



LASSEN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANING AGENCY

555 CAPITOL MALL, SUITE 600
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

P.O. Box 1028
SUSANVILLE, CA 96130

John L. Clerici, Executive Secretary

Staff Report

Date: October 15, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 5.01B

To: Lassen County Transportation Commission

From: John Clerici, Executive Secretary

Subject: Executive Secretary's Report

Transportation Planning

US 395 Coalition

The US 395 Coalition met on March 18, 2026 at the Washoe County Administrative offices in Reno. Updates for projects on both sides of the state line were provided, including an extensive report by Caltrans D2 on the status of the safety and maintenance projects planned for the corridor. They also provided the first look at the US 395 Freight Feasibility Study including route concepts for providing truck passing features. We are waiting for the election to get an idea of what the composition Congress will be after November. Also, the new highway bill has not been passed which will also determine what discussions the Coalition might have.

Wildlife Crossing Grant

A revised draft Project Report was distributed to Caltrans for comment. The Project Report serves as approval of the "preferred" alternative and program construction and right of way costs. Caltrans is providing Quality Management Assessment for the Project, and LCTC would be the lead agency for CEQA approvals. The PA&ED phase began in the Fall of 2025 and is anticipated to gain project approval in Fall of 2026. The anticipated funding year for initial construction is to be determined.

There are three target locations that are receiving additional evaluation. The include locations at Bass Hill, Doyle and Red Rock. The Doyle and Red Rock locations will receive full environmental evaluation and up to 65% design. The Bass Hill location will be developed through environmental evaluation.

The project team has initiated consultation with the Susanville Indian Rancheria. Renderings for two of the crossing locations have been developed and will be shared with the Commission at its October meeting. Commission staff will also be presenting information on the project at two public meetings being held in the area in mid-October.

Susanville Indian Rancheria – Long-Range Transportation Plan

The LRTP will provide for an assessment of all the inventory and analysis of transportation infrastructure within the SIR transportation network and geographic service area. The LRTP identifies goals and develops strategies to address current and future land use, economic development, traffic demand, public health, safety, and social needs.

The tribal communities and local populations are the beneficiaries of tribal transportation improvements. LCTC staff is committed to working with tribal staff in this very important transportation planning effort. Staff see this as an extension of the work we are currently engaged in to identify and fund improvements to the transportation systems in Lassen County.

Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway

Work is underway on the second phase of the Byways evaluation. An assessment was performed which include an evaluation of the impacts of wildfires, vegetation growth, etc. on the assets of the Byway such as directional signage and informational/interpretive signage that can impact the user experience. For FY 25/26 the LCTC will contract with a suitable individual(s) to do additional assessment of the route, and develop an action plan to restore the user experience as described in the 2018 Corridor Management Plan.

The contractor provided an update to the Commission on their activities, including a description of the Phase 2 findings at their January 12, 2026 Regular Meeting. Since then the Commission staff and the contractor have engaged Caltrans D2, members of the Byway governing board, and the Lassen County Chamber of Commerce on next steps, and the possibility of establishing a byway visitor center in Susanville.

Lassen County GIS

This grant was completed and presented to the LCTC at their January 2026 Regular Meeting. Staff has completed grant/project close-out with Caltrans.

Caltrans Planning Grant Update

The LCTC was notified by Caltrans D2 that both of these grants were awarded. Staff is working with Caltrans to prepare the grants for implementation. We anticipate commencing work/selecting consultants in the fall of 2025. Both efforts will take approximately two years to complete. Since your last meeting staff has determined that the work required for the Bizz Johnson Extension effort can be done in house by existing resources.

- **Bizz Johnson Extension East** – Commission staff continues to collect data and engage stakeholders on this effort. Staff has used the stakeholder engagement process to gather input

on broader interests/thoughts about bicycle and pedestrian movement in the County. A project update is anticipated in late 2026.

Staff held a public meeting to engage stakeholders in October at the train station in Susanville. Coupled with outreach at community events like the farmers market and social media sites has produced significant comment. Staff anticipates an update on the effort at your December meeting.

- **EV Infrastructure Master Plan** – Staff has engaged the consultant (ICF international) on a regular basis to identify potential community stakeholders for participation in the project Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The committee includes City and County staff, the LMUD, BOP, Sierra Army Depot, transit, the chamber of commerce, and community stakeholders.

The first SAC was held on October 14. An update on the projects will be provided at an early 2027 Commission meeting.

A dedicated page for the project has been developed for the LCTC website and populated with information developed by the contractor and staff.

STATE TRANSPORTATION POLICY, LEGISLATION AND FUNDING

California State Budget 2026/2027

For the 2026/27 California State Budget, the overall outlook for the Lassen County Transportation Commission (LCTC) is relatively stable. While California continues to face long-term fiscal pressures, the enacted budget largely preserves the state's core transportation funding programs that LCTC relies upon. The budget also includes additional transportation-related revenues and maintains the state's commitment to SB 1 transportation investments.

Key implications for LCTC include:

- SB 1 funding remains intact. Formula-based programs such as the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Local Partnership Program (LPP), State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), and Local Streets and Roads funding continue to provide the backbone of California's transportation investment program.
- Regional transportation planning continues to be supported. Funding for regional planning agencies and programming responsibilities remains available, allowing LCTC to continue implementation of the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan, programming funds, and coordination with Caltrans, and local agencies.
- Highway preservation remains a statewide priority. Continued investment in the SHOPP benefits Lassen County through ongoing maintenance, pavement rehabilitation, bridge work, and safety improvements along the US 395 corridor and other state highways.
- Transit funding remains available but constrained. The budget preserves major transit funding programs, including the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) which the LCTC exchanges with Tehama County, although these programs continue to operate

California Transportation Legislation

The California Legislature concluded its 2026 legislative work on August 31, sending the final group of bills to Governor Newsom, who had until September 30 to sign or veto measures passed at the end of session. Several transportation measures are particularly relevant to the LCTC. The Governor signed AB 2059 (Wilson) changes how transportation projects in nonmetropolitan (rural) counties are evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The bill directs Caltrans to publish VMT mitigation guidance by December 31, 2030, and establishes temporary less-than-significant VMT impact presumptions for qualifying rural projects, while excluding general-purpose highway lane additions. The Governor signed AB 2168 (Wicks), which modifies the Active Transportation Program guidelines beginning in 2028, including greater recognition of projects that expand access to transit in underserved and rural areas, new incentives for leveraging other transportation funds, and stronger project-delivery requirements; these changes could directly affect future LCTC and Lassen County ATP applications. The Governor also signed AB 1976 (Wicks), addressing implementation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and limiting the ability of local governments to halt certain projects once they have advanced through the development process. Overall, the close of the 2026 session continues the state's emphasis on linking transportation funding with regional planning, active transportation, transit access, and project delivery, with SB 1087 representing the key outstanding measure for LCTC to watch.

FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION AND FUNDING

On May 22, 2026, the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved the BUILD America 250 Act (H.R. 8870), a bipartisan five-year surface transportation reauthorization proposal that would replace the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which expires September 30, 2026. The bill was approved by a bipartisan vote of 62-2 and authorizes approximately \$580 billion over five years for highways, bridges, transit, rail, and safety programs. This bill has been in the Ways and Means Committee since May. Nothing has been proposed in the Senate on BUILD and will not likely be addressed within the timeframe necessary to adopt a new surface transportation bill. Therefore, it is nearly certain that an extension will be passed to continue funding surface transportation under the IIJA programs.