



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

www.washoecounty.gov

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: *June 23, 2026*

DATE: Wednesday, June 17, 2026

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Cadence Matijevich, Government Affairs Liaison
775-328-2077, cmatijevich@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Kate Thomas, Manager, Washoe County

SUBJECT: Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution R26-25 as the “2026 Streets and Highways Funding Advisory Question Resolution”, thereby approving submittal of an advisory question to the registered voters of Washoe County at the General Election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 concerning the need for new fees to be imposed on electric and hybrid vehicles to pay for roadway construction and maintenance, as requested by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

This agenda item is for the approval of the “2026 Streets and Highways Funding Advisory Question Resolution” regarding submission of an advisory question to the registered voters of Washoe County on the November 2026 general election ballot concerning the need for new fees to be imposed on electric and hybrid vehicles to pay for roadway construction and maintenance, as requested by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County.

Washoe County Strategic Objectives supported by this item: Fiscal Sustainability

PREVIOUS ACTION

No previous action related to this item.

BACKGROUND

On February 20, 2026, the Board of Commissioners of the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County unanimously approved the RTC Washoe Executive Director to submit a request to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners to place an advisory question on the November 3, 2026, general election ballot related to the need for new fees to be imposed on electric and hybrid vehicles to pay for roadway construction and maintenance.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

The federal, state, and county funding that Nevada, and Washoe County, rely upon for funding of its transportation systems comes primarily from taxes on motor vehicle fuels. Historically, as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increased, the fuel taxes collected at a similar rate.

Because of improvements in the overall fuel economy of gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles, and the proliferation of electric (EV) and hybrid vehicles, in recent years VMT growth has outpaced growth in fuel tax revenues. Because of voter-approved fuel revenue indexing in Washoe County, funding for road construction and maintenance in Washoe County has more stability than in many other areas of Nevada, but as VMT increases, the gap between road use and available funding continues to widen.

The Nevada Legislature has considered the issue of transportation funding and the highway fund impact of more fuel efficient, electric and hybrid vehicles on multiple occasions in recent years. SCR3 passed in the 80th (2019) Session and AB413 was passed in the 81st (2021) Session. AB413 directed the Legislative Committee on Energy to conduct an interim study to consider alternative solutions for transportation system funding in Nevada. An Advisory Working Group was formed to study sustainable long-term funding strategies to augment and/or replace motor fuel taxes. This process culminated in the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) Nevada Sustainable Transportation Funding Study, which among other recommendations, identified a flat fee on EV and hybrid vehicles as an important option. Despite the study findings, no action was taken to implement electric vehicle fees during subsequent Sessions of the Nevada Legislature, including the 36th (2025) Special Session.

In 2025, RTC Washoe commissioned the Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities to study revenue options for transportation infrastructure, and the study identified registration fees on EVs and hybrid vehicles as the best option because of its ease of implementation, cost-effectiveness and revenue-generating potential.

To gauge public sentiment on this topic, RTC Washoe commissioned a poll of 800 likely Washoe County voters in December of 2025. Key findings from the poll were:

- A majority of the surveyed Washoe County voters recognize a need for additional transportation funding. 78% believe Washoe County has a great (50%) or some need (28%) for additional funding to improve the local transportation system, including repairing and upgrading roads and freeways.
- Six in ten voters identify the following as extremely or very serious problems:
 - Traffic on I-80 Freeway: 61%
 - Aging infrastructure like roads and bridges: 59%
 - Unsafe traffic conditions: 59%
- When asked if they would support the Washoe County Commission seeking legislation to authorize an annual fee of not more than \$250 per year on electric and hybrid vehicles the voters responded:
 - Definitely Yes 43%
 - Probably Yes 15%
 - Undecided, Lean Yes 3%

- Total Yes 61%
- Total No 30%

- Two-thirds of voters who believe the county needs additional transportation funding indicated support for the advisory measure.

- Voters who currently own an electric or hybrid vehicle, or who plan to purchase one in the next few years, also indicate support for the advisory measure (61% support among those likely to purchase an EV or hybrid vehicle).

- Voters indicated they believe it is fair to require hybrid owners to pay half (61% favor) or a portion (63% favor) of the annual fee amount that would be charged to EV owners.

- 60% of voters favor indexing the EV fee to inflation, consistent with the county's existing gas tax indexing approved by voters.

- Supporters cited:
 - The need to invest in local infrastructure
 - Requiring EV and hybrid vehicle owners to contribute or “pay their fair share”

- Opponents cited:
 - Rejection of new taxes and fees
 - Concerns about wasteful spending
 - Belief that the measure unfairly punishes EV owners
 - Concerns it could deter future EV purchases

- Voters identified requiring public disclosure of all spending as an extremely or very important funding requirement (92%).

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 295.230 authorizes the governing body of a county to submit an advisory question to the registered voters within its jurisdiction. To exercise such authority, the governing body of the county must adopt a resolution that:

- Sets forth the question, in language indicating clearly that the question is advisory only.

- Includes an explanation of the question that is written in easily understood language and includes a digest. The digest must include a concise and clear summary of any existing laws related to measure proposed by the question and a summary of how the measure proposed by the question adds to, changes or repeals such existing laws. For a measure that creates, generates, increases or decreases any public revenue in any form, the first paragraph of the digest must include a statement that the measure creates, generates, increases or decreases, as applicable, public revenue.

- Includes a description of the anticipated financial effect on the local government.
- States that the result of the voting on the question does not place any legal requirement on the governing body, any member of the governing body or any officer of the political subdivision.

Any such approved and executed resolution for placement of an advisory question on the ballot for a general election must be submitted to a county clerk or registrar of voters, as applicable, on or before the third Monday in July preceding the election.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact related to the approval of this resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve and execute Resolution R26-25 as the “2026 Streets and Highways Funding Advisory Question Resolution”, and thereby approve submittal of an advisory question to the registered voters of Washoe County at the general election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, concerning the need for new fees to be imposed on electric and hybrid vehicles to pay for roadway construction and maintenance as requested by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board of County Commissioners agree to the recommendation, a possible motion would be: “Move to approve and execute resolution R26-25 as the “2026 Streets and Highways Funding Advisory Question Resolution”, and thereby approve submittal of an advisory question to the registered voters of Washoe County at the general election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, concerning the need for new fees to be imposed on electric and hybrid vehicles to pay for roadway construction and maintenance as requested by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County.