



NEVADA LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW AND
OVERSIGHT OF THE TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING
AGENCY AND THE MARLETTE LAKE WATER SYSTEM
(Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS] [218E.555](#))

MINUTES

July 15, 2022

The third meeting of the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System for the 2021–2022 Interim was held on Friday, July 15, 2022, at 9 a.m. in Room 3138, Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412, Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda, minutes, meeting materials, and audio or video recording of the meeting are available on the Committee's [meeting page](#). The audio or video recording may also be found at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/>. Copies of the audio or video record can be obtained through the Publications Office of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) (publications@lcb.state.nv.us or 775/684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Chair
Senator James A. Settlemeyer

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDING VIA REMOTELY:

Senator Melanie Scheible, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen
Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Alysa M. Keller, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division
Christina Harper, Manager of Research Policy Assistants, Research Division
Eileen O'Grady, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Erin Sturdivant, Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Justin Luna, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division

*Items taken out of sequence during the meeting have been placed in agenda order.
[Indicate a summary of comments.]*

AGENDA ITEM I—CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peters:

Welcome to the third meeting of the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and the Marlette Lake Water System (MLWS). Today we will be receiving presentations on the MLWS and transportation and economic development issues in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

[Chair Peters discussed meeting guidelines, including procedures for providing public comment.]

AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Peters:

This is the first public comment period for the day. An additional opportunity to make public comment will be available at the end of the meeting. I would like to first call for public comment for those attending in Carson City.

Kyle Davis, Representing the League to Save Lake Tahoe:

Two years ago, this Committee recommended, and the Legislature passed, [Senate Concurrent Resolution 8](#) (2021) to prioritize transportation projects, identify funding barriers in the Lake Tahoe Basin (Basin), and provide recommendations to this Committee and the full Legislature. I have been proud to be a part of the bistate consultation process on transportation for the last five years. A lot of work was done during that time. Later today, you will hear about some of the work we have been doing. One of the main things you will hear about is this 7-7-7 process, which is essentially the division of responsibility for the projects that we have identified in the Basin. By going through this process and prioritizing what is most important for the economic and environmental health of the Basin, we have identified projects with a total cost of about \$20 million. The 7-7-7 concept divides that responsibility—\$7 million from the federal government, \$7 million from both states [California and Nevada], and \$7 million from local governments. Local governments include local businesses and residents, so that is going to be the hardest part to come up with. There are many ideas being worked on, and we have a lot of work to do. We need to find solutions to ensure we have the transportation system we need so everyone can continue to have a world-class experience in the Lake Tahoe Basin. It has taken a lot of work and agreement among different people to get to this point. I want to commend the work conducted by the Bi-State Consultation on Transportation. I look forward to this Committee hearing their report. We want to continue working on this issue so we can fund solutions and accomplish the goals we have identified.

Chair Peters:

Is there anyone else in the room in Carson City who would like to come up for public comment? Seeing none, I will ask anyone in Las Vegas at the Grant Sawyer State Office Building to please approach the table if you would like to provide public comment. I do not see anyone coming up. Broadcast and Production Services (BPS), would you please check the public comment line and add the first caller to public comment?

BPS:

Chair, the line is open and working but there are no callers at this time.

Chair Peters:

As a reminder, there will be another opportunity to provide public comment at the end of the meeting. I will go ahead and close this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM III—UPDATE REGARDING CURRENT OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS CONCERNING THE MARLETTE LAKE WATER SYSTEM

Chair Peters:

The next agenda item is an update regarding current operations and capital improvement projects (CIPs) concerning the MLWS.

I like hearing about what is going on at the MLWS, as it is a novel system in the State of Nevada and in the West. It is a cool and continuously operational water system. I always appreciate hearing how things are going and what you need from us. Please proceed when you are ready.

**Kent A. LeFevre, Interim Administrator, State Public Works Division (SPWD),
Department of Administration (DOA):**

Joining me today is Dave Dutra, Deputy Administrator who oversees the Buildings and Grounds Section and the MLWS. I will turn the time over to him for this presentation.

David Dutra, Deputy Administrator, Buildings and Grounds Section, SPWD, DOA:

It is my pleasure to continue what we started on February 15, 2022, which was an overview of the MLWS—the System’s historical significance, major components, and recent improvements. This is a system that was originally formed in 1873 and later improved in 1877 to accommodate the mining industry in Storey County, so it is of historical significance. In today's presentation, we are going to talk about the statutory guidelines that enable us to operate the system, current operational updates as we transition seasonally, CIPs that have been completed, CIPs that are currently underway and those that are proposed, and operational needs for the facility.

Statutory authority is granted under NRS [331.160](#) through [331.180](#), which governs the operation and fiscal manner in which we manage the System. The statutes require that we provide an adequate supply of water to the areas we serve—Carson City, Washoe, and Storey Counties—and to maintain, improve, and modernize the System. It requires us to sell the water in an equitable, fiscally sound manner under contract arrangements with the municipalities that acquire or purchase the water. We are also required to issue general obligation bonds and revenue bonds to improve the facility through CIP projects. We also established an enterprise fund, which governs our staffing and how we equip the operation to ensure sufficient daily operations.

Seasonally, the startup activities begin in late May to early June. They are quite substantial, and this is the period that we are currently in. You can imagine the operational challenges, as this is a high-elevation system ranging from 6,400 to 8,900 feet. As early as May, we begin chasing the snow line up the summit to improve the roadways and drainage systems

that we manage, check for connectivity through our operating systems, and conduct visual inspections of those component parts.

This year was no different from any other year. In addition to the snow load, operational challenges included clearing deadfall and trees that often, during the winter months, prevent us from accessing these facilities. We spend a great deal of time cleaning that.

Clearing and restoring the seasonal tributaries in the catchments is essential to maintaining water quality and clarity. Catchments allow the water and suspended solids to settle out, and this improves water clarity.

During the winter months, our employees receive ongoing training and receive certifications. They start up spring operations with safety equipment inspections of the 3 dams, the Lakeview Tank, and the 27 miles of roadway and piping ranging from 8 to 24 inches in diameter. They also look over our fixed facilities such as the Ash Canyon Reservoir, the 3.5 million gallon aboveground tank, and other related facilities that I will touch on later. Staff also clears debris out of our catchments and ensures the pressure reducing air boxes are operating sufficiently. We also check our rolling stock and log boom and clear spillways. There is a great deal of work before we start up what we call the “pumping season.”

A few of the more significant CIPs that have been completed include the development of the generation building, introduction of the supervisory control data acquisition system (SCADA)—a system that allows us to remotely operate the control systems or flow of water—improvements to the east slope catchments, and the installation of the Diversion Dam thermoelectric generator. We now have three of those in place. These are natural gas-operated generators. They are thermoelectric and highly efficient units, as the System does not have traditional line power. Marlette Lake site improvements include a new 230 horsepower, fully submersible pump.

We will advance to the CIPs currently underway. These include the Marlette Lake Dam Rehabilitation project, the Hobart Dam Rehabilitation project, the Diversion Dam project, and Marlette Lake Inlet Structure Modifications. I will talk about those later along with the additional catchments on the east slope.

The most significant project is the Marlette Lake Dam Rehabilitation project. It consists of components, including the existing condition of the dam; its seismic stability and structure; the dam’s outlets—both primary and secondary—which are the spills of the water; the emergency spillway; control monitoring systems—the SCADA system; and access roads to the dam.

The dam holds back 11,370-acre feet of water, so it is a substantial structure. The necessity for the project was identified in 2018 through the safety inspection report of Nevada’s Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), which called into question the use and certain aspects of the dam—corroded and cracked, piping, outdated controls, the structure’s stability, and undersized spillways. That is what this project focuses upon.

You may recall that in 2017, we had a significant snowfall that overwhelmed the spill with 18 feet of snow that had to be dug out by hand, short of creating an ice dam, to prevent the lake from spilling in the event we had significant and quick melt off. That was something we had to address right away. It was also called into question through NDEP’s report that it was

undersized. Therefore, we are going to increase the size of the spill and enclose it to prevent ice dams from forming and snow from blocking the spill.

One of the other aspects of the project is to construct, on top of the dam, a fully secured and controlled SCADA system monitoring facility. It will be an enclosed structure with full security systems, including televised monitoring. This will allow us to improve our control of the features on the dam, which is currently done manually. We will be able to do that remotely from our offices.

Another aspect of this project includes improving five miles of the North Canyon Road from Spooner Lake into the dam site. We are going to improve the grading as well as drainage.

One of the other CIPs underway is the Hobart Creek Reservoir Dam. This is a dam that stores 200-acre feet of water. It is a structure that, in 2018, NDEP found similar concerns that we had with Marlette Lake Dam. It cited the Hobart Creek Reservoir Dam project as a requirement to improve certain aspects. Currently, we are awaiting funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), United States Department of Homeland Security, with documents filed with Nevada's Division of Emergency Management, Office of the Military.

Regarding the Marlette Lake Inlet Upgrade project, the Inlet is a relatively new structure that sits on the floor of the lake. We are looking to elevate that off the lake floor about four feet. Currently, we are experiencing increased particulates—or abrasive sediments—that are pulled into the system and wears on the pump mechanisms. Lifting the Inlet four feet will lower the turbidity and improve water quality, which is an important aspect. That project is currently underway and is in design.

The Diversion Dam project is fully designed. It will incorporate SCADA on the east slope of the System. We will be able to remotely operate those systems on the east slope as well as provide for an improved surface to park equipment, maintain the Diversion Dam, and add metering capabilities. We will be able to better control our water management through that system.

The Ash Canyon Treatment Facility Remediation and Cleanup project is a decommissioning project of the former treatment facility that the state used. We are going in to remediate and clean up the warehouse structure, remove old unused equipment, and ready that facility for alternative use. Currently, Carson City utilizes a 3.5 million-gallon above ground tank as well as a reservoir in that area. That is essentially the CIPs that are underway.

We have identified CIPs that are needed. We discussed adding additional catchments, which are necessary to collect waters that naturally flow in the area as well as four other independent projects that all consist of replacing the waterline itself. It is a 145-year-old water system, so the piping is of concern. All of these projects would range between \$30 and \$40 million to complete.

Regarding some of the significant operational needs—I mentioned the pumping season. We have a 12 cylinder naturally aspirated natural gas-fired motor, which provides electricity to the submersible, 230-horsepower pump motor. That motor runs continuously from July 1 until November, so it accumulates many hours. The bottom end of that motor needs to be rebuilt at a cost of approximately \$500,000. In addition, we are looking to replace some of the rolling stock equipment that is used to maintain the System as well as provide security fencing around the corporation yard. The corporation yard also houses our office, which is used for maintaining and operating the System.

That completes our operational update and the update of the CIPs that are underway. I will turn it back over to Mr. LeFevre.

Mr. LeFevre:

We would be happy to answer any questions.

Chair Peters:

A number of us are new to this particular treatment process. Are there any questions on the functionality of the System from the Committee? I want to make sure everyone understands what we are talking about, especially with the CIPs. We have seen those come a couple of times in my tenure here. I do not see any questions related to those things. Are there any questions related to the presentation on the MLWS? I am not seeing any questions from the Committee.

I will ask a few questions. You talked about FEMA funding for the Hobart Dam. Is that funding for finishing the design preconstruction, or is that to complete the construction?

Mr. LeFevre:

The FEMA funding is for construction and to finish the design. We have some state funding that we are using right now to elevate the design to a certain level, and then the additional federal funding will kick in. That will allow us to finish and do the design. We are still waiting to hear from FEMA. We expect to hear from them any day now on whether we are approved to move forward or not.

Chair Peters:

We are playing the waiting game with federal grants right now. Can you give us an idea of the construction timelines, from start to finish, on the three massive construction projects—the spillway, dams, and Inlet?

Mr. Dutra:

We have the three primary construction projects: (1) the Marlette Lake Dam Rehabilitation project; (2) the Hobart Dam Rehabilitation project; and (3) the Diversion Dam project. It is my understanding that the construction of the Marlette Lake Dam Project would commence in 2024. It is 60 percent completed in its design phase. The Hobart Dam Rehabilitation project is about 35 percent completed in its design phase. It still has to go through peer review and permitting. That is going to take some time. There are seasonal restrictions up there. We have a short window for construction and that further delays those projects.

Mr. LeFevre:

Since many of the Committee members have not been up to see the site, we are offering to conduct a tour at a time that would be mutually convenient for the Committee.

Chair Peters:

Thank you for that invitation. There are some other legislators outside the Committee who may be interested in attending as well. The System is beautiful. If you have not had the opportunity to go—it is stunning. We will get that scheduled and bring some people up there to see how cool that area is and to check out the System and discuss how novel it is.

Are there any other questions from the Committee? We will go ahead and close this agenda item.

The presentation for Agenda Item III is on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/About/Contact>.

AGENDA ITEM IV—UPDATE ON THE LAKE TAHOE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND THE TAHOE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Chair Peters:

We will move on to the next agenda item, which is an update on the Lake Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan and the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO). Julie Regan is here from the TRPA. Please proceed when you are ready.

Julie W. Regan, Deputy Director and External Affairs Chief, TRPA:

We have Nick Haven in the audience, who runs the TRPA's transportation program in our Long Range Transportation Planning Division, as well as several TRPA Governing Board members. We are all at your disposal to answer questions, should you have any.

I am going to begin by talking about the big picture of transportation and give a quick overview of some of the governance issues, including our [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP). You will get mired in a lot of detail today, so I want to paint that big picture for you to remember at the end of the day.

I had the pleasure of taking a group of University of Nevada, Reno visiting scholars from Europe on a hike to the lake last week. It is wonderful that we get to bring delegations from other countries back now that we are post pandemic. We, at TRPA, take great pride in doing that in a cultural exchange fashion. I explained to the group how the transportation network is intrinsically connected to the quality of the water in Lake Tahoe. Think of roads as conveyor belts that move sediment and polluted stormwater runoff into the lake. The quality and degradation of the roads can also have an impact; as tires grind particles down, those end up in Lake Tahoe and affect the clarity. What happens on the land affects the water. It is also a greenhouse gas issue; trying to reduce congestion and traffic affects our climate goals. This is the big picture—why it matters. There are other reasons related to TRPA and our governance that are involved as well, which I will get into shortly. In looking at the overall governance, it is helpful to understand there are many players in transportation, and the transportation system is a top priority for TRPA and our many partners who you will hear from today.

We have spoken to you many times around the transportation elements and the alphabet soup of agencies. For the benefit of newer Committee members, I want to start by looking at the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact ([Pub. L. 91-147, 83 Stat. 360 \[1969\]](#)). Later this year, we will celebrate the signing of that Compact, which occurred 52 years ago. The Compact created two agencies governing Tahoe's transportation system. The TRPA is a land use and transportation agency. We adopt an RTP for Tahoe's bistate region and a regional plan that integrates land use policy with approaches for Tahoe's transportation. That is unique in the United States; it is usually bifurcated. The framers of the Compact saw that inherent connection in our goal to preserve this beautiful place. Notably, the Compact mandates that we adopt policies to reduce dependency on the private automobile. In 1980,

when the Compact was amended ([Pub. L. 96-551, 94 Stat. 3233 \[1980\]](#)), it included this provision, so transportation has long been recognized as a policy directive for both states that are parties to the Compact—the State of Nevada and the State of California.

Our plans in Tahoe must prioritize transit, trails, and other noncar modes of mobility. The TRPA was authorized by federal and state laws more than 20 years ago and was also nominated as the Tahoe region’s designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO). I think we are the smallest populated area in the country with that special dispensation. Our 15-member governing board with the addition of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Department of Agriculture—the largest landowner, at 78 percent—constitute that MPO governing body. It is a federally funded and mandated transportation policy making organization. It was also a bistate decision of the two governors per federal statute in 1999 when former U.S. Senator Harry Reid (D-Nevada) and our delegation fought to get that special MPO status for Lake Tahoe.

The significance is that Tahoe, as a bistate region, is now eligible to receive more federal transportation funding than would normally be possible, and importantly, the RTP that we adopt must have reasonably foreseeable funding to make the projects eligible for federal funds. Currently, there is a roughly \$400 million shortfall in our current, adopted RTP. The bistate coalition, and the work of the Bi-State Consultation on Transportation for Lake Tahoe (Bi-State Working Group) that you will hear from today, has been actively engaged for five years to address this funding gap. This was mentioned by Mr. Davis under public comment. Tahoe serves millions of visitors a year on our transportation system, but for decades, we have been classed as a rural, or small, MPO funded only on the basis of less than our 60,000 permanent residents with some special dispensation to recognize a portion of our visitor population. This dichotomy between our small, year-round population and the \$15 million plus annual visitors we serve is truly the heart of the problem that we need to solve in transportation—scaling up to meet that peak demand on our holidays.

The Compact also created the authority for the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD)—the TRPA’s sister agency—who you will hear from shortly. The final article of the Compact—Article IX—established TTD to help implement the RTP. This unique role that the TTD plays is important because we both have cross-jurisdictional authorities. It is important to note the TRPA and TTD are not the only transportation agencies and authorities in Tahoe. Like other MPOs, the TRPA works hand in hand with many implementing partners to carry out our mission. For example, key transportation implementing partners include Douglas and Washoe Counties and Carson City in Nevada, Placer and El Dorado Counties in California, and the City of South Lake Tahoe. We have the departments of transportation from both states—Nevada’s Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)—and many other state-partner agencies. We also have a federal highway—U.S. Highway 50—which runs from Sacramento, California, across the United States to Ocean City, Maryland, where I grew up. It is a complicated jurisdictional landscape in transportation. Additionally, we have many private transit operators. Today, you will hear a snapshot of some of the exciting activity around private sector contributions to transportation. Projects supporting what we call “microtransit” include “Uber in a Van”—launching soon at the south shore—and TART Connect on the north shore, which has been working successfully. There are many partners.

Tahoe’s transportation needs are heavily influenced by areas surrounding us. Looking at the metropolitan areas of northern California and northern Nevada, it is no surprise transportation network is under pressure. Our major areas of influence outside the region extend from the San Francisco Bay Area through Sacramento to Tahoe and northern Nevada. Also, southern Nevada and southern California have residents with second homes

in Tahoe and visit our area—even for day trips. We found throughout the pandemic that people were driving much further distances to either escape the heat or get to the great outdoors. From the Bay Area to northern Nevada alone, there is a combined resident population of 15 million people who are within a day's drive of Lake Tahoe. In addition, we include our workforce in our core transportation system needs. Because home prices are out of reach for the ordinary worker in Tahoe, more and more workers and services are supplied by those who must live outside the Lake Tahoe Basin and commute in and out. Much of what you will hear today addresses the struggles of commuters on the Nevada side who perhaps live on the south end of the lake and must travel along the State Route 28 Corridor—during peak congestion—for their employment on the north shore. That is a huge challenge that we are trying to solve collectively as a partnership. Surrounding metro areas are growing rapidly.

On the basis of rising population alone, we are stressed, not to mention rising temperatures. A recent study through the Tahoe Science Advisory Council (TSAC) showed that as temperatures grow over 100°F, traffic will double on Echo Summit as cars come into the Lake Tahoe Basin on the California side; traffic will double if it is over 100°F in Sacramento and in other areas in the Sacramento Valley. I witnessed that this morning as I left my home in Christmas Valley; people were already coming in, as it is going to be over 100°F today in the Sacramento Valley. Lake Tahoe provides an escape from the heat.

How we manage our transportation networks is critically important to our local residents' quality of life, our commuters, our recreational visitors and their experience, for our economy, and for the lake itself. How do we serve these transportation needs and allow public access to the incredible bounty of public lands that we offer without ruining the resource in the process? That is at the heart of what we are trying to solve while supporting a \$5 billion regional economy that serves both states. Fortunately, we have adopted plans to fix the problem. Every four years, the TRPA—as the MPO—and our partners update the RTP. That was done in 2021; it is the 2020 [Regional Transportation Plan](#), which is a \$2.4 billion investment program with capital and operating expenses. When you drill down into the basics of that program, you will see a true emphasis for what we call in transportation speak, “active transportation.” That is nonauto modes of transportation—trails, transit, getting people out of their cars. Why does it matter so much? First, we need to reduce greenhouse gases to support our state's climate policies. Second, we have the policy mandate in the Compact to reduce dependency on the private automobile and prioritize trails and transit. It is a great opportunity to link our land use decisions with Compact development and concentrate development through our Regional Plan to support transportation investments. That is what we have done with the update of our [2012 Lake Tahoe Regional Plan](#). We will celebrate the 10-year milestone this December on that “12, 12, 12” anniversary of the Regional Plan update, which was important to both of our states.

A few quick notes on our overall framing of what we call the RTP—Regional Transportation Plan—with trails, transit, technologies, and community corridors. In terms of trails, we are making incredible progress on bike and pedestrian facilities. We are adding, on average, five and one-half new trails per year, making Tahoe more walkable and bikeable as the Regional Plan demands. We have added 28 miles of trails over the last five years. We named that connected path the Tahoe Trail. Our goal is to circumnavigate the entire lake off-road in what we call a “Class 1 trail.” There are different sections that have had great progress. I am sure many of you have been on the Tahoe East Shore Trail between Sand Harbor State Park and Incline Village. That is a signature achievement of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) and all our partners. The Spooner Front Country Improvement Project on SR 28 is making great progress, and we have a corridor plan for

the entire SR 28 Corridor [State Route 28 Corridor Project] to link up to fund and to increase our capacity to move people out of their cars and to park them safely.

Transit is perhaps the hardest nut to crack, as we are known to say in Tahoe. The operating funds necessary for transit is a huge challenge with our small rural population. Today, on the routes we can serve, we often have an hour-long service limitation without a seamless connection from the north to the south shore. We are seeing some improvements in microtransit service, which is exciting for us; however, our vision and aspiration is to have year-round transit service that is connected and seamless with dedicated, free, and frequent times so people do not have to wait more than 15—or maybe 30—minutes; dependable service is our vision. We would like to offer our visitors the opportunity to arrive, park their car once, and get around the Lake Tahoe Basin without the use of a private automobile. We need to have the trails necessary to move them around. We also hope to have trains someday.

As I mentioned, we are working diligently. In addition to transit and trails, technology is a piece we are looking at for improved communication. People can pick up their phones and get most information. We have some apps under development for travel demand management where people could have real-time information about the ability to park in certain locations and to get around congestion. There are opportunities there. That is the third “T” of the trails, transit, technology—and community corridors.

I thank this Committee and the State of Nevada for the commitment to the Bi-State Consultation on Transportation process. It could not be more important for the future of the lake, particularly as we continue to grow and evolve as the backyard for our communities of northern Nevada and northern California. You will be hearing a great deal more from Carl Hasty, District Manager of the TTD, and Alexis Hill, Washoe County Commissioner; TTD Board Chair; and Member, TRPA Governing Board. I am happy to answer your questions.

Chair Peters:

Are there any questions from the Committee?

Assemblywoman Cohen:

Did I hear you say the busses are going to be free?

Ms. Regan:

Yes, we have free transit service, and my colleagues at the TTD will get into more detail. We were able to do that prepandemic because of some investments from local jurisdictions and new grants. We have noticed that transit ridership dramatically increases when it is free and frequent. It is also fun. The plan would be to keep it free, but the collection of revenue is complicated and creates many challenges. The microtransit that launched on the north shore—TART Connect—and what will be on the south shore will be free to encourage ridership. That is a challenge. The funding is only identified in pilot phases for a few years in some of those instances, and that is part of the solution that we are trying to come up with to continue the funding.

Assemblywoman Cohen:

Are the percentages with ridership commensurate with the small numbers of residents versus tourists? Does that line up with those numbers of who is in the Lake Tahoe Basin, or is it skewed more to one or the other?

Ms. Regan:

We anticipated a lot of our visitors with TART Connect, which has been wildly successful. The numbers show there is a fair number—probably a majority—of local riders. These are commuters who are using the service. It was a bit of a surprise, and that is part of the success of these pilot programs. They help us understand the user patterns within the transportation network. We have a lot of marketing to do to get the word out. Another challenge that we have found through market research is that, because we have a very complicated transportation network, a lot of people are not familiar with the opportunities available—what transit services are there. We have a focused effort around marketing to let the consumer know that we have these services as we roll them out. We can drill down into more detail for you because it is interesting.

Chair Peters:

Are there any other questions from Committee members?

Senator Settelmeyer:

I am hearing from my constituents about the increased traffic we are seeing in Tahoe. Can we have a discussion on that? It seems that traffic totals have gone off the charts. We are seeing levels we have never seen in Tahoe, and anecdotally, I am being told a lot of that is related to the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19), meaning that people are tired of the cities, and they want out—especially on 100°F days, which everyone is tired of. We have seen an unbelievable increase in the traffic levels at Tahoe. Is that correct?

Ms. Regan:

It is correct in certain areas. During the pandemic, the traffic was different with the biggest hotspots being on our public lands. It was a different traffic pattern. In the past, people might have been more in restaurants or the Casino Core, but with those facilities being closed during the height of the pandemic, people went onto the trails. We had more crowding in our corridors, on shoulder parking, and in hiking and mountain biking trails. Public land usage skyrocketed. Overall, I think traffic is up, but it is not out of character. It is the concentration of the areas where people were parking and using facilities that was not only overcrowded, but overwhelming. That is what I think the local residents have reacted to. In my neighborhood, and for my colleagues, it is difficult to go out and enjoy anything in the peak summer season. It is being experienced by many people. The Tahoe-Douglas Visitor's Authority will probably have some excellent data for you. It seems like this Fourth of July, being on a Monday, we were all bracing for the impact because the last couple of years have been extremely crowded with traffic. It seemed more akin to a normal Fourth of July, which was busy but not in this overwhelming status. We can dive more into stats and provide any information that you need to follow up. In general, things are busy, but the shift of where people are congregating is the biggest change that we have noticed.

Chair Peters:

It has been hard for my family to make the trek up without knowing where we will be able to park or what beach will have space for us. I look forward to my children being old enough to utilize public transportation. I like the free part, as I do not carry cash. It is difficult for my family to use transportation that requires a cash payment. I appreciate that movement; it resonates with a lot of people who want to make it up to the lake to enjoy it as locals. Are there any other questions from the Committee? [There were none.]

I look forward to the next discussion. Thank you, Ms. Regan, for providing that baseline of where we are at. I am going to close this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM V—OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS, AND PRIORITIES OF THE TAHOE TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

Chair Peters:

The next agenda item is an overview of activities, programs, and priorities of the TTD. Please begin when you are ready.

Alexis Hill, Washoe County Commissioner, District 1; Chair, TTD; Member, TRPA Governing Board:

I am County Commissioner for District 1, representing northwest Reno, southwest Reno, Incline Village, and Crystal Bay. I am excited to be the new Chair of TTD as well as a TRPA Governing Board Member.

Carl Hasty, District Manager, TTD:

It would have been more fun to be up at the lake because we could show you some of the things that are being talked about. It would have been a great way to see what is going on there and what some of the solutions are. I look forward to being able to do that in the future. If there is any time you would like to do that individually or as a group, do not hesitate to reach out.

We were established in the same Compact as the TRPA; Article IX gives us our authority. You will find us in the same place as the TRPA in NRS because that is where the Compact is located—[NRS 277.200](#). We focus entirely on transportation. We were created to be similar—the equivalent—of the regional transportation commissions (RTCs) that the counties have, and we were created around the same time as the RTCs. Our job within the Compact is to focus entirely on transportation, and that covers the gamut for the region. We also have the authority, inside and outside the Lake Tahoe Basin, to go outside for purposes of connecting Tahoe. We work closely with the TRPA and other entities to do that.

It is important to know that 90 percent of the Lake Tahoe Basin is publicly owned—if you throw in the lake, which is controlled as a reservoir by the Bureau of Reclamation. There is more public ownership and control than anything else. It is a high demand, small urban area. It is challenging from a transportation perspective to have a lake in the middle of that. We are also part of the Sierra Pacific Megapolitan Region. We have 14 to 15 million people within an easy day's drive to the Basin. To your question, Senator Settlemeyer, we are seeing the willingness of people to stay in traffic longer and be in a tighter space on the beach with other people. I have also watched it evolve and change over the 30 years that I have been up there.

Senator Settlemeyer:

If I could, Madam Chair, it seems like the right time to ask a question. After being a seasoned veteran on this Committee for many years, I was looking at a report you gave a long time ago that showed about 80 percent of the visitor traffic at Tahoe came through the Reno Airport. Do you have any information showing how that has changed over the last couple of years or whether you still think it is primarily coming through that location?

Mr. Hasty:

Yes, we did some assessment of the major airports in the Bay Area, Sacramento, and Reno to see where people were coming through. We have not had any updates. I am looking at an evaluation of that, but we know Reno is still a significant player in terms of distant visitors coming to Tahoe who typically have to rent a car to come up and enjoy it. The Reno Airport plays a big role.

Continuing, we have about 10 million vehicles coming in. That is a big job for us. I want to point out we have a population of 70,000 residents. It is important to understand we have a close relationship and interplay with what is called the "Resort Triangle," which goes to Truckee on the U.S. Highway 80 Corridor. Truckee is similar to Tahoe in that there are a lot of second homes and ski resorts, and people who go to Truckee are also going to Tahoe. We need to think about that from a transportation perspective.

I am not going to go through all the major projects and services we are focusing on; instead, I am going to focus primarily on the SR 28 Corridor. What we would have shown you on a field trip to the Corridor is the circumstance there. Ms. Regan noted the first segment of that bike trail has been constructed. The TTD put that project together, got it through the environmental process, got a lot of the funding in place, and worked with our partners. Nevada's Department of Transportation took on the responsibility of building that project. It was a fantastic partnership, and it worked well. We are now focusing on the next eight miles from Sand Harbor State Park to U.S. Highway 50. We have some transportation dollars to put to work, and we have applied for a number of grant opportunities. We did receive a small earmark for that—now that those are back. We have more work to do there.

We look for other opportunities with our projects. There is an opportunity with the Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID). We are trying to get the funding in time to co-locate the replacement export pipeline for their sewage effluent, which now resides in SR 28 itself. It is difficult when they have to repair it—stop the highway, et cetera. NV Energy is extremely interested in undergrounding their power line along that Corridor. Given today's climate and fire situation, there is more opportunity and cooperation with NV Energy to do that. We have a policy with fiber connections to "dig once." We also have a rural communication system that is not always as responsive as it needs to be when we have that urban demand up there. Both NDOT and the TTD are looking at how we can expand the ability to get fiber optic in there. There are a lot of transportation upgrades, including a series of mobility hubs. We are currently focused on a mobility hub in Incline Village and are looking at having another one at the junction of U.S. Highway 50 and SR 28. Having a series of these is part of the plan to be both in and out of the Lake Tahoe Basin, so we can connect people and give them alternatives. Congestion is one of the big things to address on SR 28. We have a cooperative effort underway with all of the public entities, including NDOT; the Division of State Parks, DCNR; and the USFS. There are a lot of people who have different responsibilities for managing that Corridor, including those involved with enforcement and ticketing—the Nevada Highway Patrol, Department of Public Safety; and the courts. There is a real partnership effort underway to get some new facilities, get people to park off the shoulder, get some seasonal transit, and provide a safe way for people to walk so they are not using the highway itself as a sidewalk.

We have a board of directors with 14 members. We have two governor appointees, representatives from the private sector, and the local elected officials from all six jurisdictions that make up the Lake Tahoe Basin. I am going to turn it over to Commissioner Hill.

Commissioner Hill:

One of the things I love about being on the TTD Board is that we need to collaborate “epically” in Tahoe, as Joanne S. Marchetta, former Executive Director of the TRPA, would say. The projects we do at TTD show that epic collaboration, and we are proud of our investment of over \$100 million in transportation projects. Some of those projects are the Meeks Bay to Sugar Pine Point Bike Trail, Dollar Creek Shared Use Path, Tahoe East Shore Trail to Sand Harbor, SR 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project in Tahoe City, and the first roundabout in the Lake Tahoe Basin at the intersection of SR 28 and SR 431 in Incline Village. These are exciting projects that we have been able to work on, and we look forward to further investments, which we will talk about later. ([Agenda Item V](#))

Obviously, there are transportation challenges in Lake Tahoe. We have small communities in the shoulder seasons, but we receive a tremendous influx of vehicles during our peak seasons and special events. There is a dependence on vehicular travel. There was a question about visitation. The most recent visitation statistics show that 42 percent of visitation is day use from adjacent communities in Nevada and California. This shows how important it is to figure out how to get those day users onto public transit with a fabulous public transit system.

We have many other issues up at Lake Tahoe. We primarily have a two-lane road around the lake. In some areas, it is four lanes. We are not going to expand those roads or create a bridge over Lake Tahoe. We need to reduce the number of people driving around the lake. Vehicle miles travelled (VMT) is creating water pollution and declining our lake clarity, which is one of the biggest things we are proud about with Lake Tahoe. We have fire danger, so we need to figure out how to evacuate people when there are fires. If there are a lot of vehicles up at Lake Tahoe—we saw this with last year's fire—we can get into some trouble.

Additionally, we have a lack of affordable housing, which you will hear about later today. People are commuting to their jobs in Lake Tahoe from Carson City or Reno on the Nevada side, and they cannot afford to do that with gas prices as high as they are. Our most recent study showed they need to receive an additional \$500 per month in additional pay. We know that amount has gone up significantly with the increasing cost of gas. As a representative of Incline Village and Crystal Bay, I think we also need to consider the quality of life for residents traveling within their communities. We are not only seeing additional people coming up to Lake Tahoe to enjoy the lake, but we are also seeing people moving to Lake Tahoe as full-time residents. More people are living in these small communities on a full-time basis, and that has been an adjustment. There are additional VMTs within those communities.

With all these challenges, I can envision a fabulous transportation system—a way that all these issues can be fixed. I envision mass transit from adjacent communities—from Reno or Carson City—up to Lake Tahoe, so you can drop your car there. That is where almost half of our visitors are coming from. The first and last mile will involve our microtransit programs. This year, Washoe County has invested, for the first time, \$100,000 into microtransit. We will be seeing year-round and evening microtransit. We will also see skiers using microtransit. With our CIPs, we are completing the SR 28 [Tahoe East Shore Trail] to have people use micromobility. It will allow pedestrians to get around the lake safely while recreating. We can envision it; how do we get there?

Delivery of transportation is different in Tahoe. As Mr. Hasty pointed out, we are not a traditional RTC that can levy a sales tax. We have an opportunity to levy a tax, but it has to be general and a uniform operation throughout the region. It is very difficult for TTD to levy

its own tax. That is something we need to work on. California has the [Transportation Development Act \(TDA\) of 1971](#). This is an investment that the state has returned to its local jurisdictions to fund transit. Placer and El Dorado Counties in California and the City of South Lake Tahoe receive funding from California to match federal grants for transit through the TTD. Nevada does not match that. I think there is an opportunity, and we can look at doing that. Our local jurisdictions also want to see how we can step up to the plate and support those matches. This vision is beautiful—how we can pull together this transit program. There is complexity with the five counties, one municipality, and the two states that govern Lake Tahoe.

We are now in a focused time to figure out our transportation system funding gap. In 2019 and 2020, TTD did a study through the One Tahoe initiative that looked at a single source of funding, which would have been a basin entry fee to get into Lake Tahoe. It seems like a silver bullet solution; however, it is not yet feasible with our local jurisdictions and both states. The 2020 update of our [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP) and VMT Threshold Standard update essentially says we need to figure out how to transform our transportation system around Tahoe or we cannot develop the area any further. We have seen the 7-7-7 sector approach, and the local governments are coming together. Washoe County is at the table, and we are excited to fund transportation. We like that the 7-7-7 approach at the local level is not telling us how we need to tax our citizens or figure out our portion of the funding. We, as a local jurisdiction, can decide where that comes from, which gives us flexibility and shows the exciting point of collaboration at the local, state, and federal level.

Regarding the use of funding gap revenue for the RTP, we are looking for matching funds for capital and operations up at Lake Tahoe to finish that last part of the Tahoe East Shore Trail and many other connected corridor projects around Lake Tahoe. We have to use local funding to leverage our state funds for these capital projects. That is another opportunity for locals to step up, and we are willing to do so. On the TTD front, we need general funding support at the state level. The TTD is asking for a subgrant through the TRPA. Until we get our 7-7-7 program up and going, we are asking for a grant to help us with our operations. The TTD does not have a general funding source—no sales tax revenue. We, as an organization, need to be strong with staff who can implement this \$20 million project. You will see that coming down as well as a request from the TRPA through the TTD.

In the short term, we are asking for State General Fund support for the TTD to assist with capital and operations for the Tahoe RTP. In the long term, there is an opportunity to see how the TTD can have more flexibility to gain revenue. There may be a possible bill draft request (BDR) in the future for us to look at. If the TTD was able to implement our taxing authority, we would not even be able to reach the funding gap that we have for transportation projects, which is \$40 million—about \$6 million per year. We need to look at all of these options of local, state, and federal government coming together.

Mr. Hasty and I are available to answer any questions you may have.

Chair Peters:

Are there questions from the Committee on this presentation? [There were none.]

Can you further discuss what the 7-7-7 breakdown looks like? Who will participate in each area and where people are in agreement with funding?

Mr. Hasty:

We will be speaking to that in a lot more detail in the next item. We are providing some transition with our presentation to lead into that. We will also give you an update at that time of what the TTD Board of Directors has been doing relevant to tackling those sectors.

Commissioner Hill:

We have had many hearings on the local breakdown through the TRPA and the TTD. Overall, the local jurisdictions around the lake are open to what their spend will be. Even counties like Placer are looking at spending more than what their local match would be. That is the exciting part because we cannot have this functional transportation system without the locals coming with our State General Fund dollars.

Chair Peters:

Thank you for that redirection. I am obviously looking forward to this conversation. I can appreciate the need for State General Fund support. I hope it is clear to the Committee that your current funding is project-based, so there is not a consistent level of funding for you outside of those project-related funds to support your administrative work. The request is to help build the professional nature of what you do and make sure that you are supported with grant writing and other tasks to make sure those projects you mentioned are implemented. Is that a correct surmise?

Mr. Hasty:

Yes, it would give us a foundation that we do not currently have. We have been fortunate to have had the run of it for as long as we have. What kicked us off was a set of discretionary earmarks that came through the TRPA, which allowed us to get into this as well as an opportunity when the transit system was in danger at the south shore. The TDD was in the position to step up, take it on, and not have it go down. We have been creative and assertive with how we can play the discretionary game with trying to build a small general fund. It is not a reimbursable type of situation, so we are finding ourselves at the extent of how we can operate under the current model. This is why we are seeking for some kind of baseline that would be of great assistance.

Chair Peters:

Are there any questions before we move on to the next item? [There were none.]

The presentation from the TTD for this agenda item is on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/About/Contact>.

AGENDA ITEM VI—UPDATE ON THE LAKE TAHOE BI-STATE CONSULTATION ON TRANSPORTATION AND LIST OF TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS FOR THE LAKE TAHOE BASIN PREPARED PURSUANT TO [SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 8 \(2021\)](#)

Chair Peters:

The next agenda item is an update on the Lake Tahoe Bi-State Consultation on Transportation and list of transportation priorities and projects for the Lake Tahoe Basin prepared pursuant to [SCR 8](#) from the 2021 Legislative Session.

We have a couple of people coming forward to discuss the status of this. Please proceed when you are ready.

James R. Lawrence, Acting Director, DCNR:

I want to dive into a couple of things that were said earlier, particularly with why it is so challenging to get a transportation system up there that works for everybody. You have heard some of the numbers. Senator Settelmeyer talked about visitation from airports, and yes, 80 percent of people arriving by air are coming through Reno. A lot of people are driving up in cars through all the different entry points.

One of the best decisions I made in my life was to move to Carson City in 1991 from Eugene, Oregon. I was a commuter from Carson City to South Lake Tahoe for seven years because of the housing issues and the cost. We have a system that hits the tipping scale during peak demand in recreation areas. We have a commuter system with people who depend on getting up there for their work. We have a lot of people coming up from the Carson Valley and Carson City to the south shore. My nephew, who is a painter, lives in Reno, and almost all his jobs are in Kings Beach, Incline Village, and Reno. There is such a mix of use and transportation up there that it makes it challenging.

One of the questions I am asked frequently is, "Why is the DCNR diving into transportation issues?" Bryan Cash from the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) probably gets the same question. Between the two states, we have had a good, strong, working relationship that has been getting stronger ever since we worked on the Regional Plan update in 2012. The two former cabinet members—John Laird, former Secretary, CNRA, and my previous boss, Bradley Crowell, former Director, DCNR—decided to tackle the transportation issues at Lake Tahoe to see how we can help. The reason for doing so is due to some of those environmental problems, such as water quality issues. When you do not have a good transportation system, you actually have an increase in fire danger. We have greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets that we want to hit.

When I look at the State of Nevada—just like California—we claim ownership to the bed and bank of Lake Tahoe, and the lake is one of the primary drivers up to the region. We are part of the problem of having people come up. We also have our state park system up there. For those of you who are familiar with Lake Tahoe, the area between U.S. Highway 50 to the south and up to Incline Village is almost all public land. Not all of it is state land; most of it is USFS land. Spooner Lake is the southern "bookend" as I call it, and Hidden Beach is the northern bookend. We have many visitors coming up to recreate, and we have a responsibility to give them safe, quality recreation. On top of that, I know people who live in on the south shore, and others who live in Incline Village, who commute back and forth. In the summertime, particularly, they cannot get to their jobs because there is so much traffic going into Sand Harbor State Park; there is a backlog. The region is responsible for quality recreation, quality of life, and a \$5 billion economy. That is the reason why the two resource agencies decided to get involved.

We set up the Bi-State Consultation on Transportation about five years ago, and we have gone through what I think of as two iterations—Phase 1 and Phase 2. The first time we got together in Phase 1, we made tremendous progress. We were able to focus on different areas we think should be the highest priorities. We identified technology as an issue because we have a changing economy and a changing transportation system that is dependent on technology. Mr. Hasty mentioned the broadband challenges up there. We looked at the issue of peak recreation and what that does to the system and to congestion. We identified priority corridors—the east shore corridor that I talked about and the Emerald

Bay Corridor on the other side. Since there are so many multijurisdictions, we recognize the need to have frameworks in place that bring all those partners together to ensure they are making management decisions holistically and for the greater good. We also looked at collaborative planning documents. The Bi-State Working Group weighed in on the [California State Rail Plan](#) and the [Nevada State Rail Plan](#). Rail is not a short-term solution, but it is part of the long-term solution. A lot of work needs to be done to reduce single-use vehicles coming up to Lake Tahoe, particularly from the Bay Area; rail is part of the equation. We also looked at public-private partnerships. There was agreement that this is not solely a public endeavor; the private side will have a large responsibility and has a great role in doing this. You will hear later about the South Shore Events Center and what they are doing to provide microtransit for the visitors. We also had a long discussion about whether to have fixed-lane bus routes, which is more traditional, or more microtransit. As you have probably surmised by now, microtransit is seen as one of the better solutions to get people where they need to go. There is the south shore microtransit, which you will probably hear more about later. You already heard about TART Connect on the north shore between Placer County and Incline Village. Microtransit gets people more directly to the places they want to go, and people do not want to wait in fixed lines.

We moved into Phase 2 of the Consultation, and I want to thank this body for the time and attention you have given to this issue over the years. Last session, you passed SCR 8, which basically gave approval and endorsement for continuation of the bi-state process. This is why we are here today.

Where are we at in 2022? What are the priority projects? How are we looking at equity? What are some of the barriers to implementation? What is the funding strategy? You had some discussion on the funding strategy. That will be discussed later in the presentation, but I want to dive into that a little bit. There was a big breakthrough in the last round of the Bi-state Consultation. With so many multiple jurisdictions and “up and down” local governments and federal and state agencies, there was a desire for one fungible, single source. It is a little easier to implement when you do not have to track the color of money everywhere and you have one source that could be used for multiple purposes. Various ideas were discussed and explored thoroughly, and I think those will continue to be explored moving forward. A lot of questions need to be looked at regarding equity, legal parameters, and constitutionality. There is a recognized need that we need to do something now. That is where the 7-7-7 framework came up. For those of you have been around, that is the same strategy that we use successfully for the Lake Tahoe EIP.

The Lake Tahoe EIP is a large body of projects that needs to be completed in forest health, water quality, recreation, and aquatic invasive species. The funding shares have been split amongst the federal government, state agencies, local governments, and the private sector. We have been successful with raising money in Nevada for the EIP—a large thank you to this body for approving our EIP bonds. We have been able to use that strategy to successfully bring funding for necessary environmental improvements to Lake Tahoe. That was the strategy that was landed on by the Bi-State Consultation. In many ways, it was a breakthrough because, as you heard from Commissioner Hill, the local governments are all on board and have embraced the concept that they can dictate their own destiny by deciding how they want to raise the funds as opposed to someone telling them how to do it. It is the same thing with the states. California has its own authorities, and we have our own authorities in Nevada. At the end of the day, what matters is that we bring the revenue to bear and get the projects on the ground.

Ms. Regan and Mr. Hasty will do the bulk of the presentation on the details of the report. Before they begin, I will hand it over to Mr. Cash to say some words regarding the California perspective.

Bryan Cash, Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance, CNRA:

I want to briefly comment on California's commitment to continue working with our partner—Nevada—on transportation issues in the Tahoe area, including efforts to find funding to address the needs. We are currently working with Caltrans to secure grant funding for the transportation projects that you will be hearing about in Ms. Regan's presentation as part of the Bi-State Consultation. We are looking at other options to create more sustainable funding in the future to help and meet California's commitment. I am here to answer any questions and to show California's commitment to continue working with all our partners on this.

Ms. Regan:

I appreciate the chance to dive in a little deeper—building on the previous speakers and our introduction. As Acting Director Lawrence said, we are here to report on [SCR 8](#). Many of us, including our partners here today, testified during session to support this and bring attention to the great need around transportation and to put a fine point on the projects that will get us to the outcomes we are looking for. We can envision a transportation future that puts Tahoe in the world-class transportation area. We have a world-class resort. We have one of the most spectacular places on the planet to visit. We have an abundance of public lands, but in many respects, our transportation network is third world. That is the purpose for the work that is underway.

We are going to walk through our detailed report, which breaks down information on projects on the Nevada side of the lake ([Agenda Item VI](#)). I encourage you to breeze through that when you have the opportunity. We will share some highlights today, including how the report addresses the specific areas of the resolution, benefits of the project, the overall project list, metrics of success, how it addresses climate change, issues of equity and access, and recommendations for funding.

We will go back to the beginning with the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact. As Acting Director Lawrence said, the resource agencies have historically—for 50 plus years—been the keepers of the Compact. That entails the partnership—that “epic collaboration,” as we like to say—to get these things done, and transportation has always been envisioned as an essential element of that investment for the future of the lake. We are required to do the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) and prioritize other modes of transportation. That is a difficult thing to do. The framers were brilliant with including this in the Compact; however, when you look at the land use pattern, the highways were formed at the advent of the 1960 Olympic Games held at Squaw Valley Ski Resort—now Palisades Tahoe Ski Resort. It was a road-dominated culture, and that was the era of vacations and resorts. We created Tahoe with this road, auto-dominated infrastructure. We have to go back and change that; it expensive and challenging to do.

As I said earlier, what happens on the land affects the water. That is sometimes hard to get your arms around. As Acting Director Lawrence noted, transportation is its own entity, but that is what forces the partnership. The work we are doing is closely coordinated with NDOT. The state, as you well know, is going through its own process with the Nevada Sustainable Transportation Funding Alternatives Study Advisory Working Group. The TRPA is pleased to sit on that working group to look at funding shortfalls for the state as a whole.

The state is looking to fill a \$500 million annual shortfall with gas tax receipts going down over time. That is a big problem to solve for the state. The \$400 million for the RTP is over 20 years. We are looking at a \$20 million annual shortfall, which equates to that roughly 7-7-7 share that you have been hearing so much about. Keep in mind that these investments are good for the environment, economy, and the community. It will help us achieve our clarity goals and other environmental measures that we are mandated to maintain and achieve.

You have heard a great deal about the challenges. I do not need to belabor the point. I will emphasize safety, as it is a top priority for our transportation partners. We are at an untenable position. Senator Settelmeyer, I appreciated your question because we do have this feeling that at any minute something terrible could happen on the roadways because of the congestion and this redistribution of attention on our public lands and trails. People have discovered the great outdoors. We have always been an outdoor recreation mecca, but what we have found in these last few years is that people who might have gone to Disneyland, Six Flags, or other parks that were shut down, discovered camping, hiking, and biking. This created a big change in how traffic is clustered. That is part of why we went to these corridor approaches for the east shore on SR 28 from Stateline to Kings Beach and Crystal Bay. We are doing the same thing on the California side around the entire Emerald Bay corridor all the way down to the "Y" and Camp Richardson. We are looking at these corridors to address things like safety and equitable access. With the abundance of public lands, it is imperative that we have public access, not only for people who are able to mountain bike and climb tall peaks, but for those with disabilities, including people in wheelchairs. That is difficult in the constrained network and infrastructure we have, so that is something that we are taking a hard look at.

We are looking at these corridors and addressing things like safety and equitable access. We are doing our first ever equity study in the RTP, and our transportation team is working with the TTD and our many partners in the community to interview people about access. I will give you an example. We have installed some beautiful facilities and trails, but in the winter, they are largely inaccessible. I have cringed driving on U.S. Highway 50 with a person in a wheelchair trying to get by on a trail that was not plowed. We are looking at operations and maintenance to focus on how we can keep these trails open year-round. That is an expensive proposition, but it is necessary if we want to achieve the vision that we have access for all.

We have covered transit and GHG emissions. During the Caldor Fire, which we covered in your last gathering, 30,000 people were evacuated in 4 to 5 hours. That was a feat. We did that successfully with no injuries, but we have limited capacity to do that. Transportation spills into other areas like emergency preparedness and public safety. Fifteen people have lost their lives on the SR 28 Corridor and the U.S. Highway 50 Corridor—think Zephyr Cove.

Our local businesses are at the table for transportation—and that is the success of our EIP with the public-private sector—because even if people may tolerate traffic to a greater degree, at the end of the day, there will be a tipping point. If it takes ten hours to get to Lake Tahoe from San Francisco, it might be easier for those people to go somewhere else. It is of economic and environmental interest.

We did a study of our EIP, which showed that every year 1,700 jobs are supported by the EIP as a whole. That is everything from transportation to watershed restoration to forest health and fuels reduction. Investing in this way not only helps our communities and the environment, but it also brings economic benefits to the area. Notably, Sand Harbor State Park is one of the top attractions in the state—no surprise. I believe it was the top attraction

in 2021. It recognized one-third of revenue from entrance fees overall for the state along with Spooner Lake and Cave Rock. Visitation is a huge consideration for the state.

There is a new trail segment that was dedicated a few weeks ago, which has access for people of all physical abilities on the south shore. It is the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway. It also connects our community of the Sierra Tract on the south shore to Lake Tahoe Community College; students and commuters are using it. The trail was designed over a sensitive wetland area, so we have proven that we can build these trails in an environmentally sensitive manner and also improve access for all, including walkers, bikers, and people with different levels of activity barriers.

The resolution looked for us to talk about the barriers to implementation. You have heard a great body of evidence around this, but workforce shortages are absolutely poignant this year and has been for a number of years. Businesses are not able to be open because they do not have the staff due to the cost of housing. Other areas around the state have experienced the same thing. You are going to hear from the Tahoe Prosperity Center about that, so I will not belabor the point. I once heard it said in our community that Tahoe has always been a resort—an expensive place to live. Before the pandemic, we went to sleep—we went to bed as Tahoe—and we woke up two and one-half years later as Aspen or Vail. The prices have skyrocketed to such a degree with rental and sale prices, that they are having all sorts of effects on our workforce, the quality of life for local citizens, and the ability of people to live in Tahoe. The prices are forcing more commuting, which brings more congestion and more GHG emissions from vehicles. This is all being analyzed as part of this report. With broadband support infrastructure, we have made a request for a number of federal grants through the U.S. Economic Development Administration—some are pending—to get more support to build our infrastructure in the area of broadband and Wi-Fi. Over the Fourth of July weekend, voicemails took up to three days to show up on peoples' phones because there was so much stress from people being here, and calls were dropping left and right. These are things we all know and are working to address.

One area that has emerged and will continue to be worked on is parking. This came up in our Bi-State Consultation meeting yesterday with Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency; Mr. Cash, who you heard from earlier; Acting Director Lawrence; and others from Nevada. The complicated landscape of jurisdictional areas makes for confusing parking policy. What we are trying to do as part of this consultation and implementation through our transportation action plan is get a regional strategy for parking. We have private facilities on the south shore that charge for parking in the Casino Core. We had a meter program that was recalled through a ballot initiative in the City of South Lake Tahoe some years back. Placer County is doing a wonderful amount of research on parking for the north shore—from the west shore all the way to Kings Beach—and have some interesting pilot programs that they are looking to roll out in the coming years. What we found, particularly during the pandemic, is that one policy implemented in one jurisdiction has implications for the neighboring jurisdiction. For example, when public lands had to close due to fire danger and the beaches at Lake Tahoe were closed for the first time in history, the fire danger was too high and the capacity was not there to maintain the facilities, which pushed demand into private areas surrounding public lands. We have the Lake Tahoe Destination Stewardship Plan, which we are working through to address and provide more consistency around all of these policies, particularly parking. We are trying to determine how to best provide access, but at the same time, change behavior because we do not have the roadway capacity to see continued upticks in parking in our corridors. We are looking at some interesting research to say, "How can we shift that behavior and incentivize people to do shuttles?" That is a big focus of this plan in addition to real-time traveler data.

Within the transportation action plan, we are looking hard at, and being aggressive with, increasing our electric vehicle fleet. We took the TRPA Governing Board on a tour of the Meeks Bay recreation area last month, and we were pleased to ride on TTD's first electric bus. Lake Tahoe Community College has a mobility hub that can charge these new clean vehicles. There are a number of charging stations mapped around the Lake Tahoe Basin. We won a national award for our [*Tahoe-Truckee Plug-In Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan*](#). We are being very bullish as a public-private partnership. Many private sector, nongovernmental agencies like the Tahoe Fund, for example, are raising money to support this.

Before we transition over to Mr. Hasty, I want to again ground you with the big picture of the RTP. The full RTP is almost \$2.5 billion; \$20 million annually is the sustainable funding source that we are trying to fill. The breakthrough with the Bi-State Consultation was identifying the 7-7-7—a partnership of thirds—in the model and the spirit of the EIP where each partnership sector identifies how they will come up with an annual target of \$7 million per year. The breakthrough has been real. Yesterday, we heard about and were encouraged by the transient occupancy tax (TOT) ballot initiative in Eldorado County this year, which would bring more money into the Lake Tahoe Basin for transportation. It is always a heavy lift for any tax measure in California with a two-thirds requirement. The Bi-State Consultation is inspiring more action on the ground at local, state, and federal levels. We are pleased to report that we received a \$2 million community-funded and directed spend from our federal delegation to invest in new parking facilities for the whole corridor of SR 28. The USFS is busy with the engineering to put new parking facilities off-road to support that corridor implementation. We are receiving more money for transit, and we have several outstanding coordinated grants underway. The \$7 million state contributions would be a two-thirds to one-third funding ratio, with California contributing \$4.5 million annually and Nevada contributing \$2.5 million annually. That will be explored more in this presentation. The \$7 million annual target for local governments includes all local governments—the City of South Lake Tahoe, Washoe and Douglas Counties, Carson City, and El Dorado and Placer Counties—and the private sector, which is making substantial contribution to transportation. I want to ground you with that bigger picture before we dive into the projects. It is one thing to say we need more transportation investment, but then we need to know for what end. Our report dives into the projects that we want to invest in. I will now turn this over to Mr. Hasty.

Mr. Hasty:

We talked about the SR 28 Corridor Project in the last presentation. It is a priority project to complete the 11 miles from Incline Village to Spooner Junction—to get parking off the highway with safe, designated parking locations. Another part of the solution that was mentioned earlier is parking management. It also relates to Senator Settelmeyer's earlier question. It is one thing to have transit and trails, but when you have an abundance of free parking, that is not much of an incentive for people to get out and shift to another mode. That is human nature. What we have seen and know from successful mountain resort communities around the West is that parking management—paid parking, and so on—are incremental to a successful transit system. Park City, which is a small community in Utah, can get an annual ridership on transit of two million. People park once and are able to walk and take transit without paying a fare; it is easy to use. You see a broad spectrum of the community utilizing that—both visitors and residents. That is the desire for us at Tahoe, but we have a challenge with doing this on a larger scale. We are starting to tackle this in places like the SR 28 Corridor as well as down south at Stateline.

Regional transit service is another aspect that would begin in places like SR 28 on a seasonal basis. The idea is to reconnect to Carson City, directly, which will help us become

more interregional. This is a connection we have lost over time. Nevada's Department of Transportation is doing a corridor evaluation, of which we are all participating in, for the rest of U.S. Highway 50 from Spooner to Stateline. A series of improvements will be coming out of that. Tahoe has learned, and the EIP has fostered, the cross-silo, solution-oriented approach that we need to use; it is being applied more extensively to transportation. To address issues along any of our corridors, we must get to cross-jurisdiction solutions. Everyone has to be involved. For solutions, it is no longer adequate for NDOT to focus only on its right-of-way or the USFS or the Division of State Parks to focus only on their property. We are continuing to evolve and be successful with some of the improvements that are planned with our list of priorities.

Our single, largest mobility hub at Lake Tahoe will be at U.S. Highway 50 at Stateline. The whole redevelopment vision since the 1990s has been about making that a safer destination where you park once. There is a high concentration of bed base and parking, and we are doing more to connect trails between that area and the mountainside—Van Sickle Bi-State Park—as well as to the lake. There is the Tahoe South Events Center, which you will hear more about. Ideally, where we will get with an approved project that has been through the process, is a local street through the commercial area—the Casino Core—and a realignment of some of U.S. Highway 50 [U.S. 50 South Shore Community Revitalization Project]. Those are some of the areas that were working on.

Ms. Regan mentioned the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway trail. That is a transformation of an older concept for transportation. It was going to be a highway. Caltrans purchased the right-of-way from the community of Meyers to Stateline as the beginning of a four-lane highway to encircle the entire lake with a bridge across the mouth of Emerald Bay. This is when the Compact began to change that by moving us into a multimodal solution; the Memorial Greenway trail is a good example of that. The SR 89 Recreation Corridor around Emerald Bay is another focus area that is important.

Lastly, is the SR 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project. If you have not had the opportunity to drive through there in the summertime, I suggest you do to find out why we call it the Fanny Bridge recreational project. Everyone likes to look at the big fish at the mouth of the dam, and they tend to lean over the rail to do that. That is a very old bridge; it is more than 90 years old. It does not accommodate bicycles well, and it only has access for pedestrians on one side. This project realigned a small segment of SR 89 in California, which reduced traffic. This is allowing the old highway segment to become a local street that ties in more extensively with Tahoe City; it will increase the commercial and visitor experience. On the transit side, what is envisioned and underway is microtransit to integrate with our fixed-routes service.

With the 7-7-7 funding, we rounded up because it made a lot more sense. I am going to focus on the sectors. The next step is to move into implementation and focus on that. As noted by Commissioner Hill, the TTD Board of Directors has been focusing primarily on that local-private sector aspect and how that is going to be accomplished. Between the 1980s and early 2000s, the primary focus with transportation was on water-quality retrofit of roads. The bistate effort over the past five years has shifted the focus of transportation to a cross-silo collective with a number of organizations, including all the public works departments and the departments of transportation from both states. There are about 11 entities who implement transportation at Tahoe. This process has allowed us to start thinking and acting more regionally, and we are looking forward to continuing to foster that. The local-private sector component is kicking in gear.

There is a focus in Nevada on how to accomplish the \$2.5 million annually. Nevada already has at least two bond authorities in place. The one for the EIP has not been oriented on transportation per se, but there is now an opportunity to do so. Acting Director Lawrence is looking at matching funds to leverage federal dollars—for SR 28, for example. The Conserve Nevada program is another one that has a set-aside authority for trails at Tahoe. Direct appropriations are allocated for transit services through the Division of State Parks. The TTD, as I noted, has the potential of restoring a direct connection to Carson City. Basically, it is increasing state support for existing and new competitive grant programs. We are all getting used to the new federal transportation bill and infrastructure bill—what that means and what that can do for us, not only at Lake Tahoe but in the state.

Mr. Lawrence:

Mr. Hasty did a great job talking about Nevada's share, but I want to shine some more light on that. Regarding the EIP bond authority, this body has been gracious with sponsoring our EIP bond programs in the past. Our Division of State Lands' Administrator, Charlie Donohue, coordinates that EIP program. He presented earlier to this Committee. They are looking at the transportation piece, largely with SR 28, because it has those environmental impacts. When funding recreation projects like the Spooner Front Country Improvement Project, we are looking at how those tie in with a transit system. In the past, we did not look at the EIP for transportation, but now we see such a strong nexus that we are looking at that as a place to go. The Conserve Nevada program, which was created by [Assembly Bill 84](#) in the 2019 Legislative Session, is a \$217.5 million statewide conservation grant program. Within that bill, there is authority for \$5 million dollars for the Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway. We are looking at those dollars largely to help with that path along the SR 28 Corridor and with trails along the south shore.

Mr. Hasty mentioned direct appropriations. In the past, we have had direct authority in the Division of State Parks' budget to pay for at least a share of what is called the East Shore Shuttle, which moves people from Incline Village to Sand Harbor State Park. As many of you know, the Sand Harbor parking lot fills up by 8 a.m. We are trying to get people off the highway and onto a shuttle system, which ties into the mobility hub that Mr. Hasty was talking about. Other than the shuttle appropriation, our bond dollars are largely infrastructure dollars as Commissioner Hill pointed out. These are general obligation bonds. They are tax exempt and are there for infrastructure. There is a time frame for which that money must be spent to avoid arbitrage penalties. This is going to be a great tool for Nevada to make a share, but it does leave a little bit of a hole regarding TTD's operations, maintenance, and ongoing expenses with paying for bus drivers and transit services, et cetera. Those are not things for which we can use general obligation bonds.

I want to emphasize that our Congressional Delegation has been engaged with the federal share, and we are looking at all of the opportunities through the infrastructure programs and funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 [[Pub. L. 117-2, 135 Stat. 4, 2021](#)]. We recognize that this is an opportunity of which we have to take advantage. The USFS has been to the table, and they are looking at opportunities for federal funding, particularly for those recreation areas.

Chair Peters:

Are there any questions from the Committee? [There were none.]

My first question is a follow-up from a previous presentation that I forgot to ask. I apologize for skipping it earlier. Are you engaging in a partnership to encourage employers to be more

flexible with the public transportation use of employees? This can be a barrier for some people who must be on the clock at a specific time, but perhaps a shuttle or microtransit is moving too slowly—does not move on time. It can hamper their ability to use that as an option. I am wondering if you have had conversations with the private sector in the region and what their reception has been.

Mr. Hasty:

The utility of microtransit is new, and the north shore is leading the way on that. The Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit (TART) system has seen workers shifting away from the mainline system to utilize that door-to-door aspect that microtransit can provide. They are going a relatively short distance within the zone that is being set up for each of these kinds of microtransit aspects. I think that is being responsive to those types of issues when, for example, the north shore services are on more of an hourly schedule. Our schedule at south shore is more frequent than that, but still, when you get a traffic situation or do not have enough drivers, we may have to delay a service. We also have a very aged fleet, and that can have an impact. We try to maintain the connection that we have to Minden, Gardnerville, and Carson City because we know there are workers who live in those areas. This is part of our interest in reestablishing a direct connection to Carson City rather than the circuitous one that we must do because some of the funding restrictions. Those are areas that we would like to improve—to provide that reliability for people so they can get to their destinations and back in a timely way.

Ms. Regan:

I would like to add that in recent years, we have had new engagement with the South Shore Transportation Management Association—the SS-TMA. That body is largely comprised of the private sector and players such as Barton Health, which is one of the larger employers, in addition to the hotel/lodging and Casino Core on the south end of the lake. We are working together to identify solutions to the exact problems that you are discussing. One thing we have is the bikes and scooters brought in my Lime. People have a bit of a love-hate relationship with the scooters; there are some safety concerns. The League to Save Lake Tahoe has been a big champion and an implementer and funder of that program. Their data showed the biggest ridership on the south shore for the scooters occurred during the shift changes at the casinos. They would be parked at the casinos. People could get home quicker on the scooter—there was congestion at the time—or maybe they did not have a vehicle. The data we are gathering from those kinds of pilot programs and innovative solutions is helpful to other programs like microtransit and the fixed-line service—how we can orient the system to work better.

That is progress, and I think you will hear a bit more from other speakers around the SS-TMA because there is some interesting work underway—certainly with Barton Health's purchase of the Lakeside Inn and Casino in Stateline. That is a new opportunity to connect our community in terms of employment and transportation in the core.

Chair Peters:

It is imperative that we have everyone at the table, and you do an amazing job with that. Over the last couple of years, you have enhanced those conversations. It is showing with how you are addressing this challenge. I look forward to discussing how we can help bolster that and ensure we are being as supportive as we can.

Have you identified any significant barriers at this point that we might need to keep in mind for a BDR or other recommendation in the next month or so? We talked a little bit about funding through bond authority, which is historic for us. Is there anything else that comes to mind?

Mr. Lawrence:

There are multiple barriers. Your question was specific to a legislative ask, and that is where it gets challenging. Certainly, funding is one of the things—having the authorities and the recognition regarding EIP bonds for the use of transportation. A lot of the barriers are things like technology and broadband. How do you get the service? How do you get people there? Another barrier I have heard about relates to hiring people. You can fund and put projects on the ground and put systems in place, but if you cannot hire the bus drivers or the mechanics to keep them running, then they are not as functional. That is full disclosure so we are all aware that you cannot put a project on the ground and have everything magically work. Additionally, there are “social barriers,” for lack of a better term, which has me thinking about the new Division of Outdoor Recreation, DCNR, and all of the work in the sustainable recreation sphere. It is not necessarily going to have a legislative fix. We are all accustomed to certain things, including myself. I like to listen to my own music when I am in the car driving to my destination. To do that shift—abandoning your own vehicle for a shuttle or the public transit system—is a barrier. It is something that we need to continue to work on.

Mr. Hasty:

There are a couple of other things that come to mind. Not only do we need to make our broadband wireless system more of an urban-demand responsive system, but there is technology that can help us understand our user base. That is everything from license plate readers to other information-collecting devices that would help us with real-time traffic information and directions and being able to communicate with the traveler. One of our big obstacles is being able to communicate with the traveler.

There are some processes underway related to what we experienced from the Caldor Fire and the December snow event, which closed everything except U.S. Highway 50. That highway opened first, and emergency services worked well. We have that down between counties and jurisdictions; however, there were some cross-state issues with communication. We are in a dialogue now with NDOT, Caltrans, and a number of other stakeholders, including the emergency management groups in both states to improve some of the protocols there. This is to make you aware of that. We are looking at information systems and what will help with dispatch or emergency dispatch.

As we pilot paid parking on SR 28, I am becoming aware of the issue of enforcement. Some of the statutory authority that is given to jurisdictions about fines and things like that are not applied uniformly when you go from one jurisdiction to the next. We are anticipating a potential, future statutory change to help “harmonize” some of our abilities in the Lake Tahoe Basin to make that more uniform, eventually, all the way around the lake. It would be helpful to be able to inform our traveling public of these things and create the expectation. That would be helpful as we learn more with our position to articulate the kinds of changes that we think are necessary.

Ms. Regan:

One of the key barriers we are still researching is different feasibility options relating to the multijurisdictional issue. For example, in the parking space that Mr. Hasty mentioned, we have multiple land ownerships. We are in deep conversations with our partners, including USFS, the Division of State Lands, the Division of State Parks, private operators, and the counties about going to seamless technology-based solutions. For example, we have multiple kiosks for beach entrances and traffic queues. Would it be possible to do away with those and have more card reader technology that would instantly send dollars to the appropriate land manager? There are laws on the books that we have to explore to facilitate something like that. When someone comes to Lake Tahoe, they are not clear whether they are in a Nevada state park versus a California state park, such as Emerald Bay or D.L. Bliss State Park, or a USFS-managed beach such as Nevada Beach or Pope Beach at the "Y." Those are the conversations we are having. It is very technical and complicated, but we might ask for your help in terms of legislative fixes down the road. I appreciate you highlighting that.

Chair Peters:

Thank you for that primer on potential future issues we will need to address.

Ms. Regan, you triggered another question for me on the technology with phones and accessibility piece that you mentioned in your initial discussion. Is it an app or a website? What is it that we can blast out there to help people get connected to how you are currently communicating with everybody?

Ms. Regan:

There are apps, and it goes beyond that. There is a cottage industry in travel demand management. There are many different apps that we have looked at as a community. We have had seminars and summits with our private-sector partners because we will need the cooperation of lodging and the private sector to get the word out, including the visitors' authorities who you will hear from shortly. There are examples in other resort destinations that can instantly give you information, such as "Sand Harbor's parking lot is full, and the beach is at capacity," or "Here are three coupons to other attractions that you could try." There are cities around the world that do that. In Amsterdam, the Van Gogh Museum has a live camera. There is an app that can show the queue around the building and may say, "Try this tour that is one-half hour outside of the city," and they will send you information on your phone instantly. There are programs and companies that specialize in that, and we have a team that is working with the community to look at solutions. Parking is another area that the TTD has been looking at with "Park Tahoe"—a universal app for parking around the lake. There is obviously a lot of implementation work to be done on that, but we are looking at those technological solutions.

Chair Peters:

Are there any other questions from the Committee? Seeing none, we will close this agenda item.

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AGENDA ITEM VII—PRESENTATION REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE TAHOE SOUTH EVENTS CENTER AND SOUTH SHORE MICROTRANSIT PROJECTS

Chair Peters:

The next agenda item is a presentation regarding the status of the Tahoe South Events Center and south shore microtransit projects. Please proceed when you are ready.

Lewis S. Feldman, Esq., Feldman Thiel LLP; Counsel, Tahoe-Douglas Visitor's Authority (TDVA):

We appreciate the opportunity to bring you up to speed on our progress with the multiuse event center that was made possible due to the legislative support that we have received in connection with amendments to the [Tahoe-Douglas Visitor's Authority Act of 1997](#).

The Tahoe South Events Center is an exciting addition to the market. It is a multiuse event center that will accommodate up to 6,000 people for performing arts and 4,200 people for sporting events. The facility is about a \$105 million project. We were fortunate in that one of the long-time stewards of our south shore—Edgewood Companies—donated the five-acre site, which is adjacent to what is now Bally's Lake Tahoe—formerly the MontBleu Resort Casino. This was about a \$10 million contribution. The facility is intended to accommodate a variety of activities in addition to more traditional concerts, including youth sports.

In the interior, there will be a concourse where there will be food service. There will be a high-level of finish for a small arena. In addition to the more traditional concourse features, there will be a series of meeting rooms. We are going to have public assembly, which will accommodate groups and conventions as well as a horseshoe bowl that will accommodate about anything imaginable, including trade shows. We have a full ice surface, so we can have hockey and figure skating. We look forward to having you tour it. It is truly amazing. There is not a bad seat in the facility. At the upper concourse, there will be 13 skyboxes, half of which have already been sold. The level of enthusiasm and interest is overwhelming.

The TDVA engaged a management company called Spectra OVG. It manages venues across North America and has the relationships with the various companies to book their events here. The meeting rooms are going to be facing the area where Heavenly is. There will be incredible and stunning views.

The supply chain issues have sadly impacted us to a fairly significant degree. The project is generally proceeding close to schedule. Unfortunately, with the budget, there are electronics that need to be delivered—in particular, a switchgear. A switchgear manages the 8,000 amps of electricity that needs to be distributed to these various components, and that is causing a significant delay that will not arrive until April or so. We were hoping to be open by January 2023. It now appears it will be the early summer of 2023 when we are able to host our first event. What has been constructed is basically outlined in the Tahoe South Events Center as proposed. We have also reconstructed the parking lots behind and adjacent to the Events Center. The event lawn is in the process of being graded.

We can accommodate full-size hockey, basketball, volleyball, youth sports, and wrestling tournaments. There are electronic gaming tournaments; I am not sure what those are, but they seem to be popular.

There are currently overhead utilities that will be underground after Labor Day of this year. There will be a nice scenic enhancement as a result of that.

Carol Chaplin, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), TDVA:

We are currently in discussion with businesses that amounts to about three-quarters of \$1 million. Of course, we had to move that out a little, as Mr. Feldman mentioned. Fortunately, some of that business has moved to 2024. We have had interest from the Harlem Globetrotters; the National Interscholastic Athletics Association (NIAA) with wrestling, basketball, and volleyball; cheer tournaments or meets; the Blue Man Group from Las Vegas; and PAW Patrol, which is a children's show. We have interest from our local soroptimist club for their big fundraiser, and this is a game changer for some of our service organizations who have outgrown the casino venues for their fundraisers. We also have the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals for their National Outdoor Recreation Conference, which has moved from 2023 to 2024. There will be a national wildlife conference, concerts, and other events. The recreational and outdoor groups are going to be big with meetings and conventions. We are talking to a large convention right now for 2024. The intention is to host a lot of these events during our off-peak seasons, including late September through November—volleyball is November. Sometimes we cannot find a reason for November to be on the calendar in the south shore of Lake Tahoe because the weather is starting to change. Wrestling and basketball are in February. A lot of these other conventions are in October, which is typically a slow time of year for us. That is our main focus. With the summer months, our permit with the TRPA limits us with the number of attendees we can have, and that is for good reason. First of all, we would not want to go head-to-head with another event like the concert series at Harvey's, which can host up to 10,000 people. It comes back to the vehicle miles travelled. We will get into that with the microtransit that is required for the Events Center.

Mr. Feldman:

Part and parcel of this project included the permit condition to bring microtransit to the south shore. Obviously, if you have an event facility, it is going to generate some visitation and VMTs. The TRPA and other interested parties collaborated with TDVA to come up with a program where we could offset the increased traffic, and microtransit was the agreed upon solution. As you have already heard, it has been hugely successful in the north shore and in other venues. The visitor is now expecting it in resort areas. It is a free-to-the-user system that benefits air and water quality and the visitor and resident experience because it will reduce congestion. In this instance, it is app-based. The broadband discussion earlier is certainly one of our inherent challenges. Like Uber or Lyft, you take out your phone and identify where you are. The driver will pick you up. It is curb-to-curb, and it will coordinate with existing services including the fixed route operated by TTD and the Heavenly shuttles.

The numbers from the north shore—which are older—show that out of the box, they had over 100,000 riders, and 56 percent of those were locals and 44 percent were visitors. At the south shore, we anticipate a different split because it has a larger visitor population. The proposed service area is much larger than was originally anticipated. We have a little bit of a struggle with Douglas County, which is the county where the Events Center resides. The service area is disproportionate in the sense that California is a much larger component of the service area. The proposed service area is much larger than was originally anticipated. The question that has been asked by some Douglas County Commissioners is, "Why isn't it greater in Nevada?" The answer to that is the bed base is in California, and the density of resident population is in California. The most bang for the buck in terms of reducing vehicle trips is to provide this service in the densest area, and that area wants to go to the

Casino Core. The expectation is we will significantly, over time, expand the service area. Out of the blocks, this is going to achieve what the permit conditions require, which is to offset the increase in VMTs due to activities.

We have never seen 20 partners step up to help make something happen. Public and private partners include Barton Health, which has the beginnings of a campus on the Nevada side, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, Heavenly, Lake Tahoe Community College, the Casino Core, small businesses and marinas, the City of South Lake Tahoe, and El Dorado County. The 20 partners have stepped up to contribute \$600,000, which is half of the operating budget.

In connection with the approval of the Events Center, Douglas County had agreed to participate in the funding, and it was expected to be the predominant financial partner; however, from time to time, elections occur, and constituencies change.

The [Tahoe-Douglas Visitor's Authority Act](#) requires that 1 percent of the TOT raised in the Tahoe Township, which equates to about \$1.2 million per year, be spent on transportation at the lake. When the Events Center was approved, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners passed Resolution 2020-037, which obligates the County to contribute up to one-half of 1 percent of the TOT—\$600,00—for microtransit. Bringing people from California to Douglas County will increase sales tax revenue for the County. While we have presented to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners and requested their contribution, they have withheld that to date. We hope to be on an upcoming agenda. They are aware of the \$600,000 contributed by the array of stakeholders and are expressing reluctance to match that because the service area does not include sufficient geography on the Nevada side. If you look at the Nevada side, we do not have the density and the bed base other than in the Casino Core where there are 2,250 units. The ridership opportunity is captured by the proposed service area.

The Events Center has inspired additional development directly across the street. There is a new project that is before the TRPA for project approval. It is called Latitude 39, which will have 40 units; it is an architecturally impressive, whole ownership opportunity with food and beverage at grade opposite the Events Center. It will have stunning views of the lake over the Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. This is probably another \$150 million of economic activity in the market area.

The Events Center permit does not obligate microtransit to start until the summer of operations of the Events Center; however, the TDVA and the partners that were identified earlier want to bring this to the market sooner. We are prepared, and it is almost serendipitous because the service is starting today with proposed year-round service. The permit requirement is summer service only for the first three years, summer and winter service for the fourth and fifth years, and then year-round service in the sixth year. We are actually seven years ahead of schedule with year-round service, which is subject to building out the budget. We are halfway there, and we have this \$600,000 shortfall, which coincidentally is what would be [inaudible] under the funds that can only be spent by Douglas County for transportation projects at the lake. Hopefully, we will overcome this political hiccup. If we are unable to do so, the service would have to terminate in January of 2023. We are looking for other fallback opportunities, but the 1 percent of the TOT will help us grow the system and would provide an additional component to fund the expansion of the system.

When the Events Center commences, there will be a \$4 ticket surcharge that will be dedicated to microtransit. That will further build the budget. Today, we have maybe

four vehicles programmed with a fifth as a backup. We would like to have 15 vehicles and provide this service at least through Zephyr Cove Beach and into El Dorado County. A wonderful achievement has occurred with the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors. It allocated \$200,000 for this first year of service, even though it will not get any service, because they believe it will help alleviate congestion and build the service to serve Meyers as well. We hope that will inspire other partners to step up.

Ms. Chaplin:

I sit on the board of the SS-TMA, which is chaired by Steve Teshara. As Mr. Feldman mentioned, this is really unprecedented. It is a great story about one of the issues that could be transformational on the south shore. We have an app that is live today. I am going to be taking my first ride on microtransit this afternoon to our SS-TMA meeting. It is an amazing process that has come together quickly over the past year. Hopefully, at a future time, we can come back and tell you how successful that is been.

Mr. Feldman:

We can answer any questions you may have.

Chair Peters:

The larger question is whether Douglas County will come to the table as they said they would and what it will look like if the County chooses not to. We will keep in touch with you about that and come up with a solution to make sure you are able to keep this whole. At our last meeting, I mentioned the economic vitality of Tahoe is not siloed. There is a regional impact with how people get to their jobs and enjoy the beautiful outdoor spaces. Some of the best food in Nevada, and parts of California, is in the Tahoe area. We can enjoy some of the most beautiful staycation areas available in our region and also support some of the interconnections between the tourism draws in Reno, Tahoe, and other areas. Hopefully, Douglas County will change its mind. Maybe there is something we can do there.

Are there any questions from the Committee on this presentation? [There were none.]

In the future, I would like to take Committee members and other legislators who might be interested on a tour to visit some of the areas, including the MLWS and Tahoe system. They do not always get to check those out. It is a beautiful day trip and makes for some wonderful conversation. We are excited to see this up and running and the events that will come to the region as a result of it.

We are going to close agenda this agenda item.

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AGENDA ITEM VIII—UPDATE ON CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING IN THE LAKE TAHOE BASIN

Chair Peters:

We will move on to our next agenda item, which is an update on challenges and recommendations related to the affordability of housing in the Lake Tahoe Basin. We have

Heidi Hill Drum here with the Tahoe Prosperity Center to prime us on this discussion. Please proceed when you are ready.

Heidi Hill Drum, CEO, Tahoe Prosperity Center:

While I will be talking about housing affordability, as you have heard from almost every presenter today, housing is economic development. This is critical to the success of all the projects you have heard about in the other presentations.

For some background, the Tahoe Prosperity Center is the regional nonprofit organization acting as the community and economic development organization for the entire region, including California, Nevada, and the north and south shores of Lake Tahoe. We were formed at the recommendation of the first study of our economy, the [Lake Tahoe Basin Prosperity Plan](#) in 2010, which Mr. Teshara and many other people here in the room participated in and supported. We were set up as a regional nonprofit organization so we could work as partners with all of our jurisdictions. This includes our business and chamber leaders within our community, philanthropic institutions, and others in the region. We ground all of our work in data with a triple bottom-line focus—keeping a balance with the community, economy, and environment. We keep those in mind with the projects we work on and the solutions that we propose so we are not doing economic development for only the sake of economic development or hurting the community or the economy in any of our projects. Projects include more robust Internet for transportation and intelligent transportation systems and ALERTWildfire, which has protected our region from more than 100 local fires. Those fires were put out by firefighters before they reached one acre in size. Given the significant economic impacts we had with the Caldor and Angora Fires, ALERTWildfire is obviously important for economic prosperity.

I am here today to talk about our housing work in the region. As I have mentioned, housing is critical for economic vitality. Housing studies have recently been completed for the three housing subregions at the lake. The first study was done by the Mountain Housing Council, which addressed housing on the California side of the north shore. The studies on the other two subregions were coordinated and facilitated by the Tahoe Prosperity Center. One is a south shore housing needs assessment [[South Shore Region Housing Needs and Opportunities](#)] and associated action plan [[South Shore Region Local Resident Housing Action Plan](#)]. The other evaluates the Washoe Tahoe portion, which includes Incline Village and Crystal Bay portion of the lake. We completed the housing needs assessment [[Washoe Tahoe Local Employee Housing Needs and Opportunities](#)] for that area last year, and we are currently helping with an action plan and strategies. It is important to ground our housing policy changes and recommendations in data, so all these reports tell us how many units are needed, at what price point, and whether we need one-bedroom units or three-bedroom units—small homes or bigger homes, et cetera. All these plans share that data.

The nice thing about the south shore study is that it included both Nevada and California. We looked at the housing needs for that community, cross regionally, on both sides of the lake. We identified that 3,290 units were needed to catch up and meet our employment demands through 2026, and 57 percent of those units need to be under market—1,880 units in this case. Sadly, our housing development in the Lake Tahoe Basin has only crept up each year at about a 1.35 percent increase, which is 661 units over a decade—about 66 units per year. That is all we are building, and 95 or maybe 98 percent of those are not affordable. They have been luxury, second home developments, condos, and large single-family homes that are not affordable to the local workforce.

The Mountain Housing Council's study of the California side of the north shore, which included Truckee, identified over 9,000 units are needed in that region. Our Washoe Tahoe report identified 1,200 units are needed on the Nevada side of the north shore over the next five years to catch up with existing housing needs. The 1 percent growth rate with development has not kept pace with our local housing needs and future demand with the job market and the outlook for the region.

There was a focus on transportation, and that is a solution for some of the housing issues today. Our Washoe Tahoe business leaders have a current survey that they sent to all of the employers in that community, which includes Incline Village and Crystal Bay. They have asked those employers whether transportation might provide an option for some of their employment needs. They may be looking to provide some transportation options for their employees coming up from Reno, Carson City, and other communities; it has not been necessary for employers to consider this until recently. That is some progress we are making with as a solution to the lack of housing.

I want to share specific recommendations with you today. We have growth limits in Lake Tahoe, so we cannot build 10,000 housing units in the next few years, given our protection of the environment and other things. The primary focus for any housing development in Lake Tahoe right now needs to be focused on that low-income, affordable, "missing middle" type of housing. We need housing for employees in our tourism industry and housing for our teachers. I am hearing more and more stories of teachers, police officers, and firefighters, et cetera, who are having to move further away from the community. We want the primary focus of any housing solutions to be on that "missing middle" as well as the low-income affordable housing. There is no silver bullet to solve this crisis; however, I will share some specific policy suggestions for you to consider today. They are for the local jurisdictions and agencies as well. I am beating a dead horse for them; they have heard me say these things over and over again. I am not sure if you have heard these, so I will go through them individually.

The first recommendation pertains to inclusionary zoning and in-lieu fees. For example, in the City of South Lake Tahoe, we have a new Hampton Inn and Suites. We do not have a need for new hotels in our community. An inclusionary zoning policy would have required the Hampton Inn to either build some units of housing for the employees it will be hiring and using, or provide in-lieu fees, which is a payment that goes into a housing trust fund or housing entity to build new housing units on that more affordable mark. Our region does not have inclusionary zoning and in-lieu fees. We feel it is a strong and important policy. I was in Truckee last night for Truckee Thursday, and there was transportation, including TART Connect buses and minivans that drove people around and took them to the event. Truckee does have inclusionary zoning, so they have a significant number of projects on affordable housing that are happening in that region right now. It is working well.

The second recommendation is to provide easier and less expensive accessory dwelling units (ADUs). I will use my personal example. I have a home in Meyers on the south shore of Lake Tahoe. It has a loft above the garage that we have used for my son's gaming equipment. He goes over there to play Xbox, for example. It is fully enclosed and has heat. We have considered adding a kitchen and renting it to a Sierra at Tahoe employee, for example, because we are on the Meyers side close to that ski resort. However, we are outside of the one-half mile of Transit. There is a current incentive offered by the TRPA to turn a bonus unit into a housing option. Sadly, it would cost us \$60,000 to meet the requirements for converting that housing unit in addition to the cost of adding the kitchen, et cetera. It is definitely a barrier to adding more housing, especially when there is already a covered footprint in existence on that property. I used that as a personal example, not

only because I am someone who works in housing and would love to convert that unit into something useful, but I do not have an extra \$100,000 sitting in my bank account to do that out of the goodness of my heart. I shared this because it is an easy and simple policy change that we think the local governments and the TRPA can potentially make to encourage development of housing in already existing footprints. I feel like there are many units of housing like that with lofts above garages that could be opportunities for ADUs; however, they do not meet the current incentives. The current incentives are not working.

The third recommendation relates to development standards that lend to “affordable by design.” These are things like per square footage fees versus set fees that are the same whether you are building a 5,000 square foot home or a 1,000 square foot home. Per square foot fees would be a way to incentivize the development of smaller units, and those are more affordable by design because they have a smaller footprint. We also recommend some significant changes to height, roof pitch, coverage, and density because each of those specific policy changes has implications for developers trying to make these projects “pencil.” Currently, the projects that pencil at the lake are the luxury second home kinds of projects, not the lower income or the smaller, tiny home type projects.

The fourth recommendation is to have designated funding for housing. The challenge of building anything is there is always a gap in financing needed. This is typical for housing projects—particularly with affordable housing projects. The City of South Lake Tahoe recently contributed about \$2 million to the Sugar Pine Village project. They were able to leverage that \$2 million to access \$60 million in federal grants to build almost 300 units of low-income affordable housing. That project should break ground later this summer. It will eventually provide one-, two-, and three-bedroom units in more affordable homes in our community. It is close to transit, which will be a benefit for our tourism employees. Having designated funds for housing to help finance some of those gaps or to leverage future federal and state funds is needed.

The fifth recommendation is to have a regional housing entity. We have a number of housing authorities in Nevada and California, but none are focused only on the Lake Tahoe Basin. This is something that was identified in the south shore housing needs assessment and the action plan. A housing trust fund can act as a gap financing option; it can provide housing funding when options are found. It can also act as an entity that manages deed restrictions. What we have found over the years is that deed restrictions on affordable units are getting lost in the system; some of them are managed by a county and others are managed by the TRPA or different developers. No one is paying attention to what is happening with those deed restrictions. For example, in Incline Village, we have identified a number of affordable housing units that were deed restricted but were being sold on the regular market without noting the deed restrictions to the buyers of those units. We have shared that information with the entities who are managing that, and they are working to figure that out. A housing entity would ensure we do not lose the affordable housing that is deed restricted moving forward.

Those are my recommendations and final comments. I would like to add that we completed the [*Envision Tahoe Prosperity Playbook*](#), which is our economic development strategy for the Lake Tahoe Basin. Housing and transportation were both identified as foundational strategies to ensure future economic resiliency. It includes three other areas that are specific towards economic resiliency moving forward, so we are not so dependent on tourism in the future. I would be happy to share that with you at another time.

Chair Peters:

This is a tense issue at Lake Tahoe. I think it has been for a while and is being exacerbated by the housing prices in the market right now. The ability to work from home—from anywhere—is enabling people to move into communities that had historically not been accessible to them. Thank you for sharing your priorities and options. We may follow up with you on those as BDR recommendations if that is something that may fit with our Committee.

Senator Settelmeyer:

What are your thoughts on county bans on vacation home rentals, and how might such bans potentially affect affordable housing? They offset where people can go. It seems like there would be a domino effect.

Ms. Hill Drum:

We are currently evaluating that in the City of South Lake Tahoe. They have a ban on vacation rentals in certain neighborhoods. Our current data for the first few quarters of that ban is not showing a significant change from vacation rentals going into long-term rentals in the community. We are finding instead that those short-term rentals that you could previously rent for a week or a few days are now going into month-long rentals—or “ski lease” rentals in the winter with three- to six-month time frames—so they are still staying as vacation rentals for the most part. They are not necessarily turning into long-term housing for local workers, but it is still early in the data. We think that restricting use in certain areas of the community as vacation rentals makes sense. You would want more vacation rentals in your tourist core areas and less further out. For example, after the ban in the City of South Lake Tahoe, the cap of vacation rentals in Meyers suddenly went up. There are now more vacation rentals in the county than there were prior to the Measure T ban in the City of South Lake Tahoe. There are more people on the road driving farther out from Meyers into the tourist core area, so there is more traffic and other potential problems with that. Coordinating the bans, restrictions, or the zoning for some of those vacation rentals is a good idea. We feel it should be coordinated across the jurisdictions because the impacts are pushed out a little further if you if you are not doing that.

Chair Peters:

That is an interesting issue area on the south shore and in Incline Village.

I am not seeing any other questions from the Committee. I am going to go ahead and close this agenda item.

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AGENDA ITEM IX—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Peters:

We will move on to the next agenda item, which is our final public comment period for the day.

[Chair Peters reviewed guidelines and procedures for providing public comment.]

We have someone at the table in Carson City.

Steve Teshara, Principal, Sustainable Community Advocates:

I appreciate this opportunity. I attend a lot of presentations concerning the complexity of issues in Tahoe; I know you do as well. I am proud of my colleagues today. They gave you a great presentation on a lot of very complicated issues. It was distilled and direct, and I know you appreciate it; I sure did.

I have been involved at Tahoe since the mid-1980s on regional planning issues. It is interesting to see how things have evolved and changed. I want to focus on a couple things that were said today. The first is the need for the TTD to have a general fund source. It is amazing what the District has done based on using only project funds, which are limiting. I served on the TTD Board of Directors for a number of years, so I am very familiar with the challenges. If the two states could provide some funding through the TRPA, they could go to the TDD to help them. As you mentioned, Chair Peters, the need for professional capacity to do these kinds of complex projects is important. On the 7-7-7 approach, the goal is to get as broad a consensus around an approach as possible. It is difficult, but a lot of progress has been made with the involvement of the states, the Congressional Delegation, and the private sector, which I spent a lot of time working for and with to get people to come along. A lot of the focus is on, "What is it going to cost?" and "What is the fund?" It is about the investment and what you get—"what is the value?"

With the idea of having a 24/7 year-round transit system that went everywhere—to Ms. Hill Drums' point, she is outside the area where there is enough transit to do an ADU at her property. If transit services were expanded with microtransit, that would not be an issue for her. The other thing that I always think about is how people view transportation as mundane—transit buses and roads—but think about Tahoe's tremendous maritime history and the great vision of environmentally friendly ferries going back and forth. We are not going to build new roads, but the lake is a highway in and of itself. That is the vision I carry. If people could see that, they could take that and say, "Yeah, how much? I will put in my share." Whether I am a business, a day visitor, or whatever, I will put in my share to have a vision like that, and it is truly a world-class vision. Those are some of the things I wanted to bring forward as you close out your day. I am going to get back up to the lake to soft launch the microtransit service, and that is exciting.

Chair Peters:

Can you give us the name of the app for the microtransit in Tahoe?

Mr. Teshara:

Yes, it is [Lake Link](#), which can be found in the App Store. If you do a search, it will pop right up.

Senator Settelmeyer:

I thought it was TART Connect.

Mr. Teshara:

That is on the north shore. I have both apps on my phone. It is the same process for accessing the [TART Connect](#) app through the App Store.

Chair Peters:

We have two microtransit systems. They both have cell phone apps that you can use similar to Lyft and Uber apps. Please download those when you head up to Tahoe, park, and make your way around the lake using those kinds of opportunities to leave your car behind.

I do not see anyone else coming up for public comment in Carson City. Is anyone in Grant Sawyer coming forward for public comment? I am not seeing anyone coming up. Is anyone on the public comment line, BPS, that you can add for public comment?

BPS:

Chair, the line is open and working but there is no one on the line to give public comment at this time.

Chair Peters:

As a reminder, our next meeting will be our final meeting for the interim and is scheduled for August 31, 2022. We will include a work session, at which time, we will consider recommendations and potential BDRs for the 2023 Legislative Session. I will have staff work to develop those. If you have ideas, please submit those earlier rather than later so we can make sure those BDR recommendations are as succinct as possible. We are trying to make our work session fully accessible to the public; however, we would also like to take an opportunity to visit some of these lake areas that we have not gotten to yet in this Committee. The schedule for the day is "to be determined" with what that will look like and where we will have the meeting. Please stay tuned to our Committee [meeting page](#) and look for that agenda as it comes up. Members, please know that recommendations are open for you as well. If you have BDR recommendations, please send them in to staff. For the general public—recommendations are also open to you. Send those to our staff at tahoe@lcb.state.nv.us. We are looking to have those submitted by August 1, 2022, at 5 p.m. You are welcome to reach out to Ms. Keller with any questions on how to submit a recommendation or what information we may need.

In a recent press release, U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen (D-Nevada) announced that the Tahoe Summit will be held at Sand Harbor State Park on August 16, 2022, at 10 a.m. (Registration opens at 9 a.m.) There is limited parking, so please take advantage of these opportunities to use public transportation from the Incline Village area—park and ride. We will see you all there.

Ali Van Zee, President, BEAR League Board, submitted public comment for the record ([Agenda Item IX](#)).

AGENDA ITEM X—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Creamer
Research Policy Assistant

Alysa M. Keller
Senior Principal Policy Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Chair

Date: _____

MEETING MATERIALS

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Agenda Item V	Alexis Hill, Washoe County Commissioner, District 1; Chair, Tahoe Transportation District; and Member, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Board of Directors	Reference Statement
Agenda Item VI	Julie W. Regan, Deputy Director and External Affairs Chief, TRPA	Link to a report
Agenda Item IX	Ali Van Zee, President, BEAR League Board	Written Testimony

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