

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: October 11, 2011

SUBJECT: North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds toward the advancement of a visitor-serving capital project.

Action Requested

Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of up to \$40,000 for capital improvements at the North Lake Tahoe Express/Welcome Center space at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport.

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 Investment Master Plan, which was approved by your Board in July 2004. Therefore, the following NLTRA infrastructure expenditures are being recommended by the County Executive Office for approval.

Brief Project Description / Funding Request:

Reno-Tahoe International Airport Welcome Center- \$40,000

The Resort Association has a dual opportunity to provide Visitor Information while also improving customer service/bookings for the North Lake Tahoe Express airport shuttle by leasing storefront space at the Reno Tahoe International Airport. An Infrastructure Fund allocation of up to \$40,000 would fund space renovation, exhibit planning, construction and installation for the purpose of establishing a North Lake Tahoe Welcoming Center at the airport.

A lease for the space is currently being negotiated. The lease and annual facility operations are estimated to cost \$69,000 per year and are being solely funded by Resort Association Marketing and Visitor Support/Transportation Funds. It is understood that the Welcome Center will be used to serve passengers of the North Lake Tahoe Express airport shuttle and to promote lodging, recreational and other tourist-serving activities in eastern Placer County.

Fiscal Impact: The funding described above would come from Transient Occupancy Tax funds currently held for the purpose of Tahoe area capital project implementation in the County Treasury. There are sufficient funds available within this fund to cover the amount of the requested expenditure approval.

Environmental Analysis: The Board of Supervisors' approval of the NLTRA's funding contribution to this infrastructure project 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 project will be evaluated under CEQA by the corresponding lead agencies.

Recommendation: Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of up to \$40,000 for capital improvements at the North Lake Tahoe Express/Welcome Center space at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport.

The recommended project 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.