

Third Road Connection to Tahoe Donner

By Jennifer Jennings, TDA Board President

Many Tahoe Donner members are concerned about the limited emergency evacuation routes out of Tahoe Donner. The proposed Pioneer Trail/Bridge Street extension appears to be the most cost-effective new access and egress route for Tahoe Donner residents. The proposed road is not in an ideal location because it is so far down Northwoods, but at least it provides another way for residents to leave and emergency vehicles to arrive.

The proposed Pioneer Trail extension is an arterial connection between Northwoods Blvd. south of Lausanne Way to the eastern end of Pioneer Trail. Bridge Street would also be extended north to meet the extended Pioneer Trail.

The Town developed the plan for this road to assist in reducing predicted future traffic congestion on Donner Pass Road west of SR 89 South. Reflecting upon recent fire tragedies, perhaps the road should now also be evaluated for its public safety attributes.

In 2018, the Town prepared a very preliminary cost estimate of \$22 million for the Pioneer Trail/Bridge Street extension. The new road is not in the Town's 5-year Capital Improvement Project. Thus, under current plans, construction would occur later than 2023.

In my opinion, the Board should be a strong advocate for the prompt construction of additional access routes into Tahoe Donner. Among the actions for the Board to consider are:

- urging the Town to evaluate the Pioneer Trail/Bridge Street extension as needed for an emergency evacuation route and to consider

alternative sources of funding for the construction such as STR Transit Occupancy Taxes from Tahoe Donner rentals and TSSA1 funds.

- directing TD staff to work with the Town to evaluate and promote the Pioneer Trail/Bridge Street extension and any other potential new emergency routes for Tahoe Donner residents.