



PCTPA I-80/SR 65

# Project Update

November 2014

## Current Status

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information?**

[I-80/SR 65  
Project Website](#)

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We know that an occasional traffic jam is just one of life's unpleasant realities. But persistent traffic congestion damages our local economy, our quality of life and our air quality and creates unsafe conditions for motorists. That is why the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) is aggressively pursuing improvements to the Interstate 80 and State Route 65 corridors.

While the I-80/SR 65 interchange is an important connection to businesses, neighborhoods and other important places for the Placer County region, it is currently acting as a bottleneck and causing persistent traffic congestion in both corridors. For the past three years PCTPA has been working on improving the interchange to reduce congestion and improve safety for motorists in the area, while maintaining access to local streets and businesses within the corridors.

"Improving the I-80/SR 65 interchange is very complex," said Luke McNeel-Caird, project manager with PCTPA. "Because the interchange connects to heavily traveled corridors with many access points to job centers, shopping and neighborhoods, we have to be very careful when we are designing the solution to avoid pushing the problem down the road." [Click here to continue reading...](#)

## Looking at an Interim Fix

We know that the persistent traffic congestion on eastbound I-80 is caused, not only by the I-80/SR 65 interchange pinch point but also because a large number of motorists need to merge within a

299 Nevada  
Street  
Auburn, CA  
95603

very limited space between the Eureka Road and Taylor Road interchanges.

Today, during the evening commute, eastbound I-80 backs up from SR 65 for more than 1 mile to Eureka Road. This back up can be very frustrating for drivers to sit through, and it is only going to get worse. In six years, it is projected that this backup will extend for 3 miles beyond Douglas Boulevard.



"PCTPA is leading the effort to make needed improvements to the I-80/SR 65 interchange but, as with any major infrastructure project, the costs and timeline are substantial," said Celia McAdam, Executive Director for PCTPA. "While we work on the larger project, PCTPA is also looking at potential solutions to relieve existing congestion."

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## Next Steps

- Continue Environmental Studies
- Prepare Draft Environmental Document
- Community Workshop - Fall 2015



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# Project Update

## Current Status *(continued)*

While creating and evaluating interim solutions to relieve the immediate traffic congestion during the commute hours, PCTPA is also developing an interchange design that will improve conditions as the Placer community grows. However, the project will need to be completed in phases since additional funding is needed to construct the interchange.

“The current picture of federal and state funding is pretty dismal,” said Celia McAdam, Executive Director for PCTPA. “Our agency has been pretty resourceful in getting federal and state dollars in the past, but unfortunately many of those funds have dried up. Right now we are exploring ways that our region might be able to take control of our own destiny and fund the construction of these important transportation projects ourselves.”

In the meantime, PCTPA is working hard at finishing the planning and design of the I-80 /SR 65 interchange. The project team has evaluated five proposed alternatives that have been refined through input from the community.

The five proposed alternatives include:

- Alternative 1 - Taylor Road Full Access Interchange
- Alternative 2 - Collector-Distributor System Ramps
- Alternative 3 - Taylor Road Interchange Eliminated
- Alternative 4 - Transportation System Management
- Alternative 5 - No-Build

To better understand how each of these potential solutions might actually work, the project team created visual simulations that show what the improvements would look like compared to today’s existing conditions. [Click here](#) for an overview of each alternative and a visualization of the improvement along the corridors.



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## Looking at an Interim Fix (*continued*)

Specifically, traffic congestion is occurring on northbound SR 65, which backs up into several lanes on eastbound I-80 while the carpool lane remains free flowing. The PCTPA Board requested that staff investigate the possibility of temporarily terminating the eastbound I-80 carpool lane at Eureka Road, which currently extends 0.9 miles past SR 65.

The project team analyzed the traffic impacts for three proposed options to reduce congestion on eastbound I-80:

- 1) Allowing trucks to use the lane next to the existing carpool lane (currently trucks are restricted to only using the outside two lanes when traveling east of SR 65)
- 2) Temporarily terminating the carpool lane (opening it to all vehicles) at Eureka Road
- 3) Temporarily terminating the carpool lane (opening it to all vehicles) at Douglas Boulevard

We discovered that any of the potential solutions would only slightly reduce traffic congestion or, in some cases, would increase congestion because cars would be weaving or waiting until the last moment to make lane changes.

Because the main cause of the congestion is where the westbound I-80 ramp joins with northbound SR 65, widening the East Roseville Viaduct on SR 65 is needed to significantly improve existing traffic conditions. This solution would be included as part of the first phase of the I-80/SR 65 Interchange Improvements project and we are focused on getting the environmental approval and funding for the first phase of the project.

We will continue to look at every possible solution to relieve congestion on the heavily traveled I-80 / SR 65 corridor. We welcome your input at [pctpa@pctpa.net](mailto:pctpa@pctpa.net).