

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Placerville is a closely-knit historical California gold rush town named after the placer gold deposits found in its riverbeds and hills in the late 1840's. The City limits are approximately nine miles wide from west to east and 2 miles wide north to south. The 2005 population is 10,350. The city core was originally built for travel by foot, horseback and stagecoach, and as a result the core infrastructure still lends itself to walking for transportation. As time went on, the automobile became the primary form of transportation and the quality of the pedestrian environment in the City has declined. Walking has become more challenging as sidewalk conditions have deteriorated and the number and speeds of automobiles have increased. However, pedestrian travel remains an important element to our transportation system and a renewed interest in non-motorized transportation has developed in recent years. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 151 workers 16 years and over within the City of Placerville reported walking as a primary means of transportation to work. Walking as a form of transportation is healthy, environmentally friendly, and enjoyable.



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On April 26, 2005 the Placerville City Council adopted a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (NMTP). The plan was developed to address several issues related to non-motorized transportation, including an inventory of the City's sidewalks. The sidewalk inventory was completed to the extent the sidewalk or pathway provides a significant transportation benefit for either bicycle or pedestrian travel and provides connectivity between activity centers; i.e. schools, commerce, parks or employment centers.

The development of the City of Placerville Pedestrian Circulation Plan (Ped Plan) is the logical next step to the NMTP process. The Ped Plan will extend the inventory included in the NMTP process to the outlying areas of the City of Placerville. The Ped Plan will provide project priorities and options for funding a subsequent "Pedestrian Circulation Improvement Program" for the ultimate construction and maintenance of an extensive sidewalk network throughout the City.

1.2 DEFINITION OF A PEDESTRIAN

The term "pedestrian" includes people who walk or otherwise travel by means of a wheelchair, electric scooter, crutches or other walking devices or mobility aides. Pedestrians include people of all ages and abilities, as well as those pulling or pushing strollers, carriages, carts and wagons, and those walking bicycles. At some point in every trip a person becomes a pedestrian, even while walking from a parked car or bus stop to a place of business or restaurant.



1.3 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Placerville Pedestrian Circulation Plan was presented on September 22, 2005 to the Placerville City Council. Public Works Director Randy Pesses engaged the City Council in a discussion with regard to the Placerville Pedestrian System and planning effort as follows:

- Existing system issues
- Deterioration of existing sidewalks
- Sidewalk gaps
- Opportunities for system expansion
- Current practice, policies and codes
- Pedestrian Plan goals
- Implementation strategies
- Possible funding strategies

The Council explored and discussed ideas including: providing somewhat flexible standards for City sidewalks; equity with regard to the funding program; prioritization of certain primary walking routes; and all aspects of education, including informing property owners of their responsibility to maintain sidewalks.

In January 2006, 3,400 public opinion “Sidewalk Surveys” were sent to residents of the City of Placerville via City water bills. The survey results were utilized to gather input on City resident’s feelings regarding several pedestrian issues related to the development of this plan. The survey questions and responses are included in Chapter 2. In March 2006, the survey results were tabulated and discussed at the public meetings of the City Planning Commission and the City Council. In April 2006, a public meeting was held to gather further input from City residents regarding the development of the plan. At that meeting, maps of the existing sidewalk conditions were presented and a public forum discussion was held covering topics including locations for new sidewalks, prioritization of projects, and funding programs for project development. The combined input from the Planning Commission, City Council and Public at large were utilized to develop the Pedestrian Circulation Plan.

1.4 PEDESTRIAN PLAN GOALS

- 1. Promote convenient and safe pedestrian circulation (per City General Plan)**
- 2. Repair and upgrade the existing system of sidewalks**
- 3. Close gaps to increase the connectivity and viability of existing system**
- 4. Expand the system to provide greater opportunities to pedestrians**



1.5 PLACERVILLE GENERAL PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal F: To promote convenient and safe pedestrian circulation.

Policies:

1. Pedestrian circulation needs and convenience in the downtown shall be given priority over the needs of through-traffic.
2. The City shall continue to enforce its program requiring adjoining property owners to repair and replace sidewalks in older neighborhoods to increase pedestrian safety and convenience.
3. In approving development projects, the City shall continue to require the construction of sidewalks connecting major pedestrian destinations, such as schools, hospitals, and government centers.
4. Where deemed necessary and appropriate, the City shall undertake construction of sidewalks connecting major pedestrian destinations, such as schools, hospitals, and government centers.
5. The City shall require all developments with a density of R1-20,000 [maximum density 2.18 dwelling units per acre] or greater to provide a sidewalk on at least one side of any street that is developed as part of the project or is used as a perimeter street by that project.
6. The City shall require all multi-family developments to provide sidewalks on both sides of any street that is developed as part of the project and on one side of any street that is used as a perimeter street by that project.
7. The City shall promote the construction of pedestrian overpasses along Highway 50 in conjunction with future highway construction.

