

# Garbolino, Uhler to host transportation open house

Roseville Mayor Gina Garbolino, Supervisor Kirk Uhler and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency invite Placer County residents to attend a community Transportation Open House at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27.

Hosted by the Roseville Chamber of Commerce,



**Gina  
Garbolino**



**Kirk Uhler**

community members can talk directly to local planners about the progress of

current transportation projects, transit programs and learn about planning underway to meet future community transportation needs.

The event takes place at the Roseville Chamber of Commerce located at 650 Douglas Blvd in Roseville.

~ Staff report

# Transportation advocates furious over governor's plan

BY ERIC LAUGHLIN

THE PRESS TRIBUNE

Placer County leaders and transportation officials said they have major concerns that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposal to replace the current sales tax on gasoline with a fixed excise tax will drastically hinder public transit.

If the Schwarzenegger budget proposal were to become reality, the current sales tax on gas would be scrapped and in its place would come a 10.8 cent excise tax.

Transit officials and others interested in expanding public transportation say the proposal would strip about \$1.65 billion in annual funds guaranteed to statewide transit under Proposition 42.

"We are extremely concerned about this proposal," Placer County Supervisor Kirk Uhler said in a public meeting Wednesday night. "Our county's ability to attract new business depends on transportation, so we see this as a direct assault on our economic viability."

Schwarzenegger ally and Vice Chair of the state Transportation Commission Jim Earp was also at the Roseville meeting and shared Uhler's position.

"To get rid of sales tax on gas, that makes me really nervous," he said.

Earp said the proposal comes after the state lost a legal battle over its diverting of funds from the transportation industry. He said part of the excise tax would be used to pay off transportation bonds, while limiting money local transit agencies would be able to draw from.

Though the proposal would add an estimated \$1.5 billion to the state's troubled general fund, other interests



Kirk Uhler, Placer County supervisor



Gina Garbolino, Roseville mayor

such as education would also be affected. Schools could lose as much as \$836 million, since the Proposition 98 funding guarantee would be altered with a sales tax change.

Earp said he has already started a petition against the measure and has confidence the proposal won't go through.

"(Schwarzenegger) needs me for other things, so we'll just have to work it out," he joked.

Other county transportation-related issues discussed Wednesday included discussion to expand the Capital Corridor in Placer County.

Placer County Transportation Planning Agency executive Celia McAdam said that although no agreements have been signed with Union Pacific (which owns the tracks), there has been more hope than ever lately that a deal might be close.

"With the economy, they are looking at alternatives and options that they may not have in the past," she said. "Traditionally they have been more interested in freight because that's how they make most of their money."

The meeting was led by Roseville Mayor Gina Garbolino. Assemblyman Ted Gaines was expected but did not attend.

SJ Mercury News  
January 20, 2010

## California budget crisis could tie up thousands of public works projects

By Denis C. Theriault

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SACRAMENTO — Public works projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars could be in jeopardy starting this summer — and possibly for years to come — because of California's continuing budget crisis, state financial officials warn.

Wednesday, the Treasurer's Office renewed its concerns that a long political squabble over the state's \$20 billion deficit could keep California from selling enough bonds in time to pay for ongoing projects. Without a budget in place by July, officials say, the state will have little hope of enticing investors to purchase its debt.

And beyond that immediate problem may loom an even larger one: Even if the state does make it to the market this spring, skittish investors may be less than eager to buy what the state is selling. Already, California doesn't have enough bond revenue to pay for all the projects voters have approved.

That worry — coupled with rising discontent over the state's growing debt burden — could push lawmakers and department heads into making tough choices about which projects to endorse and which to shelve.

In such a scenario, new for a state that for decades enjoyed a wide-open checkbook, road projects would compete against university buildings, for instance, and elementary schools would compete against children's hospitals.

"California has never faced this problem before," said Jason Dickerson of the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office.

Wednesday's warning came from Steve Coony, Treasurer Bill Lockyer's deputy, as he addressed the governing board of the state's pension system operator in Napa.

Coony said 100,000 jobs could be at risk, according to Bloomberg News, and that there is only about \$2 billion left from debt sales last year to keep bond-funded projects running.

Voters have authorized billions of dollars in infrastructure bonds in recent years, most notably a \$42 billion measure passed in 2006 to fix flood levees, roads and schools. After a bond measure clears the ballot, the state treasurer woos Wall Street and other big investors to buy the bonds, with the debt repaid through future tax revenue.

Urgent action needed

"We need the Legislature and the governor to enact a solution to this fiscal year's budget problem that has credibility in the market," said Tom Dresslar, spokesman for Lockyer's office. "A protracted budget stalemate will threaten thousands of existing projects."

H.D. Palmer, spokesman for the state's Finance Department, confirmed that urgency Wednesday.

He said Finance officials, who assemble the state's annual list of bond projects and submits them to the Legislature, are still working with Lockyer's office on an estimate of how much bond money to expect.

The state's most recent foray into the bond market, a \$4.4 billion sales pitch last fall, fell short of expectations by hundreds of millions of dollars, officials said. Millions earmarked last year for affordable housing and land acquisition, for example, never materialized, according to one legislative source.

And with California's credit rating still the nation's worst, there's a very real chance bond sales will continue to underwhelm.

"We've got to marry up our list of infrastructure priorities with the treasurer's office's professional judgment of the volume of bonds they can sell," Palmer said.

Funds may fall through

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has already proposed at least \$2 billion in new bond spending in his 2010-11 budget proposal — cash that could potentially be on shaky ground. Money for policy initiatives such as last year's historic water compromise, also relies in part on bond money.

During an Assembly Budget Committee hearing last week, Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, D-Mountain View, also worried that much of what the governor has proposed might not materialize.

He has joined a chorus of leaders, including Lockyer and Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor, in urging the Legislature to take a more realistic, longer-term approach to planning that would lay out clear priorities for how bond money should be spent.

Part of that process, they say, should include comparing the economic benefit of bond spending — say, in generating new construction jobs — against the state's looming debt burden. Servicing the state's debts costs the cash-strapped general fund hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

"When you're thinking about selling a bond," Ruskin said in an interview last week, "you know it's going to increase the pressure on services like health and human services" — which have taken big cuts in previous budgets and are slated for more this year.

Some budget experts suggest that lawmakers themselves should take a more active role in vetting bond appropriations — a politically difficult proposition.

"Most of them are job creation projects," said Dickerson, of the legislative analyst's office. "And they all have a constituency."

# Proposed exit closure raises concerns

Caltrans recommending shutdown of I-80 ramp to Taylor Road/Pacific Street

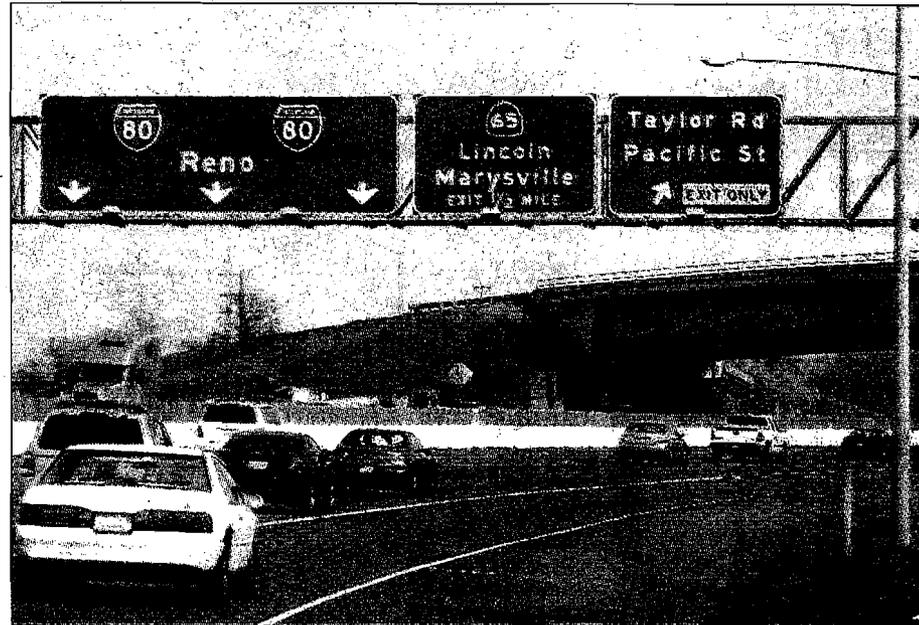
BY JON BRINES  
GOLD COUNTRY NEWS SERVICE

City and county officials are considering a recommendation from Caltrans to eliminate the Taylor Road/Pacific Street Interstate 80 off-ramp in Roseville but area business leaders promise to fight it.

The proposed alternative is spelled out in a recently finalized project initiation study to improve the I-80/Highway 65 interchange.

According to the Caltrans study, the \$280 million dollar project would also widen the East Roseville Viaduct to add high occupancy vehicle lanes and a three-lane flyover connector between I-80 and Highway 65.

"One of the (alternatives) proposes eliminating the Taylor Road off-ramp only because



Caltrans has recommended closing the Taylor Road off-ramp on Interstate 80 to facilitate the addition of a three-lane connector from 80 to Highway 65.

TIM LLOYD  
COURTESY TO THE  
JOURNAL

we need the room to make a new merge from 65 to 80 to make that a full speed interchange," Caltrans spokesman Mark Dinger said.

Dinger said elimination of the Taylor Road exit would cost

\$20 million and allow more merging room for traffic around the I-80/Highway 65 Interchange.

"We have not received any funding or anything like that to proceed," said Dinger. "It is

basically an idea and we've made a preliminary study report on it. It could take years."

The length of the project does not comfort businesses along Taylor Road that depend

• SEE EXIT PAGE A8

# EXIT: Some businesses say they'll be hurt by ramp's closure

continued from A1

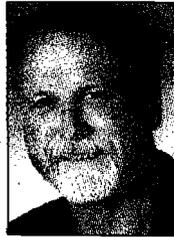
on freeway access and the thousands of cars that reportedly pass by on a daily basis.

Roseville Yamaha General Manager Sean Copelan said it's not the ideal exit but something is better than nothing at all.

"Any Sacramento and west traffic that wants to get to our dealership is fairly easy right now, so closing it would be catastrophic to us," he said.

The recession has been tough on motorcycle dealers like Yamaha. Last month, Rocklin Harley Davidson closed its dealership on Granite Drive.

"The timing couldn't be worse," Copelan said. "We're coming out of the recession and for the first time in 24 months our sales are up. For us something like this the last thing we want, to lose that momentum going



Keith Nesbitt is waiting to hear public's input

into the next two years."

One of the reasons Cheryl Tarantino opened her Meineke Car Care Center on Taylor Road seven years ago was the freeway access.

"People are stopped here all the time for things that happen on the freeway," Tarantino said. "It will cripple our business and a lot of others."

Cattlemens Restaurants President Wayne Holloway said he wants to keep the Caltrans idea from materializing.

"We would definitely and vehemently be opposed to any further access restrictions to our property and the other

**What:** Placer County Transportation Planning Agency meeting

**When:** 9 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24

**Where:** Placer County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 175 Fulweiler Ave., in Auburn, Public is welcome

area businesses," Holloway said.

The Placer County Transportation Planning Agency has the opportunity to pick an alternative.

The agency is expected to plan and secure the financing for the project and could begin that process as early as next month's meeting.

PCTPA board member and Auburn City Councilman Keith Nesbitt said he will wait to hear from the public but understands the Taylor Road

closure is not a good idea.

"My feelings at this point, I don't like the option," Nesbitt said. "There are businesses that rely on that and it is so congested I hate to take any outlets."

Fellow PCTPA board member and Rocklin City Council member Kathy Lund agrees and said the Rocklin City Council is expected to draft a letter of protest later this month.

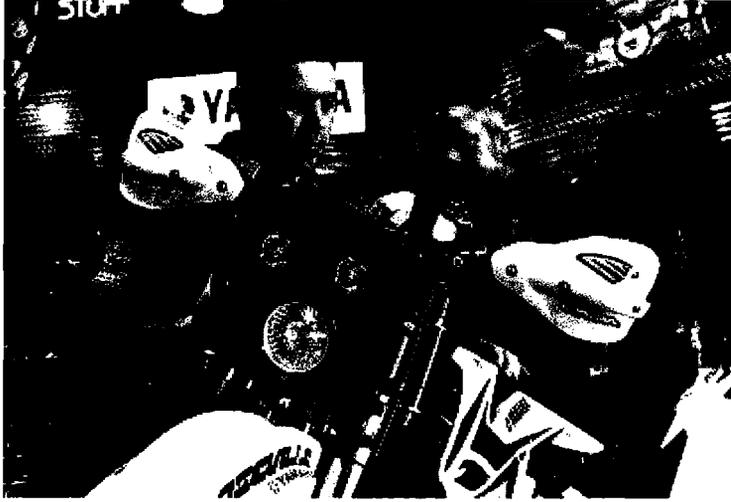
"What I want to do is just make sure that road doesn't get closed," Lund said.

Citizens who want to voice their concerns about the proposal have an opportunity to speak to PCTPA board members when they are expected to bring up the project at the Feb. 24 meeting. The PCTPA board will meet at 9 a.m. in the Placer County Board of Supervisors Chambers in Auburn.

# City to fight I-80 Taylor Road off-ramp closure

Local business leaders say proposed permanent closure would be 'catastrophic'

By Jon Brines, Placer Herald Correspondent



Tim Lloyd, Special to The Placer Herald  
Roseville Yamaha General Manager Sean Copelan, right, said his business will be affected if the Taylor Road/ Pacific Street exit off I-80 were to close. Pictured also is Zac Mickel.

Interstate 80's Taylor Road/ Pacific Street exit may be on the chopping block.

Despite a recommendation from Caltrans to eliminate the Interstate 80 Taylor Road/Pacific Street off-ramp, Rocklin city leaders plan to join area businesses to fight the proposed plan.

"What I want to do is just make sure that road doesn't get closed," said Rocklin Councilmember Kathy Lund.

A recent Caltrans study recommended eliminating the exit to allow room for a new \$280 million project that would seek to improve the I-80/Highway 65 connector. The project, in its early stages, would also widen the East Roseville Viaduct to add high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and a three-lane flyover connector between I-80 and Highway 65.

"We have not received any funding or anything like that to proceed," said Caltrans spokesman Mark Dinger. "It is basically an idea and we've made a preliminary study report on it. It could take years."

The length of the project does not comfort businesses along Taylor Road that depend on the freeway access and the hundreds of thousand cars that reportedly pass by on a daily basis.

"It would probably close our business," said Meineke Car Care Center Manager Joey Tarantino.

His family has owned the car care business for seven years and chose the location at the bottom of the ramp due to its proximity to the freeway.

"We get a lot of our business coming from the freeway," Tarantino said.

Lund, along with fellow board members of the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, has the opportunity to pick an alternative. The agency is expected to plan and secure the financing for the project and could begin that process as early as next month's meeting.

Cattiemens restaurant President Wayne Holloway said they intend to fight the measure.

"We would definitely and vehemently be opposed to any further access restrictions to our property and the other area businesses," Holloway said.

Roseville Yamaha General Manager Sean Copelan said the idea comes as his Taylor Road business is rebounding from the recession.

"Our sales are up," Copelan said. "The last thing we want to see is to lose that momentum going into the next two years. The timing couldn't be worse. Closing it would be catastrophic to us."

The Rocklin City Council is expected to draft a letter of protest to the closure proposal at its next meeting.

Citizens who want to voice their concerns for the proposal have an opportunity to speak at the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency meeting Feb. 24.

Transportation Planning Agency meeting

When: 9 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 24

Where: Placer County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 175 Fulweiler Ave. in Auburn

The public is welcome to attend.

# Capitol Corridor's new chief has big plans for rail system

Included on Kutrosky's wish list are expanded service to Placer County, free Wi-Fi and print-at-home tickets

MELANIE TURNER | STAFF WRITER

Among the changes on track for Capitol Corridor passenger rail are free Wi-Fi by late this year, a long-awaited business class service and the start of construction for additional service between Sacramento and Placer County by 2015.

Those are just a few of the goals for the system that links the Sacramento region and the Bay Area.

Capitol Corridor managing director David Kutrosky recently presented the agency's 10-year vision in Sacramento at the annual meeting of the Rail Passenger Association of California. RailPAC is a membership-supported rail advocacy organization.

"We are very, very encouraged by what he has to say and his plans for the future," RailPAC president Paul Dyson said. "His philosophy is the same as ours. Run it in a business-like way, minimize subsidies and continue to grow the service with added trains and longer trips."

The state-supported intercity passenger train system runs 32 trains daily between Sacramento and the Bay Area, with once-a-day service to Roseville, Rocklin and Auburn.

Over the past 11 years, under Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority management, the service's frequency almost quadrupled, ridership and revenue tripled and its revenue-to-cost ratio improved

56 percent.

The agency has said it made the improvements with modest increases from state funding by improving efficiency and reinvesting savings and revenue back into the service.

Kutrosky, who took over the top executive post Nov. 21, said he aims to build on past achievements of his predecessor, Gene Skoropowski, who retired in November, ending a 10-year career with the agency. Kutrosky was promoted from deputy director.

During Skoropowski's tenure, the core service increased to 32 daily trains from eight. Ridership rose 245 percent to 1.6 million passengers, and revenue increased 276 percent to \$23.5 million.

Capitol Corridor last year boasted a 93 percent on-time performance — the most on-time of any Amtrak-operated multi-frequency service in the country.

Some of upgrades planned include:

- Added railcars and locomotives. The agency is seeking state and federal funding to purchase about 20 railcars and five locomotives, and plans to submit applications for the trains in June. It would take three to four years before the cars would start to arrive.

- A business class. A plan calls for modifying some new cars with 30 to 40 seats. Riders would receive a free newspaper, snack and upgraded Wi-Fi service.

- Improvements to customer service and operations. For example, Kutrosky hopes to initiate a first-in-the-nation service allowing passengers to print tickets.

- Service alerts via text messaging by July. The service would allow riders to receive alerts on smartphones.

- Free Wi-Fi. Amtrak is expected to

## Capitol Corridor ridership and revenue

Job cuts and furloughs have negatively affected Capitol Corridor's business travel market, and discretionary travel also has taken a dip. Highlights from the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2009 include:

- Year-over-year ridership fell 5.5 percent, though compared to fiscal 2007, ridership is up 10.3 percent
- Revenue dipped 1 percent compared to fiscal 2008, but is up 21 percent over fiscal 2007.

called for 10 daily round trips between Sacramento and Roseville, as opposed to the one round trip a day today.

Capitol Corridor trains share a track with UP locomotives entering a maintenance yard. Departing and arriving freight trains in Roseville Yard — the largest railyard in the western United States — make it a challenge to move passenger trains to and from the Amtrak station in the yard.

"It becomes sort of a traffic jam," said Celia McAdam, executive director of Placer County Transportation Planning Agency.

release a national request for proposals for Wi-Fi service. Capitol Corridor is piggybacking on the plan and aims to offer the service within 12 months.

- Expanded service to Placer County, the system's most underserved market. Union Pacific Railroad has provided Capitol Corridor with a conceptual design for an expansion, Kutrosky said. The rail agency is now seeking federal funds for design and environmental work.

For years, Capitol Corridor's business plan has

Now, an idea is being floated to relocate the station. Moving it would enable Capitol Corridor to "run a whole lot more trains up there," Kutrosky said.

No alternative location has been cited. McAdam and Kutrosky have invited city officials to meet to discuss the matter later this month. The city has not been part of the discussion.

"We're in fact-finding mode," city of Roseville spokeswoman Megan MacPherson said. "We're planning to attend to learn more."

While the rail agency is busy seeking funds to implement its business plan, last week it learned it will receive \$29.2 million in federal high-speed/intercity passenger rail funding. About \$6 million will go toward a now fully funded passenger platform at Sacramento's downtown Amtrak station. The remaining \$23 million will go to ease a bottleneck between Sacramento and Davis, and boost train frequency to San Jose.

In the 15-mile stretch between Davis and Sacramento, slowdowns occur because there's no way for one train to pass another. Union Pacific plans to create a passing lane about two miles east of Mace Boulevard in Davis. A final design is complete.

About \$20 million of the federal rail funds are expected to go toward a \$52 million San Jose service expansion. That leaves \$3 million for the local project, estimated to cost as much as \$5 million.

"We will be evaluating the grant awards over the next few weeks with the feds and will then be able to determine what is the exact amount of funding for the (project)," Kutrosky said.

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