

2.1. SIDEWALK SYSTEM EXISTING CONDITIONS

With the exception of the central downtown area, the existing sidewalk system in the City of Placerville is rapidly deteriorating. Many sidewalks are cracked, eroded, uneven or obstructed by foliage. In many cases, sidewalks are elevated above the roadway and lack fence or railing to prevent falls. The average sidewalk width for many of the original sidewalks in the City is four feet.

2.2 SIDEWALK REPAIR – Existing City Code

The City of Placerville has a City Code and Ordinance with regard to sidewalks which includes the following sections; 1) Encroachments to Sidewalk Space, 2) Sidewalk Repairs Required, 3) Notice; Failure to Repair; Lien, 4) Service of Notice, 5) Action for Recovery of Lien (see *Appendix 1*). Section 2 places the responsibility for the repair of sidewalks on the adjacent property owner and reads as follows:

Excerpt from Placerville City Code:

SIDEWALK REPAIRS REQUIRED: It shall be unlawful for any person owning or having charge or control of any building, lot or premises in the City fronting on any portion of an improved street or where a sidewalk is laid, to allow any portion of the sidewalk in front of the building, lot or premises to be out of repair, and the person must at all times keep the sidewalk in such condition that it will not endanger persons or property passing thereon, and will not interfere with public convenience in the use thereof.

2.3 EXISTING CROSSWALKS

Many of the existing crosswalks in the City of Placerville have standard crosswalk striping (two parallel white lines). The crosswalks along the El Dorado Trail within the City of Placerville have two parallel white lines plus a textured and painted asphalt surface within the walking area. This texture and coloration is a nice aesthetic feature, with an added benefit of increased visibility for the crosswalk.

2.4 EXISTING CURB CUTS

Throughout the Main Street area of Placerville, curb cuts, or accessible curb ramps, exist in most locations. Other areas lack curb cuts and will need to be retrofitted with accessible curb ramps. The City of Placerville Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, adopted in April 2005, includes an existing conditions assessment in Chapter Four. Included in the assessment is an inventory of existing/missing curb cuts on each roadway inventoried. The existing conditions assessment is included in the pedestrian plan as Appendix Three.



2.5 PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENT DATA

The California Highway Patrol maintains Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) accident data. The data is contained in the “California Report of Fatal and Injury Motor Vehicle Traffic Collisions.” The most recent data available is from 2003, and the portion relating to bicycles and pedestrians within the City of Placerville is listed in Table 2-1.

TABLE 2-1												
City of Placerville Collisions – 2001-2003												
Year	Collisions						Bicycle Involved					
	Pedestrian Involved						Injury					
	Fatal			Injury			Fatal			Injury		
	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
City of Placerville	0	0	0	2	3	3	0	0	0	1	2	1

2.6 ELEVATED SIDEWALKS

Due to the historic nature, topography, and physical constraints of the City, the pedestrian system was constructed with narrow and, in some locations, elevated sidewalks. Some of the elevated sidewalks do not have a fence or railing to prevent falls.



Elevated sidewalk in Placerville. Photo by Jerry Barton

Elevated sidewalks within the City of Placerville:

- ❑ Bee Street, near Canal Street
- ❑ Clay Street, from US 50 undercrossing to Lincoln Street
- ❑ Coloma Street, between US 50 overcrossing and Spring Street, and there is a significant elevated portion north of Bee Street
- ❑ Bedford Ave, from Coleman Street half-way to Pleasant Street
- ❑ Spring Street, between US 50 and Coloma Street

2.7 PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY STREETScape FEATURES

Including certain features and amenities in the pedestrian environment encourages walking. Several pedestrian friendly features are found on Main Street in the City of Placerville. A list of the features found on Main Street is included below:

- ❑ Trees and landscaping
- ❑ Benches or other street furniture
- ❑ Attractive street lights
- ❑ Attractive trash and recycling receptacles
- ❑ Coordinated street furniture
- ❑ Clocks



Placerville Streetscape feature – Banner and Attractive Streetlight. Photo by Dan Burden



- ❑ Restrooms
- ❑ Public art
- ❑ Banners (where permitted) and flags
- ❑ Food vendors
- ❑ Information kiosks
- ❑ Fountains
- ❑ Bicycle parking

2.8 PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY DESIGN FEATURES

Certain general design features in development encourage pedestrian travel. Some of the existing pedestrian-friendly design features already existing in the City of Placerville are included in Table 2-2 below.

TABLE 2-2	
LOCATION	DESIGN FEATURE
<i>Downtown, Placerville Drive, Broadway</i>	<i>Mixed Land Uses</i> – Makes it possible for people to walk between land uses i.e., from home to work, from home to shopping, from work to restaurants, etc.
<i>Downtown, Placerville Drive, Broadway</i>	<i>Good Transit Access</i> – Encourages a mode of travel that stimulates walking at either end of the trip.
<i>Along the El Dorado Trail</i>	<i>Textured or Colored Crosswalks</i> – Draws more attention to pedestrians, increasing safety and enhancing the aesthetics of the walking area.
<i>Downtown area, Canal Street area</i>	<i>Narrowed Streets</i> – Provides for easy crossing in busy pedestrian areas, makes walking more desirable, brings land uses closer to pedestrians and slows traffic.
<i>Downtown</i>	<i>Sidewalks Adjacent to Businesses and Storefronts</i> – Makes access more convenient than those with parking separating sidewalks from entrances. This is safer for pedestrians as well. Sidewalks next to businesses attract window shoppers and make for pleasant walking environments.
<i>Downtown</i>	<i>Zero Lot Line Zoning</i> – Allows buildings to abut one another, keeping the distance between businesses convenient for walkers.
<i>Downtown</i>	<i>Lower Speed Limits</i> – Makes for safe, quiet, more pleasant walking in high pedestrian areas.
<i>Downtown</i>	<i>Design Standards for Commercial Signage</i> – Enhances the aesthetics of public space.



2.9 WALK TO SCHOOL DAY/WALKING SCHOOL BUSES

Placerville’s first Walk to School Day was held in October of 2004. Several community members and community officials participated. Over 150 children walked to Sierra Elementary School from two locations in downtown Placerville. The event helped encourage children to walk to school and created awareness of the condition of sidewalk and crosswalk facilities in the City near Sierra School. In 2005, the event was expanded to include Schnell Elementary School, and 276 children walked to school. Children walked to school in groups led by parents and community leaders on specified routes. These “Walking School Buses” reduce traffic around schools, provide adult supervision for children and encourage physical activity. Some Cities throughout the Country have embraced the idea of Walking School Buses and implemented programs support supervised walking school buses year-round.



A “Walking School Bus” ready to depart for school at the 2004 Walk to School Day event

2.10 CURRENT OPINIONS ON PLACERVILLE SIDEWALKS

In January 2006, 3,400 surveys were sent out with City water bills to gather input from city residents regarding several issues related to pedestrian circulation. Nearly 900 surveys were returned, and the tabulated results are presented on the following pages.

1. “As a pedestrian, how comfortable would you be sharing the asphalt roadway with automobiles?”

Very Comfortable	4%
Comfortable	10%
Somewhat Comfortable	13%
Slightly Comfortable	13%
Not Comfortable	59%

2. “Does a lack of sidewalks or poor sidewalk maintenance in the City keep you from walking to work, school, shopping, etc.?”

Yes	35%
No	41%
Occasionally	22%
No Response	2%

3. “How important is it to you that the City has a well-maintained and continuous sidewalk system?”

Very Important	39%
Important	27%



Somewhat Important	17%
Slightly Important	7%
Not important	9%
No Response	1%

4. "Should every street within the City of Placerville have a Sidewalk?"

Yes	21%
No	27%
Whenever practical or feasible	51%
No Response	1%

5. "How important is it to you that sidewalks are located on both sides of the street?"
responses were:

Very Important	12%
Important	15%
Somewhat Important	19%
Slightly Important	15%
Not important	39%
No Response	1%

6. "Should all new development [or construction] be required to install sidewalks on at least one side of the street?"

Yes	79%
No	15%
No Response	6%

7. "Would you support an impact fee on all new construction for the purpose of constructing sidewalks in the City?"

Yes	57%
No	34%
No Response	9%

8. "Current City Code states that property owners with a sidewalk abutting their property are responsible for construction and maintenance of that sidewalk. Do you feel this is a fair or unfair requirement?"

Fair	16%
Unfair	76%
No Response	8%

9. "Would you support a City-Wide Assessment [Tax] for construction and maintenance of sidewalks?"

Yes	44%
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No	45%
No Response	11%

