

Incline Village Crystal Bay, Citizen Advisory Board  
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Kelly Echeverria  
Washoe County Emergency Management Administrator  
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Re: Summary of Suggestions from Incline Village Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board Regarding Creation of Evacuation Plan for Incline Village Crystal Bay

Dear Washoe County Emergency Management Administrator:

The Incline Village Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board (“IVCB CAB”) met personally with each Washoe County Commissioner and presented (see attached power point) concerns about escalating evacuation risks and the necessity for an updated comprehensive, funded, actionable IVCB evacuation plan.

Valid evacuation concerns and related public safety fears repeatedly arise at IVCB CAB meetings, in conversations throughout IVCB, and at various governmental meetings, including at TRPA and the TTD. The concerns cover a broad range of growing threats, but the most immediate are:

- inadequacy of the current IVCB evacuation plan, which assumes a population of 8,669 (vs. the estimated 23,800+ inclusive of visitors), and an assumed 3,824 vehicles to be evacuated, a sizable undercount of current data recording 20,000+ vehicles in peak summer;
- limited number and type of access roads, with continual partial closures from construction during the months May – November. This has not been adequately considered; and
- added evacuation demands caused, in part, by decisions of the several governmental bodies regulating IVCB, favoring higher, denser, and more concentrated residential construction and population, plus ever-increasing IVCB, NV State Parks, TTD and TRPA attractions, which further exacerbate already unsafe evacuation conditions for residents, workers and visitors.
- None of the above are included in the current evacuation plan. Going forward, risk mitigation recommendations must be routinely and thoroughly considered by the Board of County Commissioners.

A CAB topic in February 2024 included collecting suggestions on ways to address, reduce and treat evacuation risks, for submission to you. Also attached are three written public comments, including a Declaration signed by a group of retired fire fighters addressing evacuation perils in denser town centers, also known as evacuation “choke points”. Their observations encompass many years of firefighting experience.

CAB Member attendees and the public in attendance developed the suggestions below for creation of an evacuation plan for Incline Village Crystal Bay, which the CAB has assembled below and forwards to you:

1. Retain a disaster evacuation expert to focus on public safety (i.e. an impartial expert without prior ties to Washoe County or Lake Tahoe agencies, who is not counseled or directed to satisfy a development or other business agenda) to gather data as to how many persons can safely be evacuated from IVCB within available road capacity, to project what current and future evacuation populations will be, and to analyze

- if the current and future evacuation populations can be safely evacuated. The expert should recommend best practices for evaluating all aspects of evacuation, with the goal that the updated plan utilize the most current data and best achievable technology, whether it be a roadway-by-roadway evacuation capacity analysis, an intersection-by-intersection analysis, or some other proven approach. The expert should then recommend best practices to treat the risks identified.
2. Ascertain actual visitor population during peak summer and holiday periods, not averaged visitor populations throughout the year, that seeks this information from NDOT, Sand Harbor, IVGID, the North Lake Tahoe Visitor Bureau, cellular and broadband services operating in IVCB and rental platform operating in IVCB.
  3. Model a range of worst-case traffic/evacuation population scenarios, including actual and projected July/August populations, and projected peak winter ski season populations.
  4. Develop data/technology driven thresholds for predicting evacuation times so the expert analysis and best practices can achieve safe and reasonable wildfire evacuation times.
  5. Analyze the impacts on evacuation risks tied to both already approved and currently under consideration Town Center and Special Area zoning , to the extent that these increase both potential evacuation population and density.
  6. Analyze current and future potential evacuation needs once both private and public projects now approved on Highway 28 through Incline Village and Crystal Bay are built-out and occupied.
  7. Include in the analysis the adjoining congested Placer and Carson County roadways and potential additional evacuation populations.
  8. Include analysis of the safety assumptions on current proposed Shelter locations in IVCB, including an assessment of whether shelter in place is a reasonable assumption for IVCB terrain and conditions, and analyze shelter in place capacities given actual and potential evacuation populations.
  9. Include special planning for Tyner, Tyrolean Village, and other large areas with a one vehicle access point.
  10. Assess ongoing construction projects and their impact on road closures as part of evacuation process (i.e. Hwy 28 being partially closed toward Carson City during the next 3 years due to IVGID effluent pipeline and NDOT road construction, the impact of the road closure on Hwy 28 in Crystal Bay for construction storage on the highway by private home builders, the impact of 1500 truckloads of dirt exported from the Waldorf Astoria project, etc.) The expert should then propose policies and rules for responding to requests for similar future activities.
  11. Improve cellular data and broadband data for access to emergency management information applications and systems.
  12. Review and recommend risk management approaches to address illegal parking by visitors on Hwy 28 due to attractions like Sand Harbor and the multi-use path to Sand Harbor, and future planned attractions in IVCB (i.e. Hwy 28 ticketing, Sand Harbor parking reservation system, potentially require transport other than private vehicles to attractions, like the IVCB visitor center access to George Whittell house tours).
  13. Where possible, physically widen shoulders and add turn outs on Hwy 28 (banned from parking).
  14. The Washoe Tahoe Transportation Plan states Hwy 28 was built for a maximum capacity of 13,900 vehicle trips per day, but in July 2023 NDOT reported an average of 18,000 vehicle trips per day on Highway 28. Evaluate what this means in terms of safety of the road for evacuation use.
  15. Per the TRPA website, between May and October, the international destination attraction known as the East Shore Trail daily pedestrian and bike use counts often exceed 1,000 counts per day. Yet, our agencies

appear to have no plan to effectively assist with safe evacuation or warning of the East Shore trail users. This should be analyzed in the new evacuation study.

16. Train the community for evacuation, once the plan is in place, and practice up to and including worst case scenario evacuations.
17. Once the evacuation risk analysis is complete, assess evacuation as part of any new development approval process.
18. Until the risks are fully analyzed do not add to IVCB population. This would potentially only be a 6–9-month delay in processing development approvals if an evacuation expert is hired and commences the work promptly.
19. Investigate if alternative routes could be opened in the event of evacuation (i.e. Old Mt. Rose highway, fire trails, bicycle path expansion to potentially be a viable vehicle lane in time of emergency evacuation, etc.) If such potential alternate evacuation routes exist, maintain them, and clearly notify the public.
20. Include an IVCB representative on emergency evacuation plan review boards and committees, and present a draft plan at IVCB CAB meetings for review and comment.
21. Consider the installation of a siren emergency evacuation warning system for IVCB.
22. Analyze the impact on evacuation of re-zoning Highway 431 as a school zone, and if such zoning remains in place, what mitigations should be required to avoid this re-zoning adversely impacting emergency evacuation.

The CAB had several other recommendations. They can be found in the attached public comments and in the photograph of the handwritten notes taken at the February meeting.

Finally, Kelly, the community knows you truly care about excellence in emergency management. Please let IVCB know what we can do to assist you in getting the resources you need to ensure safe evacuation for all residents, workers, and visitors to Incline Village Crystal Bay. We thank you for protecting us!

Respectfully,

*Incline Village Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board*  
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