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Guest Commentary: Transportation plan takes aim at traffic

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Representatives from every city and county in the Sacramento region have been working since early 2005 on a plan to address the No. 1 issue in our region -- traffic. The 31 elected officials who serve on the Sacramento Area Council of Governments have released a list of projects for a Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035.

For the first time in our region, transportation projects are being planned based on the types of land uses projected community by community. Simply put, the plan is a practical and forward-thinking plan to improve mobility for individuals and businesses.

We have heard from residents at community workshops and meetings and in survey research that they want smarter land use, better road maintenance, increased transit, and better connections with transit, freeway enhancements and more bicycle and pedestrian amenities throughout the region.

The detailed Metropolitan Transportation Plan project list reflects the broad-based community input and includes everything from sidewalks to streetcars, road improvements to regional rail and many other types of investments.

We expect to add another 1 million people to our region over the next three decades, but by reducing the number of miles households drive, planning for housing closer to where people work, increasing transit access and improving our streets so that walking and bicycling are safe and easy, we can stop congestion from spiraling out of control.

Folsom residents would benefit from 15-minute peak-period frequency to Folsom because of light-rail track improvements between Sunrise and downtown Folsom, greater connectivity with a four-lane Green Valley Road between Folsom and El Dorado Hills, and Bus Rapid Transit and enhanced bus service connecting Citrus Heights, Orangevale and Folsom via Greenback Lane.

Our air quality would also benefit from fewer vehicles idling and increased funding for air quality programs.

We want to hear from individuals in communities across the region about the projects we are considering. You can review the project list by visiting www.sacog.org/mtp2035 or calling (916) 321-9000.

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