

Tahoe studying ways to meet greenhouse gas emissions rules

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Reducing greenhouse gas emissions per California law is being tackled by the Tahoe Transportation Commission by delving into vehicle miles traveled and other contributing factors.

Jeremy Nelson with Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates in San Francisco gave a brief overview of the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to the commission earlier this month. (The commission is part of the Tahoe Transportation District.)

“We are focusing on a few key areas to help identify a suite of polices to decrease the vehicle miles traveled in the region,” Nelson said.

The broad categories in the SCS are:

- Parking management
- Transportation demand management
- Transit service and facilities
- Bicycles and pedestrians
- Other capital projects.

An updated regional transportation plan must be approved by August 2012 to meet federal and California requirements. The California Legislature through AB32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, has set certain emission reduction targets for metropolitan planning organizations (MPO).

Every MPO must have an SCS in place. With the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency working on its Regional Plan update, much of the data the Tahoe MPO needs is contained in that document even though it covers both states.

“Transportation is the single largest source of CO2 emissions in California (at 38.4 percent),” Nelson said. He said it’s the average person driving her vehicle that is the biggest percentage – 71.8 percent of that 38.4 percent figure.

Nancy McDermid, TTD board member, wants all facets of transit to be looked at as alternatives. She mentioned how some California towns allow golf carts on city streets and this might be an option in parts of Tahoe.

No action was taken by the commission.