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MICHAEL WOODMAN, Executive Director
AARON HOYT, Deputy Executive Director

Grass Valley • Nevada City

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File: 950.6

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Michael Woodman, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report

DATE: November 12, 2025

PROJECT UPDATE ZION STREET / SACRAMENTO STREET CORRIDOR PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MOBILITY / SCHOOL ACCESS IMPROVEMENT STUDY

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) in coordination with the City of Nevada City contracted with the consulting firm GHD Inc. to conduct a planning study and facilitate public outreach necessary to analyze potential improvements and develop recommendations to improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility, safety, and access to schools in the Zion Street/Sacramento Street Corridor from the intersection of Ridge Road/Nevada City Highway/Zion Street to the Sacramento Street/S. Pine Street intersection.

The first in a series of public workshops was held on March 25, 2025, in the Forest Charter School – Multipurpose Room to kick-off the planning study. The goal of the first workshop was to gather initial input on existing corridor conditions and concerns, as well as the types of improvements that residents may be interested in. Following the first workshop, the consultant team began developing potential improvement concepts that considered the initial public input received along with right-of-way constraints and utilities to be reviewed by the public.

The potential improvement concepts were presented to the public at a Community Workshop held at the Miners Foundry on October 23, 2025 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. The workshop was attended by approximately 25+ community members. Following an introductory presentation of the project and overview of improvement concepts, attendees worked collaboratively at tables to discuss the potential improvement options for different segments of the project corridor. At the end of the exercise each group reported out general items of support and key considerations.

The project progress to date and a summary of the input received will be presented to the Nevada City Council at their November 12, 2025 meeting to be held at 6:30 PM, located at Nevada City City Hall, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, CA 95959.

For members of the community that were unable to attend the recent Community Workshop, information on the project, as well as opportunities for input can be found on the project website located at <https://ghd.mysocialpinpoint.com/zion-sac-mobility-plan>.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE: STATE ROUTE 49 MULTI-MODAL CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS (NEVADA CITY)

On December 7, 2022, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) awarded NCTC in coordination with Nevada City, \$13.8 million of state Active Transportation funding for the construction of the *State Route 49 Multi-modal Corridor Improvement Project*. The improvements are intended to help reduce speeds through the corridor and allow active transportation users to travel along and across this section of the SR 49 corridor more safely and comfortably, while accessing important destinations along the segment of SR 49 between the intersection of SR 20/49/Uren Street and County Juvenile Hall driveway/SR 49. Caltrans District 3 has been designated as the implementing agency for the project and is working in coordination with NCTC and Nevada City. The project is currently in the Project Approval/Environmental Documentation phase. Funding for the Right-of-Way and Design phases are programmed in FY 2025/26 and construction funding in FY 2026/27.

A Public Open House was held October 2, 2025 in the Nevada County Board of Supervisors Chambers, to present an overview of the improvements to be constructed and the project schedule. The workshop was attended by approximately 45 community members. The comments received included consideration for installing downward directed lighting to limit light pollution and installing landscaping appropriate for the scenic nature of the corridor. Residents from Orchard Street indicated that they were concerned that the proposed roundabout at SR 49/Maidu Avenue/Orchard Street might result in increased traffic on their street from traffic desiring to access the Eric Rood Government Center. Several of the neighbors on Orchard Street requested that NCTC and Caltrans consider not including entrance to the roundabout from Orchard Street and instead provide a right turn bypass with access to SR 49 eastbound only. Residents from the North Bloomfield Road area expressed appreciation for the proposed Coyote Street/SR 49 intersection improvements maintaining the existing turning movements. Some residents from lower Coyote Street requested closing public access from SR 49. Other participants voiced support of the multimodal improvements to make travel in the corridor safer for residents and children trying to access downtown and/or the trails. Comment letters that have been received by NCTC on the project are attached.

NCTC staff have been working with the Caltrans project team and Nevada City staff to determine if the comments received can be accommodated into the project within the grant funding approved for the project. Any modifications to the project concept approved in the grant application would need to be approved by the California Transportation Commission. In addition, any change to public access would need to be approved by the City of Nevada City in accordance with adopted policies and procedures. NCTC is scheduled to provide a presentation to the Nevada City Council at their December 11, 2025 city council meeting to provide an update on the project and discuss input received at the public open house.

attachments



To the Grass Valley City Council and the Nevada County Transportation Commission:

Public Comment re: SR49 Multimodal Corridor Plan 11/12

Thank you for calling this important meeting around the SR-49 Multimodal Corridor Plan. There is obvious need for better traffic control through the portion of SR49 that this review covers. The intersection of Cement Hill Rd and HWY49 is dangerous and there is no one on using our road that hasn't had a close call entering HWY49. Roundabouts are a proven good solution to modifying traffic patterns, but we have some concerns regarding its effectiveness here. Our concerns:

- Two traffic circles within a few hundred yards of each other
- Proper consideration of colors for hardscape that blends with the neutral, natural landscape
- Light pollution from signs
- Pedestrian and bicycle mobility through the roundabout
- Adequate landscaping of the island to enhance our efforts for the HWY49 Scenic Corridor
- Evacuation considerations to not create a choke point at the roundabouts if lanes are modified to increase traffic flow in one direction during an emergency

Thank you for your consideration,

Will Hart, President Greater Cement Hill Neighborhood Association

October 14, 2025

Orchard Street and the State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Project

To Whom It May Concern,

I live on Orchard Street, a short one-way residential street in Nevada City that begins at East Broad and ends at Highway 49 where the new roundabout is proposed. Our street has 15 homes, no sidewalks, and lots of everyday neighborhood activity, kids playing, people walking to town, and pets out with their owners.

Right now, many drivers use Orchard as a shortcut to the Rood Center to avoid the East Broad and Highway 49 light. Connecting Orchard Street directly into the roundabout would greatly increase traffic, change the feel of our neighborhood, and create real safety concerns. Over time, this could also mean added costs and risks for the City, such as the need for speed bumps, sidewalks, and other safety measures.

Here are a few practical options to consider, especially with other major Nevada City projects moving forward nearby:

1. Move the roundabout. The intersection at the Highway 49/20 split and Uren Street would be a better location. It's already a known safety issue and could benefit more from a roundabout than Orchard Street.
2. If it stays as planned, block direct access from Orchard Street. Allow residents to exit only onto Highway 49 eastbound with a small merge lane and stop or yield sign. We can continue using the East Broad light for westbound access.
3. Keep new projects in mind. The planned courthouse at Highway 49 and Coyote Street, along with the new mental health facility at the Rood Center, will already increase traffic and pedestrian activity in the area.
4. Simplify crosswalks and lighting. Not every planned crosswalk connects to a sidewalk. At Orchard, one well-placed crosswalk with a pedestrian-activated signal (like the one at Brock and Zion) would be safer and more effective.
5. Be consistent with lighting. Please follow Nevada City's outdoor lighting guidelines to preserve the character of our community and reduce light pollution for nearby homes.

I fully support improving safety and access for everyone who uses this corridor. I simply ask that these changes take into account the safety, livability, and small-town feel of Orchard Street.

Thank you for your consideration,

Debra Plass
Nevada City, California

October 18, 2025
Nevada City Council
Nevada County Transportation Committee
Cal Trans
Regarding: State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Project

After attending the Open House at the Rood Center October 2nd regarding the State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Project, I was struck that so much work has been completed on this project without any user or neighbor feedback. The residents of Nevada City and the neighbors are the most frequent users of these roadways, as drivers and pedestrians so their input should have value. A project of this size should consider the current situation including the future courthouse location, accidents that have occurred at the Hwy 20/49 intersections, and the cross streets along the highway, specifically Coyote and Orchard. They are small city streets not meant to accommodate through traffic. The accessory improvements should be sensitive to the pedestrians, bikers and daily users. Lighting, during construction and post construction should take into account our neighborhoods. High use of these areas at night is rare and the current improvements are over-kill to what is needed.

Orchard street is a narrow single lane road for walking to town and where people walk their dogs. Currently the street is inundated by cars using it as a shortcut to the Rood Government Center. As a neighbor to the project on Orchard Street I would prefer to see no Roundabout at the Orchard, Maidu, and Highway 49 Intersection. It would seem that if a traffic circle was built at Cement Hill and West Broad Street, where vehicle speed is an issue, and with the traffic light at East Broad Street, the traffic flow will be slower and easily accommodate the traffic to and from the Government Center. If this option is not available I would like to see a dedicated Right Turn off of Orchard Street that doesn't participate in the Maidu Roundabout. This way the traffic that is currently generated by mapping devices and people who don't want to stop at the light on East Broad will not choose Orchard Street as a bypass to the Rood Government Center.

Please, please, please be sensitive to the neighbors when building this huge project. Be courteous with light at night and shorten the tall light structures to restrict light pollution. Highway 49 is virtually empty through most of the night and early morning hours. There are very few hours in any given day where there is any real traffic congestion. Nevada City is still a small town that doesn't need such large improvements to accommodate one or two hours of weekday traffic.

Christine Foster
129 Orchard Street
Nevada City CA 95959
530-277-0848
cfoster57@gmail.com

From: Don Joy <donjoy1946@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 1:54 PM
To: Lou.ceci@nevadacityca.gov; duanestrawser@gmail.com; Robb.tucker@co.nevada.ca.us; jrs@wintonstrauss.com; jzabriskie@townoftruckee.com; tomi@cityofgrassvalley.com; Mike Woodman; sue.hoek@nevadacountyca.gov
Subject: State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Project
Attachments: Roundabout Residents Survey.pdf

October 20, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Don Joy and I am a resident of Nevada City residing at 129 Orchard Street. Many of the residents of our street have been in touch with you and your staff, members of the NCTC, and county government officials regarding the State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Project and the adverse effects that the roundabout at Highway 49 and Maidu Avenue will have on our neighborhood.

Orchard Street is a single lane, residential one-way street with 14 single family dwellings. There are no sidewalks and the street is used by children, pedestrians, and cyclists as a safe, quiet place to access local trails, the historical St. Canice Cemetery, or simply a quiet place to walk the dog or push their strollers. There are also several elderly and/or disabled City residents who navigate Orchard Street with their walkers and canes. Currently, the majority of non-resident traffic uses Orchard Street as a shortcut to access the Rood Center via Maidu Avenue. We feel that the proposed roundabout will increase traffic flow and create a situation that will be detrimental to the safety and quality of life on our street.

The results of a survey of residents on October 10 showed a unanimous vote in favor of Orchard being isolated from the Maidu/Hwy 49 roundabout, and supported a proposed provision for a single lane residential egress for access to Hwy 49 east. I've attached a copy of that survey with its results for your review. Currently, pedestrians crossing Hwy 49 from Orchard utilize the southwest side corner of the intersection to access the sidewalk and adjacent foot paths along Maidu Ave. There are no sidewalks along Maidu on the east side of the intersection and there's no reason for crossing the highway there. Eliminating the proposed sidewalks and crosswalks on the east side could free up enough space for an egress lane from Orchard to Hwy 49 eastbound with minimal changes to the current dimensions of the plan. Through traffic for 49 eastbound would continue on the roundabout but access from Orchard would be denied. Orchard Street residents understand that they would have to use traffic light at East Broad and 49 for access to westbound 49.

If you haven't personally walked our street, I invite you to do so at your earliest convenience. It would be a shame to diminish the beauty and quietude of this beautiful tree-lined residential neighborhood used by so many residents and visitors to Nevada City. I'd be happy to meet with anyone interested for a personal tour!

Thank you for your attention,
Sincerely,
Don Joy
129 Orchard Street
Nevada City
donjoy1946@gmail.com
530/264-6593

I am writing in opposition to “The State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Improvement Project”, specifically the Orchard St roundabout, which is ill-conceived at best and will exacerbate already unsafe conditions on Orchard St.

I own a home at 121 Orchard St in Nevada City. I lived there for 15 years (1989-2004). My brother, Chris, and his wife, Diseree, have rented the home from me since 2004.

First, I have some issues with the process:

- 1) The “Project Background” states (in part) “...Project was initiated following concerns from Nevada City residents’ voiced at the May 2018 Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) meeting...” The minutes of the May 2018 NCTC meeting shows 3 speakers, all focused on Hwy 49 at W Broad St re: access to Hirschman’s Pond and Trailhead. 3 people is hardly an accurate representation of “Nevada City residents”. I assume there was other input provided to NCTC, but those details are not identified anywhere. Apparently, there was no input from any other Nevada City residents, including Orchard St, at NCTC meetings.
- 2) Throughout the project there has been no direct notification of public hearings or project plans to Orchard St residents, who are the most directly impacted. Anyone can find the Orchard St addresses in a few minutes from County parcel maps, yet no effort was made to inform Orchard St residents.
- 3) Caltrans is planning traffic studies as part of the Project Approval and Environmental Design phase which has not started yet. Why were these studies not done earlier? There have been no safety statistics cited, and no safety assessment of the additional traffic on Orchard St residents, despite “safety” being a major theme of the project goals.

Orchard St is essentially a one-lane road. See attached pictures for detail. While there are One-Way signs at the Hwy 49 end, residents travel both ways: out to Hwy 49 and into Nevada City via Orchard and E Broad. Many residents do not have off-street parking and routinely park on the street, especially on the E Broad St end, leaving room for on-lane/one-way traffic only. Visitors also use the available on-street parking. Making it easier to use Orchard St to get to the Rood Center creates safety issues for Orchard residents, visitors, anyone travelling on Orchard and will likely impede emergency vehicles.

An ad hoc traffic count at the Hwy 49/Orchard St intersection (done by one of the residents during morning commute hours) shows two-thirds of the traffic on Orchard St crosses over to the Rood Center. The balance of the traffic is residents turning right to Hwy 49.

There are 14 homes on Orchard St, including mine. All 14 have signed a petition IN OPPOSITION TO the current plan. All 14 are IN SUPPORT OF isolating Orchard St from the roundabout including a single lane for right turns onto Hwy 49 that is not connected to the roundabout.

Please listen to the people who know Orchard St the best, the existing residents. There are other major issues with the project and its design, not the least of which are changes to the scenic corridor and the small town feel of Nevada City.

Thank you for the work you do and your consideration of this serious issue.

John Vaughan, owner: 121 Orchard St.
11793 Lower Colfax Rd, Grass Valley, CA 95945
916-807-0430







October 10, 2025

To Whom It May Concern.

We, the undersigned residents of Orchard Street in Nevada City, Ca, do request that Orchard Street be isolated from the roundabout proposed at the intersection of Highway 49 and Maidu Avenue in the State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Improvement Project. We make this request to eliminate the volume of traffic that will utilize our residential neighborhood as a shortcut to the Rood Center via the new roundabout. We also request the construction of a single lane on-ramp from Orchard Street to Highway 49 eastbound to provide an egress for residents. For west bound access to Hwy 49, we understand that we will use either the traffic light at East Broad and Hwy 49 or the new roundabout at West Broad and Hwy 49.

<u>Print Name</u>	<u>Street Number</u>	<u>Signature</u>
<u>Don Joy</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>Don Joy</u>
<u>Mindy Sealander</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>Mindy Sealander</u>
<u>Nathan Bonar</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>Nathan Bonar</u>
<u>Elad Ganigay</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>Elad Ganigay</u>
<u>Shawn Dixon</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>Shawn Dixon</u>
<u>Debra Plarr</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>Debra Plarr</u>
<u>G. Pokal</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>G. Pokal</u>
<u>Desiree Vayle</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>Desiree Vayle</u>
<u>Melody Lawrence</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>Melody Lawrence</u>
<u>MICHELLE J. FOASBERG</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>mjfoasberg</u>
<u>Cathy FARGO</u>	<u>571</u>	<u>Cathy Fargo</u>
<u>PATRICK RAE</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>Patrick Rae</u>
<u>Diane G. Nowland</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>Diane G. Nowland</u>
<u>STEPHEN SHEPPARD</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>verbal</u>
<u>KATHY DOTSON</u>	<u>128</u>	<u>Kathy Dotson</u>

★ Received ★

NOV 07 2025

M. KATHLEEN BUTZ BERARDI
519 Coyote Street
Nevada City, CA 95959
kathleenberardi@sbcglobal.net cell (916) 201-9604

November 5, 2025

Honorable Members of the Nevada County
Transportation Commission (NCTC)
Michael Woodman, Executive Director
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102
Nevada City, CA 95959

Honorable Members of the Nevada City Council
City of Nevada City
Mayor Adam Kline
317 Broad Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Jeremy Linder, CalTrans Public Information Officer
jeremy.linder@DOT.ca.gov

Re: Coyote Street & SR-49 impact of Multimodal Corridor Improvement Project

Dear Honorable Members:

I write to address the significant impact on Coyote Street of the proposed improvements along the Highway 49 Multimodal Corridor Project, scheduled for construction beginning in the spring of 2028. Please consider this input for the scheduled December 2025, Nevada City Council meeting.

Background

My husband and I moved into our home at 519 Coyote Street 44 years ago. Leonard passed away last year, but I continue to live in our Coyote Street home.

When the Golden Center Freeway was constructed through Nevada City in the late 1960s, homes and businesses along the segment of Coyote Street from Washington Street to the new freeway's on/off ramps (Exit 186) were lost. Nevertheless, a historic

neighborhood was preserved along the portion of Coyote Street from Dean Alley to the intersection of Coyote Street and Highway 49. I refer to that segment as the “affected neighborhood.” The portion of Coyote Street that continues the other side of Highway 49 (“Upper Coyote Street”) was a dirt and gravel road. To preserve the affected neighborhood, a sign “No Thru Trucks” was posted across from Dean Alley to help limit traffic and the impact on residents. As traffic volume increased, the sign has been ignored.

When the county government administration center (Rood Center) and new jail facility were built in 1987, the automobile traffic on Coyote Street increased dramatically, particularly with Orchard Street made into a one-way street, closing that access into the downtown. The traffic, noise and size of the vehicular traffic (large fire engines, emergency vehicles, sirens, etc.) further increased with the U.S. Forest Service offices and the fire station on Upper Coyote Street. Although a stop sign was erected at Coyote and Alexander Streets for traffic headed into the downtown, vehicles exiting Highway 49 onto Coyote Street frequently do not stop. It is treacherous for all of us with driveway access onto Coyote Street (and our families and guests). The situation is further aggravated as the portion of Coyote Street in the affected neighborhood is very narrow and without sidewalks beyond the intersection with Alexander Street.

Coyote Street at Highway 49 as a Cul-de-Sac

Some years ago, our neighbors, Ken and Kay Baker, urged the City’s consideration of closing Coyote Street at Highway 49, for safety and noise concerns, in essence creating a cul-de-sac at the intersection of Coyote Street and Highway 49. My husband and I endorsed this request. I urge the City Council and the NCTC to study this proposal.

The selected new courthouse site across Highway 49 and now the State Route 49 Multimodal Corridor Improvement Project both underscore the need for the State and City to give thoughtful consideration to the cul-de-sac proposal. The time to travel from Highway 49 to Highway 20 and the Coyote Street off ramp on Highway 20 (Exit 186) rather than using Coyote Street directly from Highway 49 is insignificant. Coyote Street should not be a frontage road. It is narrow, with no sidewalks past Alexander Street. It is dangerous: the homes along this section of Coyote Street (from Dean Alley to Highway 49) are accessible by at least nine driveways. There is the risk of significant injury in attempting to access one’s property or even walk across the street to see a neighbor, made even more perilous when so many drivers ignore the stop sign at Alexander and Coyote Streets.

Addition of Dedicated Turn Lanes at Coyote Street

The proposed addition of two dedicated turn lanes with arrows (one in each direction) on Highway 49 in the Multimodal Corridor Improvement Project will funnel even more traffic onto already over-burdened Coyote Street. There is an excellent alternative. Close Coyote Street at Highway 49 to through vehicular traffic (preserving pedestrian and bicycle access) and let the Coyote Street/Exit 186 off ramp do its job: provide access over the lower portion of Coyote Street which is much wider and has homes or businesses on just one side of the street.

In summary, the safety and quality of life for residents of the affected neighborhood are at a critical juncture. Thoughtful planning and proactive measures are essential to ensure that Coyote Street remains a safe and livable environment. I urge all stakeholders to prioritize community well-being and long-term preservation in future development decisions. Please examine the current Multimodal Corridor Project and the significant impact it would have on this old Nevada City neighborhood and seek a revised design that would protect the safety of residents, guests, service providers, pedestrians and bicyclists, and preserve the Highway 49 Scenic Corridor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



M. Kathleen Butz Berardi

MKB

cc via E-mail:

Adam Kline, Mayor

adam.kline@nevadacityca.gov

Lou Ceci

lou.ceci@nevadacityca.gov

Daniela Fernandez

Daniela.Fernandez@nevadacityca.gov

Doug Fleming

doug.fleming@nevadacityca.gov

Gary Petersen

gary.petersen@nevadacityca.gov

cc: Joan Philipe, Interim City Manager

cc via *E-mail*:

Ken and Kay Baker
Bob and Peggy Wright

cc: Suellen Brattin and John Antonsen
Patricia Dunne