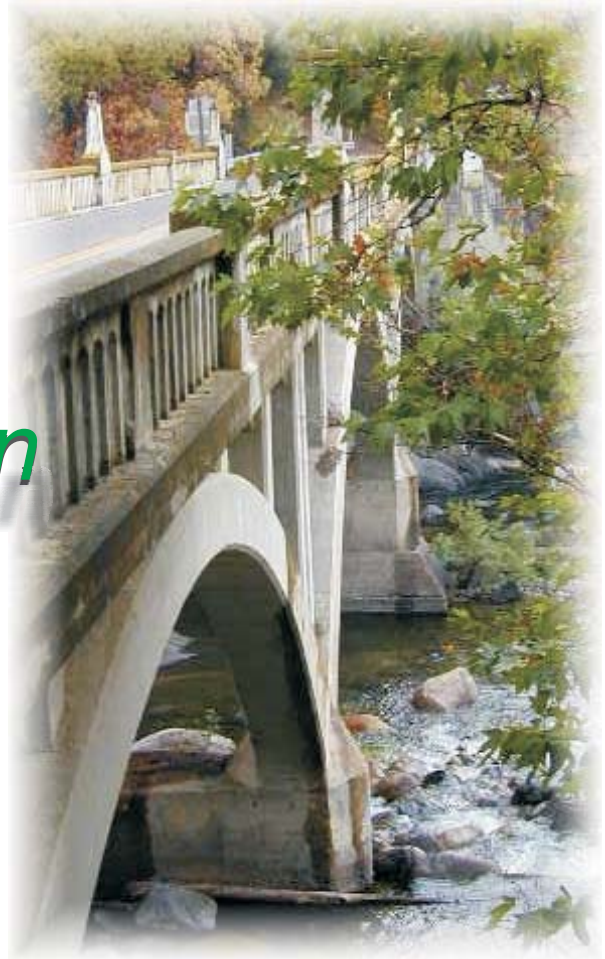


2011

Regional
Transportation
Plan

Tulare County
Since 1852



*July 19, 2010
Seventeenth Edition
Final*

The preparation of this report has been financed in part by the State of California Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, local transportation funds and in-kind contributions of member agencies of the Tulare County Association of Governments. The Tulare County 2011 Regional Transportation Plan was developed to meet the California Transportation Commission 2007 Regional Transportation Guidelines.

BEFORE THE
TULARE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of:

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TULARE)	
COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS)	
2011 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN)	
2011 FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION)	Resolution No. 10-036
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND)	
CORRESPONDING AIR QUALITY)	
CONFORMITY ANALYSIS)	

WHEREAS, the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) is a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and a Metropolitan Planning Organization, pursuant to State and Federal designation; and

WHEREAS, federal planning regulations require Metropolitan Planning Organizations to prepare and adopt a long range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for their region; and

WHEREAS, federal planning regulations require that Metropolitan Planning Organizations prepare and adopt a Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) for their region; and

WHEREAS, Section 65080 of the California Government Code requires each regional transportation planning agency to prepare a regional transportation plan and update it for submission to the governing Policy Board for adoption; and

WHEREAS, Section 65080 of the California Government Code requires each regional transportation planning agency to prepare a regional transportation plan and update it for submission to the governing Policy Board for adoption; and

WHEREAS, a 2011 Regional Transportation Plan has been prepared in full compliance with federal guidance; and

WHEREAS, a 2011 Regional Transportation Plan has been prepared in accordance with state guidelines adopted by the California Transportation Commission; and

WHEREAS, federal planning regulations require that Metropolitan Planning Organizations prepare and adopt a short range Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) for their region; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (2011 FTIP) has been prepared to comply with Federal and State requirements for local projects and through a cooperative process between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the State Department of Transportation (Caltrans), principal elected officials of general purpose local governments and their staffs, and public owner operators of mass

transportation services acting through the Tulare County Association of Governments forum and general public involvement; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 FTIP program listing is consistent with: 1) the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan; 2) the 2010 State Transportation Improvement Program; and 3) the Corresponding Conformity Analysis; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 FTIP contains the MPO's certification of the transportation planning process assuring that all federal requirements have been fulfilled; and

WHEREAS, the 2001 FTIP meets all applicable transportation planning requirements per 23 CFR Part 450; and

WHEREAS, projects submitted in the 2011 FTIP must be financially constrained and the financial plan affirms that funding is available; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 RTP and 2011 FTIP includes a new Conformity Analysis; and

WHEREAS, the MPO must demonstrate conformity per 40 CFR Part 93 for the RTP and FTIP; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 RTP and 2011 FTIP do not interfere with the timely implementation of the Transportation Control Measures; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 RTP and 2011 FTIP conforms to the applicable SIPs; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with EPA Companion Guidance for the Conformity Rule for multi-jurisdictional areas, Tulare County Association of Governments has developed their portion of the PM2.5 regional emissions analysis separately and provided the entire PM2.5 nonattainment area conformity demonstration; and

WHEREAS, the PM2.5 nonattainment area conformity demonstration is contingent upon adoption by all MPOs in the PM2.5 nonattainment area; and

WHEREAS, the documents have been widely circulated and reviewed by Tulare County Association of Governments advisory committees representing the technical and management staffs of the member agencies; representatives of other governmental agencies, including State and Federal; representatives of special interest groups; representatives of the private business sector; and residents of Tulare County consistent with public participation process adopted by Tulare County Association of Governments; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was conducted on May 17, 2010 to hear and consider comments on the 2011 RTP, 2011 FTIP, and Corresponding Conformity Analysis; and the remainder of the MPOs in the PM2.5 nonattainment area have conducted public hearings as well; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Tulare County Association of Governments adopts the 2011 RTP, 2011 FTIP, and Corresponding Conformity Analysis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tulare County Association of Governments finds that the 2011 RTP and 2011 FTIP are in conformity with the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments and applicable State Implementation Plans for air quality.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted upon the motion of Member Ennis, seconded by Member Ortega, at a regular meeting on the 19th day of July, 2010, by the following vote:

AYES: Ishida, Vander Poel, Cox, Worthley, Ennis, McKittrick, Allwardt, Boyer, Kimball, Ortega, Link, Zimmerman, Sparks, McKinley

NOES:

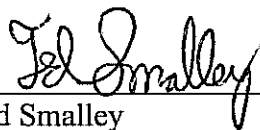
ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Martinez, Mendoza

TULARE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS



Pete Vander Poel
Chair, TCAG



Ted Smalley
Executive Director, TCAG

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution of the Tulare County Association of Governments duly adopted at a regular meeting thereof held on the 19th day of July, 2010.

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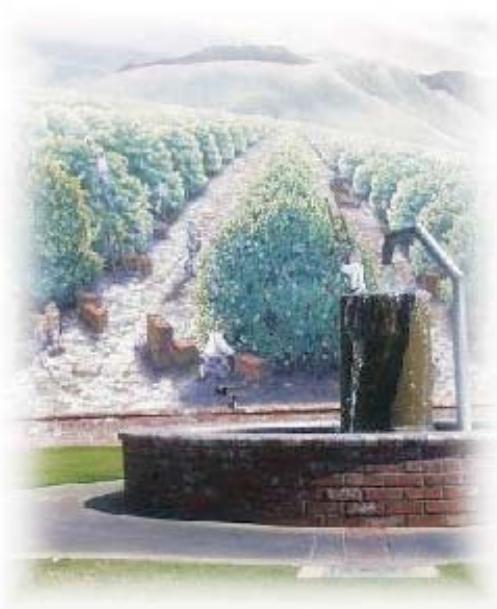
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*Exeter Mural
and City Park*

Executive **S**ummary



City of Lindsay Mural

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Location

Tulare County is located in California's San Joaquin Valley [Figure 1-1]. Tulare County is bordered by Inyo County to the east, Fresno County to the north, Kings County to the west and Kern County to the south. The western third of the County is valley floor while the middle and eastern thirds of the County contains the foothills and the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The County is situated 180 miles north of Los Angeles and 200 miles south of San Francisco. State Route 99 (SR-99), a major north-south corridor in the State, provides direct access to Los Angeles and Sacramento. State Route 198 (SR-198) provides an east to west corridor between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Interstate 5 in Fresno County.

The San Joaquin Valley consists of the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings, and Kern. The centralized location and affordable land cost allow Tulare County to attract industries that need efficient access to transportation facilities throughout the state. Tulare County's economic environment is diversified, ranging from agricultural production to manufacturing durable goods. Tulare County supports the economic environment with approximately 441,481 residents (2008 Department of Finance).

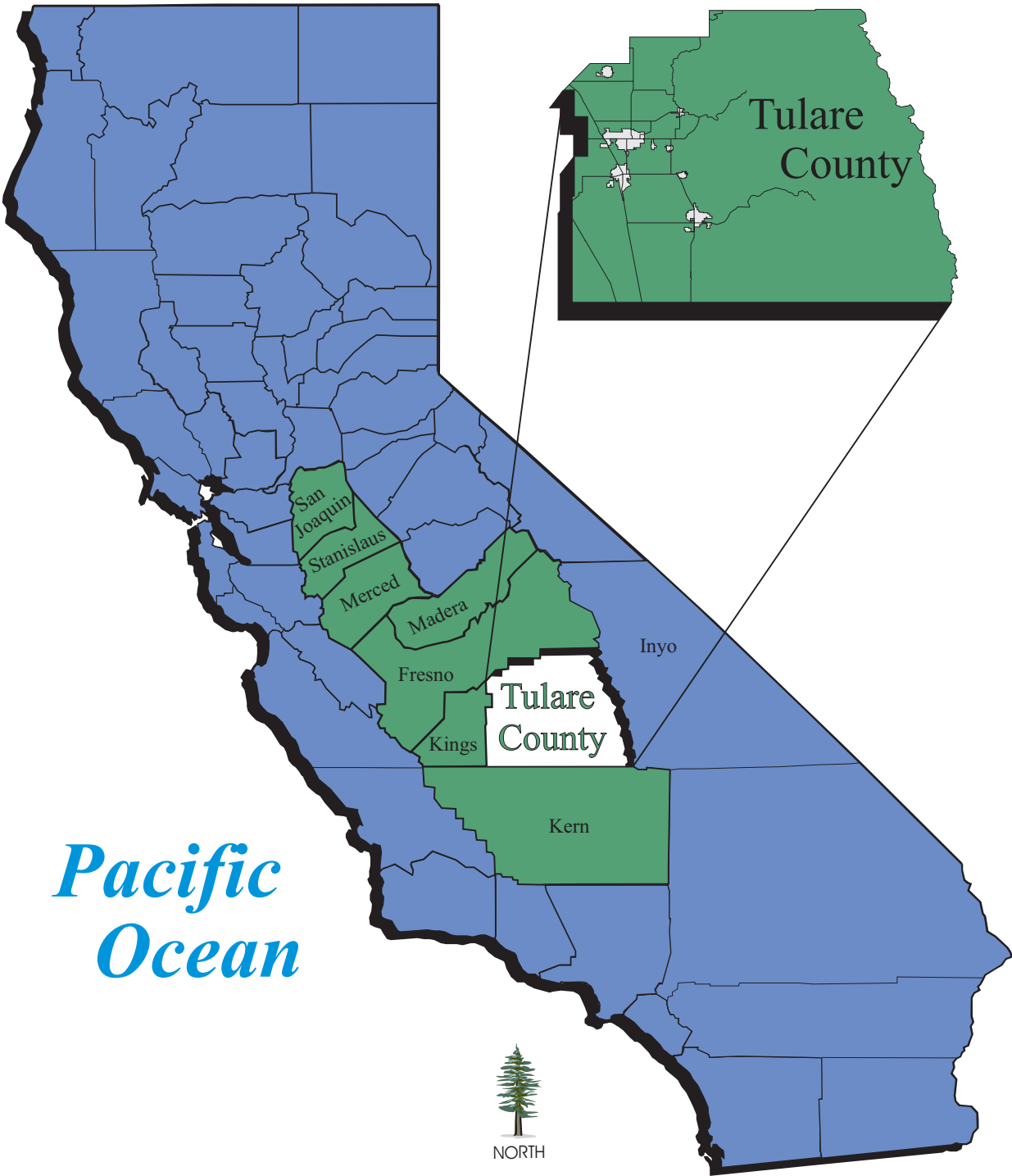
The Regional Transportation Plan

The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) developed the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP must be at least a 20-year planning document that is consistent with the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to qualify projects for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This RTP is a 25 year document addressing transportation needs through 2035. The first RTP was written and adopted in 1975 with updates every two years. In 1999, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) changed the requirement to every three years and 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 last RTP was updated in 2007. The document is based on regional transportation facilities and proposed constrained improvements funded during the time frame of the Plan.

The RTP includes a Valleywide Chapter that is also included in the RTPs of the other seven San Joaquin Valley Counties. The purpose of the Valleywide coordination effort is to address several issues of inter-jurisdictional significance, including air quality, highways, streets and roads, aviation, rail, goods movement and transportation demand efforts.

TCAG represents the Cities of Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia, Woodlake, Tulare County and the Tule River Indian Tribe in the transportation planning process. TCAG coordinates with federal, state, regional governments and the Native American tribal government to develop strategies that address transportation issues. The effort promotes direct involvement by the government and interested groups in the transportation planning and project selection process.

Figure 1-1
Tulare County and the
San Joaquin Valley



What's New?

In addition to updating the information contained in the 2007 RTP, there are several significant additions to the 2011 RTP. These include the following:

- Goals, policies and objectives for the Tulare County Regional Blueprint (Policy Element)
- Cost estimates for Operations & Maintenance (O&M), Project Development and Capital Investment (Action Element)
- A discussion regarding how local agencies address O&M (Action Element)
- The addition of the Goods Movement Chapter
- The addition of a chapter addressing greenhouse gas emissions in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (Appendix C)
- The addition of the Coordinated Transportation (Transit) Plan (Appendix E)
- The addition of the Public Participation Plan (Appendix F)

POLICY ELEMENT

The Policy Element identifies transportation goals, objectives and policies that meet the needs of the region. Goals, objectives and policies are established to determine specific courses of action to guide Tulare County toward implementation of the RTP. The element begins by discussing general regional issues including population growth, development, sources of funding and impact mitigation techniques.

REGIONAL ISSUES

Tulare County's steady growth rate is increasing demands on the existing transportation system. In some cases, traffic has exceeded roadway capacity and

mitigation measures are needed to relieve congested areas.

Tulare County has increased efforts to expand alternative modes of transportation. In spite of these efforts, the automobile has continued to be the primary mode of transportation in the County. As a result, capacity increasing projects will need to be constructed to relieve congestion, improve air quality and reduce the number of daily trips on our roadways. By utilizing Transportation System Management (TSM), Transportation Demand Management (TDM), and Transportation Control Measures (TCMs), and by encouraging development and improvement of alternate modes of transportation, projections indicate that the circulation system, within Tulare County, will operate more efficiently.

As development within Tulare County intensifies and impacts to the circulation system occur, appropriate mitigation measures become important considerations. Tulare County and the cities continue the development of projects to insure that minimum levels of service (LOS) on principal arterials (regional road system) are maintained in rural (LOS "D") and urban (LOS "E") areas. For State Highways, Caltrans has set a goal of LOS "D."

ACTION ELEMENT

ASSUMPTIONS

The Action Element has been prepared based on the best possible planning assumptions available to TCAG during the preparation of the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan. Unforeseen natural disasters, state financial constraints and cost increases can affect the projects listed in the RTP. The RTP is prepared assuming current funding levels (see financial element) will remain constant over the next 20 years. Population in Tulare County is expected to

continue to grow at about 2% per year (20 year average). The RTP recognizes that there is a current funding shortfall to cover all transportation needs in Tulare County. Due to the size and number of road miles in Tulare County there will continue to be a deficient regional road system.

In November 2006, the voters of Tulare County passed a ½ cent 30-year regional sales tax (Measure R) to help alleviate the financial strain on the Regional Road System (Appendix B). Measure R is expected to generate over \$1.2 billion in dedicated transportation funding through 2037. Measure R will not address all of the transportation needs in Tulare County but it should show positive progress in reducing congestion and attracting new businesses.

Travel demand in Tulare County is determined through an assessment of current and future traffic estimates using field surveys and traffic counts, census data, local plans, land use trends and the Tulare County Regional Transportation Model.

Population

Tulare County has been one of the faster growing counties in the state. Since 1950, its annualized growth rate is 1.8% (2.0% since 1980). Population growth has been primarily in the incorporated cities versus the unincorporated county [Table 3-2]. As of January 2009, the Department of Finance (DOF) estimates the County population to be 441,481 and the city populations as follows:

Visalia 123,670	Tulare 58,506
Porterville 52,056	Dinuba 21,237
Lindsay 11,684	Farmersville 10,771
Exeter 10,665	Woodlake 7,769

Funding

Transportation funding has traditionally come from federal and California State sources with some funding being generated locally for transportation improvements.

The passage of Measure R added an estimated \$1.2 billion over the 30 year life of the sales tax from 2007 to 2037. A positive dedicated source of transportation funds will greatly aid in the delivery of needed projects.

In addition to the regional sales tax, Tulare County primarily receives funds from the following sources: the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) through SB 45, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), congressional or senate legislation for farm to market funds, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds, State bond sources (Proposition 1b) and local developer impact fees.

Even with positive funding accomplishments, Tulare County funds will be insufficient to maintain the current circulation system as well as correct the deferred maintenance issue. The need includes capacity increasing projects as well as maintenance on the existing system. Funding continues to fall short of the needs in Tulare County. However, the agencies in Tulare County have managed to keep the system together with the current funding levels, but are losing ground each year as inflation and traffic demand grows faster than funding.

Projections

Assuming the population continues to grow and the traffic demand continues to increase along with population, improvements on the regional circulation system must be addressed. Unfortunately, not all needs will receive the attention necessary for the improvements due to funding constraints.

NEEDS AND SCENARIOS

Transportation needs are derived from congestion and circulation conditions that result from development, population growth and roadway characteristics. The County's continual growth has contributed

to the need to improve streets, highways, and inter-city transit.

Regional transportation needs for the County have been defined based upon the following programs:

- Tulare County Regional Transportation Model (TP+/Viper);
- Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP);
- Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP); and
- Transit Development Plans (TDPs).

This section provides a summary of existing and future conditions on the Tulare County transportation system. The analysis is intended to establish a rational process to meet future travel needs. Long-term effects on roadway capacities by projecting future traffic levels and improvements that result in increasing traffic volumes are examined.

FORECASTING

Forecasting is a vital part of planning for future road and transportation improvements that will meet the anticipated deficiencies in the transportation system. Population, households, employment and land use are key ingredients in determining future impacts on the circulation system. Projections were developed from Department of Finance data, transportation model inputs and data from Woods & Poole for population, housing units and employment and income [Tables 3-4.1 to 3-4.3]. Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. is a nationally recognized firm that specializes in projections.

Land Use

The predominant land use in the County is agricultural. Exceptions include urban areas and smaller communities that have residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and public facilities. With growth

and intensification of land uses in the cities and County, street and highway improvements, as well as public transit expansion must be implemented to accommodate trips generated by proposed developments. All future trip forecasts have been based upon the most recently adopted land use elements of each city and the County.

Traffic (build vs. no build)

Figures 3-4 and 3-5 identify roadway segments that are considered to be at capacity with LOS D, E and F in the rural areas and E and F in the urban areas for 2009. Figure 3-9 displays regional roads at capacity with no improvements being built and Figure 3-10 displays regional roads at capacity with improvements being built. The Tulare County Regional Transportation Model identified these segments.

Environmental Justice

To address the evaluation of environmental justice issues, Table 3-6 includes specific performance measures that were considered as TCAG evaluated all capacity-increasing projects proposed by the local agencies. The performance measure insures that the issue of environmental justice is considered as projects are nominated for inclusion in the RTP. Once a project is included in the financially-constrained project listing, projects will meet the needs of all County residents and will be further evaluated as additional planning, programming and implementation phases are initiated.

ALTERNATIVES

The RTP evaluates each project based on need, safety, level of service, cost and environmental factors. TCAG currently uses the criteria in Table 3-5 as a guideline in selecting STIP projects that will use the limited amount of Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds available to Tulare

County. TCAG will be under less financial stress based on the passage of Measure R, the STIP augmentation and the State bond passage in November 2006. Figures 3-9 and 3-10 illustrate the projects that will be developed under different scenarios.

COST CONSIDERATION

The 2011 RTP is a financially constrained document. All projects listed in the RTP are fundable during the scope of the Plan with exception of the unconstrained projects listed in Tables 3-12 and 3-15. TCAG anticipates there will be approximately \$476 million available in STIP funds through FY 2034/35. Developer impact fee programs or other local funding sources (including state disbursements to local agencies) will likely generate over \$1.7 billion in revenue. Measure R is expected to generate over \$1.2 billion over its 30 year life from 2007 to 2037. Other state and federal funding sources will also boost TCAG's spending power over the next 25 years.

Member agencies submitted a list of other desired projects to receive future federal and state funding totaling over \$2 billion. There is approximately \$383 million available to Transit, \$177 million available in CMAQ for Air Quality improvements, \$35 million available for Transportation Enhancements and a \$25 million open for statewide competition available for bicycle improvements (See Table 4-14 for funding).

SOCIAL IMPACTS

The social impacts from not building and improving the regional road system are lower levels of service and more roads at capacity. Impacts from no improvements also include road deterioration, more deferred maintenance and road surface failure. The impacts affect the mentality of the residents living and traversing Tulare County. Not improving the roads impacts residents who

must cope with the already poor condition of roads in the rural areas, and residents who live in the cities will have to cope with longer travel times, increased congestion, and poorer air quality. The cost of fuel affects everyone from businesses to residents which leads to more general financial frustration. The lack of gas tax funds that do go to road improvements, along with the State's General Fund problems causes more dissatisfaction to the drivers and taxpayers of Tulare County. With over 3,000 miles of rural roads that are over \$600 million behind in road maintenance, Tulare County faces a struggle to maintain the current system as well as to address future congestion.

Other social impacts that may result from poor transportation planning include the development over historical landmarks, Indian burial grounds or camps, and demolishing current homes in the right of ways of new developments. Every aspect of increasing the highway or road process is thoroughly weighted to minimize impacts on the environment or sacred grounds.

RTP ANALYSIS

To assess highway and arterial needs, TCAG developed a process to evaluate candidate capacity-increasing projects considering performance-based measures and level of service (LOS) analysis.

Project Rankings

According to the RTP Guidelines, each RTP agency (RTPA) should define a set of "program level" transportation system performance measures that reflect the goals and objectives adopted in the RTP. The program level performance measures in the RTP set the context for judging the effectiveness of the RTP, as a program, in furthering the goals and objectives of the RTP, while the STIP Guidelines address

performance measurements of specific projects.

The RTIP is a listing of all transportation projects proposed over a five year period for the Region that are funded through the STIP. The projects include highway improvements, transit, rail and bus facilities, signal synchronization, intersection improvements, freeway ramps, etc. The locally prioritized lists of projects are forwarded to TCAG for review, and TCAG develops the RTIP list of projects based on consistency with the RTP, financial constraint, and the ability to make a conformity determination.

Conformity

TCAG is required to make findings of air quality conformity for both the RTP and the FTIP before the documents are approved by federal agencies.

Regional Transportation Monitoring

Transportation planning for the region requires continually improved and updated information on the condition and utilization of the transportation system.

Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS)

HPMS is used as a transportation monitoring and management tool to determine the allocation of Federal Aid Funds, to assist in setting policies, and to forecast future transportation needs as it analyzes the transportation system's length, condition, and performance.

Triennial Performance Audit for Transit

State law requires that TCAG designate an independent entity to make a performance audit of its transit activities and the activities of each transit provider to whom TCAG allocates funds. The audit is conducted every three years and must evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and

economy of the operation for which the audit is being conducted. TCAG must certify with the Director of the State Department of Transportation that the required audit has been completed in order to receive State transit funds.

Benchmarking

As the designated RTPA, TCAG is required to prepare the RTP using performance based measures that will help decision makers better analyze transportation options and trade-offs.

Environmental Issues

Aesthetics

The portion of Tulare County that is most relevant to the RTP is relatively flat within the Valley region. The Valley area is where the vast majority of the population and road system exists, are met in the east by foothill and mountain ranges and include the Cities of Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake. The aesthetic quality of the County has been affected by transportation for some time. As a result, the existing and planned multimodal transportation system is not considered to have a significant impact on the aesthetic quality in Tulare County.

Agricultural Resources

Located in the world's richest agricultural region, Tulare County is ranked as the second most productive in agricultural commodity values of any county in the United States. Tulare County is also the number one milk-processing county in the country. Agriculture is one of the primary industries in the County, with much of the level and moderately sloping land used for the production of agricultural crops. Tulare County's agricultural production yields over 250 products annually, the top annual products being milk and dairy products,

walnuts, almonds, navels and valencia oranges, grapes, peaches, and cattle. Agricultural products were valued at over \$5 billion in 2008.

Air Quality

Tulare County is in the California Air Resources Board-designated San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). The air basin is an extreme non-attainment area for ozone and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size (PM_{2.5}). The air basin is an unclassified attainment area (federal) and attainment area (State) for carbon monoxide (CO).

Cultural Resources

The prehistoric human occupation of the area now known as Tulare County is evident as traces of existence have been found. There are numerous recorded archeological sites in the County, most of which are located in the foothill and mountain areas. Recorded prehistoric artifacts include village sites, campsites, bedrock milling stations, pictographs, petroglyphs, rock rings, sacred sites and resource gathering areas. Tulare County is home to a significant number of potentially significant historical sites.

Geology & Soils

The Valley is basically a flat, alluvial plain, containing rock and soil derived from the uplift and erosion of the nearby Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges Mountains. Soils and rock in the valley and foothill regions are generally dense and compact, and relatively safe from damage from earthquakes. The San Andreas Fault is the primary earthquake fault of concern for the San Joaquin Valley. The San Andreas Fault lies to the west of the Valley in the Coast Ranges and has produced several large earthquakes in historic times.

Public Services

Various federal, state and local agencies and private companies in Tulare County provide public services. Fire services in urban areas of the County are generally provided by local agency fire departments. Various fire districts, the County fire dept., and/or the U.S. Forest Service and the State Department of Forestry also provide fire suppression services to urban areas, as well as in rural areas of the County and/or in federal and State Park preserve and recreation areas.

Recreation

The eastern half of Tulare County is comprised primarily of public lands that include the Sequoia National Park, Inyo and Sequoia National Forests, and Mineral King, Golden Trout, and Domelands Wilderness Areas. Opportunities for all-season outdoor recreation include: hiking, water and snow skiing, fishing and boating.

Transportation & Traffic

Implementation of the 2011 RTP will result in improvements to existing regional transportation and circulation systems. RTP implementation to the street and highway network will assist in the improvement to airports, mass transportation services and facilities. Identification of additional bikeways and pedestrian improvements, and improved transportation systems that accommodate goods movement will provide region-wide benefits.

LINKAGE WITH VALLEY AIR QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

State Implementation Plan

For many years, the San Joaquin Valley has had bad air quality. An inversion layer sits atop the valley that creates poor ventilation and air stagnation. Other contributors to the deterioration of air quality include: ambient air from coastal air basins; agricultural industry; industrial factors; travel characteristics of employees; and vehicle (and truck) trips through the Valley. All of these activities generate pollution. Concentrations of gaseous pollutants are largely generated by identified mobile and stationary sources.

Due to the Basin's light wind patterns and surrounding mountains, air quality problems occur throughout the year. Particulate matter pollution is a problem in winter months as is ozone in the summer. These conditions, coupled with the continuing increase in population, congestion and existing agricultural production have led to significant air quality problems.

Major elements that contribute to the Valley's non-attainment of air quality standards include: Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x), Sulfur Oxides (SO_x), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Ozone (O₃), and Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀).

Particulate matter can be traced to agricultural activities, planned and unplanned fires, and unpaved and entrained road dust (e.g. car brakes and side road dust). Fuel combustion, solvent use, industrial processes, waste burning, petroleum process, landfills, and pesticides generate significant levels of ROG and NO_x that react in the presence of sunlight to create ozone. Ozone and Particulate Matter are two of the major air pollutants found in the Valley.

Federal and State Legislation

Federal legislation requires that the RTP integrate transportation and air quality during the planning process. The 1990 California Clean Air Act (CCAA) amendment requires the stipulations in order to receive federal funding. Failure to meet Federal and State requirements of the CAAA may result in disciplinary actions.

ACTION ELEMENT OVERVIEW

The circulation system in Tulare County plays a significant role in the economy. As a rural region, Tulare County is dependent on local highways, streets, and roads to meet basic transportation needs. Consumers outside of the region that are dependent on the San Joaquin Valley for agricultural goods may have trouble receiving goods if the road network is not maintained. In order to maintain a deteriorating circulation system, Tulare County, and the cities have implemented programs to reduce congestion, improve efficiency and obtain dedicated funds.

The objective of the highway, streets, and roads section is to identify a regional circulation system. Once the system is determined, the funding to maintain and improve these roadways is identified. The funds available are insufficient to address every regional roadway. In order to provide a balance and maintain an efficient circulation system, a prioritized project list is developed.

Aviation is also available as an option in Tulare County's overall transportation system. In the Cities of Visalia, Porterville, and Tulare, local transit systems provide public access to the airports. The Visalia Municipal Airport, the largest in the County, currently provides direct service to Ontario, CA. All three airports have services including charters, fixed base operations, avionics, and general aviation.

Other modes of transportation in Tulare County are classified as Non-Motorized transportation. Non-Motorized transportation includes pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities. In Tulare County's populated centers, bicycle commuting is a viable transportation alternative.

Goods movement throughout Tulare County is also an important aspect of the region's circulation system and economic vitality. Goods are moved through the region by both rail and trucks. The addition of rail, bicycle facilities, and existing mass transit will reduce congestion and improve air quality throughout the County.

Long Range Plan

Currently, the Long Range Plan for Tulare County includes \$740 million in locally funded projects (Table 3-13) and \$1.2 billion in regional projects (Table 3-14). There is an estimated \$2.1 billion available for operations and maintenance (Table 3-16). Requested projects that do not currently have complete sources of funding identified total \$545 million (Table 3-15).

Corridor Preservation

The analysis of the regional circulation system in the 2011 RTP emphasizes persons and goods movement through transportation corridors. Corridors may be thought of in terms of the number of people or tonnage of freight moved in any particular direction, regardless of the facility.

In Tulare County major travel corridors often closely mirror regionally significant roadways.

Previous Plan Accomplishments

Since the inception of the Regional Transportation Plan, Tulare County has seen many Transportation Projects come to fruition. This is the 17th Regional Transportation Plan prepared by TCAG.

Implementation

TCAG continues to implement the RTP and administer federal finances to the member agencies. Measure R aids in the implementation and funding of transportation projects. The RTP is a document designed to target future projects and eventually build those projects. The RTP is a guideline to prioritize the list of fundable projects that Tulare County can anticipate to build in the next 20 years. Using the revenue estimates as shown in the Financial Element and the project cost elements in Tables 3-13 and 3-14, the financially constrained projects listed in the RTP will be built over the next 20 years.

Air Quality

Air Quality in the San Joaquin Valley remains a top concern for Valley residents. Designated as a non-attainment region for ozone and particulate matter, local agencies and communities will be looking into instituting measures for improving emissions in Tulare County, specifically achieving reductions in transportation, agriculture, and other activities. The San Joaquin Valley Air Basin exceeded 8-hour ozone requirements 150 days in 2008, and exceeded PM 2.5 limits 81 days that year. Air Quality standards are set by the State and Federal governments. The Reasonably Available Control Measures (RACMs) and Best Available Control Measures (BACMs) are being encouraged. TCAG also has encouraged the use of Hybrid vehicles, zero emission vehicles, alternative fueled vehicles (such as Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)) and the replacement of Heavy Duty Diesel motors with newer cleaner models.

However, Air Quality is a regional problem that requires the attention of the 8 counties in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. Work must be done to meet the State and Federal Clean Air Act requirements. See the State Implementation Plan section on page

3-46 for a thorough discussion on Air Quality and measures being taken by Tulare County.

Land Use

Land use in Tulare County is predominately agriculture, and the County is committed to retaining the rich agricultural land. The foothill and mountain regions are controlled predominantly by the State and federal governments. However, as population increases, so does the demand for new housing, retail and commercial space. Agricultural land around the cities is being converted into urban uses. Housing, land, employment and economics are balanced to minimize the amount of agricultural land taken by development. Economic principles tend to take precedence over the conservation of land.

Environmental Issues & Impacts

The RTP has projects, which are planned for development within the scope of the Plan (2035) and will have a certified Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to determine the significant impacts to the environment. The CEQA Guidelines recommend tools for determining the potential for significant environmental effects including:

- *Initial Study checklist [(see the Notice of Preparation (NOP) – Appendix A)];*
- *CEQA Mandatory Findings of Significance (see the NOP, Appendix A);*
- *consultation with other agencies; and*
- *agency thresholds of significance.*

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) determined that a Programmatic EIR is required for the Tulare County 2011 RTP because the Plan would result in significant

environmental impacts. The NOP concluded that adoption of the RTP would result in less than significant impacts. See Environmental Impact Report Appendix under separate cover.

New Technologies

TCAG has encouraged the use and replacement of new efficient heavy duty diesel motors in public vehicles and fleets as well as some private. As Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) infrastructure becomes available to the consumer, more CNG use is expected. The Cities of Tulare, Visalia, Dinuba, Porterville and the County currently have or are building CNG refueling facilities. Several transit agencies use CNG to power transit buses, school buses, fleet vehicles and utility vehicles. Visalia is currently using electric trolleys in the Downtown area that as a free service to downtown patrons and a link to shopping in the area.

Emergency Preparedness

Tulare County has in place an emergency plan to cope with natural disasters that are statewide or happen locally. The County Fire Department and local stationed California Department of Forestry (CDF) are well prepared to fight fires locally as well as statewide. The United States Forest Service (USFS) is in charge of fires that happen in the national parks and Tulare County assists with the fire management process as needed.

Institutional and Legislative Actions

Since the mid 1970s, with the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 69 State law has required the preparation of Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) to address transportation issues and assist local and state decision makers in shaping California's transportation infrastructure.

Senate Bill (SB) 45, signed into law by Governor Wilson in October 1997, made significant changes in the formula for funding State and local projects. AB 1012,

approved October 7, 1999, amended SB 45 in funding project delivery.

The current federal transportation reauthorization bill, the Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy For Users (SAFETEA-LU) was signed by President Bush in 2005 and contained funding for a broad range of federal transportation programs through September 31, 2009. SAFETEA-LU was extended into 2010 while a successor transportation bill is being developed. SAFETEA-LU replaced the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21), which expired in 2003.

One feature of SAFETEA-LU, which has received substantial interest, is the large number of “earmark” projects within the bill. Over 3,000 earmark projects are contained in SAFETEA-LU, including funding for improving State Route 99, Ave 416, Ben Maddox Rd and Farm to Market roads in Tulare County.

Evaluation

Evaluating each project that is considered in the RTP is done through several processes. TCAG staff takes recommended projects and evaluates each one based on adopted guidelines. TCAG Staff reports to the TCAG Board with recommendations and evaluations about Federal Transit Administration funds. Projects are re-evaluated each time the RTP is updated or new projects are identified. The RTP is a plan that determines which projects are eligible for funding, identifies project parameters and schedules an approximate time of construction within the 20 year horizon.

Resource Sharing

Tulare County has partnered with many jurisdictions and agencies in the past. TCAG has partnered on air quality issues, project development, long range planning and other efforts. Past improvements include the

cross-valley rail (track upgrade) improvements. Tulare County is in the process of developing the Blueprint Planning Process that consolidates long range planning concerns throughout the Valley.

TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES

Tulare County has long been known for affordable housing opportunities. Attraction of the affordable housing is expected to remain the source for much of the County's future population growth. As a result, any major increase in employment within the County will cause increased demands in the housing market.

Considering increased population, expansion of industry and residency throughout the County, the need for compact mixed-use developments, ridesharing and alternative commuting modes become an issue.

Additional population concentrations of residential, commercial and industrial development will result in more automobiles within the urban areas, more auto emissions and deterioration of ambient air quality. Additional industrial and commercial development may result with increased emissions at and near such sites.

Implementation Strategies

Implementing the 2011 RTP is done incrementally through the development of short range programs. The programs include the 2011 FTIP, 2010 RTIP/STIP and FTA requirements for transit agencies. All projects must comply with legislative requirements and must also be included in the appropriate documents in order for the project to receive federal and/or state funding.

Transportation Demand Management

TDM consists of managing behavior regarding how, when and where people travel. TDM strategies are designed to reduce vehicular trips during peak hours by shifting

trips to other modes of transportation and reduce trips by providing jobs and housing balance.

Air Quality

Tulare County conforms to all air quality requirements set by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) and the California Clean Air Act as well as the Federal Clean Air Act. For a detailed description on air quality conformity refer to Appendix D – Air Quality Conformity Findings.

Transportation System Management

TSM is designed to identify short range, low cost capital projects that improve operational efficiency of existing infrastructure. TSMs are an important tool endorsed by the SJVAPCD and state to meet air quality standards and congestion management levels-of-service.

Land Use

Historically, land use in Tulare County has been predominantly agricultural. The agriculture industry, which includes dairies, produce, citrus and livestock, continues to be Tulare County's most intensive land use. The remaining areas are urban communities that include public facilities, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial land uses. As pressures for growth and development of land uses within city and community urban boundaries intensifies, implementation of planned street and highway improvements are imperative to accommodate increased trips generated by development.

New Technology

TCAG member agencies have implemented new technology that includes Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling stations, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and hybrid vehicle purchases. The Cities of Tulare, Visalia, Dinuba, Porterville,

Farmersville and the County have constructed or will construct CNG fueling stations and are currently operating the transit fleets with CNG as well as some city vehicles. The Cities of Porterville and Dinuba are currently in the process of enlarging CNG fueling stations to power transit fleets and some city vehicles. The City of Visalia is currently using electric trolleys in the Downtown area. As technology advances and become affordable, TCAG and the member agencies will take advantage of the benefits that come from improving the air quality.

ACTIONS BY MODE

The following modes are the actions that are being implemented by Tulare County and the Cities to improve the transportation on the Regional Road System. The section looks at Highways, Streets, and Roads, Mass Transit, Non-Motorized, (Bicycle and Pedestrian) Rail, Aviation and Goods Movement.

Highways Streets and Roads

The purpose of the highway, streets and roads section is to identify the existing regional circulation system and determine both feasible short-term and long-range improvements. Tulare County's planned circulation system consists of an extensive network of regional streets and roads, local streets and State Highways. The system is designed to provide an adequate LOS that satisfies the transportation needs of County residents. However, Tulare County has experienced a large increase in population and is beginning to outgrow portions of the circulation system. The need for major improvements to the State Highways, streets and roads network is an important issue.

The existing State Highway system was completed in the 1950s and 60s. The average design life of a State Highway is approximately 20 years and many Tulare County highways were constructed 50 years

ago. The agricultural and commercial industries continue to utilize the circulation system to get products to market. With industry intensification and other development, many facilities are beginning to show structural fatigue (e.g., surface cracks, potholes, and broken pavement).

Public Transportation

Public transportation provides an economical and efficient alternative for getting people to work, school and other chosen destinations.

In Tulare County, buses are the primary mode of public transportation. Public transportation also takes the form of shared-ride taxi, automobile and vanpools; dial-a-ride, and specialized handicapped accessible services.

In Tulare County, social service transportation is provided by the following: local transit agencies, demand responsive operators and city/county special programs for senior citizens, mental health organizations and disabled citizens programs. These programs are funded and subsidized through State and federal grants, Local Transportation Funds (LTF), State Transit Assistance Funds (STAF), and local transportation sales tax revenues.

Tulare County Area Transit (TCAT)

TCAT has been providing rural route service between various cities and towns in Tulare County since 1981. TCAT retains MV Transportation to provide all of its transit services, which includes fixed route and demand responsive services for inter-city and intra-city service in many small communities throughout the County.

TCAT is the most extensive transit system in Tulare County and connects with Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART), Visalia City Coach (VCC), Tulare InterModal Express (TIME), Porterville City Operated Local Transit (COLT), Kings Area Rural

Transit (KART), Kern Regional Transit, Orange Belt and Greyhound bus.

City of Visalia

Visalia City Coach (VCC), operated by MV Transportation, provides both fixed route and demand response service within the Visalia Urbanized Area. VCC began serving Visalia in 1981 and is now providing service for over 150,000 residents in the Visalia Urbanized Area (including Goshen, Exeter and Farmersville). The City of Visalia also operates a dial-a-ride service that began in February 1981. The dial-a-ride system is available to senior citizens and the physically disabled who need basic transportation services to the doctor, shopping, and other destinations.

In 1998, VCC introduced the Downtown Trolley which services the downtown business district with a free transit shuttle. The Downtown Trolley has proven a real asset to downtown Visalia by allowing people to access downtown businesses without parking an automobile.

In an effort to make transit services even more attractive to riders in Visalia and the surrounding areas, the City has constructed the Downtown Transit Center. The modern, state-of-the-art center serves as a central hub for VCC and other regional services connecting with VCC. The City of Visalia is also doing its part in improving air quality by upgrading their transit fleet with modern CNG buses and in constructing a new CNG fueling station.

City of Tulare

The City of Tulare, through MV Transportation, currently operates a fixed route system, the Tulare InterModal Express (TIME), and a dial-a-ride service called TIME Dial-a-Ride Tulare. Dial-a-ride services began operations in 1980 while fixed route services began operations in December of 1989. Currently, TIME operates seven fixed

bus routes that provide service Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

City of Porterville

The City of Porterville transit system, known as the City Operated Local Transit (COLT), began operating a demand responsive service in 1981. The system, operated by Sierra Management, presently provides fixed route and demand-response service to Porterville and the surrounding urban areas. Tulare County is responsible for reimbursing Porterville for the portion of service provided in the surrounding County communities of Strathmore and Springville. In 2003, Porterville also opened a new transit center. The transit center now serves as the transfer hub for all their buses and minivans, in addition to the Tulare County Transit bus transfers.

City of Dinuba

Public transit service in the City of Dinuba and the adjacent areas is provided through a dial-a-ride system and three fixed routes through Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART). The City also operates a free trolley service (Jolly Trolley) in the downtown area, with stops at the local Wal-Mart and K-Mart stores. MV Transportation provides all of these services under contract with the City.

DART recently added a new route in partnership with the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) linking the City of Dinuba with the City of Reedley in Fresno County. DART also contracts with Tulare County to provide service outside Dinuba city limits to County residents who live within their service area.

Cities of Exeter and Farmersville

The City of Exeter transit system began in June 1992 as a fixed route service serving residents within the City's urban area. Currently, the City of Exeter operates a dial-a-

ride service providing transit to local residents on a demand responsive basis.

In 2004 the City of Exeter and City Farmersville became part of the Urbanized Area of Visalia, and VCC began operating fixed route service between the three communities.

City of Woodlake

The City of Woodlake transit system began service in September 1999. Transit is provided as a demand-response service for the Woodlake Service Area which includes the City and surrounding unincorporated area. Services are available to over 8,000 residents in the Woodlake area. The buses are fully serviced, fueled and maintained by the City.

Tule River Indian Tribe

The Tule River Indian Tribe provides transit for casino employees and Indian healthcare services for Tule River tribal members and other tribal communities.

Kings Area Rural Transit

Kings Area Rural Transit (KART) provides a vanpool program which is primarily utilized by farm workers and state prison guards. The vanpools extend throughout the southern San Joaquin Valley, including Kings, Tulare, Kern and Fresno Counties. KART also provides fixed route service linking Hanford (in Kings County) to various locations in the City of Visalia.

Unmet Transit Needs Process

Every March TCAG holds an "unmet transit needs" hearing as required by the California Transportation Development Act (TDA). If any "unmet transit needs" are found to be reasonable to meet by the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) they must be addressed before Local Transportation Fund (LTF) money can be used for streets and roads improvements. If an "unmet transit need" is found to be

unreasonable to meet, it is noted and documented for possible future consideration.

Non-Motorized Transportation

With the advent of programs such as Air Quality Attainment and Transportation Demand Management; transportation planning agencies are taking a detailed look at bicycling as an alternate form of transportation. In the populated areas of Tulare County, bicycles are a particularly viable mode of transportation. Bicyclists enjoy the flat topography and the moderate climate of the area.

One program that has worked successfully in Tulare County is the placement of bike racks on transit buses. This creates an interface between bicycles and transit that broadens the options for commuters to leave their cars at home. Bicycle racks and lockers conveniently located near transit stops make the interface more attractive. The County of Tulare, Tulare Transit Express, Visalia City Coach and Porterville Transit are all equipped with bicycle racks.

Rail

There are three railroad companies that provide freight service within Tulare County: Union Pacific (UP), Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BN&SF) and the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVRR). The railroads connect the County to all-major west coast markets and destinations. There are rail service spurs and freight terminals throughout the County that serve specific industries.

Light Rail

In 2005, TCAG conducted a light rail feasibility study that looked at service between Visalia and Tulare. The study collected information on preferred routes, cost estimates and future population intensities. The feasibility concluded that residential and commercial densities near the rail line would need to be increased (zoning amendments) to

support the cost. Densities and interest will be monitored in the future to determine if a light rail system is feasible.

Passenger Rail Project Priorities

The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) is concerned with the preservation of and continued use of existing rail lines in the region. The San Joaquin Valley Railroad expressed interest in improving a freight rail system to serve the Cities of Visalia, Hanford, Lemoore and Huron. TCAG programmed one million dollars of CMAQ funding to upgrade the existing rails. A second phase would include passenger rail service between the Cities of Huron, Lemoore, Hanford, Visalia, Exeter, Lindsay and Porterville. The route would serve as a link to the Amtrak station in Hanford and could also serve as a link to a high-speed rail station, either in Visalia or Hanford.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority has proposed high-speed train service for intercity travel in California between the major metropolitan centers of San Francisco, San Jose and Sacramento in the north. The service will run through the Central Valley to Los Angeles and San Diego in the south. The system is proposing exclusive tracks for most of the route, alignments will be within or adjacent to existing rail or highway right-of-way and new upgraded stations with connections to local transit routes.

Aviation

Tulare County's airport system can be subdivided into three components: publicly-owned and operated airports; privately owned airports open to public general aviation use; and private "special use" airfields and airstrips. There are five public airports and two privately owned airports open to public use in operation Countywide. The remaining airstrips that presently exist

throughout the County are used for agricultural aviation activities. Out of the airports mentioned above, only Visalia Municipal Airport has regularly scheduled commercial service.

Goods Movement

Planning for rail and goods movement in Tulare County is driven by the free enterprise system. Major generators of goods movement in the region include agriculture, but increasingly, a diversified range of raw materials and products are also generating trips on the network and rail system. In an agriculturally based economy, much of the goods movement would be seasonal; in a diversified economy, the flow of goods is year round.

The use of rail for goods movement is growing as rail operators improve efficiency and supply. TCAG supports the use of rail and other alternative transportation methods such as aviation to alleviate conditions resulting from truck transport. Train movements are most efficient with durable goods and long distance travel. The service benefits the region by reducing congestion, helping to reduce air pollution and making safe, efficient use of the transportation corridors.

Pass Through Movements

In Tulare County, the corridor that is most impacted by pass through movements is the SR-99 corridor (including the adjacent UP Railroad). Products are being transported between the Bay Area (including Sacramento) to the Los Angeles and San Diego areas. The movements have a significant impact on local facilities in the form of reduced pavement life, air quality degradation, increased congestion and reduced safety.

Operations & Maintenance

Tulare County has 4,880 miles of publicly maintained roads. Local agencies are

responsible for the operations and maintenance (O&M) of 3,978 miles of road. The local agencies use various pavement management systems to address and prioritize O&M needs. A variety of federal, state and local funds are used for the O&M of the local roadways. However, there is currently not enough revenue to address deferred maintenance.

FINANCIAL ELEMENT

The purpose of the Financial Element is to provide an assumption of the cost and revenues necessary to implement the RTP. The assumptions include revenue estimates for specific governmental funding programs, local contributions, license and fuel taxes, and development fees. Tulare County passed a local sales tax for transportation purposes in 2006. Measure R was a great boost for transportation funding within the county and is estimated to provide about \$1.2 billion in funding over its 30 year lifespan. The majority of available funds generated from federal and state gas taxes are distributed in a variety of grants and acts. The following provides a summary of the major funding sources (please refer to the Financial Element for more complete descriptions and listing of funding sources):

State Funding Sources

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):

The STIP is a multi-year capital improvement program of transportation projects on and off the State Highway System, funded with revenues from the Transportation Investment Fund (Prop 42) and other state funding sources. The STIP is adopted by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) every two years and programs projects over a 5-year period. Funding is allocated through Senate Bill 45 (SB 45) which distributes funds

to Interregional Improvement Programs (IIP) and Regional Improvement Programs (RIP). STIP funds may also be used for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects.

State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP):

The SHOPP program is operated by Caltrans that includes State Highway safety and rehabilitation projects, seismic retrofit projects, land projects, building projects, landscaping, operational improvements, bridge replacement, and the minor program. It is funded through state and federal sources and can not be used for capacity increasing projects.

Proposition 1b (State transportation bond):

On November 7, 2006, the State of California passed Proposition 1B. The distribution of this \$19.9 billion transportation bond is outlined in SB1266, the Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality and Port Security Fund Act of 2006 [Table 4-3]. In Tulare County the bulk of this funding is currently programmed prior to FY 2010/11. Exceptions include the State-Local Partnership Program (SLPP) and STIP augmentation. About \$300 million in bond funding was programmed prior FY 2010/11 in Tulare County.

Federal Funding Sources

Federal Transit Administration (FTA):

The FTA provides grant funding for improvements in rural and urban transit systems. This includes metropolitan, statewide and planning programs from Sections 5303, 5304 and 5305, grants for urbanized areas for public transportation capital investments from Section 5307, grants for “new starts” capital investment projects from Section 5309, capital assistance for elderly persons and persons with disabilities from Section 5310, capital, operating and administrative assistance for non-urbanized transit operations from Section 5311, funding for Jobs Access and Reverse Commute

projects from Section 5316 and funding for alternative transportation in parks and public lands from Section 5320.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU):

SAFETEA-LU (adopted August 25, 2005) replaced the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21 - adopted in June 1998) which in turn replaced the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). SAFETEA-LU continues to fund transportation improvements throughout the United States. Funds are directed toward projects and programs for a broad variety of highway and transit work through several funding components which include the Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation Enhancements (TE), Safety Program, Rail Programs and Emergency Relief Programs. SAFETEA-LU was set to expire in September, 2009 but was extended into 2010 until a successor transportation reauthorization bill is adopted.

Local Funding Sources (including State-Local disbursements)

Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA):

The state collects 18 cents per gallon excise tax (also known as the “Gas Tax”) on gasoline and diesel fuel. About 65% of the revenues are allocated to Caltrans through the State Highway Account (SHA) and 35% are subvented to the cities through HUTA.

Traffic Congestion Relief (TCR) – Prop 42:

The state also collects a 5% sales tax on gasoline which goes into the Transportation Investment Fund (TIF). The TIF is distributed 40% to the STIP, 20% to the Public Transportation Account (PTA) and 40% to local streets and roads through Traffic Congestion Relief.

Vehicle License Fees (VLF):

The state collects vehicle license, registration and drivers license fees. VLF is distributed to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and local agencies. Driver license and vehicle registration fees are split between the DMV, ARB and the California Highway Patrol (CHP).

Measure R (Regional Transportation Sales Tax):

In November of 2006, Tulare County residents passed Measure R, which enacted a half cent sales tax for the next 30 years. The Measure R Expenditure Plan used a straight-line estimate of \$21.8 million per year totaling \$654 million in regional sales tax funds for the 30 year life of the measure. Actual Measure R receipts include \$26.5 million in revenue for FY 2007/08 and \$23.8 million for FY 2008/09. Figure 4-12 shows Measure R projections using an escalation factor rather than the straight-line projections in the Expenditure Plan. Measure R is estimated to generate about \$1.2 billion in funding over its 30-year lifespan.

Funding is distributed towards regional projects (50%), city/county specific improvements (35%), transit, bicycle, rail and environmental projects (14%) and administration and planning (1%). Although Measure R will aid in transportation projects, the issue of deferred maintenance remains.

Financial Constraint/Year of Expenditure

The 2011 RTP is financially constrained. By definition, all projects listed in this document (unconstrained projects are listed for informational purposes) have been identified with a funding source(s) to complete the project during the scope of the Plan (25 years). The sources of revenues have been estimated based on past receipts and use escalation factors as summarized on Table 4-13. Revenues and expenditures per source are displayed on Tables 4-14 through 4-16.

Project costs are also escalated per year of expenditure and are listed in the Action Element (Tables 3-13, 3-14 and 3-16).

Surpluses & Deficits

In the County there is generally no surplus of funds available for additional transportation projects in the short term. However, there is additional bonding capacity and the ability for additional short-term loans against the Measure R regional sales tax or local agency general fund sales taxes if circumstances were to arise where local or regional funding is needed to replace or enhance other revenue streams or to potentially advance existing projects or add new projects.

Also, there have been unanticipated revenue sources in the past that have supplemented funding for projects in the RTP. For example, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 included about \$48 billion in transportation investment nationwide with \$23 million for transportation and transit projects in Tulare County.

The single largest issue for Tulare County is “deferred maintenance” or lack of road rehabilitation funding. For most counties in the San Joaquin Valley, there are considerable miles of roads requiring maintenance due to the unique requirements of the agricultural production and smaller populations. Most street and roads funding received by the state are population based. The result is a lack of necessary funding to maintain County roads.

There are also several regional projects that don’t have identifiable sources of funding within the 25 years of this RTP. These projects are listed on Table 3-15 in the Action Element.

GOODS MOVEMENT CHAPTER

A new addition to the 2011 RTP, the Goods Movement Chapter addresses goods movement issues in Tulare County. Tulare County is the #2 agricultural county in the United States and is bisected by SR-99, one of the busiest truck corridors in the country. Because of these factors and as one of the fastest growing counties in the state, goods movement issues and impacts to the transportation system are of vital importance to Tulare County and its residents.

VALLEYWIDE CHAPTER

The Valleywide Chapter provides a regional perspective to transportation planning in the San Joaquin Valley. The chapter addresses several regional issues including air quality, highways, streets, aviation, rail and goods movement. The chapter provides a regional view on issues. This is the fifth product of a cooperative effort pursuant to a memorandum of understanding signed by the participating agencies.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

TCAG held a series of public meetings designed to inform and generate feedback for various transportation needs from residents. TCAG operates a booth at the Tulare County Fair every year to educate the residents of Tulare County on transportation issues as well as gathering survey information for the RTP and Blueprint efforts. A timeline of TCAG's outreach meetings is listed in Appendix G: Public Outreach Documents.

TCAG also disseminated information regarding the RTP and its development through TCAG's "On the Move" newsletter, press releases to the local newspapers and the TCAG website. Public outreach for the RTP

was consistent with the Public Participation Plan and the Environmental Justice goal in the Policy Element.

Tribal Consultation

TCAG continues consultation efforts with the Tule River Indian Reservation in Tulare County. We strive to have at least one formal consultation a year and other staff-level or informal meetings as needed. A member of the Tule River Indian Reservation has been on the TCAG Technical Advisory Committee since 2001. Further, TCAG is one of only a few MPOs in the state that has had a MOU with a Tribe to develop and construct a State funded transportation safety project. This safety project, for Reservation Rd, was completed in 2007.

Resource Agencies

As stated previously, TCAG has already been involving the resource agencies in transportation planning for over ten years. The Environmental Advisory Committee includes the following agencies: Sequoia National Park, Irrigation Districts, Sierra Los Tulares Land Trust, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, Tulare County Redevelopment Agency, County of Tulare, County of Tulare Parks Department, Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District, Bureau of Land Management, and Caltrans.

The Environmental Advisory Committee was consulted in November 2009 in the development of the 2011 RTP Policy Element and again in ___ 2010 in the development of the draft 2011 RTP. In addition, a list of agencies contacted in regards to the development of the 2011 RTP is included in Appendix G: Public Outreach Documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Visual techniques

Large color maps (as appropriate with topography) and other graphics are used to illustrate the RTP. A separate map is used for each mode of travel. For larger, urban areas separate maps are developed for each city. As with the 2007 RTP, many of the exhibits in the *final* RTP are in color with GIS layers showing topography and waterways.

The use of poster-sized maps and PowerPoint occurs at most if not all of the public presentations. The RTP (draft and final), including maps and other graphics, has been posted on the TCAG website.

Public Participation Plan

The development of a Public Participation Plan (PPP) is required by the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Sec. 450.316. 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).

TCAG's PPP was first adopted in 2007 and was subsequently amended in 2009. The current PPP is included in Appendix F.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The 2011 RTP Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates potential significant impacts that may result from the planning and implementing of the 2011 RTP. The review is consistent with the CEQA and NEPA guidelines. The 2011 RTP EIR focuses on those impacts that were found to be

potentially significant on a regional, system-wide level as a result of the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment and Impacts Checklist that were prepared. The EIR is included with the 2011 RTP under separate cover (Appendix C).

AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY

The Clean Air Act and federal transportation conformity rule (40 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 51 and 93) requires that each new RTP and transportation improvement program (TIP) must be demonstrated to conform before the RTP/TIP is approved by the MPO or accepted by FHWA. This analysis demonstrates that the criteria specified in the federal transportation conformity rule for a conformity determination are satisfied by the TIP and RTP.

Currently, the eight-county San Joaquin Valley is designated as a non-attainment area with respect to federal air quality standards for ozone, and particulate matter under 2.5 microns in diameter (PM-2.5).