

CONCEPT DOCUMENT

NEVADA STATELINE-TO-STATELINE BIKEWAY PROJECT

The Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project is a joint proposal of local, state, and Federal agencies with responsibilities on the Nevada side of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The sponsoring agencies are Douglas County, Washoe County, Carson City, Incline Village General Improvement District, Tahoe Transportation District, Nevada Division of State Parks, Nevada Division of State Lands, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and USDA Forest Service. The Nevada Department of Transportation and the Washoe Tribe are partnering entities.

Public input is vital to the planning process for the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project. This concept document was prepared to provide a framework for beginning public discussion about the project. Drawing from other similar bikeway planning documents, this paper describes the vision, purpose and need, guiding design principles, and objectives of the bikeway planning process. It is recognized and expected that this document will evolve and be enhanced through public comment.

VISION FOR THE BIKEWAY

To complete the Nevada portion of a premier separated bikeway circling Lake Tahoe that connects communities, enhances recreational opportunities, expands transportation choices, and promotes the enjoyment of the Tahoe Basin.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & NEED

The purpose of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway is to provide non-auto transportation opportunities that link recreation areas, community centers, transportation facilities, and neighborhoods in the bikeway corridor to expand recreational access and transportation choices for residents and visitors to the Tahoe Basin. Separated bicycle facilities are not available along most of the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe. The bikeway would provide a spectacular recreation opportunity to link public beaches and coves along the picturesque east shore. These popular recreation areas are generally accessed by automobile. Paved parking is limited and the high demand for these areas leads to shoulder parking and erosion problems. Providing bicycle links to East Shore beaches and recreation areas is an important step to reducing vehicle and parking impacts, improving the multi-modal options available to residents and visitors, improving safety, and providing an unparalleled recreation experience in the bike path itself.

The current bikeways in the basin are extremely popular and public surveys show that expansion of the system around the entire lake is desired. A well-planned bikeway is needed on the Nevada side of the lake to alleviate negative environmental impacts created by current use along the East Shore and to provide improved access to recreational facilities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BIKEWAY DESIGN

1. Identify and provide convenient buildable connections to communities, public facilities, public lands, the lakeshore, and open space.
2. Establish separated bikeway alignments wherever feasible.
3. Serve both recreation and commuter needs, with recreation needs receiving first priority where choices must be made.
4. Support the protection, restoration, and sustainability of natural and cultural resources.

5. Anticipate future growth in the surrounding communities in Nevada and California.
6. Provide for a variety of bicycle and pedestrian uses on the bikeway, while recognizing and managing potential conflicts.
7. Provide adequate public and private support facilities.
8. Remain sensitive to the cultural resources and traditions of the Washoe Tribe.
9. Design the bikeway to create social and economic benefits.
10. Provide interpretive opportunities along the bikeway for natural, cultural, and historic resources.
11. Minimize the number of at-grade crossings on State Route 28 and U. S. Highway 50.
12. Provide connections to existing or new trails to recreation areas, transportation facilities, and community centers along the bikeway.
13. Where appropriate, enhance and use existing disturbed area, such as old logging and fire access roads, and take advantage of joint parking opportunities, such as at school sites.
14. Include opportunities for ADA accessibility.
15. Provide visitor amenities, such as rest areas and vistas, to make the bikeway an enjoyable experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLANNING AND DESIGN PROCESS

1. Identify feasible bikeway alignments on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe from the south Stateline to the north Stateline that will connect to adjacent California bikeways.
2. Complete two demonstration bikeway projects, one at the south end of the Lake (connecting the casino core to Nevada Beach and Round Hill Pines Beach) and one at the north end of the Lake (connecting Incline Village to Sand Harbor, with connections to Hidden Beach and Memorial Point).
3. Complete long-term maintenance, resource management, and operations plans for bikeway segments prior to construction.
4. Establish partnerships for operations and maintenance for each segment prior to approval of construction.
5. Encourage the shift in travel demand for East Shore recreation areas from driving to bicycling, walking, and transit.
6. Respect the Washoe community by involving them in determining ways to protect and interpret Washoe cultural, historic, and natural resources values.
7. Maximize funding source opportunities for timely project implementation and for long-term operation.
8. Provide opportunities for existing local businesses to participate in the process so they can help enhance the visitor experience on and access to the bikeway.
9. Coordinate bikeway decisions with the recommendations in the East Shore Access Plan and consider other alternative transportation choices.
10. Coordinate with appropriate agencies to incorporate the bikeway in new development plans and avoid conflicts with road and highway projects.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH

Regular public communication will occur through a variety of approaches to create multiple opportunities for public input and to provide helpful information about the progress of bikeway project planning, design, and construction. This will include a project web site for public information and input during bikeway planning and design. Community meetings will be held at several key milestones of the planning process, including early identification of issues, consideration of corridor opportunities and constraints, input on potential alternatives, and review of the draft feasibility report.

By involving the Washoe tribal community; local, state, and federal agencies; advocacy and interest groups; and the community-at-large in the planning process, greater stewardship and support of the implementation, maintenance/ management, and funding of the bikeway can be encouraged.

A draft of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project Feasibility Study will be released for public review and comment. After making revisions to the study in consideration of public comment, it will be presented to the appropriate sponsoring agencies for approval.