

\$7.4 mil. transit hub to be built in Tahoe City

Using public transportation to get around on the North and West shores of Lake Tahoe will become easier when the soon-to-be built Tahoe City Transit Center is finished. The Placer County Board of Supervisors moved that closer to reality when it awarded the construction contract for the center this week.

The center will serve as an intermodal transportation hub for both residents and visitors.

The center, which will cover about 2.5 acres on a tract of land west of Highway 89, will serve as a hub for Placer County's Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) buses. The center will be situated adjacent to hiking and bike paths and provide parking for commuters and visitors to utilize buses to get around on the North and West Shores of Lake Tahoe.

The Transit Center is part of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Environmental Improvement Project program for improving air quality, which in turn will benefit lake clarity. The project is also consistent with numerous agency transportation plans, community plans, and studies.

The \$4.2 million contract was awarded to Aspen Developers Corporation. Construction of the project should begin this summer. Completion of the Transit Center will likely stretch into an additional building season.

"The Tahoe City Transit Center represents a critical public transportation component in North Lake Tahoe," Public Works Deputy Director Peter Kraatz said in a statement. "It will significantly enhance our existing public bus system at a key bus transfer and multi-modal transit location, providing needed amenities such as a sheltered waiting area, public parking, bike lockers, better access to existing walking and

bicycle trails, and elimination of the unprotected highway crossing for bus transfer patrons in Tahoe City. The project fulfills the County's and TRPA's vision of encouraging more opportunities for using alternative modes of transportation and becoming less reliant on the personal automobile that will ultimately result in less traffic congestion and cleaner air."

Placer County previously put the project out for bid in 2009. The county decided to reject all bids at the time and re-advertise the project. The bid that was awarded to Aspen is \$44,000 less than the 2009 lowest responsive bid.

The total project cost is estimated to be \$7.4 million, which includes construction costs, environmental documentation and design. The project is fully funded through grants from Federal Infrastructure Stimulus funds, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Proposition 1, FTA Alternative Transportation in Public Parks and Lands, Placer County Redevelopment Agency, Placer County Traffic Mitigation Fees, a Placer County Air Pollution control District Clean Air Grant, California Tahoe Conservancy, the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, and the State Local Partnership Program. Funding for the construction of this project is included in both the 2009-10 and 2010-11 fiscal year budgets.