

DANIELA FERNANDEZ – Nevada City City Council
SUSAN HOEK – Nevada County Board of Supervisors
TOM IVY – Grass Valley City Council, Vice Chair
ED SCOFIELD – Nevada County Board of Supervisors, Chair
JAY STRAUSS – Member-At-Large
DUANE STRAWSER – Member-At-Large
JAN ZABRISKIE – Town of Truckee



MICHAEL WOODMAN, Executive Director
AARON HOYT, Deputy Executive Director

Grass Valley • Nevada City

Nevada County • Truckee

MINUTES OF NCTC MEETING March 20, 2023

A regular meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, March 20, 2023 in the Grass Valley City Hall Council Chambers, 125 E. Main Street, Grass Valley, California. Notice of the meeting was posted 72 hours in advance and was scheduled for 9:45 a.m.

Members Present: Susan Hoek
Tom Ivy
Ed Scofield
Jay Strauss
Duane Strawser
Jan Zabriskie

Members Absent: Daniela Fernandez

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

Standing Orders: Commissioner Scofield convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 9:52 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Chair Scofield presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jan Arbuckle on the occasion of her retirement from her position as Commissioner on the Nevada County Transportation Commission. Chair Scofield highlighted some of Jan's many accomplishments during her tenure, saying she has been a longstanding advocate for public safety, broadband access, major public works projects, and funding for our local roads. Her involvement on the Commission has been valuable in representing transportation needs throughout the county. Chair Scofield opened the floor for comments from Commissioners and staff, several of whom expressed their appreciation for Commissioner Arbuckle's contributions and dedication over the years.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

CONSENT ITEMS

1. Financial Reports
October, November and December 2022, January 2023
2. NCTC Minutes
November 9, 2022 NCTC Meeting Minutes
3. Allocation Request from Grass Valley for Regional Surface Transportation Program Funds for FY 2020/21 Projects
Resolution 23-01
4. Allocation Request from Town of Truckee for Regional Surface Transportation Program Funds for FY 2020/21 Projects
Resolution 23-02
5. Approval of Low Carbon Transit Operations Program FY 2022/23 Funding Amounts
Approved FY 2022/23 funding amounts
6. Revised Findings of Apportionment for FY 2022/23 and Preliminary Findings of Apportionment for FY 2023/24
Resolutions 23-03 and 23-04
7. State Transit Assistance Preliminary Apportionments for FY 2023/24
Approved the apportionment table

ACTION: Approved Consent Items by roll call vote

MOTION: Strawser / **SECOND:** Strauss

AYES: Hoek, Ivy, Scofield, Strauss, Strawser, Zabriskie

NOES: None

ABSENT: Daniela Fernandez

ABSTAIN: None

ACTION ITEMS

8. Amendment 2 FY 2022/23 Overall Work Program
Resolution 23-05

This is an administrative amendment to the FY 2022/23 Overall Work Program. This amendment was necessary due to revised revenue projections that decreased the amount of FY 2022/23 Local Transportation Funding anticipated, and necessitated a budget adjustment to make sure that the amount of LTF budgeted for planning does not exceed the allowed amount. The adjustment does not change the total budget amounts or the revenue totals or expenditures for the Work Elements.

ACTION: Approved Resolution 23-05 by roll call vote
MOTION: Strauss / SECOND: Strawser
AYES: Hoek, Ivy, Scofield, Strauss, Strawser, Zabriskie
NOES: None
ABSENT: Daniela Fernandez
ABSTAIN: None

9. Draft FY 2023/24 Overall Work Program
Comments provided

Regional Transportation Planning Agencies are required by the state to annually prepare an Overall Work Program that describes the planning activities and projects to be accomplished, and details of the budgeted revenue and expenditures. Several projects are still in progress and are carried over into this year's Draft Overall Work Program, including the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan Update, the Eastern Nevada County Transit Development Plan, the Rural Counties Task Force Rural Induced Demand Study, and the Zero Emission Vehicle Transition Plan for the County of Nevada.

As part of the update of the Regional Transportation Plan there will be an opportunity for the public to utilize an online platform, <https://dks.mysocialpinpoint.com/nctc-rtp#/sidebar/tab/about> as an interactive way for people to provide comments on the local transportation issues they would like to see addressed. There will be public workshops presented as well as pop-up booths at some of the street events on both the eastern and the western side of the county in an effort to gather public input during the update.

Included in the Coordination of Regional Planning work element will be staff time to focus on the first and last mile study for the passenger railway extending to Reno, and also impacts of winter traffic congestion and potential solutions, both of which will be addressed in the update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

NCTC funded a study in 1993 to look at extending passenger rail from the capital corridor in Sacramento through to Truckee and Reno. Based on the study the public was supportive of the idea. The main challenge was the infrastructure needs as well as the competition between Union Pacific's freight model versus the passenger model, track capacity and timing. Placer County Transportation Planning Agency did a subsequent study to look at the concept of extending passenger rail to Truckee, the Tahoe area, Reno, and beyond. Railroad needed to do some freight modeling to see how the passenger component could fit in, but did not do the modeling at that time. Currently, Placer County Transportation Planning Agency is taking the lead on another study with the railroad's participation. NCTC staff is hopeful that the study will make some recommendations, and then they can work with Caltrans and the California State Transportation Agency as well as Union Pacific to find the revenue needed to address infrastructure and other challenges. There is some renewed interest and some momentum at the state level given the current emphasis on reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. Staff is hopeful that the effort will see some positive progress.

ACTION: Approved Draft FY 2023/24 Overall Work Program by roll call vote
MOTION: Hoek / SECOND: Strawser
AYES: Hoek, Ivy, Scofield, Strauss, Strawser, Zabriskie
NOES: None
ABSENT: Daniela Fernandez
ABSTAIN: None

10. Professional Services Agreement to Develop the Nevada County Zero Emission Vehicle Transition Plan
Resolution 23-06

NCTC staff coordinated with the County of Nevada and was awarded a Rural Planning Assistance grant in the amount of \$230,000 to conduct this study. The study will provide a detailed plan on how to transition the county's fleet of vehicles to meet new state zero emission regulations for public transit, light duty, medium duty, and heavy-duty vehicles, it will identify the infrastructure needs for zero emission alternatives, and will look at alternative options such as electric and hydrogen. It will take into consideration charging and fueling requirements based on the various viable sources for power, and will look at vehicle maintenance needs as well as public charging infrastructure at county facilities. Frontier Energy Inc. was selected to develop the plan that will involve each of the individual departments for the county and their specific fleet needs. The plan will not address the jurisdictions of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Town of Truckee, which could be accomplished in additional studies.

ACTION: Approved Resolution 23-06 by roll call vote

MOTION: Zabriskie / SECOND: Strawser

AYES: Hoek, Ivy, Scofield, Strauss, Strawser, Zabriskie

NOES: None

ABSENT: Daniela Fernandez

ABSTAIN: None

11. Presentation: Regional Transportation Plan Update
Comments provided

Jim Damkowitch from DKS Associates gave a presentation on the update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Having projects included in the Regional Transportation Plan is a requirement for many state and federal funding sources, so for a project in this county to be eligible for state and federal funds, rather than spending local funds, the project needs to be included in an adopted Regional Transportation Plan.

Jim Damkowitch's presentation slides and presentation transcript can be viewed here:

<https://www.nctc.ca.gov/Reports/Regional-Transportation-Plan/index.html>

12. Election of Officers

It is the Commission's policy to elect a chair and vice chair at the first meeting of the year. Chair Scofield opened the floor for nominations for the chair and vice chair for 2023.

Motion made by Commissioner Scofield and seconded by Commissioner Hoek to nominate Commissioner Ed Scofield as the Nevada County Transportation Commission Chair for 2023. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Strawser and seconded by Commissioner Ivy to nominate Commissioner Tom Ivy as the Nevada County Transportation Commission Vice Chair for 2023. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

13. Correspondence

- A. Senator Brian Dahle and Assemblywoman Megan Dahle, Support Letter for Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project on SR 49, File 1200.4, 2/9/23
- B. California Transportation Commission, Highlights of the 2022 Annual Report to the California Legislature, File 370.0, 1/25/23.
- C. Betty T. Yee, California State Controller, Fiscal Year 2022-23 First Quarter State of Good Repair Program Allocation, File 370.2.1, 11/16/2022
- D. Betty T. Yee, California State Controller, Fiscal Year 2022-23 First Quarter State Transit Assistance Allocation, File 1370.0, 11/16/2022
- E. Malia M. Cohen, California State Controller, Reissuance of the Fiscal Year 2023-24 State of Good Repair Program Allocation Preliminary Estimate, File 370.2.1, 2/9/23.

Senator Brian Dahle and Assemblywoman Megan Dahle’s letter is in support of the Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project on SR 49, a grant funding proposal that was submitted by Caltrans District 3 in coordination with NCTC staff for funding from the State Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Program, a new federal funding program through the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act.

The project is focused on making incremental enhancements to the State Route 49 corridor to help improve the efficiency of evacuation egress and ingress for first responders. The project proposes to construct both northbound and southbound shoulders and a center two-way left turn lane, between Ponderosa Way north of Alta Sierra to Wolf/Combie Road. These improvements would be beneficial during an evacuation scenario to mitigate the high volume of traffic by utilizing the shoulders and potentially the two-way center left turn lane for evacuation while still allowing for ingress of emergency first responders. If awarded, this project would be in construction by the year 2026.

7. Executive Director’s Report

NCTC staff in coordination with Nevada County OES has been working in collaboration with the UCLA Engineering and Research Team to find grant funding to conduct a Wildfire Evacuation Research Project that would include Western Nevada County. The project would include development of a comprehensive, multipurpose community-centered wildfire evacuation modeling and simulation platform tool. The tool will integrate aspects of wildfire dynamics, existing traffic conditions, and modeling improvement scenarios for the roadways. The tool could also utilize satellite imagery to make vegetation management decisions such as shaded fuel breaks. Once the tool is developed, it could then be utilized by other agencies across the state and modeled for each region. The UCLA Engineering and Research Team recently submitted a proposal to establish a Wildfire Research Center that would work on two or three testbed regions, one of which would be the Sierra Nevada including Western Nevada County.

The UCLA team contacted Mr. Woodman after hearing him give input on prioritizing evacuation improvements in high wildfire risk areas such as Western Nevada County and State Route 49, and invited him to participate as a panelist in a UCLA workshop in Los Angeles to discuss the Wildfire Research Center, and community needs and desired outcomes. The UCLA team is hopeful that funding can be secured for the research center, and will continue to pursue funding opportunities to do this kind of wildfire modeling tool, and have Western Nevada County as one of the key collaborating partners.

NCTC staff applied for a Sustainable Communities Grant to conduct a comprehensive operational analysis of western Nevada County Transit, Fixed Route and Paratransit Services. The analysis will provide an in-depth look at the variety of models for delivering transit, including the different alternative models, to see what provides the most cost-effective way of delivering transit service, and recommendations on how best to move forward.

The Commission thanked Executive Director Woodman and Deputy Executive Director Hoyt for the work they are doing in collaboration with the California Transportation Commission and Caltrans to bring local concerns to the table.

11. Project Status Report

A. Caltrans Project: Sam Vandell, Caltrans District 3 Project Manager for Nevada County.

Sam Vandell, Caltrans District 3 Project Manager for Nevada County, reviewed the March Caltrans Project Status Report.

The Gold Nugget Project on Highway 20 is approaching design completion this spring with the main construction starting in 2024. Broadband middle mile fiber optic is included with that project. On Highway 49, they anticipate completion of the Nevada 49 Corridor Improvement Project environmental document this spring. Design is wrapping up on the Highway 49 Safety Barrier project, although there has been some right of way delays due to acquisition.

On Highway 80, the Yuba Pass Separation Overhead project is on schedule to wrap up design this spring, however due to railroad review processes, the project may be delayed. Union Pacific has their own schedule and are in control of their situations, so they impact a lot of projects and schedules. The Soda Springs Pavement Repair project design is finishing this month and should be going out for advertisement and construction this summer.

Caltrans District 3 Safety Department has pulled together accident data over 10 years for the State Route 20 corridor between Highway 49 and Rough and Ready Highway. They will analyze the data and identify the accidents in one-to-two-mile segments within a three- to-five-year period to see if there is a concentration that would trigger safety funding for any segment of the corridor. There will also be a report in the near future regarding the Omega Curves project, and Caltrans continues to look into adding the merge lane arrows at the Wolf/Combie Road intersection on Highway 49.


Appreciation was given to the Caltrans Maintenance team for the cleanup of the Transit Center after the big storms, which made it easier for passengers to access the area when the buses were able to start running again.

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS: Executive Director Woodman reported on an item of concern at the state level. Caltrans released the 2023 Draft State Highway System Management Plan, which

identifies needs and regions of the state that will receive funding for programs the state operates. The State Highway Operations Protections Program includes \$1.7 billion of Climate Adaptation and Resiliency funding, and it proposes to spend all of that funding to address sea level rise in the six coastal districts. NCTC staff provided comments to Caltrans Headquarters and worked with other agencies to address the more urgent climate adaptation projects like wildfire and the recent flooding. Sea level rise is important, but there should also be investment in the current and recurring climate risks and challenges that the state faces. Deputy Executive Director Hoyt will be attending the California Transportation Commission meeting in Los Angeles and providing comments on that issue.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting of the NCTC has been scheduled for May 17, 2023 at 9:45 a.m. at the Grass Valley City Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING: The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: 
Carol Lynn, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: May 17, 2023

By: 
Ed Scofield, Chair
Nevada County Transportation Commission