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MEMORANDUM

To: **Tony Boren**
Executive Director

Date: August 31, 2010

Subject: **Status report for August 2010**

The intent of the present document is to provide you with a **Status Report** regarding SRI's activities, to date, during the month of August 2010.

I'm presently involved in two major projects for Fresno COG; Transit Consolidation and Farmland Conservation; plus, several projects for the smaller cities who are members of the COG. We anticipate beginning a third, major project, on behalf of the Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley within the next month. I'll speak to each of these below.

Transit Consolidation in Fresno County:

Based upon the "findings" from the first phase of a Feasibility Study, an **Exploratory Committee** has been formed to determine whether or not it is possible to create a seamless regional transit system to make it possible for people to traverse (navigate) from any point in the County to any destination in the County with minimal inconvenience and at a reasonable cost. Beyond providing seamless transportation, the intent is to minimize and/or eliminate the duplication of services among agencies; thus, maximizing the ROI (*return on investment*) of tax dollars earmarked for public transportation.

Due to the technical complexities inherent to the very notion of transit consolidation in Fresno County, this committee is comprised solely of professional staff (e.g., heads of the respective public transit agencies, transportation planners, and the like). Once the technical details have been addressed, and selected politically-charged elements, which are essential to moving forward from a logistical perspective, one of two things will happen:

- ☒ If it is determined that the advantages of Transit Consolidation in Fresno County **DO NOT outweigh** the challenges and cost, SRI will recommend to Fresno COG'S Executive Director, Tony Boren, that the notion of consolidating the three major public transit systems in the County be abandoned and the matter be put on hold into the foreseeable future.

An Institute for CONSENSUS BUILDING

- ☑ If it is determined by the Exploratory Committee that the **benefits of Transit Consolidation outweigh the challenges** (including cost), I will recommend that Fresno COG move forward . At the present time, it is anticipated that we will have this determination by year-end.
- ☑ In the process of making such a determination, the Exploratory Committee is looking into virtually every major facet of Transit Consolidation. Therefore, if it is determined that Transit Consolidation is, indeed, feasible...then the FRAMEWORK for moving forward will have been developed.
- ☑ Finally, if it is determined that Transit Consolidation is, in fact, practical and the Exploratory Committee concludes that moving forward is the right thing to do, then the Committee will be expanded to include such stakeholders as elected representatives of local government, members of various community and special interests groups/organizations, among others. The committee will be renamed to: FORMATION COMMITTEE, and we will move Transit Consolidation in Fresno County to the next level.

The composition of the **Exploratory Committee** is:

- Tony Boren, Ex. Director, Fresno COG
- John Downs, Fresno COG/City of Fresno
- Ken Hamm, Fresno FAX
- Shonna Halterman, City of Clovis
- Jeff Webster, Fresno County Rural Transit Agency
- Paul Jewel, Nelson\Nygaard
- Linda Rhine, Nelson\Nygaard
- Phil McGuire, Innovative Paradigms
- Kirk Hunter, Southwest Transportation Agency (former Chair of the San Joaquin Valley Blue Print Committee)
- Dr. G. Gary Manross, Strategy Research Institute, who will serve as facilitator and be responsible for consensus building

The Committee had its first meeting in late July; an electronic copy of the Minutes from this start-up meeting are available upon request (e-mail Tony Boren or Gary Manross). It was agreed that there will be two (2) Workshops between now and the end of the year; the first was anticipated to take place in mid- to late-September. Toward that end, Nelson\Nygaard has prepared a questionnaire to be completed by the three public agencies that would consolidate, should a decision be made to move forward; those being: (i) Fresno FAX, (ii) Clovis Transit Service (Stageline and Round Up), and (iii) the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA). The second Workshop will take place near year-end; it will culminate with a '**Go, No-Go**' recommendation.

Farmland Conservation:

As reported last month, through the Exploratory Phase of the project, we have identified a model that appears to have merit. Thus, we've moved from the **EXPLORATORY** stage into the **CONFIRMATORY** stage in the process. To date, we have "tested" the model on individuals BOTH inside and outside the Ag Industry (e.g., those in the Ag Industry, developers, local government officials, and the business community, among others). With few exceptions, the Model has generated support.

One key component of which there is CONSENSUS is that whatever model is brought forward (assuming one is brought forward) MUST incorporate the "intelligence" that was presented in a paper entitled: ***A Landscape of Choice***, prepared by The Growth Alternatives Alliance and released in 1998; as well as the follow-up work presented in a second paper entitled: ***Model Farmland Conservation Program for Fresno County***, commissioned by the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley and produced by the American Farmland Trust (released in December 2008).

Another component of which there is CONSENSUS among those interviewed, to date, in the Confirmatory Stage of the process, is that any Model that has merit must also be, for the most part, self-funding. In other words, no monies can be taken out of existing revenue streams (especially tax-based revenue streams) for implementing Farmland Conservation.

The final element of the Confirmatory Stage involves designing and administering a scientific, BENCHMARK survey of registered voters in Fresno County (much like the BENCHMARK survey conducted for Measure C. The Research Instrument (questionnaire) for this study is being crafted now. The timeline calls for the scientific survey to be completed by the end of September. Once we have this "intelligence" in hand, we will be prepared to make a recommendation of what amounts to a 'Go or NO-Go' decision. At that point in time, all of the "intelligence" gathered, to date, will be synthesized, analyzed, and a recommendation made whether or not Farmland Conservation should be moved forward. The feasibility study will culminate with a comprehensive report.

Serving the smaller Cities, who are members of Fresno COG:

SRI has, to date, worked with the City of Mendota in helping them create their own City Police Department. We've assisted the City of Huron with handling media relations pertaining to the hiring of a new Police Chief; in the process, we created new press release stationery for the City to use, going forward. We are presently assisting the City of Reedley with a couple of projects; for example, we recently facilitated a community meeting involving Reed Avenue Project. Will be conducting a community survey to assist the City in addressing the fiscal challenges they are facing, today; including, but not limited to, the City's LLAD (Landscape and lighting District).

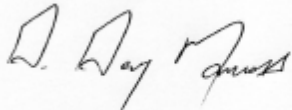
Some of these professional services have been provided on pro bono basis; others at highly reduced fees. We will continue to assist members of Fresno COG in a variety of ways that bring to the members professional services that would otherwise not be feasible.

California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley:

SRI is anticipating working with ***The Partnership***, under the direction of Mike Dozier, Executive Director, to assist the organization in realizing specific goals, objectives, and expectations that are consistent with the professional expertise and resources that our Institute brings to the proverbial table. We anticipate beginning our first project within the month.

Of course, there are other projects that SRI will be asked to work on. However, the above projects are those that are on the front burner. If you have any questions and/or comments you would like to share, please know that I'm telephone close and I monitor my e-mails quite closely.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Day".

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