

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

# Regional Priority Projects

2002/2003



SACOG-02-008

# Introduction

*SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan includes hundreds of projects planned for the next 23 years. It is vital to establish what can be done within the next two years. As part of SACOG's mission to deliver transportation projects, a list of regional priority projects has been established and approved by the SACOG Board of Directors. The SACOG Board will encourage project sponsors and county-wide transportation agencies to advance these projects and nominate them for funding as soon as possible.*

*This listing of priorities puts SACOG in a strong position to pursue funding when opportunities for discretionary funding arise. SACOG will also work to counter any threats to the funding for or progress on priority projects.*

*The 20 projects shown here have been identified as those with the highest priority in the region (listed in alphabetical order).*

## "Access-to-Jobs" Transit Program

Through a coordinated regional application, transit operators in the SACOG region have received grants under this federal discretionary funding program for the last three years. A range of transit service enhancements have now been implemented throughout the region to improve the ability of entry-level workers to get to work. A number of service concepts have been successfully tested and additional needs have been identified. Funding to continue and expand these services is needed; earmarks will be sought and grant applications prepared.

## Air Quality Improvement

The SACOG region may have a difficult time passing future air quality conformity tests. Accordingly, SACOG has taken an aggressive role in meeting conformity goals by implementing the \$70 million Sacramento Emergency Clean Air and



Transportation (SECAT) program. Over the last year, SACOG has obligated over \$25 million towards the purchase and installation of over 460 cleaner-burning heavy-duty diesel engines. A major effort this year will be the implementation of the Lawson Fleet Modernization option under the SECAT program. Fleet Modernization allows a trucker to purchase a newer truck (1994-2000) to replace an older truck (1983 and older). In addition, the newer truck engines will be calibrated to the lowest NOx emissions levels. Finally, SACOG will continue to work with transit operators to complete the replacement of diesel buses with alternative-fuel buses and any necessary infrastructure.

## Blueprint for the Future

“Blueprint for the Future” is an umbrella brand name for various projects and activities that relate to regional-scale thinking and planning. SACOG’s Transportation-Land Use Study—which is designed to build consensus around specific land use strategies that will optimize the use of the region’s transportation system—will be a key element of the Blueprint Project. In addition, several other related issues will be addressed by other partners through the project. SACOG’s interests in the project are to significantly increase our capacity to effectively address land use issues in the next update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and to provide better information and tools for SACOG’s members to use as they make local land use decisions. A critical component of this work is the development of a new integrated travel model that will not only consolidate the Sacramento area and Yuba-Sutter area models, but will be able to address a broad range of issues including growth patterns, induced travel, social justice and equity, and spreading of the peak period, among others.

## Capitol Corridor Intercity and Regional Rail Service



SACOG will support efforts to implement tenth and eleventh round trips from Sacramento to Oakland and to obtain full funding for the Yolo Causeway double tracking. It will also support completion of the environmental analysis and engineering for the Roseville

third track by late 2003 and for construction in 2003-2004. SACOG will continue to participate actively in planning for a new or revamped Sacramento intermodal station and to work with all parties to program funds once the City approves the project. SACOG will support efforts to implement frequent, peak-period regional rail service

between Auburn and Dixon. In cooperation with others, SACOG will also pursue funding for a study to determine the feasibility of operating Capitol Corridor trains on the new Benicia-Martinez Bridge.

## I-5/Route 113 Connector

This three-phase project will construct connectors from I-5 to Route 113 within and near Woodland. The first phase includes improvements at the adjacent County Road 102 interchange as well as engineering and right of way for the freeway-to-freeway connectors. Additional funding will be pursued to complete the financial package for phase two.

## I-80 Corridor Plan Implementation

This multi-year corridor study resulted in an investment strategy for the I-80 corridor between Davis and Colfax. Construction of HOV lanes between Longview Drive and the Placer County line will begin in 2002. Caltrans is conducting further studies of other HOV segments (from I-5 to Longview Drive and from the Placer County line to Route 65), which were called for in the investment strategy, and SACOG has included these projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2025. Meanwhile, the City of Rocklin is conducting preliminary work on the I-80/Sierra College Boulevard interchange reconstruction and the City of West Sacramento has begun work on the U.S. 50/Harbor Boulevard interchange. At the same time, the Sacramento Regional Transit District is conducting environmental studies of double tracking of light rail to accommodate express light rail service. SACOG will identify funding to expedite these projects.

## Intelligent Transportation System Planning and Deployment



This year, SACOG and its partners will develop a Strategic Deployment Plan, which will set priorities for ITS projects over the next 20 years and help SACOG integrate these projects into its plan and program. Phase one of the

Arden Way Smart Corridor will be begin in late 2002; this will improve traffic flow and expedite buses and emergency vehicles. A detailed engineering study will also be conducted as part of a greater project to install the needed hardware, including fiber-optic cable, database servers, and software to complete STARNET, which will link several traffic operations centers. Federal funding earmarks are being sought for STARNET and the second phase of the Arden Way project.

## Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2025 and Implementation

Through a partnership with Valley Vision and with the assistance of a broad-based 55-member Transportation Roundtable, SACOG will adopt a new long-range transportation blueprint for the six-county region. After the plan is adopted in the summer of 2002, the focus will be on its implementation. This will likely include corridor studies and development of procedures and criteria for allocating bicycle/pedestrian, air quality, and community design funds.

## Light Rail Extension Studies

Sacramento Regional Transit District's Multi-Corridor Study resulted in a focus on further extension to the south and a new Downtown/Natomas/Airport line. State funds were earmarked for the further extension of the South Line and SACOG has approved federal funding for an Alternatives Analysis/Draft EIS for the DNA line. Work on the Final EIS for the South Line extension and the AA/DEIS for the Downtown/Natomas/Airport line has begun.

## Pavement Rehabilitation

Road maintenance needs in the region are currently estimated at about \$84 million annually for local agencies. In addition, the backlog of maintenance needs is approximately \$763 million. Over the last five years the jurisdictions have spent an average of \$68 million per year, an amount that does not take care of new needs, let alone the backlog. If spending on road maintenance is constant over the next 25 years, the backlog could grow to over \$1.3 billion. SACOG and local jurisdictions must work together to find reliable long-term funding sources to do pavement rehabilitation and maintenance.



## Placer Parkway

Last year, SACOG and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency approved a Project Study Report for a new transportation facility connecting Routes 99 and 65. This report calls for no access in the eight-to-ten-mile section that traverses agricultural land—except possibly at Watt Avenue—and for a no-development buffer zone, both of which are designed to avoid inducement of unplanned growth. This year, SACOG included this project in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2025 and will monitor the development of the environmental studies on the project.

## Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements



SACOG will continue to work to secure funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout the region to ensure that residents have healthy, non-polluting options to

driving. Through the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, SACOG will provide a forum for regional cooperation and coordination of bicycle and pedestrian activities, projects and programs. Of particular emphasis this year will be bicycle and pedestrian crossings of barriers such as rivers and highways and continued work on the identification of a regional trails network.

## Right-of-Way Preservation Studies

SACOG is leading the second phase of the CalTraction Preservation and Purchase Plan Study. This phase includes negotiations for the purchase of the segment of this right-of-way between Elder Creek Road in Sacramento County and Woodbridge Road in Lodi. Pending successful negotiations, it will include other tasks leading to close of escrow.

## Route 65: Lincoln Bypass

The right-of-way for this project was fully funded two years ago and the draft environmental document was released in December 2001. Right-of-way acquisition is beginning this year. Placer County and the state have agreed to fully fund the construction of the project over the next several State Transportation Improvement Programs. SACOG will work with PCTPA (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency) and Caltrans to assist in federal programming for the project and timely implementation.

## Route 65: Third Feather River Bridge

This long-standing priority project received a substantial commitment of state and regional funds to complete studies and purchase right-of-way. SACOG will work with Caltrans and local jurisdictions to develop a plan to fully fund the right-of-way and construction.

## Route 70/99 Corridor Improvements

Portions of Route 99 south of Yuba City are scheduled to be widened to four lanes of conventional highway and portions of Route 70 south of Marysville are scheduled to be widened to four-lane expressway standards. SACOG will push for timely delivery of these projects and for the additional funds needed to complete the unprogrammed segments of Route 99. SACOG will work with Sutter County, Yuba County, and others to prepare a habitat conservation plan, which is needed to ensure mitigation of impacts and timely project delivery.

## Sacramento Regional GIS Cooperative

The Sacramento Area Geographic Information System Cooperative is developing a consistent and reliable building, land, and street information system that will improve planning and decision-making throughout the region. The initial GIS projects in Sacramento and Yolo counties are being implemented there, and planning efforts are underway to extend it to Yuba, Sutter, Placer and El Dorado counties. The Cooperative's goals are to share digital data, develop joint GIS projects, and make GIS data easier to use. Many projects are underway including digital aerial photography, assisting the ITS Partnership, improving public safety information systems, and enhancing economic development programs.

## Sacramento Regional Transit District Bus Maintenance Facility Expansion

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2025 calls for a significant expansion of the Regional Transit bus fleet as part of its comprehensive strategy to reduce congestion and improve air quality. In order to expand its bus fleet, RT will have to develop a second bus maintenance facility. RT is currently studying alternative sites for the facility and once a site is selected it will need funding for right-of-way acquisition, environmental analysis, preliminary engineering, and design and construction. The new facility will allow RT to maintain an expanded fleet and be capable of maintaining RT's standard coaches, articulated buses, and the small buses used in the new Neighborhood Ride community bus services. In addition, the new facility will provide CNG fueling capabilities for other transit operators and the ability for RT to provide bus parking for commuter buses operated by other area transit operators.



## U.S. 50 Corridor

The construction of high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes between Sunrise Boulevard and El Dorado

Hills Boulevard is scheduled to be completed in the Fall of 2002 as part of SACOG's U.S. 50 Corridor Investment Strategy. Over the course of the next three years, SACOG will continue to work with the City and County of Sacramento, the City of Folsom, the El Dorado County Transportation

Commission, Sacramento Regional Transit, Caltrans, and others on approximately 30 projects to ultimately reduce traffic congestion along the Corridor. Some of the projects include determining the feasibility of extending the HOV lanes into downtown Sacramento, extending light rail to downtown Folsom, and widening Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue.

## Stockton Boulevard Bus Enhancements Study

SACOG is coordinating a bus enhancements study along Stockton Boulevard in Sacramento. As a congested corridor with significant transit ridership, Stockton Boulevard is an exceptional opportunity to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness and feasibility of bus rapid transit (BRT) and other bus enhancement strategies. The BRT concept for Stockton Boulevard will create a new image of the bus system, combining traditional traffic engineering strategies with innovative transit technologies to improve the operations and quality of bus service. The Stockton Boulevard study is also designed to analyze a full range of BRT strategies that may have further application in the Sacramento region. Initial project implementation is scheduled for Fall 2002. Future candidate corridors for BRT include Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue.

## Priority Projects

*include all of these attributes:*

- The projects affect or include more than one jurisdiction.
- The projects are true regional priorities that will affect the region.
- The SACOG Board, staff, or member jurisdiction has some influence or control.
- Some element of the project can be accomplished within the next year.
- There is some potential benefit for making the project a priority.
- There is a realistic expectation that funding will be available.
- There is support from the jurisdictions where the project is located and support from the lead agency.