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Sent: 10/22/2024 1:14:53 PM
To: Public Comment <PublicComment@trpa.gov>
Cc: Nicole Rinke <Nicole.Rinke@doj.ca.gov>;
Subject: Public Comment, 10/23 GB Meeting, Transportation Committee, Agenda Item No. 5
Attachments: [AG Letter to TRPA 10-22 FINAL.pdf](#)

Hello,

Attached is a letter being submitted in connection with tomorrow's Transportation Committee meeting, Agenda Item No. 5. If you could provide a copy to members of the Transportation Committee we would appreciate it.

Best regards,
Jessica

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October 22, 2024

RE: TRPA Transp. Committee, October 23, 2024 Governing Board Meeting, Item No. 5

Dear Chair Hill, and Members of the Transportation Committee of the TRPA Governing Board:

The California Office of the Attorney General submits these comments to the Transportation Committee in the spirit of collaborative engagement and support for achieving the region's environmental goals, specifically goals relating to reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in the Tahoe Basin. This letter follows up on our prior letter of August 27, 2024, and our earlier engagement in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

As we wrote in our August letter, when TRPA adopted the amended VMT threshold in 2021, as a result of negotiations with our office, TRPA committed to develop and implement certain milestones to ensure that progress towards VMT reductions in the Basin remained on track. The specific milestone of focus here is the milestone currently codified in the Regional Plan requiring the attainment of a reliable source of regional revenue by December 31, 2023, and establishing a net-zero VMT standard of significance for all development in the event such milestone was not met. (DP 5.4 and DP 5.6).

The milestone was not achieved by that date. The staff report observes, however, that the success of another funding effort, referred to as the "7-7-7" (reflecting local/state/federal dollars) strategy, exceeded the revenue expectations for what would have been obtained via regional revenue for the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Since 2020, TRPA has suggested that these sources of funding—state/local/federal budgets and contributions on the one hand, and reliable regional revenue on the other—would exist alongside each other. Accordingly, we encourage continued focus on the diversity in funding sources. If indeed the dollars obtained for the last four-year period met or exceeded the funding needs for a good portion of the Regional Transportation Plan's transportation goals, that is a notable achievement in terms of dollars earned to apply towards projects. At the same time, it remains critical to develop reliable revenue—the "Fourth Leg" of regional funding (as characterized by TRPA's Executive Director in April 2024)—that would not be subject to budgetary fluctuation (which can significantly affect the availability of local/state/federal dollars) and that would provide funding for a variety of VMT reducing transportation projects throughout the Basin, including transit.

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The staff report suggests that TRPA will now pivot to developing new milestones for transit funding, “rather than the broad approach of “Regional” revenue in the current RTP/SCS and the Regional Plan.” This is a confusing mix of apples and oranges. At present, the regional revenue goal and associated milestones refer to developing a reliable regional *source* of funding and timelines for its attainment. Transit is what needs to be reliably funded, not a *source* of funding; the staff reports also lacks any timing goals for when transit funding would be allocated. We support an emphasis on funding transit, but this does not fulfill the goal of developing a reliable *source* of regional revenue.

TRPA has not explained why the sort of pivot it is currently suggesting is warranted and how the new proposed course will meet the important goals TRPA set for itself, and codified in the Regional Plan, regarding the attainment of reliable regional revenue and the revised VMT threshold. We request that staff provide clarification on this and that the committee defer any endorsement of a pivot away from attaining reliable regional revenue. In the meantime, we have no objection to the committee directing staff to develop *additional* milestones for transit funding.

Sincerely,

Nicole Rinke

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Deputy Attorney General

For ROB BONTA
Attorney General