



Grass Valley • Nevada City

Nevada County • Truckee

## MINUTES OF MEETING May 20, 2015

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2015 in the City of Nevada City Council Chambers, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, California. The meeting was scheduled for 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Terri Andersen, Nate Beason, Carolyn Wallace Dee, Jason Fouyer, Ann Guerra, 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 9:32 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

### PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Beason pulled Consent Item #2.

1. Financial Reports

A. February 2015 and March 2015. *Approved.*

3. Revised Findings of Apportionment for FY 2015/16. *Adopted Resolution 15-13 accepting the Revised Findings of Apportionment for FY 2015/16.*

4. Multi-Year Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program FFY 2015/16 Adjustments. *Pulled from the Agenda by NCTC staff prior to the meeting.*

5. NCTC Lease Agreement with Ridgewood Associates. *Adopted Resolution 15-15 authorizing the Executive Director to sign a five year agreement to lease office space from Providence Park, Ltd.*

6. Update of NCTC's Personnel Manual. *Adopted Resolution 15-16 approving NCTC's updated Personnel Manual.*

7. Formal Establishment of the NCTC Petty Cash Fund. *Adopted Resolution 15-17 formally establishing the Petty Cash Fund.*
8. Amendment III to the FY 2014/15 Overall Work Program. *Adopted Resolution 15-18 amending the FY 2014/15 Overall Work Program.*

Commissioner Beason made a motion to adopt the Consent Calendar minus Item #2 and #4. Commissioner Fouyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

#### ITEM PULLED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

##### 2. NCTC Minutes

March 18, 2015 NCTC Meeting Minutes. *Approved as amended by Commissioner Guerra, with an abstention from Commissioner Beason due to his absence from the meeting.*

Commissioner Guerra stated on pages 4 and 5 there were several references to "Paratransit, Inc.", which is an organization separate and distinct from "Paratransit Services". She asked that the references be changed to the correct name of Paratransit Services on both pages.

Commissioner Scofield made a motion to approve the March 18, 2015 NCTC Meeting Minutes, as amended. Commissioner Dee seconded the motion. The motion passed with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield. Commissioner Beason abstained.

#### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

##### 9. Correspondence

There was no discussion.

12. NCTC Workshop: Discussion led by Charles Wilson, Director of Nevada County Human Resources, to review the process for setting NCTC staff salaries.

Chairman Jostes moved this item forward to accommodate Mr. Wilson's schedule. Chairman Jostes stated that every few years there is an issue pertaining to how the Commission reviews and sets NCTC staff salaries. He said in discussions over the years the Commission felt the current process is one that not everyone is completely comfortable with and they thought it would be useful for Mr. Wilson to speak to the general issue of setting salaries for this type of body.

Mr. Charles Wilson stated his goal was to share information and help facilitate a discussion in an informal workshop setting. He did not have specific recommendations regarding NCTC. He spoke in general about how organizations might approach compensation for their staff. He qualified that the Commission would not need to embrace what he shared or that it is something they have to do just because someone who is in Human Resources discipline has shared it. Mr. Wilson said each Commissioner has their own experiences and their own philosophies, and as a governing body they would have to come to their own conclusions as to how they want to approach this process.

Mr. Wilson referred to his handout and stated that a governing board has to answer the question of what is their philosophy on compensation and what do they want to provide for staff. He asked them to consider what their desired position relative to the labor market would be and what percentile of labor market compensation do they want to achieve for staff, i.e. 100%, 75%, etc. Mr. Wilson asked: "What is your labor market? Who are your competitors? Who do you want to be compared to?" He said many look at the labor market to determine which organizations they draw from to obtain staff, or what organizations do they lose staff to, and that helps to define their labor market. Mr. Wilson said with NCTC, where the Commissioner members outnumber the staff, they are blessed with very little turnover of staff members. He said perhaps the traditional ways of approaching the definition of NCTC's labor market cannot be defined by who you lose employees to or where you draw them from, and you may have to look at another way to define the labor market. Mr. Wilson reviewed that the Commission would need to decide who they are trying to stay up with and where do they want to be relative to that position. He said once the Commission decides where they want to be, then they must determine if they have the resources to be at that proposed level. Mr. Wilson questioned if the revenue or income stream would be sufficient to sustain the philosophy of compensation. Therefore, it is not just current resources, but the Commission must consider what the allocated resources will be going forward.

Mr. Wilson said then you need data to drive that philosophy and the resources. He said you want to make sure the data you are collecting is objective and comes from a credible source. He asked, "Do you have within your staff the capability of having that data collected, or do you want to use an outside consultant, which means you will spend the funds to insure objectivity, and is that important for what your objectives are." He asked if the Commission has the expertise among their members to form a subcommittee. Mr. Wilson said he strongly suggests that no matter how the data is collected, that you have a means to insure that it is objective, so when it is presented for analysis it has high reliability associated with it. He asked how they would insure that it is accurate data. The classic way is to make sure you have staff who have position descriptions that are defined in great detail, so when you are collecting data from other organizations you make sure that the comparison is an apt one. As an example, Mr. Wilson told how the City of Grass Valley changed from a City Administrator form of government to a City Manager. He said when the title changes, the job description and the delegated authority to a City Manager is different than that of a City Administrator. It sounds simple, but there is a significant difference in delegated authority. He said the position description would make that distinction and that would result in making sure you are looking for matches with that level of responsibility. Mr. Wilson said the compensation for a City Manager would be greater than the compensation for a City Administrator. He said the Town of Truckee has a Town Manager and Nevada City has a City Manager. He added that the position descriptions also should go into detail on level of responsibility, level of authority, consequence of error, the budget responsibility, etc. He stated you want to be sure you are comparing accurately and if the minimum qualifications for the positions you are comparing are accurate, i.e. does it require a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree, a special certificate, or a special expertise such as the NCTC Transportation Planner. Mr. Wilson said to be sure the job description reflects the specifics and ask if the comparisons are being made accurately, based upon a specialty within the job. He said this is key.

Then Mr. Wilson asked what specific data are you trying to collect, such as base salary alone, or base salary plus longevity, or are you looking at total compensation, which is a very difficult "apples to apples" comparison to make, since some might include a retirement plan with medical and dental and vision. You need to ask: "How much sick leave and vacation time do you get? How many holidays do you have? Do you have disability insurance and long-term disability

insurance?” Mr. Wilson said placing a dollar value in all of those to amalgamate a figure in order to compare one agency to another is very difficult. He said some organizations invest in that so they can meet their philosophical goals within their resources. Mr. Wilson said NCTC would need to decide what the salient factors are that they would consider in collecting data to allow making comparisons to your data. He said most organizations do a modified approach where they collect basic salary information, i.e. what is the top and bottom of the scale, and they collect other data that is important for their organization, their labor market, and their resources. He said maybe it is the total contribution to medical, dental, and vision, the retirement plan, maybe accruals such as longevity, but you predefine what you will use as comparison points, so you can make an accurate analysis of the data later.

Mr. Wilson said when you analyze the results you must discern if the results support your philosophy. You look at the results and then look at your resources and see if your resources support what you want to do. He said what you want to do may not be sustainable over time. When you have a plan you want to implement, you must ask if it is something you can do in one action, or if it will be done in steps or phases; would it be appropriate to do part one and then reconvene one or two years later and talk about part two.

Mr. Wilson reviewed that NCTC will need to decide how they want to approach staff compensation within the broad parameters of their philosophy, determine what their resources are, how to be sure the collected data is accurate and objective and considers the critical factors to compare, ask if the analysis results align with the philosophy and resources, and decide how the plan will roll out.

Commissioner Fouyer said the format most government agencies follow is they do an average and then increase the average, and that is forever up-ticking. He knows in the private sector there are ratios he likes to follow and when he exceeds those there is the question if they are sustainable. Commissioner Fouyer asked if there are any new trends or a model that Mr. Wilson sees in the future that agencies are beginning to take a look at that may replace the antiquated approach. Mr. Wilson replied that there are some that are not necessarily new, but re-emphasized approaches and they all center around the term “sustainability”. He said NCTC staff are not in PERS and there has been a lot of press about the expense of retirement plans. In the public sector agencies that have PERS retirement programs, there has been a strong public policy shift amongst the governing bodies to make sure that the employees are paying in the full employee contribution amount for that benefit, so there is no free ride for employees for public sector retirement plans. Mr. Wilson said that is one philosophy and the two Nevada County Commissioners are well acquainted with that because of their influence on that philosophy at the county level. He said the other measure that is taking on more steam on sustainability is making sure that the cost of medical, dental, and vision has some measure born by the employees. Mr. Wilson said some organizations take a stance that they will pick up the premium for employee only coverage, but when it comes to dependent coverage, then it is asked of the employees to bear some of the burden. He said there is a shift for more premium dollars to be shifted to the employees.

Mr. Wilson said another broad subject that he has seen of the peaks and valleys in the public sector is compensation based upon actual performance and it is called “variable pay”. He said in the public sector there are laws that require that variable pay be defined in advance, in terms of how one attains it and how much is provided if performance measurements are attained. You cannot say in a broad document that there is a “pay for performance” program and at the end of the year they will look back and see how staff has done, and if they have done a great job they will give them 5%, and if they have done a better than great job they will give them 10% or

greater. Mr. Wilson said you have to define the process, prior to the implementation and evaluation, as having certain performance objectives that must be attained and are easily measured, so they are incorporated into the program in advance. You cannot retrospectively decide what that percentage or dollar amount is congruent with the level of performance. He said those have come and gone in the public sector because they are more staff intensive, and yet, it is an incentive for employees. In the private sector "pay for performance" or "variable pay" is more prevalent and the laws do not apply in terms of strict establishment.

Mr. Wilson said, other than that, it is making sure that you are providing an adequate total compensation plan to attract the employees you are going to need when the baby boomers retire. You will try to preserve institutional knowledge by having people stay longer and incentivizing mentorships or preceptorships. Those are the things that are out there because of the demographics.

Commissioner Beason said he was not only uncomfortable with the way NCTC does things, but with the way Nevada County does it, because they have so-called "peer counties" that they try to compare themselves to in order to compensate people fairly. He said there is also the obligation to the tax payers. He said Nevada County looks pretty good until you add Placer County data, because they are wealthy, and proximate, and they steal employees from Nevada County. Commissioner Beason said it is an approximation and they have sort of defined the labor market and he thought that was key, because he remembers when he was young his mother was a City Clerk and they received low salaries, but received pretty good benefits. He stated that over the years the public sectors have become more technical and complicated, and it is about as complicated as it would be to run a business on the same scale. He said the competition for people in the market has changed, and after Nevada County tries to match or come close to what the peer groups are doing, the peer group does something else and there is no end to it. Commissioner Beason said when you look at NCTC it gets even harder to compare to other transportation agencies that we call peers, but he is not too sure they are, that you try to compare staff positions with them. He said then you try to compare NCTC staff positions with positions at Nevada County, which are based primarily not on the technical aspects of the job, but on responsibility and the budget, and he thinks you start getting into comparing apples with oranges. Commissioner Beason thought those were the types of issues the Commission needs to figure out and implicate some coherency. He said he does not have the answer, but it seems as soon as some compensation standards are established, then the other people will be doing the same thing, so then you have to decide what to do with that. Mr. Wilson replied it is difficult because you want to be sensitive to your neighbors who may be taking away your talent, and as soon as you develop new talent, then they may be taken away as well. Therefore, your inclination is to try to make sure that your compensation in totality is equal so they will stop stealing employees, but is that sustainable for a county such as Nevada County versus Placer County where the tax base is so different. Mr. Wilson said what other organizations are trying to do is to make the organization itself a place where people want to work, not just looking at the total compensation, but the value derived from the work they do. Mr. Wilson said that is abstract and you cannot buy milk with how good you feel about your job, but trying to have a work environment that is attractive to have you come to work and to stay. He said the "pine tree syndrome" does work for some and they have been successful in using it to attract employees, but when people can drive thirty minutes from home and get a better compensation package, that is a challenge. Mr. Wilson said he does not have a magic potion to share with the Commission.

Commissioner Scofield said his issue is not so much what is being paid, but the negotiation process. He thought the current process puts a lot of pressure on Executive Director Landon. He would like to spell out the negotiation process with the objective, and he thought possibly it

would be good to go into closed session to determine the Commission's objectives before they start negotiating with Executive Director Landon. He said currently the Commission just asks him what staff is asking for and NCTC takes it from there. Commissioner Scofield said that puts a lot of pressure on Executive Director Landon and asked if it would be worth it to hire a consultant to form their own county comparison. Another option is if the Commission has the expertise to do it, or can they fall back a little on the county or the cities' expertise to help NCTC come up with some of this data, so all the figures are not coming from Executive Director Landon and putting pressure on him. Commissioner Scofield thought NCTC could have a committee to describe what the Commission's objectives are and then have the committee go into negotiations with Executive Director Landon. Then there would be two or three Commissioners, possibly Chairman Jostes and Commissioner Dee and someone else, who say the proposal is fair and equitable. He thought it would then be defined in the NCTC Personnel Manual. Commissioner Scofield read in the Personnel Manual a statement to consider a cost-of-living increase every year, and he said that was not negotiations. He thought it would be better to have a two year or three year contract, such as the county and city does, and then at the end of that time the negotiation process would start over again. Commissioner Scofield thought the Commission puts a lot of pressure on Executive Director Landon and there needs to be a little more responsibility on the Commissioners to make sure they are having fair negotiations with NCTC staff. He asked if that made sense.

Chairman Jostes said it does make sense. In the private sector he held a management job that dealt with, among other things, doing salary surveys in the oil industry, writing job descriptions, and making those comparisons. He said the interesting thing is that in his situation there were 50-60,000 employees, and he and his staff were a slight piece of that, and they would go out and get the data and come back and hand it up the line to management to make decisions about salary. He said they were doing the exact same thing; they were setting their own salaries. Chairman Jostes said there are four people in this situation and two of them are involved in the process, rather than five people out of 50,000 doing the process, so it changes the whole dynamics. Commissioner Beason said it is not as personal. Chairman Jostes said that is part of the issue. He said he is not a public sector person and he finds it extraordinarily difficult to do business as a public Commission because of the Brown Act. Chairman Jostes asked if it is allowed to have a subcommittee, or are they violating the Brown Act. He was told, with a seven person Commission, you are allowed to have a three person subcommittee, as long as you do not have a quorum. Chairman Jostes said he has had the discussion with Commissioner Scofield before, but the word "negotiation" does not even enter his mind; he felt there was no negotiation in this situation. He views it as being in the private sector and having a company; you choose to hire, and you tell the employees what you are going to pay them; end of story. He said that is basically what happens in this situation. Chairman Jostes said the small group of people get intimately involved in the process of it sometimes and that can be a problem.

Chairman Jostes said his observation, in sitting through a number of these discussions, was there is another dynamic that goes to philosophy. The process is to survey jobs and set some place relative to the objectives and all the things talked about. But an overlying factor he sees is every time NCTC discusses staff compensation, the Commissioners who are voted in and who represent constituents say, "Wait a minute; in my jurisdiction we are only doing this. How can I justify to my constituents that we are doing this for these people, but the people in my organization are doing something different." Chairman Jostes said that comes up every time the compensation discussions occur, and he was not pointing fingers and understood why. He said the Commission may come to an answer based on the data that has come in, but there is an overlying concern among some Commissioners. The final test is how it reflects relative to what is being done in each individual group of constituents. He said that is his observation, but it

happens. Commissioner Beason said he thought it went further than that; it is not just the constituencies; and he thought it was a fair question. He said you also wonder how that is going to affect the attitudes of people on that staff who are getting compensated a certain way. He said they are probably going through a more extensive and objective process; similar to what Chairman Jostes described. Commissioner Beason is on a Board in Sacramento and then he has to go back to Nevada County and justify this to the people there. Chairman Jostes said he agrees that a constituency is more than just your voters; some are also your employees, etc., etc.

Chairman Jostes said, based on the discussion, he wanted to propose a philosophical concept and he did not know if anyone else uses this exactly. If they thought they had a good match with everything and there was a base point that NCTC was comfortable with, the Commission would have staff where they want them to be relative to the competitive jobs in the marketplace. Chairman Jostes thought rather than looking at those competitive markets anymore, you simply average what the jurisdictions and the county do each year, and that is a representation of the county as a whole in terms of salary movement, and that is what you apply. Chairman Jostes said since this Commission represents the entire county, it is just a philosophical thought that it addresses the constituency issue, and it moves this body with the county, rather than stair stepping with it, and moves it with the county from that point on. He said you could disconnect yourself from your competition, but with counties like Placer, he was not really sure you could stay with that competition anyways. Chairman Jostes asked if anyone ever takes a look at that or do they do it independently. In other words, when the county looks at something, do they say, "what does Grass Valley do?" Mr. Wilson said it is not a direct comparison, but some data is collected just so Nevada County is not missing some salient points. He said, for example, Nevada County compares with five other counties: Mendocino, Butte, Sutter, Placer, and El Dorado, and that has been the comparison group for the majority of its employees for about fifteen years. Mr. Wilson said as those other counties go up and down, the average goes up and down, and the county's relativeness to that average has changed. Mr. Wilson said they do "check-ins" with key positions at the towns or cities when there is direct competition. He gave the example of a Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator. He said you need to be sensitive in the local labor market in Nevada County to what other agencies might be paying for those kinds of disciplines. Mr. Wilson said they are not necessarily concerned with how they are leveling positions in some of the support areas, and certainly some disciplines are unique to the county since the cities do not have social service workers, or eligibility workers, or behavioral health therapists, so they will not look to the cities for those comparisons. Mr. Wilson said for some positions they are sensitive and other positions they will not measure them at all. Commissioner Beason said he recalled there was a sensitivity with City Managers, CEO's, and Assistant CEO levels. Mr. Wilson said there is a sensitivity and they keep in touch with what those data points are.

Commissioner Guerra said Mr. Wilson spoke about comparing salaries and benefit packages, but he mentioned incentivizing mentorships, and she said one thing that does not get looked at is the size of the organization. She said NCTC has a very small staff and if they are compared to El Dorado County, then what is their overall budget. She asked if NCTC is getting more bang for their buck in that way, and she wondered if there is room for quality comparisons, or how do you insert those kinds of things into your philosophy; or is it strictly what they pay here and what they pay there, or is that just the standard. Mr. Wilson replied, to his knowledge, Executive Director Landon has taken that into account to make sure there is a leveling of the playing field to do justice to that. Chairman Jostes said the next step might be, based on what Commissioner Scofield stated, that it would be useful for a subcommittee to sit down with NCTC staff, specifically on this issue, and really drill down into how it is done and how comfortable the Commissioners are with how it is being done. He said, typically, you would take several jobs

you are going to compare and you would come up with five or six measurements for that job. An example would be to note how many people that person would supervise and if this person supervises twice the number of people as the compared person, then you give a plus one for that job. He said if they have half the budget, then they get a minus one. Chairman Jostes stated there is a fairly standard American process, that is not perfect, but you can make jobs equal by making those adjustments. Executive Director Landon stated that he has not gotten that detailed. Chairman Jostes said that is a way you can make two jobs that are somewhat dissimilar, similar by adjusting those, so you feel comfortable with considering scope, budget, number of employees, etc. and you have to pick the number and be consistent. He said, if you pick six measuring points, then you use those six measuring points and you do it the same for every job with pluses and minuses and that is how to level the field. He said that is what the private sector does.

Commissioner Beason said he agreed with that in some form or fashion, but he referred back to Commissioner Guerra's point regarding size of staff, which he thought was a good one. He said every time they do salary they talk about the size of staff, and their productivity, and the Commissioners all recognize that NCTC has a very good staff and they probably work harder than most transportation commission staffs do. The Commission also recognizes that NCTC has a good reputation in the state because of these people. He thought they could be subjective and factor that in.

Commissioner Dee went back to Chairman Jostes' point that if you identify factors that are contributing, whether it is size of staff, budget, area covered, etc., then you have to define those. She said you have to weigh those and you always have to be able to balance it, because there is no way they could ever compete with say Los Angeles County. She thought it was something the Commission needs to do to take into consideration those factors, and be sure they are not just looking at what Placer County pays, but how is the job different. The Commission has never gotten to the level to identify that and she thinks to set the base parameter the Commission needs to do that, i.e. what do they offer as benefits, and counterbalance, and all of that needs to be looked at. Commissioner Dee said NCTC has never done that in the eight or nine years she has been on the Commission.

Commissioner Scofield said he did not think they need to overcomplicate this. He thought things were pretty well established where they are. He would like to have a simple procedure that says here is the next time we will make this consideration. Currently Executive Director Landon says it is time to look at a salary increase, or staff is not looking for an increase at this time. Commissioner Scofield thought it should be more of a definition of when the next time will be to talk about salaries and have it defined as to what they will be looking for and maybe they would get more in depth. He is just looking for a simple procedure, so the Commission is the body coming forward, rather than Executive Director Landon coming forward asking for an increase.

Commissioner Fouyer said if you go back to what Chairman Jostes and Commissioner Dee were talking about, you start weighing things a certain way, but things change and shift through time, so three years from now we may not be weighing the same things. He thought a set plan would be a challenge to do. He agreed with Commissioner Scofield to potentially look at compensation every two or three years, and it would keep Executive Director Landon from having to go through this tough task, and the numbers he comes up with might be different than an outsider. Commissioner Fouyer said Executive Director Landon does a great job, but it is still a challenge because he has the best interest of the people he works with every day. He thought NCTC has an advantage with only four staff members, and how the revenues are generated allows for a little



more flexibility than with the bargaining units at the City of Grass Valley. Commissioner Beason said they know when the period of time is for employee contracts.

Chairman Jostes said he would like to get the discussion down to something the Commission can act upon. He suggested that the Commission would put together documentation and scheduling, so everyone knows when compensation discussions are going to happen and how they are going to happen. Chairman Jostes suggested two or three of the Commissioners be party to, or be observers of, at least, the process of collecting data and analyzing the data. The idea is when the data actually would come before the entire Commission in an official way, the subcommittee would say they have gone through this and are comfortable with where they are. He asked if that process would be an advantage. Chairman Jostes reviewed there would be a timeline, and when the time comes up, there would be a subcommittee that would meet with staff to monitor and go through the process with them, so they can bring back to the formal meetings their thoughts. Commissioner Scofield said the subcommittee could start right now to meet with Executive Director Landon and put together the process. He volunteered to be on the subcommittee and suggested Chairman Jostes also participate on the subcommittee. Chairman Jostes said he would be happy to be involved because he has some real life experience in this process. He said he is not greatly dissatisfied with the process, but he does understand that it is not well defined, and thought the whole Commission would be more comfortable if it were. Commissioner Scofield said he would like to make the process easier, since the last time it took months to resolve everything.

Commissioner Beason nominated Chairman Jostes and Commissioner Scofield to form a working committee to sit with NCTC staff and determine the timeline for the next salary/benefit negotiation and review procedures, the market, and come to the full Commission with recommendations. Commissioner Dee asked to add complete job descriptions. Chairman Jostes said one of the first things he wants to do when working with Commissioner Scofield is to look at job descriptions. Commissioner Beason included that in the motion. Chairman Jostes asked if there were a third Commissioner who would be willing to serve on the small subcommittee. Commissioner Fouyer thought it would be good to have someone from a city or the Town to participate on the subcommittee. Commissioner Dee agreed to participate with the subcommittee and Commissioner Beason amended his motion to add Commissioner Dee to the subcommittee. The three Commissioners agreed to meet in Truckee sometime, and Commissioner Dee suggested they could meet in July when the Commission meeting is held in Truckee. Commissioner Fouyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

## 10. Executive Director's Report

### 10.1 SR 49 Corridor Planning

Executive Director Landon reported there was discussion in the previous meeting that NCTC is gearing up to work with Caltrans on the development of the Project Approval and Environmental Documentation (PA/ED) for the next segment of SR 49 from La Barr Meadows Road up to McKnight Way. He provided historical maps from 2004 of the corridor as background information of what has gone on in the past. The maps reflect some concepts that were based on NCTC and local jurisdiction staff inputs to Caltrans as they were developing the corridor alternatives. Executive Director Landon said this was a reiteration of what has been done and what the philosophy was with relationship to the SR 49 Corridor, so as the Commission enters the next planning process of the corridor, they have that background.

## 10.2 Draft 2015 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan

Executive Director Landon said Caltrans has developed an Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) where they look at the interregional connections throughout the state. This was first prepared in 1998 and has been carried forward since that time. He said this is maybe the third update of that plan. Executive Director Landon said, early on, NCTC made a case to the state that SR 49 from Auburn to Grass Valley is the key entrance into our area and is an interregional connection route to the Greater-Sacramento area. He said it is also a piece of the I-80 corridor, and becomes an alternate route in times of bad weather and traffic incidents. SR 49 also connects with SR 20, which early on in this process, was recognized as an interregional connection from the Pacific Coast, in Mendocino County, to the I-80 corridor. Executive Director Landon said the state carried that forward with those two routes being identified as “focus routes”. The significance of a focus route is that it was Caltrans’ goal by 2020 to have those roads up to their facility standards. He said that could mean a two lane facility with eight foot shoulders, so they would want to have that facility developed to that level by that point in time. That was a written goal in their plan and that was one of the genesis of the work that has been done on SR 49, and also the genesis on some of the safety jobs that were completed on SR 20 to the west. Executive Director Landon said that has been an important nomination for those routes as NCTC works with the state. He stated after the adoption of SB 45, when a significant piece of control was given to the regional agencies of statewide funds, it became the basis for NCTC to leverage dollars. The first project that came out after SB 45 was the widening of SR 49 from the Bear River Bridge to Combie Road, which was a \$14 million job, and NCTC contributed about \$7 million of the project by leveraging Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) money. Caltrans and NCTC built the project together. He said that has been the ongoing philosophy behind widening the SR 49 Corridor as we move forward. However, in recent years, as funding becomes more difficult to obtain and there is more competing interests, there has been a reduction in the participation by the state, to where the SR 49 project at La Barr Meadows was achieved on the basis of NCTC going after a statewide grant to obtain the funding to construct the project. Executive Director Landon said on the current segment of SR 49, NCTC has put up \$6 million in two tranches of \$3 million each for PA/ED and PS&E (Plans, Specifications, and Estimates) without any commensurate participation by the state. The ITSP sets up a reduction in the focus on interregional highways and has a very strong focus on interregional rail. He said it also has a very strong focus that moves money towards the urbanized areas, so there is a great concern on the part of NCTC staff that this is a departure from the shared focus. Although, on page two of the document, it says, “We have new emphasis, but we have not changed any priorities.” Executive Director Landon said he is not sure how that really works, so it is staff’s intention to work with Caltrans staff, to the extent that they have input, and potentially with elected representatives, to see if any changes can be made prior to the adoption of the 2015 ITSP.

Commissioner Andersen asked how it came about that this was changed and what are the proposed new 11 Strategic Interregional Corridors. Executive Director Landon replied that Caltrans divided the state into eight areas and Nevada County is included in the Greater Sacramento area. As they looked at these strategic corridors, the main criteria Caltrans was looking at was goods movement. Therefore, the I-80 Corridor became a very important corridor with this new plan, but the connection with SR 49 and SR 20 were left out of that. He said the key behind all of that is the plan is in place and now you have the strategic corridors, and you had focus routes, so as the state moves forward to implement the plan, those became objectives for funding. What is happening is that Nevada County will be relegated to a much lower level of participation by the state to fund projects on those corridors.

Commissioner Dee has followed this from the start and she and Transportation Planner Woodman attended a session in Sacramento last year and she said it became very clear that the state's intention was to strip money from the rural areas. She stated when you look at the focus routes they put together, none of the rural areas are included in any of them, and they did not discuss it with any of the rural areas. Their intention is to go urban. Commissioner Dee encouraged the Commissioners to read the proposed plan if they have not already, because it is cutting the rurals out. She said the rurals will be in a bad place if the plan goes through as drafted. She thought a lot of the direction for this trend comes from the governor's office. When you look at the plan specifications, I-80 is a priority corridor, and what is especially prioritized is the section through Truckee. Truckee has nothing else but I-80, unless they are able to get goods movement on rail and improve the rail service. Commissioner Dee noted that the federal budget negotiations cut Amtrak's allowance by \$250 million after the recent accident. They have been threatening to do it and they openly said they will not give them any more funding until the accident reports come back, so that will hurt rail further. She reiterated that it will be a bad situation for Nevada County and they will be hit very hard if the plan is approved as written.

Executive Director Landon reported that there were four focus routes that were deleted from the plan; three of those were in Senator Dahle's district, so he contacted his chief of staff and provided him with the background information, similar to what was given to NCTC. He also contacted Modoc and Lassen Counties, who are the other areas affected by the deleted routes, in hopes of garnering support there as well. Commissioner Dee asked if he had contacted Senator Gaines office. Executive Director Landon replied he had not. Commissioner Dee said he is the Co-Chair of the Transportation Committee in the state and she thought he would be a good person to get involved; she has found him to be very responsive.

Commissioner Beason asked if he understood clearly that NCTC staff was requesting to have SR 20 and SR 49 be included in the ITSP, and that Executive Director Landon is saying he thinks those highways should be developed to the full potential and full build-out of four lanes up and down the corridors. Executive Director Landon replied to their facility standard, and in that case, yes, SR 49 is a four lane facility, but with the caveats that were included in the CSMP (Corridor System Management Plan). Commissioner Beason said the issue is that since he has been on NCTC, he has received mixed signals from the community about what they want in the corridor. He defined "corridor" as more than just the highway. Some people want five lanes from Grass Valley to Combie Road in South Nevada County, but other people say if that is done then it will change the character of the corridor and there will be pressure to rezone the land, the land will then be developed, and the corridor will look similar to what is north of Auburn. Commissioner Beason said there is a task and assumption here that NCTC will go forward and develop a five lane highway, and maybe that should be done. He does not have a sense that is what the community wants. He asked what the numbers have shown lately on SR 49 and SR 20; has anyone looked at numbers such as trip counts, peak hour information, etc. Shannon Culbertson, Caltrans Planner for Nevada County, stated that Caltrans District 3 recently updated the SR 49 CSMP, which included a lot of modeling information, volumes, and peak hour information. The current data was collected the latter part of 2014, but they do not have recent data after the completion of the Dorsey Drive Interchange this year. Commissioner Beason asked what the data was saying. Ms. Culbertson said it is pretty much the same as it has been in most of the documents. Commissioner Beason said there are Commissioners from the local jurisdictions who have said over the years to be careful what you ask for. He would like to have some discussion with more public input. He knows that Caltrans will be holding an Open House to get the community's input on the newest SR 49 project.

Chairman Jostes said he reads the newspaper and there are people who want these things and there are people who do not want these things, and it has to do with roads, and stores, and everything else; which is fair. However, just to put it on the table to keep the focus so the Commission does not forget, part of the impetus of this is SR 49 is a Safety Corridor, and despite the will of what the community wants, more or less commerce and people, the Commission has an obligation to provide a safe highway system, so that is part of the driver. Chairman Jostes said this is part of the discussion as well as the other part. Commissioner Beason said he was here when there were twelve fatalities in one year on SR 49. He thinks there needs to be more outreach, to educate the public on the safety needs of the corridor. He said there is the SR 49 Safety Committee, which is only a hand full of citizens. He personally sees the safety improvements on the road that Caltrans has done, just by driving it, and they have done a great job and the road is safer than it used to be. Commissioner Beason asked what it will be like in twenty years from now and how safe will it be if people are pulling in and out on SR 49; how does the Commission deal with that. He said there is talk about frontage roads, etc.

### 10.3 Caltrans Audit of NCTC Financial Management System

Executive Director Landon noted that on March 25<sup>th</sup> NCTC staff received a call from the Caltrans Office of Audits and Investigations and the division is as daunting as the name implies. He said there has been a twenty-five year run of clean audits and oversight by independent auditors, but these individuals come in and look in amazing detail. He said he is friends with a person who is now at the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, who used to be the head of Audits and Investigations, and she said the audit that NCTC has experienced is atypical as far as the amount of effort that has been put on a small agency. Executive Director Landon said it is not really an audit to see if you are doing things well, but it is an audit to find what you have done wrong and what can they find. He said a report is expected to come out the end of June, but that past week there were two more requests for information down to looking at individual time cards. He said it has taken a toll on staff's ability to get other work done, as they have tried to meet the auditors' requirements and deadlines. Staff will keep the Commission posted on what the findings are.

## 11. Project Status Reports

- A. Caltrans Projects: Sergio Aceves, Caltrans Project Manager for Nevada County; and Tom Brannon, Caltrans Deputy District Director, Program/Project Management.

Executive Director Landon introduced Sergio Aceves as the new Project Manager for Nevada County, replacing Winder Bajwa. He said he has already been doing a good job for the county. Tom Brannon added that Mr. Aceves comes from a wealth of construction and traffic experience. Executive Director Landon noted that in 2004, when the SR 49 maps were developed, Mr. Brannon was Nevada County's Project Manager.

Mr. Aceves gave a brief summary of projects listed in his May Project Status Report.

- *SR 174 Safety Improvement from Mosswood Lane to just South of Dalmatian Drive* – Mr. Aceves reported this is a safety improvement project that proposes to realign two curves, widen shoulders, add a left turn lane at Greenhorn Access Road, and improve the clear recovery zone between Mosswood Lane and Dalmatian Drive. The main purpose of the project is to reduce the number and severity of collisions, and it was amended into the 2014 State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) in September 2014 for about \$12 million. Mr. Aceves stated that the May 7<sup>th</sup> Open House went well with about

thirty-five to forty-five people attending and there was a lively discussion. He said twenty-five people signed in and Caltrans received thirteen comments; seven are in favor and six are against the project. He said the no votes were worried about their property and the yes votes were focused on safety of the facility.

Executive Director Landon asked Mr. Aceves to speak on the information provided at the Open House regarding the possible expansion of some of the project limits.

Mr. Aceves said this project is driven by the safety index and Caltrans received a complaint on Bar Ela Ranch Road, which is south of the project limits. Caltrans Engineers took a look at the area, since it is so close to the current project. He said when they looked at the additional lane miles and the accidents that occurred there, the accident index went up, so they asked how much they could spend to improve that area to make it safer. Then Caltrans looked at what was going on north of the project, and the possibility of adding more lane miles to the project, which waters down how much can be spent on safety. Mr. Aceves said Caltrans does not have the money to fix the entire SR 174 corridor since safety project funding is based on statewide averages per lane miles. Mr. Aceves said they potentially have a project that would cover from just before You Bet Road to Bar Ela Ranch Road, and all of it could be taken care of with \$25 million. He said there is a possibility that Caltrans will extend the project limits to those two roads and almost double the size of the project from 0.9 miles to 1.5 miles. Mr. Aceves said the Project Development Team would meet that afternoon, which includes the safety engineers, designers, and environmental staff, to discuss the possibility. If they agree, they will approach management requesting to extend the limits of the project, and, if approved, they will hold an additional Open House to discuss this with the public.

Chairman Jostes asked if Caltrans has a meeting and fifty percent of the people want the project and fifty percent of the people do not want it, what do they do with the information from a split group of people. Mr. Aceves said that was a good question. Caltrans does Open House meetings in order to see if they can minimize the impact of the environmental work and see if they can realistically adjust the alignment or part of the project, but they may not be able to. He said sometimes they get input regarding impact to specific property they may not have known about. They try to minimize or mitigate the impact once they know about it. The environmental staff analyze the input and maybe they will say they should not be doing that, they should be doing something else, or they may say it cannot be avoided when they sign off on the EIR. And there might be other issues on the roadway that Caltrans is not aware of, as what just happened with the SR 174 Open House.

Commissioner Guerra said at the last NCTC meeting the Commission said it would be nice to see data that shows what drove the decisions to do this particular project as a safety project. She looked at the explanation and it states to improve safety for pedestrians and equestrians and that alarmed her, because she lives on SR 174 and feels it is unsafe to walk there. She said if Caltrans makes this little portion of the roadway safe, she does not know where you go from there. It did not make sense to her and it is not safe for horses either, unless it is a portion of a longer equestrian trail project. Mr. Aceves said that question came up, and what happens is when Caltrans widens the shoulder of a roadway that makes it safer. And, while it may not have connectivity to other facilities, at least it improves a small section. He said that is where the accidents are, so they can justify it as a safety project, and if they can make that section safer, then in the future they add onto that project. Mr. Aceves said there is no corridor plan for SR 174; all the projects are safety driven.

Commissioner Beason said SR 174 was once proposed to be a Scenic Corridor and it turned into a very contentious issue that caused Caltrans to eventually give up. He thought that situation was coloring a lot of the negative input. He said as the District Supervisor for the SR 174 area, he got input from one person on this issue and she was wrong about a lot. He thought what Caltrans is trying to do is a legitimate safety improvement to improve sight lines and recovery time and widen shoulders. But he agreed with Commissioner Guerra that he has never seen anyone ride a horse on that road, and the only pedestrian was him putting up campaign signs. Commissioner Beason said one of the things a property owner said that called him was that a Caltrans staff member said the California Highway Patrol will not patrol SR 174, and he knows that is not true. He has seen people get tickets on that roadway.

Commissioner Beason said with respect to SR 174 and SR 49, from time to time when Caltrans is doing a project, you open the newspaper and see a Caltrans ad with a map of the roadway and what the improvements are going to be. He thought that really helped the public to understand what is going on. Commissioner Beason asked if there were any plans to have a public notice of the plans with this project. Mr. Brannon replied that generally when they advertise for public meetings they use a location map, but Caltrans could put some effort into providing more detail and buying more page space in describing the project. Commissioner Beason said when he talks to most people regarding SR 174 they realize that the roadway needs to be safer and it will be hard to widen it very far because of the topography, the right-of-way issues, and people who do not want to have trees taken out. He thought the Open House helped, but Caltrans might want to consider more direct advertising.

Commissioner Fouyer said to dovetail on what has been said, government draws a big circle around a project impact area to reach out to people living there, and those are the people they have discussions with. He thinks there is something unique about our community, especially on the western end of Nevada County, which is where we identify ourselves. He knows by being on the Grass Valley City Council, when changes are made within the city limits of Grass Valley, it has a huge impact on more than the 13,000 people in the city limits; it also impacts the 60,000 people that live nearby and come into town. Commissioner Fouyer said although this project is out on SR 174, the people who live in Grass Valley and Nevada City and drive SR 174 to access the I-80 corridor are also impacted by the changes; not just the people who reside in the area of the project. The changes impact our entire community. He said he understands that Caltrans is required to do all of the environmental work and check all of the boxes to make sure that everything has been met, but our community is unique and there are different needs for each portion of Grass Valley and Nevada City. Therefore, he wanted to stress the importance of outreach to get comments from people beyond the ones living in the area of the project. Mr. Aceves said the Caltrans Public Information Officer put an announcement in The Union and they sent individual letters to neighbors and stakeholders.

Commissioner Beason commented, in conjunction with a previous I-80 improvement project, when many trucks came through the Grass Valley/Nevada City area, a public meeting was held in Colfax thinking the logic was because Colfax is on I-80, so they held the meeting in Colfax. He said the people that were impacted were the ones living on SR 20/49 with trucks driving the highways at night and using their jake brakes as they drove down the hill from I-80. Commissioner Beason said finally the Board of Supervisors asked Caltrans to hold a public meeting in our area to get information out on the project, and it helped. He said that is what was motivating his earlier comments that you cannot give the public enough information, so whatever Caltrans can do will be appreciated.

Commissioner Scofield said he wants to see five lanes into Grass Valley on SR 49. He said the La Barr Meadows Road improvement project is an example, because no one is complaining about the project and he thinks it is just wonderful. He also thinks the next project being proposed from the end of the La Barr Meadows Road project north to McKnight Way is very similar. Commissioner Fouyer asked Commissioner Scofield if he was ready to resist the pressure he was going to get. Commissioner Scofield replied that he did not think there would be any pressure. He said when he asks people who live in Lake of the Pines why they do not go to Grass Valley to shop, they reply that it scares them to drive SR 49 north to Grass Valley.

- *SR 49 Widening from the End of the La Barr Meadows Road Project North to Just Before the McKnight Way Interchange* – Mr. Aceves reported this is a State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project on SR 49 to widen to a four-lane highway with a continuous median/left-turn lane and 8-foot shoulders. He stated that \$3 million is programmed for Project Approval and Environmental Documentation (PA&ED) and \$3 million is for Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) work. He said they are currently setting up permits to enter properties to do field services. In August or September they will do preliminary layouts and then they will have an Open House as soon as they are able to provide layouts of concepts they want to achieve with the project in order to discuss them with the public.

Commissioner Beason asked when the timeline was to start construction. Executive Director Landon replied there is no construction date at this point; the goal behind this work is to get the preliminary work done and review the plans with the public. Commissioner Beason said back in 2006 they decided to do these preliminary steps for the purpose of safety on the SR 49 corridor. Mr. Aceves said there is no funding for the construction portion of the project. Commissioner Beason asked where they would hold the Open House. Mr. Aceves said it has not been determined at this time. Commissioner Beason suggested they hold it in Grass Valley and have a diagram of the proposed work in the newspaper. He commented on something Commissioner Dee spoke of earlier, and said the federal government has taken away the rural carve-out. He said there is this concept of high-risk rural roads because they are not as safe as urban roads. Commissioner Beason was back in Washington, D.C. lobbying to include language to restore funding. He said the state does not have enough money to do the projects and the backlog of road maintenance. He said this goes back to a governor's term in 1976, or so, when they planned to make the whole state transit friendly. He finds it remarkable that there is not enough money to build something or maintain something, so they are going to propose a tax, which is SB 16, to increase the tax on gasoline and diesel and vehicle license fees in order to provide an infrastructure and core service.

- *SR 49 Operational Improvements at Brewer Road* – Mr. Aceves reported this is a SHOPP Minor A project that will construct a right turn lane on northbound SR 49 to improve operational performance and potential rear-end collisions at this intersection. He said the project was awarded on February 10, 2015 to America Pacific Construction for \$174,426. Construction will be completed this summer.
- *SR 49 Operational Improvements at Smith Road* – Mr. Aceves said this is a SHOPP Minor B project that will construct a right turn pocket lane with four foot shoulders. Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2016. The project cost is estimated at \$280,000.

Commissioner Beason said to presume that the five-lane widening project on the entire SR 49 corridor will happen, and asked if these two projects will be throw-away projects. Executive

Director Landon replied that, based on his work with Winder Bajwa and the Corridor System Management Plan group, both of these projects were looked at with the aspect that they would not be throw-away projects; they will be long-lasting. He said even with the widening, they provide a basis for things to move forward. Executive Director Landon said the potential widening is at least eight to ten years out in the future.

- *SR 49 Hot Mix Asphalt Overlay* – Mr. Aceves reported the project limits extend from 1.2 miles north of Nevada City on SR 49 from the South Yuba River Bridge to the Yuba County line, which is approximately 9.4 miles. The project will overlay with a Cold-in-Place Recycled substance, the placement of a new Hot Mix Asphalt overlay, and will also upgrade the guard rail and asphalt to current standards. Mr. Aceves said the total cost is \$7,579,000, including all of the engineering and environmental work. He said they held a Project Delivery Team meeting, and because this is a straight-forward project, they will be able to move the schedule up and go to construction the summer of 2017.
- *SR 49 Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt Open Graded Overlay* – Mr. Aceves reported this as a Major Maintenance Program funded project that will overlay rubberized asphalt on SR 49 from the county line at the Bear River Bridge to the SR 20 separation in Grass Valley, skipping the roadway that was a part of the recently completed La Barr Meadows Road project. He said there is also some Hot Mix Asphalt-Dike replacement and metal beam guard rail work at certain locations to maintain hydraulic and safety standards. The project was awarded to Teichert Construction for \$3,998,277 and construction is scheduled for this summer.

Executive Director Landon said staff became aware of this project at the last SR 49 Safety Committee Meeting and there is an issue with regard to the replacement of the striping on the highway. He said as it is currently striped, the highway is considered a divided highway, so the standard speed limit on a divided highway is 65 mph. He said even though there is a 55 mph speed limit currently, CHP will not enforce anything under 65 mph, because it would get thrown out of court. Executive Director Landon reported that the width of the striping in the center of the highway determines whether or not it is a divided highway or a standard highway. The Safety Committee noted that with the current striping the travel lanes are a little bit narrower and it causes drivers to feel that they need to go a little bit slower. He said in order to make this a non-divided highway, they would have to narrow the center line striping, and then they would be able to keep the speed limit at 55 mph and have it be enforceable. Executive Director Landon stated that one more mix in this is anywhere that you do an engineering speed survey and it is determined on the basis of that speed survey that 85% of the people are traveling at a certain speed, then you would have the ability to set, within 5 mph, an engineering speed limit that would make it enforceable for CHP. He said what they came down to after a few weeks of discussion and determination was there was an initial speed survey done on SR 49 that allowed Caltrans to set the speed limit as it is; that speed survey expired about one year ago. Executive Director Landon said they have worked with Caltrans District 3 and the Operations staff and they are currently completing a new speed survey, which he is expecting to hear the results of around June 1<sup>st</sup>. He said hopefully, based on the desires of the SR 49 Safety Committee, they will be able to replace the existing striping as it is and still maintain the 55 mph speed limit. Commissioner Beason asked if the lanes would be widened in any area. Executive Director Landon replied no, they are only putting down an overlay of asphalt on the current roadway.

Chairman Jostes asked when construction is scheduled, will there be lanes closed, and how will this affect traffic flow. This is a major project that is about 14 miles long. Mr. Aceves said it will probably be night work and it is currently estimated as a 55 working day project to



complete, which means there are about 20 working days per month, so it will take about three months to complete.

Commissioner Scofield asked when the overlay project would be done. Mr. Aceves said he did not have an actual date, but he could tell him it will probably be in July and August. Commissioner Scofield said to keep the dates of the Nevada County Fair in mind with the construction schedule and obstructing fair traffic.

Commissioner Scofield asked if this is similar to the overlay project that was done on SR 20 several years ago that went toward the Yuba County border. Executive Director Landon replied that was an overlay project, but it included a lot of curve correction and additional shoulder work. Chairman Jostes said there was an overlay project that went through Grass Valley and Nevada City about three years ago, which did not affect traffic flow.

Commissioner Beason had a "cosmetic" question. He stated that western Nevada County gets a fairly large tourist population here on the weekends, and sometimes during the week, and he knows that Caltrans does vegetation work. He asked if it would be possible for them to take a look at some of the interchanges to remove weeds, such as the Brunswick area. He wanted people to get a good impression that visit here. Mr. Brannon asked specifically if he would like a better mowing job done. Commissioner Beason said yes, it is an ongoing job to be done.

- B. Truckee's SR 89 "Mousehole" Project: Becky Bucar, Town of Truckee, Associate Engineer.

Commissioner Dee said this is one of the most exciting projects she has ever witnessed. She said it is progressing very well and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) has slowed things down a little with issues over some of the engineering plans. The contractor is building the back box, and she could not understand why they were driving I-beams into the ground and building this box that totally blocked the tunnel. Commissioner Dee said the process apparently is that this is what the pusher is going to be braced against when they move the tunnel into the mountain. She said they will build the tunnel as a cement box outside of its positioning and it will be on rails. This machine will be back on the pusher wall and it will push the tunnel through the hill as they dig out the dirt. She said first they have to freeze the hill, so once the hill is frozen, they will work 24/7 to put the tunnel in place. Commissioner Dee said if the Commission would like to see the project in person, when NCTC meets in Truckee on July 15, the Town can arrange a tour. She said she would work with Becky Bucar and Executive Director Landon to arrange something prior to or after the July NCTC meeting. She said with CTC Director Kempton coming up for the meeting, he will want to see the project as well. She said it is an amazing thing to watch. They have SR 89 traffic down to one lane and there is K-rail up for safety purposes. Commissioner Dee said they are also working north of the tunnel getting the trailway set up along the river. She said she watched them build the Caldecott Tunnel, but she has not seen anything like this. When they start to push the tunnel through the hill, she is going to be down there. The contractor said they could possibly be completed this November, but construction may go into next summer; it will depend on the winter weather.

- C. Brunswick/Loma Rica Intersection Improvements: Josh Pack, Principle Civil Engineer, Nevada County Public Works Department

Executive Director Landon stated the reason he invited Mr. Pack to make a presentation on this project is because it is included in the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee (RTMF) program.

He said Nevada County, through their diligence, was able to secure federal funding to get this project done in a more timely fashion.

Josh Pack shared the county history of the project and stated they have had this project in different phases of the planning process for more than twenty years. It has been in Nevada County's original fee program and NCTC's RTMF program and they have had at least six different studies to look at alternatives and no viable options until last year. He said this has been a consistent and persistent operational and safety problem all these years. From 2000 to 2014 there have been 42 collisions, including 27 injuries, and 1 fatality. Mr. Pack said that makes the location the highest number of reported collisions for any intersection in the unincorporated area. In addition, and contrary to public popular belief, which is that the collisions are primarily caused by snow issues, the majority of collisions happened between the months of April and October. He said, in particular, 11 collisions occurred in the month of June alone, and when you compare that to 12 collisions during the five winter months of November through March, you realize this is not an isolated snow issue, but is a 24 hour per day/365 day issue that needs attention. Mr. Pack reported this is one of the busiest intersections in the county with 22,000 vehicles per day, and there are moderate to significant delays on Loma Rica Drive throughout the day, and particularly during morning and afternoon peak hours. He said in the future the operations are expected to operate at a Level of Service (LOS) F, and with signalization and the other proposed improvements, this will result in a future LOS B in both the morning and afternoon peak hours.

Mr. Pack stated they were successful in May 2013 of receiving \$522,000 from the federal government and Caltrans for a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Grant. He said the remaining funding needed will come from the RTMF Program through development fees. This project is the highest remaining priority currently in the RTMF program that has not been completed. He said the alternative that was in the fee program from 2007, compared to the current alternative, is 67% less in costs than all of the previous alternatives. Mr. Pack reported that the Nevada County Board of Supervisors awarded the contract to Koch & Koch of Penn Valley at a cost of \$935,293.12.

Mr. Pack said the improvements include a traffic signal, but the signal is less than 25% of the overall cost of the project. He said they are excited about the thermal video vehicle and bicycle detection technology, which is a military based technology that has been recently brought to traffic signals. He explained that it registers the heat signature of vehicles and bicyclists and other traffic, and it is impervious to weather conditions, so it is not affected by fog or rain or snow or night time conditions; it just recognizes the differences in heat temperatures and has a lot of advantages over traditional technologies. Mr. Pack said the new technology is smart enough to not only identify bicyclists, it can separate them from vehicles, and it can provide alternate signal timing for the bicyclists. So, no longer is the bicyclist half way through the intersection, the light turns yellow, and they are left scrambling and hoping vehicles stop or slow down to avoid hitting them. He said the traffic signal will actually adjust its timing accordingly for when bicyclists are there, and when bicycles are not present, it has more appropriate timing for vehicles. Mr. Pack reported the project improvements also include comprehensive intersection and corridor safety lighting along the entire corridor with high-efficiency LED street lights. In all three directions they will have "Signal Ahead" flashing beacons to warn drivers of an upcoming traffic signal. He reported they have two improvements in the northbound direction, and this was from historical feedback of local residents and their concern that residents from Colfax and Greenhorn would come up over the hill and hit icy and slippery conditions. They will have a radar speed feedback sign northbound to inform motorists of their speeds, to try to mitigate and monitor the speeds in that direction in order to reinforce the issue of slowing

down and keeping a reasonable speed. Mr. Pack said one of the cooler weather technologies involved in this project is an "Icy" Traffic Alert Sensor that is mounted on the traffic signal and it measures the ambient temperature in the presence of moisture on the pavement. Therefore, if it registers icy conditions, it triggers the signs to let the motorists know there are icy conditions. He said you should not be surprised by ice when you come around the corner; the sign will inform you that there is ice and then you can take actions to slow down accordingly, so you can navigate the corridor successfully.

Mr. Pack reported there are more traditional improvements with the project, such as adding a northbound right turn pocket. This will provide additional refuge in the northbound direction and it will separate the northbound right turn traffic as they accelerate and turn onto Loma Rica, which will also provide additional safety for them. He said there will be a striped, separated median improvement with a "rumble strip" down the middle, to further reinforce the idea of keeping separation between the two directions of travel. They will also construct shoulder widening and drainage improvements to get the water off the road as it hits the roadway.

Mr. Pack said one of the unique safety benefits of the project is a process called "High Friction Pavement", which is a new process in California that is not widely used yet, but it has a lot of success throughout the United States. High Friction Surface Treatments (HFST) use a polish-resistant aggregate that is bonded to the pavement surface using a polymer resin binder. He said it creates a high friction surface that is resistant to wearing over a long period of time, which is what happens to other traditional techniques due to traffic and snow plows. He explained that during icy and wet weather conditions, where there is traditional slipping, a vehicle's tires are able to keep a grip on the pavement and can stay on the roadway. He reported that on the East Coast, through the Midwest, and in other portions of the United States, there is a lot of success with this process. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation did a project several years ago and saw a 100% crash reduction. He said Kentucky was so excited about the process, they did 60 additional HFST applications over a three year period and saw a crash reduction of 78%, and with wet weather the crash reduction was 85%. Mr. Pack stated there is one local success story, on Highway 17 between San Jose and Santa Cruz, Caltrans delivered a project in 2012 on a portion of this very curvy roadway. Laurel Curve, on Highway 17, has a very high collision rate and many issues. Caltrans applied a HFST on this portion of the road in July 2012 and there is before and after collision data to show the improvements. In 2009 there were 34 collisions on this portion of roadway, in 2010 there were 67 collisions, in 2011 there were 44 collisions, and the first half of 2012 there were 21 collisions. Since they applied HFST, under wet weather conditions, there have been zero collisions from the second half of 2012 through 2014. Mr. Pack said these numbers are almost too hard to believe, but this data, along with data from other states, indicates this is a much needed safety benefit for this roadway in western Nevada County. He said this is the first time our county has tried this process and they are planning to apply for future Highway Safety Improvement Program grant money for other areas in the county.

Chairman Jostes asked how the cost of this process compares to a normal process of overlay. Mr. Pack replied that it is significantly cheaper than the traditional overlays. He said the project will cost about \$300,000. It is similar to a routine chip seal, but costs a little more than a chip seal because the aggregate is imported from China. Chairman Jostes confirmed that it is not significantly different in cost from a traditional chip seal. Mr. Pack said overlays are more expensive, because they provide additional strength and longevity for pavement.

Mr. Pack reviewed that the project at Brunswick Road/Loma Rica Drive will improve traffic safety, reduce collisions, improve operations, and it is at a significantly lower price than all the previously proposed alternatives. He noted that construction will start the week after July 4<sup>th</sup> and

is scheduled for completion in September 2015. Commissioner Fouyer said it will be great because it will slow traffic down going down the hill and into the other troubled intersection at the bottom of the hill.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### 13. Revised and New Allocations Request from the Town of Truckee

Executive Director Landon stated during this fiscal year the Town of Truckee experienced some changes in their transit service operations that significantly increased their costs. Therefore, they are requesting a revised allocation; their original allocation for FY 2014/15 was \$434,009 and this will put it at \$536,529. He said all of the submittals have been reviewed and this is all within their available local apportionment of Local Transportation Funds (LTF). Staff recommended this request be approved.

Commissioner Beason made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-19 approving a revised allocation of funds in the amount of \$536,529 to the Town of Truckee. Commissioner Guerra seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

#### 14. Appointment to Truckee North Tahoe Transportation Management Association (TNT/TMA)

Executive Director Landon stated that the letter in the meeting packet noted that the County of Nevada had a seat on the TNT/TMA Board, however they were not active. Last November Supervisor Anderson indicated that he thought it would be more appropriate for NCTC to appoint the person and oversee that activity since they are a dues paying member of the TNT/TMA. He reported that Commissioner Dee worked with the Truckee community and identified Allison Pedley, the Executive Director of the Truckee Trails Foundation, as a potential person to sit on the Board of the TNT/TMA. Staff requested the Commission consider the appointment.

Commissioner Beason made a motion to appoint Allison Pedley to serve on the TNT/TMA. Commissioner Fouyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

#### 15. Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Interagency Agreement with Nevada City

Transportation Planner Mike Woodman reported that NCTC staff received a request from Nevada City asking NCTC's assistance to conduct the procurement of a consulting firm to prepare a traffic analysis for the Gold Flat Road Corridor and to manage the preparation of the traffic analysis. He said this study is needed as part of the planning and development to move forward one of Nevada City's Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program projects. It is looking at constructing improvements at the Gold Flat Road Interchange. He stated the traffic analysis will address some of the changes in travel patterns in relation to the construction of the Dorsey Drive Interchange and re-evaluate the need for, and timing of, potential improvements at the Gold Flat Interchange. NCTC staff has reviewed Nevada City's request in relation to the activities planned for FY 2015/16 Overall Work Program and they determined that the procurement and management of the traffic analysis can be accomplished, and will require approximately 93 hours of staff time. Mr. Woodman said in order to facilitate the reimbursement to NCTC for costs associated with the procurement and management of the

consultant contract and associated staff time, NCTC staff has prepared an Interagency Agreement to formalize the terms and conditions of that arrangement. He said the Nevada City Council took action the previous week and authorized the Mayor to sign the Agreement, if NCTC approves to execute the Agreement. Mr. Woodman said Bill Falconi, Nevada City Engineer, was present at the meeting to answer any questions.

Chairman Jostes noted that the NCTC legal counsel had reviewed the Agreement. Commissioner Andersen, who is also Mayor of Nevada City, indicated that the Nevada City Council is unanimously grateful for NCTC's help on this project. She said they are very fortunate to have NCTC's expertise. She asked if it was appropriate for her to vote on this action. It was stated that it was appropriate.

Commissioner Andersen made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-20 authorizing the Chairman of the NCTC to execute the Interagency Agreement with Nevada City. Commissioner Scofield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

Executive Director Landon gave credit to Transportation Planner Mike Woodman for his work on this issue. Mr. Woodman will be the Project Manager on the project. Executive Director Landon said there is an attitude with NCTC staff that they want to make things work and get projects done. When the problem appeared, Mr. Woodman took it on and developed a concept of how to work with Nevada City to do this project. Executive Director Landon said he was pleased to have staff with a "can do" attitude.

#### 16. Approval of Contract to Update the Regional Transportation Plan

Executive Director Landon said the Commission has seen this project in various stages as the grant application and grant funding was received to do this project. He said the procurement process was completed and staff was ready to initiate a contract with Fehr & Peers to develop the next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), with the emphasis on performance-based planning and programming. He stated the contract was reviewed with NCTC's legal counsel and staff was requesting approval from the Commission to contract with Fehr & Peers.

Chairman Jostes said the performance-based planning and programming emphasis is a relatively new way of doing a RTP. Executive Director Landon said that was correct. Chairman Jostes asked what made Fehr & Peers capable of doing this. Executive Director Landon replied that performance-based planning is something that has been done on the East Coast a little more than here; maybe a year or two ahead of California in some jurisdictions. He said Fehr & Peers is a nation-wide firm that has been at the cutting edge of working with the Transportation Resource Board and has prepared research papers on this issue and is probably, in his opinion, one of the premier firms in the state when it comes to this policy level work and planning work. Executive Director Landon said, as it is new, particularly in the rural areas of California, for the last four of five years the urban areas of California have been working on performance-based planning, so they have some track record to go on from there. Chairman Jostes commented that they are not starting from scratch.

Commissioner Dee made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-21 authorizing the Chairman of the NCTC to execute the contract with Fehr & Peers to update the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan, with an amount not to exceed \$119,217. Commissioner Guerra seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

17. Rural Counties Task Force: Streets and Roads Performance Measurement Data Project

Executive Director Landon presented excerpts of information from the final report that was prepared by Nichols Consulting Engineers (NCE) on behalf of the Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF). NCTC managed the project on behalf of the RCTF. He said this was a step towards rural counties being able to utilize pavement measurement in their performance measurement and management processes. He stated some of the other key information that came out in the report was the fact that rural counties, at least the twenty-six rural counties that were a part of this study, have significantly lower pavement indexes than do the rest of the state. Executive Director Landon said when you look at the cost of maintaining pavement on a per mile basis per capita, rural residents in some of the rural areas of California pay fourteen times as much as do urban dwellers, so this will be a significant issue as they present the data to the California Transportation Commission (CTC). He said NCE's engineer will be in front of the CTC the following week to give them the results. He thought it will become a significant lever in helping rural California to maintain its equity in receiving funding from the state. He asked the Commission to accept the completion of the project in accordance with the contract with NCE.

Commissioner Fouyer made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-22 accepting the RCTF Performance Measurement Data project as complete in accordance with the contract with NCE. Commissioner Guerra seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

18. Final FY 2015/16 Overall Work Program

Executive Director Landon said staff added several items and included comments from Caltrans to the draft 15/16 Overall Work Program (OWP) that was presented at the March 18<sup>th</sup> NCTC meeting. Staff also made budget modifications to participate with the City of Grass Valley and Nevada County in the update of their mitigation fee programs. He said the Gold Flat Road Corridor Traffic Analysis was included, and funding was modified for the RCTF Performance Monitoring Indicators project, which is currently underway, in accordance with comments from Caltrans Headquarters. He said there were no surprises to the OWP; staff made modifications to fit the needs. He asked the Commission to approve the FY 2015/16 OWP.

Commissioner Guerra made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-23 approving the Final FY 2015/16 Overall Work Program. Commissioner Scofield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

19. SB 16 Transportation Funding

Executive Director Landon reported that this Senate Bill became active and came to the forefront of things just as the agenda packet for the meeting was being completed. He said SB 16 proposes to increase several current funding sources for transportation, including an increase of the gasoline excise tax, diesel excise tax, vehicle license fees, and vehicle registration fees. He said there were some focus groups that were conducted by Transportation California and determined that this was probably the most likely way that voters would support an increase in fees for transportation. The idea was developed on the current shortfall in funding for maintenance of roads. He said, as Commissioner Beason had pointed out, there is a core function that government is supposed to take care of that is really lagging in its ability to meet the need. Executive Director Landon stated this bill is proposed to meet that need with increased fees. He noted, based on the results that came out of the pavement management study for the

RCTF, the fees that are proposed from this bill would actually more than cover our current needs. He said it would be a big step forward in reducing the deferred maintenance. He noted there are some glitches that need to be considered, as in any legislative issue, such as ending the diversion of weight fees, working relative to the general fund and getting those back into transportation, repayment of transportation loans, and ending the diversion of gas tax revenues to local jurisdictions. Executive Director Landon stated he wanted to bring this information to the Commission, and he requested the Commission adopt a monitoring position on SB 16, and that the city and county representatives discuss and review this bill with their councils and boards to determine in July if NCTC would want to take either a continued monitoring position or to adopt a support or opposed position.

Chairman Jostes asked if anyone was offering an opinion on the probability of this bill being passed. Executive Director Landon replied that he had been in contact with staff at RCRC (Rural County Representatives of California) and it is a real mixed bag at this point. He said this is a democratically sponsored bill, but there are Democrats in the Assembly who are not sure of their own support. He added that there is a general reticence on the part of the Republican legislators to move forward with any new fee increases, or tax increases, so it is uncertain if the bill will move forward or not.

Commissioner Beason said he is on the RCRC and the irony here is you have the perfect dilemma; you have all of these local jurisdictions who need more money for roads, and then you have all of these conservative representatives that do not like to raise taxes. He agreed that it will be interesting to see how it plays out. He asked if this is designed to dovetail into a permanent road user charge. Executive Director Landon replied that is the idea, because it is a five year bill. The hope and the plan of the author is that at about the five year point-in-time the road user charge committee will have completed their pilot program and will be making recommendations for permanent funding. Therefore, this is considered an interim funding bill. Commissioner Beason recommended that everyone read the bill because there is language in it that implies if it is passed in its current form, what you see may not be what you get. He thought there might be some issues that communicate there may be some borrowing that could go on.

Chairman Jostes stated in July the Executive Director of the California Transportation Commission would be speaking at the NCTC meeting, which he thought was fantastic, and he thought there might be some conversation on this topic. He asked if the CTC gets involved in the new concept of funding based on mileage versus gasoline tax. Executive Director Landon said yes. In fact, the legislation, SB 1077 by Senator DeSaunier, named the CTC as the overseeing agency and they have formed a committee that meets almost monthly to look at the proposal, and how could and should there be a road user charge in California, and should that be the new way of providing funding. Chairman Jostes read that morning on the internet that the State of Oregon has initiated their mileage fee GPS pilot program. Executive Director Landon added that they have 5,000 users participating in the pilot program.

Commissioner Guerra made a motion to adopt a "Monitor" position on SB 16 and requests Commissioners review the bill with their council or board in preparation to adopt a "Support" or "Oppose" position at the July NCTC meeting. Commissioner Dee seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Aye votes from Commissioners Andersen, Beason, Dee, Fouyer, Guerra, Jostes, and Scofield.

#### COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Commission Announcements.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is on July 15, 2015 at the Town of Truckee Council Chambers, 10183 Truckee Airport Road, Truckee, CA.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Chairman Jostes adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Antoinette Perry  
Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: July 15, 2015

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