



**TCAG**  
Tulare County Association of Governments

*Tulare County Association of Governments is committed to eco-friendly practices. "On the Move" is now available electronically. Visit [www.tularecog.org](http://www.tularecog.org) to sign up for our seasonal newsletters and agendas!*

### Table of Contents

- \$92 million Headed To Tulare County For Road Projects ..... 2
- Draft Transportation Documents Available For Review ..... 2
- Contest Sparks Air Quality Ideas Among Tulare County Youth ..... 2
- Hot Off The Press ..... 2
- TCAG Budget Approved ..... 2
- Ride Safely ..... 3
- Public Invited To Provide Study Input On Santa Fe Trail ..... 3
- T-Pass Helps College Students "Get On The Bus" ..... 3
- Valley Voices Heard in Washington D.C. ... 3
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets Set .... 3
- Demographic Update ..... 4
- Nominations Needed For Transportation Advisory Council ..... 4

# ON THE MOVE

Spring 2010 | Dinuba-Exeter-Farmersville-Lindsay-Porterville-Tulare-Visalia-Woodlake-Tulare County

## Opening of Santa Fe Overcrossing Celebrated



*The Santa Fe Overcrossing was made possible by Measure R funding.*

Local dignitaries and residents gathered April 29 to celebrate the opening of the Santa Fe Overcrossing. It's the latest transportation project created in large part by Measure R funds. Construction began in March 2009 and costs are estimated at \$8.6 million.

Some local funds were used, but the project would not have been possible without funds generated by Measure R, which has also proven to be a very useful tool in leveraging federal money, as demonstrated by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Measure R is a half-cent transportation sales tax passed in November 2006 and revenues have been collected since April 2007. Measure R will be in effect until 2037.

It funds road improvements, transit and environmental improvements in Tulare County. The Tulare County Association of Governments, acting as the Tulare County Transportation Authority, administers the Measure R program. **For more information, contact Ted Smalley at (559) 624-7274 or visit [TCMeasureR.com](http://TCMeasureR.com).**

## Environmentally-Friendly Commutes Pay Off for Municipal Employees

Participating agencies have made the 2009-10 cycle of TCAG's Employee Incentive Program one of the most successful to date.

Participants were vigilant in their efforts to make work commutes more environmentally friendly, and they were rewarded by the Employee Incentive Program (EIP) managed by TCAG. Carpoolers, bicyclists, bus riders and walkers receive \$5 in scrip to local restaurants and businesses for using alternative forms of transportation to commute to and from work.

The Employee Incentive Program is one of many ways TCAG encourages Tulare County residents to help improve the Valley's air. The incentive program encourages municipal employees to use alternative modes of transportation that produce fewer vehicle emissions than commutes that involve just one person per vehicle.

Seven of the county's eight incorporated cities participate in the EIP, which began in 2004 to help address the region's poor air quality and educate residents on how they can make a difference.

During the 2009-10 EIP cycle, a new online tracking system was implemented that allowed

program coordinators in each city to monitor their scrip budget in real time, make requests and record their colleagues' environmentally-friendly commutes.

"The program is working great for us," said Roy Ramirez, Dinuba's EIP coordinator. "The employees are very appreciative of the program. They come in with smiles and comment, 'This is great. Thank you!' and 'I hope this program continues for a long time.' In this economic downturn the employees, and I'm sure the businesses, really appreciated receiving the gift certificates for this great program."

Thanks to the generosity of five city employees in Porterville, the EIP scrip also benefitted some of the city's most needy residents. During the Christmas season, the employees donated some of their EIP scrip - which totaled 12 meals - to Project Homeless.

Thank you to everyone who continues to make the EIP a success. EIP participants are role models for our community and we hope more people follow in their footsteps, carpool lanes and bike trails.

The next EIP cycle begins July 2010. **E-mail Matt Leedy at [mleedy@jsaweb.com](mailto:mleedy@jsaweb.com) if you would like to participate or have any questions about the program.**



## Contest Sparks Air Quality Ideas Among Tulare County Youth

TCAG's eighth annual Make A Difference In Air Quality Contest has Tulare County youth thinking about what we can all do to improve air quality in our community.

The call went out for students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade to create a drawing or essay that shows how they would improve air quality in Tulare County. New this year to the Air Quality Contest is the option for youth to submit a 1-2 minute video.

One bike will be awarded for the winner of each grade group (K-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12). One grand prize winner will receive \$250 and a bike.

Winners will be announced in the next edition of "On The Move."

## Hot Off The Press

Who you gonna call? What's the latest with Tulare County transportation? What's coming up?

Answers to these questions and many more can be found in TCAG's recently published Annual Directory and Annual Report.

In addition to recapping TCAG's accomplishments, milestones and projects, the new Annual Report also folds out to a calendar that includes dozens of important meetings, events and deadlines.

The Directory contains a host of important phone numbers, e-mails, physical addresses and information about Tulare County cities and agencies.

Contact information for regional, state and federal offices also can be found in the Directory.

To order your copy of TCAG's annual report and directory call 559.624.7274.

## TCAG Budget Approved

A 2010/11 overall work program and \$2.82 million budget was recently approved by the TCAG board of directors.

### 2010/11 Revenues Include:

\$124,000	Member Dues
\$779,544	Local Contribution
\$43,500	TDA Administration
\$945,041	FHWA PL
\$106,656	FTA Section 5303 (Metro)
\$27,280	FTA Section 5304 (FTA)
\$5,000	DMV
\$10,272	City of Visalia
\$720	City of Tulare
\$5,232	City of Porterville
\$151,247	Other Grants
\$504,500	Measure R
\$120,000	LAFCO
<b>\$2,822,992</b>	<b>Total</b>

## \$92 Million Headed to Tulare County for Road Projects

Long stretches of Highway 99 and Road 80 in Tulare County will be widened, and other highways will be repaved, thanks to \$92 million that was recently awarded by the California Department of Transportation.

Approximately \$83 million of that money will be used to expand Highway 99, from four lanes to six, between Kingsburg and Goshen. The widening will have far-reaching benefits for all of Tulare County and the Central Valley, said Tulare County Supervisor Mike Ennis.



"Any time we can improve Highway 99, it helps all of us," Ennis said. "Highway 99 is a backbone for goods movement for Tulare County and the San Joaquin Valley."

Road 80 between avenues 328 and 342 north of Goshen will also be expanded from two to four lanes with \$2.3 million of the money.

The two projects could begin within a year. Tulare County would not have received the \$92 million in state funds

without Measure R, the half-cent sales tax that funds transportation projects.

Tulare County voters passed Measure R in 2006. The same year, California voters passed the Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality and Port Security Bond Act, which earmarked \$1 billion for counties with taxes, such as Measure R, that fund road projects.

Additional Tulare County road projects that will be completed with the Caltrans funding include:

- \$3.9 million to re-pave and lay new concrete on Highway 245 between Highway 198 east of Visalia and Highway 201 west of Elderwood.
- \$2.6 million to re-pave and lay new concrete on Highway 216 between McAuliff Road in Visalia and the Friant-Kern Canal west of Woodlake.
- \$428,000 to install 46 wheelchair curb cuts and sidewalks along state highways throughout the county.

## Draft Transportation Documents Available for Review

The public review and comment period has begun for several important draft transportation documents, including: the Draft 2011 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (2011 FTIP), the Draft 2011 Regional Transportation Plan (2011 RTP), the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and corresponding draft air quality conformity analysis.

**These documents are available at the Tulare County Association of Governments' website at [www.tularecog.org](http://www.tularecog.org) and at TCAG's office, 5955 S. Mooney Blvd. in Visalia.** Comments must be submitted by 5 p.m. on June 14, 2010.

The TCAG Board of Directors will consider the adoption of the Draft 2011 FTIP, RTP, EIR and corresponding conformity analysis on July 19, 2010. They will meet in the Board of Supervisors Conference Rooms, County Civic Center Administration Building, in Visalia.

- The 2011 FTIP is a near-term listing of capital improvement and operational expenditures utilizing federal and state money for transportation projects in Tulare County during the next four years.
- The 2011 RTP is a long-term strategy to meet Tulare County transportation needs out to the year 2035.
- The Program EIR provides an analysis of potential environmental impacts related to the implementation of the RTP as required by the California Environmental Quality Act.
- The Conformity Analysis contains the documentation to support a finding that the 2011 FTIP and 2011 RTP meet the air quality conformity requirements for ozone and particulate matter.

## Ride Safely

Warm weather and long days make now an ideal time for a bicycle ride. That means it's also time to review some important safety tips.



For more bicycle safety tips visit [tularecog.org](http://tularecog.org).

- Wear properly fitted bicycle helmets and fluorescent, or brightly colored, clothing every time you ride. A helmet is the single most effective way to prevent head injury resulting from a bicycle crash.
- To increase your visibility to drivers at night use a front light and a red reflector or flashing rear light.
- Ride so drivers can see you and predict your movements. Remember that cyclists are considered vehicle operators and

must obey the same rules of the road, including traffic signs, signals and lane markings. When riding in the street, bicyclists must ride in the same direction as traffic.

Bicycling is one of several alternative modes of transportation – which also include public transportation, walking and carpooling – that improve our air quality by producing fewer emissions than single-occupied vehicles. TCAG helps local agencies manage improvements for area bike trails and routes.

## Residents Invited To Provide Study Input On Santa Fe Trail

Tulare County residents can help shape an upcoming environmental study on the Santa Fe Trail.

TCAG hosted a public meeting on June 3. Comments about what residents would like studied during an environmental impact report can still be e-mailed and submitted in writing by June 16 to [chavez@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:chavez@co.tulare.ca.us) or **Christine Chavez, 5955 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277.**

TCAG, on behalf of the County of Tulare, is proposing to develop the Santa Fe Trail – a Measure R-funded project that would be the county's first regional bicycle/multi-use trail. The trail would link Tulare and Visalia with a multi-use commuter and recreational trail following the historic Santa Fe

Railroad corridor. It would be funded through the Federal Transportation Enhancement Program and Measure R's transit/bicycle/environmental funding category, as outlined in the original 2006 Measure R Expenditure Plan.

The City of Tulare has completed its portion of the trail, which ends at Prosperity Avenue, and the City of Visalia is currently developing its portion of the trail from

Tulare Avenue to Avenue 272. This portion of the Santa Fe Trail, which runs through the unincorporated portion of Tulare County, will close the gap between Prosperity Avenue and Avenue 272. The project is currently being developed and is anticipated to have environmental clearance in early November 2010.

For more information on the Santa Fe Trail, visit [www.tcmeasurer.com/santafe\\_updates.htm](http://www.tcmeasurer.com/santafe_updates.htm).



## Public Feedback Fuels Future Transit Improvements

The public is TCAG's strongest partner in its continual effort to improve our community's transportation systems. This was shown in March when dozens of people from across the country attended three public meetings conducted to identify the region's unmet transit needs.

TCAG hosted meetings in Visalia, Porterville and Tulare to give as many residents as possible a chance to share their points of view on public transportation. TCAG also

received written comments from the public.

The unmet transit needs identified by residents include: extended service hours, additional transit stops and discounted transit passes. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) will review the public comments and subsequent responses from the appropriate transit agencies before determining which transit requests are reasonable to meet.

The Transportation Development Act of 2004 requires that the local

Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) identify the unmet transit needs within its jurisdiction and those needs that are reasonable to meet. The TPA is required to conduct at least one public hearing per year to garner public comments on any possible unmet transit needs. The TPA also must present these unmet needs requests to the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council to determine reasonable requests.

The TCAG Board will consider SSTAC's recommendations in June.

## T-Pass Helps College Students "Get On The Bus"

TCAG has collaborated with College of the Sequoias, Visalia Transit and Tulare County Area Transit to make public transportation a little easier for college students.



The monthly T-Pass is now available at the College of the Sequoias bookstore and signs are posted around campus alerting students to the convenient and economical way to "Get On The Bus."

T-Passes also are available at Dinuba City Hall, Visalia's Government Plaza and transit centers in Porterville, Tulare and Visalia.

By purchasing a \$45 T-Pass, riders can enjoy unlimited convenience all month long on fixed route transit services in Tulare County. For more information call the Green Line: 1.877.4OGO.GREEN (1.877.404.6473).

## Valley Voices Heard in Washington D.C.

TCAG leaders, and their counterparts from throughout the Valley, are making their voices heard on Capitol Hill.

Federal lawmakers discussed several transportation issues important to the Valley during a May meeting with the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, which included TCAG Executive Director Ted Smalley and TCAG board members Allen Ishida and Rudy Mendoza.

During the second annual Valley Voice trip to Washington D.C., the Valley coalition detailed issues including high speed rail and short haul rail. The group lobbied for support of bridge projects, Highway 99 improvements and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding.



TCAG staff continues to keep a close eye on federal and state issues such as the state budget and proposed state and federal legislation.

## Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets Set

The TCAG board of directors took the first step in the Senate Bill 375 implementation process by agreeing to submit greenhouse gas emission targets to the Air Resources Board.

The process involves cooperation and communication between metropolitan planning organizations and the Air Resources Board. Targets will be finalized Sept. 30, 2010.

SB 375 was approved in 2008. The bill requires metropolitan planning organizations to prepare land use strategies in conjunction with regional transportation plan updates that will meet greenhouse gas emissions targets.

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## Demographic Update

Tulare County's population is making a steady climb toward 450,000, according to the California Department of Finance's estimates for 2010. A more accurate count is currently being made by the United State Census. The TCAG Board is playing an important role locally by serving as the Tulare County Complete Count Committee.

In 2000, the Census counted 368,021 people in Tulare County, an increase of about 18% from 1990. If the state Department of Finance's 2010 estimate of 447,814 proves to be accurate, it will mean another 22% increase for Tulare County between 2000 and 2010.

Every year on May 1, the California Department of Finance uses various

state and federal documents to model migration patterns and generate population and housing estimates for counties and incorporated cities. The state estimated that as of Jan. 1, 2010, Tulare County's population included totals of:

- 21,542 in Dinuba
  - 10,752 in Exeter
  - 10,971 in Farmersville
  - 11,800 in Lindsay
  - 52,960 in Porterville
  - 59,535 in Tulare
  - 125,971 in Visalia
  - 7,927 in Woodlake
  - 146,356 in unincorporated Tulare County
- Countywide Total: 447,814**

## Nominations Sought For Transportation Advisory Council

TCAG is seeking nominations for the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC). There are several vacancies on the council that TCAG would like to fill, including:

- Two representatives of a local social service provider for seniors, including one representative of a social service transportation provider.
- One representative from the Center for Independent Living.

- One representative of potential transit users from the youth community (member must be between ages of 18 and 25).

SSTAC is an advisory council that addresses unmet transit needs, coordination and consolidation of specialized transportation services and transit issues in Tulare County. **For more information about SSTAC or how to make a nomination contact TCAG (559) 624-7274 or visit [www.tularecog.org](http://www.tularecog.org).**