



North Valleys Citizens Advisory Board
Minutes of the regular meeting of the North Valleys Citizens Advisory Board held on May 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Reno Stead Airport.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION QUORUM

Present: Vice Chair Aaron Jennings, Roger Edwards, Susan VanNess, and Daniel Yriarte

Absent: Chair Scott Finley

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF April 13, 2026

There was no public comment on this item.

Vice Chair Jennings moved to approve the April 13, 2026, North Valleys Citizens Advisory Board minutes as written. Member Yriarte seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

4. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan VanNess encouraged everyone to check their voter status as she relayed that several people complained of the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) changing their registration. She said some Republicans received ballots for independent voters. Anyone listed as an independent voter, she pointed out, needs to change their affiliation if they want to vote in the primary. She believed the DMV should not be involved in voter registration.

Roger Edwards stated the Registrar of Voters' Office was sending out cards, and people should check that all the information on those cards was correct. Aaron Jennings added that his party affiliation was recently changed to Democrat.

5. COMMISSIONER/CAB CHAIR NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

6. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

Battalion Chief Ryan Whitlock reviewed the agenda packet materials provided for this item, including statistics related to March's incident totals. He encouraged people to be diligent, especially with fire season starting, and to report incidents quickly. He promoted a QR code that directed people to a document focused on hazardous fuels reduction. The document also highlighted invasive species like cheatgrass and explained current code limitations regarding enforcement, as well as emphasizing education and preventative enforcement.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office

No one was present from the Sheriff's Office to give a presentation.

7. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION (RTC) COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATE

In response to a question from a member of the public, Government Affairs Officer Paul Nelson with the RTC explained that he hoped to hear an answer by June regarding the \$85 million Sun Valley grant. If received, the RTC will have money to begin construction.

Officer Nelson conducted a slideshow presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Metropolitan Planning Organization; Project Process; FY26 Budget (Revenues); FY 26 Budget (Expenses); Impact (2024); How Roads Are Funded Today; 2026 Pavement Preservation Program; Vehicle Miles Traveled; Taxable Gallons Sold; EVs & Hybrids are Growing; Paying for Growth – RRIF; Public Transportation; Future Riders; Planning Neighborhood Network Plans; Treatment Types; Buck Drive Circulation; Military Road Capacity and Safety; Lemmon Drive Traffic Improvements...; U.S. 395 & Virginia Street North Valleys; Stead Signal Improvements; Moya Boulevard Capacity; North Valleys North Virginia Street Capacity; Northeast Connector; and Commuter Rail Study.

Officer Nelson stated the RTC has been very successful over the last five years obtaining discretionary grants, which has helped move capacity projects along. Money was previously set aside for some critical projects, which was why expenses were set to exceed revenues in fiscal year 2026. He spoke about a capacity project on Military Road expected to begin next month. He explained that the sales tax collected by the RTC goes towards transit projects while fuel tax goes toward building roads. He said the RTC contracts with University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) to do its signal timing.

Officer Nelson indicated there will be an agenda item for the May 26 meeting of the the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to potentially approve an advisory ballot measure question regarding charging registration fees for electric vehicles (EVs) since they do not pay fuel taxes. Nevada is one of only ten states without a fee or mileage use charge for EVs, and a study revealed that the best way to make up losses in revenue was to charge a flat fee for registering EVs. The proposed fee is \$250, though lesser amounts are also being considered. He said 60 percent of people were in favor of a fee, specifically the highest one. If approved by the BCC, then Washoe County would let the State Legislature know that County residents were in favor of the fee, and if approved there, the Legislature could authorize the County to implement the fee.

Officer Nelson noted that regional road impact fees (RRIF) will be used to pay for the Military Road widening, and no taxpayer dollars will be used for that. RTC Ride currently features 20 routes, he explained, and it recently experienced 44 straight months of ridership growth. He described the FlexRIDE rideshare service and said the RTC VANPOOL service was one of the top 10 van pool programs in the country, driven in large part by transporting people to and from the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center (TRIC). He briefly reviewed the RTC SMART TRIPS, Washoe Senior Ride, and Mobility Center programs. Keolis is the contractor who operates the fixed ride buses, he noted, while MTM Transit handles RTC ACCESS and FlexRIDE vehicles. He cited the Youth Ride Free pilot program as a possible reason for a dip in truancy, adding that the majority of students use the service to get to jobs after school.

Officer Nelson indicated that the Sun Valley/Panther Valley and Meadowood Mall/Hidden Valley neighborhoods are currently being studied with the intent to implement programs in addition to seeking feedback from residents about trouble spots and possible improvements.

He described some of the elements that are planned as part of the Lemmon Drive Traffic Improvement and Resiliency Project, adding that the RTC received a \$25 million Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the project. He believed residents will ultimately benefit from and like the project when it is complete. He mentioned that the North Valleys North Virginia Street Capacity Project will likely not begin in 2027, but rather when the next phase of the US 395 project is complete. There are also plans to connect Spanish Springs and Lemmon Valley, which will be expensive and is not expected to occur for a while. Funding is not yet in place for the Northeast Connector project, but the RTC is discussing the possibility of public private partnerships with some of the companies at the TRIC to fund it.

Officer Nelson spoke about the significant costs that would be involved in having a commuter rail line to the TRIC, though he thought that could be a viable option to reduce traffic on I-80 if funding could be obtained. He said the RTC has several members on a working group at the State Legislature to explore a rail line.

Monty Turner expressed concern about the high gas tax in Washoe County and the poor job done on Oddie Boulevard. He felt that a culvert project in Sun Valley would cost \$250 million, not \$84 million, so that garbage trucks could be supported. Officer Nelson responded that he felt all RTC projects made sense.

Tammy Holt-Still expressed frustration at the timing of the traffic lights at Lemmon Valley near the highway. She wondered how Lemmon Drive would handle the increased traffic from the Northeast Connector when it is built on silt. She asked why commercial development did not pay RRIF fees. Officer Nelson replied that the figures listed in the presentation include both commercial and residential development. He said a traffic engineer would need to respond to her question about traffic lights, and it was too early in the planning process to know where the Northeast Connector would connect to the North Valleys. He expected that the right soil would be used to strengthen that road. He discussed two of the potential routes for that connector and their collaboration with a tribe on that project.

Member VanNess agreed with concerns over the high gas taxes in the area, though she felt they were necessary. She asked about the rates possibly increasing again. Officer Nelson stated the tax was based on a formula for the 10-year rolling average for the producer price index. They will be adjusted on July 1, and he expected the gas tax would go up \$.04 per gallon. He commented that he owns a truck and pays around \$600 a year in gas taxes, which was low compared to property and sales taxes as well as utility bills. Additionally, the gas tax does not fluctuate with the changing costs of oil. The RTC does not currently receive any Division of Motor Vehicle fees, like vehicle registration fees, and if an EV tax were ever implemented, state law dictates that those revenues would need to go towards roads. However, the State Legislature could choose one of several ways that that money could be allocated.

In response to Member Edwards's question, Officer Nelson said he believed there is a tire tax, but revenues from that go to the State. A proposal last year to increase the tire tax was rejected. He explained that the RTC partners with UNR to do its signal timing and also use light detection and ranging to determine areas of high traffic and pedestrian volume. The contract was relatively cheap, and the university's work resulted in significant cost savings. He noted that changing the timing of lights on a main street also impacts the timing of lights on side streets. Regarding the Pavement Preservation Program, he remarked that from least

to most expensive, the three treatment methods are preventative maintenance, corrective maintenance, and road rehabilitation, each of which he briefly described. He defined paratransit as designed for people with chronic illnesses or those with mobility issues. Students can utilize the Ed-Pass Program with their school IDs, he stated, though they would need to sign up with the school district for the Youth Ride Free Program and either use passes on their phones or receive printed passes.

Member Yriarte inquired about the size of the connector between Lemmon Valley and Spanish Springs. Officer Nelson said they have not decided on the size or even the location of the connector yet, and design cannot take place until the route is determined and the environmental process is completed. The Northeast Connector will be two lanes with a 45 mile-per-hour speed limit. He indicated that the RTC does not build roads with future development in mind; they are done to accommodate the current growth. Road capacity typically follows development. He added that the connector would likely be placed on federal land, meaning development could not happen without Congress transferring the land for development.

Responding to additional public commenter questions, Officer Nelson stated that even though the plan is for it to be a three-lane road, one lane in each direction with a turning lane, it would be wide enough to potentially restripe into a four-lane road if capacity warranted it. Regarding the intersection of Lemmon Drive and Buck Drive, he hoped that the signal being installed further along Buck Drive would help with the traffic at that main interchange.

Another commenter expressed frustration that commercial development did not pay for roadway maintenance. He inquired about the exact location of the Lemmon Drive improvements. Officer Nelson reiterated that commercial development pays for part of the RRIF fee, but they do not pay continually for maintenance, nor does residential development. The RTC does not own any roads; they build them and give them to the local jurisdictions to maintain. The speaker expressed frustration about the condition of Ramsey Way and suggested that side streets be given more attention.

Katherine Yriarte inquired about development on Red Rock Road whose approval was predicated on the road being widened even though that project was pushed back to between 2030 and 2050. Officer Nelson said that project would be in the RTC's Regional Transportation Plan, and if it becomes urgent, it would be pushed forward quicker. Much work happens on projects before construction. He confirmed that projects like that could also be deprioritized if more urgent needs surface. Safety and capacity are the two primary considerations for prioritization.

In response to Speaker Yriarte's queries about the proposed EV fee, Officer Nelson said the \$250 estimate was based on a calculation of 41 miles per gallon. While the weight of vehicles was considered, it did not have a large impact on road wear and tear. Speaker Yriarte expressed concern about pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation users not paying gas taxes, so diesel users had to pay for all roadway improvements. Officer Nelson noted that sidewalks and bike lanes make roadways safer, and many cyclists also own cars.

Jody Pool asked about the timing of projects like the Buck Drive project and the Military Road widening. Officer Nelson responded that the RTC tries to spread projects out so the entire area is not blocked up. With respect to people not registering their vehicles, he stated there are some things the RTC cannot control, but people who could afford EVs could afford to

register them.

Brian Wadsworth wondered whether the County and the two Cities provide direction on project priorities when they discuss interlocal cooperative agreements. Officer Nelson reminded him that the jurisdictions own the roads, and input can be provided at their public meetings. The RTC Board decides which projects it wants to prioritize, then the RTC approaches the BCC or the City Councils for approval. If the Boards say no, the projects do not get done. He said the RTC does not prioritize projects, though they tend to be prioritized to address areas of current need, not future need.

Responding to Member Edwards's question, Officer Nelson provided additional information about the RAISE grant program. Member VanNess inquired about a set of faulty core samples. Officer Nelson replied that additional core samples were not needed because there would not be a significant change, and it would be a duplication of costs to do the process again. He said he did not know anything about the samples being faulty and suggested that she reach out to Bryan Byrne, the project manager for the Lemmon Valley Drive Project.

Another member of the public expressed frustration that the RTC functions reactionarily and not according to a master plan. Officer Nelson stated the RTC certainly does plan, but projects must be prioritized. Member Edwards talked about his time on the Planning Commission and said developers do not need to worry about the need for things like future road widening when their projects are approved. He stated there are plans, though they do not always work perfectly.

8. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

No one was available to present this item.

9. CAB MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Member Edwards promoted a Golden meeting on May 14 at Raley's and encouraged people to attend.

10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Brian Wadsworth stated he was a candidate for the District 5 seat on the Board of County Commissioners and talked about town halls he has hosted around the district. The next ones will be at the Cold Springs Community Center on May 16, the Celita Lindo Taqueria in Lemmon Valley on June 2, and the Celita Lindo Taqueria on King's Row on June 6.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Member Yriarte moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Rogers seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.