

DRAFT 2009 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

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DRAFT

2009 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Tulare County
Association of Governments
Metropolitan Planning Organization

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In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the MPO does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion and disability in the execution of this Public Participation Plan.

Please direct any questions or comments regarding this plan to Benjamin Giuliani at the address, phone or fax number listed above or e-mail bgiuliani@co.tulare.ca.us

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I. Introduction

Tulare County

Tulare County, comprised of 4,824 square miles, is located in the southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley. The Valley is between the Coast Range on the west and the Sierra Nevada Range on the east. The Valley extends from Sacramento on the north, to the Tehachapi Range on the south. The San Joaquin Valley is one of the richest farmlands in the world. Tulare County has approximately one third of its land area in the Valley. The remaining portion is in the Sierra Nevada Range. This offers an abundance of scenic and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The land in the Valley produces a wide variety of agricultural products. Tulare County ranks second in the nation in total agricultural income. The population of Tulare County is concentrated in the Valley. There are eight incorporated cities accounting for 64 67 percent of the total county's approximate population of 420,000 435,000.

Tulare County Association of Governments

The Board of Governors directs TCAG. This group Board is composed of one representative from each of the eight city councils, the five members of the County Board of Supervisors, and three members-at-large. These sixteen members act as the Council of Governments (COG), the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). These members, plus the District 6 Director of Caltrans, sit as the Policy Advisory Committee. This body offers advice on issues that will be presented to the Board of Governors. The Tulare County Transportation Authority is governed by the elected members of the TCAG Board of Governors. The Authority is designated to act on Measure R (the Tulare County ½ percent sales tax) issues.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) makes recommendations to the Board of Governors. This committee is comprised of representatives from each of the eight cities, the Tulare County Resource Management Agency, Caltrans, the Tule River Tribal Council and TCAG Staff. This committee meets once a month prior to TCAG Board meetings to review upcoming Board agenda items and to discuss outstanding issues of regional significance.

The Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), responsible for the annual review of the Unmet Transit Needs in the County, is another permanent committee of TCAG. This review results in a recommendation of findings to the TCAG Board of Governors, who then considers the recommendation and makes the final Unmet Needs Determination. This council meets quarterly (at a minimum) 3 to 4 times a year and represents the following agencies and groups of people: handicapped transit users, transit users – over 60 years of age, social service providers for Seniors, social service providers for the handicapped, social service providers for persons of limited means, consolidated transportation service agency for non-urbanized areas, consolidated transportation service agency for urbanized areas and the Center for Independent Living.

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) meets at least quarterly and is responsible for observing, analyzing, and reporting on new programs such as amendments to the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts, Sequoia National Forest Service Management Plans, new listing or removing proposals, proposed changes to the California Environmental Quality Act, and any federal, state, or local agency proposal that affects environmental issues in Tulare County, including important NEPA and CEQA documents, and any particular project TCAG

may assign to the Committee. The EAC also makes recommendations to the TCAG Board regarding environmental mitigation banking sites. This committee is represented by the following agencies and organizations: Sequoia National Park, Irrigation Districts, TCAG, Tulare County City Managers, Sierra Los Tules Land Trust, Agricultural Commissioner, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, California Dept. of Fish & Game, Tulare County Redevelopment Agency, County of Tulare, County of Tulare Parks Dept., Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District, Bureau of Land Management and Caltrans.

The Rail Advisory Committee meets quarterly or on an as needed basis and provides a forum to identify, discuss and make recommendations regarding commercial rail in Tulare County. This includes rail abandonments, rail goods movement, rail consolidation and other pertinent issues related to commercial rail in the County. The Committee is comprised of members from the cities that are affected by rail, the County and representatives from the rail industry.

The Measure R Citizens Oversight Committee meets ~~monthly~~ at least quarterly and additionally as needed and is responsible for providing input on implementation of the Measure R Expenditure Plan and to advise the TCAG Board if and when the Plan needs to be augmented and to ensure that the funds are being spent in accordance with the Plan. This committee is comprised of non-elected citizens from the following groups: the County of Tulare, the eight incorporated cities, a major private sector employer (nominated by the Tulare County Economic Development Corporation), the building industry (nominated by the Tulare County Building Association), the agriculture industry (nominated by the Tulare County Farm Bureau), the Hispanic community (nominated by the Tulare-Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce), advocacy group representing bicyclists, pedestrians and/or transit (selected through application), a professional in the field of audit, finance and/or budgeting (selected through application) and an environmental advocacy group (selected through application).

There are also non-Board appointed committees that provide the public and other agencies and organizations the opportunity to participate in planning processes:

The Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) meets ~~at least~~ quarterly or as needed and is responsible for advising the TCAG Board regarding the development and maintenance of bicycle interests within Tulare County. This committee is comprised of members from the following groups: Planning and Public Works Staff from the County and eight incorporated cities, bicycle facility users, school officials, local service clubs, law enforcement officials, local citizens and TCAG staff.

The transit operators in Tulare County are represented on the TCAG Board of Governors and the Technical Advisory Committee by an elected official of the operator's decision-making body and by a technical staff person respectively. In addition, the Transit Forum is composed of representatives from each of the ~~providing agencies~~ agencies that provide transit operations and TCAG Staff. The Forum meets every two months to exchange information and discuss transit related issues.

~~The Regional Blueprint Technical Advisory Committee meets monthly and is responsible for reviewing Blueprint staff work, recommending actions to the TCAG Board and providing TCAG staff with content-type advice on Blueprint planning issues. This committee is comprised of a planning staff person from each of the eight incorporated cities, the County Planning Department and the County Community Development and Redevelopment Agency.~~

II. Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of the Tulare County Association of Governments' (TCAG) Public Participation Plan is to help ensure that citizens, organizations and public agencies are kept informed and involved in TCAG's various programs, projects and work activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the development and the amendment of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), and the Overall Work Program (OWP). The process used to ~~develop~~ update the Public Participation Plan is outlined in Appendix A. (Please refer to the 2007 Public Participation Plan for the process used to develop the initial Plan.)

Background

The Public Participation Plan is to be developed using principles as required by Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Sec. 450.316:

- (a) *The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.*
 - (1) *The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:*
 - (i) *Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;*
 - (ii) *Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;*
 - (iii) *Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;*
 - (iv) *Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;*
 - (v) *Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;*
 - (vi) *Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;*
 - (vii) *Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;*

- (viii) *Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;*
- (ix) *Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and*
- (x) *Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.*

Participation Goals, Strategies and Procedures

TCAG recognizes that the involvement of the public and agencies, organizations and other groups which represent the public is pivotal in to the success of transportation programs, plans and projects in Tulare County. Listed below are goals, strategies and procedures regarding public participation in TCAG's planning processes:

Goal: Raise the public's level of understanding of transportation planning processes in the County.

Strategy: Use a variety of presentation methods and modes of communication to disseminate information to the public.

Procedures:

- Use TCAG's 'On the Move' newsletter to highlight important transportation issues.
- Post important public documents such as the RTP, FTIP, OWP and Special Planning Studies on the TCAG website (<http://www.tularecog.org/>)
- Work with other agencies and organizations to educate and inform the public regarding transportation processes.
- Respond to the public's requests or questions in a timely and professional manner.
- Use maps, charts and other visualization techniques to convey transportation related information.
- Use TCAG's public relations consultant to issue news releases regarding important transportation processes and accomplishments.

Goal: Increase opportunities for public involvement in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide varied opportunities for public review and input and be responsive to that input.

Procedures:

- Provide timely public notice of meetings.
- Conduct or attend project/process focused meetings outside the usual monthly TCAG Board meeting to gather public input.

- Work with other public agencies and organizations to gather public input regarding transportation processes and issues.
- Respond to public input in a professional, timely and accurate manner.

Goal: Involve traditionally under-served persons such as low-income and minority households, the elderly, those addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Native American tribal governments and communities in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to reach out and address the transportation related needs of traditionally under-served persons.

Procedures:

- Use SSTAC as a forum to address transit needs for traditionally under-served persons.
- Provide Spanish language translation at meetings or for written documents when necessary.
- TCAG meeting locations should be reasonably accessible to those addressed by the ADA.
- Use TAC, through the Tule River Tribe's representative, as a forum to keep the Tribe informed of transportation issues both significant to the Tribe and to the County as a whole.
- Conduct formal consultation with the Tule River Tribe Council at least once a year to determine if Tribal transportation issues are being adequately addressed.
- Work with other public agencies and organizations which represent traditionally under-served persons to maintain a two-way dialogue regarding transportation processes and issues that are important to them.

Goal: Involve other public agencies, organizations and other groups which represent various segments of the public in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to seek input and involvement from other public agencies, organizations and groups.

Procedures:

- Provide opportunities for member public agencies to be kept informed and involved in transportation planning processes through TAC and other TCAG committees.
- Provide opportunities for resource agencies to be kept informed and involved in transportation planning process through EAC and other TCAG committees.
- Attend meetings and give presentations to other public agencies, organizations and other groups regarding transportation processes and issues.

Participation Plan Updates

The Public Participation Plan is not intended to be a static document. It will need to be periodically reviewed to evaluate its effectiveness in promoting public participation in TCAG's transportation planning processes. The Plan will be comprehensively reviewed every four years (at a minimum) in the year preceding the adoption of an RTP update. The next currently scheduled RTP update is in ~~2014~~ 2010. This will ensure that the Public Participation Plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary preceding the public outreach efforts for the development of each successive RTP update. **In addition, the Public Participation Plan may be subject to additional updates due to changes in state and federal law and to address any needed changes as a result from the input of the public, other public agencies, organizations and other groups which represent various segments of the public in transportation planning processes.**

III. Regional Transportation Plan

Background

The RTP is a 20-year planning document that serves as TCAG's long-range plan. The RTP is a state-mandated document that describes existing and projected transportation conditions, needs, alternatives and their consequences. The RTP is inclusive of all types of transportation modes including mass transit, non-motorized (bicycle and pedestrian), rail and aviation. The first RTP was written and adopted in 1975 with updates every two years. In 1999 the California Transportation Commission changed the requirement to every three years and then changed it to every four years in 2006 to meet the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requirements. The document is based on regional transportation facilities and proposed constrained improvements funded during the time frame of the Plan.

Goals, Strategies and Procedures

Goal: Raise the public's level of understanding of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Strategy: Use a variety of presentation methods and modes of communication to disseminate information to the public.

Procedures:

- Use TCAG's 'On the Move' newsletter to highlight the RTP.
- Post the RTP on the TCAG website (<http://www.tularecog.org/>)
- Work with other agencies and organizations to educate and inform the public regarding the RTP.
- Respond to the public's requests or questions in a timely and professional manner.
- Use maps, charts and other visualization techniques to convey information regarding and within the RTP.
- Use TCAG's public relations consultant to issue news releases regarding important meetings, milestones and accomplishments related to the RTP.

Goal: Increase opportunities for public involvement in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide varied opportunities for public review and input and be responsive to that input.

Procedures:

- Provide timely public notice of meetings for RTP updates and when required, RTP amendments.
- Conduct or attend project/process focused meetings outside the usual monthly TCAG Board meeting to gather public input. This includes giving presentations at city councils, town councils and community groups.
- Use exhibits and hand-outs to highlight and inform that public of the RTP and other transportation issues at the Tulare County Fair.

Goal: Involve traditionally under-served persons such as low-income and minority households, the elderly, those addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Native American tribes in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to reach out and address the transportation related needs of traditionally under-served persons.

Procedures:

- Use SSTAC as a forum to address transit needs for traditionally under-served persons.
- Provide Spanish language translation at meetings or for written documents when necessary.
- TCAG meeting locations regarding the RTP should be reasonably accessible to those addressed by the ADA.
- Meet with the Tule River Tribe Council at least once a year to determine if Tribal transportation issues are being adequately addressed in the RTP.

Goal: Involve other public agencies, organizations and other groups which represent various segments of the public in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to seek input and involvement from other public agencies, organizations and groups.

Procedures:

- Provide opportunities for member public agencies to be kept informed and involved in transportation planning processes through TAC and other TCAG committees.
- Provide opportunities for resource agencies to be kept informed and involved in transportation planning process through EAC and other TCAG committees.
- For Air Quality Conformity, follow the interagency consultation procedures as outlined in 40 CFR 93.105.
- Attend meetings and give presentations to other public agencies, organizations and other groups regarding transportation processes and issues.

Development and Circulation

Updates

The development of a RTP update generally begins about a year before anticipated adoption. The following is a general timeline and description of public and interested party involvement in the RTP update process.

Before work on the RTP update begins, a Request for Proposals is sent out to qualified consultants for the completion of an (Subsequent) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the RTP. TCAG staff grade the returned applications (for comprehension of the project, completeness, references, cost, etc.) and a consultant is selected by the Board. TCAG staff works with the consultant in data gathering, conducting meetings and enlisting public involvement in the development of the EIR. The Draft EIR is subject to a

45-day public review period and is posted on the TCAG website. The distribution list for the Draft EIR includes the Resource Agencies (among others) listed in Exhibit 3 of Appendix A. The development of the EIR is done in coordination with the development of the RTP.

TCAG annually has a booth at the Tulare County Fair where information regarding the RTP and other transportation processes and issues are displayed and distributed (such as transit schedules, information regarding the Measure R sales tax, etc.). In addition, surveys are distributed in English and Spanish to gather information from the public regarding transportation related issues. With coordination from TCAG's public relations consultant, TCAG staff participates in a number of public outreach presentations at service clubs, member agencies, town councils, professional groups, Tule River Tribal Council and any other agency or group willing to hear a presentation on the RTP. After these initial outreach events, draft RTP policies are developed. These draft policies are posted on the TCAG website and circulated to member agencies and EAC (see description of EAC and its membership in Section I) for review.

Following the early review of the draft RTP policies, the Draft RTP is developed and released for a ~~60~~ 45-day comment period (at minimum). The Draft is mailed to member agencies, Resource Agencies, Tule River Tribe and other interested parties and is posted on the TCAG website. During this period, another series of public outreach presentations are conducted and the Draft RTP is reviewed by the EAC and TAC. The Draft RTP is presented and additional comments are received at a public workshop during a TCAG Board hearing. The Draft RTP and EIR are subject to a 10-day public notice which is posted ~~in the three~~ at least one Tulare County daily newspapers. In addition, through TCAG's public relations consultant, information regarding the RTP is distributed through press releases and TCAG's 'On the Move' newsletter. All comments regarding the RTP and associated EIR are considered and the final documents are presented to TCAG for approval at the following Board meeting. After approval, the Final RTP and EIR are posted TCAG's website and distributed to FHWA, FTA, Caltrans, San Joaquin Valley COGs, San Joaquin Valley APCD, EPA, ARB and member agencies. [Note: All of TCAG's planning documents are available upon request in hard-copy format.]

Amendments

RTP amendments are usually triggered by a project specific need to be consistent with either the project's environmental document or the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). The process of RTP amendments follows the process of the specific FTIP amendment.

IV. Federal Transportation Improvement Program

Background

The Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is a federal requirement for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that was created in 1991. The FTIP is a financially constrained transportation-programming document developed in cooperation with state and federal agencies and the eight San Joaquin Valley Counties. The 2007 FTIP is a compilation of transportation projects that include full or partial federal funding. Projects include FTA urbanized and non-urbanized areas funding, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ), Transportation Enhancement (TE) and other programs using federal funding.

The FTIP is composed of two parts. The first is a priority list of projects and project segments to be carried out in a four year period. The second is a financial plan that demonstrates how the FTIP can be implemented. The financial plan is also required to indicate all public and private resources and financing techniques that are expected to be used to carry out the program. Federal legislation has further defined the FTIP process focusing on enhanced public and public agency participation.

The basic premise behind a FTIP is that it is the incremental implementation (four years) of the long-range RTP (20 years). The FTIP was developed, for federal funding agencies, to manage components of funding the RTP and is comprehensively updated every two years.

Goals, Strategies and Procedures

Goal: Raise the public's level of understanding of the Federal Transportation Improvement Program.

Strategy: Use a variety of presentation methods and modes of communication to disseminate information to the public.

Procedures:

- Use TCAG's 'On the Move' newsletter to highlight the FTIP.
- Post the FTIP on the TCAG website (<http://www.tularecog.org/>)
- Work with other agencies and organizations to educate and inform the public regarding the FTIP.
- Respond to the public's requests or questions in a timely and professional manner.
- Use maps, charts and other visualization techniques to convey information regarding FTIP.
- Use TCAG's public relations consultant to issue news releases regarding important meetings, milestones and accomplishments related to the FTIP.

Goal: Increase opportunities for public involvement in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide varied opportunities for public review and input and be responsive to that input.

Procedures:

- Provide timely public notice of meetings for FTIP updates and when required, FTIP amendments.
- Conduct or attend project/process focused meetings outside the usual monthly TCAG Board meeting to gather public input. This includes giving presentations at city councils, town councils and community groups.
- Use exhibits and hand-outs to highlight and inform that public of the FTIP and other transportation issues at the Tulare County Fair.

Goal: Involve traditionally under-served persons such as low-income and minority households, the elderly, those addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Native American tribes in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to reach out and address the transportation related needs of traditionally under-served persons.

Procedures:

- Use SSTAC as a forum to address transit needs for traditionally under-served persons.
- Provide Spanish language translation at meetings or for written documents when necessary.
- TCAG meeting locations regarding the FTIP should be reasonably accessible to those addressed by the ADA.
- Meet with the Tule River Tribe Council at least once a year to determine if Tribal transportation issues are being adequately addressed in the FTIP.

Goal: Involve other public agencies, organizations and other groups which represent various segments of the public in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to seek input and involvement from other public agencies, organizations and groups.

Procedures:

- Provide opportunities for member public agencies to be kept informed and involved in transportation planning processes through TAC and other TCAG committees.
- Provide opportunities for that resource agencies to be kept informed and involved in the FTIP process through EAC and timely distribution of FTIP amendment requests to Caltrans and FHWA (when required).
- Attend meetings and give presentations to other public agencies, organizations and other groups regarding the FTIP when necessary.

Development and Circulation

Expedited Project Selection Procedures (EPSP):

EPSP allows eligible projects to be moved between FTIP fiscal years within the four year FTIP as long as the project cost and scope do not change. TCAG staff is authorized to utilize EPSP without additional state or federal approval action.

Amendment Type 1 – Administrative:

Administrative amendments include minor changes to project cost (less than 20% **25% or \$5 million**), scope, schedule or funding sources. They require action by TCAG (**delegated to the Executive Director or TCAG Chair**) and approval by Caltrans. Federal agencies are notified but do not take approval action. Public notification **of the Amendment** is posted on TCAG's website (<http://www.tularecog.org/>) at the time of the action and subsequently posted on Caltrans website (www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog) after their approval.

Amendment Type 2 – Formal Amendment (Funding Changes):

Type 2 amendments include project cost changes that are greater than \$2 million or 20% of the total project cost, whichever is lower. Public notice **of the Amendment** is posted ~~30~~ **at least 14** days prior to ~~adoption~~ **action (delegated to the Executive Director or TCAG Chair)** ~~in the Visalia Times-Delta (VTD) and posted on the TCAG website prior to TCAG action.~~ ~~It's~~ **The amendment is** distributed to local agencies through the TAC. These amendments require approval by TCAG, Caltrans and FHWA. The approving TCAG resolution and amendment is forwarded to Caltrans and FHWA for approval both in hard copy and electronic format.

Amendment Type 3 – Formal Amendment (Exempt Projects):

Type 3 amendments included adding or deleting projects that are exempt from regional air quality emissions analysis such as transit buses, etc. These amendments typically include transit or safety projects. Public notice **of the Amendment** is posted ~~30~~ **at least 14** days prior to ~~adoption~~ **action (delegated to the Executive Director or TCAG Chair)** ~~in the Visalia Times-Delta (VTD) and posted on the TCAG website prior to TCAG action.~~ ~~It's~~ **The amendment is** distributed to local agencies through the TAC. These amendments require approval by TCAG, Caltrans and FHWA. The approving TCAG resolution and amendment is forwarded to Caltrans and FHWA for approval both in hard copy and electronic format.

Amendment Type 4 – Formal Amendment (Conformity Determination that Relies on a Previous Regional Emissions Analysis):

Type 4 amendments include adding or deleting projects that have already been appropriately modeled for air quality purposes as part of the RTP. Federal approving agencies can use a previous analysis of the project's impact on air quality for approval purposes. These amendments may be accompanied by an RTP amendment to maintain consistency. **The legally noticed public comment period is 30 days. Public Notice is posted 30 days prior to adoption** **The legal notice of the public hearing is posted** in the Visalia Times-Delta (VTD) and posted on the TCAG website ~~prior to TCAG action.~~ **These notices may be combined as long as they are compliant with state and federal noticing provisions.** ~~It's~~ **The amendment is** distributed to local agencies through the TAC. These amendments require approval by TCAG, Caltrans and FHWA. The approving TCAG resolution and amendment is forwarded to Caltrans and FHWA for approval both in hard copy and electronic format.

Amendment Type 5 – Formal Amendment (Conformity Determination and New Regional Emissions Analysis):

Type 5 amendments are the highest level amendment and involve adding or deleting new projects that result in new modeling for air quality impacts or significantly changing the design concept, scope or schedule of an existing project. These are accompanied

by a new Air Quality Conformity document that demonstrates conformity with applicable air quality requirements. These amendments may be accompanied by an RTP amendment to maintain consistency. **The legally noticed public comment period is 30 days. Public Notice is posted 30 days prior to adoption. The legal notice of the public hearing is posted** in the Visalia Times-Delta (VTD) and posted on the TCAG website ~~prior to TCAG action.~~ **These notices may be combined as long as they are compliant with state and federal noticing provisions.** ~~It's~~ **The amendment is** distributed to local agencies through the TAC. These amendments require approval by TCAG, Caltrans and FHWA and are distributed to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. The approving TCAG resolution and amendment is forwarded to Caltrans and FHWA for approval both in hard copy and electronic format.

'Local agencies' include the Cities of Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia and Woodlake, Tulare County and the Tule River Indian Tribe. FTIP updates follow the same process as Type 5 amendments. Copies of all amendments and updates are posted on the TCAG website (<http://www.tularecog.org/>) and hardcopies are provided to other agencies, organizations or individuals upon request.

V. Overall Work Program

Background

The Program contains work elements with detailed tasks as well as revenues and expenditures anticipated for the year. The following is a summary of major work products and highlights from the 2009/10 OWP:

1. Continued Measure R Implementation and Planning.
2. Continued work on the Valley Regional Blueprint which includes a Tulare County Vision, Local and Regional Scenario development, and public outreach.
3. Monthly Board meetings.
4. Continued funding of \$1,000 to each member agency for transportation training.
5. Amendments and updates of the 2008 Interim Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP).
6. Development of the 2010 FTIP
7. Development of the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
8. Travel forecasting services.
9. Assistance to member agencies with the preparation of local bicycle transportation plans and grant requests.
10. Support for regional rideshare program through Kings County Transit and partnering with Fresno COG and Valleyrides.com for rideshare efforts for Tulare County citizens.
11. Special Studies
 - a. Completion of 2008/09 studies
 - b. High speed rail
 - c. As-needed traffic engineering services (non-federal funds)
 - d. Ag Mitigation Study
12. Continued City of Visalia and Porterville Urbanized Area transit planning efforts.
13. Continued public information and participation.
14. Continued Air Quality monitoring and planning efforts.
15. Continued TCAG RACM monitoring of commitments.

Goals, Strategies and Procedures

Goal: Increase opportunities for public involvement and understanding of the Overall Work Program.

Strategy: Provide varied opportunities for public review and input and be responsive to that input.

Procedures:

- Provide timely public notice of public meetings related to the OWP.
- Conduct a public workshop to present the Draft OWP to the TCAG Board and any other interested party.
- Post the Draft and Final OWPs on the TCAG website.

Goal: Involve other public agencies, organizations and other groups which represent various segments of the public in transportation planning processes.

Strategy: Provide forums and seek alternative methods to seek input and involvement from other public agencies, organizations and groups.

Procedures:

- Provide opportunities for member public agencies to be kept informed and involved in the development of the OWP through TAC.
- Provide the Draft OWP to Caltrans, FHWA and FTA in a timely manner and address comments that are received.
- Attend meetings and give presentations as needed.

Development and Circulation

- The Draft OWP is provided to TAC for initial review and posted on the TCAG website.
- The Draft OWP is provided for Interagency Consultation (this includes Caltrans, FHWA and FTA).
- Meet with Caltrans, FHWA and FTA staff to review the OWP and receive comments.
- The Draft OWP is updated to address comments received from TAC and the Interagency Consultation.
- The Draft OWP is presented at a public workshop to the TCAG Board and opportunity is given to receive additional comments.
- All additional comments are considered and the Final OWP is developed.
- The Final OWP is presented to the TCAG Board for approval.
- The Final OWP is posted on the TCAG website.
- The Final OWP is sent to FHWA/FTA for approval.

VI. Special Planning Studies

Background

TCAG engages in a variety of special planning studies in addition to the development of the RTP and FTIP. Recent examples of this include the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint, the Regional Bike Plan and the Light Rail Preliminary Feasibility Study. The Regional Blueprint is currently the largest on-going special planning project at TCAG and is a prime example of a cross-jurisdictional plan that is being jointly developed by the eight San Joaquin Valley Councils of Government (COGs). Listed below is a description of the Blueprint:

Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) is one of eight Councils of Government that will collaboratively develop the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint. In conjunction with Fresno (<http://www.fresnocog.org/>), Kern (<http://www.kerncog.org/>), Kings (<http://www.countyofkings.com/kcag/>), Madera (<http://www.maderactc.org/>), Merced (<http://www.mcagov.org/>), San Joaquin (<http://www.sjcog.org/>), and Stanislaus (<http://www.stancog.org/>) Councils of Government, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (<http://www.valleyair.org/>) and the Great Valley Center (<http://www.greatvalley.org/>), TCAG will be establishing the valley-wide fifty-year vision that the Blueprint is to represent. Three quality of life outcomes, called the 3Es, are stated goals for the Blueprint: a prosperous economy, a quality environment, and social equity. The 3Es are goals we think we can achieve as a valley by integrating our respective local plans in transportation, housing, land use, environmental resources, infrastructure, and other services into a cooperative valley-wide document.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Included, as necessary, within the individual study's plan. For example, the Citizen Participation Plan for the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint is posted here: <http://www.tularecog.org/regionalblueprint.htm>

Development and Circulation

Determined, as necessary, within the individual study's plan. For an example, refer to the Citizen Participation Plan for the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint.

Appendix A – Development and Update of the Public Participation Plan

Pursuant to SAFETEA-LU, an MPO's Public Participation Plan must be developed in consultation with 'all interested parties'. (Note: A more in-depth process was used to develop the initial plan. Please refer Appendix A of the 2007 Public Participation Plan for this process.) Listed below is the step by step process to be used to develop update the Plan:

- On February 27, 2009, notice of the 45-day public review period and the public hearing was posted in the Visalia Times-Delta. The Plan was mailed and/or e-mailed to all identified Resource Agencies, the Tule River Tribe and other interested agencies, organizations or individuals. In addition, a letter was sent to all remaining agencies, organizations and individuals on TCAG mailing lists notifying them that the Draft Plan was available for review and is posted on the TCAG website (<http://www.tularecog.org/>).
- March 16, 2009, Public Hearing at the Visalia Convention Center (1:00PM, 303 E Acequia Ave, Visalia CA 93291).
- April 13, 2009, end of public comment period. All comments are to be addressed with the comments and responses to be included in Appendix B of the final Plan.
- April 20, 2009, anticipated adoption of the updated Plan.

Appendix B – Responses to Comments

To be included in the Final Plan. (Please refer to Appendix B of the 2007 Public Participation Plan for responses to comments for the initial development of the Plan.)