



MINUTES OF NCTC MEETING March 17, 2021

An online meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held via teleconference, in light of COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings, on Wednesday, March 17, 2021. The meeting was held via Zoom. Notice of the meeting was posted 72 hours in advance. The meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jan Arbuckle
Andy Burton
Ann Guerra
Susan Hoek
Ed Scofield
Duane Strawser
Jan Zabriskie

Staff Present: Mike Woodman, Executive Director
Dan Landon, Executive Advisor
Kena Sannar, Transportation Planner
Dale Sayles, Administrative Services Officer
Carol Lynn, Administrative Assistant

Standing Orders: Chair Burton convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:31 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

CONSENT ITEMS

1. Financial Reports
December 2020 and January 2021
2. NCTC Minutes
January 19, 2021 NCTC Meeting Minutes
3. Revised Findings of Apportionment for FY 2020/21 and Preliminary Findings of Apportionment for FY 2021/22
Resolutions 21-03 and 21-04

4. State Transit Assistance Preliminary Apportionments for FY 2021/22
Approve the apportionment table
5. Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee Inflation Adjustment
Resolution 21-05

ACTION: Approved Consent Items by roll call vote

MOTION: Scofield / SECOND: Arbuckle

AYES: Arbuckle, Burton, Guerra, Hoek, Scofield, Strawser, Zabriskie (unanimous)

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

ACTION ITEMS

6. Draft FY 2021/22 Overall Work Program
Provide comments

Executive Director Woodman explained that the purpose of the Draft OWP is to show how the federal planning factors are integrated into the Overall Work Program to outline continuing and new activities, and to present a summary of the expected revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year. Two key planning projects in the Fiscal Year 2021/22 Overall Work Program are the update of the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee program and the READY Nevada County Extreme Climate Event Mobility and Adaptation Plan. NCTC staff intends to apply for transportation planning and grant funding from Caltrans to update the Eastern Nevada County Transit Development Plan in the future. Transportation stimulus funding will be coming through that will be available for the jurisdictions. The California Transportation Commission is currently devising how that funding will be distributed. If NCTC receives any additional funding, staff will amend it into the Overall Work Program when it becomes available.

The READY Nevada County project is a coordinated planning effort with all of the jurisdictions, working primarily through Nevada County Office of Emergency Services. This study is focused on identifying climate-related weaknesses of the transportation system in Nevada County, and what can be done to improve and protect our infrastructure to address vulnerabilities related to wildfire and extreme climate events. The intent of the study is to provide actionable strategies and integration into transportation planning, funding programs, and emergency response plans. It is a coordinated effort with all the jurisdictions tying into the various emergency plans and other planning efforts. The project will consider evacuation concerns, including the physical constraints of the local roadway system, to facilitate safe evacuation from local communities.

Chair Burton commented that with the work he does with Area 4 Agency on Aging, he is interested in knowing how seniors and people with disabilities can be factored into the emergency response plan transportation and operations. Commissioner Arbuckle commented that with the county's demographic being largely those over age 55, that population needs to be included in transportation planning. Mr. Woodman said Nevada County OES has measures put in place to help evacuate folks without vehicles or with disabilities, and NCTC staff will work closely with Nevada County OES, the sheriff, police, and first responders, to see if there are areas that have issues with communications or logistics, and if improvements can be made, whether a physical improvement or to notification system coordination.

Staff will also incorporate organizations like FREED and Meals on Wheels to include people who live in locations other than congregate senior or retirement facilities.

Commissioner Strawser asked if the preparation for catastrophes would be better handled if there is more public transportation versus private automobiles being used for transport. Mr. Woodman said public transportation would definitely play a role in evacuating senior housing centers and transporting disabled patrons, but each event is unique and specific and it is hard to predict where a fire, for example, may start and head, and what areas need to be evacuated next, so public transportation would probably play less of a role in moving the majority of the population.

ACTION: None – Comments only.

7. Assembly Bill 786
Take an oppose position

Executive Director Woodman commented that Assembly Bill 786 was introduced in February by Assembly member Sabrina Cervantes. Current law authorizes the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to appoint the Executive Director who serves at the pleasure of the Commission. The CTC has had this authority ever since it was established in 1978. Assembly Bill 786 proposes to amend Section 14510 of the Government Code relating to transportation, and requires the Executive Director of the CTC to be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate, and subject to removal at the discretion of the Governor. The current law reflects a carefully negotiated compromise regarding the relationship between the CTC and the Administration, and the changes proposed by Assembly Bill 786 would upset the delicate balance that has been achieved and could jeopardize the independence of the CTC in allocating funding and advising and evaluating state policies. Mr. Woodman has reached out to Assemblywoman Cervantes' office about Assembly Bill 786, but they have not given justification for it.

NCTC staff's recommendation is to take an oppose position on Assembly Bill 786 and communicate that position with the author of the bill and the appropriate legislative committees. The bill just moved out of the Rules Committee to the Transportation Committee, and a hearing will be scheduled. Mr. Woodman will submit a letter of opposition to Assemblywoman Cervantes, and to the Assembly Transportation Committee for the hearing.

ACTION: Adopted an Oppose Position on Assembly Bill 786 by roll call vote
MOTION: Guerra / SECOND: Arbuckle
AYES: Arbuckle, Burton, Guerra, Hoek, Scofield, Strawser, Zabriskie (unanimous)
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

8. Correspondence
 - A. Betty T. Yee, California State Controller, FY 2021-22 State of Good Repair Program Allocation Estimate, File 370.2.1, 1/28/21.

9. Executive Director's Report

- READY Nevada County – Extreme Climate Event and Adaptation Plan
- Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan Update
- Nevada County Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Update
- California State Transportation Agency – Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI)

Executive Director Woodman highlighted the progress of the READY Nevada County Extreme Climate Event Mobility and Adaptation Plan. The consultant GHD is completing the review of the background, climate data, projections and identification of the potential vulnerabilities. They have begun conducting interviews with public officials, first responders and other key stakeholders, both local and from nearby regional communities, that have been impacted by recent extreme climate events, to identify vulnerabilities, lessons learned, and gather input on possible strategies to address future events. NCTC staff and GHD will be holding an online public workshop to introduce the project and scope, review the existing conditions and observations, and gather input from the stakeholders. Chair Burton requested that Connecting Point 211, FREED, Meals on Wheels, Gold Country Senior Services, and CRS Senior Services be included in the list of stakeholders that are interviewed.

The updates of the Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan and the Nevada County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan are both underway. There will be an online public workshop to review the initial study findings and draft alternatives, then the plans will be presented to the Transit Services Commission for their review and comment.

Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-19-19, which called for actions from multiple state agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. This included a direct acknowledgement of the role the transportation sector must play in tackling climate change. In response, the California State Transportation Agency has begun development of the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure, or CAPTI for short. NCTC staff have been following this effort and coordinating with the Rural Counties Task Force and North State Super Region who are actively engaged with CalSTA. Mr. Woodman said one of the main issues of concern is the strategy of promoting projects that do not increase vehicle miles traveled, instead considering alternative strategies for reducing congestion. Staff has been emphasizing that in some suburban and rural areas of the state, strategic capacity increasing projects are appropriate, and the need is not always driven by congestion. Many rural projects don't significantly increase Vehicle Miles of Travel, but are needed for safety, operations, connectivity, and to facilitate evacuation in high wildfire risk areas. It is critical that the planning effort acknowledges and addresses the difference between urban and rural areas of the state.

10. Project Status Report

A. Caltrans Project Report

Caltrans District 3 Project Manager Sam Vandell reviewed the Caltrans Project Report. He reported that the Highway 49 Corridor Improvement Project is going through legal review in the Headquarters division to anticipate any potential opposition or concerns. They will schedule a public meeting discussing the draft environmental document and the project. The construction is expected to begin

Summer 2026 with completion targeted for Fall 2028.

A public meeting for the Placer County Hwy 49 Safety Barrier project environmental document will be scheduled, to address any concerns the constituents may have with that project.

Slope Stabilization on Highway 80 will be completed very soon, weather permitting. It is a tough situation considering what transpired in the fire season of last year.

The CAPM & Drainage Improvements on Highway 89 is a cap and pavement rehab project, addressing drainage and putting in message boards. It is a SHOPP project. Completion is targeted for Fall 2023.

Mr. Vandell said the Fix 49 group have had concerns in the past about Highway 49, and Caltrans would like to reach out to them and keep communications open with these projects, including the Safety Barrier project in Placer County. He believes the preferred alternative on the Placer County project is the roundabouts, and there has been some opposition to roundabouts on Highway 49 and the impact to overall travel time for commuters along that route. There is some concern of high-speed approaches, with the current speed limit in that section being 65 miles an hour. He said they want to build alliances in support of the project as much as possible.

Mr. Woodman said comments were submitted by the Fix 49 group, Scott and Jolie Allen being the main folks behind that group, as well as letters from the Firewise communities, addressing the State Route 49 Safety Assessment. NCTC will coordinate with those groups and will schedule a public workshop for the Highway 49 environmental document, and will address state level planning activities, such as the update of the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan, which is critical for State Route 49 funding, and the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Investment, recognizing the need for highway improvements for evacuation in the event of a wildfire. He said it is time to have the State Route 49 Safety Committee meet again and discuss the findings from the Highway 49 Safety Assessment and the progress of the environmental document.

Commissioner Guerra commented that on the Dorsey Drive overpass where drivers need to merge or turn onto the freeway, the stripes are completely faded, and at night, especially in the rain, drivers can't see where the lines are. Commissioner Arbuckle received information during the meeting that the city has tried to address that area, but due to the weather it is not sticking. The city placed reflectors, but the snowplows took them out during a snowstorm. The work is scheduled with their striping contractor in about a month.

Mr. Woodman commented that he has not seen white merge arrows on the Highway 49 acceleration lanes at the Wolf/Combie intersection. Mr. Vandell said he would reach out to Traffic Operations and ask them about the striping there.

Commissioner Hoek addressed the control of vegetation on the evacuation routes on Highways 20 and 49. Mr. Vandell said these very critical concerns deserve to be a higher priority considering the climate action plans being discussed. and the significance of last year's fire season and this year's drought conditions. He said funding is always going to be an issue, and getting guidelines on what needs to be done in terms of defensible space. He said he would keep following up on it.

B. The Town of Truckee’s Transit operations

Truckee Administrative Analyst II Kelly Beede reviewed the Town of Truckee Transit operations report. She reviewed the efforts made in the Transit Center Relocation Feasibility Study. They conducted nine public meetings and identified 15 potential sites, narrowing them down to three.

The first potential site is the Beacon Gas Station, just East of Downtown, at the intersection of Truckee Way and the Donner Pass Road extension. To fulfill the plan of expanding transit services in the future, they need a facility that can house eight to 10 buses at any given time, which these facilities accommodate.

The next potential site is the Railyard North Balloon Track, East of Truckee Way. As part of the Railyard Master Plan Agreement, the Town can purchase 25,000 square feet within the North Balloon Track for a dollar and an additional 25,000 square feet for fair market value. The floor plan is about 40,000 square feet in this design. It includes not only a Transit Center facility, but could possibly help house some community nonprofit organizations.

The third potential site would be modifying the existing location at the train depot, removing parking within the depot’s parking lot and on Donner Pass Road. It also provides some RV parking.

The majority vote from public meetings and the Truckee Transit Center website was to pursue the area in the Railyard North Balloon Track. They have completed the study and are now in the process of conducting an appraisal and securing funding. They plan to have transit service through the downtown area that would link people from the train station over to the new transit center.

ACTION: None – Information only.

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were no commission announcements.


SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the NCTC will be May 19, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom Webinar.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING: Chair Burton adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: 

Carol Lynn, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: 5-19-2021

By: 

Andrew Burton, Chair
Nevada County Transportation Commission