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Mayor Bill Spriggs
City of Merced

Vice-Chair
Supervisor Allen
Ishida
Tulare County

Fresno Council of
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Commission

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Stanislaus Council
Of Governments

Tulare County
Association of
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San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. #201-Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 Ext. 200 Fax: 559-233-9645

Meeting Agenda **Friday, June 24, 2011** **Time: 10:00 a.m.**

Fresno Council of Governments
Sequoia Room
2035 Tulare St
Fresno, California 93721

Toll Free Number: 1-877-455-8688
Participant Code: 278933

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. March 25, 2011 Policy Council Meeting (*enclosure*)

DISCUSSION ITEM

2. *Discussion with Pete Weber from Friends of
The San Joaquin Valley* T. Boren

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3. High Speed Rail J. Abercrombie
4. California Partnership for the SJV (*enclosure*) M. Dozier
5. California Forward
Update on Smart Government Framework CA Forward
6. Short Haul Rail T. Smalley
7. Prop 84 Sustainable Communities Grant
Revised Scope B. Steck
8. SJV Interregional Goods Movement M. Sigala
9. Regional Energy Planning M. Sigala
10. Director's Report T. Boren
11. Fall Policy Conference P. Taylor

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 12. Accept SJV Blueprint Guidance Framework (<i>enclosure</i>) | B. Steck/
Mintier Harnish |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary Report• Guidance Framework• Web Based Toolkit• http://www.fresnocog.org/document.php?pid=187 | |
| 13. Accept Priorities for Federal Transportation (<i>enclosure</i>)
Reauthorization Bill | T. Boren |
| 14. VLAC (<i>enclosure</i>) | D. Barth |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valley Voice D.C. Priorities• State and Federal Bills to Support/Oppose | |
| 15. Approve FY 2011/12 Valleywide OWP (<i>enclosure</i>) | T. Boren |
| 16. High Speed Rail – LAO Report, Kings County Concerns (<i>enclosure</i>) | B. Spriggs |

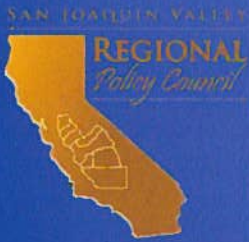
OTHER ITEMS

17. Other
18. Public Presentation 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 Policy Council Meeting: October 13, 2011.

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San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies Policy Council

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. Suite 201 Fresno, Ca 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 – FAX 559-233-964

REGIONAL POLICY COUNCIL

Executive Minutes

Friday, March 25, 2011

10:00 am

Fresno Council of Governments

Sequoia Room

2035 Tulare St. Suite 201

Fresno, California 93721

Toll Free Number: 877-455-8688

Participant Code: 278933

Members Attending:

Bill Spriggs, Mayor, City of Merced, MCAG

Allen Ishida, Supervisor, County of Tulare, TCAG

Joe Oliveira, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Gustine, MCAG (phone)

Robert Poythress, Mayor, City of Madera, MCTC

Judy Case, Supervisor, County of Fresno, Fresno COG

Amarpreet, Dhaliwal, Mayor, City of San Joaquin, Fresno COG

Paul Boyer, Councilmember, City of Farmersville, TCAG

Tony Barba, Supervisor, County of Kings, KCAG

Cheryl Wegman, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Wasco, Kern COG

Sayed Sadredin, Executive Director, SJVAPCD

List of Other Attending: Appendix A

1. Approval of Minutes

Bill Spriggs, Chair, opened the meeting – Introductions

Mayor Dhaliwal moved to accept the minutes and Mayor Robert Poythress seconded the motion. December 15, 2010 Policy Council minutes approved by consensus.

At this time Supervisor Judy Case entered and joined the meeting after the minutes were approved.

3. California Partnership – INFORMATION – M. Dozier

Ms Stacie Dabbs updated the Policy Council on the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley's latest activities. She informed everyone that they have started their work on the Smart Valley Places grant the organization received and have Bill Fulton as their consultant and that Ms. Barbara Steck is the representative for the Regional Policy Council.

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Association of
Governments**

Ms. Steck noted that future applications that are consistent with Smart Valley Places will receive bonus points with their applications. She also highlighted the support letters that were in the agenda packet.

Mr. Ismael Herrera informed the Policy Council that the Rural Development center officially launched on February 25th. They had over 80 representatives from throughout the valley and some of the neighboring foothill communities. He pointed out the executive summary in the agenda packet, the organizational chart and the list of partners. He noted that Mr. Mike Dozier's vision for the Rural Development Center was that it would serve as a one stop shop for rural communities and serve as a support staff center for those places. Mr. Herrera noted that they would like to have each of the COGs represented and will be having an event in May.

RETURNED TO ITEM 2

2. Discussion with Bob Rucker – DISCUSSION – B. Spriggs

Mr. Bob Rucker thanked everyone for allowing him the time to speak to the Policy Council. He informed the group that Congressman Denham would like to speak to the group and receive ideas from them during one of his congressional work weeks in the district. He noted a few dates and Mayor Spriggs gave direction to staff consultant Mr. Michael Sigala to follow up on a time and date with Mr. Rucker after the meeting was over. He noted it would not need to be a meeting in an official capacity.

Mr. Seyed Sadredin joined the meeting at this point.

Supervisor Ishida asked Mr. Rucker if their planned Valley Voice trip to Washington D.C. in September would be too late. Mr. Rucker informed them he would check when he would be going to D.C. the next week and follow up with the group. A quick discussion followed talking about the transportation bill that congress is looking at and the intentions of the Valley Voice trip.

Mr. Tony Boren informed everyone that he had been requested to share some information with the group. There had been effort to create a San Joaquin Valley Caucus, called the Friends of the San Joaquin Valley. A short discussion continued and the directors will explore the issue further.

4. High Speed Rail – INFORMATION – J. Abercrombie

Ms. Bryn Forhan gave the update to the Policy Council in place of Mr. Jeff Abercrombie as he was unable to attend the meeting. She informed the group that the valley engineering is being conducted along with local alignment. She noted that urban design guidelines would be available the next week to review. Environmental is still underway, including the San Jose to Merced section. The Merced to Sacramento section should have an alternative analysis available in late Fall and the Altamont alternative analysis has already been presented to the board.

Councilmember Boyer asked Ms. Forhan what the deadlines were for the ARRA funding. She pointed out that the EIRs need to be completed by the end of the year and that construction must begin by September 2012. Mayor Dhaliwal commented on the political climate in Washington D.C. about the project and asked about the business plan portion of the project. Ms. Forhan informed him that the business plan is available online but it is being reviewed and should be refined by October.

5. Short Haul Rail – INFORMATION – T. Smalley

Mr. Ted Smalley informed everyone on the latest developments for this issue. He reported that they are working on purchasing abandoned right of way and are looking at the existing and potential upgrade of the tracks for the next 20 to 30 years of useful life. The bill establishing a rail authority is being submitted by Senator Rubio for final language shortly. Supervisor Case informed everyone that Fresno COG is supporting the bill. Ms. Dianne Barth told the Policy Council that the bill will be heard April 12th at the senate meeting for Transportation and Housing in Room 4203 at 1:30 pm.

Mr. Sadredin told the Policy Council that the air district will have approximately \$217 million in grant fundings in the next year and in the next month he will be taking a proposal to the board setting aside \$10m to go to government agencies for clean air. They would like to return funds to the public by utilizing municipalities and cities for clean air initiatives in a competitive process. Supervisor Tom Wheeler noted that Madera's Board of Supervisors and MCTC both passed resolutions supporting the bill.

6. State Route 99 Bond Savings Project List – INFORMATION – T. Boren

Mr. Boren informed the Policy Council that the directors are looking to finalize their priority list quickly to get it to the CTC by June and will let them know when they have it resolved in the next two weeks.

7. San Joaquin Valley Interregional Goods Movement – INFORMATION – M. Sigala

Mr. Sigala reported that the Interregional Goods Movement study is a valleywide funded activity analyzing all goods movement systems for the valley. They will have consultant interviews Monday and will have a decision shortly after.

8. 2010 California Regional Progress Report – Information – M. Sigala

Mr. Sigala noted that when meeting with Ms. Heather Fargo from the Strategic Growth Council she gave him the document. Councilmember Boyer asked if it would be updated the next year and Mr. Sigala told him that he would get back to him about the question.

Mr. Sadredin wanted to clear up any potential confusion about air quality and asthma. He noted that asthma is not caused by air pollution, only that it can exacerbate the asthma.

9. SJV Blueprint Roadmap – DISCUSSION – B. Steck / Mintier Harnish

Ms. Barbara Steck gave a quick background on the Blueprint process for everyone. Two years prior, the Regional Policy Council had adopted the 12 principles of the blueprint. A year ago, the group had contracted with Mintier Harnish to develop and present the deliverables that were being presented at the meeting, including the planner's toolkit. John Wright, was also available to answer any questions as the head of the planner's workgroup.

Mr. Jim Harnish handed out the blueprint implementation strategy and gave a powerpoint presentation on their methodology and some of their findings. He noted the collaborative efforts between the COGs and the valley planner's workgroup. Mr. Harnish presented an overview of the Blueprint Roadmap, Guidance Framework, and the planner's toolkit. Mr. Harnish and Mr. Ted Holzem then gave their powerpoint presentation and the beta version of the planners toolkit to the Policy Council.

Discussion of the administration aspect of the toolkit came up at the end of their presentation. Mr. Harnish and Mr. Wright acknowledged that a vetting process is essential to the quality of the planner's toolkit. There was consensus among the planner's workgroup that a small group to help determine how to address these issues and the funding aspect. Ms. Steck noted that this product will be coming back to the Policy Council in June, and they were receiving the documents today.

10. Regional Planning Agencies – DISCUSSION – A. Ishida

Supervisor Ishida wanted to bring up this topic as a number of the COGs were going to Washington D.C. and wondered if they could have a discussion about what people were hearing. Supervisor Case noted that earmarks were not going to be happening but departments are still spending money. Supervisor Ishida noted that it could be beneficial to lobby for programs as projects like interregional goods movement and 99 are still very important. The topic of bifurcating congestion and air quality issues came up with the transportation bills. Mr. Sadredin noted that they will be going to Washington D.C. in May and that it is on their agenda. Mayor Robert Poythress noted that in their trip last year they had heard on the last day of meetings with the consultants that there was little to no money in the transportation bill and the group should have been meeting with the departments. Ms. Barth noted that these kinds of comments were taken into consideration and in the fall they will be approaching the trip differently.

11. VLAC – DISCUSSION – D. Barth

Ms. Barth noted that the Valleyvoice trip to Sacramento was felt to be overall a successful trip and they have received good feedback to improve it for the next year. Supporting the California Partnership and participating more with the Strategic Growth Council were some of the follow up items. The next trip on September 14 and 15th in Washington D.C. will be arranged a bit differently. The hotel has been booked and will need to make reservations shortly.

Mr. Sadredin quickly wanted to revisit the earmarks issue. He informed everyone he had met with the head of the EPA and that departments are having their funding cut as well. He noted that to the extent the Policy Council will meet with the departments, they need to be sure to keep their congressional delegation involved in the process to help put the appropriate pressure where necessary especially in such competitive process oriented topics like air quality and transportation.

12. Support for the Central California Railroad Authority – DISCUSSION – R. Phipps

Mr. Smalley noted that Kern COG had put a significant amount of effort into this bill. SB 325 would help establish a central valley rail authority which would also include Merced with the southern counties. The funding of the authority came up in discussion and Supervisor Ishida noted that at this point in time the creation of the authority would not require hard costs. Mr. Robert Ball pointed out that SAFETY-LU had an infrastructure bank component that had a significant portion of money but very little was accessed due to the difficulty in getting it and it could be a potential first test for the group. Mr. Ball also noted that any language changes to the bill were due on March 25th in an email he had received during the meeting.

Councilmember Boyer made a motion to support the bill and Mayor Dhaliwal seconded. The motion passed by consensus.

13. San Joaquin Valley USDA Rural Definition – DISCUSSION – P. Boyer

Councilmember Boyer reported that Congressman Cardoza had submitted the bill in the agenda packet and Congressmen Costa is coauthoring it. It would allow the secretary of agriculture determine if those cities in the valley that historically have been considered eligible for USDA rural funding would still be eligible despite their populations putting them above the thresholds.

Councilmember Boyer moved to support the congressional bill and Supervisor Case seconded. The motion carried. Ms. Patricia Taylor asked that the support letter be circulated.

14. Policy Council Member Comments

Supervisor Ishida noted that during their COG's Washington D.C. trip, they had a good experience sitting down with the President's office.

14. Public Comment

No comments by the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Boren
Chair, SJV Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

Others Attending:

Bob Rucker, Congressman Denham's Office
Harold Hanson, Councilmember, City of Bakersfield
John Wright, Blueprint Valley Planner's Workgroup
Bryn Forhan, CHSRA
Tom Jordan, SJVAPCD
Christine Cox-Kovacevich, Caltrans
Sharri Bender-Ehlert, Caltrans
Ismael Herrera, California Partnership
Andrew Chesley, SJCOG
Vince Harris, StanCOG
Carlos Yamzon, StanCOG
Rosa De Leon Park, StanCOG
Jesse Brown, MCAG
Patricia Taylor, Madera CTC
Derek Winning, Madera CTC
Tony Boren, Fresno COG
Barbara Steck, Fresno COG
Ted Smalley, TCAG
Terri King, KCAG
Rob Ball, Kern COG
Michael Sigala, SJV Coordinator/Sigala Inc
Nathan Wahl, SJV Coordinator/Sigala Inc
Ken Baxter, Caltrans (phone)
Stacie Dabbs, CA Partnership (phone)
Dianne Barthe, SJCOG (phone)
Tanisha Taylor, SJCOG (phone)
Kim Anderson, SJCOG (phone)



News Release

Item 4

June 9, 2011

Contact:

Mike Dozier, Interim Director
Office of Community and Economic Development
California State University, Fresno
559-294-6021
559-696-2524 cell

mdozier@csufresno.edu
www.SJVPartnership.org
www.facebook.com/smartvalleyplaces

Smart Valley Places announces Preferred Sustainability Status for San Joaquin Valley

FRESNO – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently announced that it will award 2 bonus points to applicants that are working with communities that have received Preferred Sustainability Status under the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program and/or the Challenge Grant Program. The San Joaquin Valley has been designated as a Preferred Sustainability Status community based on being awarded a \$4 million regional planning grant for Smart Valley Places in October 2010.

To be eligible to receive bonus points, an applicant must be within the San Joaquin Valley region and obtain certification from the Designated Point of Contact for Smart Valley Places by using HUD Form 2995. In order to obtain certification from Smart Valley Places, applicants must demonstrate the nexus between the proposed activities of the applicant and the principles and activities of Smart Valley Places. Instructions on how to request certification from Smart Valley Places and the required Certification of Consistency Form for Smart Valley Places can be found online at <http://www.smartvalleyplaces.org/hud-preferred-sustainability-status-program/>

HUD anticipates making the Preferred Sustainable Status Communities bonus points available in the following program NOFAs:

- Asthma Interventions in Public and Assisted Multifamily Housing Grant Program
- Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)
- Capital Fund Education and Training Community Facilities Program
- Choice Neighborhoods
- Continuum of Care

- Fair Housing Initiatives Program
- Healthy Homes Production
- Healthy Homes Technical Studies
- Hispanic Serving Institutions Assisting Communities (HSIAC)
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities Program (HBCU)
- HOPE VI Main Street
- HOPE VI Revitalization
- Housing Counseling Program
- Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Program
- Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration
- Housing for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Programs Technical Assistance
- Multifamily Energy Innovation NOFA
- Rural Innovation Fund
- Section 4 Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly
- Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program
- Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP)

For more information, please contact Stacie Dabbs at 559-347-3918 or sdabbs@csufresno.edu.

June 24, 2011

Item # 12

TO: San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

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.valleyblueprint.org/resources.html>

The web based Blueprint Planners' Toolkit has been awarded two California Chapter APA (American Planning Association) Outstanding Planning Award – Best Practices – from the Central Section and Sacramento Valley Section.

Action: SJV RPA Directors recommend acceptance of SUBJECT Blueprint Roadmap deliverables

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, initially conducted in each county, 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, which included:

- 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.

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 12 Smart Growth Principles to be used as the basis of Blueprint planning in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Adopted Scenario B+, with an average density of 6.8 DUA, 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 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 further this effort.

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 an appendix
- SJV Blueprint – Planners Toolkit (web based) – the beta version is available at <http://toolkitvalleyblueprintorg.alias.strangecode.com/>

The purpose of the Blueprint Roadmap documents is to memorialize the Blueprint planning process and the eventual adoption of the Preferred Growth Scenario 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 adopted Blueprint Preferred Growth Scenario or disclose that traffic modeling was not done.
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 and after that comment period:

- Kern County Development Services Agency – Ted James, Director – April 8, 2011
- City of Tehachapi – David James, Community Development Director – April 14, 2011
- Kern COG – Steve Morgan, Chairman – May 19, 2011
- Kern County Development Services Agency – Ted James, Director – June 14, 2011

Response to Comments: *The following is a response to questions raised by the Valley Planners Working Group regarding the transportation modeling performed during the Blueprint planning process.*

- **Blueprint Transportation Modeling.** 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.”

Response to Comments: *The following responses are related to the concerns raised in the four letters received during and after the comment period.*

- Kern County Development Services Agency – Ted James, Director – April 8, 2011
- City of Tehachapi – David James, Community Development Director – April 14, 2011
- Kern COG – Steve Morgan, Chairman – May 19, 2011
- Kern County Development Services Agency – Ted James, Director – June 14, 2011

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
3. **No Regional Identity.** The statement that “the Valley is too big to have one regional identity” is 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 to 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 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. The Regional Policy Council approved the Greenprint planning process and work program on October 7, 2010.
5. **Emphasize the voluntary nature of Blueprint Planning.** The voluntary nature of Blueprint planning has been emphasized from the outset of the process. In fact, the Regional Blueprint

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

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

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 request to insert language related to this "voluntary nature" throughout the document may create 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. The document does not suggest 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 RPAs 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 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.
8. **Other Expressed Concerns** (Letter dated June 14, 2011).
 - Reference to Greenprint – see response above
 - Technical Coordinating Committee – see response above
 - Program's voluntary nature – statement included in Framework Exec. Summary page i
 - Absence of funding – reference made in Chapter 6 (page 53)
 - Diversity of issues in SJV - statement included in Framework Exec. Summary page i

SJV Regional Planning Agencies Directors Meeting - June 2, 2011

The Valley RPA Directors met on June 2nd and reviewed all of the comments received to date and the recommended edits proposed by staff to address those concerns (pages affected and referenced are attached to this memo). The Directors concurred with the proposed edits.

On June 14th, Ted James, Director of Kern County Development Services Agency, submitted a second letter reiterating the concerns he stated in his letter of April 8, 2011 (attached). Additional edits have been made and are included in the attachment using June 18, 2011 reference in footer.

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. 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 decision before the Regional Policy Council at this time is to consider the comments received thus far as well as the edits that staff and the RPA Directors have suggested.

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. Comments received prior to 2/15/11 have been addressed in the 2/15/11 version. The four letters received from Kern agencies after that point in time are attached to this memo. Responses to comments received after 2/15/11 are provided earlier in this memo.

Staff recommends that the Regional Policy Council accept the deliverables presented to you today including the proposed edits that staff and the COG Directors have suggested to the February 15th Guidance Framework.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Edits to Guidance Framework (excerpt)**
- **Comment letters**
- **Letters of support**

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- **Edits to Guidance Framework (excerpt)**
- **Comment letters**
- **Letters of support**

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT ROADMAP



DRAFT

GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

February 15, 2011
(With June 7, 2011 and
June 18, 2011 Edits)



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY



Prepared for the
San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

Prepared by
Mintier Harnish
In association with:
Caro | Whiteside Consulting
Mogavero Notestine Associates
The Rios Company

DRAFT

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT ROADMAP

Guidance Framework

February 15, 2011
(With June 7, 2011 and June 18, 2011 Edits)

Prepared for:

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

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In association with:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BLUEPRINT GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

The Blueprint Guidance Framework is made up of a set of 12 strategies intended to assist local agencies with land use authority implement the Valley 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, recognizing the diversity amongst the Valley's 70 local jurisdictions, 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 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.

This Guidance Framework is one of three products that make up the San Joaquin Valley 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.

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.

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 Fresno Council of 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 incorporates all of the county level Blueprints and recognizes that individual RPAs will rely on those documents in their future work. The Valleywide 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.

Transportation Modeling

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.

BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

The word "implementation", as it is used in the Blueprint Guidance Framework, should be defined. Since the Blueprint is voluntary, then "implementation" would apply to those wanting to incorporate the 12 Blueprint Smart Growth Principles and density targets into 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.

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 **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.

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, SJCOC, 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.

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 Blueprint Roadmap documents have been developed to help in this pursuit.

This 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). 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 personnel, 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 word “implementation”, as it is used in the Blueprint Guidance Framework, should be defined. Since the Blueprint is voluntary, then “implementation” would apply to those wanting to incorporate the 12 Blueprint Smart Growth Principles and density targets into 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.

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.



Transportation Modeling

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.

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Process was a unique opportunity to develop a regional vision for land use and transportation that will be used to guide growth in the San Joaquin Valley over the next 50 years. Major accomplishments of this process included:

- Determining community values related to quality of life issues
- Developing a vision that reflects those values
- Engaging member agencies (the 62 cities and eight counties in the Valley) and the community-at-large in scenario planning exercises that ultimately led to the endorsement of a preferred growth scenario in each county
- Creating Valleywide scenarios by UC Davis that were considered by the Regional Policy Council (two elected officials from each of the eight counties) to endorse one of the four scenarios
- Creating a Valleywide Blueprint
- Adoption of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Growth Scenario

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. 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

COMMENT LETTERS

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AGENCY

TED JAMES, DIRECTOR

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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

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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.

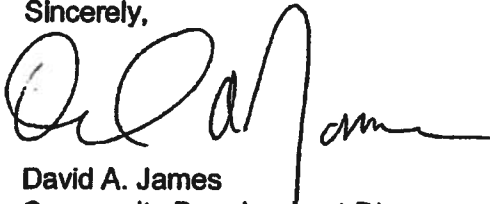
Unfortunately over the last four years it appears that the Blueprint has morphed into something it was never intended to be. Further, the City of Tehachapi is at risk of abrogating our autonomy to some new San Joaquin Valley Agency, a Super Cog if you will, to implement the Blueprint in a one size fits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

David A. James
Community Development Director

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



**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.**

RECEIVED

MAY 23 2011

**BY:
FRESNO COG**

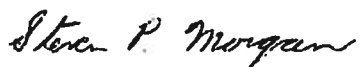
Kern Council of Governments

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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

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AGENCY**TED JAMES, AICP, DIRECTOR**Planning and Community Development Department • Engineering, Survey and Permit Services Department •
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June 14, 2011

Barbara J. Steck, AICP, Deputy Director
Council of Fresno County Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA. 93721**RE: San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Draft Guidance Framework Document**

Dear Ms. Steck:

The purpose of this correspondence is to comment on the recent revisions being recommended by the San Joaquin Valley COG Directors related to the Draft Guidance Framework of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Program. It is understood that the COG Director's recommendations for the Draft Guidance Framework will be presented for consideration by the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council (RPC) at their June 24, 2011 meeting in Fresno.

The Kern County Development Services Agency had previously submitted comments on the Draft Guidance Document dated April 8, 2011 as well as a mark-up of the Draft Guidance Document dated May 3, 2011 which were included in a May 19, 2011 letter from the Kern Council of Governments to your agency. The comments made by the Development Services Agency expressed concern about:

- 1) Clarifying the voluntary nature of the Draft Guidance Document and providing recognition of the locally developed Regional Planning Agency Blueprint Programs;
- 2) Avoiding the creation of a new regional governance structure that prescribes a one-size-fits-all solution for addressing growth issues and SB 375 Greenhouse Gas solutions for the local COG Sustainable Communities Strategies;
- 3) Providing checklists for "certifying" city and county General Plan conformance with the Blueprint principles and densities;
- 4) Creating a Greenprint Program that is redundant with local government Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan; and

June 14, 2011
Page 2

- 5) Creating an interagency Regional Technical Coordinating Committee that appears redundant with the existing meeting forums of other agencies.

Although the Valley COG Director's revisions acknowledge that the Draft Guidance Document is a voluntary process and incorporates the individually developed county-level Blueprint programs, other changes recommended in the Development Services Agency's May 3, 2011 mark-up Draft of the Guidance Document were not addressed. These include deleting reference to the Greenprint Program and the creation of a new Regional Technical Coordinating Committee. Other changes recommended by the Development Services Agency re-enforced the program's voluntary nature, recognized the absence of funding for Blueprint implementation and noted the diversity of issues in the San Joaquin Valley that warranted flexibility and adaptability in addressing future growth and economic development approaches.

The Development Services Agency continues to recommend that the Regional Policy Council incorporate all of the revisions included in the May 3, 2011, mark-up Draft of the Guidance Document.

Please contact me if you have questions concerning these comments. I can be reached at (661) 862-8802 or tedj@co.kern.ca.us.

Sincerely,



TED JAMES, AICP, Director
Development Services Agency

TJ:jb
I:\admin\TJ\Blueprint Guidance Document.ltr

cc: Supervisor Ray Watson
Supervisor Jon McQuiston
Lorelei Oviatt, AICP, Director, Planning and Community Development Department
Ron Brummett, Executive Director, Kern Council of Governments

LETTERS OF SUPPORT



CITY OF STOCKTON

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

City Hall • 425 N. El Dorado Street • Stockton, CA 95202-1997 • 209 / 937-8444 • Fax 209 / 937-8893
www.stocktongov.com

June 14, 2011

Mr. Bill Spriggs, Mayor, City of Merced
Chair, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council
c/o Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721

Chair Spriggs,

As the final products of the five-year Valleywide Blueprint process (Guidance Framework for Implementation and Blueprint Planners' Toolkit) are scheduled for consideration of acceptance by the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, I am writing to express my support for the Blueprint process in general and the Blueprint Roadmap (Summary Document, Guidance Framework, and Toolkit) in particular as important tools for use by jurisdictions choosing implementation of Blueprint and other "smart growth" planning concepts.

As Community Development Director for City of Stockton, I was actively engaged in the Blueprint Planning process in San Joaquin County. It was a process that began with the values and visions as articulated by the citizens of San Joaquin County through dozens of community workshops, then shaped through the work of two core workgroups: the Blueprint Planners' Roundtable and the Blueprint Leadership Group. Ultimately, the work of citizens, workgroups, other stakeholders, SJCOG staff, and the SJCOG policy board was shaped into the San Joaquin County Regional Blueprint Vision and approved by the SJCOG policy board in January 2010. The work products of this vision also became a part of the Valleywide Blueprint Roadmap, which "stitched together" the individual eight San Joaquin Valley county Blueprint scenarios and principles.

Throughout the Blueprint process in San Joaquin County, and by extension, the San Joaquin Valley, it has been clear that this has been an inclusive, bottom-up, and above all voluntary planning endeavor. Inasmuch as the majority of the work was completed at the local level, it is the local effort that will primarily inform local implementation. However, the valleywide products provide additional value in pulling together the principles, concepts and strategies of the individual county blueprints into a guidance document and web-based toolkit as resources to aid local planners who ultimately have land use authority. These tools are also available to interested local citizens, stakeholder groups, and developers, those that will concretely shape implementation of the Blueprint goals. I encourage your positive acceptance of the Blueprint Roadmap products at your June 24, 2011 meeting.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL M. NIBLOCK, DIRECTOR
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



June 15, 2011

Mr. Bill Spriggs
Chair, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council
c/o Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721

Chair Spriggs:

I am writing in support of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint adopted by the Regional Policy Council on April 1, 2009, and of the on-going process since that adoption. As City Planner for the City of Fowler, I have been actively involved in the Blueprint Planning process in Fresno County. The eight Valley MPOs have worked diligently to engage their member agencies in a process that has resulted in a reasoned vision for the future of the Valley.

Subsequent work has produced the Blueprint Roadmap documents consisting of the *SJV Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report*, the *Guidance Framework*, and the web-based *Blueprint Planners' Toolkit*. These documents will be presented for Policy Council consideration on June 24th. Since its inception, the Blueprint planning process has been understood to be voluntary, with each agency to incorporate Blueprint Smart Growth Principles as deemed appropriate and necessary by local elected officials. Those agencies wanting to incorporate the Blueprint principles and density targets into their local general plan and development codes may use the *Guidance Framework* and *Planners' Toolkit* to provide them with assistance in implementing the Blueprint.

I encourage you to commend the participants engaged in the collaborative five-year Valleywide Blueprint process. The Blueprint Roadmap documents will serve as important resources for jurisdictions choosing to implement the Blueprint and other "smart growth" planning concepts.

Very Truly Yours,

Bruce O'Neal, AICP
City Planner



California Partnership for the
San Joaquin Valley

June 15, 2011

Mr. Bill Spriggs, Mayor, City of Merced
Chair, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council
c/o Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721

RE: Partnership support for the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint

Dear Chair Spriggs,

On behalf of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership), I am writing to express strong support for the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint, which was adopted by the Regional Policy Council in April 2009. Since that time, subsequent work has produced the Blueprint Roadmap documents which will be presented for Policy Council consideration on June 24, 2011. As the final products memorializing the five-year Valleywide Blueprint process are scheduled for acceptance by the Policy Council, I encourage you to commend and encourage the participants engaged in this collaborative venture. The Blueprint Roadmap – consisting of the SJV Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report, the Guidance Framework and the web based Blueprint Planners' Toolkit- will continue to serve as critical resources for jurisdictions choosing to implement the Blueprint and other "smart growth" planning concepts such as those encompassed by the Smart Valley Places project.

As you may know, Smart Valley Places is an unprecedented regional consortium of 14 Valley cities, Fresno State, the California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation, several regional non-profit organizations, and the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council that has been awarded a \$4 million regional planning grant by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to refine a regional plan for sustainable development. Through the Smart Valley Places project, the San Joaquin Valley will essentially benefit from a regional framework that will change the way we do business – to help transform the region from one of the most economically challenged, to one that serves as the example for the rest of the nation in embracing smart growth principles and practices. The collaborative project builds on the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint's smart growth principles and the Partnership's Strategic Action Proposal to help guide our region into creating more transportation choices, equitable affordable housing, economic competitiveness, and healthier, safe and walkable neighborhoods- ultimately shaping future growth trends by helping implement the Blueprint principles at the neighborhood level throughout the region.

5010 N Woodrow Ave.
2nd Floor, M/S WC 142
Fresno, California 93740

559.294.6021 T
559.294.6024 F

www.sjvpartnership.org

Due to the local input and regional collaboration that occurred throughout the Blueprint Planning process, local values and visions were articulated and ultimately incorporated into the Valleywide Blueprint which stitched together the individual eight county Blueprint scenarios and principles. As a result, the region has a Valleywide Blueprint Roadmap that will serve the region well as we move forward and plan for projected growth over the next several decades. I am confident that the years of work dedicated to the development of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint was key to the substantial federal investment for Smart Valley Places, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Regional Policy Council in the implementation of the Blueprint's smart growth principles throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Dozier', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Dozier
Lead Executive
California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

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



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**Merced County
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Jesse Brown**

**San Joaquin
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Andrew Chesley**

**Tulare County
Association of
Governments
Ted Smalley**

June 8, 2011

Item 13

The Honorable Jeff Denham
United States Representative
1605 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 2051

RE: San Joaquin Valley Priorities for the Surface Transportation Act Reauthorization

Dear Congressman Denham:

On behalf of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Transportation Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee, thank you for meeting with us on May 19, 2011 to discuss the significant transportation issues affecting our Valley and greater economy.

As we discussed, Goods Movement is essential to both the San Joaquin Valley and moving products throughout the nation. The projects detailed in the San Joaquin Valley Transportation Priorities handout, provided on May 19, include specific examples of projects that the Valley is working towards. As a follow up, we are submitting proposed language for your consideration for the Surface Transportation Act Reauthorization Bill. The enclosed summary outlines the priorities by major programs and incorporates potential air quality criteria for prioritization of the programming.

We are encouraged by and very much appreciate your efforts to work with the San Joaquin Valley. Thank you again for this opportunity to provide our input. Should you need any additional information, please contact me at 559.233.4148.

Sincerely,

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

Enclosure



San Joaquin Valley

Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

Goods Movement Priorities for Surface Transportation Act Reauthorization

PROGRAM	REQUEST
High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System	Guaranteed \$2 billion annually for High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System with priority for Extreme 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment (1997) and PM2.5 nonattainment areas.
Create Freight Corridor Program	Guaranteed \$1 billion annually for freight corridors with priority for Extreme 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment (1997) and PM2.5 nonattainment areas.
Port Corridor Management Plans	- Include Port Corridor Management Planning in criteria for existing planning grants. - Redefine port funding as within 25-50 miles of a port and a port access corridor as within 300 miles of a port.
Freight Rail Line Notification and Protection	- Revise short-haul rail abandonment regulations to require short-haul rail line operators to notify transportation planning agencies and metropolitan planning organizations of their intent to abandon a segment of rail line. - Guaranteed \$1 billion annually for national short-haul rail program with priority for Extreme 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment (1997) and PM2.5 nonattainment areas. - Require short-haul rail line operators to file environmental and economic impact reports that address local and regional issues in accordance with NEPA.
NEPA Streamlining and Regulatory Reform	- Change federal NEPA regulations to set a specific review time in which Federal resources agencies are required to provide comments to the project sponsor. The time limit could be six (6) month or one (1) year as long as there is a defined time for review. - Permit integrating state and federal environmental impact studies, to avoid duplication without compromising environmental standards, to prevent or avert project cost increases that occur due to lengthy processes.

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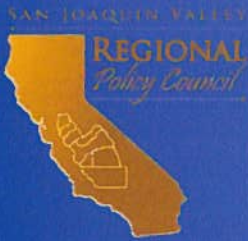
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San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies Policy Council

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. #201-Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 Ext. 200 Fax: 559-233-9645

June 17, 2011

Item 14

Chair
Mayor Bill Spriggs
City of Merced

Vice-Chair
Supervisor Allen
Ishida
Tulare County

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The Honorable Senator

RE: SB 126 – Support

Senator:

On behalf of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, I am writing to express our support for the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 126. This important legislation is a key element in helping the public engage and understand any changes that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) may make to program guidelines that impact critical transportation projects.

We are in support of creating a process for the adoption of program guidelines that is understandable, predictable, and transparent. The public should be allowed ample opportunity for public review and comment on any proposed guideline changes before the CTC adopts those changes.

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council believes that it is vital to place into statute a process for the adoption of program guidelines by the Commission; therefore, we support the passage of SB 126. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Spriggs
Mayor, City of Merced
Chairman, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council



Chair
Mayor Bill Spriggs
City of Merced

Vice-Chair
Supervisor Allen
Ishida
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June 17, 2011

Item 14

The Honorable Senator

RE: AB 296 – Oppose

Senator:

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council opposes AB 296 (Skinner), which requires the Department of Transportation to adopt by regulation a Cool Pavements Handbook by January 1, 2015 and to implement cool pavement pilot projects no later than January 1, 2018. We believe this bill, while well intentioned, contains unrealistic expectations and will ultimately increase project costs unnecessarily.

“Cool pavement” is the common term for reflective pavement that helps lower surface temperatures and reduces the amount of heat absorbed. This bill’s intent is to establish the Cool Pavements Research and Implementation Act, which require the Department, in consultation with specified state agencies, to implement the act. Unfortunately, Caltrans is not a research agency staffed or equipped to study the effect of every pavement treatment and the potential ranges of temperature changes that could be involved with every type of asphalt in the nine climate zones of California.

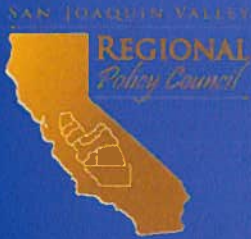
In addition, we believe that the bill is vague and ill-defined in its approach. Consider that AB 296 only addresses the potential albedo factor (the fraction of the incident sunlight that is reflected) that cool pavement technology offers. The bill’s definitions do not address permeability, conductivity, emissivity, thickness, convective airflow, noise, night-time illumination or urban geometry in urban canyons. Without having any of these terms clearly defined, a successful cool pavement program will be impossible. AB 296 will result in increased costs at a time when the state budget deficit and U.S. economy present a major challenge to the 5,000 lane miles of highway pavement that Caltrans maintains each year.

We hope you will oppose AB 296 as it is a costly, unrealistic and ill-defined bill whose goal is appreciative but whose cursory approach is misguided. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Spriggs
Mayor, City of Merced
Chairman, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. #201-Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 Ext. 200 Fax: 559-233-9645



San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies Policy Council

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. #201-Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 Ext. 200 Fax: 559-233-9645

Item 14

June 17, 2011

The Honorable Assemblymember

RE: AB 892 – Support

Assemblymember:

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council would like to express its strong support for Assembly Bill (AB) 892. This measure is an important component of the continuing efforts by Caltrans to streamline the environmental review process for critical transportation projects.

The 2005 federal transportation bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), established a Pilot Program through which Caltrans was delegated the U.S. Secretary of Transportation's responsibilities under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other Federal environmental laws.

To assume these federal responsibilities, Caltrans was required to accept the jurisdiction of the federal courts, necessitating that we waive sovereign immunity on a limited basis for this purpose. This was initially authorized by AB 1039 (Nunez, 2006) and was later extended until January 1, 2012 through AB 2650 (Carter, 2008). AB 892 would make the waiver permanent.

We support this permanent extension because participation in the pilot has enabled us to substantially streamline our environmental project review process under NEPA. While we still must comply with all federal regulations, environmental policies and formal guidance, by assuming the federal role, we are able to eliminate a layer of review, enabling us to achieve a median time savings of 14 months in processing standard environmental documents and significant savings on simpler projects as well. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Spriggs
Mayor, City of Merced
Chairman, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

Chair
Mayor Bill Spriggs
City of Merced

Vice-Chair
Supervisor Allen
Ishida
Tulare County

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Phone: 559-233-4148 Ext. 200 Fax: 559-233-9645

June 17, 2011

The Honorable Assemblymember

RE: AB 1308 – Support

Assemblymember:

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council would like to express its support for AB 1308, which would prevent transportation funding delays resulting from a prolonged state budget impasse. As you may recall, the 2010 budget impasse threatened to halt nearly \$10 billion in ongoing construction projects. Caltrans, in a separate action to preserve funding, delayed awarding \$3.5 billion in new transportation projects.

These delays occurred because there was no state budgetary authority to appropriate funding out of the Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA). No fund transfers were required, no additional funding was necessary and no other personnel were needed – all that was required was the budgetary authority to expend the funds that sat unused in HUTA.

With the fuel tax swap in 2010, recently re-enacted this year, transportation funding is no longer partially dependent on the state's General Fund. Eliminating the sales tax on gasoline and increasing the excise tax on gasoline to an amount that produced the same revenue intentionally removed the vast majority of transportation funding from the state's General Fund. The exception is the sales tax on diesel fuel, which is ultimately used for public transit.

As the state increased its dependence on HUTA funding in the early months of 2010, the electorate voted to protect those funds with Proposition 22, which placed into our Constitution a prohibition against using HUTA funds for any other purposes besides what they are intended for.

The changes in the fuel tax swap combined with Proposition 22 make the delays we witnessed in 2010 completely unnecessary. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Spriggs
Mayor, City of Merced
Chairman, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

c/o Fresno Council of Governments – 2035 Tulare St. #201-Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 559-233-4148 Ext. 200 Fax: 559-233-9645



Chair
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June 17, 2011

Item 14

The Honorable Congressperson

RE: H.R. 1582 – Support

Congressperson :

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council would like to express our support for H.R. 1582 “Common Sense Ozone Regulation Act”.

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council (Policy Council) is an eight-county collaborative effort of elected officials, San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies’ Directors, and other regional partners. The Policy Council works on interregional transportation, sustainable growth, and other related policy and long-term planning issues of importance to the economic and social wellbeing of our four million residents.

We believe that the federal non-attainment penalties which are currently imposed on Valley residents and businesses are unfair and unjustified. Despite significant challenges, air quality in the San Joaquin Valley has improved dramatically. These improvements are largely the results of major investment and sacrifice by Valley businesses and residents. Since 1980, stationary source emissions, which are controlled by the local air pollution control district, have been reduced by more than 80%. Although significant challenges remain, this past year, the Valley experienced its cleanest winter and summer in recent history.

We also believe that a common sense approach is warranted in implementing the new ambient air quality standards that the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is about to publish. H.R. 1582 will in no way delay clean air efforts in the San Joaquin Valley and will not remove EPA’s authority to establish a new 8-hour ozone standard. As an “extreme” non-attainment area for the current standard, the Valley is required to adopt all feasible control measures, and is working to develop advanced, yet currently unavailable, technologies to obtain additional reductions. In assessing the achievability of the new standard it is important to consider the fact that the proposed new standard encroaches on the naturally occurring, or background, ozone concentrations in the Valley. In promulgating feasible implementation strategies we must also be cognizant of the fact that many areas in the San Joaquin Valley suffer from chronic double-digit unemployment rates which are now nearing 20%.

Valley Regional Policy Council

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Spriggs".

Bill Spriggs
Mayor, City of Merced
Chairman, San Joaquin

DRAFT

San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies

2011-2012 Work Program



**San Joaquin Council of Governments
Merced County Association of Governments
Fresno Council of Governments
Tulare County Association of Governments**

**Stanislaus Council of Governments
Madera County Transportation Commission
Kings County Association of Governments
Kern Council of Governments**

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council Members and Staff as of April 2011

Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG)

Supervisor Judy Case, County of Fresno,
Mayor Amarpreet Dhaliwal, City of San Joaquin
[Alternate: Mayor Harry Armstrong, City of Clovis]
STAFF: Tony Boren, Executive Director – Fresno COG

Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG)

Mayor Sam Ramirez, City of Delano
Councilmember Manuel Cantu, City of McFarland
[Alternate: Councilmember Cheryl Wegman, City of Wasco]
STAFF: Ronald Brummett, Executive Director – Kern COG

Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG)

Supervisor Tony Barba, Kings County
Supervisor Joe Neves, Kings County
[Alternate: Mayor Larry Hanchew, City of Corcoran]
STAFF: Terri King, Executive Director – KCAG

Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC)

Supervisor Tom Wheeler, County of Madera
Mayor Robert Poythress, City of Madera
[Alternate: Supervisor Frank Bigelow, Madera County]
STAFF: Patricia Taylor, Executive Director – MCTC

Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)

Mayor Bill Spriggs, City of Merced - CHAIR OF RPC
Vice Mayor Joe Oliveira, City of Gustine
[Alternate: Mayor Joan Faul, City of Atwater]
STAFF: Jesse Brown, Executive Director – MCAG

San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG)

Mayor Ann Johnston, City of Stockton
Mayor Pro Tem Steve DeBrum, City of Manteca
[Alternate – Mayor Chuck Winn, City of Ripon]
STAFF: Andy Chesley, Executive Director – SJCOG

Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)

Mayor Jim Ridenour, City of Modesto
Supervisor Bill O'Brien, County of Stanislaus
[Alternate – VACANT]
Vince Harris, Executive Director – StanCOG

Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)

Supervisor Allen Ishida, County of Tulare, VICE CHAIR OF RPC
Councilmember Paul Boyer, City of Farmersville, TCAG Board
[Alternate: Councilmember Rudy Mendoza, City of Woodlake]
STAFF: Ted Smalley, Executive Director – TCAG

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Seyed Sadredin, Executive Director

BACKGROUND

The San Joaquin Valley regional transportation planning agencies (Valley RTPAs) have organized in response to the need to address certain issues of valley-wide concern. Air quality, regional transportation planning, freight and goods movement and certain rail issues in particular require a broader more coordinated approach to planning. Agency activities are being coordinated through monthly meetings of the directors.

In 2006, the eight San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies again renewed their commitment to regional planning and created the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, consisting of two elected officials from each regional planning agency. The Regional Policy Council provides guidance on common interregional policy issues, and represents the Valley at public forums. In 2009, the Regional Policy Council was amended to add a representative from the SJV Air Pollution Control District.

Jointly Funded Valleywide Activities

OBJECTIVE

To Promote coordination, cooperation and communication among the eight San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies, including the Regional Policy Council, and other federal, state and local governments, related to various regional planning processes.

DISCUSSION

The following sections describe some of the jointly funded activities related to valley-wide planning coordination.

San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint Planning

Lead: Fresno Council of Governments

The San Joaquin Valley (SJV) is a large, diverse, and complex area that contains millions of acres of the world's most fertile farmland, a wealth of natural resources, and large urban environments. The 240-mile long valley stretches from Stockton to Bakersfield and encompasses the eight-county region (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and San Joaquin).

Today, 3.9 million people live in the San Joaquin Valley. According to the Department of Finance, the Valley's population will grow to over 9.4 million by 2050. How will the region accommodate this anticipated growth? Will it be through expansion of current cities or the development of new ones? How will intra and interregional transportation accommodate commuters, travelers, and goods movement? And how will the balance be maintained between the development of new infrastructure and the need to preserve the region's most important resources?

A look at the current economy of the region points to agriculture as the Valley's economic base. While growth of agriculture has altered some of the natural environmental landscape over time, perhaps even more concerning is the rate at which prime agricultural land is being converted to urban uses. Much of the land conversion is due to the attractiveness of Valley home prices to residents of the Bay Area and Los Angeles regions. However, these new Valley residents often commute back to their place of origin for employment compounding transportation impacts, air quality dynamics, and presenting significant civic engagement challenges.

Highway 99 bears the yeoman's share of commuter traffic, and is also burdened with extraordinary truck traffic transporting goods. Insufficient for current traffic loads, Highway 99 is further impacted by industrial growth and new distribution centers, especially in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.

At both the federal and state levels, policymakers have begun to recognize the extraordinary challenges facing the Valley. Through executive orders issued by two presidents, the Federal Interagency Task Force was formed to help coordinate federal efforts within the region. Following suit, Governor Schwarzenegger signed an executive order creating the *California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley*, a state effort to direct resources to the region. Through the Blueprint process, regional leaders will work closely with the Partnership to address the significant issues facing the region. Teaming with the San Joaquin Valley Partnership will enable pooling of resources, consistency of vision, and combined momentum to solutions to the forefront.

PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

- Blueprint Governing Board Workshop – August 2005
- Blueprint Grant application package (COG MOU, letters of support)– October 2005
- Blueprint Grant Award Notifications – 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010
- Overall Work Program Amendment for first grant–
- Systematic Development of Informed Consent (SDIC) training
- Establish SJV COG Directors Association Policy Subcommittee
- Establish the Blueprint Coordinating Committee (BCC)
- Institutional Framework for SJ Valley Regional Blueprint Planning
- Community Outreach Plans
- SJ Valley Modeling group established
- SJ Valley Regional Traffic Model Plan Update – Dowling contract,
- GIS Data Inventory and Conversion – In progress, Blueprint Modeling Subcommittee
- GIS Standards October 2006 – In progress, Blueprint Modeling Subcommittee
- Blueprint Vision Summit –June 28, 2006
- Established and Convened Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee (BRAC)
- Blueprint Media Campaign – Ongoing, Blueprint Media Subcommittee
- Attended Blueprint Learning Network Workshops (May, 2006; September, 2006; November, 2006; June, 2007; Sept. 2007; November 2007)
- Alternative Blueprint Scenarios
- Hybrid Alternative Blueprint Scenarios
- Choose Preferred SJV Regional Blueprint Scenario
- Valleywide Blueprint Summit – Jan 2009

ONGOING AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- SJV Partnership collaboration on Strategic Action Plan recommendations
- Blueprint grant administration
- Document Tribal government-to-government relations.

- Evaluate Valleywide growth scenario's impact at county level
- Make Scenario presentations to local governments and general public
- Present implications of preferred scenario at local level
- Continue to work with Valleywide local agency planners group
- Promote Policy Council's endorsement of Valleywide Scenario to member agencies
- Complete SJV Blueprint Final Report and Toolkit for implementation
- Translate Blueprint principles into local implementation strategies
- Convene meetings with local officials to discuss funding challenges of local government
- Address new greenhouse gas directives (SB 375)
- Develop adequate modeling tools for compliance with SB 375
- Address the increasing of residential densities
- Determine the impact of various densities on the fiscal health of cities and counties in the SJV
- Determine the market demand for higher density residential housing projects
- Greenprint - incorporate Farmland Conservation Model Program concepts into the Blueprints
- Work with Central California EDCs and Partnership for SJV to address jobs/housing issue
- Continue Using Adopted Methods to Measure the Effectiveness of the Regional Blueprint Plan
- Conduct second SJV Executive Summit for elected officials (with Great Valley Center)
- Continue Extensive Public Outreach Efforts
- Prepare reports and monitor contractors
- Participate in Blueprint related meetings and workshops
- Coordinate Tribal consultation with Kern COG's outreach activities.
- Coordinate valleywide application to the Strategic Growth Council for Prop 84 planning grant for blueprint, greenprint, general plan and climate action plan implementation
- Implement and administer \$1 million funding award from Prop 84
- Continue to seek funding from the Strategic Growth Council and other funder for continued Blueprint implementation activities

Air Quality Transportation Planning & Coordination

Lead: San Joaquin COG

To ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to transportation and air quality planning among the eight San Joaquin Valley transportation planning agencies and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. The goal is to attain and subsequently maintain federal and state air quality standards. A new aspect of this particular coordination effort will be the issue of Greenhouse Gases and the need to comply with AB 32 (reduction to 1990 levels) in the future. However although AB 32 milestones have not yet been reached, legal actions filed or threatened by the Attorney General over greenhouse gases has lead to at least an earlier evaluation of needed early actions that may be taken within the COGs' areas of responsibilities – Regional Transportation Plans and the Blueprint in particular.

The development and adoption of air quality attainment plans is vested with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Within the Air District are the eight Valley regional transportation planning agencies (RTPAs). Each Valley regional transportation planning agency maintains its individual and traditional county role of supporting the Air District in the development of

transportation control measures (TCMs) and providing technical analyses of transportation issues. However, significant efforts are made to coordinate transportation/air quality planning in its larger geographic context. It is anticipated that this is also the arena in which AB 32 activities and requirements will be carried out.

Transportation and air quality planning historically have been undertaken through a continuous, cooperative and comprehensive process. The importance of the "three-C" approach has become even more significant given the broader and more complex framework of transportation and air quality planning in the San Joaquin Valley today. The formation of the Air District, combined with the passage of federal surface transportation legislation that requires a more direct link between transportation and air quality, AB 2766 (Motor Vehicle Registration Fees) and the emphasis on multi-modal approaches, all require closer coordination and communication to take full advantage of Valleywide staff expertise. This type of approach ensures no duplication of effort, and assures timely completion of products and also promotes compatibility of transportation and air quality plans.

Coordination among the RTPAs, the Air District and other air quality and transportation agencies is proving to be a very effective process. Several mechanisms have been developed to date. The eight Valley RTPA Directors' Group meets on a regular basis or as needed. Through the impetus of the Valley RTPA Directors, the eight Valley RTPAs and the District have an executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure a coordinated transportation/air quality planning approach. This MOU was updated in 2008. The current agreement (1) ensures maximum effectiveness and compatibility of regional air quality and transportation plans; (2) complies with the transportation conformity requirements of SAFETEA-LU and the federal Clean Air Act Amendments; (3) complies with federal and State transportation-related mandates; and (4) helps achieve attainment of air quality standards. An informal group of Valley public transit agencies has also been formed to address transportation issues pertinent to public transit operators.

This coordinated approach also includes such items as submission of Vehicle Miles Traveled forecasts to the Air District to be used in developing emission budgets, updating existing plans, and developing attainment demonstration plans; the joint evaluation of TCMs; working with local transit agencies and Caltrans to enhance transit services; and to work jointly with the Air District on any studies or projects that work to assure that reductions in non-attainment pollutants are achieved and continuing the ongoing public education programs.

The Valley RTPA Directors have included in their individual budgets to continue joint funding for a valley wide air quality coordinator, responsible to the Directors, to ensure that air quality conformity and related modeling within the Valley is accomplished on a consistent and timely basis. In addition, the RTPA Directors have budgeted additional funding to provide coordination on air quality policy issues beyond the technical needs of the Valley. Towards this end, Carrie Anderson Consulting was hired to conduct the requisite analysis and coordination. Fresno COG, as the lead agency for the group on air quality, is responsible for the contract administration.

Transportation conformity is required by the federal Clean Air Act and ensures that federal funding is given to transportation activities that are consistent with air quality goals. The Clean Air Act strengthened conformity requirements for transportation projects, necessitating a more enhanced level of technical analysis of plans, programs, and projects than in the past. Conformity determinations must be conducted at least every four years, or as amendments are made to plans or projects. The federal transportation conformity rule requires interagency consultation on issues that would affect the conformity analysis, such as the underlying assumptions and methodologies used to prepare the analysis. Consultation is generally conducted through the San Joaquin Valley Model Coordinating Committee (MCC). The MCC has been established to provide a coordinated

approach to Valley air quality, conformity and transportation modeling issues. Each of the eight Valley Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) and the Air Pollution Control District are represented. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the California Air Resources Board and Caltrans have members on the committee.

PREVIOUS COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

- Monitored developments of federal and State Clean Air Acts
- Executed MOU with eight Valley RTPAs and the Air District to ensure a comprehensive and cooperative approach to air quality transportation planning
- Presented air quality transportation issues to the Air District Board
- Assisted in the development of travel and emissions travel forecasts
- Projected motor vehicle emission forecasts.
- Continued to work jointly with the Air District in all matters pertaining to transportation
- Provided updated travel factors to the Air District
- Assisted in development of the Air District's Ozone, PM10, PM 2.5 and CO plans
- Coordination of Valley RTPA sub-committees.
- Continuity of air quality transportation planning approaches with the District.
- Adoption of the San Joaquin Valley TCM program.
- Structuring agreements between various counties to accomplish air quality conformity certifications.
- Hosted a Greenhouse Gas meeting with the Attorney General in Fresno
- Regularly-scheduled meetings of the Valley RTPA Directors' Group.
- Assist with ongoing Air Quality efforts in the San Joaquin Valley; development of the Ozone plan, the PM10 plan, the PM 2.5 plan, the CO plan, Air District Rules, and Conformity Determinations.
- Assist the Air District in developing new motor vehicle emission budgets for the Ozone Plan, and for the PM10 and PM 2.5 Plans.
- Complete the Reasonably Available Control Measure (RACM) Process for inclusion in the Ozone Plan.
- Coordinate efforts with the Air District to ensure a comprehensive and cooperative approach to air quality transportation planning.
- Participate with the other Valley TPAs in the San Joaquin Valley Model Coordinating Committee to address pertinent transportation modeling, air quality modeling, and transportation conformity analysis issues.
- Continued coordination among Valley transit agencies.
- Comments on proposed air quality plans, rules, regulations and new standards.
- Continue to evaluate and propose how AB 32 requirements for a reduction of Greenhouse Gases can reasonably be moved forward for consideration and implementation.

ONGOING AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Monitor state and federal guidance related to air quality transportation planning requirements.
- Provide technical support and assistance on applicable transportation planning issues to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).
- Participate with the other Valley RTPAs in the San Joaquin Valley Model Coordinating Committee to address pertinent transportation modeling, air quality modeling, and conformity analysis issues.

- Conduct conformity determinations to ensure that the Regional Transportation Plan, FTIP, and subsequent amendments conform to the State Implementation Plans (SIPs), as required by federal laws and regulations.
- Submit future-year travel forecasts to the SJVAPCD and the California Air Resources Board as requested.
- Work with the SJVAPCD and other agencies in determining whether there are TCMs, RACM and/or BACM, which could be pursued for congestion or inclusion in the Ozone and PM10 Plans.
- Participate in truck and goods movement studies along with the Air District, RTPAs, and other government agencies.
- Continue with the ongoing public education process and work to develop outreach programs on conformity, air quality, and other transportation issues.
- Continue to work with the SJVAPCD to jointly estimate and evaluate the effects of EMFAC 2007 and current California mobile source control measures on motor vehicle emission projections.
- Identify methods, procedures, and/or alternatives to analyzing the effect of transportation modes, infrastructure and land use patterns on air quality.
- Attend and participate within the Valley RTPA Directors' Group meetings on a regular basis.
- Promote coordination of public transportation issues, transportation systems management approaches and control strategies among the Valley transit agencies.
- Coordinate and assist the District to develop products identified in the MOU.
- Conduct Valley TPA sub-committee meetings on a regular basis for purposes of identifying consistent approaches to development of the: Regional Transportation Plan; the Regional Transportation Improvement Program; transportation and emissions modeling; transportation control measures; and conformity.
- Attend regularly scheduled District Board meetings as necessary.
- Contract oversight on jointly funded Air Quality coordinator.
- Provide coordinated, valleywide comments on draft air quality plans and proposed rules, regulations and new standards.
- Participate in the San Joaquin Valley Partnership's Air Quality Work Group.
- Participate in San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint planning process.

San Joaquin Valley Interregional Goods Movement

Lead: Valleywide Coordinator (Sigala Inc.), and All

The San Joaquin Valley region is one of the four major international trade regions in California. The San Joaquin Valley (SVJ) Goods Movement Study project has completed three phases of goods movement related studies in the valley. The project will provide for improvements to the eight-county San Joaquin Valley truck model and integration with local model. The first phase of the study described the goods movement system and freight flows for the region and generated a list of key goods movement issues and problems. Phase II of the study developed the San Joaquin Valley Truck model tool. In Phase III, the SVJ truck model tested modified scenarios from Phase II and other goods movement scenarios in future years. The completed model product will be used by each of the county Regional Planning Agencies and HQ Modeling and Travel Analysis Branch.

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies recently developed the *2007 San Joaquin Valley Regional Goods Movement Action Plan*. The purpose of the plan is to provide a knowledge base for the understanding of freight and goods movement issues facing the San Joaquin Valley. The Plan

also provides a platform for promoting strategies to improve overall movement of goods in the Valley and identifies goods movement projects that competed for some of the \$2.0 billion Proposition 1B Trade Corridor Improvement Funds.

Increasingly, goods movement continues to play a more central role in transportation planning. It is anticipated that future funding may emulate the approach of the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund tying transportation funding to trade corridors and movement of goods. In addition, a system-wide approach is a critical component. Trade corridors of national significance and statewide efficiencies have become central criteria for funding. This emphasis requires continued Valleywide collaboration.

It is widely understood that working collaboratively as a Valley was the key factor in securing the Valley's "fair share" of TCIF funds under Proposition 1B. Individual projects that appear to be isolated from the system rather than key program components can no longer effectively compete for transportation funding. Emphasis on system-wide efficiency and a comprehensive goods movement system seem to have become key elements of competitive funding. It is anticipated these trends will continue to shape transportation funding into the foreseeable future.

In fiscal year 2010-2011, the eight valley regional transportation planning agencies received a funding award for a Caltrans Partnership Planning grant for a San Joaquin Valley Interregional Goods Movement Study for a comprehensive strategy by mode and east/west goods movement. The Study will build on previous work efforts and further refine the criteria and decision-making process for future coordinated selection for valley wide projects. The Study will occur over a 24-month period beginning in May 2011.

PREVIOUS COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

- San Joaquin Valley Regional Goods Movement Action Plan, 2007
- Draft San Joaquin Valley Regional Goods Movement Action Plan, 2008
- California Interregional Intermodal System (CIRIS) Implementation Plan 2006
- SR 58 Origin and Destination Study
- State Route 99 Business Plan
- Interstate 5 and State Route 99 Origin and Destination Study, 2009
- East Side Business Plan (Short Haul Rail), Tulare County, 2010

ONGOING AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- SJV Interregional Goods Movement Study Implementation (thru FY 2012-2013)

Coordination of SJV Regional Policy Council

Lead: StanCOG Vince Harris, Chair of Director's Committee, & Valleywide Coordinator

The day-to-day coordination of the Valley Regional Policy Council is guided by the current Chair of the Executive Directors' Committee, which in 2011-12 is the Stanislaus Council of Governments, Executive Director Vince Harris. The 2011-12 Vice Chair is Patricia Taylor, Executive Director for the Madera County Transportation Commission. The Chairman consults with the other Valley Executive Directors to develop the agendas for the Regional Policy Council, and is charged with circulating the agenda and attached materials to the Policy Council. As Chair, he will be responsible

for the minutes (action minutes) of the Policy Council. He will also be charged with keeping all pertinent records concerning the Policy Council. However it is the charge of each Executive Director to aid the Chair in fulfilling his task by providing appropriate documents and agenda material timely. The Valleywide Coordinator (Sigala Inc, a Fresno based consulting firm), has been retained to conduct the administrative, coordination, research and project management functions related to the activities of the Regional Policy Council. Michael Sigala, Principal, works in close consultation with the Policy Council Chair and Vice Chair, and the Directors.

Coordination of Executive Directors' Committee

Lead: StanCOG Vince Harris, Chair of Director's Committee, & Valleywide Coordinator

Like the day-to-day coordination of the Policy Council, the Executive Directors' Committee will also be guided by the current Chair of the Executive Directors' Committee. He will consult with the other Valley Executive Directors to develop the agendas for the Executive Directors' meetings, and is charged with circulating the agenda and attached materials. As Chair he will be responsible for the minutes (action minutes) and with keeping all pertinent records. However it is the charge of each Executive Director to aid the Chair in fulfilling his task by providing appropriate documents and agenda material timely. The Valleywide Coordinator (Sigala Inc, a Fresno based consulting firm), has been retained to conduct the administrative, coordination, research, and project management functions related to the activities of the Director's Committee. Michael Sigala, Principal, works in close consultation with the Directors, and reports to the Chair.

Chair Rotation Schedule

Vince Harris – Stanislaus – 2011-12
Patricia Taylor – Madera 2012-13
Terri King – Kings 2013-14
Ron Brummett – Kern 2014-15
Andy Chesley – San Joaquin 2015-16
Ted Smalley – Tulare 2016-17
Jesse Brown - Merced – 2017-18
Tony Boren – Fresno – 2018-19

Valley Wide Model Improvement Plan

Lead: Fresno Council of Governments

With the passage of AB 32 and SB 375 it has become increasingly important for the Valley MPOs to continue coordination of valley wide transportation modeling and air quality activities.

Recently the valley MPOs jointly submitted an application to the Strategic Growth Council for \$2.5 million dollars for valley wide model improvements to meet the requirements of AB 32 and SB 375. The Strategic Growth Council is charged with, among other things, making Proposition 84 funds available for data gathering and model development necessary to comply with SB 375.

The valley MPOs were successful in their application and will be receiving the \$2.5 million for valley model improvements. The valley MPOs have developed a Model Improvement Plan (MIP) to deal with the requirements of SB 375. The plan includes a Short Term and Long Term component.

ONGOING AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Short Term (upgrade each valley model)
 - Improve each valley MPO model to be more sensitive to “Smart Growth” strategies.
 - Integrate the 4D elasticities into each model
 - Improve interregional travel estimates
- Long Term (Develop long term model improvement plan)
 - Develop land use modeling tools
 - Determine model coverages (individual county, multiple county or county wide)
 - Determine long term model improvements (advanced 4 step models, tour based models or activity based models)
- Implement the long term Model Improvement Plan

The short-term model improvements will be completed in time for the 2014 RTP. The 2014 RTP is our first RTP that will have to be fully SB 375 compatible. Additional improvements and timing will be determined by the results of the Long Term Model Improvement Plan.

Prop. 84, Sustainable Communities Implementation

Lead: Fresno Council of Governments

In mid 2010 Fresno COG, on behalf of the Valley MPOs, applied for a Prop 84 Grant under the Strategic Growth Council's Focus Area 2. The proposal requested \$2.5 Million to initiate three separate initiatives. In the end, we were awarded \$1 million for the three proposed components. After the notice of award, the Valley MPO Directors allocated the anticipated funding from the pending grant as follows: Greenprint Program (\$275,000), General Plan Program (\$530,000), and SCS Development (\$185,000).

ONGOING AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The Greenprint Program:

- Recommend and promote comprehensive governmental, not for profit and private sector strategies for securing and maximizing their benefit to people, local communities, the region and the state.
- Complement and reinforce the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint adopted by the Policy Council to promote more efficient urban growth and development and build upon efforts which have sought to address these issues.

The General Plan Program:

- Develop tools for Blueprint integration into General Plans. Use those tools to propagate the Blueprint Roadmap online resource tool-kit.
- Hold series of workshops to assist small cities with the application of those tools

- Use balance of funding for focused circuit planner to assist/complete the integration of Blueprint principles into General Plans for cities most impacted by the economy and left without sufficient staff to do the general plan updates.

The SCS Development:

- Develop a template for SB 375 compliant Outreach Plans for each of the Valley MPOs
- Initiate a model outreach activity in each of the 8 counties based on that Plan

Other Coordinated Activities (at the eight county level)

Valley Legislative Affairs Committee – “Valley Voice” Advocacy

Lead: Kern Council of Governments

A Valley Legislative Affairs Committee (VLAC) has been established at the staff level. They are responsible for tracking legislation which would have a Valley impact, in particular with legislation affecting the duties and responsibilities of the Valley's Regional Planning Agencies. Not only will they track the bills but they will also exchange pertinent information that may be crucial towards developing a support/oppose/amend position for each of the agencies. Where legislative positions appear to have a consensus building within the Valley, the Policy Council should be informed so they may make a unified statement. The intent is to increase the awareness at the State level that the Valley is actively engaged in the process, and deserves being acknowledged as having a unified position. Too often, in looking at a bill analysis, the larger planning agencies will have been consulted and their positions will be posted. The San Joaquin Valley needs to weigh in on the legislative process in order to be more effective. This committee will meet regularly. Products expected are a Valley Legislative Platform and annual advocacy trips to Sacramento and Washington D.C. to engage our representatives and their colleagues on issues of importance to the Valley. The Valley Voice trip to Sacramento is scheduled for February 2012. The Washington D.C. trip is scheduled for September 14 and 15, 2011.

Coordination with the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

Lead: Tulare County Association of Governments

The Valley's Regional Planning Agencies sought and received a consortia board membership on the Governor appointed Partnership Board – Ted Smalley, Executive Director of the Tulare County Association of Governments. In addition, all the Regional Planning Agencies participate in some of the 10 work groups of the Partnership. Our staff participation is most notable in three main work groups: Air Quality, Transportation, and Land Use and Housing. In the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the eight county RTPA's assumed responsibility for these working groups and are currently revising their structure. The Partnership has encouraged the formation of a Housing Trust, which will have in its membership an elected official from each of the MPOs. The Partnership has provided seed grants to Valley entities, including a Model Farmland Conservation Study (Fresno COG) which is intended to develop a template that may be used throughout the Valley for the purposes of Farmland Conservation/ Preservation. A Mid Valley Intermodal Corridor (City of Fresno) with accompanying land uses is being examined for its potential in at least four counties (Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kings) and could be expanded in scope.

In addition there is increased interaction between the Partnership and the Regional Policy Council/MPOs seen most recently in High Speed Rail, the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund, Air Quality 1B Funds, and other common goals that have fostered a better network of communication and subsequent action to occur. The recently award “Smart Valley Places” application to HUD resulted in a \$4 million grant to the Valleys 15 largest cities. This association has already resulted in

higher visibility at the State level, with Valley representatives being offered a “seat at the table” on more issues where previously we were overlooked or excluded from the policy discussions.

2011 Federal Transportation Reauthorization Act

Lead: All

The new federal transportation bill, tentatively scheduled for 2011, provides an unparalleled opportunity for the eight Valley Counties to explore funding potential within the new and updated federal act, probably aligned with a National Goods Movement Program. This would be a jointly agreed upon strategy, and would be separate from individual County “High Priority” projects.

It is clear the valley counties struggle to compete with California’s major metropolitan areas from a performance/congestion based priority system. Further, the Valley metropolitan areas are not considered rural to compete for rural funding. The Valley is unique and requires unique consideration for agricultural goods movement.

Currently the Regional Planning Agencies’ Executive Directors and their staff are discussing this opportunity. At the same time the MPOs have participated in the California effort to arrive at general principles that both Caltrans and California’s COGs can jointly support.

Regional Transportation Plans

Lead: All

The Valley’s Regional Planning Agencies have jointly developed a common Valley Chapter for each agency’s Regional Transportation Plan since the early 1990’s, in response to the federal transportation act in effect at the time. In that chapter the issues that are valley-wide are highlighted and discussed. These issues generally include air quality, high speed rail, State Route 99 and the need for additional east-west corridors, Amtrak passenger service, and any other common discussion items.

State Route 99 Coordination

Lead COG: Tulare County Association of Governments

There has been active coordination and consultation with Caltrans (owner/operator of SR 99). Working with the Great Valley Center and Caltrans a Business Plan and a Master Plan were developed for the SR 99 corridor running through the Valley. It was in major part due to that coordination that the Proposition 1B bond included a SR 99 earmark, the only transportation earmark in the bond placed before the voters. Those funds have been awarded to needed projects, but there is an additional \$5 billion plus in projects remaining to be funded. The next objective is to develop the necessary Corridor System Management Plans required by the State, update the Business Plan and Master Plan, and coordinate and reach consensus for continued project selection and funding alternatives.

High Speed Rail

Lead: All

Throughout the discussions taking place over the past couple of decades, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies have occasionally met jointly or in smaller groups with the various Commissions/Authority overseeing the High Speed Rail effort. Although positions have varied to some degree regarding the exact details of High Speed Rail, its routes and its placement of stations, the Regional Planning Agencies have been good at exchanging information and tracking our various positions. The Regional Policy Council, in cooperation with the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, crafted a joint position on the desired routing through the Valley and has presented and continues to present this information to our Legislators and to the High Speed Rail Authority. Continued advocacy for full project funding for all Valley segments remains a priority for all Counties.

Intercity Rail

Lead: All

Like High Speed Rail, there is a high degree of involvement and exchange of information between our agencies on the Amtrak services provided throughout the Valley. The Valley's Regional Planning Agencies regularly have staff in attendance at the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee.

511 Information

Lead: Fresno Council of Governments

A Traveler Information System (511 System) is on its way to becoming a reality in the San Joaquin Valley. Each of the eight MPOs is in the process of signing a final Memorandum of Understanding with the Sacramento Council of Governments (SACOG) to provide "baseline" coverage. "Baseline" coverage consists of wireless access to Caltrans Highway Information through SACOG's Traveler Information System. The cost for this basic coverage is being paid for by Caltrans. There is no cost to the eight San Joaquin Valley MPOs unless they choose to provide service beyond the "baseline". Should any Valley MPO choose additional 511 services in their communities, they may certainly do so but will be individually responsible for the associated costs.

Since the last update, Caltrans District 6 has made available \$750,000 to help design and develop a 511 system for the San Joaquin Valley. San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors have been presented three viable options for a traveler information system (511) for the San Joaquin Valley. Those options are as follows:

- A. Do nothing. Continue to participate in the SACOG 511 and not utilize the monies made available by Caltrans
- B. Build out a San Joaquin Valley 511 system: Use the monies provided by Caltrans to build out a customized system for the San Joaquin Valley.
- C. Hybrid Option. Participate in the SACOG 511 system for the voice component and use the funds provided by Caltrans to build out a 511 system for the San Joaquin Valley.

Since the options were presented to the Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors, Kern COG made the decision to join forces with the 511 implementation taking place in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Most of the remaining participating MPOs have chosen to proceed with option A, do nothing and only participate as part of the SACOG 511 system. This option would entail not using the monies provided by Caltrans. At the time of this writing, staff is pursuing an option to utilize at least part of the monies provided by Caltrans to build out a 511 system that would not

result in any costs to participating MPOs, at least for the next several years. Fresno COG staff will keep Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors apprised of any new developments as they occur.

Video Conferencing

Lead: Fresno Council of Governments

As the Valley MPOs continue to work collaboratively on more and more valleywide issues, the number of needed, face-to-face meetings continues to grow. As a result, the Valley MPOs sought innovative ways to counter the increased Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and time associated with travel to and from these meetings. A project to connect all of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies through video conferencing technology is currently underway. This infrastructure will allow face-to-face meetings to be replaced with video conferences. The project to connect all of the 8 San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies through video technology is nearly completed. Currently, 6 of the 8 Valley MPOs have up and running systems, with a 7th currently being installed in Stanislaus. This project should be complete by the end of September/October 2009. Madera County Transportation Commission opted out early in the project.

Networking / Fall Policy Conference

Lead: Madera County Transportation Commission

One of the greatest values to our coordinative efforts is the networking between staff at the various Regional Planning Agencies. The Executive Directors have encouraged this networking, recognizing that our enhanced communication poises all of us to have better information on activities going on at the state and federal level. Beyond that staff is able to learn from each other and increase their individual skills, adding value to each of our agencies. In addition, when too many meetings outside of the Valley are scheduled, such coordination (identifying who from the Valley might be in attendance) and subsequent communication allows a better coverage of important topics. The annual Fall Policy Conference offers a productive opportunity for networking. In October 2011 the Conference will be held in Bass Lake, with the Madera County Transportation Commission as the host.

San Joaquin Valley Web Sites/ Centralized Data

Lead: Merced Association of Governments

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council and Directors Group have become more prominent as a unified voice for the Valley. In 2010, the informational website, www.sjvcogs.org was created and is currently maintained by MCAG.

At the staff level, it has been recommended that all shared sites supporting valley-wide efforts through the RTPAs and Policy Council, be hosted and maintained by the same RTPA for improved coordination of information as well as potential cost savings. These include the Blueprint www.valleyblueprint.org, the San Joaquin Valley RTPA/Policy Council site at www.sjvcogs.org, and the future Blueprint Toolkit. In FY 2010/11, the Directors approved MCAG's hosting of both www.sjvcogs.org and www.valleyblueprint.org in order to facilitate better communication, and provide a centralized data portal for sharing information across RTPAs and the general public.

Regional Energy Planning

Lead: Kern Council of Governments & Valleywide Coordinator (Sigala Inc)

The eight valley RTPAs have recently engaged in meaningful, yet very preliminary, conversations with the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) about the economic development opportunity of energy that exists in regions across the country. The San Joaquin Valley can be poised to capture jobs and industry investments, and potentially become a net energy producer and exporter if investment strategies are implemented accordingly and regional assets are appropriately aligned.

As we understand, no thorough understanding of the region's energy economy currently exists; particularly not a comprehensive understanding of the energy economy in relation to statewide and regional investment, policy, and programs in business attraction and development, innovation, taxation, education and training, transportation, housing, land-use, environmental remediation and permitting, or the many other areas that can and will influence energy.

In FY 2010/11, the RTPAs presented this concept, along with NARC, to the Regional Policy Council and were directed to continued discussions of the topic. A valley wide working group has been assembled consisting of the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Office, Economic Development Corporations, PG&E, Southern California Edison, Cal State Bakersfield, UC Merced, and others. Regional energy planning funds will be sought in FY 2011/12.

San Joaquin Valley Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)

Lead: Kern Council of Governments

The San Joaquin Valley has begun to assess the need for a comprehensive update with the development of the next Regional Transportation Plan. Representatives from the San Joaquin Valley MPOs attended a March 2011 workshop in Fresno regarding the update to the Fresno COG ITS Architecture. The outcome from that workshop was that Fresno COG will begin the process of updating their ITS Architecture and that update would serve as a model for the San Joaquin Valley. Kern, serving as the ITS Maintenance Manager for the San Joaquin Valley, will work with the Fresno effort over the next year. The San Joaquin Valley MPOs will evaluate implementation options and identify resources for their update. Kern's focus would be to coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley to establish update tasks to be complementary to the Fresno effort.

Proposed FY 2011/12 Budget

<u>Jointly Funded Valleywide Activities</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>RTPA's Share</u>
1. SJV Regional Blueprint Planning	Fresno COG	\$1,350,000	\$0
2. Air Quality Transportation Coordination	SJ COG	\$172,322	\$172,322
3. SJV Interregional Goods Movement	Valleywide Coordinator	\$300,000	\$150,000
4. Regional Policy Council/Directors Group Coordination	StanCOG & Valleywide Coordinator	\$100,000	\$100,000
5. Valleywide Model Improvement Plan	Fresno COG	\$1,200,000	\$0
6. Prop 84, Sustainable Communities	Fresno COG	<u>\$500,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
		\$3,622,322	\$422,322

<u>Other Coordinated Activities</u>	<u>Lead</u>
1. Valley Legislative Affairs Committee	Kern COG
2. California Partnership Coordination	TCAG
3. Transportation Reauthorization Act	All
4. Regional Transportation Plans	All
5. SR 99 Coordination	TCAG
6. High Speed Rail	All
7. Intercity Rail	All
8. 511 Information	Fresno COG
9. Video Conferencing	Fresno COG
10. Networking / Fall Policy Conference	Madera CTC
11. SJV Web Sites / Centralized Data	MCAG
12. Regional Energy Planning	Kern COG & Valleywide Coordinator
13. SJV Intelligent Transportation System	Kern COG

High-Speed Rail Is at a Critical Juncture

MAC TAYLOR • LEGISLATIVE ANALYST • MAY 10, 2011



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California's proposed high-speed rail project would link the state's major population centers, including Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego. The most recent cost estimate for completion of the first phase of the project is roughly \$43 billion. In November 2008, voters approved Proposition 1A, which allows the state to sell \$9 billion in general obligation bonds to partially fund the development and construction of the high-speed rail system. In addition, the state has received roughly \$3 billion from the federal government for its construction. The California High-Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) recently approved plans to begin construction in fall 2012 on a portion of the system costing roughly \$5.5 billion through the Central Valley that spans from north of Fresno to north of Bakersfield. The Legislature will likely be asked to appropriate much of the funding for this initial segment in 2012-13.

A Number of Problems Threaten Successful Development of High-Speed Rail. In this report, we describe a number of problems that pose threats to the high-speed rail project's successful development as envisioned by Proposition 1A. For example, the availability of the additional funding assumed in a 2009 business plan as necessary to complete the project is highly uncertain and federal deadlines and conditions attached to the funding already provided to the state would limit the state's options for the successful development of the system. In addition, the existing governance structure for the project is inadequate for the imminent development and construction stages and the Legislature lacks the good information it needs to make critical multi-billion dollar decisions about the project that it will soon face.

Legislative Actions Could Improve Likelihood of Project's Success. The Legislature faces some

challenging choices about whether to continue with a project that, despite the problems outlined above, could have some reductions in other spending for transportation improvements as well as air quality and other environmental benefits. If the Legislature chooses to go forward with the high-speed rail project, we have concluded that two key steps could be taken now to improve the likelihood of its successful development. First, the Legislature needs more time and greater flexibility to make critical decisions relating to the project. This would require modifications to the federal restrictions that have been imposed on the project regarding the timing of the expenditure of these federal funds, as well as to a federal administrative decision to require that they all be spent building an initial section of the rail line in the Central Valley. Second, significant improvements are needed in the way both day-to-day and longer-term strategic decisions are made. We have concluded that the current governance structure for the project is no longer appropriate and is too weak to ensure that this mega-project is coordinated and managed effectively.

LAO Recommendations. We recommend that the Legislature take the following actions to increase the likelihood that the high-speed rail project will be developed successfully:

- ***Fund Only Needed Administrative Tasks for Now.*** We recommend that the Legislature reject the administration's 2011-12 budget request for \$185 million in funding for consultants to perform project management, public outreach, and other work to develop the project, and only appropriate at this time the \$7 million in funding requested for state administration of the project by HSRA.

- ***Seek Flexibility on Use of Federal Funds.***

We propose that the Legislature direct HSRA to renegotiate the terms of the federal funding awarded to the state by the Federal Rail Administration (FRA). We believe the state must obtain relief from the current federal restrictions on the project if it is to be developed successfully, and therefore that the Legislature should proceed with the project only if this flexibility is obtained from the federal government.

- ***Reconsider Where Construction of the Line Should Start.*** If the federal flexibility proposed above is obtained, we recommend that the Legislature further direct HSRA to reevaluate which segment or segments should be constructed first based on criteria determined by the Legislature, such as potential statewide benefits from building a particular segment and whether a selected segment could generate the ridership and revenues to be financially

viable on its own. The HSRA would be authorized to subsequently seek a budget augmentation to fund the development of whatever segment the Legislature approves based upon these new criteria.

- ***Improve the Way Project Decisions Are Made.*** We recommend that the Legislature pass legislation this session that shifts the responsibility for the day-to-day and strategic development of the project from HSRA to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). A new and separate division of Caltrans dedicated to the high-speed rail project would be better positioned, if equipped with the appropriate project delivery tools, to manage the development of the system in this phase. In addition, we recommend that the Legislature remove decision-making authority over the high-speed rail project from the HSRA board to ensure that the state's overall interests, including state fiscal concerns, are fully taken into account as the project is developed.