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DANIEL LANDON, Executive Director  
 MICHAEL WOODMAN, Deputy Executive Director

Grass Valley • Nevada City

Nevada County • Truckee

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report for the September 2018 Meeting

DATE: September 19, 2018

### 1. STATE ROUTE 49 SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS – STATE ROUTE 20 TO CEMENT HILL ROAD

On August 15, 2018, representatives from NCTC, Nevada City, Nevada County, CHP, and Caltrans (Traffic Planning, Project Management, Operations and Safety) met to discuss safe pedestrian crossings on State Route 49 north of Nevada City. Discussion items included:

- Review of safety data
- Potential improvements considered to be effective and feasible
- Programs that might provide funding

The meeting participants concluded that a systemic approach (i.e. developing a corridor plan that identifies future improvements) may be the most effective way to fund future projects. NCTC staff will ensure that this corridor is referenced in the Active Transportation Plan currently being developed.

Following the meeting, NCTC staff determined that there are sufficient State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) funds to develop the recommended corridor plan. The proposed project is included as Work Element 2.2.3 and can be found in Amendment 1 of the FY 2018/19 Overall Work Program (see Agenda Item #15).

### 2. AB 2363 – ZERO TRAFFIC FATALITIES TASK FORCE

**Summary:** This bill, authored by Assembly Member Laura Friedman, was passed by the state legislature and sent to Governor Brown for his signature. The bill requires the Secretary of Transportation to establish and convene a task force on or before July 1, 2019. The “Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force” will analyze several traffic safety issues, including the existing process for establishing speed limits, and make a recommendation to the state legislature on whether an alternative practice should be considered. The Secretary of Transportation will prepare and submit a report of the Task Force’s findings to the state

legislature on or before January 1, 2020. Members of the Task Force shall include, but are not limited to, representatives from California Highway Patrol, Department of Transportation, Department of Public Health, the University of California and other academic institutions, local governments, bicycle safety organizations, road safety organizations, and labor organizations.

**Background:** Speed is the single greatest determining factor in the severity of crashes. Higher vehicle speeds correlate to the increased likelihood of a crash occurring and its severity.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2015 the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 2.6 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas, and of the 35,092 traffic fatalities in 2015, 17,114 were in rural areas as compared to 15,362 in urban areas. The 2015 American Community Survey from the US Census Bureau estimates 19% of the US population lived in rural areas; however, rural fatalities accounted for 49% of all traffic fatalities in that year.

In California and elsewhere, speed limits are generally set in accordance with engineering and traffic surveys, which measure prevailing vehicular speeds and establish the limit at or near the 85th percentile (i.e., the speed that 15% of motorists exceed). California uses the 85th percentile to set speed limits except where the limit is set in state law, such as the 25mph limit in residential and school zones, or where an engineering and traffic survey shows that a lower speed limit is warranted. A highway's design speed incorporates considerable margins of safety. However, continually increasing the posted speed limits to match the 85th percentile may use up most of the margins of safety.

Given the overall increase of injuries and fatalities due to vehicle collisions on California's roadways, a re-evaluation of the 85th percentile methodology is necessary.

The findings of the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force are to include:

- Existing process for establishing speed limits.
- Existing policies on how to reduce speeds on local streets and roads.
- Recommendation of alternatives to the 85th percentile.
- Engineering recommendations on how to increase vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle safety.
- Existing reports and analyses on calculating the 85th percentile at the local, state, national, and international level.
- Usage of the 85th percentile in urban and rural settings.
- How local bicycle and pedestrian plans affect the 85th percentile.

It is my intention to work with the Rural Counties Task Force to ensure that there are rural representatives appointed to the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force.

### 3. CONGESTION MITIGATION AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CALL FOR PROJECTS FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2018/19 AND 2019/20

Western Nevada County was classified as "non-attainment" in 2004 for the federal 8-hour ozone standard and now annually receives Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for projects that can help the area reach and maintain air quality standards. The CMAQ program is a federal funding program authorized under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. NCTC, as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County, is responsible for administration of the region's annual apportionment of CMAQ funding, including project selection and approval.

On August 24, 2018, staff issued a call to Grass Valley, Nevada City and Nevada County for CMAQ funded projects in western Nevada County. NCTC has a goal of programming a total of \$1,989,792 of CMAQ funds covering FFY 2018/19 (\$985,046) and FFY 2019/20 (\$1,004,746) to fund projects that can demonstrate emission reductions and improve air quality. The schedule of activities related to the CMAQ Call for Projects is shown below:

CMAQ Call For Projects Timeline

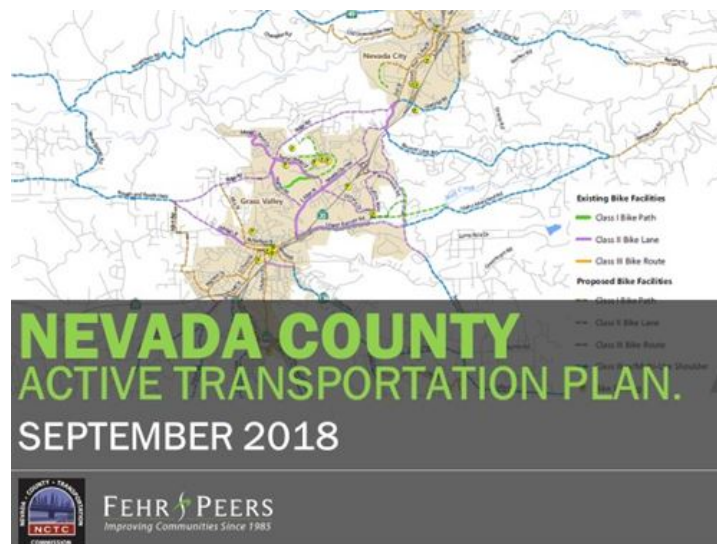
NCTC Staff Issues Call for Projects	August 24, 2018
Application Submittal Deadline	September 28, 2018
Staff Review and Initial Ranking	Oct. 1 – Oct. 12, 2018
Review by Technical Advisory Committee	Oct. (TBD) 2018
Recommendations Presented to NCTC for Approval	November 21, 2018

4. PUBLIC INPUT WANTED FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The information shown below can be viewed on the NCTC website and Facebook page:

NCTC would like your input! Do you value bicycle and pedestrian access to schools, senior housing, transit, tourist attractions, or other amenities? Would you like to see more sidewalks, bike lanes and trails? Is safety the priority for you? We invite you to share your opinion by using the Nevada County Active Transportation Plan interactive online map found here: <http://arcg.is/1Sj5zH> now until October 7 and vote for a list of possible bicycle and pedestrian projects or suggest some of your own. Your opinion counts!

Learn more by visiting the Active Transportation Plan page on our website at <http://www.nctc.ca.gov/Projects/Active-Transportation-Plan/index.html> where we will have information on upcoming public workshops and updates on the progress of the ATP. Let us know where you stand (or walk or bike)!



As part of the regional transportation planning process, the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) in coordination with the County of Nevada, City of Grass Valley, City of Nevada City, and Town of Truckee has contracted with the consulting firm Fehr & Peers to prepare an Active Transportation Plan (ATP) covering Nevada County and the jurisdictions within. The Plan will evaluate pedestrian and bicycle needs, identify and prioritize active transportation recommendations by jurisdiction.

## WHY CREATE AN ATP?

Objectives for the Active Transportation Plan.

- Create basis for successful funding applications for bicycle and pedestrian projects, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails
- Update and replace the Nevada County Bicycle Master Plan and Pedestrian Improvement Plan
- Incorporate and update information from the Truckee Trails & Bikeways plan
- Fulfill all State active transportation program requirements for active transportation plans

The development of the plan will utilize the previously adopted Nevada County Bicycle Master Plan (2013), amended in 2016 to incorporate the Town of Truckee's updated Town of Truckee Trails & Bikeways Master Plan (2015), and the Nevada County Pedestrian Improvement Plan (2010) along with input from local jurisdictions and the public. The plan shall analyze and prioritize recommended bikeway and pedestrian facility improvements by jurisdiction. By identifying active transportation improvements, the Plan will improve efforts to secure funding to implement improvements that strengthen the active transportation network.

## ONLINE COMMENTS OPEN UNTIL 10/7.

<http://www.nctc.ca.gov/Projects/Nevada-County-Active-Transportation-Plan/index.html>

