



STAFF REPORT

Date: June 18, 2024
To: TRPA Transportation Committee
From: TRPA Staff
Subject: Transportation Funding Landscape Briefing

Summary:

Staff will present an overview of funding for transportation programs and projects in the Lake Tahoe Region. This is an information only item, no action is requested.

Background:

The Lake Tahoe Region has shown a long-standing commitment to investing in transportation improvements to enhance mobility in the region and directly address the Compact mandate to “reduce the dependency on the private automobile...”. Transportation funding is provided by a combination of Federal, State, Local, and private sources. The percentage between these “sectors” continually shifts depending on the level of success in competitive federal and state funding programs. For the 2023 fiscal year over \$107 million dollars were programmed to transportation projects. The tables below illustrate how transit and roadway and bicycle/pedestrian projects are funded in 2023.

FY23 Transit Operations and Capital by County and Funding Sector

County	Local	State	Federal ¹	Private	Total	Percentage of Regional Total
El Dorado County, CA ²	\$600,000	\$2,862,164	\$3,468,970	\$560,000	\$7,455,134	35.2%
Placer County, CA	\$5,018,300	\$2,357,115	\$1,952,167	\$600,000	\$9,990,582	47.2%
Carson City-County, NV	\$0	\$0	\$289,018	\$0	\$289,018	1.4%
Douglas County, NV	\$555,000	\$0	\$1,445,404	\$140,000	\$2,140,404	10.1%
Washoe County, NV	\$415,000	\$85,000	\$795,069	\$0	\$1,295,069	6.1%
Totals	\$6,651,300	\$5,268,279	\$7,950,691	\$1,300,000	\$21,170,270³	
Percentage of Regional Total	31%	25%	38%	6%		100.0%

¹ Distributed to Counties based on the following estimated distribution of transit services provided: TART – Placer 90% + Washoe 10%; TTD- El Dorado 60% + Douglas 25% + Washoe 10% + Carson City 5%.

² Includes the City of South Lake Tahoe, CA.

³ Total and sum of counties may not be equal due to rounding.

FY 23 Roadway and Bicycle/Pedestrian Capital Projects by County and Funding Sector

County	Local	State	Federal	Private	Total	Percentage of Regional Total
El Dorado County, CA ⁴	\$89,000	\$27,980,000	\$5,163,000	\$0	\$33,232,000	38.3%
Placer County, CA	\$592,000	\$540,000	\$11,942,000	\$450,000	\$13,524,000	15.6%
Carson City-County, NV	\$0	\$69,000	\$1,621,000	\$346,000	\$2,036,000	2.3%
Douglas County, NV	\$250,000	\$3,177,000	\$32,282,000	\$200,000	\$35,909,000	41.4%
Washoe County, NV	\$0	\$1,957,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,957,000	2.3%
Totals	\$931,000	\$33,723,000	\$51,008,000	\$996,000	\$86,658,000	100.0% ⁵
Percentage of Regional Total	1%	39%	59%	1%		

⁴ Includes the City of South Lake Tahoe.

⁵ Percentages by jurisdiction may not total 100.0% due to rounding.

The Local, State, Federal, and Private funding for roadway and bicycle/pedestrian capital projects is distributed to reflect the county in which the projects are located. Because the data include large, limited-duration projects that receive funding from non-local sources, the percentages will vary significantly from year-to-year as stated above.

In April 2024, the Transportation Committee discussed the need to focus on sustaining local revenue for transit operations and enhancing transit services. The table above confirms the need to generate new revenue for transit, as active transportation and other infrastructure projects are better matched with federal and state discretionary funding programs. **Local, non-federal match** is also critical to enhance federal and state grant applications and increase funding awarded.

Discretionary vs. Formula

Tahoe receives federal and state transportation funding from two types of sources, **formula funding** and **discretionary grants**. Many programs generally allocate funding through formulas that use factors like residential population to scale investment. Funds received via these sources are often referred to as “formula funding.” Discretionary grant funding refers to resources received through a competitive grant application process. Lake Tahoe has secured changes to federal funding formulas to provide increased funding and pending legislation in California aimed at similar changes for transit and infrastructure funding. Nevada does not allocate any transportation funds through formula funding. TRPA is currently exploring other potential funding sources that the NV legislature could assist in enacting or enabling. Lake Tahoe’s transportation funding is more heavily dependent on discretionary funding than other regions.

Self-help Funding

Over 25 jurisdictions in California and Nevada have instituted programs that generate revenue dedicated for transportation purposes. This “Self-help” revenue generated in the regions enhances competitiveness for federal and state discretionary funding and provides additional control over achievement of their transportation goals. This type of **Self-help** funding in California has typically relied on voter approved sales tax measures that provide critical leverage and matching funds for federal and

state funding (more info: [Self Help Counties Coalition](#)). The Lake Tahoe Region's unique multi-state, multi-county boundaries makes typical county-wide self-help funding mechanisms exceedingly difficult to implement.

Over the last two decades partners at Lake Tahoe have explored various alternatives to create its own version of self-help funding to generate the necessary revenue to accelerate attainment of our transportation goals. While the region continues to investigate region-wide mechanisms, Tahoe's local governments have been increasing spending for transportation individually. This new funding is coming from increased Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), creation of new improvement districts, passage of measures to support critical maintenance, and additional general funds. The RTP/SCS will document the current and anticipated commitment from local agencies in order to capture the full funding landscape.

TRPA itself does not possess the authority to raise revenue for transportation but can identify the level of investment needed to meet the collective transportation goals and facilitate dialogue among the regional partnership on how to get there. These commitments will be documented in the RTP/SCS to provide a roadmap to achievement of the regional transportation vision.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Nick Haven, MPO Director at nhaven@trpa.gov or 775-589-5256. To submit a written public comment, email publiccomment@trpa.gov with the appropriate agenda item in the subject line. Written comments received by 4 p.m. the day before a scheduled public meeting will be distributed and posted to the TRPA website before the meeting begins. TRPA does not guarantee written comments received after 4 p.m. the day before a meeting will be distributed and posted in time for the meeting.