Part 5  Transportation Plan

This Transportation Plan is intended to provide an efficient circulation system for all users, with a focus on improved pedestrian, bicycle and transit options in accordance with the Regional Plan and with the 2012 Lake Tahoe Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that was adopted in accordance with California Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act).

Automobile use strongly influences Threshold Standards in the Air Quality and Noise categories. Currently, both residents and visitors rely heavily on automobiles and light trucks. Development is spread over a broad area, transit service is limited and the bicycle and pedestrian network is not fully connected. Vehicular exhaust and noise have exceeded some Threshold Standards and negatively impacted others. Improved air quality will also help to improve Lake Tahoe’s water quality.

Significant drivers of automobile travel and the associated air pollution include employees who regularly commute from homes outside the Tahoe basin, as well as visitors who stay in lodging outside the basin and travel to and from attractions at Lake Tahoe. Transitioning to a more balanced land use pattern that provides housing for area workers and lodging for area visitors in an important component of the transportation and air quality improvement plan.

The Plan also seeks to limit greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality and reduce noise by transitioning to a more walkable development pattern in Town Centers and improving pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities. Included are provisions for roadway, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements, as well as parking and transportation demand management strategies. Roadway projects to reduce congestion are also planned, including but not limited to the SR 89/Fanny Bridge project in Tahoe City.

The transportation system includes regional roadways and local streets, sidewalks and multi-purpose trails, bus systems, and water transit. Transportation network policies seek to
establish a safe, efficient, and integrated transportation system while reducing vehicle emissions. Ordinances require mitigation for traffic impacts from development projects.

This Plan is consistent with the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization/Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Transportation Plan, which will continue to serve as the Regional Transportation Plan for Lake Tahoe.

### 5.1 Regional Plan/Regional Transportation Plan

Mobility 2035 is the Regional Transportation Plan for the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO) and also serves as the transportation element of the Regional Plan. Mobility 2035 seeks to improve mobility and safety for the commuting public while delivering environmental improvements throughout the transportation network. Mobility 2035 was approved with the 2012 Regional Plan Update.

Mobility 2035 also serves as a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) in accordance with California Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act). The SCS demonstrates how integrated transportation, land use, and housing strategies will help Lake Tahoe meet environmental thresholds and greenhouse gas targets for cars and light trucks on the California side of the Tahoe basin.

The 2010 Lake Tahoe Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) is the Bicycle and Pedestrian element for Mobility 2035. The BPP identifies planned bicycle and pedestrian improvements and enables Placer County and other implementing agencies to apply for funding assistance. The BPP is being updated in 2015, with the update anticipated to be complete by December 2015.

Important strategies of the Regional Plan and RTP are to reduce the overall environmental impact of transportation in the Region, create walkable, vibrant communities, and provide alternatives to driving. Transportation investments prioritize non-auto modes of travel, rather than new roadway capacity. Where increased capacity is required, preference is given to public transportation and non-motorized alternatives.

The expectation is that a safe, efficient, and integrated land use and transportation system will have a positive influence on environmental Threshold areas including air quality, water quality and noise - while improving mobility and quality of life within the region. The plan also achieves the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions required under California’s Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act.
5.2 Roadway Network

STREET AND HIGHWAY SYSTEM

State Highways

State Route (SR) 28 is the major roadway serving Lake Tahoe’s north shore, linking Kings Beach with Incline Village, Nevada to the east and Tahoe Vista and Tahoe City to the south and west. SR 28 is typically a two-lane facility with one lane of travel in each direction. A center two-way left-turn lane is provided in Tahoe Vista as well as in Tahoe City. As part of the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project, the segment of SR 28 in central Kings Beach is being modified from two lanes in each direction to a three-lane cross-section with one through lane in each direction and a center two-way left-turn lane, new sidewalks, and roundabouts at Bear and Coon streets. The posted speed limit on SR 28 varies from 25 to 45 miles per hour.

State Route (SR) 267 is a two-lane highway running in a general northwest-southeast alignment between Interstate 80 (I-80) in Truckee and SR 28 in Kings Beach. This highway consists of two travel lanes, with a speed limit of 55 miles per hour in the rural sections. It climbs just under 1,000 feet in elevation from Lake Tahoe to Brockway Summit.

State Route (SR) 89 serves the Truckee River Canyon and west shore, as part of the overall route connecting Alpine County on the south with I-5 in Siskiyou County on the north. As a direct all-weather road connecting the Tahoe area to I-80 and the Sacramento and San Francisco Bay areas, it carries the greatest traffic volumes into the north and west shores. SR 89 is generally two lanes in width, with additional turn lanes at major intersections. The speed limit varies from 25 to 45 miles per hour in the Plan area.

County Roadways

The majority of roadways in the Plan area fall under the jurisdiction of Placer County—these include both collector and local roadways. Collector roadways are intended to “collect” traffic from local streets and carry it to roadways higher in the street classification hierarchy (e.g. highways). Examples of collector roadways are National Avenue and Lake Forest Road. Local roadways provide direct access to the abutting land uses and collector roadways. Within the Plan area there are approximately 108 miles of County-maintained local roads and
the County plows approximately 102 miles of these roads during winter road maintenance operations.

Snow removal is an important element of County roadway operations and maintenance. With the highest average snowfall of any county in the lower 48 states, Placer County’s snow removal program ranks among the largest four in California. Figure 3-1 maps existing roadways within the Plan area.

Other Roadways

In addition to Caltrans and Placer County roadways, the Plan area includes roadways owned by the US Forest Service, California State Parks, California Tahoe Conservancy, as well as private roadways.

EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

“Level of Service” (LOS) is a measure of the quality of operation of roadway elements, ranging from LOS A (free-flow conditions, with minimal delay) to LOS F (stop-and-go conditions, with extensive delays). Placer County currently defines its LOS standard as “D” for locations within one-half mile of a state highway, and “C” for other locations in the Plan area. The TRPA standard is to achieve LOS D or better at signalized intersections, with up to four hours per day at LOS E allowed. The TRPA vehicle LOS standards may be exceeded when provisions for multi-modal amenities and/or services are adequate to provide mobility for users. In general, Caltrans tries to maintain LOS D or better, although exceptions are made in specific cases.

Table 5.2 presents the existing LOS at key intersections. The LOS F conditions at SR 89/Grove Street reflect the long delays for movements (particularly left turns) onto the state highway at stop-sign-controlled intersections along the major highways. The other (signalized) intersections attain LOS standards.

Not reflected in the intersection LOS is the congestion created along roadways away from the key intersections. In particular, drivers on SR 89 northbound and SR 28 in both directions through the Tahoe City core area experience substantial (20 minute or more) delays due to a combination of factors including pedestrian crossings, parking maneuvers, and congestion generated by public transportation and commercial activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2: Existing Level of Service at Key Intersections</th>
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<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR 89 / SR 28 (Tahoe City Wye)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR 28 / Grove Street</td>
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<td>SR 28 / National Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR 28 / SR 267</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR 28 / Coon Street</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Based on average delay of all approaches for signalized intersections, and delay on worst approach at unsignalized intersections.

vehicular turning movements, and bicyclists. This LOS F condition occurs on peak summer days (generally early July through mid-August) from approximately 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Source: Fehr and Peers, 2011).

PLANNED MAJOR ROADWAY PROJECTS

There are two active projects that modify the roadway network:

- Nearing completion, the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project changed the auto-dominated section of SR 28 between Secline Avenue on the east and Beaver Street on the west to a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly corridor. The existing two travel lanes in each direction have been converted to one travel lane in each direction plus a center two-way left turn lane, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. Roundabouts have been constructed at Bear Street and at Coon Street (replacing the existing signal at the latter cross-street). In addition, Brook Street has been converted to one-way eastbound, and extensive water quality improvements have been constructed throughout the area.

- The Lakeside Project is a Caltrans project that implements water quality control improvements along SR 89 between Tahoe City and Tahoma. This includes widening to provide left turn lanes in key areas such as Sunnyside and Homewood, as well as construct elements of the missing portion of multipurpose bicycle/pedestrian trail directly adjacent to the highway in the Homewood area. It is planned for completion by 2016.

In addition, the SR 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project has been approved by Placer County and TRPA and will be implemented by the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD). The project will address existing user conflicts and traffic congestion in the Fanny Bridge area through a new state highway alignment and bridge over the Truckee river to the west of the existing bridge. Construction of the new alignment will allow the majority of traffic to bypass Fanny Bridge and the Tahoe City wye.

To reflect community, State of California, and regional goals for reducing vehicle miles travelled and developing infrastructure that supports vibrant, environmentally and economically sustainable communities, Placer County and TRPA shall take steps to move the former State Route 89/Fanny Bridge towards a revitalized “Tahoe City River District” that
evolves into an active, popular location with safety enhancements that encourage primary access by bicycling, walking, and transit.

To implement the policies of the Regional Transportation Plan, Placer County, TRPA, the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization and TTD shall develop and carry out measures to revitalize the Fanny Bridge and Tahoe City River District into a primarily pedestrian and bicycle zone. These measures shall be developed through active planning processes and adopted into the appropriate plans, including the Placer County Area Plan, the Tahoe City Mobility Plan, and the Corridor plan for the area. In particular, Placer County and TRPA will fully implement feasible biking, walking and transit objectives of the Mobility and Area plans consistent with RTP policies on complete streets in consultation with stakeholders. Feasibility shall take into account funding and State and local legal requirements.

[Note to public: Specific policies to implement the above general direction for inclusion in this Area Plan will be developed.]
5.3 Transit Network

As a recreational/resort area with a limited roadway network, public transit services are important in expanding mobility capacity and improving environmental conditions. As discussed below and mapped in Figure 5-2, the Plan area is served by a mix of public and private transit services.

TAHOE AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT

The Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) system is operated by the Placer County Department of Public Works. TART buses also accommodate bicycles. Services are as follows:

- TART’s “Main Line” route operates on SR 28 and SR 89 along the northern and western shores of Lake Tahoe from Sugar Pine Point State Park in El Dorado County on the west shore to Incline Village, Nevada on the north shore. During the summer, half-hourly service is provided between Tahoe City and Incline Village, while hourly service is provided along the west shore. During the winter and off-season, half-hourly service is provided between North Stateline and Incline Village and hourly service is provided for the remainder of the Main Line route.

- The SR 89 route provides hourly service between Tahoe City and Truckee, via Squaw Valley, year-round.

- The SR 267 route operates hourly between Truckee, Northstar Village, Kings Beach and Crystal Bay in the winter. In summer, hourly service is provided between Northstar Village, Kings Beach and Crystal Bay. No service is operated in the spring and fall.

- The Complementary Paratransit Service is provided to persons eligible under the Americans with Disability Act that cannot access the fixed route service. It is provided for all portions of eastern Placer County, through a cab contractor.

TART handled approximately 345,000 passenger-trips per year in 2012-13, a decrease of 3.7 percent from 2011-12. The largest proportion is carried on the Mainline Route (62 percent)
followed by the Highway 89 Route (22 percent) and the Highway 267 Route (12 percent) according to the Tahoe Area Regional Transit Triennial Performance Audit (May 2014).

In 2012, Placer County opened the Tahoe City Transit Center along SR 89 just to the south of the Truckee River. The transit center provides an attractive hub for various transit services, including TART, the Emerald Bay Trolley and the skier shuttles. It also provides multi-modal connectivity with bicycle lockers and park-and-ride spaces available on-site.

**OTHER TRANSIT SERVICES**

**North Lake Tahoe Express**

The North Lake Tahoe Express provides service between the Reno Tahoe International Airport and the north/west shores of Lake Tahoe. Service is available year-round. Three routes are operated: a Red Line serving Truckee, Squaw Valley, Tahoe City and the West Shore; a Green Line serving Truckee and Northstar; and a Blue Line serving Incline Village and Kings Beach/Tahoe Vista. Annually, the service carries approximately 22,600 passenger-trips according to the 2012 North Lake Tahoe Express Performance Review.

**Night Rider**

Using funds gathered by the Truckee North Tahoe Transportation Management Association, free night services are operated in both summer and winter, connecting Squaw Valley, the west shore, the north shore and Northstar.

**Emerald Bay Trolley**

A free shuttle service is operated from the Tahoe City Transit Center to the South Y Transit Center in South Lake Tahoe. The purpose of the shuttle is to serve recreational activity centers along the west shore, and also to provide a link between north shore and south shore trolley services. Funded by the U.S. Forest Service, three trolleys are used to operate hourly service departing the Tahoe City Transit Center between late June and Labor Day. Emerald Bay Trolley buses accommodate two to three bicycles each.
Ski Area Shuttle Services

Ski areas operate independent skier and employee shuttle services. Employee services focus on providing additional capacity on key TART runs with overcrowding, and consist of Alpine Meadows service to Tahoe City and Northstar service to Incline Village and Kings Beach. Both Squaw Valley and Northstar have also provided skier shuttle services connecting the north shore and Incline Village with the base areas, while Homewood Mountain Resort has provided dial-a-ride service on the west shore. In 2012, a joint skier shuttle program was operated through the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association that consisted of five buses operating on three routes (excluding an Incline Village–Northstar route). Future operation of a coordinated service is currently under discussion.

North Lake Tahoe Water Shuttle

In 2012, the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, in coordination with the Tahoe Transportation District and the Truckee–North Tahoe Transportation Management Association, launched the North Lake Tahoe Water Shuttle. A single 12-passenger boat (with capacity for bicycles) operates from late July to late September. Future extensions of this service are possible, pending dock improvements and new funding sources. In addition, the Tahoe Transportation District is conducting a study for a larger waterborne transit service that could connect the north shore and south shore.
Tahoe Basin Area Plan

Figure 5-2
Regional Transit System

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM DIVISION

Legend
- Tahoe City Transit Center
- Water Shuttle Service
- Water Shuttle

Transit Routes
- TART Mainline
(Tahoe to Incline Village, NV to Incline Village)
- Hwy 89
(Tahoe City to Truckee, Truckee to Tahoe City)
- Hwy 267 (Winter Only)
(Crystal Bay to Truckee, Truckee to Crystal Bay)
- Hwy 267 (Summer Only)
(Northstar to Crystal Bay, Crystal Bay to Northstar)

NOTE: TART Mainline and Hwy 89 buses connect at the Tahoe City Transit Center. TART Hwy 89 and Hwy 267 (Winter Only) buses (except for the Truckee Depot, where they also connect with Truckee Transit and Amtrak). TART Mainline and Hwy 267 buses connect to Crystal Bay at Stateline Rd. (winter and summer only).

Data Source: County of Placer
Tahoe Area Regional Transit
Ott & Blake, 2013
April 2015
5.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION

Pedestrian and bicycle users within the Plan area are accommodated through a network of both on-road and off-road facilities. State Route 28 provides Class II bicycle lanes between Tahoe City and Kings Beach. Sidewalks are located on both sides of SR 28 in the core of Tahoe City and are currently being constructed in the core of Kings Beach.

Multi-purpose trails provide for much of the connectivity within the Plan area. The Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) operates multipurpose trails along the Truckee River between Tahoe City and Squaw Valley, along the west shore between Tahoe City and Sugar Pine Point State Park (with several sections of a Class III signed route along low-volume residential streets and a missing 0.9-mile section), and along the north shore from Tahoe City to Dollar Hill. These facilities total 16.2 miles in length. TCPUD also operates a new 0.9 mile lakefront trail through the core of Tahoe City from Commons Beach to the Tahoe City marina. Figure 5-3 maps existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Plan area. Additional details on this trail network are provided in Part 6, Recreation Plan.

The Region also contains an extensive network of unpaved trials, including U.S. Forest Service trails, California State Park trails, California Tahoe Conservancy trails, and 36 miles of the Tahoe Rim Trail. Portions of the Tahoe Rim Trail are also part of the Pacific Crest Trail, stretching from Mexico to Canada, which does not permit bicycle travel.

PLANNED BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Placer County has taken the lead in a multiagency effort to construct the Dollar Creek Shared Use Trail. The project will construct a paved 10-foot wide and 2.2-mile long shared-use trail through the Dollar and Firestone properties extending the existing TCPUD multi-use trail that currently terminates near the intersection of Dollar Drive and SR 28 to the end of Fulton Crescent Drive. This project is the western most end of an approximately eight-mile long North Tahoe Bike Trail corridor identified by TRPA to link Tahoe City to Kings Beach. Other connections off of this facility have also been proposed to extend northward to Northstar and Truckee.
TCPUD is leading the effort to fill the “Homewood Hole”, a 0.9-mile gap in the west shore trail between Cherry Street and Fawn Street, where cyclists currently must ride along an uneven highway shoulder. Portions directly adjacent to the state highway are planned for construction as part of the Lakeside erosion control project, while another portion is planned for construction as part of development of Homewood Mountain Resort.

TCPUD is also working to construct two short Class I trails in the Lake Forest area connecting the North Shore Trail with the Lake Forest Campground as well as connecting the North Shore Trail with Skylandia Park.

The National Avenue Bike Path will ultimately consist of a Class I facility along National Avenue from SR 28 to Donner Road. An initial segment adjacent to the Tahoe Vista Recreation Area parking area was constructed in 2012.

A shared use path is planned along the south (lake) side of SR 28 between Chipmunk Street and Secline Street, connecting bike lanes on the discontinuous segments of Brockway Vista Road with a separated facility through the State Beach area.

The Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project is constructing sidewalks along SR 28 between SR 267 and Beaver Street, as well as along portions of Brook Avenue, Steelhead Avenue, Minnow Avenue, Fox Street, Coon Street, Deer Street, Secline Street, and Chipmunk Street. Class II sidewalks will be marked along SR 28.

The Lake Tahoe Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provides additional information on existing and planned bike and pedestrian paths in Placer County and throughout the Tahoe Region.

**TOWN CENTER SIDEWALKS**

In accordance with Regional Plan requirements, sidewalk extensions are planned on both sides of the State Highways through the Kings Beach and Tahoe City Town Centers. Detailed sidewalk plans and funding will be developed by Placer County and partner agencies. The Regional Plan and this Area Plan require that sidewalk connections be constructed prior to or concurrent with Town Center development.
5.5 Transportation Policies

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

T-P-1 Encourage use of non-auto modes of transportation by incorporating public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel amenities in transportation projects.

T-P-2 Provide for sufficient capital improvements to meet the target for vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas reductions.

T-P-3 Minimize the number of driveways and access-egress points to commercial businesses along SR 28 and SR 89 to reduce the number of turning movements, minimize the number of driveways and ingress-egress points and improve traffic flow.

T-P-4 Create left turn pockets at major public road intersections along SR 28 and throughout the Plan area in cooperation with the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO) and Caltrans.

T-P-5 Consider traffic calming and noise reduction strategies (e.g., alternate truck routes, speed reductions on SR 28 and SR 89, entry features, highlighted pedestrian cross walks, etc.) when designing transportation improvements.

T-P-6 Maintain consistency with Level of Service (LOS) and quality of service standards identified in the Regional Transportation Plan, including the use of alternative standards when provisions for multi-modal amenities and/or services (such as transit, bicycling and walking facilities) are adequate.

PARKING

T-P-7 Encourage shared use parking facilities to more efficiently utilize parking lots.

T-P-8 Pursue programs to allow properties that contribute to off-site community parking facilities or transit to be given credit for satisfying their individual parking requirements.

T-P-9 Encourage consolidation of off-street parking within mixed-use areas in the Plan area.

T-P-10 Provide suitable parking facilities for recreational areas.

TRANSIT, PEDESTRIAN, AND BICYCLE

T-P-11 Require, as appropriate, bus turn-outs, shelters, park and ride lots, planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities, bicycle parking, and other related facilities or programs as conditions of approval for projects.
T-P-12 Encourage TART to increase TART hours of operation and frequency of route circulation (i.e., reduce headways), provided funding is available.

T-P-13 Work with public transit providers to structure fare rates and schedules in order to optimize ridership.

T-P-14 Coordinate the provision of public and private transit service, where feasible, to reduce costs of service and avoid duplication of services.

T-P-15 Create bicycle- and pedestrian-oriented facilities and street designs to provide safe travel through the Plan area in both east and west directions.

T-P-16 Require installation of bicycle racks or secured lockers as a condition of approval for projects and encourage transit providers to offer bicycle racks on their buses.

T-P-17 Within Town Centers and in other areas where sidewalks are planned, require that projects install sidewalk(s) on-site as a condition of project approval. Include landscaping, street furniture, and lighting in accordance with the Area Plan Implementing Regulations.

T-P-18 In the design of projects, provide pedestrian connections to adjoining properties and nearby attractions where feasible.

T-P-19 Explore strategic abandonment or priority retention of roadway rights-of-way as a means of providing pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the Plan area, public access to Lake Tahoe, and to link the Plan area with adjacent areas including potential trail connections to USFS trails at appropriate locations.

T-P-20 Explore funding sources to support maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths during snow conditions in the winter months.

T-P-21 Preserve the condition of sidewalks and bicycle facilities and where feasible, maintain their year-round use.

T-P-22 Secure adequate funding for transit services so that transit is a viable transportation alternative.

T-P-23 Implement safety and wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycle routes and maximize the visibility of bike/pedestrian and vehicle conflict areas through increased signage and facility/roadway design.
Figure 5-3
Existing and Planned Pedestrian & Bike Infrastructure

Note: More detail on existing and planned bike and pedestrian networks can be found in the 2010 Lake Tahoe Regional Plan and Pedestrian Plan.

Data Source: County of Placer
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Ozret & Blaikie, 2010

April 2015

Proposed Class I, Shared Use Path
Proposed Class II, Bike Lane
Proposed Pedestrian Facility
Existing Class I, Shared Use Path
Existing Class II, Bike Lane
Existing Class III, Bike Route
Existing Pedestrian Facility
Streams
Parks/Recreation
Schools

PLACER COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE AGENCY
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM DIVISION

Tahoe Basin Area Plan
Figure 5-4  
Kings Beach  
Transportation Infrastructure & Improvements
Figure 5-5

Tahoe City
Transportation Infrastructure
& Improvements