Sacramento Region
Bus/Carpool Lane
Network Vision
Bus/Carpool Lanes, also known as High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, are a critical element in reducing traffic congestion and maintaining mobility throughout the Sacramento region. Freeway HOV lanes move more people in fewer vehicles than a mixed flow lane.

In the Sacramento region, the vision of the HOV network is to have HOV lanes on all freeways, as well as HOV bypass on-ramp lanes and direct freeway-to-freeway HOV connectors at major interchanges for seamless HOV travel opportunities.

HOV lanes are designed to maximize the number of people traveling in a corridor while minimizing the number of vehicles. HOV lanes limit the number of vehicles traveling along a corridor by requiring a minimum number of passengers per vehicle during specific peak travel times. The hours of operation of the HOV lanes also vary depending on the needs of the local areas. In the Sacramento region, HOV lanes currently require a minimum of two occupants between the hours of 6:00 AM to 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Monday thru Friday.

The HOV lanes are less congested than mixed flow lanes and the increased travel speeds and time savings provide incentives for commuters to carpool and use transit instead of driving single-occupant vehicles. Other benefits of the HOV system are fewer vehicle emissions, less energy and fuel consumption and improved safety throughout the system. Study data has shown that the HOV lanes in Sacramento are very successful:

- Compared to adjoining lanes, HOV lanes in the Sacramento Area move 23-44% of the people on the freeway, while using only 13-27% of the total vehicle volume:

- HOV users in the Sacramento area save an average of 10 minutes during the peak commute hour, when compared with users of mixed flow lanes.

- Transit buses regularly use the HOV lanes during the commute periods.

The Vision for the Bus/Carpool Network will take many years to implement. Caltrans will continue to work with its local and regional partners to plan, program, and construct individual segments. The Regional Transportation Plans for the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, and the El Dorado County Transportation Commission already include key segments for which project development activities should begin quickly to ensure the region is prepared to take advantage of any upcoming transportation funding opportunities.