

**RESORT TRIANGLE TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION GROUP**  
**June 5, 2018**  
**Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am at the TTCF Annex Building at 11008 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, CA 96161.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Meeting attendees introduced themselves and noted their group affiliation.

**ATTENDEES**

Kira Smith, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
Mike Woodman, Nevada County Transportation Commission  
Daniela Fernandez, Connecting Point  
Camille Cauchois, Achieve Tahoe  
Hillary Bayliss, Placer Public Health  
Tara Styer, Tahoe Transportation District  
John Melrose, Sierra Senior Services  
Alison Schwedner, Community Collaborative of Truckee Tahoe  
Heather Heckler, Connecting Point  
Jackie Griffin, Tahoe Forest Hospital  
Victoria Backing Ferris, Community House  
Nataly Zarate, KidZone  
Will Garner, Placer County  
Nathaly Chavez, North Tahoe Family Resource Center  
Curtis McMullan, Nevada County Health and Human Services  
Julia Tohlen, Truckee North Tahoe Transportation Management Association  
Lizzie Hennessee, Tahoe Forest Hospital

**PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION**

**1. Tara Styer – Tahoe Transportation District/North Tahoe Truckee Transport Senior Shuttle**

Ms. Styer explained that TTD is being faced with some transit challenges and as a result, the North Tahoe Truckee Transport Senior Shuttle (NTTT) will cease operations on June 14th. The program provides transportation to seniors over 60 within and out of the Tahoe/Truckee area and was made possible through strong community partnerships with the Town of Truckee, TNT/TMA and Sierra Senior Services. Area 4 Agency on Aging funded the program and required an 11 percent local match, which was covered by the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, Lahontan Foundation, and Caltrans 5310 funding. The NTTT program is no longer sustainable because TTD now receives formula funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and is not eligible for discretionary 5310 funding from Caltrans. The 5310 funds supported TTD's mobility management position and other administrative costs required to run the program.

The NTTT program operated for four years, serving 900 riders. It cost \$175 per hour to operate, which is very expensive relative to other transit services. Area 4 requires substantial reporting and required a senior be present to operate the service, which created some challenges. TTD often had to create trips to generate interest and ridership.

**Silver Lining:** the 5310 grant cycle is coming up next year and non-profits are eligible to apply for this funding and the Area 4 funding. Ms. Styer believes it would be more beneficial for a non-profit agency to apply for transportation funds and operate specialized transportation because they are not as restricted by FTA guidelines like TTD is. For example, TTD cannot bring on volunteer drivers, they must drug test their drivers, and they have to use ADA-accessible vehicles. Ms. Styer said that Area 4 funders are eager to partner with another agency to fund specialized transportation in Eastern Placer and Eastern Nevada Counties.

Ms. Griffin expressed concern that the NTTT program is ending without a replacement or boost in Dial-a-ride service. Ms. Griffin said that many of her clients have not been able to successfully reserve service on the existing Dial-a-ride and dispatchers have been telling them they do not have enough drivers. Ms. Tohlen said that TART in both Placer County and the Town of Truckee do not have enough drivers to even operate the fixed route service that is scheduled, which may be impacting driver availability on Dial-a-ride service. Town of Truckee TART is particularly struggling to find drivers because the cost of housing is expensive, and they are competing with Placer County TART because they pay their drivers more than Truckee TART and provide a \$700 stipend for drivers that live in the Basin.

Ms. Schwedner asked the group what specific impacts they will see within the community after the NTTT program is discontinued. Ms. Griffin said that she works with a lot of Medicare and Medical patients who are restricted to receiving medical treatment and surgeries in California. The closest surgery facility for these patients is UC Davis and many of them are forced to cancel or reschedule appointments because they do not have transportation. Some other patients use the service between Tahoe and Truckee and will have trouble using fixed route buses because they have mobility restrictions. Ms. Bocking Ferris spoke on behalf of one senior community member who recently had knee surgery and relied on the NTTT program. She feels like she is losing some independence and socialization.

Mr. Melrose suggested looking into subsidizing taxi, Uber, and Lyft rides. Ms. Hennessee said that Tahoe Forest Hospital is in the very early stages of looking into this. Ms. Tohlen said that Placer County TART used to partner with taxi companies to provide Dial-a-ride service, but many of the taxi companies have gone out of business. To hear more information about potential transportation partnerships like this, the TNT/TMA holds their board meetings on the first Thursday of every month at 8am at Granlibakken.

Mr. Melrose asked the group if they have had clients who are leaving the Basin because they cannot afford to live in Tahoe or they are restricted by limited transportation options. Several meeting attendees said they have seen many seniors move out of the Basin during the winters and several families have even had to leave because they cannot afford housing. Ms. Griffin believes many of her clients will prefer to take Uber and Lyft over taking a bus.

Ms. Schwedner asked what challenges TTD faced while operating the NTTT shuttle and what changes might be needed to turn it into a successful program. Ms. Styer said that TTD was restricted by the age requirement (there must be a rider who is 60 years or older on the bus) and that they would have needed an additional funding source to negate that requirement. They also had a difficult time getting people to ride the bus, which is probably because Tahoe/Truckee is a rural area and there just aren't enough people to sustain the program. Ms. Griffin suggested that as baby boomers are getting older, they

will probably prefer to take private transportation like Lyft/Uber because are accustomed to driving their own cars. It's also difficult to find volunteers because the process to become a volunteer driver is extensive and requires a complete background check and a lot of paperwork, but is necessary to transporting vulnerable people and patients.

Mr. Garner provided an update on the summer Youth Pass. Beginning June 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, anyone 18 and under can purchase a youth transit pass for \$10 to ride unlimited trips on the bus for the entire summer. Passes can be purchase directly on the bus or at the Placer County TART offices (870 Cabin Creek Rd). For more information, call TART at 530-550-1212.

Ms. Styer presented on TTD's proposed service changes. The Emerald Bay Shuttle is being proposed for elimination and will impact regional connections between the South Shore and North Shore. The public comment period is open until July 13<sup>th</sup> and comments can be emailed to [planning@tahoetransportation.org](mailto:planning@tahoetransportation.org).

#### **NEXT STEPS AS A COLLECTIVE:**

1. Any comments or concerns about the NTTT program ending can be sent to Tara Styer at TTD ([tstyer@tahoetransportation.org](mailto:tstyer@tahoetransportation.org)) or sent directly to Maggie Borowiak at Area 4. Comments are important to demonstrate to Area 4 that there is still a need for specialized transportation in North Tahoe/Truckee.
2. Tara Styer will find out if funding is available from Area 4 and ask how non-profits or other agencies can apply for that funding. Can the funds be used to subsidize Uber/Lyft rides?
3. John Melrose will reach out to his Uber/Lyft driver contacts to see if they would be interested in driving and filling this gap in any way.
4. Connecting Point and Tahoe Forest Hospital will coordinate to host an event focusing on travel training.
5. Meeting attendees will communicate via email to come up with ideas to fill NTTT gaps in specialized transportation and will brainstorm potential partnerships or options to apply for Area 4 funding.
6. Will Garner will forward the Youth Pass flyer to Alison to distribute to the group.
7. The next meeting will be September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 9:00am. Location TBA.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57am.