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MICHAEL WOODMAN, Executive Director  
AARON HOYT, Deputy Executive Director


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File: 950.6

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Michael Woodman, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report for the November 8, 2023 Meeting

DATE: November 8, 2023

### **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROGRAM (LTCAP) GRANT AWARD ANNOUCEMENT**

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) is scheduled to release the staff recommendations for award of the Local Transportation Climate Adaptation (LTCAP) grants on November 3, 2023. NCTC staff will report at the meeting if NCTC's State Route 49 Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project, described below, is recommended for funding. If recommended for funding, the CTC will consider the staff recommendations for approval at their December 6-7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting.

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) staff, in coordination with Caltrans District 3, submitted the State Route 49 Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for funding consideration for the 2023 Local Transportation Climate Adaptation Program (LTCAP). The proposed project is intended to help address the existing evacuation barriers identified at bottleneck locations on the State Route 49 corridor between Combie Road/Wolf Road and Ponderosa Pines Way through the construction of structurally engineered shoulders and a center two-way left turn lane. The shoulders will be constructed to be 12 feet wide southbound and 8 feet wide northbound. The 16' center two-way left turn lane will also improve safety and operations during non-emergency events allowing safer operations for vehicles entering and exiting the highway. The planned improvements will help to facilitate southbound contraflow during evacuation events mitigating risks to residents of the Cities of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and unincorporated communities adjacent to the State Route 49 corridor by reducing evacuation times while enhancing emergency ingress. Additionally, the project will also harden infrastructure and improve climate resiliency.

The grant application requested \$35,000,000 of LTCAP funding, which includes a state only match request of \$5,833,000, to expedite Community Resilience and Evacuation Route improvements on State Route 49. The LTCAP funding requested will allow NCTC in partnership with Caltrans District 3 to advance the project through a coordinated strategic funding plan. Of the \$35 million total funding being

requested, approximately \$10.0 million of LTCAP is requested to complete the project development work (Project Approval/Environmental Documentation, Plans, Specifications & Estimates, Right-of-Way Support, and Construction Support), \$3.5 million for Right-of-Way Capital, and \$21.6 million is being requested to fully fund the construction in partnership with State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) funding committed by Caltrans District 3. NCTC is the nominating agency and Caltrans District 3 will be the implementing agency.

### **COMBINED CONGESTION MITIGATION AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ) AND CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) CALL FOR PROJECTS**

Western Nevada County was classified as “non-attainment” in 2004 for the federal 8-hour ozone standard and, due to the designation, annually receives federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for projects that can help the area reach and maintain air quality standards. 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.

In November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), was passed into law, which included a new funding program called the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The CRP provides federal funding to projects that decrease transportation emissions, which are defined as the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions that result from on-road, highway sources. CRP is apportioned annually by population to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs). Nevada County, Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Town of Truckee are eligible applicants for CRP funding.

NCTC staff are preparing to release a “Call for Projects” in November for CMAQ and CRP eligible projects in western Nevada County. NCTC has a goal of programming a total of \$366,139 of CRP funding available for FY 2023/24 and a total of \$2,480,256 of CMAQ funds covering FFY 2023/24 (\$622,705) and FFY 2025/26 (\$1,857,551) 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 & CRP Call for Projects Timeline**

NCTC Issues Call for Projects	November 10, 2023
Application Submittal Deadline	December 15, 2023
Staff Review and Initial Ranking	Dec. 18, 2023 – Jan. 5, 2024
Review by Technical Advisory Committee	January 2024 (TBD)
Recommendations Presented to NCTC for Approval	January 24, 2024