

Opinion: Measure F ensures funding for North Lake Tahoe projects

By Sandy Evans Hall

In 1996, North Lake Tahoe residents voted to increase the existing transient occupancy tax from 8 percent to 10 percent, which is paid by overnight visitors to the area. North Lake Tahoe residents do not pay this tax.

This 2 percent tax increase, which was renewed by voters in 2002, has been used to fund approximately \$30 million in public improvement projects and services, such as beaches and bike trails, throughout the North Lake Tahoe region.

These monies have also been leveraged via local, state and federal funding to generate \$160 million for projects the area could not otherwise afford.



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Since 1996, North Lake Tahoe's 2 percent TOT dollars have helped pay for improvements at Commons Beach and Squaw Valley Community Park, the construction of the Midway Bridge to Squaw Valley Bike Trail and the Tahoe City Lakeside Bike Trail, funding for the North Lake Tahoe Express Airport Shuttle and area bus shelters, and the Tahoe City Beautification Project

and regional way-finding signage.

On June 5, 2012, North Lake Tahoe voters will again put the 2 percent renewal to a vote. It is not a tax increase, but a renewal of an existing measure that will continue to be paid by lodging guests – not North Lake Tahoe taxpayers.

The approval of Measure F requires a 50 percent plus one affirmative vote, and the passage of Measure F ensures funding for the next 10 years – until 2022.

It's important to note that Measure F funding will only be used for projects and services in North Lake Tahoe, and will continue to require an annual independent audit of all funds and expenditures by a non-county, private CPA firm.

If the 2 percent TOT is not renewed, North Lake Tahoe will lose more than \$2 million in revenue per year for public improvement projects and services.

I encourage you to educate yourself about Measure F and what it means to our North Lake Tahoe community, and plan to vote on June 5, 2012.

Sandy Evans Hall is CEO-executive director of the North Lake Tahoe Chamber/CVB/Resort Association.