

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The El Dorado County 2025-2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was developed under the direction of the El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC). The RTP serves as a guide for the systemic development of a balanced, comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system. This system encompasses but is not limited to: highways, streets, interregional roadways, public transit, aviation, freight/goods movement, active transportation (bikeways and pedestrian facilities), transportation systems management, and intelligent transportation systems. The RTP is action-oriented and pragmatic, considering both the short-term (up to 10 years) and long-term (10 to 20 years) planning periods.

Federal regulations for the development of RTPs are directed at States and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), as specified in 23 CFR 450.202. The primary federal requirements for RTPs are detailed in the statewide/nonmetropolitan transportation planning and metropolitan transportation planning rules – Title 23 CFR Part 450 and 771 and Title 49 CFR Part 613. These regulations were updated by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and published in the May 27, 2016, Federal Register.

Since the mid-1970s, with the passage of AB 69 (Chapter 1253, Statutes of 1972), California state law has mandated the preparation of RTPs to address transportation issues and guide local and state decision-makers in shaping California's transportation infrastructure.

California statute relating to RTP development is primarily contained in Government Code Section 65080. State planning requirements apply to state-designated RTPAs

Where applicable, RTPs must be consistent with federal planning and programming requirements and adhere to the RTP Guidelines adopted by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) pursuant to Government Code Section 65080(d). Furthermore, the CTC is prohibited from programming projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that are not identified in an RTP.

State law requires each RTPA to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) not less than every five years in non-urban regions.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Regional Transportation Plan is to foster and promote the safe, efficient management, operation, and development of a regional transportation system that, when integrated with land use planning, will serve the mobility needs of people, commerce, and goods.

RTPs are developed by RTPAs in collaboration with Caltrans and other key stakeholders, including local and regional agencies and users of the transportation system. The RTP aims to:

- Establish regional transportation goals
- Identify needs, deficiencies, and constraints
- Analyze potential solutions
- Estimate available funding sources
- Propose strategic transportation investments

Regional transportation planning led by RTPAs is a collaborative process with federal, state, tribal governments/agencies, as well as other key stakeholders, and the general public. The process is designed to foster involvement by all interested parties, such as the general public, community groups, the business community, Tribal Governments, environmental organizations, and local jurisdictions, through a proactive public participation process conducted by the RTPA. It is essential to extend public participation to those traditionally underserved by the transportation system and services in the region. Engaging the public early in the planning stage helps ensure a smoother project process and minimizes potential delays. The RTP is developed to provide a clear vision of the regional transportation goals, objectives, and strategies. This vision must be within reason and fiscally constrained. In addition to providing a vision, the RTP has many specific functions, including:

1. Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential for new transportation options within the region
2. Projecting/estimating the future needs for travel, safety, and goods movement
3. Identifying and documenting specific actions necessary to address regional mobility and accessibility needs
4. Identifying guidance and documenting public policy decisions by local, regional, state, and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures, financing, and future growth patterns
5. Identifying transportation improvements to serve as a foundation for the:
(a) Development of the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), (b) Facilitating the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 integration process and (c) Identifying project purpose and need
6. Employing performance measures that demonstrate the effectiveness transportation improvement projects in meeting the intended goals
7. Promoting consistency between the California Transportation Plan (CTP), the RTP and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, Tribal Governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs
8. Providing a forum for: (1) participation and cooperation and (2) facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues that transcend regional boundaries; and,
9. Engaging community-based organizations, the public, federal, state, and local agencies, Tribal Governments, and local elected officials early in the transportation planning process to ensure their involvement in discussions and decisions regarding social, economic, air quality, and environmental impacts of transportation.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN VISION

The regional vision provides a framework for transportation planning decisions based on our shared values and goals. This vision illustrates how EDCTC, within a larger regional context, will contribute to the region's overall quality of life.

RTP 2045 VISION

Empowering Connectivity, Promoting Resiliency, Preserving Heritage:

EDCTC envisions a transportation future that reflects and enhances the character of rural, urban, and suburban communities. It prioritizes connectivity, adapts to climate change, builds resilience, and serves all users of the transportation system throughout El Dorado County.

Our vision is a Regional Transportation Plan that:

- **Enhances Mobility:** Ensuring efficient and accessible transportation options that connect rural areas, agritourism hubs, and urban centers, promoting economic growth and safe, sustainable communities.

- **Embraces Innovation:** Leveraging emerging technologies to enhance efficiency, safety, and quality of life for residents and visitors.
- **Ensures Equitable Access:** Providing inclusive transportation options, and bridging gaps to ensure that everyone can participate in the opportunities offered by El Dorado County.
- **Celebrates Rural Heritage and Identity:** Respecting and preserving the distinct identity of rural communities, while addressing their unique transportation needs.
- **Empowers Community Engagement:** Encouraging public involvement, allowing residents to shape the transportation future of El Dorado County..
- **Facilitates Sustainable Living:** Promoting sustainable transportation choices, reducing environmental impact, and fostering healthier lifestyles.

As EDCTC moves forward, it commits to actively engaging with communities, listening to their needs, and adapting the plan to reflect the evolving aspirations of El Dorado County. Together, we will shape a transportation future that honors our past, celebrates our present, and secures a sustainable future for generations to come.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Government Code Section 65080 mandates that RTPs include the following components:

1. A **Policy Element:** Identifies mobility goals, objectives, and policies of the region.
 - Outlines the implementation process of the RTP to guide decision-makers.
2. An **Action Element:** Defines programs and actions to implement the RTP per its goals, objectives, and policies.
 - Discusses institutional and legal actions needed to implement the RTP and action
 - Establishes priorities for regional transportation programs.
3. A **Financial Element:** Summarizes project costs within a financially constrained environment.
 - Compares anticipated revenues with projected costs.
 - Develops strategies to fund otherwise unfunded projects.

The RTP must comply with federal planning and programming requirements and adhere to the RTP California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted RTP Guidelines (Government Code Section 65080(d)). Furthermore, the CTC cannot program projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) unless they are included in an RTP.

State Climate Change Legislation and Executive Orders

SB 32 – California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: Emissions Limit

In recognition that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction is critical for the protection of all areas of the state, particularly for the state’s most disadvantaged communities, which are most affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, SB 32 (Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016) was signed into law on September 8, 2016. SB 32 extends the requirements of AB 32 by mandating a GHG emissions reduction of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels no later than December 31, 2030. Furthermore, SB 32 authorizes the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to adopt rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions. CARB must carry out the process to achieve GHG emissions reductions in a way that benefits the state’s most disadvantaged communities and ensures transparency and accountability to the public and Legislature.

AB 1279 -The California Climate Crisis Act of 2021

This law establishes the policy of the state to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045; to sustain net negative GHG emissions thereafter; and to ensure that by 2045, statewide anthropogenic GHG emissions are cut by at least 85 percent from 1990 levels. The bill requires CARB to ensure that the Scoping Plan updates, identifies, and recommends measures to achieve carbon neutrality, and to develop and implement policies and strategies that enable CO2 removal solutions as well as carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies.

Executive Orders on Climate Change Issues

Combating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a key goal for the state of California. In July 2021, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) released the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), which outlines recommendations for investing discretionary transportation dollars to help mitigate climate change. CAPTI is based on Executive Orders (EO) N-19-19 and N-79-20, issued in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

EOs on climate change provide a critical framework for RTPAs. While EOs apply to State agencies, incorporating climate change policies in RTPs supports the State's effort to reduce per capita GHG emissions and combat the effects of climate change.

Two EOs have been issued since the last update of these guidelines, addressing climate change:

- **N19-19 (September 20, 2019)** calls for leveraging the State's investment portfolio to advance climate leadership and create a climate investment framework. CAPTI was developed in response to this EO (Appendix to be added).
- **N-79-20 (September 23, 2020)** calls for 100% of new in-state sales of passenger cars and trucks to be zero-emission by 2035. N-79-20 also establishes a goal for medium and heavy-duty vehicles in California to be zero-emission by 2045.

These EOs can be online here:

N-19-19: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/9.20.19-ClimateEO-N-19-19.pdf>

N-79-20: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/9.23.20-EO-N-7920-Climate.pdf>

Promoting Public Health and Health Equity

One goal for RTPs is to provide a policy framework promoting the highest level of health for all people, where no person shall be denied benefits or be subjected to discrimination. RTPs often incorporate some or all of the following: air quality and climate change measures, safe routes to school programs, complete streets strategies, equity considerations, transportation safety, strategies to reconnect communities and reduce traffic congestion, and policies to promote transit, biking, and walking. These transportation-related policies and programs foster more accessible, livable, and healthier communities. Local health departments, public health practitioners and advocates, school districts, emergency services, community-based organizations (CBOs), and residents can be valuable partners in promoting public health through RTP development. These partnerships can help maximize the RTP's public health and equity benefits and ensure that the RTP responds to the needs of all communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

In California, the environmental review associated with the RTP and subsequent project delivery process is twofold. RTPAs are responsible for the planning contained in the RTP that precedes project delivery. Typically, a local government, consultant, or Caltrans is responsible for the actual construction of the project (project delivery). California Environmental Quality Act applies to the RTP document, while both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and CEQA may apply to

individual projects that implement the RTP during the project delivery process. Likewise, all RTP CEQA analyses and subsequent transportation project CEQA analyses assess all environmental issue areas identified in the CEQA Guidelines Environmental Checklist Form.

The RTP planning document, as well as the projects listed in it, are considered “projects” for the purposes of CEQA. Subsequent RTP amendments or updates are discretionary actions that can also trigger CEQA compliance. As defined in CEQA Statute Section 21065, a project means “an activity which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and which is any of the following: (a) An activity directly undertaken by any public agency or (b) An activity undertaken by a person which is supported, in whole or in part, through contracts, grants, subsidies, loans, or other forms of assistance from one or more public agencies”.

Many RTPAs prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to analyze the environmental impacts of implementing their RTP. The purpose of the Program EIR is to enable the RTPA to examine the overall effects of the RTP, including broad policy alternatives, program-wide mitigation, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts at a stage when the agency has greater flexibility to avoid unnecessary adverse environmental effects. Additionally, environmental documents subsequently prepared for the individual projects contained in the RTP can be tiered from the Program EIR, saving time and reducing duplicative analysis.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Transportation planning is a collaborative process, led by the RTPA and other key stakeholders in the regional transportation system. Transportation planning activities include visioning, forecasting population and employment, identifying major growth corridors, projecting future land use in conjunction with local jurisdictions, assessing needs, developing capital and operating strategies to move people and goods, and developing a financial plan. The required planning processes are designed to foster involvement by all interested parties, such as the business community, community groups, walking and cycling representatives, public health departments and non-governmental organizations, environmental organizations, the Native American community, neighboring RTPAs, and the general public through a proactive public participation process.

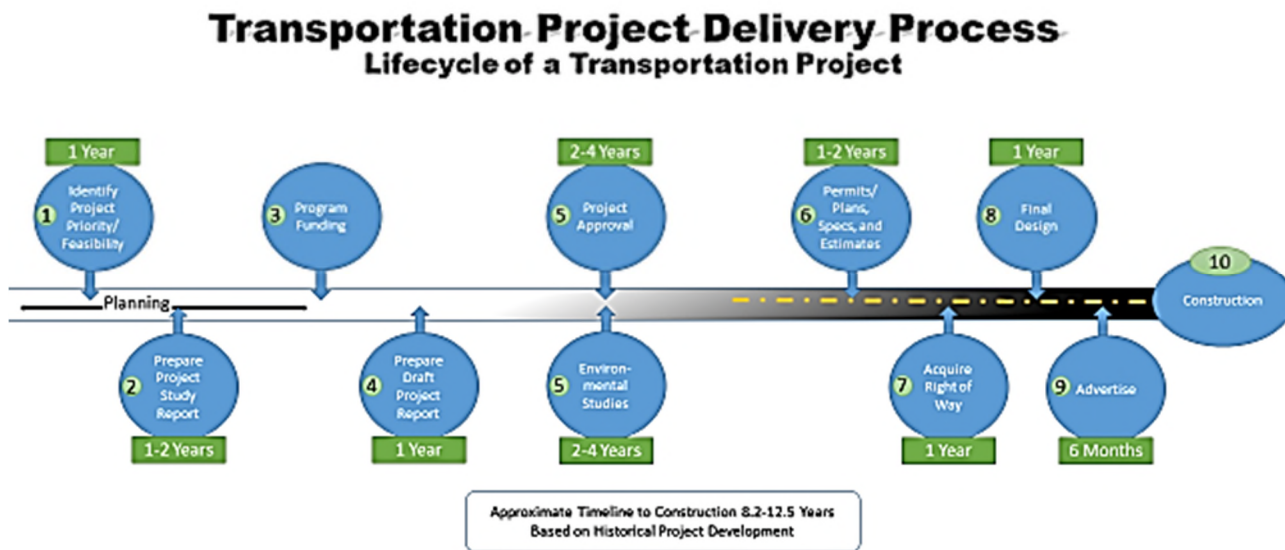
Coordination is the cooperative development of plans, programs, and schedules among agencies and entities with legal standing in order to achieve general consistency. Consultation requires that one or more parties confer with other identified parties following the established process, and prior to taking action(s), consider the views of the other parties and periodically informs them about action(s) taken. Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the EDCTC and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), EDCTC submits the Regional Transportation Plan for inclusion in the SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). This process is important to both the SACOG MTP and the EDCTC RTP, as it allows for a locally developed RTP to be included in the regional air quality conformity process. The MOU also stipulates that EDCTC shall utilize data and analysis methods consistent with those developed by SACOG. This data includes existing and projected travel data, socio-economic data, and travel demand forecasts and assumptions. However, this data is integrated into a locally developed RTP process focused around local consensus on policies, projects, programs, and funding decisions. The El Dorado County 2025-2045 RTP, pending SACOG review, will become the El Dorado County portion of the SACOG 2025-2050 MTP.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN DELIVERY SUCCESS

Delivery of transportation projects is a lengthy process that includes extensive public outreach,

detailed planning, environmental studies, engineering design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. Adding to this the development of funding strategies, the overall life of a project - from planning to construction - can take a great deal of time, as illustrated in Figure 1-1: Transportation Project Lifecycle.

Figure 1-1: Transportation Project Lifecycle



This complex process is one of the many reasons the RTP is developed to address transportation needs over a 20-year period. A long-term planning process allows sufficient time to effectively secure funding and deliver projects. The 2015-2035 and 2020-2040 RTPs each included a 20-year portfolio of multi-modal projects which, in most circumstances, would take at least two decades to deliver.

The completed project lists are included in Appendix 1. The tables highlight the RTP's delivery successes of the RTP over the last five years (2020-2025). Costs included in the delivered project tables are for reference only. These costs represent planning-level estimates during the 2020-2040 process and do not necessarily reflect actual expenditures.