That’s because commuter buses also use them. But so do motorcycles, electric cars, emergency vehicles and high-mileage hybrid cars. None of them is high-occupancy because each can be driven in the lane by a solo occupant.

We could call them Everybody But Us lanes.

Nearby, on the Capital City Freeway, reader George Thompson lamented to us a while back that drivers there don’t seem to notice that the speed limit is only 55, not 65 and certainly not 75.

Our advice: You’re right, George, but stay in the slow lane anyway.

How many people, by the way, know what the Capital City Freeway is, much less the speed limit? We weren’t completely sure ourselves.

Indeed, the CCF is a road of many disguises, plus an unexpected twist.

Caltrans tells us the CCF officially starts in West Sacramento at the Interstate 80 split, where I-80 heads north to loop through Natomas (“over the top” as they say at Caltrans). Officially, at this point, the CCF is also Highway 50.

The CCF crosses the Sacramento River into the Central City where it gains another alias—the W/X freeway as it runs between W and X streets.

If that’s not confusing enough, the CCF suddenly swoops sharply north at the Highway 99 junction. That stretch is known in the Caltrans numbers world as State Route 51.

Finally, it deposits drivers back on I-80 eastbound, just beyond Watt Avenue.

Ironically, the Capital City Freeway moniker came about as a way to reduce confusion. The freeway had been called Business 80, but having both an I-80 and a Business 80 running through town confused the unwary.

So, in 1995, the city won state approval to rename the freeway. Some rejected suggestions: Camellia Freeway, River City Freeway and Yellow Brick Road. One guy suggested Hell Highway, given the congestion.

Maybe Caltrans would like some suggestions on a new name for carpool lanes? Then again, if the Hell Highway guy is still around, maybe not.

* * *

E-mail your transportation concerns to backseat@sacbee.com or call The Bee’s Tony Bizjak at (916) 321-1059. Please leave your name and a telephone number so we can contact you.