

MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
COUNTY OF PLACER

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer
Submitted by: Jennifer Merchant, Principal Management Analyst

DATE: May 26, 2009

SUBJECT: Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds in the amount of \$200,000 to provide environmental planning services for development of the Dollar Hill to Tahoe Vista multi-purpose Class I trail.

Action Requested

Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds in the amount of \$200,000 to provide environmental planning services for development of the Dollar Hill to Tahoe Vista multi-purpose Class I trail.

Background

Placer County has entered into an annual agreement with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association to provide transportation and infrastructure project development and tourism marketing and visitor information services. The agreement is funded with general fund Transient Occupancy Tax dollars and requires Board of Supervisors approval prior to expenditure from the infrastructure portion of the agreement budget.

The Resort Association's Infrastructure Committee and Board of Directors have voted to recommend that the County Executive Office carry forward the following project for approval by your Board. In doing so, they affirm that the project is consistent with the Resort Association's Tourism and Community Development Master Plan, which was approved by your Board in July 2004. Therefore, the following NLTRA infrastructure expenditure is being recommended by the County Executive Office for approval.

Brief Project Description / Funding Request:

Environmental Planning Services for Development of the Dollar Hill to Tahoe Vista Multi-Purpose Class I Trail- \$200,000

The recommended Infrastructure Fund expenditure will fund planning, environmental document preparation, and project development for the proposed Dollar Hill to Tahoe Vista Multi-Purpose Class I Trail. The proposed trail will close an eight mile gap in the current trail system between Dollar Hill and Tahoe Vista. The trail is expected to be located north of SR 28 in the forested areas just north of the residential communities

that line the highway. Existing area trail systems serve visitors and residents for both recreational and transportation uses.

This component of the project, which is being led by the North Tahoe Public Utility District, was initially funded with a \$976,000 grant from the California Tahoe Conservancy. The Conservancy has already expended more than a million dollars in land acquisition and environmental planning work for this project. However, while the Conservancy is still committed to the project, the current California bond freeze has limited the NTPUD's ability to proceed with project planning. This request would provide "bridge" funding that will maintain project progress and ensure timely completion. The Conservancy has provided written support of this "bridge" funding concept and has separately stated that it will refund expenses either directly or through offsetting future allocation to capital implementation.

Fiscal Impact: The funding described above would come from the Resort Association's FY 2008-2009 County Agreement budget funds designated for infrastructure improvements. There are sufficient funds available within this budget category to cover the amount of the requested expenditure approval.

Environmental Analysis: The Board of Supervisor's approval of the NLTRA's expenditure funding contribution to these infrastructure projects is categorically exempt from CEQA per Section 15061, which provides a general rule that if an activity does not have the potential to cause a significant environmental effect, it is exempt from CEQA. The specific projects were and continue to be evaluated under CEQA by the corresponding lead agencies.

Recommendation: Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds in the amount of \$200,000 to provide environmental planning services for development of the Dollar Hill to Tahoe Vista multi-purpose Class I trail.

The recommended project represents the cooperation of multiple agencies and funding partners and the expenditure has the potential to lead to significant improvements to the tourism infrastructure at North Lake Tahoe. The project recommended for funding is consistent with goals in the Resort Association's Tourism & Community Investment Master Plan.