

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was developed under the direction of the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA). This chapter describes the purpose of the RTP; provides an overview of the plan requirements; and describes the process to update the RTP.

The 2035 RTP is designed to be a blueprint for the systematic development of a balanced, comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system, including but not limited to, regional roadways, public transit, passenger rail, aviation, goods movement, non-motorized facilities, transportation systems management, transportation safety and security, and intelligent transportation systems. In addition, the RTP is action oriented and pragmatic, considering both the short-term and long-term time periods.

This RTP is developed to fulfill the state requirements of AB 402 (Government Code Title 7, Chapter 2.5, Sections 65080-65082), the specific guidance of the California Transportation Commission (CTC), including the recently updated 2010 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, as well as federal planning requirements, and the California Environmental Quality Act.

1.1 Regional Transportation Plan Purpose

Regional Transportation Plans are developed to provide a clear vision of the regional transportation goals, objectives, policies and strategies. This vision must be realistic and be within fiscal constraints. In addition to providing a vision, the RTPs have many specific functions, including:

- Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region including Lake Tahoe (north and west shores).
- Predicting the future needs for travel and goods movement;
- Identifying and documenting specific actions necessary to address the region's mobility and accessibility needs;
- Identifying needed transportation improvements, in sufficient detail, to serve as a foundation for the:
 - Development of the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP);
 - Facilitation of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)/404 integration process decisions;
 - Identification of project purpose and needs;

- Development of an estimate of emissions impacts for demonstrating conformity with the air quality standards identified in the State Implementation Plan (SIP).
- Promoting consistency between the California Transportation Plan, the regional transportation plan and other transportation plans developed by cities, counties, districts, private organizations, tribal governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;
- Providing a forum for:
 - Participation and cooperation
 - Facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries; and
- Involving the public, federal, state and local agencies, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation.

1.2 Need for the 2035 RTP

The 2035 RTP is intended to address the many transportation needs within Placer County, including and not limited to:

- Insufficient resources within Placer County to meet all of maintenance, preservation, and improvement needs of the transportation system;
- Increasing amount of traffic congestion;
- Insufficient supply of non-motorized facilities;
- Limited public transit service and inadequate pedestrian and bicycle access to transit services;
- Improvement of regional and inter-regional goods movement via rail, truck, and air to accommodate future growth and to reach intended destinations with limited delay;
- Existing street designs that do not safely accommodate all forms of travel; and
- Insufficient Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and transportation system and demand management strategies that would improve system operation.

The 2035 RTP is needed to provide a comprehensive strategy to approach the many transportation issues and environmental challenges faced by Placer County as population, employment and housing continues to grow and the urbanized area expands over the next two decades. These issues and challenges are discussed further in Chapter 4.0.

1.3 Regional Transportation Plan Requirements

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Government Code Section 65080 states that Regional Transportation Plans shall include the following components:

A ***policy element*** that identifies the mobility goals, objectives, and policies of the region. This element outlines the process for implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan to guide decision-makers.

An ***action element*** that identifies programs and actions to implement the RTP in accordance with the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the policy element. The institutional and legal actions needed to implement the RTP and action plans are also discussed in this section, followed by a detailed assessment of all transportation modes. It is within the action element that priorities for regional transportation programs are established. In addition, the RTP is required to include a short-range (approximately five years) and a long-range action plan (approximately 20 years), identifying a list of specific projects to be implemented over these timeframes. To qualify for federal or state funding, projects nominated by jurisdictions and transportation agencies must be included in or be consistent with the RTP.

A ***financial element*** that summarizes the cost of implementing the projects in the RTP considering a financially constrained environment. All anticipated transportation funding revenues are compared with the anticipated costs of the transportation programs identified in the action element. If shortfalls are identified, strategies are identified to fund the otherwise unfunded projects.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Environmental documentation is required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The environmental documentation states whether there will be an environmental impact of the plan and, if so, what that impact will be. Depending upon the scope of the plan and the local environment, environmental documentation may be a negative declaration, a mitigated negative declaration, or a full, supplemental or subsequent environmental impact report (EIR).

1.4 Regional Transportation Plan Process

2035 RTP UPDATE PROCESS

PCTPA is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Placer County, except for that portion of the County within the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). One of the fundamental responsibilities which results from this designation is the preparation of the county's RTP.

Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding between PCTPA and SACOG, entered into in 1993 and affirmed in 2001 and 2005, PCTPA submits the Regional Transportation Plan for inclusion into the SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This process is important to both the SACOG MTP and the PCTPA RTP, as it allows for a locally developed RTP to be included in the regional air quality conformity process. This locally developed RTP process includes a local consensus of policies, projects, programs and funding decisions which then become an integral part of the regional MTP.

The 2035 RTP is an update of the Placer County 2027 RTP, adopted by the PCTPA in September 2005. The 2027 RTP served as the transportation blueprint for the Placer County portion of the SACOG 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The 2027 RTP projects were refined as part of the development of the 2035 MTP. A small number of new projects have been added to the original 2027 RTP project list. The 2035 MTP was adopted by SACOG in March 2008. The 2035 RTP conforms to the Placer County portion of the 2035 MTP, and brings the two plans into consistency. The 2035 RTP short-term program is also consistent with the Placer County portion of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). Further, the 2035 RTP is consistent with the goals of the existing California Transportation Plan.

The 2035 RTP, pending review by SACOG will serve as the transportation blueprint for the Placer County portion of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan update.

RTP AMENDMENT PROCESS

Revisions to a project's cost, scope, funding, and schedule can occur as part of the overall project development process. Projects included in the RTP short-term element are typically programmed in the SACOG MTIP. Any changes to RTP projects programmed in the MTIP can also be considered an amendment to PCTPA's RTP. It should be noted that projects with federal funds may be moved within the four year period of the MTIP without necessitating an amendment. Development of SACOG's MTP will also lead to refinement of projects submitted as part of PCTPA's RTP. Any changes to RTP projects included in the MTP can also be considered an amendment to PCTPA's RTP.

There may also be other changes proposed besides revisions to projects that require an amendment to the RTP; for example in regard to plan policies. An amendment to the RTP in this regard would require an evaluation demonstrating that the amendment is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the plan; that the amendment maintains financial constraint; that the amendment meets the air quality conformity requirements inherent to the adopted plan; and that there is an opportunity for review and comment by the public of the proposed amendment.

RTP CONSULTATION, COORDINATION, AND APPROVALS

As the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Placer County, PCTPA is responsible for the preparation and adoption of the 2035 RTP. PCTPA is also the lead agency for the environmental review of the 2035 RTP, pursuant to the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15050.

Although adoption of the RTP itself will not require permits or other regulatory approvals of resource or trustee agencies, separate future, environmental review, permits and approvals may ultimately be required by project lead agencies to implement transportation system improvements identified in the 2035 RTP.

Review of the RTP is part of the consultation process required under federal planning regulations and State RTP guidelines, and is consistent with the community involvement procedures described in PCTPA Community Information and Participation Program shown in Appendix A. The RTP was circulated for 45 days to give all affected parties an opportunity to comment. All comments received have been addressed in the document.

Agency Consultation and Coordination

PCTPA has engaged in continuous consultation and coordination with the following agencies in the development of the RTP, including the individual projects and programs shown in the Action Element:

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 03;
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG);
- PCTPA member jurisdictions, including:
 - *Placer County*
 - *City of Rocklin*
 - *City of Auburn*
 - *City of Roseville*
 - *City of Colfax*
 - *Town of Loomis*
 - *City of Lincoln*
- South Placer Regional Transportation Authority;
- Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority; and
- Other responsible transportation agencies.

Stakeholder Groups Consulted

Various stakeholder groups, including public agencies, private industry, business organizations, tribal governments, environmental groups, and the general public were formally and informally consulted during the preparation of the 2035 RTP. These stakeholder groups are identified in Appendix B. Each stakeholder group received a copy of a Notice of Availability of the 2035 RTP.

Many of the projects shown in the RTP's Action Element are federally funded and are therefore included within SACOG's MTP and MTIP. As the metropolitan transportation planning agency for the six-county Sacramento region, SACOG is responsible for federal programming and addressing federal planning requirements. Consultation and coordination with various public agencies and stakeholder groups regarding these projects follows the procedures outlined in SACOG's Public Participation Plan.