



# REPORT TO COUNCIL

## City of Sacramento

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915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671  
www. CityofSacramento.org

REGIONAL ISSUES  
November 1, 2005

Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

**Subject:** Highway 50 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes – Community Enhancements

**Location/Council District:**

U.S. 50 from Riverside Boulevard to the eastern city limits and surrounding area –  
Council Districts 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6

**Recommendation:**

This report recommends that City Council direct staff to conduct public outreach to develop the list of community enhancements that the City of Sacramento will request be included as part of the Highway 50 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane plus Community Enhancements project.

**Contact:** Fran Halbakken, Planning & Policy Manager, 808-7194

**Presenters:** Fran Halbakken, Planning & Policy Manager; Wayne Lewis, Deputy District Director, Caltrans District 3; Pete Hathaway, Deputy Director, Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

**Department:** Transportation

**Division:** Office of the Director

**Organization No:** 3416

**Summary:**

Caltrans' and SACOG staff will provide a status report on the U.S. 50 HOV Lane/Community Enhancements project. City staff is requesting that Council direct staff to work with the Sacramento community to develop a list of community enhancements for the segment of the project within our city limits. The list of community enhancements would be brought back to Council in about four months for consideration and approval. The approved list would be submitted to Caltrans.

**Committee/Commission Action:** None



**Background Information:**

On July 24, 2001, the City Council voted 8-1 to deny staff's recommendation to join Caltrans and the County of Sacramento in submitting a joint application for State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds for the U.S. 50 HOV Lanes plus Community Enhancements project. Subsequent to the City Council action, both the Sacramento Transportation Authority and SACOG Boards approved funding for the preliminary engineering and environmental phases of the project. The City of Sacramento members of both policy boards were instrumental in adding project conditions (see Attachment B).

In 2003, Caltrans convened a Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) and held several meetings. The CAC was asked to provide Caltrans input on the scope of the environmental document. The CAC's work culminated in a written report that detailed the project's pros, cons, suggestions for community enhancements and project alternatives. The project alternatives are shown in Attachment C and the report is summarized in Attachment D.

On January 15, 2004, the SACOG Board passed a resolution to reaffirm the following:

- Support continuance of the environmental studies leading to a project and asking Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission to continue support and funding to complete the work in a timely manner;
- Intent to program from funds controlled by the region a substantial portion of funding needed for construction of the project, or phases of the project if necessary, and appropriate in the 2006, 2008, and/or 2010 STIPs; and
- Intent to commit an appropriate share of funding to construction of the project, given its importance for interregional travel and commerce, in the 2006, 2008, and/or 2010 STIPs.

Staff is requesting that Council direct staff to conduct public outreach to further develop the list of community enhancements that the City of Sacramento would like Caltrans to include as part of the Highway 50 HOV lane plus Community Enhancements project. Staff would return to Council in about four months with a recommended list of enhancements for Council consideration. The approved list would be submitted to Caltrans with a request that these enhancements be included in the HOV lane project.

**Financial Considerations:**

There are no financial obligations associated with this report.

**Environmental Considerations:**

This activity is not considered a project as defined by Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. The activity involves no physical construction and has no potential to cause a significant impact on the environment

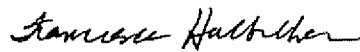
(CEQA Section 15061 (b)(3)). The Highway 50 HOV Lane plus Community Enhancements project will comply with CEQA and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requirements.

**Policy Considerations:**

The inclusion of community enhancements for the City of Sacramento will help address neighborhood livability and quality-of-life impacts and improvements.

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):**

The actions contained in this report are not subject to the City's ESBD requirements.

Respectfully Submitted by:   
Francesca Halbakken  
Planning & Policy Manager

Approved by:   
Marty Hanneman  
Director of Transportation

Recommendation Approved:

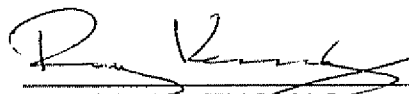
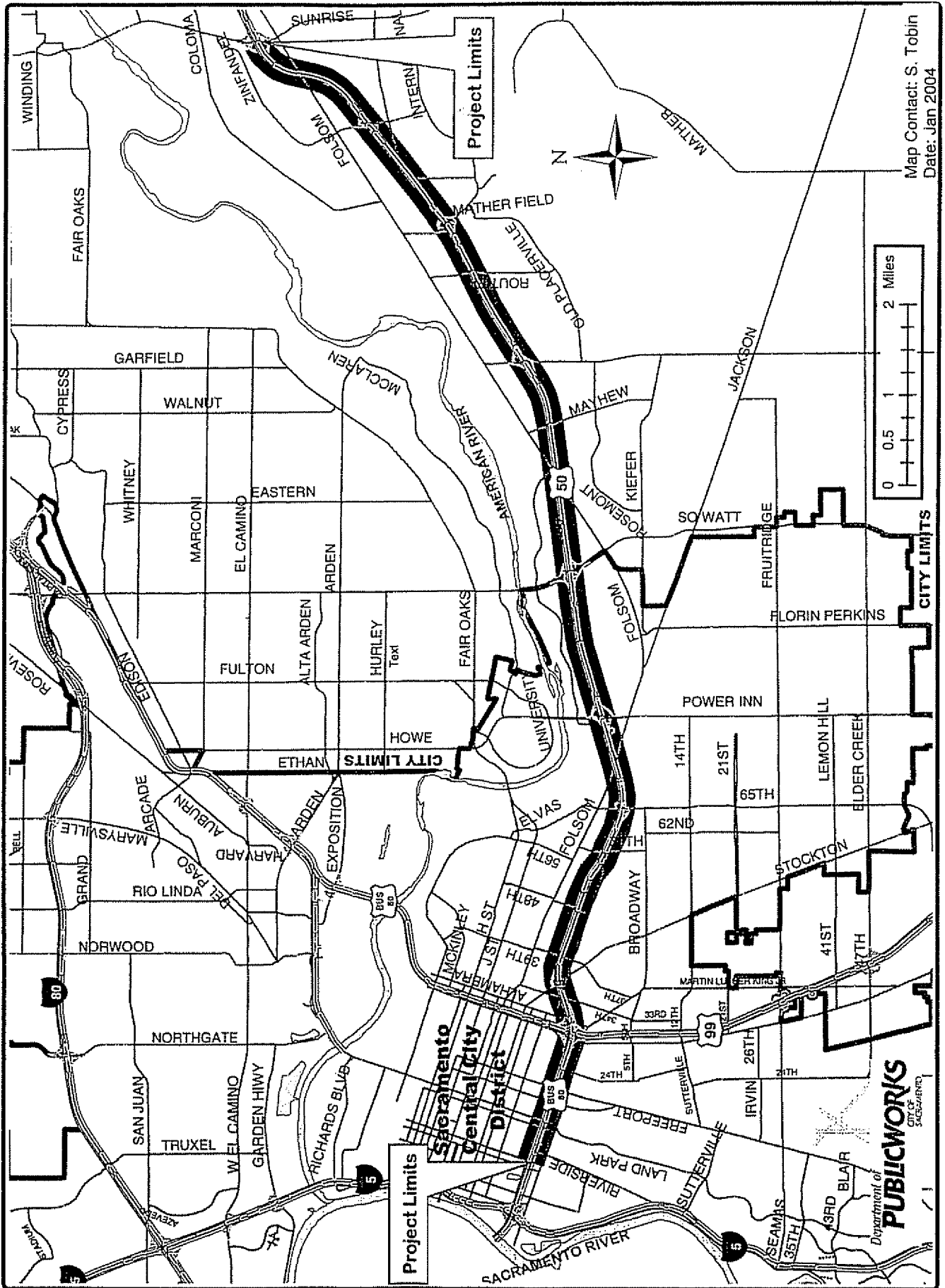
  
for ROBERT P. THOMAS  
City Manager

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Location Map for  
**U.S. 50 HOV LANES AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS PROJECT**



**ATTACHMENT B: Summary of Conditions Regarding the U.S. 50 HOV Lane Project**

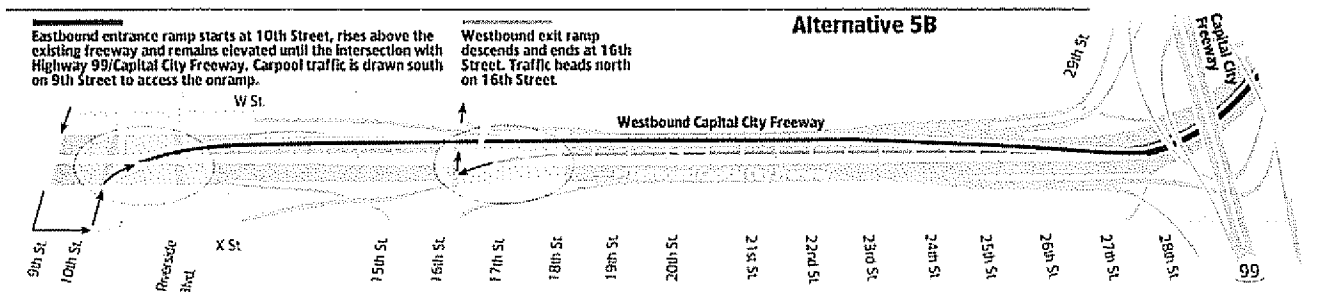
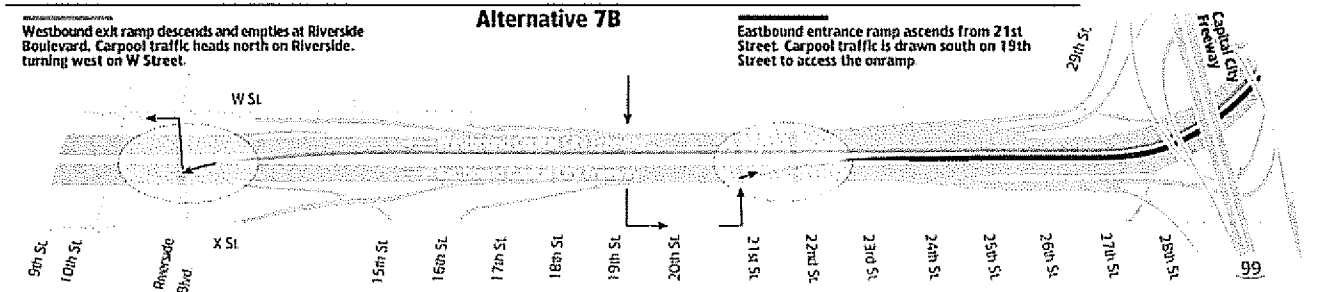
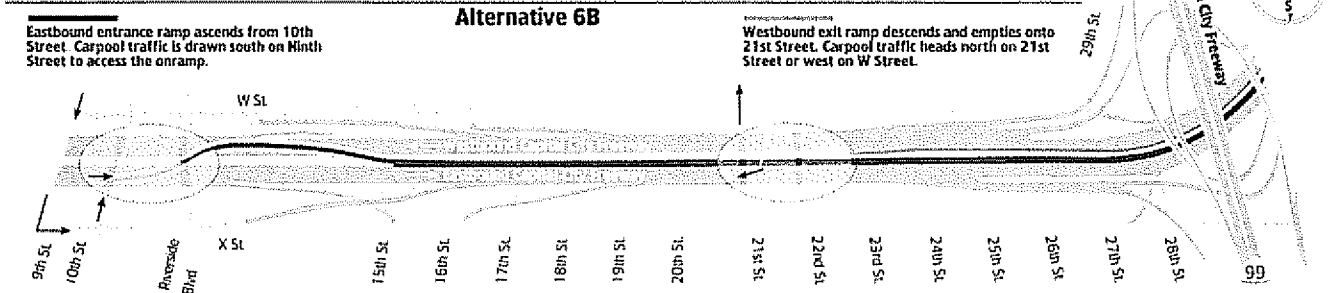
Conditions for Approval	Project <sup>(1)</sup>	Environmental Analysis <sup>(2)</sup>	Project Alternative <sup>(3)</sup>
<b>Objective: Neighborhood Livability</b>			
Traffic calming and other traffic mgt. improvements throughout the study area including:	X	X	
Conversions recommended in the City's two-way conversion study	X		
Improvements per South Midtown Area Revitalization Transportation (SMART) Plan	X		
Lighting and streetscape improvements including:	X	X	
Stockton/Broadway Streetscape	X	X	
Folsom Blvd Streetscape	X	X	
Landscape improvements along Highway 50 within the corridor	X	X	
<i>Other improvements identified through community study advisory committee (SAC)</i>	X	X	
<b>Objective: Regional Transportation Planning and Operations</b>			
<i>Improve traffic operations including traffic weaving in the vicinity of WX freeway</i>	X	X	
Consider other projects and studies being conducted in the Highway 50 corridor		X	
<b>Objective: Transit and Alternative Modes</b>			
<i>Bicycle and pedestrian circulation improvements</i>	X	X	
Improvements to pedestrian/transit access to mass transit	X	X	
Expansion and marketing of the rideshare program	X		
Develop strategies to encourage use of HOV lanes and alternative modes	X	X	
Transit enhancements on identified transit corridors	X	X	
Additional transit service; Bus Rapid Transit and other innovative bus feeder systems		X	X
<b>Objective: Parking</b>			
<i>On-street and facility parking impacts</i>		X	
Study/recommend parking fee structure in destination areas		X	
<b>Objective: Land use Planning</b>			
Land use changes for the development of pedestrian and transit oriented communities		X	X
<b>Objective: Regional Social Equity</b>			
Commitment from member jurisdictions to participate in a series of regional forums to address social equity issues including social services and affordable housing			Requires regional commitment

**Notes:**

- (1) Project - The existing HOV lane project should be defined to include these improvements.
- (2) Environmental Analysis - These conditions should be studied and analyzed in the environmental document.
- (3) Alternative - These conditions should be analyzed in the environmental document as project alternatives.
- (4) Items in italics are included in the Caltrans' Draft Project Study Report dated August 2001.

**Proposed carpool ramps in Sacramento's center**

Caltrans is studying five plans to extend carpool lanes on Highway 50 from Rancho Cordova to downtown Sacramento. A final decision is expected by 2007. Each alternative features carpool-only exit ramps that would descend from the median row separating the elevated east- and westbound lanes. Plans for carpool-only entrance ramps would vary.



**Other alternatives**

Source: California Department of Transportation

Caltrans is studying two other options: A "no-build" plan, in which no carpool lanes are added, and an alternative that would require carpoolers to enter

and exit the carpool lanes using existing ramps. For more information, go to <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/projects/hov50/>

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*and not the consensus of the group.*

Alternative	Pros	Cons	Community Enhancements
<p><b>General Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job growth in the region – will need to implement all circulation improvements that promote traffic movement, both into and out of the downtown.</li> <li>Air quality would be improved.</li> <li>Will encourage use of carpools.</li> <li>HOV lanes can complement other alternative forms of transportation.</li> <li>Timing of HOV construction should complement other alternatives.</li> <li>Pros depend on how you define success.</li> <li>Roadway plans respond to current development pressures, growth, and problems.</li> <li>HOV lane doesn't mean most of the traffic is going into downtown – people are also passing through to points further west and east.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EIR needs to clearly define study area and scope.</li> <li>Are there studies that support / refute that HOV lanes promote carpooling and alternative modes?</li> <li>Have workshop on pros/cons of HOV lanes.</li> <li>Provide adequate enforcement for HOV lanes.</li> <li>Clean up the merge lane between Highway 50 and Route 80.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air quality is affected by traffic loads (Express Bus or BRT better?)</li> <li>Data not conclusive to support/refute HOV air quality benefits.</li> <li>Need to look at safety impacts and who is at more risk, commuters or residents?</li> <li>With or without HOV, downtown traffic is unsafe for pedestrians and bikes.</li> <li>El Dorado residents don't use HOV/carpool; prefer other transit modes; want freedom to travel. El Dorado transit is picking up users.</li> <li>No evidence that HOV lanes result in new carpool formation when freeways are operating at less than capacity.</li> <li>No evidence of air pollution benefits.</li> <li>Increased freeway capacity likely to induce more vehicle trips.</li> <li>Increased freeway capacity will create sprawl and encourage long distance commutes resulting in air pollution impacts, increased energy usage, increased oil dependence, increased surface street congestion, increased vehicle crash injuries and fatalities, loss of open space, loss of permeable surface area, reduced levels of physical activity, harm to public health and increased police and emergency services costs.</li> <li>Undermines investment in parallel light rail system.</li> <li>Spending on automobile-oriented transportation represents a poor choice because it makes it more difficult to develop a balanced transportation system.</li> <li>Freeways divide communities.</li> <li>Lack of maintenance – deteriorated conditions.</li> <li>Light rail tracks at HOV exits will create conflicts in downtown.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community Enhancements</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supply laptop hook-ups on transit vehicles.</li> <li>Make BRT/Express Bus and vanpool more attractive than the car – provide an exclusive transit lane.</li> <li>Plan for BRT/Express Bus lanes that can be changed to accommodate future changes such as rapid transit, etc. Assume future changes will occur and set aside the easements now.</li> <li>Provide carpool lots that are lit, secure, nice looking, under the freeway, and near transit pick-up.</li> <li>Provide signal detection and timings for pedestrians and bikes - important for all alternatives.</li> <li>Provide more Park &amp; Ride lots further east.</li> <li>Repair sidewalks (many are torn-up).</li> <li>Add metering at exits and entries (make it consistent throughout the system).</li> <li>Provide bike/pedestrian overcrossings - See overcrossing at Airport for positive bike/pedestrian example.</li> <li>Install audible signals for the blind at intersections and bus stops at intersections (currently done by local jurisdictions – by request).</li> <li>Consider an alternative with a drop ramp in West Sacramento. (The in to pedestrian bridge over the river to West Sac.)</li> <li>Promote transit through more advertisements to commuters: "Get off Highway 50 early and take rapid transit to downtown sites."</li> <li>Put up electronic signs with the estimated arrival times of light rail (time to downtown in car, x minutes; time to downtown on light rail y minutes).</li> <li>Make light rail visible to highway traffic.</li> <li>Provide for easy exit off the freeway and access to light rail all along the corridor.</li> <li>Work with City and developers to tie HOV lanes into transit options at the railroad (HOV to enhance traffic delivery).</li> <li>Provide more park and ride and transit stops to take people to sites along the corridor.</li> <li>Contribute to user delivery to downtown venues through densification and infill development.</li> <li>Highlight lots of opportunities along the corridor to exit and pick up transit.</li> <li>Provide drop ramps at transit stops.</li> <li>Increase parking costs and enforcement in downtown.</li> <li>Coordinate current traffic construction (i.e. Watt Avenue improvements and access to light rail) with longer-term enhancements and connections and make them work together.</li> <li>If there is any downtown HOV off-ramp, then traffic has to be "stopped" at the off-ramp (dropped into a parking lot).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supply transit pick-ups – BRT, bus stops.</li> <li>Prevent HOV traffic from entering downtown.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Terminate leases of under-freeway "air space" for storage units, and put more valuable uses/resources in air space.</li> <li>Provide additional bike/pedestrian crossings – at reasonable frequencies (Zainfarber, etc.).</li> <li>Provide non-interchange freeway crossings-bike/pedestrian only or for all modes, at a neighborhood scale such as 48th Street and 51st Street over Hwy 50.</li> <li>Provide interchange improvements to make them more bike/pedestrian safe and accessible.</li> <li>Provide signal detection and timing for cyclists and pedestrians.</li> </ol>	





Alternative	Pros	Cons	Community Enhancements
<p><b>General Comments</b> (continued)</p>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29. Provide bicycle boulevard(s) (like in Berkeley, Palo Alto and Vancouver) to help compensate for increased traffic on surface streets.</li> <li>30. Do additional revision of one-way streets to two-way streets in downtown.</li> <li>31. Provide improved bicycle access and parking at light rail stations.</li> <li>32. Provide improved enforcement for the increased traffic in the downtown/downtown areas through technology based systems such as red light cameras or additional funding for traffic officers.</li> <li>33. Do grade separation of light rail tracks.</li> <li>34. Create a parking structure and light rail station over/under Hwy 50 at HOV offramps for transfer of motorists to light rail for last leg of journey. Include a light rail pass with parking charge.</li> <li>35. Add protective lanes signage at off ramps to freeways (Folsom, Watt and Mather are examples of where it's needed).</li> <li>36. Provide visual cues to drivers as they enter/merge onto highway (Florida has green lights).</li> <li>37. Add signage over HOV lanes to notify the driver of distance to next exit ramp.</li> <li>38. Provide for sound wall continuity throughout the entire system.</li> <li>39. Add trees and planter areas (roses, pyracantha) to screen sound walls.</li> <li>40. Use trees, landscaping and sound walls to buffer neighborhoods from freeway.</li> <li>41. Provide painted medians on surface streets near freeway exits and entries.</li> <li>42. Create gateway signage.</li> <li>43. Provide bike/pedestrian access over freeway.</li> <li>44. Provide more bike trails throughout corridor and link bike trails to one another.</li> <li>45. Get bike/pedestrians out of intersections through dedicated pathways away from traffic and signals and overpasses rather than crosswalks and signals (separated crossings).</li> <li>46. Link existing bike trails to each other and to overcrossings (new and proposed). Existing bike trails are disconnected (i.e. American River bike trail does not connect to other bike routes).</li> <li>47. Coordinate with other jurisdictions (including City, County, STA, State Parks, Caltrans) to improve bike paths and trails – this is a regional issue.</li> <li>48. Give more weight to alternative modes of transportation (bike, pedestrian, etc.). There should be a minimum of 51% given to alternative modes.</li> <li>49. Allow for informal rider pick-up/drop-off system.</li> <li>50. Utilize "air space" for appropriate uses including retail, parking and transit pick-up sites.</li> <li>51. Add cultural motifs to the freeway system that reflects local history and events.</li> <li>52. Include community enhancements that were presented in Darold Heiken's presentation – building an individual community identity based on local history, culture.</li> <li>53. Require developers to pay into a mitigation fund that addresses congestion/traffic issue/alternatives.</li> <li>54. Locate HOV lanes so not to conflict with light rail lanes.</li> <li>55. Address development pressures first. Land use development affects traffic, roads and transportation systems. Roads and transportation systems are always lagging behind development. Why do patching of transportation system?</li> <li>56. Encourage/require Regional Transit to comment on development proposals.</li> <li>57. Continue to coordinate with other studies and plans from other jurisdictions (i.e., SWAT plan, 65<sup>th</sup> Street, Howe, BRT, etc.).</li> </ol>