



# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Grass Valley • Nevada City • Nevada County • Truckee

## MINUTES OF MEETING December 11, 2013

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) and the Nevada County Airport Land Use Commission was held on Wednesday, December 11, 2013 in the Nevada County Board of Supervisors Council Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, California. The meeting was scheduled for 8:15 a.m.

**Members Present:** Nate Beason, \*Carolyn Wallace Dee, Jason Fouyer, Ann Guerra, Sally Harris, Larry Jostes, and Ed Scofield

**Staff Present:** Daniel Landon, Executive Director; Mike Woodman, Transportation Planner; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant

**Standing Orders:** Chairman Jostes convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:15 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

### PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

Chairman Jostes announced that one of the Commissioners needed to leave the meeting early due to another obligation, so he changed the agenda order. The Public Hearing for the 2013/14 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), Action Item #13, was moved forward at this point so all the Commissioners could participate in the discussion.

### ACTION ITEM

#### 13. Public Hearing: 2013/14 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

Chairman Jostes stated that since this was a Public Hearing, all members of the public would be allowed to address the Commission as to any item that is noticed on the NCTC Agenda as a Public Hearing.

Executive Director Landon reported the NCTC submits projects to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) every two years for inclusion in a funding list called the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. He said when the CTC adds these projects to their project list, they are deemed to be “programmed” and they are in line for funding. He stated that because NCTC received an advance of \$4.1 million in the 2012 program, it has no additional capacity through FY 2018/19. However, as a part of the State Transportation Improvement

Program (STIP) Fund Estimate, rural counties are allowed to receive additional funding, up to 200% of their maximum share. Mr. Landon said with that being the case, Nevada County is in a position to request an advance of up to \$1.8 million in the upcoming STIP cycle. He said there was a summary of the current status of the county's STIP shares in the meeting packet, which showed the projects that were programmed in the last cycle. Mr. Landon briefly reviewed these projects.

Executive Director Landon reported the Dorsey Drive Interchange project is under construction and no further action is needed in this current cycle. He asked Trisha Tillotson, Senior Civil Engineer for the City of Grass Valley, to make a brief report on the status of the project. Ms. Tillotson said the project will be winterized the following week; they will be doing work on the bridge; putting in the final portion of concrete on the southside of Dorsey Drive and fencing; and they will be doing temporary striping to allow the project to winter better and get rid of some of the delineators on the roadway to improve their ability to plow snow. Ms. Tillotson said, other than that, the project is on schedule and within budget. They are about 50% complete with improvements and they have expended about 50% of the money so far. She said their plan is to complete the project in the fall of 2014.

Executive Director Landon noted that Ms. Tillotson provided him with an expenditure summary on the project the previous day, and there is \$14.1 million of STIP funds in the project and approximately \$7 million have been expended. He said there is also approximately \$5 million of the RDA (Redevelopment Agency) funds and about \$850,000 of those were expended in the constructability review. To date there is approximately \$1 million of RDA funds that have been expended on the construction portion of the project.

Mr. Landon noted that the second project programmed is the SR 89 Mousehole Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement. He said the initial design and development has been going on for several years. He stated the design component is now 95% complete. He invited Becky Bucar, Town of Truckee Associate Engineer, to provide a PowerPoint presentation on the status of the project.

Ms. Bucar introduced Dan Wilkins, Public Works Director/Town Engineer for the Town of Truckee. As an overview, she described the Mousehole as a concrete arched structure that provides an undercrossing for a two-lane highway in the Town of Truckee on SR 89. She said if a pedestrian or bicycle wants to travel through the tunnel, they need to enter the travel lanes to do so. The current project is to provide a separate pedestrian and bicycle tunnel, as well as a Class I Bike Path, adjacent to the existing Mousehole, which starts at Deerfield Drive to the north and ends at West River Street to the south. Ms. Bucar reported the project includes retaining walls on the east side of the trail; drainage improvements such as curb and gutter, new storm drain, new inlets, and a large detention basin that would treat the runoff from the path and the roadway; driveway improvements that accesses the mobile home park; a transit shelter to be built on the south side of the tunnel; and the existing flashing beacons will no longer be necessary and will be removed once the separate tunnel is built.

Ms. Bucar gave a history of the project and noted a study was done by Nolte and Associates in 1997. They looked at different alternatives for grade separations at the location, looked at a new traffic bore and pedestrian bore, and also a whole new bridge at the project location. In 2002 Caltrans prepared a Project Study Report that also looked at all the alternatives. The design work started in 2004 when NCTC programmed \$500,000 of STIP funds for Project Approval and Environmental Documentation (PA/ED). In 2005 \$2.8 million was earmarked as part of federal SAFETEA-LU legislation, which came through as High Priority Project (HPP) funding. She reported that Caltrans took lead on the PA/ED phase of the project after 2005 and a Value

Analysis was done to figure out which alternative to use. A Project Report and Environmental Document was also put together. Ms. Bucar stated in April 2011 Caltrans completed the PA/ED and the Town of Truckee took over as lead agency of the project to do PS&E (Plans, Specifications, and Estimates) for the project. She said the Town primarily uses HPP (High Priority Project) funds to fund the design effort.

Ms. Bucar said two years previously the Town was working on the 60% plan when the last STIP cycle was discussed. They had requested \$1.3 million in STIP/RIP funds be programmed for the project. She said there was discussion at that NCTC meeting for an additional \$1.3 million to be programmed for the project because, at that time, the Town thought that was the amount needed to complete funding of the entire project. The NCTC said the Town was in the early stages of the project and they did not know what the final costs would be, so it was recommended to wait to program the additional \$1.3 million until they had a better idea what the actual costs would be. Ms. Bucar said they submitted the 100% plans to the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and Caltrans that week so there are updated cost estimates. She noted the cost estimates have gone up over \$2 million. She said some of the additional costs are due to the 2010 Caltrans PS&E standards versus the 2006 standards. The updated standards require more robust retaining walls, and the path was improved to meet Class I Bike Path standards, as opposed to the Multi-Use Path previously planned, so additional improvements were needed to meet those standards.

Since 2011 the Town secured \$4.4 million in State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) funding. In 2013 they received \$1.5 million from TIGER (Transportation Investments Generate Economic Recovery) federal funds. The project is almost fully funded now. Ms. Bucar said the Environmental Report is done, but a supplemental report will need to be completed to adjust the minor changes that address the changes in the project description. Ms. Bucar said the Town is still in the process of obtaining the required easement from UPRR. She noted that the \$500,000 of STIP funds that was programmed specifically for PA/ED in 2004 was not all expended, so there is a little left from that amount. In 2009 Transportation, Community, and System Preservation funds totaling \$355,680 were programmed for the project, and in 2011 the Town put \$333,689 of AB 1600 Traffic Impact Fees toward the project. Ms. Bucar stated there is a total of \$10,801,600 assigned to the project at this time. She reviewed numerous funding applications since 2008 that were unsuccessful in obtaining funds. The TIGER funds were applied for four times previously before being funded. Ms. Bucar reviewed a chart of current estimated project costs, which notes a deficit of \$1,832,000, due mostly to the increase in construction costs. The Town requested that amount be included in the 2014 STIP.

Ms. Bucar said the Town's schedule, moving forward, still requires that they obtain an Easement and Construction and Maintenance Agreement with UPRR. She said now that UPRR have the 100% PS&E in for their review and approval, they have been good about reviewing them quickly and they were hoping for comments back within 30 days. That would then start the process to get the easement in place. Ms. Bucar said a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans is needed to enter into construction, a Maintenance Agreement, an Encroachment Permit, and approval of the 100% PS&E. The Town also needs a funding allocation from the CTC. She said the Town is expecting to advertise the project in August 2014 and by the end of the year the contract would be awarded. She said the construction would probably not start until 2015 since the contractor would need a few months to work through the submittal with the UPRR over the winter.

Ms. Bucar summarized that the Town of Truckee was requesting NCTC recommend an additional \$1.8 million be programmed in the 2014 STIP for the Mousehole Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Tunnel, in addition to the \$1.3 million previously programmed, for a total

of \$3.132 million in funding for construction of the project. She asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Fouyer asked if there were any fees or charges involved in obtaining construction easement from the UPRR that were not included in the total. Ms. Bucar said there will be a cost associated with the easement, and the Town of Truckee has done an appraisal and submitted an offer to the UPRR for the cost of the easement. She understood that the UPRR will probably do their own appraisal and the two parties will have to come to an agreement on the amount; she does not know what the cost will be at this point.

Commissioner Beason thanked Ms. Bucar for the presentation. He reviewed that some of the added expenses were related to the retaining walls and the upgrade of the bicycle path that was not previously planned. Ms. Bucar said there were some changes to the minimum curvature in the trail, which then pushed the trail out slightly and increased the cost of the retaining walls. She said they were not major revisions, but it caused an increase in costs. Commissioner Beason said he presumed that any money that would be put toward the Mousehole project would come out of the SR 49 funds. Executive Director Landon replied yes, that was the anticipation, assuming that Caltrans is successful in freeing up some money. Commissioner Beason said, looking at one scenario, there is \$6 million programmed for SR 49, and in another scenario it is \$3 million, depending on what Caltrans does. Mr. Landon said that was correct. Commissioner Beason stated if there is no Regional Improvement Program (RIP) advance, and there is \$3 million for SR 49, he presumed if the Commission grants Truckee's request, then that \$3 million would be reduced by the \$1.83 million. Mr. Landon said without Caltrans' Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) contribution and without RIP advance, the \$3 million would remain for PA/ED on SR 49, but the \$3 million for PS&E would be withdrawn so \$1.8 million could go to the Mousehole and the remainder would be in the balance for the county. Mr. Landon added that the SR 49 project could still start on time. Commissioner Beason said his concern about SR 49 in the short term, which is 10 to 15 years, is that the safety improvements would continue to happen with the money available.

Chairman Jostes asked if the Town had any reason to believe that at the end of the day, given that they negotiate some final agreement with the UPRR, that they will in fact grant permission to do this project. Ms. Bucar said just going off of the comments received on the 95% submittal, the UPRR had a few minor comments regarding monitoring the track to be sure there was no settlement on the tracks as the tunnel is being constructed, and also flagging costs, but she thought the Town had addressed those. She said she is pretty confident that the Town will get approval. Chairman Jostes reviewed that the UPRR has accepted the project and they are dealing with the details rather than sitting back and withholding judgment on doing the project or not. Ms. Bucar said that was correct, but she could not say for sure. There were substantial comments from UPRR on the 60% submittal and a few on the 95% submittal, so she thought they were paying attention to this project. Chairman Jostes said there are two key issues at this point with the project: money and approval from UPRR. He added the Town should watch carefully so UPRR does not ask for something else to be done, for their own purposes, at the last minute that will cost more money. Chairman Jostes asked at what point would they know that the project is funded by this additional amount of money. Executive Director Landon said if the Commission approves this request today, it would be submitted to the CTC in a few days and would be reviewed during January and February, and the final approval by CTC would take place in March and the money would be considered "programmed". He said, starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, it would be the soonest opportunity for the Town of Truckee to go to the CTC to ask for the allocation of funds. Mr. Landon said this would dovetail with the proposed schedule the Town has to go out to bid on the project in August 2014.

Chairman Jostes said his question was to assume that on June 1<sup>st</sup> the Town has the money in hand, then what has to happen for the Town to get final approval from UPRR. Ms. Bucar said when both parties sign the Construction and Maintenance Agreement that is when the Plans and Specifications are referenced in that agreement. She said there is a draft agreement and it will be sent to UPRR for review once they approve the 100% PS&E the Town has submitted. Ms. Bucar said that is the document that gives the Town permission to build the project. Chairman Jostes asked if the document can be completed before the money is in hand. Ms. Bucar said the hope is that it would be before June 1<sup>st</sup>, but it will depend on how much back-and-forth negotiations take place.

Commissioner Beason asked what if the CTC programs the money for the Mousehole project and something would then go wrong, would NCTC be able to recoup the money or does it go somewhere else. Executive Director Landon said there are probably two potential scenarios. If there were an adjustment that was needed and the Town could cover the cost, a STIP Amendment would take care of it within a 60 to 90 day period following the identification of the problem and then the project could move forward. He said if there were a fatal flaw, such as the UPRR saying no, then the funding would be withdrawn and, based on deprogramming, he believed the funds would all come back to the county in the next cycle. He said he is not 100% sure of that because if the project is programmed, the potential could be that the money would go back into the top of the filter and the county would get a percentage of it back. Commissioner Beason said we have been down that road before. Mr. Landon agreed that we had.

Commissioner Scofield said he was appalled at the cost of the Mousehole project and he wondered if back in 1997 anyone would have envisioned it costing \$12 million. He thought it would be great to get this project off the ground and completed; much like the Dorsey Drive Interchange project in Grass Valley. Commissioner Scofield said the SR 49 project, where the money is coming out of, has the potential of saving more lives than just about any project the Commission is looking at, so he thought it was important to stay on track with that particular project. However, when looking at the Mousehole project that started in 1997, and the cost of the SR 49 project, who knows how many years down the road it will be and what the ultimate cost will be. He thought the Commission should step forward and get the Mousehole project done. He stated he does support programming the funds for the project. Commissioner Scofield stated that he also would want to stay on track with the planning of SR 49 improvements and not use the money designated for it as a slush fund for other projects.

Commissioner Beason said he does not know what the risk is, but he wondered if there was any way to ascertain from the CTC what would happen to this money if it was programmed to the Mousehole and then the project fell through. Executive Director Landon said it would depend on how far down we were in the STIP process. He stated that Ms. Bucar indicated the Town was hoping to have approval from UPRR prior to the allocation, but Mr. Landon said if it occurred prior to the allocation he was fairly confident the money would come back to the county. Mr. Landon said if the allocation was made and they started the project, then it would be doubtful whether the county could get the money back. Commissioner Beason agreed with Commissioner Scofield that the Mousehole is a project that needs to be built; it is on the table, moving forward, and there is enough money to finish it. He said SR 49 is the key artery in the county and that is where the key safety issues exist, even with many of the improvements. Commissioner Beason asked Ms. Bucar what her confidence level was with respect to the UPRR. Ms. Bucar said based upon all the conversations she has had with UPRR staff over the past year, she is relatively confident that this will be approved. She has not heard of any issues raised, so if she had to give it a percentage she would say 90%. Dan Wilkins said the Town is highly confident that everything will work out with UPRR. He said the Town would not be able to get the funds

allocated from the CTC for the project until they have permission from the railroad. He said the funds will not be allocated until the railroad says the project can be built, so it ensures the funds will stay within the region as opposed to going back to the overall state funding.

Commissioner Harris said if these funds prove inadequate because costs go up for whatever reason such as materials, or something is discovered when they go through the process, she was sure the Town has contingency in the project. She asked what other sources of funds were available, rather than coming back to NCTC, if the project explodes into something unexpected and more expensive. Ms. Bucar said they have a 5% contingency at this point, but if they need additional funding they would have to look at local sources to try to fill that such as AB 1600 funds. Mr. Wilkins said the Town has some ability to transfer Traffic Impact Fee dollars from the Town program to the Mousehole project if it becomes necessary, so that is the main contingency plan at this point.

Commissioner Guerra said she was first appointed to NCTC in 1997 and this is a long time project. She said watching the project and the issues around it, such as the railroad at one time was really daunting and she felt like so much progress has been made. She said with cost increases because regulations have changed and things like retaining walls, imagine what could happen with railroad kinds of things. Commissioner Guerra felt it important to keep the momentum going forward on the Mousehole. She added that SR 49 is also important, but one project is not being held hostage by the other. She looks forward to seeing the Mousehole project completed for those people who live up there and use it. She was glad to hear there will be a Class I Bicycle Path there, and it appears the project will be really well done, and it has been needed for a really long time.

Commissioner Dee said she drives through the Mousehole at least twice a day and shudders every time she has to drive past someone walking through it, especially with a baby carriage. She also sees teenagers climbing up over the railroad tracks because they do not want to walk through the Mousehole. She said this has been a problem for a long time and the Town is asking NCTC for their support to get the project completed. They think it is a critical project for the Town of Truckee. Commissioner Dee said the Town has put their money where their mouth is when they took over the lead on the project from Caltrans and have contributed a lot of staff time to move the project along.

Commissioner Fouyer said he lived in Truckee for two years and has driven the Mousehole many times, and he agrees with Commissioner Dee that it is a scary drive. Commissioner Dee invited anyone to walk through the Mousehole. She recounted a day when she was standing in the Mousehole taking pictures of the deteriorating roadway and structure and a California Highway Patrolman came along and told her how dangerous it was to be in the tunnel.

Chairman Jostes said he also supports the Mousehole project, but he thinks there are legitimate concerns with it. He said with the Dorsey Drive Interchange project, the City of Grass Valley told NCTC that there are certain leeways that they have if costs get out of hand. He hoped the Town watches carefully for those opportunities because it could get close on the funding aspect of the project. Chairman Jostes said everyone wants the project to get done, but it will not get done if the Town does not have all the money, so part of that is keeping the costs under control as best they can obviously. He wished them luck and thanked them for the presentation.

Executive Director Landon resumed the review of the other projects on the 2014 RTIP list. The next project was the SR 49/La Barr Meadows Signalization and Widening Project and construction has been completed and the project is in the wrap-up phase. He noted that earlier

that week he saw that the Engineers Association of Nevada County nominated this project for consideration as Project of the Year.

Executive Director Landon reported that the SR 49 Signal Preemption Project was next on the list that was programmed in the last STIP cycle. He stated it is a non-capacity increasing highway operational improvement that will provide signal preemption at three major intersections along the SR 49 corridor. The funding is secure and is scheduled for construction in FY 2015/16 and no further action is needed in this STIP cycle.

Executive Director Landon stated the SR 49 Widening Project from La Barr Meadows to McKnight Road was programmed in the 2012 STIP for \$3 million to be used for PA/ED in FY 2015/16 and \$3 million for PS&E in FY 2016/17. He said in this current cycle Caltrans District 3 has requested that the CTC program \$3.6 million of ITIP funds to provide a 60/40 match to the previous programming. Those are the funds that Caltrans uses on the state highway system. Mr. Landon said if Caltrans' request is approved, then \$2.4 million of RIP funds would be freed up and be available for other programming. Then staff would recommend that \$1.8 million of that be applied to the Truckee project. He said, with regard to the Caltrans District 3 request, he spoke with the county's Caltrans Planning Liaison, Shannon Culbertson, and she said they have had quite an extensive and active process in developing their program this fall and the request from District 3 for these funds has had no negative comments from headquarters. Their assumption is that it will be approved, but they will not know that until either Friday of that week or the following Monday when the ITIP is presented by Caltrans Headquarters staff. Mr. Landon said, in regard to that, staff has presented in the resolution regarding the RTIP an alternative scenario that, if the Caltrans request is not approved, staff would then request, as per their ability in the STIP process, an advance of \$1.8 million. He said, in essence, this keeps the SR 49 project whole and then gives the county additional money beyond what would normally be available. The last scenario or fall back would be, if that is not successful, then staff would request that some money be moved out of the second phase of the SR 49 project to fund and keep the Mousehole project going forward. Mr. Landon said he also spoke with CTC staff on this scenario and they were very supportive of the idea of presenting a tiered approach. He said the comment from Laurel Jansen, who works principally with the programming of these funds, was to go ahead and ask for the advance, because in the scale of the state program \$1.8 million is not a lot of money. Ms. Jansen felt probably with other projects that are going to be delayed and projects that will be moved, the \$1.8 million probably could be found for the fiscal year that it is requested.

Executive Director Landon said the last item on the RTIP list is the ongoing Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) of STIP funds to keep the projects moving forward and staff is requesting that \$79,500 be programmed in FY 2017/18 and 2018/19 to continue to work with these projects. He concluded that this was the list of staff recommendations, who also worked with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and with the SR 49 Safety Committee to create the list. He asked for questions from NCTC or from the public.

Commissioner Beason clarified that the 60/40 match initiative was supported by Jody Jones, so he asked if that would give it a little more fortification coming from her. Executive Director Landon said he believed it would. He said Ms. Jones is very cognizant of the issues Nevada County faced in the past few years and she took the initiative on this to put the 60/40 match forward and is supporting it to Caltrans Headquarters.

Chairman Jostes said when NCTC asks for the 200% advance, does that in fact create a hole in the future. Executive Director Landon replied that it does and he noted that in the last STIP

cycle staff thought they would have a little bit of money remaining from the last cycle, but that dried up during the course of the last two years. Mr. Landon said by asking for the advance, if it is awarded, it does make a potential \$1.8 million hole in the county receipts in the next cycle. He added if the money is down like it is this year, we have a project that is secured for funding without actually receiving the funds ahead of time. He said it at least gets its place in line. Mr. Landon said if revenues come up, which someday we hope will happen, then it probably gets absorbed in that new revenue and there is not much of a hole.

Chairman Jostes stated there are two scenarios: we get this extra money from Caltrans or we do not. He asked Executive Director Landon if he could project approximately what the construction start date of the SR 49 project would be under both scenarios. He said if the county gets what it wants, there is a reasonable start year for it, and if we do not get what we want, does it have an impact on the start date of the project. Mr. Landon replied that assuming they would be able to secure the Caltrans match with the PS&E being started in FY 2017/18, he thought construction would start in FY 2019, if we get the money. He said if the county does not get the money at this point in the 2014 STIP cycle, there is the 2016 STIP cycle, and the 2018 STIP cycle, so there is a better than even chance that we would be on the same construction cycle.

Chairman Jostes asked if there was anyone from the public wishing to speak on this subject for the public hearing. There was no one.

Chairman Jostes asked for a motion. Commissioner Harris made a motion to adopt Resolution 13-36 approving the FY 2013/14 Regional Transportation Improvement Program for inclusion in the 2014 State Transportation Improvement Program. Commissioner Guerra seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Jostes closed the Public Hearing.

\*Commissioner Dee thanked the Commission for their support of the Town of Truckee Mousehole project and left the meeting at this time.

Chairman Jostes ADJOURNED AS THE NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION at 9:00 a.m. and CONVENED AS THE NEVADA COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION (NCALUC).

#### NCALUC CONSENT ITEMS

1. NCALUC Minutes

September 18, 2013 NCALUC Meeting Minutes. *Approved.*

Commissioner Beason made a motion to approve the September 18, 2013 NCALUC Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Fouyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### NCALUC INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

2. NCALUC Review of Projects

Executive Director Landon explained that this was a list of four projects staff reviewed on behalf of the Commission, including project description and review status. Commissioner Beason



asked if NCTC paid Mead & Hunt to provide this reviewing of projects. Executive Director Landon said no, these were activities that staff completed.

3. Annual Review of the NCALUC Fee Schedule

Executive Director Landon stated that staff has reviewed the NCALUC Fee Schedule and he believes the charges are very appropriate based on the projects received. He said there have been no concerns over the cost and staff has been able to handle most reviews with the initial deposits without having to get into additional estimated charges.

There were no additional comments or discussion.

Chairman Jostes ADJOURNED AS THE NEVADA COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION and RECONVENED AS THE NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION.

CONSENT ITEMS

4. Financial Reports

- A. August 2013 and September 2013. *Approved.*
- B. Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee Program Fund Annual Report for FY 2012/13. *Approved.*

6. NCTC Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2014. *Approved.*

7. Final Eastern Nevada County Transit Development Plan Update. *Adopted Resolution 13-35 accepting the 2013 update of the Eastern Nevada County Transit Development Plan as complete in accordance with the contract with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.*

Commissioner Harris requested Consent Item #5 NCTC Minutes be pulled. Commissioner Beason made a motion to adopt the Consent Calendar minus Item #5. Commissioner Scofield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM PULLED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

5. NCTC Minutes

September 18, 2013 NCTC Meeting Minutes. *Approved.*

Commissioner Guerra made a motion to approve the September 18, 2013 NCTC Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Beason seconded the motion. The motion passed with an abstention by Commissioner Harris.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

8. Correspondence

There were no comments or discussion on the Correspondence.

9. Overview of the Town of Truckee's Transit Operations

Executive Director Landon noted that he received a phone call the previous day from Kelly Beede, Truckee's Parking Services Manager, and she was ill and requested to be placed on the next NCTC meeting agenda. There was no further comment on the topic.

10. Executive Director's Report

10.1 North State Super Region (NSSR): North State Transportation for Economic Development Study

Executive Director Landon reported the North State Transportation for Economic Development Study was completed. He said there seems to be a consensus of all sixteen northern counties that this will be a useable document that will help to springboard the region, as well as the individual counties, toward future funding sources from the state and federal governments. Mr. Landon noted that he provided a copy of the Executive Summary to NCTC and he would be glad to provide the full document to anyone desirous of receiving that.

10.2 Tahoe Transportation District – Trans Sierra Transportation Plan

Executive Director Landon said this project is similar to the NSSR project and it was initiated this fall by the Tahoe Transportation District. The Trans Sierra Transportation Plan is essentially looking through all of the transportation plans in the Trans Sierra area and rolling them up into a combined effort. They are making a business case to the state and federal governments for projects that are within this Trans Sierra area. Mr. Landon said NCTC staff is participating in this effort and will keep the Commission apprised of how the project moves forward. He said he spoke to the Tahoe Transportation District Executive Director, Carl Hasty, and he said the consultant, CH2M HILL, is in the data collection phase. In late January they plan to hold a workshop to give all of the participating agencies the first review of what data they have collected and how they are moving forward.

There were no questions or comments from the Commissioners.

11. Project Status Reports

A. Caltrans Projects: Winder Bajwa, Caltrans District 3 Project Manager for Nevada County

- *SR 49/La Barr Meadows Road Widening Project* – Mr. Bajwa stated the project is complete and Caltrans is going through the close down process with final billing.
- *SR 49 Minor A SHOPP Operational Improvement Project at Carriage Road and Ladybird Drive* – Mr. Bajwa said this project was awarded to Hansen Brothers Enterprises on October 8<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$764,335. The contract is going through the final approval process for signature and it is expected the contractor will start construction next spring. He said tree and brush removal will start sooner than that.

Commissioner Scofield stated he was pleased to see Hansen Brothers were awarded the contract for this project. He asked the status on the other two projects: Smith Road and Cherry Lane. Mr. Bajwa replied that he thought Caltrans would be able to ask for allocations on those two projects in 2014 sometime, possibly in July or August. He reported the design work is going

forward on these projects and he believes they have a good opportunity that when the Carriage Road project is finished, then Caltrans will be able to get started on the other two projects as well. He thought the construction of those will be in 2015.

- *SR 20/49 Major SHOPP Rehabilitation Project from East of Indian Springs Road in Grass Valley to the Junction of SR 49 East of Nevada City* – Mr. Bajwa reported the work is completed and Caltrans is closing out the project.
- *SR 49 Shoulder Widening from Old Downieville Highway to Newtown Road* – Mr. Bajwa reported this project is proceeding through the final design process. He said they received the final environmental clearance in August and the project report is complete. There are environmental permits that Caltrans must secure and they have submitted applications to the various agencies. They hope to have them in the next few months. Mr. Bajwa said utility verification is underway and they do have a waterline in that area. Advertisement for the project will occur in spring 2014 and they are planning to begin construction in the summer. He reported that CMAQ funds are being used for a part of the project so Caltrans will ask for the allocation in the spring.

Commissioner Beason asked Mr. Bajwa if he was confident the construction would be completed by the end of 2014. Mr. Bajwa replied that based on his discussion with the team, they are moving quickly on the project and he was confident it will go to construction in 2014, once the regulatory agencies give Caltrans the permits.

12. Status Report: Regional Traffic Model Update -- Presentation by Kwasi Donkor and Ron Milam from Fehr & Peers

Executive Director Landon stated the consultant doing the work is Fehr & Peers and the project has been underway for some time. He said early on in the project they experienced some delays due to incomplete data, which they went out and collected to move forward. He said the project is close to completion, but they are at a point where they need to input the future year land use scenario for the model and they have hit a few glitches on it. Mr. Landon wanted to give the Commission an understanding of where the project is and he noted that this project will lead to the update of the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee program. He introduced Kwasi Donkor of Fehr & Peers to give the presentation update.

Kwasi Donkor gave a general overview of travel models and explained that a model is just a tool; in this case a computer program, which allows them to simulate traffic volumes and travel patterns in a specific region. He said travel models are used for planning exercises, a mitigation fee program, or to just answer general questions about how land use or infrastructure projects may affect travel in an area. He said over the past few years there have been a few regulatory laws that have created an evolutionary change in the planning processes, and particularly in travel demand modeling. As part of that evolution, they found that there has been a shift from just using travel models as vehicles to forecast traffic and to see how much traffic is on a roadway. Now they can inform you in terms of best management practices or look at greenhouse gases and inputs to them such as Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). He said you can also look at travel choices, depending on different policies, that you might want to implement. Mr. Donkor said it has really been about balancing objectives and looking at ways they can model them to answer transportation questions.

Mr. Donkor reported with that change came a number of different methods and tools that were developed regarding VMT and greenhouse gases, some of which were developed by Fehr &

Peers, to help answer those questions. He said one of the major developments was the update to the California Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Guidelines in 2010. With that came a new focus on travel demand models, particularly in how they are developed. They found that there are a few blind spots related to traditional three-step or four-step models, so the RTP Guidelines were really an effort to try to add sensitivity to their models in order to have more confidence as they are used. Mr. Donkor noted that Nevada County fell within Category B in the RTP, related to different jurisdictions, depending on factors such as the population size and how rapid growth is occurring. He said that category is a rural, smaller population, with slower growth. As a part of that there are a number of recommendations that the RTP Guidelines outline. He said the previous model answered a few of those recommendations, but definitely not all of them. The new model update is looking to answer a few more of those recommendations to the best of their ability. Mr. Donkor said the models they have traditionally used have had some blind spots, particularly with the circulation network; most models do not cover the full circulation network in their region or geography. He said in the walking environment many times the models are blind to pedestrian travel and also density and clustering; understanding the difference in travel behavior between higher density development versus more low density development. He said another major one that is becoming a trend is the demographic changes, as you look at how in the next few years the age of persons turning 65 will be increasing; many models are not sensitive to the different travel patterns that they will now have.

Mr. Donkor said in addition to those sensitivities, they have been rolled into the "D Factors": Density of Dwellings, Diversity, Mix of Use of Housing and Uses, Design Connectivity, Destinations, Distance in Transit, Development Scale, Demographics, and Demand Management. He said with all of those now they are able to roll back into their new model so it can be a little more sensitive than traditional models to those factors. He stated they have also created a user friendly graphical interface and a streamlined process, whereas in the previous model it was a little bit more of a task to go through each step of the model. Now they have created an interface that allows you to just click a button and run it all the way through, so it is really user friendly and easier to follow. Mr. Donkor said the model was made simpler to output different metrics, such as VMT in particular. He said this is really interesting because VMT is the inputs that go into air quality models, so right now they have it set up so they can output directly into a model like EMFAC [emission factors that represent the vehicle fleet, speeds, and environmental conditions associated with a project; a model issued by the California Air Resources Board]. Executive Director Landon noted that VMT is a key indicator for air quality emissions and staff has had to manually prepare tables in the past to provide them to the California Air Resources Board when doing the air quality modeling, so this will be a help to staff. Mr. Donkor stated they will be preparing a Model Development Report and a User's Guide so anyone can pick it up, read it, and understand how to use the model readily.

Mr. Donkor said the major question to ask is how is the model actually performing, and they call that static validation, which is looking at how the model is able to replicate existing conditions. He said those existing conditions are represented in the form of traffic counts. Part of the effort that they went through early-on in data collection for the project, they collected counts from all over Nevada County and wanted to then compare those counts to the results they are getting as they run the model. He said the RTP Guidelines actually have statistics they can use to see how well their model is doing. The model is currently passing all of the tests.

Mr. Donkor said not only did they want to look at how the model is able to replicate existing conditions or counts, they wanted to really understand how any changes of the model would affect the model's behavior. He stated they do not typically pick up a model and just run it statically; they are usually inputting land use changes or infrastructure changes to then get their

results. With that, they do dynamic validations to see how dynamically the model responds to any changes. He walked the Commissioners through an example of that on the display screen. He used a section of SR 49 between Brunswick Road and Gold Flat Road and he drew a boundary, or screen line, that bisects the eastern side from the western side of the freeway. He said what they observed is there are three points at which vehicles can cross over the freeway: Brunswick Road, Banner Lava Cap Road, and Gold Flat Road to the north. They wanted to test what would happen if they removed Banner Lava Cap Road. As they would expect, that traffic diverted to Brunswick Road and Gold Flat Road. The volumes at Brunswick Road and Gold Flat Road increased proportional to the volume that used to be on Banner Lava Cap Road. Mr. Donkor said they were very pleased with how the model was performing; it was responding well in the magnitude and direction of change they expected.

Mr. Donkor said they updated the model and tested it to make sure it was responding favorably, and they created a tool that allows them to store data; not just the traffic data, but also some of the input data that goes into the model. He said at the current stage they are looking to input their future land use data set into the model to create a future model land use and a model scenario. What they have done is create a web map that is online and the member jurisdictions can go to it and actually update their land use for the 2035 condition. Mr. Donkor said they can then take the land use and update their travel demand model inputs using that data. They tried to streamline the process to make it simple for member jurisdictions to go in and update data as they wish. He said one of the challenges with the map, that occurred during the presentation that day, was he wanted to log in to show them how to use the tools, but they have been having difficulty getting through the Nevada County firewall. He said they are working through that security issue and it has caused a slight delay in the input process. He noted the City of Grass Valley has been using the tool and Fehr & Peers opened it to Caltrans and other jurisdictions also, so they can update what they want to update. They have the parcel land use set in there from Nevada County's GIS Department. They have also included the model's traffic analysis zone, which is how they inventory the land uses for the model. Mr. Donkor stated they also have the jurisdictional boundaries on the map. He said because it is now in a GIS interface, they can actually bring in other data that might be useful for planning. He showed another map they created using the Caltrans traffic collision data base, so they can go into the website and pull out their data and add it to the map, to see where there are collisions in Nevada County. There are tables that can be used to understand exactly what kind of injuries or fatalities took place in that area. The traffic counts will be added to the map also so you can see the locations where they collected counts. Mr. Donkor asked the Commissioners if they had any questions.

Commissioner Harris said the presentation was fascinating and she looks forward to being able to access the data directly. She said traditionally, projecting dynamically that happened in her experience have not worked too well; the human behavior is more adaptive to changes than computers can exactly predict. She said there is a major change coming up when Dorsey Drive Interchange comes online and it will affect a number of the arteries, which could then affect the RTMF update that is coming up behind this work and which projects need to be done and in what order. Commissioner Harris asked Mr. Donkor if they have worked on that or any indication of that. She sees the correlation coefficients, etc. so that gives her a little confidence, but how well is the model going to be able to predict it if this does not come online until we are done with the traffic study and already into the RTMF update planning. Mr. Donkor said ultimately when they are doing any sort of planning, they cannot just focus on allowing the model to be able to give them the answer; there has to be a level of experience and knowledge in the area that helps determine what decisions are made. He said going back to the validation, the static is what allows them to have a little confidence, but it is really the dynamic validation that gives them even more confidence when infrastructure projects like Dorsey Drive come online

that they will see a reasonable pattern in the traffic. He said, ultimately, they will have to take a look at that and if they need to make adjustments they can do that. Mr. Donkor said what they will be doing in the future year model is including many of those projects that NCTC would be anticipating, so Dorsey Drive will be in the network, and then they can see how the model is assigning trips to that interchange and how it is changing patterns on other arterials. He said that is still in the process as they develop the accumulative year model.

Commissioner Harris asked Executive Director Landon if he thought the timing would work in terms of when they will be needing to update the RTMF and the knowledge of this. Executive Director Landon said yes it will; staff is holding off on the update of the RTMF to get the model in place and working well to then proceed with the update of the mitigation fees. Commissioner Harris asked what happens when Dorsey Drive actually starts operating relative to the timing and understanding. She said it is one thing to project it and it is another thing to experience it. Mr. Landon said he is pretty confident going into this, and based on the experience with past models, that we will get a good product. He said the counts, when they actually occur, will certainly either validate or tell us we need to make adjustments. He anticipated the RTMF will be updated prior to or just about the same time Dorsey Drive Interchange is completed. Mr. Landon said every five years NCTC does a comprehensive update on the mitigation fee program, and should there be a significant difference from what has been forecast, they can always go in and do an interim update.

Commissioner Beason said before we moved forward with Dorsey Drive, there was data calculations about the traffic relief that would occur, not just along the highway, but also along Sierra College Boulevard, and Ridge Road by the high school. He asked if that is contained in the current model or is it just some analysis we have. Executive Director Landon said there were model runs from the previous model that indicated that the construction of Dorsey Drive Interchange and the implementation of Dorsey Drive would then provide, for example in the Brunswick Basin, about a 15% to 20% relief of traffic volumes. He said with the update of the model, they see again the base year does not have Dorsey Drive as a completed project, but the future year will, so we will see a forecasted improvement.

Commissioner Fouyer said this is a great tool for all of the agencies to use. He asked if this was something that the public will have access to or will they always go through a government agency to access the data. He said if there are local planners working on local projects it would be nice for them to be able to go in and play with the model as they discuss projects with their clients. Executive Director Landon said they would certainly need some technical expertise to utilize the model, but it can be available to them. Mr. Donkor said separate from the actual Travel Demand Model being available, with many of the maps now on a website, they can work with NCTC to set up a website where people can go in and look at some of the data. Commissioner Fouyer said he could see a tremendous value for people who propose projects and who look at different types of uses, potentially rezoning property to meet needs, to at least be able to have an idea of what is going to trigger issues and maximum capacity versus where can they meet. He thinks it is a tool that needs to be made available to the public.

Chairman Jostes stated that was an excellent presentation and was very interesting. He asked how long Fehr & Peers were retained for and when was the product expected to be finished. Executive Director Landon said they are working through the issue of being able to get the county data input. He stated the final contract is through the end of this fiscal year, but he is anticipating that by mid-spring the project should be completed.

Commissioner Beason asked if they remembered the dueling models previously in 2005/06 and asked if they had gotten beyond that. Executive Director Landon said this project is a joint project with the City of Grass Valley so they are utilizing the same data base.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### 14. Amendment I to the 2013/14 Overall Work Program (OWP)

Executive Director Landon reported that as the last fiscal year concluded, it was noted that actual carryover amounts for the various funding sources were a little different than what staff anticipated and put in the budget. He said this amendment to the OWP simply adjusts the budget to recognize those changes as they actually occurred.

Commissioner Beason made a motion to adopt Resolution 13-37 approving Amendment I to the FY 2013/14 Overall Work Program. Commissioner Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Executive Director Landon said at the January meeting he is anticipating bringing forward a special project to be added to the Overall Work Program. He has been working for some time with the Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF), which is a grouping of 26 rural agencies throughout the State of California similar to the NCTC. He said over the years there is a funding source that comes from the state that is called Rural Planning Assistance, and there have been carried over funds by other agencies that they have not been able to fully utilize. In recognition of that, Caltrans has asked the RCTF to come up with a state-wide project that would enable those funds to be expended effectively and not just have them lapse. Mr. Landon said, working with the RCTF, he attended a workshop in November that was put on by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) with regard to developing performance measures for how your highway system is working. He said this is a new focus under the MAP-21 federal legislation, and one of the FHWA Headquarters officials has noted that, given the shortage of funding, we need to be focused on maintaining our investment in what we have, and that capacity increasing projects are going to be falling on hard times until we insure that we are able to maintain what we have. Mr. Landon said, in view of that statement, and in concert with the workshop he attended, he has put forward a proposal for the RCTF, and there is at least verbal approval from Caltrans to do this. They will be setting up a process whereby they would develop a set of performance measures for maintaining each rural system throughout the State of California, developing a data set that could be put into the Regional Transportation Plan. Mr. Landon reviewed that Caltrans has requested that NCTC be the Project Manager for that project and they will provide the funding for staff to accomplish that, so he will bring that hopefully to the January NCTC meeting. The draft Request For Proposal has been submitted to Caltrans and he anticipates getting that approved. Commissioner Beason asked if there was adequate staff capacity to do the project. Mr. Landon replied that the work would be done through a contract with a consultant.

Executive Director Landon noted that an email was sent out indicating the NCTC offices will be closed from December 23 through January 1<sup>st</sup>. He said he would be starting his time off early since there were medical issues in his family that require him to be off starting December 17<sup>th</sup>.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is on January 15, 2014 at the City of Grass Valley Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, CA.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Chairman Jostes adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Antoinette Perry  
Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: January 15, 2014

By: L. Jostes  
Lawrence A. Jostes, Chairman  
Nevada County Transportation Commission