

Chair
Supervisor Daron McDaniel
Merced County



Vice Chair
Supervisor Vito Chiesa
Stanislaus County

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council Executive Committee

Friday, November 21, 2025
9:00 a.m.

Members of the Policy Council Executive Committee may participate via video teleconference at the following locations:

Madera County Transportation Commission
2001 Howard Road., Suite 201
Madera, CA 93637

Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, 6th Floor Lobby
Modesto, CA 95354

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726

Merced County Association of Governments
369 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

Tulare County Association of Governments
210 N. Church Street, Suite B
Visalia, CA 93291

Stanislaus Council of Governments
8607 John Fox Rd, Hughson, CA 95326

Stanislaus Council of Governments
1111 I Street, Suite 308
Modesto, CA 95354

Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare St., Ste. 201., Fresno, CA 93721

Public members may participate at any of the above locations or remotely via Zoom. Please contact Georgiena Vivian at (559) 259-9257 or gvivian@vrpatech.com prior to the meeting to determine which physical locations will be utilized.

Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88554646263?pwd=cgqh9hyZK84MzpX04HxGQzIgwChf2z.1>
Meeting ID: 885 5464 6263
Passcode: 037675
Phone only: 1 (669) 444-9171

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Enclosure</u>
A. CALL TO ORDER	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. ROLL CALL	Georgiena Vivian	<input type="checkbox"/>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations – The public meeting room and restrooms are ADA accessible. Representatives or individuals with disabilities should contact the SJV Regional Agencies Coordinator, Georgiena Vivian, at (559) 259-9257, at least three days in advance, to request auxiliary aids and/or translation services necessary to participate in the meeting.



San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council Executive Committee

Roll Call

SJVPC	First Name	Last Name	Title	Agency	Present (Y/N)
Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC)					
Member	Robert	Poythress	Supervisor, District 3	County of Madera	
Alternate	Jose	Rodriguez	Councilmember, District 2	City of Madera	
Alternate	Waseem	Ahmed	Councilmember	City of Chowchilla	
Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)					
Member – Chair	Daron	McDaniel	Supervisor, District 3	County of Merced	
Alternate	Scott	Silveira	Supervisor, District 5	County of Merced	
Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)					
Member – Vice Chair	Vito	Chiesa	Supervisor, District 2	County of Stanislaus	
Alternate	Rosa	Escutia-Braaton	Councilmember, District 1	City of Modesto	
Alternate	Buck	Condit	Supervisor, District 1	County of Stanislaus	
Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)					
Member	Rudy	Mendoza	Mayor	City of Woodlake	
Alternate	Dennis	Townsend	Supervisor, District 5	County of Tulare	
Alternate	Linda	Launer	Councilmember, District 5	City of Dinuba	
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)					
Member	Samir	Sheikh	Executive Director	SJVAPCD	
Alternate	Mark	Montelongo	Director of Policy & Governmental Affairs	SJVAPCD	

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<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Enclosure</u>
C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. November 13, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting (<i>Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2025, will be forwarded by Monday, November 17, 2025</i>)		
D. DISCUSSION ITEMS		
1. Discuss, Review, and Comment on the Preliminary Draft State Legislative Platform	<i>Gus Khouri</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
E. OTHER ITEMS	Members	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. Executive Committee Member Comments		
F. PUBLIC COMMENT	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Committee on items within its jurisdiction but NOT on this agenda. Public comment will be allowed during the Discussion Items above.		
G. ADJOURN	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Other Meeting Participants

Yes	No	Director Agency	Yes	No	Director Agency
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Becky Napier Kern COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Hanebutt SJPPA
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AGENDA ITEM C.1.

November 13, 2025, Executive Committee

Meeting Minutes

(to be forwarded by Monday, November 17, 2025)

Chair
Supervisor Daron McDaniel
Merced County



Vice Chair
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San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

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Meeting ID: 826 8344 4789

Passcode: 048588

One tap mobile

Phone only: 1 (669) 444-9171

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Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)					
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Alternate	Scott	Silveira	Supervisor, District 5	County of Merced	N
Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)					
Member – Vice Chair	Vito	Chiesa	Supervisor, District 2	County of Stanislaus	N
Alternate	Rosa	Escutia-Braaton	Councilmember, District 1	City of Modesto	N
Alternate	Buck	Condit	Supervisor, District 1	County of Stanislaus	N
Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)					
Member	Rudy	Mendoza	Mayor	City of Woodlake	Y
Alternate	Dennis	Townsend	Supervisor, District 5	County of Tulare	N
Alternate	Linda	Launer	Councilmember, District 5	City of Dinuba	Y
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)					
Member	Samir	Sheikh	Executive Director	SJVAPCD	Y
Alternate	Mark	Montelongo	Director of Policy & Governmental Affairs	SJVAPCD	Y

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<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Enclosure</u>
C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1. October 24, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Member Poythress, MCTC, moved to approve the minutes, which were seconded by Member Mendoza, TCAG. The motion passed.		
D. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS		
1. Budget, Policy, and Legislative Updates		
<i>a. State</i>	<i>Gus Khouri</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gus Khouri, Khouri Consulting, reported on state legislative updates, noting that the governor's bill signing period had passed and they were working on the 2026 state legislative platform for review by the Directors' Committee and the Executive Committee. Members discussed waiting for the governor's budget, expected by January 10, to address potential funding cuts for REAP and transit programs.		
<i>b. Federal</i>	<i>Jen Covino</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jen Covino, Covino, Smith, and Simon reported the federal government's reopening after a 43-day furlough and discussed the passage of a continuing resolution along with three full-year appropriations bills. She noted that federal agencies may take time to respond to inquiries and explained that the Agriculture Bill extends the authorization of the Farm Bill, as well as SNAP and WIC programs, through the end of fiscal year 2026.		
Jen also mentioned that Chairman Sam Graves of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has postponed the markup on the transportation reauthorization bill until next year, and there are rumblings that the bipartisan infrastructure law may need to be extended for one more year due to the Senate's slower progress.		
Jen reported that the delegation's policy priorities had been submitted to both the House and the Senate. Although there was some disagreement between industry associations regarding formula versus competitive funding, an emerging consensus was developing for streamlining and revisiting funding allocations.		
The group agreed to reaffirm their priorities in the first week after Thanksgiving, as the reauthorization process was expected to reflect the Valley's needs better.		

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2. RTP/SCS Updates and Air Quality Issues

Ryan Niblock



a. SB 375 – 2026 GHG Reduction Targets

Ryan Niblock, SJCOG, noted that there had been little movement on SB375, with ongoing discussions about future targets and participation in a working group. He presented an update on SB 375, noting that smaller MPOs are frustrated with changing targets, and mentioned that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) will need to justify its methodology to the legislature.

Gus Khouri, Khouri Consulting, provided context on ongoing statewide efforts related to SB 375 and greenhouse-gas reduction targets for MPOs. He explains that CALCOG has taken the lead on this issue and has hired former Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, the original author of SB 375, to guide strategy and engagement with the Legislature.

Gus noted that many smaller MPOs are frustrated by continued changes to state-mandated targets, which feel like “moving the goalpost.” He highlighted that the recent Cap-and-Invest package included a requirement for CARB to report to the Legislature and justify its methodologies and planned investments, something the Valley advocated for during their Valley Voice meetings.

He closed by emphasizing that the issue is being monitored closely and expressed appreciation for Ryan, Director Smalley, and others who are actively tracking SB 375 and its regulatory implications for the region.

b. Clean Air Act Waiver Recission – Lockdown/Endangerment Finding Update

Stacie Guzman, MCAG



Stacie Guzman, MCAG and Directors’ Committee Chair, reported that she represented the San Joaquin Valley on a statewide panel with the “Big Four” counties, with support from MCAG staff and partners. Her presentation focused on the significant impacts of the air quality conformity lockdown, emphasizing that \$2 billion in current projects and another \$5 billion in long-term investments are at risk. She highlighted how these delays threaten essential infrastructure that supports the Valley’s agricultural economy and goods movement.

She was specifically asked to discuss the Atwater–Merced Expressway, noting that it is effectively the “tip of the spear” statewide for understanding how conformity barriers are affecting project delivery. Stacie was also the only panelist who



proposed a potential solution, discussing the effort to secure a two-year grace period to provide regulatory relief.

Although there was little discussion or questioning from commissioners or CARB board members, she emphasized that having all major Valley agencies deliver a unified message was powerful. She added that MCAG and Valley representatives have maintained ongoing communication with CARB, which continues to reach out for further dialogue as the issue evolves.

E. OTHER ITEMS

1. Executive Committee Member Comments

Members,



Member Mendoza, TCAG, shared that he recently met with Steve Hilton, a candidate for Governor of California, and discussed statewide transportation policy. He noted that Hilton's views appear to align closely with the San Joaquin Valley's priorities and the goals the Valley agencies are working toward. Rudy suggested that it may be valuable for Valley leaders to begin gauging the positions of all gubernatorial candidates on transportation issues early, given the importance of state-level alignment.

Member Mendoza acknowledged that candidates often tailor their remarks to their audiences, but still believes that reviewing their backgrounds and policy positions is worthwhile. His comments were offered as food for thought for the group as they consider future engagement with gubernatorial contenders.

Kate Miller, StanCOG Interim Executive Director, introduced herself as a new team member and expressed enthusiasm for collaboration.

Member Sheikh, SJVAPCD, provided an update on the Valley Air District's ongoing work with CARB and EPA regarding the region's State Implementation Plan (SIP) challenges. He noted that issues tied to conformity, mobile-source measures, and recent federal regulatory actions are all affecting multiple ozone and particulate matter plans. These shifting requirements create uncertainty about how the Valley's SIPs will be evaluated.

He explained that CARB is expected to take action early next year to update one of the Valley's major ozone plans in response to complications involving mobile-source rules and federal actions. These developments could have a significant impact on local planning efforts. The Air District's priority is to maintain approvable plans and avoid sanctions clocks, which, if triggered, could lead to consequences such as highway sanctions.

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Samir emphasized that the situation is evolving rapidly and still lacks clarity, but more information is expected to emerge early next year. He stressed the importance of continued coordination among Valley partners. He noted that these issues will inform the region's federal advocacy platform, particularly efforts to communicate the Valley's needs in Washington, D.C.

Stacie Guzman, MCAG and Directors' Committee Chair, commented on the legislative platform review process, which involves a draft being reviewed by the Directors' Committee, then by the Executive Committee, and finally by the Policy Council in January 2026. Stacie noted that she would schedule an Executive Committee meeting to review the Platform on November 21st, with a final review in December, if needed.

Gus Khouri, Khouri Consulting, proposed March 4th for the Sacramento Valley Voice Trip, which Member Poythress supported; however, the exact date will be confirmed at the November 21st meeting.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Committee on items within its jurisdiction but NOT on this agenda. Public comment will be allowed during the Discussion Items above.

Chair

No comments were provided.

G. ADJOURN

Chair

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.

H. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & STAFF WORK SESSION – *Scheduled*

The Executive Committee will recess into a non-public work session with designated staff to discuss preliminary legislative and intergovernmental strategy. No formal action will be taken.

Chair

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AGENDA ITEM D.1

Preliminary Draft State Legislative Platform

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

202~~6~~5 State Legislative Priorities-PRELIMINARY DRAFT

Issue	Goal	Strategy
1. Pragmatically Address Air Quality, Equity, and Mobility Goals Through Operational Improvements, and without compromising economic activity	<p>Support stable, equitable, and environmentally conscious state funding of alternatives to petroleum fuel sources to expand infrastructure and incentives for conversion to electric vehicles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Prioritize feasible implementation strategies for State and regional climate goals to improve air quality and mobility.</p> <p><u>Extend the Cap-and-Trade Program beyond 2030.</u></p> <p>Pursue innovative and pragmatic solutions to address climate and mobility Goals.</p> <p>Monitor activities on conversations regarding the jobs-housing imbalance and the impact on vehicle miles traveled.</p> <p>Monitor the implementation of SB 743, AB 285, and discussion on amending SB 375 and protect the ability to continue addressing congestion</p>	<p>SJVRPC supports a revenue-neutral conversion from the gas tax to a source that ensures equity in revenue collection that does not disadvantage those who must drive further to job centers. Distribution should respect San Joaquin Valley's vital role in maintaining system integrity and providing mobility options. This includes continuing to monitor the Road User Charge Technical Advisory Committee's activities.</p> <p>SJVRPC will collaborate with all stakeholders to implement CAPTI to promote mode-shift where feasible while also working towards completing key highway projects that enhance safety and support goods movement, tourism, disaster response, military operations, and general economic vitality</p> <p>SJVRPC will work to ensure that efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions account for opportunities and limitations within the region due to socioeconomic disadvantages, geographical considerations, the jobs-housing imbalance, the lack of density, and the profile of the regional economy. SJVRPC will oppose efforts to continually revise emissions targets, which undermine previous investments and condition competitiveness for state funding beyond what is achievable for the region.</p> <p>SJVRPC will also work with organizations such as the California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG), California League of Cities, California State Association of Counties, and Self-Help Counties Coalition (SHCC), Cal Chamber, among others, to extend and pursue funding from Cap-and-Trade revenues beyond 2030 or other means to comply with the statewide mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and endorse policies that promote equity and regional job creation to reduce vehicle miles traveled with pragmatic solutions that fit the region. <u>This includes supporting legislation to allow small to medium-sized metropolitan planning organizations greater flexibility in complying with state air quality standards so that solutions regarding population density, vehicle miles traveled, and housing are emblematic of a region's geography, demographics, travel patterns, and availability of alternative modes.</u></p> <p>SJVRPC will also support greater regional and geographic geographic appropriate investments into transit priority projects, operational improvements such as telecommuting, vanpools, shipping more freight via rail, availability of more e-bikes, and</p>

Issue	Goal	Strategy
	<p>management and safety on the state highway system, without compromising economic activity</p> <p>Restore FARMER funding to accelerate air quality goals.</p>	<p>promoting opportunities for regions to sell mitigation credits to generate revenue for providing multi-modal options.</p> <p>SJVRPC will work with organizations such as CALCOG and SHCC, among others, to protect transportation funding from being withheld or diverted, while working with stakeholders to find alternatives to address jobs-housing imbalance. This includes monitoring the implementation of SB 743 and AB 285 recommendations and the impact on addressing safety, congestion management, goods movement on the state highway system to ensure that capacity projects are not precluded from being funded.</p> <p>SJVRPC will work with CALCOG to develop additional revenue sources at the state, regional and local levels to support the planning required by SB 375 to support the construction of affordable housing in the region.</p> <p>SJVRPC will also continue to pursue revenue made available through the Cap and TradeInvest, Active Transportation Program, and Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program, for operations and capital needs for bus, rail and bicycle and pedestrian programs, and any new funding programs that target improving air quality. This includes pursuing a portion of the \$85 million made available in SB 840 of 2025 to support climate-focused technological innovation, related research, and the deployment of climate solutions identified in the California Air Resources Board scoping plan.</p> <p>SJVRPC encourages the California Air Resources Board to expedite adoption of a State Implementation Plan to conform with the Clean Air Act and protect planned projects from being delayed or restricted.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate for \$200 million be included in this year's budget or from excess Cap and Invest auction revenues for the FARMER Program, and annually over the next five years, in-order-to achieve critically needed air quality and GHG emission reductions. This funding will: 1) achieve emission reductions of approximately 800,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, and 2) achieve emission reductions of over 8 tons per day of harmful air pollutants, such as particulate matter and nitrogen oxide.</p> <p>SJVRPC will support efforts to maintain local control for air districts and oppose efforts to enact redundant, costly oversight to meet air quality goals.</p>

Issue	Goal	Strategy
2. Leveraging State Funding to Address Safety, Goods Movement, and Mobility	<p>Aggressively pursue funds through the State Budget, California Transportation Commission (CTC) allocation process or any other state sources to address safety, congestion management, and goods movement.</p> <p>Advocate for a successor source to the gas tax to ensure stability and predictability of funding.</p> <p>Ensure that CSIS allows investments to enhance safety and goods movement on state highway system.</p>	<p>SJVRPC will remain diligent in competing for additional state funds to complete gap closures to improve safety, congestion management, and goods movement throughput on State Route 99 and other regional arterials. This includes building out SR 99 to a minimum of six lanes, consistent with the Caltrans-adopted State Route 99 Business Plan. This will also maximize the return on previous state and local investments.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate to protect traditional sources of funding, such as the SHOPP, and ITIP program for their intended purpose to ensure that resources are made available to address highway safety, maintenance, preservation, and goods movement needs. Additional resources for mode-shift priorities, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects, or climate resiliency projects, should be pursued through accessing excess Cap and Invest auction revenues or Proposition 4 grant opportunities.</p> <p>SJVRPC will monitor Road User Charge Technical Advisory Committee's activities and consider sponsoring legislation to implement a successor source to the gas tax and advocating for the restoration of truck weight fees to ensure predictable, stable funding, and consider additional resources to expedite project delivery.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate to ensure that goals expressed in the Caltrans System Investment Strategy (CSIS) does not limit the ability to address safety and goods movement projects on the state highway system, while enhancing the Region's Economic Vitality</p>
3. Access Transit Funding	<p>Support potential changes to the Transportation Development Act that will assist local public transportation systems with funding eligibility.</p> <p>Stabilize and increase transit funding levels.</p> <p>Protect and augment existing programs to encourage mode-shift.</p>	<p>SJVRPC will monitor the CalSTA Transit Transformative Task Force and support modifications to the TDA process as appropriate to ensure that transit operators are provided with flexibility to continue accessing funding to maintain and expand service.</p> <p>SJVRPC will support efforts to advocate for additional flexibility for TDA, State Transit Assistance Program, and State of Good Repair funding. This includes supporting additional funding for operations.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate for increased, ongoing transit operations and capital funding, either through existing programs or longer-term programs, including updates to TDA and a successor to the sales tax on diesel, to provide predictable and stable funding.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate to protect <u>and acquire the remaining balance of SB 125 formula funds provided by the legislature for operations and capital needs, from being diverted.</u></p>

Issue	Goal	Strategy
		<p><u>SJVRPC will also advocate for a portion of the new \$125 million pot set aside for free transit passes to assist with meeting regional mobility options for Valley residents.</u></p> <p>SJVRPC will also support extending exemptions or revising requirements to meet farebox recovery ratio requirements, which expire on July 1, 2026, per AB 149 of 2021, to maintain and expand transit service.</p>
4. Enhance Passenger Rail Infrastructure and Service	<p>Provide enhanced passenger rail service to better connect the San Joaquin Valley to Sacramento, the Bay Area, and Southern California.</p> <p>Maintain and increase funding for commuter and intercity passenger rail for ACE, San Joaquin, and Valley Link. Pursue funding opportunities made available through CalSTA.</p>	<p>SJVRPC will work cooperatively with CalSTA, Caltrans Division of Rail, Amtrak, CTC, ACE, San Joaquin, Valley Link, BNSF, and Union Pacific Railroad to expand passenger rail service and connectivity to accommodate Valley residents.</p> <p>SJVRPC will continue to diligently work on establishing extended commuter/intercity rail and high-speed rail service, to provide enhanced mobility options and connectivity, reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions, and the impacts of congestion on SR 99, and expand equitable transportation options for San Joaquin Valley residents.</p> <p><u>SJVRPC supports the dedication of excess Cap and Invest Program auction revenues to create a supplemental pot that supports passenger rail service opportunities (capital and operations) along the San Joaquin Valley.</u></p> <p><u>SJVRPC will advocate to increase, recalibrate, and acquire funding from CalSTA through the State Rail Assistance (SRA) and TIRCP to help expedite delivery of multimodal options and meet 2030 climate goals. This includes supporting the extension of Cap and Trade to allow for the TIRCP program to continue and be augmented.</u></p> <p>SJVRPC supports the Governor's plan for further passenger rail investments, the 2024 California State Rail Plan, and CHSRA's 2024 Business Plan to complete the Early Operating Segment between Merced and Bakersfield between 2030 and 2033. Together, these plans will link high-speed rail with investments for extended ACE commuter service between Stockton, San Jose, Sacramento, and Merced; expanded San Joaquin intercity rail service in the valley, Valley Link passenger rail service between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and Mountain House, and future expansion of passenger service north to Chico. These many passenger rail investments are critical for Valley communities and help promote local and regional coordination efforts around station-area planning, station design, and increase connectivity to align with the region's priorities for project delivery and enhanced mobility in the San Joaquin Valley.</p>

Issue	Goal	Strategy
		<p>SJVRPC supports accountability measures, included in AB 377 of 2025, and beyond, to ensure that delivery of the Merced to Bakersfield segment is completed on budget and in a timely manner, and considers impacts to communities along the corridor.</p>
<p>5. Housing</p>	<p><u>Monitor efforts to update state housing law related to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation process and advocate for the interests of the region in any proposed legislative changes.</u></p> <p><u>Secure funding for costs associated with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation process, an unfunded state mandate.</u></p> <p><u>Support policies aimed at increasing production of housing and funding to produce and preserve affordable housing and associated infrastructure to help the jobs-housing imbalance and the impact on vehicle miles traveled.</u></p>	<p>SJVRPC will monitor California Department of Housing and Community Development updates related to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Process in anticipation of the next cycle that is anticipated to begin in 2029.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate for a flexible funding source like the Regional Early Action Planning Grants to ensure the work of SJVRPC is compensated and not an unfunded mandate, and for use by local agencies in satisfying their RHNA-related responsibilities.</p> <p>SJVRPC will advocate for funding to produce housing near jobs and transit areas with local flexibility, such as advocating to continue Regional Early Action Planning Grant funding opportunities. Additionally, SJVRPC will seek opportunities to streamline the Regional Early Action Planning Grant process to align with other state funding programs.</p> <p>SJVRPC will monitor impacts of vehicle miles traveled mitigation banks for affordable housing production as provided by AB 130 of 2025. Payment into the mitigation bank should be the responsibility of the developer and not the local jurisdiction, particularly for mitigation associated with transportation impacts.</p> <p>SJVRPC supports a state housing bond that would accelerate delivery of affordable housing and transit-oriented development in the San Joaquin Valley.</p>