

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2024
TO: EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: WOODROW DELORIA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The following is an overview of the issues, projects, and coordination currently being advanced by EDCTC.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Transportation Demand Management

Sierra and Schnell schools participated in the International Walk to School Day on October 7, 2024. Each school had over 100 students walking to school in large groups, accompanied by teachers and parents. The event was supported by the Marshall Foundation and the schools' dedicated parent clubs. The City of Placerville Police, El Dorado County Sheriff's and Fire Departments, and volunteers from Placerville SHIELD were present to ensure the safety of all participants.

Regional Transportation Plan

EDCTC staff have continued work on the Policy and Action Elements of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Staff have finalized the project lists for streets, highways and roadways, active transportation, and transit in coordination with El Dorado County, El Dorado Transit, City of Placerville, and SACOG staff. With the draft project list now finalized, EDCTC staff will transmit it to the environmental consultant to begin work on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR). EDCTC retains the flexibility to add projects through our ongoing public outreach process as well as after the RTP is adopted, should new projects come forward.

Four Regional Transportation Plan Advisory Committee meetings have been held thus far in January, April, July, and October 2024. The next phase of RTP outreach will be done in coordination with the Next Generation Transportation Investments Strategy Social Pinpoint interactive mapping effort. Additionally, staff are working with our EIR consultant to prepare a comprehensive informational video for the RTP.

Next Generation Transportation Investments Strategy

EDCTC was awarded \$217,124 in Sustainable Transportation Planning grant funding for the preparation of a "Next Generation Transportation Investments Strategy" (Next Gen Strategy), to provide data, analytics, and information to support transportation investments across the west slope of El Dorado County. The consultant team prepared and launched a public outreach strategy and comprehensive transportation survey earlier this year. Project mapping for both roadway and active transportation projects was recently completed. On October 23, EDCTC launched an interactive Social Pinpoint mapping website to gather additional input from the public on the proposed projects, which will be further analyzed for performance measurement and prioritization in the Next Gen Strategy.

El Dorado County and City of Placerville Active Transportation

EDCTC has taken responsibility for the collection of bicycle and pedestrian counter data from counters located on multi-use trails on the west slope. EDCTC is also supporting the El Dorado County Department of Transportation with the recent installation of temporary counters in the Pollock Pines area. The post-construction counts are required by the State Active Transportation Program for the recently completed Pony Express Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements project.

State Active Transportation Program

The Call for Projects for Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 7 was released in late March 2024, and applications were due on June 17, 2024. EDCTC supported El Dorado County Transportation staff in the development of two applications: one for the Ponderosa Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements project and the other for the Henningson Park/Lotus Road Multi-Use Trail project. There has been a statewide reduction in available ATP funds which has significantly reduced the amount of funding available through the statewide ATP.

The California Transportation Commission announced the Statewide ATP funding recommendations on November 1. Unfortunately, neither of the submitted projects for El Dorado County were recommended for funding. EDCTC also supported El Dorado County's efforts to prepare a revised application for the Ponderosa Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements project for the SACOG Regional Funding Round which was due on September 30. SACOG is currently working through their selection process. The SACOG Regional Funding Round also has less funding available this year, with only \$4,700,000 available for projects in the entire SACOG six-county region.

PARTNER AGENCY COORDINATION

El Dorado Transit Authority

For the month of September 2024, ridership across all three modes of service trended up. Overall fiscal year-to-date ridership was up 29.8% compared to the previous fiscal year. In September 2024, systemwide monthly passenger trips increased 31.4% compared to September 2023. Demand Response ridership increased 3.5%. Local Fixed Route ridership increased 24.5%, and Commuter ridership increased 86.3%. For the third month in a row Commuter ridership increased by over 70% compared to the same month in the previous year. El Dorado Transit continues to monitor commuter ridership trends as the Governor required state workers to return to the office. The Sacramento/Tahoe Connector service showed a slight decrease of 1.8% in September 2024 compared to September 2023.

El Dorado County

EDCTC is monitoring County project allocation requests, bid awards, and planning activities for EDCTC related projects. EDCTC staff is also monitoring development activity, providing comment letters, and attending County planning TAC meetings when warranted. EDCTC regularly collaborates with El Dorado County staff to amend the SACOG MTIP for El Dorado County DOT projects.

Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is providing Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program (WCPP) discretionary grants to reduce wildlife vehicle collisions (WVCs) while improving habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species. EDCTC worked with a dedicated member of the public, Lisa Morgan, and staff from En2 Resources to prepare and submit a Wildlife Crossing Program Grant Application before the September 4 deadline. The application requested \$1.7 million in federal funding to investigate and identify the highest priority locations for improvements to reduce WVCs along the US 50 Corridor within the project area. The project area spans from El Dorado Hills to the existing wildlife undercrossing just west of Placerville. The project will complete environmental permitting and engineering design for at least one new wildlife under-crossing (box culvert), improvements to existing culverts, and the installation of between 5 and 7 miles of new barrier fencing to mitigate the high incidence of WVCs. US 50, between the Sacramento region and South Lake Tahoe, is one of the top designated "hotspots" in the State of California for WVCs and mortality. Grant award announcements are anticipated in early in 2025.

City of Placerville

State Climate Adaptation Program

At the December 2023 California Transportation Commission (CTC) meeting, the City of Placerville

and EDCTC were awarded Climate Adaptation Program funding for the US 50 Trip to Green Congestion Management and Resiliency Strategy. The \$3.75 million will support the completion of the Environmental Approvals, Engineering Design, and Right-of-Way to install the necessary infrastructure to conduct Trip to Green on an as-needed basis.

An allocation request for \$800,000 in funding for the PA/ED phase was approved by the CTC at their August 2024 meeting. The City of Placerville released an RFP for consulting services for Environmental Documentation and Preliminary Engineering. One proposal was received, and EDCTC supported the City of Placerville in consultant procurement in partnership with Caltrans.

SACOG

Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

EDCTC is working with SACOG, El Dorado County, and the City of Placerville on the next update of the MTP/SCS (2025 Blueprint). EDCTC has collaborated with SACOG, the City of Placerville, and El Dorado County DOT to update projects in the MTIP and complete work on a comprehensive project list for the MTP and EDCTC RTP. EDCTC is also participating in the SACOG planning processes for the Mobility Zones Study and the US 50 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan. EDCTC staff are also coordinating with SACOG on the Regional Trails Implementation Plan.

EDCTC PROJECT OVERSIGHT AND ADMINISTRATION

Partner Agency Project Delivery

EDCTC is responsible for oversight of project delivery regarding transportation funding programmed through approval of the Commission. One aspect of this oversight is ensuring that project invoicing is submitted in accordance with the funding requirements for various state and federal funding sources administered by Caltrans. Caltrans Local Assistance requires local jurisdictions to invoice regularly to ensure the timely use of funds and retain all funds programmed for a given project. Caltrans monitors project delivery closely and maintains a published list of those projects that have not been invoiced within the last six months or more, known as the "Inactive List". This list is published on the Caltrans website for local agencies, such as EDCTC, to monitor and work with local cities and counties to ensure invoices are submitted in a timely manner. Ultimately, if an agency does not submit an invoice within 11 months and does not provide justification as to why, the obligated funds could be removed from the project and programmed elsewhere.

For the second consecutive month, neither the City of Placerville nor El Dorado County has any projects on the inactive list.

STATE TRANSPORTATION POLICY, FUNDING, and LEGISLATION

Transportation Policy

Caltrans System Investments Strategy

In early March, Caltrans released the Draft Caltrans System Investment Strategy (CSIS) for review and comment. The review period was open until April 15, 2024. EDCTC staff have been engaged with Caltrans and the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) throughout the development of this recent draft, providing many comments and suggestions along the way. The Draft CSIS document and comment form can be found here: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/division-of-transportation-planning/corridor-and-system-planning/csis>. CSIS is intended to be the guiding policy document for Caltrans to lead climate action and advance social equity through targeted transportation investments that are in alignment with the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI, 2021) set forth by CalSTA. CSIS will be used by Caltrans to determine how investments are made on the state system to support the policies and targets set in motion by Governor Newsom's two Executive Orders N-19-19 and N-79-20. EDCTC staff will be submitting

additional comments on the Draft CSIS to advocate that consideration and recognition be given to rural context, resource limitations, climate threats, high visitation, and other issues and opportunities facing our rural and suburban transportation network.

California Legislation

The California Legislature began their final recess for the year. They will reconvene after the November elections on December 2, 2024. August 31, 2024, was the last day for each house to pass bills. Some of the relevant bills that Governor Newsom is now considering for signature or veto include the following:

AB 1924 – Nguyen-Stephanie (D): Sacramento Regional Transit District.

The Sacramento Regional Transit District Act provides for the formation of the Sacramento Regional Transit District, with specified powers and duties related to providing public transit services. The act authorizes the district to comprise the Cities of Citrus Heights, Davis, Elk Grove, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, Roseville, Sacramento, West Sacramento, and Woodland, the territory of the County of Sacramento that is the same area as the urban service area of the county, and other specified portions of the County of Yolo, provided those cities and counties have agreed to annexation by the district, as specified. This bill would authorize the district to also comprise the Cities of Galt and Isleton, and the unincorporated portions of the County of Sacramento where the county has declared a need for the district to operate, provided the cities and county agree to annexation, as specified.

AB 2678 – Wallis (R): Vehicles: high-occupancy vehicle lanes.

Current state law authorizes the Department of Transportation to designate certain lanes for the exclusive use of high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs). Current federal law authorizes, until September 30, 2025, a state to allow specified alternate fuel and plug-in electric or hybrid vehicles to use lanes designated for HOVs. Current state law authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue decals or other identifiers to qualified vehicles, as specified. Current state law allows a vehicle displaying a valid decal or identifier issued pursuant to these provisions to be operated in a lane designated for the exclusive use of HOVs regardless of the occupancy of the vehicle. These existing state laws, by operation of their provisions, become inoperative on the date the federal authorization expires. Current state law also repeals these provisions on September 30, 2025. This bill would extend the repeal date of these provisions until January 1, 2027.

SB 936 – Seyarto (R): Department of Transportation: study: state highway system: road safety

Would require the Department of Transportation to conduct a study to identify certain locations in the state highway system about vehicle collisions, projects that could improve road safety at each of those locations, and common factors, if any, contributing to the delay in the delivery of those projects. The bill would require the department to post the study on its internet website on or before January 1, 2026.

FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION AND FUNDING

EDCTC staff is working with County, City of Placerville, and El Dorado Transit partners to consider, and to apply for, new and expanded competitive grant programs in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) anticipated to launch over the course of the next year. Given the recent change in administration, EDCTC will be working closely with regional, state, and federal partners to track and understand any changes to the current surface transportation bill. Some of the programs that continue to present opportunity, pending any changes by the new administration, include the following:

- **Safe Streets for All (\$6 Billion)** – This program will provide funding directly to local and tribal governments to support their efforts to advance “vision zero” plans and other improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.
- **Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants (\$15 Billion)** – RAISE grants support surface transportation projects of local and/or regional significance.

- **Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants (\$14 Billion)** – INFRA grants will offer needed aid to freight infrastructure by providing funding to state and local government for projects of regional or national significance. The BIL also raises the cap on multimodal projects to 30% of program funds.
- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low and No Emission Bus Programs (\$5.6 Billion)** – BIL expands this competitive program which provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities.
- **FTA Buses + Bus Facilities Competitive Program (\$2.0 Billion)** – This program provides competitive funding to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities.
- **MEGA Projects (\$15 Billion)** – This new National Infrastructure Project Assistance grant program will support multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects of national or regional significance.
- **Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program (\$8.7 Billion)** – PROTECT will provide \$7.3 billion in formula funding to states and \$1.4 billion in competitive grants to eligible entities to increase the resilience of our transportation system. This includes funding for evacuation routes, coastal resilience, making existing infrastructure more resilient, or efforts to move infrastructure to nearby locations not continuously impacted by extreme weather and natural disasters.
- **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) competitive grants for nationally significant bridges and other bridges (\$15.77 Billion)** – This new competitive grant program will assist state, local, federal, and tribal entities in rehabilitating or replacing bridges, including culverts. Large projects and bundling of smaller bridge projects will be eligible for funding.
- **Charging and fueling infrastructure discretionary grants (Up to \$2.5 Billion)** – This discretionary grant program will provide up to \$2.5 billion in funding to provide convenient charging where people live, work, and shop.
- **Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (\$1 Billion)** – This new competitive program will provide dedicated funding to state, local, MPO, and tribal governments for planning, design, demolition, and reconstruction of street grids, parks, or other infrastructure.
- **FHWA Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (\$1.78 Billion)** – This discretionary program provides funding for the construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of nationally significant projects within, adjacent to, or accessing Federal and tribal lands. BIL amends this program to allow smaller projects to qualify for funding and allows 100% federal share for tribal projects.
- **Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program (\$1 Billion)** – The SMART Grant program will be a programmed competition that will deliver competitive grants to states, local governments, and tribes for projects that improve transportation safety and efficiency.
- **Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (\$2 Billion)** – This new competitive grant program will improve and expand surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas, increasing connectivity, improving safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth.

EVENTS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED *(since the last Commission meeting October 3, 2024)*

10/7/24	SACOG Policy and Innovation Meeting
10/9/24	Next Gen Study Meeting Regarding Social Pinpoint
10/10/24	Meeting with Roberts and Company
10/14/24	SACOG/PCTPA/EDCTC Monthly Coordination Meeting
10/15/24	Caltrans/EDCTC Monthly Coordination Meeting – S. Takhar
10/17/24	SACOG Board Meeting
10/17/24	CARTA Meeting

10/23/24	RTP Advisory Committee
10/24/24	Rail Discussion with Supervisor Hidahl
10/28/24	EDCTC TAC Meeting
10/30/24	Southeast Connector Discussion
11/1/24	Camino Signage and Wayfinding Discussion – P. Bush
11/1/24	SACOG Race, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group
11/4/24	CARTA Meeting
11/4/24	Camino Signage and Wayfinding Discussion – L. Boeger
11/5/24	EDC BOS Meeting
11/6/24	Agenda Review with Supervisor Turnboo
11/6/24	SACOG/PCTPA/EDCTC Monthly Coordination Meeting
11/7/24	SACOG Transportation Meeting
11/7/24	EDCTA Board Meeting