# WASHOE COUNTY

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## STAFF REPORT
**BOARD MEETING DATE: December 9, 2025**

**DATE:** November 10, 2025

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Dwayne Smith, Division Director, Engineering & Capital Projects
Community Services, 775-328-2043, desmith@washoecounty.gov

**THROUGH:** Eric Crump, Director,
Community Services Dept., 775-328-3625, ecrump@washoecounty.gov

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to: (1) approve a new capital project – NV FLAP WAS CR34; (2) approve the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Memorandum of Agreement between Washoe County, the Federal Highway Administration – Central Federal Lands Highway Division, and the Bureau of Land Management, retroactive to September 3, 2025, for the NV FLAP WAS CR34(1) project to improve Washoe County Road 34 from County Road 447 to the "8 Mile" entrance to the Black Rock Desert using [$29,011,000.00 in FLAP funds and $1,874,000.00 in Washoe County matching funds, bringing the total project cost to $30,885,000.00], and (3) authorize the County Manager to sign related agreements and documents. (Commission District 5.) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

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**SUMMARY**

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) provides federal funding for projects that improve transportation access to federal lands. Washoe County, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA–CFLHD) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has been awarded $29,011,000 in FLAP funding for the NV FLAP WAS CR34(1) project. Washoe County will contribute $1,874,000 in leveraged funds, bringing the total project cost to $30,885,000.

The project will rehabilitate and improve approximately nine miles of Washoe County Road 34 (CR34), a key route providing access to BLM's Black Rock Desert recreation area and serving as the main corridor for the annual Burning Man event. Improvements will include full-depth pavement reconstruction, shoulder safety edges, culvert replacements, apron and intersection upgrades (including reconfiguration of the "Southern Y" and a substandard curve near milepost 4.2), and construction of a deceleration/turn lane to the "8 Mile" entrance.

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) establishes the roles and responsibilities of FHWA–CFLHD, Washoe County, and BLM throughout the project's environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction phases. FHWA–CFLHD will manage project development and construction, while Washoe County will support right-of-way and

utility coordination, permitting, and long-term operation and maintenance after completion.

**PROJECT SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **FHWA–CFLHD:** Lead agency responsible for project management, environmental compliance (NEPA and related laws), design, contracting, permitting, and construction administration.
- **Washoe County:** Responsible for right-of-way acquisition, utility coordination, review of design and environmental documents, and long-term operation and maintenance of the completed roadway.
- **BLM:** Will support environmental review, provide technical data, and coordinate right-of-entry and policy compliance.

**PROJECT COST AND FUNDING**

| **Phase** | **Estimated Cost** |
|---|---|
| Preliminary Engineering & Environmental Compliance | $1,900,000 |
| Construction Contract | $24,140,000 |
| Construction Engineering | $1,600,000 |
| Contingency | $3,245,000 |
| **Total Estimated Project Cost** | **$30,885,000** |

**Funding Sources:**

- Federal Lands Access Program (FHWA–CFLHD): **$29,011,000**
- Washoe County Leveraged Funds: **$1,874,000**

A separate funding agreement will be executed prior to construction to document Washoe County's contribution and funding schedule.

**SCHEDULE**

| **Milestone** | **Completion Date (Estimated)** |
|---|---|
| Signed MOA and Financial Documents | November 2025 |
| Preliminary Design Completion | November 2026 |
| Environmental Compliance Completion | August 2027 |
| Right-of-Way and Utility Certifications | July 2028 |
| Final Design Completion | July 2028 |
| Construction Advertisement / Award | September 2028 |
| Construction Completion | March 2030 |

**Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item**: Economic Impacts: Meet the needs of our growing community.

**PREVIOUS ACTION**

There is no previous action for this project.

## BACKGROUND

County Road 34 provides critical access for residents, recreation users, and special events to the Black Rock Desert near Gerlach, Nevada. The roadway's surface has deteriorated, and safety improvements are needed to accommodate year-round use and significant seasonal traffic increases during the Burning Man event, which draws approximately 75,000 participants annually.

The project was approved by the FLAP Program Decision Committee on August 25, 2025. Construction is anticipated to occur during the 2029 construction season, with a temporary shutdown during the Burning Man event to minimize traffic impacts.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Washoe County's total financial obligation under this agreement is a match of $1,874,000.00 to the $29,011,000.00 of FLAP funding. Budget authority for the $1,874,000.00 match is available in the Capital Improvements Fund (402). Approval of this MOA allows FHWA and BLM to continue the work.

A future funding agreement will be executed prior to construction.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Board of County Commissioners approve: (1) approve a new capital project – NV FLAP WAS CR34; (2) approve the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Memorandum of Agreement between Washoe County, the Federal Highway Administration – Central Federal Lands Highway Division, and the Bureau of Land Management, retroactive to September 3, 2025, for the NV FLAP WAS CR34(1) project to improve Washoe County Road 34 from County Road 447 to the "8 Mile" entrance to the Black Rock Desert using [$29,011,000.00 in FLAP funds and $1,874,000.00 in Washoe County matching funds, bringing the total project cost to $30,885,000.00] and (3) authorize the County Manager to sign related agreements and documents.

## POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve: (1) approve a new capital project – NV FLAP WAS CR34; (2) approve the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Memorandum of Agreement between Washoe County, the Federal Highway Administration – Central Federal Lands Highway Division, and the Bureau of Land Management, retroactive to September 3, 2025, for the NV FLAP WAS CR34(1) project to improve Washoe County Road 34 from County Road 447 to the "8 Mile" entrance to the Black Rock Desert using [$29,011,000.00 in FLAP funds and $1,874,000.00 in Washoe County matching funds, bringing the total project cost to $30,885,000.00] and (3) authorize the County Manager to sign related agreements and documents."