

Western Placerville Interchanges Project

City of Placerville Final Environmental Impact Report

Placerville Drive/Ray Lawyer Drive/U.S. 50
City of Placerville, California
03-ELD-US 50-KP 24.9-27.0 (PM 15.5 - 16.8)
SCH# 2003122137

November 2005



General Information About This Document

What's in this document?

This document is a Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the Western Placerville Interchanges Project located in the City of Placerville, in El Dorado County, California. This Final EIR incorporates the project's September 2005 Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (Draft EIR/EA) by reference and provides final documentation, including responses to comments received on the Draft EIR/EA.

What should you do?

- Please review this Final EIR and, if you provided comments on the Draft EIR/EA, please review the City's responses to your comments.
- The City Council's consideration of certification of the project environmental document will occur at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting. You are invited to attend this meeting and will be afforded an opportunity to address the City Council, if you so choose. The City Council meeting at which certification of this Final EIR will be considered will be held as follows:

November 22, 2005 - 7 p.m. (or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard)
City Council Chambers, Town Hall
549 Main Street
Placerville, California

What happens after this?

The City Council will consider the Final EIR for the Proposed Project and will either approve (certify) the environmental document as meeting the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, or will deny the certification and provide additional direction to City staff with regard to continuing moving forward with the project. FHWA will also use this document to support a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, computer disk, audiocassette, and Braille. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please contact Rick Tippett, PE, City Engineer, 487 Main Street, Placerville, CA 95667. Phone: (530) 642-5250.

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List of Abbreviated Terms

Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
City	City of Placerville
DOT	Department of Transportation
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NMTP	Non-Motorized Transportation Plan
NOP	Notice of Preparation
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SPTC	Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
U.S. 50	U.S. Highway 50
WPIP	Western Placerville Interchanges Project

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

The City of Placerville (City) is proposing to widen and improve segments of Forni Road, Fair Lane, Placerville Drive and Ray Lawyer Drive. Improvements to these roadways would be made in conjunction with modifications and improvements to eastbound and westbound U.S. Highway 50 (U.S. 50) ramps to and from Forni Road, Placerville Drive, and Ray Lawyer Drive. The Western Placerville Interchanges Project (WPIP) is subject to both state and federal environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), respectively.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (Draft EIR/EA), which is incorporated to this Final EIR in its entirety by this reference, describes the project alternatives, potential impacts of the WPIP, and mitigation measures proposed to reduce identified impacts. As discussed in more detail below, the Draft EIR/EA evaluated four project build alternatives with an equal level of consideration. A final determination of which alternative will be implemented will not be made until such time as the City certifies this Final EIR. However, based on the merits of each of the four project build alternatives, the City has identified Alternative D as its preferred alternative, and Alternative D is therefore referenced within this Final EIR as the City's Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project is located along U.S. 50 and adjacent roadways in the western portion of the City of Placerville, California (see **Figure F-1**). Improvements associated with the Proposed Project (and each of the project build alternatives considered in the Draft EIR/EA) would include modifications to Forni Road, Placerville Drive, Fair Lane, and Ray Lawyer Drive in the vicinity of U.S. 50 (see **Figure F-2**). The Proposed Project would also include widening and lane additions to the westbound and eastbound U.S. 50

on- and off-ramps at Forni Road, widening the Fairgrounds Overcrossing¹ by replacing the existing overcrossing, installing a roundabout at the westbound U.S. 50 off- and on-ramps intersection with Placerville Drive and Fair Lane, and providing westbound and eastbound U.S. 50 on- and off-ramps at Ray Lawyer Drive.

In association with the proposed roadway modifications, the Proposed Project would install new traffic control signals at project-area intersections, sidewalks and bike lanes, retaining walls, and landscaping. The Proposed Project would include a roundabout north of the Fairgrounds Overcrossing with incoming/outgoing traffic legs from Fair Lane, Placerville Drive and westbound U.S. 50 ramps. Modifications at the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection would contain design provisions to install a segment of pedestrian/bicycle trail. The Proposed Project would also provide two locations for possible future park-and-ride facility development, as indicated on **Figure F-2**.

1.2 Organization of the Final EIR

Chapter 1 of this Final EIR provides a project overview, identifies the Proposed Project and environmentally superior alternative, and provides a discussion of the purpose and content of this document.

Chapter 2 provides a summary of the public involvement process.

Chapter 3 provides copies of all comments received during the Draft EIR/EA review period the City's responses to general issues raised as well as responses to each individual comment.

Chapter 4 presents the additions and corrections that have been incorporated into the EIR in response to the comments submitted during the public review period.

Chapter 5 provides a list of preparers of the Draft EIR/EA and this Final EIR.

¹ Note that the overcrossing referenced herein as the Fairgrounds Overcrossing has been previously referenced in certain documents or other discussion as the Placerville Drive/U.S. 50 overcrossing. However, the Caltrans guidance refers to the overcrossing as the Fairgrounds Overcrossing. Placerville Drive terminates at Forni Road on the south side of the overcrossing, and therefore the overcrossing roadway is referenced herein and in subsequent documentation prepared for this project as Placerville Drive.

Chapter 6 contains a listing of the persons, agencies and organizations to which this Final EIR was provided.

Chapter 7 includes references cited in the preparation of this document.

Appendix A contains the Mitigation Monitoring Plan prepared for the Proposed Project. The Mitigation Monitoring Plan includes a list of required mitigation measures and includes information regarding the City's policies and procedures for implementation and monitoring of the mitigation measures.

Appendix B contains written comments provided to the City in response to the EIR Notice of Preparation.

1.3 Project Alternatives

The Draft EIR/EA fully evaluated four project "build" alternatives as well as the "No Project/No Build" alternative. In addition, the Draft EIR/EA also identified other alternatives and design options considered during the alternatives development process. A full discussion of the alternatives development process and alternatives considered during this process is provided in Section 2.3 of the Draft EIR. This Final EIR identifies the City's preferred alternative (i.e., Proposed Project) and also discusses the environmentally superior alternative as required by CEQA. The decision to approve the project or to eliminate consideration of any of the four alternatives evaluated within the Draft EIR, has not been made at the time of the preparation of this Final EIR and will not be made until the City certifies that the EIR is complete and adopts a set of written findings associated within the project and its potential environmental effects.

1.3.1 Proposed Project Identification

Based on its consideration of the merits of the project alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIR/EA, the City Council directed project staff and its consultants to consider Alternative D as the preferred alternative, and Alternative D is therefore presented as the Proposed Project in this Final EIR.

The Council's direction was based on its consideration of the beneficial attributes of Alternative D when compared to the other project alternatives considered in the Draft EIR. Alternative D was recommended by City staff and the City's engineering consultant in its October 11, 2005 Project Update to the Council. The beneficial

attributes of Alternative D as compared to the other project build alternatives are listed below for the western portion of the project area and the eastern portion of the project area²:

Western Portion of Project Area	Eastern Portion of Project Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best traffic operations • Traffic accidents less severe • Traffic speeds in roundabout average 20 mph • Best air quality performance due to elimination of signals • Can convert back to traditional intersections if roundabout loses popularity • Improved aesthetic opportunities • Better for pedestrians than back-to-back signals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct connection to a future Ray Lawyer Drive extension • Park-and-Ride lot location (150 stalls) • One less signal

1.3.2 Environmentally Superior Alternative

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) requires the lead agency to identify an *environmentally superior* alternative among the project alternatives when the no project alternative is environmentally superior. As discussed, each of the four project build alternatives were evaluated at an equal level of detail and have been given equal consideration in terms of their potential environmental effects. Variations among the alternatives' designs, construction requirements, and environmental effects occur within two portions of the project area: (1) at the intersection of the westbound U.S. 50 ramps at Placerville Drive and Fair Lane where the Proposed Project and Alternative C would install a roundabout and Alternatives A and B would install two back-to-back signals, and (2) at and near the intersection of Ray Lawyer Drive and Forni Road where two alternative eastbound U.S. 50 ramps and Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection configurations are under consideration.

It must be noted here that, in consideration of these design options, there is no clear environmentally superior alternative among the build alternatives. Each of the

² Note that Alternative C has the same configuration as Alternative D in the western portion of the project area and Alternative B has the same configuration as Alternative D in the eastern portion of the project area. As such, the beneficial attributes of the Proposed Project would also occur under these alternatives in these respective portions of the project area.

alternatives would have similar construction-related impacts, would result in equivalent or very similar amounts of wetlands, oak tree and habitat disturbance, and would have equivalent or very similar air pollutant emission and noise effects. Under each alternative, these impacts would either be less-than-significant or could be mitigated to less-than-significant levels under each of the alternatives. The minor variations that occur among the alternatives in each of these comparative aspects create only marginal differences that do not consistently indicate that there is one environmentally superior alternative.

As a result of similarities among the alternatives in terms of quantifiable environmental effects, beneficial attributes of the various alternatives associated with environmental factors were also considered for identifying the environmentally superior alternative. Based on the consideration of the beneficial environmental attributes, the Proposed Project has been found to be the environmentally superior alternative. The Proposed Project has two particular beneficial attributes which result in this determination: (1) the proposed roundabout (an element of both Alternative C and the Proposed Project) would result in lower aggregated air pollutant emissions when compared with a signalized intersection at this location, and (2) the provision of a future park-and-ride location near Ray Lawyer Drive (as shown on **Figure F-2** and which is an element of both Alternative B and the Proposed Project) provide increased future options for traffic management and air quality improvement strategies.³

1.4 Purpose and Content of this Document

The WPIP is subject to environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City of Placerville is the state lead agency responsible for conducting environmental review and documenting this review in an Environmental Impact Report. This Final EIR, in combination with the September 2005 *Western Placerville Interchanges Project Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment*, which is incorporated to this Final EIR by reference, identifies and describes the project alternatives, potential impacts of the project, and

³ Note that each of the four project build alternatives would provide for opportunities of future park-and-ride facility development near Forni Road; however, only Alternative B and the Proposed Project would provide a configuration that could accommodate a park-and-ride near Ray Lawyer Drive.

mitigation measures that would serve to reduce all significant and potentially significant impacts to less-than-significant levels.

The September 2005 Draft EIR/EA was made available for public and agency review and comment between September 2, 2005 and October 21, 2005. During that period, the City received public and agency comments on the draft document through both written communication and at a public hearing at which members of the public and agencies with jurisdiction over one or more aspects of the project were invited to provide oral comments. Based on the input received concerning the Draft EIR/EA, the City has prepared this Final EIR which contains a record of public comments on the Draft EIR/EA, the City's response to pertinent issues raised in such comments, and documentation of revisions made to the Draft EIR/EA. Also included with this Final EIR is a Mitigation Monitoring Plan (see **Appendix A**), which provides a listing of the City's mitigation commitments associated with the Proposed Project and identifies implementation procedures, effectiveness criteria and implementation timing associated with each measure. Implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring Plan would ensure that all otherwise significant and potentially significant impacts of the project would either be avoided or reduced to less-than-significant levels.

The City has determined that it may conduct a public outreach and educational program prior to and during the initial period of roundabout operation under the Proposed Project. The purpose of this outreach program is to advise the community with regard to safe and legal movement within the roundabout and to foster the awareness of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to enhance the safety of roundabout operations. (See discussion at General Issue 4 in **Chapter 3** of this Final EIR for additional information regarding this issue.) Upon its certification, this Final EIR will complete the City's CEQA review and enable the City to approve the Proposed Project along with adopting the Mitigation Monitoring Plan.

1.5 National Environmental Policy Act Considerations

In addition to CEQA, the WPIP is subject to federal environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the federal lead agency for the project. With FHWA input and approval, the Draft EIR also served as FHWA's Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project.

Based on the analyses and information presented in the Draft EIR/EA, public input, and the information presented in this final document, FHWA has indicated its intent to make a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project pursuant to NEPA.

However, in association with FHWA's review the agency must make a determination that the project is in conformity with regional transportation planning and air quality budgets contained within regional air quality plans. To be found in conformity, a project must be part of the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization's conforming Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The Project is included in both the latest RTP (*Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for 2025*) and TIP (*2005/07 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program*) for El Dorado County. On February 6, 2003 the MTP and TIP were found to conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) by the U.S. Department of Transportation. However, the MTP and TIP conformity determinations were dependent upon the completion of certain projects within the planning region. As a result of delays and uncertainties with the completion of these projects, FHWA determined that the implementation of the RTP and TIP as projected in the SIP conformity determination may not occur, and the region entered a conformity "lapse" on October 4, 2004. As a result of the conformity lapse, FHWA is unable to make final NEPA determinations at this time. Although the project conforms to the MTP and TIP, the current conformity lapse must be resolved prior to obtaining FHWA's final NEPA determination and prior to proceeding with subsequent phases of project design and construction.

1.6 Areas of Controversy

CEQA Guidelines Section 15123 requires that an EIR identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency. Although much public support for the project has been expressed throughout the planning process, the following issues warrant recognition here to document their expression during the environmental review process. This discussion is not intended to address all issues raised during the Draft EIR/EA comment period (all comments are included and addressed in **Chapter 3** of this Final EIR) and is intended to summarize the key issues that may warrant recognition as areas of controversy. These are:

1. Concerns have been expressed from bicycle and pedestrian interests regarding the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians moving through or adjacent to the roundabout. This Final EIR includes comments received from the public and

organizations on this matter, the City's responses to the comments and identifies an outreach/educational program to provide information to motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians regarding safe and legal roundabout movement.

2. Concerns have been expressed from bicycle and pedestrian interests regarding the proposed El Dorado Trail crossing of Forni Road at Ray Lawyer Drive. The Proposed Project would install a segment of the El Dorado Trail, a Class I bike path, and would provide an at-grade crossing of Forni Road. Commentors have requested that the project install a grade-separated crossing at this location. This recommendation has not been included in the project for reasons discussed in detail in **Chapter 3** of this Final EIR. As discussed in more detail in **Section 1.7**, the City has determined that the Proposed Project will include surface treatments at all El Dorado Trail crossings within the project area.
3. Residents who live off of Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville have expressed concern that this segment of Forni Road is unsafe and requires improvements. These commentors also contend that the WPIP would increase trips and encourage "cut-through" traffic attempting to avoid congestion on U.S. 50 to downtown Placerville. This segment of roadway is not included within the project area for the purposes of considering roadway improvement necessary to achieve the project objectives. The traffic study conducted for the project determined that PM peak hour trips on this segment of roadway would decrease with the Proposed Project and each of the alternatives. However, it should be noted that the traffic study does not account for potential changes in the amount of cut-through traffic that may occur (under either the project build alternatives or the no-project alternative). This Final EIR concludes that the project would not adversely affect this segment of roadway (i.e., would reduce the total amount of traffic compared to the no-project alternative) and that improvements to this segment of Forni Road are not warranted *as a component of the WPIP*. The City recognizes that this segment of Forni Road is a non-standard roadway and should be considered for improvements. This segment of Forni Road is primarily within the jurisdiction of El Dorado County, and the County has included in their Interim 2004 General Plan TIM Fees Program (adopted by the County Board of Supervisors September 20, 2005) a project to perform preliminary planning, engineering and environmental investigations for future widening of Forni Road to a standard two-lane roadway.

4. As discussed in **Section 1.5**, the region is currently in a conformity lapse with regard to its transportation improvement plan, and the FHWA can not issue final approval of the project's environmental documentation and NEPA review until conformity is resolved. The City of Placerville may, however, certify the Final Environmental Document in the absence of a conformity determination.

1.7 Modifications and Clarifications

Certain project design modifications have been identified and incorporated to the project as a result of input on the Draft EIR/EA and in further consideration by City staff and the City's engineering consultant. These modifications and clarifications do not alter the findings of the CEQA review; however, their documentation here is necessary to provide a full description of the project for the CEQA record.

El Dorado Trail – The project has incorporated full development of a 0.12-mile (650-foot) segment of the El Dorado Trail Class I bike path adjacent to Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive. Full development of this segment could be implemented under each of the project alternatives and is shown for the Proposed Project in **Figure F-2**. This segment would connect on its western end with a segment of the El Dorado Trail currently being planned by El Dorado County for development within approximately two years at the time of this writing. The eastern end would terminate at the northeast corner of the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection after an at-grade crossing of Forni Road at a signalized intersection and would allow for the future interconnection with an undeveloped segment to the east between this location and downtown Placerville. All locations within the project area at which the El Dorado Trail would cross roadways (i.e., Forni Road, Ray Lawyer Drive and the Placerville Jail entrance driveway) would include surface treatments (such as colored, stamped pavement) to increase visibility at these crossings. Note that the segment of the El Dorado Trail which has been incorporated into the project design would not be developed by the City until such time as the full development of other Proposed Project facilities is constructed within this portion of the project area. A trail connection from the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection to downtown Placerville can not be considered until the completion of the *Highway 50 Operational Improvement Project* due to right of way constraints.

Retaining Wall Modifications – The proposed design of the retaining wall necessary for the construction of the westbound U.S. 50 off-ramp to Ray Lawyer Drive has been

modified to include a reinforced soil slope as opposed to a vertical wall as was discussed for this location in the Draft EIR/EA. The reinforced soil slope was recommended by Caltrans as a more cost-effective method to widen U.S. 50 and construct the Ray Lawyer Drive off-ramp in this location. This modification does not affect the environmental review of the project, as the review included the full area that would be disturbed by this design. **Figure F-3** provides a photosimulation of the proposed retaining structure.

Traffic Forecasts at Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive – The forecasts for Alternatives B and D at the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection have been revised to correct an error in the traffic forecasting process that was presented in the Draft EIR/EA and the project traffic study. The future volume on Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive is anticipated to be the same for all “with project” alternatives (as opposed to a higher number of trips shown in the traffic study and Draft EIR/EA). As a result of the revision, the level of service and average intersection delay will be the same or better than previously reported. The volume changes are mostly minor – 10 to 20 vehicles per hour. The one substantive change is a shift in volumes from the eastbound through (trips on to Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive) to the eastbound right (vehicles turning to westbound Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive). This will reduce the overall intersection delay since right-turn movements have a higher capacity than through movements due to right turns on red. **Figures F-4** and **F-5** represent the corrected volumes and are applicable to both Alternative B and Alternative D (i.e., the Proposed Project). Additional information regarding traffic on Forni Road raised in comments on the Draft EIR/EA is provided in **Chapter 3** of this Final EIR.

Fairgrounds Frontage Sidewalks and Parking – During the preparation of this Final EIR, the City’s engineering consultant met with representatives of the El Dorado County Fair Association and the El Dorado County Historical Museum to discuss vehicle parking, pedestrian access and other issues associated with project construction and design adjacent to the County Fairgrounds and museum. Based on these discussions, the project design has been refined to include a sidewalk adjacent to the east side of Placerville Drive along the southern portion of the Fairgrounds property (parallel to an existing rock retaining wall at this location) and continuing across the southern of two entrance gates (this gate is used by pedestrians only, and the northern gate would remain available for emergency vehicle access). Opportunities for the addition of short-term parking and parking designated for disabled persons at this location were also discussed and will be incorporated into final project design. The City and/or its engineering consultant will continue to coordinate with fairground and museum representatives

during the preparation of final project design of this portion of the project area. These refinements do not alter the impact determinations presented in the Draft EIR/EA and this Final EIR.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Planning and Final Design Considerations – Input has been received throughout the project planning and environmental review process which expresses strong support for consideration of bicycle and pedestrian facilities planning and design. Meetings and coordination with bicycle and pedestrian interests, including representatives of Trails Now, the El Dorado County Trails Advisory Committee and El Dorado County Transportation Commission staff have resulted in modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities proposed in association with the project with a goal of addressing much of the input received. This coordination and planning has resulted in the incorporation of sidewalks and Class II bicycle lanes along all major roadway segments within the project limits.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities included in the Proposed Project are considered appropriate for the anticipated level of use of these facilities.

The City has also considered requests that grade-separated crossings should be included in project design. The City has considered these requests and has concluded that the need for such facilities has not been demonstrated, and that based upon established traffic engineering principles, analysis, and reports on the performance of similar facilities in Truckee, Santa Barbara, and Bend, Oregon, the incorporation of grade-separated crossings to the project design is not warranted. In general, grade-separated facilities provide an ultimate level of pedestrian and bicycle safety and convenience. The need for this facility has not been demonstrated as based on anticipated use levels, traffic volumes. Further, preliminary technical analysis indicates that terrain and existing facility constraints render the use of grade separated crossings infeasible.

1.8 Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table F-1 provides a listing of the impacts identified for both the Proposed Project (identified as Alternative D in the table) and each of the project build alternatives.

Table F-1. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.2-1. The project would result in the removal of on-street parking which could be considered inconsistent with Goal D and Policy D-1 of the City General Plan.	LS	None.	LS
Impact 3.3-1. Project construction would result in temporary lane closures and traffic delays, potential disruptions to transit services and increased difficulties of bicycle and pedestrian movement.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.3-1. A project traffic management plan shall be developed and implemented which includes measures to minimize disruptions to vehicle, transit and bicycle and pedestrian activities during the duration of construction activities.	LS
Impact 3.3-2. The WPIP would improve operations at four project-area intersections under near-term conditions.	B		
Impact 3.3-3. The WPIP would improve operations on U.S. Highway 50.	B		
Impact 3.3-4. The WPIP would improve operations at four project-area intersections under long-term cumulative conditions.	B		
Impact 3.3-5. The WPIP would improve operations on U.S. Highway 50 under long-term cumulative conditions.	B		
Impact 3.3-6. The WPIP would provide for future development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	B		
Impact 3.4-1. Construction activities would result in short-term construction vehicle, reactive organic gas, and fugitive dust emissions that could affect local air quality.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.4-1 – The City's contractors will implement dust control measures and construction vehicle emission reduction strategies during construction.	LS
<p>¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based Draft EIR/EA Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations regarding significance are applicable only to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR/EA provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.</p>			

**Table F-1 (continued)
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.4-2. Reductions in local carbon monoxide concentrations would occur as a result of increased vehicle speeds and reduced idling in the project area.	B		
Impact 3.4-3. Slight reductions in regional air pollutant emissions would occur as a result of the project.	LS/B	None required.	LS/B
Impact 3.5-1. Construction activities associated with the project build alternatives would result in temporary increases in ambient noise levels along the project corridor.	LS	Mitigation Measure 3.5-1. Construction noise levels shall comply with applicable local, state and federal regulations and all equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers according to the manufacturer's specifications.	LS
Impact 3.5-2. Project modifications and future traffic operations could result in increased noise levels at sensitive receptors within the project area.	LS	None required.	LS
Impact 3.5-3. Vibration levels could increase within the project corridor as a result of vehicle passages on U.S. Highway 50 and its arterials.	LS	None required.	LS
Impact 3.6-1. The use of hazardous materials would create the potential to pose a risk to workers and nearby residences during construction of the project.	LS	Mitigation Measure 3.6-1. The City shall ensure that only qualified construction contractors are employed by the project, and shall require contractors to make all reasonable efforts to reduce their use of hazardous materials and generation of hazardous wastes.	LS
<p>¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based on Draft EIR/EA Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations regarding significance are applicable only to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR/EA provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.</p>			

**Table F-1 (continued)
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.6-2. Construction activities would create a potential for disturbance of unknown areas of soils contaminated with hazardous materials or other substances which may contain hazardous materials, and would create the potential to pose a risk to workers and the public from exposure to such materials.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.6-2. The City shall conduct an updated Environmental Site Assessment, including a hazardous materials occurrence database search, for the project area within a two year period prior to construction. The City shall also implement a limited soil sampling program for soils to be disturbed during project construction.	LS
Impact 3.7-1. Ground disturbance and the use of hazardous or toxic materials during construction would potentially result in increased amounts of sediment or other pollutants in stormwater runoff from construction areas.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.7-1. The City shall develop and implement a SWPPP for the project which identifies specific Best Management Practices for controlling stormwater runoff to be implemented during construction.	LS
Impact 3.7-2. The project would increase the amounts of impermeable surfaces within the project area that would potentially increase stormwater runoff. Alternative A: 3.38 ha (8.35 ac) Alternative B: 3.74 ha (9.23 ac) Alternative C: 3.71 ha (9.17 ac) Alternative D: 4.07 ha (10.05 ac)	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.7-2. The City shall develop and implement a Stormwater Data Report which identifies permanent stormwater runoff treatment BMPs to be implemented for the project.	LS
Impact 3.8-1. Soils disturbance during construction activities would create the potential to increase soils erosion and sedimentation.	PS	Implement Mitigation Measure 3.7-1.	LS
<p>¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based on Draft EIR/EA Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations regarding significance are applicable only to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR/EA provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.</p>			

**Table F-1 (continued)
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.8-2. Overcrossings and roadway structures constructed as part of the project would improve seismic integrity.	B		
Impact 3.9-1. Construction of the project would require relocation of linear utilities, which would create a potential for temporary disruptions in service while relocations occur.	LS	None required.	LS
Impact 3.9-2. Construction activities and lane closures within the project area would create a potential for delays in emergency response times during construction.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.9-2. The City and its contractors shall coordinate construction planning and scheduling with local emergency response and service providers and shall incorporate emergency services vehicle routing consideration into the construction-period traffic management plan.	LS
Impact 3.10-1. The project could result in the loss of wetlands or waters regulated by the Corps under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and the CDFG under Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code.	S	Mitigation Measure 3.10-1. The City will obtain required permits, and purchase wetlands credits from an approved wetland mitigation bank, as necessary.	LS
Impact 3.10-2. Construction activities would require the removal of interior live oak habitat protected by the City of Placerville.	S	Mitigation Measure 3.10-2. The City shall avoid construction activities in the vicinity of interior live oak habitat, where feasible; however, where infeasible, the City shall replace oak trees at a 3:1 replacement-to-loss ratio.	LS
Impact 3.10-3. Project construction activities could impact special-status plant species.	LS	None required.	LS
<p>¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based on Draft EIR/EA Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations regarding significance are applicable only to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR/EA provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.</p>			

**Table F-1 (continued)
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.10-4. Project construction activities could result in habitat disturbance of the northwestern pond turtle and the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB).	LS	Mitigation Measure 3.10-4. The City shall direct a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys of the project area to determine the potential presence of VELB or its habitat. In the event that VELB or its habitat is identified, the City shall coordinate with Caltrans and FHWA to determine the necessary procedures for consulting with the USFWS and shall implement all required mitigation elements.	LS
Impact 3.10-5. Construction activities could result in habitat disturbance of the California red-legged frog and the foothill yellow-legged frog.	LS	Mitigation Measure 3.10-5. The City shall implement specific CRLF and FYLF impact avoidance and minimization measures.	LS
Impact 3.10-6. The project would result in the loss of habitat for non-special status protected bird species.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.10-6. The City shall avoid construction activities in the vicinity of potential avian habitat where feasible and shall replace trees and shrubs which provide habitat to protected bird species at a 3:1 replacement-to-loss ratio.	LS
Impact 3.10-7. Construction of the project would create the potential for the introduction or proliferation of invasive species within the project area.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.10-7. The City and its contractor(s) shall avoid introduction of invasive species into the project area through implementation of specific invasive species control measures.	LS
¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based on Draft EIR/EA Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.			
² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations regarding significance are applicable only to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR/EA provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.			

**Table F-1 (continued)
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.11-1. Ground disturbance from activities associated with construction of the project would create the potential to disturb or destroy unknown archaeological resources within the APE.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.11-1. Any and all potential archaeological resources discovered during construction shall be examined by a qualified archaeologist, who shall examine the findings, assess their significance, and offer recommendations for appropriate handling procedures.	LS
Impact 3.12-1. Project construction activities would be visible to motorists on U.S. 50 and other locations within the project area and would result in temporary adverse detraction from the visual quality.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.12-1. The City shall require construction contractors to utilize and maintain designated staging areas at all times during project construction. Project landscaping and revegetation shall commence immediately upon the completion of facilities construction.	LS
Impact 3.12-2. Each of the build alternatives would introduce both modified and new roadway and related facilities, including retaining walls and other necessary design structures, to the project area that would create the potential to detract from the visual quality of the project area.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.12-2. The City shall, with public input, prepare and implement a project landscape plan which specifies design for plantings, retaining walls, signage and other project features to ensure consistency with the region and project area visual attributes and quality.	LS
Impact 3.12-3. Lighting to be installed under each of the project build alternatives would create increased light and glare within the project area that would detract from nighttime sky views.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.12-3. A lighting plan shall be developed for the project that requires all project lighting to be appropriately shielded and that project lighting design is consistent with all City lighting guidelines and standards. Lighting design shall incorporate context sensitive design and shall be reviewed and approved by the City Council during the project design phase.	LS
<p>¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based on Draft EIR/EA Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations regarding significance are applicable only to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR/EA provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.</p>			

**Table F-1 (continued)
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Impacts of Project Build Alternatives ¹	Significance Without Mitigation ²	Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation ²
Impact 3.13-1. Proposed roadway improvements could have the potential to divide and/or disrupt community cohesion.	LS	None required.	LS
Impact 3.13-2. Construction activities would reduce access and parking at commercial properties, and right-of-way requirements would permanently reduce the size of commercial properties.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.13-2. The City shall coordinate construction timing, parking space closures, and adjacent business parking space sharing as practicable.	LS
Impact 3.13-3. Construction activities and traffic would result in short-term disruptions to local residences.	LS	None required.	LS
Impact 3.13-4. Construction activities would require adjustment in school bus routes and student pick-up and drop-off locations.	PS	Mitigation Measure 3.13-4. The City shall coordinate with the Placerville Union Elementary School District and the El Dorado Union High School District prior to and during construction to facilitate bus rerouting and the identification of alternative stop locations.	LS
<p>¹ Impacts are numbered sequentially based Chapter 3 section numbering. Due to similarities among the project build alternatives, all impacts listed would occur with each of the build alternatives in a similar manner, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>² Pursuant to CEQA, the level of impact significance has been determined for each impact using the following notations: S = Significant; PS = Potentially Significant; SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LS = Less than Significant; and B = Beneficial. FHWA does not make significance determinations for individual impacts under NEPA, and as such, all determinations within this document associated with the level of significance of an individual project-related impact are applicable to the City's determination under CEQA. Chapter 3 of this document provides information concerning the methods and criteria used for determining impact significance under CEQA.</p>			

Chapter 2 Public Involvement

Public and agency coordination is an important component of the City's CEQA review and documentation process. Prior to and during the preparation of the Draft EIR/EA the City provided numerous opportunities for public input. The Draft EIR/EA was distributed for public and agency review and comment and this Final EIR seeks to address all input received. The following sections describe the key public input opportunities provided thus far in the project environmental review and design process.

2.1 Public Input Prior to and During the Preparation of the Draft EIR/EA

During the preparation of the Project Study Report and preliminary alternatives development process, a series of meetings were held to solicit community and business owner input concerning the project. On October 28, 1999, a public meeting was held at which approximately 20 people were in attendance. Comments were received at the meeting concerning Forni Road access problems, project schedule and bicycle movement concerns especially with regarding U.S. 50 ramps intersections with Forni Road.

A second public meeting was held on May 15, 2000 at which five project alternatives were presented for public consideration and input. Preferences for improvements at Forni Road and bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns were identified at this meeting.

The City and its project consultant team hosted a project EIR scoping meeting on January 7, 2004, at the City of Placerville Town Hall. The meeting was held to provide an overview of the WPIP and solicit input from interested individuals concerning the scope of the environmental analyses as outlined in the WPIP Notice of Preparation (NOP) that was advertised and distributed for public review and filed with the State Clearinghouse on December 26, 2003. The scoping meeting was announced in the NOP and in project mailings that were sent to residents and businesses within 4,000 feet of the project area. The meetings and NOP availability were also advertised in the Sacramento Bee and Placerville Mountain Democrat newspapers. Approximately 27 people attended the scoping meeting. All comments at this scoping meeting as well as written comments provided during the NOP comment period were considered during the preparation of the

Draft EIR (written comments provided during the NOP comment period are included as **Appendix B** of this Final EIR).

2.2 Draft EIR/EA Comments

The Draft EIR/EA was made available for public and agency review (Appendix H of Draft EIR/EA includes a listing of that document's distribution). The City invited and accepted written comments on the Draft EIR/EA submitted through October 21, 2005, which provided for a 45-day (minimum) public review and comment period. Copies of all written comments received and the City's responses to all issues raised in these written comments are included in **Chapter 3** of this Final EIR.

The City hosted a CEQA public hearing (which also served as a NEPA informational meeting for the project) on September 20, 2005 to receive public and agency input concerning the WPIP and the environmental analyses presented in the Draft EIR/EA. A written summary of comments at the September 20, 2005 meeting is included as Comment Set A in **Chapter 3** of this Final Environmental Document and the City has provided responses to each comment received. The City Council received a presentation by staff and the City's project consulting team on October 11, 2005 and at that meeting invited public input on the project and the environmental document. Although not considered a formal CEQA hearing for the project, comments made during public input at the October 11, 2005 City Council meeting are summarized in **Chapter 3** of this Final EIR and the City's responses to these issues are provided.

The City's project consulting team also attended a regularly scheduled meeting of the El Dorado County Trails Advisory Committee on October 4, 2005 to provide an overview of the project bicycle and pedestrian facility considerations and to participate in an open discussion with the Trails Advisory Committee. The relevant issues discussed during that meeting are identified in the Trail Advisory Committee's comment letter on the Draft EIR/EA (included in **Chapter 3** as Comment Set J) and the City's responses to these issues are provided there.

Chapter 3 Public and Agency Comments and City Responses

This section includes all comments provided to the City during the Draft EIR/EA review period, including a summary of oral comments provided at the September 20, 2005 public hearing on the Draft EIR/EA. The City Council heard a presentation from staff and the project consultant team at the Council's October 11, 2005 meeting. Although not considered part of the formal CEQA public hearing process for the project, three individuals addressed the Council on matters related to the WPIP. As a result of the City's intent to fully solicit and respond to public input, this chapter also includes a listing of issues raised by individuals at the October 11, 2005 Council meeting. A list of individuals and agency representatives who commented on the Draft EIR/EA is provided below:

September 20, 2005 Public Hearing

John Quidachay
Walter Klinefelter
William Crim

October 11, 2005 City Council Meeting

Bob Smart
Eileen Crim
William Crim
Mike Covis

Written Comments

Jacque Kelley, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Storm Water Unit
Bob Altmeyer
Joyce Gabrielson
Don Corcoran, El Dorado Irrigation District
John Quidachay, Gold Nugget Homeowners Representative
Don Grind
David Kantz
Robert (Bob) Smart
Jerry Ledbetter, Chairperson, El Dorado County Trails Advisory Committee
Eileen Crim, Chairperson, Trails Now

The City has reviewed and considered all comments received. **Section 3.1** of this Final EIR provides the City's responses to several general issues raised in public comments, and **Section 3.2** contains the specific comments received on the Draft EIR/EA and the City's response to each individual comment. **Section 3.3** provides a summary of questions/comments raised by Planning Commissioners and City Council members at

the September 20, 2005 and October 11, 2005 meetings, respectively, and additional information is provided as necessary to address questions or clarify issues raised.

3.1 Discussion of General Issues

Many of the comments received indicated that a number of commenters were interested in certain similar issues or had similar input and opinions. To reduce redundancy in responding to individual comments on such issues, this section identified these general issues and provides the response.

General Issue 1. Comments were received which expressed concern regarding increased traffic volumes and associated safety and roadway condition issues on Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and Main Street.

The segment of Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and Main Street in Placerville is a two-lane road approximately 0.7 mile in length, with no bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The road contains a number of relatively tight curves and through traffic is uncontrolled (i.e., no stop signs or traffic signals are present); however, there are a number of roadways and private drives which intersect with Forni Road. The current condition of asphalt paving along this segment is considered to be fair to poor, with certain areas showing cracking and breakdown. The road has substandard shoulder width and intersects with other roadways/driveways at locations which are anticipated to have limited sight-distance.

This segment of Forni Road is currently used by residents for access to and from their properties. Although U.S. 50 serves as the primary route between the project area and downtown Placerville, a portion of the vehicle trips on this segment of Forni Road is comprised of motorists who find the road more convenient for traveling to and from downtown Placerville and areas adjacent to Forni Road and Ray Lawyer Drive (including the El Dorado County Government Center on Fair Lane north of U.S. 50 and the County's Placerville Jail adjacent to Forni Road). This route may also periodically be used by motorists seeking to avoid traffic congestion on U.S. 50 during periods when U.S. 50 experiences significant delays through Placerville. Bicyclists and pedestrians also utilize this portion of Forni Road; however, due to the absence of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and limited shoulder width, these uses may pose increased risk of conflict with motor vehicles.

Comments on the Draft EIR/EA have suggested that improvements to Forni Road should be included in the WPIP or should be required of the project as mitigation. Much of this segment of Forni Road is within unincorporated El Dorado County, and improvements to this segment of Forni Road are not proposed as part of the WPIP. However, because the segment provides a connection with the downtown area of the City of Placerville and traffic on this roadway will be affected by the project, further discussion of this issue is warranted here to address public comments.

Comments were received which expressed that the WPIP could increase “cut-through” traffic on Forni Road from Ray Lawyer to Main Street in downtown Placerville by providing an opportunity for eastbound U.S. 50 motorists to exit at Ray Lawyer Drive during periods of delay on U.S. 50 and use Forni Road to drive into downtown Placerville. Increased traffic, including that which may be considered “cut-through” traffic, creates concerns for those residents for whom this segment of Forni Road is the primary route to their residences. Concerns expressed include those associated with decreased safety as a result of the roadway’s condition, sight-distance concerns associated with intersecting driveways and roads, and safety concerns associated with increased potential for conflicts with bicyclists and pedestrians.

Table F-2, below, shows projected AM and PM peak vehicle trips onto this segment of Forni Road at the Ray Lawyer Drive intersection and off of this segment of Forni Road at the Ray Lawyer Drive intersection.

Table F-2. AM and PM Peak Vehicle Trips on Forni Road East of Ray Lawyer Drive

	Existing Conditions	2010		2030	
		No Project	Proposed Project	No Project	Proposed Project
Eastbound Forni Road	27/191	45/220	25/225	95/495	60/520
Westbound Forni Road	64/144	140/100	130/95	410/260	390/245
Two-way Volume	91/335	185/320	155/320	505/755	450/765
Notes: Projected AM/PM peak hour volumes under each of the project build alternatives for these movements would be the same as those shown for the Proposed Project.					
Source: Fehr & Peers, 2005					

As shown in **Table F-2**, Forni Road is anticipated to receive increased traffic volumes over time under both the No Project and the Proposed Project⁴. The magnitude of the differences in traffic volumes on Forni Road are minimal (a slight decrease in the AM and slight decrease in the PM) and do not represent a significant difference between No Project and with-project traffic volumes on Forni Road.

It should be noted that the travel demand forecasting model which was used to determine these volumes for this segment of Forni Road accounts for the much lower speed and greater distance of this segment as compared to the parallel U.S. 50. Therefore, the model does not assign through traffic (or cut-through traffic) to this segment of Forni Road. Because the models forecast average daily travel, rather than the periodically high recreation trips which contribute to U.S. 50 delays in Placerville and may lead to “cut-through” trips on Forni Road, the traffic forecasts do not include any additional cut-through traffic beyond that which currently may occur.

It should also be noted that El Dorado County has included in their Interim 2004 General Plan TIM Fees Program (adopted by the County Board of Supervisors September 20, 2005) a project to perform preliminary planning, engineering and environmental investigations for future widening of Forni Road to a standard two-lane roadway.

⁴ Projected volumes under each of the project build alternatives for these movements would be the same as those shown for the Proposed Project.

General Issue 2. Comments were received which expressed a desire for the installation of a Class I bicycle facility under-crossing beneath Forni Road at the Ray Lawyer Drive intersection to provide grade separation for the El Dorado Trail crossing at this location.

As discussed in Draft EIR Section 2.4.5.2, a segment of the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor (SPTC) passes through the eastern portion of the project area. Funding has been obtained and approved for the development of a Class I bicycle path along a portion of the corridor from west of the County's Placerville Jail driveway access on Forni Road, southwestward along the SPTC alignment to Missouri Flat Road approximately 1 mile south of U.S. 50. The eastern end of this segment is within the WPIP project area and terminates adjacent to and south of Forni Road. El Dorado County is currently developing plans and initiating environmental review to improve the existing corridor to install an asphalt-paved Class I bicycle path. In recognition of the goals of facilitating the development of the El Dorado Trail (as designated in the City of Placerville's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and the 2005 El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan), the City has incorporated development of an additional segment of the El Dorado Trail into the design of the Proposed Project. This segment would provide a connection from the eastern terminus of the segment which the County is currently developing, eastward to the edge of the project area at the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection (see **Figure F-2**).

Comments were received which expressed support for the development of a "grade-separated" crossing at this location to enable the El Dorado Trail to cross below (or above) Forni Road to provide an interconnection with the SPTC alignment northeast of the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection. A grade-separated crossing would, with a future extension of the El Dorado Trail to downtown Placerville, allow cyclists and pedestrians to travel to and from downtown Placerville without crossing traffic lanes at this location. The City and its project consultants have considered several grade-separated crossing options at this location including the installation of an underground boxed culvert under Forni Road, an underground tunnel connection that would by-pass both of the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersections, and an elevated trail crossing of Forni Road.

Although the City recognizes that there could be benefits of a grade-separated crossing at this location (i.e., bicycle and pedestrian through-traffic at this location would avoid interaction with traffic on Forni Road), the City also has identified a number of issues

that have resulted in the City's decision to not include a grade-separated crossing in the project design. These issues include:

1. Safety – The City has concerns with safety and personal security issues associated with an underground crossing. An underground crossing would create an enclosed area with limited visibility from outside areas within which malicious activity could occur, threatening the safety of trail users. Further, the underground crossing would require a slope of nearly 5 percent which could encourage or otherwise result in excessive speed of eastbound cyclists. As a result of the enclosed nature of the crossing, limited opportunities would exist for pedestrians and/or other cyclists to avoid potential collisions.

2. Constraints Associated with Interconnection with At-Grade Facility Interconnection – While a grade-separated crossing would enable bicyclists and pedestrians traveling *through* this area an opportunity to avoid at-grade interaction with motor vehicles, a grade-separated facility would also create less convenient bicyclist and pedestrian access to and from the El Dorado Trail from at-grade sidewalks and Class II bike lanes along surface streets.

3. Design Feasibility and Cost – Although the City's review indicates that a grade-separated crossing could be designed for this location, terrain and right-of-way issues would require special design and construction provisions that would increase the cost that may typically be associated with a grade-separated crossing. The City's design consultant estimates that construction costs for a below-grade crossing would cost a minimum of approximately \$700,000.

The City has considered potential benefits and constraints associated with the development of a grade-separated crossing at this location and has determined that the sidewalks, Class II bicycle lanes and at-grade surface treatments included in the Proposed Project design will be sufficient to accommodate anticipated pedestrian and bicycle traffic volumes at this location. As such, the City has determined that a grade-separated crossing at this location is not warranted and therefore will not be included as a component of the WPIP.

General Issue 3. Comments were received which expressed a desire for the project to accommodate connectivity with a potential future bicycle/pedestrian facility crossing Weber Creek parallel to U.S. 50.

The City recognizes the designation of a Class I bike path parallel to U.S. 50 in both its Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and the County's 2005 El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan. As discussed in the Draft EIR, in association with the Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project, the County conducted a feasibility assessment associated with providing bicycle and pedestrian access across the Weber Creek Bridges. As a result of that assessment, the County determined that the most feasible option for such a facility would be for a Class I facility to begin on Perks Court (on the west side of Weber Creek and south of U.S. 50) and cross Weber Creek utilizing an expanded outside (southern) section of the eastbound U.S. 50 Weber Creek bridge.

The County recommends that the most feasible option for the crossing would be for the trail to terminate at the eastbound U.S. 50 off-ramp intersection with Forni Road. The routing would require the trail to pass beneath Placerville Drive, parallel to the U.S. 50 eastbound off-ramp, then turn southward to join with Forni Road. Although the County proposes to incorporate certain design modifications into the eastbound U.S. 50 Weber Creek Bridge in association with the Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project to preserve future options related to this trail facility, neither the County, nor the City, is proposing to design or construct this trail segment at this time.

Development of each of the WPIP alternatives, including the Proposed Project, would provide sufficient spacing for a grade-separated trail to pass beneath Placerville Drive and join with either Forni Road east of Placerville Drive or connect into a park-and-ride that may be developed near this location.

No further accommodations are planned or deemed necessary for the trail interconnection at this time. However, the City will continue coordination with the County and the public. In the event that further decisions are made concerning the development and final alignment needs of this connector trail prior to construction of the WPIP modifications at Placerville Drive, the City may incorporate trail connection development at that time. As discussed, if the trail is not constructed at that time, options for its future installation would remain. The Proposed Project provides the space necessary for this trail connection and the future installation of the trail would not require changes to the roadway configuration.

General Issue 4. Comments were received which expressed concerns over bicycle and pedestrian movement within the project area and, specifically, in negotiating the proposed roundabout.

The Proposed Project would install a roundabout at the Fair Lane/Placerville Drive/westbound U.S. 50 ramps intersection. The roundabout is shown on **Figure F-1**. The roundabout would replace what are currently two signalized intersections within close proximity and is a component of two of the project alternatives considered in the Draft EIR. Two other alternatives (A and B) would improve the existing intersections; however, the two signalized intersections would remain.

The City has carefully considered each of these intersection options. Opinions from the bicycle and pedestrian community as well as experts in the field of vehicle and bicycle/pedestrian movement vary and it is evident that there are pros and cons associated with the two intersection configurations. City staff and the City's project consultants assert that the roundabout poses several operational aspects which may benefit bicycle and pedestrian movement at this location, such as reduced maximum vehicle speeds through the intersection. (The roundabout would have a 20 mph design speed, as opposed to higher speeds that would occur with traffic moving through a signalized intersection.)

The design configuration and delineation of incoming/outgoing traffic lanes, curb and sidewalk features, and pedestrian crosswalks and crossing areas, must be carefully considered to ensure that these facilities provide for adequate movement and visibility of bicyclists and pedestrians. The proposed roundabout would include a 10-foot-wide sidewalk along the eastern side of the facility which would enable both pedestrians, as well as cyclists choosing to negotiate the roundabout intersection as pedestrians, to have a clearly delineated route adjacent to the roundabout and incoming/outgoing lanes of traffic. Crosswalk delineation would be provided at all surface street crossings, (however, current design standards restrict the delineation of crosswalks on the U.S. 50 ramps) and handicapped-accessible ramps would be installed at all curb/lane crossings along the pedestrian walkway. Signage would be placed to aid bicyclists and pedestrian movement at the roundabout, and to advise motorists of pedestrian crossing and Class II bicycle lanes at approach and exit lanes. Bicyclists may choose to negotiate the roundabout intersection as pedestrians, as discussed, or may choose to negotiate the roundabout within the motor vehicle lanes.

Roundabout Operations Outreach/Education Program

In addition to the above elements which are currently incorporated into the project design, the City has determined that a public information and outreach effort would prove beneficial in educating motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians regarding safe and legal movement within and adjacent to the roundabout intersection. Although the City has not identified an adverse impact associated with roundabout operations, the City has determined that it may implement a public outreach and educational program prior to and during the initial period of roundabout operation under the Proposed Project to advise the community with regard to safe and legal movement within the roundabout and to foster increased awareness of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Under this program, the City would develop and conduct a public outreach and educational program to provide information to motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians regarding safe, efficient and legal motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian movement within and adjacent to the Proposed Project roundabout at the westbound U.S. 50 ramps intersection with Placerville Drive and Fair Lane. The outreach and educational program would include the development and distribution of a brochure with both diagrams and text which illustrate and describe the various aspects of motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian movement at the roundabout. The program may also include television, radio and/or newspaper public advisory messages.

The brochure and other outreach media would include a statement of maximum vehicle speeds within and approaching/departing the roundabout and shall provide information to motorists regarding their responsibility to be alert for and provide rights-of-way to pedestrians and bicycles as required by law.

During the development of the outreach/educational program the City may solicit input from the City of Placerville Police Department, the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, the California Highway Patrol, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the El Dorado County Transportation Commission and its bicycle/pedestrian facilities coordinator. Other interested organizations and individuals may be invited to provide input to the development of this program at the City's discretion.

3.2 Comments and Responses

This section contains the written comments and summary of oral comments received by the City during the Draft EIR review period. Each set of comments has been assigned a reference letter and each comment has been numbered sequentially for reference in this section. Each comment set is included in this section, followed by the City's response to each individual comment. When appropriate, responses reference the general issues discussed above, and may also reference other responses contained within this section.

Responses to Comment Set A

A-1. The City of Placerville recognizes the concerns associated with Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and eastward to Main Street within the City of Placerville. Please see discussion of **General Issue 1** in **Section 3.1** for a discussion of project traffic volumes under the Proposed Project and the No Project/No Build Alternative. Note that the traffic study for the project considered potential cumulative contributions from trips that would be associated with the proposed Justice Center. (The traffic projections utilized are those associated with the original Justice Center proposal and represent higher traffic volumes than those anticipated under current plans. As such, the trip generation inputs for this future cumulative contribution represent conservative estimates of potential future traffic.) A future Ray Lawyer Drive extension is identified on project design configuration drawings and has been considered by the City in its evaluation of the project design and integration with future roadway planning. A future Ray Lawyer Drive extension to State Route (SR) 49 was included in the traffic forecast model and trips from approved land uses are accounted for on both the Ray Lawyer Drive extension and Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive traffic counts.

This segment of Forni Road and residential communities accessed from and located adjacent to this segment of Forni Road are located primarily within unincorporated El Dorado County, as opposed to within the City of Placerville. As such, the goals and policies of the City of Placerville General Plan may not apply to this area. The City considered each of the City General Plan land use policies referenced in this comment and presented its determinations in the Draft EIR. To specifically address the policies referenced in the comment, the City offers the following:

As discussed in Draft EIR Table 3.2-3 on page 3-5, the City considered General Plan Land Use Element Policy B-4 which states, “The City shall promote the protection and enhancement of the integrity and identify of residential neighborhoods.” The City has considered the potential for the Proposed Project to affect residential neighborhoods and has determined that the Proposed Project is consistent with this policy. The Proposed Project would improve roadway and bicycle/pedestrian facilities within the project area and would not directly or indirectly affect established communities or residential areas. It is

noted that increased traffic volumes that are anticipated to occur over time (under both No Project and with-project conditions) may exacerbate traffic-related issues within residential areas and communities; however, the Proposed Project would serve to alleviate some of these issues by improving traffic movement efficiencies within the project area.

As discussed in Draft EIR Table 3.2-3 on page 3-6, the City considered General Plan Transportation Element Policy A-10 which states, “The City recognized that there is a relationship between the transportation planning in the county and transportation planning in the city. It is the policy of the City to work closely with the transportation agencies of the County and the City to solve transportation problems that affect all levels of government.” Representatives from both El Dorado County Department of Transportation (DOT) and the El Dorado County Transportation Commission have been invited and have participated in project planning and coordination, including attendance at monthly project development team meetings. The City will continue to work closely with the El Dorado County DOT regarding transportation issues which affect both jurisdictions.

As discussed in Draft EIR Table 3.2-3 on pages 3-6 and 3-7, the City considered General Plan Transportation Element Policy C-2 which states, “In the development of new projects, the City shall give special attention to maintaining adequate corner-sight distances at city street intersections and at intersections of city streets and private access drives and roadways” and Policy C-3 which states, “The City shall identify and remove, as feasible, obstacles limiting corner-sight distance at city street corners.” The project has been designed to comply with American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and Caltrans Highway Design Manual standards which provide for adequate site distances in roadway design.

Although the City recognizes that corner sight distance from the Forni Road and Gold Nugget Way intersection may not be adequate for compliance with new roadway construction standards, this intersection would not be modified by the Proposed Project and the Proposed Project would not contribute adversely to the existing sight-distance conditions. As discussed above and in the discussion of **General Issue 1 in Section 3.1**, this segment of Forni Road is within the jurisdiction of El Dorado County and, as such, the County retains the

discretion and responsibility for addressing existing roadway deficiencies at this location. Note that through its participation in the WPIP project development team, the County has been made aware of this comment and the stated conditions at the Forni Road and Gold Nugget Way intersection.

- A-2.** Under the Proposed Project, the separation between the Fairgrounds Overcrossing and the Ray Lawyer Drive Overcrossing is 1.24 kilometers (0.77 mile). Current mandatory standards call for 1.5 kilometers (0.93 mile) spacing between local street interchanges. The project would include a full auxiliary lane between the on- and off-ramps, and the City has obtained a design exception from Caltrans for this nonstandard design feature and has determined that the full auxiliary lane would provide adequate merge/crossover distance and would not adversely affect levels of service (LOS) on mainline U.S. 50. A single-interchange design was considered for the project which would avoid this nonstandard feature; however, existing roadway configurations and terrain limitations make a single interchange design infeasible.
- A-3.** Please see discussion at **General Issues 2, 3 and 4** for discussion of issues associated with bicycle and pedestrian facilities and movement associated with the proposed roundabout, Forni Road crossing, and Weber Creek crossing.

Responses to Comment Set B

- B-1.** The City appreciates the Regional Water Quality Control Board's input regarding requirements associated with construction period stormwater management planning and Best Management Practices (BMP) implementation, post-construction stormwater control devices, and stream course alteration and dewatering permit requirements. The Draft EIR/EA summarized these requirements in Table 2-2, and the City will include all appropriate stormwater controls in project construction and design specifications and will coordinate with applicable regulatory agencies to obtain required permits and other approvals for project construction and long-term maintenance.

Responses to Comment Set C

- C-1.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 1** for information regarding Forni Road traffic considerations.

- C-2.** The City has determined that limiting improvements to the Placerville Drive interchange and not constructing a full interchange at Ray Lawyer Drive would not adequately achieve the project objectives. Please see discussion of **General Issue 1** for information regarding Forni Road traffic considerations.

Responses to Comment Set D

- D-1.** Your observations regarding traffic on U.S. 50 and within Placerville are noted. The WPIP would improve the Placerville Drive Overcrossing and is one of three primary projects within or adjacent to the City of Placerville that is currently being planned to address these issues. The Highway 50 Operational Improvements Project and the U.S. Highway 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange project would also serve to address traffic issues on U.S. 50 as well as adjacent roadways within the City of Placerville and surrounding unincorporated areas of El Dorado County.

Responses to Comment Set E

- E-1.** Discussion of the Writ of Mandate effects on the County's ability to review discretionary projects pursuant to the 2004 General Plan have been eliminated from the referenced section. Please see **Errata 1** in **Chapter 4** of this Final EIR.

- E-2.** The requested change has been made to the environmental document. Please see **Errata 2** in **Chapter 4** of this Final EIR.

- E-3.** The requested change has been made to the environmental document. Please see **Errata 3** in **Chapter 4** of this Final EIR.

- E-4.** A change has been made to the environmental document to address this comment. Please see **Errata 4** in **Chapter 4** of this Final EIR.

Responses to Comment Set F

- F-1.** The area of analysis considered for the project is based on that area within which the project would have a measurable effect which may result in a significant adverse impact to a particular resource. In terms of the assessment of transportation and circulation issues, the City has selected the appropriate roadway segments and intersections for which a traffic impact study is warranted. Please see discussion at **General Issue 1** for more information regarding traffic and other issues associated with Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville.
- F-2.** The traffic forecast model uses the approved land uses from the 1996 El Dorado County General Plan and also included the Justice Center as originally proposed (a larger center than the current proposal). The original model forecasts were adjusted by adding trips for the Home Depot on Placerville Drive and additional trips for the highway commercial parcels near Forni Road/Placerville Drive. Briggs property traffic accounted for in the model is associated with the currently approved land use. Trips that may be generated by any alternative land use that would require subsequent City or County approval are not included in the traffic forecasts and would be required to be evaluated at such time a change in land use or zoning may be requested.
- A future Ray Lawyer Drive extension is identified on project design configuration drawings and has been considered by the City in its evaluation of the project design and integration with future roadway planning. A future Ray Lawyer Drive extension to State Route 49 was included in the traffic forecast model and trips from approved land uses are accounted for on both the Ray Lawyer Drive extension and Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive.
- F-3.** The provided graphics indicate areas of proposed and planned development within the project vicinity. CEQA and NEPA requirements for cumulative impacts consideration are discussed in Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR methodology for determining cumulative impacts is discussed in Section 4.1 and Sections 4.2 through 4.12 of the document provide a discussion of cumulative impacts for each relevant resource topic. Note that consideration of the Justice Center expansion and development of the Briggs property are appropriate in the traffic study as, although the schedule for these projects is

currently undefined, the vehicle trips that may be generated by these projects were considered necessary for projecting traffic impacts and roadway demands through the year 2030. The inclusion of these projects in the traffic study also results in their consideration in both the air quality and noise evaluations, as these evaluations rely on the traffic study as inputs for determining vehicle air pollutant emissions and noise generation.

Other cumulative considerations are primarily associated with construction-related project impacts which would result in cumulative impacts in association with the Justice Center expansion or Briggs property development only if construction of these projects were to occur simultaneously with construction of the Proposed Project. Because the construction timing and effects of these projects are unknown, they are not appropriate for consideration in other aspects of the cumulative impacts evaluation.

- F-4.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 1** for more information regarding traffic and other issues associated with Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville.
- F-5.** As discussed, the Proposed Project is anticipated maintain or reduce the number of trips on this segment of roadway compared to No Project conditions. As such, the project would not contribute to the stated soils and geological conditions and would not exacerbate these conditions.
- F-6.** The statements regarding the character and conditions of the Gold Nugget neighborhood are noted by the City.
- F-7.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 1** for more information regarding traffic and other issues associated with Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville.
- F-8.** Measure Y (as incorporated to Policy TC-Xa of the 2004 County General Plan) is directed at development projects and is not applicable to the WPIP.
- F-9.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 1** for more information regarding traffic and other issues associated with Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville.

- F-10.** Please see responses to **Comments F-2** and **F-3**, above, which address these issues. The City has not determined that the impacts referenced in this comment would occur as a result of the Proposed Project and, therefore, the suggested mitigation is not warranted.
- F-11.** Please see response to **Comment A-1**, paragraphs 2 through 6, for discussion of the City's consideration of comments associated with the City's General Plan Land Use Element Policy B-4 and Transportation Element Policies A-10 and C-2.
- F-12.** More detailed discussion addressing these issues is provided in responses to **Comments F-1 through F-11**, above, and in discussion at **General Issue 1** of this Final EIR. In summary and in response to this specific comment:
1. The City has appropriately defined the project area for the analyses in the Draft EIR.
 - 2/3. The conditions of Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville are not attributable to and would not be exacerbated by the Proposed Project. Incorporation of the recommended activities to the project or their inclusion as project mitigation is, therefore, not warranted as an aspect of the WPIP. Placement of an all-way stop at this location is potentially unwarranted and is not within the purview of the City to determine (see discussion of County planning efforts for this segment of Forni Road at **General Issue 1**).
 4. The project traffic study and the Draft EIR/EA fully consider an appropriate level of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the cumulative impacts analysis conducted for the project.
- F-13.** The City appreciates the input of the Gold Nugget Homeowners and trusts that the information provided in responses provided clarify the City's definition of the project area and extent of analyses appropriate for the WPIP. The City intends to continue to support the County's on-going planning efforts and considerations for future roadway improvements. The comments, observations and recommendations regarding the condition of the segment of Forni Road between Ray Lawyer Drive and downtown Placerville are noted by both City staff, the City Planning Commission and the City Council by way of their

inclusion within this Final EIR. Additional review and recirculation of the Draft EIR is not deemed necessary for the project, and the City has fully complied with the requirements of CEQA in its review of the project.

Responses to Comment Set G

- G-1.** Please see discussion at **General Issues 2, 3 and 4** for specific information regarding the City's consideration of bicycle and pedestrian issues associated with the project design and project-area bicycle transportation planning. Please note that the comments of Mr. Robert Smart are included in this Final EIR as **Comment Set I**.

Responses to Comment Set H

- H-1.** Your comments and observations regarding roundabouts have been considered. Note that there is an existing roundabout at the entrance to Building C from Fairlane Court of the County administrative campus; however, this roundabout is a single-lane roundabout with much lower traffic volumes than those anticipated at the Proposed Project roundabout. Please also note that the City is considering roundabout feasibility at other locations within the City and that the purpose of considering and ultimately including a roundabout in the Proposed Project design is a result of the City's exploration of roadway, intersection and interchange configurations which would best meet the project objectives. Further, roundabouts of similar configuration (e.g., multiple lane and/or at freeway interchanges) have been installed at various locations throughout the state and have proven effective. Caltrans currently requires consideration of roundabout installation at back-to-back signalized intersections and intersections with five or more legs.
- H-2.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 4** of this Final EIR for discussion of the City's decision to incorporate a public education program regarding vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian use of the roundabout.
- H-3.** The Proposed Project design configuration, including roadway and ramp configurations, is illustrated in **Figure F-2** of this Final EIR.

Responses to Comment Set I

- I-1.** Each of the referenced planning documents was considered in both the development of the project alternatives and in the CEQA review conducted by the City for the WPIP. Section 2.2 of the Draft EIR discusses the “Relationship of Missouri Flat Road Interchanges Project Weber Creek Bridges Modifications”, including discussion of the County’s consideration of bicycle and pedestrian facilities provisions in the environmental documentation prepared for that project. Pages 3-15 and 3-16 of the Draft EIR discuss the “2005 El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan” and its identification of two bicycle facility alignments within the project area; the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor (SPTC) and a Weber Creek crossing parallel to U.S. 50. Pages 3-16 and 3-17 of the Draft EIR discuss the City of Placerville Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (NMTP) and its identification of the two facilities discussed above as well as the plans emphasis on planning for facilities used for bicycle commuting. Table 3.2-5 of the Draft EIR lists Pedestrian-Friendly design features identified in the NMTP which have been and will continue to be considered by City staff and the project development team during final project design. Note that page 3-17 of the Draft EIR discuss the SPTC Master Plan.
- I-2.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 2** for information regarding a grade-separated crossing of Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive.
- I-3.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 3** for information regarding a Weber Creek Bridge Class I bike path linkage.
- I-4.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 4** for information regarding bicycle and pedestrian issues at the proposed roundabout.
- I-5.** Your support for Alternative A is noted. The City recognizes and supports the need for planning and designing transportation facilities to accommodate motor vehicle traffic, as well as bicycle and pedestrian movement.

Responses to Comment Set J

- J-1.** Each of the referenced planning documents was considered in both the development of the project alternatives and in the CEQA review conducted by the City for the WPIP. Pages 3-15 and 3-16 of the Draft EIR discuss the “2005 El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan and its identification of two bicycle facility alignments within the project area; the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor and a Weber Creek crossing parallel to U.S. 50. Pages 3-16 and 3-17 of the Draft EIR discuss the City of Placerville Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (NMTP) and its identification of the two facilities discussed above as well as the plans emphasis on planning for facilities used for bicycle commuting. Table 3.2-5 of the Draft EIR lists Pedestrian-Friendly design features identified in the NMTP which have been and will continue to be considered by City staff and the project development team during final project design.
- J-2.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 2** for information regarding a grade-separated crossing of Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive.
- J-3.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 3** for information regarding a Weber Creek Bridge Class I bike path linkage.
- J-4.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 4** for information regarding bicycle and pedestrian issues at the proposed roundabout.
- J-5.** Your support for Alternative A and concerns with bicycle and pedestrian safety issues associated with Alternatives B and D are noted.
- J-6.** The City and its project consultant received written comments provided by the El Dorado County Trails Advisory Committee in response to the EIR Notice of Preparation (NOP) and considered this input when preparing the Draft EIR. Written comments provided in response to the NOP, including the Trails Advisory Committee’s letter received by the City on January 21, 2004, are included in **Appendix B** of this Final EIR.

Responses to Comment Set K

- K-1.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 2** for information regarding a grade-separated crossing of Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive.
- K-2.** The development of a future park-and-ride adjacent to Ray Lawyer Drive would be undertaken by the El Dorado County Transit Authority through coordination with Caltrans and the City of Placerville. The design of the park-and-ride and access to and from the park-and-ride lot (for personal vehicles, transit vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians) will be determined at such time as the Transit Authority may propose to develop a park-and-ride at this location. Opportunities for public parking to access the El Dorado Trail would be considered at that time.

Responses to Comment Set L

- L-1.** The City has sought to provide a balance between the need to address motor vehicle traffic operations and to incorporate safe and convenient bicycle pedestrian facilities. Each alternative considered in the Draft EIR incorporates pedestrian facilities throughout the project area and the City has included pedestrian considerations in its selection of the Proposed Project. The need and purpose of the project is to improve traffic operations and to meet increases in traffic volumes over a 20-year period. The Proposed Project and alternatives seek to meet this objective for motor vehicle traffic as well as bicycle and pedestrian access.
- L-2.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 4** for discussion of bicycle and pedestrian issues associated with the roundabout and for the City's commitment to developing a public outreach effort for increasing roundabout safety.
- L-3.** Your comment expressing a preference for the design of Alternatives A and C at the Ray Lawyer Drive ramps from eastbound U.S. 50 are noted by the City. Pedestrians would be required to cross one lane of traffic at the Ray Lawyer Drive on-ramp to eastbound U.S. 50. The ramp design speed at this location would be 25 mph and pedestrians would cross perpendicular to the roadway. The City has determined that this is an acceptable design configuration for this location.
- L-4.** The City and its consulting team have considered the input received by the bicycle and pedestrian community in its design of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities under each of the alternatives considered in the Draft EIR.
- L-5.** A grade-separated crossing at the roundabout has not been identified as a warranted objective of the project. The bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are included in the Proposed Project are adequate to accommodate anticipated bicycle and pedestrian activity.
- L-6.** As this comment states, the absence of a delineated crosswalk at U.S. 50 ramps to and from the roundabout is consistent with Caltrans standards. The rationale behind not striping sidewalks across on- and off-ramps is that such delineation may create a false sense of security for pedestrians. Without delineated facilities, it is expected that pedestrians will use more caution when crossing the

ramps. Note that California Vehicle Code clearly states that motor vehicles must yield to pedestrians at all marked and unmarked crossings.

- L-7.** This comment stating your preference for Alternative A is noted by the City.
- L-8.** Each alternative, including the Proposed Project, contains provisions to incorporate a project-area segment of the El Dorado Trail into project design and construction.
- L-9.** Please see discussion at **General Issue 4** for discussion of roundabouts and bicycle/pedestrian safety issues.
- L-10.** These comments and opinions regarding the preference of Alternative D are noted.

3.3 Planning Commission and City Council Input

Tables F-3 and **F-4** summarize the questions and comments that were raised by the Planning Commission and the City Council during regularly scheduled meetings on September 20, 2005 and October 11, 2005, respectively, during which the WPIP was discussed.

**Table F-3. Planning Commission Input at September 20, 2005
Planning Commission Meeting**

Commission Input	City Staff and Consultant Responses
Commission Member Les Russell: Is it possible to put a roundabout at Ray Lawyer Drive and Forni Road?	It would be possible to construct a roundabout at this intersection; however, roundabouts are most effectively applied in situations where an intersection is of irregular configuration. This intersection is a standard intersection and a roundabout at this location does not appear to have an advantage from a traffic operations standpoint. A roundabout at this would have a larger footprint than the proposed intersection and would require additional right-of-way, larger/additional retaining walls, or both.
Commission Member Les Russell: Are there bike lanes on both sides of Placerville Drive all the way to Armory Drive?	The southbound bike lane on Placerville Drive does not begin until the un-signalized pedestrian crossing perpendicular to the fairgrounds entrance.
Commission Member Les Russell: Is the frontage road for the Fairgrounds affected?	Yes, under each alternative the museum and veterans hall will permanently lose 19 on street parking spots, but nine parallel parking spots may be provided.
Commission Member Manny De Aquino: Include the trail through the project area in the project.	Full development of a segment of the El Dorado Trail has been incorporated to the project design between the Justice Center driveway and the existing Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection, as shown in Figure F-2 of the Final EIR. The trail will be a Class I bike path and will interconnect with a segment currently being planned for development by the County immediately to the west.
Commission Member Manny De Aquino: Consider preferential signal timing for the busses at the park and ride lot.	Preferential signal timing is a function of signal preemption technology. The use of preemption signal operation can result in adverse traffic operations in coordinated signal situations and preemption may not be desirable at this location. Bus preemption is an element of the Tahoe Gateway Counties ITS Master Plan and may be considered as a future project. The park-and-ride lot identification has been and will continue to be coordinated with El Dorado Transit Authority to ensure that bus and other transit operation needs are met in the configuration of roadways/ramps to ensure that transit vehicles can be accommodated.
Commission Member Manny De Aquino: What has been done for Weber Creek habitat preservation?	Impacts to Weber Creek habitat would occur in association with the Weber Creek Bridges improvement in association with the U.S. Highway 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange project and are being addressed through mitigation associated with that project.
Commission Member Carol Ogdin: What are the safety issues at roundabouts?	Roundabouts have lower speeds and less severe accidents and if designed properly will have much lower accident rates.

Commission Input	City Staff and Consultant Responses
Commission Member Carol Ogdin: Are roundabouts a fad in California? One that will be regretted?	Caltrans has four functioning roundabouts in California, all of which perform well.

Table F-4. City Council Input at October 11, 2005 Meeting

Council Member Input	City Staff and Consultant Responses
Council Member Acuna: If the area at the Ray Lawyer Drive interchange is going to be used as a park-and-ride lot, has any consideration been made for aesthetic impacts?	Aesthetics have been considered in the landscaping portion of the project cost estimate and will be considered in all stages of the design phase.
Council Member Washburn: Has any consideration been made as to what type of railings, light fixtures, etc. will be used? This area has a “gateway effect” for Placerville and should be aesthetically pleasing.	The details for lighting design and other aesthetic aspects of the Highway 50 Operational Improvements project will be designed using context sensitive elements and will be provided for review and approval by the Council during final project design.
Council Member Hagen: Agrees, with Council Member Washburn, the project should included aesthetic elements similar to Interstate 80 interchanges in Auburn. Aesthetic items are mandatory and should be considered in the EIR/EA.	Mitigation for the project requires landscaping and lighting design to be consistent with adjacent U.S. 50 improvements.
Council Member Rivas: What is the status of the Billboards?	The billboards will be removed either prior to or at the time of project construction. The billboard owners have been contacted.
Council Member Hagen: Does the roundabout have a cost savings associated with no signals? Both initially and during operation?	Although there will be no on-going costs associated with signal maintenance, the roundabout does require landscaping and maintenance. The roundabout construction and operation will be slightly more expensive than the signalized intersection.
Mayor Colvin: How do people bike around a roundabout?	Bicyclists negotiating the roundabout may either join the flow of motorized vehicle traffic or may exit the roadway and utilize the 10-foot-wide walkway adjacent to the roundabout as a pedestrian.
Council Member Acuna: People either love or hate roundabouts. What is known about the accident rates in roundabouts?	Accident rates are lower and less severe in a roundabout intersection due to lower speeds and a lack of “T-bone” (perpendicular) conflict points for motor vehicles.
Council Member Hagen: Has the future courthouse / Justice Center traffic been considered in the traffic report?	The Justice Center was considered in the traffic study conducted for the project. The trip generation factors for the Justice Center were based on a larger facility than what is currently under consideration by the County, and therefore represent a conservative estimate of traffic volumes associated with this facility.

**Table F-4 (continued)
City Council Input at October 11, 2005 Meeting**

Council Member Input	City Staff and Consultant Responses
Council Member Washburn: Chief of Police George Nielsen, what do you think about the roundabout?	Chief Nielsen's response at the Council Meeting: According to the Truckee police chief, the new roundabout in Truckee is working well and it appears to be safer than the signalized intersection.
Mayor Colvin: Can we move all pedestrians over to Ray Lawyer Drive and keep them out of the roundabout?	Due to the proximity activity centers and businesses on Placerville Drive and Forni Road the distance that pedestrians would be required to travel if crossing was only available at Ray Lawyer would be inconvenient and would not promote pedestrian movement.
Council Member Hagen: The current situation at Placerville Drive, Fair Lane and U.S. 50 is bad. The roundabout looks like a good alternative.	Caltrans requires a roundabout to be studied in situations such as this because it is a good solution to problems associated with back-to-back signals.
Council Member Hagen: Can we post a yield sign on the off ramp approach?	Yield signs will be posted on all approaches to the roundabout.
Council Member Acuna: What is the status of the Ray Lawyer Drive Extension?	The Ray Lawyer Drive extension is an on-going long-term goal of the City.
Council Member Washburn: The SR 49 Bypass is still an important issue, this project should accommodate a Ray Lawyer extension/SR 49 bypass. Ray Lawyer Drive is critical as a viable route for the bypass.	The Proposed Project is designed to be consistent with the adopted plan line for this extension.
Council Member Hagen: Would not like to choose Alternative B or D and then be stuck with "a road to no-where" if the Bypass goes elsewhere.	The extension of Ray Lawyer Drive would provide connection with future commercial development south of the project area, regardless of whether a SR 49 bypass is developed in the future.
Council Member Hagen: Forni residents prefer Alternatives B and D because they take the focus off Forni as the main road. May keep traffic off residential Forni.	The traffic report indicates no difference between Forni Road traffic east of the Ray Lawyer Drive intersection with any of the Alternatives. Note that discussion at General Issue 1 of this Final EIR responds to concerns raised by individuals for whom this segment of Forni Road provides access to their residences.

Chapter 4 Errata to the Draft EIR/EA

The City has identified the following revisions and corrections to the Draft EIR/EA. Please note revisions are shown as underlined (inserted text) and strikethrough (deleted text).

Errata 1: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.2, Land Use, Page 3-13

~~The general plan cannot be implemented until the Superior Court lifts the Writ of Mandate, which currently limits the County's ability to approve discretionary projects.~~

Errata 2: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.7, Stormwater Runoff and Water Quality, Page 3-84

The City of Placerville's main source of water, purchased from the El Dorado Irrigation District through a municipal account, is derived from surface water sources such as rivers and reservoirs. ... ~~The City EID~~ also diverts surface water from Sly Park Reservoir (Jenkinson Lake) in the Consumnes River watershed.

Errata 3: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.9, Utilities, Emergency Services, and Public Utilities, Page 3-95

~~The EID provides municipal and industrial water, irrigation water, wastewater treatment and reclamation, recreation and hydroelectric services to the City of Placerville.~~

Errata 4: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.9, Utilities, Emergency Services, and Public Utilities, Page 3-98

Such disruptions would be of short duration (most of only several minutes) and all affected businesses and residents for whom services would be temporarily disrupted would be notified by the City or its construction contractors within one week in advance. Fire hydrant relocations may require more extended disconnections (of several hours), however, contingency interim reconnection or alternative supplies would be available in the event that an emergency situation required the use of hydrants or other water supply during this relocation.

Errata 5: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.3, Transportation and Circulation

Description of Errata: The forecasts for Alternatives B and D at the Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection presented in Draft EIR/EA Section 3.3 have been revised to correct an error in the traffic forecasting process. The future volume on Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive is anticipated to be the same for all “with project” alternatives (as opposed to a higher number of trips shown in the traffic study and Draft EIR/EA). As a result of the revision, the level of service and average intersection delay will be the same or better than previously reported. The volume changes are mostly minor – 10 to 20 vehicles per hour. The one substantive change is a shift in volumes from the eastbound through (trips on to Forni Road east of Ray Lawyer Drive) to the eastbound right (vehicles turning to westbound Forni Road/Ray Lawyer Drive). This will reduce the overall intersection delay since right-turn movements have higher capacity than through movements due to right turns on red. **Figures F-4 and F-5**, shown previously, represent the corrected volumes and are applicable to both Alternative B and Alternative D (i.e., the Proposed Project) and serve as errata to Draft EIR/EA Figure 3.3-6 and Figure 3.3-8, and referenced traffic volumes in Section 3.3 of that document.

Errata 6: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.12, Visual Resources, Mitigation Measure 3.12-3

Mitigation Measure 3.12-3. A lighting plan shall be developed for the project that requires all project lighting to be appropriately shielded and that project lighting design is consistent with all City lighting guidelines and standards. Lighting design shall incorporate context sensitive design and shall be reviewed and approved by the City Council during the project design phase.

Errata 7: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.3, Mitigation Measure 3.3-1

Mitigation Measure 3.3-1. A project traffic management plan shall be developed and implemented which includes measures to minimize disruptions to vehicle, transit and bicycle and pedestrian activities during the duration of construction activities.

Errata 8: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.6, Mitigation Measure 3.6-2, Fourth Bullet

- ~~• Limiting speeds to 10 miles per hour or less at the construction site.~~
- Limiting the speeds of construction vehicles and equipment as necessary to prevent the generation of dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries.

Errata 9: Draft EIR/EA Section 3.13, Mitigation Measure 3.13-4

Mitigation Measure 3.13-4. The City shall coordinate with the Placerville Union Elementary School District and the El Dorado Unified Union High School District prior to and during construction to facilitate bus rerouting and the identification of alternative stop locations.

Chapter 5 List of Preparers

The Draft EIR/EA and this Final Environmental Document were prepared by the City of Placerville and its project consultant team, with review and input provided by Caltrans, District 3, and FHWA.

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Sarah Powell

Chapter 6 Distribution List

The Final EIR is being provided to the following agencies, organizations and individuals who provided comments on the Draft EIR.

Robert Schneider/Jacque Kelley, California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Brian Mueller/Don Corcoran, El Dorado Irrigation District

John Quidachay, Gold Nugget Homeowners Association

Joyce Gabrielson

David Kantz

Bob Altmeyer

Bob Smart

Don Grind

William Crim

Eileen Crim

Jerry Ledbetter, Chairperson, El Dorado County Trails Advisory Committee

Mike Covis

Walter Klinefelter

Chapter 7 References

Dokken, 2005. Memorandum – 1373 Western Placerville Interchanges – Traffic Volumes on Forni Road. October 18, 2005. Dokken Engineering. Folsom, CA.

Appendix A Mitigation Monitoring Plan

Appendix B NOP Comment Letters

This appendix include copies of comments received in response to the December 2003 EIR Notice of Preparation.