

Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting – May 17, 2023

Draft Regional Transportation Plan Goals, Policies, and Objectives

Presentation by Deputy Executive Director Aaron Hoyt

Aaron Hoyt:

Thank you Chair. We're going to go from something very specific and technical from the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee Program to a little something higher level, a little bit more broad encompassing in terms of policies and goals which may fit well within your elected roles and how you see things proceeding both within your cities but at a larger scale in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Last March we had a presentation from our consultant on the Regional Transportation Plan and the overview of what it is, what does it include and what will it produce. The Regional Transportation Plan is many things. It looks at all modes of travel: streets, roads, highways, cycling, biking, you name it, and railings.

It also is really grounds up, hopefully generating documents from local agencies, and from members of the public. But really in the end, the Regional Transportation Plan is a mechanism to bring our tax dollars back to our county to deliver transportation projects. I think that's the easiest way to summarize it. If the project isn't in this plan, it has a much harder time to receive those monies. So, we work with local agencies and make sure all the projects are in here. The public or stakeholders may comment, "We would like to see this explored, or that a program can do this." And that's the avenue for us regionally to find those monies to deliver those projects.

At this point in time, we're moving from broad overview to goals, policies and objectives. This is really the foundation elements of the Regional Transportation Plan in terms of guiding investments in the future, telling the public what we're going to invest in and where we're going to try to find the money and what are the methods in which we can try to quantify our success towards meeting certain goals and targets. Those policies and objectives are all informed by a number of local policies, plans, including general plans, programs that we've developed, as well as the state and local planning efforts that are shown here, because in the end we need to make sure we're complying with visions that the state has in play for transportation. We need to make sure that those are incorporated into our plan.

We've taken a look at all our existing goals, objectives and policies from our 2016 Regional Transportation Plan. We've looked at local documents to try to figure out how can we better align ourselves in updating our goals, which are the end result that we want to see that really don't change over time. But it is how the objectives, what is it we're measuring, what is it we're identifying as the steps to take and the policy that then influences those steps. So those are what we're focusing on here and whether or not there needs to be any changes to what we have.

In your staff memo there is an attachment that is the changes that we are proposing for the goals, objectives and policies. There's a number of things that have been modified for better alignment with recent state policies such as the Climate Action for Transportation Infrastructure, and the Caltrans System Investment Strategy, how we address vehicle miles traveled in the state as a policy from Senate Bill 743.

There are a number of things that we've tried to better align the policies by making modifications, making sure that there's clarity in those and even restructuring some of the different elements to policies to a different goal that might align a lot better. But the most significant changes to the document are that we've added three new goals. We heard a little bit about these in our last meeting. Developing a future-ready transportation system, ensuring infrastructure resiliency and disaster preparedness, and generating equity in the public engagement process.

What these are is we're really going into a future and it may be accelerating a lot faster than we thought in terms of electric vehicles. It may get here a little bit later than it will in some of the more urban metropolitan areas, but it will get here in terms of our electric vehicles recognizing the lines on the

road and keeping us in those lanes or actually being able to talk to the next vehicle and keeping a safe distance on the roadways. And also broadband is a real big part of this.

We've introduced this goal along with objectives and policies to help make sure that we have these here. As we go look for funding we can realize that the county has a broadband policy and an initiative. And so we can look to that to help try to figure out how do we get technology back into roadways if there's an opportunity for that. It is supported by two objectives as well as eight policies.

Our next goal that we have is ensuring infrastructure resiliency and disaster preparedness. There's been a lot of work that's been done on this front since the last Regional Transportation Plan. There's a lot of ongoing work that we are doing and we will hear an update from Mike later on the work that he's doing with UCLA on behalf of Nevada County.

There is a lot of work and we want to make sure that as there is funding available from the feds and the state that we have these goals, objectives, policies and projects that are tied to that to try to bring those monies back to the county.

The last goal that we are introducing is ensuring the transportation planning participants in the process includes underrepresented, underserved groups. This is really the way public outreach is occurring now, and the way we're going to be seeing in the future is much different than we've done in the past. We're really focused on trying to make sure that those who aren't typically participating in the process, can. That we are breaking down the language barriers to introduce them and include them in the process of planning efforts. That way their needs are being represented in the future of our transportation projects that we're bringing forward.

So with that I'll close. I'm not going to go through all the changes that are in your document. You have those. But to the extent that you have any comments, whether it's word choice or some questions, clarity you would like on those goals, objectives and policies, we'd be glad to receive those. If you think we missed anything, we'd be glad to hear that to include that into this document. We're not necessarily looking for acceptance of this today, this is just one piece of our process and a milestone that we wanted to present to you. But any recommendations you have today will come back in the overall Draft Regional Transportation Plan that'll be coming to you later this summer. We want to make sure that we incorporate comments early on before we get to that draft stage. So with that I'd be glad to take any questions.

Question: Any public workshops you'll be having on this?

Aaron Hoyt:

We did host two virtual workshops. The attendance was not that great. So we are looking at opportunities to get out into the public now that the weather's changed and people are getting out and about in their flipflops and sandals. We're going to try to get out to some of those street fairs and other events where people are already at, so we don't have to entice them to come visit us, we can go where they're at and gain some more input on this.

Question: It's a good opportunity to put goal seven, ensuring that the transportation planning participation process includes underrepresented and underserved groups, into it, and I'm sure I don't have to tell you guys, you know I talk about this in Nevada City a lot. Language is a start. It's a really good start. It's aspirational. I'm excited to see the new goals. I think they're necessary and timely and relevant, and number seven is particularly challenging in our community. And so I look forward to seeing how that looks and how it could support many of those efforts.

Chair: Any other comments? Alright, thank you very much.