

# CHAPTER 4: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Throughout the planning process for the 2025-2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), EDCTC staff actively engaged with the public, stakeholders, and both regional and local agency staff to identify key transportation issues on the western slope of El Dorado County.

EDCTC staff-initiated work on the 2025-2045 RTP in November of 2023. At that time the EDCTC Board ratified the Stakeholder Advisory Committee Matrix, which includes a diverse cross-section of government agency staff, citizen organizations, and public advocates to engage in the planning process and advise Commission staff on proposed projects and programs (see Appendix ##).

In June of 2024, The Commission approved the Draft RTP Policy Element, including the Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. The RTP Advisory Committee met four times during the plan's development. The EDCTC RTP webpage was regularly updated with information on the plan's progress, including recordings of the virtual advisory committee meetings and the Draft Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. Participation in the RTP Advisory Committee meetings was high, with over 30 members attending each meeting (<https://edctc.org/regional-transportation-plan-2025-2045>).

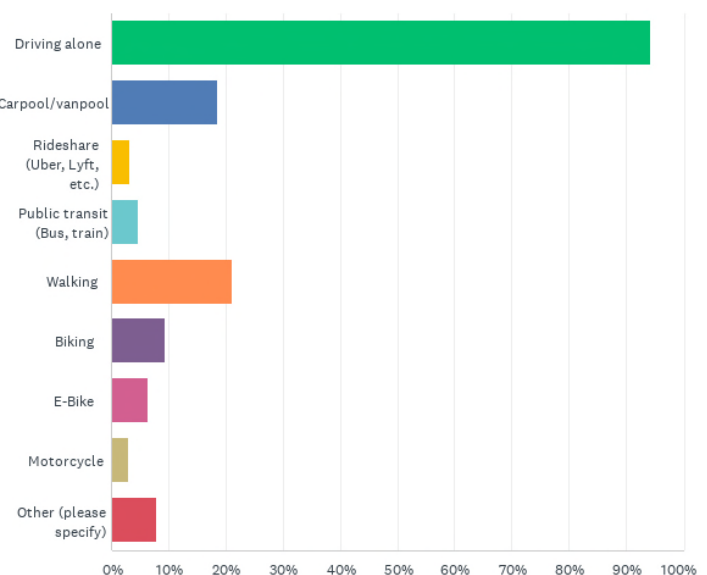
The EDCTC 2025-2045 RTP was also developed in close coordination with the SACOG Blueprint - SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) 2050 update, which followed a similar timeline for adoption.

From May 17, 2024, to June 17, 2024, the El Dorado County Transportation Commission administered an online questionnaire to collect ideas and interests on how community members would like to prioritize transportation investments. The survey was widely distributed via social media platforms, and two in-person pop-up events were held to further engage members of the public who may not typically participate in these public agency planning efforts. 466 community responses were used to inform the Regional Transportation Plan supporting the evaluation, prioritization and performance measurement of the projects proposed in this RTP. The complete survey summary is provided in Appendix ##. Figure 1 displays responses about travel choices captured in the survey.

**FIGURE 1**

### How Do You Typically Travel?

(2024 Transportation Investments Survey)



## SURVEY RESULTS: TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

The 2024 Transportation Investments Survey asked respondents to rank their transportation priorities from highest to lowest, with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. As was expected, the greatest concern among all respondents was road conditions and maintenance efforts followed by safety and then congestion. Their responses are provided in Table 1 below:

**TABLE 1**

Priority	5	4	3	2	1
1 Repaving roads, fixing potholes, and other regular road maintenance	72.51%	11.90%	7.58%	2.81%	5.19%
2 Improving road safety and reducing collisions (i.e. widening shoulders, improving sight distance, curve corrections, improvements at intersections)	46.22%	24.41%	14.90%	8.21%	6.26%
3 Reducing congestion on local roads	30.74%	23.59%	24.68%	11.47%	9.52%
4 Reducing congestion on freeways/highways (US50/State Route 49)	30.15%	23.64%	23.64%	11.93%	10.63%
5 Adding infrastructure and improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists (dedicated paths/lanes, crossings, wayfinding)	26.14%	20.70%	22.00%	14.60%	16.56%
6 Making equitable transportation investments that would benefit underrepresented communities (i.e. low-income residents, rural residents, seniors, communities of color)	18.48%	16.96%	21.74%	16.74%	26.09%
7 Improving local transit routes, increasing frequency and availability of transit	17.07%	15.10%	28.45%	17.29%	22.10%
8 Investing in projects that support improved environmental quality (i.e. electric vehicle charging, carpool lanes, bike lanes, transit)	16.04%	12.53%	20.44%	15.82%	35.16%
9 Providing programs to encourage commuters to use alternatives to driving like carpooling, public transit, or working from home)	10.70%	13.10%	24.24%	17.90%	34.06%

### PRIORITY 1 – ROAD MAINTENANCE

Roadway rehabilitation and ongoing maintenance, including vegetation and storm water management, are becoming increasingly important to ensure safe and effective travel - especially as traffic and congestion intensifies in areas of the county experiencing increased visitation for tourism and recreation across more rural parts of the County. Investing in the upkeep of existing roads, bridges, and rights of way remains a critical priority to maintain a safe and effective transportation network that serves existing needs and supports future growth.

Roadways, bridges, and the associated infrastructure have a finite useful life, necessitating adequate funding for their maintenance and rehabilitation. Moreover, rehabilitation projects may be required to accommodate evolving travel patterns. For example, interchanges may need to be upgraded to

facilitate smoother traffic flow, additional paving might be needed in response to accelerated pavement deterioration increased truck traffic, and extra lanes may need to be added, with shoulders widened or constructed as necessary. Furthermore, as the threat of wildfire continues to plague the region, maintaining the rights-of-way and travel lanes is ever more critical to provide for evacuation preparedness and emergency response.

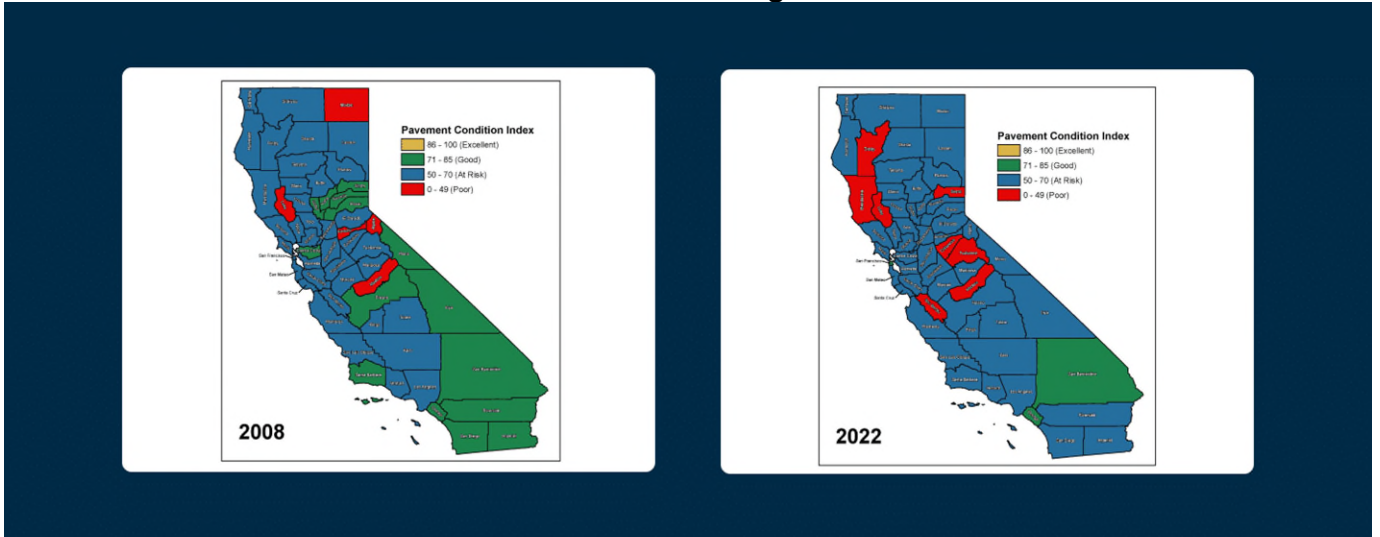
Eighty-one percent of California's pavement is owned and maintained by cities and counties. The California State Association of Counties and League of California Cities, in collaboration with the California Regional Transportation Planning Agencies and the Rural Counties Task Force, released an updated Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment in 2023. According to this assessment, the Pavement Condition Index (PCI), the universal index used to measure the condition of pavement, of local streets and roads has decreased by half a point since 2020. On a scale of zero (failed) to 100 (excellent), the average statewide PCI for local streets and roads is 65 – classified as “At Risk”. Additionally, 54 out of 58 counties have either at-risk or poor pavement conditions. Figure 2 illustrates the changes in the statewide pavement condition since 2008. El Dorado County maintains 1,082 centerline miles of pavement with an average PCI of 63, or “at risk”, as of 2022. Additionally, El Dorado County DOT maintains 76 bridges and a multitude of storm drainage systems, culverts, and other related infrastructure.

Good stewardship of taxpayer funds means preserving and maintaining roads in good condition rather than waiting until they deteriorate or fail, which would necessitate costly repairs or complete replacement. Preventive maintenance treatments (e.g., slurry seals, chip seals, thin overlays) are the most cost-effective means to achieve best management practices (BMPs). In addition to being less expensive, preventive maintenance minimizes disruption to commerce and the public mobility and is more environmentally friendly than extensive rehabilitation or reconstruction.

As pavement conditions deteriorate, the cost to repair them increases exponentially. For example, reconstructing a segment of paved road can cost up to 14 times more than preserving it while it is in good condition and even modest resurfacing is 4 times more expensive than maintaining pavement in BMP condition. In practical terms, 14 miles of roadway can be maintained in a BMP condition for the same cost as reconstructing 1 mile of failed pavement. By elevating local roadway systems to BMP standards, cities and counties can maintain streets and roads at the most cost-effective level – an outcome that is both optimal and fiscally responsible.

Furthermore, as maintenance and rehabilitation projects are undertaken, it is essential to incorporate all transportation modes into design decisions to ensure that pedestrians, bicyclists, auto drivers, large truck operators, and transit services can all travel efficiently and safely. Additionally, integrating maintenance cost plans into project planning will help ensure the long-term sustainability of the transportation system across all modes.

**FIGURE 2 – Statewide Pavement Condition Index Changes between 2008-2022**



During Fiscal Year 2023/24, El Dorado County allocated \$776,708 on asphalt maintenance. An additional \$11,725,635 was spent on various surface treatments, asphalt grinding, and paving contracts to maintain their 1082 miles of western slope roadway at a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 63. These figures exclude costs associated with engineering, equipment, staff time, or maintenance activities related to brush clearing, ditching, or culvert maintenance. The ten-year pavement needs in El Dorado County are estimated at \$671 million in 2022 dollars.

In 2014, the City of Placerville Pavement Management Program estimated an average annual need of \$3 million to elevate 48 miles of roadway (currently at PCI of 52) to a rating of 70 over the next 20 years. Since 2014, the City has paved approximately 20% of these roadways. Accounting for the escalation of construction costs, the City currently estimates a need of \$3.2 million per year to bring the remaining roadways to a PCI rating of 70 over the next 20 years.

The summary of PCI data for El Dorado County, including the City of Placerville and South Lake Tahoe, is presented in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**

Centerline Miles	Lane Miles	Area (Square Yards)	Average Weighted PCI						
			2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
1,399	2,684	21,458,907	58	63	63	62	63	63	63

Source: California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment April 2023

El Dorado County and the City of Placerville each operate pavement management programs to ensure the strategic and timely maintenance of local streets and bridges. However, funding for these improvements remains limited, as statewide funding programs are now primarily focused on transportation investments that address climate change.

## PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING SAFETY

### SAFETY

Improving the safety and efficiency of the complete transportation system is vital to advancing transportation policy and protecting public health. A healthy community design incorporates elements -such as integrated transportation networks, well-designed streets, and supportive zoning and land use policies-that work together to promote public health and safety. Active transportation infrastructure further connects places where people live, learn, work, shop, and play by providing safe and convenient facilities for walking and bicycling.

State funding exists for safety improvement projects for highways, transit, bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safe routes to schools. Nevertheless, the demand for safety improvements far exceeds available funding. Additional funds are available for bridge projects, and for airport upgrades and enhancements that impact safety.

The RTP includes a wide array of transportation system projects that enhance safety for all users. This aligns with the goals of California’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), a statewide, comprehensive, data-driven initiative launched in 2005 to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on public roads. The SHSP is regularly updated to ensure continued progress and meet evolving safety needs.

### Roadway Safety

In 2022, El Dorado County finalized the Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP). The LRSP process involved a comprehensive network screening analysis that identified key priority locations for potential case studies. Table 3 below presents the prioritized project locations within the study area (excluding South Lake Tahoe).

**TABLE 3: El Dorado County Short-List of Priority Locations**

Locations	Crashes	Local CCR Differential	Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)	Notes
Missouri Flat Road and Forni Road	22	-0.03	102	Two pedestrian crashes and three head-ons
Missouri Flat Road and Golden Center Drive	16	-0.04	529	One fatal, three severe injury crashes, two head-ons. Location of future Diamond Springs Connector Project.
Missouri Flat Road and Old Depot Road	6	-0.02	149	One Fatal, Pedestrian, 3 Dark
Lotus Road and Gold Hill/Luneman Road	7	0.21	259	One Fatal, One Severe Injury Crash. Located near a School
Salmon Falls Road between Salmon Valley Lane and Timeless Lane <sup>1</sup>	63	1.89	2213	1 Fatal, 11 Severe, 21 Motorcycle Crashes, 20 Hit Object, 15 Dark, 10 Overturned

Note: 1. 10 Segments along Salmon Falls Road Combined, 7 Miles total

Source: El Dorado County Local Road Safety Plan, Table 3.

[eldoradocounty.ca.gov/files/assets/county/v/1/documents/services/roads-amp-transportation/2022-07-el-dorado-draft-lrsp.pdf](http://eldoradocounty.ca.gov/files/assets/county/v/1/documents/services/roads-amp-transportation/2022-07-el-dorado-draft-lrsp.pdf)

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety**

According to the 2020 El Dorado County Active Transportation Plan<sup>1</sup>, there were 52 reported collisions in the EDCTC planning area involving bicyclists and 49 collisions involving pedestrians during the period of 2013-2017. The most common violation by a bicyclist was riding on the wrong side of the road, which may indicate insufficient bicycle facilities, inadequate safe crossing opportunities, or a lack of knowledge-or disregard for- laws requiring riding with the flow of traffic on the right side of the travel lane or shoulder. In 22 of 49 reported pedestrian-involved collisions, pedestrians were found to be at fault. These incidents were classified as “Pedestrian Violations,” a term commonly used to describe collisions with pedestrians crossing at unmarked crossings. Similarly, the bicyclist violations suggest a lack of adequate crossings or pedestrian facilities.

## **PRIORITIES 3 & 4 –REDUCING CONGESTION ON LOCAL ROADS AND HIGHWAYS**

Throughout the RTP development process, congestion emerged as a consistently cited primary concern on both the state highways and local roads across the western slope of El Dorado County. Although even the most severe congestion in El Dorado County does not rival that of major metropolitan areas, it remains a fundamental issue for residents, local transportation agencies, businesses, and emergency services.

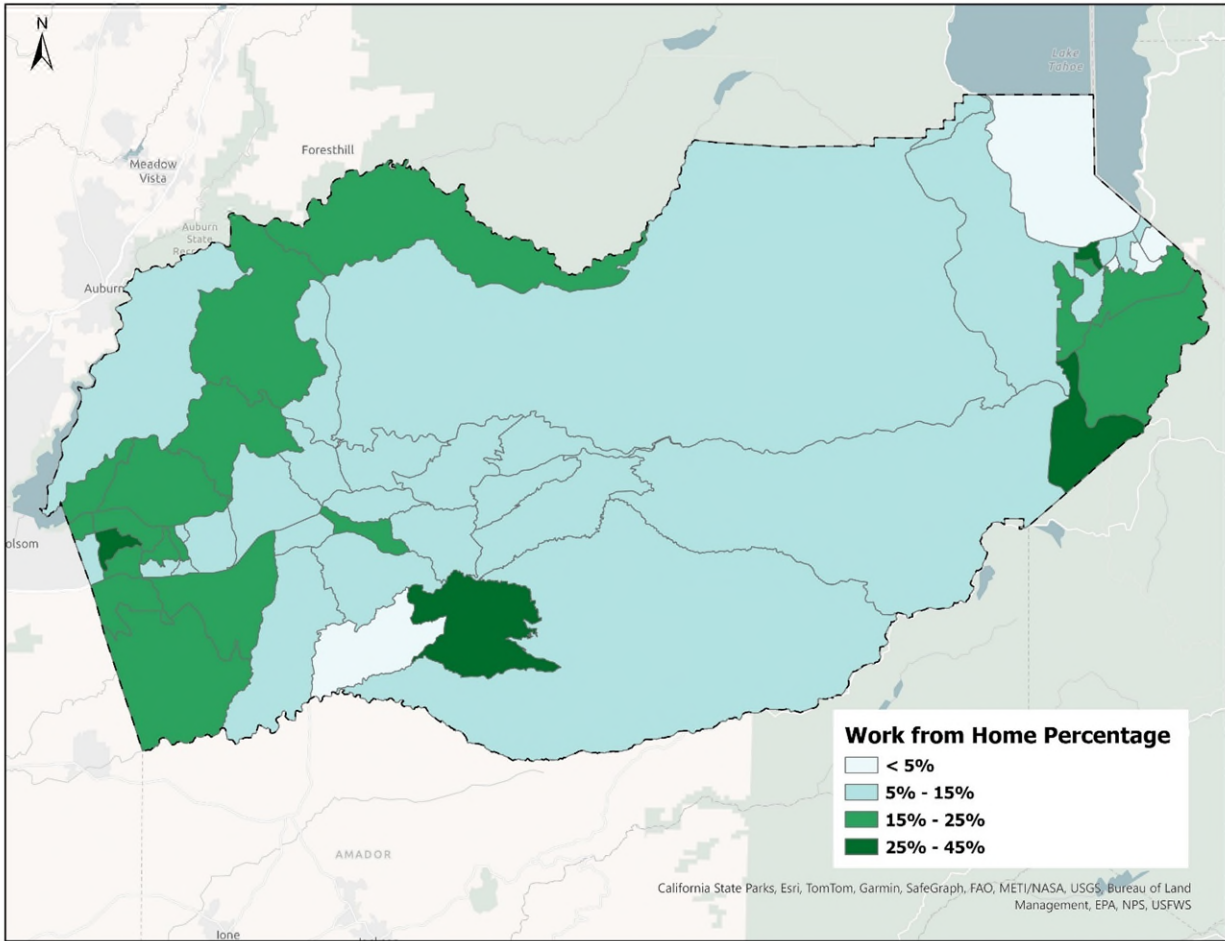
The El Dorado County Department of Transportation’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) Program include several large capital transportation infrastructure projects designed to mitigate congestion resulting from planned growth and development. However, congestion due to interregional tourism and seasonal events remains an issue between US 50 between the western County line and Cameron Park, and especially on US 50 within the City of Placerville.

Most peak-period congestion along US 50 near the county line is attributed to daily commute traffic, largely because approximately 69 percent of El Dorado County residents commute westward out of the County each day (*Next Generation Transportation Investments Strategy, 2025*).

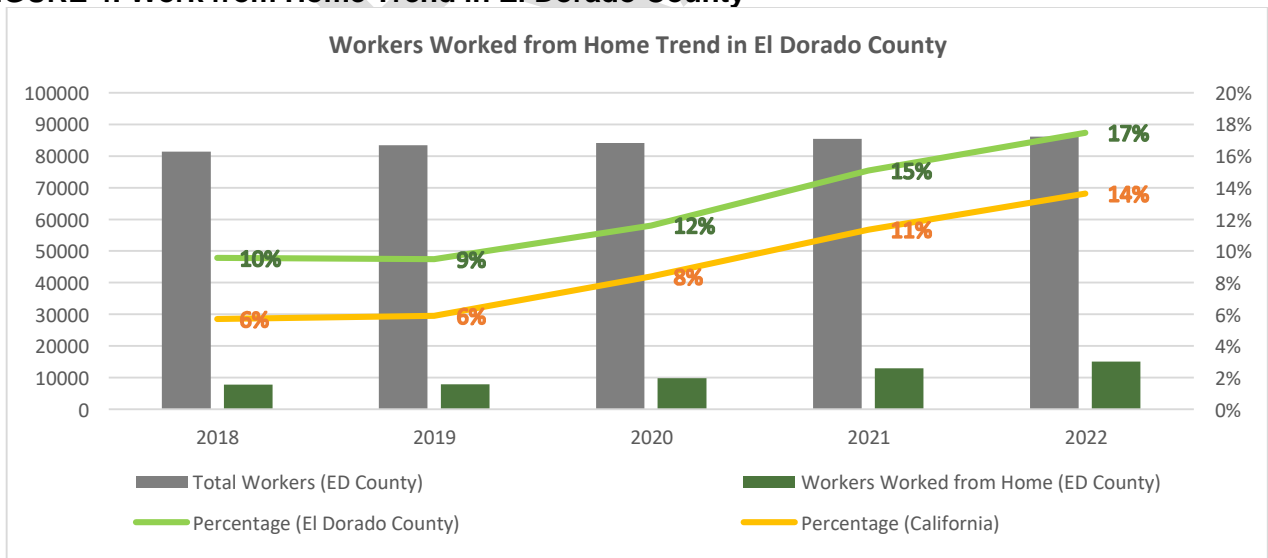
Job growth is expected to increase during the planning period for this RTP. As noted in Chapter 3, over 50,000 new jobs are expected in the western slope of El Dorado County by 2035, with over 60,000 projected by 2050. Despite this growth, El Dorado County will continue to export commuters due to the jobs-housing imbalance, peak-period congestion is likely to persist on US 50 as a result of these commute patterns.

However, it is likely that many of the new jobs based in El Dorado County will be remote or home-based. El Dorado County has a slightly higher percentage of individuals working from home than the statewide average, and that number is projected to increase. Figure 3 shows the percentage of individuals working from home across various census tracts in El Dorado County, while Figure 4 illustrates the trend of employees working from home in El Dorado County compared to the statewide average.

**FIGURE 3: Work from Home Percentage in El Dorado County Census Tracts**



**FIGURE 4: Work from Home Trend in El Dorado County**



Source: Next Generation Transportation Investments Strategy 2025; ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2021 Means of Transportation Map by US DOT

## Interregional Tourism and Recreation Travel

The transportation needs of the recreation and tourism industries continue to significantly influence the transportation infrastructure in El Dorado County. It is essential that the unique transportation demands of recreation-oriented travel be fully considered in all transportation planning. For example, peak travel periods for recreational activities often differ from traditional commute patterns. El Dorado County offers a wide variety of tourism and recreational opportunities, ranging from whitewater rafting and historical tours to wine tasting, agritourism activities, and mountain snow sports. As this economic sector continues to grow, increased demand will be placed on the rural state and local transportation system, necessitating greater planning and focus to serve not only the resident population but also the broader user population. This is even more critical when planning for wildfire evacuation preparedness of the residents and visitors of these often rural or remote areas. The following issues have been identified in various reports and studies regarding interregional tourism and recreation travel along US 50 between the western El Dorado County line and the Tahoe Basin:

- Tourism and recreation travel, as detailed in the Bay to Tahoe Basin Tourism and Recreation Travel Impact Study (2014), can account for 80% or more of daily peak-hour traffic along primary routes such as US 50 in the City of Placerville.
- Over four million visitors from the Bay Area alone generate nearly eight million trips annually to the Lake Tahoe Basin (2014 Bay to Tahoe Basin Recreation Tourism and Travel Impact Study; page ES-2).
- In addition to the millions of trips to and from Lake Tahoe, the Apple Hill™ agritourism area experiences very high seasonal area traffic volumes, with 40% of the eastbound traffic on US 50 during the peak fall season directed toward the Camino area (El Dorado County Sustainable Agritourism Mobility Study, 2016).
- As a percentage of all trips entering the Tahoe Basin, US 50 accommodates more travelers than I-80 during both winter and summer months. In February 2017, 30% of travelers entered from US 50 compared to 27% in July (Linking Tahoe: Corridor Connection Plan, 2017).

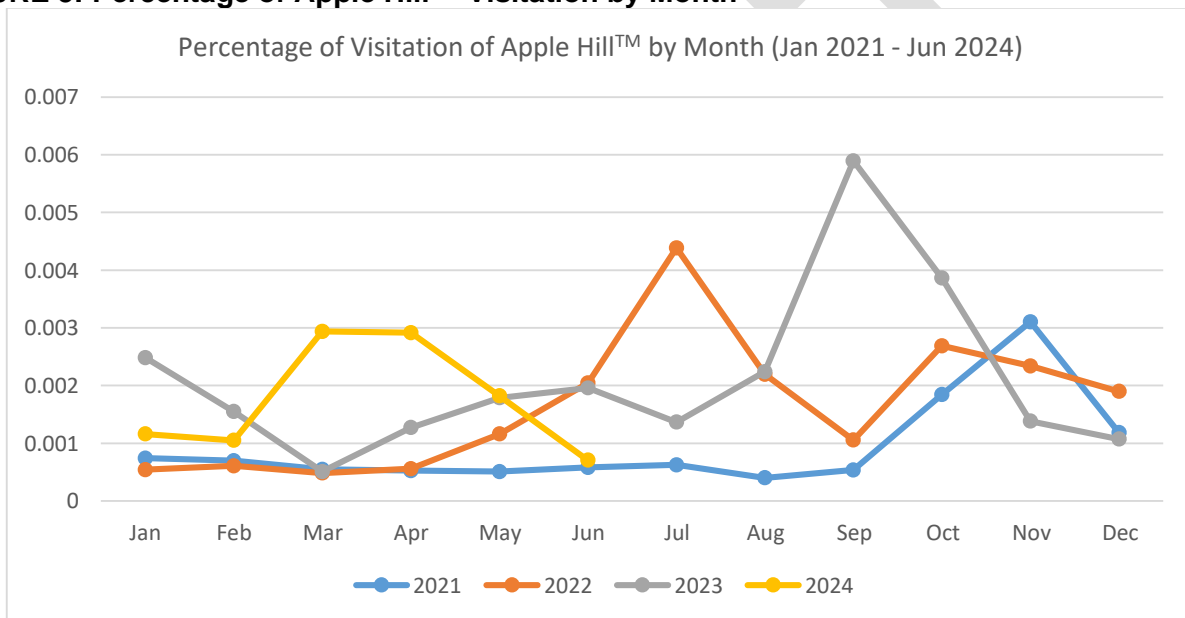
One of the challenges is to provide a public transportation system that is both convenient and flexible, encouraging visitors to opt for alternative modes of travel and reducing reliance on personal vehicles. Furthermore, typical visitors often travel in groups, transport recreational equipment, or purchase agriculture products, which underscores the need for seamless multimodal connectivity (e.g., linking cars, bus, bicycles, and shuttles).



The primary challenge, however, is that transportation funding has traditionally been based on a formula that considers only resident population and lane miles of a jurisdiction, overlooking the significant impact of millions of annual visitors on the transportation system, funding programs must be designed to serve the entire population – not just residents.

Recreational trips comprise a significant portion of travel in El Dorado County. The region's diverse landscapes - from the Sierra Nevada to rolling foothills - make it a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Some of the most popular recreational destinations include South Lake Tahoe, renowned for its scenic beauty and year-round activities; Apple Hill™, celebrated for its orchards and seasonal festivities; and the American River, known for whitewater rafting and hiking. The Rubicon Trail, located in the South Lake Tahoe Basin east of the EDCTC area, is a major attraction for off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts, offering one of the most challenging and renowned 4x4 trails in the country. Figure 5 illustrates visitation trends for Apple Hill™ within the plan area from January 2021 to June 2024. The data highlights October as the peak visitation season, underscoring the area's popularity. Year-over-year comparisons from 2021 to 2023 reveal the impact of COVID-19 on visitation patterns, with notable recovery in visitor traffic to the Apple Hill™ area beginning in 2023.

**FIGURE 5: Percentage of Apple Hill™ Visitation by Month**

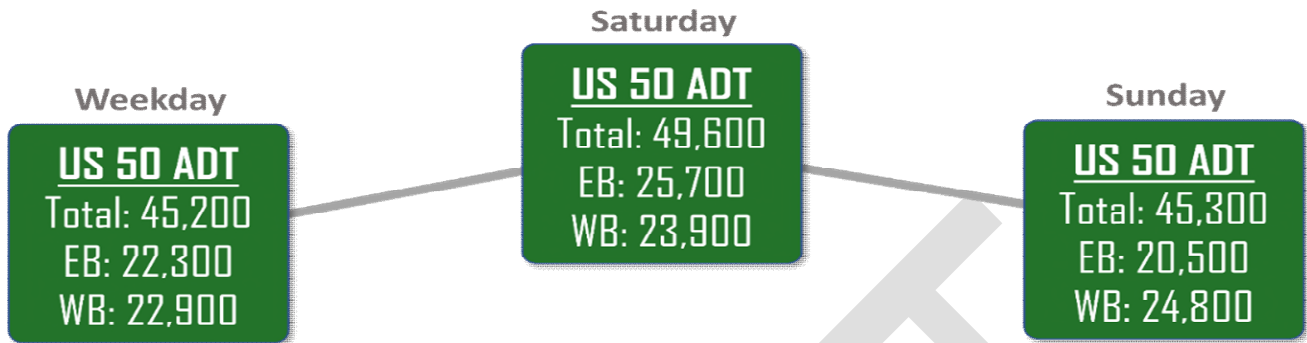


Source: Zartico; Fehr & Peers, 2024

**How Much Traffic is on US 50 Through Placerville?**

Caltrans Performance Measurement System “PeMS” data from October 2019 on US 50 west of Placerville Drive was obtained for the US 50 Corridor Action Plan, completed in 2023, to determine traffic levels during peak fall harvest season visitation. Data for both weekdays (Thursday) and weekends are reported as Average Daily Traffic (ADT), as shown in Figure 6.

**FIGURE 6: US 50 Average Daily Traffic in Placerville on Select Days**



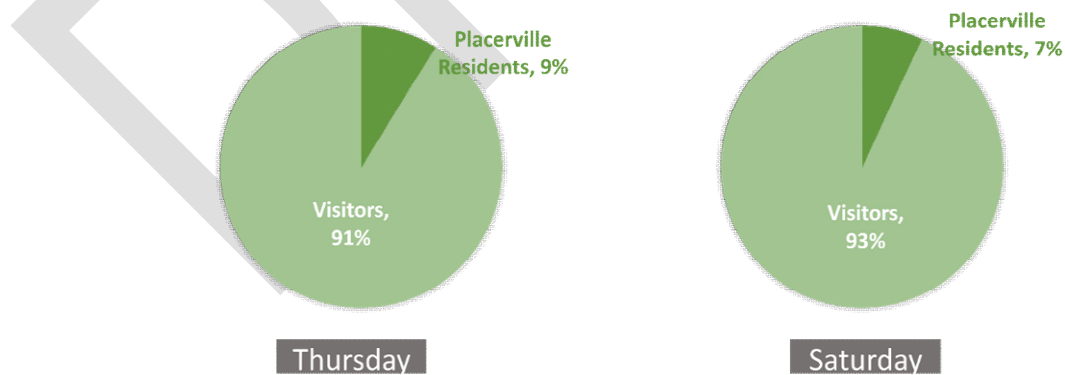
Source: (US 50 Corridor Action Plan 2023)

As shown in Figure 6, Saturday records the highest overall average traffic, while Sunday and weekday traffic volumes are very similar. However, weekday traffic is evenly balanced in the eastbound and westbound directions, whereas Saturday traffic is heavier eastbound and Sunday traffic is heavier westbound. This pattern aligns with visitor traffic from Sacramento and the Bay Area traveling to and then from Apple Hill™ and South Lake Tahoe. Furthermore, average vehicle occupancy is higher on weekends, indicating more person-trips compared to weekdays. Additionally, the hourly distribution of traffic on weekends tends to concentrate peak traffic in one direction; in other words, visitor and recreational traffic on Sunday is likely to be more concentrated in the afternoon rather than spread throughout the day.

**Who Makes Up the Majority of this Traffic?**

For the US 50 Corridor Action Plan (2023), Replica™ traffic data was obtained on US 50 at Bedford Avenue for weekdays (Thursday) and Saturdays from September through November 2019. Origin and destination data was used to determine the share of traffic from Placerville residents versus visitors. The results, shown in Figure 7 below, clearly indicate that the majority of travelers passing through Downtown Placerville on both weekdays and Saturdays are from outside the City of Placerville (non-City residents).

**FIGURE 7: Residents vs. Visitors on US 50 in Placerville**



Source: (US 50 Corridor Action Plan 2023)

Local city residents comprise only 9% of weekday travelers, with that share decreasing to 7% on Saturday. Given the increase in Saturday traffic shown in Figure 7, the lower portion of local travelers reinforces that the increased traffic is driven primarily by recreational and tourist trips. It should be

noted that some Thursday traffic may include travelers beginning a “long weekend,” although that share is assumed to be negligible.

### **Congestion on Local Roadways**

The El Dorado County General Plan addresses local road traffic congestion and Traffic Levels Of Service (LOS) as follows:

*In determining what levels of growth-related traffic are acceptable, the Plan balances a number of competing considerations. If the County sized its roadways solely to guarantee the smooth flow of traffic during limited peak periods in which commuter trips push traffic to maximum levels, one result would be the need to modify many rural two-lane roads by adding new lanes, thereby reducing the rural character of the affected adjacent lands. Such modifications would also entail enormous expense, while generating benefits only realized during limited periods. In addition, County revenue financing mechanisms, such as user fees in the form of gasoline tax or a road benefit assessment, are limited. In light of these considerations, the Plan has been designed to match any increases in the size of roadways to those necessary to meet the LOS and concurrency policies included in the Transportation and Circulation Element (General Plan Introduction, page 5).*

The passage of SB 743 (Steinberg, 2013) changed the way traffic impacts are analyzed in CEQA documents. Instead of basing analyses solely on motor vehicle delay as measured by LOS, traffic impacts are now evaluated based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). This shift is intended to reduce mitigation requirements that focus on increasing road capacity and instead emphasize reducing greenhouse gas emissions, facilitating transit use, and promoting a mix of land uses that lower automobile demand.

Although LOS is no longer the primary metric in CEQA analyses for significant environmental impacts, the County’s General Plan still requires that roads meet the LOS thresholds described in General Plan Policy TC-Xd through the implementation of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) Program (formerly the TIM Fee Program). These programs are updated annually, with major revisions every five years.

## **PRIORITY 5 –DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS**

Bicyclists and pedestrians share transportation facilities with motorized vehicles for both commuting and recreation. Active transportation can provide a viable alternative to driving if new or rehabilitated facilities are designed to ensure safe travel, provide direct routes, maintain well-kept surfaces, and offer off-road options when necessary. In addition to serving as an alternative mode, active transportation yields ancillary benefits such as reduced congestion, improved air quality, and enhanced public health. Providing safe and efficient active transportation infrastructure also encourages more users, including children traveling to and from school in areas where unsafe conditions may be perceived. By involving community members in the active transportation planning process, a greater sense of safety and security can be achieved among users and their families.

Land use coordination can influence travel mode choice by connecting active transportation facilities to activity centers, particularly in the most densely populated areas, and by providing safe routes to schools. To facilitate active transportation, the RTP recommends integrating active transportation needs into all phases of land use and transportation planning, design, and implementation. Discussions with active transportation stakeholders and EDCTC agency partners have identified four

overarching themes regarding active transportation: Safety, Health, Connectivity, Funding, and Implementation.

### **Complete Streets**

Governor Schwarzenegger signed AB 1358, the California Complete Streets Act of 2009, into law in September 2008. AB 1358 requires that a city or county's general plan specify how the roadway system will accommodate all users - including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and public transit riders. This is particularly critical in El Dorado County, which has experienced significant growth in its elderly population, emphasizing the importance of addressing their transportation needs. Such accommodation may include micro-transit, rideshare, sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, wide shoulders, medians, and ADA transit facilities, among others. In addition to traditional complete streets applications, EDCTC encourages the implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems throughout the region and coordination with utilities to expand rural broadband. Integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, transit amenities, and safe crossings into initial project designs is more cost-effective than retrofitting these features later. As the population continues to age, more consideration should be given to the growing elderly population, some of whom rely on personal motorized scooters and other electric vehicles for mobility. Planning for an aging population should include adapting, connecting, and modifying roads to better accommodate their needs by providing lower-speed route options, senior-friendly road designs, and increased transit services.

## **PRIORITY 6 – EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS**

Rural and remote areas and some of the communities throughout El Dorado County have been disproportionately impacted by one or more environmental hazards such as wildfire, socio-economic burdens, or both. Historically, these residents haven't been included in policy-setting or decision-making processes and have not received the same level of attention, planning and investment in the transportation network they rely upon.

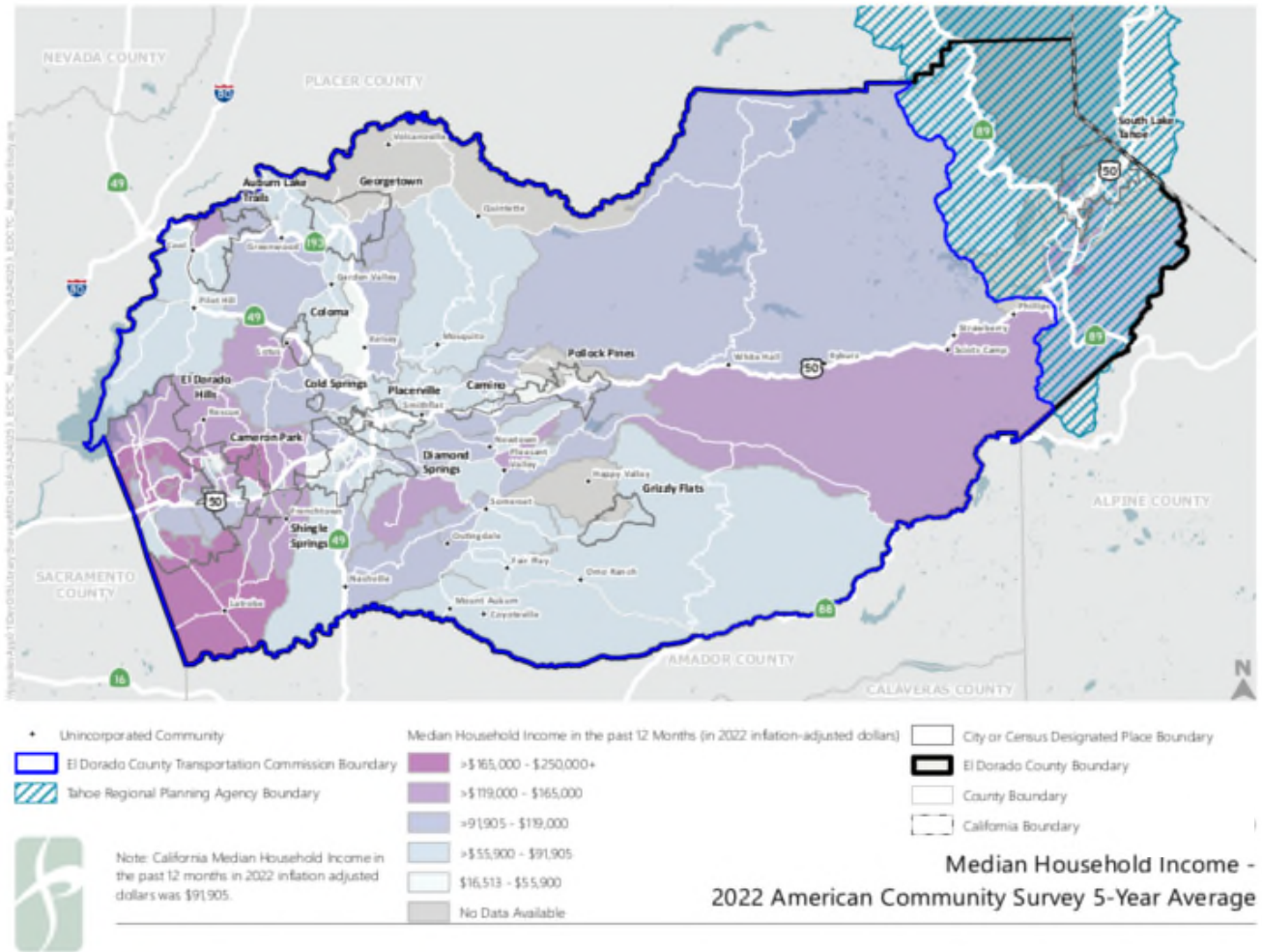
In California these communities are identified by some of the following metrics and tools:

- Disadvantaged communities, as identified by CalEPA's CalEnviroScreen tool;
- All Tribal lands;
- Low-income households (household incomes below 80% of the area median income); and
- Low-income census tracts (census tracts where aggregated household incomes are less than 80% of the area or state median income).

El Dorado County has relatively few communities or developed areas in which the majority of the population meets any or all of these criteria. Many of those who are underserved are spread throughout the rural communities of the County and not concentrated in any given area. This presents many challenges when attempting to integrate the needs of these residents with the transportation policies and funding programs that target these groups.

According to the 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the median household income in the EDCTC area reflects moderate affluence, reinforcing the county's position as a region of economic stability in California. Figure 8 shows the median household income over the past 12 months. The map identifies certain areas within the plan as economically vulnerable due to notably low household incomes, often corresponding with communities facing higher rates of cost-burdened households, limited access to employment opportunities, or a greater reliance on seasonal or part-time work. Addressing these disparities is essential for ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities on the western slope of El Dorado County.

**FIGURE 8: El Dorado County Median Household Income by Census Tract**



Some funding programs, such as the statewide Active Transportation Program, include criteria that require a certain percentage of program funds to be allocated to areas with disadvantaged communities as defined by median household income (i.e., less than 80% of the statewide average, or <\$73,524, based on 2018-2022 American Community Survey data), CalEnviroScreen, scores or at least 75% of students participating in the National Student Lunch Program. While limited, El Dorado County does have areas of disadvantaged communities scattered throughout the county, and those residents often face transportation challenges. Some residents in El Dorado County do not own vehicles, are unable to drive, or have special transportation needs.

## **PRIORITY 7 – IMPROVING TRANSIT SERVICE**

### **COMMUTER TRANSIT**

El Dorado County ranges from sparsely populated rural areas to more densely populated urban centers. With a growing population, the demand for transit services across larger areas is increasing. Over the past 20 years, the number of people using public transportation to commute to work has risen significantly- except during the downturn in transit use observed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Transit ridership is now rebounding as more employees are returning to work post pandemic at large state agencies and private employers located in Sacramento and elsewhere outside of El Dorado County.

The convenience and reliability of transit services play a key role in encouraging transit use as an alternative to single-occupancy vehicle trips. Designing transit services to be as seamless as possible is critical to providing convenience. Transit can also help mitigate El Dorado County's jobs/housing imbalance by offering tailored commuter services to employment centers in Sacramento. Implementing Light Rail and/or Bus Rapid Transit services along selected corridors may further enhance convenience and provide a viable alternative to driving.

Other more specific factors contributing to the need for increased transit include:

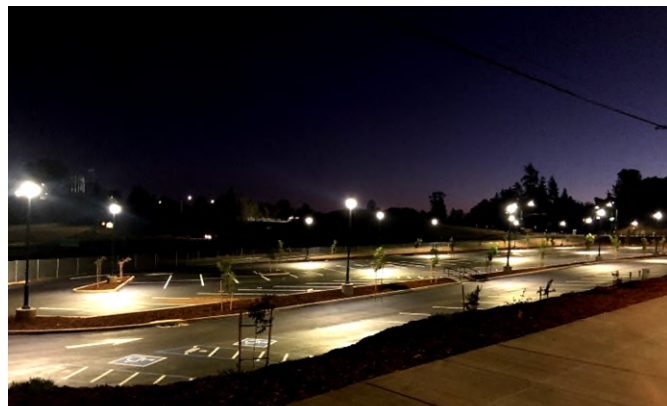
- The Americans with Disabilities Act mandates the expansion of paratransit services in designated areas, complementing fixed-route services;
- State and federal clean air legislation and Transportation Demand Management principles call for increased transit use to offset and reduce vehicle emissions;
- There is a consistent need, as cited by El Dorado County citizens, for commuter bus service providing rapid connections between El Dorado County, Folsom, and downtown Sacramento;
- An aging population contributes to greater demand for transit and paratransit services, including non-emergency medical transportation, as more people become unable to drive; and
- As the greater Sacramento region grows, interregional connections between areas such as El Dorado County, South Placer County, and Rancho Cordova will become increasingly important.

### **Community Transit Service**

Regular and convenient local community transit service is fundamental to boosting transit ridership. While local service currently exists in Cameron Park/Shingle Springs, Diamond Springs/El Dorado, Placerville and Pollock Pines, El Dorado Hills remains an important activity center that is not served by El Dorado Transit. Past efforts to provide services through both taxi voucher programs and fixed-route transit bus services have failed due to low ridership. However, major employment centers and development activities in the southern portion of El Dorado Hills may generate potential for future transit ridership. Coordinating active transportation facilities with local transit stops is recognized as an important factor in encouraging and sustaining transit use on local routes. It is also recognized that nearly all transit passengers travel on foot or by bicycle for part of their journey. Furthermore, the daily transit needs of rural residents may differ from those of urban transit users; therefore, dial-a-ride can address these individual requirements more effectively. More information on transit services can be found in Chapter 9.

### **Regional Transit Connections**

Regional transit connections are one of the most critical transportation issues in El Dorado County. As the county works to manage a job-housing balance over the next 20 years, the daily movement of workers between El Dorado County and the Sacramento Valley will remain robust. The existing El Dorado Transit commuter service to downtown Sacramento is a highly popular and valuable asset for local residents. To maximize convenience and efficiency, El Dorado County must maintain and improve safety and access at transit stops and park-and-ride lots while optimizing the use of the existing US 50 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes. Furthermore, convenient and timely regional connections to



*Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive Park and Ride Lot at night*

Folsom healthcare facilities and light rail stations are key components of a strong regional transit network. An emerging regional connection is the Capital SouthEast Connector project, which will ultimately provide a transportation facility connecting El Dorado County with the City of Elk Grove. As this project progresses, the county will need to consider potential light rail options as well as plans for a county-line transit center.

Another challenge facing transit service providers across the region is establishing a fully connected transit network that addresses the significant tourism and recreation travel needs. El Dorado County experiences high volumes of tourism and recreation traffic from the broader region, including the State of Nevada, and a large percentage of visitors come from urban areas where transit service is readily available. Developing a cross-jurisdictional transit network to support these travel needs would likely be well utilized and appreciated by many visitors, while also mitigating some of the impacts that high tourism traffic volumes create on the rural state and local transportation network.

### **Zero Emission Transit Fleet Requirements**

El Dorado Transit is mandated by California's Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation to transition to a zero-emission bus (ZEB) fleet by 2040. As a small transit agency, El Dorado Transit must ensure that 25% of its new bus purchases are zero-emission by January 1, 2026, progressing to 100% by 2029. This transition presents several challenges, including the need to overhaul operational and maintenance practices, upgrade infrastructure to support new technologies, and secure funding for the higher upfront costs associated with ZEBs.

## **PRIORITY 8 – IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

### **Air Quality**

California set ambitious climate change goals with the passage of AB32 in 2006 and SB32 in 2016. The state met the goal of AB32 four years early in 2016--reducing 1990 carbon emissions by 15% by 2020. However, the state is not on track to meet the goal of SB32 to reduce carbon emissions by 40% by 2030 or the goal to be carbon neutral by 2045 (Executive Order B-55-18 in 2018). The Sacramento region, including El Dorado County, has been designated a non-attainment area for air quality standards specified by the California Clean Air Act of 1988 and the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1991. California leads the nation in efforts to mitigate automobile-generated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Pursuant to AB 32, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) must adopt regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG reductions. Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) further focuses on reducing GHG emissions through regional transportation planning efforts by Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Therefore, EDCTC continues to work closely with SACOG and the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District to assess the air quality impacts of all transportation projects and planning efforts in the region.

### **Climate Adaptation and Resiliency**

Over the past five years, El Dorado County has experienced historic wildfires, extreme weather events, subsequent landslides, storm damage to culverts and bridges, and even washouts of certain road sections. Despite diligent maintenance activities, extreme conditions often damage infrastructure. Although most severe weather events have been related to rain and flooding, wildfires also pose a significant threat to transportation infrastructure. EDCTC and El Dorado County have intensified efforts to improve climate resiliency - particularly for wildfire- given the numerous historic and tragic events in recent years. Chapter 7 of the RTP discusses actions and initiatives aimed at fostering a sustainable, adaptable, and resilient transportation system throughout El Dorado County.

## **Zero Emission Vehicles**

To meet the ambitious air quality goals, California policy has focused investments toward transitioning from petroleum-based fuels to zero electric and other zero-emission vehicles (ZEV). The ZEV program is part of CARB's Advanced Clean Cars package, a coordinated set of standards designed to control smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions of passenger vehicles in California.

Vehicles and transportation fuels are the dominant sources of carbon emissions in California, followed closely by emissions from wildfires. While the state has made substantial improvements in air quality, the greater Los Angeles region and the San Joaquin Valley are classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as "extreme" ozone non-attainment areas, and the Sacramento Region is classified as "severe". These regions do not yet meet health-based air quality standards. CARB has led the development of programs aimed at reducing emissions from mobile sources, which account for well over half of the emissions contributing to ozone and particulate matter pollution in California. ZEVs and near-zero-emission vehicles are key elements of California's plan for attaining health-based air quality standards.

## **REDUCTION IN VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED AND SB 743**

Senate Bill (SB) 743, signed in 2013, requires local, regional, and state agencies to shift away from using vehicle delay and level of service (LOS) as the primary metrics under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Instead, the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has identified Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the metric for evaluating transportation impacts as part of the environmental review under CEQA. This change mandates that VMT per-capita, per-employee, and per-service population be considered in the analysis of transportation impacts related to land use projects. Regulatory changes to the CEQA Guidelines implementing SB 743 were approved on December 28, 2018, and implemented on July 1, 2020. In El Dorado County, both VMT and LOS must be considered for CEQA analysis given the County's TC-Xf policy included in the Transportation and Circulation element of the County's General Plan.

How does Policy TC-Xf work?

- Development projects that worsen traffic, based on LOS, on county roads must include traffic mitigation measures
- Residential projects with five or more parcels must include mitigation measures in the 10-Year CIP
- Other discretionary projects must include mitigation measures in the 20-Year CIP

## **PRIORITY 9 –SUPPORTING PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT ALTERNATIVES TO DRIVING**

EDCTC plans for, promotes, and secures funding for all modes of transportation. EDCTC supports annual Bike and Walk to School Day events, as well as initiatives to encourage transit use and ridesharing. In early 2025, Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) introduced a new travel support system called NorCal Go ([www.norcalgo.org](http://www.norcalgo.org)), which offers resources for finding travel options such as carpooling, vanpooling, transit, and more throughout the Sacramento Region.

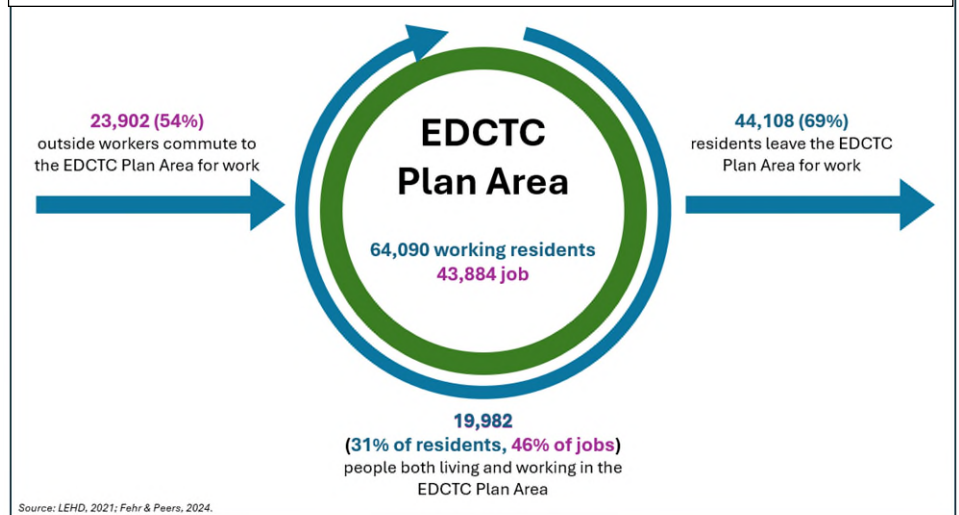


## COMMUTE PATTERNS

El Dorado County exports a significant number of employees, 69% in 2024, making it essential to offer alternative transportation options that help reduce costs, lower emissions, and alleviate congestion.

For the recently completed Next Generation Transportation Investments Strategy, data from the US Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program was used to estimate work and home locations for workers within the EDCTC plan area. This data, accessed via the US Census OnTheMap webtool, represents trends from 2012 to 2021 (the most recent complete dataset) and illustrates 10-year historical trends.

**FIGURE 9: Workers and Residents Entering and Leaving the EDCTC Area**



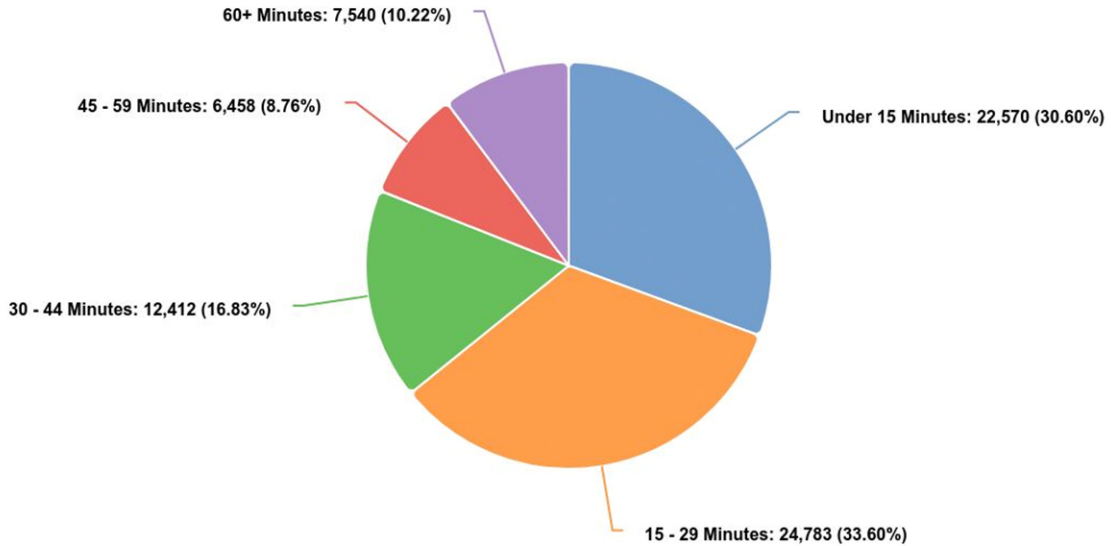
As of 2021, there were 43,884 jobs in the EDCTC plan area and 64,090 employed residents. Among these, 19,982 workers both live and work in the plan area, while 23,902 workers live outside the plan area. In 2021, 20,716 workers in the plan area resided in El Dorado County, an increase of 1,745 (9%) since 2012 (from 18,971). Additionally, the number of workers in the plan area and working in Sacramento County increased from 7,640 workers in 2012 to 10,363.

For the 64,090 employed residents, 44,108 work outside the plan area. Within the plan area, 20,222 workers in 2021 work in El Dorado County (up from 18,492 in 2012), and 19,793 work in Sacramento County (up from 18,523 workers in 2012). Conversely, workers residing in the plan area have shown decreases in working within the City of Placerville and South Lake Tahoe in El Dorado County, with the trend toward working from home assumed to be a major contributing factor. Refer to Figure 9 for a graphic display of this trend.

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK

For many El Dorado County residents, commuting has become a way of life. According to Well Dorado ([www.welldorado.com](http://www.welldorado.com)), the mean travel time to work for county workers was 29 minutes, slightly lower than the statewide average of 31 minutes.

**FIGURE 10: El Dorado County Workers: Travel Time to Work**



Claritas, 2024. welldorado.org

**TABLE 4: Workers by Travel Time to Work**

Workers by Travel Time to Work	County: El Dorado		State: California	
	Workers	% of Workers	Workers	% of Workers
Under 15 Minutes	22,570	30.60%	3,642,851	22.12%
15 - 29 Minutes	24,783	33.60%	5,976,724	36.29%
30 - 44 Minutes	12,412	16.83%	3,647,439	22.15%
45 - 59 Minutes	6,458	8.76%	1,363,684	8.28%
60+ Minutes	7,540	10.22%	1,837,563	11.6%

Source: [www.welldorado.org](http://www.welldorado.org) (2025)

## MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

As with travel time, the means of transportation indicator was measured every ten years by the decennial census until 2005. The American Community Survey now collects means of transportation data and reports it as a one-year estimate.

**TABLE 5: Means of Transportation to Work El Dorado County, California**

	Total		Car, truck, or van -- drove alone		Car, truck, or van -- carpooled		Public transportation (excluding taxicab)		Worked from home	
Label	Estimate		Estimate		Estimate		Estimate		Estimate	
Workers 16 years and over	87,630		58,335		6,770		457		16,726	
AGE										
16 to 19 years	3.6%		2.8%		14.7%		0.0%		1.4%	
20 to 24 years	5.9%		6.9%		1.6%		17.7%		2.5%	
25 to 44 years	39.1%		39.5%		48.7%		18.4%		35.4%	
45 to 54 years	21.7%		22.1%		12.3%		0.0%		23.1%	
55 to 59 years	11.8%		11.2%		13.4%		35.2%		15.1%	
60 years and over	17.9%		17.6%		9.4%		28.7%		22.5%	
Median age (years)	45.6		45.3		39.9		56.4		49.5	
SEX										
Male	51.7%		54.3%		37.5%		58.6%		46.2%	
Female	48.3%		45.7%		62.5%		41.4%		53.8%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Means of Transportation to Work by Selected Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0802, 2023, [https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S0802?q=commute in El Dorado County California](https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S0802?q=commute%20in%20El%20Dorado%20County%20California). Accessed on January 9, 2025.

In order to address transportation needs associated with existing and projected growth, EDCTC and local jurisdictions are working to maximize the capacity of the existing transportation system through strategic maintenance and improvements, the implementation of new technologies that enhance system performance, and, where feasible, the expansion of roadway systems. These efforts involve regional partnerships with SACOG, Caltrans, both private and public sector entities, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), local jurisdictions, and all users of the transportation system. EDCTC continues to promote the development of alternative modes and new technologies to reduce congestion and reliance on US 50 for local trips. The implementation of the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) along US 50 has proven successful in meeting the transportation demand goals of the RTP.

The FSP program, managed by the CHP, provides emergency roadside assistance on freeways. It is designed to enhance roadway safety, reduce motorist delays and freeway congestion, lower air pollution, and improve overall freeway operational efficiency.

## **ISSUES NOT IDENTIFIED IN PUBLIC OUTREACH SURVEY**

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND RESILIENCY PLANNING**

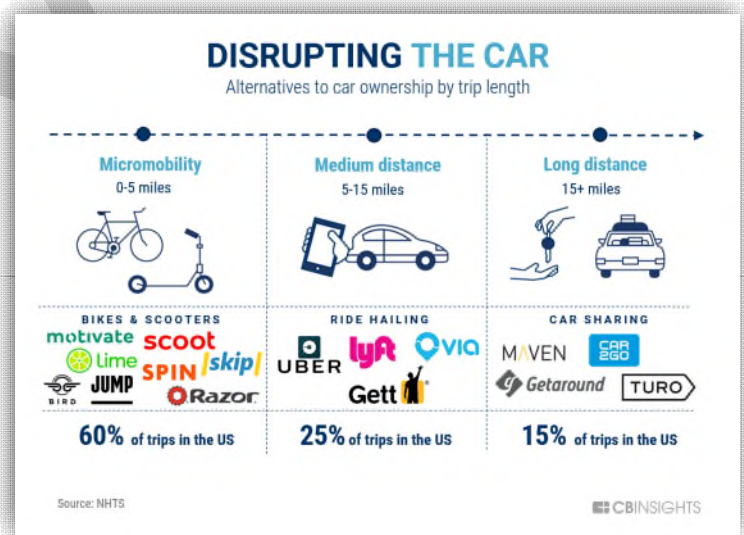
Wildfires continue to grow in frequency and intensity across California, resulting in hundreds of thousands of acres burned and thousands of homes destroyed each year. The eight most destructive fires in California history occurred in the last five years. The four most deadly fires in California history have also occurred in the last five years. El Dorado County has experienced this firsthand with the devastating King, Sand, Caldor, Mosquito, and Crozier Fires during the past decade. As a result, county residents and public officials are increasingly concerned about the threat of fire and the community's ability to evacuate safely. CalFire Department of Forestry and Fire Protection classifies most of El Dorado County as a Very High Fire Severity Zone. The County is working diligently to remove dead or dying trees within road rights-of-way where possible to mitigate wildfire risk. Additionally, EDCTC, in partnership with El Dorado County Fire and the El Dorado County Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience, completed the Greater Placerville Wildfire Evacuation Preparedness Study in 2024.

The Greater Placerville Wildfire Evacuation Preparedness Study evaluated multiple wildfire scenarios, identified high-risk communities, assessed the transportation network for potential catastrophic failure points, engaged and informed the community about these findings, and provided recommendations for improving the greater Placerville area. The scope of the wildfire evacuation assessment is based on the behavior and movement of motor vehicles during evacuation events.

EDCTC, El Dorado County, the City of Placerville, and emergency response providers recognize emergency preparedness as a critical transportation issue and are working with our regional partners to mitigate threats to the transportation system and improve evacuation conditions.

### **NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN TRANSPORTATION**

Recent technological advancements have ushered in one of the most dynamic times in transportation planning and implementation. New transportation technologies have emerged over the last decade, posing challenges for federal, state, and local agencies in terms of integration and accommodation. These emerging technologies include micromobility options such as bike and scooter sharing, autonomous vehicles, and Transportation Network Companies. Additionally, advancements in road surface materials and traveler information and data collection have greatly improved safety and access to real time travel data. Additional details on these mobility options are provided in Chapter 7.



## **AVIATION ISSUES**

### **AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION**

As the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for the western slope of El Dorado County, EDCTC is responsible for reviewing proposed projects to ensure consistency with the current Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans for the three airports within its jurisdiction: Georgetown, Placerville, and Cameron

Park. These airports support five primary functions across El Dorado County, including public and private regional air transportation, as well as emergency, fire and rescue services.

## **FREIGHT MOVEMENT ISSUES**

As population and traffic increase, the ability to move freight efficiently and safely within and through El Dorado County will become an increasingly critical challenge. Efficient freight movement is essential for both the local and regional economy. In El Dorado County, freight movement is primarily provided by truck transportation. Although freight traffic volumes are relatively low on US 50 and State Route 49, both routes are important for truck traffic in Northern California. Additionally, US 50 serves as an important alternative freight route when Interstate 80 is closed over the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

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