

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 12, 2022
 To: Nevada County Transportation Commission
 From: Alfred Knotts, Transit Program Manager
 Subject: Truckee Transportation Program Update

In August 2021, Kelly Beede, Administrative Analyst for the Town Truckee’s Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) system, concluded her career with the Town and headed off into her well-deserved retirement. As part this transition process, the Town hired Alfred Knotts to serve as Transit Program Manager focused on the management and growth of the existing transit program as well as a more comprehensive and and holistic multi-modal transportation program. Since arriving in September 2021, Alfred has taken the opportunity to quickly familiarize myself with the existing system in terms of Key Performance Indicators as well as the financial and contractual relationships that support our system and the critical role it plays in our community and resort-based economy. In addition to the oversight of the short- and long-range elements of the Truckee TART system, several strategic transportation initiatives have been undertaken which are described in more detail below.

Truckee TART System Update

As with national, regional, and local peer transit systems, Truckee TART operations continue to be challenged by labor shortages and the ongoing COVID pandemic. While we have been able to provide our core services related to the Truckee Local Route, complimentary ADA service, and general public Dial-a-Ride, a tough decision was made in late October to suspend our regional night service that provided service from the Truckee Depot to resort base areas of Northstar and Palisades Tahoe along State Route 267 and State Route 89, respectively. This decision was made in close consultation with our resort partners as well as regional transit partners at Placer County and as result of carrying approximately 0.50 passengers per hour.

NORTHSTAR			SQUAW/PALISADES		
	Average Per Night	4 HOURS Average Per Hour		Average Per Night	4 HOURS Average Per Hour
October Ridership	18	0.45	October Ridership	21	0.53

Other consideration that went into the suspension of this service as lack of available drivers which was requiring the General Manager and Operations Supervisor to serve as drivers on a daily basis. This decision reduced cost while balancing environmental and social benefit and improving operator morale and in advance of the peak winter season.

While the operating climate has been challenging Truckee TART DOES continue to see increases in ridership over last year (with the exception of the month of October):

Truckee TART Ridership Comparison

<u>Fixed Route</u>	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total
FY 21/22	2,598	2,502	1,989	1,831	1,742	1,562							12,224
FY 20/21	2,049	2,078	2,091	2,060	1,700	1,430	1,241	1,351	1,498	1,631	1,905	2,587	21,621
% Change this FY to Last	26.79%	20.40%	-4.88%	-11.12%	2.47%	9.23%							
<u>Dial-A-Ride</u>	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total
FY 21/22	430	454	413	391	340	282							2,310
FY 20/21	230	174	219	346	272	229	247	274	347	335	494	531	3,698
% Change this FY to Last	86.96%	160.92%	88.58%	13.01%	25.00%	23.14%							
<u>Total System</u>	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total
FY 21/22	3,028	2,956	2,402	2,222	2,082	1,844							14,534
FY 20/21	2,279	2,252	2,310	2,406	1,972	1,659	1,488	1,625	1,845	1,966	2,399	3,118	25,319
% Change this FY to Last	32.87%	31.26%	3.98%	-7.65%	5.58%	11.15%							

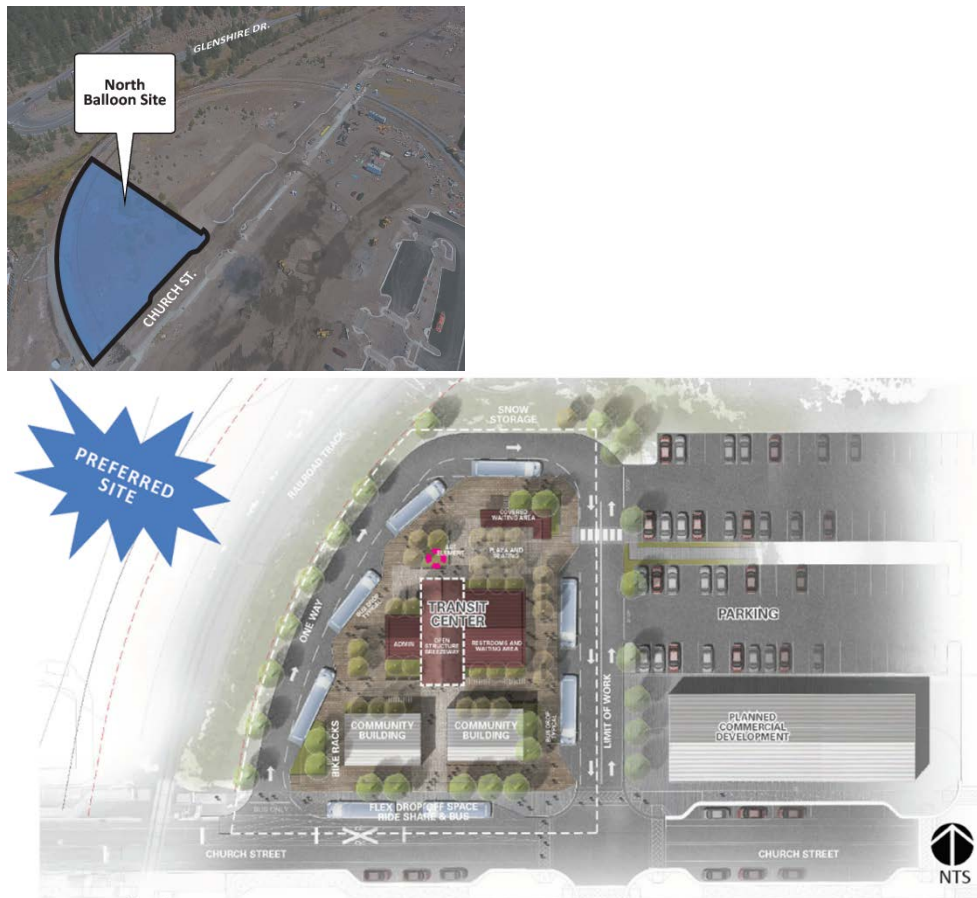
At the time of preparing this report, both Placer County and the Town continue to struggle to recruit, hire, and retain staff necessary to operate at the levels of service anticipated for the winter season. For this reason, Truckee TART winter night time regional service was not reinitiated as planned and our North Shore regional partners are also struggling to achieve their necessary levels of staffing.

Microtransit Feasibility and Pilot Program

Given these constraints, staff sees potential opportunities to improve efficiencies, expand coverage, and increase ridership. As such, Town staff has embarked on an effort to evaluate the feasibility of developing and implementing a Microtransit program with the goal of implementing a near term summer 2022 pilot program. The Town currently has a Request for Proposal out for solicitation and has identified the Glenshire and Tahoe Donner communities as potential pilot program service areas. The evolution of Microtransit in the “Resort Triangle” area of Truckee, Tahoe City, and Kings Beach/Incline Village is currently underway. Microtransit has recently been implemented by both public and private partners in the form of the “TART Connect” (<https://tahoetruckeetransit.com/tart-connect/>) in Placer County and “Mountaineer” that operates seasonally in Olympic Valley (<https://www.squawalpinetransit.org/mountaineer-services>). These programs have proven to be successful in “getting people out of their cars” including those that typically would have used their private vehicle rather than using traditional fixed route mass transit. By facilitating mode shift, reductions in VMT and associated Greenhouse Gases can be realized as well as the need for bigger capital investments such as roadway expansion and increases in parking inventory. This accomplishes many Council goals with the potential of improving service and reliability for the end user.

Railyard Transit Plaza (formerly known as the “Transit Center Relocation Project”)

As the Commission was informed in March 2021, the Transit Center Relocation Feasibility Study was completed in October 2020 resulting in the identification of the “North Balloon Parcel” as the preferred site/alternative.

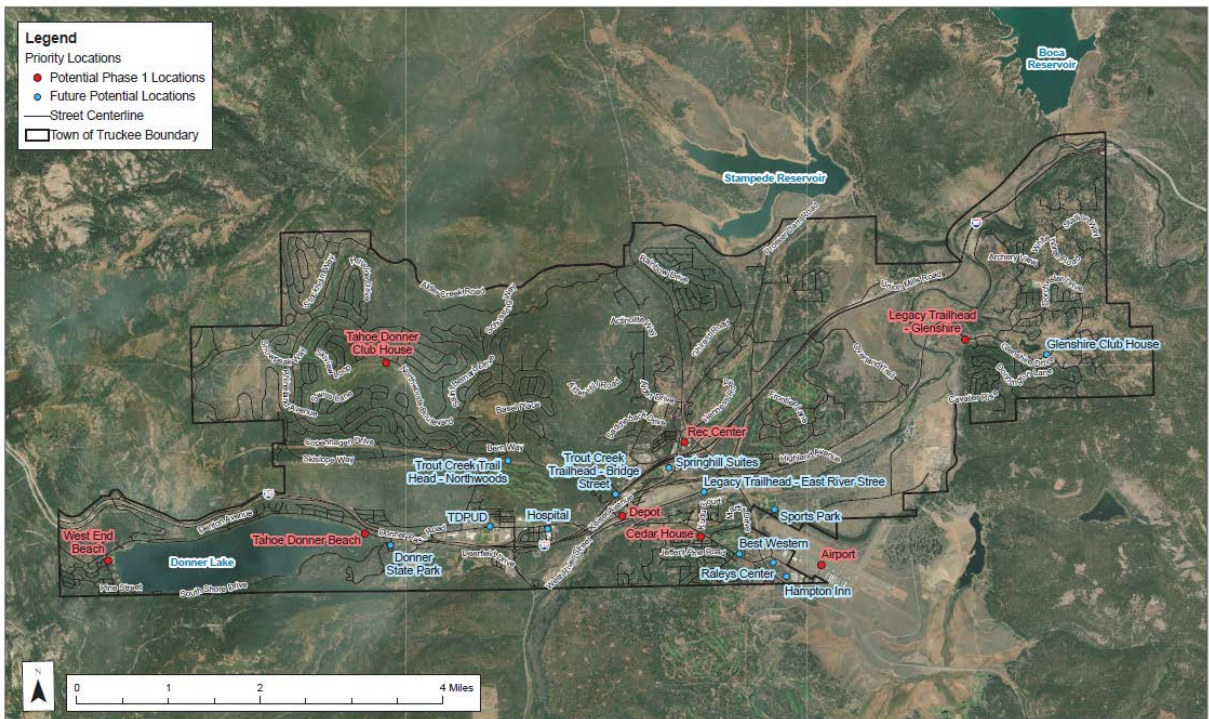


Since the last update to the Commission, staff has been meeting regularly with the owner of the parcel, Truckee Development Associates, to finalize the acquisition of the parcels. It is anticipated that this acquisition process will be complete by April 2022. Concurrent with the acquisition process, the Town is also working in close consultation with Caltrans Division of Mass Transit and Rail as well Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region 9 to obtain environmental clearance as required under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to position the Town and project for future FTA funding. As part of this consultation, FTA has scoped the level of environmental analysis and subsequent clearance as a Categorical Exclusion under Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part §771.118. The Town would then proceed with final design with construction phased construction scheduled to commence during the 2023 construction season.

E-Bike Share Program

To achieve sustainability as well as mobility goals associated with reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and associated Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, the Town is in the process of identifying a qualified vendor to implement and manage a Town sponsored E-bike Share Program. The RFP solicitation process concluded on December 28th, 2021 and resulted in the Town receiving eight (8) proposals. Proposals included various operating and business models ranging from docked vs. dockless stations, E-bikes supported by a combination of e-scooters, and various cost models. The Town convened an Evaluation Committee consisting of representatives from the Town, Placer County, Nevada County, and Visit Truckee Tahoe which recommended a narrowed down list of qualified vendors. Staff hopes to bring a recommendation to Town Council in February 2022 with the goal of implementing this program during the summer of 2022. Preliminary sites identified as part of the Phase 1 implementation are as follows:

Preliminary Bike Share Site Assessment



It should be noted to the Commission that within the RFP a heavy emphasis was placed on the vendors demonstrated ability to operate and maintain a system in a similar geographic location as well as resort and second homeowner community. Emphasis was also placed on demonstrated proven technology that can be expanded to other regional areas outside the Town limits as to be seamless to the user with a focus on compatible infrastructure and consistent fee structures and payment methods.

Truckee Trails Sales Tax Renewal

In 2014, Town of Truckee (Town) residents voted to approve Measure R, a ¼% sales tax dedicated to the construction and maintenance of trails. Specifically, the ballot language provided for the following expenditure authority:

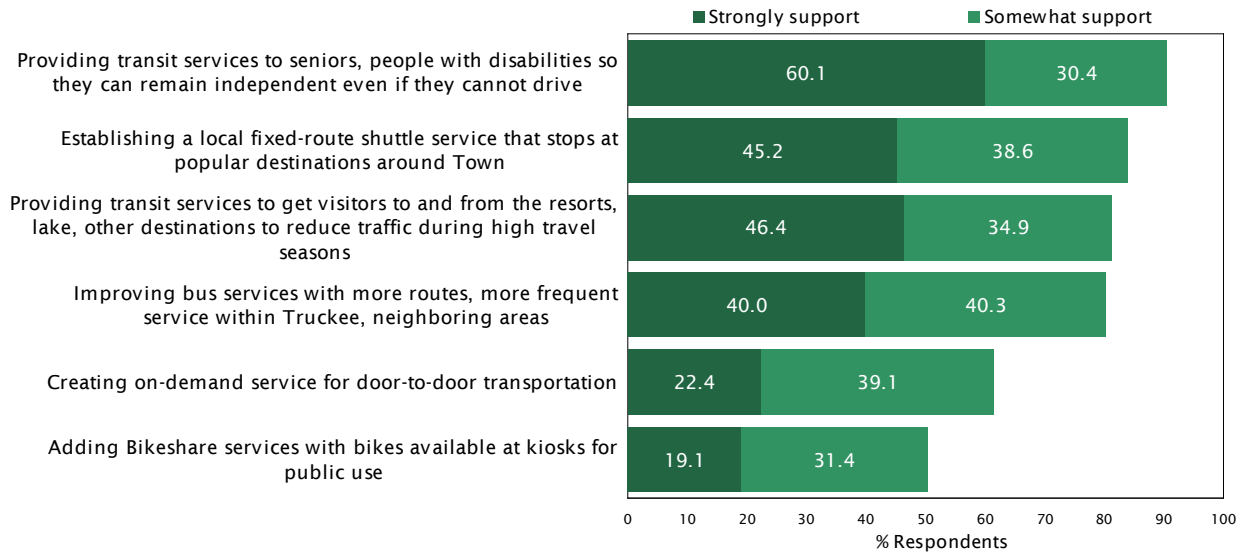
“Completing the Truckee River Legacy Trail, building and maintaining paved and dirt trails, and protecting the environment and natural open space along trail corridors. Specific uses that would be allowed include pavement maintenance, erosion control, sweeping, litter removal, snow removal and other winter maintenance, and repair or replacement of bridges, signs, bike racks, sanitation facilities, and other amenities.”

This existing taxing authority provided for a ten (10) year life on the measure which means the measure is set to expire on June 3, 2024. Given the important role trails play in the Town’s quality of life, economic vitality, sustainability, overall transportation system, and goals of reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and GHG emissions, staff has initiated renewal of this measure.

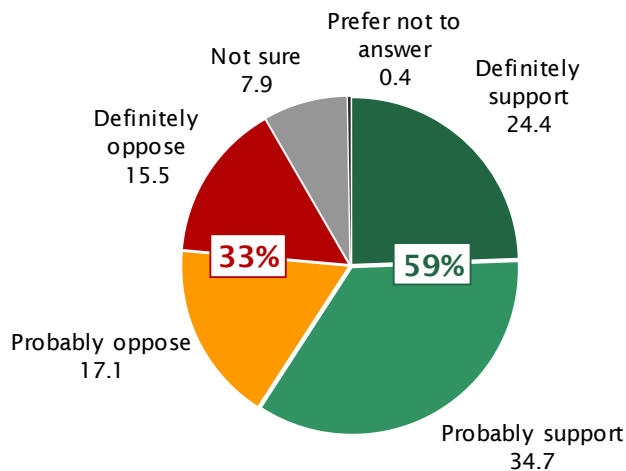
In October 2021, Town staff obtained Council approval to proceed with conducting a public opinion survey related to the renewal of the existing Measure R. This survey was completed in November 2021 and results indicated the community supported the reauthorization of Measure R and at a rate of 1/2% vs. the current ¼%. At the January 11, 2022 Town Council meeting, the Council unanimously passed and adopted Resolution 2022-03 which authorized the placement of this ballot measure on the June 2022 County ballot. Should this measure pass, the Town will continue and even accelerate priority trails projects, including bicycle lanes, to expand the Town’s Active Transportation network and elevate year-round levels of service for maintenance.

It is important to note to the Commission that as part of aforementioned survey effort, staff and Council saw added value in leveraging this effort to obtain additional information related to public sentiment toward the broader transportation system and associated solutions and services. Therefore, a limited number of questions were asked related to transportation and more specifically, active transportation and transit. Below are some results obtained from the survey related to transit and transportation:

Support for mobility services:



Public Support for “Mobility Tax”



Thank you for the opportunity to be before you and I look forward to answering any questions you may have. Should you wish to contact me in advance of the meeting, I can be reached via email at aknotts@townoftruckee.com or via phone at (530) 582- 2489.