



STAFF REPORT

Date: April 21, 2021

To: TRPA Governing Board

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: 1) Amending the existing nitrate deposition threshold standard (AQ14) to a per capita VMT standard to reduce reliance on the automobile, reduce GHG emissions, and promote mobility; 2) Amendments to the implementing Goals and Policies of the Regional Plan Chapters 3 (Transportation Element) and 7 (Implementation Element) to attain the per capita VMT standard and implement the Regional Transportation Plan; 3) Amendments to Code of Ordinances to revise the transportation project impact assessment and air quality mitigation fee (Code Chapter 65.2), including related amendments to Chapters 2, 3, 22, 34, 39, 50, 82, and 90

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the TRPA Governing Board consider this staff report, staff presentation, and public input on the items summarized below and adopt the Threshold, Regional Plan and Code of Ordinances amendments.

Required Motions:

In order to act on the proposed package, the Governing Board should make the following motions, based on the staff summary and evidence in the record:

1. A motion to approve the required findings, including a finding of no significant effect, for amendments to Thresholds, Regional Plan, and Code of Ordinances, as provided in Attachments K and L.
2. A motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-___, amending Ordinance 2019-03, as previously amended, to amend Air Quality Threshold Standard 14 as set forth in Attachment M1 of the staff report.
3. A motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-___, amending Ordinances 87-9, as previously amended, to amend the Regional Plan Goals and Policies as set forth in Attachment M2 of the staff report.
4. A motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-___, amending Ordinance 2019-03, as previously amended, to amend the Code of Ordinances as set forth in Attachment M3.

For the motions to pass, the vote of at least four of the members of each State agreeing with the vote of at least four members of the other State is required.

Advisory Planning Commission (APC) Direction:

At the April 14, 2021 meeting, the APC recommended adoption of the amendments to the Threshold, Regional Plan and Code of Ordinances to the Governing Board.

Regional Plan Implementation Committee (RPIC) Direction:

Staff is seeking the RPIC recommendation of the Threshold, Regional Plan and Code of Ordinances amendments to the Governing Board at the April 28, 2021 meeting, to be held prior to Governing Board.

Summary:

Since its adoption 40 years ago, the Tahoe Regional Plan has set out strategies for an integrated land use and transportation vision for the Tahoe Region. A comprehensive update in 2012 strengthened the land use strategies to better incentivize compact sustainable communities with walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented land use patterns. Now in 2021, TRPA is proposing changes to the foundations for planning, managing, and implementing the Region's integrated transportation system to better align to the sustainable communities aspirations of the updated 2012 Regional Plan.

Three actions are presented today to strengthen the ongoing implementation of the regional transportation system. At the top of the regulatory pyramid is an updated new transportation and sustainable communities threshold standard to codify the shared aspiration for a more walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented Tahoe as a regional goal. The next actions implement the new threshold standard, first at the plan level and also at the project level. At the plan level, we propose to adopt amended goals and policies for the 2020 update to the Regional Transportation Plan (and conforming amendments to the Transportation Element of the Regional Plan) as well as enhancements to the Regional Transportation Plan's project list that address and accelerate implementation of the new threshold standard. The third action proposes replacing the current project level transportation impact analysis methodology with a new analytical tool to better assess whether a redevelopment project will have a significant effect on transportation and how projects will mitigate those potential effects. These changes -- a threshold update with plan and project level amendments to implement the new threshold -- when taken together align regional goals, plans, programs, and projects to achieve the complete transportation and sustainable communities vision of the Tahoe Regional Plan.

In a Region where growth and development are capped and the Region is nearly built out, these proposed changes are primarily in response to expanding outdoor recreation visitation pressures that grow as population within a short travel distance of the Region grows. To create the first-class transportation system needed to serve more out-of-basin visitors, the small regional population of permanent residents, and commuters alike, the proposals link success to interim milestones for accelerated investment in and implementation of Tahoe's transportation vision in the RTP.

Background:

The Tahoe Region is poised to bring its transportation system into the 21st Century with updates to its outdated 40-year-old transportation regulatory, planning, and implementation structure. Fifty years

ago, the Compact established a goal to “reduce dependency on the automobile by making more effective use of existing transportation modes and of public transit to move people and goods within the region.” TRPA adopts standards, plans, Code, and implementing programs and projects to achieve the Compact’s broad goals.

The RP and RTP encompass the Tahoe Region's comprehensive integrated land use and transportation vision: The groundwork for today's proposals has been developing for at least a decade. Bringing the land use elements of the Regional Plan current started with the update of the Tahoe Regional Plan (RP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) eight years ago in 2012, the first comprehensive update of the Region's land use vision in 25 years. The 2012 Regional Plan Update strengthened development policies and implementation incentives to spur walkable, bikeable, small community centers that would favor reduced traffic and affordable and workforce housing near transit to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and use of the auto. That Plan did so by incorporating important state policies that integrate land use and transportation projects, effectively the California state policies of AB 32 (2006) (greenhouse gas reduction) and SB 375 (2008) (linking land use and transportation planning).

Tahoe's 2012 Regional Plan Update put teeth behind integrating land use and transportation because TRPA is the only Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) whose plan incorporates an enforceable system of growth control, a system that's been in place for 40 years where all development in the Tahoe Region is capped. Unlike other areas of California and Nevada, Tahoe is effectively not growing because the Region is nearly at buildout, with little to no new development within the Region. What little development occurs is metered out at about 1% a year through limited remaining housing allocations (about 130 new housing units a year regionwide). Most development in the Region is either redevelopment of existing buildings or transfers of development.

A further refinement of the land use incentives for compact, walkable, bikeable communities came in 2015 with further revisions to the development rights system of the Regional Plan. All development types in Tahoe remain capped but now can be converted from one use to another more readily to achieve the mixed use that is the foundation for creating the 2012 Regional Plan's goals for sustainable communities, where housing can be located in proximity to community services and alternative modes of travel that reduce auto reliance.

Having strengthened the land use side of the Regional Plan, starting in 2015, the Region's priorities shifted more to strengthening the transportation side of the Compact's mandates. In TRPA's role as the Tahoe Region's MPO (TMPO), we are charged with transportation planning for the Region and producing an updated RTP every 4 years, as well as overseeing RTP funding and implementation. The RTP encompasses myriad performance measures but has never been associated with a measure reflecting a successfully integrated transportation and sustainable communities desired end state.

Adopting a new VMT per capita standard to replace the outdated total VMT standard: The Compact's success is measured by a system of adopted environmental standards the vast majority of which are 40 years old, with many only remotely grounded in the most current science, circumstances, or policy. In 2015, recognizing prior failed attempts, the TRPA Governing Board identified a top strategic priority for TRPA to update its outdated threshold standard system -- bring it current with today's science, policy, and best approach for monitoring and evaluation. The Board directed staff to work with the newly established Bi-state Tahoe Science Advisory Council to develop an updated system of measures grounded in best practices.

At that time in 2015, the TRPA Governing Board prioritized and made the update of a dated air quality standard for nitrogen emissions (the current total VMT standard) among the top priorities. Those nitrogen emissions were measured through a cap on VMT that is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was established. Many of the early threshold standards adopted in the 1980s were designed to arrest the decline in water clarity. In 1981 increased algal growth because of elevated nutrient inputs (phosphorus and nitrogen) was thought to be the primary driver of Lake Tahoe's clarity loss. Threshold standard (AQ14) was established in 1982 and set a goal of reducing in-basin nitrogen emissions from cars by 10% from 1981 levels and benchmarked its performance to total regional VMT.

Since 1982 a number of developments have occurred that have functionally rendered the original intent of the nitrate reduction threshold standard (AQ14) moot. First, improvements in tailpipe emissions controls have reduced nitrogen emissions by more than 66%, far greater than the 10% objective of the adopted standard. In other words, the nitrogen reduction goal has been accomplished. Second, the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) scientific research established that fine particles were the principal driver of clarity loss. Each of the last four threshold evaluations have recommended that the 1982 VMT nitrogen deposition threshold standard (AQ14) be reviewed and updated.

Some initial resistance to changing the 1982 VMT threshold standard arose because, for years, Tahoe stakeholders have relied upon the total VMT standard for nitrate reduction as an indirect proxy for the effectiveness and efficiency of the Region's transportation system. It is not. Notably, this air quality threshold standard was never set as a standard to measure the success of Tahoe's transportation system. But that 40-year-old VMT target is often invoked today as though it was set as a transportation standard. It is not now and has never been related to or scientifically tied in any way to the implementation of Tahoe's RTP. Therefore, nearly three years ago, with Board direction, TRPA started working on how we might update the current VMT standard in a way that converted it from an air quality standard to control nitrogen emissions to instead a transportation standard that would tie to the desired end state goals of Tahoe's transportation vision, the accelerated implementation of the RTP, as well as the contemporary transportation policies the Compact states.

The proposal before the Committee is to replace the total VMT standard with a 6.8% reduction in per capita VMT to reduce reliance on the automobile, support GHG emission reduction, and increase mobility through modes other than the automobile. While VMT is a measure of the total volume of travel, VMT per capita is a measure of the efficiency of a transportation system in moving individuals between the places they need to be and so better measures the experience with and use of the various parts of the transportation system by individual travelers. Higher VMT per capita regions are those where individuals are traveling farther distances and are generally reliant on the automobile to move between their destinations. Lower VMT per capita regions are those that are characterized by complete

neighborhoods consistent with the RP's sustainable communities goals with individuals travelling shorter distances and having multiple transportation options (e.g. bike paths, transit systems) other than the personal automobile to take those trips.

Adopting updates to the RTP to implement the new VMT per capita threshold standard: Once a threshold standard is set, TRPA is required to maintain adopted plans to achieve and maintain the standard. The second set of proposals before the Committee today are amendments updating the RTP (and identical conforming amendments to the Transportation Element of the RP) to achieve and maintain the new VMT per capita threshold standard. The foundation for the RTP update began in 2016 when the two States, through the two cabinet secretaries of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) and Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) convened a transportation policy forum to clarify Tahoe's transportation project and program priorities as well as needed implementation funding given growing pressures on Tahoe's transportation system. The States convened cross-sector public and private stakeholders to identify and align on the highest and most impactful priorities for transportation implementation in Tahoe that would reduce reliance on the personal auto, manage out-of-basin outdoor recreation visitation, and accelerate integration of transportation with land use (CA SB 375) and reduction of GHG emissions from mobile sources (AB 32). Essentially, the two States were asking the Region to accelerate Tahoe's RTP implementation.

The consultation acknowledged the Tahoe Region's greatest transportation challenge. Tahoe is an iconic outdoor recreation destination with both the Lake and 90 percent of its surrounding land base held as publicly accessible federal, state, and local forests, parks, and wilderness areas. Out-of-basin visitation traffic, which is about 50% of Tahoe's in-basin VMT, clogs the Tahoe Region's public roadways at peak times. The states asked regional transportation partners to identify the highest priority regional projects and programs to manage that out of basin visitation, the primary escalator of VMT. The consultation's recommendations are now included in the 2020 RTP update: e.g., adding transit to popular destinations, out of basin park and ride and transit connections, and more transportation choices once in the Region, like bicycle, pedestrian, and parking management systems. The 2020 RTP updates are changes needed to now implement the new VMT per capita threshold standard as well as other required transportation performance measures of the MPO. The 2020 RTP has been available for public review since October and is now being finalized for decision concurrent with the VMT threshold update proposal. It redoubles the reliance on transportation strategies designed to address visitation congestion, reduce auto reliance, and implements California state policy SB 375 and supports consideration of parallel Nevada state policy on GHG emissions policies.

Strategies for funding the 2020 RTP Update: Implementing the RTP comes with a hefty price tag, a \$2.7 billion plan of transportation and sustainable communities investments with a long list of capital projects and other implementing programs over 25 years. Increasing investment in transportation is the single most effective way to accelerate RTP implementation.

To make sure the Region secures the monies needed to implement the RTP, the two states through the cabinet secretaries for CNRA and DCNR have engaged two rounds of ongoing transportation consultation among implementing partners across all sectors -- federal, two states, local government, and private sector. The first consultation in 2017-2018 produced a final report that identified the RTP's highest priorities (i.e., what new transportation funds will be used to accomplish) that will make the most difference in reducing reliance on the auto and address the Tahoe Region's greatest challenge --

out-of-basin visitation traffic that clogs Basin roads at peak times. A second convening of the bi-state transportation consulting parties is now underway and has made securing new sources of transportation funding to accelerate implementation of the RTP its highest priority. A legislative report is due by the end of 2021 laying out a widely supported bi-state and stakeholder consensus on approach to new funding sources for Tahoe's transportation system implementation.

Code of Ordinance Amendments implement the new VMT per capita threshold standard at the project-level: At the base of TRPA's regulatory pyramid is the Code of Ordinances, which implement the plans, programs, and projects designed to achieve and maintain threshold standards. The third proposal before the Committee looks at how to apply the updated VMT per capita threshold standard to development and redevelopment projects. Although development (mostly redevelopment) projects are only a small increment of RTP implementation, accounting for only about 7% of regional VMT, they are nonetheless a necessary part of transportation implementation system. The proposed Code of Ordinances amendments will establish a consistent project review method oriented to the new VMT standard and implementation of the RTP priority projects.

The current Code evaluates projects based on the total number of trips generated. The proposed Code of Ordinance amendments will convert the present project trip analysis (daily vehicle trip ends or DVTE) to a framework that is instead tethered to VMT. The new method assesses a development project's significance to the new VMT threshold at the project level, and how therefore each project will be required to mitigate those VMT generated impacts. The project level impact assessment is coupled with a proposed framework for updating the existing Air Quality Mitigation Fee to a mobility mitigation fee that mitigates project level transportation system effects of development projects.

The proposed project level assessment has the benefit of being consistent with recently implemented California state law SB 743 (2013) (which updated the state's CEQA Guidelines to require VMT-based transportation impact assessment rather than Level of Service) so that Tahoe project applicants will have a streamlined analysis at the regional level and local level in California. The Tahoe RTP shares common goals with the state law -- reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting the development of a multimodal transportation system, and providing clean, efficient access to destinations -- so that TRPA, by working closely with Placer County and its transportation consultant Fehr & Peers, was able to conform both the regional and state level assessment methodology. As a result, the project level transportation impact assessment and mitigation fee updates provide a streamlined, transparent, and predictable process for projects that result in additional vehicle miles traveled. Certain classes of projects, although exempt from additional project impact assessment (because these classes of projects would likely not lead to a substantial or measurable increase in VMT, e.g., bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and affordable housing projects), will be required to pay the mobility impact fee. More complex projects will require detailed analysis of significance and mitigation options tailored to the project impacts.

The comprehensive package of transportation system changes is more coherent, more progressive, and far superior to the system in place today: The threshold standard change, RTP update, code changes, and transportation funding initiative to accelerate RTP implementation now underway, when taken together, create a far more holistic, coherent, aggressive, and integrated system for achieving the sustainable communities and transportation vision for Tahoe.

Proposed today is a new transportation threshold standard together with the 2020 RTP Update that not only encompasses contemporary and current California state policies and approaches -- AB 32, SB 375, and now SB 743. It achieves this by anchoring to regional implementation of interim RTP project and program targets as the most effective means of controlling the growth of regional VMT rather than looking solely to development restrictions as we do today. As a practical matter, population growth is occurring all around Tahoe, and this growth will place upward pressure on VMT within the Basin. While California policy (SB743) allows VMT growth, the RTP forecasts growth in visitation and local population, but implementation of the 2020 RTP limits VMT growth to near zero and reduces the per capita figure by 6.8%.

A few advocates have suggested the Region retain an absolute cap on regional VMT as a means to further control development in Tahoe and so with it VMT for Tahoe. The current VMT standard (i.e., tied to NOx air emissions) purports to control VMT by stopping release of residential allocations when the transportation model shows that we are exceeding the cap on VMT. Because we are nearly at buildout under the Regional Plan's growth control system, development in Tahoe accounts for a small portion of VMT (7%). Limiting new allocations is an ineffective strategy where new development accounts for only a fraction of overall regional. The greatest effect on VMT will come from funding the transportation programs and projects of the RTP -- transit, trails, technology, parking management, Transportation Demand Management -- all the programs and projects not directly connected to development projects but instead that come from public commitment of dollars to transportation.

As this staff report reveals, today's proposed comprehensive framework ties to all the necessary objectives to accelerate and achieve the Region's transportation system goals. The proposals tie to:

- the integrated land use and transportation vision for the Region,
- the ongoing Bi-State and Tahoe Partnership transportation funding initiative, and
- the interim implementation goals of the updated 2020 RTP.

The Proposals are consistent with, and are more progressive than related California statutory goals for climate adaptation, GHG emissions reduction, sustainable communities (SB375), affordable housing (EO N-06-19), and transportation project assessment (SB743). Taken together, the recommended proposals will bring Tahoe's transportation and land use systems fully up to date with the needs of the 21st Century.

Project Description:

The converging of three initiatives includes an update to the existing Nitrate Deposition VMT threshold standard, an update to the Regional Transportation Plan Goals and Policies, and an update to the TRPA Code of Ordinances for project impact analysis and mitigation fee.

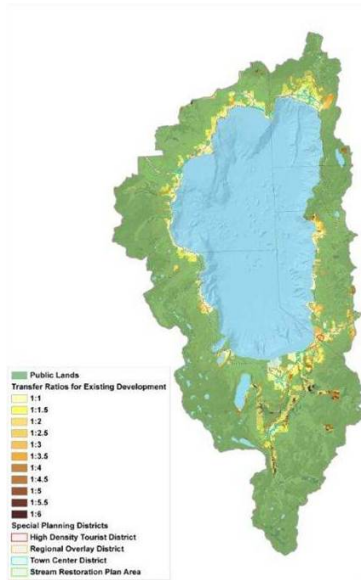
VMT Threshold Standard Update Summary: The proposed update to the VMT threshold standard proposes a 6.8% reduction in VMT per capita by 2045 and interim reduction targets to assess progress. The proposed implementation framework for the updated standard will reduce the distance traveled in automobiles for both visitors and residents, and result in nearly zero growth in VMT over the next 25 years. The proposed standard is grounded in the contemporary approach to threshold standards recommended by the Tahoe Science Advisory Council and accepted by the TRPA Governing Board's Threshold Update Initiative Stakeholder Working Group, including desired outcome, the use of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound) goals, and identification of implementation and monitoring components as part of an adaptive management system. It aligns with current climate and transportation policies of both states, as well as those reflected in both the Regional Plan and Regional Transportation Plan. The proposal and its components (e.g., how VMT and population are measured, etc.) are described in detail in Attachment A (VMT Threshold Update: Target Setting and Implementation). Key components of the proposal, highlighted briefly below, relate to greenhouse gas reduction, reduced auto dependency, the land use and development pattern, and a Regional Plan amendment.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Component: In addition to recognizing that economic conditions and extra-regional growth that cannot be controlled by TRPA drive VMT levels in the basin, the per capita approach is consistent with the per capita GHG reduction requirement to which the Tahoe MPO is subject per the California Air Resources Board. California MPOs are subject to California Air Resources Board (CARB) per capita GHG reduction targets for passenger vehicles as well as sustainable communities strategy (SCS) requirements intended to create more compact development and meet affordable housing needs. The Tahoe MPO per capita GHG reduction target for 2035 is 5% below the 2005 level. TRPA, with its unique combination of land use and transportation planning authority, is well positioned to meet this reduction goal, as well as reduce auto dependency, create a more compact development pattern, and meet affordable housing needs.

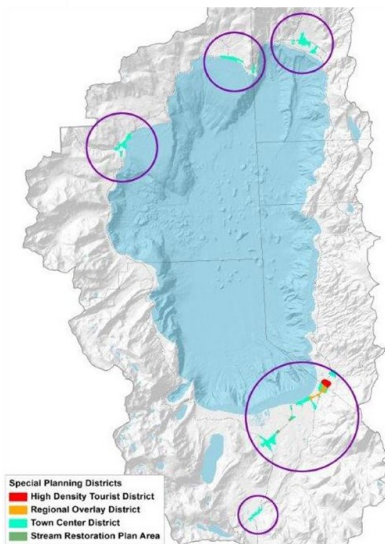
Reduced Auto Dependency Component: The proposed threshold standard recognizes the Bi-State Compact directive by targeting a reduction in VMT per capita. VMT per capita more directly measures auto dependency than total VMT. Roadway capacity in Tahoe is limited (i.e., new roads or lanes are unlikely due to geographic and environmental constraints) so increasing mobility requires a transportation system that improves connectivity and mobility through implementing new trails and transit service, adapting existing roadway for transit priority and/or reversible travel lanes during busy traffic periods, and travel demand management strategies, like parking management.

Land Use and Development Pattern Component: Higher density, mixed use development reduces per capita vehicle miles traveled and better utilizes and supports transit service (Richard M. Haughey 2005; Bochner & Sperry 2010; Ewing et al. 2011; Walters et al. 2013). The 2012 amendments to the Regional Plan increased transfer ratios for relocating remote (auto-reliant) development into town centers with existing and planned transit service. The most recent versions of the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (i.e., 2017 and 2020) emphasize reducing auto travel demand by encouraging non-auto travel and by providing alternative modes of transportation. Both the RP and RTP are consistent with these underlying concepts and work in a complementary fashion to address many of the Region's goals, as shown in the RP and RTP maps that follow.

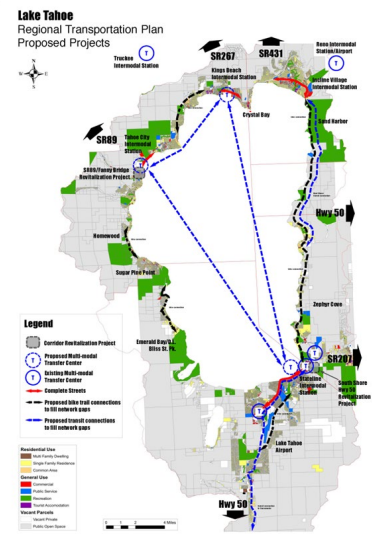
Development Rights Sending Areas and Transfer Ratios



Centers and Development Rights Receiving Areas



Proposed Transportation Projects (illustrative)



Regional Plan Amendment Recommendations: To effectuate attainment of the new per capita VMT threshold standard requires amending the Regional Plan Goals and Policies. The proposed amendment adds a new goal in the Development and Implementation Priorities sub-element and six associated policies. See Attachments C and D for proposed amendments. The amendments include a suite of actions to achieve the new per capita VMT reduction standard:

- o Establishing a technical advisory body to provide guidance on attaining and maintaining the new threshold standard
- o Requiring the technical advisory body to prepare and transmit to the TRPA and TMPO governing boards a regular report including past performance, findings, and recommendations that the boards must act on.
- o Establishing a schedule of milestones to measure progress towards the per capita VMT reduction goal
- o Implementing identified adaptive management responses if scheduled milestones are not met
- o Obtaining regional funding sources for transportation projects and programs per scheduled milestones

Regional Transportation Plan Update: Visitation from outside the Region is the main driver of the Lake Tahoe Region's \$5 billion annual economy, based largely on seasonal tourism and outdoor recreation. But it also puts metropolitan-level travel demands on the Region's limited and largely rural transportation system. During peak times of visitation, Tahoe's roads clog with traffic and parking demands exceed capacity at recreation sites. This seasonal influx of motorists has consequences for the environment, for local communities and their mobility, and for air and water quality. As neighboring cities from Reno and Carson City to Sacramento and San Francisco continue to grow, transportation pressures and challenges at Tahoe will only increase.

There is broad consensus that to meet the growing travel demand the Tahoe Region needs a transportation system transformation. Improvements are needed to help people travel to, from, and around the Region more efficiently. Improvements will also strengthen initiatives underway to conserve and restore Tahoe's environment; revitalize communities; improve quality of life for residents and quality of experience for visitors; improve mobility and safety for people walking and biking; improve recreation access and sustainability; and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and build a resilient system in response to climate change.

Regional Plan goals and policies: Goals and policies establish the organizing framework for transportation planning at Lake Tahoe. The 2020 RTP (Attachment F) proposes an update to the policies (Attachment D) to implement the new VMT per capita threshold standard along with the goals. The changes will strengthen support of the goals, support a reduction in VMT and improve the livable environment with expanded transit services and a robust network of trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes that ensure every Tahoe resident has safe, reliable, and convenient alternatives to travel throughout the region to homes, workplaces, schools, commercial areas, and recreation sites.

The plan's focus to create a transportation system that allows for travel without having to drive, making it easier for recreation and vacation visitors to arrive without a car or leave their cars parked while exploring everything Tahoe has to offer. The plan includes new technologies to improve how roads, traffic signals, and parking areas are operated and puts real-time information about road conditions and the most convenient travel options at the fingertips of everyone planning a trip in the Region. The Communities focus area includes changes so that all corridors in Tahoe have more travel options than just the automobile — and roadways are maintained to ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

The new VMT standard is now tied directly to the implementation and funding of the RTP, the plan that sets the goals and policies for bringing the transportation system into the 21st Century.

The Regional Plan and RTP share six major goals for the transportation system that the 2020 RTP is not proposing to change; Environment, Connectivity, Safety, Operations and Congestion Management, Economic Vitality & Quality of Life, and System Preservation.

Recommended changes: To date over 53 public meetings (both in person and virtual), online webinars drawing 483 participants, and outreach videos reaching 2,383 people all provided valuable input to help shape the Final Draft Plan. A full list of comments received is included in Governing Board Item VI A. Attachment J. The plan was developed to reflect an envisioned regional system that represents the priorities of local and regional implementors, state interests, environmental and NGO groups, and public

feedback. The proposed policy additions reflect outreach and support the new VMT standard, its GHG reductions and proposed projects and programs:

Environment	<p>New Policy: Implement greenhouse gas reduction strategies in alignment with federal, state, and regional requirements and goals.</p> <p>New Policy: Prioritize projects and programs that enhance non-automobile travel modes.</p>
Connectivity	<p>New Policy: Collaborate with nearby communities that share transportation to and from the Tahoe Basin, including the Town of Truckee, the Resort Triangle, and the Carson/Minden valley.</p> <p>New Policy: Ensure all transportation projects, programs, and policies meet the transportation needs and minimize negative impacts for disadvantaged communities and people with special needs.</p> <p>New Policy: Ensure all transit is Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, Universally Accessible, and consistent with Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans.</p> <p>New Policy: Support, where feasible, the implementation of on-demand, dynamically routed transit shuttles.</p> <p>New Policy: Coordinate and maintain parking maximums and shared parking standards that support goals and policies of the Regional Plan.</p> <p>New Policy: Paid parking revenues should benefit infrastructure and services for transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists within areas that funds are generated.</p>
Safety	<p>New Policy: Encourage appropriate agencies to use traffic incident management performance measures.</p>
Operations & Congestion Management	<p>New Policy: Enable growth of shared and on-demand shared ride mobility services (i.e., ride-, car-, and bike-sharing, e-hailing, etc.).</p> <p>New Policy: Work to ensure that new transportation services and technologies utilize electric vehicles as feasible.</p> <p>New Policy: Invest resources in marketing and outreach campaigns to promote the use of non-auto travel options.</p> <p>New Policy: Coordinate policies across multiple partners that support the use of electric assisted, low-speed devices on paths and trails to serve travel needs in Tahoe.</p>
Economic Vitality & Quality of Life	<p>New Policy: Ensure access to public transit in identified Priority Communities.</p>

System Preservation	<p>New Policy: Improve winter transit access by providing shelters, cleared sidewalks and paths around stops, winter accessible bike racks, and warm shelters at mobility hubs and major transit stops.</p> <p>New Policy: Advance transportation planning through public participation and collaboration.</p>
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Additional edits include restating policies for clarity and alignment with agency goals related to VMT. For example, Environment policy 1.4 states: “Mitigate the regional and cumulative traffic impacts of new, expanded, or revised developments or land uses by prioritizing projects and programs that enhance non-automobile travel modes.” The proposed policy language is: “Develop and implement project impact analysis, mitigation strategies and fee programs to *reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled and auto trips.*” The revision is for clarity and emphasis on reducing VMT. Edits were also done in response to the public and stakeholders to policies Environment 1.3, Connectivity 2.1, Economic Vitality & Quality of Life 5.4 and 5.5 to include coordinating with federal and tribal partners that were unintentionally left out of the list. Operations and Congestion Management policy 4.4 was updated to include the word safe, now, *Coordinate policies across multiple partners to support the use of safe electric assisted, low-speed devices on paths and trails to serve travel needs in Tahoe.* The full draft list of Transportation policies is in Attachment D and strikethrough version D1.

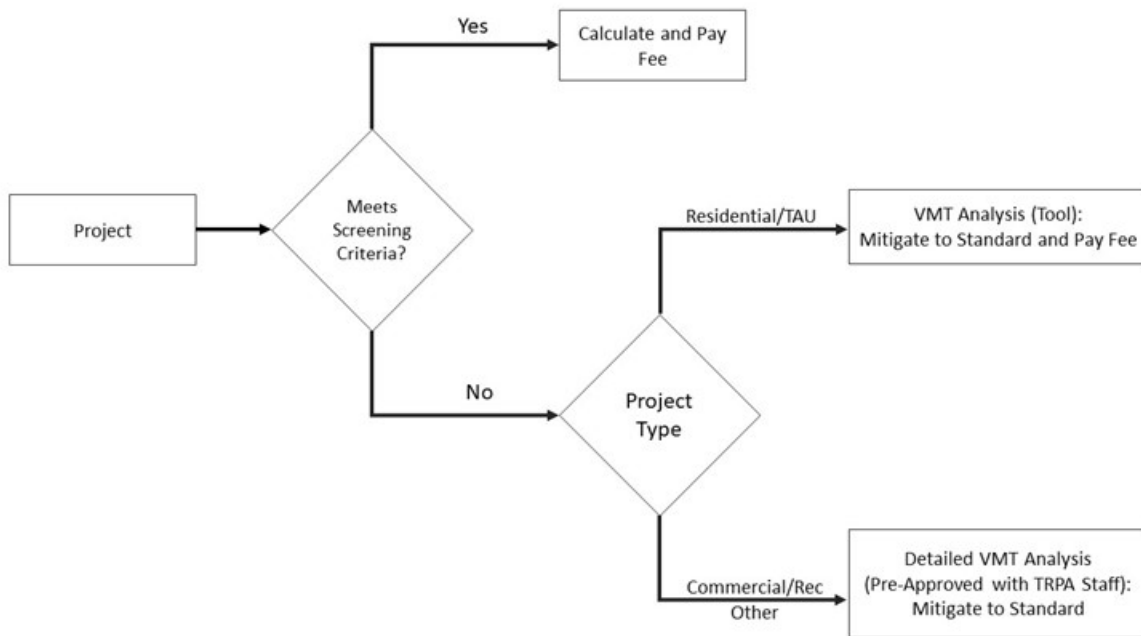
The new VMT standard is now tied directly to the implementation and funding of the RTP, the plan that sets the goals and policies for bringing the transportation system into the 21st Century. The proposed changes necessary for adoption of RP Chapter 3 Transportation goals and policies are included in Attachment D. The proposed modifications to the Regional Plan goals and policies establish an adaptive management process through which implementation and performance independent are evaluated every two years and independent guidance is sought on appropriate modifications.

Project Impact Assessment Summary: To fully implement the new VMT per capita threshold standard, the Code should specify how the new threshold measure will apply to development projects. The proposed Code changes specify the framework to assess whether a development project would have a significant impact with VMT at the project level and how projects would be required to mitigate those impacts. The proposed Project Impact Assessment (PIA) framework for this update is presented in more detail in Attachment G (Project Impact Assessment and Air Quality Mitigation Fee Update). Consistent with previous RPIC direction, TRPA has been working closely with Placer County as it has updated its project impact assessment processes using VMT for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) transportation impact assessments, as required by SB 743.

Key components of the proposed changes to the TRPA project impact assessment include process improvements, providing an online tool, screening criteria, environmental analysis standards of significance, fee update, and monitoring. These components are described briefly below.

Process Improvements: The PIA process improvements include advancing screening from additional analysis for projects that reflect important regional planning objectives (e.g., 100% deed restricted affordable, moderate, and achievable housing), recognize underlying land use and transportation

contexts that correlate to lower VMT in or within a half mile buffer of town and regional centers when assessing projects, consistent VMT levels for different types of projects, development of an online assessment tool which also computes mitigation fees. These were identified in coordination with Placer County, as they developed their project impact assessment approach, consultant, Fehr & Peers, who was partially funded by TRPA for TRPA products, input from the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee, individual stakeholder discussions, and research and guidance provided by the State of California’s Office of Planning and Research. The proposed revised process is illustrated in the following figure.



Online Tool: The use of an online PIA tool is a best practice used in jurisdictions across the nation. TRPA Governing Board members have seen demonstrations of similar online PIA tools that are in use in both Colorado and California. TRPA is developing a PIA tool with Placer County and consultant, Fehr and Peers. The tool will be driven by data from the TRPA Travel Demand model according to the framework detailed here and for California jurisdiction impact assessment to comply with CA SB 743. The tool will be available to the public, consultants, developers, and others to assist in the screening process; to assess whether projects meet screening criteria; evaluate VMT for non-screened residential, tourist accommodation, and public service projects; incorporate appropriate VMT mitigations into projects to reduce mitigation fees for screened projects or reduce VMT of non-screened projects determined to have a significant impact (i.e., those that exceed the standards of significance); and to calculate mobility mitigation fee(s).

Screening Criteria: Screening criteria are based on the size, general location, and project type. The main goal of screening is to streamline VMT impact assessment by removing projects that are 1) expected to have a minor impact to transportation by producing less VMT than the adopted standard of significance or by providing a beneficial outcome (e.g., affordable housing); or 2) are simple enough that their

impacts can be determined without undergoing a complex analysis. Any new VMT from screened projects would be mitigated through payment of the mobility mitigation fee(s).

Projects that are screened most effectively mitigate their impacts with VMT through paying mobility mitigation fees, which help fund implementation of projects and programs designed to mitigate anticipated future VMT in the region. Non-screened projects are of a size that can meaningfully mitigate VMT at the project level through implementation of mitigation strategies and paying fees that support regional VMT mitigations.

The screening criteria were created referencing available data, various jurisdictional approaches, and the State of California's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) guidance on implementation of SB 743, which utilizes VMT for project impact assessment for environmental review in that state (Attachment G), and adapted for the needs of the Tahoe region. TRPA's screening criteria (both existing and proposed) functions differently than the OPR guidance in that all projects, including those that qualify for screening, will be required, at a minimum, to mitigate through paying the mobility mitigation fee. This is stricter than OPR guidance which requires no mitigation of VMT by projects below 110 DVTE. As a result, this framework, through overall implementation, will garner more mitigation than a screen based on OPR guidance. (Some stakeholders assert that the OPR screening guidance does not apply to the Tahoe Region because the entire basin is "sensitive" under CEQA. However, TRPA already prohibits or tightly controls development on sensitive lands within the basin and the proposed transportation impact assessment does not include any modifications to those development restrictions.)

When a project is screened, it is not required to mitigate to the standard of significance for the project type. Screened projects are required to calculate VMT and pay the mobility mitigation fee associated with the project to offset the net additional VMT it generates; these projects may apply mitigations to reduce their mobility mitigation fee. Screening approaches include affordable housing, active transportation, and low-VMT. See Attachment G (Project Impact Assessment and Air Quality Mitigation Fee Update) for screening for approaches to these categories.

To identify low-VMT producing projects which do not require more complex analysis a low-VMT screen is defined in two ways depending on the location of the project and using regional average in-basin trip length of 6.53 miles, per the 2018 TRPA Travel Demand Model:

1. Town and regional centers and their half-mile buffer: The VMT equivalent of 200 DVTE: 1,300 VMT
2. All other areas of the region: The VMT equivalent of 110 DVTE: 715

Standards of Significance: Projects that are not screened from further review will be evaluated by land use type. Standards of significance set a defined level above which a project would have a significant transportation impact, as measured by VMT, and therefore require additional analysis and/or mitigation. (see Table 2 in Attachment G for detail):

- 15% below the sub-regional¹ average VMT for residential uses; e.g., VMT/Resident for Residential and VMT/Tourist Accommodation Unit, and 15% below the sub-regional¹ average VMT for Public Service projects
- No-net increase in unmitigated VMT for commercial, recreation, and transportation projects

- Other projects not defined here, campground development, and transit mobility hubs will be determined on a case-by-case basis

The framework uses sub-regional (i.e., jurisdictional¹) standards of significance for residential, tourist accommodation uses, and public service uses. These standards of significance are designed to encourage applicants to reduce VMT by locating projects in the most efficient parts of each jurisdiction.

Fee Update: The Air Quality Management (AQM) fee is being updated and renamed to the Mobility Mitigation Fee. Fees are used by the region's jurisdictions and implementing agencies to provide the transportation infrastructure necessary to implement the policies and achieve the goals of the RTP.

Each trip that produces VMT has an origin and a destination. The origin is the production of the trip and the destination is the attraction of the trip, with each being responsible for a proportional share of the trip's associated VMT. Since 1987, TRPA has weighted the origin/production of a vehicle trip at 90 percent, and the destination/attraction end of the trip at 10 percent. The current approach to apportioning fees based on the land use type of the project is continued under the mobility mitigation fee.

The "per VMT" fee amount will be determined using significant projects identified in the adopted RTP constrained project list, calculated using project costs less anticipated funding, that address new VMT in the region from development and redevelopment projected in the TRPA model, as modified by applicable constitutional principles and the policy considerations used to generate the existing AQM fee. The mobility mitigation fee will be adjusted annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index for the San Francisco region.

The regional mobility mitigation fee will be charged on all new, unmitigated VMT. This work will be completed in consultation with jurisdictions, stakeholders, and the development community, and in consideration of current transportation fees in the region and in nearby communities.

After exhausting all project-level mitigation options, non-screened projects with net-unmitigated VMT above the defined standard of significance may contribute to the mobility mitigation fund in an amount sufficient to pay for the remaining necessary mitigation.

Monitoring: TRPA is committed to monitoring the efficacy of the updated program. However, approaches to monitoring VMT mitigations are evolving. The National Center for Sustainable Transportation at the University of California, Davis is initiating a project to develop recommendations for monitoring VMT impacts and assessing the efficacy of VMT reduction strategies at the project level. Staff have been working with this research team on a parallel effort: VMT Measurement in the Tahoe Region. The development of project impact assessment VMT mitigation monitoring will be informed by both of these efforts as they develop over time.

Adoption of the new PIA approach requires changes to the Regional Plan and TRPA Code of Ordinances. A draft of those changes is included in Attachments D and E.

1. Jurisdictions include Carson City, City of South Lake Tahoe, Douglas County, El Dorado County, Placer County, and Washoe County

Public Participation:

As discussed above, this proposal encompasses much needed improvements to transportation including the current VMT threshold standard due to new scientific information, contemporary policies, and a new more comprehensive approach to setting and implementing threshold standards. It also includes a Regional Plan amendment update to Transportation policies and a Regional Plan amendment and framework for updating the project impact assessment and fee used as one of the implementing mechanisms. The summarized transportation regulatory, planning, and implementation proposals are designed to improve the transportation system and environment in the Lake Tahoe Region. Significant input has been received over many years. RPIC first met on the outlines of the proposals beginning in July 2020. Added input came in from three public Transportation Technical Advisory Committee meetings, the Environmental Improvement Transportation and Public Outreach Committee of the Governing Board, the Tahoe Transportation Commission, this committee as well as hundreds of meetings with various stakeholders. Comments, formal and informal, from a wide range of stakeholders have been received, considered, and incorporated wherever appropriate.

Environmental Review:

For the 2020 RTP/SCS, the TRPA/TMPO issued on September 10, 2020 a Notice of Intent and Notice of Availability (NOI/NOA) and a joint environmental document consisting of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Environmental Checklist/Finding of No Significant Effect, referred to hereafter as the Initial Study/Initial Environmental Checklist (IS/IEC). The IS/IEC was developed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.), CEQA Guidelines, and TRPA Compact, Code of Ordinances and Rules of Procedures. A final draft of the IS/IEC is now available at trpa.gov/rtp/.

The 2020 RTP/SCS IS/IEC examines updates to the policies and project list from the 2017 RTP/SCS and incorporates the proposed update to the threshold standards and the mitigation from the 2012 RTP/SCS EIR/EIS. For the majority of impact topic areas, the changes in policy and the project list create no impacts beyond those already disclosed by the 2017 and 2012 environmental review. Environmental impact topic areas where regulations have changed, therefore more detailed discussion is included, are: Transportation, Greenhouse Gases, Air Quality, and Recreation. The IS/IEC discloses no unmitigated significant impact and TRPA therefore intends to rely on the IS/IEC to support a Negative Declaration/Finding of No Significant Effect (Attachment H).

For the update to the Threshold Standards, Regional Plan, and Project Impact Analysis, the TRPA prepared an Initial Environmental Checklist (IEC) (Attachments I and K-M) in accordance with the TRPA Compact, Code of Ordinances, and Rules of Procedure. The analysis in the checklist is focused on those environmental resource areas that could be affected by the change to the threshold standard, implanting Regional Plan amendments and project level impact analysis program. The analysis disclosed how the revised threshold standard and framework would better measure transportation and air quality impacts and result in no adverse environmental impacts. The IEC supports a Finding of No Significant Effect.

Contact Information:

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at (775) 589-5204 or mglickert@trpa.org. For questions on the project impact assessment and fee update please contact Melanie Sloan at (775) 589-5208 or msloan@trpa.org.

Attachments:

- A. [VMT Threshold Update: Standard Recommendation and Implementation](#)
- B. [Threshold Indicators and Compliance Measures Checklist](#)
- C. [Threshold Update redlines](#)
- D. [Regional Plan Amendments Chapter 2, 3, and 7](#)
[D1. Regional Plan Amendments Chapter 2, 3, and 7 – redline to current proposal](#)
- E. [Code of Ordinance Changes](#)
[E1. Code of Ordinance Changes – redline to current proposal](#)
- F. [Final Draft 2020 RTP/SCS](#)
- G. [Project Impact Analysis Update: Project Impact Assessment and Fee Framework](#)
- H. [IEC 2020 RTP/SCS](#)
- I. [IEC for VMT Update/PIA](#)
- J. [2020 RTP/SCS Comment Matrix \(RTP Item VI B. Attachment B.\)](#)
- K. [Findings – Threshold Amendments](#)
- L. [Findings – Regional Plan Amendments & Code Changes](#)
- M. Adopting Ordinances
 - [M1. Threshold Amendments](#)
 - [M2. Regional Plan Amendments](#)
 - [M3. Code of Ordinances Amendments](#)