

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: April 1, 2014

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3A

APPLICANT: Ann Bollinger, Natural Resource Specialist
Karen Mullen, Project Consultant

REQUEST: Presentation and discussion only regarding the Environmental Assessment for the Nevada Stateline to Stateline Shared-Use Path, North Demonstration Project, Incline Village to Sand Harbor. Comments will be submitted to the Tahoe Transportation District.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Staff along with Karen Mullen, Project Consultant, will deliver a PowerPoint presentation on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Nevada Stateline to Stateline Shared-Use Path, North Demonstration Project, Incline Village to Sand Harbor. At this time, staff and/or the consultant may clarify questions; however, any comments heard at this or other public hearings on the EA that address environmental issues or the adequacy of the EA will be responded to in writing as part of the Final EA. Comments will be noted and submitted to the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD).

A few documents have been attached including: Exhibit A – Cover page, Introduction, and Purpose and Need chapters only of the Environmental Assessment, Exhibit B – a map showing the two alignments under review, Exhibit C – a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and Exhibit D – a brief memo regarding the background and related project elements. The entire EA is available on the Tahoe Transportation District website at www.tahoetransportation.org.

Background

The EA for the North Demonstration Project is the current effort towards a complex, 30+ mile path along the east side of Lake Tahoe from the stateline on the north shore to the stateline on the south shore. The project was envisioned and \$5 million was approved as part of a statewide voter-approved bond in 2002, known as Question 1. Since then, several reports have been completed including the Opportunities and Constraints Evaluation Report (May 2009) and the Feasibility Study Report (June 2011).

The South Demonstration Project from Stateline, Nevada to Round Hill Pines has not only been evaluated in an EA, but two miles have also been constructed. In 2012, one mile from Kahle Drive to Nevada Beach / Elks Point Road was completed and in 2013, one mile from Nevada Beach / Elks Point Road to Round Hill Pines was completed.

Within the Carson City jurisdiction and the segment from Sand Harbor to Highway 50, the TTD and Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID) continue to evaluate the possible co-location of the sewer export line and the shared-use path. TTD and IVGID have entered into an

Interlocal Agreement regarding a fatal flaw analysis and an initial field assessment has been conducted.

In a similar effort, the State Route 28 Corridor Management Plan (CMP) was adopted by the TTD Board of Directors in October 2013. The CMP was in response to concerns about the numerous pedestrian and traffic challenges along State Route 28 and with the goal to streamline traffic flow and enhance the environmental and recreational assets along this National Scenic Byway.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action may be taken. Comments will be submitted to the Tahoe Transportation District.

Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway, North Demonstration Project

Joint Environmental Assessment



March 2014

Prepared for:
Federal Highway Administration
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Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
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1 INTRODUCTION

The proposed North Demonstration Project is a shared-use path that comprises Phase 2 of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project. It consists of an approximately 3-mile section of the longer bikeway project, which is a proposal to build a premier, separated, shared-used path on the east side of Lake Tahoe between the Nevada state line in Crystal Bay on the north and the casino core in Stateline, Nevada on the south. The North Demonstration Project is proposed to connect Incline Village and Sand Harbor in Washoe County, Nevada.

1.1 LEAD AGENCIES

This joint Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in accordance with both National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) environmental review requirements. For NEPA, the EA is written to comply with the statute, Council on Environmental Quality Regulations Implementing NEPA (Title 40, Section 1500 and subsequent sections of the Code of Federal Regulations [40 CFR 1500 et seq.]), and Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) NEPA Regulations (23 CFR 771) and related procedures. For TRPA requirements, the EA complies with Chapter 3 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances (Code) and Article VI of the TRPA Rules of Procedure. The lead agency for the NEPA aspect of the joint EA is FHWA, Central Federal Lands Highway Division. The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) provided assistance to the FHWA in preparation of this EA. TRPA is the lead agency and primary permitting agency under the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact (Public Law 96-551). The project is included in the 2010 Lake Tahoe Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and 2012 Regional Plan.

An approximately 800-foot section of the North Demonstration Project crosses a parcel on National Forest System (NFS) land managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU). This section of the shared-use path falls within the NEPA exclusion category described in 36 CFR 220.6 (e)(3) – *Approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of NFS lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land*. Therefore, LTBMU is preparing a NEPA Categorical Exclusion Decision Memorandum, which will focus on considering the potential for seven extraordinary circumstances found in Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30.4. LTBMU will be preparing the Decision Memorandum independently, in a separate process from this EA.

The Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) is the project proponent for the North Demonstration Project. The project is included within the 2012 Lake Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan. Other agencies that have been instrumental in guiding the preliminary design and preparation of this EA include the Nevada Division of State Parks (NDSP), the Nevada Division of State Lands (NDSL), Washoe County, and the Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID). Other agencies or entities involved indirectly through sponsorship of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway planning process include: Douglas County, Carson City, and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California.

1.2 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

The information provided in this EA is intended to satisfy NEPA and TRPA environmental review requirements for the proposed North Demonstration Project. The EA discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that may result from implementation of any of the alternatives. The document is organized into the following seven chapters:

- ▲ **Chapter 1, Introduction.** This chapter includes information on: the lead agencies for environmental review; the document structure; background of the project proposal; the proposed action; project funding; the regulatory and decision-making framework; key issues; and a comparison of alternatives evaluated.

- ▲ **Chapter 2, Purpose and Need.** This chapter describes the purpose and need for the project, and project goals and objectives.
- ▲ **Chapter 3, Alternatives.** This chapter provides a detailed description of the action and no-action alternatives, including alternatives that have been considered but eliminated from detailed study. It contains maps that define the project and study areas and identify the alternative shared-use path alignments evaluated in this EA.
- ▲ **Chapter 4, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences.** This chapter is organized by resource topic area and, within each section, the regulatory background is summarized; the affected environment is described; the significance criteria and analysis methodology are explained; and the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects and the consequences for TRPA Environmental Threshold Carrying Capacities of the alternatives are discussed. Because the proposed project is included in the 2012 Regional Plan and 2012 Regional Transportation Plan, this EA relies, where appropriate, on the environmental documents prepared for those two plans for cumulative impact conclusions. The sections in this chapter also provide a discussion of compliance with applicable federal executive orders and regulations required under NEPA.
- ▲ **Chapter 5, Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966.** This chapter discusses the relevance of Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 to the proposed North Demonstration Project. Section 4(f) stipulates that the FWH and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from publicly-owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or other public and private historical sites unless certain conditions apply.
- ▲ **Chapter 6, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement.** This chapter describes the public involvement process and provides a list of EA preparers and agencies consulted during the development of the EA.
- ▲ **Chapter 7, References.** Provides a bibliography of sources cited in the EA.

1.3 BACKGROUND

The Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project is a joint proposal of local, state, and federal agencies with responsibilities on the Nevada side of the Tahoe Basin. A “Working Group” has been formed to oversee Bikeway project development activities. It consists of the staff from the sponsoring and partnering agencies that are helping to direct the project planning, environmental review, shared-use path design, construction, and operations and maintenance. Partnering agencies are:

- ▲ Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization;
- ▲ Tahoe Regional Planning Agency;
- ▲ Tahoe Transportation District;
- ▲ U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit;
- ▲ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Central Federal Lands Highway Division;
- ▲ Nevada Department of Transportation;
- ▲ Nevada Division of State Lands;
- ▲ Nevada Division of State Parks;
- ▲ Carson City Parks and Recreation Department;
- ▲ Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department;
- ▲ Washoe County Department of Regional Parks and Open Space; and
- ▲ Incline Village General Improvement District.

The Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada also participated as a partnering government.

Numerous planning documents within the Tahoe Basin have highlighted the importance of a region-wide pedestrian and bicycle network. The TRPA Regional Plan, the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO) Lake Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and the TRPA Lake Tahoe Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan addressed this need directly and each of these documents maps and contemplates a shared-use path similar to the proposed project between Incline Village and Sand Harbor. Additionally, the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) identifies the project as a means to achieve and maintain environmental threshold carrying capacities for air quality and recreation while also furthering the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact mandate to “reduce dependency on the private automobile.”

TRPA’s 2012 Regional Plan restated the agency’s commitment to encouraging pedestrian and bicycle use as a significant mode of transportation at Lake Tahoe. The Regional Plan presented a transportation strategy including 40 bicycle/pedestrian projects (including the larger Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway and the proposed North Demonstration Project—RTP Project No. 18) throughout the Region representing a commitment of \$140 million. The revised TRPA Code that accompanied the Regional Plan also provided regulatory relief for the development of non-motorized public trails.

A primary objective of the RTP is to establish a safe, secure, efficient, and integrated transportation system that reduces reliance on the private automobile. Specifically, Goal 2 of the RTP is to encourage bicycle and pedestrian usage as viable and significant modes of transportation in the Tahoe Region. The Lake Tahoe Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (TRPA and TMPO 2010), which was incorporated into the RTP, identified the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway, North Demonstration Project as a high-priority transportation project that begins to address a critical gap in multi-modal transportation infrastructure. Currently, the east shore of Lake Tahoe has virtually no bicycle network and is accessed predominantly by automobile (TMPO and TRPA 2012). Visitors and residents that do access the public lands and developed recreation facilities on the east shore by foot or bicycle do so under extremely unsafe and hazardous roadway conditions.

In addition to the documents described above, the SR 28 Corridor Management Plan (completed in October 2013) presents a plan for integrated management of the State Route (SR) 28 corridor in a manner that accommodates the existing uses while protecting natural resources and improving user safety and experience. Elements considered in the plan include but are not limited to shuttle service and intercept parking areas, an off-highway shared-use path (including the proposed project, and extending through the remainder of the corridor), off-highway parking and emergency pullouts, vista points, improved access to recreational areas, and interpretative signage. The North Demonstration Project is being designed to complement connections to transit service within the corridor. Specifically, the paved improvements at the crossing at Tunnel Creek on the mountain side would accommodate the development of a transit stop at this location should that be considered for future implementation. The North Demonstration Project and the subsequent phases of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway are critical components of this effort. The proposed shared-use path, coupled with increased transit service, would provide safe, reliable, and enjoyable access to the popular recreation sites within the corridor and would reduce the dependence on private automobiles within the corridor.

Sand Harbor is the southernmost beach area within the Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, Sand Harbor Management Area. Sand Harbor is located at the southern terminus of the proposed shared-use path. In 2012 NDSP established a “no walk-in” policy at Sand Harbor to discourage illegal and unsafe shoulder parking near the main entrance when the park is at capacity. For the shared-use path to function as an alternative means of accessing the park, it is expected that this policy will be revised to allow walk-in and bicycle-in access from the shared-use path users, at least during non-peak use periods. During peak periods when Sand Harbor is at capacity, a decision could be made by NDSP to close access from the shared-use path, along with other walk-in access, with appropriate signage publicizing this information, if visitor safety and park management issues warrant it. The challenges associated with controlling shoulder parking and park access will be addressed through an Operations and Maintenance Plan as described in Chapter 3, “Alternatives,” of this EA.

The proposed North Demonstration Project is the second of two demonstration projects identified by the Bikeway Project Working Group for initial development and implementation of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway. The first demonstration project, South Demonstration Project, is an approximately 3-mile section of the Bikeway that has been constructed between the Stateline casino core and Round Hill Pines Beach. The EA for the South Demonstration Project was published in January 2011 and subsequently approved by LTBMU and TRPA. Construction was completed in 2013.

1.4 PROPOSED ACTION

The two action alternatives (Alternatives A and B) for the proposed shared-use path evaluated in this EA are described in detail in Chapter 3, "Alternatives." The proposed North Demonstration Project would be a shared-use path between Incline Village and the Sand Harbor Management Area of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park. The path would be limited to pedestrians and non-motorized vehicle use, except for maintenance and emergency vehicles. The proposed shared-use path would typically include a 10-foot-wide paved path with 2-foot shoulders on both sides, consistent with American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. Trailhead parking is proposed to be provided within the NDOT right-of-way (ROW) on the east side of SR 28 at the northern end of the shared-use path. The shared-use path would be accessible seasonally and would not be maintained for winter use.

Alternatives A and B would follow the same alignment north of Tunnel Creek. At Tunnel Creek the route would either drop in elevation to and cross SR 28 via a constructed undercrossing or an at-grade crossing (Alternative A), or would climb slightly and cross Tunnel Creek on a constructed bridge (Alternative B). To provide access to Hidden Beach, Alternative B would also include a SR 28 crossing at Tunnel Creek. Both alternatives would continue south ending at the main entrance to Sand Harbor. Alternative A would remain along the lake side of SR 28 after crossing the highway at Tunnel Creek. Alternative B would remain along the mountain side of SR 28 until crossing to Sand Harbor via an undercrossing or at-grade crossing.

TTD and the lead agencies are seeking stakeholder input before selecting a preferred alternative. Therefore, the EA herein refers to the proposed action as implementation of either action alternative.

1.5 PROJECT FUNDING

Funding for the North Demonstration Project would be provided by local, state, and federal grants, some of which require matching funds from the project proponent (TTD) and partnering agencies. Funding for the proposed project and the broader Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway originated with the State of Nevada Conservation and Resource Protection Grant Program (also known as State Question 1 Program), a voter-approved bond measure passed in 2002, which provided up to \$5 million for the construction of a "Lake Tahoe Pathway System." Funds from this program are administered by NDSL. Since that time, TTD and the partnering agencies have identified additional funding sources for the North Demonstration Project that include FHWA Federal Lands Highway Program funds administered by TMPO and TTD, and Scenic By-Ways funds administered by NDOT. Grant funds awarded to date have been used for preliminary design and environmental review related to the North Demonstration Project.

The North Demonstration Project has been designed in a series of segments (see Chapter 3, "Alternatives") that allows construction to occur in phases as funding becomes available and to coincide with the limited Lake Tahoe construction season. TTD has secured the funds necessary to complete final design and construction of the first segment of the North Demonstration Project shared-use path, which would connect Incline Village to Hidden Beach. Lastly, TTD has received preliminary award of Federal Lands Access Program funds administered by the Central Federal Lands Highway Division of the FHWA related to final design and construction of the remainder of the project.

Long-term operation and maintenance responsibilities for the shared-use path are still being discussed by the partnering agencies in accordance with the Interlocal Agreement signed by those agencies. Maintenance of this project would be eligible for funding under TRPA's Air Quality Mitigation Fund Program.

1.6 REGULATORY AND DECISION FRAMEWORK

1.6.1 USE OF THIS DOCUMENT BY LEAD AGENCIES

This EA is intended to meet the environmental review requirements of FHWA and TRPA, which maintain primary discretionary authority over the project approvals. The project approvals would include approval of project funding for final design and construction by FHWA and issuance of a TRPA Construction Permit.

After reviewing this EA and other information regarding the project proposal, TRPA will consider the adequacy of the EA and its compliance with the TRPA Regional Plan, Code, Rules of Procedure, and Goals and Policies. This will be followed by an action on the project by TRPA to approve or deny the project as presented.

The Responsible Official under NEPA is FHWA. Action by FHWA will follow TRPA's action. In considering the Purpose and Need (see Chapter 2, "Purpose and Need"), FHWA will review the action alternatives and decide: 1) whether or not to implement one of the action alternatives; and 2) whether the project necessitates preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or whether a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) can be supported by the environmental analysis contained in this EA. If a FONSI can be supported, then it will be prepared to conclude the NEPA process and will document the rationale for the decision. The FONSI would consist of the EA modified to reflect all applicable comments and responses and the final environmental conclusions.

1.6.2 USE OF THIS DOCUMENT BY OTHER AGENCIES

This EA is also intended to be used by other agencies that may have authority over one or more elements of the North Demonstration Project. Other potential permits and/or approvals that may be required for development of the project could include, but are not limited to the following:

- ▲ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Section 404 Nationwide Permit
- ▲ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act consultation
- ▲ USFS, LTBMU – LTBMU is preparing a separate NEPA Decision Memorandum for a categorical exclusion in support of issuance of a Special Use Permit for the short section of the shared-use path that would cross a single parcel on NFS land. The memorandum would use information from the EA, as appropriate.
- ▲ Nevada Department of Environmental Protection
 - ▲ Construction General Storm Water Permit
 - ▲ Section 401 Water Quality Certification
 - ▲ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit
- ▲ NDOT – Encroachment and Occupancy Permits for any work within NDOT ROW
- ▲ NDSP – Development, operations, and maintenance approvals and advice to NDSL on easements for projects within Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park
- ▲ NDSL – Easement allowing use of state-owned land
- ▲ Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer – Section 106 Consultation
- ▲ IVGID – Utility Relocation Permit/Agreement (lowering of the sewer mains at identified locations on SR 28)

- ▲ Washoe County
 - ▲ Site Improvement Permit
 - ▲ Encroachment Permit (if 4th Street is used, see Chapter 3, “Alternatives”)

1.7 KEY ISSUES

This EA identifies and addresses the following key issues that are known to the lead agencies or were raised by agencies or interested parties during the public scoping period.

- ▲ pedestrian and bicyclist safety and conflicts with roadway traffic;
- ▲ privacy and security of residents in the Rocky Point Subdivision;
- ▲ project costs;
- ▲ impacts to wildlife;
- ▲ removal of rock outcroppings and effects to scenic resources;
- ▲ capacity issues/user experience at lake side recreation areas, including Hidden Beach, Memorial Point, and Sand Harbor;
- ▲ site drainage and water quality concerns, particularly given the project’s proximity to Lake Tahoe;
- ▲ potential scenic impacts and impacts to shorezone character;
- ▲ potential impacts to cultural resources;
- ▲ tree removal, extent of new disturbance, and land coverage;
- ▲ construction-related road closures and techniques; and
- ▲ soil erosion.

In general, representatives of the State of Nevada, NDSL, and NDSP are very supportive of projects that improve and enhance recreational access within the Tahoe Basin. NDSL and NDSP—as landowner and manager—are concerned about the long term operations and maintenance of the proposed facility, as well as the impacts it may pose to the future operations and maintenance of existing NDSP facilities. NDSP is currently working with TTD and other project partners to develop an Operations and Maintenance Plan that will adequately address these concerns. Landowner and manager consent for this proposal will be pending successful resolution of the Operations and Maintenance Plan (see Section 3.4, “Long-Term Operations and Maintenance”).

1.8 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Three project alternatives are considered in this document. Table 1-1 below presents a comparison of the major physical characteristics of the two action alternatives (Alternatives A and B) and the No Project/No Action Alternative (Alternative C), as well as a comparison of environmental effects where the outcomes can be distinguished quantitatively or qualitatively between the alternatives. Chapter 3 provides a narrative description of the North Demonstration Project shared-use path and the project elements that are common to both action alternatives, followed by a more detailed description of each alternative.

Table 1-1 Summary Comparison of North Demonstration Project Alternatives			
Comparative Details	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Approximate Total Length	~ 15,500 lf	~ 17,000 lf	NA
Projected Use (Daily One-Way Trips)	1,311	971	NA
Number of Highway Crossings	2	4 (3 crossings without Memorial Point connector)	NA
Rideability (Length of Path with a Finished Grade Exceeding 5%) ²	1,170 lf	3,530 lf	NA
Approximate Increase in Land Coverage¹			
Overall Coverage Increase	4.32 acres	4.63 acres (4.43 acres without Memorial Point connector)	NA
Coverage in LCD 1a	2.88 acres	3.00 acres (2.80 acres without Memorial Point connector)	NA
Coverage in LCD 1b (SEZ)	0.03 acres	NA	NA
Coverage in Backshore	0.05 acres	NA	NA
Biological Resource Constraints and Effects³			
Stream Crossings	2	2	NA
Permanent Effects to SEZs and Jurisdictional Waters ⁴	0.05 to 0.06 acres	NA	NA
Temporary Effects to SEZs and Jurisdictional Waters	0.06 to 0.07 acres	0.04 acres	NA
Permanent Effects to Native Vegetation Communities/Habitat	4.7 to 4.9 acres	7.2 acres	NA
Permanent Effects to Ruderal/Developed Vegetation Communities/Habitat	1.9 to 2.0 acres	0.8 to 0.9 acres	NA
Temporary Effects to Native Vegetation Communities/Habitat	1.4 to 1.5 acres	1.7 acres	NA
Temporary Effects to Ruderal/Developed Vegetation Communities/Habitat	1.9 to 2.0 acres	1.7 acres	NA
Linear feet of path within TRPA osprey disturbance zones	4,742 to 5,939 lf	5,131 to 5,931 lf	NA
Acreage of permanent disturbance within TRPA osprey disturbance zones	2.4 to 2.7 acres	2.7 to 3.1 acres	NA
Acreage of temporary disturbance within TRPA osprey disturbance zones	0.6 to 0.7 acres	0.7 to 0.8 acres	NA
Likelihood of Osprey Nest Abandonment	Unlikely, SR 28 separates path from nests	Likely, two nests close to the alignment	NA
Tree Removal			
Total trees to be removed (>14" diameter at breast height [dbh])	49	121	NA
Trees 14 to <24" dbh	45	112	NA
Trees >24" dbh	4	9	NA
Scenic Resources			
Percent of Path Requiring Retaining Walls ²	66%	70%	NA

Table 1-1 Summary Comparison of North Demonstration Project Alternatives			
Comparative Details	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Total Length of Bridge Structures ²	1,315 lf	175 lf	NA
Total Vertical Surface Area Visible from Lake Tahoe	73,800 sf	77,200 sf	NA
Scenic Impact on TRPA Roadway Travel Units	Visible from SR 28 in some locations	Not as visible, located above SR 28	NA
Scenic Impact on TRPA Shoreline Travel Units	Likely to be more visible from lake, but within existing SR 28 disturbed area with visible guard rail and timber walls	Less visible, because of better screening potential by forest vegetation	NA
# of Locations where Power Line Crosses Trail	6	17	NA
Utility Relocation	16-inch effluent main (1 location in SR 28; only with undercrossing option) 4-inch force/pressure main (1 location in SR 28; only with undercrossing option)	guy wire (1 wire) 16-inch effluent main (up to 2 locations in SR 28; only with undercrossing option) 4-inch force/pressure main (up to 2 locations in SR 28; only with undercrossing option)	NA
<p>Notes: NA = Not Applicable, lf = linear feet, sf = square feet, " = inches, and dbh = diameter at breast height</p> <p>¹ Land coverage, as well as land coverage increases in all LCDs, is defined in Section 4.5, "Earth Resources."</p> <p>² Calculated in GIS using the 30 percent preliminary engineering plan set included as Appendix B to this EA.</p> <p>³ Details are discussed in Section 4.4, "Biological Resources."</p> <p>⁴ Jurisdictional waters are defined in Section 4.4, "Biological Resources."</p> <p>Source: Data adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2013</p>			

2 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway, North Demonstration Project, as adopted by the Bikeway Project Working Group, is to provide a premier separated, shared-use path that offers safe pedestrian and bicycle access and links recreation areas from Incline Village, Nevada to Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park's Sand Harbor Management Area. The proposed project is a TRPA Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) project. The EIP program was launched by the TRPA in 1997 to help implement the TRPA Regional Plan. EIP projects are focused on improving air, water, and scenic quality, forest health, fish and wildlife, and public access to the Lake and other recreation areas.

Existing bikeways in the Tahoe Basin are extremely popular and public surveys show that expansion of the bikeway system around the entire lake is desired (TRPA/TMPO 2010). Separated shared-use path facilities are not available along most of the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe, so improved facilities are needed to serve residents and visitors in this area; the projected use (demand) for the project is summarized in Section 4.9, "Traffic, Parking, and Transit." The proposal for a shared-use path originated with the State of Nevada Conservation and Resource Protection Grant Program (also known as State Question 1 Program), a voter-approved bond measure passed in 2002, which provided up to \$5 million for the construction of a "Lake Tahoe Pathway System." Extensive planning efforts resulting from this bond measure (including the Bikeway Project Working Group's preparation of a Concept Document, Desired Design Parameters, GIS Trail Suitability Model, Opportunities and Constraints Report, and Feasibility Study) identified the desire for a shared-use path that now reflects the proposed North Demonstration Project.

The proposed North Demonstration Project would provide a spectacular, separated, shared-use path linking Incline Village to Sand Harbor and other recreational amenities, including Hidden Beach and Memorial Point, the Lakeshore Boulevard shared-use path, and the world-class, Flume Trail. These popular recreation areas are generally accessed by automobile at this time, because no other viable option exists. Providing pedestrian and bicycle links to recreation areas is an integral part of reducing vehicle-related impacts, improving the multi-modal options available to residents and visitors, promoting healthy lifestyles, and providing a high-value recreation experience in the shared-use path, itself. For these reasons, the North Demonstration Project provides high value as an independent facility, but is also a critical section of for the planned Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway. Although high quality trails exist in the Tahoe Basin, necessary connections for an integrated network of bicycle trails have been identified as a future need (TRPA 2007). The North Demonstration Project is necessary to provide safe, pedestrian and bicycle access to Hidden Beach, Memorial Point, and Sand Harbor on a path separated from the highway. Today, visitor access to these lake side recreation sites is limited to automobile (year-round), and boat and shuttle (when operating in the summer) to Sand Harbor. A guard rail along the lake side of SR 28 separates the highway from the lake. The North Demonstration Project is critical for helping to ameliorate existing unsafe access conditions, as illustrated in Exhibits 2-1 and 2-2. The shoulders of SR 28 are narrow and in most places do not meet minimum bicycle lane width requirements. Parking at the recreation sites is constrained and historically visitors have attempted to access these sites by foot on and across the highway, creating segmented social trails and dangerous conditions along the shoulders of SR 28, or by parking illegally on the shoulders of SR 28, resulting in hazardous conditions for visitors and adverse environmental conditions, such as soil erosion.

The injury crash rate (injury accidents per million vehicle miles traveled) for SR 28 between the junction with US 50 and the Nevada state line in Crystal Bay is 180 percent higher than the statewide average, with the area between the northern boundary of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park and Memorial Point being one of the top six areas within the SR 28 corridor where accidents occur (TTD 2013). Between 2006 and 2013, a total of 107 accidents occurred (35 percent involved at least one injury) within the limits of the project area (between Sweetwater Road and a point just south of the Sand Harbor). This represents nearly 25 percent of the accidents within the SR 28 corridor (LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. [LSC] 2013).

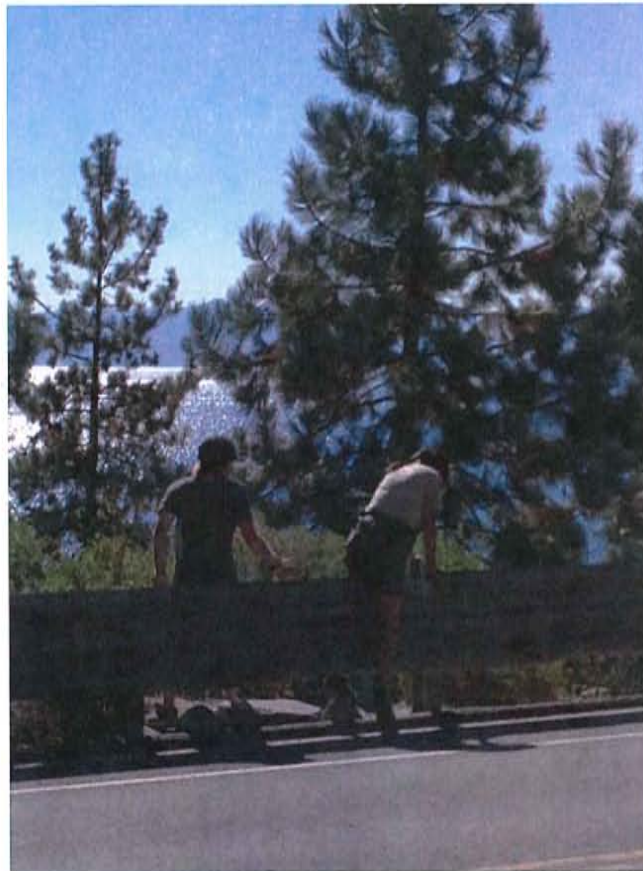


Exhibit 2-1

Nevada Division of State Parks rangers crossing guard rail to conduct maintenance at Hidden Beach.



Exhibit 2-2

Family crossing guard rail on SR 28 to access the shoreline.

2.1 PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goal and objectives were developed for the North Demonstration Project to meet the Purpose and Need established for the Project:

Goal: The primary goal of the North Demonstration Project is to design and construct a demonstration shared-use, bicycle and pedestrian facility to showcase the potential for creating the Nevada portion of a premier separated bikeway encircling Lake Tahoe.

Objectives:

- ▲ Create a separated, shared-use path that connects Incline Village to Sand Harbor with connections to Hidden Beach and Memorial Point.
- ▲ Provide a separated, shared-use path that offers a high-quality user experience.
- ▲ Provide a new high-quality recreation access facility while protecting the quality, integrity, and character of existing outdoor recreation resources and user experiences.
- ▲ Serve a broad spectrum of users by meeting AASHTO and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards, wherever feasible.
- ▲ Support the purpose of the SR 28 Corridor Management Plan and management of access to Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park.

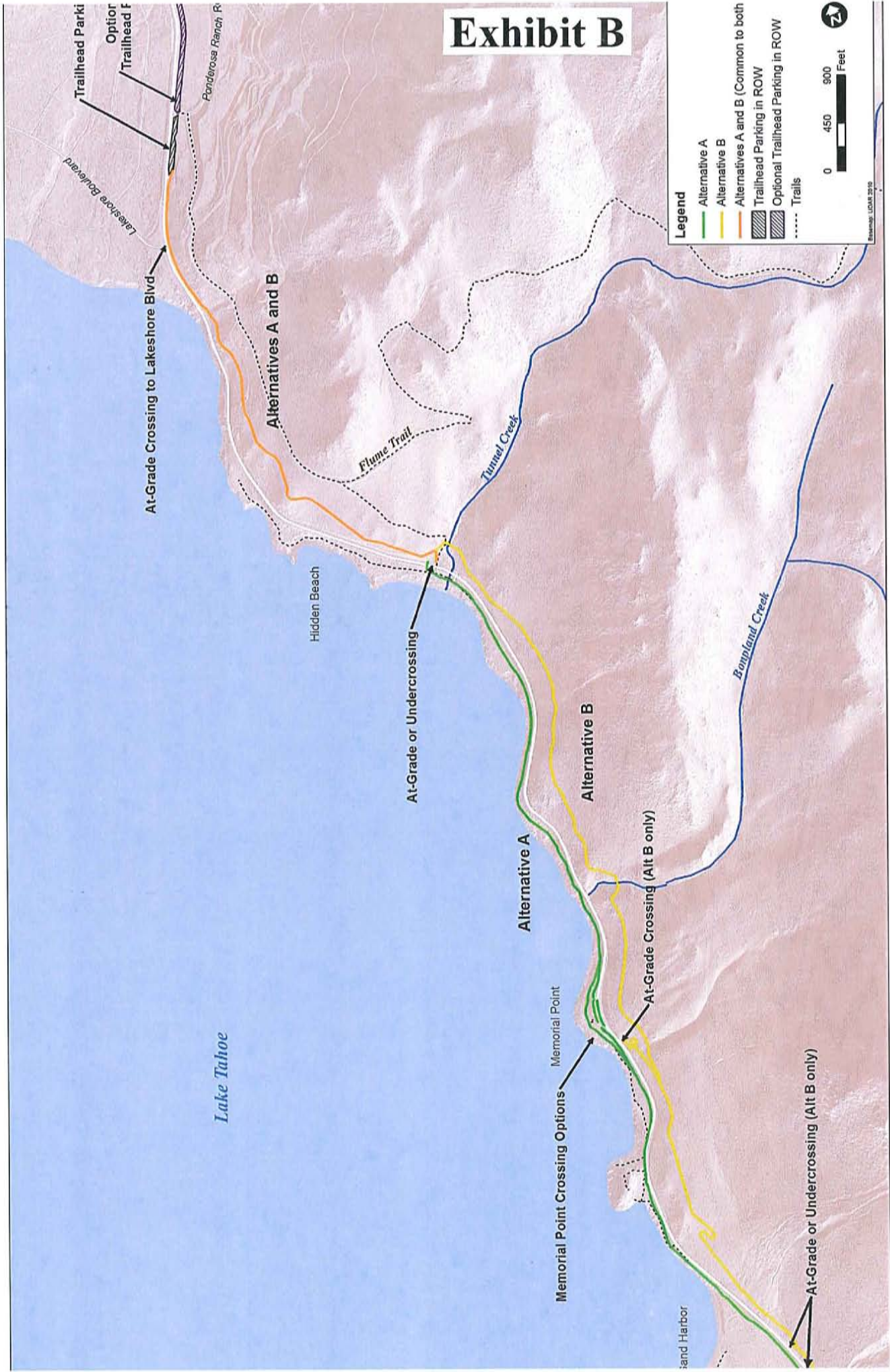
In addition to the AASHTO and ADA standards, the North Demonstration Project would be designed to meet the 15 design principles established by the Working Group for the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project. These principles are:

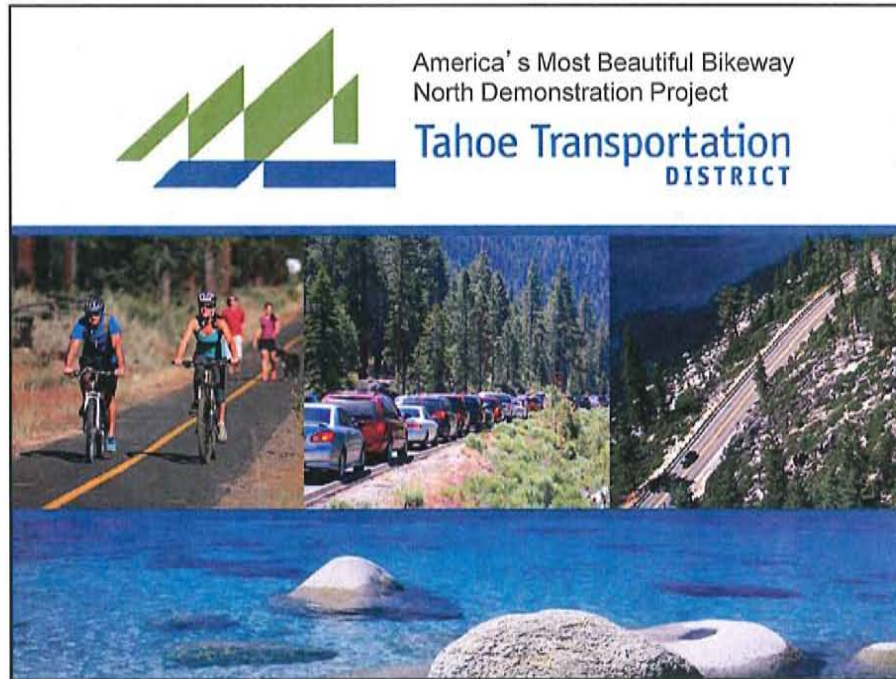
1. Identify and provide convenient buildable connections to communities, public facilities, public lands, the lakeshore, and open space.
2. Establish separated shared-use path alignments, wherever feasible.
3. Serve both recreation and commuter needs, with recreation needs receiving first priority where choices must be made.
4. Support the protection, restoration, and sustainability of natural and cultural resources.
5. Anticipate future growth in the surrounding communities in Nevada and California.
6. Provide for a variety of bicycle and pedestrian uses on the separated, shared-use path, while recognizing and managing potential conflicts.
7. Provide adequate public and private support facilities.
8. Remain sensitive to the cultural resources and traditions of the Washoe Tribe.
9. Design the bikeway to create social and economic benefits.
10. Provide interpretive opportunities along the bikeway for natural, cultural, and historic resources.
11. Minimize the number of at-grade crossings on SR 28.
12. Provide connections to existing or new trails to recreation areas, transportation facilities, and community centers along the bikeway.
13. Where appropriate, enhance and use existing disturbed area, such as old logging and fire access roads, and take advantage of joint parking opportunities, such as at school sites.
14. Include opportunities for ADA accessibility.
15. Provide visitor amenities, such as rest areas and vista points, to make the bikeway an enjoyable experience.

In addition to the 15 design principles, the Working Group identified 10 objectives for the Bikeway. The following eight objectives apply to the North Demonstration Project:

1. Complete long-term maintenance, resource management, and operations plans for Bikeway segments prior to construction.
2. Establish partnerships for operations and maintenance for each segment prior to approval of construction.
3. Encourage the shift in travel demand for East Shore recreation areas from driving to bicycling, walking, and transit.
4. Respect the Washoe community by involving them in determining ways to protect and interpret Washoe cultural, historic, and natural resources values.
5. Maximize funding source opportunities for timely project implementation and for long-term operation.
6. Provide opportunities for existing local businesses to participate in the process so they can help enhance the visitor experience on, and access to, the Bikeway.
7. Coordinate Bikeway decisions with recommendations in the East Shore Access Plan and consider other alternative transportation choices.
8. Coordinate with appropriate agencies to incorporate the Bikeway in new development plans and avoid conflict with road and highway projects.

Exhibit B





Purpose of Today's Meeting

- Present information on the project and environmental review process
- Receive comments on Environmental Assessment

The slide features a background image of a clear blue lake with large, smooth, light-colored boulders in the foreground. The Tahoe Transportation District logo is positioned in the bottom left corner of the slide. The text 'Purpose of Today's Meeting' is centered at the top, followed by a bulleted list of two items: 'Present information on the project and environmental review process' and 'Receive comments on Environmental Assessment'.

The Bigger Picture

- 30+-mile shared-use path (Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway)
- North and South Demonstration Projects


Tahoe Transportation DISTRICT

Partnering Agencies (Working Group)



 Tahoe Transportation District <i>Carl Hasty</i> Carl Hasty, District Manager	 U.S. Forest Service <i>Nancy J. Gibson</i> Nancy J. Gibson, Forest Supervisor Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit	 State of Nevada, Division of State Lands <i>James R. Lawrence</i> James R. Lawrence, Administrator and State Land Registrar
 Federal Highway Administration <i>Sue Kiekar</i> Sue Kiekar, Division Administrator	 Nevada Division of State Parks <i>Dave Morrow</i> Dave Morrow, Administrator	 County of Douglas <i>Steve Mokrohsky</i> Steve Mokrohsky, County Manager
 Nevada Department of Transportation <i>Rudy Malabon</i> Rudy Malabon, P.E., Director	 Carson City Regional Transportation Commission John McKenna, Chair	 Incline Village General Improvement District <i>William B. Horn</i> William B. Horn, General Manager
 Nevada Highway Patrol <i>Sergeant Randy Jackson</i> Sergeant Randy Jackson Incline Village/Lake Tahoe	 County of Washoe <i>John Berkich</i> John Berkich, Interim County Manager	
 Tahoe Regional Planning Agency <i>Joanne Marchetta</i> Joanne Marchetta, Executive Director <i>Tim Carlson</i> Tim Carlson, Presidential Appointee	 Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California <i>Darrel Cruz</i> Darrel Cruz, Washoe Cultural Resource Department-Director, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	

North Demonstration Project

- Shared-use path from Incline Village to Sand Harbor (~ 3 miles)
- Project steps:
 - Preliminary design
 - **Environmental review**
 - Permitting
 - Final design
 - Construction



The map shows a green highlighted route along the northern shore of Lake Tahoe. Key locations marked include Incline Village at the top, followed by Memorial Point, Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park (Sand Harbor), and Thunderbird Lodge. Highway markers for 431 and 28 are visible. The route follows the shoreline through Crystal Bay and Sand Harbor.



Plan Implementation

- Lake Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Lake Tahoe Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- SR 28 Corridor Management Plan
- Environmental Improvement Program
- TRPA Regional Plan
- Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Feasibility Study





Purpose and Goal

- **Purpose:** Provide a premier separated, shared-use path that offers safe pedestrian and bicycle access and links recreation areas from Incline Village, Nevada to Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park's Sand Harbor Management Area.
- **Goal:** Design and construct a demonstration shared-use, bicycle and pedestrian facility to showcase the potential for creating the Nevada portion of a premier separated bikeway encircling Lake Tahoe.



Project Objectives

- Create a separated, shared-use path that
 - connects recreation destinations;
 - offers a high-quality recreation facility; and,
 - protects the quality, integrity, and character of existing outdoor recreation resources while enhancing the user experience.
- Serve a broad spectrum of users by meeting AASHTO and ADA design standards, wherever feasible.
- Support the purpose of the SR 28 Corridor Management Plan.



Environmental Review Requirements

Joint Environmental Assessment (EA)

- TRPA
 - Tahoe Regional Planning Compact (Compact)
 - Code of Ordinances (Chapter 3)
 - Rules of Procedure (Article VI)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
 - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 - CEQ Regulations
 - FHWA NEPA Regulations (23 CFR 771) and related procedures

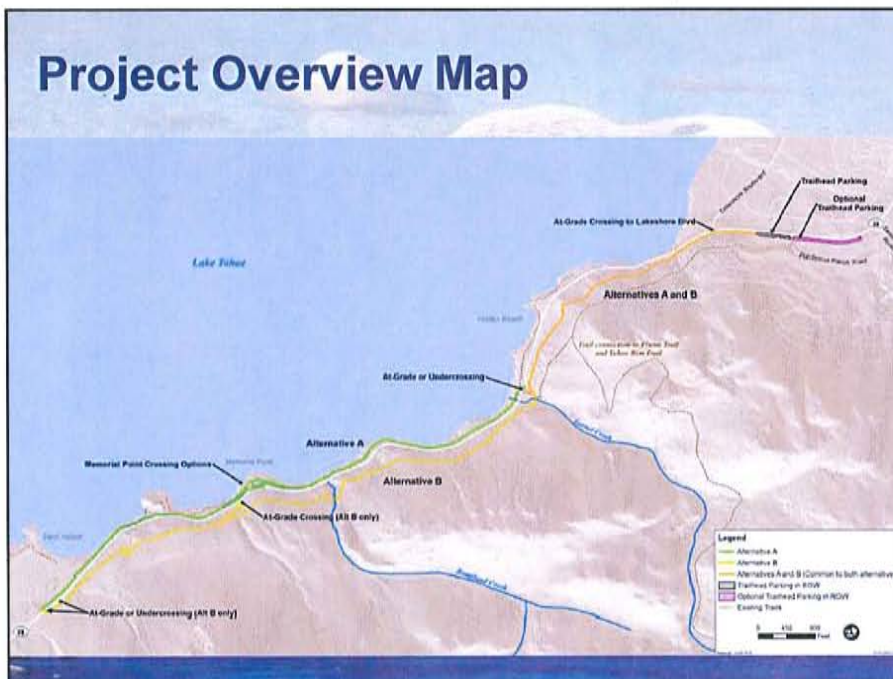


Alternatives Studied in EA

- Alternative A: mountain side of SR 28 from Incline Village to Tunnel Creek, lake side of SR 28 from Tunnel Creek to Sand Harbor
- Alternative B: mountain side of SR 28 from Incline Village to Sand Harbor
- Alternative C: No Project/No Action



Project Overview Map





Purpose of the EA

- Disclose environmental effects
- Identify, compare alternatives
- Provide mitigation to reduce/avoid adverse effects
- Enhance agency and public participation
- Assess relationship of project to TRPA thresholds
- Disclose agency decision-making



Environmental Issues Addressed in EA

- Land use, socioeconomics, and environmental justice
- Hydrology and water quality
- Biological resources
- Earth resources
- Scenic resources
- Recreation
- Cultural resources
- Traffic, parking, and transit
- Air quality
- GHGs and climate change
- Noise
- Public service and utilities
- Hazards and hazardous materials
- Cumulative effects
- TRPA environmental thresholds




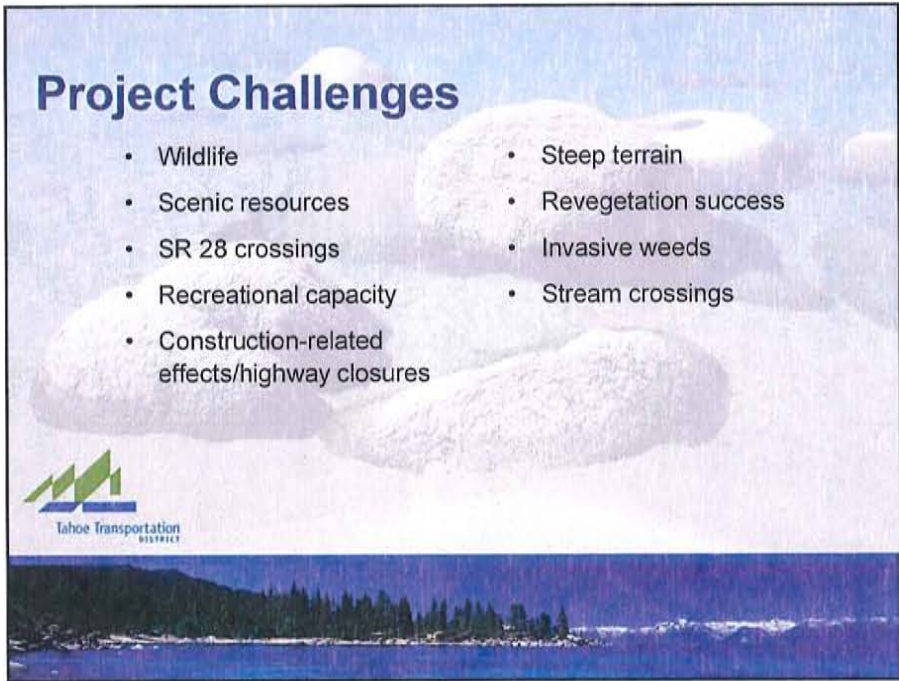
Project Opportunities

- Provides safe, non-automobile access to recreation areas
- Reduces region-wide VMT and GHGs
- Expands recreational facilities and public access to Lake Tahoe
- Implements three EIP projects
- Increases connectivity and ADA accessibility
- Enhances interpretative opportunities
- Implements voter-approved initiatives and regional plans




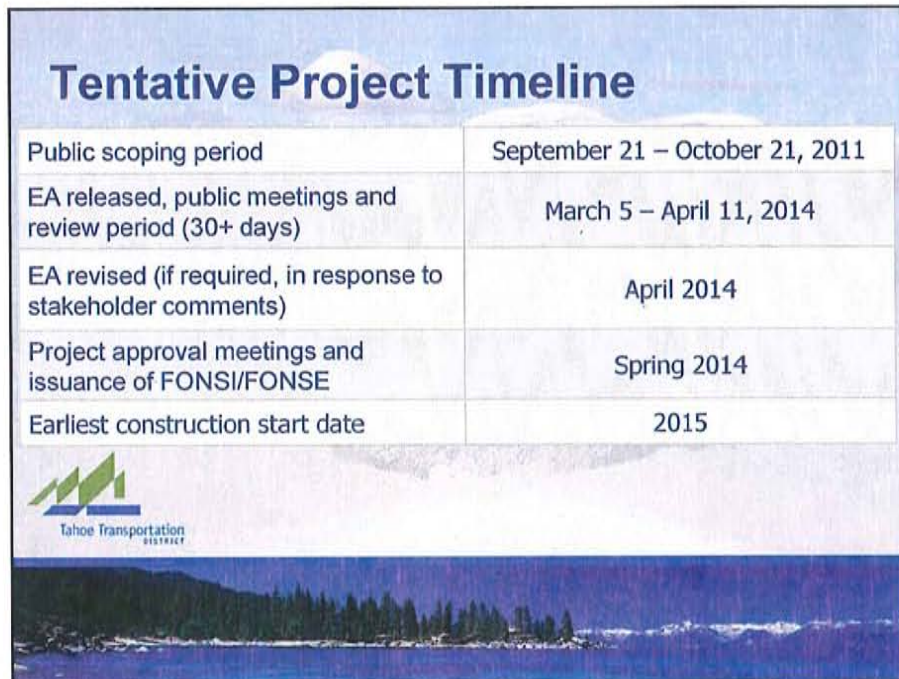
Project Challenges

- Wildlife
- Scenic resources
- SR 28 crossings
- Recreational capacity
- Construction-related effects/highway closures
- Steep terrain
- Revegetation success
- Invasive weeds
- Stream crossings

Tentative Project Timeline

Public scoping period	September 21 – October 21, 2011
EA released, public meetings and review period (30+ days)	March 5 – April 11, 2014
EA revised (if required, in response to stakeholder comments)	April 2014
Project approval meetings and issuance of FONSI/FONSE	Spring 2014
Earliest construction start date	2015

Comment Submittal Options

- Oral comments:
 - Please state your name and speak clearly so that we may record your comments.
- Written comments:
 - Comment sheets and envelope available to collect today's comments; or
 - Send comments to Brian Judge at TRPA by April 11:

TRPA
PO Box 5310, Stateline, NV 89449
Phone: (775) 588-4547; Fax: (775) 588-0917
email: bjudge@trpa.org



For Additional Information

Tahoe Transportation District
Alfred Knotts
(775) 589-5503
P.O. Box 499, Zephyr Cove, NV 89448
128 Market Street, Suite 3F, Stateline, NV 89449
AKnotts@TahoeTransportation.org



Background Information
Nevada Stateline to Stateline Shared-Use Path Project &
SR 28 Corridor Management Plan

February 26, 2014

Nevada Stateline to Stateline Shared-Use Path Project

Shared-Use Path South Demonstration Project:

Phase 1B:

The Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) is 100% complete on Phase 1B construction of a one mile segment of the South Demonstration Shared-Use Path from Kahle Drive to Elks Point Road with connection to Nevada Beach via the Elks Point bike path. Construction began mid-July with the bike and pedestrian path and trailhead parking being completed in October. The restroom construction was completed the following spring. The visitor signage will be completed spring 2014. The construction contract for this segment was completed under budget at \$ 1,498,835 for this segment of the Shared-Use Path. Although a few items of work carried into the 2013 construction season due to winterization the contract was completed within the engineers projected work days. The project employed approximately 35 people (engineers, surveyors, geo tech, biologist, construction manager, construction labor, monitoring crew, etc.). Total project cost for inspection, testing, construction management/administration was \$2,308,354.

This segment of the Shared-Use Path is operated and maintained by Douglas County under a Special Use Permit with the U.S. Forest Service. Rabe Meadow is an area of high visitor demand, the Shared-Use Path which meets ADA standards, the new restroom and visitor amenities will be enjoyed by over 100,000 visitors annually. The summer of 2014 Douglas County trail counts show that 10,000-12,000 persons per month used the path in the first summer of operation.

Our funding partners:

NDOT \$985,246	Nevada State Question-1 \$1,037,669
FHWA Recreation Trails Program \$199,405	Tahoe License Plate Fund \$50,000
Nevada State Lands \$220,900	Tahoe Transportation District \$36,242

Project Management: Tahoe Transportation District, Alfred Knotts Project Manager

Engineering: Lumos & Associates

Construction: Herback General Engineering.

Phase 1C:

NDOT and the Tahoe Transportation District are 100% complete on Phase 1C. It is a 1.3 mile segment of the Shared-Use Path continuing from Elks Point Road to Round Hill Pines historic lodge and beach. This project was completed under the Construction Management at Risk (CMAR) program administered cooperatively between the Tahoe Transportation District and the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT). The path was constructed during the 2013

construction season. Under this program TTD was the project manager coordinating the design and permitting while NDOT managed the design and construction. NDOT via the Request for Qualification process selected Q&D Construction to review the design documents for constructability and cost savings. Atkins Engineering was the Independent Cost Estimator. Q&D constructed the path. The project partners for this segment are NDOT, TTD, U.S. Forest Service, Nevada Division of State Lands, Federal Highway Administration, Douglas County and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). This process to streamline the timeline and contain costs is the first in Nevada for an environmentally sensitive project area such as Lake Tahoe.

Our funding Partners:

NDOT
Nevada State Question 1
Federal Highway Administration

Project Management: Tahoe Transportation District and NDOT

Engineering: Lumos & Associates

Construction: Q&D Construction

Phase 1D: Laura Drive Reconstruction and Bike Facility

With cost savings from Phase 1C it was determined that Laura Drive bike and pedestrian facilities could be completed to connect the existing Hwy 50 pedestrian path from 4-H Camp Road to the recently constructed phases of 1B and 1C. It is anticipated these improvements will be completed summer 2014. This project will provide direct access for pedestrians and bicyclists from the casino/resort core of South Lake Tahoe, CA and Stateline, NV to public land and developed recreation sites such as Nevada Beach and Round Hill Pines Beach and Resort.

Shared-Use Path along State Route 28

Phase 3 – Sand Harbor to Hwy 50 co-location of IVGID sewer export line and the Shared-Use Path:

On March 22, 2013 the TTD and Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID) approved an Interlocal Agreement regarding a fatal flaw analysis for the possible co-location of the IVGID sewer export line and the Shared-Use Path. IVGID is in the design stage to replace their existing export line located underneath SR 28. This analysis will first look at any fatal flaws, is it feasible environmentally and from a construction stand point. Secondly, IVGID will do a cost benefit analysis to determine if co-location provides cost efficiencies for the export line and TTD will look at cost benefits for the Bikeway. If it is determined that it is beneficial the project would move into further design and environmental analysis. Currently, an alignment study has been completed by Lumos & Associates. In spring 2014, IVGID will continue further analysis of its pipeline requirements.

SR 28 National Scenic Corridor Management Plan:

In response to concerns about the numerous pedestrian and traffic challenges along SR 28 the TTD recognized the need to provide an overall Corridor Management Plan (CMP). The CMP was approved on Oct. 4, 2013. The goal is to streamline traffic flow and enhance the environmental and recreational assets along this National Scenic Byway “America’s Most Beautiful Drive”. The last CMP was completed over 15 years ago and since that time shoulder parking has doubled along SR 28. It has been recognized that collaborative solutions to corridor issues must be obtained to be effective. The corridor issues relate to safety, access issues, connecting people to recreation facilities, and enhancing water quality and clarity. This segment has the ability to provide a broad array of multi modal solutions for safe parking, safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and a transit program. The Project Development Team, 12 agencies including the three counties, NDOT, USFS, NHP, NV State Parks, IVGID among others, continues to implement and manage the projects along the corridor. They have successfully instituted:

- A No Parking Zone, No Walk-in policy, and the East Shore Express transit service for Sand Harbor that significantly reduced traffic congestion on SR 28.
- The East Shore Express providing transit service from Incline to Sand Harbor with ridership of over 12,000 during the summer. This pilot program was funded through summer 2013. Partners are currently working to secure funding for future service.
- Partners were successful in obtaining a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant in the amount of \$545,000 which will be used to construct a parking lot south of Rocky Point. The parking lot will serve visitors accessing Hidden Beach and provide a vista point for visitors. The parking lot will be operated and maintained as part of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park. The design and construction is anticipated to be complete by summer 2015.
- Partners have applied for a Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) grant in the amount of 12.5 million to complete the Shared-Use Path from Incline to Sand Harbor as well as other access and safety improvements.