Date: February 24, 2026

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Blake Kloczl, Engineering Technician II and Scott Mathot, Engineering Manager

Title: **Donner Lake Pilot Transportation Strategy Update and Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards**

Jennifer Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: That Council:

1. Receive an update on the implementation of recommended pilot transportation strategies along Donner Pass Road adjacent to Donner Lake; and
2. Accept the Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards presented in the staff report.

Discussion:

Donner Lake Pilot Transportation Strategy Update

On July 9, 2025, Town staff, along with other agency partners, hosted a public meeting with a group of Donner Lake residents to discuss community concerns regarding traffic speeds and volumes, pedestrian/bicycle safety, parking, and erosion control along Donner Lake. During the Town Hall, Donner Lake constituents proposed many ideas on how to modify transportation behavior along Donner Pass Road adjacent to Donner Lake. These ideas were considered by Town staff and used to develop various action items to address some of the community's concerns.

The items discussed during the meeting are as follows with a prioritization grouping prepared by staff:

High Priority/Short Term

- Pedestrian and bicyclist surveys
- Buffered bike lanes
- Radar speed feedback signs
- Boulders at locations where legal parking is not feasible
- Reduction in speed limit
- Promotion of transit and non-motorized transportation
- Parking in bike lane sign improvements
- Increased parking in bike lane fine amount
- Increased Police Department enforcement

Medium Priority

- Crosswalks
- Roadway striping earlier in the summer season
- Green bike lanes
- Seasonal shuttle with more restrictive no parking enforcement

Low Priority

- Continuous sidewalks
- The construction of U-turn locations
- One-way vehicular travel
- Roundabouts
- Physically separated bike lanes
- Stopped controlled intersections
- Roadway classification change
- Adjustable speed limit
- Centerline and bike lane rumble strips
- Removal of parking for bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Remote enforcement with license plate readers and cameras

Below is a summary of and update on some of the high priority/short term items staff have worked on since July. **Implementation of the items listed below is planned to occur by the end of May 2026.**

- Pedestrian and Bicyclist Surveys: Staff conducted updated pedestrian and bicyclist counts this past summer -- west of the Donner Lake public boat launch and east of the Tahoe Donner Marina. The surveys were conducted on Saturday July 26, 2025, and Saturday August 2, 2025, and data can be viewed in Attachment A. When compared to the counts that were conducted near the Tahoe Donner Marina in 2018, there appears to be an increase in both pedestrian and bicycle activity in the area, which is consistent with what staff heard from the residents.

- Speed Limit Reduction Study: Staff have conducted additional research and speed studies to determine whether a speed reduction along Donner Pass Road is warranted or can be justified. Based on the *California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (CA MUTCD) guidelines and a review of the character of the area (number of driveways, pedestrian and bicycle activity, etc.), staff is pursuing a reduction in the speed limit from 35 miles-per-hour (MPH) to 30 MPH as a project. Speed limit reductions are requested frequently throughout the Town of Truckee. The Town typically does not reduce speed limits as research has indicated that speed limit reductions do very little to reduce vehicle speeds. However, a speed limit reduction on this section of Donner Pass Road is supportable by staff and the CA MUTCD based on multiple factors such as the proximity to a large recreational area, high number of pedestrian and bicyclists, high number of driveway and roadway encroachments, relatively low truck traffic, and speed surveys that support the reduction. Staff anticipates presenting an ordinance to update the speed limit on Donner Pass Road by Donner Lake to Council in April to allow for a speed limit reduction to occur by May 2026.

- Parking in Bike Lane Sign Improvements: On August 25, 2025, Council approved an increase to the fine amount for parking in the bike lane from $42 to $150. Therefore, the existing “No Parking in Bike Lane” signs on Donner Pass Road along Donner Lake are planned to be updated to include the increased fine amount to help deter violations. These additional signs are planned to be made in the newly created Town of Truckee Public Works sign shop in order to utilize internal resources previously approved by Council.

- Placement of Boulders at No Parking Locations: During peak times, vehicles are often parked in areas that either require encroachment into the bike lane or cause excessive erosion due to parking on steeper slopes. In order to prevent parking in these areas, staff propose to place boulders in locations where the only feasible parking spot would impact the bike lane or cause erosion into Donner Lake.

- Reduction in Vehicle Lane Width (Pilot): A portion of Donner Pass Road does not have adequate pavement width to maintain the existing 11-foot travel lanes with the addition of a 5-foot buffered bike lane. Staff are proposing a lane width reduction from the current 11 feet to 10 feet on Donner Pass Road from the Coldstream Road roundabout to the intersection of Donner Pass Road and

South Shore Drive, consistent with the guidelines contained in the attached Lane Width Reduction memo (Attachment B). The lane width reduction will provide additional width for the bike lane and is supported by the *Caltrans Highway Design Manual*. The combination of the vehicle lane width reduction and buffered bike lane implementation is also being implemented as a pilot project for evaluation of effectiveness. Engineering staff will coordinate with Police Department staff to determine if the 10-foot travel lanes are appropriate for the vehicle users along this segment of Donner Pass Road. This determination will be based on Police Department observations during the summer. If the pilot program is successful, the 10-foot travel lanes will become permanent.

- Buffered Bike Lane: As currently striped, Donner Pass Road by Donner Lake does not provide adequate room for a buffered bike lane, which uses two white roadway stripes to delineate a buffer between the vehicle travel lane and bike lane. Staff reviewed several published guidelines and standards to evaluate whether a buffered bike lane could be a viable solution along Donner Pass Road in the study area and developed the Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards that are discussed below. The proposed standards support the installation of a buffered bike lane in the study area (with a travel lane width reduction described above).

- Police Department Enforcement: The Town of Truckee Police Department previously determined that Donner Pass Road adjacent to Donner Lake is a Maximum Enforcement Area and will continue to be an area of emphasis throughout 2026. This includes additional enforcement patrols and changeable messaging boards throughout this corridor. Finally, the Police Department is deploying a newly formed Motors Unit, which will conduct targeted traffic enforcement on police motorcycles. The Police Department plans to increase traffic enforcement along this segment of Donner Pass Road that was previously difficult to enforce with a full-size vehicle.

Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards

The Town's 2015 *Trails and Bikeways Master Plan* was the original document that identified the implementation strategy for bike lanes throughout Truckee. In 2023, the Town installed its first buffered bike lane along the face of Northwoods Boulevard. Since 2023, the Town has installed buffered bike lanes along West River Street, Brockway Road, Glenshire Drive, Truckee Way, and Alder Creek Road. As identified above, staff are proposing the installation of additional buffered bike lanes along Donner Pass Road adjacent to Donner Lake.

Buffered bike lanes are bike lanes that (at minimum) include two 6-inch-wide white pavement stripes that are separated by 6 inches (for a total width of 18 inches) and placed on the side of the bike lane nearest to the vehicle travel lane. The double-stripe acts as a visual buffer between vehicles and bike lane users. Buffered bike lanes are supported by transportation design guides such as the *National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO): Urban Bikeway Design Guide*, the *AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities,* and CA MUTCD. Buffered bike lanes are recommended because they provide greater space for bike lane users without making it appear as though it's another travel lane for vehicles; is an additional visual queue to vehicle users of the presence of bicycle facilities; and it increases perception of safety among bike lane users (NACTO: Urban Bikeway Design Guide, 10).

To ensure consistent implementation of buffered bikes lanes that also meet recommended standards, staff developed the Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards, which are presented in Attachment C. The standards are meant to guide the restriping of existing buffered bike lanes and installation of additional buffers where Class II bike lanes already exist throughout Truckee. Staff propose to evaluate roadways against these standards prior to installing new buffered bike lanes or re-striping existing ones.

Staff is recommending that the Council accept the Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards.

Priority:

	Enhanced Communication	X	Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction		Housing
X	Infrastructure Investment		Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	X	Core Service

Fiscal Impact: There have been and will be staff time associated with the data collection and evaluation, signage manufacturing and installation, boulder placement, and striping materials. However, no outside consultants or contractors are expected to be required to implement the projects.

Public Communication: Donner Lake Town Hall on July 9, 2025, and follow-up emails with Donner Lake constituents.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Pedestrian and Bike Survey

Attachment B – Lane Width Reduction Memo

Attachment C – Buffered Bike Lane Implementation Standards