



Trisha Tillotson
Community Development Agency Director

David Garcia
Director of Public Works

NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: September 23, 2025
TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: David Garcia, Director of Public Works
SUBJECT: Presentation regarding the California Road Charge Program Public/Private Roads Project

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the presentation.

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND: On April 18, 2023, the Board of Supervisors received a presentation from Caltrans regarding the California Road Charge Program. In response to a request for an update, Caltrans plans to provide a presentation to the Nevada County Transportation Commission on September 17th regarding the Public/Private Roads Project followed with a presentation to the Board of Supervisors on September 23rd.

As described on the California Road Charge webpage at <https://caroadcharge.com/>, the “Road charge is the concept of a tax on each mile driven instead of a tax on each gallon of fuel purchased. This new way to fund transportation is being studied for California.” The reason for this is because as Californian’s switch to electric or more fuel-efficient vehicles, less gas tax is collected which is the primary funding source for maintaining our roads. A new way of paying for road maintenance long term is needed.

Meanwhile, the Public/Private Roads Project (started April 2023 and concluded in September 2023) tested the ability of current GPS technology to differentiate when a car is driving on a public versus a private road, while protecting the user’s privacy. Currently, when a driver is on a private road, they are still paying the gas tax even though no public money goes to the maintenance of that road. While there is a process to request refunds for the gas tax paid while driving on private roads, many Californians either don’t know or have the time to pursue the process. Could a road charge system create a simpler way to distinguish between public and private roads for travelers?

This pilot explored the technical aspects of location-based mileage reporting, but more importantly, also engaged rural and tribal communities in a conversation about their communities’ priorities in a potential road charge system. These are unique communities that may have unique impacts, and understanding the issues, concerns, and opportunities the new concept presents for them is important to the state’s effort to create a potential road charge system that works for all Californians.

Additionally, Caltrans partnered with The Toll Roads to test the functionality of a tolling agency serving as a third-party commercial account manager in a road charge system. This effort explored the crossover between tolling and road charge and the opportunities to create an easy taxpayer experience and keep administrative costs down.

The full Public/Private Roads Project report is available online at:
<https://www.caroadcharge.com/projects/public-private-roads-project/>

Attachments:

1. Presentation

Item Initiated by: Trisha Tillotson, CDA Director
Approved by: David Garcia, Director of Public Works