

FINAL

2004 Amador County Regional Transportation Plan Update

Executive Summary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The regional transportation planning process was initiated by State law throughout California in 1972 (AB 69). The Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC) was designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Amador County in that same year. A primary responsibility of the ACTC is to adopt and update the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Amador County "region" in accordance with State law. The ACTC is also responsible, with city and County input, for determining the priorities for all proposed new transportation facilities shown in the RTP.

The ACTC completed an extensive update of its RTP in 1998. It resulted in adoption of the Amador County Regional Transportation Plan Circulation Element 1996/97 Update. The Amador County 2004 RTP Update is made necessary due to progress that has been made on previously prioritized projects and in order to comply with new statewide RTP Guidelines.

In 1998 the Amador County Board of Supervisors adopted the ACTC's RTP Update to serve as the County's General Plan Circulation Element. This is because certain provisions in the State's General Plan Guidelines overlap with similar requirements contained in the State's RTP Guidelines. In 2004 it is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors will again adopt the 2004 RTP Update to serve as the County's General Plan Circulation Element.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING/EXISTING CONDITIONS

Amador County is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Sacramento on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. Amador County's population is 35,100 people (including approximately 5,000 persons in group quarters - Mule Creek Prison, etc.). Geographically, the County can be divided into two physiographic divisions referred to locally as a forested "upcountry" and the lower foothills. The lower foothills are typified by rolling hills, oaks, and grasslands. The lower foothills still contain most of the County's population. This population tends to be concentrated within or around the County's five incorporated cities: Ione, Amador City, Plymouth, Sutter Creek, and Jackson (the County seat). State highways serving the County include Routes 16, 26, 49, 88, 104, and 124. The ACTC considers the system of State highways (arterials) and city and county roads of major significance (major collectors) to be the "regional road system". There are approximately 470 miles of County roads and city streets that interconnect with State highways in Amador County.

The growth in Amador County's population and through-County traffic over the past decades has resulted in a number of deficiencies on the current transportation system. The quality of traffic operations is expressed in terms of level of service (LOS) ranging from LOS A (best) to LOS F (worst). The previous 1996/97 RTP Update found that the following locations experienced conditions worse than LOS C:

- SR 49 near downtown Sutter Creek LOS D
- SR 88 from SR 104 (east) to SR 49, Martell LOS D

- SR 88 in Pine Grove LOS E
- SR 49/88 from Martell to Sutter Street, Jackson LOS D

Based on updated traffic counts for the 2004 RTP Update, the following locations currently experience average daily levels of service that are worse than LOS C:

- SR 49 near downtown Sutter Creek LOS D
- SR 88 from SR 104 East to SR 49 Martell LOS D
- SR 49/88 from Martell to Sutter Street, Jackson LOS D
- SR 88 Pine Grove LOS E
- Ridge Road from SR 49 to New York Ranch Road LOS D
- New York Ranch Road from Ridge Road to Bingo Way LOS E

In March 1999, the ACTC completed an analysis of pavement conditions on all County roads and city streets. The Amador PMS study found that the current status of County roads and city streets in Amador County is less than satisfactory. The Average Pavement Condition Rating (APCR) for all County roads and city streets is less than 65 (on the scale of 1 to 100). It also determined that the one-time cost to bring all local roads up to an APC rating greater than 97 could be \$27.5 million. Amador County maintains a local road capital improvement program (CIP) list of road improvement projects beyond those identified in the County's Pavement Management Systems (PMS). Currently this list includes over 135 projects needing approximately \$100 million in funds.

Amador Regional Transit System (ARTS) is the only public transit service in the County. ARTS provides fixed-route/demand responsive bus service throughout the western portion of the County. ARTS has also initiated service between Amador County, Rancho Murieta, and Sacramento. There are a number of other special needs transit service providers that operate in the County.

Westover Field, located near Martell, is the only public airport serving Amador County. A total of 126 aircraft were based at the airport in 2001. There is no commuter or airline reliever service to this airport at this time.

Few designated bicycle routes currently exist in Amador County and a very small percentage of the local population is using their bicycles in lieu of autos for transportation.

Rail service in Amador County is limited to freight service since there is no direct rail passenger service available. The Amador Foothill Railroad provides limited rail freight service in the County, trucks handle most of the freight entering and exiting Amador County. Six to ten percent of the daily traffic on State routes consists of trucks according to Caltrans vehicle classification counts.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to techniques for managing traffic circulation better to make maximum usage of existing circulation facilities without having to construct expensive new facilities. Currently, TDM activities are limited in Amador County.

Several "informal" or undeveloped park-and-ride lots and programs are becoming established as Amador County communities begin to ride-share. Transportation Systems Management (TSM) represents short-range improvements intended to maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system that, like TDM, provide a relatively high benefit for relatively low cost of investment. As population and traffic volumes grow, and projections for transportation funding remain constrained, the need for consideration of TDM and TSM in the County will increase.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

The County's 2000 population (35,100) is expected to increase by 26% by 2015, and 49% by 2025. The 2004 RTP population growth analysis was based on an assumption of approximately 1.8 percent per year average growth from 2000 to 2025. This growth rate is higher than DOF projections put forth in January 2000 (0.7% per year). Growth rates in surrounding regions and the State also suggest that through or interregional traffic in Amador County will increase in the coming years (vehicles with origins and/or destinations outside the County).

Each city planner and the County Land Use Agency provided the ACTC with updated land use information for 2000 and projections of new land use developments likely to occur by 2025. In order to project the future demand on roads and highways, the countywide traffic model developed in 1994 was updated based on revised growth assumptions for each jurisdiction inside and outside of the County. The Amador County traffic model was also adjusted to include increased traffic as projected by the Jackson Rancheria. The County traffic model was used to evaluate the future deficiencies under a worst-case scenario (i.e., assuming no improvements to the roadway system). Areas where increased traffic anticipated after 2000 will cause reductions in level of service to become worse than LOS C include the following:

- SR 49 - Drytown LOS E
- SR 49 - Drytown to SR 16 LOS E
- SR 88 - County Line to SR 104 West LOS D
- SR 88 - SR 104 West to SR 104 East LOS E
- SR 88 - SR 49 to Court Street LOS E
- SR 88 - Court Street to Climax Road LOS E
- SR 88 - in Pine Grove LOS F
- Ridge Road - SR 49 to New York Ranch Road LOS E
- Upper Ridge Road - Climax Road to SR 88 LOS D
- SR 104 - Sutter Creek Bridge in Ione LOS E
- SR 104 - SR 124 to Castle Oaks Drive LOS D
- New York Ranch Road - Ridge Road to Bingo Way LOS F
- SR 49 - Argonaut Lane to Sutter Street LOS F
- SR 49 - Sutter Street to SR 88 LOS D
- SR 49 - French Bar to Broadway LOS E
- SR 49 - Broadway to County Line LOS D

- SR 104 - SR 88 to SR 49 LOS D
- SR 88 - SR 104 East to SR 49 LOS E
- SR 88 - SR 26 to Shake Ridge Road LOS D

Based on the lack of adequate funding for local road improvements, it is anticipated that the average pavement condition rating (PCR) for County roads and city streets could drop below 30 (out of 100) by 2025 with 68% of County roads and city streets below PCR 20. The PCR analyses do not include up to \$96.5 million in other operational and safety improvements identified as needed for the County's road system.

Based on long-range forecasts for ARTS public transit ridership, ARTS service may grow from approximately 100,000 riders per year in 2003 to 120,800 passengers per year in 2015 and 132,100 by 2025. Growth in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Counties combined with traffic constraints on highways leading to and from these counties suggest that inter-County transit demand is likely to be a growing percentage of total countywide transit demand by 2025.

The County's airport master plan is being updated in 2004. Airport consultants are predicting that aircraft based at Westover Field will increase by approximately 40% by 2020 (from 126 aircraft to between 165 and 180 aircraft). In 1990, the Airport Land Use Commission adopted the current Airport Land Use Plan. This plan calls for a maximum of 233 based aircraft and establishes policies and criteria for land use to protect Westover Field from conflicting and/or hazardous uses.

1990 census data indicates that approximately 5 percent of home-to-work travel occurs by walking. With traffic volumes expected to increase in most locations and with limited funding for roads and highways, increasing congestion is anticipated. This will likely cause the number and percentage of people choosing to walk to work, for shopping, or for other purposes to increase. Given the County's broadly dispersed development pattern, this increase will be minimal.

The County's last bicycle plan was prepared by Caltrans in 1981. This document is substantially out of date. The ACTC initiated a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update in 1993. Funding constraints and other priorities have, thus far, prevented completion of the plan.

Truck traffic is expected to remain approximately 10% of total traffic on the regional road system through 2025. The Martell Business Park Master Plan anticipates continued use of the Amador Foothill rail line. Passenger rail service between the population centers in western Amador County and the San Joaquin or Sacramento valleys will not be cost effective within the 2025 planning period.

A survey was conducted in 1996 to evaluate the short-range demand for TDM as a part of the Inter-County Transportation Demand Management Feasibility Study, prepared by Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates. The survey focused on the potential viability of vanpool services, particularly for commuters from Amador County to Sacramento or Stockton. The study concluded that there is a short-term need for a vanpool program to

serve the Amador County/Sacramento commuter market. Some of this demand was subsequently satisfied by ARTS Sacramento service. Service for the Amador County/Stockton commuter market was found to be a longer-term need.

ALTERNATIVES

The State's updated Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines require that RTP updates shall include analyses of system-wide alternatives for meeting the region's future transportation needs. For purposes of the Amador County 2004 RTP Update the following system-wide alternatives were considered:

- (1) No Project
- (2) Expanding Existing Highways
- (3) Financially Unconstrained Plan (Tier 2)
- (4) Financially Constrained Plan (Tier 1)
- (5) Emphasize Local Road Rehabilitation and Maintenance

The analysis of system-wide alternatives indicated that the unconstrained plan meets more of the established performance measures than any of the other system-wide alternatives. However, given funding constraints, the unconstrained plan cannot be carried out. Without consideration of the un-constrained plan, the constrained plan out-performs any of the other system-wide alternatives. The 2004 RTP Update thereby focuses upon the "Tier 1" funding constrained list of roadway improvements. (See attached table of "2004 Amador County Regional Roadway Project Priorities and Funding Sources".)

A system-wide strategy was developed which helps to establish the goals, policies, objectives, and project priorities identified in the Plan's Policy, Action, and Financial Elements.

1. Limit the Number of Costly Bypasses and Route Widening
2. Prioritize Resources Based on Importance and Need
3. Accept Lower Levels of Services Where the Reduction Clearly Out Weighs Environmental and Funding Considerations
4. Require New Developments to Pay For Their Share of Additional Impacts to the System
5. Aggressively Pursue Additional Local and State Funding Sources
6. Expand Consideration of Transportation Systems Management (TSM), Transportation Demand Management Alternatives (TDM), and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The assessment of project-specific or corridor-specific alternatives considered by the 2004 RTP Update goes back to transportation studies that were carried out in support of RTP Updates since the late 1980's. Community participation and public hearings were involved in consideration of all alternatives and in the selection of alternatives that should be funded pursuant to the 2004 RTP Update. These studies involved a number of transportation corridors throughout the County. Some of these studies are ongoing. Most of the studies have, however, led to community consensus regarding transportation projects deemed necessary and acceptable to relieve that corridor's present and/or future transportation needs.

All proposed regional improvements deemed to be fundable were put into the countywide traffic model to determine the effects upon projected levels of service. The results indicated that all roadways would operate at LOS "C" or better in 2025 with the improvements in place, except for the following listed locations.

- SR 49 - Drytown LOS E
- SR 49 - Drytown to SR 16 LOS E
- SR 88 - County Line to SR 104 West LOS D
- SR 88- SR 104 West to SR 104 East LOS E
- SR 88 - SR 49 to Court Street LOS E
- SR 88 - Court Street to Climax Road LOS E
- Ridge Road - SR 49 to New York Ranch Road LOS D
- Upper Ridge Road - Climax Road to SR 88 LOS D
- SR 104 - Sutter Creek Bridge in Ione LOS E
- SR 104 - SR 124 to Castle Oaks Drive LOS D
- New York Ranch Road - Ridge Road to Bingo Way LOS F
- SR 49 - Argonaut Lane to Sutter Street LOS F
- SR 49 - Sutter Street to SR 88 LOS D
- SR 49 - French Bar to Broadway LOS E
- SR 49 - Broadway to County Line LOS D
- SR 88 - SR 104 East to SR 49 LOS E
- SR 88 - SR 26 to Shake Ridge Road LOS D

THE PLAN (GOAL, POLICIES AND PROJECTS)

The primary, over-arching goal of the Amador County RTP Update is:

Provide a transportation and circulation system that is safe, efficient, convenient, comfortable, and that meets the transportation needs of people and goods, and that is compatible with other scenic, historic, economic, environmental and recreational resource values.

Other significant goals and policies of the 2004 RTP Update include the following.

- 1) It is Amador County's goal to maintain a level of service (LOS) of "C" or better for average daily conditions on all State highways and local streets and roads outside of incorporated cities and other developed communities. It is the County's goal to maintain LOS "D" or better for average daily conditions within incorporated cities and other developed communities. As documented in the RTP, LOS C and D may not be achievable on certain sections of the State highway and local road system because of prohibitive costs and/or environmental impacts and the lower LOS levels shall not require denial of any development project provided the County or city finds that a

- project's benefits are sufficient to override the project contributing to a LOS level other than C or D.
- 2) Amador County supports formation of multi-agency partnerships that will help provide funding for and expedite construction or implementation of needed transportation projects and programs.
 - 3) Amador County supports use of consultants and staff to improve delivery of transportation projects that are programmed (funded) and to prepare other prioritized transportation projects for funding and efficient delivery.
 - 4) Amador County supports use of Proposition 35 and private sector consultant resources under contract to the ACTC for delivery of State highway projects faster, cheaper, and in closer conformance to local design concerns.
 - 5) Amador County supports the "land banking" concept provided it can be proven to be a program that will expedite federal and State agency review and approval of local and regional transportation projects.
 - 6) Amador County supports SB 45 and all future efforts that will provide additional transportation funding at the State level and equitable distribution of State funds to rural counties.
 - 7) Amador County supports all future efforts to reduce the 2/3's requirement for local sales taxes or user fees that will enable rural counties to raise funds to provide for their own transportation programs.
 - 8) Amador County supports the maintenance of a regional traffic mitigation fee for improvements to State highways and other components of the regional system adversely impacted by new development.
 - 9) In addition to the countywide regional traffic mitigation fee program, Amador County supports a policy requiring new development projects to determine and mitigate any impacts they may have on the system beyond the limits of the mitigation fee program.
 - 10) Indian gaming facilities should pay their fair share to construct regional roadway improvements to mitigate the increased traffic they generate and help to maintain the RTP's adopted goals, policies, and standards.
 - 11) Development approved on highway frontage should provide additional right-of-way to meet projected needs.
 - 12) On all State highways, arterials, and major collector roads in the County, a minimum of 300 feet should be maintained between driveways and between driveways and State highways, arterials, or major collector roads. New public road connections should be spaced at least 1,000 feet apart.
 - 13) Amador County should pursue new funding needed to establish and maintain a countywide average pavement condition rating (APCR) above 75 (out of 100) and to complete the cities' and County's short-range transportation capital improvement programs.
 - 14) Amador County supports projects and programs that enhance safety, that relieve congestion, and that create transportation enhancements. Toward this end, the ACTC will assist the cities and County in funding for and delivery of safety (HES), bridge (HBRR), pedestrian (SR2S), transportation enhancement (TEA), and other local, State, or federally funded transportation projects.

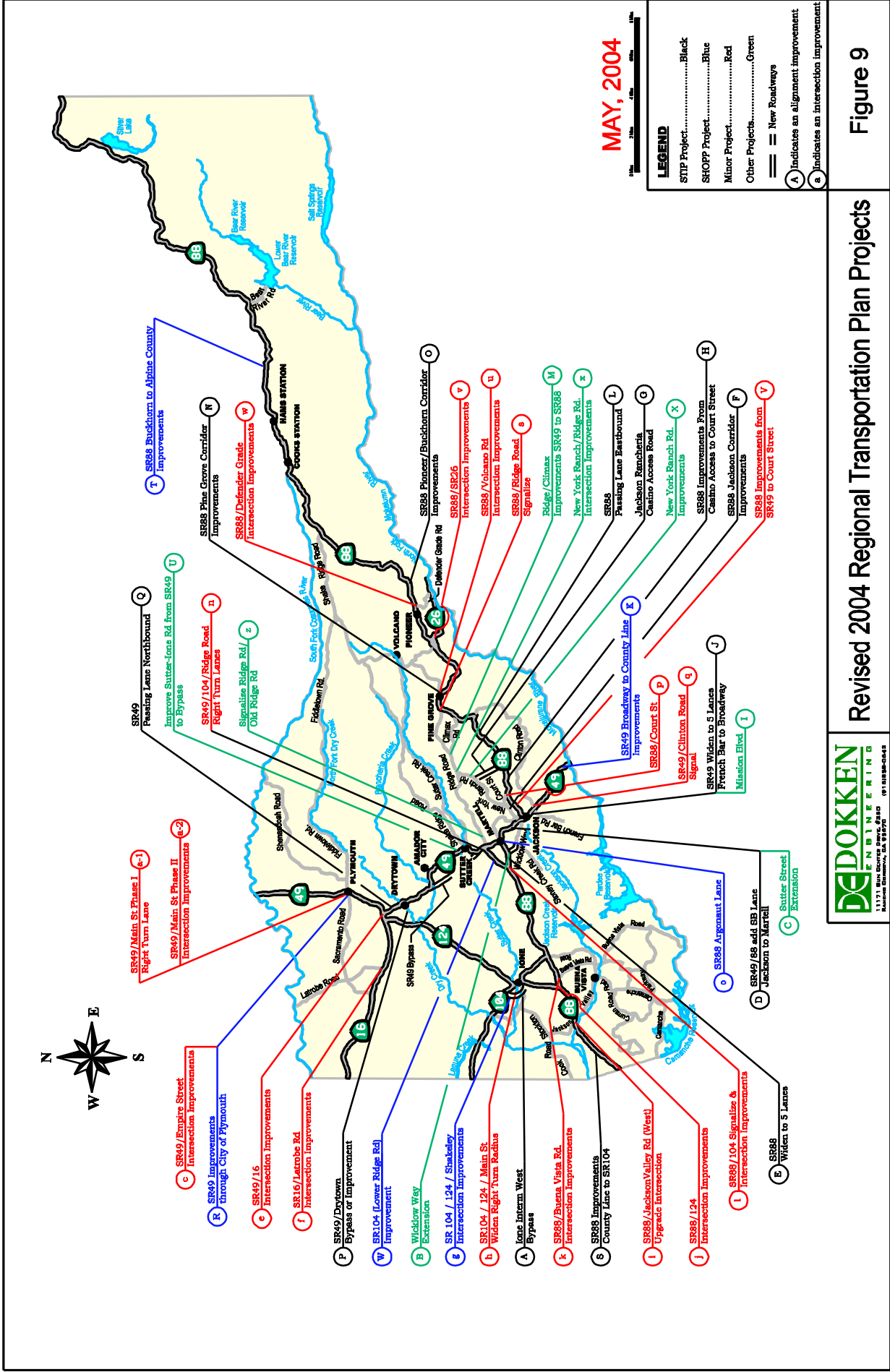
- 15) Local road projects should not be funded by State or federal sources unless their efficient delivery can be assured by use of the ACTC's "Transportation Project Development Checklist".
- 16) It is Amador County's goal to provide effective, economically feasible safe and efficient public transportation in Amador County with emphasis on service to the transportation disadvantaged.
- 17) Amador County supports interregional public transportation services to the Sacramento area so long as State, federal, or other non-LTF are available to maintain adopted "reasonable to meet" criteria.
- 18) Amador County supports other inter-county public transportation services (Stockton, Calaveras) provided that supplemental funding is made available so the service fits adopted "reasonable to meet" criteria.
- 19) ARTS should provide input on major development projects to identify locations of bus stops, park-and-ride lots, wheelchair, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other facilities where necessary.
- 20) It is Amador County's goal to provide a safe County airport facility with compatible surrounding land uses that will enhance economic development.
- 21) It is Amador County's goal to provide bicycle and pedestrian circulation facilities that are safe, that reduce automobile traffic, and that promote recreation.
- 22) The countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update should be completed before the next RTP Update (2008).
- 23) It is Amador County's goal to increase the usage of TSM and TDM as an economical means of reducing existing and projected traffic congestion.
- 24) It is Amador County's goal to help improve air quality in the State of California through improvements to the transportation system and incentives to reduce single-occupant auto travel.

The expected deficit for transportation improvements needed in Amador County is presently estimated to be more than \$238 million over the next 25 years. Nearly all of this deficit involves State highways and local roads. There are smaller anticipated funding deficits identified for transit, aviation, rail, bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, and TDM or TSM improvements.

2004 Amador County Regional Roadway Project Priorities and Funding Sources (x \$1000)

Priority	Location	Project Identifier	Project Description	Total Cost	Const. Period*	Tier 1 Fundable				Tier 2 (unfunded)		
						STIP	SHOPP	MINOR	Regional Mit Fee	Other Sources	Fund by New Development	Unfunded
STIP 1	P. Grove	N	SR 88 Pine Grove corridor improvements	\$21,500	short term	\$21,500						
STIP 2	Jackson	F	SR 88 Jackson corridor improvements	\$30,000	long term	\$10,000					\$10,000	\$10,000
STIP 3	Jackson	A	lone interim west bypass	\$24,000	long term	\$14,000					\$5,000	\$5,000
STIP 4	Uppcountry	O	SR 88 Pioneer/Buckhorn corridor improvements	\$15,000	NA						\$5,000	\$5,000
STIP 5	Martell	E	SR 88 widen to 5 lanes from SR 49 to SR 104	\$10,000	NA							\$10,000
STIP 6	Jackson	D	SR 49/88 add SB lane between Martell & Jackson	\$10,000	NA							\$10,000
STIP 7	Drytown	Q	SR 49 passing lane NB between Drytown & SR 16	\$3,000	NA							\$3,000
STIP 8	Jackson	L	SR 88 passing lane EB between Jctsn/P.Grove	\$3,000	NA							\$3,000
STIP 9	Lower Co	S	SR 88 improvements San Joaquin Co line to 104	\$5,000	NA							\$5,000
STIP 10	Jackson	J	SR 49 - widen to 5 lanes - French Bar to Broadway	\$3,000	NA							\$3,000
STIP 11	Drytown	P	SR 49 Drytown bypass or improvements	\$10,000	NA							\$10,000
STIP 12	Jackson	H	SR 88 improvements - Casino access to Court st	\$7,000	NA							\$7,000
SHOPP 1	lone	g	SR 104/124/Shakeley Ln intersection improv.	\$2,000	short term	\$1,000			\$1,000			
SHOPP 2	Jackson	V	SR 88 improv. from SR 49 to Court St.	\$5,000	short term	\$4,000			\$1,000			
SHOPP 3	Jackson	o	SR 49/88/Argonaut Lane	\$2,000	short term	\$1,000						
SHOPP 4	Martell	W	SR 104 (Lower Ridge) improv. SR 49 to SR 88	\$2,000	short term	\$1,000			\$1,000			
SHOPP 5	Plymouth	R	SR 49 - improvements through City of Plymouth	\$2,000	short term	\$1,000			\$1,000			
SHOPP 6	Uppcountry	T	SR 88 improv. between Buckhorn & Alpine Co	\$5,000	long term	\$5,000						
SHOPP 7	Jackson	K	SR 49 - improv. from Jackson to Calv. Co. line	\$5,000	long term	\$5,000						
Minor 1	lone	h	SR 104/Main St - widen turn radius on NE corner	\$100	short term			\$100				
Minor 2	Plymouth	a-1	SR 49/Main St Phase I right turn lane	\$100	short term			\$100				
Minor 3	Plymouth	c	SR 49/Empire St intersection improvements	\$1,000	short term			\$750	\$250			
Minor 4	P.Grove	s	SR 88/Ridge Rd signalize & improvements	\$550	short term			\$300	\$250			
Minor 5	Martell	i	SR 88/104 signalize & improvements	\$200	short term			\$200				
Minor 6	Jackson	q	SR 49/Clinton Rd signal	\$300	short term			\$300				
Minor 7	Pioneer	w	SR 88/Defender Grade intersection improv.	\$750	short term			\$500	\$250			
Minor 8	Plymouth	e	SR 49/16 intersection improvements	\$500	short term			\$400	\$100			
Minor 9	Plymouth	a-2	SR 49/Main St Phase II intersection improv	\$1,000	short term			\$750	\$250			
Minor 10	Sutter Hill	n	SR49/104/Ridge Rd add right-turn lanes	\$1,000	long term			\$750	\$250			
Minor 11	Lower Co	j	SR 88/124 intersection improvements	\$1,000	long term			\$750	\$250			
Minor 12	Lower Co	i	SR 88/Jackson Vly Rd (west) upgrade inters.ec.	\$1,000	long term			\$750	\$250			
Minor 13	Lower Co	k	SR 88/Buena Vista Rd intersection improv.	\$1,000	long term			\$750	\$250			
Minor 14	Pine Grove	u	SR 88/Volcano Rd intersection improvements	\$500	long term			\$400	\$100			
Minor 15	Lower Co	f	SR 16/Latrobe Rd intersection improvements	\$500	long term			\$400	\$100			
Minor 16	Pioneer	v	SR 88/SR 26 intersection improvements	\$500	long term			\$400	\$100			
Minor 17	Jackson	p	SR 88/Court Street	\$500	long term			\$400	\$100			
Other 1	Sutter Cr	U	Improve Sutter-lone Road from SR 49 to Bypass	\$1,000	short term				\$1,000			
Other 2	Jackson	I	Mission Blvd.	\$2,000	short term				\$2,000			
Other 3	Jackson	C	Sutter Street Extension	\$6,000	long term				\$6,000			
Other 4	P.Grove	M	Ridge/Climax improvements SR 49 to SR 88	\$6,000	long term				\$6,000			
Other 5	Martell	B	Wicklow Way Extension	\$2,000	NA						\$2,000	
Other 6	County	y	New York Ranch Rd improvements	\$10,000	NA						\$10,000	
Other 7	County	x	New York Ranch/Ridge Rd intersect. imps	\$1,500	NA						\$1,500	
Other 8	County	z	Signalize Ridge Rd/Old Ridge Road	\$200	NA							\$200
TOTAL				\$203,700		\$45,500	\$18,000	\$8,000	\$21,500	\$0	\$33,500	\$76,200

*Short term projects anticipated to receive construction funding before 2015. Long term projects anticipated to receive construction funding before 2025. NA means construction funding not assured. Full funding for STIP priorities #2 and #3 are also not assured at this time.



MAY, 2004

LEGEND

- STIP Project.....Black
- SHOPP Project.....Blue
- Minor Project.....Red
- Other Projects.....Green
- == New Roadways
- Indicates an alignment improvement
- ⊖ Indicates an intersection improvement

Revised 2004 Regional Transportation Plan Projects



Figure 9