

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS County of Placer

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DATE: January 20, 2015

FROM: KEN GREHM / WILL GARNER 

SUBJECT: REBRANDING OF TAHOE AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT (TART)

ACTION REQUESTED/RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the use of the new TART brand for the TART service provided by Placer County.
2. Approve the paint designs for use on Placer County's TART buses. There is no net County cost.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY

The Board of Supervisors authorized Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) funds in the FY 2014-2015 budget to rebrand the Tahoe Area Regional Transit system and implement the branding in coordination with the Town of Truckee for the Truckee Transit system. The goal of the branding project is to develop a new single transit brand for the North Tahoe/Truckee area. The County Executive Office selected a branding consultant, Fallon Multimedia, to develop the new brand. A working group of representatives from Northstar, the Truckee Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Truckee, the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, Truckee-North Tahoe Transportation Management Association and Placer County met over the summer and fall of 2014 to provide input and review the ideas developed by the consultant. The consultant also conducted market research by interviewing community stakeholders. A final brand logo was developed and agreed upon by the working group in November. The logo was previewed at the November 13, 2014, third annual Transit Summit. A gray-scale version of the logo is shown in Attachment A.

A key decision of the branding process was to continue using the TART name. The interviews of community stakeholders and the working group overwhelmingly agreed that TART was a well-recognized name and easily associated with the local transit system. The working group wanted the brand and logo to clearly represent a transit system and to create something unique. Attachment B is an overview of the branding project. As noted in this report, the brand logo is meant to represent several of the branding ideas, or brand pillars, discussed by the working group. The brand pillars are:

- Convenient
- Sustainable/Environmentally-friendly
- Reliable/Accountable
- Easy-to-Use
- Polished
- Frequent/On-time
- Fun
- Identifiable/Recognizable
- Free (perhaps in the future)

The implementation of the branding will start with Placer County's TART system and The Town of Truckee's transit system. To go along with the implementation of the new brand, the Town and County are also working on other improvements in the first half of 2015, such as a combined Nextbus bus route prediction service and a single phone number.

One of the first efforts in implementing the brand will be to incorporate the brand into the design of the exterior bus graphics. TART has 12 buses. The Board authorized the purchase of new buses over the next five year period. The first order of four new buses will be delivered with the new paint design by early 2016. The remaining eight buses would be repainted depending on the cost and available funding – starting with the buses that will remain in the fleet the longest. Attachment C displays two gray-scale renderings of bus paint designs incorporating the new brand (Versions 1a and 1b).

Your Board is being asked to approve the use of the new TART branding in the paint design of the buses. The final design will need to be detailed first with the bus manufacturer, Gillig for the current bus order. We will also want to coordinate closely with the Town of Truckee and the branding working group on the final details. This design will then be incorporated into the rest of the existing fleet.

The photographic representation on design version 2 is called a wrap. The concept of the wrap is to have multiple images on different buses promoting activities in the North Lake Tahoe resort triangle. The wrap is being shown as an example of what could be done as part of a future coordinated promotion with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association. The wrap design would be applied with a vinyl material over the bus paint job, without compromising the TART brand. The specifics of the wrap and the associated promotion would come back to the Board in the future for approval.

ENVIRONMENTAL

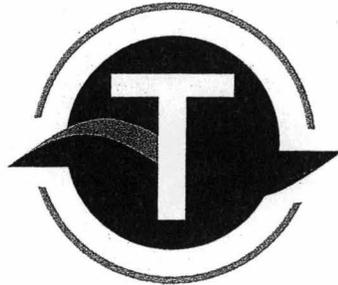
The project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to section 21080(b)(10), as it is a project to provide passenger service.

FISCAL IMPACT

A total of \$100,000 in TOT funds is budgeted in the current fiscal year for the TART branding effort. The development of the brand and the bus paint design will use approximately \$25,000 of this budget. The remaining \$75,000 will be available for painting of existing TART buses, creation of new bus stop signs, printing and other miscellaneous activities related to production and implementation of the new brand. The cost of painting the new buses is part of the budget for new buses in the DPW/TART equipment budget. Any additional costs will need to be approved in future budgets by the Board of Supervisors.

Attachments: A- TART Logo
B- Fallon Multimedia Branding Project Overview of Process and Status
C- Pages 1-2, TART Bus Graphic and Wrap Designs

Attachment A
Gray Scale TART Logo



TART

Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit



TART

Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit



**North Tahoe/Truckee Regional Transit Service Unified Branding Project
Overview of Process and Status
November 5, 2014**

THE PROCESS

The process to create a new brand for the North Tahoe/Truckee Transit System began in June 2014, when the working group first met to discuss the current status of the system and plans for the future. We began this project by conducting market research then identifying brand pillars, goals and messaging through brainstorming sessions with community stakeholders and representatives. These sessions led us to produce several different brand ideas and directions and the group overwhelmingly selected one design direction that led to our last session where this concept was previewed in more of a refined format. The following brand pillars were determined by the working committee:

- Convenient
- Sustainable / Environmentally-friendly
- Reliable / Accountable
- Easy-to-use
- Polished
- Frequent / On-time
- Fun
- Identifiable / Recognizable (even when used with other graphics)
- Free (perhaps in the future)

For a complete list of the creative exercise results, please see attached re-cap.

BACKGROUND / MARKET RESEARCH

Before we agreed as a group to continue using the TART name (at a meeting on July 30, 2014), we conducted informal market research. We implemented this survey throughout North Lake Tahoe and Truckee and asked approximately 25 participants a series of questions about the TART name and brand. We interviewed a cross-section of residents and visitors in both Truckee and the North Lake Tahoe, including but not limited to:

- Business Owners
- Representatives of Organizations (including the Hispanic Community)
- Community Leaders
- Riders (both locals and visitors)
- Residents

Here is a sampling of the questions we asked:

- The TART name has been around for nearly 40 years. We are currently undergoing a logo/branding update, do you feel that it is time for a name change as well?
- If so, have you given any thought to what the name might be?
- If you think we should keep TART, do you think the name is still a viable representation of North Lake Tahoe and Truckee?
- When you think of TART what words/messages come to mind?
- Do you think it is important for the TART logo and brand to convey specific messages? (e.g. Environmentally-friendly, convenient, etc. - If so, what messages come to mind?)

Overall, the majority of the participants felt strongly that we should keep the name TART even if it were to include Truckee. To summarize, they felt that TART has major name recognition in both North Lake Tahoe and Truckee, and it "makes sense". Here is a sampling of some the comments that reflect the overall consensus:

The name TART has been around for years and has brand equity in both North Lake Tahoe and Truckee. Anything new may take years for people to get on board with.

Everyone knows TART ... Why change something that is already easily recognizable? That would be like changing Coca Cola!

It has been TART forever, and other than the typical complaint here and there that comes with any transit system, no major negative connotation with the name comes to mind.

From the Hispanic Community: Many of our clients rely heavily on TART and are extremely familiar with the TART name. Changing the name might cause confusion and frustration even if the routes remain the same."

TART is a well-established name. I like the way the ART is connected like BART and other cities.

We only had two participants who felt that maybe a name change might be good for the following reasons:

- To draw attention
- Might be good to have a new name to go with new logo

WHERE WE ARE TODAY?

At our most recent meeting on October 16, 2014, the committee reviewed the final selection of logos in different formats and colors (along with black and white and gray scale) as well as examples to show what a new logo would look like when displayed on a bus (with and without a bus wrap), on a rack card, signage, etc.

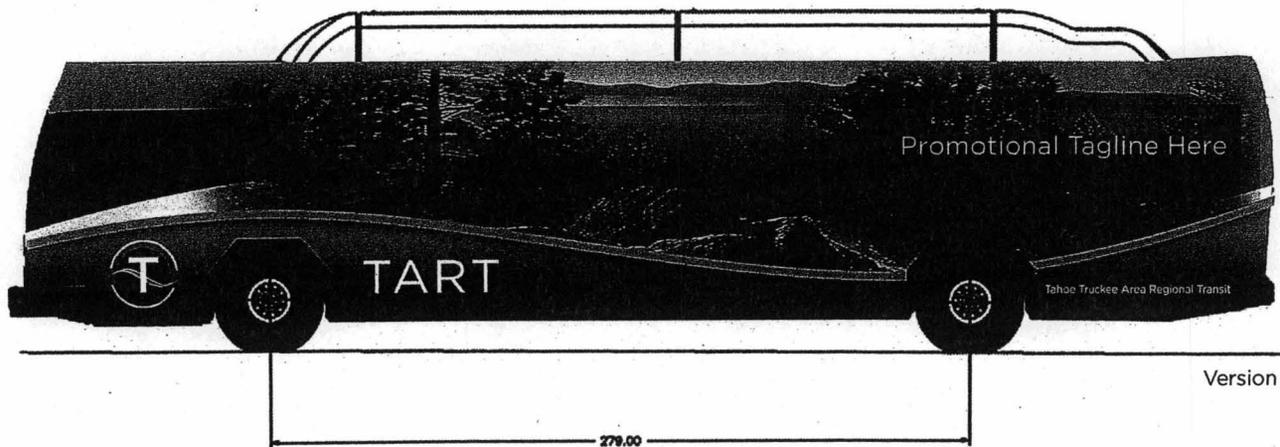
We then worked with different colors and configurations in a "live" setting in order to streamline the process and ensure everyone was on the same page. At the end of the meeting a solid choice for the new transit logo was reached and agreed upon. The "T" surrounded by an open ended circle with a free-flowing environmental element through the middle of the logo was determined to be the best design to represent the communities served by TART.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The logo is currently in the process of being fine-tuned and elevated to the final stage of production. Fallon Multimedia plans to have the logo ready to be distributed to the working group (via e-mail) the first part of November, and expects to have a final, completed logo showing various configurations (e.g. icon by itself, icon with TART name, icon with TART acronym and complete name, etc.)

After the final stages of adjustments are made to the logo and approval is received, Fallon Multimedia will prepare brand identity guidelines which will feature specific colors, how to best use the new logo for different types of collateral, signage, etc., horizontal and vertical versions of the logo and accompanying components, as well as a high resolution digital files in the following formats: pdf, jpeg, and transparent background gif files.

TART Bus Wrap Design



Version 2

December 2014

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