

## PURPOSE & NEED STATEMENT

### CONCURRENCE VERSION

#### PLACER PARKWAY CORRIDOR PRESERVATION TIER 1 EIS/EIR FEBRUARY 16, 2005

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## CHAPTER 2 – PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

### 2.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT

#### 2.1 Purpose

The goal of the Tier 1 phase of the proposed Placer Parkway project is to preserve a right-of-way for a proposed transportation facility that contributes to the ultimate project purpose. The ultimate purpose of the proposed Placer Parkway project is to reduce anticipated congestion on the local and regional transportation system and advance economic development goals in southwestern Placer County and south Sutter County.

The Placer Parkway's objectives are:

##### 2.1.1 Preserving Right-of-Way

The purpose of the proposed action is to preserve right-of-way for a new or upgraded east-west connector between SR-65 and SR-70/99 serving cities and unincorporated areas across southwestern Placer County and south Sutter County. Planned and proposed development in the project vicinity has been accelerating over the last few years, and opportunities for building a new or upgraded connector may be lost unless action is taken now to preserve right-of-way for project construction.

##### 2.1.2 Responding to Existing and Anticipated Travel Demand

The proposed Placer Parkway would be designed to reduce pressure on the existing transportation network and to address anticipated future congestion on the local roadway system in southwestern Placer County and south Sutter County. The proposed project would be designed to reduce total vehicle hours traveled (VHT) during the morning and evening peak commute periods (i.e., 6 to 9 AM and 3 to 6 PM), reduce the amount (VMT) and duration of travel that is spent in congested conditions in Southwestern Placer County, and improve travel times between the SR 65 corridor and SR 70/99 by maintaining a travel speed at or near the free flow speed of the Parkway, which on a freeway reflects LOS C to D conditions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Free flow speed and LOS C and D conditions on a freeway do not preclude an alternative based on: expanding existing roads, a non-freeway facility, a Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative, a shorter Parkway Alternative, or a combination of the aforementioned.

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2.1.3 Providing Access to the Regional Transportation System in Areas Planned or Projected for Job Growth

Placer Parkway would be designed to improve regional accessibility for businesses and jobs in the project vicinity including access to SR 70/99 and the I-5 corridor in northern Sacramento County including access to the Sacramento airport. With its controlled access, an objective of the proposed transportation facility would be to strike a balance among advancing planned job growth along the SR-65 and SR-70/99 corridors, avoiding urban growth inducement in areas not designated for development, and helping to preserve the rural character of southwestern Placer County and south Sutter County.

2.2 NEED

The needs for the proposed project are discussed below. The ordering of the specific needs is not intended to imply a prioritization or order of importance.

2.2.1 Need to Preserve Right-of-Way

The project vicinity includes some of the fastest growing communities in the Sacramento Metropolitan region – Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln and the Sunset Industrial Area. SACOG projects that the population in southwestern Placer County will nearly double between 2000 and 2025. Employment in the SR-65 high-technology corridor is expected to grow even faster than population. The anticipated development to support this increased population and employment will dramatically increase travel demand over the next 20 years and beyond.

The study area is under intense development pressure. Cities and counties are processing development applications and approving entitlement of new land uses in the study area. This is an ongoing process and the future of proposed land uses in the study area is not yet certain. However, given the ongoing environmental review of existing applications (including the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and the West Roseville Specific Plan and Sphere of Influence Annexation Area), the number of recent applications or pre-application submittals, and interest by the development community, it is apparent that it will become increasingly difficult and expensive to identify an appropriate corridor as a solution that meets the ultimate purpose of the proposed project. Failure to preserve a corridor as soon as feasible would risk losing the

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opportunity to reduce environmental impacts and costs.

#### 2.2.2 Travel Demand and Anticipated Congestion

##### Population Growth

Growth in population in southwestern Placer County, northern Sacramento County and south Sutter County will influence travel demand in the project vicinity. The project vicinity includes some of the fastest growing communities in the Sacramento region – Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln and the Sunset Industrial Area. SACOG projects that the population in southwestern Placer County will nearly double between 2000 and 2025.

The anticipated population in the region will dramatically increase travel demands in southwestern Placer County and south Sutter County over the next 20 years and beyond. The jurisdictions in southwestern Placer County have developed Capital Improvement Programs (funded by development fees) that would maintain a high level of service on their local roadway systems. However, limited improvements are programmed for the regional roadway system and travel speeds/travel times from Placer County to both Sacramento and Sutter counties are projected to deteriorate over the next 20 years, even with improvements to local roadways already identified in local general plans.

##### Job Growth and Goods Movement

The I-80 corridor is the major trans-Sierra roadway in northern California accommodating the movement of goods and services. Goods and services are moved to and through the project area at a growing rate using three primary modes of transportation: road, air, and rail. The combined increase of vehicles used for the movement of goods and services as well as passenger vehicles has led to increased congestion, which in turn decreases in travel times in the project area and competition for roadway capacity.

When the travel forecast model is completed, this information will be augmented with data to support this need. For now, note:

Current (2001) truck volumes and percentages:

> SR 65 north of I-80 – 9,060 trucks out of 60,000 total volume (15.1%)

> I-80 at Placer/Sacramento County line – 8,700 trucks out of 145,000 total volume (6%)

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Congestion on the regional roadways connecting Placer County with Sutter and Sacramento counties will adversely impact access to jobs. The projected increase in travel times will affect the movement of goods and people, and will have an impact on the region's economy. By 2025, SACOG estimates that total employment in southwestern Placer County (172,000 employees) will exceed total employment in downtown Sacramento (154,000 employees). The high-technology industry in the SR-65 corridor, plus development of Sutter County's industrial/commercial reserve area, requires dependable access to airports to move high-value/time-critical freight. Thus, direct and convenient access and reliable travel times to both the Sacramento International Airport and the Lincoln Regional Airport are very important to this growing regional job center.