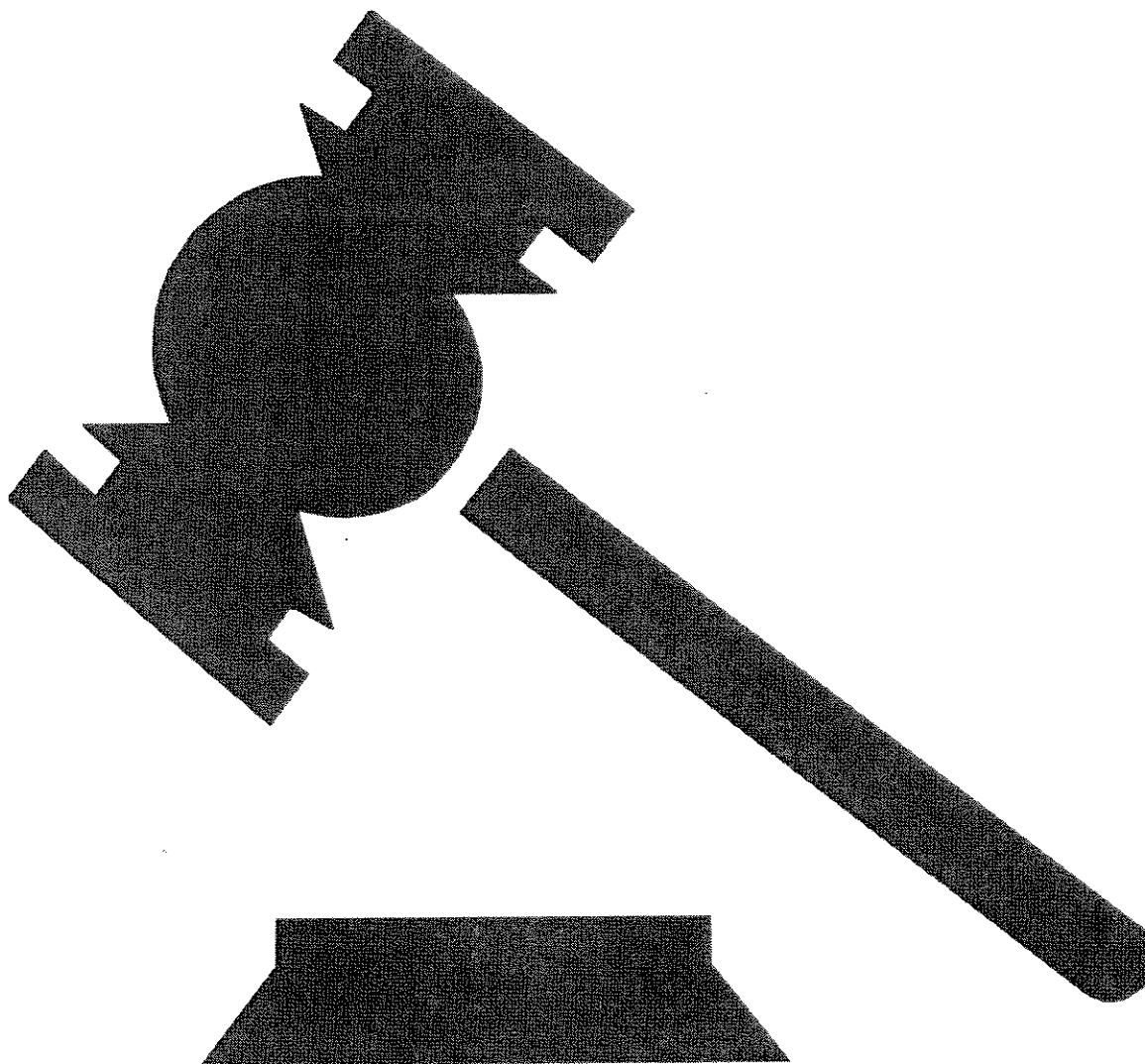




***TRANSPORTATION
CONSENT ITEMS
AGENDA ITEMS II. A-E.***

BEFORE THE
COUNCIL OF FRESNO COUNTY GOVERNMENTS
RESOLUTION NO. 2009-07

In the Matter of:)
)
TRANSPORTATION)
DEVELOPMENT ACT)
OF 1971)
_____)

RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL
TRANSPORTATION FUNDING
CLAIM FOR THE COUNTY OF
FRESNO, 2008-09

WHEREAS, the Council of Fresno County Governments (COG) is the administrator of the Local Transportation Fund as provided by Chapter 1400 of the California Statutes of 1971, and the State Transit Assistance Fund as provided by Chapter 161 & 322 of the Statutes of 1979 and 1982, respectively, and

WHEREAS, the COG has the authority to review claims and allocate such funds in accordance with the Transportation Development Act of 1971 and Chapter 3 of Title 21 of the California Code of Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the County of Fresno has submitted a Transportation Funding Claim for its 2008-09 fiscal year apportionment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Transportation Funding Claim submitted by the County of Fresno has been reviewed and the following findings are hereby made:

1. The Funding Claim submitted by the County of Fresno has been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the adopted Regional Transportation Plan.
2. That the COG finds that priority consideration has been given to claims to offset reductions in federal operating assistance and the unanticipated increase in the cost of fuel, to enhance existing public transportation services, and to meet high-priority regional, countywide, or areawide public transportation needs.
3. On June 26, 2008 the COG Board approved Resolution 2008-23 which found that public transportation needs within the County of Fresno and its sphere of influence will be reasonably met in 2008-09.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the COG hereby approves the Transportation Funding Claim submitted by the County of Fresno and allocates monies from the Transportation Development Act in accordance with the attached claim which is hereby made a part of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Auditor-Controller of the County of Fresno cause the approved claim to be paid in the manner and time directed by the Executive Director of the Council of Fresno County Governments.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was passed and adopted by the Council of Fresno County Governments this 26th day of March, 2009.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

ATTEST:

Signed: _____
Trinidad M. Rodriguez, Chairman

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution of the Council of Fresno County Governments duly adopted at a regular meeting thereof held on the 26th day of March, 2009.

Signed: _____
Tony Boren, Executive Director

Date: 3/3/2009

Claimant: County of Fresno

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING CLAIM FOR FISCAL YEAR: 2008/09

TO: Council of Fresno County Governments
2100 Tulare Street, Suite 619
Fresno, California 93721

FROM: Applicant: County of Fresno
Address: 2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor
City: Fresno, CA Zip Code: 93721
Contact: Margo Lerwill Phone: 262-4881

This applicant is an eligible claimant pursuant to Section 99203 of the Public Utilities Code and certifies that the following transportation funds are available to be claimed:

Local Transportation Fund

Apportionment	\$ <u>6,153,530</u>
Surplus (Prior Years)	\$ _____
Unexpended, Held by Claimant	\$ _____
Other Agency	\$ _____

State Transit Assistance Fund

Estimate	\$ <u>1,693,223</u>
Prior Year Carryover	\$ _____
Unexpended, Held by Claimant	\$ _____

Other

Audit Exception/Impairment (required General Fund Payback)	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____

TOTAL \$ 7,846,753

In accordance with Title 21, Chapter 3, Subchapter 2 and 2.5 of the California Code of Regulations, it is requested that an allocation be made in the total amount of

SEVEN MILLION, EIGHT HUNDRED FORTY SIX THOUSAND, SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY THREE

(spell out amount)

for the purposes and respective amounts specified in the attached claim be drawn from the Local Transportation Fund and State Transit Assistance Fund

Authorized Signature: _____

Title: Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Date: March 3, 2009

Claimant: County of Fresno

PURPOSE	AMOUNT	SUB-TOTAL
1. Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities (Art. 3)	\$ 123,017	
(Art. 8a)	\$	
Audit Exceptions (General Fund Payback)	\$	
Unexpended Funds Held By Claimant	\$	
	SUB-TOTAL	\$ 123,017
2. Regional Transportation Planning		SUB-TOTAL \$ 171,793
3. Public Transportation (Art. 4)	\$	
(Art. 8c)	\$	
Other Agency ()	\$	
Other Agency ()	\$	
State Transit Assistance Funds	\$	
Audit Exceptions (General Fund Payback)	\$	
Unexpended Funds Held By Claimant	\$	
Other, specify ()	\$	
	SUB-TOTAL	\$
4. Community Transit Service (CTSA, Art. 4.5)		SUB-TOTAL \$
5. Streets & Roads (Art. 8a)	\$ 4,993,894	
Audit Exceptions (General Fund Payback)	\$	
Unexpended Funds Held By Claimant	\$	
	SUB-TOTAL	\$ 4,993,894
6. To Be Claimed By:		
(Fresno County Rural Transit Agency)	\$ 569,190	
(Consolidated Transp. Serv. Agency)	\$ 304,074	
Other (FAX)	\$ 1,654,764	
Other (Clovis Transit)	\$ 30,021	
Other ()	\$	
	SUB-TOTAL	\$ 2,550,568
7. Reserved in Fund Pending Further Claiming		SUB-TOTAL \$

GRAND TOTAL	\$ <u>7,846,753</u>
(Claim Total Must Agree With Total On First Page)	
Minus All Unexpended Funds Held By	\$ _____
GRAND TOTAL PAYABLE TO CLAIMANT	\$ <u>7,846,753</u>

Allocation instructions and payment by the Fresno County Auditor-Controller to the applicant is subject to such monies being available for distribution, and to the provisions that such monies will be used only in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Transportation Development Act.

Date: 3/3/2009Claimant: County of Fresno

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Two percent (2%) of the claimant's Local Transportation Fund apportionment must be spent on bicycle and pedestrian facilities (PUC 99233.3 and 99234); such claims are to be filed as Article 3. Claims for projects in excess of 2% may be filed as Article 8a (PUC 99400(a)). If other funding is to be used with Local Transportation Funds to implement projects, such funding should be shown on the claim form.

Project Title and Brief Description		Project Cost
1. (Generic)	Various Bicycle and Pedestrian facilities throughout the.....	\$ <u>123,017</u>
claimant's jurisdiction;		
AND/OR		
1. (Specific)		\$ _____
2. (Specific)		\$ _____
(add sheets if necessary)		
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS		\$ <u>123,017</u>

Revenue Source & Amount

LTF (Article 3)	\$ <u>123,017</u>
LTF (Article 8a)	\$ _____
Other:	\$ _____
Other:	\$ _____
Audit Exception - G.F. Payback ..	\$ _____

STREETS AND ROADS CLAIM

Local Transportation Funds coming to claimants within Fresno County may be used for streets and roads improvements and maintenance pursuant to Article 8 (PUC 99400), but only after Fresno COG makes a finding that public transportation needs within the claimant's jurisdiction are reasonably met by satisfying the service requirements set forth by the Regional Transportation Plan (PUC 99401.5).

Project Title and Brief Description		Project Cost
1. (Generic)	Development, Construction and Maintenance of Facilities	\$ <u>4,993,894</u>
AND/OR		
1. (Specific)		\$ _____
2. (Specific)		\$ _____
(add sheets if necessary)		
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS		\$ <u>4,993,894</u>

Revenue Source & Amount

LTF (Article 8a)	\$ <u>4,993,894</u>
Other:	\$ _____
Other:	\$ _____
Audit Exception - G.F. Payback ..	\$ _____

Date: 3/3/2009

Claimant: County of Fresno

CONTINGENCY PROJECT LISTING

Should additional Local Transportation Fund or State Transit Assistance Fund monies be made available during the current fiscal year, they are hereby also claimed for the following purposes:

() **ARTICLE 3, BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES**

Project Title & Brief Descriptions

Project Cost

1. Various Bicycle and Pedestrian facilities throughout..... *\$ Amount of Add'l*
the claimant's jurisdiction *funds made available*
in current FY.

AND/OR

1. \$

(add sheets if necessary)

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS \$

() **ARTICLE 4, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**
OR
() **ARTICLE 8C, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Project Title & Brief Descriptions

Project Cost

1. \$

2. \$

(add sheets if necessary)

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS \$

() **ARTICLE 8, STREETS AND ROADS**

Project Title & Brief Descriptions

Project Cost

1. Development, Construction and Maintenance of Facilities..... *\$ Amount of Add'l*
throughout the claimant's jurisdiction *funds made available*
in current FY.

AND/OR

1. \$

(add sheets if necessary)

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS \$ Surplus Available

MERCED COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

San Joaquin Valley Express Transit Study

Service Recommendations

Draft Report



Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates
785 Market Street, Suite 1300
San Francisco, CA 94103

February 2009

Nelson\Nygaard
consulting associates

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Introduction

The San Joaquin Valley Express Transit Study seeks to identify strong markets for inter-county commute travel in the region, and to provide cost-effective recommendations for improved commute choices in these markets. By providing a broader array of commute options, the policy recommendations in this study may also result in decreased single-occupancy vehicle trips, reduced congestion, and improving air quality in the Valley. While the scope of the study is limited to inter-county commute travel, many of the principles and service models described in this report may also apply to the many very long intra-county commutes that the study does not explicitly consider.

The San Joaquin Valley is a large and diverse region. Making transportation investments cost-effective will depend on deploying the right type of transportation service for the right market. This report recommends that the San Joaquin Valley explore a mix of ridesharing, vanpool, bus, and rail services.

The outcomes of the two previous analyses conducted for this project, the Existing Conditions and Case Studies Report and the Travel Demand Analysis Report, identified several key corridors in the region that would derive maximum benefit from new transportation investments. These corridors are:

1. The northern SR 99 corridor, extending from Merced through Modesto, Stockton, Lodi, and continuing to Sacramento.
2. The northern SR 99 corridor to the Bay Area.
3. The Cities of Madera and Visalia to the City of Fresno.
4. The Commute market between northern Los Angeles County and Edwards Air Force Base in eastern Kern County.

This report discusses the following transportation investments:

Figure 1 Summary of Proposed Services

Proposed Service	Key Travel Corridor			
	Northern SR 99 corridor, to Sacramento	Northern SR 99 corridor to the Bay Area.	Madera and Visalia to the City of Fresno.	Northern LA County to Eastern Kern County
Ridesharing /TDM	X	X	X	X
Vanpool	X	X	X	X
Commuter Express Bus	X	X		
Commuter Rail Improvements	X	X		

Hierarchy of Services

There are a variety of strategies for providing higher-capacity transportation choices for Valley commuters. These represent a continuum from very basic incentives for carpooling to higher occupancy vanpools, subscription bus services to higher capacity public transit services including commuter rail. In the lowest density environments, simple incentives to choose carpooling can help to divert a share of commuters away from single-occupancy vehicles. In the highest-density environments with the greatest concentrations of commute trips, much higher-capacity strategies have a chance to capture a significant share of the commute market, and to attract some share of non-work trips. Some of the key service options available to the Valley are:

1. **Ridesharing and Transportation Demand Management:** Commuters can be encouraged to choose carpooling over single-occupancy vehicle travel through a variety of programs, ranging from administrative support (such as ridematching services) to monetary incentives (including parking charges). Such programs may be run by public agencies, or by individual employers or groups of employers. Ridesharing programs have the advantage of being low cost, and of being feasible in very low density environments. Their total potential to shift travel away from single-occupancy vehicles depend upon the particular strategies employed. For example, administrative support for carpooling might have a modest impact. When carpool incentives are combined with other strategies such as employee paid parking (or parking cash-out) and Guaranteed Ride Home, the impact of these programs can be quite robust.

San Joaquin Valley Examples: South Valley Rideshare, Commute Connection

2. **Vanpool:** Vanpools offer many of the advantages of carpools, but can accommodate more passengers per vehicle (generally up to 15 for large vans). Because they are operated by riders, vanpools have low operating expenses, and so they can be more cost-effective than fixed-route transit for many trips. Vanpools are most effective at serving commuters travelling to large employers. They can be particularly effective for long commutes, where the cost savings of sharing a ride are sufficient to justify the time cost for commuters of gathering at a central meeting place. Communities can encourage vanpooling by either partially or completely subsidizing the cost of vehicles, and by increasing access to park-and-ride facilities.

San Joaquin Valley Examples: Kings Area Vanpool, Commute Connection

3. **Subscription Bus:** Transit agencies may decide to provide bus service in a targeted way by enrolling regular commuters and scaling the level of service to demand. This type of service is similar to vanpools in that it usually serves a particular employer, but it has higher capacity because it uses a larger vehicle, generally provided by the transit agency. Subscription bus services can be passenger-operated, or they can be operated by professional drivers. This type of service makes few trips per day, resulting in limited flexibility for riders as compared to more robust fixed-route bus service.

San Joaquin Valley Examples: San Joaquin RTD Subscription Routes

4. **Fixed-Route Express Bus:** In travel corridors with a sufficient density of trips at the origin and destination end, transit agencies may be able to provide cost-effective fixed-route express bus service. This category of service includes a wide range of possible service plans, from targeted, one-way, peak-only transit to frequent all day service. They

generally serve not a particular employer but a downtown, an employment cluster, or a rail connection. Like carpools, vanpools, and subscription buses, fixed-route transit in low density areas may benefit from park-and-ride facilities. Buses are more flexible and have lower initial capital costs than rail. However, they must compete with roadway congestion. Compared to ridesharing and vanpooling, buses offer much higher capacity, but suffer from first-and-last mile challenges and high operating costs. Even the most productive bus services in the United States cover less than half of their operating costs through fares.

San Joaquin Valley Examples: Modesto MAX ACE and BART service.

5. **Commuter Rail:** Commuter rail service can be the most appropriate transit option in very high demand corridors. Commuter trains offer very high capacity. They provide service that does not have to compete with freeway congestion, although in some rail corridors passenger trains must share tracks with freight trains, which may cause delays. Development of commuter rail also offers the opportunity for transit-oriented development near rail stations. Capital costs for rail service can be extremely high compared to bus service. In the San Joaquin Valley, there are opportunities to take advantage of existing rail corridors. However, even in these cases expensive upgrades are generally required. In order to justify very high capacity transit service, rail must either serve high-density origins and destinations, or it must rely on strategies to get passengers to and from rail stations, such as park-and-ride facilities, feeder transit, and or employer shuttles.

San Joaquin Valley Examples: Altamont Commuter Express (ACE).

Each of the strategies described above is appropriate for a different set of operating environments. Generally, the lower-cost, lower-capacity investments are most appropriate for low-density environments where homes and employers are dispersed. The higher-cost, higher capacity investments become feasible as population and employment density increase. These investments can build on each other: ridesharing strategies can compliment fixed-route bus service; the park-and-ride facilities and guaranteed-ride-home services that benefit carpools can also benefit bus riders. As higher capacity options become feasible for implementation, they do not necessarily fully replace other options, but add to the range of commute options available, allowing commuters to choose what works best for them.

There are transportation and land use environments in the Valley that call for implementation of each of these strategies. The recommendations of this study aim to implement each in the most appropriate setting.

Conclusions of Travel Demand Analysis

The travel demand analysis conducted for this study confirms that the San Joaquin Valley is a challenging environment for inter-county commuter transit. Most of the regions' land area is rural or very low-density residential in character, and is expected to remain so for the foreseeable future. Even many urban areas, residential and employment densities are low and too dispersed to be served by a transit service that could be competitive with the auto. Even with significant growth projected in the coming decades, low-density land use patterns will remain for most of the region. Long distance travel, with dispersed origins and destinations spread over a wide geographic area is almost never a winning proposition for a transit service. Given these constraints, for most of the region's communities, the most attractive alternative to single-

occupancy vehicle travel will be carpool and vanpool. However, the travel demand study did identify several strong commute markets where the region can evaluate the possibility of provided enhanced transportation investments. The key corridors for further study included:

1. The northern SR 99 corridor, extending from Merced through Modesto, Manteca, Stockton, Lodi, and continuing to Sacramento. This corridor includes a cluster of the region's most transit competitive cities, and its strongest internal travel markets. There will be nearly 10,000 daily trips on SR 99 heading towards Sacramento by 2030.
2. The northern SR 99 corridor to the Bay Area. The stretch of I-580 that crosses the Altamont Pass between Tracy and Livermore is expected to carry more than 50,000 commute trips per day by 2030, with commuters on the west side of the pass dividing between a diverse set of Bay Area destinations.
3. The Cities of Madera and Visalia to the City of Fresno. Fresno attracts a large number of workers from the surrounding communities, and these commute markets are expected to grow substantially in the coming decades. The most feasible origin points for transit service into Fresno are Visalia in to the south and Madera to the north.
4. In addition, the study identified a large and growing commute market between Los Angeles and Kern County, focused on the large commute market to Edwards Air Force Base in eastern Kern County. There are currently no transit options available for this commute.

Recommendations

This section describes service recommendations for investments to improve inter-county commute choices in the San Joaquin Valley.

Ridesharing/Vanpool

Recognizing that low-density land use patterns will continue to prevail in most of the San Joaquin Valley for the foreseeable future, the expansion of the ridesharing and vanpool opportunities should be the primary commute strategy for inter-county commuters in most of the region. While the whole of the Valley can benefit from enhanced ridesharing opportunities, this will be the primary alternative to single-occupancy vehicle travel for most inter-county commuters travelling to employment destinations other than those along northern SR 99 corridor, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Sacramento.

Two significant vanpool programs now operate in the region. Combined, they have registered more than 400 commuter vans, contribute to an environment in the San Joaquin Valley where carpooling is the primary alternative to single-occupancy vehicle travel.

Kings Area Vanpool operates in Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, and Kings Counties. The program currently includes 103 vehicles serving agricultural workers and 190 serving other workers. The general worker vanpools are currently composed almost entirely of California Department of Corrections workers, who receive a \$65 subsidy from the state that can be applied to ride sharing. The organization structure of Kings Area Vanpool is further discussed below.

Kings Area Vanpool is currently a program of Kings Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA), which is a partnership between Kings County and the cities of Hanford, Lemoore, and Avenal. The

agency has partnership agreements to serve commuters traveling to and from the Counties of Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kern. While the vanpool program runs as a single operation, marketed on the web under the brand South Valley Rideshare, it is actually two separate programs: Agricultural Industries Transportations Services (AITS), which serves only agricultural workers, and KART vanpool, which is open to all workers. The service currently operates 293 vehicles, most of which are 15-passenger vans, and the vans carry more than 900,000 trips per year. Currently 103 vehicles serve agricultural workers and 190 serve other workers.

Program participants operate the vans—in return, drivers do not pay program fees, and are permitted incidental use of vehicles. Fares are based on the number of trips and distance traveled, and costs are divided among passengers. Drivers collect the payments and send them to KART. Pickup points and route times are chosen by the driver. GPS and gas billing records verify that vehicles have traveled distances submitted by driver. Most operating funding for the program comes from passenger fares (both out of pocket costs and subsidies to passengers).

Capital costs are dealt with differently for farm worker vanpools as compared to general worker vanpools. For the general worker vanpools, capital costs are amortized and repaid out of passenger fares. For farm workers, the vehicles now in use were paid for out of the program's original \$5.8 million in grant funding. Both programs also receive capital funding from a variety of statewide and federal grant programs. The program intends to replace farm worker vehicles that must be retired using vehicles that have been paid-off through five years of use in the general worker vanpool program. In this way, the program believes it can be self-sustaining financially. Fresno County also contributes \$500,000 annually to the program: these funds are used to reduce passenger fares for passengers from Fresno County.

KCAPTA estimates that the cost of its general public vanpools, including the cost of leasing, fuel, insurance, administration, is \$1,413 per van per year. Funding from Fresno Measure C and the San Joaquin Valley Air District are currently available, covering about \$85 per vehicle per year on average. The cost-per-passenger depends on the number of passengers per vehicle: at 7 passengers per vehicle, the cost is \$202 per month. At 15 passengers per vehicle, the cost is \$94 per month. Many current riders are state corrections employees, who receive a \$65-per-month subsidy, further reducing the employees out of pocket costs. For farmworkers, KCAPTA's cost calculations exclude vehicle lease costs. They estimate that monthly per-passenger costs are between \$136 and \$68 per passenger, depending on the number of passengers in the vehicle. Assuming 20 work days per month per worker, these costs compute to \$3.40 per worker per trip even for the least occupied vans.

Commute Connection is a program of the San Joaquin Council of Governments. It primarily serves San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties, and there are currently 182 vanpools registered through the program. The majority of these serve origins and destinations in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. A smaller number of vans provide transportation from origins outside of the area to employment sites in San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties. The program provides each registered vanpool with a \$150 per month subsidy for one year after the vanpool begins operating. Subsidies are paid directly to the company that leases the vehicle—either Enterprise or VPSI. Each year, a limited number of new vanpools can be subsidized. After the agency has surpassed this limit, it can offer new vanpool subscribers a gas card as an incentive to register with the program.

There are several steps that could improve further boost access to vanpools and ridesharing in the Valley. While vanpool programs have continued to grow, growth is currently constrained by

several factors. Key among these is the availability of park-and-ride facilities. Because most vanpools function with workers driving and parking at a central location, park-and-ride arrangements are critical to operations. In seeking to expand vanpool opportunities, the region should focus particularly in the commute markets into the city of Fresno, which are large and growing but are unlikely to reach sufficient trip densities to justify new transit offerings. The travel demand portion of this study identified the commuting from Madera and Tulare Counties into the City of Fresno as large and growing commute markets. However, there will continue to be an insufficient density of trips to justify new express transit service in these corridors for the foreseeable future. With robust incentives, Vanpool and carpooling can capture a significant share of this market.

Recommendations are as follows:

1. Continue with plans to form a Joint Powers Authority in the Southern portion of the Valley to operate Kings Area Vanpool.

The KCAPTA is currently investigating the creation of Joint Powers Authority to operate its vanpool program. This entity would be a partnership between Kings, Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kern counties, and would continue to serve commuters in all five of these counties. It is recommended that the region pursue this strategy, in order to share the administrative burden of the program between the participating localities, manage costs, and to encourage cohesive planning.

This entity should also take on coordination of other ridesharing functions for the region. For example, it should provide the informational resources of South Valley Rideshare, now operated by Tulare COG, and it should also administer the Guaranteed Ride Home program described below.

2. Form a Joint Powers Authority to Enhance and expand Commute Connection in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced Counties.

Policymakers should seek to establish a robust vanpool and ridesharing program in the northern part of the Valley. A key first step would be to create a Joint Powers Authority to house Commute Connection, the ridersharing programs now operated by the San Joaquin Council of Governments. The new entity should have dedicated program staff charged with maintaining and growing the program.

This entity should include participation not only from San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties, but also from Merced County. Given the large scale of commuting between Merced and Stanislaus Counties, Merced is a natural part of the northern part of the region when it comes to ridesharing services. Having two regional ridesharing entities (one in the northern part of the valley, and one in the southern part) creates an appropriate coverage area for each, and allows for efficient governance.

Commute Connection should then work to shift its business model from one where it provides a subsidy to groups of individuals leasing a van, towards a model where the agency takes responsibility for leasing the vehicles itself. Leasing costs can be recovered by charging fares to vanpool participants. This model, now employed successfully by Kings Area Vanpool, has a number of advantages. First, it removes a disincentive to vanpooling by eliminating the risk that commuters may feel in taking on lease for a large and expensive vehicle. Second, the ability to lease a vehicle is not limited should participants have poor credit. Third, and perhaps most importantly, lease-

to-own arrangements can allow the agency to take full ownership of the van after it has been paid for, reducing operating costs for the remainder of the vehicle's useful life.

The new entity should also seek to emulate the practices of Kings Area Vanpool by marketing its services directly to the two populations of workers that can receive direct subsidies for vanpooling: corrections workers and agricultural workers. Doing so could significantly expand its base of vanpool passengers.

3. Prioritize Fresno.

The travel demand analysis portion of this study identified the commute markets from Tulare and Madera Counties into the City of Fresno as two of the strongest future inter-county commutes in the region. Demand for trips between the city of Visalia and the City of Fresno is expected to increase from 1,700 currently to 3,800 in 2030. Even more trips to the city of Fresno originate in the surrounding non-urban areas of Tulare County.

However, even with significant growth in the coming decades, the low-density nature of employment destinations in Fresno create a situation where there is unlikely to be a sufficient density of trips to justify new fixed-route transit service in these markets.

Instead, the region should prioritize the promotion and availability of vanpool opportunities for inter-county commuters traveling to the City of Fresno. Fresno is well suited for vanpool opportunities, particularly because it has relatively high parking costs compared to other urban areas in the region. Commutes from the city of Visalia to Fresno are relatively long (43 miles), another factor that recommends vanpooling. Currently, 19 vanpools travel between Tulare and Fresno Counties, carrying a total of 418 one-way trips per day. While trips from the city of Madera are shorter (25 miles), the large and growing market suggests that a significant number of Vanpools may be possible in this corridor as well.

Fresno FAX ran a small vanpool program until July, 2008, with most trips occurring between Fresno and Madera. That program was recently turned over to the Fresno COG after Measure C made funds available to the COG for operating a vanpool program. Fresno COG uses Measure C funds to provide Kings Are Vanpool with \$1,000,000 per year subsidy, which is directed toward reducing fares of for Fresno residents who are vanpool commuters.

There are several ways that the region could seek to attract more of the Fresno commute to vanpools. First, it could seek to market the program more aggressively through employers in the City of Fresno. The Air District's trip reduction requirements for large employers (described below), provides an excellent opportunity for enhanced marketing to employers. Second, the region could seek to make more park-and-ride facilities available in Tulare and Madera Counties.

4. Invest in more marketing of Vanpool to choice riders.

There are currently several web sites that offer vanpooling opportunities in the San Joaquin Valley. Kings Area Vanpool is marketed through the South Valley Rideshare web site (southvalleyrideshare.com), which is managed by the Tulare County Association of Governments. Fresno COG also markets the Fresno Clean Air Express Vanpool program (now operating through Kings Area Vanpool), on its ValleyRides ridesharing web site (valleyrides.com). Kern Commuter Connection (commutekern.org) markets vanpools to commuters in Kern County. Finally, San Joaquin Council of Government's Commute Connection markets vanpools on its own web site

(commuteconnection.com). It would simplify the process of ridesharing to have a single portal web site where Valley commuters could go to seek information. Employers, counties, and council's of government throughout the Valley could link to this common web site, and it could be jointly managed by the two regional ridesharing entities.

In addition, new, targeted marketing could increase vanpool's share of the inter-county commute market. Promising avenues for targeting marketing include:

- *Direct marketing to employers.* Marketing material sent to human resource departments at large employers may be beneficial. Ideally, this type of marketing should be part of a coordinated effort to attract ridesharing investment from employers require to have trip reduction programs by new Air District regulations.
- *Signage at park-and-ride facilities.* Many park-and-ride facilities now used in the San Joaquin Valley are surface parking lots shared with shopping malls and other businesses. Signage at these locations could alert potential riders the existence of convenient commute services. The rights post this type of signage could be negotiated as part of park-and-ride agreements.
- *Billboard advertising on freeways.* Billboard advertisements on congested commute corridors could help to alert single-occupancy drivers to other commute choices.
- *Signage on vehicles.* Advertisements on vans, with contact information, could also alert drivers of the opportunity to share a ride.

5. Expand park-and-ride opportunities.

Most program participants currently access vanpools by driving to a central location and parking. However, the supply of secure, well-lit parking available to commuters is limited. Program staff believes that the program could expand faster if more park-and-ride lots were available.

Vanpool programs should work to develop a coordinated strategy to negotiate for expanded rights to park-and-ride access to underutilized business parking lots. These agreements, if necessary, should use program funds to compensate parking lot owners for facility where-and-tear. Agreements may be easier to negotiate during and economic downturn, when some businesses will be experiencing lower-than-normal parking demand. It may be particularly fruitful to seek shared parking agreements with businesses that have peak parking demand outside of normal commute hours, such as restaurants and movie theatres.

6. Offer Guaranteed Ride Home throughout the Valley.

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) programs compliment carpool, vanpool, and transit offerings by providing a reliable ride home when an unexpected emergency arises. Enrolled participants are generally offered a limited number of free emergency rides home per year, in the case of personal emergencies or unscheduled overtime. The program can contract with private taxi companies to provide rides. While few participants ever need to rely on the service, this arrangement allows more commuters to choose vanpooling or transit with the peace of mind that comes with knowing they will never be stranded at work.

Commute Connection offers Guaranteed Ride Home in Stanislaus and San Joaquin County. It is recommended that this service be expanded, along with vanpool offerings, to include the large number of Merced County residents expected to commute into

Stanislaus County. Kings Area Vanpool currently offers emergency rides home to vanpool participants on an information basis, but has no formal GRH program. It is recommended that Guaranteed Ride Home be added as a service of the regional Vanpool entity being created in the southern counties of the region. This service should be marketed through the regional rideshare portal website.

GRH should be packaged as part of the trip reduction program offered to large employers as a means of satisfying the Air District's new trip reduction rule. Funding supplied through this arrangement could partially fund the program.

7. Use the new Air District program to fund and promote ridesharing to large employers

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is in the process of recommending regulations (Rule 9410) that will require large employers (those with 100 or more workers) to establish an employee trip reduction program. The goal will be to reduce vehicle miles travelled from employee commutes, along with associated emissions.

The air district may establish one or more of the following:

- Menu option-based trip reduction program implementation
- Tiered mitigation measures based on employer size
- Emissions or VMT reduction targets;
- Average Vehicle Ridership (AVR) targets
- Partnership with well-established ride-share programs
- Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Best Workplaces for Commuters" recognition
- Toolkits and/or training for employers
- Periodic reporting requirements to evaluate performance

Under such a rule, possible trip reduction strategies may include carpooling, vanpooling, transit passes, flex schedules, telecommuting, ridematching, bike-racks, lockers and showers, and other strategies to encourage commuting by modes other than single-occupancy vehicle.

While individual employers could develop their own trip reduction programs, it would benefit both employers and regional agencies to create a coordinate regional program to meet these goals. Under this scenario, the regional ridesharing programs (Commute Connection and South Valley Ridesharing/Kings Area Vanpool) would provide large employers with a coherent program of marketing, ridematching, subsidized vanpools, and other services that would be designed to meet the Air District's requirements. In exchange, large employers could provide these programs with financial support they could use to fund services. A portion of the funding could also be directed towards securing park-and-ride facilities in origin communities. Direct marketing of vanpools to employees at participating large employers may be among the most efficient ways to attract new vanpool participants, as a new vanpool requires a critical mass of participants from a single employer.

Inter-county express bus

Currently, seven San Joaquin Valley transit agencies provide at least some bus service across county lines. Of these, four focus on services between San Joaquin Valley counties. Productivity for inter-county routes operating entirely within the San Joaquin valley is generally quite low, ranging between 1 and 9 passengers per hour, and can be generally categorized as “lifeline” routes, rather than services designed to attract choice riders. They are as follows:

- Stanislaus Regional Transit routes 45, from Turlock to Gustine, and 70, from Modesto to Merced
- Merced The Bus routes 7, from Merced to Turlock, and TSA-10, from Gustine to Turlock
- Kings Area Rural Transit’s Hanford-Visalia and Hanford-Fresno Hospitals routes
- Tulare County Area Transit Route 20, from Tulare to Delano Just two of these, (TCaT route 20 from Tulare to Delano and StaRT’s Route 70 from Modesto to Merced) operate primarily along the SR 99 corridor.

Four agencies provide service between the San Joaquin Valley and neighboring regions. They are:

- The San Joaquin Regional Transit District’s “San Joaquin Commuter” subscription-only routes from San Joaquin County to the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento. This service makes up more than half of the inter-county bus routes in the region. It is also the most productive bus service, at 16.7 passengers per hour.
- Modesto Area Express’s Altamont Commuter Express and Bay Area Rapid Transit Express services from Modesto. These services provide connections to rail service to the Bay Area.
- Kern Regional Transit’s East Kern Express route provides traditional fixed-route bus service over the 90 miles from Bakersfield to Lancaster in Los Angeles County.
- YARTS provides a niche service, carrying park visitors and employees from Merced to Yosemite National Park in Madera County.

These inter-regional services are generally more productive than inter-county routes entirely within the Valley, and the services currently offered overlap well with the highest-demand commute corridors.

Recommendations for express bus services are as follows:

1. Maintain existing inter-county commuter service.

The existing inter-regional routes overlap in a logical way with key high-demand inter-county commute corridors identified in the travel demand analysis assembled for this study. In an extremely challenging funding environment, the primary goal of the region with respect to inter-county commuter express bus service should be to maintain the existing level of service, and to expand strategically as funding becomes available.

This study has identified the northern SR 99 corridor to the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento as the highest-demand commute corridors: San Joaquin RTD’s subscription routes to Sacramento and Bay Area commute destinations provide Stockton-area commuters access to a wide variety of important destinations. Similarly, Modesto MAX’s feeder services to ACE and BART do an outstanding job of connecting

Modesto-area commuters to Bay Area markets. Both sets of commuter routes are well-utilized and cost-effective. These agencies should work to maintain funding for these important services.

Kern Regional Transit's East Kern Express provides the only existing transit link from Bakersfield to the Los Angeles region's Metrolink in Lancaster. YARTS provides cost-effective transit service to both visitors and employees traveling from Merced to Yosemite National Park. The region should work to maintain funding such that the existing routes can be maintained at their present levels of service.

2. Enhance San Joaquin Regional Transit District subscription routes to Sacramento and the SF Bay Area as funding becomes available.

San Joaquin RTD's 19 subscription routes to Sacramento and the Bay Area offer an efficient and well-utilized commute option for workers traveling in some of the region's highest-demand corridors. Together, these subscription routes carry more than 1,300 passengers per weekday, at a rate of 16.7 passengers per hour. Each of these routes makes a single daily round-trip, and most routes are destined for the doorsteps of major employers. For employees of those companies, then, the routes essentially amount to a shuttle service—and a commute option that is significantly cheaper than driving.

There are currently three buses serving two subscription bus routes to Sacramento. Route 165 travels from west Stockton via I-5 to downtown Sacramento. It arrives in downtown Sacramento at 6:50 AM and departs at 4:47 PM. A second Route 165 bus makes the same trip arriving in Sacramento at 6:05 and departing at 4:35 PM. Route 163 travels to Downtown Sacramento via SR 99. This bus arrives at 6:50 and departs at 4:29. These routes are currently oversubscribed, and demand may grow with time: the travel demand analysis conducted for this study projects 4,700 daily commute trips between Stockton and Sacramento by 2030. While this study recommends that the region continue to evaluate the possibility of expanding rail service in this corridor, rail service will take years to implement. In the meantime, San Joaquin RTD should prioritize expanded subscription bus service through the corridor, should funding become available. A wider offering of departure times may help to expand ridership.

RTD also has 17 routes serving the employment centers of the San Francisco Bay Area, including the Tri-Valley and Silicon Valley. Six provide service from Stockton, Manteca, and Escalon to Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories and Sandia Labs, just across the Altamont Pass from San Joaquin County on the west side of Livermore. One provides service to Hacienda Business Park in Pleasanton, and one serves the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station. Nine routes serve the job centers of Silicon Valley, including Sunnyvale, Mountain View, Milpitas, Santa Clara, and San Jose. RTD should focus on maintained existing service, and expanding the highest-demand routes as funding becomes available.

The agency may also wish to consider a number of technology improvements that would improve the service experience for passengers. Providing wireless internet on board the bus would allow many commuters to begin working as soon as they board – a huge advantage in the case of long inter-county commutes. Wireless internet has been successfully deployed both on private, employer based bus systems (such as the Google and Microsoft shuttle systems), and public express bus systems (such as FrontRange Express in Colorado). Deploying a web-based scheduling product would allow passengers to easily make a reservation in advance, and would allow occasional riders to take advantage of excess capacity.

Commuter Rail

Nearly half of the San Joaquin Valley's inter-county commuters travel not between Valley counties but between the Valley and the neighboring San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento areas. Most commuters must travel along the extremely congested Interstate 580, while Sacramento drivers must choose either SR 99 or Interstate 5. These congested freeways are likely to become increasingly congested in the coming decades. High trip densities, congested roads, and the opportunity to connect to dense downtowns and high quality local rail service on the destination end make these corridors good candidates for commuter rail service.

The Altamont Corridor is already served by the region's only existing commuter railroad, the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission's Altamont Commuter Express (ACE). It provides cost-effective service through the high demand travel corridor from Stockton into the Tri-Valley and Silicon Valley job markets. While there is no commuter-oriented rail service between San Joaquin County and Sacramento County, Amtrak operates four daily San Joaquin trains from Sacramento to Stockton, using the UP/SP route out of Sacramento. South of Stockton, these trains continue to Bakersfield using the BNSF right-of-way.

Expanding and improving passenger rail service in these corridors may be the best way to serve San Joaquin Valley commuters in the coming decades. For San Joaquin Valley commuters, the advantages of rail over bus service are clear: efficient rail service can help commuters avoid delays due to freeway congestion. The most practical way to enhance commute options for these commuters may be for the Valley to advocate for regional, state, and federal investments in rail service improvements. It should be noted that while rail improvements are critical to serving some of the key corridors for inter-county and interregional commutes, effective rail service requires reasonable frequencies and travel times, and detailed planning for "first mile and last mile" connecting service.

Recommendations for commuter rail are as follows:

- 1. Develop a coordinated regional advocacy plan for enhanced state and federal investments in commuter rail.**

All of the rail upgrades recommended in this report will require new state and federal funding commitments. The communities of the San Joaquin Valley should develop a coordinate program of proposed rail improvements, and should work in a coordinated fashion to lobby for funding to carry out these improvements. With a coordinated vision of the rail improvements necessary for the future of the region, the San Joaquin Valley will be better positioned to lobby for funding as opportunities arise.

The Valley has a history of such coordinated lobbying. In 2008, after environmental review selected the Pacheco Pass as the preferred alternative for California High Speed Rail to enter the San Francisco Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley Councils of Governments worked with communities in the Tri-Valley to form the Altamont Partnership. This group successfully lobbied the California Assembly to pass AB 3034, legislation that made the Altamont an eligible corridor to receive funds from California High Speed Rail bond funds. After California voters approved \$9.95 billion for California High Speed Rail through proposition 1A, high speed train compatible upgrades to the Altamont corridor became eligible for a portion of the those expenditures. The region should consider the success of the Altamont partnership as a model for future coordinated action.

2. Upgrade ACE.

With more than 25,000 commute trips per day traveling from the San Joaquin Valley over the Altamont Pass to jobs in the San Francisco Bay Area, and more than 50,000 daily trips expected by 2030, ACE train service is a critical resource for the region's inter-county commuters. The region should work to ensure that the system's capacity increases along with demand. In 2008, the Altamont Partnership created a prioritized list of possible capital improvements that could benefit ACE service. They are:

Short Range ACE Corridor Improvements:

- Increase service to at least 12 trains (from current 8)
- Upgraded signaling
- Dispatching Improvements
- Altamont Slide Repairs
- Niles Canyon Drainage Improvements
- BNSF Crossing Improvements
- Increase Speed in curves as possible
- Additional sidings/passing tracks to speed operations and allow increase in service
- Purchase rolling stock to support expanded service

Mid Range ACE Corridor Improvements

- Purchase new rolling stock to support expanded and higher speed service
- Provide additional dedicated ACE track on Fresno Subdivision and Purchase Tracy Subdivision to create a dedicated corridor from Stockton to Lathrop.
- Double-track existing ROW where possible to separate freight and passenger rail service including operating on ACE owned track parallel to UP track from East Livermore to Hearst.
- Construct track in former SP Right of way owned by Alameda County between Midway and East Livermore, and relocate service to that trackway.
- Grade separations
- Station Improvements to support increased service frequency.

Longer Range ACE Corridor Improvements

- Increase service to 20 minute bi-directional peak hour service, plus regular midday service up to every half hour.
- Operate a dedicated ACE/Regional Rail corridor throughout the length of ACE service through additional right of way acquisitions and new trackage.
 - Evaluate options including purchase of right of way/tunneling, and signalization as necessary to create a more direct, level alignment through Niles Canyon to support increased service

- Evaluate options including purchase of right of way/tunneling, and signalization as necessary to create a more direct, level alignment through Altamont Pass to support increased service.
- Evaluate options including purchase of UP Warm Springs Subdivision to support increased service from Niles to Diridon Station
- Complete other improvements as necessary to support high speed equipment operating on regional rail corridor, including electrification.
- Purchase additional rolling stock compatible with high speed service.
- Make additional station improvements as needed to support higher frequency higher speed service.

The region should continue to lobby for state and federal funding to help accomplish each of these improvements. Recent voter approval of \$9.95 billion in bond funding for California High Speed Rail increases the likelihood of significant upgrades to this corridor. However, the total package of improvements will require far more investment than the high speed rail project will make available.

3. Lobby for a direct ACE/BART connection.

The travel demand analysis completed for this study shows that while many San Joaquin Valley commuters to the Bay Area have destinations in the Tri-Valley and Silicon Valley, a significant share also travel to destinations along the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) network. However, there is currently a one-mile gap between the terminal BART station in Dublin-Pleasanton and the ACE station in Livermore. A seamless connection between ACE and BART would provide not only a fast rail trip to many destinations, but a distribution network on the BART system that is well matched to the destinations of San Joaquin Valley travelers. A direct ACE/BART connection was also identified as needed improvement by the Bay Area's Regional Rail Plan.

BART is currently undertaking environmental review for an extension to Livermore that would provide a direct ACE/BART transfer point. Representatives from ACE and the San Joaquin Council of Governments have participated in regional advisory committees helping to guide decision-making for this project. The San Joaquin Valley should be directly involved in supporting and influencing this process.

4. Work toward expansion of commuter rail service between Merced and Sacramento.

The travel demand analysis carried out for this report shows that the cities on the northern SR 99 corridor between Merced and Sacramento includes several of the strongest travel demand markets in the study area, and will see some of the greatest growth in the coming decades. By 2030, there will be 2,300 commuter trips between Merced and Modesto, 4,000 between Modesto and Stockton, and 4,700 commute trips between Stockton and Sacramento. While Amtrak currently provides passenger train service north and south throughout the whole valley, its schedules and its fares are not oriented towards daily commuters.

To best serve this market and to capitalize on existing rail infrastructure, the San Joaquin Valley should continue to explore the possibility of implementing commuter-rail levels of service between Merced and Sacramento. Like ACE service in the Altamont corridor, high quality commuter rail in this corridor has the potential to capture a

significant share of the market. Merced to Sacramento train service could also be scheduled to allow connections to existing ACE service, to allow travel from Merced and Stanislaus communities to the Bay Area as well as Stockton and Sacramento.

The full length of this corridor is over 100 miles, representing nearly two hours of drive time under uncongested conditions. The most efficient near-term strategy may include only service between Stockton and Sacramento. Thereafter, expansion to Modesto and Merced may be implemented as growth justifies. Initial service offerings, like ACE, should aim to provide at least three peak-direction, peak-period round trips and one mid-day trip.

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commissions (SJRRRC) is currently studying the implementation of rail service in this corridor (among others) in the region in its "SJRRRC Service Expansion Analysis". This study will include the evaluation of several rail service alternatives, including service between Merced, Modesto, Stockton, and Sacramento, using either the Union Pacific (UP) right of way, or a combination of the UP and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) right of way.

Unlike expansion of bus service, commuter rail service implementation would require significant up-front capital investment. Detailed cost estimates will be prepared as part of SRCC's study and are not yet available. However, the region could expect that capital investments in right-of-way and rolling stock would exceed \$75 million between Stockton and Sacramento and could range as high as \$200 million from Merced to Stockton. Such high capital costs certainly require the participation of state and federal funding.

5. Consider express bus service or LA Metrolink expansion towards Edwards Air Force Base.

The travel demand analysis conducted for this study identified 12,000 daily commuter trips to the San Joaquin Valley region from the Los Angeles region, expanding to 26,000 trips by 2030. It is likely that a very large share of these commute trips represent Northern LA county residents bound for jobs at Edwards Air Force Base, which employs 20,000 people.¹

Kern County has proposed rail investments to serve this commute market. Service would include a 12-mile extension of the MetroLink from Lancaster to the Kern County City of Rosamond. A feeder bus service could then connect Rosamond with the Edwards Air Force Base.

A commuter rail extension to Rosamond has been discussed in Kern County for many years. This service has several advantages. It could serve a significant number of workers traveling to the Air Force Base, who currently have no transit options, although a shuttle the air force base would still be necessary. It makes use of the existing freight rail right-of-way between Lancaster and Rosamond. California High Speed Rail is likely to use this same right-of-way, and the service could keep the capital costs of the project low by piggybacking off of high-speed rail investments. The extension would also allow Metrolink to serve as feeder service connecting eastern Kern County to High Speed Rail, which will have no stops between Bakersfield and Palmdale. Finally, it could also

¹ It should be noted that this study has evaluated only the demand for commute trips between counties. As a result, it does not speak to the very long commutes undertaken by some residents of Kern County, which is more than 8,200 square miles and comprises one-third of the 8-county region's area. There may be the potential for expanded commuter express transit, including commuter rail, entirely within Kern County.

serve eastern Kern County commuters traveling the Los Angeles area; while this study did not identify this southbound commute as competitive for transit, the additional train service would benefit some Kern County commuters.

The proposal also has several weaknesses in the near term. As the terminus of the proposed rail extension, the town of Rosamond has just 14,000 residents and few jobs. Nearly all potential northbound passengers of the service would be those traveling to the Air Force Base, and every one of these passengers would then be required to transfer to a separate bus service traveling a further 15 miles to Edwards. In addition to the transfer penalty imposed on passengers, this situation poses a difficult operational issue for transit service: if the service attracted enough passengers to justify the high capacity of commuter rail, it would then require enough shuttle buses waiting at the Rosamond rail station to carry a full load of train passengers at the same time.²

An appropriate near-term step would be the implementation of one-way, peak-oriented express bus service between Lancaster Metrolink Station and Andrews Air Force Base. Express bus could provide a standard of service similar to rail in this uncongested corridor, and it could also be implemented faster, without the transfer penalty of switching from rail to bus in Rosamond. A partnership between Kern County, Los Angeles County, and the Airforce base could provide funding. Should there be a very high level of demand; the operator could then study the feasibility of adding rail service in part of the corridor. Investments could then be planned in coordination with the implementation of High Speed Rail.

6. Invest in great station area planning.

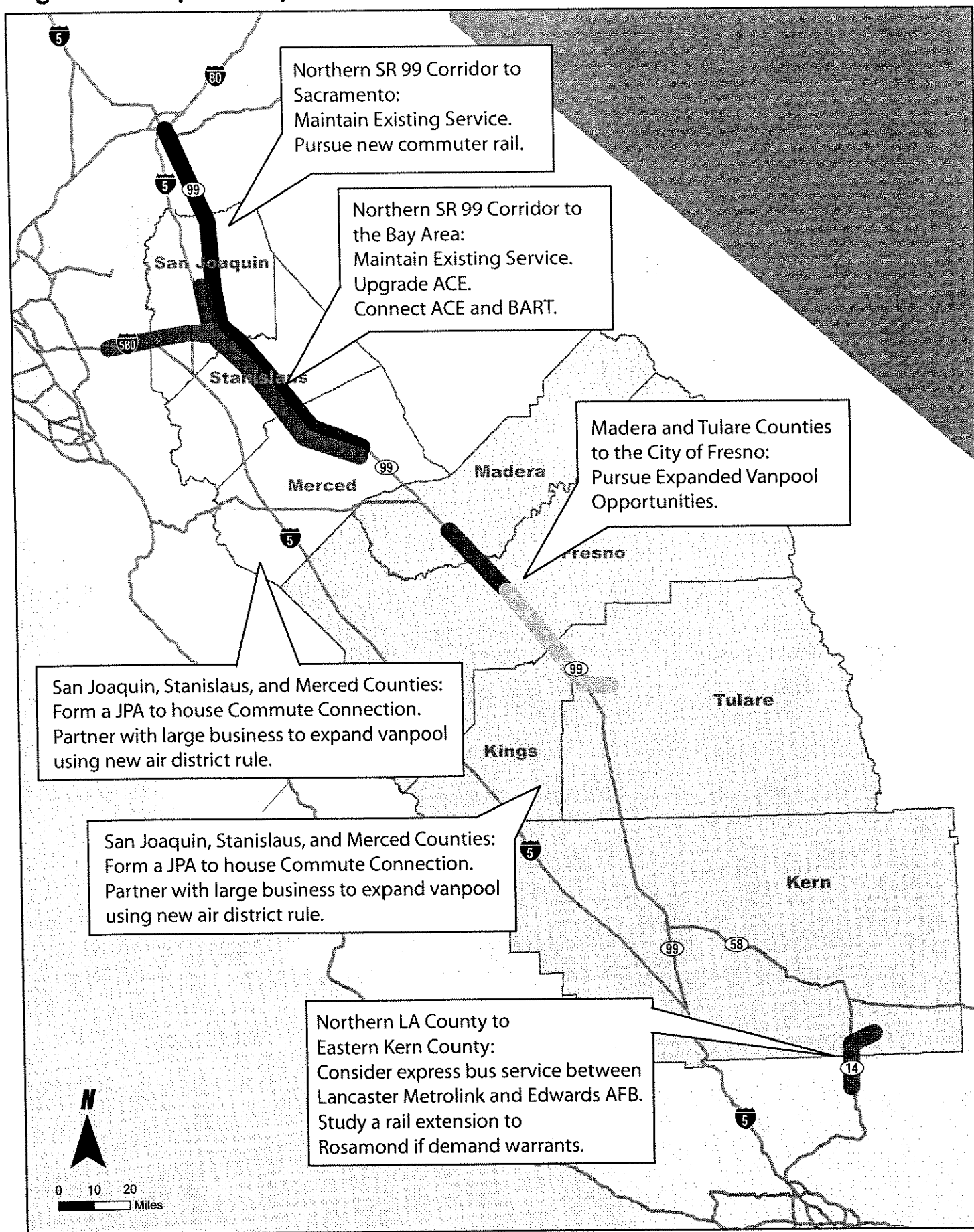
Some commuter rail passengers access train stations using park-and-ride facilities, while others walk, bike, or ride transit to access stations from surrounding communities. As it adds new passenger rail services and upgrades existing services, San Joaquin Valley communities should invest in comprehensive station area planning to achieve a balance of station access modes, and to ensure the maximum benefit for local communities.

Train stations can anchor vibrant, walkable urban neighborhoods consistent with the character of the San Joaquin Valley's historic downtowns. Well-planned stations can set aside some land for park-and-ride lots while ensuring priority for pedestrian access. Land-use regulations for the surrounding one-half and one-mile walk sheds can be tailored to allow moderate residential density and a mix of uses. Final, transit agencies should ensure sufficient feeder transit service connectivity to rail stations. By adding and upgrading passenger rail service in the densest cluster of urban areas in the region, along with this kind of station area planning, the region can foster more compact and pedestrian-oriented land uses, further reducing vehicle miles travelled and vehicle emissions. This course of action would maximize the value of rail infrastructure investments, and they would be consistent both with the region's air quality goals, its recently adopted Blueprint plan, and its obligations under SB 375.

² In the past, Edwards Air Force Base has not been receptive to proposals to extend bus service onto its grounds. Either an extension of Metrolink with a shuttle connection to the base, or a direct express bus connection, would require the support and participation of Edwards Air Force Base.

MPO's in the region should dedicate funds to ensure adequate resources for comprehensive station area plans, and local governments should follow through on tailoring appropriate land-use regulations to new station sites.

Figure 2 Map of Proposed Services



Conclusions

The San Joaquin Valley is a large region made up of a diverse group of communities. Regional policymakers should seek to tailor transportation investments based on the specific land use, population, and employment context in each community.

For a majority of the region, investments in ridesharing are the most cost-effective strategy. The region's focus should be on expanding vanpool offerings in both the northern and southern parts of the Valley. The new Air District rule requiring trip reduction programs from large employers offers the opportunity both for a new funding stream, and an effective marketing strategy for expanded vanpool offerings.

The region's existing inter-regional bus offerings match the highest demand corridors. In an extremely difficult funding environment for transit, the region's first priority should be to maintain these services to the extent possible. As funding becomes available, it should consider expanding subscription bus service from Stockton to Sacramento and the Bay Area. The region should also consider implementing bus service between Lancaster Metrolink station and Andrews Air Force Base in Eastern Kern County.

Finally, the region's long-term vision for its highest demand corridors should include significant upgrades to commuter rail service. The region should lobby for state and federal funds to upgrade the speed, capacity, and reliability of ACE, and to add a similar service between Sacramento and Stockton (and perhaps as far south as Merced). If demand warrants, the region should also consider extending LA Metrolink into eastern Kern County. To the extent possible, all passenger rail investments should seek to capitalize on California High Speed Rail investments.

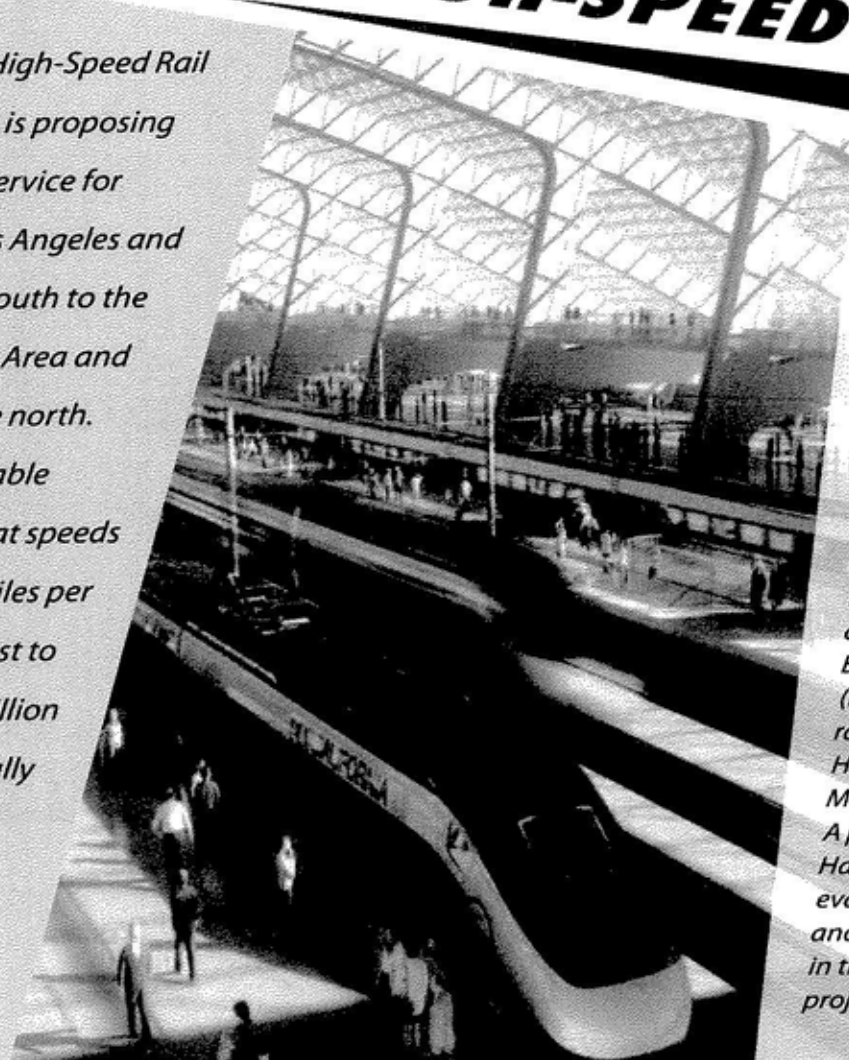


FLY CALIFORNIA
Without ever leaving the ground.



WHAT IS THE HIGH-SPEED TRAIN?

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) is proposing high-speed train service for travel between Los Angeles and San Diego in the south to the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento in the north. This fast, safe, reliable system will travel at speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour and is forecast to carry up to 100 million passengers annually for the entire 800-mile high-speed train network by the year 2030.

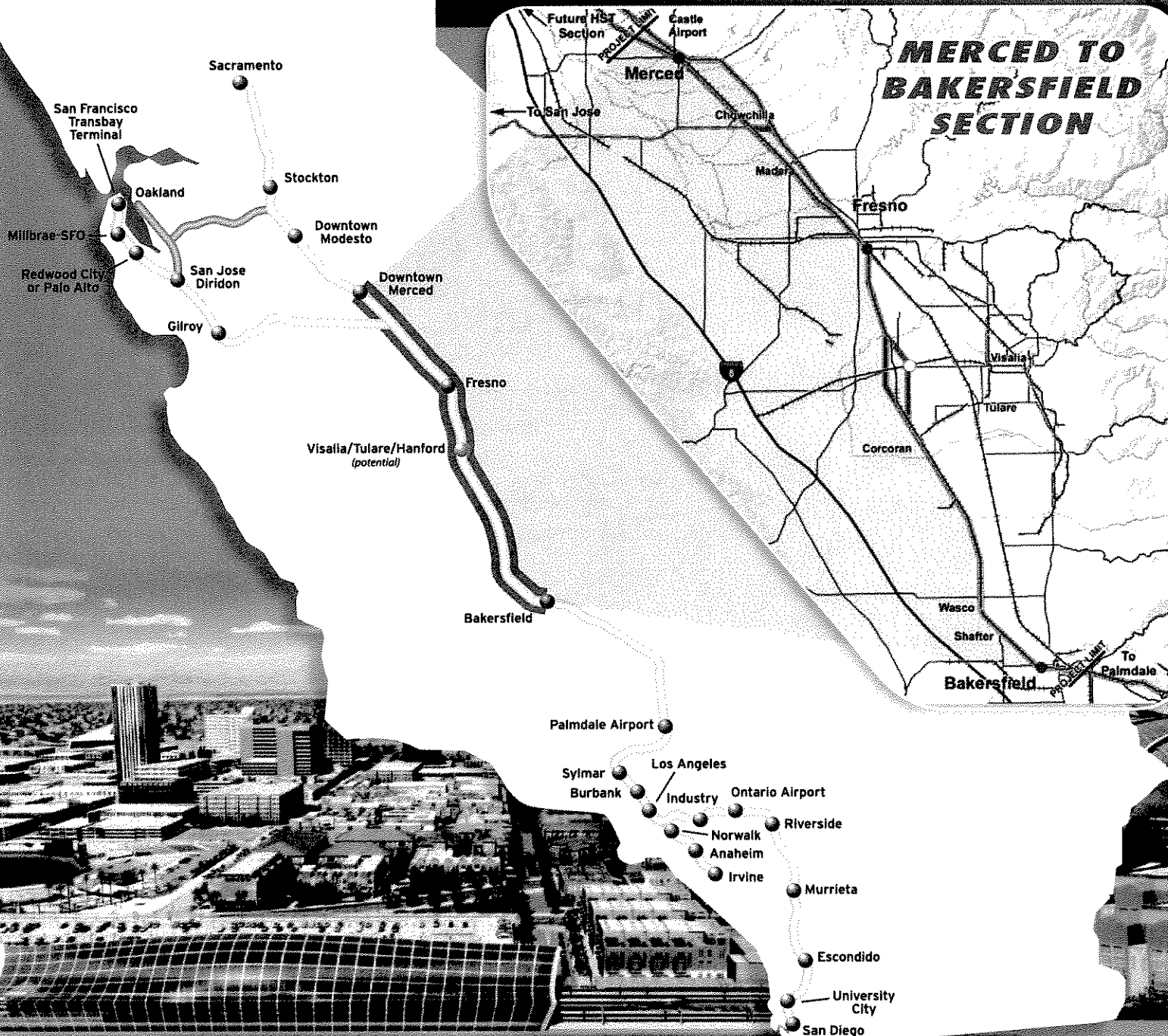


MERCED TO BAKERSFIELD HIGH-SPEED TRAIN PROJECT

The Merced-to-Bakersfield section of the High-Speed Train (HST) system includes the area north of the City of Merced south to the City of Bakersfield. Proposed route alternatives generally follow the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) or the Union Pacific (UP) railroads throughout the section. HST stations are proposed in Merced, Fresno and Bakersfield. A potential station in the Visalia/Hanford/Tulare area will be evaluated. A heavy maintenance and repair facility will be evaluated in the Merced to Bakersfield HST project area.

(See detailed map inside.)

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN SYSTEM



IMPLEMENTATION AND CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

PROGRAM - LEVEL EIR/EIS

PROJECT SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, PRELIMINARY

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

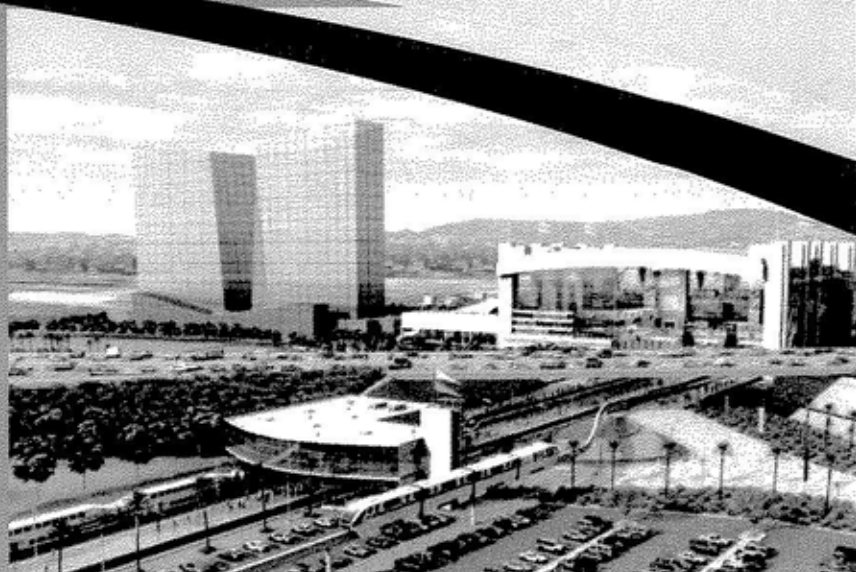
2011

2012

ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) initiated the project-level environmental review process in the high-speed rail section between Merced and Bakersfield.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Authority has issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP), and the FRA published a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As part of the initial phase of the environmental process, public scoping meetings will be hosted to receive public comment on the alternatives and issues that should be examined as part of the environmental analysis. Your comments will be considered in the preparation of the environmental document and will become part of the public record.



WHAT IS SCOPING?

Scoping is the first opportunity to become involved in the Merced-to-Bakersfield HST project-level Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). During the scoping process the public, as well as city, county, state, and federal agencies have an opportunity to provide comments on project alternatives and environmental impacts to be evaluated in the EIR/EIS. The purpose of the scoping process is to:

- *identify public and agency concerns early in the environmental process*
- *define the issues and alternatives that will be examined in the EIR/EIS*
- *save time in the overall process and facilitate an efficient EIR/EIS preparation process*

FINAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

SIGN

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

COME PARTICIPATE IN THE HIGH-SPEED TRAIN PROJECT!

The California High Speed Rail Authority will host public scoping meetings along the project section to provide the public with an opportunity to learn about the project, ask questions and provide feedback about what route alternatives and environmental issues should be evaluated in the EIR/EIS. Please join us for one of the following Open House sessions.

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

3:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Merced Community Senior Center

755 W. 15th St

Merced, CA

Thursday, March 19, 2009

3:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Madera County Fairgrounds

Home Arts Building

1850 West Cleveland Ave.

Madera, CA

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

3:00 - 7:00 p.,m.

Visalia Convention Center

303 E Acequia Avenue

Visalia, CA

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Fresno Convention Center (Exhibit Hall)

848 M Street

Fresno, CA

Thursday, March 26, 2009

3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Rabobank Theater (Lobby)

1001 Truxtun Ave.

Bakersfield, CA

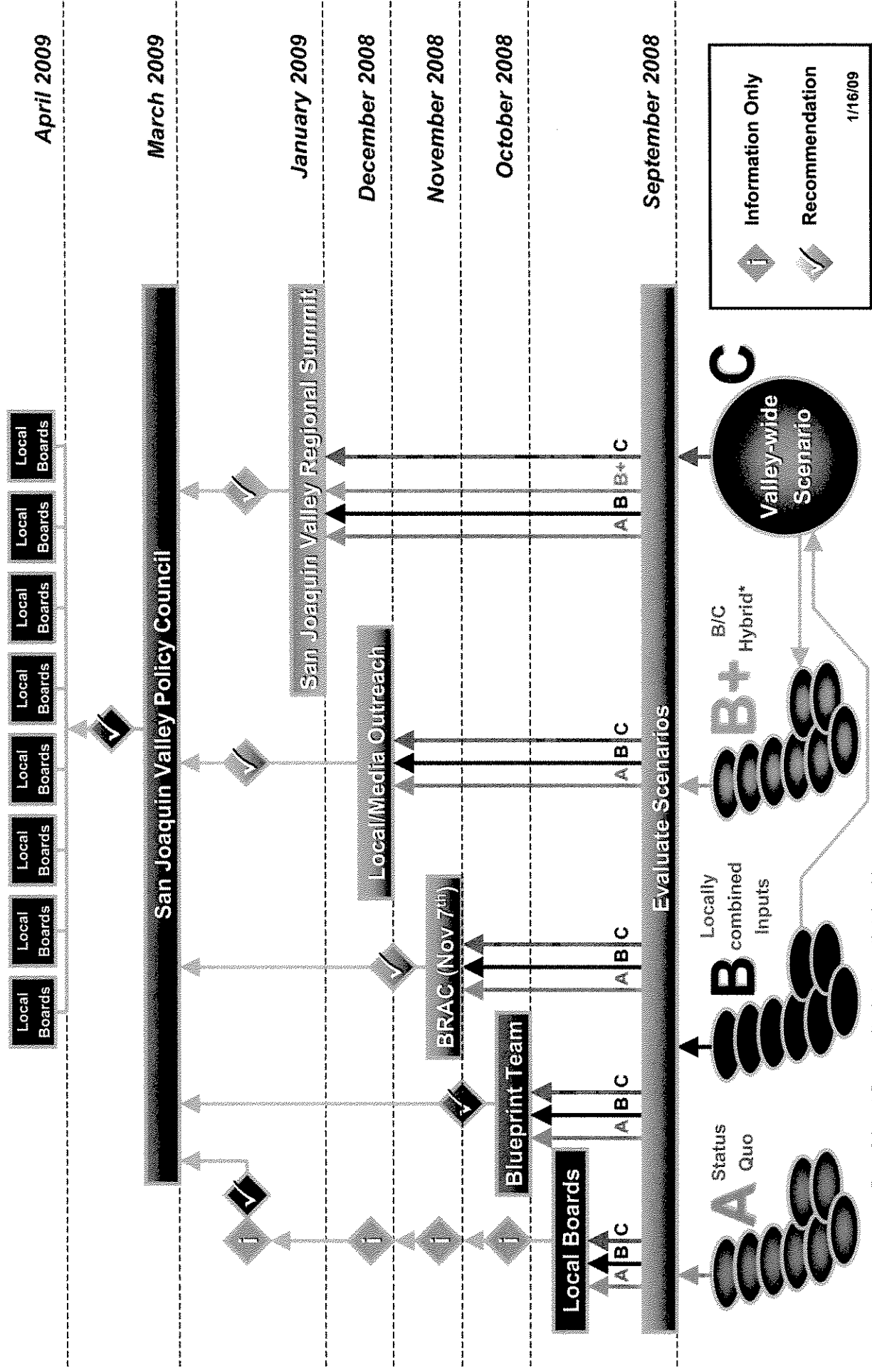
COMMENTS

Public scoping comments regarding the Merced-to-Bakersfield HST project will be accepted until Friday, April 10, 2009. Please send comments to Ms. Carrie Pourvahidi, Deputy Director, Merced-to-Bakersfield, California High Speed Rail Authority, 925 L Street, Suite 1425, Sacramento, CA 95814. Comments can also be submitted via email to comments@hsr.ca.gov with the subject line "Merced-to-Bakersfield HST."

CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED TRAIN PROJECT WILL:

- Be built on dedicated right-of-way, safely separated from cars and trucks, pedestrians and other rail traffic
- Use only a fraction of the energy of automobiles and airplanes
- Help free California from dependence on fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gases that cause global warming.
- Reduce traffic – the statewide system will remove over 50 million auto trips per year
- Enhance the economy – as many as 450,000 jobs will be created, including jobs at the maintenance facility to be located in the Central Valley
- Improve the environment – the energy efficient, high-speed trains will provide a transportation alternative that will help reduce air pollution.
- Provide better connections – provides a safer, time and cost efficient alternative to automobiles and will help relieve overcrowding at major airports

For more information visit www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov



*This scenario was created after the BRAC, based on direction from the Policy Council.

