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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**  
**of an Environmental Impact Report for the**  
**Western Slope Roadway**  
**Capital Improvement Program and Traffic Impact Mitigation Fee Program**

**Date:** February 5, 2016  
**To:** State Clearinghouse  
Responsible Agencies  
Trustee Agencies  
Interested Parties



**NOP Comment Period:** Written comments must be submitted to the County's Community Development Agency, Long Range Planning Division no later than **March 7, 2016 by 5:00 p.m.**

**Project Location:** El Dorado County

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Claudia Wade, P.E.  
Senior Civil Engineer

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) includes the following sections:

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

- Section 1.0 Introduction
- Section 2.0 Project Background and History
- Section 3.0 Project Description
- Section 4.0 Potential and Probable Environmental Effects of the Project
- Section 5.0 Project Alternatives

FEB 05 2016

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been issued to notify interested parties of the proposed project description for the County of El Dorado's (County) update of the Western Slope Roadway Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) Fee Program. The County will be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) to evaluate the environmental effects associated with the proposed project.

This NOP and background documents associated with the updates to the CIP and TIM Fee Program are available for review on the County's **Western Slope Update** webpage at:

<http://www.edcwesternslopeupdate.com/>



This NOP has been issued to provide opportunity for interested parties and agencies to submit comments on the scope of the EIR relative to the project description. Agencies should comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The County has determined that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, an EIR is being prepared. The EIR is intended to be a program-level document that will analyze the effects of the proposed update to the CIP and TIM Fee Program. Program EIRs generally analyze broad environmental effects of the program, with the acknowledgment that site-specific environmental review may be required for future actions (14 CCR 15168(a)). The purpose of a Program EIR is to allow the lead agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts. Because no specific development projects are being proposed as part of the updates to the CIP and TIM Fee Program, the analysis will not be parcel-specific. Rather, the analysis will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects that could result from the updates to the CIP and TIM Fee Program, which would include a number of new transportation improvement projects that would be added to the County's CIP list.

**NOP Comment Period:** In accordance with the time limits identified in state law, your response to this NOP must be submitted to the County at the earliest possible date, but **not later than 5:00 p.m. on March 7, 2016** (30 days following the date this notice was first posted). Please submit written comments to the El Dorado County Community Development Agency (including the contact person's full name and address) to:

Claudia Wade, P.E. Senior Civil Engineer  
El Dorado County Community Development Agency  
Long Range Planning Division  
2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville CA 95667

**Scoping Meeting:** A scoping meeting will be on March 3rd, 2016 at 5:30 pm in the Planning Commission Hearing Room at 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667.

## 2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identifies and prioritizes future transportation investments that will be required to meet the County's existing and future transportation needs for the next 20 years. This can be roadways, intersections, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, traffic calming treatments, transit service improvement projects, and ongoing administrative costs for transportation monitoring programs, including traffic model update costs, traffic study guideline updates and Circulation Element updates. Consistent with state law and General Plan policies (specifically General Plan Policy TC-Xb), the County completes minor updates to its CIP list every year and completes a major update approximately every five years to ensure that the CIP list is appropriate and reasonable based on current market





conditions and costs of construction/investment. Funding for most CIP projects is provided from a variety of sources including state and/or federal grants. However, funding for the portion of the CIP related to new development in the County is financed by the Traffic Impact Mitigation Fee Program which is required by County's General Plan Implementation Measure TC-B (adopted in 2004).

Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) Fees are collected by the County to offset the costs of impacts to the transportation system created by new development. Consistent with state law and General Plan policies, the County has minor updates to the TIM fee every year and major updates approximately every five years to ensure they are appropriate and reasonable based on current market conditions and costs of construction/investment. The TIM Fees are based on planned development assumed to occur in the County's adopted General Plan (assumed to occur through the year 2035), the total cost of transportation improvements needed to accommodate this growth, and assumed local/state/federal revenue streams anticipated to be available to the County for transportation improvements. This information allows a nexus between the unfunded improvement costs and projected future development. As part of the TIM Fee Program, a nexus study is completed which results in a calculation that determines the fair share that future development must pay for a particular type of land use development (i.e., residential and/or non-residential uses). The nexus analysis for the updates to the TIM Fee program are based on the incremental land use growth projected to occur in the County between January 1, 2015 and January 1, 2035 (the twenty year growth projection for the General Plan).

The analysis includes a comprehensive review of the existing and projected traffic conditions during various times of the day at key locations in the unincorporated areas of the El Dorado County. Based on General Plan policies, this information was used as part of the proposed update to the TIM Fee Program to identify existing and future deficiencies in the transportation network and the types of projects and costs that would be required to mitigate them. This information along with the General Plan land use growth projections and other anticipated revenue streams was used to determine the proposed fair-share cost contribution. Those transportation improvement projects identified in the analysis that would be necessary to alleviate deficiencies in the County's transportation system (both existing and future) would be added to the CIP list and funding for those specific TIM Fee projects would be provided by development projects.

It should be noted that TIM Fee projects are CIP projects that are driven by new development and are to be funded via TIM Fee revenue. The other (non-TIM Fee) projects are also included in the CIP and funded with a variety of other sources (including, but not limited to, local, state and/or federal grants). Since these other projects do not meet the nexus requirements per the Mitigation Fee Act (Government Code Section 66000 et. seq.) they are not identified as TIM fee projects and are not eligible for TIM fee funding.





For additional discussion of the County’s past efforts in preparing and implementing the CIP and TIM Fee Program, please refer to Background Information in the Document Library at the County’s **Western Slope Update** webpage at:

<http://www.edcwesternslopeupdate.com/>

### **3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

El Dorado County is in the process of updating its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) list and Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) Fee. The CIP is the long-range plan for all individual capital improvement projects and funding sources. The CIP provides strategic direction for capital projects over a current year, 5, 10, and 20 year horizon. It is used as a planning tool, and updated annually (as required by the County’s General Plan Policy TC-Xb). The TIM Fee Program is used to fund needed improvements including roadway widening, new roadways, roadway intersection improvements, and transit to deal with future growth during a defined time period (currently based on 20 years of growth). The TIM Fee funded improvements are a part of the CIP and the proposed TIM Fee Update would provide funding for traffic improvements necessary for all roadways in the county to operate at an acceptable Level of Service (LOS) under 2035 General Plan 20 year time horizon conditions, in accordance with the County’s General Plan.

The majority of new transportation projects proposed to be included on the CIP list would occur in the western, developed area of El Dorado County. For those non-TIM Fee funded improvements, typical projects would include bridge replacement/maintenance, improvements to bicycle lanes/bike routes, sidewalks, pedestrian access and trails, safety improvements such as crosswalks or signage for pedestrians at intersections, drainage improvements, traffic safety improvements such as realignments, and improvements that increase capacity of existing roadways such as road widenings or traffic signal interconnects.

The majority of the TIM Fee funded traffic improvements that would be included on the CIP list are anticipated to be located on or near US Highway 50 (US 50) in the western, developed area of El Dorado County and include roadway expansions and widenings. This area is referred to as the “western slope”, the area west of Echo Summit. The improvements are generally along US 50, beginning on US 50 on the western side of El Dorado County at the border of Sacramento and El Dorado counties and would extend along US 50 to Missouri Flat Road where the easternmost traffic improvement, construction of Diamond Springs Parkway, would occur. In addition to improvements located along US 50, two roadway improvements would be located approximately four miles north of US 50 on Green Valley Road, an additional roadway project on Green Valley Road approximately 3.5 miles northeast of the Ponderosa Interchange, and one improvement would be located two miles south of US 50 on the Latrobe Road connector . The location of the proposed traffic improvements are surrounded primarily by commercial and residential land uses, although much of it remains undeveloped land.



The working draft list of transportation improvement projects (both the TIM Fee project and non-TIM Fee CIP projects) associated with the updates to the CIP and TIM Fee Program are provided on the County's **Western Slope Update** webpage at:

<http://www.edcwesternslopeupdate.com/>

### **3.1 Project Location**

The project area includes the parts of unincorporated El Dorado County that are outside the Tahoe basin, west of Echo Summit. The majority of proposed TIM Fee Program projects would be generally along US 50, beginning on US 50 on the western side of El Dorado County at the border of Sacramento and El Dorado counties and would extend along US 50 to Missouri Flat Road. Non-TIM Fee funded CIP projects would also generally along US 50, however, some of the proposed roadway and bridge repair/maintenance projects would be located more than two miles from US 50.

## **4.0 PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR**

The EIR for the proposed project will focus on the resource areas/issues germane to this particular project. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project and will evaluate whether there are feasible mitigation measures that may lessen or avoid such impacts. As the proposed project does not include any specific construction or development, but rather the potential for transportation improvement projects to be constructed in the future, the impact analysis will be programmatic and cumulative in nature. The EIR will also identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental effects related to the following environmental issues:

- Aesthetics (Visual Resources)
- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services/Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities/Service Systems

In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and other issues required by CEQA.





## 5.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must “describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project, or to the location of the Project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the Project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” As required by CEQA, the EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of project alternatives including a No Project Alternative, which will assume no change to the current CIP and TIM Fee Programs. Additional alternatives will be identified during the environmental review process. Once selected, the alternatives will be analyzed at a qualitative level of detail in the Draft EIR for comparison against the impacts identified for the proposed project, consistent with the requirements of CEQA.