



# **US 50/SOUTH SHORE COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROJECT**

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **ABOUT THE PROJECT**

#### **What is the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project?**

A transportation project along U.S. Highway 50 between Nevada State Route 207 in Stateline (near Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course) and Pioneer Trail in South Lake Tahoe, CA. The proposed plan would convert the existing route through the commercial core into a three-lane local street. It would also realign US 50, following Lake Parkway East from its Nevada intersection (one alternative includes a roundabout there), along the mountain side (southeast) of the commercial core (behind MontBleu and Harrah's). Past the casinos, the realignment would continue behind (south of) Heavenly Village Center (Raley's Shopping Center and former Crescent V), then along a new section between Fern and Echo Roads. It would rejoin the existing US 50 at Pioneer Trail. The new alignment would provide two travel lanes in each direction with left-turn pockets at intersections and business entrances.

#### **What are the project goals?**

- \* Efficient transportation flow for locals and visitors to and around the Stateline area, resulting in better connectivity, reliability and less travel time
- \* Reduction of vehicle emissions and fine sediment particulates that affect lake clarity
- \* Creating a more pedestrian-friendly local street experience in the commercial core
- \* Facilitating the revitalization of the South Shore Stateline area
- \* Some residences and businesses southwest of the Heavenly Village Center would be impacted by right-of-way acquisition for the project. A responsive, successful relocation assistance program for affected owners and tenants, including a phone line - 775.589.5500 - and email - [relocation@us50revitalization.org](mailto:relocation@us50revitalization.org) - for questions, is also of primary importance. (More details are included in the "About Community Impacts" section that follows.)

## What are the benefits of the project?

### Transportation

- \* Solves the long-time problem of improving community traffic flow into and out of its most congested area, as well as providing a better visitor experience with smoother access/egress
- \* Establishes the foundation for multi-modal transportation and connectivity for the area. Part of the plan for a Tahoe Basin-wide network that will strategically and logically integrate an efficient system, which could include bike/pedestrian paths and a seasonal aquabus
- \* Provides more mobility choices and a better town center experience with the local street conversion

### Safety

- \* Eliminates a residential back street shortcut, moving busy traffic to a dedicated highway, preventing potentially dangerous interactions between cars, children and pedestrians
- \* Separates through-flowing traffic from destination traveler
- \* Reduces the conflict between cars and pedestrians in the commercial core

### Community

- \* Offers the potential of renovating properties on the city's redevelopment list to provide some of the necessary housing for impacted tenants, thereby providing better housing
- \* Increases the South Lake Tahoe tax base with redeveloped properties
- \* Improves employment opportunities
- \* Provides new amenities, i.e., landscaping and community beautification for the neighborhood
- \* Improves access for residents to recreate at Van Sickle State Park

### Environmental

- \* Lessens environmental impacts by reducing vehicle emissions
- \* Positively impacts Lake Tahoe clarity by reducing fine sediment particulates (over 70% due to the transportation system)
- \* Improves storm water treatment (included in project design)
- \* Includes environmentally sustainable upgrades in new properties

## Economic

- \* Provides construction jobs and promotes purchase of local materials
- \* Helps revitalize local business health
- \* Puts City properties back on the active tax rolls
- \* Increases housing value
- \* Improves the quality of the visitor experience, updating the look of the area

### **How much will the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project cost?**

The estimated cost is \$70 million.

### **How is it being paid for?**

The project is being planned through federal highway funding. Construction funds will come from a combination of sources, including local, state and federal contributions.

### **Who's involved in this project? What organizations?**

Tahoe Transportation District (TTD), City of South Lake Tahoe, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), Douglas County, and El Dorado County.

### **Will there be traffic impacts during construction?**

Construction will be conducted to minimize impact. The realignment will be constructed first and traffic redirected to it once complete, before addressing the improvements along the existing highway. Detours will route vehicles expediently around the area. A communications plan will be in place with regular updates and timelines for locals and visitors via websites, mobile applications, brochures, press releases, media coverage, and neighborhood announcements by Lake Tahoe organizations.

### **Why is this project being considered now?**

The US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project has actually been under consideration in various forms since 1980. Lack of necessary support and funding has been resolved. The longstanding need to improve traffic conditions, environmental impacts and the resident and visitor experience

has also become more important given the current economy. This project is part of a master plan and system to improve traffic access and egress throughout the South Shore. Studies have established that over 70% of the fine sediment particulates, harming Lake Tahoe's clarity and health, come from the existing transportation system.

### **How was the new route determined?**

The Tahoe Transportation District Board of Directors recommended advancing five alternatives that were developed for the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project (Loop Road) to the environmental analysis stage on April 12, 2013. The final determination on project parameters/design will not be made until after the certification of the environmental analysis document and formal approval through a series of public hearings.

## **ABOUT COMMUNITY IMPACTS**

### **How will the project impact area residents?**

Existing US 50 within the project area is approximately 1.1 miles long and stretches from Pioneer Trail in California to Lake Parkway in Nevada. The majority of the proposed alternatives include the reclassification of the existing US Highway 50 from a federal highway to a local street along its present route. US 50 would be realigned outside of the commercial core. This would allow for local area control and the development of a "main street" district. The project proposes to construct the infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development of main street district within the public right of way. The project would address traffic and allow for complete street improvements to provide the public with alternatives to driving.

How this project affects the people in the project area is of major importance. Moving is seldom easy and can cause anxiety and uncertainty. While the long-range benefits of the project are abundant for everyone who lives and visits here, the immediate impacts are of a personal and individual nature.

TTD and lead agencies have completed a Relocation Assistance Plan. During the relocation phase, there will be representatives on-site, following established federal guidelines and laws to protect and assist each person affected. TTD plans to complement those efforts and exceed those requirements whenever possible. That includes one-on-one meetings and a

community outreach person to oversee regular informational updates and responsive communications. A phone line – 775.589.5500 – and email address – relocation@us50revitalization.org – will be available for questions, with a commitment to answer within 72 hours. Printed materials, regarding the latest news, options and opportunities, will also be published in English, Spanish and Tagalog.

### **How many residents and businesses will be affected?**

The project would impact a number of existing structures. Approximately 75 aging units may require acquisition should Alternative 2 or 3 be selected.

### **What types of housing will be available for affected residents?**

Relocation Assistance can include completely remodeled and refurbished housing or placement in housing comparable in condition, size and market value. In addition to available lodging options, the City of South Lake Tahoe currently has parcels in the area that could be utilized to construct housing required for the project. Relocation plans could also include renovations and upgrades, such as the approved project on Pioneer Trail, potentially putting older units back on the City's tax roll.

The benefits to remodeling City-owned units are numerous:

- \* Keeping residents in the area and close to current work and social centers
- \* Upgrading an older neighborhood to quality housing
- \* Possibility of area amenities, including new landscaping

Following approval of the project, factors such as family size and proximity to work, public transportation, schools, recreation, shopping and friends will be considered. Under the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, experienced relocation representatives will be on site to meet with the head of each household to determine specific housing needs and comparable square footage. While housing options will be offered, some residents may decide to relocate on their own.

### **What are the possibilities of eminent domain being applied to obtain properties?**

Eminent domain is a process that can be used to acquire property for public projects. It is unknown whether it will be needed for this project. The preferable method is working with willing sellers at an agreed-upon fair

market value obtained through a market assessment process.

### **Will there be enough housing in the community for those needing to relocate?**

Yes. Plans call for a number of options including renovating, upgrading and refurbishing properties on the City's redevelopment list.

### **When would residents need to relocate?**

Residents will be provided with as much lead time as possible to determine their individual plans. With the project still in development and under review, a definitive start date for construction has not yet been determined.

It should be noted that formal acquisition of property cannot proceed until approval of the environmental document. According to the guiding principles adopted by the TTD Board of Directors May 13, 2016, existing developed and occupied real estate will not be removed until project construction is funded and residential and business relocation is completed.

### **What costs are covered for homeowners? For tenants?**

Federal law offers guidelines for compensation. For tenants, options (guaranteed to meet current standards of quality housing) will be discussed individually with relocation representatives. Owners of affected properties will be provided with information on compensation at fair market value through a separate process.

### **What will happen to affected businesses?**

Under federal law, owner-occupiers of commercial properties are entitled to compensation equal to or greater than current market value.

For absentee owners, federal law also prescribes compensation. Specific information will be posted in the near future at <http://www.tahoetransportation.org>.

For businesses renting commercial property, the TTD is working with Lake Tahoe businesses and organizations to provide assistance and information on available space for relocation.