

# Regional roadwork motoring along in Placer County

BY JOYIA EMARD  
GOLD COUNTRY NEWS SERVICE

Roadwork may bring improvements, but it can be a real nuisance for drivers.

Many Loomis Basin roads are under construction and Placer County Transportation Planning Agency and Caltrans representatives held an open house at the Loomis Depot on Oct. 13 to give updates.

## Interstate 80

According to Celia McAdam, executive director of the Placer County Transportation Agency, carpool lanes and auxiliary lanes are being added to Interstate 80, both eastbound and westbound, from the Placer County line to just past Highway 65.

McAdam said a freeway auxiliary lane is one that extends between two interchanges and is the onramp from one interchange that turns into the offramp for the next.

The Interstate 80 project is being constructed in three phases.

"We had not identified all of the funding, so we broke the project up into three phases. All phases are now funded," McAdam said.

Phase one was funded by a federal earmark in the 2003 federal transportation bill known as SAFETEA-LU. Phases two and three use the same federal funds, plus state Proposition 1B bonds.

The first phase added an auxiliary lane between Riverside and Douglas boulevards. It was completed in August 2007, three months ahead of schedule, at a cost of \$8.8 million, McAdam said.

Phase two is the construction of carpool and

auxiliary lanes in both directions from the Placer County and Sacramento County line to Eureka Road.

This phase is slated for completion by the end of 2010. After the weather warms, an asphalt overlay will be added in July 2011. The cost is \$48 million.

McAdam said a separate project, set to begin in spring 2011, will add lanes to the Eureka Road exit so that traffic does not back up onto Interstate 80.

Phase three is the addition of carpool and auxiliary lanes from Eureka Road to just east of Highway 65.

Construction began in fall 2009 and is expected to finish by July 2011. The cost is \$34 million.

## Sierra College Boulevard

The Town of Loomis and the City of Rocklin are working together on the widening of Sierra College Boulevard from Granite Drive to Taylor Road.

Brian Frাগiao, engineer for the Town of Loomis, said Rocklin is spearheading the project, which will cost \$1.44 million.

Dave Palmer, Rocklin senior engineer, said Loomis is contributing \$519,000 and the rest comes from transportation fees through the South Placer Regional Transportation Agency.

Palmer said the project includes widening the road to two lanes on both sides, installing a new traffic signal at Brace Road, and creating an irrigated landscape median to be planted and maintained by Loomis.

The entire widening project is expected to be completed in May 2011, Palmer said.

**"Nothing has been finalized, but I'm fairly comfortable saying that there are other options that are as good, if not better than closing the Taylor Road ramps."**

Samuel Jordan, Caltrans project manager

## Interstate 80 bridge raising

Doug Lange, Caltrans project manager, said the project to raise nine bridges over Interstate 80 at Brace, Horseshoe Bar, King, Penryn and Galardi roads is not expected to begin until 2013.

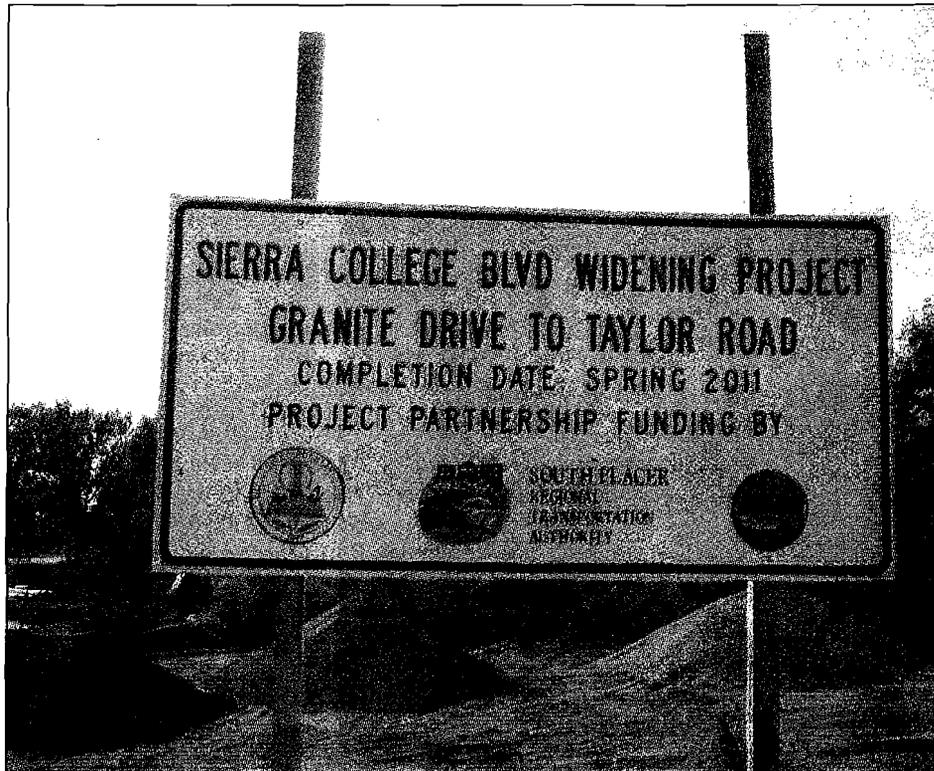
Lange said Caltrans has now confirmed that all bridges will each be closed only for a maximum of 20 days because accelerants will be used to dry the concrete faster. The Horseshoe Bar bridge could be closed for as few as 10 days.

## Taylor Road exit

Caltrans recently discussed closing the Taylor Road onramp and offramp in Rocklin as part of construction of the new Highway 65 interchange at Interstate 80. Both the Town of Loomis and the City of Rocklin opposed the idea.

Samuel Jordan, Caltrans project manager, said the closure suggestion may be history.

"Nothing has been finalized, but I'm fairly comfortable saying that there are other options that are as good, if not better than closing the Taylor Road ramps," Jordan said.



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A sign at the corner of Taylor Road and Sierra College Boulevard in Loomis explains construction that is causing detours and road closures.

#### ROAD CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TIPS

- Do not speed in work zones; obey the posted speed limits.
- Stay alert; expect the unexpected.
- Watch for workers; drive with caution.
- Don't change lanes unnecessarily.
- Avoid using any mobile phones, including hands-free, while driving in work zones.
- Turn on headlights so that workers and other drivers can see you.
- Be especially alert at night while driving in work zones.
- Expect delays, especially during peak travel times.
- Anticipate lane shifts, and merge when directed to do so.
- Be patient.

Source: Caltrans

# Auburn Capitol Corridor rail link gathers steam for local commuters

Ridership, revenue both reported up

BY GUS THOMSON

JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The Capitol Corridor commuter-rail system between Auburn and San Jose is back on track after suffering through some recessionary bumps.

With some sectors of the economy in recovery mode, the rail service is reporting a steady upward trend in ridership

and revenue – as well as unprecedented on-time performance thresholds.

September saw Capitol Corridor achieve 98 percent on-time performance – the best intercity passenger rail performance in the nation.

Jim Holmes, a Placer County supervisor who chairs the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, said the Oakland-based commuter service is grateful for

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## RAIL: Link No. 1 in on-time performance

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September's spike in ridership to 1.6 million passengers.

"Although ridership results struggled in the first five months of the fiscal year, we were thrilled to see it increasing 4 percent in the last seven months," Holmes said. "Revenue for the fiscal year also showed a 4 percent increase when compared to the previous fiscal year."

Holmes, who represents the Auburn area on the county board, said that a significant factor has been the consistent, high level of on-time performance the Capitol Corridor achieved all year.

"We're proud to have

**"Thousands of families and seniors took advantage of our discounted fares this summer, which helped fill our seats during off-peak travel periods."**

David Kutrosky, Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority managing director

the most reliable intercity passenger rail service in the nation," Holmes said.

Ridership totals have benefitted from money-saving promotions as well as the recovering

economy and improved performance on the Union Pacific tracks, said David Kutrosky, authority managing director.

A Kids Ride Free on Weekends program and a Seniors Ride Half Off promotion lasts through the end of the month.

Through August, more than 15,400 family members and 11,120 seniors took advantage of lowered fares along the 170-mile rail corridor.

"Thousands of families and seniors took advantage of our discounted fares this summer, which helped fill our seats during off-peak travel periods," Kutrosky said.

Reach Gus Thomson at [gust@goldcountrymedia.com](mailto:gust@goldcountrymedia.com).

## Taylor Road offramp closed through Oct. 25

The California Department of Transportation is alerting motorists that now until 5 a.m. Monday, Oct. 25, the eastbound Interstate 80 offramp to eastbound Taylor Road will be closed.

Detour signs will be posted to direct traffic back into I-80 eastbound. Vehicles will use the Atlantic/Eureka Road eastbound offramp to continue on Taylor Road from eastbound I-80.

The closure is necessary to reconstruct the ramp as part of the Sacramento/Placer Interstate 80 Operational and Improvement Project.

The \$54 million project by Caltrans, Placer County, the City of Roseville and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency will add more than 5.5 miles of new bus and carpool lanes on I-80 between the Douglas/Lead Hill overcrossing and east of

the State Route 65 eastbound connector. Completion is expected in 2011.

Roadside message boards will be used to post the latest information. Caltrans urges motorists to use caution in this area and to "Slow for the Cone Zone."

To learn more about local transportation projects, construction and planning go to [www.pctpa.net](http://www.pctpa.net).

- Staff report

# Schooled in safety



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Brandon McGuffin, a firefighter with the Loomis Fire Protection District, chats with 10-year-olds Sage Cloutman, Shyan Childers and Sophia Huntzinger at H. Clarke Powers School during the walk to school event. In the background, fire district engineer Josh Green visits with Ian May, 7.

## Powers Elementary holds walk to school event

BY JOYIA EMARD  
LOOMIS NEWS STAFF WRITER

Statewide, one-in-six traffic fatalities is a pedestrian, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Glenn Lockwood, principal at H. Clarke Powers Elementary School, wants to be sure none of his students become a victim. Lockwood said about half of his 404 students walk, ride bikes or take the bus to school. He said when the weather is good even more walk home.

More than 100 Powers School students and their parents recently got schooled on how to safely walk to school at an International Walk to School event, sponsored by the Town of Loomis, Safe Kids Placer County and local emergency services personnel.

On Oct. 14, walkers met at Loomis Sunrise Park on Arcadia Avenue and were escorted to school by the flashing lights of Placer County Sheriff's vehicles and Loomis Fire Protection

District trucks.

Students carried colorful balloons and yellow safety signs. Parents walked beside them and moms pushed strollers carrying little ones as they paraded along the sidewalks and through the streets to school.

The walk took only minutes to complete, then firefighters, Sheriff's deputies and local dignitaries met on the school playground.

Sandra Alquicira and her

children Joel, 6, and Anna, 4, live near Powers School and participated in the walk-to-school event.

"When the days are nice, we walk to school," Alquicira said.

Lockwood said he plans to get even more students involved when he holds another walk to school event in spring.

"After the weather warms up I want to give students even more information," Lockwood said.

# Railway service plans derailed

Electioneering blamed for sending second Capitol Corridor train off track

BY GUS THOMSON  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Jim Holmes is stepping down as chairman of the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority board happy with on-time performance of trains but still seeking a second round trip for the rail route to Auburn.



Jim  
Holmes

October's on-time performance was 96 percent, a figure that continues to lead all of the nation's commuter rail services.

Holmes, Placer County supervisor for the Auburn area and the local board's appointee on the joint powers authority, leaves the chairmanship Wednesday after two years.

"I'm very pleased with on-time performance," Holmes said "But I still want to have another train here because the demand is here."

The authority, which oversees a passenger rail link from Auburn to San Jose, was rebuffed this past month in an attempt to secure Homeland Security funding totaling \$57 million for a series of improvements along the Capitol Corridor that would have allowed the second Auburn round trip.

Plans were to construct track improvements between Roseville and Donner Pass, with Union Pacific Railroad contributing \$10.3 million in matching funds. Improvements

## TRAIN: High-speed rail plan received funding precedence

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in the Fremont-Newark-Centerville area were also being proposed as part of the funding request.

Holmes said the authority, which represents eight counties from Placer to Santa Clara, had been expecting to secure a share of \$2.4 billion available this year but instead watched Central California projects supporting high-speed rail win out.

Capitol Corridor's Washington, D.C. legislative adviser indicated that political pressure from Central California congressmen in re-election campaigns resulted in the funding going elsewhere, Holmes said.

Holmes said that when he visited Washington earlier this year, he was under the impression from federal officials that the authority's funding was going to be approved.

Auburn already has one morning and evening departure but would have gained a second weekday train arrival at 7:18 p.m. with the extension of a San Jose-to-Sacramento run into Placer County.

The second morning train would have left

Auburn for San Jose at 5:55 a.m.

The single Auburn-Sacramento route departs from Conheim Auburn Station at 6:35 a.m. weekdays and arrives back in Auburn at 6:30 p.m.

Staff with the authority have calculated that the new second train and other route changes — including eliminating an early-morning run from Oakland to Sacramento — would increase ridership 3 percent and costs would drop by 2 percent.

October statistics showed ridership was up to 141,350 along the Capitol Corridor. That's 3.1 percent higher than October 2009. Revenue was up 7.2 percent.

David Kutrosky, authority managing director, said Union Pacific's superior dispatching and a decrease in bridge-related delays helped Capitol Corridor lead the nation in on-time percentage.

The new chairman, to be selected from other directors on the Capitol Corridor board, will be elected at Wednesday's meeting for a two-year term.

Reach Gus Thomson at  
gust@goldcountrymedia.com.