

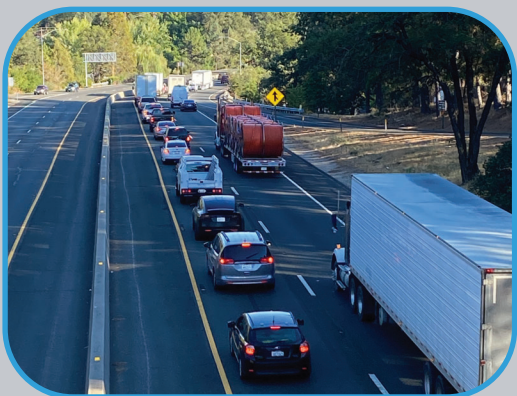


# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

2024

Regional Transportation  
Improvement Program (RTIP)

December 15, 2023



DANIELA FERNANDEZ – Nevada City City Council  
SUSAN HOEK – Nevada County Board of Supervisors  
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MICHAEL WOODMAN, Executive Director  
AARON HOYT, Deputy Executive Director

Grass Valley • Nevada City

Nevada County • Truckee

File:1390.1

TO: California Transportation Commission  
FROM: Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC)  
SUBJECT: NCTC 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program  
DATE: December 14, 2023

The Nevada County Transportation Commission hereby submits the following projects and programming recommendations to the California Transportation Commission as NCTC's 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program:

1. Program \$4,385,000 of available Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funding for the SR49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 (4E170). This funding amount will be recommended for programming in FY 2024/25 as follows: Construction Support \$2,800,000 and Construction Capital \$1,585,000. NCTC in partnership with Caltrans District 3 and Caltrans Headquarters requests programming \$2,000,000 of Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) funding to the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 for Construction Capital in FY 2024/25. These programming requests will fully fund the construction phase of the project.

The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phases 1 and 2 will be constructed congruently providing improvements between Post Mile (PM) 11.3 and PM 13.3 to enhance goods movement, safety, operations, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and safety by adding a southbound and northbound truck climbing lane outside and urbanized area and widening shoulders, from La Barr Meadows Road to McKnight Way in Nevada County. The purpose of this project is to enhance connectivity for the rural communities in Nevada County including AB 1550 rural communities adjacent to SR 49 corridor. The improvements will enhance access, connectivity, safety and mobility of vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic on SR 49. This project will enhance daily commuting, mobility, freight, transit (Nevada County Connects Route 5 Commuter Service to Auburn Multi-modal Station), connections to essential services, access to zero emission bus charging infrastructure, and provide a long-term benefit for emergency readiness for evacuations caused by climate change stressors.

The project accomplishes the goals of the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan and the 2021 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) by balancing local community and interregional travel needs for all users and improves emergency evacuation. The project

also addresses the needs identified in the SR 49 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan and the Nevada County Active Transportation Plan.

In previous STIPs, Nevada County RIP funds were programmed for the project as follows: \$3.9 million for Project Approval and Environmental Documentation (PA/ED), and \$3 million for Plans, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E), \$1.2 million for Right of Way Support, and \$3,000,000 of RIP and \$3,000,000 of IIP funds for Right of Way Capital.

2. NCTC requests the CTC program \$360,000,000 for STIP Planning, Programming, and Monitoring Activities - Apportioned as follows:

FY 2024/25	FY 2025/26	FY 2026/27	FY 2027/28	FY 2028/29
\$65,000	\$65,000	\$100,000	\$65,000	\$65,000

**NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
2024 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
(2024 RTIP)**

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# **A. Overview and Schedule**

## **Section 1. Executive Summary**

The Nevada County Transportation Commission hereby submits the following projects and programming recommendations to the California Transportation Commission as NCTC's 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program:

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\$65,000	\$65,000	\$100,000	\$65,000	\$65,000

## **Section 2. General Information**

- **Regional Agency Name**  
Nevada County Transportation Commission
- **Agency website links for Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).**

**Regional Agency Website Link:** <http://www.nctc.ca.gov>

**RTIP document link:** <https://www.nctc.ca.gov/Reports/Regional-Transportation-Improvement-Program/index.html>

**RTP link:** <https://www.nctc.ca.gov/Reports/Regional-Transportation-Plan/index.html>

- **Regional Agency Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer Contact Information**  
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Title Executive Director  
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Telephone 530-265-3202

- **RTIP Manager Staff Contact Information**

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Email ahoyt@nccn.net  
Telephone 530-265-3202

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Telephone 916-707-1388

**Section 3. Background of Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)**

A. What is the Regional Transportation Improvement Program?

The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) is a program of highway, local road, transit and active transportation projects that a region plans to fund with State and Federal revenue programmed by the California Transportation Commission in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The RTIP is developed biennially by the regions and is due to the Commission by December 15 of every odd numbered year. The program of projects in the RTIP is a subset of projects in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), a federally mandated master transportation plan which guides a region's transportation investments over a 20 to 25 year period. The RTP is based on all reasonably anticipated funding, including federal, state and local sources. Updated every 4 to 5 years, the RTP is developed through an extensive public participation process in the region and reflects the unique mobility, sustainability, and air quality needs of each region.

B. Regional Agency's Historical and Current Approach to developing the RTIP

NCTC's RTIP historically is developed based on the regional priorities identified in the development of the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Development of the

RTP includes a significant public outreach process to engage the public and local and state officials in order to gain consensus on the top multimodal regional priorities. Other regional planning documents that are developed through public input, such as the SR 49 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan and Nevada County Active Transportation Plan are also taken into consideration. NCTC staff develop recommendations for projects to be funded in the RTIP based on the RTP priorities and ensure consistency with other regional planning documents, such as the SR 49 CMCP and Nevada County ATP. The Nevada County Transportation Commission, after consideration of public input received at the RTIP public hearing, determines the projects and funding amounts to be adopted into the RTIP. Completion of the Nevada 49 Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) is the top regional priority of the NCTC and there is strong local support for improvements that will improve safety and operations for all users on SR 49. There is also a strong local desire to have the highway improved to address evacuation needs in the event of a major wildland fire. This project was originally programmed for PA/ED and PS&E in the 2014 STIP. Caltrans District 3 is the implementing agency and PA/ED was completed in November 2021. NCTC's 2024 proposes to program additional Regional Improvement Program and Interregional Improvement Program funding for Construction Support and Construction Capital funding for the Nevada 49 Corridor Improvement Project – Phase 2 and Planning, Programming, and Monitoring funding.

**Section 4. Completion of Prior RTIP Projects (Required per Section 78)**

No other projects were programmed or completed between adoption of the 2022 RTIP and the 2024 RTIP.

**Section 5. RTIP Outreach and Participation**

A. RTIP Development and Approval Schedule

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
CTC adopts Fund Estimate and Guidelines	August 16-17, 2023
Caltrans identifies State Highway Needs	September 15, 2023
Caltrans submits draft ITIP	October 15, 2023
CTC ITIP Hearing, South	November 1, 2023
CTC ITIP Hearing, North	November 8, 2023
Regional Agency adopts 2024 RTIP	November 8, 2023
Regions submit RTIP to CTC	December 15, 2023
Caltrans submits ITIP to CTC	December 15, 2023
CTC STIP Hearing, North	January 25, 2024
CTC STIP Hearing, South	February 1, 2024
CTC publishes staff recommendations	March 1, 2024
CTC Adopts 2024 STIP	March 21-22, 2024

B. Community Engagement

Improving safety and operations within the SR 49 corridor have been a top priority of NCTC for over two decades and has been driven by public involvement. In June of 2006, following citizen concerns regarding the number of injury accidents and fatalities in the corridor, NCTC formed the



*SR 49 Stakeholder Committee.* The *SR 49 Stakeholder Committee* includes representatives from NCTC, Citizens for Highway 49 Safety, Fix 49.org, County of Nevada, City of Grass Valley, Caltrans, citizens, first responders, and CHP that are collaboratively focused on implementing short-term and long-term safety and operational improvements. The group's involvement includes:

- 1) Identifying key community design principles.
- 2) Review and comment on planning and technical studies.
- 3) Recommend strategies for addressing community concerns.
- 4) Provide a collaborative approach to planning and implementing improvements.

Public involvement is a major component of the transportation planning process conducted by the NCTC in coordination with Caltrans District 3. Every person in Nevada County is affected by transportation and therefore is an important component of the transportation planning process. NCTC makes a concerted effort to solicit public input regarding transportation planning from all Nevada County residents including underrepresented groups. Information on the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project was provided to interested citizen and environmental groups, such as the Citizens for Highway 49 Safety, SR 49 Stakeholder Committee, Highway 49 Safety.org, Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities, and the Sierra Fund. Information for public meetings was also distributed to the three mobile home parks adjacent to the SR 49 corridor (Tall Pines, Forest Springs, Ponderosa Pines).

Information on meetings and workshops, as well as presentations were provided to the Social Service Advisory Committee (SSTAC) and Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative Mobility Action Partners Coalition (ATCI-MAPCO) consisting of representatives underserved populations. All in-person meetings were held in transit-accessible locations (prior to COVID). Spanish translation services were available upon request for all public workshops. While there are no lands held in trust of federally recognized tribes within Nevada County, a number of tribes and Native American individuals with historic or cultural interests regarding lands in Nevada County have been consulted on the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan and SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report. This consultation was based on the of interested parties pertaining to Nevada County, maintained by Native American Heritage Commission.

Public outreach efforts for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project included an initial public workshop on August 4, 2015, to collect input on design alternatives to be further evaluated in the Draft Environmental Document for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project. November 18, 2015, NCTC held a public hearing on the adoption of Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which included additional funding for the project. On September 16, 2015, Caltrans hosted an Open House at Grass Valley City Hall to provide information and receive input on the project alternatives. In addition, a public workshop was held in the Summer of 2017 with state and local officials with 300+ concerned citizens at the Bear River High School following a fatality involving two high school students were citizens passionately demanded improvements be made in the corridor. NCTC and state officials discussed the planned improvements and contemplated interim safety improvements.



Public outreach was also held as part of development of the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan (2018), SR 49 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (2022), and Ready Nevada County Extreme Climate Event Mobility Adaptation Plan (2022) to get input on proposed transportation improvements, including the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project, and held at public events widely attended by a broad cross-section of the population at transit accessible locations. These events included local farmers

markets, Grass Valley Thursday Night Market, Summer Nights (Nevada City), Cornish Christmas (Grass Valley), and Victorian Christmas (Nevada City). Copies of the Regional Transportation Plan are also available at the public libraries.

An online Virtual Open House was held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, to provide information and receive input on the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Draft Environmental Impact Report. NCTC produces and maintains a website, [www.nctc.ca.gov](http://www.nctc.ca.gov), to keep the public informed on transportation planning efforts and public workshops. On November 8, 2023, NCTC held a public hearing on the proposed 2024 RTIP.

Planning documents, such as the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment are posted and made available for review. Hard copies were made available at the Nevada County Eric Rood Administrative Center for public review. Caltrans District 3 also posts the project documents on their project website. NCTC also maintains a social media presence and provides information on public workshops and links to documents through its Facebook and Twitter account pages. Press releases were sent to regional newspapers, radio stations, and local online internet news sources (TheUnion newspaper, Auburn Journal, Yubanet.com, KNCO radio, KVMR radio, and Lake Wildwood Independent).

*Effect of Public Participation:*

Public participation has informed the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project in a variety of ways, through many planning documents and public engagement opportunities, particularly during preparation of the environmental document. Public



input was received on the preferred project alternatives and incorporated into the design. Public engagement during the development of Regional Transportation Plan (2018) and Active Transportation Plan (2019) identified the need for adequate shoulders in the SR 49 corridor improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists. Public participation as Part of the SR 49 Safety Needs Assessment (2019) and SR 49 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (2022) confirmed the public desire for safety and

operational improvements in the related to daily operations, I-80 detour events, and evacuation

needs. Community support has led to planning and securing funding for improvements in the SR 49 corridor to be the top regional priority of NCTC.

*Continued Public Engagement:* Caltrans and NCTC will continue to coordinate public extensive public outreach immediately before and during construction. This suite of community engagement activities will include: 1) **Weekly Construction Emails:** Project updates and information about anticipated delays due to construction will be distributed to a list of interested parties. 2) **Electronic Signage and WAZE Mobile Phone App:** Updates and navigation for local and regional travelers moving through the corridor during construction. 3) **Joint News Releases:** News releases with partner agencies regarding upcoming activities or critical closures will be provided to the local media and shared online through official websites. 4) **Social Media Updates:** News and photos of the project will be posted on Caltrans and NCTC's social media platforms, such as, Facebook and Twitter. 5) **Stakeholder Updates:** Continued communication with stakeholders associated with goods-movement businesses and other important groups to spread knowledge about the project, as well as mitigate freight impacts to the surrounding communities. 6) **Local Meetings:** Verbal updates at NCTC meetings, Accessible Transportation Initiative Coalition and Mobility Action Partners, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council, and community events to share project information. 7) **Community Events:** Ribbon Cutting and Groundbreaking events to highlight the benefits of the project.

*Project Benefits:* 1) Eliminates key transportation bottlenecks for freight, commuters, and evacuation. 2) Reduce freight and automobile related emissions impacts on AB 1550 Communities. 3) Travel time reliability is expected to improve with the addition of the project resulting in \$32.5 million monetized value. 4) Freight travel time saving in the amount of 33,676 annual average person hours and \$4.2 million in freight travel time reliability. 5) Total monetized travel time Savings of \$89 million over 20 years. 6) Reduce collisions, savings \$8 million over 20 years. 7) Improve safety and operations during I-80 emergency detour events reducing travel times by 995 hours or 55%. 8) The total project monetary benefits over 20 years is \$112 million. 9) The project has a Cost Benefit Ratio: 4.1. 10) Constructing the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phases 1 and 2 congruently streamlines the right-of-way phase and utility relocations, reduces unit costs of construction materials, minimizes duplicative work items (e.g., mobilization, time related overhead, erosion control, etc.), reduces the burden on the traveling public, and avoids a seven to eight percent annual cost escalation per year that the phase 2 project is delayed.

Caltrans completed the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Assessment in November 2021. The EIR identified that the project will have either less-than-significant impacts or no impacts to: 1) Aesthetics 2) Hydrology and Water Quality 3) Agricultural and Forest Resources 4) Land Use Planning 5) Air quality 6) Mineral Resources 7) Biological resources 8) Public Services 9) Energy Recreation 10) Geology and Soils 11) Tribal Cultural Resources 12) Greenhouse Gas Emissions 13) Utilities and Service Systems 14) Hazards and Hazardous Materials 15) Wildlife The EIR identified potential impacts to the following areas; however, the proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts to a less than significant level after implementation: 1) Cultural Resources: Establishment of environmentally sensitive area fencing was determined to sufficiently protect areas of potential cultural interest. 2) Noise: Sound walls

are proposed to be constructed in select areas to minimize the noise impact to adjacent properties. 3) Population and Housing: Potential partial and right-of-way acquisitions will follow the Relocation Assistance Program guidelines. During the final design phase, the engineering team will further minimize the right-of-way impact by shifting the vertical and/or horizontal roadway alignment, incorporate retaining walls, and evaluate increasing roadway side slopes. 4) Transportation: Implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan strategies to reduce the non-significant increase in VMT (+0.6%) would mitigate the project. Strategies include enhanced express transit service between Nevada County and the Amtrak Capitol Corridor passenger rail station in Auburn, improvements to active transportation infrastructure, evaluate micro-transit services, and evaluate enhancements to park & ride lots in the SR 49 corridor.

The EIR determined that the project would not reduce community cohesion because the project stays on the current alignment and would not divide the community, separate residences from community facilities, or result in substantial growth. Driveway access will be maintained at all businesses in the study area. Neither construction nor long term impacts would result in disproportionately high and adverse effects related to community cohesion on the Environmental Justice community. Additionally, the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 1 will be able to be constructed congruently with Phase II and will improve multi-modal options by constructing a 10-foot-wide class III multi-use shoulder as identified in the 2019 Nevada County ATP.

C. Consultation with Caltrans District (Required per Section 20)

The Nevada County Transportation Commission is located within Caltrans District: 3.

Caltrans District 3 is the implementing agency and NCTC maintains regular communication with staff and the District Director regarding planned and programmed improvements and planning activities in relation to implementation of the RTP, SR 49 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan, and RTIP. Caltrans District 3 in coordination with NCTC conduct Project Development Team (PDT) meetings for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project on a regular basis to coordinate the actions necessary for delivery of the project. Caltrans also participates as a member of the SR 49 Stakeholder Committee. NCTC coordinates with both Caltrans District 3 regarding both the development of the draft RTIP and draft ITIP to discuss NCTC's regional and interregional programming needs and priorities to develop consensus and partnerships.

## **B. 2024 STIP Regional Funding Request**

### **Section 6. 2024 STIP Regional Share and Request for Programming**

#### **A. 2024 Regional Fund Share Per 2024 STIP Fund Estimate**

NCTC has a total of \$5,431,000 available through FY 2028/29 to program in the 2024 STIP. Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) Limitations, NCTC has a total of \$412,000 of PPM available in the 2024 STIP for planning, programming, and monitoring activities.

B. Summary of Requested Programming – Insert information in table below. Identify any proposals for the Advanced Project Development Element (APDE) share, if identified in the fund estimate, by including “(APDE)” after the project name and location. Identify requests to advance future county shares for a larger project by including “(Advance)” after the project name and location.

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Requested RIP Amount</b>
SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project – Phase II. Located in Nevada County, on SR 49 from La Bar Meadows Road to McKnight Way. (PM 10.8 to PM 13.3)	Construction of the Southbound truck-climbing lane outside an urbanized area, eliminating the southbound lane drop/merge point south of the McKnight Way Interchange, and construction of a new entrance on SR 49 to the Nevada County Transit Operation Center and Zero Emission Bus charging infrastructure.	\$4,385,000 (RIP) \$2,000,000 (IIP)
Planning, Programming, and Monitoring Funding (PPM)	PPM	\$360,000

**Section 7. Overview of Other Funding Included With Delivery of Regional Improvement Program (RIP) Projects**

Other project funding includes \$14,615,385 of Trade Corridor Enhancement Program and \$2,000,000 of Interregional Improvement Program funding for Construction Capital. Commission approval for non-proportional spending will not be required.

Proposed 2024 RTIP	Total RTIP	Other Funding					Total Project Cost
		ITIP	STBG/ CMAQ	TCEP	Fund Source 2	Fund Source 3	
SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 - Construction	\$4,385,000	\$2,000,000		\$14,615,385			\$21,000,385
Planning, Programming, & Monitoring (PPM)	\$360,000						-
							-
							-
							-
							-
							-
							-
							-
							-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,745,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$14,615,385</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**Notes:** In partnership Caltrans 2024 Draft ITIP and NCTC's 2024 RTIP jointly recommend \$2,000,000 of IIP funding for construction on the new entrance to the Nevada County Transit Operations Center and Zero Emission Bus Charging infrastructure as part of the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 funding being requested in the 2024 RTIP.

## **Section 8. Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) Funding and Needs**

The purpose of the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) is to improve interregional mobility for people and goods in the State of California. As an interregional program, the ITIP is focused on increasing the throughput for highway and rail corridors of strategic importance outside the urbanized areas of the state. A sound transportation network between and connecting urbanized areas ports and borders is vital to the state's economic vitality. The ITIP is prepared in accordance with Government Code Section 14526, Streets and Highways Code Section 164 and the STIP Guidelines. The ITIP is a five-year program managed by Caltrans and funded with 25% of new STIP revenues in each cycle. Developed in cooperation with regional transportation planning agencies to ensure an integrated transportation program, the ITIP promotes the goal of improving interregional mobility and connectivity across California.

**If requesting ITIP funding, provide narrative on your request in the text field below. Or state that no ITIP funding was requested.**

**ITIP Funding Request:** NCTC in partnership with Caltrans Headquarters are jointly recommending \$2,000,000 in ITIP funding for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 to provide additional funding needed for construction of the transit access component of this project. The funding requested will facilitate construction of an improved access via SR 49 to the Nevada County Transit Operations Center and Zero Emission Bus Charging Infrastructure, including a new driveway access, deceleration, and bus acceleration lane. This component of the project will improve access, routing, and enhance interregional connectivity for the rural communities in Nevada County along State Route 49. The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project will help to facilitate mode shift within the corridor by reducing transit delays and improving reliability and on-time performance for the interregional fixed route transit commuter transit service, operated by Nevada County, Gold Country Connects Route 5 (Annual ridership approximately 15,000 boardings). Route 5 provides fixed route express transit service (Monday -Friday, six roundtrips between 6:00 am and 7:30 pm) between Nevada City/Grass Valley via the SR 49 corridor providing a critical interregional connection to the Auburn Conheim Multimodal Station in Placer County. This interregional transit service allows passengers to make connections to the Amtrak Capital Corridor Inner-City Passenger Rail, Auburn Transit, and Placer County Transit. Gold Country Connects Route 5 passengers can transfer to Placer County Transit, which provides access to the Watt Ave. Light Rail Station or direct connections to the Amtrak Capital Corridor, as well as via Amtrak Thruway buses providing access the Capitol Corridor to Sacramento and the Bay Area.

The implementation of the planned Sac-Roseville Phase 1 triple track project will allow the Capitol Corridor to operate three round trips (6 trains) daily between Sacramento and Roseville versus the one round trip currently offered. The Capitol Corridor expects to implement the remainder of the Sac-Roseville Phase 1 triple track project, for a total of 10 roundtrips (20 trains daily) between Sacramento and Roseville, as soon as funding is available. It is anticipated that additional Amtrak bus connections to the Auburn Conheim Multimodal Station will be added. This will provide an opportunity to align the Gold Country Connects Route 5 fixed route express transit service to plan and coordinate new Amtrak connector bus scheduled connections at the Auburn

Conheim Multimodal Station. Third track project improvements are projected to reduce vehicle miles traveled by nearly 12 million throughout Northern California.

**Include a discussion of what the region believes are the most significant interregional highway and intercity rail needs within the region (see section 24G).**

Safety and operational Improvements in the SR 49 Corridor for the segment between the Placer/Nevada County line and the McKnight Way Interchange are the most significant interregional highway need within the region. Improving safety, operations, and multimodal options in the corridor are critical to providing connectivity to employment, specialized medical facilities, passenger rail and interregional transit, improved safety and accessibility for AB 1550 populations adjacent to the corridor, operational and safety improvements to facilitate I-80 emergency detour events, as well as provide emergency readiness for wildfire or other evacuation events. The most significant intercity rail need within the region would be the desired expansion of Capital Corridor Passenger service to the Truckee/Tahoe region and Reno to facilitate significant mode shift and reduce vehicle miles traveled on I-80, SR 49, and SR 20.

### **Section 9. Projects Planned Within Multi-Modal Corridors**

**Provide a description of the project's impact on other projects planned or underway within the corridor as required per Section 24(e) of the STIP Guidelines.**

The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project will provide improvements that when combined with SR 49 Grass Valley Evacuation Route Project that was funded in Cycle 1 of the Local Transportation Climate Adaptation Program will address climate related community risks related to wildfire evacuation egress. The State Route 49 Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project, in Nevada County, will construct structurally engineered full depth shoulders and a two-way left turn lane between approximately Ponderosa Pines Way and Wolf/Combie Road (PM 2.1 to 9.8). The purpose of this project is to address existing evacuation barriers identified at bottleneck locations on the State Route (SR) 49 corridor improving mobility and safety for climate vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and resiliency of the evacuation route.

The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project improvements combined with SR 49 Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project improvements will facilitate a three-lane southbound contraflow during evacuation events mitigating climate and wildfire risks to residents of the communities Cities of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and unincorporated communities adjacent to the SR 49 corridor while enhancing emergency ingress. 58% of residents adjacent to and served by the project corridor are considered disadvantaged and 37% are considered severely disadvantaged, including 7% zero vehicle households. The resulting improvements combined with the improvements resulting from the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project will reduce evacuation time from 6 hours and 20 minutes to 2 hours and 12 minutes.

Additionally, the combined shoulder improvements will implement planned Class III multiuse shoulders on SR 49 as identified in the Nevada County Active Transportation Plan and SR 49 Comprehensive Multi-Modal Corridor Plan (CMCP) including the addition of continuous shoulders along the SR 49 corridor to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety that will help to encourage



additional mode shift within the corridor and provide enhanced safety and mobility through the elimination of gaps in shoulder and provide a continuous network of facilities. Bicyclists and pedestrians frequently observed navigating the project segment.

Mapping developed by ARB identifies that the residential areas adjacent to the SR 49 CIP on both sides of project are identified as AB 1550 low-income communities. The Nevada County Active Transportation Plan (2019) identifies the need for Class III Multi-use shoulders along SR 49 from the current northern project limits, south of the McKnight Way Interchange, all the way to the Nevada County/Placer County Line. The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project eliminates the gap that currently exists between SR 49 south of the McKnight Way Interchange and the previously completed SR 49/La Barr Meadows improvement project (Post Mile 10.8), creating a Class III bicycle and pedestrian connection between the residential areas adjacent to La Barr Meadows Road, Lode Line Way, Young American Mine Road, Cornette Way, Wellswood Way, Upward Way, Smith Road, and the commercial land uses located in the vicinity of the McKnight Way Interchange in the City of Grass Valley.

The SR 49 Grass Valley Wildfire Evacuation Route Project will construct 10' northbound and 12' southbound shoulders from the southern terminus of the previous SR 49/La Barr Meadows Road improvement project providing a bicycle and pedestrian connection to the commercial land uses located off of SR 49/Alta Sierra Drive. This would provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between the unincorporated community of Alta Sierra (census designated place, approximately 7,207 population) and the City of Grass Valley, as well as connections for residents to transit stops and provide continuous shoulders all the way to Wolf Road/Combie Road improving pedestrian and bicycle safety, connectivity, and accessibility.

#### **Section 10. Highways to Boulevards Conversion Pilot Program**

One potential candidate for the Highways to Boulevards Conversion Pilot Program would be the segment of SR 174 within the Grass Valley City limits that just recently completed the relinquishment process. This relinquishment will facilitate the City of Grass Valley's ability to plan and implement multimodal and complete streets improvements to restore this segment to a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly roadway segment.

#### **11. Complete Streets Consideration (per Section 26)**

See pedestrian and bicycle benefits documented in Section 9.

### **C. Relationship of RTIP to RTP/SCS/APS and Benefits of RTIP**

#### **Section 12. Regional Level Performance Evaluation (per Section 22A of the guidelines)**

Provide an evaluation of system performance and how your RTIP furthers the goals of the region's RTP, and if applicable, your Sustainable Communities Strategy as required per Section 22A of the STIP Guidelines. Each region that is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or within an MPO shall include an evaluation of overall (RTP level) performance using, as a baseline, the region's existing monitored data. To the extent relevant data and tools area available, the performance measures listed in Table B1 below may be reported.

Regions outside a MPO shall include any of the measures listed in Table B1 (below) that the region currently monitors. A region outside a MPO (or a small MPO) may request, and Caltrans shall provide, data on these measures relative to the state transportation system in that region.

As an alternative, a region outside a MPO (or a small MPO) may use the Performance Monitoring Indicators identified in the Rural Counties Task Force's Rural and Small Urban Transportation Planning study dated June 3, 2015. These include: Total Accident Cost, Total Transit Operating Cost per Revenue Mile, Total Distressed Lane Miles, and Land Use Efficiency (total developed land in acres per population).

The evaluation of overall performance shall include a qualitative or quantitative assessment of how effective the RTIP or the ITIP is in addressing or achieving the goals, objectives and standards which correspond to the relevant horizon years within the region's RTP or Caltrans ITSP that covers the 5-year STIP period. Caltrans' evaluation of the ITIP shall also address ITIP consistency with the RTPs.

In addition, each region with an adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or Alternate Planning Scenario (APS) shall include a discussion of how the RTIP relates to its SCS or APS. This will include a quantitative or qualitative assessment of how the RTIP will facilitate implementation of the SCS or APS and also identify any challenges the region is facing in implementing its SCS or APS. In a region served by a multi-county transportation planning organization, the report shall address the portion of the SCS or APS relevant to that region. As part of this discussion, each region shall identify any proposed or current STIP projects that are exempt from SB 375.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

A. Regional Level Performance Indicators and Measures (per Appendix B of the STIP Guidelines).

The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project begins at the limits of the previous La Barr Meadows Signalization Project (PM 11.1) and ends just south of the McKnight Way Interchange (PM 13.3), connecting to the four lane Golden Center Freeway. This project is exempt from SB 375, NCTC is not required to prepare a SCS. The project (STIP 4E170) will make improvements to this segment focused on goods movement, safety, operations, transit access, evacuation egress, and multi-modal mobility improvements. This project is designed to be funded in three phases as state and federal transportation funding allow.

The ultimate project includes redirecting numerous entrances to a newly constructed frontage road system to access the highway at two new at-grade intersections that will either be roundabouts or signalized. It will also construct portions of northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes and will eliminate merge points that currently exist to the north and south of the project limits, connecting to the existing four-lane northbound/southbound sections. This project also proposes to further address safety concerns through the installation of a continuous median barrier, 10' shoulders with rumble strips, animal crossing tunnel with fencing, enhanced wet night visibility striping, and pavement edge treatments.

Phase 1: Construction of the northbound truck climbing lane, a 16' wide continuous two way left turn lane, 10' shoulders, and elimination of the northbound merge point improving operations and improving northbound evacuation capacity. This phase also includes southbound right turn lanes at Wellswood Way, Bethel Church Way, Smith Road, and Crestview Drive. Other safety features include enhanced wet night visibility striping, rumble strips, and pavement edge treatments. A wildlife undercrossing with fencing will be installed as part of this phase to help reduce deer strikes.

Phase: 2: Construction of the southbound truck climbing lane, 10' shoulders with rumble strips, and elimination of the lane drop/merge point south of the McKnight Way Interchange improving the southbound highway segment to four lanes and improving evacuation egress. This phase will also include enhance wet night visibility striping, rumble strips, and pavement edge treatments.

Phase 3: Construction of frontage roads, elimination of ingress/egress points, construction of two access-controlled intersections initially proposed in the vicinity of Wellswood Way and Smith Road, and installation of a center median barrier.

The purpose of this project is to enhance connectivity for the rural communities in Nevada County along State Route 49 from La Barr Meadows Road to McKnight Way. The project will enhance safety and mobility of vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic on State Route 49. The project will also enhance daily commuting, mobility, freight, transit (Nevada County Connects, fixed route transit, Route 5 Commuter Service to Auburn Multi-modal station), access to employment and essential services, and provide a long-term benefit for emergency readiness for evacuations caused by climate change stressors. The project improvements are anticipated to achieve the following outcomes:

- Improving the reliability of travel times by improving operations, eliminating merge points and goods movement bottlenecks, reducing accidents, and providing for truck climbing lanes.
- Improve interactions between roadway users, reducing the likelihood of high consequence events.
- Improving safety by eliminating merge conflict points between freight trucks and passenger cars and reducing rear end accidents (achieve reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries related to collisions).
- Improving pedestrian and bicycle mobility and safety through the addition of shoulders, enhancing multimodal connectivity and accessibility.
- Improved traffic flow reducing peak hour vehicle congestion and associated air quality emissions.
- Address equity concerns by improving the multi-modal options and improving the safety of entering and exiting the highway for AB 1550 rural economically disadvantaged populations (identified below the statewide median income) that are adjacent to the project limits.
- Support commerce and economic growth by improving traffic operations and travel times. The proposed project improvements will also ensure that SR 49 is able to handle the forecasted growth of goods movement on the corridor, and address the needed ability to serve as an Emergency Detour Route when I-80 is closed, due to major accidents, wildland fires, construction, and serve as a major evacuation route during wildland fires. When freight and passenger vehicles are re-routed from I-80, additional operational improvements are needed to reduce associated impacts on AB 1550 populations adjacent to the corridor.
- Advances national and regional economic development by improving connections to the nation's transportation network to support the movement of freight and people.
- Reducing corridor traffic congestion improving multi-modal connections to peripheral regions and urban centers and job opportunities.

The proposed RTIP is consistent with the following goals and objectives of the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan 2015-2035:

**Goal 1.0 Provide for the safe and efficient movement of all people, goods, and services on the roadway network.**

- Objective 1A: Improve safety

- Objective 1B: Coordinate with Caltrans and the SR 49 Stakeholders Committee to ensure development and implementation, and funding of projects within the SR 49 Corridor System Management Plan (CSMP) that improve safety and operations.

The State Route 49 Corridor System Management Plan identified the following baseline performance metrics. It is anticipated that the proposed RTIP will improve the travel reliability (BTI) to reliable ( $BTI < 0.25$ ) within the project limits of the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project and reduce accidents and fatalities per million vehicle miles traveled.

Travel time reliability is a transportation performance metric advocated at both the federal and state levels. How predictable travel time is can be critical for commuters, goods movement, and transit provision. As such, the federal National Performance Management Rule now specifically mandates State Departments of Transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to measure travel time reliability on the National Highway System (NHS). Travel time reliability is defined as the variation in travel time for the same trip from day to day (“same trip” implies a trip made with the same purpose, from the same origin, to the same destination, at the same time of the day, using the same mode, and by the same route). If variability is large, the travel time is considered to be unreliable, because it is difficult to generate consistent and accurate estimates for it. If there is little or no variation in the travel time for the same trip, the travel time is considered to be reliable.

There are several measures available to determine travel time reliability. The SR 49 Corridor System Management Plan utilized the Buffer Time and the Buffer Time Index (BTI) to report reliability. Buffer Time is the amount of extra time a person needs to account for above the average travel time to ensure being on time 95% of the time (approximately one day late per month). If a commute trip usually takes 30 minutes, but there are periodic issues with weather or traffic incidents that can cause the commute to take 45 minutes, the buffer time would be 15 minutes, causing the commuter to be 15 minutes early on an average day, and late only occasionally. Buffer time can be monetized similar to delay. A person’s time has a value, and buffer time spent each day to account for unreliable roads has an opportunity cost that could otherwise be spent with family at home or elsewhere. The BTI value normalizes buffer time against the average travel time controlling for distance and typical daily congestion. The BTI is simply the ratio of Buffer Time against the average travel time and is expressed as an index.

The Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 6th Edition definitions were used to define congestion and reliability. These thresholds reflect heavy congestion (with observed average speed less than 60 percent of the free-flow speed) and unreliable road segments (with a 95th percentile travel time more than 1.5 times longer than the 50th percentile travel time (i.e., average), quantified by Level of Travel Time Reliability or LOTTR). The scheme below was used to develop the thematic maps of the results. Table 3.1 shows the Buffer Time Index (BTI) range and metrics for reliable, moderately reliable, and unreliable.

**Table 3.1 Reliability-Congestion Matrix**

	Reliable	Moderately Reliable	Unreliable
BTI A Range	BTI<0.25	0.25>=BTI<0.50	BTI>=0.50
Uncongested B	Predictable and efficient	Not always predictable, but usually efficient	Unpredictable, but not often congested
Congested B	Predictable and inefficient	Not always predictable, but usually inefficient	Unpredictable, and often congested

A BTI: A measure of reliability, measures percentage of travel time devoted to being on time above average travel time.

B Free flow speeds were estimated for each segment based on NPMRDS data during the hours of midnight and 3:00 AM.

**Performance Metrics SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project PM (CSMP Zone 6)**

Zone 6 accounts for the remaining 3.1-mile portion of the CSMP study corridor. With the exception of the transition areas at La Barr Meadows and McKnight Way (where SR 49 has two lanes in each direction), SR 49 segment in this zone is a two-lane highway with approximately 14 access points. All of the access points (with the exception of La Barr Meadows Road at the southern terminus) are side-street stop controlled intersections. The majority of those access points do not have dedicated turn lanes on SR 49. Each of these uncontrolled intersections creates multiple conflict points on the corridor. With the growth in traffic on SR 49, this may potentially result in an increase in the number of collisions involving vehicles entering and exiting SR 49 without the benefit of dedicated turn lanes. Based on travel time runs, the average time to traverse the entire length of Zone 6 was determined to be 3 minutes and 36 seconds.

**Travel Time Reliability**

The travel time reliability (BTI) was broken down for passenger cars and heavy-duty trucks for Zone 6. This zone is from La Barr Meadows Road/Allison Ranch Road to South of McKnight interchange. Per the NPMRDS data segment limits, these limits for Zone 6 were apportioned based on length proportions of the respective segments.

## Passenger Cars

As presented in Table 9.1, the passenger car BTI reliability for the southbound direction in PM peak hours showed unreliable conditions. However, the AM peak hour for the southbound direction showed reliable results. This is likely due to the increase in traffic volumes (PM peak hour are almost double the AM peak hour). The other BTI results for the northbound direction showed moderately reliable conditions in the AM peak hour and reliable conditions in the PM peak hour.

**Table 9.1 Zone 6 Passenger Car BTI Reliability**

Reliability BTI (Passenger Vehicles)					
NB		SB			
Segment		AM	PM	AM	PM
La Barr Meadows Road/Allison Ranch		0.26	0.18	0.16	0.69

## Heavy-Duty Trucks

Table 9.2 presents the BTI reliability for heavy-duty trucks. This showed similar results in comparison to the passenger cars except the trucks had slightly less reliability. The southbound direction in the PM peak hour had a BTI of 0.79 (unreliable) and the AM peak hour had a BTI of 0.20 (reliable). The northbound directions showed moderately reliable conditions for AM and PM peak hours.

**Table 9.2 Zone 6 Heavy Duty Trucks BTI Reliability**

Reliability BTI (Trucks)					
NB		SB			
Segment		AM	PM	AM	PM
La Barr Meadows Road/Allison Ranch		0.31	0.28	0.20	0.79

Continued Next Page

**Table 9.3** presents the performance measures for Zone 6 for Existing and Future (Year 2035)

Conditions without the proposed SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project presented included in the 2024 RTIP.

**Table 9.3 Zone 6 Projected Performance Without Improvement**

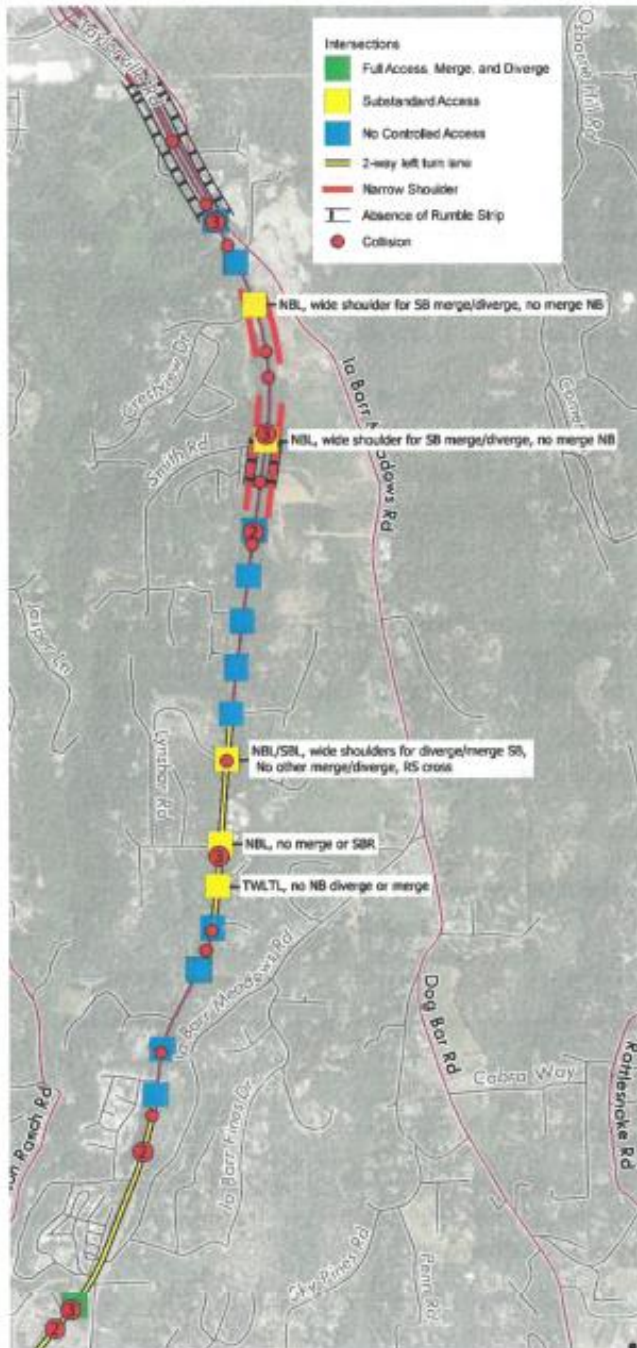
Existing Average Daily Traffic <sup>1</sup>		30,495	
Future (Year 2035) Average Daily Traffic <sup>2</sup>		33,545	
Existing LOS (Year 2018)	AM	NB	E
		SB	E
	PM	NB	E
		SB	E
Future LOS (Year 2035)	AM	NB	E
		SB	E
	PM	NB	E
		SB	E
Total Vehicle Hours of Delay	AM	NB	4.84
		SB	1.65
	PM	NB	4.19
		SB	8.92
Total Person Minutes of Delay <sup>3</sup>	AM	NB	333.57
		SB	113.72
	PM	NB	288.66
		SB	614.12
Minutes of Delay per Vehicle	AM	NB	0.23
		SB	0.13
	PM	NB	0.23
		SB	0.38



1 Source: Average Daily Traffic based on 2018 traffic counts

2 Source: Growth Rate used was obtained from the Nevada County Travel Demand Model

3 Source: Delay is the average additional travel time by vehicles traveling is the difference between the average FFS and average speed. A vehicle occupancy factor of 1.15 was used for passenger car and vehicle occupancy factor of 1.0 for trucks.



## 9.2 Safety Analysis (81 Collisions)

In Zone 6, out of 81 total collisions recorded from 2012 to 2016, one was fatal and 34 resulted in injury. In the undivided four-lane section of Zone 6, the overall collision rate is 0.65 per MVM (lower than the statewide rate of 0.9 per MVM). In the two-lane section of Zone 6, the overall collision rate is 0.52 per MVM (lower than the statewide rate is 1.08 per MVM). In the undivided four-lane section of Zone 6, the fatal rate is 8.3%, higher than the statewide rate of 1.1%. There are four collision areas of primary concern:

### *SR 49 & Allison Ranch Road/La Barr Meadows Road*

This is a signalized intersection with standard access. Four of the eight injury collisions at the intersection are rear-end collisions. One of the collisions is a severe injury sideswipe collision. Another collision is a fatal pedestrian collision.

### *SR 49 & Wellswood Way*

This is a side-street stop controlled intersection with substandard access with three injury collisions.

### *SR 49 & Smith Road*

This is a side-street stop controlled intersection with substandard access. Of the four injury collisions, two are sideswipes, likely due to the left turn from Smith Road not having a merge lane. One of the sideswipe collisions is a severe injury collision.

### *Northern Segment of Zone 6*

The northern segment of Zone 6 does not have any significant access points, but it has ten collisions. One of those collisions was a severe injury sideswipe collision 910 feet north of Crestview Drive.

### *Other Significant Collision*

In addition to the fatal and severe injury collisions at the intersections discussed above, the following collision occurred:

- A severe injury sideswipe collision on SR 49 occurred 900 feet south of Smith Road.

This project will improve safety, traffic operations, goods movement, transit access and routing, bicycle, and pedestrian mobility throughout the project limits. The ultimate project proposes to construct SB and NB truck climbing lanes and eliminate unsafe merge features and installation of a concrete median barrier and 8-foot shoulders with rumble strips, EWNV striping, and pavement edge treatments. This improvement will reduce rear-end and sideswipe accidents that, for the existing two-lane configuration, are often due to either congestion or traffic slowing or stopping for vehicles preparing to make turning movements. Rumble strips will alert fatigued or distracted drivers who start to leave the roadway.

Widening shoulders to standard widths will provide additional recovery area for drivers who stray outside the roadway. Pavement edge treatments allow vehicles that leave the roadway a gentler slope to navigate when re-entering the roadway. The median barrier will eliminate the potential for head-on accidents and will reduce broadside accidents in this segment of SR 49.

The project will also eliminate numerous access points adjacent to SR 49, which create low speed versus high-speed conflicting movements, which have resulted in collisions, serious injuries and fatalities, and many other “near misses” that have occurred at these locations. Frontage road segments will be constructed to collect and funnel access to SR 49 at two at-grade intersections. Animal crossing tunnels with fencing at the right-of-way line should reduce the number of deer or other animal strikes. This project will remove the existing merge points at each end of the project limits, reducing rear-end and sideswipe accidents and connect to the existing four-lane section to the south and the existing four-lane Golden Center Freeway in Grass Valley to the north.

This project will reduce congestion, improve operations, enhance multi-modal options, improve safety and achieve reductions in broadside, rear end, and head-on accidents. The segment of SR 49 that includes the proposed project serves as the gateway to the Grass Valley/Nevada City area, which serve as the economic hub of western Nevada County. The existing two-lane highway’s current Level-of-Service (LOS) is E during peak hours, and cannot accommodate future traffic increases. The volumes of both local traffic and goods movement freight traffic have increased and the State highway facility have become an integral part of the local circulation system in addition to serving tourist, interregional, and interstate traffic. Growth forecasts for the corridor indicate that traffic congestion and delays will only increase if SR 49 in Nevada County is not improved. It is estimated that 30% of the County workforce is using this route as a primary commute route to major employment centers outside of the County, resulting in over-capacity traffic demand during peak commute periods. Historical and recreational tourism traffic also increases congestion in the project area throughout the year.

The planned improvements will accommodate existing and projected future traffic volumes at LOS D or better through the year 2030. It is anticipated this project will reduce 96 collisions over 20 years. Operations will be improved through the installation of Traffic Management Systems. Existing culverts in poor condition within the project limits will be rehabilitated and extended, pavement will be rehabilitated, and lighting will be upgraded to standard.

**Goal 2.0 Create and maintain a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system to serve the needs of the County.**

- **Objective 2A:** Reduce dependence on the automobile by emphasizing transit, ridesharing, working from home, and pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- **Objective 2B:** Create bicycle, pedestrian, and transit networks that provide access and connections between key destinations including schools and commercial centers.

The project will also address the need for adequate continuous shoulders to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists and disabled vehicles by widening the shoulder to 8 feet. The existing highway has paved and/or gravel shoulders that vary from 0 to 8-foot wide; but more typically, these shoulders are non-existent or are much narrower than 8-foot. The Nevada County Active Transportation Plan identifies the need for shoulders on this segment of SR 49 to improve safety, eliminate existing gaps, and provide connectivity. This project will correct roadway deficiencies within the project limits by bringing this segment of SR 49 up to current design standards.

The SR 49 corridor also plays a key role in providing interregional multi-modal connectivity as an interregional public transit corridor, providing Gold Country Stage fixed-route transit connections between Nevada and Placer County and access to the Amtrak Capital Corridor Inner-City Passenger Rail station in Auburn. The planned improvements in these corridors will improve the quality of life by providing mobility options, increasing reliability and accessibility to all modes of transportation and enhance connections to local and regional economic centers.

**Goal 3.0: Reduce adverse impacts on the natural, social, cultural, and historical environment and the quality of life.**

- **Objective 3B:** Reduce regional emissions of criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Emission Reduction Estimates

Emission Reduction	Total Over	Average	Total Over	Average
	20 Years*	Annual*	20 Years**	Annual **
CO Emissions Saved	74	4	\$0.0	\$0.0
CO2 Emissions Saved	18,802	940	\$0.7	\$0.0
NOX Emissions Saved	7	2	\$0.1	\$0.0
PM10 Emissions Saved	0	0	\$0.1	\$0.0
PM2.5 Emissions Saved	0	0		
SOX Emissions Saved	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
VOC Emissions Saved	5	0	\$0.0	\$0.0

Investment Analysis Summary

\* Tons

\*\* Value in millions of dollars

\*\*\* Includes value for CO2e

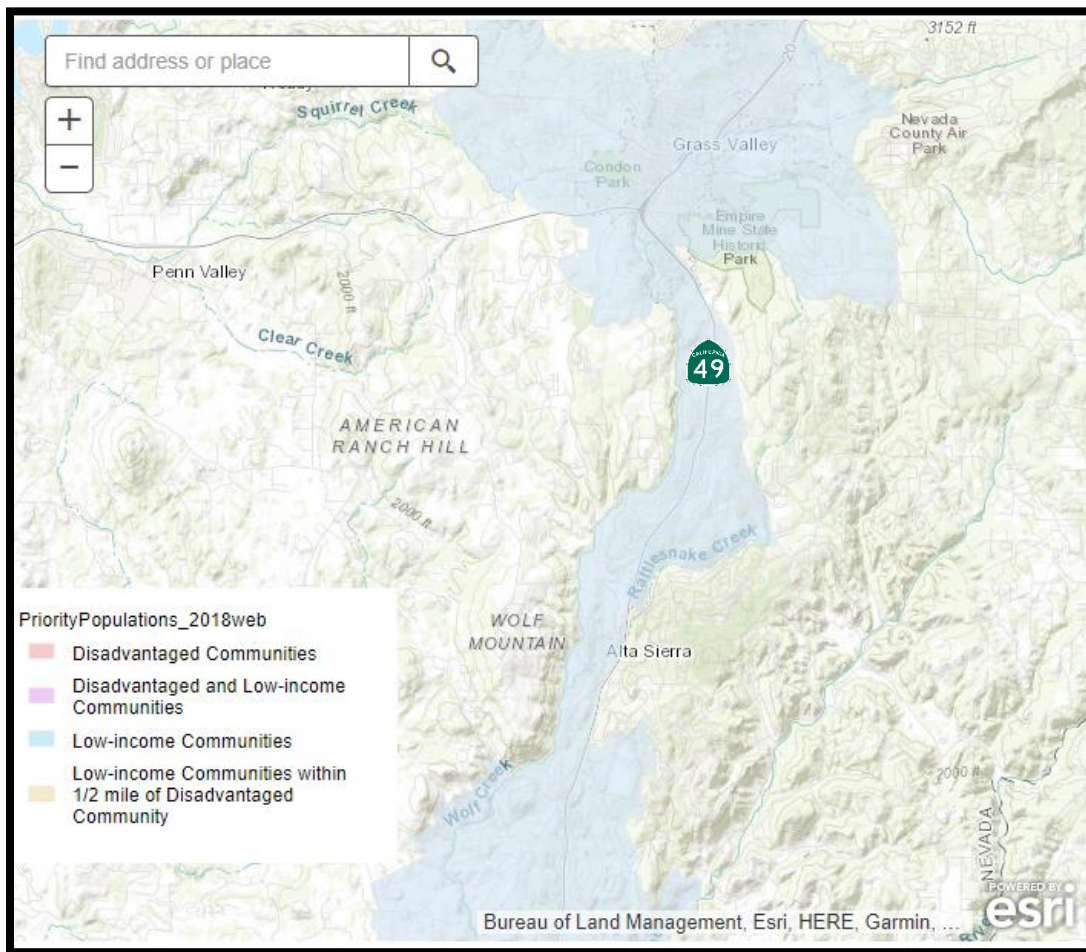
Performance measures included in the Regional Transportation Plan are monitored and progress towards goals are measured and updated every four years.

The majority of the residential development and communities adjacent to the SR 49 corridor in Nevada County have been identified as “Low-income households” and “Low-income communities” in Nevada County per the AB 1550 definitions defined below:

“Low-income households” are those with household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development’s list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093.

“Low-income communities” are census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development’s list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093.

See Map below of the AB 1550 Low-Income Communities (depicted in light blue shading) adjacent to the SR 49 Corridor.



The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project will improve multimodal accessibility and connectivity for AB 1550 populations adjacent to the project limits and provide for safer access to the highway and reduce emissions (Ozone precursors and GHG). Western Nevada County is non-attainment for the Federal Ozone Standards.

Compared to existing conditions, GHG emissions will decrease by opening (2024) and horizon (2044) year conditions for all project phases/alternatives due to planned improvements in fuel efficiency and anticipated changes to alternate fuels (such as, electric vehicles). Under horizon year (2044) conditions, the build phases/alternatives would have less GHG emissions than Alternative 4/No Build based on increased speeds on network links. EMFAC2017 emissions factors were used to develop GHG emissions estimates for the alternatives. The emissions factors do not include off-model adjustment factors to account for the SAFE Vehicles Rule Part One from the US EPA and NHTSA. The SR 49 CIP is forecasted to save 74 tons of CO emissions, 18,802 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and 7 tons of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions over twenty years.

### **Section 13. Regional and Statewide Benefits of RTIP**

SR 49 acts as a lifeline route to several communities in Nevada, Placer, and Sierra Counties, and is the major interregional state highway connecting to the Interstate 80 gateway. This project is the top regional priority of Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) and strong local support exists for improvements that will increase safety and improve operations on SR 49, which has a history accidents and fatalities in the corridor. The project segment serves as the gateway to the City of Grass Valley, the economic hub of western Nevada County. Volumes of both local traffic, interregional, and goods movement freight traffic have increased, and the State highway facility have become an integral part of the local circulation system in addition to serving tourist, goods movement, and interregional traffic. It is estimated that 30% of the County work force is using this route as a primary commute route to major employment centers outside of the County, resulting in over-capacity traffic demand during peak commute periods. The corridor also provides a key connection to specialized medical services provided outside Nevada County, access to higher education institutions, and access to goods and services within and outside of the county.

Tourism traffic that is important to the regional and state economy increase congestion and exacerbate safety issues throughout the year. The 2014 Bay to Tahoe Basin Tourism Impact Study indicated that during the summer peak tourism season approximately 34% of the traffic on SR 49 is tourism related traffic. Tourism spending over the ten-year study period showed steady increase of tourism spending in Nevada County and indicated that the City of Grass Valley has experienced a strong Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) collection growth of 15% per year. It is reasonable to assume that as tourism increases and associated traffic increases, increases in tourism related traffic contribute to the further deterioration of Level of Service (LOS) for SR 49, which currently operates at LOS E during peak periods.

The SR 20 and SR 49 corridors function as part of the major east/west interregional movement for people and goods across the northern Central Valley, linking U.S. 101, Interstate 5, SR 99, SR 70, and providing connections to Interstate 80. These routes are part of a North state “transportation crossroads” or “hub” for agricultural goods movement in the North Valley and

through the Yuba City/Marysville urbanized area for connections to SR 99 and SR 70; and connecting via the north/south SR 20 and SR 49 corridor in Nevada and Placer County to the Interstate 80 corridor. The closest east-west strategic interregional corridor to SR 20 is 100 miles north on I-5 (SR 44 in Redding) or 50 miles south (I-80 in Sacramento). Daily truck volume on SR 49 is estimated at about 1,050 trucks per day, using the total volume measured in May 2018 and the reported truck percentage of 3.6 percent. According to a recent count reported in Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic on the California State Highway System (Caltrans 2016) at Lorensen Road in Placer County (about 13 miles south of the study area), the truck volume is divided among 79 percent 2-axle trucks, 9 percent 3 or 4-axles trucks, and 12 percent trucks with 5 or more axles. (03-4E170 EIR).

The project segment is designated by FHWA as Critical Rural Freight Corridor under 23 U.S.C. 167(g). Both SR 20 and SR 49 are utilized in combination as an Emergency Detour Route when Interstate 80 between Emigrant Gap and Colfax is closed due to major accidents, wildfires, maintenance activities, and construction; and both are designated to be able to handle STAA oversize and CA Legal Trucks. The SR 49 corridor is also identified in the Caltrans California Freight Mobility Plan as a Tier 3 freight facility on the Highway Freight Network and is designated as a terminal access route for STAA trucks.

Anytime Interstate 80 is closed north of Colfax, truck traffic and passenger vehicles are able to be detoured onto SR 20 to SR 49 and back onto I-80. When I-80 is closed south of Colfax truck traffic and passenger vehicles are able to be detoured onto SR 174 connecting them to SR 20/SR 49 and back onto I-80. Data collected by the Caltrans District 3 Traffic Management Center indicate that between 2004 and 2014 there were 188 closures of Interstate 80 where truck traffic and passenger vehicles were rerouted onto SR 20 and SR 49. The most recent I-80 emergency detour occurred on July 3, 2021. Data collected by the Caltrans District 3 Traffic Management Center, indicate that between 2004 and 2021 there were 220 closures of I-80, where truck traffic and passenger vehicles were detoured onto SR 20 and SR 49. Estimates indicate \$5 to \$7.5 million dollars of commerce travel over I-80 at Donner Pass every hour throughout the year and emergency detours help to reduce freight costs related to delays. I-80, both directly and via connections from SR 49, provides interregional access to Sacramento, San Francisco, Reno, and continues eastward outside of California toward the northeastern United States before terminating in New Jersey. It is important for NCTC and Caltrans to continue to partner in order to deliver improvements that reduce congestion, improve air quality, improve safety, reduce GHG, and facilitate goods movement through these corridors (see attached letter 2015 ITSP Update California Trucking Association).

The *2015 Caltrans District 3 Goods Movement Study* identifies SR 49 as having a high deficiency for goods movement mobility in the base year, and in the no-build forecast, both SR 20 and SR 49 are identified as having high deficiency for goods movement mobility. SR 20, east of the Yuba County/Nevada County border, is identified as a segment of high priority in Caltrans District 3 for improving goods movement mobility. Improving freight transportation infrastructure and maintaining an efficient transportation system that provides for effective goods movement, allows local businesses to transport goods within Nevada County, and to markets outside of the area.

The SR 49 corridor also plays a key role in providing interregional multi-modal connectivity as an interregional public transit corridor, providing Gold Country Connects (formerly Gold Country Stage) Route 5 express fixed route transit service between Nevada and Placer County and connections to the Amtrak Capital Corridor Inner-City Passenger Rail, Auburn Transit, and Placer County Transit at the Auburn Conheim Multimodal Station in Auburn. Gold Country Connects Route 5 passengers can transfer to Placer County Transit, which provides access to the Watt Ave. Light Rail Station or via Amtrak Thruway buses access the Capitol Corridor to Sacramento and the Bay Area.

The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project will eliminate a significant choke point through elimination of the southbound lane drop and provide the necessary lane configurations to allow for implementation of innovative contra flow lane utilization to provide additional capacity necessary to efficiently evacuate the major population centers of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and surrounding areas safely beyond the major forested canopy below Alta Sierra. Emergency and hazard mitigation plans for liability reasons no longer identify evacuation routes due to the risk of someone assuming the route is safe simply because it is on a map when in fact it is dependent on the location and direction of the fire. Nevada County Office of Emergency Services in coordination with the Nevada County Sheriff's office utilizes CodeRED notification system, Zonehaven evacuation software, and developed the Nevada County READY Dashboard platform to quickly disseminate information to individual evacuation zones with specific information and instructions. Letters are attached from CALFIRE, CHP, and FIREWISE Community Groups acknowledging support for and the strategic need to construct the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project.

The project segment of SR 49 is located within a CAL FIRE Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The construction of the planned improvements to SR 49 will make this segment of SR 49 more resilient to the risk of wildfire by reducing roadside vegetation fuel loads and providing capacity to handle evacuation events and allow contra flow lane management to facilitate evacuation egress and the ingress of emergency responders. The additional roadway width will create additional distance between the forested tree canopy that currently overhangs the highway in several segments of the corridor. Through the removal of the existing lane-drops at the merge points that the northern and southern project limits existing design features that would constrict traffic flow in the event of evacuation will be eliminated. Local residents continue to express both safety and evacuation concerns and the desire to have the SR 49 corridor improved.

Evacuees from the Paradise Fire, as well as the Oroville Dam evacuation used both SR 20 West connecting to SR 49 to evacuate and seeking lodging alternatives and services. SR 49 is one of the main evacuation routes in the event of a wildfire that threatens the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City, as well as unincorporated areas and the existing SB merge is a significant concern that has been identified by fire agencies, law enforcement, the California Highway Patrol, Nevada County, and Nevada County Transportation Commission. One of the major evacuation centers, Bear River High School, is located south of the project segment on Magnolia Road.

During the recent evacuations for the August 2021 River Fire the previous concerns raised by local partner agencies and emergency responders were verified when the current highway

configuration experienced accidents and operations broke down at the lane drops and accidents resulted along the length of the corridor. This was with only approximately 4,000 residents evacuated. Local social media feeds were full of comments about how SR 49 was a failure of the River Fire and traffic was stuck and could not move due to accidents and congestion resulting from the current highway configuration resulting in frustration and panic. The evacuations from the River Fire, which originated in the Bear River Canyon while significant, were small compared to the potential need to evacuate 17,000+ residents in the event of a fast-moving wildfire starting in the Yuba River Canyon advancing on the City of Grass Valley and Nevada City. The 1988 49er Fire and the recent Jones Fire in 2020, originating in the Yuba River Canyon, are examples of the wildfire/evacuation threat to the communities of Grass Valley and Nevada City and surrounding unincorporated areas.

The *Nevada County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2017* determined the likelihood of future occurrence of wildfire in Nevada County as highly likely and classified the hazard risk as a priority hazard for the Nevada County Planning Area. Compounded by current drought conditions, the wildfire hazard in Nevada County has substantially increased and is no longer just a seasonal issue. The wildfire season, including the potential for a catastrophic wildfire, is now a year around concern. The vulnerability of Nevada County to increased occurrence of a devastating wildfire has increased as exacerbated by the recent drought, increases in tree mortality, and overall increase in wildfire conditions.

From May to October of each year, Nevada County faces a serious wildland fire threat. Fires will continue to occur on an annual basis in the Nevada County Planning Area. The threat of wildfire and potential losses are constantly increasing as human development and population increase and the Nevada County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update August 2017 wildland urban interface areas expand. Due to its high fuel load and long, dry summers, most of Nevada County continues to be at risk from wildfire. When fire does return to the dense, dry forests of Nevada County, they are more likely to burn uncharacteristically, at moderate and high intensity, rather than the historic low intensity level.

The increased fuel accumulation results in greater flame lengths, more crown fires and greater resistance to control. Tree mortality is often high, even for the fire-resistant ponderosa pine and large Douglas firs. Soils, understory vegetation, and wildlife populations, which evolved with low intensity fires, are at risk of long-term damage from uncharacteristic fire intensity. Climate Change and Wildfire Warmer temperatures can exacerbate drought conditions. Drought often kills plants and trees, which serve as fuel for wildfires. Warmer temperatures could increase the number of wildfires and pest outbreaks, such as the western pine beetle. Cal-Adapt's wildfire tool predicts the potential increase in the amount of burned areas for the year 2085, as compared to current (2010) conditions. Based on this model, Cal-Adapt predicts that wildfire risk in Nevada County will increase slightly in the near-term, and subside during mid-to late century. However, wildfire models can vary depending on the parameters used. Cal-Adapt does not take landscape and fuel sources into account in their model. In all likelihood, in Nevada County, precipitation patterns, high levels of heat, topography, and fuel load will determine the frequency and intensity of future wildfire.



The Nevada County Transportation Commission in coordination with Caltrans District 3, Nevada County Office of Emergency Services, and emergency responders is currently underway with the development of the *Ready Nevada County Extreme Climate Event Mobility Adaptation Plan*. The draft plan indicates that the extent and intensity of wildfires increase as temperatures rise, and warming is one of the primary projected impacts of climate change. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fourth National Climate Assessment, released in 2018, reported that climate change factors alone roughly doubled the area burned by wildfire in the western United States between 1984 and 2015. Nevada County has been affected by several wildfires in recent years, such as the McCourtney Fire (2018), Lobo Fire (2018), Jones Fire (2020), River Fire (August 2021), and Bennet Fire (August 2021) resulted in evacuations of portions of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and unincorporate communities. Warming and drying trends in Nevada County as a result of climate change are projected to increase the frequency and severity of wildfires in Nevada County. Increasing wildfires are likely to lead to more transportation disruptions, affecting access to local communities, commerce, tourism and other essential functions throughout the Nevada County (Dettinger, 2018). These effects could be particularly acute near bottle necks in the transportation system, such as highways through forested areas and other principal arterials in high-risk wildfire areas. Input from CALFIRE, CHP, Nevada County Sheriff, and citizens has identified the current project limits as a major evacuation concern.

In Nevada County, 92 percent of County residents live within high fire severity zones (Nevada County OES, 2020). Many wildfires occur in rural areas, which often have more low-income households than the state average, and disproportionately affect disadvantaged and low-income communities. Older adult residents and those with disabilities may be unable to quickly evacuate themselves during a wildfire, requiring them to receive additional assistance. Funding transportation improvements to ensure that these households can be effectively evacuated when wildfires threaten them, as well as providing resources for recovery in these areas afterwards, is a challenge to government agencies in Nevada County at all levels.

# D. Performance and Effectiveness of RTIP

## Section 14. Evaluation of Cost Effectiveness of RTIP (Required per Section 22B)

### Investment Analysis: Summary of Results

Itemized Benefits (mil. \$)	Passenger Benefits	Freight Benefits	Total Over 20 Years	Average Annual
Travel Time Savings	\$80.4	\$8.7	\$89.1	\$4.5
Vehicle Op. Savings	-\$16.6	-\$1.2	-\$17.8	-\$0.9
Accident Cost Savings	\$7.9	\$0.4	\$8.3	\$0.4
Emission Cost Savings	-\$0.7	-\$0.1	-\$0.8	-\$0.0
<b>TOTAL BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$99.3</b>	<b>\$12.1</b>	<b>\$111.3</b>	<b>\$5.6</b>
Time Saved (Person-Hrs)			13,021,235	651,062

Life-Cycle Costs (mil. \$)	\$27.1
Life-Cycle Benefits (mil. \$)	\$111.3
Net Present Value (mil. \$)	\$82.4
Benefit/Cost Ratio:	4.1
Ratio of Return on Investment	29.1%
Payback Period:	4 Years

In 2015, Governor Jerry Brown signed Executive Order B-30-15, which established a new interim statewide GHG emission reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2030. The objective of the executive order was to ensure California is able to meet its long-term target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2050. The Nevada County Transportation Commission’s RTIP is supports Executive Order B-30-15 by increasing multi-modal options and connectivity and reducing emissions related congestion. Compared to existing conditions, GHG emissions will decrease by opening (2024) and horizon (2044) year conditions for all project phases/alternatives due to planned improvements in fuel efficiency and anticipated changes to alternate fuels (such as, electric vehicles). Under horizon year (2044) conditions, the build phases/alternatives would have less GHG emissions than Alternative 4/No Build based on increased speeds on network links. EMFAC2017 emissions factors were used to develop GHG emissions estimates for the alternatives. The emissions factors do not include off-model adjustment factors to account for the SAFE Vehicles Rule Part One from the US EPA and NHTSA. The SR 49 CIP is forecasted to save 74 tons of CO emissions, 18,802 tons of CO2 emissions, and 8 tons of NOX emissions over twenty years.

### Section 15. Project Specific Evaluation (Required per Section 22D)

**Not Applicable:** The RTIP does not propose a new project and the total amount of existing and proposed STIP for right-of-way and/or construction of the project is less than \$15 million and the total project is less than \$50 million.

## **E. Detailed Project Information**

### **Section 16. Overview of Projects Programmed with RIP Funding**

The only project submitted in the NCTC 2024 RTIP is the funding request to add **\$4,385,000 of RIP funding** in partnership with **\$2,000,000 of IIP funding** for construction of the previously programmed SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 and programming of **\$360,000 of PPM** (\$65,000 in FY 2024/25, \$65,000 in FY 2025/26, \$100,000 in FY 2026/27, \$65,000 in FY 2027/28, and \$65,000 FY 2028/29)

The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project begins at the limits of the previous La Barr Meadows Signalization Project (PM 11.1) and ends just south of the McKnight Way Interchange (PM 13.3), connecting to the four lane Golden Center Freeway. This project is exempt from SB 375, NCTC is not required to prepare a SCS. The project (STIP 4E170) will make improvements to this segment focused on goods movement, safety, transit access, operations, evacuation egress, and multi-modal mobility improvements. This project is designed to be funded in three phases as state and federal transportation funding allow.

The ultimate project includes redirecting numerous entrances to a newly constructed frontage road system to access the highway at two new at-grade intersections that will either be roundabouts or signalized. It will also construct portions of northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes and will eliminate merge points that currently exist to the north and south of the project limits, connecting to the existing four-lane northbound/southbound sections. This project also proposes to further address safety concerns through the installation of a continuous median barrier, 10' shoulders with rumble strips, animal crossing tunnel with fencing, enhanced wet night visibility striping, and pavement edge treatments.

Phase 1: Construction of the northbound truck climbing lane, a 16' wide continuous two way left turn lane, 10' shoulders, and elimination of the northbound merge point improving operations and improving northbound evacuation egress. This phase also includes southbound right turn lanes at Wellswood Way, Bethel Church Way, Smith Road, and Crestview Drive. Other safety features include enhanced wet night visibility striping, rumble strips, and pavement edge treatments. A wildlife undercrossing with fencing will be installed as part of this phase to help reduce deer strikes.

Phase: 2: Construction of a southbound truck climbing lane, elimination of the lane drop/merge point south of the McKnight Way Interchange, new access to the Nevada County Transit Operations Center and zero emission bus charging infrastructure. This phase will also include enhance wet night visibility striping, rumble strips, and pavement edge treatments.

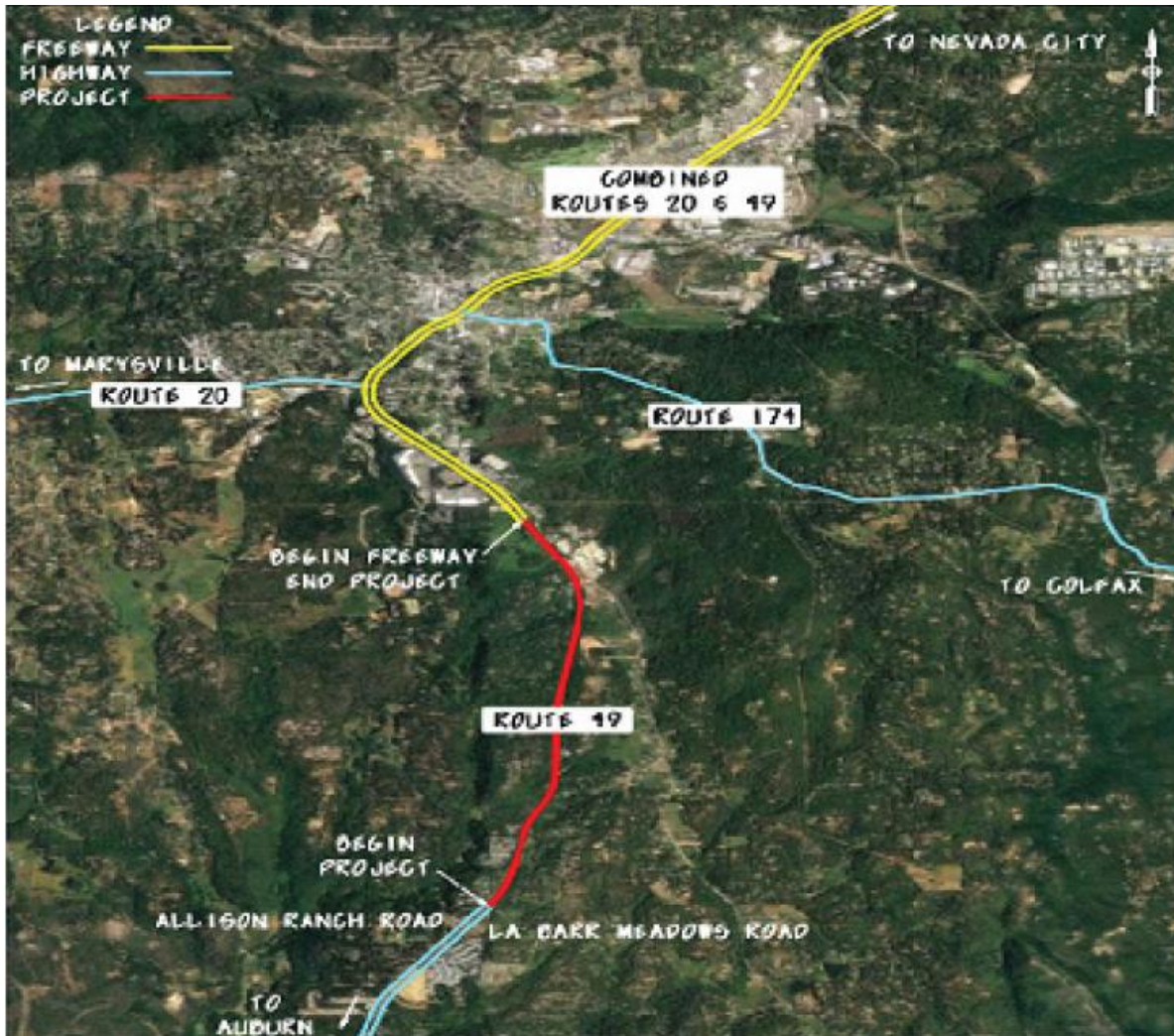
Phase 3: Construction of frontage roads, elimination of ingress/egress points, construction of two access-controlled roundabout intersections initially proposed in the vicinity of Wellswood Way and Smith Road, and installation of a center median barrier.

The purpose of this project is to enhance connectivity for the rural communities in Nevada County along State Route 49 from La Barr Meadows Road to McKnight Way. The project will enhance

safety and mobility of vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic on State Route 49. The project will also enhance daily commuting, mobility, freight, transit (Nevada County Connects, fixed route transit, Route 5 Commuter Service to Auburn Multi-modal station), access to employment and essential services, and provide a long-term benefit for emergency readiness for evacuations caused by climate change stressors and make improvements needed to continue to safely facilitate I-80 emergency detour events.



Project Location Nevada County



SR 49 Widening (Nevada 49 Corridor Improvement Project) PM 11.1 to PM 13.3

## **F. Appendices**

**Section 17. Projects Programming Request Forms**

**Section 18. Board Resolution or Documentation of 2024 RTIP Approval**

**Section 19. Fact Sheet**

## **Appendices**

### **Section 17: Project Programming Request Forms**

#### **SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project: Reprogrammed from 2022 STIP**

Amendment (Existing Project) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				Date	11/08/2023 13:42:13
Programs <input type="checkbox"/> LPP-C <input type="checkbox"/> LPP-F <input type="checkbox"/> SCCP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TCEP <input type="checkbox"/> STIP <input type="checkbox"/> Other					
District	EA	Project ID	PPNO	Nominating Agency	
03	4E170	0315000064	4117	Nevada County Transportation Commission	
County	Route	PM Back	PM Ahead	Co-Nominating Agency	
Nevada County	49	R 10.800	R 13.300	Caltrans District 3	
				MPO	Element
				NON-MPO	Capital Outlay
Project Manager/Contact			Phone	Email Address	
Sam Vandell			530-682-6478	sam.vandell@dot.ca.gov	

**Project Title**

Rt 49, Corridor Improvement Project

**Location (Project Limits), Description (Scope of Work)**

Located in Nevada County, on State Route (SR) 49 south of La Barr Meadows Road to McKnight Way. The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 will construct improvements between PM 10.8 – 13.3 on SR 49.

The project adds a southbound truck climbing lane with segments of auxiliary lane of less than a mile. A new driveway, with deceleration and acceleration lanes to access the Nevada County Transit Operations Center on the east side of Route 49.

Component	Implementing Agency
PA&ED	Caltrans District 3
PS&E	Caltrans District 3
Right of Way	Caltrans District 3
Construction	Caltrans District 3

**Legislative Districts**

Assembly:	1	Senate:	1	Congressional:	1,4
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Project Milestone	Existing	Proposed
Project Study Report Approved		
Begin Environmental (PA&ED) Phase	04/12/2015	04/12/2015
Circulate Draft Environmental Document <span style="float:right">Document Type EIR</span>	07/30/2021	08/18/2021
Draft Project Report	08/16/2021	08/30/2021
End Environmental Phase (PA&ED Milestone)	10/04/2021	11/12/2021
Begin Design (PS&E) Phase	10/05/2021	11/15/2021
End Design Phase (Ready to List for Advertisement Milestone)	05/02/2025	05/02/2025
Begin Right of Way Phase	10/05/2022	11/15/2022
End Right of Way Phase (Right of Way Certification Milestone)	04/17/2025	04/17/2025
Begin Construction Phase (Contract Award Milestone)	10/17/2025	10/17/2025
End Construction Phase (Construction Contract Acceptance Milestone)	12/29/2028	12/29/2028
Begin Closeout Phase	06/28/2030	06/28/2030
End Closeout Phase (Closeout Report)	05/23/2031	05/23/2031

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**Purpose and Need**

The State Route (SR) 49 Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) Phase 2, proposes needed improvements to a 2.1-mile segment of SR 49. The focus is on goods movement, safety, operations, evacuation egress, and construction of a new entrance on SR 49 to new ZEB transit infrastructure (2024 ITIP application), air quality, and multimodal mobility. The project includes the construction of the Southbound truck climbing lane to eliminate the southbound lane drop/merge point south of the McKnight Way Interchange, allowing slow freight movement vehicles space to move over and allow other traffic to continue safely through the corridor, thus reducing freight emissions, and improved access to the zero-emission bus charging infrastructure.

NHS Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Roadway Class 2	Reversible Lane Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
Inc. Sustainable Communities Strategy Goals <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

<b>Project Outputs</b>			
Category	Outputs	Unit	Total
Operational Improvement	Slow vehicle lanes	Miles	1.5
Pavement (lane-miles)	Truck climbing lanes constructed	Miles	1
Operational Improvement	Intersection / Signal improvements	EA	1



Date 11/08/2023 13:42:13

**Additional Information**

4E170 Nev 49 PM R10.8/R13.3 phase II, southbound truck-climbing and entrance to Nevada County Transit Operation Center on SR 49 will be combined with the 3H510 Nev 49 PM R10.8/R13.3 SHOPP Safety and Operations project at time of construction.

Western Nevada County is designated as an isolated rural non-attainment area for Federal Ozone Standards, but is attainment unclassified for PM 10, PM 2.5, and CO. The SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project was determined to be exempt from Conformity per sections 93.126 and 93.127 through the required Interagency Consultation process with EPA, FHWA, FTA, Caltrans, NCTC, and Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District.

Section 93.126 Table 2 Exempt Features:

- Shoulder Improvements/widening narrow pavements
- Median/Median Barrier
- Truck Climbing Lanes Outside an Urbanized Area
- Segments of Auxiliary Lanes less than a mile, supplementary to through traffic movement (slow-moving vehicle lanes for operations and safety)

Section 93.127 Table 3 Exempt Features:

- Intersection signalization projects at individual Intersections
- Intersection channelization projects

Performance Indicators and Measures						
Measure	Required For	Indicator/Measure	Unit	Build	Future No Build	Change
Congestion Reduction	TCEP	Change in Daily Vehicle Hours of Delay	Hours	68	837	-769
	TCEP	Change in Daily Truck Hours of Delay	Hours	-10	45	-55
Throughput (Freight)	TCEP	Change in Truck Volume	# of Trucks	848	1,148	-300
	TCEP	Change in Rail Volume	# of Trailers	0	0	0
			# of Containers	0	0	0
Velocity (Freight)	TCEP	Travel Time or Total Cargo Transport Time	Hours	20,487	31,654	-11,167
Air Quality & GHG (only 'Change' required)	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Particulate Matter	PM 2.5 Tons	0	0	0
			PM 10 Tons	0	0	0
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Carbon Dioxide (CO2)	Tons	-915	0	-915
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	Tons	0	0	0
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Sulphur Dioxides (SOx)	Tons	0	0	0
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Tons	-4	0	-4
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	Tons	0	0	0
Safety	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Number of Fatalities	Number	0	0	0
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Fatalities per 100 Million VMT	Number	0	0	0
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Number of Serious Injuries	Number	0.24	0.5	-0.26
	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Number of Serious Injuries per 100 Million VMT	Number	41	91	-50
Economic Development	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Jobs Created (Only 'Build' Required)	Number	350	0	350
Cost Effectiveness (only 'Change' required)	LPPC, SCCP, TCEP, LPPF	Cost Benefit Ratio	Ratio	4.1	0	4.1



Fund #2:	Future Need - Future Funds (Uncommitted)								Program Code
Existing Funding (\$1,000s)									FUTURE
Component	Prior	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30+	Total	Funding Agency
E&P (PA&ED)									
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W									
CON									
TOTAL									
Proposed Funding (\$1,000s)									Notes
E&P (PA&ED)									
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W									
CON									
TOTAL									
Fund #3:	IIP - National Hwy System (Committed)								Program Code
Existing Funding (\$1,000s)									20.XX.025.700
Component	Prior	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30+	Total	Funding Agency
E&P (PA&ED)									Caltrans HQ
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W	3,000							3,000	
CON									
TOTAL	3,000							3,000	
Proposed Funding (\$1,000s)									Notes
E&P (PA&ED)									Proposed IIP funding is included in the 2024 STIP to be adopted at the March 2024 CTC meeting
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W	3,000							3,000	
CON		2,000						2,000	
TOTAL	3,000	2,000						5,000	

Fund #4:	RIP - COVID Relief Funds - STIP (Committed)								Program Code
Existing Funding (\$1,000s)									20.XX.075.600
Component	Prior	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30+	Total	Funding Agency
E&P (PA&ED)									Nevada County Transportation Comm
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W	669							669	
CON									
TOTAL	669							669	
Proposed Funding (\$1,000s)									
E&P (PA&ED)									NCTC will submit a Federal RURAL Surface Transportation Grant Program application during FY 23/24. Match for TCEP Cycle 3 Application (4,384,616). STIP will be backup source for federal funds.
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W	669							669	
CON									
TOTAL	669							669	
Fund #5:	Other Fed - Surface Transportation Program (Committed)								
Existing Funding (\$1,000s)									20.30.010.300
Component	Prior	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30+	Total	Funding Agency
E&P (PA&ED)									Nevada County Transportation Comm
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W									
CON		4,385						4,385	
TOTAL		4,385						4,385	
Proposed Funding (\$1,000s)									
E&P (PA&ED)									NCTC will submit a Federal RURAL Surface Transportation Grant Program application during FY 23/24. Match for TCEP Cycle 3 Application (4,384,616). STIP will be backup source for federal funds.
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W									
CON									
TOTAL									

Fund #6:	State SB1 TCEP - Trade Corridors Enhancement Account (Committed)								Program Code
Existing Funding (\$1,000s)									20.30.210.320
Component	Prior	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30+	Total	Funding Agency
E&P (PA&ED)									California Transportation Commissio Regional State TCEP Cycle 3 Application - 14,615,385
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W									
CON		14,615						14,615	
TOTAL		14,615						14,615	
Proposed Funding (\$1,000s)									Notes
E&P (PA&ED)									
PS&E									
R/W SUP (CT)									
CON SUP (CT)									
R/W									
CON		14,615						14,615	
TOTAL		14,615						14,615	

**Complete this page for amendments only**

Date 11/08/2023 13:42:13

District	County	Route	EA	Project ID	PPNO
03	Nevada County	49	4E170	0315000064	4117

SECTION 1 - All Projects

Project Background

na

Programming Change Requested

Reason for Proposed Change

na

If proposed change will delay one or more components, clearly explain 1) reason for the delay, 2) cost increase related to the delay, and 3) how cost increase will be funded

Other Significant Information


SECTION 2 - For SB1 Project Only

Project Amendment Request (Please follow the individual SB1 program guidelines for specific criteria)

na

Approvals

I hereby certify that the above information is complete and accurate and all approvals have been obtained for the processing of this amendment request.

Name (Print or Type)	Signature	Title	Date
Sam Vandell		Project Manager	12/04/2023

SECTION 3 - All Projects

Attachments

- 1) Concurrence from Implementing Agency and/or Regional Transportation Planning Agency
- 2) Project Location Map

## **Appendices**

### **Section 18: Board Resolution or Documentation of 2024 RTIP Approval**



**RESOLUTION 23-31  
OF THE  
NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**ADOPTION OF THE FY 2023/24 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT  
PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is responsible for the preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP); and

WHEREAS, prior to the adoption of the FY 2023/24 RTIP, a public hearing was conducted on November 8, 2023; and

WHEREAS, NCTC has considered the relationship between the proposed RTIP, Caltrans recommendations for the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program, and the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, NCTC is responsible for the programming of Regional Improvement Program funds, and Caltrans is responsible for the programming of Interregional Improvement Program funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Nevada County Transportation Commission hereby submits the following projects and recommendations to the California Transportation Commission as NCTC's FY 2023/24 Regional Transportation Improvement Program:

1. Program \$4,385,000 in FY 2024/25 for Phase 2 of the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project.
2. \$360,000 for STIP Planning, Programming, and Monitoring Activities - Apportioned as follows:

<u>FY 2024/25</u>	<u>FY 2025/26</u>	<u>FY 2026/27</u>	<u>FY2027/28</u>	<u>FY2028/29</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$65,000	\$65,000	\$100,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$360,000

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is authorized and directed to complete the necessary information regarding the FY 2023/24 Regional Transportation Improvement Program to the California Transportation Commission for inclusion in the 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Nevada County Transportation Commission on November 8, 2023, by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Ceci, Commissioner Hoek, Commissioner Ivy, Commissioner Scofield, Commissioner Strauss, Commissioner Strawser, Commissioner Zabriskie

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

  
Ed Scofield, Chair  
Nevada County Transportation Commission

Attest:   
Dale D. Sayles  
Administrative Services Officer

## **Appendices**

### **Section 19: SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Fact Sheet**

# SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 2 - 2024 RTIP Factsheet

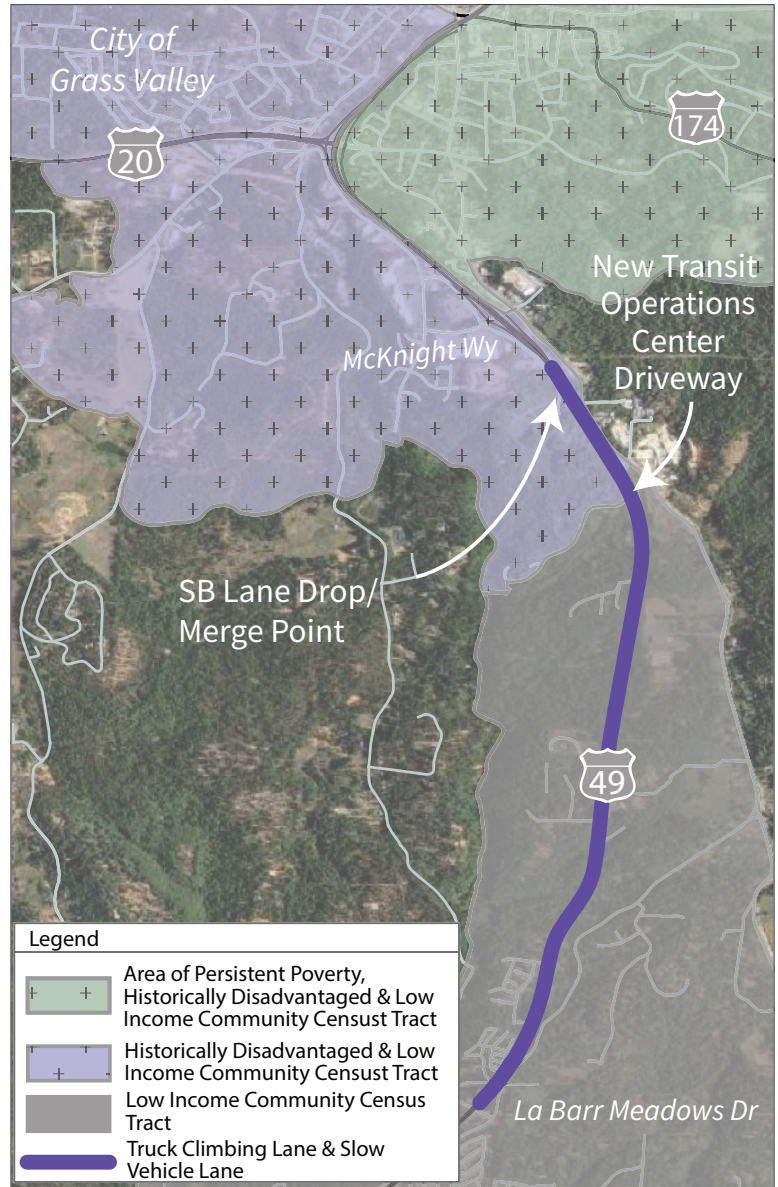


## Project Description

The State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project in Nevada County addresses an existing southbound freight bottleneck by removing a lane drop/merge point south of the McKnight Way interchange and constructing 2.5 miles of truck climbing lanes and slow vehicle lanes.

The project improves goods movement travel time, reduces congestion and rear end collision created by the lane drop/merge point, and improves the ability of SR 49 to accommodate detouring traffic from I-80 closures at SR 20 during accidents or construction.

The project was designed to provide direct community benefits by improving mobility options for priority communities and reducing freight impacts. Greenhouse gas emission reductions will be achieved as freight network speed improves. A new driveway to the transit operations center will reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve access to zero emission bus charging infrastructure. Phase 1 of the project will feature 10-foot wide class III multi-use shoulders. The improvements address climate risks and improves evacuation egress.

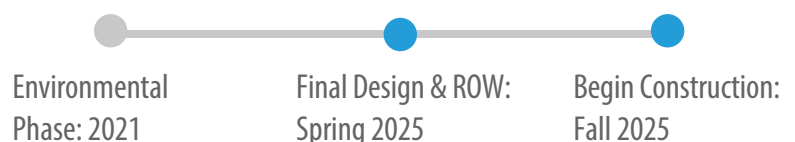


## Funding

-Total Project Cost: \$35.1 million

-Total Construction Cost: \$21.0 million

## Project Schedule



# Project Benefits

**4.1** Project cost-benefit ratio

**\$112 M** Total project related benefits over 20 years

**33,676** Freight travel time savings - annual average person-hours

**\$8.7 M** Freight travel time savings monetary benefit

**55** Hours of freight delay reduced-per day

**\$4.2 M** Cost savings in freight travel time reliability

**220** Emergency Closures of I-80 since 2004, where traffic is detoured to SR 49/SR 20

**55%** Reduction in travel time, or 995 hours saved during I-80 closure detour, with the project

**\$56.4 M** In state and federal funding already invested or programmed in this corridor



**Appendices**  
**Support Letters**



## SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY

November 15, 2022

Mitch Weiss, Executive Director  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS-52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### ***SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project***

Dear Mr. Weiss:

California Trucking Association (CTA) is writing in support of improvements in in both the State Route (SR) 20 and SR 49 corridors in Nevada County California to ensure they can adequately handle the large volumes of trucks that are re-routed to these corridors during detour events, as a result of closure to Interstate 80. Both SR 20 and SR 49 priority interregional facilities that are part of the Bay Area – Sacramento – Northern Nevada Strategic Interregional Corridor. With truck volumes forecasted to increase over the next twenty years, it will remain important for the aforementioned segments of SR 20 and SR 49 to be identified for improvements and prioritized for funding to provide opportunities for strategic partnership with the Nevada County Transportation Commission to construct the needed improvements, to reduce costly delays, and ensure goods movement efficiency.

CTA expresses our support for the Nevada County Transportation Commission's State Route (SR) 49 Corridor Improvement Project (03-4E170), which proposes both northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes, as well as other safety, operational, and multi-modal mobility corridor improvements. In order to fulfill the State of California's commitment of enhancing the flow of interregional goods movement the CTA supports the Nevada County Transportation Commission's request for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project (03-4E170).

CTA also asks for your consideration of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) strategies outlined below to the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) for the State Route 20 and State Route 49 corridors in Caltrans District 3. The improvements and strategies outlined below are critical to ensuring the long-term direction for the corridor accounts for the needs within our organization.

- For both State Route 20 and State Route 49 please include **Access Management** as improved access and connections between the local and regional transportation system is important to management the movement of people and freight. This enhances community livability by reducing vehicular and modal conflict points and improving emergency services overall.

***SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project***

- For both State Route 20 and State Route 49 please include ***Truck Climbing and/or Passing Lanes in Locations with Steep Grades*** as the creation of truck climbing lanes reduces recurrent congestion along rural routes where vehicles are unable to consistently pass freight trucks and slow-moving vehicles. This increases safety by reducing conflicts because of speed differentials and reduces the need for vehicles to pass trucks in the opposite direction.
- For State Route 49 please include ***Expand Truck Parking*** as creating or expanding truck parking yields multiple benefits, but not limited to safety for both trucks and travelers to reduce conflicts along the roadway. This enhances community economic opportunities by consolidating truck parking into specific locations. Further enhances greenhouse gas emissions by reducing idling times by providing truckers electrical options for refrigeration and heating.

In order to fulfill the State of California's commitment to enhancing the flow of interregional goods movement, the CTA respectfully requests your consideration.

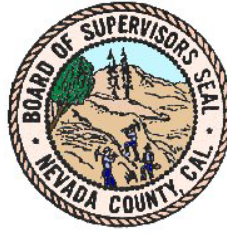
Sincerely,



CEO

California Trucking Association

COUNTY OF NEVADA  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Heidi Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Vice Chair Edward C. Scofield, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Dan Miller, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Chair Susan Hoek, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Hardy Bullock, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
Julie Patterson Hunter,  
Clerk of the Board

November 18, 2022

Mike Woodman, Executive Director  
Nevada County Transportation Commission  
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102  
Nevada City, CA 95959

**Re: Letter of Support for SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project**

Dear Mr. Woodman:

I'm writing to express the County of Nevada's Board of Supervisors support of the Nevada County Transportation Commission's request for funding for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project.

We understand that this project is the top regional priority of Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) and strong local support exists for improvements that will increase safety and improve operations on SR 49, which has a history accidents and fatalities in the corridor. This project also aligns and advances one of our board's top objectives for 2022, emergency preparedness, by improving the highway's ability to facilitate and handle the traffic capacity associated with a mass evacuation in the event of a major forest fire.

Construction of the proposed project will provide benefits of regional, statewide, and national significance. The project segment serves as the gateway to the City of Grass Valley, the economic hub of western Nevada County. The volumes of both local traffic and goods movement freight traffic have increased, and the State highway facility have become an integral part of the local circulation system in addition to serving tourist, and interregional traffic. It is estimated that 30% of the County work force is using this route as a primary commute route to major employment centers outside of the County, resulting in over-capacity traffic demand during peak commute periods. The SR 49 corridor also plays a key role in providing interregional multi-modal connectivity as an interregional public transit corridor, providing Gold Country Connects fixed route transit connections between Nevada and Placer County and access to the Amtrak Capital Corridor Inner-City Passenger Rail station in Auburn.

Additionally, tourism traffic that is important to the regional and state economy increase congestion and exacerbate safety issues throughout the year. The 2014 Bay to Tahoe Basin Tourism Impact Study indicated that during the summer peak tourism season approximately 34% of the traffic on SR 49 is tourism related traffic. Tourism spending over the ten-year study period showed steady increase of tourism spending in Nevada County and indicated that the City of Grass Valley has experienced a strong Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) collection growth of 15% per year. It is reasonable to assume that as tourism increases and associated traffic increases, increases in tourism related traffic contribute to the further deterioration of LOS.

Finally, this project is critical to improving SR 49's ability to function as a safe and efficient I-80 bypass route. The project segment is also officially designated as a Critical Rural Freight Corridor under 23 U.S.C. 167(g) with SR 49 serving as an I-80 emergency detour route connecting the interstate near Emigrant Gap via SR 20 and SR49 in Nevada/Placer County back to I 80. It is estimated that \$5.5 to \$7.5 million dollars of commerce



travels over Donner Pass on I-80 every hour. This narrow, accident prone section of SR 49 must be upgraded in order to ensure smooth traffic flow in the event of and I-80 closure or evacuation event.

The corridor is also identified in the Caltrans California Freight Mobility Plan as a Tier 3 freight facility on the Highway Freight Network and is designated as a terminal access route for Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks and the 2015 Caltrans District 3 Goods Movement Study identifies SR 49 as having a high deficiency for goods movement mobility in the base year, and the no-build forecast.

This project has so many benefits – it will improve safety and operations, provide both regional and national economic benefits, reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions, enhance goods movement, improves multi-modal options, addresses equity, and helps move the state toward zero fatalities. Without federal funding these important project benefits will be delayed.

The County of Nevada Board of Supervisors strongly supports and urges careful consideration for funding request for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project.

Sincerely,



Susan Hoek, Chair  
Nevada County Board of Supervisors



**CITY OF GRASS VALLEY**  
**ADMINISTRATION**  
125 East Main Street  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
(530)274-4310

Council Members  
Ben Aguilar, Mayor  
Jan Arbuckle, Vice Mayor  
Hilary Hodge  
Bob Branstrom  
Tom Ivy

---

November 18, 2022

Mike Woodman, Executive Director  
Nevada County Transportation Commission  
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Subject: Letter of Support for the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project

Dear Mr. Woodman:

The City of Grass Valley is writing in support of the Nevada County Transportation Commission's request for federal funding for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project. This project is the top regional priority of Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) and strong local support exists for improvements that will increase safety and improve operations on SR 49, which has a history accidents and fatalities in the corridor. There is also a strong local desire to have the highway improved in order for it to be able to facilitate and handle the traffic capacity associated with a mass evacuation in the event of a major forest fire. The requested funding will improve safety for motorized and non-motorized users, operations, goods movement, tourism and mobility on SR 49 from PM 10.8 to 13.3 by constructing segments of NB & SB truck climbing and slow moving vehicle lanes, a 16' wide continuous two way left turn lane, right turn pockets, and 10' shoulders improving the highway to four lanes consistent with the existing sections to the north and south of this 2.5 mile gap closure project.

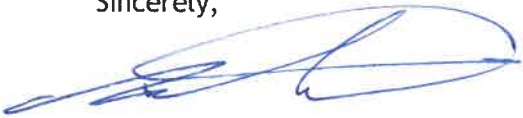
The project segment serves as the gateway to the City of Grass Valley, the economic hub of western Nevada County. The existing two-lane highway's current LOS is E during peak hours. The volumes of both local traffic and goods movement freight traffic have increased, and the State highway facility have become an integral part of the local circulation system in addition to serving tourist, and interregional traffic. It is estimated that 30% of the County work force is using this route as a primary commute route to major employment centers outside of the County, resulting in over-capacity traffic demand during peak commute periods. The SR 49 corridor also plays a key role in providing interregional multi-modal connectivity as an interregional public transit corridor, providing Gold Country Stage fixed

route transit connections between Nevada and Placer County and access to the Amtrak Capital Corridor Inner-City Passenger Rail station in Auburn.

Tourism traffic that is important to the regional and state economy increase congestion and exacerbate safety issues throughout the year. The 2014 Bay to Tahoe Basin Tourism Impact Study indicated that during the summer peak tourism season approximately 34% of the traffic on SR 49 is tourism related traffic. Tourism spending over the ten-year study period showed steady increase of tourism spending in Nevada County and indicated that the City of Grass Valley has experienced a strong Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) collection growth of 15% per year. It is reasonable to assume that as tourism increases and associated traffic increases, increases in tourism related traffic contribute to the further deterioration of Level of Service (LOS) for SR 49, which currently operates at LOS E during peak periods.

This project will improve safety and operations, provide both regional and national economic benefits, reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions, enhance multi-modal options, addresses equity, and helps move the state toward zero fatalities. Without funding assistance these important project benefits will likely be delayed. The City of Grass Valley appreciate your consideration of the funding request for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project.

Sincerely,



Ben Aguilar, Mayor



# North State Super Region

1255 East Street, Suite 202, Redding, CA 96001  
(530) 265-3202 [nssr16@gmail.com](mailto:nssr16@gmail.com)  
[www.superregion.org](http://www.superregion.org)  
John Clerici, Chair

**Jon Clark**  
Butte County Assn. of Governments

**Mike Azevedo**  
Colusa County Transportation Comm.

**Tamera Leighton**  
Del Norte Local Transportation Comm.

**Mardy Thomas**  
Glenn County Transportation Comm.

**Beth Burks**  
Humboldt Co Assn of Governments

**Lisa Davey-Bates**  
Lake Co City/Area Planning Comm.

**John Clerici**  
Lassen County Transportation Comm.

**Nephele Barrett**  
Mendocino Council of Govts

**Debbie Pedersen**  
Modoc County Transportation Comm.

**Mike Woodman**  
Nevada County Transportation Comm.

**Jim Graham**  
Plumas County Transportation Comm.

**Sean Tiedgen**  
Shasta County SRTA/MPO

**Tim Beals**  
Sierra County Transportation Comm.

**Jeff Schwein**  
Siskiyou County Local Trans. Comm.

**Jessica Riske-Gomez**  
Tehama County Transportation Comm.

**Panos Kokkas**  
Trinity County Transportation Comm.

November 15, 2022

Mike Woodman, Executive Director  
Nevada County Transportation Commission  
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102  
Nevada City, CA 95959

RE: Consideration of Member Designated Project Funding for the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project

SUBJECT: State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project – Phase 2 Project Support

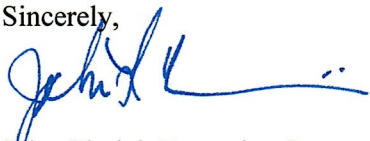
Dear Mr. Woodman:

The NSSR is pleased to support the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project (SR 49 CIP). Phase 2 (STIP 03-4E170). The project will construct a southbound truck climbing and a passing lane, eliminate the southbound lane drop/merge point, which creates a key transportation bottleneck. The improvements will enhance goods movement, improve operations and safety, reduce freight related emissions on adjacent AB 1550 communities, improve evacuation egress, and reduce community impacts related to I-80 detours.

The project segment is officially designated as a Critical Rural Freight Corridor under 23 U.S.C. 167g and identified as a Strategic Interregional Corridor in the Caltrans 2015 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan. The SR 49 corridor is identified in the Caltrans California Freight Mobility Plan as a Tier 3 freight facility on the Highway Freight Network and is designated as a terminal access route for Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks. The 2015 Caltrans District 3 Goods Movement Study identifies SR 49 as having a high deficiency for goods movement mobility in the base year, and the no-build forecast. SR 49 also serves as a critical I 80 emergency detour route, connecting I 80 near Emigrant Gap via SR 20 and SR 49 in Nevada and Placer County back to I 80 in the City of Auburn.

The proposed improvements align with the unified goal of the NSSR to support transportation investments that improve the economy of the region, the efficiency of the movement of goods and people, and safety. Investment in this segment of State Route 49 will improve freight reliability, mobility, and safety within the North State Super Region while reducing environmental community impacts. We hope you give strong consideration to this important rural project.

Sincerely,



John Clerici, Executive Secretary  
Lassen County Transportation Commission  
Chair, North State Super Region



## **Western Nevada County Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative – Mobility Action Partners Coalition**

November 15, 2022

Mitch Weiss  
Executive Director  
California Transportation  
Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr Weiss:

In 2010, the County of Nevada Transit Services Division was awarded an Easter Seals Project Action grant to look at opportunities to improve the accessibility of transportation options in western Nevada County. The initiation of this project involved establishing a coalition of stakeholders with knowledge of the available transportation options and social service needs in western Nevada County. This coalition is known as the Accessible Transportation Coalition – Mobility Action Partners Coalition (ATCI-MAPCO) and continues to meet and work collaboratively to improve the accessibility of transportation options.

The ACTI-MAPCO is happy to express our support for the funding of Nevada 49 Corridor Improvement Project (03-4E170) as it provides direct benefits to rural communities through improved safety, and mobility of vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic on State Route 49 as the corridor provides connectivity to rural disadvantaged populations. This is needed for a corridor that is the lifeline of a region which facilitates goods movement, access to service industries, residential, medical, jobs, and higher education facilities. The SR 49 corridor also plays a key role in providing interregional multi-modal connectivity as an interregional public transit corridor, providing Gold Country Connects Route 5 express fixed route transit service between Nevada and Placer County and connections to the Amtrak Capital Corridor Inner-City Passenger Rail, Auburn Transit, and Placer County Transit at the Auburn Conheim Multimodal Station in Auburn.

The ATCI-MAPCO also writes in support of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) strategies outlined in the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) for the State Route 20 and State Route 49 corridors in Caltrans District 3. The improvements and strategies outlined below are critical to ensuring the long-term direction for the corridor is inclusive and accounts for the needs within our organization.

- For both State Route 20 and State Route 49 please include **Access Management** as improved access and connections between the local and regional transportation system is important to management the movement of people and freight. This enhances

community livability by reducing vehicular and modal conflict points and improving emergency services overall.

- For both State Route 20 and State Route 49 please include **Truck Climbing and/or Passing Lanes in Locations with Steep Grades** as the creation of truck climbing lanes reduces recurrent congestion along rural routes where vehicles are unable to consistently pass freight trucks and slow-moving vehicles. This increases safety by reducing conflicts because of speed differentials and reduces the need for vehicles to pass trucks in the opposite direction.
- For both State Route 20 and State Route 49 please include **Expand Express Bus Service Consistent with the California Intercity Bus Study**. The expansion of express bus services for interregional travelers and commuters will reduce congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled along the corridor while providing benefits to people and goods movement.
- For State Route 49 please include **Balance Local Community and Interregional Travel Needs**. By implementing corridor-based approaches that consider all modes of travel, the corridor will enhance local, regional, and statewide economy and equity while preserving community livability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles traveled, and congestion

Regards,

*Robin Van Valkenburg*

Robin Van Valkenburg, Chair  
ATCI-MAPCO



**FIREWISE USA™**  
Residents reducing wildfire risks

**NEVADA COUNTY  
COALITION of  
FIREWISE  
COMMUNITIES**

*The list below includes NFPA-certified and those pending assessment. An additional 29 communities are considered "in training" and working on becoming certified.*

- 6B and Friends
- Ananda Village
- Bear River Pines
- Bear River Ranch
- Bitney Springs
- Cascade Shores
- Dalmatian Drive Neighbors
- Darkhorse
- Deer Creek Southside
- Echo Ridge
- Foxwood-Slate Creek
- Friends of Banner Mountain
- Glenshire-Devonshire
- Glenwood-Maidu-Charlene Nghbrs
- Golden Oaks
- Greater Cement Hill Neighbors
- Greater Champion Neighborhood
- Greenhorn
- Grizzly
- Hyatt Blue Sage
- Jones Bar Neighborhoods
- Juniper Hills
- Kentucky Flat
- Lake of the Pines Association
- Lake Vera Round Mountain
- Lake Wildwood
- Lower Colfax
- Martis Peak
- Montezuma Ridge
- Mountain Lakes Estates
- Outer Jackass Flats
- Pine Forest
- Rattlesnake Ridge Estates
- Ridgeview Woodlands
- Salmon Mine – East Sages
- Serene Lakes
- Sherwood Forest
- Sierra Knolls Estates
- Stonebridge HOA
- Tahoe-Donner Association
- The Cedars
- The Gazebos HOA
- Toller Ridge Court
- Upper Rough & Ready
- Town of Washington
- West End Donner Lake
- Wolf Mountain
- You Bet Community



Coalition mailing address:  
640 Charlene Lane  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
Email c/o: susanrogers@nccn.net

November 15, 2022

Mr. Mitch Weiss  
Executive Director  
California Transportation Commission  
Division of Transportation Planning  
1120 N Street, MS-52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project Improvement Program Funding Request**

Dear Mr Weiss:

The Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities is pleased to support the Nevada County Transportation Commission's request for funding to construct the State Route 49 Corridor Improvement Project (03-4E170). The planned improvement helps further Nevada County's readiness and resiliency in the event of a major wildfire requiring evacuation. This will be accomplished directly by the planned operational and safety improvements that are needed to facilitate the flow of traffic out of the population centers of Grass Valley/Nevada City and surrounding communities in the event of evacuations related to wildfire events.

Indirectly, the clearing of brush and organic material along the roadway will make the region safer by providing a potentially larger fuel break in the corridor. An investment in this vital risk reduction project makes Nevada County a safer place to live and work. I encourage you to invest in the project to reduce the potential harm caused by wildfire in in our state.

Thank you for consideration,

Scott Beesley, Chair

Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities



**DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL**  
11363 McCourtney Rd.  
Grass Valley, CA 95949  
(530) 477-4900  
(800) 735-2929 (TT/TDD)  
(800) 735-2922 (Voice)



May 13, 2021

File No.: 230.14307

Mike Woodman, Executive Director  
Nevada County Transportation Commission  
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Amarjeet Benipal, District 3 Director  
California Department of Transportation  
703 B Street  
Marysville, CA 95901

Subject: Acknowledgement of Continued Focus on Safety within the State Route (SR) 49 Corridor in Nevada County.

Dear Mr. Woodman and Mr. Benipal:

The Grass Valley Area California Highway Patrol (CHP) would like to thank the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) and Caltrans District 3 for their continued partnership and planning efforts focused on reducing fatal/injury accidents within the SR 49 corridor. These efforts include, but are not limited to, the coordination of the ongoing SR 49 Stakeholder Committee, the current planning efforts to development of the SR 49 Safety Assessment, the SR 49 Comprehensive Multi-Modal Corridor Plan, the Nevada County Extreme Climate Event Mobility Adaptation Plan, and the planning and programming of funding for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project gap closure between PM 10.8 and 13.3.

The Grass Valley Area CHP recognizes the significant challenges faced by Nevada County communities regarding emergencies and/or evacuations and their subsequent impact on roadways throughout the county. This is especially true with all primary traffic corridors accessing the county. The Grass Valley Area CHP remains committed to working with the NCTC and Caltrans on all future projects that will improve the safety of people utilizing roadways and corridors throughout the county. I hope that the collaborative, proactive efforts of all entities involved in planning future project enhancements will result in increased state and federal funding for improving traffic safety and evacuations.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at (530) 477-4900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G.A. Steffenson".

G.A. STEFFENSON, Lieutenant  
Commander  
Grass Valley Area



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

Nevada – Yuba – Placer Unit

13760 Lincoln Way

Auburn, CA 95602

(530) 889-0111

Website: [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)

April 29, 2021

Mike Woodman, Executive Director  
Nevada County Transportation Commission  
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102  
Nevada City, California 95959

RE: CAL FIRE Nevada-Yuba-Placer support for SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project - Phase 1 (STIP 4E170)

Dear Mr. Woodman:

I am pleased to indicate CAL FIRE's support for the SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project – Phase 1, which would widen a currently narrow and accident-prone section of Highway 49 between La Barr Meadows Dr. and McKnight Way. This segment of SR 49 includes numerous access points adjacent to SR 49, which create low-speed versus high-speed conflicting movements, which have resulted in collisions, serious injuries and fatalities, and many other “near misses”. The proposed 16' median and planned right turn pockets will allow a safe refuge for vehicles entering highway and exiting the highway reducing rear-end and sideswipe accidents that, for the existing two-lane configuration, are often due to either congestion or traffic slowing or stopping for vehicles preparing to make turning movements.

This corridor is also part of a critical evacuation route out of the Nevada City / Grass Valley area and I am concerned about the ability of traffic to safely and efficiently flow through that area. During morning and evening “rush hour,” traffic along this route bottlenecks at the existing merge sections that this project will eliminate. Improving traffic flow and safety along this section of Highway 49 is very important to increasing our ability to evacuate residents in the event of a major wildfire.

Sincerely,

Brian Estes  
Fire Chief  
CAL FIRE Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit



September 7, 2021

Scott Sauer  
Chief, Office of Multimodal System  
Planning  
Division of Transportation Planning  
California Department of  
Transportation  
1120 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hilary Norton  
Chairwoman  
California Transportation  
Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mitch Weiss  
Executive Director  
California Transportation  
Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Caltrans and California Transportation Commission:

Fix49.org representing residents of Nevada and Placer Counties are greatly concerned by the increasing number of accidents and fatalities on State Route 49 between Auburn and Grass Valley. We are also concerned that in the event of a mass evacuation, such as a wildfire, that Hwy 49 is completely inadequate to handle the traffic with segments of varying lane widths shifting between a two-lane and four-lane highway, with lane-drops and merges that serve as evacuation choke points and exacerbate safety concerns. When a fire happens in Alta Sierra for example, 7,000 people would need to merge onto a 1 lane Hwy 49 to evacuate southbound. 7,000 people will make the "Camp" fire in Paradise look like child's play. Who's responsible and has been too slow to accomplish anything... Caltrans. The Caltrans 2021 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan must prioritize investment in safety and evacuation improvements and make completing the strategic interregional corridors, such as SR 49 that address safety, connectivity, mobility, and are needed for evacuations the top priority. Additionally, SR 49 serves as an I-80 emergency detour when I-80 is closed due to construction and maintenance activities, accidents, and wildfires, but again is inadequate to handle the associated high volumes of cars and trucks.

Over the last decade, the collisions per year have greatly increased (Over 40%) and fatalities continue (see attached graph). The completion of the planned improvements to SR 49 cannot be delayed any longer! We will not stand silent and let more lives be ruined due to injury and fatal accidents. To date we have collected and given Caltrans over 3,000 signed petitions demanding these improvements, but we continue to be ignored and lives continue to be lost. Improvements are needed to bring the corridor to minimum facility standards, providing four travel lanes, installation of median barriers, roundabouts at key intersections, truck climbing lanes, turn pockets, and 10-foot shoulders.

When next major wildfire threatens the communities requiring mass evacuation of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and other unincorporated communities such as Alta Sierra without the needed safety and evacuation improvements it will result in tragedy. During the recent evacuations that resulted from the August 2021 River Fire, SR 49 in its current configuration failed and resulted in additional accidents, stand still traffic, and another fatality. The Jones Bar fire also saw bumper to bumper traffic. This is why it is so critical that the state commit our tax-payer dollars to fund the completion of these rural priority interregional corridors that are critical for safety and evacuation, such as the Nevada County Transportation Commission's SR 49 Corridor Improvement Project (03-4E170) between McKnight Way in Grass Valley south to La Barr Meadows Road and their funding request submitted as part of the development of the 2021 Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP). This project provides direct benefits to rural communities of Nevada County through improved evacuation, safety, access, goods movement, and mobility of vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic on State Route 49.

This interregional priority corridor is the lifeline of the region, which facilitates movement of goods, access to service industries, residential, tourism, medical, jobs, and higher education facilities with connections to Placer County and I-80. Our economy is directly impacted by SR 49. Californians pay the highest gas taxes in the nation by far – over 65 cents/gallon. By contrast our neighboring states like Arizona pay 19 cents, Nevada 33 cents, Oregon 37 cents/gallon and they have better roads. Stop wasting our gas taxes on trains to nowhere and BS carbon offsets. Stop wasting our money and spend it on fixing Hwy 49. As an engineer, I am disgusted by the inefficiencies of doing these 1 to 2 mile sections, done every 5 years. At this inefficient rate, it will take 40 more years to complete this corridor.

Please make this corridor and the planned improvements a priority in the 2021 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan and Interregional Transportation Improvement Program as we cannot not afford to wait any longer.

Sincerely,

*Scott & Jolie Allen*

Scott & Jolie Allen

Founders, [www.Fix49.org](http://www.Fix49.org)

