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## LAKE TAHOE PASSENGER FERRY PROJECT AIMS FOR APPROVAL BY 2016

*Public comment accepted through Jan. 3, 2014 for daily passenger service  
between North and South Shore*

**Dec. 17, 2013** (*South Lake Tahoe, Calif.*) – Plans for vessels that would ferry up to 150 local commuters as well as visitors on Lake Tahoe with marina stops on the north and south shores are available for public comment through Jan. 3, 2014.

The Lake Tahoe Passenger Ferry Project is part of an overall public/private partnership strategy introduced by the Tahoe Transportation District to reduce traffic congestion, vehicle emissions and air pollution on highways throughout the basin by creating regional transportation alternatives for the lake. TTD is working closely with Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and US Department of Transportation to reduce dependency on the private automobile use as well as improving mobility, connecting communities and enhancing economic vitality.

Passenger ferry service, a waterborne alternative transportation option is one of the opportunities being evaluated in the "North-South Transit Connection Alternatives Analysis," for federal funding consideration. TTD would implement the service while a private company would manage daily operations. The analysis identified the ferry as the preferred alternative to connect the north and south shore of Lake Tahoe via public transit.

The Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation for the Lake Tahoe Passenger Ferry Project began Nov. 11, 2013. Public comment will be included in a draft EIR/EIS. Issues TTD will address following the public comment period include marina parking, park and ride routes, dredging, public bus stops as well as bike and pedestrian trails.

The final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement is expected mid-2015, with permitting and pier upgrades to follow. The project could then hit the water with passenger service beginning in 2016. Preliminary plans include year-round transportation on the ferries with as many as eight trips daily during peak summer months. The cost of the project is estimated at \$33 million with a \$3 million annual operating cost. Federal grant money would cover start-up costs with a combination of state and federal money for annual expenses.

"This as an environmentally-friendly, economically sound and beneficial way of breaking the geographical barrier when it comes to traveling around Lake Tahoe," said TTD transportation project manager Alfred Knotts. "It's the equivalent to a light rail system with Lake Tahoe as the tracks and marinas serving as the depots."

By contrast, more cars on the roads require more maintenance and additional costs at the federal, state and local level. Ferries would improve air quality and lake clarity by reducing emissions. More than 70 percent of the pollutants affecting Lake Tahoe's clarity are attributed to erosion/developed-area run-off, much of it related to existing transportation systems.

"The Lake Tahoe Passenger Ferry Project would be one of many components that fits into the overall Lake Tahoe Basin transportation strategy to reduce dependency on the private automobile through integration of mass transit," said Carl Hasty, district manager of the Tahoe Transportation District.



A similar vessel as the passenger ferry shown is one of the opportunities being evaluated in Tahoe Transportation Districts' "North-South Transit Connection Alternatives Analysis."

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**Tahoe Transportation District**

The Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) is responsible for the implementation and management of transportation projects and programs in the Tahoe Basin. The organization has facilitated many area safety infrastructure projects, including bicycle paths, roadway improvements, pedestrian

thoroughfares, water quality and water shed improvements and public transit solutions.