

1. Introduction to the Community Plan

Introduction

The *Diamond Springs and El Dorado Area Mobility and Livable Community Plan (Community Transportation Plan)* is a community-based study of transportation modes within the *El Dorado-Diamond Springs Community Region* as defined by the 2004 El Dorado County General Plan. The study area is roughly bounded by US 50 to the north, Mother Lode Drive to the west, Pleasant Valley Road/SR 49 to the south, and Missouri Flat road to the east.

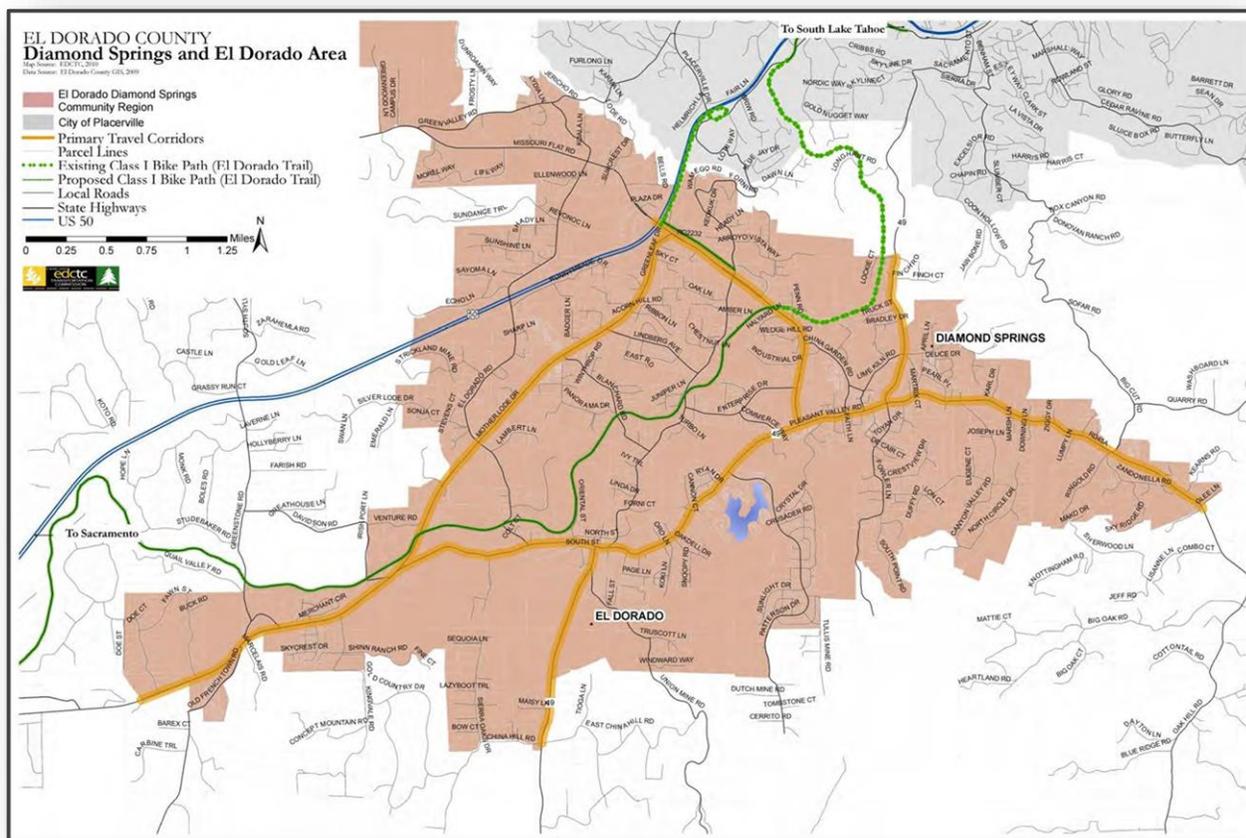


Figure 1 - El Dorado Diamond Springs Community Region

The overall goal of the study is to identify improvements for mobility, safety, and access for all users within the region by creating multi-modal transportation links between residential neighborhoods, commercial districts and the historic downtown districts of El Dorado and Diamond Springs that are consistent with the Diamond Springs and El Dorado Community Values adopted by the Diamond Springs Community Advisory Committee on June 20, 2013. In addition to making travel more efficient for residents within the project area, the goal is to also make it easier for people to travel to the area or through the area to reach regional destinations. This increased multi-modal mobility and access will enhance the communities of

Diamond Springs and El Dorado and provide the framework to preserve their rural and historic character while accommodating future demand within the study area.

The Community Transportation Plan is part of a larger effort by El Dorado County, Caltrans and the El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) to proactively coordinate regional transportation planning in the project area. In 2009, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors created the *Diamond Springs and El Dorado Community Advisory Committee* and appointed members of the local community to serve on the committee for the purpose of engaging the community in a dialog about transportation, land use identified in the adopted El Dorado County General Plan, economic development, community identity, and strategic approaches to preserve cultural, historic, and environmental resources. Subsequently, the 2010 State Route 49 Realignment Study (Coloma to El Dorado) identified the need to take a more focused look at individual segments within the SR 49 corridor, including mobility issues within the Diamond Springs-El Dorado area. The work done by the Diamond Springs and El Dorado Community Advisory Committee and the results of the SR 49 Realignment Study highlighted the need to find transportation solutions in the Diamond Springs and El Dorado area that balance and integrate community values with transportation safety and performance. At the request of the community, in 2010 EDCTC initiated the *Diamond Springs-El Dorado Area Mobility and Livable Community Vision Project (Vision Project)*. This project was a precursor to the Community Transportation Plan and drafted a community vision and set of community values through meetings with stakeholders and a visioning workshop. The Vision Project included a review of relevant planning documents (including the current General Plan), review of the existing transportation infrastructure, economic development plans, historic district guidelines, and community identity.

Existing Transportation and Land Use Plans

The intent of the Community Transportation Plan is to supplement these existing studies with a focused and technical analysis of the project area that both addresses the mobility issues identified in the 2010 SR 49 Realignment Study and preserves the rural, environmental, historical, and cultural assets of the region that were outlined in the Vision Project and the adopted Diamond Springs and El Dorado Community Values. The project also takes into consideration the existing transportation and land use plans in the area listed below.

El Dorado County General Plan (2004)

The El Dorado County General Plan provides long range direction and policy for land use within El Dorado County. It is important to note that recommendations in the Community Transportation Plan are intended to function within the context of the approved General Plan and adjacent development projects (both private and public). It is not within the jurisdiction of the EDCTC or the scope of this document, nor was it the intent with the stakeholder involvement, to supersede or override approved development plans, policies, or the land use authority of El Dorado County.

El Dorado County Regional Transportation Plan (2010)

The El Dorado County Regional Transportation Plan 2010-2030 was developed to provide a clear vision for the regional transportation goals, objectives and policies for both the short-term and long-term development of the transportation network within EDCTC's jurisdiction. It identifies large, regional improvements to the existing transportation network including the Missouri Flat Road/US 50 Interchange improvements, Pleasant Valley Road (SR 49)/Patterson Drive Signalization Project, and the Diamond Springs Parkway project which are all within the Community Transportation Plan's study limits. These projects have all been included in the updated El Dorado County Travel Demand Model and are taken into consideration with the network recommendations in this document. It is the intent of the Community Transportation Plan to provide additional recommendations for projects on the local level that improve multi-modal access and connectivity within the study's limits.

El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan (2010)

The El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan updates the adopted El Dorado County Bicycle Master Plan (2005) and provides a framework for the development of a bicycle transportation network that enhances the safety and convenience of bicycling to neighboring jurisdictions, employment centers, residential neighborhoods and other activity centers in El Dorado County. The bicycle transportation plan provides bicycle network recommendations in the Diamond Springs/El Dorado area that were reviewed and evaluated by the project team as part of the Community Transportation Plan.

SR 49 Realignment Study (2010)

The SR 49 realignment study, accepted as complete by the EDCTC Board on May 6, 2010, evaluated over fifty different scenarios for the realignment of SR 49 from El Dorado to Coloma to eliminate the existing at-grade crossing of SR 49 and US 50, relieve traffic on SR 49, and improve the safety and efficiency of goods movement in the region. It is a preliminary Project Identification Document (PID) that identifies provisional project alternatives and makes recommendations on their feasibility. It is not intended to be an authoritative document with an approved realignment of SR 49, however the top three alternatives recommended by the study will have varying degrees of impact to Pleasant Valley Road and Missouri Flat Road within the Community Transportation Plan's limits. The recommendations of this plan have been made with the flexibility to accommodate the future realignment plans for SR 49 with specific recommendations for the long-term development of the highway to meet the local bicycle, pedestrian and automobile needs.

El Dorado County Long-Range and Short-Range Transit Plan (Ongoing)

EDCTC has secured funding for a number of short- and long- range planning grants for the future transit needs of El Dorado County. The most recent long-range planning document was approved in 2003 and was supplemented by a short-range transit plan in 2008. EDCTC is currently preparing a new 2013/2014 Short and Long Range Transit Plan to account for the demographic and socioeconomic and demographic changes that have occurred in the County with the downturn in the economy. The transit plan was still in the preliminary planning stages during the stakeholder visioning process for the Community

Transportation Plan, although there are no anticipated conflicts between the recommendations of this document and the future recommendations of the transit plan. It is anticipated that proposed active transportation improvements proposed in the Community Transportation Plan will improve access to transit and be a benefit to the overall transit plan.

El Dorado County Park and Ride Facilities Master Plan (2007)

The El Dorado County Park and Ride Facilities Master Plan identifies the policies, actions, and financing needed to ensure a continuous and adequate supply of parking capacity to support the growing transit needs of El Dorado County. There is an existing park-and-ride lot within the Community Transportation Plan's limits at the southwest quadrant of the US 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange that is owned and operated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the Central Transit Center Multi-Modal Transfer Facility on Commerce Way that is owned and operated by El Dorado Transit. The recommendations of the Community Transportation Plan are intended to encourage multi-modal connectivity to these facilities and enhance the services that Caltrans and El Dorado Transit provide.

El Dorado County Transit Design Manual (2007)

The El Dorado County Transit Design Manual provides transit improvement standards that are appropriate to the unique conditions of Western El Dorado County. The manual does not supersede the authority of local jurisdictions or existing design standards, but instead provides design guidelines for more pedestrian, bicycle and transit friendly bus stops. While the recommendations in the manual are rather specific relative to scope of the Community Transportation Plan, the intent of both documents to create multi-modal connectivity in the Diamond Springs and El Dorado area are synonymous.

Missouri Flat Master Circulation and Funding Plan – Phase I (2002)

The Missouri Flat Area Master Circulation and Funding Plan (Phase I) is a collaborative plan between El Dorado County, local developers and property owners to identify and incrementally fund improvements to the US 50/Missouri Flat Road interchange and adjacent arterials and collector roads. These improvements are needed to reduce existing traffic congestion and to create additional capacity for planned commercial development in the Missouri Flat area to be consistent with the approved guidelines in the current El Dorado County General Plan. The Community Transportation Plan is sensitive to these recommendations and has accounted for the future traffic volumes and improvements to the US 50/Missouri Flat Road interchange.

El Dorado County Historic Design Guidelines (circa 1980)

The El Dorado County Historic Design guidelines were prepared for the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors to give examples, in text and pictures, of the architectural qualities that are commonly attributed to the "gold rush" or "western frontier" styles. The intent of the guidelines is to protect, enhance and promote the areas and buildings determined to be of historic significance in El Dorado County. The guidelines do not set limits on the type and architectural features that are permissible in historic districts; however they are frequently referenced with development plans in the El Dorado and

Diamond Springs area. Specific recommendations in the Community Transportation Plan within these districts have been made to be sensitive to the historic character of El Dorado County as recommended by this document.

Missouri Flat Design Guidelines (2008)

The Missouri Flat Design Guidelines provide property owners and project architects a clear understanding of the desired design elements for the redevelopment of Missouri Flat Road between El Dorado Road and Pleasant Valley Road. County staff uses the guidelines as a basis for evaluating development proposals on the corridor for the quality of their design. The Community Transportation Plan makes recommendations for the future development of the Missouri Flat roadway section within public right-of-way to complement the approved goals and objectives of the Missouri Flat Design Guidelines.

Diamond Springs-El Dorado Area Mobility and Sustainable Community Vision Project (2011)

The Diamond Springs-El Dorado Area Mobility and Sustainable Community Vision Project initiated a dialogue with the Diamond Springs and El Dorado communities to craft a vision for the physical, economic and social development of the region in the short- and long- term. On June 20, 2013, the Diamond Springs and El Dorado Community Advisory Committee adopted the following Community Values which form the framework for the Community Transportation Plan:

The Rural Character of the Area:

- Oaks, native plants, and wildlife habitat
- Support of local agriculture and community gardens
- A healthy environment
- Preservation and connectivity of wildlife corridors and permeable landscapes

Distinct, Small Communities:

- Ease of travel in and around the community on smaller, uncongested roads
- Safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian paths
- Places to walk, bike, and gather
- Parks for open space and recreation
- A strong sense of community, knowing your neighbors

Preserve Cultural History:

- Gold Rush / pioneer history and assets
- Golden Chain / SR 49
- Native American history and sacred sites
- The El Dorado Trail and the historic railroad park
- The history and culture of the area celebrated through public art and performance

- Incorporate the culture and history (Gold Rush, Native American, Lumber, Mining) of the area into commercial buildings and public spaces

Employment and Economic Prosperity:

- Job, economic, and personal income growth
- Providing infrastructure to support and attract small and medium-sized businesses
- Keeping commercial development appropriate to enhance and be compatible with the historic areas of Diamond Springs and El Dorado
- Transition commercial zones to provide a smooth transition between commercial and historic areas
- Access to current technology, including fiber optics and high speed internet
- Diverse sources of employment that allow people to live near their work

The Community Transportation Plan is intended to compliment the visioning process with a viable transportation plan that integrates the vision of the community with realistic expectations for the development of transportation infrastructure in the region. Additionally, the Community Transportation Plan will provide the citizens of Diamond Springs and El Dorado the information and analysis from which to make informed decisions that will shape the future of their community.