

# **NEW ROLES FOR TAHOE BUS SHELTERS**

(A White Paper for The Tahoe Foundation®)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Unless one is seeking a bus shelter to ride one of the public bus systems in the Lake Tahoe Basin, they are not particularly noticed by residents and visitors. This is because bus shelters are considered one-dimensional structures. The Tahoe Foundation believes that this is a shortsighted view of the potential of bus shelters. This paper is intended to identify the many roles that a bus shelter could play with an eye to promoting a new look and use of bus shelters.

## **ONE STRUCTURE, MANY ROLES**

The Tahoe Foundation believes that bus shelters can meet a number of different needs, i.e. roles. Initially, the Foundation has identified the following roles that bus shelters can provide – all within the context of carefully designed structure:

- The traditional transit stop/shelter
- Promotion of the unique culture and history of Lake Tahoe
- Wayfinding
- Collection point for emergency evacuations
- Support for those without automobiles
- Community branding
- Professional educational opportunity

## **TRANSIT STOP/SHELTER**

The foundation recognizes that the primary purpose of bus shelters will be to provide convenient locations for resident and visitor use of the public bus systems operated throughout the basin. It is important that the design of bus shelters provide a readily recognizable point of access for the public bus systems for residents and, especially, for visitors. One of the recommendations that the Foundation would make is that all bus shelters within the basin have a similar design notwithstanding who the operator of a specific bus system may be. Hopefully a recognizable design that identifies a bus stop will encourage residents and visitors to use the different transit systems throughout the basin.

## PROMOTION OF UNIQUE CULTURE/HISTORY OF LAKE TAHOE

The Foundation is firmly committed to promoting the unique culture and history of Lake Tahoe, especially the culture of its original Indigenous people as that relates to The Lake's natural history and the preservation of native plant and animal species. To that end, the Foundation has created informal arrangements with individuals with said Indigenous lineage and birthrights with the intent of providing an opportunity to them to tell parts of their Tahoe story. The Foundation believes that the design of bus shelters can assist in this storytelling by providing space on the shelters to show certain aspects of the history and culture of these Indigenous as it relates to Lake Tahoe's preservation.

Note: WHERE APPLICABLE: The narratives will uphold the National Endowment's of Humanities *Code of Ethics to Native Americans* -Laws revised under the National Historic Preservation Act – Public Law 89-665, See Appendix A.

The Tahoe Foundation also recognizes the opportunity to utilize this venue as a way to intersect the extensive survey work which has been completed and published by the US Forest Service and sees this as a way to celebrate the unique flora and fauna research and use it to inform the public about species native to the watershed and their necessary perpetuity for the preservation and health of the Lake.

The Foundation envisions bus shelter locations telling varied histories with an emphasis on transportation components found from ancient settlement patterns to the logging of Incline Village. Each served as primary form generators in the planning process and architectural styles during these distant eras. The Tahoe Foundation also envisions the opportunity for the shelters in Incline Village to hi-light the international cultures that developed the varied types of rail and water transit as the means to support the Comstock. The Tahoe Foundation also anticipates the shelters telling the story of the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> Century tourist locations on the North Shore, and the early gaming operations on the South Shore. These are just a few opportunities to promote Lake Tahoe's culture and history.

## WAYFINDING

Typically the visitor to Lake Tahoe uses an automobile to explore the many offerings that the lake provides to tourists. It is ironic that public transit systems that provide service to the north, west and south shores of the lake can be used for this same exploration but are frequently overlooked. Unfortunately, this aspect of the transit systems has not been utilized as a traveler's wayfinding support, nor is it well publicized. The Foundation believes that in concert with the bricks and mortar, landscape installations, and signage at the shelters there will exist an opportunity to publicize this option through web based applications and possibly through a partnership of the Tahoe Transportation District and the transportation associations. Through said partnerships, architectures, and technology, shelters could compliment such wayfinding options. A bus shelter design could incorporate a map of where a visitor was, what options for

further wayfinding were available (eating, recreating, etc.), and along with the culture/historic role discussed above, provide a visitor with options for exploring the area from a particular bus shelter location. (See June 5 2009 Minutes of The Tahoe Transportation District Meeting, where the Tahoe Foundation's previous white paper: *SSRAM Service Sustainability Retention of Local Economies, Advertising, Metrics* is read into record.)

## COLLECTION POINTS FOR EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

The Foundation also believes that bus shelters will provide an important role in the event of evacuation of residents and visitors during an emergency. Most emergency preparedness plans for the Lake Tahoe Basin anticipate the evacuation of residents and visitors to emergency shelters, or in some cases transport out of the basin. Although many of these plans assume the use of private automobiles as the primary evacuation vehicle, it is probably because there is no identified point of pick-up by public transit vehicles and school district vehicles as an alternative. The Foundation believes that well designed and located bus shelters could promote this alternative. As part of emergency evacuation plans, bus shelters could be identified as collection points and on the ground support for emergency evacuation transit and school district vehicles and systems. The nearest bus shelters could be identified using the reverse 911 system to contact households of the need to evacuate. The Foundation believes that the more public transit and school district vehicles can be used as evacuation vehicles, the less congestion will occur during emergency evacuations.

## SUPPORT FOR THOSE WITHOUT AUTOMOBILES

The Foundation is well aware that the public bus systems operated in the Tahoe Basin are heavily used by those residents and workers who do not have the use of an automobile. The Foundation is also aware of the need for better handicapped accessibility. Well designed, e.g. readily identified as a transit stop, well maintained, e.g. navigable for wheelchairs, and conveniently located bus shelters could promote the continued use of the transit systems even when those using it can or will purchase an automobile. Bus shelters can also promote the mobility of those segments of our population who may not be able to use an automobile: stay-at-home mothers with children using strollers, one-car families; seniors and, as mentioned earlier, the handicapped. The Foundation believes that bus shelters can become an attractive invitation to this population segment to use the public transit systems.

## COMMUNITY BRANDING

Although the Foundation strongly promotes a uniform design of bus shelters throughout the basin to promote the use of the different transit system; the Foundation also believes that enough flexibility in design can promote the branding of the different communities within the basin. It is especially important for the visitor who uses the public bus systems to be able to know where

he/she is as busses travel from community to community. The Foundation believes that a uniform bus shelter design as well as a common wayfinding system to locate public transit and shelter sites could incorporate a community brand within the design. This would assist those using the system to know which community they are in as the busses stop at each shelter.

#### THE TAHOE FOUNDATION TO USE BUS SHELTER AS PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY:

There is a unique opportunity to celebrate the complexity of transit architecture and provide an educational and public mutual benefit where students may get professional experience and at the same time offset public costs. There is no other example for such a unique opportunity to celebrate the intersecting challenges found in the design and implementation of public projects which can be found in transit architecture. Rural areas with winter snow conditions based in low population or resort based population arenas can host real world learning opportunities. These learning opportunities could include the challenges facing public project cost, implementation, liabilities and ongoing maintenance. The Tahoe Foundation envisions the bus shelter as a site based classroom where pre- and post-professional learning service credits may be accumulated. The bus shelter design and implementation process could create an opportunity for western students to address these real world challenges that will face them in the workplace and in practice. This is a venue where the intersection of civil engineering, preservation, planning, architecture, landscape architecture, public project costs and liabilities play themselves out.

Through a unique public agency/not-for-profit/university intern program, The Tahoe Foundation would host interns and professionals needing internship/ongoing learning hours, to acquire credit to understand more about public surveys, and project implementation where all fields must collaborate for the sake of the public good. Once set up, this type of partnership/community service learning program may well off-set costs through scholarship/volunteer work efforts made available through The Tahoe Foundation.

#### CONCLUSION

Through the white paper, the Tahoe Foundation has identified a number of roles that a bus shelter can support. The Foundation believes that an effort to design and locate bus shelters throughout the basin incorporating these roles can be an important part of the effort to promote public transit as a viable alternative to the automobile. The Tahoe Foundation is prepared to take a lead on further refining the bus shelter role in the public transit effort.

See Following Pages for Appendices and graphics.

## Appendix A:

### Code of Ethics Related to Native Americans

Researchers and scholars working projects related to Native Americans, Aleut, Eskimo, or Native Hawaiian peoples adhere to the following provisions: Every effort should be made in advance of project design and execution to engage the agreement, advice, and cooperation of members of the Native community in planning and execution of the project and in the disposition and results from the project. This should be communicated to the Native community and the anticipated consequences and results of the research or data-gathering should be explained as fully as possible to the individuals and groups likely to be affected.

Where research or exhibition of materials involves the acquisition of material (objects and documents) and transfer of information on the assumption of trust between persons, the rights, expressed interests and sensitivities of those originating the material must be safeguarded.

There is an obligation on the part of the scholar/researcher/principal investigator to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication on the participant population and to inform them of the probable impact.

Native community consultants have the right to remain anonymous or be specifically named and given credit if they so choose. This right should be respected where it has been explicitly promised. Where there is no clear understanding to the contrary, sources should be kept confidential. Because funded proposals, grant reports and other written material in the Foundation's possession are available to the public, no identifications contrary to the wishes of the community consultants should appear.

Investigators using recording devices such as cameras or tape recorders or the technique of oral interviewing are also subject to the above criteria. Subjects under study should understand the capacities of such machines and should be free to accept or reject their use. Individuals or group community consultants should be fairly compensated (through reciprocal exchange or monetary payment) for their services/information and there may be no exploitation of subjects under study. Scholars should make every attempt to guarantee appropriate credit (in the form of co-authorship or co-investigatorship) and the distribution of financial rewards where appropriate for products resulting from projects.

Any report or work considered for publication (and where applicable and possible, films or exhibitions) should be deposited with the Native representatives of the elders and traditional leaders of the community. Every effort should be made to see that such a representational body has an opportunity to view the films or exhibitions which result from work undertaken in the community.

This Code should not interfere with or preclude any formal agreements made between researchers and Native peoples for the course of research undertaken with Federal funds. Further, the Code does not preclude or supersede ethical codes subscribed to and endorsed by various professional associations, but rather intends only to make clear the standards expected of those participating in The Tahoe Foundation programs.

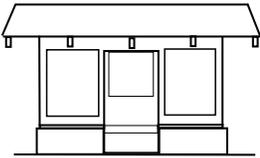
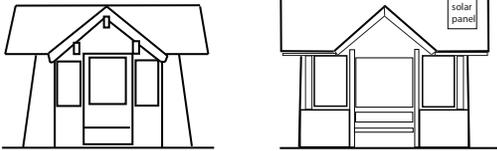
This Code conforms to the principles of Public Law 95-341 as amended (the Indian Religious Freedom Act), Public Law 89-665 as amended (the National Historic Preservation Act), and other relevant public laws governing relations with native peoples of North America. Those who direct projects that are subject to the Code of Ethics are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the laws on which it is based to ensure full compliance with the Code. Although the body of the law and customs on which the Code is constructed is rooted in relations with native peoples of North America, researchers are urged to follow it whenever living cultures and peoples are involved.

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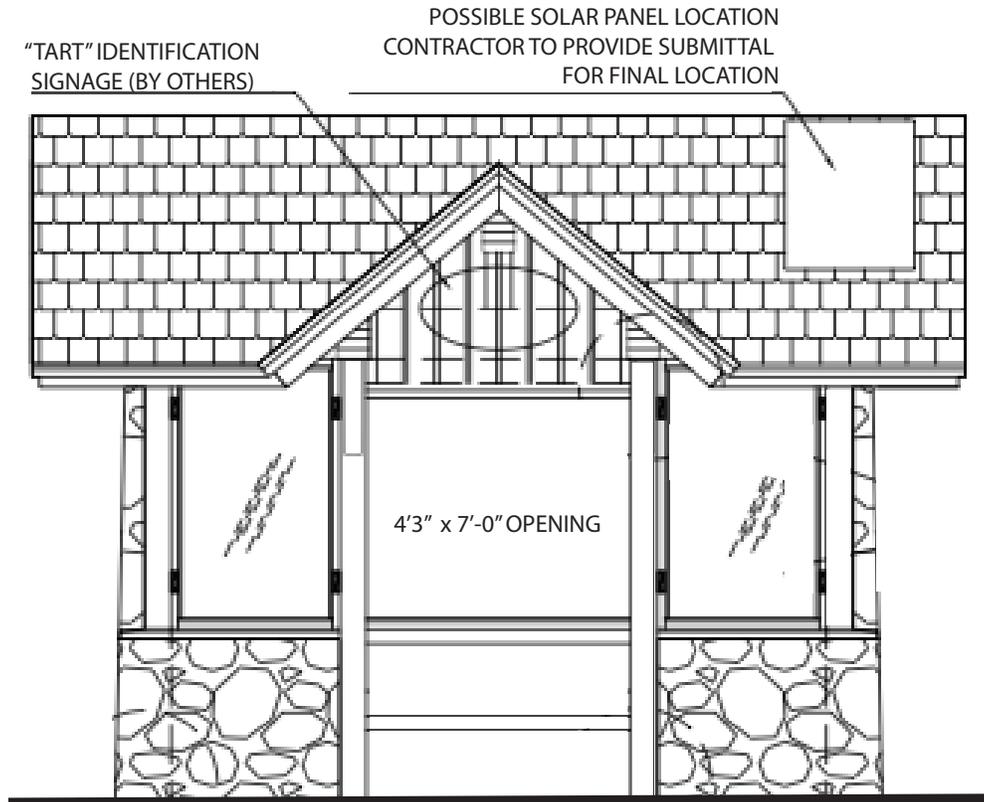
Scenarios	Scope of Work	Pictures/Graphics
<p>Use older existing stops. ie: Incline Rotary shelters/Southshore</p>	<p>Survey existing structure/site. Is an opportunity to study performance of site-planning, erosion issues, user opinions, etc. Retrofit with BMPs, lighting, branding etc.)</p>	
<p>Newer shelters. New shelters. These designs have already been adopted by the TRPA/TTD.  (Tahoe Transportation District) ie: Placer County Shelters</p>	<p>Site Planning, use of existing plans, develop or change the scale of plans per needs assessment.</p>	 <p>See detail on subsequent pages.</p>
<p>Custom Design/Build with the Use of Private land or money or both to customize the transit stop experience and to complement the existing architectural theme, materials, etc. ie: The Hyatt</p>	<p>A Professional architect will work with us or oversee student(s) to come with a or several design scenarios to choose from to suggest to and attempt to satisfy the owner's desires.</p>	<p>To be Determined by Owners, Site, Architects</p>
<p>Temporary/Research Structures with idea that they could become permanent after time. Student concepts where design/build is for NAAB/AICP/ASLA Engineering/Art Design/learning credit</p>	<p>Researcher based designs which will be built as temporary or permanent structures or virtual explorations as the means for primary research as relates to transit architectures, roadside design, and heritage/ preservation investigations.</p>	<p>To be determined by Researcher</p>

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### FRONT ELEVATION

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