



US 50 Corridor Action Plan

Community Open House Event Summary

Introduction

On Thursday, January 19, 2023, the El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) and the City of Placerville jointly hosted a community open house about the US 50 Corridor System User Analysis, Investment Strategy, and Access Control Action Plan (Action Plan). At this event, participants had the opportunity to view the results of the Trip to Green demonstration weekends, learn about four possible alternatives for the next steps, and provide feedback on which alternative should be pursued. A total of 25 community members attended the meeting at the Placerville Town Hall located at 549 Main Street in Placerville.

Project Overview

As the primary transportation corridor through El Dorado County, US Highway 50 serves the County's major population centers, including El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park, Diamond Springs, Placerville, Camino, and South Lake Tahoe. Peak month Average Daily Traffic (ADT) ranges from 106,000 at the west end of the County at Latrobe Road, to 16,800 at the junction of SR 89 in South Lake Tahoe (2017 Data). To address long-term problems associated with limited data availability and a need for a comprehensive investment strategy for the US 50 Corridor, EDCTC in partnership with the City of Placerville, local and regional partners, and Caltrans District 3, is conducting a system user analysis to identify and assess innovative pricing and investment strategies for the US 50 Corridor. The project also includes data collection and development of traffic management strategies, which led to the deployment of Trip to Green, a pilot project to control access on US 50 allowing the signals to be held in a solid green phase on US 50 within the City of Placerville.

Workshop Purpose

The El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC), the City of Placerville, and Caltrans are developing the US 50 Corridor Action Plan to consider creative solutions to the longstanding congestion issues on US 50 Action Plan through Placerville. The first workshop was held in December to share the findings of the Trip to Green demonstration weekends with the public and collect input on future directions for the corridor. This second workshop then presented four different options for next steps, including the pros and cons of each, and asked participants for their feedback on which one should be pursued. Representatives from the City of Placerville, EDCTC, and the project consultant team were available to discuss the project and answer questions.



Figure 1111: Welcome to the workshop.



Workshop Format

The workshop was structured in an open-house format with three distinct parts: the left side of the room devoted to Trip to Green demonstration weekend information and outcomes, the center of the room dedicated to a presentation to share the four alternatives for the next steps, and the right side of the room for community members to provide feedback on the four alternatives following the presentation. A detailed description of the workshop follows:

Welcome Table

As community members entered the room, they were greeted by two project staff members asking them to sign in. Then participants were handed a print-out of the presentation as well as an instructional card with colored dot stickers attached to “vote” on alternatives after the presentation. Participants were then invited to partake of refreshments and check out the information about the Trip to Green weekends prior to the presentation beginning.

Trip to Green Demonstration Weekends

On the left side of the room was information related to the Trip to Green demonstration weekends that had occurred between August and October 2022. This was to remind people how we got to this point in the project. An information board explaining the Trip to Green program and key takeaways were located at this “station,” along with a 72 -page outreach summary detailing efforts made to let the public know about the Trip to Green weekends and questionnaire results given to the community after the last Trip to Green weekend concluded. Furthermore, two screens were set up to show drone footage comparing traffic backups on a Trip to Green weekend versus a non-Trip to Green weekend.

Presentation on the Four Alternatives

At 5:20 p.m., Bryan Gant, Principal Engineer from Wood Rogers, Inc., began a formal presentation on the four alternatives being considered for the next step of this project. What follows is a summary of the presentation he gave:

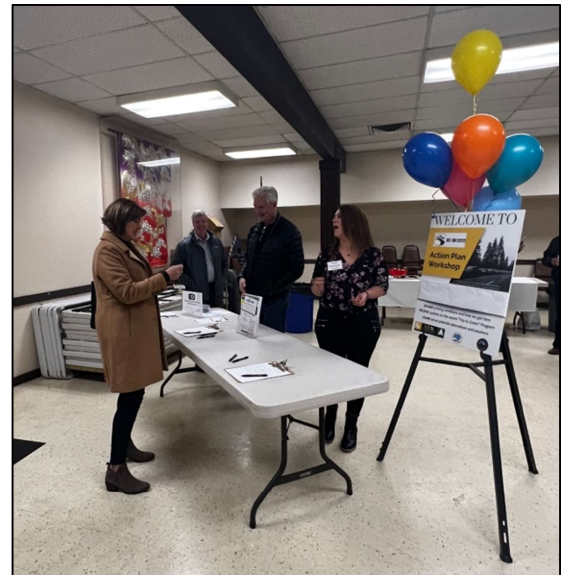


Figure 2222: Participants welcomed at registration.



Figure 3333: Bryan Gant presenting alternatives.



Study Background

Gant briefly contextualized the current stage of the project by reviewing a map of the project area, reminding people that signalized intersections on US 50 result in congestion, showed a timeline dating back to 1996 when the first study report was released and showed that the current project team represents a collaboration between multiple agencies and organizations.

Alternative 1: Construct New Elevated Express Lanes

The most expensive and involved of the options, this alternative would create a permanent elevated tolled lane system as part of US 50. Proposed entry and exit points would be Placerville Drive in the west, and Mosquito Road in the east. Gant then showed data where typical fall eastbound traffic peaks on Friday afternoons and Sunday mornings, compared to typical fall westbound traffic peaks occurring on Sunday afternoons. If Alternative 1 is pursued, the next steps would be to estimate traffic and toll revenue, considering traffic eligible to use lanes (through traffic), the value of time (which would be estimated using income levels), and future traffic growth. This alternative would assume operation 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a toll rate of \$1.00-\$1.75 during peak times and \$0.50 at non-peak times. Those figures would generate a projected \$1.4 million annual gross revenue in 2025.

US 50 CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN **Traffic and Revenue Analysis Scenarios**

OBJECTIVE - Improve travel times through 3 signalized intersections: Canal St., Spring St., and Bedford Ave.

- **Elevated Express Lanes**
 - Western terminus at Placerville Dr.
 - Eastern terminus at Mosquito Rd.
 - One lane per direction
 - 24 hours x 365 days
- **Trip to Green**
 - 12 weekends per year
 - Signals set to all green on US 50 all weekend

Elevated Express Lanes Concept

Figure 4444: Overview of the first two alternatives, including concept drawing.

Alternative 2: Pursue Permanent Trip to Green Tolloed Facilities

This alternative would continue the Trip to Green program (maintaining green lights on the signaled intersections of US 50 during daytime hours) on select weekends that have the most traffic congestion, including Memorial Day weekend, July Fourth weekend, Labor Day weekend, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Unlike the demonstration weekends in 2022, if this option were to be pursued then more permanent infrastructure would be

US 50 CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN **Overall Methodology (Sketch-Level)**

- Create traffic profile for trips during 5 holiday periods and 7 typical Fall weekends
 - Memorial Day (4 days)
 - July Fourth (4 days)
 - Labor Day (4 days)
 - Thanksgiving (3 days)
 - Christmas/New Year's Day (3 days)
- Signals on US50 held to green with other infrastructure (e.g. ITS, barriers, etc.)
- Approximate traffic diversion to alternate routes under range of potential toll rates
- Estimate traffic and toll revenue (sketch-level)

Figure 5555: Overview of alternative 2, to maintain Trip to Green selectively.



constructed, such as gantries and barriers. Furthermore, this alternative would toll people utilizing US 50 during the TTG weekends, between \$1.00-\$3.00, with toll gantries placed to minimize the potential for diversion/bypass. This would result in an annual gross revenue of \$620,000-\$1.8 million, depending on the toll rate charged.

Alternative 3: Continue with the Temporary Trip to Green Operations

A less involved option is to continue with the temporary Trip to Green, exactly had it had operated during the demonstration weekends in 2022 without the installation of any permanent infrastructure or tolls. The advantages of this option include temporary relief from seasonal recreation and holiday travel, a lower cost compared to alternatives 1 and 2, and adjustments that can be made easily to mitigate the impacts on peak traffic flow. The disadvantages include the labor and equipment required to set it up each time, the safety concerns over field staff being exposed to traffic during set-up and take-down, and ongoing funding that would still need to be identified.

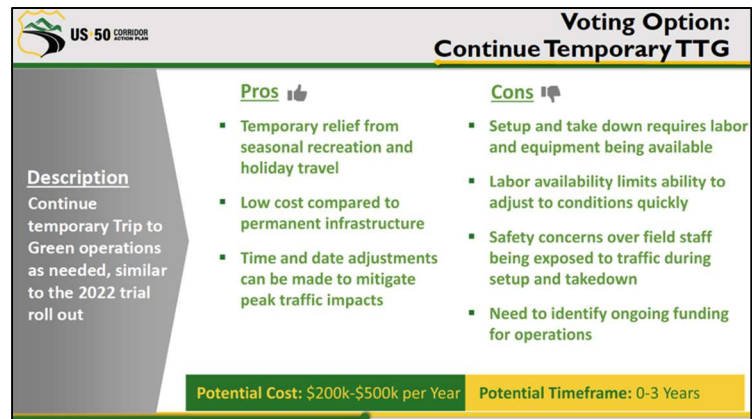


Figure 6666: Pros and cons of Alternative 3, continuing Trip to Green.

Alternative 4: Do Nothing

Finally, the community can simply choose to do nothing, which would require no new or ongoing investment. However, this would potentially result in continued or worsening traffic congestion on peak weekends and holidays, does not aid in evacuations, there would still be safety concerns with major differences in US 50 speeds, and traffic would continue to be diverted through downtown when the corridor is congested.

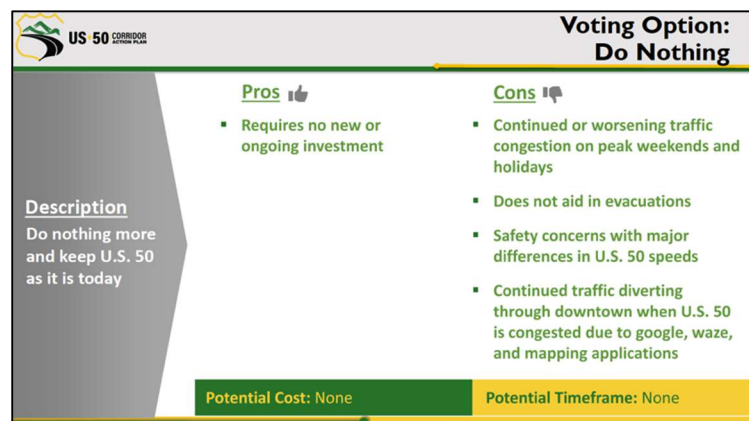


Figure 7777: Pros and cons of alternative 4, to do nothing.

Input on the Four Alternatives

The four alternatives from the presentation had been summarized on boards on the right side of the room. When participants had first entered the workshop they were handed a card with three colored dots: red to indicate the option they absolutely do not want, yellow for the option they'd find acceptable under certain conditions, and green for the most preferred option. Following the presentation, community members were encouraged to visit the boards and "vote" on which



alternative they would prefer using their colored dots. Post-it notes were available for further comments. What follows is the feedback provided on each board:

Board 1: Pursue Permanent Tolloed Infrastructure

This board had the following colored dot breakdown:

- 3 Green
- 1 Yellow
- 9 Red

This board also included the following comments on post-its:

- Red dot
- No tolls! We already paid taxes
- No tolls for residents
- Tolls are not a realistic way to fund this

Board 2: Pursue Permanent Trip to Green Tolloed Facility

This board had the following colored dot breakdown:

- 11 Green
- 7 Yellow
- 0 Red

This board also included the following comments on post-its:

- No toll too expensive
- No tolls!
- Have a way to access downtown merchants
- Try to fund without tolls
- Good for evacuation
- In the meantime, while pursuing the permanent option, an elevated 4-lane structure
- More signage to help educate prior to Placerville Drive
- No tolls! We already paid taxes for this
- No tolls for residents
- Have EDC residents exempt from toll

Board 3: Continue the Temporary Trip to Green

See the next page of this report for the image of the board. This board had the following colored dot breakdown:

- 3 Green
- 6 Yellow
- 2 Red

This board also included the following comments on post-its:

- Much more streamlining needs to occur. Too confusing as it was implemented

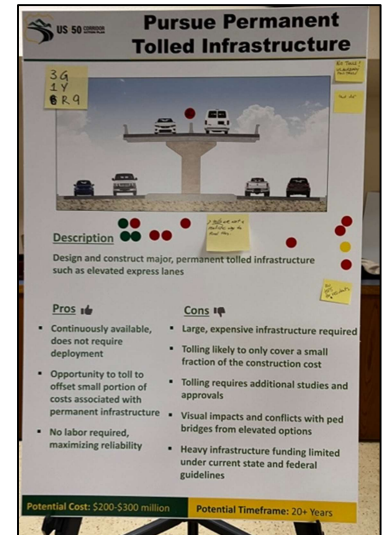


Figure 8888: Board 1 with dots & comments.

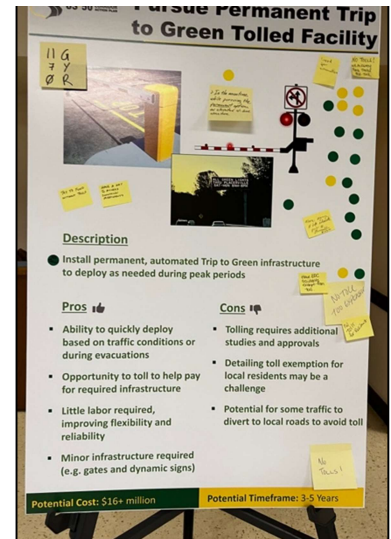


Figure 9999: Board 2 with dots & comments.



US 50 Corridor Action Plan
Open House
January 19, 2023 | 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Board 4: Do Nothing

This board had the following colored dot breakdown:

- 3 Green
- 0 Yellow
- 7 Red

This board also included the following comments on post-its:

- This is my favorite

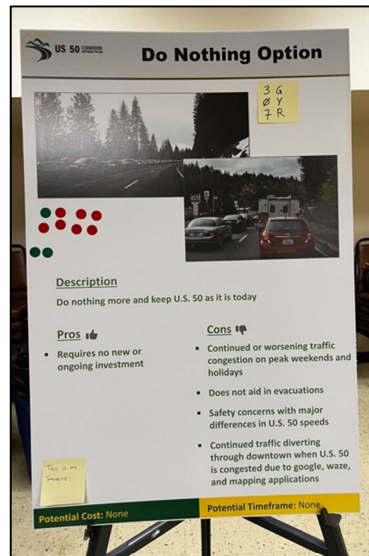
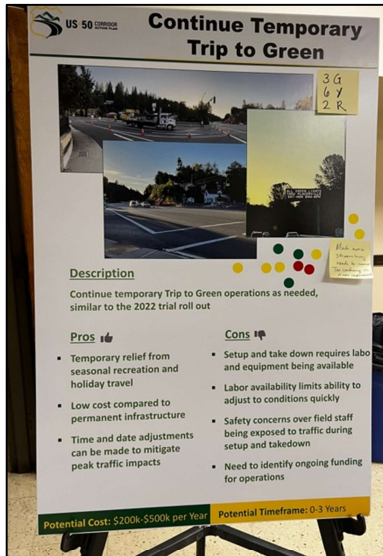


Figure 10101010: Boards 3 and 4 with dots & comments; Placerville Fire Chief & Police Chief engaging participants during the workshop.

Publicity & Noticing

The project development team identified specific targeted audiences that are being engaged throughout the US 50 Corridor Action Plan and Trip to Green projects. AIM Consulting created a stakeholder database of 276 unique contacts spanning community members, adjacent neighborhoods, emergency responders, distribution firms, Main Street businesses, nearby properties, Placerville Drive area businesses, and more.

To publicize and notice this workshop, three rounds of emails were sent via Constant Contact between January 5 and January 18. Emails included the event flyer, which they were encouraged to share with their organization. Personalized phone calls were made between January 6-11 to inform people about the event and encourage their attendance. Additionally, the flyer and event information was shared via



Figure 11111111: Participants engaging with boards.



social media weekly, including various Facebook groups specific to Placerville and El Dorado County.

Community Input

In the middle of the room was a table with comment cards and pens to encourage the community to give input on the project. A comment box was provided to collect comment cards. Five community members submitted feedback via comment cards during the open house. The following comments were submitted on comment cards:

- “Do nothing is my first choice. Major project is a definite no, too expensive and an eyesore. NO TOLLING!”
- “If a zoom meet, please have a public access point for those with no tech ability or speed, to participate in - open town hall for zoom connection.”
- “Would prefer the fly over or bridges over Canal/Bedford/49 for the long term fix however the ‘Trip to Green’ is very viable with some improvements I.E. sensors on highway 50 to activate auto gates/bollocks/signs and other to make the system automate and to turn on automatically when traffic loads increase along with some other improvements.”
- “Elevate Highway 50, 6 lanes total. Use old westbound lane for 2-way local traffic and nudge hang town creek north far enough to hide the sewer lines etc. Use remainder of old east bound 50 for parking and a Creekside Park; build a few pedestrian bridges across. Most importantly, tell the world how easy and nice it is to visit Placerville now...”
- “Have Trip to Green implemented on weekends to compromise between commuters and businesses/locals.”

Next Steps

The project team has collected the data from the four alternatives and the comment cards to understand the community feedback. Using that information, decisions will be made on how to move forward with improving the corridor and alleviating congestion. People can stay up to date on the status of the project by visiting the project website.