



San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. Suite 201 Fresno, Ca 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 – FAX 559-233-9645

Meeting Agenda Thursday, June 2, 2011 Time: 10:00 a.m.

Fresno Council of Governments (Ash Room)
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA

Toll Free Number: 877-455-8688

Participant Code: 278933

Video Conferencing also available

Please contact Marla Day at Fresno COG 559-233-4148 Ext. 212

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. May 5, 2011 Director's Meeting (*enclosure*)

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 2. High Speed Rail | J. Abercrombie |
| 3. FTIP/AQ – Status | T. Taylor |
| 4. California Partnership | S. Dabbs |
| 5. Valley Modeling Improvements | M. Bitner |
| 6. Regional Energy Planning | M. Sigala |
| 7. SJV Interregional Goods Movement | M. Sigala |
| 8. Fall Policy Conference | P. Taylor |

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 9. Blueprint Roadmap (<i>enclosure</i>)
<i>Accept Deliverables – Next Step RPC</i> | B. Steck |
| 10. Valley Legislative Affairs Committee (VLAC) (<i>enclosure</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Discuss Valley Voice DC Priorities</i>• <i>Support for HR 1582</i>• <i>Reauthorization – Valley Language</i>• <i>Additional Bills for Consideration</i> | D. Barth
J. Brown
R. Phipps |
| 11. FY 2013-14, RTP/SCS
<i>Understanding of AG's Requests</i>
<i>SCS Coordination Sub-committee</i> | T. Taylor |

Fresno
Council of
Governments
Tony Boren
Chair

Stanislaus
Council of
Governments
Vince Harris
Vice Chair

Kern
Council of
Governments
Ronald Brummett

Kings County
Association of
Governments
Terri King

Madera County
Transportation
Commission
Patricia Taylor

Merced County
Association of
Governments
Jesse Brown

San Joaquin
Council of
Governments
Andrew Chesley

Tulare County
Association of
Governments
Ted Smalley

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 12. Director's Retreat
<i>Receive Input for Agenda Items</i> | A. Chesley |
| 13. Regional Policy Council, June 24 Meeting
<i>Receive Input for Agenda Items</i> | T. Boren |
| 14. Optional July 7 Meeting – New Chair / Vice-chair
<i>Discuss Need to Meet in July</i> | T. Boren |

OTHER ITEMS

15. Director Items
16. Public Presentations for Items Not on Agenda. This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Committee on items within its jurisdiction but NOT on this agenda. Unscheduled comments may be limited to 3 minutes. Note: The general public may comment on listed agenda items as they are considered.

Next Directors Meeting: Thursday, August 4, 2011 (or July 7, 2011)

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San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies
Fresno Council of Governments (Ash Room)
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA

Item 1

Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 5, 2011
10:00 a.m.

Executive Minutes

Members Attending:

Tony Boren, Fresno COG, Chair
Vince Harris, StanCOG, Vice-Chair
Patricia Taylor, MCTC

Ted Smalley, TCAG
Jesse Brown, MCAG (phone)
Andrew Chesley, SJCOG (phone)

Others:

Bruce Abanathie, KCAG
Rob Ball, Kern COG
Barbara Steck, Fresno COG
Mike Bitner, Fresno COG
Laural Fawcett, Fresno COG
Stacie Dabbs, CA Partnership
Derek Winning, MCTC
Michael Sigala, Sigala Inc.

Nathan Wahl, Sigala Inc.
Elizabeth Wright, TCAG
Sharri Bender-Ehlert, Caltrans
Neil Bretz, Caltrans
Bryn Forhan, HSR (phone)
Tanisha Taylor, SJCOG (phone)
Dianne Barth, SJCOG (phone)

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tony Boren, Chair. Everyone introduced themselves.

1. Approval of April 7, 2011 Minutes

T. Boren

A motion was made by Mr. Vince Harris. The minutes were approved by consensus.

2. High Speed Rail

J. Abercrombie

Ms. Bryn Forhan gave the update to the group in place of Mr. Jeff Abercrombie. She noted that the authority had a board meeting scheduled to discuss the supplemental alternative analysis report for the Merced-Fresno, Fresno-Bakersfield, and San Jose-Merced. They are currently waiting to hear from the federal government on their application for funds.

Ms. Forhan noted that the federal application was reduced to \$2 billion. She informed everyone of four upcoming public meetings on the following dates: May 16th in Corcoran, May 17th in Fresno, May 18th in Hanford, and May 19th in Bakersfield. On June 1st and 2nd there will be public information meetings in Merced and Madera that will preview what is in the draft EIR.

3. FTIP/AQ Status

T. Taylor

Ms. Tanisha Taylor gave the update on this item. She informed everyone of the latest developments with PM 2.5. Based on their last meeting, they believe they should be able to conform and the ARB took action to approve with the technical STIP. It is currently being forwarded to EPA. A repropose notice of disapproval is coming in May and should be out by the end of the month. It is not a final action but it will be an indicator which direction the air district and ARB may need to move. It is unclear what it will look like but will be able to provide an update by the June meeting. Several MPOs moved forward with amendments to mitigate any potential impacts. She also informed everyone that on the next Monday there will be an open meeting on SB 375 reviewing the SCS at 1-4 pm in Sacramento, but it will be available by webinar as well.

4. Valley Legislative Affairs Committee (VLAC)

D. Barthe

Ms. Dianne Barthe updated everyone on what has been happening with VLAC. She asked everyone to make their travel arrangements for the September 14-15 Washington D.C. trip. A short discussion followed about the arrangements. Ms. Barbara Steck let everyone know that she attended the most recent Strategic Growth Council meeting to represent the MPOs.

5. California Partnership

M. Dozier

Ms. Stacie Dabbs updated everyone on the latest with the Partnership. She asked to distribute a survey through the MPOs regarding job barriers which the directors will receive after the meeting. Mr. Andrew Chesley noted that some work had been done already by Cambridge Systematics so they ought to look at their work for some additional ideas. He noted that they should reach out to their Public Works departments for a good response as well.

Ms. Dabbs noted that the next Partnership meeting will be held July 11th and the annual summit will be held September 21 and 22 in Bakersfield. Mr. Ted Smalley noted that the new merged sub-committee will be the Sustainable Community Planning Committee. Their quarterly meetings will be held: in June in Fresno, in September in Kern, and in November in Stanislaus. There will be a focus on engaging the private sector with this group and asked everyone to give them 10 key private sector folks they could engage in workshops.

6. Valley Modeling Improvements

M. Bitner

Mr. Bitner distributed a handout that is available on the modeling website delineating the timeline on project deliverables and assessing potential issues. He noted that it is mostly on time with a slight danger on some of the tasks. MPO staff work was front loaded so the consultants could do the bulk of the work on the backend. He also informed everyone that the new licensing fees will be applicable in 2012/13.

7. Regional Energy Planning

M. Sigala

Mr. Michael Sigala noted that Mr. Fred Abousleman was busy and the meeting may be held in June just before NARC's annual conference in San Diego.

8. SJV Interregional Goods Movement

M. Sigala

Mr. Sigala informed the directors that a meeting has been set for Tuesday, May 17th in Fresno at 1 pm for the start of the project.

9. Fall Policy Conference

P. Taylor

Ms. Patricia Taylor informed everyone that they are working on the flyers and have a draft agenda with some ideas for potential speakers they are planning on inviting.

10. Mini Workshop - SJV Regional Transportation
Project Maps & Materials for Upcoming CTC
Workshop and Federal Reauthorization Bill

T. Boren

Mr. Tony Boren let everyone know the workshop was in response to Commissioner Assemi's request for a map of the valley depicting congestion and projects. There was some confusion as to whether or not the congestion showed 2025 congestion levels or current congestion. The group discussed further what they could get and it was decided that each county would work with Mr. Bitner and Ms. Laural Fawcett to get everything completed. Ms. Fawcett requested a template for goods movement priority project summaries to standardize everything that will be handed out.

11. Blueprint Toolkit

B. Steck

Ms. Steck gave an update on the latest with the blueprint toolkit. She informed the group that Mintier Harnish will continue to administer the toolkit until June 30th with the 3rd year match and grant funds that were still remaining. She plans to apply for cycle 2 prop 84 funds to help administer the toolkit as a backup plan. Mr. Jesse Brown moved to accept the proposed strategy for using the balance of 3rd Year Blueprint grant funds by June 30, 2011 and include Toolkit administration task in Cycle 2 Prop 84 funding proposal. Mr. Chesley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

12. SR 99 Bond Savings

T. Boren

The paperwork to have approval for the next prioritized project for the next CTC meeting was brought up as being needed to be completed. A memo that is consistent with the prioritization the group agreed upon will be drafted by Mr. Sigala with Mr. Smalley.

13. Director's Retreat

A. Chesley

Mr. Chesley updated everyone on his progress on the director's retreat. Three potential locations were brought forward: Bass Lake, Wonder Valley and Three Rivers. A few facilitators were mentioned and the availability of the locations as well as the facilitator will be followed up in the next meeting.

14. Approve FY 2011/2012 RTPA (8 county) Work Program

T. Boren

Mr. Boren recapped the last meeting and what transpired with this issue. Mr. Chesley moved to accept the document and Mr. Brown seconded. It passed by consensus. Ms. Taylor clarified she wanted to make sure that proper procurement procedures were followed. For the benefit of the group, Mr. Harris commented on the funding mechanisms that StanCOG uses in these different activities.

15. Smart Valley Places

B. Steck

Ms. Steck noted that the Regional Policy Council is a partner with Smart Valley Places and they need the agreement signed to continue moving forward with the consortium agreement. Mr. Brown moved to accept and Mr. Smalley seconded. The motion passed by consensus.

16. Other Directors Items

Mr. Rob Ball informed everyone that there has been discussion in Kern County from some planners about the guidance framework and their interest in having an edited version. They plan on signing a letter to the Regional Policy Council.

Mr. Boren informed everyone of a letter of support Mayor Spriggs wrote from the City of Merced to the Regional Policy Council in support of the High Speed Rail application for federal funding.

Mr. Harris let everyone know about StanCOG's new e-newsletter.

There was a short discussion about the next Caltrans director and who plans on signing a letter of support. There was no consensus at the time to send a unanimous support letter.

17. No public comment

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

June 2, 2011

Item # 9

TO: San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agency Directors

FROM: Barbara J. Steck, AICP, Deputy Director
SJV Blueprint Program Manager

SUBJECT: Blueprint Roadmap - Documents include Summary Report, Guidance Framework
(Implementation Strategy) and Web-based Toolkit –
<http://www.fresnocog.org> (then click on "Blueprint" tab).

Late Breaking News: Blueprint Planners' Toolkit has been awarded Cal Chapter APA (American Planning Association) Outstanding Planning Award – Best Practices – from both Central Section and Sacramento Section.

Action: Recommend acceptance by the Regional Policy Council of SUBJECT Blueprint Roadmap deliverables at their June 24, 2011 meeting.

Background:

In early 2006 the eight Regional Planning Agencies (MPOs) in the San Joaquin Valley came together in an unprecedented effort to develop a coordinated valley vision – the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint. This eight county venture has been conducted in each county, and was ultimately integrated to form a preferred vision for future development throughout the Valley to the year 2050. The Blueprint is a bottom up, voluntary endeavor that is intended to engage and guide local agencies in their pursuit of sustainable development patterns within their own jurisdictions and throughout the Valley.

The Blueprint planning process - Eight individual Valley MPOs planning in unison

Phase 1: Values and Vision – gathered from community input

Phase 2: Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures based upon Values and Vision

Phase 3: Evaluation of alternative "what if" growth scenarios in each county

- Selection of preferred county level scenarios for Valleywide analysis
- Evaluation of four Valleywide alternative scenarios
- Adoption of Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Growth Scenario for Valley

Phase 4: Develop documents to memorialize the Blueprint planning process, suggest strategies for implementation and provide a toolkit to assist planners with integrating the Blueprint Smart Growth Principles into local planning processes.

City of Clovis

City of Coalinga

City of Firebaugh

City of Fowler

City of Fresno

City of Huron

City of Kerman

City of Kingsburg

City of Mendota

City of Orange Cove

City of Parlier

City of Reedley

City of San Joaquin

City of Sanger

City of Selma

County of Fresno

On April 1, 2009, after a full vetting in each of the eight San Joaquin Valley Counties, the Regional Policy Council reviewed the Valley MPOs' collaborative work on the Blueprint and took the following actions:

- Adopted a list of Smart Growth Principles to be used as the basis of Blueprint planning in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Adopted Scenario B+ as the Preferred Blueprint Growth Scenario for the San Joaquin Valley to the year 2050. This preferred scenario will serve as guidance for the Valley's local jurisdictions with land use authority as they update their general plans.

Since its inception, the Blueprint planning process has been billed as a bottom up and voluntary process. Those assurances remain as the Valley Regional Planning Agencies move forward in their work with their member agencies to help integrate the Blueprint Smart Growth Principles into local planning processes. The documents being discussed today have been developed to help in this pursuit.

In February 2010, the Valley RPAs entered into a contract with Mintier Harnish to prepare three deliverables that comprise the Blueprint Roadmap:

- SJV Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report (September 2010)
- Draft SJV Blueprint Guidance Framework (Implementation Strategy) February 15, 2011 – Which includes Institutional Arrangements White Paper as appendix
- SJV Blueprint – Planners Toolkit (web based) – the as yet unreleased beta version is available at <http://toolkitvalleyblueprintorg.alias.strangeocode.com/>

The purpose of the Blueprint Roadmap documents is to memorialize the Blueprint planning process and eventual adoption by the Regional Policy Council on April 1, 2009 and to facilitate the integration of the 12 Smart Growth Principles into local planning processes should local governments with land use authority elect to do so.

The Blueprint Project Managers from each RPA, the Valley Planners Working Group, the RPA Directors and other stakeholder groups have all been involved in reviewing and commenting on the three deliverables that comprise the Blueprint Roadmap. The first two documents, along with the comments received on the Guidance Framework through February 15th (as well as follow up comments through May 20th) are available on line at <http://www.fresnocog.org> (then click on "Blueprint" tab).

At the Valley Planners Working Group meeting on February 23, 2011, the following items emerged as concerns related to the draft Guidance Framework:

1. The document should describe what traffic modeling was done during the development of the Blueprint. If traffic modeling was not done, the document should disclose that.

(The following two comments emanated from the Kern planners and will be incorporated into the responses to the Kern COG letter.)

2. The document needs to state that the Blueprint is completely voluntary.
3. The word “implementation”, as it is used in the document needs to be defined. For example since the Blueprint is voluntary, then “implementation” would apply to those wanting to incorporate the 12 Blueprint Smart Growth Principles and density targets in their local general plan and development codes. In short if an agency or agencies desire to promote or incorporate the Blueprint into their policies and land use/ transportation planning efforts then the Guidance Framework would provide them with assistance in implementing the Blueprint.

Public Comment Period: March – May 2011:

The Valley RPA Directors agreed to take the Blueprint Roadmap deliverables through their individual committee processes in order to provide an opportunity for public comment. The following letters (attached to this memo) have been received during that comment period:

- Kern County Development Services Agency – Ted James, Director
- City of Tehachapi – David James, Community Development Director
- Kern COG – Steve Morgan, Chairman

Response to Comments:

Valley Planners Working Group- February 23, 2011:

1. During the formulation of the valley-wide Blueprint, each of the eight counties prepared traffic modeling runs for the alternative scenarios. The 2030 transportation network from each county’s Regional Transportation Plan was extended to 2050 with an assumption of some roadway and transit expansion. This was done at the county level because of the absence of a valley-wide traffic model. The traditional 4-step travel demand model was applied in each of the eight valley counties. The inherent deficiency of the 4-step-model’s insensitivity to smart growth was not corrected during the Blueprint modeling in most of the counties except that a 4-D process was applied in Fresno COG’s modeling. In the fall of 2008, the scenario modeling results including land use and traffic modeling were sent to the UC Davis Information Center for the Environment (ICE), and stitched together as the Valley-wide scenarios. The scenarios included valley-wide transportation facility assumptions such as high speed rail. These are reflected in the illustrative maps used throughout the process. The indicators shown for the valley-wide scenarios are weighted averages based on county-level modeling.”

2. & 3. – These two comments (above) emanated from the Kern planners and will be incorporated into the responses to the Kern COG letter.

Kern Council of Governments – May 19, 2011 (The following responses prepared by Mintier Harnish consultant team.)

1. **Avoid Lawsuits.** While it is true that anyone can file a lawsuit on just about any subject, the question is whether the lawsuit has a legitimate basis. The legitimate basis, in the case of governmental actions, would be the citation of a Federal, State, or local law, ordinance, or regulation that has allegedly been violated, presumably, in this case, through the failure of a city or county to implement or conform to the Guidance Framework. However, the Framework will not be approved by any governmental agency with authority to establish laws, ordinances, or regulations. Instead, it will be accepted by the Regional Policy Council, a voluntary, advisory committee, as recommendations for setting future work program priorities by the Valley COGs. Acceptance of the Guidance Framework will not establish any laws, ordinances, or regulations, nor does it carry out an existing law, ordinance, or regulation. While some future readers could conceivably misinterpret the Framework by thinking it carried the force of law, they would find it difficult, if not impossible, to identify a law, ordinance, or regulation upon which to base a lawsuit. Acceptance of the Guidance Framework by the RPC carries little, if any, risk of litigation.
2. **Recognize locally adopted Blueprints.** The Valley Blueprint has from the beginning recognized and supported locally adopted Blueprints. That is the essence of the Valley Blueprint – built from a bottom-up approach, with an emphasis on finding common ground among the eight counties. Explicit acknowledgement of this relationship is included in the Guidance Framework, “This ‘locally combined’ scenario is an assembly of scenarios created by each county...”¹ However, the frequency of the acknowledgement proposed by Kern COG leaves the impression that a Valley-wide Blueprint and Regional Policy Council have no relevance.
3. **No Regional Identity.** The proposed edit (p. 4) stating that “the Valley is too big to have one regional identity” is counterproductive, unnecessary, and not a universally held opinion in the Valley. The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint effort and local governments and MPOs participation on the Regional Policy Council are examples of the Valley’s acknowledgement of a shared identity. The purpose of Regional Policy Council is to provide guidance on common interregional issues and represent the San Joaquin Valley on issues that require a common voice.² When the RPC adopted the Valley Blueprint, they were adopting a vision for the entire San Joaquin Valley.
4. **Eliminate the Greenprint Program.** Elimination of the Greenprint program is not necessary. Just as the Blueprint looked at economic and urban growth of the Valley’s communities, the Greenprint would look at economic, agricultural, and environmental sustainability for rural and open space areas of the Valley. The program clearly identifies the starting point of the

¹ San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Draft Guidance Framework; Page 6; February 15, 2011

² <http://www.sjvcogs.com/PCabout.html>

effort as the locally adopted conservation and open space elements. The intent of the program is to provide cities and counties additional tools and ideas to strengthen, on a voluntary basis, their local elements. Furthermore, the program has been identified as a priority Blueprint implementation effort since 2009 and has recently been awarded Prop 84 grant funding through the Strategic Growth Council.

5. **Emphasize the voluntary nature of Blueprint Planning.** The voluntary nature of Blueprint planning has been clear to everyone involved from the outset. In fact, the Regional Blueprint Planning Program grant that was used to fund the Valley's Blueprint effort is defined as, "...a voluntary, discretionary grant program that provides funding to [MPOs] to conduct regional blueprint planning." The intent of the process is to find common ground for improving the quality of life in the 62 cities and eight counties. As with the emphasis on locally adopted Blueprints, the voluntary nature of Blueprint Planning can be stated once, up front in the Guidance Framework. The Kern COG recommendation to insert language related to this "voluntary nature" throughout the document creates the impression that the implementation recommendations have little or no meaning.
6. **Emphasize bottom-up approach.** The Guidance Framework is neither a plan nor a regulatory document. It is a list of program options for use by the Regional Policy Council and Regional Planning Agencies in setting future work program and funding priorities since the adoption of the Blueprint. These are ideas to help and support regional and local efforts to improve their quality of life, consistent with the adopted Valley Blueprint, which is a combination of the eight Valley county Blueprints. There is nothing in the document that suggests it will provide a basis for future legislation that could erode local control. To the contrary, it provides a means for the Regional Policy Council and Regional Planning Agencies to work with, support, and provides tools to local governments that desire to implement the Blueprint. The entire document is built on the concept of RPAs and their member cities and counties working together for progress in the Valley.
7. **Formation of a Regional Technical Coordinating Committee.** This committee is not, as the Kern COG comment suggests, another regional governance structure. The Committee would be made up of local, regional, and other agency staff to coordinate data gathering, modeling, and other technical efforts. It would build on the coordination efforts started by the Blueprint Coordination Committee. It would function similar to the Valley Planners Blueprint Working Group as a voluntary participation group for those interested in sharing ideas, coordinating programs and initiatives, avoiding redundancy, and leveraging resources. It would have no decision-making, policy setting, or regulatory authority.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The Valley Regional Planning Agencies have engaged their local jurisdictions in the Blueprint Planning Process for over five years. As promised - it has been an inclusive, bottom up endeavor that is voluntary in nature. I believe that Caltrans intends for Blueprint planning to become an ongoing process that will lend itself to the upcoming work on Sustainable

Communities Strategies in our next Regional Transportation Plans. Blueprint planning's outreach and engagement alone, along with information sharing and relationship building, will likely have long term benefits. What may be on many local agency planners' minds at this point is the lack of resources to do the work necessary to move toward implementation. Prop 84 will help, but the extent of need may be greater than the resources available. That remains to be seen.

The task before the RPA Directors at this time is to discuss and resolve the comments and concerns received thus far. All of the subject documents, a link to the Planners' Toolkit, and the public comments are available at www.fresnocog.org under the "Blueprint" tab. The February 15, 2011 version of the Guidance Framework is the most current version (awaiting final revisions from the Regional Policy Council). All comments received prior to 2/15/11 have been incorporated into the 2/15/11 version. The three letters received from Kern agencies after that point in time are attached to this memo. Responses to all post 2/15/11 comments are provided earlier in this memo.

Staff recommends that the RPA Directors endorse the "Response to Comments" on the Guidance Framework and forward the Blueprint Roadmap deliverables on to the Regional Policy Council for their acceptance on June 24, 2011. Following the June 24th meeting, the Roadmap documents will be revised to reflect Regional Policy Council direction.

Blueprint Roadmap

Comments 2/15/11 through 5/20/11

Attachment to June 2, 1011 memo



**Kern Council
of Governments**

May 19, 2011

Mr. Bill Spriggs, Mayor – City of Merced
Chairman, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council
C/O Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721

Dear Chairman Spriggs:

On March 17 and April 21, 2011, the Kern COG Board of Directors solicited comments on San Joaquin Valley Blueprint documents out for public review. The documents include:

- SJV Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report (September 2010);
- Draft SJV Blueprint Guidance Framework (February 15, 2011);
- SJV Institutional Arrangements White Paper (December 13, 2010); and
- Associated Comments from the Valley Planners Working Group (February 13, 2010)

Attached for the San Joaquin Policy Council's consideration are requested revisions to the Draft SJV Blueprint Guidance Framework document. The revisions were approved by the Kern COG Board of Directors on May 19, 2011. The changes were recommended to the Kern COG Board by the Kern COG Regional Planning Advisory Committee with participation from member agency jurisdictions. We strongly urge that the Policy Council approve these changes as part of their action to accept the document scheduled on June 24, 2011. The Kern COG Board of Directors respectfully requests the Policy Council not "accept" the document as it is currently written.

The proposed changes are considered essential for the following reasons:

1. Avoid Lawsuits – If not revised, future readers of the Framework not familiar with the voluntary intent of the Policy Council could misinterpret the document in a way that could result in future lawsuits.

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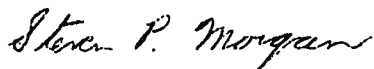
MAY 23 2011

BY: _____
FRESNO COG

2. Recognize Locally Adopted Blueprints – It is extremely important that the Guidance Framework recognize locally adopted Blueprints. Kern COG adopted its local Blueprint, and the Kern COG Board wants to ensure conflicts are not created between its locally adopted Blueprint and the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint. Additionally, California 2010 RTP Guidelines state in part: "The following is a non-exclusive list of circumstances when it may be appropriate or necessary to make an assumption that is different from historical trends or existing plans and boundaries: ... (2) The assumption accounts for adopted blueprints, habitat conservation plans or other plans which may accurately reflect future growth...". Revisions have been suggested to deal with this concern.
3. Emphasize the Voluntary Nature of Blueprint Planning – The State of California recognizes that COGs have no land use authority and that the intent of the California Regional Blueprint Planning Program is to build consensus with local government agencies that do have land use authority. Implementing the Blueprint at the local level is voluntary, but the Guidance Framework contained the word "voluntary" in only one location. Revisions have been suggested to underscore the voluntary use of suggested tools in the Framework.
4. Emphasize a Bottom-Up Approach - The intent of regional blueprint planning is to use a bottom-up approach to visioning and scenario planning. Regardless of the Policy Council's non-regulatory intent, this Framework reads like a top-down regulatory document that could impact local control should future legislation require the tools suggested in this document. Revisions include the striking of the "Greenprint" program tool and replacing it with a reference to existing local General Plan Open Space and Conservation Elements. It is understood that existing grant-funded activities are associated with the "Greenprint"; however, mention of these efforts as tools adds weight to voluntary activities with only temporary funding sources.
5. In addition, the revisions exclude the formation of a Regional Technical Coordination Committee. The Regional Policy Council was formed to guide and review activities on a regional level. The Kern COG Board strongly opposes any additional regional governance structure.

Thank you for consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Steve Morgan, Chairman
Kern Council of Governments

Cc: SJV Regional Planning Agency Directors

DRAFT

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT
GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK**

February 15, 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blueprint Guidance Framework

The Blueprint Guidance Framework is made up of a set of 12 ~~specific~~ strategies intended to assist local agencies with land use authority who wish to voluntarily ~~guide~~ implementation ~~ation-of~~ the Valley Blueprint (the Blueprint). The strategies are not an exhaustive or detailed list of prescriptions or suggestions for what could or should be done to implement the Blueprint. Instead, they set out a relatively short list of actions that will be most important in the short- to mid-range (five years) to create a structure and process of carrying out the Blueprint and for translating Blueprint principles into local policy and actions. The strategies focus on land use and transportation, although in future years strategies may be added to address a broader range of regional issues.

This Guidance Framework is one of three products that make up the San Joaquin Valley ~~b~~ Blueprint roadmap. The other two are the Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report and an Internet-based Planners Toolkit of programs and techniques local governments can use to implement the Blueprint.

San Joaquin Valley Blueprint

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is the result of an unprecedented effort of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies (RPA), that include the Council of Fresno County Governments, the Kern Council of Governments, the Kings County Association of Governments, the Madera County Transportation Commission, the Merced County Association of Governments, the San Joaquin Council of Governments, the Stanislaus Council of Governments, and the Tulare County Association of Governments, to develop a long-term regional growth strategy for the future of the San Joaquin Valley. Following three years of visioning and outreach by the eight Valley RPAs, the Regional Policy Council (RPC), the decision-making body for the Valleywide process, adopted the Valley Blueprint in April 2009.

The Blueprint is a long range vision for a more efficient, sustainable, and livable future for the Valley. It is made up three elements: a 2050 growth scenario diagram that identifies areas of existing development, new development and future regional transit and highway improvements; a Valleywide average target density of 6.8 units per acre for new residential growth to the year 2050; and a set of 12 Smart Growth Principles. Importantly, the Blueprint recognizes and

incorporates by reference the visioning and outreach efforts undertaken by the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies.

Benefits of Blueprint Implementation

The Valley is facing significant challenges involving a continued slow economy, government service downsizing, a burdensome environmental and permitting process and an increasing need to conserve water and other resources. ~~and implementing the Blueprint must overcome significant obstacles. However, t~~ The Blueprint was prepared in recognition of these challenges and will be implemented with the expectation that the Blueprint principles of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies and regional cooperation will produce major and tangible benefits for the Valley as a whole and for its individual communities. Among these expected benefits are:

- More vibrant downtowns and urban centers and better neighborhoods
- More walkable communities
- Greater housing choices
- More efficient and convenient transportation systems and services
- More efficient and cost-effective infrastructure
- Reduces costs of government services
- Increased energy efficiency
- Reduced urban water consumption
- More investment and better jobs
- Greater competitiveness with other regions
- Reduced conversion of agricultural, resource, and open space lands
- Better air quality
- Healthier population
- Better informed and more engaged public
- More consistent expectations and standards for new development
- More outside financial resources directed to the Valley because of ~~a unified~~ regional efforts

Challenges and Obstacles to Implementation

There are challenges and potential obstacles to implementation of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint that need to be acknowledged and overcome if the benefits of the Blueprint are to be realized. The Blueprint is being implemented during one of the most challenging economic times for California and the nation in memory; it is especially challenging in the Valley. The Valley faces many other challenges as well. However, it must be remembered that while the challenges are great at the inception of the implementation phase, conditions will shift and shift again during the period of implementation (2010 - 2050).

- **Population Growth.** The Valley has experienced enormous population growth, with some county and city populations doubling and redoubling. The California Department of Finance projects the Valley's population will increase by approximately 126 percent, from over 4 million people today to 9.5 million in 2050.
- **Demographics.** The demography of the region is changing. Some communities now have no single ethnic or racial majority; instead their residents represent groups from throughout the world.
- **Unemployment.** Unemployment and underemployment are among the biggest issues for the region. The Valley's unemployment is over 18 percent, significantly higher than the state and national averages of 13.2 percent and 9.3 percent, respectively.
- **Poverty.** Average family income in the Valley is 35 percent lower than the statewide average. The Valley's poverty rate of nearly 25 percent puts it among the top three regions in the nation with the highest poverty rates.
- **Water.** A growing population, reduced water supplies, and multi-year droughts continue to complicate water quantities and quality for Valley water users. Agriculture, resource needs, ~~the environmental,~~ and urban areas are the three primary ~~three~~ users of water resources, with agriculture using the greatest percentage. In recent years, there has been an increase in ground water overdraft, fallowing of farm land, and amplified unemployment rates due to reduced water delivery.
- **Infrastructure.** Revenues are inadequate to support essential government services and infrastructure. Local developer fees and general taxes are also inadequate to build and maintain critical infrastructure to meet demand, and few communities have been able to keep up with the need to both maintain aging systems and expand them to meet the needs of a growing population.
- **Housing.** The Valley likely overbuilt during the housing boom of the early 2000s. Since the real estate market crashed in 2008 house prices have fallen. In parts of the Valley, houses lost 50 percent or more of their value in less than two years. Foreclosures continue to occur throughout the Valley as people walk away from homes with mortgages higher than their current market value and high monthly mortgage payments. As a result there is a large stock of empty houses and a backlog of approved projects. Some estimate that there is a ten year supply of some housing types in the Valley.
- **Health.** Valley residents face four critical public health issues (e.g., asthma, obesity, diabetes, and limited access to health care. In addition, research shows that social environment – who you live with, whether you are supported, or feel safe, or endangered – is an important indicator of health. Safe and supportive neighborhoods and communities are, therefore, critical in promoting public health.

- **Air Quality.** Although progress has been made, the San Joaquin Valley has some of the worst air quality in the nation. In 2009 the San Joaquin Valley had 98 days that exceeded the State ozone level standards.
- **New Mandates.** There are several new state mandates (e.g., AB 32, SB 97, SB 375, AB 170, AB 1358) that will influence Blueprint implementation. However, the State has provided very little funding to carry out these mandates.

Making changes in communities takes a long time. The planning process takes years, especially when the planning areas is as big as the San Joaquin Valley. New developments, commercial areas, and transportation corridors are built over decades; progress toward noticeable change is incremental. Over the ~~months and~~ years of implementation, economies will prosper and decline, resources will shrink and grow again, and regional leadership will change as elections are held and community priorities shift. Implementing the Blueprint principles will need to overcome several obstacles:

- **Regional Identity.** While there is some recognition of the eight-county San Joaquin Valley as a region, the Valley is too big and diverse to have one ~~has not fully embraced a true~~ regional identity. ~~Building a regional identity will require the identification and promotion of issues and challenges that can be most effectively dealt with Valleywide. Future regional success will depend upon whether that regional identity is credible, and the local benefits of regional coordination are clear.~~ The diversity of issues and outlooks warrants a recognition of the eight individual RPA's blueprint visioning programs. Each program has similar concepts that together promote regional coordination.
- **Public Support.** The benefits of Blueprint implementation are long term and indirect; there is not much political reward for taking difficult action now when the payoff seems so far off in the future, unless the public understands and buys into the benefits of the Blueprint.

Finding ways to engage the underrepresented populations in every community will require improved and innovative communication strategies, as well as a determination to ensure that the neighborhood meetings and community decisions are relevant and engaging for everyone.

- **Lack of Resources.** The capacity of implementing the Blueprint – in terms of staff and financial resources – varies greatly among the cities and counties in the Valley, with small cities being the most challenged. An important State and regional priority must be the financial support of city and county planning efforts designed to implement Blueprint smart growth principles.
- **Regional Leadership.** The Regional Policy Council (RPC) may have lead responsibility for coordinating Blueprint implementation. In order for the RPC to be able to effectively

advance the Blueprint, it will need to build credibility with cities and counties and stakeholders throughout the region. The RPC will need ~~an institutional structure that can gather and manage funds to maintain staff and direct sufficient resources~~ to see that the Blueprint is supportive of local planning, State law (AB 32 and SB 375), and regional priorities.

Overcoming these challenges and obstacles will be critical to Blueprint implementation. Failure to act decisively may not only be detrimental to the Blueprint's success, but to the overall quality of life and success of Valley communities.

Blueprint Implementation Strategies

The Blueprint links the eight Valley Regional Visioning efforts ~~regional goals~~ and sets out a vision for a more prosperous Valley. The Guidance Framework lays out actions that will facilitate implementation of the Blueprint and produce tangible benefits for individual communities and the Valley as a whole.

The ~~12~~ 11 implementation strategies were selected based on input from the Regional Policy Council, Valley RPA Directors, Valley planners, other stakeholders, and a review of ongoing programs in the Valley. These include: work programs, recent grant applications, and the Blueprint implementation programs of other regional planning agencies in California. Each strategy includes an overview, a set of specific recommendations, a list of responsible implementation partners, a timeframe for implementation, possible funding sources, and references relevant to the strategy.

Explore a Regional Leadership Structure

Successful implementation of the Blueprint suggests ~~a refined~~ an appropriate institutional arrangement that can provide Valleywide leadership and coordination while minimizing cost and avoiding added layers of government.

Continue and Expand the Valley Legislative Advocacy Program

Successful implementation of the Blueprint requires that the Valley is effective in securing adequate resources and favorable legislation from the State and Federal governments.

Align SCS/APS with the Blueprint

Successful implementation of the Blueprint assumes that the Blueprint planning efforts carried out to date in the Valley will be used by Regional Planning Agencies (MPOs) as the framework for development of their Sustainable Communities Strategies, which are to be part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), as required by SB 375.

Translate Blueprint into City and County Policy and Actions

Successful implementation of the Blueprint and the eight valley regional planning agency efforts will depend ultimately on incorporation of Blueprint principles into city and county general plans policy, supporting ordinances, and development approvals and programs at the discretion of local governments.

Maintain and Expand the Planners Toolkit

Successful implementation of the Blueprint concepts will depend on cities and counties having ready access to tools and resources that can be easily adapted to local conditions, particularly for smaller jurisdictions.

~~Create a Greenprint Program~~ Recognize Local Government General Plan Open Space and Conservation Elements

Successful implementation of the Blueprint ~~suggests a companion strategy for conserving agricultural and open lands, which make up most of the land in the Valley~~ acknowledges the efforts by local governments to conserve agricultural and open lands.

Increase Technical Support and Data Sharing Capacity

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will depend on expanded technical support for and coordinated data sharing among local governments and other agencies within the Valley.

~~Create a Regional Technical Coordinating Committee~~

~~Successful implementation of Blueprint will depend on all regional partners systematically coordinating their programs and initiative on a regular basis.~~

Conduct an Annual Regional Event to Celebrate the Blueprint

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will be enhanced if Blueprint principles and concepts are celebrated and refreshed on an annual basis in a regional venue.

Create a Leadership Training and Public Outreach Program

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will depend on an informed citizenry and local leaders in addition to popular support for the Blueprint principles.

Monitor Blueprint Implementation

Successful implementation of the Blueprint suggests reviewing the implementation strategies regularly, documenting accomplishments, and monitoring changes in conditions in the Valley that the Blueprint seeks to influence.

Develop a Valleywide Blueprint Vision Statement

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will be enhanced if a Valleywide Blueprint vision statement is created that provides an overarching philosophical framework to link ~~the preferred growth scenario diagram, target density, and growth principles.~~ the Blueprint planning efforts of the eight Valley RPA's.

Blueprint Implementation Partners

Effective implementation of the strategies calls for the participation and cooperation of an array of Federal, State, and local government agencies and quasi-public and non-profit organizations. Most of these partners have already made important contributions in the development of the Blueprint. While the Blueprint implementation will most likely need to be led by a single organization with a Valleywide base, all the agencies and organizations discussed in this chapter will likely play important roles in implementing the Blueprint. Coordination and communication among all of these groups will be a critical component of Blueprint implementation, recognizing that the roles and capacities of these agencies and organizations will change over time.

Funding Implementation

Implementing the Blueprint ~~will~~ may require substantial financial resources. ~~at the local and regional level. A broad range of funding sources and financial tools are available to local and regional agencies that may be useful for implementing the Blueprint. These funding sources and financial tools can be organized into two categories: taxes and fees; and grants and loans.~~ The implementation of the Blueprint must recognize the funding limitations imposed on local governments.

Chapter 1 Introduction

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is the result of an unprecedented effort to plan for the future of the San Joaquin Valley. Following three years of visioning and outreach by the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies (FCOG, KCAG, KernCOG, MCAG, MCTC, SJCOG, StanCOG, and TCAG), or Valley RPAs, the Regional Policy Council (RPC), the decision-making body for the Valleywide process, adopted the Valley Blueprint in April 2009. The Blueprint is a long-range vision for a more efficient, sustainable, and livable future for the Valley. It consists of a Valleywide preferred growth scenario, an average target density for future residential development, and a set of 12 Smart Growth Principles. The Blueprint also recognizes the visioning efforts undertaken by the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies.

The Guidance Framework is one of three products that make up the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Roadmap. The other two are the Blueprint Process Summary Report (September 2010) and an Internet-based Valley Planners Toolkit of programs and techniques local governments can use to implement the Blueprint.

Purpose and Intended Use

The purpose of this Guidance Framework is to identify the steps for carrying out the Blueprint in the near- to mid-term (2011 – 2015). The Guidance Framework is a voluntary program by local governments. It focuses primarily on four major issues:

- What roles and responsibilities should various public, private, and non-profit organizations play in carrying out the Blueprint and, in particular, which organization or organizations should take the lead in implementing the Blueprint?
- How can or should Blueprint principles be translated into local land use plans and practices to effectively create more efficient land patterns and distinctive, attractive, and livable communities?
- Where will the resources, both financial and personal, be found to carry out the Blueprint?
- How can Blueprint concepts be communicated to a wider audience to build an informed constituency that will support Blueprint implementations over time?

The Guidance Framework is written as a voluntary strategy, not as a plan. The primary audiences for this strategy are the 70 cities and counties that make up the Valley and that have the most responsibility and authority for implementing the Blueprint, the Valley RPAs that will continue providing coordination for and technical support to the cities and counties, and finally, the RPC or alternative agency or agencies that will be designated to coordinate Blueprint

implementation at the Valleywide level. The Blueprint was prepared through a collaborative effort and will be implemented through a collaborative process that will be both flexible and evolutionary.

Organization of the Guidance Framework

The Guidance Framework is made up of six chapters. Chapter one introduces the Guidance Framework, describes the benefits of the Blueprint, and summarizes the Blueprint planning process. Chapter two describes the Valley Blueprint principles and process. Chapter three provides context for Blueprint implementation. It summarizes challenges facing the Valley, State law and recent legislation that is directly relevant to Blueprint implementation, and potential obstacles to Blueprint implementation. Chapter four, the heart of the Guidance Framework, outlines a set of strategies for implementing the Blueprint. Chapter five describes the various agencies and organizations that played a role in developing the Blueprint and will play a role in implementing it. The sixth and final chapter summarizes existing and potential funding sources for Blueprint implementation.

Benefits of Blueprint Implementation

The Valley is facing significant challenges involving a continued slow economy, government service downsizing, a burdensome environmental and permitting process and an increasing need to conserve water and other resources. ~~and implementing the Blueprint must overcome significant obstacles.~~ However, the Blueprint was prepared and will be implemented with the expectation that the Blueprint principles of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies and regional cooperation will produce major and tangible benefits both for the Valley as a whole and for its individual communities. Among these expected benefits are:

- More vibrant downtowns and urban centers and better neighborhoods
- More walkable communities
- Greater housing choices
- More efficient and convenient transportation systems and services
- More efficient and cost-effective infrastructure
- Reduces costs of government services
- Increased energy efficiency
- Reduced urban water consumption
- More investment and better jobs
- Greater competitiveness with other regions
- Reduced conversion of agricultural, resource, and open space lands
- Better air quality
- Healthier population
- Better informed and more engaged public
- More consistent expectations and standards for new development

- More outside financial resources directed to the Valley because of ~~a unified~~ regional efforts

How the Guidance Framework was Prepared

The Blueprint Guidance Framework was prepared under the direction of the Regional Policy Council by a consulting team that includes Mintier Harnish, Carol Whiteside, Mogavero Notestine, and the Rios Company.

Early in preparing the Guidance Framework, the consulting team reviewed the four-year history of the Valley Blueprint planning process, documenting that history in the Blueprint Planning Process Summary report (published in October 2010).

In Spring and Summer 2010, the consulting team met with Valley Regional Planning Agency (RPA) Directors, the Regional Policy Council, and the Valley Planners Workgroup to solicit their thoughts on Blueprint implementation. The consulting team also conducted individual interviews in all eight counties with local elected officials, agency staff, and representatives of agriculture and the building industry to solicit their views on Blueprint implementation. In September 2010, the consulting team met with a group of building industry representatives in a focused discussion concerning development trends and possible incentives for Blueprint implementation.

Following its release in December 2010, this report was reviewed in detail by a committee made up of representatives from all eight Valley counties, the Valley Planners Workgroup, and Valley Regional Planning Agency Directors. ~~prior to its review and approval by the Regional Policy Council in June 2011.~~

Chapter 2 Blueprint Scenario and Principles

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is the culmination of the collective efforts of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies to develop a individual county and long-term regional growth strategies. The Blueprint is made up three elements: a 2050 growth scenario diagram that identifies areas of existing development, new development, and future regional transit and highway improvements; a Valleywide average target density of 6.8 units per acre for new residential growth to the year 2050; and a set of 12 Smart Growth Principles.

Valley Blueprint 2050 Growth Scenario

The 2050 growth scenario diagram illustrates how the region's transportation network of highways, high speed rail, and Amtrak stations connect major population centers. By concentrating new development around areas with existing development and transportation network access, it emphasizes preservation of agricultural land, protection of environmental resources, and provision of transportation infrastructure that connects the region. The target density of 6.8 units per acre is the average of target densities selected by each of the eight counties, which ranged from 8.6 units per acre in Merced to 4.7 units per acre in Madera, based on county-specific preferences. The box below shows the residential density targets selected by the eight counties.

County	2050 Target Density
Fresno County	8.0
Kern County	6.0
Kings County	7.4
Madera County	4.7
Merced County	8.6
San Joaquin County	7.7
Stanislaus County	5.6
Tulare County	5.3

San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Adopted 12 Smart Growth Principles

The Blueprint reflects the combined visions of the eight Regional Planning Agencies for the future through a set of 12 Smart Growth Principles. These principles are based on the core values of Valley residents identified early in the Blueprint process and will continue to be used as a basis of future Blueprint planning and implementation.

- **Create a range of housing opportunities and choices**
- **Create walkable neighborhoods**
- **Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration**
- **Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place**

- **Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective**
- **Mix land uses**
- **Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas**
- **Provide a variety of transportation choices**
- **Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities**
- **Take advantage of compact building design**
- **Enhance the economic vitality of the region**
- **Support actions that encourage environmental resource management**

Blueprint Planning Process

The Valley Blueprint planning process included five major steps. In the first step, Project initiation, the Valley RPAs secured funding for the Blueprint program. Next the Valley RPAs carried out a three-phase sequence of steps within each county (i.e., Phase 1, Values and Vision; Phase 2, Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures; and Phase 3, Evaluation of alternative Growth Scenarios) to develop a preferred growth scenario for each county. In the final step the Valley RPAs integrated the county-level Blueprints into the Valleywide Blueprint and the RPC adopted the 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Growth Scenario. The history of the Valley Blueprint is recounted in the Blueprint Process Summary Report, published in September 2010.

Chapter 3 Context for Blueprint Implementation

This chapter sets out the context for Blueprint implementation, outlining the challenges facing the Valley, State laws that will shape implementation, and potential obstacles to Blueprint implementation.

Challenges Facing the Valley

Making changes in communities takes a long time. The planning process takes years, especially when the planning area is as big as the San Joaquin Valley. New developments, commercial areas, and transportation corridors are built over decades; progress toward noticeable change is incremental. Implementation of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is being initiated during one of the most challenging economic times in California and the nation in memory; it is especially challenging in the Valley. It must be remembered that while the challenges are great at the inception of the implementation phase, conditions will shift and shift again during the period of implementation (2010 – 2050). Economies will prosper and decline, resources will shrink and grow again, and regional leadership will change as elections are held and community priorities shift.

Demographics

This region, from San Joaquin County to Kern County, is under great stress. There has been enormous population growth in the region, with some county and city populations doubling and redoubling. As of January 2010, the California Department of Finance estimates that there are more than four million people living in eight counties and 62 cities in the San Joaquin Valley. Not only is population increasing rapidly, the demography of the region is also changing. Some communities now have no single ethnic or racial majority; instead, their residents represent groups from throughout the world. The population of the Valley as a whole is over 50 percent “minority.” School districts report dozens – some over 100 – different languages spoken in the classrooms throughout the region. Building cohesive communities with shared visions and goals is one of the toughest challenges of the Blueprint.

Economy

Economic development is a priority for an area that has long been challenged by rapid population growth, often fueled by foreign immigrants and migrants from other states. Agriculture is an enormous economic engine for the region, but it will not provide enough jobs and upward mobility to support the region’s growing population. In recent decades, the region’s greatest job growth has been in retail and construction, both of which offer only seasonal employment and both of which have proven to be especially vulnerable in the current financial crisis. Unemployment in the Valley is nearly twice the national rate and a third higher than the statewide rate. Average family income in the Valley is over 35 percent lower than the statewide

rate. Average family income in the Valley is over 35 percent lower than the statewide average. The valley's poverty rate of nearly 25 percent puts it among the nations' highest poverty rates.

Water

A growing population, reduced water supplies, and multi-year droughts continue to complicate water quantities and quality for Valley water users. In recent years, there has been a significant reduction in water delivery that has resulted in increased overdraft of groundwater resources, fallowing of farm land, amplified unemployment rates, and increased strain on accessible sources. Water quality continues to be negatively affected by multiple sources including storm water runoff, pesticides, nitrates, and salt contamination. According to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), climate change is already impacting snowpack, river flows, and sea levels all of which will significantly contribute to the difficulties of providing the necessary water for the Valley. Flooding is an additional concern and the DWR has identified major deficiencies and challenges to the flood management system in the Valley.

To meet the water needs of the future, a combination of strategies such as a greater emphasis on conservation, encouraging drought tolerant landscaping, urban water reuse, additional groundwater and surface water storage capacity, water recycling, and increased infrastructure efficiency will need to be supported to achieve a viable future for all Valley water users.

The State requires promotes the preparation of Integrated Regional Water Management Plans (IRWMP) – which is a voluntary effort. Local land use and transportation planning needs to coordinate with these regional planning efforts.

Infrastructure

With per capita income in the Valley significantly lower than the state average, revenues are inadequate to fully support essential government services and infrastructure. Infrastructure – transportation, water, sewer, power, and telecommunications – is the backbone, the foundation of any city or town. In spite of the Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), there has been little assistance for building essential water and sewer lines to support the region's growing population or for updating and replacing aging public facilities. Local developer fees and general taxes are inadequate to build and maintain critical infrastructure to meet existing and future demand. Few communities have been able to keep up with the need to both maintain aging systems and expand them to meet the needs of a growing population.

Residential Development

The Valley was overbuilt during the housing boom of the early 2000s. Fueling housing demand was an unprecedented number of subprime mortgages. Throughout the Valley, new housing developments were approved consisting mostly of single family houses. Cities and towns in the Valley paved over agricultural land at an unprecedented rate, flooding planning departments with development applications and filling planning departments with planners to review permits.

In many cases, city and county revenues began to grow with the permit fees and increased tax revenues; however, this wasn't true for all Valley communities.

In addition, in many areas of the Valley, houses were far from jobs and too expensive for residents (e.g., bedroom communities for the Bay area, Central Coast, and Southern California). As many as 25 percent of the new houses were purchased by speculators from other parts of the state. When the real estate market crashed in 2008, house prices fell as quickly as they had risen. In some parts of the Valley, houses lost over 50 percent of their market value in less than two years. Foreclosures continue to occur throughout the Valley as people walk away from homes with mortgages higher than their current value and high monthly mortgage payments.

As a result of the crash, there is a large stock of empty houses and a backlog of approved, unbuilt projects. Counties have thousands of permitted lots waiting for building to restart. Some estimate that there is a ten-year supply of single-family residential units in the Valley. The building industry is rethinking its development models of the past, looking instead to reduce lot size and increase densities of previously approved subdivisions, responding to the new financial realities and demographics of the market.

Health

Valley residents face four critical public health issues: asthma, obesity, diabetes, and limited access to healthcare. Asthma, diabetes, and childhood obesity rates in the Valley are nearly double the national rate. While the country and the state continue to debate health care access, nearly 30 percent (2007) of Central Valley residents are without access to health care. But access may be the least important factor in having a healthy Valley. Research shows that social environment – who you live with, whether you are supported, or feel safe or endangered – is an extremely important indicator of health. Neighborhood and family living conditions, opportunities for learning and development capacity, community development and employment opportunities, social cohesion, civic engagement, and disease injury prevention are all more important factors in health than access to health care. Safe and supportive families, neighborhoods and communities are, therefore, critical in promoting public health.

Air Quality

Although progress has been made, the San Joaquin Valley still has some of the worst air quality in the nation. Pollution comes from a variety of sources including industrial facilities, vehicles, consumer products, fires, and inflow from the Bay Area. Farm activities account of a large percentage of particulate emissions in the San Joaquin Valley: concentrated animal feeding operations; agricultural water pumps; open burning; wine fermentation; commercial dryers; fertilizers; and road dust. While the SJVAPCD has implemented many progressive policies geared at improving air quality, air quality issues remain at the forefront of SJV planning efforts. The solution to improving air quality is not to get rid of cars or agriculture; instead the solution lies in working together to find innovative, sustainable, cost-effective ways to improve our air quality while expanding the Valley economy.

Legislative Context

Under the California Constitution and State law, cities and counties have legal authority over land use. The exercise of this authority is shaped by State laws that require cities and counties to prepare general plans, to implement these plans through zoning, other regulations, and public works project decisions, and to consider the environmental effects of their decisions. One of the most challenging of these requirements is to regularly update a housing element that identifies adequate sites sufficient to accommodate protected regional housing needs. The key to implementing the voluntary Blueprint program will be successfully translating Blueprint principles into the plans and regulations of the 70 cities and counties that make up the Valley.

There are several relatively new laws and State programs that will influence Blueprint implementation. In many ways these new statutes and programs reinforce and further Blueprint principles and growth strategies and will facilitate Blueprint implementation. However, the State had provided very little funding to carry out these mandates. Inadequate funding may be an impediment to Blueprint implementation.

AB 32 (Nunez – 2006)

AB 32 (Nunez – 2006), known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to adopt rules and regulations to achieve 1990 equivalent statewide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission levels by 2020. Local governments and regional planning agencies have been identified as critical players in implementing AB 32 through local development plans, regulations, and transportation planning programs. AB 32 is helping shape development patterns and transportation networks consistent with Blueprint principles and growth strategies.

SB 97 (Dutton – 2007)

SB 97 (Dutton – 2007) requires the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to prepare guidelines for the feasible mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or the effect of greenhouse gas emissions, as required by CEQA, including effects associated with transportation and energy consumption. The guidelines create new requirements for CEQA documents to identify and mitigate for greenhouse gas emissions. Similar to AB 32, SB 97 is shaping development patterns and transportation networks consistent with Blueprint principles and growth strategies.

SB 375 (Steinberg – 2008)

SB 375 (Steinberg – 2008) brings together land use, housing, and transportation planning in order to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This law requires all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to update their Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and prepare regional housing needs allocations (RHNA) that result in development patterns and supporting transportation networks that reduce GHG emissions from cars and light trucks. SB 375 will

facilitate implementation of the Blueprint by incorporating Blueprint principles and growth strategies into the RTP and RHNA and encouraging the Valley MPOs to coordinate and prepare interregional strategies. SB 375 also provides incentives to local governments and new development projects that embrace Blueprint principles and strategies, when specific thresholds are met.

AB 170 (Reyes – 2003)

AB 170 (Reyes – 2003) requires cities and counties within the boundaries of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to amend appropriate elements of their general plans to include data and analysis, comprehensive goals and policies, and feasible implementation strategies to improve air quality. Similar to AB 32, AB 170 will result in changes to development patterns and transportation networks consistent with the Blueprint principles and growth strategies.

AB 1358 (Leno – 2007)

AB 1358 (Leno – 2007), the Complete Streets Act, requires cities and counties to plan for a balanced multi-modal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation. AB 1358 furthers Blueprint principles to create walkable neighborhoods, foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place, and provide a range of transportation choices.

Obstacles to Blueprint Implementation

As with all plans and strategies, there are potential barriers to implementation of Blueprint principles that need to be acknowledged and overcome if the benefits of the Blueprint are to be realized. This is especially true when working on a regional level, which requires a greater degree of coordination and cooperation than separate, individual local actions. The following describes some of the more significant obstacles.

Regional Identity

While there is some recognition of the eight-county San Joaquin Valley as a region, the Valley has not fully embraced a true regional identity. The diversity of the region does not lend itself to one regional identity. Land use, economic development, and transportation decisions are sometimes made in one community without regard to their impact within the broader regional context. There is limited regional media, and so the news that one hears in Modesto is different than in Visalia; the television market is fragmented into at least three separate markets. When local officials are asked to define their region, some define it as just their own county, others include the two or three neighboring counties, and others think of the entire San Joaquin Valley.

Building a regional identity will require identification and promotion of issues and challenges that can be most effectively dealt with at a regional level. The region – local governments, the business community, labor and agriculture – united around improving Highway 99 and the Governor's infrastructure bond measure in 2006 because it was easy to see the local benefits. Future regional success will depend upon building a credible regional identity and demonstrating the local benefits of regional coordination.

The Economy

Even in the best of times, the region's unemployment rate exceeds those in the rest of the state and the nation, and creating new jobs for new residents continues to be a priority. But in the current recession, economic growth is even more critical. Concerns about the economy are reflected in how we think about some issues:

- Restrictions on land use or additional fees to fund necessary and desirable infrastructure are seen as deterrents to economic growth.
- Since home building is a major creator of local jobs and economic activity, local elected officials are reluctant to impose new requirements, restrictions, or fees on the industry.
- Since agriculture is increasingly mechanized and often perceived to be a low-wage, seasonal employer, communities are too often willing to trade agricultural land for residential development.
- Public interest in growth and land use tracks the economy. When the economy is strong and new houses are being built in large numbers, the public focuses on managing growth and land use. When the economy slows, public attention shifts to promoting economic activity of virtually any type.

Public Support

The benefits of Blueprint implementation are long term and indirect; there is not much political reward for taking difficult action now when the payoff seems so far into the future, unless the public understands and buys into the benefits of the Blueprint.

In conversations with policy makers and community leaders throughout the region, the top public policy issues were the economy, water, education, local government finance, health care, and education. Land use and the Blueprint rarely make it into the top five on anyone's list, so ensuring the long-term attention and resources necessary for implementation will require public education, communication, commitment, and vision. It will require a sustained effort over time.

There is an additional challenge as the region's demographic profile is changing. No one group represents a majority in the region, and there are increasingly complex communities requiring

different languages and tools for effective connections to the region's diverse residents. Finding ways to engage the underrepresented populations in every community will require improved and innovative communication strategies, as well as a determination to ensure that neighborhood meetings and community decisions are relevant and engaging for everyone.

Vacant Properties and Entitled Development

The Valley has become a sea of vacant single-family houses in newly-built subdivisions due to foreclosures and a depressed housing market. In addition, there is a glut of approved projects waiting to be built. The building industry is frustrated by this combination of an excess supply of paper lots and its inability to re-design or re-entitle approved but unbuilt projects to meet changing market demand. Even without Blueprint principles, there is widespread industry support and market demand for smaller lots and more compact development. Unless local government and developers can work together to find creative solutions to retrofit newly-built subdivisions and re-entitle paper and approved developments, many communities will see stagnant housing markets long after overall economic recovery.

Lack of Resources

The capacity of implementing the Blueprint in terms of staff and financial resources varies greatly among the cities and counties in the Valley, with small cities being the most challenged. However, all cities and counties are struggling today to balance budgets, retain staff, and meet their service responsibilities. An important State and Regional priority must be financial support of city and county planning efforts designed to implement Blueprint smart growth principles.

Infrastructure Costs

While much of the future population growth in the Valley will continue to be accommodated at the edge of existing cities in "greenfield" developments, a major principle of smart growth and the Blueprint is that a significant share of new development should occur in the form of infill within existing communities. Contrary to convention wisdom, most infill sites lack adequate infrastructure. Therefore, the costs of upgrading and expanding infrastructure in infill areas will in many cases be higher than in greenfield areas. Compounding the problem is the question of who pays for upgrading and expanding infrastructure in infill areas. Under current conditions if infrastructure costs fall entirely on infill development, they would likely render the development economically infeasible. Additionally, in the absence of such improvements in the form of schools, parks, and roadway capacity, it is doubtful that neighboring property owners and residents would support increased infill. Clearly more public funding of infrastructure in infill areas will be required compared to greenfield areas.

Regional Leadership

The Guidance Framework suggests that the Regional Policy Council (RPC) could be the agency with lead responsibility for coordinating and managing Blueprint implementation. Currently,

membership of the RPC is two elected officials from each of the eight counties and a representative from the SJVAPCD. Communities in the Valley have different value systems and priorities, some are rural in character and some are more urban. In order for the RPC to be able to effectively coordinate implementation of the Blueprint, it will need to build credibility with cities and counties and stakeholders throughout the region. This means the RPC will need to be representative of the Valley's many communities. In addition, Blueprint implementation will require funding. The RPC will need an institutional structure that can gather and manage funds to maintain staff and direct sufficient resources to see that the Blueprint is supportive of local planning, State law (AB 32 and SB 375), and the regional priorities. Given the current economic climate, funding a new regional program is a major issue to program advancement. The Guidance Framework recommends that a decision be made in the first year concerning the appropriate institutional arrangement for Blueprint implementation.

Chapter 4 Implementation Strategies

The Guidance Framework is made up of a set of ~~12~~ 11 separate strategies intended as a framework to guide implementation of the Valleywide blueprint. The eight Valley Regional Visioning efforts provide more localized implementation strategies for consideration by the cities and counties for incorporation in General Plans and Land use programs. The strategies are not an exhaustive or detailed list of prescriptions or suggestions for what could or should be done to implement the Blueprint. Instead, they set out a relatively short list of actions that will be most important in the short- to mid-range time frame (five years) to create a structure and process for carrying out the Blueprint and for translating Blueprint principles into local policy and actions. The strategies focus on land use and transportation, although in future years strategies may be added to address a broader range of regional issues.

The strategies were selected based on input from the Regional Policy Council, Valley RPA Directors, Valley planners, and other stakeholders and a review of ongoing programs in the Valley, work programs, recent grant applications, and the Blueprint implementation program of other regional planning agencies in California.

Each strategy includes an overview, a set of specific recommendations, a list of responsible implementation partners, a time frame for implementation, possible funding sources, and references relevant to the strategy. Subsequent chapters of this report describe the various organizations and agencies that may be involved in Blueprint implementation and potential funding sources. The ~~12~~ 11 strategies set out in this chapter include the following:

- Explore a Regional Leadership Structure
- Continue and Expand the Valley Legislative Advocacy Program
- Align SCS/APS with Blueprint
- Translate Blueprint into City and County Policies and Actions
- Maintain and Expand the Planners Toolkit
- ~~Create a Greenprint Program~~ Recognize Local Government General Plan Open Space and Conservation Elements
- Increase Technical Support and Data Sharing Capacity
- Create a Regional Technical Coordinating Committee
- Conduct an annual Regional Event to Celebrate the Blueprint
- Create a Leadership Training and Public Outreach Program
- Monitor Blueprint Implementation

Explore a Regional Leadership Structure

Successful implementation of the Blueprint suggests an institutional arrangement that can provide Valleywide leadership and coordination.

In 2006 the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to form the Regional Policy Council, consisting of two elected officials and one alternate from each of the eight Regional Planning Agencies, and one representative from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control district (SJVAPCD). The Council provides guidance on interregional policy issues, seeks to build regional consensus, represents the Valley at public forums, and advocates on behalf of the San Joaquin Valley at the State and Federal levels. Major activities have included participation in the development of the Valley Blueprint, participating in "Valley Voice" advocacy trips to Sacramento and Washington, D.C., and acting as the Transportation Working Group for the Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley. The Regional Policy Council is a volunteer advisory body with limited authority and resources. It relies on the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies for staff support and policy expertise.

In recent years, particularly during the Valleywide Blueprint process, the concept of the Valley as a single region has grown. There is increasing interest in how the Regional Policy Council and the Valley Regional Planning Agencies can be more effective in representing the shared interests of the Valley and in securing additional financial resources for Valley communities and Blueprint implementation. Regional Policy Council members have also expressed interest in finding a regional organizational structure that provides more influence, clarity in priorities and policy, and better communication. Throughout California and the nation, regions covering multiple counties have faced similar challenges. Many have created regional "umbrella" organizations by forming intergovernmental partnerships or by consolidating existing agencies into a single regional organization.

Given the breadth and depth of challenges facing the Valley and the limited availability of local, State, and Federal resources, increasing regional collaboration is essential to Blueprint implementation. A new or restructured institutional arrangement to represent the entire Valley could improve coordination of regional planning efforts and provide a forum to discuss and resolve regional issues, establish regional priorities and policy positions, and obtain additional financial resources. Creating a restructured regional body to fill this Valleywide role would not ~~need to significantly~~ change any existing agency's authority or responsibilities as the Blueprint program is voluntary. Rather, such an arrangement could support and enhance existing agencies and local governments by formalizing current coordination and advocacy activities, expanding representation of Valley communities, expanding services with dedicated staff and resources, and providing technical and financial assistance to the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and cities and counties.

Recommendation

- Convene a regional discussion on the most appropriate and effective institutional arrangement to provide leadership for the Valley and lead Blueprint implementation. (See Institutional Arrangements Whitepaper for discussion of options.)
- Select a preferred option and implement it.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies
- Cities and Counties

Timing

- 2011 – 2012

Funding

- Caltrans Blueprint funding
- SGC Proposition 84 Grants
- Local Sources

References

- Summary of Development Workshop, Outcomes, and Recommendations, Nelson Nygaard, 2010
- Institutional arrangements Whitepaper, Mintier Harnish, December 2010

Continue and Expand the Valley Legislative Advocacy Program

Successful implementation of the Blueprint requires that the Valley is effective in securing adequate resources and favorable legislation from the State and Federal governments.

In 2008 the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies (Valley RPAs) and the Regional Policy Council (RPC) established a San Joaquin Valley Legislative Platform, reflecting the priorities of the Valley RPAs and the RPC in State and Federal legislative matters. The program is managed and supported by the Valley Legislative Affairs Committee (VLAC) made up of staff of the eight Valley RPAs. Under the banner “Valley Voice,” delegations from the Valley have traveled annually since 2008 to Sacramento and Washington D.C., to press Valley priorities with legislators and administration officials. The 2010 Legislative Platform priorities are organized under the five headings: transportation; local and regional planning; air quality; process streamlining; and water quality, supply and reliability.

It is imperative that the Valley speaks with a unified regional voice on legislative matters, particularly considering that the other four largest regions in California (San Diego, Southern California, the Bay Area, and Sacramento) have had strong and effective legislative advocacy programs for many years. The eight-county Valley region has a population of approximately 4 million, making it the third largest region in California, smaller than Southern California and the

Bay area, but larger than the San Diego and Sacramento regions. Recent experience demonstrates that the Valleywide unified action can produce greater results and revenues than individual efforts combined (e.g., Highway 99 improvements, HUD sustainable Communities Grant).

Recommendation

- Continue the San Joaquin Valley Legislative Platform program.
- Continue to make Valley Voice trips to Sacramento and Washington D.C. (at least annually, more often as necessary).
- Create capacity at the regional level to manage and coordinate the Legislative Platform program.
- Distribute the Legislative Platform and Valley Voice materials to all local elected officials and post the materials on the Valley Blueprint website.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies
- Valley Legislative Affairs Committee
- Local elected officials

Timing

- On-going; 2012 (for increased regional capacity)

Funding

- Local sources (e.g., Transportation Development Act funds, member dues, one-half-cent sales tax measure funds)

References

- 2010 Legislative Platform of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Transportation Planning Agencies
- San Joaquin Regional Planning Agencies' Valley Legislative Committee Bylaws

Align SCS/APS with the Blueprint

Successful implementation of the Blueprint assumes that the Blueprint planning including the eight Valley Regional Visioning efforts carried out to date in the Valley is used by Regional Planning Agencies (MPOs) as the framework for development of their

Sustainable Communities Strategies, which are to be part of the Regional Transportation Plan, as required by SB 375.

SB 375 (Steinberg – 2008) brings together land use, housing, and transportation planning in order to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. SB 375 requires all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to update their Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and prepare regional housing needs allocations (RHNA) that result in development patterns and supporting transportation networks that reduce GHG emissions from cars and light trucks. The law recognizes regional blueprints as important processes to develop collaborative regional/local plans that achieve preferred scenarios for future regional development. In fact the planning process outlined in SB 375 was patterned after successful blueprint processes.

A key requirement of SB 375 is that the RTP include a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to shape further development to achieve GHG targets set by the State (September 2010). If the SCS is unable to achieve the GHG reduction target, the responsible MPO must prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) which is similar to an SCS, but would not be included in the RTP. SB 375 also requires that SCS/APS be revisited and updated every four years in conjunction with the update of the RTP. For projects and plans that are consistent with the SCS/APS, SB 375 provides incentives, including CEQA streamlining and/or transportation priority funding when specific criteria are met. Finally, SB 375 allows a single MPO or two or more MPOs in the San Joaquin Valley to develop and adopt a multi-county SCS/APS and associated goals and policies.

The Valley Regional Planning Agencies are scheduled to next update their RTPs by 2013 - 2014. They have already initiated collaborative efforts to prepare for the update. In 2010 the Valley RPAs started a process to update and improve their traffic models sensitivity to smart growth strategies in response to the requirements of SB 375. Over the next three years, the RPAs will be undertaking a process to prepare their first SCS or APS as part of the RTPs. While an SCS/APS has not yet been developed by any MPOs in the state, most experts agree it will likely resemble a regional blueprint plan. Also, because the Blueprint sets out a growth scenario to 2050 and SB 375 requires scenario planning to 2020 and 2035, the SCS/APS can be viewed as an important milestone in ultimate realization of the Blueprint.

Using the Blueprint and the eight Valley Regional Planning Agency visioning efforts to implement SB 375 and develop the SCS/APS can help the Valley RPAs achieve mutual objectives for smart growth and compact development, efficient transportation system, high-density housing and open space conservation. The blueprint can assist with setting SB 375, RHNA, and GHG reduction targets. Finally, the incentives for development projects and plans that are consistent with SCS/APSs can help facilitate and achieve Blueprint implementation.

Recommendation

- Using the Valley Blueprint as the framework, assist MPOs to develop and establish RHNA and GHG reduction targets.

- Coordinate development of single-county, multi-regional, or Valley-wide SCSs/APSs that reflect the Blueprint eight Valley Regional Planning Agency visioning efforts and 12 Smart Growth Principles

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies/MPOs
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
- Valley Planners Workgroup

Timing

- 2011 – 2014; On-going

Funding

- SGC Proposition 84 Grants
- State and Federal Transportation Planning Funds

References

- Making it Work: Implementing SB 375, Center for Sustainable California, Institute of Urban and Regional Development, UC Berkeley, October 2009
- Fact Sheet on SB 375, Fresno COG, April 2010

Translate Blueprint into City and County Policies and Actions

Successful implementation of the Blueprint and the eight Valley Regional Planning Agency visioning efforts will depend ultimately on the voluntary incorporation of Blueprint principles into city and county general plan ~~policy, supporting ordinances, and development approvals~~ s and programs at the discretion of local governments.

Under the California Constitution and State law, cities and counties have primary legal authority over land use. The exercise of this authority is shaped by State laws that require cities and counties to prepare general plans; to implement these plans through zoning, other regulations, and public works project decisions; and to consider the environmental effects of their decisions. There are 62 incorporated cities and eight counties in the Valley that have land use authority. Updating policy documents to meet AB 32 requirements is expensive for the local agencies, particularly for small jurisdictions.

The Valleywide Blueprint, adopted by the Regional Policy Council in 2009, consists of a preferred growth scenario diagram, a target residential density, and a set of smart growth

principles. Each of the individual Blueprints adopted by the eight Regional Planning Agencies included a preferred growth scenario diagram, a target density, a vision statement, and a set of guiding principles. These are the components that will need to be translated into local policy and regulations if the Blueprint is to be implemented successfully. It is, however, a voluntary program.

Fourteen of the largest cities (of the 62 cities in the Valley) with populations greater than 50,000 joined together as a Compact of Cities in applying in 2010 for a HUD Sustainable Communities Grant. A major component of successful grant application is updating general plans in these large cities to incorporate Blueprint smart growth principles. The Valley Regional Planning agencies, the eight counties, and the 46 smaller cities joined together in submitting an application in 2010 for a Proposition 84 grant to the California Strategic Growth Council. A major component of that successful grant is assisting the counties and smaller cities in updating their general plans to incorporate Blueprint smart growth principles.

Recommendation

- Assist counties and cities in voluntarily updating their general plans (and/or preparing Climate Action Plans) to incorporate Blueprint smart growth principles.
- Create a protocol and checklist for voluntarily evaluating and certifying consistency (self-certification) of city and county general plans and general plan amendments with Blueprint principles and target densities.
- Create a protocol and checklists for voluntarily evaluating and certifying consistency (self-certification) of major development projects with Blueprint principles and target densities, pending updating of the applicable general plan.
- Develop prototypical examples illustrating Blueprint-consistent development in various size communities.
- Assist cities and counties in obtaining additional funding for long-range plans and implementing ordinances.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Cities and Counties
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies
- Compact of Cities
- Valley Planners Workgroup

Timing

- 2011 – 2013

Funding

- SGC Proposition 84 Grants
- HUD Sustainable Communities Grants
- City and County General Funds (may not be available)

References

- Proposition 84 Application (2010)

Maintain and Expand the Planners Toolkit

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will depend on cities and counties having ready access to tools and resources that can be easily adapted to local conditions, particularly for small jurisdictions.

As part of the Blueprint Roadmap, consultants to the Regional Policy Council developed an internet-based Planners Toolkit to provide local planners easy access to planning tools that could be readily adapted to local conditions to implement Blueprint principles. Launched in January 2011, the Planners Toolkit is a guide to California planning law and a set of tools in the form of topical case studies, templates, and other resources. The tools are designed to help planners and other Valley city and county staff implement the 12 Blueprint Smart Growth Principles through policies, plans, programs, and regulations. The tools range from agricultural easements to innovative zoning provisions. At the heart of the toolkit are templates that can be easily customized to fit the individual needs of each jurisdiction. The toolkit emphasizes tools for smaller cities, which typically have less staff to carry out the research and work necessary to implement the Blueprint principles.

In its initial form in January 2011, the toolkit included 25 tools that were selected as top priorities by Valley planners. The toolkit is designed to evolve and expand over time as conditions change and new challenges emerge. To this end the toolkit enlists the ideas, experiences, and input of its users. Through its interactive interface, the toolkit asks users to critique and suggest modifications to existing tools, request new tools, and recommend new case studies, templates, and other resources.

Recommendation

- Designate a sponsor for on-going administration and maintenance of the Planners Toolkit.
- Develop a program for expanding the tools in the Toolkit and regularly soliciting feedback from Valley planners on improving the Toolkit.
- ~~Develop additional tools based on the Greenprint program.~~
- Develop additional tools for public outreach.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Planners Workgroup
- Toolkit Sponsor (e.g., Community and Regional Planning Center at CSU Fresno)

Timing

- Ongoing; 2011 (designate institutional sponsor)

Funding

- SGC Proposition 84 Grants
- HUD Sustainable Communities Grants
- Caltrans Blueprint Grants

References

- Valley Planners Toolkit

~~Create a Greenprint Program~~ Recognize Local Government General Plan Open Space and Conservation Elements

Successful implementation of the Blueprint ~~suggests a companion strategy for conserving agricultural and open lands which make up most of the land in the Valley.~~ Acknowledges the efforts by local governments to conserve agricultural and open lands.

The county-level and Valleywide Blueprint efforts over the last five years have focused primarily on urban and rural community development. Yet over 97 percent of the valley consists of resource and open space lands. As a companion to the Blueprint, ~~a regional open space framework ("Greenprint") would~~ local government General Plan Open Space and Conservation Elements focus on agricultural lands; habitat and lands providing ecological benefits; hazardous areas (floodplains and wildland-fire-risk areas); parks and recreational lands; scenic, historic, and culturally and geologically significant areas; and urban/rural edges. ~~The Greenprint would build upon open space and conservation elements of local general plans, especially county general plans, and on recent efforts such as the Model Farmland Conservation Program in Fresno County, and Safe Passages wildlife connectivity project, and the TreeTOPS Urban Forest initiative. The Greenprint program should include an inventory and analysis, a public awareness program, and strategic recommendations.~~

The Valley Regional Planning agencies, the counties, and the 46 smaller cities joined together in submitting an application in 2010 for a Proposition 84 grant to the Strategic Growth Council. A major component of the grant is ~~developing a Greenprint program~~ enhancing agricultural and open space conservation.

Recommendations

- Expand the existing Blueprint program and website to include the ~~Greenprint program~~ local government Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan.
- Undertake more detailed and systematic mapping of Valley resource and open space lands.
- ~~Facilitate a forum on the Greenprint program for stakeholders.~~

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies
- Cities and Counties
- LAFCOs
- Valley Planners Workgroup
- American Farmland Trust
- Farm Bureaus
- Environmental NGO's (e.g., TreeTOPS Regional Forest Initiatives)
- Universities

Timing

- 2011-2012

Funding

- SGC Proposition 84 Grants
- Private foundations
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Federal agencies (Interior, Agriculture, EPA)

References

- Proposition 84 Grant Application (2010)
- Greenprint proposed work program (9/30/10)
- SACOG rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS)

Increase Technical Support and Data Sharing Capacity

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will depend on expanded technical support for and coordinated data sharing among local governments and other agencies within the Valley.

Blueprint implementation will depend on the actions of local governments and the availability of good data and modeling. The Regional Policy Council has started developing technical resources and tools (e.g., Planners Toolkit) for local government implementation. Likewise, regional efforts are underway to develop Valleywide modeling tools (e.g., Valley Model Improvement Program I-Places, San Joaquin Valley Travel Demand Model Data System) to improve and synchronize the Valley Regional Planning Agencies modeling efforts. Since 2007 the Information Center for the Environment at UC Davis has supplied data, modeling tools, and technical support to the Valley Blueprint Program.

Valley agencies currently lack a Valleywide organizational structure to efficiently and economically manage data, which is essential to Blueprint implementation. The recent economic downturn has depleted the resources of many Valley communities. Local governments need the tools, training, and support to carry out projects necessary for Blueprint implementation. Additionally, Valley Regional Planning Agencies, cities and counties maintain separate databases that are not well coordinated. The result is inconsistent data formats, long delays in data sharing among agencies, and lost opportunities to collect and analyze data regionally.

A centralized data clearinghouse and planning resource center would provide focal points for building regional capacity based on shared interests and needs. The benefits of consolidating and better coordinating existing programs are numerous. These centers could provide a place for regional data management services, knowledge sharing, and collaboration. They could prepare regional demographic and socioeconomic profiles and indicators reports. They could provide access to jurisdictional and regional data and analysis. They could provide the methodologies, tools, and training to help agencies implement Blueprint principles. They could perform site-specific performance analysis and transportation/land use benefits analysis. They could provide customized data, maps, models, studies, reports, and planning support.

California State University Fresno is creating a Community and Regional Planning Center. The center will be a depository of planning information and a research center to help the counties and regional planning organizations address significant urban and rural issues in the Valley. It would be beneficial for the Planning Center to coordinate with other State universities in the Valley on these efforts.

Recommendations

- Create a Valleywide data clearinghouse within the Valley to maintain, manage, and share mapping and modeling data (e.g., data from the Model Improvement Program) among the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and cities and counties.
- Create consistent data formats, data management standards, and data sharing protocols for all Valley Regional Planning Agencies and cities and counties.
- Create a consistent data sharing format for Valley Regional Planning Agency, city and county data.

- Create a Valley planning resource center to provide land use, transportation, and resource data services; to share planning-related knowledge; and to bring together skilled individuals to help carry out local and regional planning efforts.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies
- Modeling Subcommittee
- Cities and Counties
- Universities

Timing

- 2010-2011; Ongoing

Funding

- HUD Sustainable Communities Grants
- Transportation funds

~~Create a Regional Technical Coordinating Committee~~

~~Successful implementation of Blueprint will depend on all regional partners systematically coordinating their programs and initiatives on a regular basis.~~

~~More than a half-dozen organizations with a Valleywide focus are concerned with land use, transportation, and resources issues. These include the Regional Policy Council, the partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, the Great Valley Center, the San Joaquin Valley air Pollution Control district, the Compact of Cities (Smart Valley Places), the San Joaquin Valley Supervisors Association, and other organizations. While there is crossover among membership in these organizations, there is no formal mechanism for coordinating their various programs and initiatives to achieve the Blueprint. The result is unnecessary redundancy and competition among regional organizations and missed opportunities to coordinate resources and focus on Blueprint implementation. There are also several State and Federal agencies that will play important roles in implementing the Blueprint.~~

~~Convening a technical coordinating committee that includes all the regional organizations, State and Federal agencies, and any other entities that may have an interest or are involved in the region, would be useful in addressing overlapping interests, avoiding redundancy, and leveraging resources for Blueprint implementation. This type of coordinating committee has proven to be useful in other areas of the state and should serve the region well in its efforts to implement the Blueprint.~~

Recommendations

- ~~• Create an interagency Regional Technical Coordinating Committee~~
- ~~• Conduct semi-annual Regional Technical Coordinating Committee meetings.~~

Responsible Partners

- ~~• Regional Policy Council~~
- ~~• San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District~~
- ~~• California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley~~
- ~~• Great Valley Center~~
- ~~• Compact of Cities~~
- ~~• Rural Communities Network~~
- ~~• San Joaquin Valley Supervisors Association~~
- ~~• San Joaquin River Restoration Program~~
- ~~• Universities~~
- ~~• League of California Cities~~
- ~~• California State Association of Counties (CSAC)~~
- ~~• California Association of Councils of Governments (CalCOG)~~
- ~~• Federal Interagency Task Force~~

Timing

- ~~• 2012; On-going~~

Funding

- ~~• Participating agencies pay own expenses~~

References

- ~~• None~~

Conduct an Annual Regional Event to Celebrate the Blueprint

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will be enhanced if Blueprint principles and concepts are celebrated and refreshed on an annual basis in a regional venue.

Since its founding in 1998, the Great Valley Center has held annual conferences in the spring. These well-attended conferences are two-day events that feature speakers of state, national, and international prominence, special presentations, and numerous concurrent breakout sessions on a range of topics.

Since 2007 the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley has held one-day “Summits” each Fall. Similar to the GVC annual conference, the Summit features prominent speakers, special presentations, and concurrent breakout sessions. Since 2006 the Regional Policy Council has held annual “Policy Conferences” in the Fall. Similar to the GVC and Partnership programs, the annual conference features prominent speakers, breakout sessions, and the announcement of Blueprint Awards.

While quite successful, these three annual conferences cover many of the same topics, feature many of the same speakers, and draw from the same pool of potential attendees. In effect, the conferences compete against each other. In the current financial climate, it will be difficult to hold all three of these conferences every year.

Recommendations

- Consolidate the three Valley conferences into a single annual two-day conference. This conference should include speakers, educational breakout sessions, a progress report on Blueprint implementation and other Valleywide programs, and awards.
- Continue to make annual Blueprint awards for Sustainable Development Projects and Blueprint Leadership and announce winners at the annual event.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Great Valley Center
- Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley
- League of California Cities
- California State Association of Counties

Timing

- Annually

Funding

- Contributions from the regional organizations
- Corporate sponsorships

References

- None

Crate a Leadership Training and Public Outreach Program

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will depend on an informed citizenry and local leaders in addition to popular support for the Blueprint principles.

In their individual Blueprint efforts during 2006 through 2008, the eight Valley RPAs conducted extensive public outreach efforts to educate and solicit input. The collective effort of the eight Valley RPAs was unprecedented, involving thousands of residents and stakeholders and hundreds of agencies and organizations. The outreach efforts included public workshops, stakeholder meetings, community organization and service club meetings, meetings with public agencies, summits, informal surveys, online surveys, telephone surveys, and newspaper and radio media campaigns. In some counties there were major efforts to conduct workshops in Spanish, provide other translation services, and provide outreach to high school and college students. Yet, most Valley residents still know little or nothing about the Blueprint.

The issues of land use and development are vital to every community. The implementation of the Blueprint will rest in the hands of community leaders throughout the region. Over time, the leadership will change as will the implementation strategies. Keeping the vision and principles in front of the public and decision-makers will require ongoing leadership development in the region.

There are currently several active leadership programs in the Valley. Local chambers of commerce offer leadership programs, many of which include sessions on planning and land use. The California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities have programs for elected officials; individual cities also offer leadership training programs. The Great Valley Center has several leadership development programs designed to meet the needs of different levels of the community. GVC's Institute for the Development of Emerging Area Leaders (IDEAL) is designed to provide emerging leaders with information, skills, and background on the Valley's most important issues. The Great Valley Leadership Institute for elected officials focuses on development of personal skills, and the American Leadership Forum provides training for private sector leaders in the region.

The HUD sustainable Communities Grant will create a Community Leadership Program. In this program the Compact of Cities will work with communities to provide leadership development for the residents of the San Joaquin Valley. The Community Leadership Program will include programs to improve methods for local government to engage the public, especially low-income and marginalized groups, in their planning and decision-making processes. It will also provide regional workshops and webinars for government staff, banking and investment personnel, and community members, covering such topics as transportation, land use, affordable housing, education, employment, water and green infrastructure.

Recommendations

- Provide information and materials on the Blueprint to all existing leadership programs to be included as part of their curriculum and programs.

- Create a series of Executive Forums for elected officials to enhance their effectiveness as champions of good planning and public policy in their cities and counties. This program would leverage existing regional training offered by GVC and the American Leadership Forum.
- Identify a responsible organization to create a leadership development program in each of the eight counties. The local programs will serve to promote participation and engage marginal populations in planning and decision-making processes and provide the participants with information on the benefits of good land use planning to individuals, families, and communities.
- Create a regional education program to address topical issues in local communities such as transportation, land use, affordable housing, education and employment, water, and green infrastructure.
- Develop a set of public education and outreach tools for inclusion in the Planners Toolkit, including tools focusing on traditionally underrepresented groups. The tools should be designed to inform and educate the public about the Valley Blueprint and to encourage public participation. In targeting underrepresented groups, the tools must take into account cultural and linguistic needs.
- Create a high school curriculum for teaching land use and Blueprint principles. The curriculum must be developed with student's unique learning needs and specific outcomes in mind. The curriculum should be designed so that it can be used, with modifications if necessary, for students at the college level.
- Reestablish a masters in city and regional degree program at a University in the Valley. CSU Fresno previously offered such a degree in the 1970s and 1980s.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies
- Cities and Counties
- Great Valley Center
- Compact of Cities
- California Coalition for Rural Development
- Small Communities Network
- Local Government Commission
- PolicyLink
- Universities

Timing

- 2012; On-going

Funding

- HUD sustainable Communities Grant
- Participant fees and grants
- Local government
- Universities

References

- San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report, September 2010

Monitor Blueprint Implementation

- **Successful implementation of the Blueprint and the programs of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies suggests reviewing the Roadmap strategies regularly, documenting accomplishments, and monitoring changes in conditions in the Valley that the Blueprint seeks to influence.**

The Regional Policy Council and the Valley RPAs already periodically report on accomplishments relative to their adopted work programs and State and Federal grants. In 2007, the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Coordinating Committee adopted a matrix of performance measures to track changing conditions in the Valley based on what the Valley RPAs could model and what the Valley RPAs felt was important to monitor. The matrix includes 13 measures grouped under six headings: transportation, mass transit/choices, air quality, economy and housing/jobs balance, agricultural land preservation, and environmental conservation.

In 2007, the California Center for Regional leadership published the California Regional Progress Report. Under the director of the California Strategic Growth council and with the sponsorship and support of many state-level and regional agencies, the California Regional Programs Report was updated in November 2010. The report is designed to measure and compare progress of 14 regions in California base on 20 measures (indicators) grouped under four headings:

- Efficient Transportation and Land Use
- Economic Competition and Opportunity
- Environmental Health
- Resources Efficiency and Conservation

Recommendations

- Create a program for an annual review of the Blueprint strategies and their implementation and updating the Roadmap to revise, delete, or add strategies base on the annual review and changing conditions and opportunities.

- Institute a Blueprint performance measurement program based on the initial performance measures adopted by the Regional Coordination Committee in 2007.
- Participate in and support updating of the California Regional Progress Report.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council

Timing

- Annually
- Ongoing

Funding

- SGC Proposition 84 Grants
- Caltrans Blueprint Program Grants

References

- Valleywide Performance Measures, San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Coordination Committee, June 12, 2007
- 2010 California Regional Progress Report, Applied Development Economics, Inc., et al., November 2010

Develop a Valleywide Blueprint Vision Statement

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will be enhanced if a Valleywide Blueprint vision statement is created that provides an overarching philosophical framework to link the ~~preferred growth scenario diagram, target density, and growth principles~~. Blueprint planning efforts of the eight Valley RPA's.

The Valleywide Blueprint program conducted between 2005 and 2009 resulted in separate Blueprints for each of the eight counties and a Valleywide Blueprint. Each of the eight individual Blueprint efforts created a vision statement, a set of principles (and, in some cases, values statement), a preferred growth scenario diagram, and a target residential density. The Valley Blueprint adopted by the Regional Policy Council in 2009 included a preferred growth scenario diagram, an overall residential target density, and a set of 12 Smart Growth Principles, but it did not include a valleywide vision statement.

Beginning in the early 200s the four largest regional planning agencies in California (San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, Southern California, and San Diego) launched visioning processes to develop regional land use growth scenarios and smart growth principles to

address increasing growth pressures. These were the first regional “blueprint” programs in California, even though they went by different names. Prompted by the success of these early efforts the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) created the California Regional Blueprint Planning Program, which has supported development and continuation of blueprint programs throughout the state. All eight Valley Regional Planning Agency programs and the Valleywide effort have used the “Blueprint” label as a reference to various regional visioning and scenarios development programs. Future outreach must convey what the regional efforts are trying to accomplish, such as better communities, better quality of life and better health, particularly to those segments of our society that do not regularly participate in mainstream civic affairs.

Recommendations

- Develop consensus among SJV Regional Policy Council members on a Valleywide Vision Statement.
- Develop a narrative/story that makes the Blueprint principles relevant to people’s lives. In developing this story, the principles must be communicated clearly and simply in culturally- and linguistically- appropriate languages, and explain the tangible benefits for residents and their communities. Appropriate venues to effectively disseminate the story must be determined for the target audiences in each city and county.

Responsible Partners

- Regional Policy Council
- Valley Regional Planning Agencies

Timing

- 2011 – 2012

Funding

- Participant Regional Planning Agencies

References

- None

Draft Valleywide Vision Statement

The San Joaquin Valley will contain vibrant cities, small towns, and rural areas, each with its own unique character, offering a variety of housing types, and transportation choices to meet the needs of the population. The region will have a diversified economy that includes a strong agricultural sector. The region’s schools will prepare students for productive 21st century jobs,

and the region will have sufficient water, clean air, and plentiful natural resources to provide a high quality of life for current and future generations.

Chapter 5 Blueprint Implementation Partners

Effective implementation of the strategies outlined in the previous chapter of this report will depend upon the participation and cooperation of an array of federal, State, and local government agencies and quasi-public and non-profit organizations. Most of these organizations have already made important contributions in the development of the Blueprint. This chapter describes these groups and their organization and programmatic characteristics. All the agencies and organizations discussed in this chapter will play important roles in implementing the Blueprint. Coordination and communication among all of these groups will be a critical component of Blueprint implementation, recognizing that the roles and capacities of these agencies and organizations will change over time.

The Blueprint implementation partners discussed in this chapter include:

- Cities and Counties
- Other Local Agencies
- Regional Planning Agencies
- Regional Policy Council
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
- Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley
- Great Valley Center
- Colleges and Universities
- State Agencies
- Strategic Growth Council
- Non-Profit and Not-For-Profit Organizations

Cities and Counties

The San Joaquin Valley encompasses eight counties and 62 cities. Elected official and city and county staff planners from virtually all these jurisdictions participated in developing the Blueprint. Their participation took three main forms: 1) assistance with Blueprint workshops; 2) formal participation on boards; 3) representation via their RPA membership.

Cities and counties have legal authority over local land use matters and, therefore, are critical partners in Blueprint implementation. Through their general plans, zoning ordinances, and other regulatory tools, cities and counties are the key to voluntarily translating the Blueprint principles into policy and action. If development projects approved by cities and counties reflect Blueprint principles and densities and those planning efforts of the eight Valley RPA's, the Blueprint will be a success. If cities and counties minimize conversion of prime agricultural to urban uses, the Blueprint will be a success.

In short, the success or failure of the Blueprint process rests with the eight boards of supervisors and 62 city councils who decide where and how the Valley will develop. Commitment of these 70 partners to the Blueprint smart growth principles is essential.

Other Local Agencies

In addition to cities and counties, there are many other local agencies that will be indirectly involved in implementing the Blueprint. In the eight-county Valley region, there are hundreds of special districts that provide and manage facilities and programs that are critical to the health and safety and quality of life in the Valley. These include, among others, schools districts, water districts, wastewater districts, drainage districts, and others whose boundaries are not coterminous with city and county boundaries. Most of these agencies have their own elected boards of directors and independent authority over their own facilities and operations. Many of the agencies will be expected to work with cities and counties to support Blueprint implementation through energy and water conservation programs and the provision of services to new development.

Local agency formation commissions (LAFCOs) in each county are charged with reviewing and approving creation of new local agencies and changes in the boundaries or services provided by cities and special districts. LAFCOs boards are made up of city, county, and public representatives. While LAFCOs are not land use planning agencies, their authority to make decisions on city and special district expansion and boundaries can be critical to how the Blueprint is implemented.

Valley Regional Planning Agencies

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is the product of a three-year process (starting in 2006) carried out by the eight Valley RPAs: the Council of Fresno County Governments (Fresno COG), the Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG), the Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG), the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG), the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), and the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG).

Each of the Valley RPAs is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency and the Metropolitan (MPO) for their county. This means that their primary responsibilities are to plan for transportation and to develop and administer the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is a long-term 20-year plan for a county transportation network, and encompasses projects for all types of travel including aviation and freight movement. In addition to the RTP, each Valley RPA is responsible for updating countywide transportation models, Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP), and Federal Transportation Improvement Programs.

Beyond transportation responsibilities, Valley RPAs are involved in a range of other programs, which depending on the RPA, includes housing, land use policy, education, carpool/vanpool or

rideshare programs, and regional data processing. Valley RPAs are responsible for assigning the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) as a part of the State-mandated Housing Element process. As a result of SB 375, Valley RPAs will now be responsible for aligning the RHNA and the RTP. The Valley RPAs have varying levels of capacity for implementing the Blueprint. They all have permanent staffs ranging in size from 4 to 33 persons; however, most of their expertise is in transportation planning, not land use. The Valley RPAs receive much of their funding from State and Federal transportation grants.

While cities and counties have the ~~most~~ legal authority over land use, the Valley RPAs have the most capacity for implementing the Blueprint for several reasons. However, they have no land use control affecting city and county jurisdictions. As lead agencies on the Blueprint grant application, they have the most access to State blueprint funding for implementation. Through their role as regional transportation agencies, they have significant technical capacity to coordinate transportation programming and funding. This role is expanding with SB 375 to include a mandate to coordinate transportation and housing with sustainable land use patterns. The Valley RPAs also have significant capacity to coordinate programs among their member cities and counties.

Regional Policy Council

The Regional Policy council was created in 2006 by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) among the eight Valley RPAs to: provide focus and guidance on interregional policy issues; represent the Valley at the State and Federal levels; and work with the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley. The Regional Policy Council is made up of two elected officials and one alternate from each of the eight Valley RPAs, and one representative from the SJVAPCD. The Regional Policy Council does not have its own staff or budget; all of its administrative and technical support comes from the individual Valley RPAs.

The Regional Policy Council was the decision-making body for the combined Valley Blueprint planning process, and continues to be for the implementation of the Blueprint. It also serves as the Transportation Working Group for the Partnership. The RPC will provide ongoing oversight for all Blueprint implementation efforts.

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) encompasses the airshed of the eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley. The SJVAPCD develops plans and implements control measures consistent with Federal and State requirements for non-attainment areas. It also conducts public education and outreach programs. The SJVAPCD was an active partner both financially and technically during the Blueprint development. The SJVAPCD directly participated in the Blueprint planning process through its role on the Blueprint Coordinating committee and as a member of the Regional Policy Council and the Valley Planners Workgroup. The District provided nearly \$750,000 in matching funds during the first two years of the planning process and provided technical assistance throughout the Blueprint process.

The SJVAPCD government board is made up of 15 members: eight county supervisors (from the eight valley counties), five city council members, and two public members appointed by the Governor. The district gets its funding from three sources: permit fees paid annually by businesses operating within the district; motor vehicle registration fees generated by a \$7 surcharge fee on every vehicle registered within the district; and State and Federal grants. The district receives State grants from the California Air Resources Board and the Environmental Protection Agency. The SJVAPCD is expected to provide continuing technical and financial support for Blueprint implementation efforts.

Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley was created by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2005 to focus attention on and recommend changes to improve the economic well-being of the Valley. In November 2006 the Partnership adopted a ten-year Strategic Action Plan, which details its goals to help the Valley achieve a prosperous economy, quality environment, and social equity. The Partnership received \$5 million in FY 2006-2007 to implement the Strategic Action Plan. The Strategic Action Plan includes six major initiatives and recommendations for its ten working groups. The Strategic Action Plan specifically references the efforts of the Valley RPAs to enhance quality of life and identify the Valley Blueprint as an implementation strategy for the Transportation and Land Use, Agriculture, and Housing work groups.

Originally set to expire in November 2006, the authority of the Partnership was extended by two additional executive orders (s-22-06, S-17-08). On July 1, 2010, the Governor strengthened the Partnership with Executive Order S-10-10 by expanding the number and variety of members on the board and clarifying voting and decision-making authority. There are not six classes of voting directors in addition to a board chair and two deputy chairs. These include: State government directors, local government directors, private sector directors, liaisons to government agencies and commissions, representatives of consortia, and directors with special expertise. No additional funding was provided for the Partnership with this last executive order. The Partnership will continue to work closely with other Blueprint partners to provide research, policy, and funding support of implementation efforts.

Great Valley Center

The Great Valley Center has been integrally involved in the Blueprint, as a member of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership), as a partner throughout the Blueprint planning process, and as the current host for the Blueprint website and publications. As a tax exempt, nonprofit organization, GVC programs and activities encompass agriculture, economic development, telecommunications, leadership development, and energy and sustainability. Their 2009 annual Report lists over sixteen programs including Agricultural Transactions Program, Sustainable Agriculture Program, Pixley Connect, City Success Fund, Green Bus Tour, Daily Connect e-newsletter, American Leadership Forum, Institute for

Development of Emerging Area Leaders, and the Great Valley Leadership Institute. As a member of the Partnership, the GVC provided support, produced the annual report, hosted the annual summit, and staffed three work groups (i.e., Transportation, Advanced Communications Services (ACS), and Land Use Agriculture, and Housing).

Now affiliated with UC Merced, GVC is currently (2010) developing a five-year action plan to align GVC's mission and programs with UC Merced's long-term Strategic plan and Vision 2025, strengthen the connections between the two organizations, and continue to coordinate with Blueprint programs throughout the Valley.

Colleges and Universities

There are 21 public and private institutions of higher education in the Valley: Bakersfield College, Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, Cerro Coso Community College, College of the Sequoias, Columbia College, CSU Bakersfield, CSU Fresno, CSU Stanislaus, Fresno City College, Joint Doctoral Program in Higher Educational Leadership, Fresno Pacific, Humphries College, Merced College, Modesto Junior College, Porterville College, Reedley College, San Joaquin Delta College, Taft College, UC Merced, University of the Pacific, and West Hills College. The Valley colleges and universities will have an important role in supporting Blueprint implementation through continuing research and technical assistance to other Blueprint partners.

State Agencies

The Business Transportation and Housing Agency (BTHA) oversees 14 departments (including Caltrans and the Department of Housing and Community Development), several economic development programs (e.g., California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley), and commissions. BTHA programs affect a wide range of sectors involved in planning such as transportation, public safety, affordable housing, and economic development. In 2006, BTHA created a Blueprint Learning Network team to work with the regional Blueprint programs in a series of workshops on overcoming the challenges and obstacles to effective regional blueprint planning.

Caltrans is the State agency responsible for funding, administering, and supporting the California Regional Blueprint Planning Program. Caltrans has awarded \$20 million in Federal regional transportation planning funds to develop regional blueprints and provided funding to 18 MPOs and 15 RTPAs. From 2005 to 2009, Caltrans awarded the Valley Blueprint a total of \$6,675,000:

- \$2,000,000 in Fiscal Year (FY 2005/2006)
- \$1,950,000 in FY 2006/2007
- \$1,375,000 in FY 2007/2008
- \$1,350,000 in FY 2008/2009

In addition, Caltrans staff from Districts 6 and 10 and State headquarters has participated in the Blueprint Learning Network and the Valley Planners Workgroup.

The Department of Transportation is expanding the State's transportation planning process to include development of a statewide transportation blueprint focused on interregional travel needs. The California Interregional Blueprint (CIB) will articulate the State's vision for an integrated, multimodal interregional transportation system that complements regional transportation plans and land use visions (i.e., blueprints). When complete, the CIB will become the foundation for the 2040 update to the California Transportation Plan (CTP). CTP should result in stronger partnerships with regional and local agencies and better data for decision-making at the State, regional, and local levels. Continuing financial and technical support from State agencies is essential to the success of Blueprint implantation.

Strategic Growth Council

In September 2008 when Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed SB 732 creating the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) as a cabinet level committee tasked with coordinating the activities of State agencies to:

- Improve air and water quality
- Protect natural resource and agriculture lands
- Increase the availability of affordable housing
- Improve infrastructure systems
- Promote public health
- Assist State and local entities in the planning of sustainable communities and meeting AB 32 goals.

SGC consists of the Director of State Planning and Research, the Secretary of the Resources Agency, the Secretary for Environmental protection, the Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing, the Secretary of California Health and Human Services, and one member of the public appointed by the Governor.

SGC has several statutory duties, including: administering grant programs, coordination and outreach, research and data management, and state infrastructure planning. SGC also advocates SGC objectives at the Federal level and works with the High Speed Rail authority to ensure the project meets SGC objectives. SGC supports the planning and development of sustainable communities by providing grant funding (Proposition 84) for preparing, adopting, and implementing general plans, general plan elements, regional plans, or other planning programs, and for preparing and implementing urban greening projects. Financial support from the SGC is essential for local and regional sustainable planning efforts that implement the Blueprint smart growth principles.

Non-Profit and Not-For-Profit Organizations

The Blueprint planning process has highlighted the critical and diverse role of non-profit and not-for-profit groups in shaping policy and actions in the valley. These groups range from environmental, social, and business advocacy groups to health related, agricultural preservation, and many other areas. Land use and transportation policy touches almost every segment of our social structure. That reality is being recognized increasingly by these groups and by transportation and land use planning agencies. To successfully bring about the Blueprint vision for the valley, a broad range of non-profit and for-profit groups will need to positively support and participate in making the smart growth principles part of the daily fabric of life in the valley.

Chapter 6 Financial Resources

In addition to institutional capacity, implementing the Blueprint will require substantial fiscal resources at the local and regional level. The dramatic downturn in the economy and the resultant impact on local planning agency budgets has taken place since the Blueprint planning process was begun. While the State has recognized the need to provide funding to go with new mandates they have not, as yet, been able to provide the funding to cover existing and expected local agency costs. This lack of funding will be one of the most important barriers to moving the Blueprint principles and recommendations forward. This chapter describes a broad range of funding sources and financial tools that may be useful for funding local agency efforts to incorporate the Blueprint principles in their plans and implementing ordinances. However, it must be emphasized that funding efforts by local agencies are voluntary only. Still needed is a consistent long-term funding source for local agencies to conduct long range planning. Seeking this long term funding source could be an important regional advocacy role for those seeking to support the Blueprint and the local agencies that have the responsibility for land use planning.

Taxes and Fees

Assessment Districts

Formation of an assessment district is a financing tool available to cities, counties, and special districts that allows the costs of public improvements to be apportioned among beneficiaries. Assessment districts are a form of “user pays” financing. Benefit assessments are often used for flood control, fire services, and water systems. Assessment district formation includes districts authorized by the Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, which specifically authorizes the use of districts for parks, recreation and open space, recreational improvements, and maintenance. Developers often create new assessment districts at the time of development approvals, and then new homeowners within the district pay for the cost of the improvements through the district.

Bond Financing

Local governments, including special districts, have the authority to issue debt in the form of bonds to pay the costs of developing infrastructure. The debt is repaid over the life of the bonds, usually at very favorable, tax exempt interest rates. The two basic types of bonds are general obligation bonds and revenue bonds. While general obligation bonds are secured by government taxing power, revenue bonds are secured by a pledge of projected revenues. Bonds may also be issued by Joint Powers Authorities for projects that exceed the boundaries of any one jurisdiction.

Business License Fees

Business license fees are an excise tax imposed on businesses by local governments and are usually based on gross receipts or levied at a flat rate. Business license fees are typically general fund revenues and can be used to fund a broad range of municipal expenses.

Impact Fees

Impact fees are assessments imposed as a condition of approval for development projects that apportion the costs of required public facilities and services to new development. Authorized by AB 1600, the impact fee must be “reasonably related to the cost of the service” or facility provided by the government. Local government impact fees often include sewer and water facilities, public safety, roads and freeway interchanges, schools, parks and open space, libraries, and other facilities that are consistent with the standard of service within a community. Under the California Government code, cities and counties can charge a fee on new development for maintaining their general plans.

Local Auto Registration Taxes

Counties received legislative authority to assess a \$1 surcharge on in-county vehicle registrations for vehicle theft prevention programs. The authority for this fee will expire in 2018. The fee could be legislatively reinstated or extended for the purposes such as infrastructure improvements, transit systems development or operations, or open space conservation.

Mello Roos Community Facilities Fees

Mello Roos fees are property taxes imposed on real estate within a defined geographic area. Mello Roos districts facilitate public financing through the sale of tax exempt bonds to pay for provided infrastructure and services. The collected taxes are used to pay the debt on the bonds.

CEQA Mitigation Fees

CEQA mitigation fees are assessments imposed by lead agencies as a condition of approval for development projects. Mitigation fees are charges on new development for negative impacts that development may have on the community. Mitigation fees are most frequently used to compensate for the loss of agricultural land or natural resource habitat. The use of mitigation fees is limited to funding programs and actions directly related to the identified impact.

Property Taxes

Property taxes are ad valorem taxes limited to 1 percent of assessed property value. The property tax represents a significant though decreasing share of local government revenue. Property tax rates can be increased through special assessments and bonds (covered elsewhere in this chapter) approved through a local election with a two-thirds majority vote.

Property Transfer Taxes

Property transfer taxes are imposed at the local level based on a percentage of the sale price of the property. While some cities and counties have transfer taxes that were grandfathered in prior to the passage of Proposition 218, the establishment of new transfer taxes are generally held to require a two-thirds vote of the electorate. However, property transfer tax agreements related to development approvals have become more popular as a method of financing affordable housing and other community benefits. Under such an arrangement, a developer agrees to include a property transfer tax on parcels created in the new project that generate revenue each time the parcel is sold.

Business Improvement Districts

Business improvement districts are formed by local governments, with the agreement of the district business owners. They represent a public-private partnership in which the business owners in the district agree to a special assessment and the purposes for which the assessments will be collected and spent. A city, county or joint powers authority may create the district and levy the assessments after providing public notice and holding a hearing. If there is no protest by a majority of the property owners, the district may be formed. The assessments can provide funding for a variety of purposes, including parking facilities, parks, fountains, street lighting, and other streetscape features. Assessments may also be used for special events and promotion of tourism.

Sales Tax

Sales tax is a tax on tangible personal property charged as a percentage of the purchase price of an item. Sales tax is not charged on services at this time in California. The current statewide base sales tax is 8.25 percent, one percent of which goes to local governments. Cities, counties and special districts may add optional supplementary taxes to the current rate of 8.25 percent with two-thirds voter approval. "Self-help" counties have been successful in winning voter approval for local sales tax increases to provide local matches for transportation funds. Self-help Counties in the San Joaquin Valley include: Fresno, San Joaquin, Madera, and Tulare. Many other local option taxes have been approved for a variety of purposes, including libraries, economic development, public safety, and schools.

Transient Occupancy Taxes

Transient occupancy taxes (TOT) are imposed by local government on the rental of motel, hotel, and other "transient" accommodations. TOTs are general revenues used for broad range government activities. Imposition of new TOT requires two-thirds voter approval.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing is the primary funding mechanism for redevelopment activities. The difference (or increment) in property tax revenues between the base year of the assessed property tax value at the date of formation of a redevelopment agency and the increase in property values in the current year is captured by a redevelopment agency. Tax increment does not change the amount of taxes that the property owner is required to pay, but it does change the formula for distribution of tax revenue among existing agencies. All cities and counties in California have the authority to form redevelopment districts to capture tax increment revenue, although the State Legislature has frequently narrowed the application and use of the increment funds. This may change, however, as the new Governor tries to balance the State budget.

Utility Users Taxes

Utility user taxes previously could be imposed by local governments on the consumption/use of electricity, gas, cable television, water, and/or telephone service. The rate of the tax and its use are determined by the local government but the establishment of a new tax must be approved by the voters. A two-thirds vote is required for a special tax for a specified purpose, and a majority vote is required for a general tax without a specified purpose.

Grants and Loans

In addition to using taxes and fees, local governments may apply for a range of grants and loans. While the grant and loan programs described here represent a broad overview of current programs, the opportunities change often. It is advisable to check frequently for the most current information on available programs. Current information is available from a number of sources, such as the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, the Local Government Commission, and others, which maintain up-to-date lists of grants and discretionary funding sources. Information on available Federal grants can be found at www.grants.gov.

As the national economy recovers, it is likely that funding to support plans and development compatibility with the Blueprint principles will expand. Already, the current trend toward smaller houses and strategies to reduce carbon emissions suggest that the emphasis on sustainability and “green” buildings and transportation are likely to continue in the private market. Public funding is likely to fall in step to bolster additional support.

Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

The Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is an economic stimulus package enacted in February 2009. Not intended as an ongoing revenue source, the stimulus was intended to create jobs and promote investment and consumer spending during the recession. The Act includes Federal tax incentives, expansion of unemployment benefits and other social welfare provisions, and domestic spending in education, health care, and infrastructure, including the energy sector. A significant portion of funds available under ARRA are in the areas of transportation, energy, and environment, and provide opportunities to

advance projects that not only address critical infrastructure and other needs, but also help address the air quality situation in the San Joaquin Valley.

California Energy Commission

The California Energy Commission (CEC) has various grant and loan programs to promote energy efficiency and mitigate climate change. Existing resources have been supplemented by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding from the Federal government. (see www.energy.ca.gov/recovery/blockgrant)

California Strategic Growth Council

Using funds from voter-approved Proposition 84, the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) awards grants to local governments for planning and for urban “greening”. The Proposition 84 funds represent a major new source of funding for local and regional planning programs that address sustainability, climate change, and smart growth. The San Joaquin Valley RPAs receive a \$1 million grant from the SGC in December 2010 for Valley Blueprint implementation as well as a \$2.5 million grant for the Valleywide Model Improvement Program. In addition the following Valley agencies received SGC grants totaling over \$4.7 million:

- City of Arvin received \$150,000 for an Air Quality & Health Element and Comprehensive Green Zoning Code and General Plan Updates
- City of Clovis received \$295,500 for the Shaw Avenue Corridor Plan
- City of Corcoran receive \$450,000 for a General Plan Update
- City of Farmersville received \$267,000 for a Comprehensive Infrastructure Master Plan
- City of Fresno received \$992,214 for a Strategic Centers Solution for SB 375 Implementation
- Kings CAG received \$385,000 for a county-wide Climate Action Plan
- City of Merced received \$251,345 for the Bellevue Corridor Community Plan
- City of Riverbank received \$536,000 for the SR 108 Relinquishment and Reinvestment Plan
- Stanislaus County in concert with nine cities received \$1,000,000 for development of a Regional Sustainability Toolbox
- City of Stockton received \$398,423 for a Climate Action Plan

(See <http://www.sgc.ca.gov/> for up to date information, funding deadlines and grant requirements.)

California Department of Transportation

Caltrans provides various grants and types of assistance to local governments, COGs, and MPOs. The specific programs change from time to time, and, while this discussion provides a framework for reference, the best source for up to date information is the Caltrans website. Caltrans has several programs, managed mainly through the Departments Division of Local

Assistance or the Division of Transportation Planning, that are excellent sources for local land use and transportation planning, including: Caltrans Local Assistance, Community-Based Transportation Planning, Environmental Justice: Context-Sensitive Planning, Safe Routes to Schools, Bicycle Transportation Account, Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation, and the Regional Blueprint. Caltrans also administers grants that support projects focused on environmental justice, historic resources, environmental restoration, bicycle pathways, and public engagement. (The Caltrans District Director for each district can provide additional information or see <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html>.)

California Department of Water Resources

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the State Water Resources Control Board provide grants and loans for a variety of purposes, including flood protection planning, local groundwater assistance, and urban streams and watershed restoration. Loans are available for water conservation programs and local water supply construction. (see www.water.ca.gov/grants.)

California Department of Housing and Community Development

The California Department of Housing and Community development (HCD) has more than a dozen grant programs available to local governments, most of which are focused on housing. The Infill Infrastructure Grant program provides assistance for infrastructure and the development of infill housing projects. The HOME program, designed to assist cities and counties in providing and maintaining affordable housing, provides funds for rehabilitation, new construction, and acquisition and rehabilitation, for both single-family and multifamily projects, and predevelopment loans to assist low-income renters and owners. (See <http://www.hcd.ca.gov>.)

Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program administered by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is designed to support multi-jurisdictional regional planning efforts that integrate housing, economic development, and transportation decision-making in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of economic growth, social equity, and environmental impact simultaneously. The first round of funding was completed in October 2010, but there will likely be other similar opportunities through HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the US Environmental Protection Agency, working together as The Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The Compact of Cities (Smart Valley Places) representing 14 of the 16 largest cities in the Valley received a \$4 million Sustainable Communities Planning grant in October 2010.

Livable Communities Act

Under the Livable Communities Act the Federal Office of sustainable Housing and Communities would oversee two grant programs. One grant program would make \$2.2 billion available for communities to build and improve affordable housing, strengthen public transportation, promote transit-oriented development, and redevelop Brownfield sites. A second grant program would provide \$500 million to support comprehensive regional planning that recognizes the interconnectedness of transportation, housing, community and economic development, and environmental sustainability. This bill will likely be reintroduced in the 2011 session of Congress.

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April 14, 2011

Mr. Ron Brummett, Executive Director
Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street Suite, 300
Bakersfield, CA. 93301

RE: San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Draft Guidance Framework Document

Dear Mr. Brummett:

The City of Tehachapi is in receipt of Mr. Ted James's correspondence dated April 8, 2011 regarding the above referenced document. The City of Tehachapi wanted to take this opportunity to go on record that we (the City) are in concurrence with and share the comments and concerns expressed by Mr. Ted James in his April 8, 2011 correspondence.

Additionally, approximately four (4) years ago when the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint (Blueprint) concept was first introduced to the City of Tehachapi and our participation was requested it was our understanding that Tehachapi's participation was not mandatory given that we are not a San Joaquin Valley community. However, we were also led to believe that for the greater good our participation would strengthen KernCog's position relative to the Blueprint process. It was in this context that the City of Tehachapi agreed to participate in the Blueprint.

The issues that have precipitated the Blueprint process for the San Joaquin Valley such as poor air quality, urban sprawl, loss of viable agricultural resources and high unemployment do not apply to Tehachapi or most of the East Kern region for that matter. Additionally, we were led to believe that the Blueprint was a voluntary exercise intended to be a bottom up effort akin to a Community Charrette with no real force of law and certainly not a document that would pre-empt and highjack a communities General Plan process.

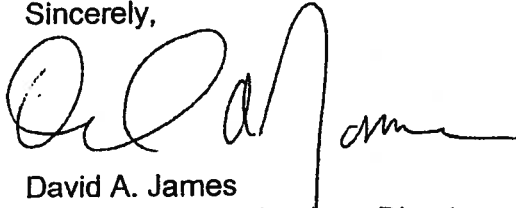
Unfortunately over the last four years it appears that the Blueprint has morphed into something it was never intended to be. Further, the City of Tehachapi is at risk of abrogating our autonomy to some new San Joaquin Valley Agency, a Super Cog if you will, to implement the Blueprint in a one size fits all manner.

During the April 6, 2010 KernCog meeting in which the Blueprint was discussed KernCog staff volunteered that the Blueprint is not a high priority for the Cog. In response to this revelation, at the end of the day this is KernCog's document and the City of Tehachapi would respectfully suggest that the stakes are too high for the Blueprint to not be of the highest priority. The City of Tehachapi would also respectfully request that the Cog to take a more proactive leadership role in the process as the Blueprint and associated frame work document continues to move forward to completion to ensure that our regions uniqueness is recognized.

In closing, East Kern in general and the Tehachapi Region specifically are not physically located in the San Joaquin Valley and we do not want to get embroiled in the issues and politics that have confronted the San Joaquin Valley for years and which ultimately promulgating the Blueprint process in the first place.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter. Should you have any questions and/or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at (661) 822-2200 ext. 119.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David A. James', with a stylized, flowing script.

David A. James
Community Development Director

cc: Mr. Greg Garrett, City Manager
Supervisor Zack Scrviner 2nd District
Ms. Barbara Steck, Council of Fresno County Governments
Mr. Ted James, AICP Director Development Services Agency
Kern County City Managers

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AGENCY

TED JAMES, DIRECTOR

Administrative Operations • Engineering, Surveying and Permit Services Department
Planning and Community Development Department • Roads Department •

Phones: (661) 862-8800
(800) 552-5376 Option 5
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2700 "M" STREET, SUITE 350
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301-237
E-Mail: dsa@co.kern.ca.us
Web Page: <http://www.co.kern.ca.us/dsa>

April 8, 2011

Mr. Ronald e. Brummett, Executive Director
Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street, Suite 300
Bakersfield, CA 93301

RE: San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Draft Guidance Framework Document

Dear Mr. Brummett:

The purpose of this letter is to provide comments on the February 15, 2011 Draft Guidance Framework for the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Program. These comments are a follow-up to comments made by the Kern County Development Services Agency (DSA) at the March 17, 2011 Kern COG Board of Directors meeting and a Special Ad Hoc Planning Advisory Committee Meeting conducted on April 6, 2011. It is understood that the Kern COG staff will be scheduling a report on the April 21, 2011 Board of Directors meeting to further discuss the San Joaquin Regional Blueprint Program.

The DSA understands that following the completion of the local Kern Regional Blueprint Program in 2008, the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, the decision-making body for the Valleywide program, approved growth scenario B+ with a target density of 6.8 units per acre and 12 Smart Growth Principles in April, 2009, which was intended to represent a "coordinated vision for future development throughout the Valley to the year 2050." It is also understood that the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint was intended to be a bottom up, voluntary endeavor for guiding local agencies in the pursuit of sustainable development.

The Kern Regional Blueprint Program was specially crafted to reflect the County's unique urban, dispersed rural and resource patterns of development as well as its military bases, renewable energy, desert resource and other economic pursuits which are different than other San Joaquin Valley counties. It was designed to ensure flexibility and choice in the selection of smart growth tools by the different cities and the County in planning for future growth. The DSA notes that the concepts presented in Kern's program (generalized growth center map vs. specific map, recognition of rural patterns of development and emphasis that one-size-does-not-fit-all situations) have not been effectively integrated into the broader San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint program as presented in the Draft Guidance Framework document. In fact, it remains unclear what the relationship is of the local Blueprint efforts to the Valleywide program.

The Guidance Framework is made up of 12 Strategies or actions to guide implementation of the Valleywide Blueprint. Kern COG staff continually has emphasized that the implementation of the program is "voluntary", yet this concept is unclear in the presentation of the Guidance Framework document. Indicated below are some specific concerns related to some of the implementation strategy proposals presented in Chapter 4 of the document.

Explore a Regional Leadership Structure (p.24)

The program calls for the establishment of an institutional structure that can gather and manage funds to maintain staff for administering the program. Appendix B, Institutional Arrangements White Paper, profiles several different agency structures and outlines three institutional options ranging from the utilization of the present Regional Policy Council arrangement among the eight COG's to forming a Joint Powers Authority with a centralized "top down" institutional governance structure. Page 53 of the Guidance Framework indicates that implementation of the Valleywide Blueprint will require substantial financial resources at the local and regional level that could consist of taxes, fees, grants and loans.

Is the concept of creating a new institutional structure funded by taxes, fees and other sources of funding a realistic approach for Valley counties and their residents who are struggling in a challenging economic climate of unknown duration? Is creating another institutional governance structure going to address the effective and efficient delivery of government services demanded by the public? It is unclear how a valleywide regional governance structure effectively represents the interests of the Kern Region? Which entity would be responsible for imposing taxes and fees?

"Align" the SB375 Greenhouse Gas Sustainable Communities Strategy with the Blueprint (p. 28)

What is meant by this implementation measure? Does this mean the broader one-size-fits-all San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is to be used as the framework for developing Kern's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) which will be a part of the Regional Transportation Plan required by SB375? Why is it not appropriate to use the more localized Kern Regional Blueprint program? Where is the recognition that the SCS can develop local strategies for addressing local circumstances in the Kern region?

Translate Blueprint into City and County Policies and Actions (p.30)

It is not clear how the Valleywide Blueprint and the eight Regional Planning Agency Blueprints are to be translated into local city and county general plans, ordinances and development approvals.

Although the Guidance Document recognizes that cities and counties have legal authority over land use, there appears to be an expectation that Valley cities and counties will incorporate the Valleywide regional preferred growth scenario diagram, target residential density and smart growth principles into their general plans, ordinances and development approvals. In fact, the Guidance Document acknowledges that the Blueprint process, SB 375 greenhouse gas reduction strategies/targets, Regional Transportation Plan conformity and Regional Housing Need Allocation requirements should be interrelated. Thus, this arrangement implies that the Valleywide Blueprint process is much more than a voluntary program as the Guidance

Framework advocates the integration of mandatory requirements of Federal Transportation law, SB 375 and the Housing Element that will have implications for local governments in the future. How will local governments absorb the cost of preparing general plan amendments and ordinance changes related to implementing the Blueprint concepts? The recommendation for this implementation strategy on page 31 references the "creation of a protocol and **checklist for evaluating and certifying consistency (self certification) of city and county general plans and general plan amendments with Blueprint principles and target densities.**" Is this a mandatory certification process? Are the Blueprint principles referenced those of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint or those of the local Regional Blueprint program? Will certification relate to the yet to be developed SB375 SCS and Regional Transportation Plan conformance?

The same list of recommendations on page 31 reference the "creation of a protocol or checklists for evaluating and certifying consistency (self-certification) of major development projects with Blueprint principles and target densities, pending updating of the applicable general plan." Once again, the intent of this recommendation is unclear as to authority and purpose. Is the recommendation talking about utilizing the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint or the local Blueprint program? What are the implications of not complying with these recommendations?

Create a Greenprint Program (p. 33)

This implementation strategy identifies the creation of a "regional open space framework (Greenprint) focusing on agricultural lands, habitat lands, lands of ecological benefit and lands that are hazardous, scenic or provide cultural benefit (p. 33)."

The concept of a "Greenprint" program is unclear as to intent. What is the purpose of such a program? Cities and counties already have adopted Open Space and Conservation Elements of their General Plans which deal with conservation, the promotion of agriculture, mining, renewable energy, ranching, resource and other uses. Why is the Blueprint program promoting land use-related conservation concepts that are the authority of local governments?

Create a Regional Technical Coordinating Committee (p. 36)

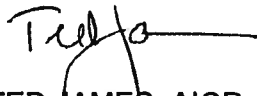
This implementing strategy recommends the creation of an interagency Regional Technical Coordinating Committee to include such groups as the Regional Policy Council, the Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, the Great Valley Center, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Smart Valley Places, San Joaquin Valley Supervisors Association and other organizations. The creation of another regional coordinating agency would not be an efficient use of scarce resources nor provide for the effective use of staff resources of the government entities. Why not rely on the existing forums of governmental entities and organizations to deal with Blueprint-related issues? Proposing a concept of another regional coordination entity lacks a purpose and adds another layer of complexity and cost.

Conclusion

The concepts of creating new Valleywide regional leadership structures that are further removed from local issues, the uncertain relationship of the Valleywide Blueprint to the development of a SB375 Greenhouse Gas Sustainable Communities Strategy, the inference of the need to translate the Valleywide Blueprint into local general plans, ordinances and development approvals, the recommended creation of a Greenprint Program that is duplicative with local government General Plans and the creation of an unnecessary Regional Technical Coordinating Committee appear problematic and unclear in establishing effective guidance for future growth and economic development in the San Joaquin Valley. Further work is needed on the Guidance Framework Document to make clear the recognition of city and county land use authority, the recognition of the preeminence of Kern's local Blueprint planning process and the acknowledgement of the diversity of economic activities, patterns of development and uses throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

The Development Services Agency requests that you keep the County and cities informed of efforts by the Valleywide Blueprint staff to address the aforementioned concerns mentioned in this correspondence.

Sincerely,



TED JAMES, AICP, Director
Development Services Agency

cc Supervisor Jon McQuiston
Supervisor Ray Watson
County Administrative Office
Roads Department
Planning & Community Development Dept
Barbara Steck, Council of Fresno County Governments

TJ:jf

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 26, 2011

TO: SJV REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES' DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE

FROM: LORI FLANDERS, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, MCAG

RE: SUPPORT LETTER FOR HOUSE RESOLUTION 1582

House Resolution (H.R.) 1582 would give the San Joaquin Valley and the Los Angeles area a five-year pass from stricter limits on ground-level ozone, the main ingredient in smog, which are expected to be finalized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) this summer.

The legislation ensures that the Central Valley can continue to clean its air in a commonsense way, while also relieving financial burdens on the residents of the San Joaquin Valley by repealing a \$29 million fine imposed on residents by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

The \$29 million fine was charged from a 1-Hour Ozone Standard back in 2005. The standard has since been replaced with the current 8-Hour Ozone Standard, which the Central Valley is working to comply with while still paying the fine for the 1-hour standard. Now the EPA is tightening up the 8-Hour Ozone Standard, which would be nearly impossible for the Valley to meet. Neither the 1-Hour nor the 8-Hour take into account the Central Valley's topography, weather, national ozone background levels, foreign sources of pollution and traffic passing through the region, which create an environment ripe for ozone formation. H.R. 152 would ensure these local factors are taken into account with the creation of the Local Advisory Committee.

The Local Advisory Committee would be composed of a representative of the local agriculture industry, air pollution control board, energy industry, health care industry, manufacturing and processing industry, and transportation industry, as well as a local governments and environmental justice representative. The committee would have five years to study and report findings to Congress. Congress would then have six months to review the report and act. During this time, EPA would not be able to implement new 8-Hour Ozone Standards, but the Valley would still be subject to the current 8-Hour Ozone Standard.

REQUESTED ACTION

Accept and sign the letter of support for H.R. 1582.

Attachments: H.R.1582 bill
Summary Chart
Letter of Support



San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. Suite 201 Fresno, Ca 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 – FAX 559-233-9645

Fresno Council of
Governments
Tony Boren
Chair

Stanislaus
Council of
Governments
Vince Harris
Vice Chair

Kern
Council of
Governments
Ronald Brummett

Kings County
Association of
Governments
Terri King

Madera County
Transportation
Commission
Patricia Taylor

San Joaquin
Council of
Governments
Andrew Chesley

Tulare County
Association of
Governments
Ted Smalley

Merced County
Association of
Governments
Jesse Brown

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
326 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: H.R. 1582

Dear Majority Whip McCarthy:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee, I am writing to express our strong support for House Resolution (HR) 1582 and to thank you for authoring this important legislation. This measure is a key element to bring the San Joaquin Valley back on track, in a practical way, to continue our efforts to clean the air while not impeding our economic growth.

Currently residents in the Central Valley are being charged a \$29 million fine for ozone standards that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revoked in 2005. We in the Central Valley are working diligently to comply with today's air quality standards, pay the \$29 million fine, and seek out solutions to recover from an economic downturn that has resulted in an unemployment rate of just below 20%. Passage of HR1582 would ensure new regulations do not destroy any chance we have today to recover from the economic downturn, it would provide us the needed financial relief to maintain focus on meeting today's standards and it would take into account the unique makeup of the Valley to ensure the measures are reasonable to meet.

Existing standards do not take into account the Valley's topography, weather, natural ozone background levels, foreign sources of pollution and traffic passing through the region, which create an environment ripe for ozone formation. Our residents have no control over these things, yet we are being held accountable by the EPA. We appreciate that this bill will ensure these local factors are taken into account with the creation of a Local Advisory Committee.

Again, let me thank you for your authorship of this important legislation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at (559) 233-4148.

Sincerely,

Tony Boren, Chair
Chair, San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

CC: Energy Commerce House Committee
Congressman Cardoza
Congressman Costa
Congressman Denham
Congressman McNerney
Congressman Nunes

CURRENT OZONE REGULATIONS

Currently, the Central Valley must meet **BOTH** regulations!

1-Hour Standard

124 PPB (parts per billion)

- Revoked by EPA in 2005, then reinstated by the Federal Courts
- Compliance Deadline: Nov. 2010
- Noncompliance Fine: \$29 million
 - Set to increase each year the Central Valley is noncompliant.
- Central Valley violations:
 - 1990s: 74 violations
 - 2010: 7 violations (lowest on record)

8-Hour Standard

84 PPB (parts per billion)

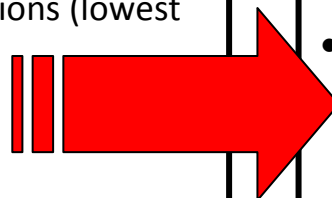
- Current regulation
- Compliance Deadline: 2023
- The Central Valley is working to come into compliance with this standard.
- Central Valley violations -
 - 2003: 134 violations (highest on record)
 - 2010: 49 violations (lowest on record)

Summer 2011, this standard will replace the current 8-Hour standard. Then, it will apply to the Central Valley along with the 1-Hour standard.

8-Hour Standard

60-70 PPB (parts per billion)

- New standard proposed by EPA in January 2010
- Expected Implementation: Summer 2011
- Expected Compliance Deadline: 2031
- Would result in banning fossil fuel combustion and a de facto ban on new business



The Commonsense Ozone Regulations Act

REPEALS

The Central Valley would no longer be required to meet this standard or pay the \$29M fine.

1-Hour Standard

124 PPB (parts per billion)

- Revoked by EPA in 2005, then reinstated by the Federal Courts
- Compliance Deadline: Nov. 2010
- Noncompliance Fine: \$29 million
 - Set to increase each year the Central Valley is noncompliant.
- Central Valley violations:
 - 1990s: 74 violations
 - 2010: 7 violations (lowest on record)

LEAVES IN PLACE

The Central Valley would be required to work toward meeting this standard.

8-Hour Standard

84 PPB (parts per billion)

- Current regulation
- Compliance Deadline: 2023
- The Central Valley is working to come into compliance with this standard.
- Central Valley violations -
 - 2003: 134 violations (highest on record)
 - 2010: 49 violations (lowest on record)

POSTPONES

EPA would be postponed from implementing this regulation for 5 ½ years when it is finalized in the Summer of 2011 to study feasibility.

8-Hour Standard

60-70 PPB (parts per billion)

- New standard proposed by EPA in January 2010
- Expected Implementation: Summer 2011
- Expected Compliance Deadline: 2031
- Would result in banning fossil fuel combustion and a de facto ban on new business

112th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. R. 1582

To address the application of the national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone with respect to extreme nonattainment areas, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 15, 2011

Mr. MCCARTHY of California (for himself, Mr. NUNES, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. ISSA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To address the application of the national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone with respect to extreme nonattainment areas, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Commonsense Ozone Regulation Act'.

SEC. 2. EXCLUSIVE APPLICATION OF 8-HOUR NAAQS TO COVERED EXTREME OZONE NONATTAINMENT AREAS.

(a) In General- Notwithstanding section 172(e) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7502(e)), any covered extreme ozone nonattainment area shall not be subject to any control (as defined in section 4(2)) pursuant to the 1-hour national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone.

(b) Retroactive Applicability- Subsection (a) applies as of the effective date of the classification of the area involved as extreme pursuant to the 8-hour national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone promulgated on July 18, 1997 (62 Fed. Reg. 38856).

SEC. 3. POSTPONEMENT OF FUTURE OZONE STANDARDS FOR COVERED EXTREME OZONE NONATTAINMENT AREAS.

(a) Postponement of Standard- With respect to any covered extreme ozone nonattainment area--

(1) the Administrator may take such steps as are necessary to classify the area pursuant to any rule setting the level of the 8-hour national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone below 0.08

parts per million; and

(2) until the date that is 6 months after a report on the feasibility of compliance in the area with the rule described in paragraph (1) is submitted to the Congress and the Administrator under subsection (b)(4)--

(A) the rule described in paragraph (1) shall not otherwise apply; and

(B) the 8-hour national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone in effect as of January 1, 2011, shall continue to apply.

(b) Local Advisory Committees-

(1) ESTABLISHMENT AND APPLICABILITY- Subsection (a) applies with respect to a covered extreme ozone nonattainment area only if the governing board of the responsible local air agency agrees to establish, in accordance with this subsection, a local advisory committee to study the feasibility of compliance in such area with a rule described in subsection (a)(1).

(2) MEMBERS- Each local advisory committee under this subsection shall be composed of the following members, to be appointed by the governing board of the responsible local air agency:

(A) A representative of the governing board of the responsible local air agency.

(B) A local representative of the energy industry.

(C) A local representative of the agriculture industry.

(D) A local representative of the manufacturing and processing industry.

(E) A local representative of the transportation industry.

(F) A local representative of local government.

(G) A local representative of the health care industry.

(H) A local environmental justice representative.

(3) STUDY-

(A) FEASIBILITY OF COMPLIANCE WITH RULE- Each local advisory committee under this subsection shall conduct a study on the feasibility of compliance in the applicable covered extreme ozone nonattainment area with a rule described in subsection (a)(1), taking into account--

(i) topography of the area;

(ii) weather in the area;

(iii) foreign sources of pollution (both stationary and mobile) that cause ozone formation in the area;

(iv) pass-through traffic and its impact on ozone formation in the area;

(v) exceptional events in the area;

(vi) current and future technologies needed to bring the area into compliance with the rule; and

(vii) natural ozone background levels in the area.

(B) **COSTS OF COMPLIANCE WITH RULE-** Each study described in subparagraph (A) shall address the potential adverse employment impacts of, and the costs of compliance with, a rule described in subsection (a)(1) for local businesses, agriculture operations, and residents in the applicable covered extreme ozone nonattainment area.

(4) **REPORT-** Not later than 5 years after a rule described in subsection (a)(1) is promulgated as final--

(A) each local advisory committee under this subsection shall submit to the governing board of the responsible local air agency a report on the results of the study by the committee under paragraph (3), including any findings and recommendations of the committee; and

(B) such governing board shall immediately submit such report, without change, to the Congress and the Administrator.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ADMINISTRATOR-** The term `Administrator' means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) **CONTROL-** The term `control' has the meaning given to such term for purposes of section 172(e) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7502(e)) and includes any fee or penalty under section 185 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 7511d)).

(3) **COVERED EXTREME OZONE NONATTAINMENT AREA-** The term `covered extreme ozone nonattainment area' means a nonattainment area for ozone classified as extreme as of January 1, 2011, pursuant to the 8-hour national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone promulgated on July 18, 1997 (62 Fed. Reg. 38856).

(4) **EXCEPTIONAL EVENT-** The term `exceptional event' has the meaning given such term in section 319(b) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7619(b)).

(5) **RESPONSIBLE LOCAL AIR AGENCY-** The term `responsible local air agency' means the local air district or other local government agency or authority with responsibility for enforcing requirements relating to the prevention and regulation of air pollution for the area involved.

END

June 2, 2011

TO: San Joaquin Valley COG Directors
FROM: Robert Phipps, Valley Legislative Affairs Committee
SUBJECT: Legislative support positions

DESCRIPTION:

Several bills proposed so far this session in the State Legislature or in Congress warrant support in the San Joaquin Valley.

DISCUSSION:

Assembly Bill 890 (Olsen) exempts a roadway improvement project or activity that is undertaken by a city, or county, or city and county from the California Environmental Quality Act.

Assembly Bill 892 (Carter) would make permanent a pilot program through which Caltrans is delegated the U.S. Secretary of Transportation's responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal environmental laws.

Assembly Bill 1308 would prevent transportation funding delays resulting from a prolonged state budget impasse, as occurred during the record budget delay of 2010.

Senate Bill 126 amends existing law for allocation of state and federal funds for transportation capital improvement projects by the Transportation Commission. It establishes specified procedures that the Commission would be required to utilize when it adopts guidelines, except as specified, and would exempt the adoption of those guidelines from the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act.

Senate Bill 683 (Correa) Amends the California Environmental Quality Act, which requires a lead agency to prepare an environmental impact report on a project that it proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant effect on the environment or to adopt a negative declaration if it finds that the project will not have that effect. The bill would prohibit certain actions or proceedings unless an objection occurs during a public comment period provided under the Act or prior to the close of the public hearing on a project.

House Resolution 1582 (McCarthy) addresses the application of the national primary ambient air quality standard for ozone with respect to extreme nonattainment areas, and for other purposes.

ACTION:

Recommend a "support" position for the aforementioned bills and recommend support letters to the San Joaquin Valley Policy Council.