

Sacramento, CA
(Sacramento Co)
Sacramento Bee
(Cir. D 248,855)
(Cir. S 291,115)

DEC 25 2014

Allen's p.e.b. est. 1888



Tahoe Transportation District

The replacement of Fanny Bridge is intended to improve pedestrian, cyclist and driver safety and make public transportation more effective. Work could start in 2016 and finish two years later, officials say. The old bridge may remain for local traffic.

Tahoe's Fanny Bridge near the end of its life

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After 86 years of sturdy service for millions of drivers and fish-watchers in Tahoe City, the landmark Fanny Bridge on the Truckee River is crumbling, increasingly congested and no longer up to the job.

Tahoe transportation officials this week released a draft environmental analysis of their plans to build a larger bridge a few hundred yards downstream, north of Fanny Bridge, to improve traffic flows, reduce conflict among autos, pedestrians and cyclists, and make it easier to get from Tahoe City to the rest of the west shore.

"It has long been a pinch point," said Carl Hasty, Tahoe Transportation District manager. "On a busy summer day, traffic can back up."

The old concrete span, formally titled Truckee River Bridge, stands a few feet from

where the river flows out of Lake Tahoe, and is the only vehicular route to the west shore from Interstate 80, Truckee and north shore communities. Local fire officials have expressed a strong desire to unclog the area so that emergency vehicles can get through faster, and for potential evacuations of west shore residents.

Six alternatives are proposed as part of the State Route 89/Fanny Bridge Revitalization Project. The plan also includes a potential new roundabout at the entrance to Tahoe City. Several of the alternative plans under consideration involve repairing Fanny Bridge and using it as a local traffic route, including for bike, pedestrian and bus use. The old bridge also could be torn down and replaced by another local span, officials said.

The public has until Feb. 17

to make comments, suggestions and ask questions about the environmental report. Comments can be made online at www.TahoeTransportation.org or during public meetings to be held next month by the Tahoe Transportation District and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Copies of the environmental analysis are available at TRPA and TTD offices, as well as the Tahoe City library. Online viewing is available at www.TahoeTransportation.org and www.TRPA.org.

For information about upcoming meetings on the topic, go online to www.FannyBridge.org. Interested parties can email suggestions@fannybridge.org.

If approved, road reconstruction work in the area is tentatively scheduled to begin in May 2016. Work should be



The Sacramento Bee

complete two years later, transportation district officials said.

If the bridge is repaired and turned into a community gathering point, it could allow more room for people to do what gave the bridge its "fanny" name, lean over the balustrade to watch the trout swim below.

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