fire has allocated \$128,000 for the acquisition of a fire boat and plans are in place to fully fund and staff the boat that can serve not only the west shore but can come to the assistance of other emergency agencies around the lake. There are emergency cooperative agreements in place with a plan to respond to emergencies and disasters lake wide. Thank you for understanding the need to include a pier and fire boat lift when the time comes to select the final alternative for the Meeks Bay restoration project. As discussed, the final alternative can mix and match elements of the existing alternatives that are presented today.

David Coglizer said his family has been visiting Lake Tahoe since 1949 particularly to Meeks Bay and has a place in Rubicon Bay since 1984. Lake Tahoe already has too many piers and the lake has been hurt by too many piers, houses, cars, etc. He supported Alternative 3 and doesn't want to go with this very costly eyesore of pier.

Item No. 4: Discussion and possible recommendation for Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan Amendments: To encourage more workforce housing development, expand opportunities for additional multi-residential land uses where already allowed and in community service districts, align allowable multi-person densities with multi-family densities, remove limitation on affordable housing to "seniors" from four subdistricts, and update accessory dwelling unit requirements;

TRPA team member Ms. Fink and Mr. Dobbs from Placer County provided the presentation.

Ms. Fink said the focus of these amendments is to allow and encourage more workforce housing types, to make it easier to use bonus units for workforce housing, and, to encourage more of Placer County's remaining allocations to be used for workforce housing. This will not only help to achieve regional and area plan housing and walkable communities' goals, but it will also help Placer County meet the requirements of the California Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

There are two aspects of the amendments to point out. First, the Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan draws on Local Government Housing Programs that are built into the Regional Plan. Where a local government has a specific affordable or moderate income housing program that is equal or more effective in supporting regional plan goals, they gain access to additional incentives, such as, the ability to build accessory dwelling units on parcels on smaller parcels.

Second, you'll hear how the amendments propose to increase multi-person densities for things like dorm rooms, senior living units, or boarding house rooms. These proposed increases in density, do not alter the growth management system or allow for more growth than was analyzed in the Regional Plan. They are consistent with the growth management system.

These amendments are an example of the local efforts to address the workforce housing challenges. Simultaneously, TRPA and partners are working on a regional effort to address these challenges through the Tahoe Living Strategic Initiative which is a subject of an agenda item being presented to the Governing Board later today.

Mr. Dobbs said he previously presented to the Regional Plan Implementation Committee seeking feedback on these proposed housing related amendments to the Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan as adopted in 2017. Today, they're asking for a recommendation to the Governing Board.

There are no changes to TRPA's environmental policy regarding growth management or resource protection measures. There's also no known controversy with the proposed amendments.

These amendments build off the need identified by the Mountain Housing Council, Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, TRPA's 2018 Development Rights Strategic Initiative, the California Tahoe Conservancy, members of the public, and further development of Placer County's housing element policies. The goal is to align the area plan with state law and TRPA policy, to provide a greater mix of housing types that creates an inventory of full time workforce housing units. California housing laws regarding Accessory Dwelling Units that went into effect in January 2020, resulted in the TBAP being inconsistent with state law. Placer County is therefore required to update their codes. These amendments represent Placer County's approach to address this inconsistency.

In summer of 2020, the Governing Board tasked the Advisory Planning Commission, with organizing the Tahoe Living Working Group to develop regional strategy and solutions.

The Tahoe Basin Area Plan covers the entire land area within the Basin. There are approximately 1,000 remaining vacant residential parcels. Of those, 500 are currently buildable with an IPES score greater than 726. Through TRPA's performance review system, Placer County anticipates receiving an additional 500 allocations through 2032. These allocations in have historically been used for low density, single family homes, and increased real estate values have resulted in an existing home inventory that is becoming out of reach for those earning local wages. This has created a number of social, environmental, and economic issues.

These are very technical but at their core, they are aimed at facilitating a shift so that more that allocations are used for workforce housing. The amendments primarily target three areas: multi-residential development, accessory dwelling units, and better utilization of the Transfer of Development Rights systems.

The amendments are grouped into four components. The first component is multi-residential development. Multi-residential refers to three different land use types: multi-family, employee housing, and multi-person dormitory style. The goal of the amendments is to 'fill the gaps'. There are a number of zoned districts in the area plan where one or two of these multi-resident uses are allowed. They've made the case that multi-family and multi-person, employee housing have similar levels of environmental impacts and compatibility considerations. Generally, they're adding multi-person and employee housing land use types where multi-family is currently permissible. They would be regulated under the same entitlement process that if a multi-family project requires a minor use permit so would a multi-person land use type project. Also, there would be the same type of density or density equivalents.

The one exception is the Kings Beach Industrial Zone, single-family dwellings are allowed as an accessory primary commercial or industrial use. Currently, there are no multi-family uses allowed. The change would permit multi-family uses subject to a discretionary minor use permit that would be limited to affordable through achievable income levels only. This is a result of discussions with the California Tahoe Conservancy about properties they own in the Kings Beach Industrial Zone District that are potentially well suited for these types of multi-residential developments.

For multi-person density increase most land uses measure density in units per acre. Multi-person land use, measures density in people per acre. The TRPA Code has an equivalency factor for every 2.5 people equals one allocation. This would result in multi-person densities of 25, 37 or 62 people per acre, across various zone districts that transition from outlying, rural areas into town centers.

Each of the zone districts would have their own designations and policies where these multi-residential uses are allowed to enable the transfer of the necessary development rights so these projects can assemble the commodities needed to facilitate the project.

Placer County currently has four zone districts in the Lake Forest Glen area, Dollar Hill, and Tahoma that limit affordable housing to 'senior citizens only'. They are also proposing to remove that limitation and enable affordable housing for all demographics.

Placer County is the only jurisdiction in the Basin with a TRPA recognized Local Government Housing Program, which allows the County to permit accessory dwelling units on parcels of less than one acre. This amendment would recognize Placer County as a certified Local Government Moderate Income Housing Program. This is a recognition of the programs that are underway at the County such as the workforce housing preservation program which is based off of Vail's InDEEd program. TRPA is recognizing Placer County's housing programs as equal or more effective to the regional programs that are in place to accelerate workforce housing and would give Placer County access to the different pools of development rights held by TRPA.

The following is for the second, third, and fourth components. They are in a unique situation with accessory dwelling units where California housing law and TRPA regulations have diverged. The California ADU laws, that went into effect in 2020, removed the County's ability to consider things like land coverage, or to deed restrict for affordability. If the ADU meets objective development standards like setbacks and height, then they must be approved ministerially. These changes would establish a two-step permitting process that would delete the existing language and ADU development standards in the area plan and replace it with language that establishes this two-step process, whereby Placer County will apply state law and TRPA will apply the Regional Plan regulations. In addition, the County proposes an amendment to establish a maximum of one additional parking space for accessory dwelling units. There would be a number of scenarios where no additional parking is required (e.g. within close proximity to public transport).

The third component deals with development right conversions. This would align the area plan with TRPA's 2018 Development Rights Strategic Initiative. When there is a conflict between the Regional Plan and the Area Plan, the more restrictive provision would apply. This would enable Placer County to take better advantage of the banking, transfers, and conversions of development rights in place.

The final component is clean-up and minor amendments, to correct cross references and ensure consistent terminology

In July 2020, Placer County went to the North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council and in August, the County presented to the Regional Plan Implementation Committee. In November and December, they brought these amendments to the Placer County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The amendments were unanimously approved without public comment or controversy.

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Staff further recommends that the Regional Plan Implementation Committee recommend approval of the Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan Amendments to the Governing Board. These are intended to be dynamic as they're implementing the area plan and identify areas for improvement. They'll be coming back to assume more delegation authority, provide flexible standards, and a more streamlined process for these types of desired developments. The goal is to enhance the quality of life and environment in Placer County and accelerate attainment of the regional environmental thresholds.

Presentation can be found at:

[RPIC-Item-No.-4-Placer-County-Area-Plan.pdf](#)

#### Committee Comments & Questions

Ms. Aldean asked what mechanism the county uses to ensure that these affordable housing units are occupied by people who work in the Basin.

Mr. Dobbs said they're striving for people to live in the Basin, but it isn't a requirement.

Ms. Aldean asked how they ensure that these are occupied by people who work in the Basin, not "living" in the Basin.

Ms. Gustafson said she believes the deed restriction program allows people to work within the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District boundaries. So, there could be people that live in the Basin and one or both would work in the Truckee area or just outside the Basin in Squaw or Northstar.

Mr. Dobbs said they're working within the fair housing laws and are establishing programs that incentivize local housing and is being based on school district boundaries.

Ms. Aldean asked if these units are still available to existing occupants after they retire and no longer a part of the workforce.

Mr. Dobbs said they're still working out the details to these programs. He's unsure how they'll be addressing this after someone retires.

Ms. Gustafson said the workforce preservation program is going to require people to work at least seven years before retiring. Those are for those property purchased deed restricted properties. She's not sure if that applies here and staff can check into that further.

Ms. Aldean said what we want to avoid is having these affordable housing units taken up by people who want to come to the Basin and retire in an affordable unit. The objective of this is to improve the circumstances for those who are already living in the Basin in substandard housing. There needs to be a laser focus on implementing policies that don't allow abuse of these affordable housing units by people who don't work in the Basin.

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Steve Teshara, business advocate said during his 47 year career at Lake Tahoe, he's been fortunate to advocate for the businesses on the North Shore while serving as the CEO of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association and more recently the CEO of the Tahoe Chamber. This is an important step forward that Placer County has taken not only to be consistent with new California law but also to be in line with the direction that TRPA is going with a more regional solution for some of the affordable housing needs. He supported a recommendation for approval from the Committee to the Governing Board.

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Ms. Gustafson said Ms. Aldean was on target with where they are at within the boundaries of the law. The Fair Housing Act is the only restriction and are not going through this exercise without the intent that these are people working in and around our community. Staff will get answers on those restrictions. The preservation program which is not subject to today's motions, is a program they developed but is not sure what rules they have. Whatever is legal they will implement to assure themselves that this housing is for people working in and around the Basin.

Ms. Fink said there are some issues with finding out where the persons income comes from, but Placer County has some good models for that in the workforce preservation program. Most of these workforce housing units will take advantage of TRPA's bonus unit program where they'll get a bonus unit in exchange for affordable, moderate, or achievable deed restriction that requires that the income be restricted, and the person be a local resident. Most of these units will take advantage of that although they all don't have to.

Ms. Gustafson made a motion to recommend Governing Board approval of the required findings, including a finding of no significant effect, for adoption of draft amendments to the Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan and as provided in Attachment D.

Ayes: Ms. Aldean, Mr. Bruce, Ms. Gustafson, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Yeates

**Motion carried.**

Ms. Gustafson made a motion to recommend Governing Board adoption of Ordinance 2021-\_\_\_, amending Ordinance 2017-01, as previously amended, to amend the Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan to include the changes referenced in Attachments B and C.

Ayes: Ms. Aldean, Mr. Bruce, Ms. Gustafson, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Yeates

**Motion carried.**

Item No. 5: Discussion and possible direction on amending the existing nitrate deposition threshold standard (AQ14) to a per capita VMT standard to reduce reliance on the automobile, reduce GHG emissions, and promote mobility;

Item No. 6: Discussion and possible direction on implementing mechanisms to accelerate attainment of the per capita VMT standard including: revisions to the transportation project

impact assessment and air quality mitigation fee of TRPA Code Section 65.2, and amendments to the Goals and Policies of the Regional Plan

TRPA team members Ms. Marchetta, Mr. Segan, and Ms. Sloan provided the presentation.

Ms. Marchetta said these two combined items relate to TRPA's strategic initiative on transportation. Ordinarily, staff would not make a presentation that exceeded about 30 minutes but by combining these two, our expectation is that this will be a fairly long presentation. It will be divided into three parts and the goal is to help everyone see how all these pieces work together. Transportation is perhaps one of the most difficult areas of the regional planning context to simplify and explain in a way that that is understandable because there are so many players and related puzzle pieces. Before we go into the specifics, we'll help everyone to see both of what we're proposing to accomplish in transportation and what the moving puzzle pieces are that will get us to that desired outcome.

Ms. Marchetta will introduce a "thought frame" that's drawn directly from the Compact that allows you to fit these moving puzzle pieces together and how they connect in the Compact's big picture. Mr. Segan will put some additional flesh on the bones of those puzzle pieces. We'll show by the end of today's discussion, that since 2015 they have been updating, adapting, and making more effective every relevant puzzle piece in Tahoe's transportation system. From its measures of success that are in the form of threshold standards and the transportation model that we use to measure those standards, to the plans. We start at the top of the pyramid threshold, then plans to achieve the intended measures. Those plans have implementation strategies and then how to get those strategies implemented. Then it's how to get the funding to implement those strategies in the enhanced plan. For almost six years, they've focused work and emphasis on transportation in the region. Now we're poised to bring a lot of the puzzle pieces of an integrated system of land use and transportation for Tahoe up to date. All of that ground work has been developing for about a decade. They started over a decade ago where the Compact had us start. The Compact says "What is the Regional Vision, what are the values and desired outcomes for the region in land use and transportation.

That first puzzle piece was put in place in 2012 when the region coalesced around an adopted of what was then the most widely supported community vision for the future of Tahoe since the 1980s. It was the 2012 Regional Plan Update and the Regional Transportation Plan update that created this vision of sustainable communities that integrated the transportation system so we could generate reduced reliance on the automobile.

We strengthened the land incentives to alter Tahoe's land use pattern in order to create walkable, bikeable, community centers that favored reduced traffic, affordable workforce housing near transit all to reduce reliance on the private auto as called for by the Compact. That Sustainable Communities Strategy also had the benefit of implementing the California state policies on Assembly Bill 32 for greenhouse gas reduction and Senate Bill 375 that linked land use and transportation planning. Our plan was fully consistent with those state laws. The 2012 community vision was also important because it maintained all of Tahoe's enforceable system of growth control. It's a system that's been in place for 40 years where all the development in Tahoe is capped. What minimal growth is metered out slowly to point where it's almost negligible and most of that development in the region is redevelopment of existing buildings or transfers of development.

They've strengthened the land use side in 2012 and then again in 2015 when they brought forward the development rights initiative. All of that was to meet the objectives of the sustainable communities foundation of the Regional Plan. It was in 2015 that they turned the emphasis to the transportation side of the sustainable communities vision. That was when the Governing Board approved the first transportation strategic initiative as well as strategic initiative to bring the threshold standards up to date, so they were based on current science. They've been steadily working to update, improve, accelerate, and bring all parts of the transportation system current from the definitions to the standards of success that we call threshold standards. The enhancement to the plans, the implementing strategies that would implement the threshold standard, and then the focused work that needs to be done on securing funding to achieve those plans.

With the vision and values defined in 2012 they moved on to answer the question of what are the measures of success of that 2012 transportation and sustainable communities vision. Under the threshold update initiative, the top priority was updating a dated 1982 air quality standard for nitrogen emissions. That air quality standard is the present vehicle miles travelled standard. Mr. Segan will talk more about how that current VMT standard isn't now or never has been related to or scientifically tied in any way to the implementation of Tahoe's transportation vision that's set out in the Regional Transportation Plan. He'll summarize a proposal for a new VMT per capita standard as being the right goal for success and is closely tied to the 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation vision as well as the integrated land use sustainable communities system that's in the Regional Plan.

The next piece of the Compacts puzzle about the transportation system is what is the plan for achieving that threshold. The new transportation and sustainable communities threshold standard that will be reviewed today is only as good as the plans and programs that are designed to achieve it. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, they are in the process of preparing the next four year update of Tahoe's Regional Transportation Plan that's done every four years. They strengthened the policies and programs of that RTP in 2016 and are doing it again in 2020. That 2020 RTP, another piece of that puzzle, is on the street and ready for approval. It emphasizes transportation strategies that are all designed around addressing visitation congestion, reducing automobile reliance, implementing state policy on Assembly Bill 32, greenhouse gas emissions as well as Nevada's corresponding state policies on greenhouse gas emissions and California's policies in Senate Bill 375.

In addition to updating the plan and the threshold now staff is tackling action items that will implement that threshold. First at the plan level of the Regional Transportation Plan and then at the project level. At the plan level implementing the Regional Transportation Plan comes with a hefty price tag of \$2.5 billion of transportation and sustainable communities investments with a long list of capital and other projects to be accomplished over 25 years. That's why at the plan level they're increasing investment in transportation. That increase in investment is the single most effective way to accelerate the Regional Transportation Plan implementation. To ensure that there are the resources needed, the two states have helped by engaging two rounds of ongoing transportation consultation among the implementing partners. California and Nevada convened the departments of transportation, the local government, and the private sectors among other partners. That first consultation in 2017/18 produced a final report that identified transportations highest priorities in the Regional Transportation Plan that could make the difference on addressing the region's biggest challenge of the out of basin visitation traffic that

clogs the roads at peak times. The second convening of the consultation which is still underway, and that effort is looking at how to secure new sources of funding to implement the Regional Transportation Plans highest priorities. A target has been set to reach a widely supported bi-state stakeholder consensus on the approach to new funding sources for the transportation system implementation and to reach that consensus by the end of 2021. There will be more on that action plan at today's Environmental Improvement, Transportation, and Public Outreach Committee meeting.

They're also now looking at the project level. The question is how do we apply this new threshold measure, this new vehicle miles traveled per capita threshold measure to development projects. Development in the basin mostly meaning redevelopment is only a very small increment of how we implement the Regional Transportation Plan because it accounts for only about three percent of regional VMT. Part of any improved transportation implementation system needed to look at a better way of assessing whether a redevelopment project would actually have a significant effect on VMT at the project level. How will that be done and then how would projects mitigate those potential VMT effects. Today, they'll outline this updated framework for assessing VMT whether a development project has a significant effect on the VMT threshold that will be proposed.

These multiple moving pieces of the puzzle for achieving the transportation and sustainable communities vision, a VMT threshold update, a 2020 Regional Transportation Plan update for implementing that threshold, a bi-state consultation, and funding initiative to secure added investment in transportation, and a project level assessment methodology for determining whether development projects will have a significant effect on that new VMT threshold.

Lastly, why is what's being developed better than the system that is in place today? They've heard that they are not doing enough about cars and congestion, do it faster, you're not trying hard enough. Today, we change that frame because what is being proposed so far is a more effective system than the one, we currently have. It will accelerate implementation; it checks the box on all the important required outcomes that we need. We're updating to a more relevant VMT standard, we're designing around strategies which when implemented will not only decrease per capita VMT growth but it's also going hold absolute VMT to near zero over 25 years. That is an outcome that is not just consistent with but it out performs, it exceeds all of the related statewide requirements that we've tried to design around; Assembly Bill 32, Senate Bill 375, Senate Bill 743, and Nevada's climate plan goals. Lastly, it checks the box on funding. This bi-state consultation is committed to solutions for increasing the transportation investment. They've tied the new VMT threshold to the bi-state funding initiative, to the interim goals of an updated RTP, tied it to land use and transportation policies of the state, and is related to those statutory goals for greenhouse gas reduction, sustainable communities, affordable housing, and the Senate Bill 743 considerations on how we assess projects. All of that taken together is more proactive and ambitious than anything they've done to date in transportation. It would bring Tahoe's transportation and land use system fully up to date for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today's presentation will bring two puzzle pieces of that updated transportation framework. Mr. Segan will round out this contextual framework that's been outlined, he will then summarize the approach for a new mobility based threshold standard that uses VMT per capita as its measure of success. Ms. Sloan will then outline the framework for how that threshold gets applied and assessed at a project level. Today, there's not any final proposals, there's still details of both of these pieces that we're continuing to work with our partners on. Staff is asking the committee

for input and endorsement to proceed to finalize these two framework proposals for VMT per capita on the threshold standard and for the project assessment tool.

Mr. Segan said we're not bringing a final proposal today; staff is still working through many of the details with the numerous partners in this effort. Staff is doing a routine check-in to ensure that we are headed in the right direction. The committee provided direction in March that initially set off the most recent round here. Staff checked in again in July to assure that they were on course and would like input today that suggests that they are still headed in the right direction and continue to finalize these proposals.

When most think about the VMT standard today they mistakenly think that it was originally adopted as a transportation goal for the region. Rather its adoption was to many of the same concerns that motivated about one third of our standards in 1982 which were the concerns around the clarity of the lake. At the time, it was believed that excess algal growth was responsible for declining clarity. Nitrogen is both a byproduct of combustion and a nutrient that supports algal growth. It was critical to the early threshold standards to control nitrogen. Over the past 40 years two things have changed. The first was the nearly \$10 million in science invested to better understand clarity that ultimately led to the development of the Lake Tahoe Total Maximum Daily which is the science based strategy to restore the clarity of the lake over the next 65 years. The science highlighted that it wasn't algal growth that was primarily responsible for declining clarity, but it was inorganic fine sediment particles that were responsible for about two thirds of the clarity loss.

The second thing that's happened since that time is that cars are cleaner. A new car purchased today would have to drive about 100 miles to emit about the same amount of NOx that the average car did in 1975 when the Environmental Protection Agency started adopting clean emission standards.

They've dramatically changed the emissions landscape within our landscape. The relationship fundamentally that between VMT and NOx both in our region but also around the world, the original standard that called for a ten percent reduction in nitrogen deposition from 1991 values has been attained many times over. We are currently at about one third of what emissions were in 2000 which were far lower than they were in 1980 and are forecasted to go on that trajectory of reducing emissions farther and farther.

The reviewers of historical threshold evaluations called to the attention the changing relationship between VMT and nitrogen, first in the 2001 Threshold Evaluation. The next round of threshold reviewers in 2006 repeated that same recommendation. The threshold reviewers in 2011 repeated that same recommendation to revisit this and then again in 2015. Maybe one of the authors of the 2015 evaluation would like to take credit how carefully worded that recommendation was to revisit this. Because after 20 years of recommending it they started to include that revision of that relationship and review into the workplan. The Governing Board chartered the threshold update initiative and identified review of the VMT threshold standard as one of the core areas that staff revisit initially. The Advisory Planning Commission convened a transportation measures working group at the direction of the Governing Board. That group met over about six months in 2017 and reviewed the entire landscape of how to measure progress within transportation and what measures are best suited for what causes.

Something that emerged from that effort was that they and stakeholders were using VMT in their discourse in a manner that entirely changed since it was initially adopted in 1982. Again in 1982, was the concern over algal growth within the Lake that motivated the adoption of this standard. In 2017, they saw the entire landscape shift to talk about congestion, looking at greenhouse emissions, clearly not a concern in the 1980s. Fine sediment loading, road wear, and regional mobility. That highlighted that they needed to go back and understand that if they were going to revisit this threshold standard why are they revisiting that and what are they trying to set a goal for?

They started where the Compact directed; what's the regional vision, what are the values, and what are the desired outcomes? What are we trying to create, what are we setting a goal for ourselves to achieve? Not just TRPA but as a region. They refined the comments heard from that 2017 stakeholder process and brought a recommendation to this committee where they thought VMT based threshold would be best suited to measure progress towards and establish a goal for. Working towards three goals of increasing mobility within the region, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and implementing the Compact directive to reduce dependency on the automobile.

Based on the direction provided by the committee in March, if those are the goals, how do they set a threshold standard for those new goals. Because they also kicked off the threshold standard process in 2017, they've been working with the Tahoe Science Advisory Council for the past four years on how to set better goals for the region. They outlined five criteria that are called smart criteria. There needs to be specific goals that can be easily measure progress towards that are achievable within our means, they are relevant to the concerns and the people of the day and are time bound. They need to establish a goal when they are going to achieve the goal.

Thinking about what they were trying to create such as increasing mobility, implementing the Compact directive, reducing reliance on the automobile, they also took a look at the existing thresholds. Over the years, TRPA has adopted about 200 thresholds all of which fit into one of two categories. They are either thresholds to restore something that has been lost for example, the threshold standards for restoring stream environmental zones or the historic clarity of the Lake or protect something that we fear we are going to lose. This is non-degradation standards for the scenic viewsheds or existing stream environmental zones within the Basin. For protection of public access and a fear that we may lose more public access to the Lake. If these are the models for how people have set threshold standards in the past, where do we look?

There is no historic point when visitors or residents of Tahoe enjoyed an experience that was dependent on the automobile. That is not unique to Tahoe, it is true for city's all around the country and the world. We grew up in an auto dependent society and we're trying to break that. There were no comments at the public meetings in 2017 or even recent Regional Plan Implementation Committee saying, "If you could only stop everything right now, we would happy with the existing congestion." What they heard was why don't you have more bike paths and why don't we have free transit service. They realized that there wasn't a historic precedent for what they're trying to create.

This desire to create something better for the residents and visitors of Tahoe dates back to at least to the start of the Compact and probably much further. The direction to TRPA that when it

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considers developing its Regional Transportation Plan that it emphasizes this multi model transportation experience. The ability to get around without being forced to get in a car every day and for every task.

As mentioned by Ms. Marchetta, there are numerous visions for what this future might look like. They've started to implement and work towards those visions and developed plans to help achieve those visions.

There were numerous changes made in the 2012 Regional Plan Update that maintained those development caps that were essential to the region but also included a host of incentives that would focus development in specific areas and provide workforce and affordable housing for the community. That was complemented by the Regional Transportation Plan which also emphasized transit, trails, and technology to provide people with different ways to get around the region. TRPA's role relative to many agencies in many regions is that they have responsibility for both of these and thus harmonize them to maximize the benefit.

The real benefit of this coordinated transportation and land use planning is the ability to maximize the benefit of each of those planning efforts. There are incentives within the Regional Plan that are designed to promote additional development and redevelopment within the town centers and core parts of the community. The Regional Transportation Plan also focuses on providing additional transportation services whether it's waterborne taxi, bike routes, or increased transit service to those areas as well. They complement each other to provide and design a future where they're making it possible where they are focusing the development and transportation efforts in the same areas. As a result, there's an opportunity to create something new for the region.

They've adopted so many thresholds that are motivated out of fear that they've lost something that is important and that we need to get back or fear that we have something today that our kids tomorrow will not be able to enjoy. The standard being brought forward today is fundamentally different, it's not motivated by fear but rather by hope. As a partnership, we can do something better.

Mr. Segan said next he'll discuss how they identified what the goals should be for the region. Staff is recommending a VMT per capita goal. VMT per capita is how much distance we have to drive each day or that the average resident or visitor to the region has to drive. There's extensive literature and numerous state policies that suggest that people enjoy spending less time in their cars and more time enjoying the things that they like. They enjoy taking shorter trips or not having to get in the car to take trip.

It's been asked that if they're doing a VMT standard, why don't you an absolute VMT standard? The reason they are not recommending an absolute VMT standard is that absolute VMT and VMT per capita are fundamentally different measures that tell you different things about a community. In a review of the 100 largest metropolitan areas of the region, the region with the lowest VMT per capita was New York City. Resident's there drove on average less than 4,000 miles per year. But while they had extremely low VMT per capita and were able to take transit or walk, the total VMT for the New York region had the second highest VMT of the 100 largest metro areas in the country. They don't believe that's because it's performing poorly, or it has an inefficient transportation system. The VMT per capita tells us that it is quite efficient

transportation system and is affording the people the opportunity to take transit or walk. New Yorkers spend less time and travel shorter distances in their car than the vast majority of the other cities within the country.

They laid out a three-step process for this threshold standard; first was to establish how much VMT there is in the region today (numerator), then establish how many people are traveling in the region (denominator). The goal of the transportation program is reducing reliance on the automobile not just for residents of Lake Tahoe but for anyone traveling in the region. The Bi-State Consultation highlighted the importance of including and considering visitor travel and addressing visitor travel within the transportation concerns of the region. Once the baseline amount of VMT and population are set then it's to determine how far they want to get in the future. They organized a technical advisory committee this past summer and held three meetings, one on each of these subjects to receive feedback on how we are setting the baseline VMT, calculating the population, and what target should be set. The proposal today has benefited greatly from those inputs.

In terms of setting that target, it was thinking about where they might be in the future. One of things the Science Council emphasized is that the targets should be achievable. A goal without a plan is just a wish. They looked at what would happen if the Regional Plan were effective, and the area plans were effective in providing workforce and affordable housing. What would happen if they implemented all those projects in the Regional Plan.

They brought those two items into the travel demand model which is a model used to look at what happens when the land use pattern is changed and change the transportation infrastructure within the region. After the last threshold evaluation and Regional Transportation Plan in 2017, they received a number of critiques of the existing modeling. They felt that they could do better and organized a technical model working group that prioritized a suite of investments with the model that allowed them to dramatically improve the quality of the model. The goal of that was to ensure that the model could be used for this exercise and that the information being presented today is the best possible information that can be provided for policy making.

The goal is to have 15-minute transit service between town centers and recreation destinations throughout the region, 30 to 60 minute transit service between neighborhoods and town centers, waterborne taxis connecting the north and south sides of the Lake and to key destination places around the Lake. As a result of those investment, they'll see a fivefold increase in transit ridership by 2045. They also include completion of the multi-purpose trail around the Lake that will allow access to people with disabilities and provide critical infrastructure within the communities that allow people to get to work and to recreation destinations from all the neighborhoods. To do that, they'll build 110 miles of bike and pedestrian trails around the region. People will have greater access to those trails because they'll build 17 mobility hubs and transit centers. This will provide travelers and residents with the opportunity to park their car once and get around the region without reliance on the automobile. They're also looking at micro-transit, bike and scooter sharing that will allow them to close some of those last miles, trip planning tools, and information kiosks that will help manage parking at key recreation sites, relieving the congestion at those pinch points and help visitor and residents make more informed decisions to enjoy more things and not getting there in their automobile or looking for a parking space. They're also looking at augmenting the

electric vehicle charging stations around the Lake to support and encourage cars that do not omit anything. It would completely alter the travel experience within the region.

If the Regional Plan is successful in revitalizing and focusing additional development in the town centers and they were able to increase transit by fivefold, they feel that they can achieve 6.8 percent reduction from the baseline of per capita VMT by 2045.

This is the moment when there's an elephant in the room because some may think that 6.8 percent doesn't sound that great and were hoping for something bigger. The 6.8 percent reduction is ambitious. If they looked at the Senate Bill 743 target for the California side of the region and they formulated their target the same way, by 2035, they expect a ten percent reduction in VMT per capita relative to the overall five percent goal in SB 375. Their target is both stricter and is twice as aggressive as what they were talking about under SB 375.

Many other regions around the state have more aggressive targets than Tahoe. They are looking at the same evidence base that the California Air Resources Board is looking at in Sacramento for what is possible. It's that evidence base that informed both those targets and the threshold target that staff is recommending today. There's been a significant amount of work done on how to reduce VMT and what's the overall effectiveness of these individual efforts. Unfortunately, what a lot of that literature says is that VMT reduction is not easy, it takes coordinated concerted effort, and is especially hard in rural areas like Tahoe. It's also hard when you don't expect much population growth.

If you look at the overall capacity for development as specified in the Regional Plan, they regulate three different types of development rights; commercial floor area, tourist accommodation units, and residential developments. Adding that together the region is already 93 percent buildout. Of everything that could exist in the region, 93 out of 100 is already on the ground. We're not going to build all that much more.

What does that mean from a policy standpoint? This also informs how they approached the project level evaluation and what they expect of projects. Referring to slide 37, comparing the Tahoe and Sacramento region. Currently every time a home is built in each there's about ten VMT per unit. If there was a policy that said let's get a 15 percent reduction per unit. Every new home built in Tahoe and Sacramento would produce 8.5 VMT for each unit. Then if all the remaining homes were built in each region the return on investment from the policy Sacramento region sees a larger reduction in VMT overall in its population when looking at VMT per capita than Tahoe would. The reason is because Tahoe has capped development and near buildout, they're not adding existing stock to making new development to deliver the returns that other regions that are expected to experience higher growth. That's why the highest reduction targets are for large metropolitan areas where significant population growth and development is expected.

Slides 35-37 were intended to convey that there's two ways to reduce VMT per capita through land use and transportation policy and hopefully it's being done through a coordinated effort of both. As a Tahoe region relative to other regions, they are far more reliant on our transportation policy because they are so close to buildout and the maximum development is capped. These proposals emphasize the implementation of the programs, policies, and projects of the Regional Transportation Plan because it is fundamental to achieving the reductions that we're hoping to

achieve through this target.

How we're going to work towards the target is the implementation framework which is the rebranding of adaptive management. They've established a plan and will start to implement that plan and need to ensure that we are checking that progress along the way and doing the right thing.

This started by thinking about the current implementation framework which is if TRPA is not hitting its VMT threshold standard they're not going to give out residential allocations for the year. Fundamentally, the construct behind that is they're not going to build 130 units and that will somehow help achieve our standard. When they looked at the entire system and thought about the interaction between land use and transportation policy, it wasn't driving them towards the wanted outcome. This is not a significant lever that once pulled all of the sudden pulls the VMT back down and everything is better. You don't build additional bike trails and add any additional transit service by preventing a couple of homes from being built.

Working through this process there were three things to include. The first are a series of milestones because they're establishing a goal for some time in the future to check the progress to see that they are getting the gains that they feel they are going to get. The second item is adaptive management responses. These are items that are automatically triggered if they start to go off course. The third was an advisory body which is an independent panel to help assess the milestones, provides them with regular reporting on progress, and recommendations to improve and accelerate that progress.

They established a series of milestones which are detailed in the staff report and will highlight six in this presentation. The first milestone goal is 2024 to have sustainable transportation funding in place. The key to achieving the goals is implementing the programs policies and projects within the Regional Transportation Plan. The entire effort to achieving this goal and reducing per capita VMT is hinging upon getting that funding in place. Subsequent to the first milestone there are a series of milestones at roughly eight year intervals to measure progress towards achieving the goals. Eight year intervals are a reasonable time frame at which the mix between transportation and land use systems respond to meaningful change. There are interannual variabilities because of weather, visitation, or demographic trends that have influence on an annual basis, but they're focused on that longer term goal. There is a milestone in 2048 which is the first year they expect to know if the target has been attained. They'll use a three year interval to assess overall VMT per capita. They expect to be in attainment in 2045 but because of some of the lags in monitoring and data collection they would expect to know about that in 2048.

If they fall off course there would be two things that would automatically happen. The first item for funding is that they would increase the standard of significance for all projects to no unmitigated VMT and this would remain in place until a funding source was in place. In 2029 and subsequent years if they start to fall off the VMT per capita milestones they'll increase the mobility fee rate by ten percent over the previous year's value to start to close some of the funding gap.

To compile information and make recommendations they've suggested that there be an independent advisory body that represents the jurisdictions, implementors, various

stakeholders that work through the evidence on a regular basis with us. After the advisory body evaluates which programs are working or where it's lagging then transmits recommendations for modifications to implementation of either the land use or transportation system every two years.

The entire system is hinged on this overall approach that includes regular check-ins that summarize progress and where they formulate recommendations for change, and then a series of discrete and specific milestones that must be met. If they are not met, then automatic change is initiated.

Ms. Sloan will present on how we are updating the project impact assessment and mobility mitigation fee to ensure that future development within the region is consistent with the threshold standard and with this walkable, bikeable, transit friendly future for the region.

Ms. Sloan said this gets to a very specific aspect of implementation of the VMT threshold at the project level. Updating the threshold standard policy and the objectives around that with greenhouse gas reduction, reduced reliance on the automobile, changing land use and development patterns, and that conversion to using a VMT per capita threshold requires them to look at assessing projects for transportation and air quality impact and that they are updated to align with that threshold and Regional Plan.

Under the current process all projects are evaluated using average daily trips that the projects generate, and it treats every project the same. This process just by using trips and being agnostic to the length of trips or the total vehicle miles traveled a project has on the transportation system through VMT is disconnected from that VMT threshold outline. Treating projects, the same regardless of where they are located, whether in a town center, regional center, or a rural area it also doesn't reflect alignment with that threshold or the Regional Plan or the goals of both. Location of development does matter. Development that happens in or near a town center will have shorter trips or transportation options other than the personal automobile. Whereas development that is situated in more remote areas doesn't have those transportation options and if they do, they're much more expensive to bring out to those remote areas.

The Regional Plan sets forth a vision for a more walkable, bikeable, and transit served community by improving land use and transportation solutions. TRPA's policies advance that goal by providing incentives to move development into town and regional centers. There's an opportunity because of the California jurisdictions also implementing vehicle miles traveled into project impact assessment from Senate Bill 743 to connect and align with that work, research, and guidance to improve TRPA's project impact assessment. As a result, new development and redevelopment will help to accelerate achievement of that Regional Plan vision and the goals of the updated VMT threshold by reducing the two to three percent of additional VMT that they expect from development and redevelopment. This is a work in process. The framework elements being presented today are the third iteration of thinking. It's been evolved through work with partner Placer County and consultant Fehr & Peers, input from the Technical Advisory Committee, conversations with stakeholders, review of that guidance as well as analysis conducted internally.

This framework is a high level outline of the project impact assessment and mitigation fee update. First a project applicant would compare its project information to screening criteria and

if met, it would go to the upper most process shown in slide 50. It wouldn't require additional assessment instead it would calculate the fee and advance through the application process. However, if the project information didn't meet that screening criteria, additional analysis would be required and go through the middle and bottom portion as shown on slide 50. Additional analysis would depend on what type of project it is. Along with Placer County and Fehr & Peers they'll be developing an online tool that the residential and tourist accommodation unit projects could use. Commercial, recreation, and other projects that are not easily defined by the land use definitions would use a more detailed VMT analysis. That might be the TRPA model or an agreed upon assessment such as a market study. Regardless of which approach the land use project would use for analysis or assessment, both of those processes would be evaluated to understand does the VMT of the project have a significant impact to implementing the VMT threshold at the project level. If it does, what does it need to do to mitigate either through strategies or fees.

Screening criteria is a quick way to understand if a project should be expected to have a less than significant impact with VMT and it can do so without requiring additional or detailed study. Our framework proposes two screening approaches. One based on project size and the second is based on the combination of project type and location. Attachment D of the staff report provides the analysis for the screening criteria recommended for each of those two approaches.

The next component of the framework are standards of significance and is where you set that line to define above which a project would have a significant impact to transportation with its VMT. Here the standard of significance applies to the net overall change in VMT. New development would be producing new VMT so the standard would apply to that new VMT. Whereas redevelopment that might be changing from a previous land use would be evaluated based on that net overall change in VMT. The framework uses a sub-regional standard of significance by land use types. For example, if there's a tourist accommodation unit project and it was going to be situated in Placer County, it would be evaluated based on VMT per overnight visitor. It would also be evaluated against the current average VMT per overnight visitor in Placer County. If that same type of project were proposed in Douglas County, it would be compared to the Douglas County average VMT per overnight visitor. The sub-regional standard of significance allows each jurisdiction to contribute to implementing the VMT threshold at the project level by reducing impacts to transportation by projects within their jurisdictions. The information around the standards of significance for the framework can be found in Table 3 of Attachment B. Those came about in reference to current research best practice and guidance from California in relation to Senate Bill 743, in addition to receiving input from Placer County, Fehr & Peers, and input from the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee which was all considered and adapted to Tahoe.

Also, within the evaluation of the project to understand if it has significant impact is mitigation. If a project is found to have that significant impact it must mitigate to below that standard of significance and can do so either through strategies and or fees. Strategies would be available to the applicant in the online tool and discussed through a detailed VMT analysis if that were the approached used. For example, continuing that tourist accommodation unit, if it didn't meet the screening criteria an applicant would go through that middle process, as shown on slide 50, use the online project tool and depending on project location and other information maybe its determined to have a significant impact. That tool lists various strategies and can select from one or more that would then calculate the impact to be less than significant. Those example

strategies could be parking pricing at the tourist accommodation unit or providing a shuttle or van pool for staff. In addition, fees would be determined. They'll be updating the air quality mitigation fee to a more of a mobility mitigation fee. It will be determined using rough proportionality, nexus, and calculated using the Regional Transportation Plan constrained project list and VMT calculated projected from new development and redevelopment.

The framework proposes that those fees vary by location and that would depend on if the project is located in a low or high VMT generating area. Again, that's recognizing those projects in remote areas would pay more mitigation fees because it cost more and there would be more VMT to mitigate.

If a project is proposed in or within one half mile of a town or regional center and meets screening criteria it would have a simplified assessment process but if it's in a more remote location or doesn't meet the screening criteria additional analysis will be required and potentially higher fees. That framework is to incentivize that development and redevelopment into town and regional centers through incentives here being simplified assessment and lower fees.

For example, if someone wanted to add 15 units to an existing hotel and it happens to be within one half mile of a town center, it meets the screening criteria of project type and location it would go through the upper most process as show on slide 50. No additional assessment would be required, the fee would be calculated and then advance through the application process. Another example is if a lesser location was selected and not within one half mile or in a town or regional center. It then wouldn't meet that screening criteria. Then additional analysis would need to be completed and then it would go through the middle process as shown on slide 50. Using the online tool depending on the information added and the general location of the project the tool would calculate whether it have a significant impact. If there was a significant impact, then there would be a suite of mitigation strategies to choose from. The tool calculates that then is sufficient to have the project have a less than significant impact, the fee is calculated and advanced through the application process. Another example is proposing 15,000 square feet of commercial floor area, that doesn't meet either of the small project screening or the project type and location screening and would need additional analysis. Because it's a commercial project it would have to go through the bottom most process as on the chart on slide 50. It would require a detailed VMT analysis where again the projects VMT is evaluated based on the components of the project in its general location and determination of whether it has a significant impact or not, mitigations, whether they be strategies or fees would be identified as applicable.

There are a lot of components that they have proposed in the packet and will continue to develop with partners including Placer County and in consultation with stakeholders and other jurisdictions. Part of the development of those components is creating maps for those general location assessments of VMT and fees. That would also have them finalizing the mitigation fee framework. Once all those components are in place, they would take a few land use cases through the final framework to ensure it operates the way they expect but also to be able to revise it as needed based on the findings of those tests. Concurrently, they'll develop the online tool with Fehr & Peers and Placer County. The goal is to have a reliable, predictable, and transparent process for applicants and others in the community interested in this facet of VMT threshold implementation at the project level.

Presentation can be found at:

[RPIC-Item-Nos.-5-6-VMT.pdf](#)

### Committee Comments & Questions

Ms. Aldean said in connection with the mitigation fee framework based on the example provided, there is a higher bar for commercial projects because the assumption is that they will result in an increase in VMT. But what if that commercial project is part of a mixed-use development where essential services are being provided on site? She assumed that it would be one of those unique circumstances that would be given due consideration and might now be required to go through a more extensive analysis.

Ms. Sloan said staff has been discussing with Placer County and Fehr & Peers how a mixed-use project that may have tourist accommodation and commercial combined would be treated. This is one of those components that will be continued to be developed before bringing back a framework.

Mr. Friedrich said great presentation. His question pertained to the absolute VMT numbers and the assumptions that go into the denominator of total travelers. He asked how they plan to monitor that shift. For example, they've seen a huge day visitation over the past year under the pandemic. It's not hard to imagine under various climate scenarios that we get increased visitation for more scarce snow events or people escaping the heat from the valley. We've also seen a growth in the local population as people are doing remote work. There's a variety of variables that could be different than the assumptions that underly that denominator. What is the plan to evaluate, monitor, and respond to the actual visitation numbers? If we get a 6.8 percent reduction in per capita VMT but a 30 percent beyond what was forecast in total visitation for example, would swamp the more efficient per capita numbers.

Mr. Segan said for the total VMT they've historically used the travel demand model to evaluate and foresee that continuing to be a tool to evaluate the overall effectiveness of different strategies to reduce VMT. What they've suggested is that for the threshold standard itself they should use the state reporting. Both states as part of the Federal Highway Administration report the total amount of VMT traveled within the region on an average day. Staff is proposing to combine those two estimates to provide the estimate for the region. They've explored a number of big data sources providing them, most notably with one called StreeLight Data for estimation. The conclusion was that those may not be ripe for interannual comparison just yet because of the methodological differences in how VMT is estimated in a given year, so, deferring to the more stable sources of state and federal data would be the best way to handle.

Regarding per capita number they are proposing a project that's been supported by a group of researchers with the University of Nevada, Reno and University of California, Davis with the Tahoe Science Advisory Council. The total of number of people within our region is not a number that is readily available to them or any jurisdiction. They've heard that it is an incredibly important number to know for these planning purposes. Staff has spent about the past six months developing a protocol to estimate that uses a bottom up approach. They're using the traffic counts at the entry/exit stations to monitor the flow or number of cars into the region. They're using information on hotel/motel occupancy, and vacation home rental occupancy to identify and map the number of visitors within the region at any given time. What they know

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from surveys on travel patterns of individual visitor types to help parameterize and arrive at the overall estimate of the number of people. That number will also be dynamic as they move forward and responsive to all those things that drive visitation and population dynamics within the region.

Mr. Friedrich asked if there will also be tools to use the adaptive management process for the absolute VMT number in addition to the per capita. Again, if the assumptions underestimate actual visitation 2 to 5 years out.

Mr. Segan said that's the intention of that advisory body that is providing recommendations to look at the underlying assumption and the data then provide management recommendations for how they can improve and better tailor the programs to address the drivers of VMT that they're seeing.

Mr. Friedrich asked if consideration has been given to peak visitation. Again, the scenario of climate change where there is infrequent snow storms and huge rush of people throughout California to come sledding in a smaller number of storms or intense heat in the summer that people are escaping. How is that peak demand accommodated for in the plan?

Mr. Segan said the second part of the project with the Science Advisory Council is looking at how hot days in valleys influences transportation travel within the Tahoe region and trying to formulate methods primarily driven by big data to allow them to better understand where people are coming, where they are going, and how they're traveling around the region in part to prepare for what Mr. Friedrich is talking about. They expect to have more of those days in the future and want to be able to provide transportation planners with the information to tailor solutions to the future environment and visitation patterns of the region.

Mr. Friedrich said it's not hard to imagine that there are those peak visitations increasingly at the same time that we have extreme fire risk in the Basin. Even if we have a more efficient per capita VMT but we have a big surge of vehicles in the Basin at the times of high fire danger needs to be planned for.

Mr. Segan said the evacuation planning is ongoing in other venues.

Mr. Lawrence said tremendous work by staff, the advisory committee, Placer County, and Fehr & Peers. The devil will be in the details. He's in support of this moving forward and will be taking a close look at the implementation details. It's an antiquated VMT threshold that we've been reviewing against something that doesn't really mean anything, move it forward to tie to the Regional Transportation Plan and the goals of the Regional Plan Update with the two states particularly with Nevada to align it with greenhouse gas emission reduction, mobility, and reduced dependence on the automobile. He's excited and this is the right direction to go. He likes the online tool which they've done similar work in Nevada with endangered species work and there's been positive response with that online tool. He's heard discussions of an air quality fee, VMT and mobility fee. His assumption is that the air quality mitigation fee is being updated to account for VMT and mobility and that there's still one fee and not multiple fees.

Ms. Sloan said currently the project impact assessment includes an air quality mitigation fee based on trips. They'll be updating that to align with the project impact assessment and the

VMT threshold using VMT as the calculating factor with the aim of the same goals of greenhouse gas reduction and reduce reliance on the automobile. They've also started reframing the air quality mitigation as a mobility mitigation fee.

Mr. Lawrence said the adaptive management is going to be key because particularly in the transportation space. It seems like it's evolving so much year to year that an adaptive management component is going to be critical particularly not knowing how much visitation will increase or decrease. If this were to be successful and we're starting to get the Regional Transportation Plan projects implemented particularly around sustainable recreation that perhaps a ten percent increase in visitation once we get those systems in place won't be as impactful as a ten percent increase in visitation prior to getting those projects in place. For example, if we have a ten percent increase in 2021 with no corridor implementation and no shuttles in place that will be a more dramatic impact to the transportation system than a ten percent visitor increase when those things are in place.

Mr. Bruce said you've taken something that can be viewed in a very complicated and made it understandable and very positive. He's watched this progress through the stages and feels good about where we are. Thank you for all the hard work.

Ms. Gustafson said the presentation was very thorough and staff simplified it to very good understanding on how to tackle this issue. She wants to create an environment where the jurisdictions have an opportunity to propose a set of projects on a more jurisdictional basis to be evaluated. Project by project, 15 units here, 20 units there, yes, we can require and collect fees but if we can get real commitment from the jurisdictions to work towards those more regional projects. In Placer County they'll hopefully moving forward with a TBID to have significant dollars to work towards those more regional projects. We need to ensure that we can evaluate those through this screening criteria and by capacity to incentivize the town center reinvestments. When they go project by project it becomes quite an obstacle for those individuals to reinvest and see the type of redevelopment we want. She encouraged that thinking as we move the process and think about those examples where a town center could invest in a system, fund it, and have capacity for a certain number of new investment units whether it's mixed-use, tourist accommodation, or commercial.

Ms. Sloan said they'll bring that back to the team as they continue to work on the framework.

#### Public Comments & Questions

Carole Black said the overall framework of this presentation was phenomenal. She suggested that some of the framing concepts that Ms. Marchetta made during her presentation are incredibly useful. If there was some way to make graphics to present how all these pieces fit together it would be helpful to the casual user. Please don't lose the overall total VMT number as a measure that looks at occupancy, some elements of over tourism, etc. She understands that the arguments that were made and make sense but hopes we continue to look at the overall measurement as a measure for overall volumes of use. She suggested that you don't lose focus on collateral impacts and in addition to sustainable communities, sustainable tourism. There's discussion about land use and transportation and that balance which she understands and is right on the money but the focus on land use and development and maybe redevelopment credits is important. Think about vacation rentals and whether those are looked at with those measurements. She also thinks about the collateral impacts and interacting pieces, there's

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transit, occupancy, if the area looks safe, transportation, evacuation capabilities, parking and traffic safety. As you think about transportation and town centers think about all those pieces fitting together. We want to improve but do no harm. Some of it may have to do with how we put together these pieces and also the order in which they're implemented. She said the East Lake Tahoe Trail is beautiful but it would have been great if the parking could have been dealt with ahead of time. That's an example of timing and thinking through all the collateral impacts.

Sophie Wenzlau on behalf of the California Attorney General's Office. She also expressed appreciation for staff it was a very thorough presentation on this complex topic. Their office is carefully following TRPA's handling of this critically important issue. They participated in a stakeholder working group updating the VMT threshold and have engaged with and commented on issues related to updating the threshold since at least 2017. They submitted a comment letter last night expressing concerns both with TRPA's engagement with their office and this substantive proposal and encouraged the Regional Plan Implementation Committee to take a close look at the letter. As explained in that letter, staff didn't share its updated VMT threshold materials with stakeholders until the close of business last Wednesday. This gave stakeholders four business days to review, analyze, and respond to 200 plus pages of material in advance of this meeting. That is not enough time for their office to carefully review and comment on such a significant proposal. As a committed partner that has participated in good faith in the stakeholder process since last summer, they would have appreciated the opportunity to share what they expect would have been helpful comments with RPIC at this meeting.

In the future, when stakeholders have invested such significant time and resources in a collaborative process with staff, they hope staff will provide all involved stakeholders with more time to review and comment on updated materials in advance of the committee and Governing Board meetings. Particularly where recommendation or direction are being requested. At a high level, they express continued concern about TRPA's proposal to decouple the VMT threshold from its traditional lake clarity protection function. They are also concerned about staff's proposal to link the VMT threshold, the draft 2020 Regional Transportation Plan, Sustainable Communities Strategy particularly since that plan has not been finalized or approved. Ms. Marchetta mentioned earlier that TRPA expects the RTP/SCS to hold total basin wide VMT to near zero growth between now and 2045. However, their review indicates that both total VMT and per capita VMT could be much higher than TRPA anticipates under the RTP/SCS. The devil is in the details. They encouraged RPIC to take a close look at their letter which touches on this concern and their other high level substantive concerns. Their office is diligently working on a more detailed comment letter which they will share as soon as they can.

Mr. Yeates said he understands their concerns about all the material that was presented. A lot of this material was covered in the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee discussions and he felt that they've reached out a lot to the Attorney General's Office and benefitted greatly on many of the projects that they've worked together on. Comments and concerns have made the process better and thinks that is the way that they'll proceed at this point forward. There are some details that need to be worked out but believes staff will be working closely with the Attorney General's staff and others. They understand there might be some differences about why they would want to hang onto an outdated VMT from his standpoint but is interested in what it is that they expect us to gain from that when we really don't have a nitrate problem and there's other ways that it's being dealt with. But we do have a serious transportation problem. He's committed to continue working with the California Attorney General's staff and is sure the

staff is too.

Peter Kraatz, Placer County Public Works Department said he strongly recommended that the Regional Plan Implementation Committee supports the proposed VMT threshold as presented by staff. Placer County has worked closely with TRPA in supporting a reasonable and balanced VMT threshold solution for the Basin. First, one of the most salient points made by Ms. Marchetta today was the three percent VMT increase attributed to future development in the Basin. Folks need to stop focusing on development being the main culprit to increasing VMT.

Second, as pointed out by Mr. Segan and Ms. Sloan development projects will ultimately help decrease VMT per capita in the Basin through project level mitigation and contribute to system wide solutions like fully connected frequent, and convenient public transit and microtransit systems.

Third, consistency with nearby VMT threshold adoptions. VMT is a regional issue as we know, considering a total or absolute VMT cap or limit is inconsistent with nearby jurisdictions including Placer County where they've adopted a per capita threshold outside the Basin. The other 57 counties and 300 cities in California along with Caltrans going down this same path of this per capita threshold approach. Absolute VMT limit approach will lead to an inconsistent convoluted approach with delaying efforts with delivering VMT reducing improvements. He agreed that the VMT cap is still there as a tool, it's pertinent and important to track in and out of the Basin with VMT but shouldn't be the main metric going forward for consistency.

Fourth, they have talked and studied VMT to death in the Basin. Staff has put their heart and soul into this as one of the top issues in the Basin for sustaining the environment. They've come up with a great framework, the devil is in the detail. There are still things to work out along the way but supports the approach.

#### Committee Comments & Questions

Mr. Yeates said there was a comment letter submitted by the League to Save Lake Tahoe who also had some of the devil in the detail questions that should get worked out. He appreciated some of their comments and they were a key member of the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee that staff will be working with.

Staff has done a lot of work on this. The connection between our Regional Transportation Plan, the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Regional Plan, and this VMT threshold is where we have to be to be to address the transportation problems we have. The work that we're doing in the Bi-State and the work plan, we're going to have to get the Basin on board to say how we want to pay for, manage, and operate a transportation system that will include many different pieces. We need the funding to carry this out.

Mr. Lawrence made a motion directing staff to finalize development of the Per Capita VMT standard, implementing Goals and Policies, and the revisions to the Project Impact Assessment and Air Quality Mitigation Fee as discussed in this staff report.

Ayes: Ms. Aldean, Mr. Bruce, Ms. Gustafson, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Yeates

**Motion carried.**

REGIONAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE  
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IX. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

None.

XII. PUBLIC INTEREST COMMENTS

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bruce moved to adjourn.

Chair Mr. Yeates adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marja Ambler".

Marja Ambler  
Clerk to the Board