

Chair
Supervisor Daron McDaniel
Merced County



Vice Chair
Supervisor Vito Chiesa
Stanislaus County

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

January 12, 2026
10:00 a.m.

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

Fresno Council of Governments

2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721

Madera County Transportation Commission

2001 Howard Road, Suite 201
Madera, CA 93637

Stanislaus Council of Governments

1111 I Street, Suite 308
Modesto, CA 95354

McFarland Veterans Community Center

103 W. Sherwood Ave.
McFarland, CA 93250

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726

Kern Council of Governments

1401 19th Street, Suite 300
Bakersfield, CA 93301

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

Avenal City Hall

919 Skyline Blvd
Avenal, CA 93204

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau

1201 L Street
Modesto, CA 95354

Kings County Association of Governments

339 W. D Street, Suite B
Lemoore, CA 93245

San Joaquin Council of Governments

555 E. Weber Avenue, Suite 400
Stockton, CA 95202

Kern County Administration Building

1115 Truxtun Ave # 504
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Madera County

200 W. 4th St., Ste. 4006
Madera, CA 93637

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

Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82818682533?pwd=W36nYbb7xLZajjh2Hvr790onv4pBVQ.1>

Meeting ID: 828 1868 2533

Passcode: 546678

One tap mobile: +16694449171

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



Valleywide Coordinator, Georgiena Vivian
(559) 259-9257



Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721



Fresno Council of Governments
Fax (559) 233-9645

Fresno Council of Governments

Kern Council of Governments

Kings County Association of Governments

Madera County Transportation Commission

Merced County Association of Governments

San Joaquin Council of Governments

Stanislaus Council of Governments

Tulare County Association of Governments

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority



San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

Roll Call

SJVPC	First Name	Last Name	Title	Agency	Present (Y/N)
Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG)					
Member	Gary	Yep	Councilmember, District 1	City of Kerman	
Member	Alma	Beltran	Mayor	City of Parlier	
Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG)					
Member	Saul	Ayon	Mayor	City of McFarland	
Member	David	Couch	Supervisor, 4 th District	County of Kern	
Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG)					
Member	Alvaro	Preciado	Mayor	City of Avenal	
Member	Doug	Verboon	Supervisor, District 3	County of Kings	
Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC)					
Member	Robert	Poythress	Supervisor, District 3	County of Madera	
Member	Jose	Rodriguez	Councilmember, District 2	City of Madera	
Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)					
Member – Chair	Daron	McDaniel	Supervisor, District 3	County of Merced	
San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG)					
Member	Robert	Rickman	Supervisor, District 5	County of San Joaquin	
Member	Gary	Singh	Mayor, At-Large	City of Manteca	
Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)					
Member – Vice Chair	Vito	Chiesa	Supervisor, District 2	County of Stanislaus	
Member	Rosa	Escutia-Braaton	Councilmember, District 1	City of Modesto	
Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)					
Member	Dennis	Townsend	Supervisor, District 5	County of Tulare	
Member	Rudy	Mendoza	Mayor	City of Woodlake	
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)					
Member	Samir	Sheikh	Executive Director	SJVAPCD	
San Joaquin Powers Authority (SJJPA)					
Member	Ahdel	Ahmed	Public Relations Manager	SJJPA	

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Agenda Item	Speaker	Enclosure
C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 22, 2025 Meeting	Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
D. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS		
1. State Budget, Policy, and Legislative Update		
a. State Budget, Policy, and Legislative Update	Gus Khouri	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. ACTION: Approve the 2026 San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council State Legislative Platform	Gus Khouri	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. State Implementation Plan (SIP) Update	Samir Sheikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Federal Budget, Policy, and Legislative Update	Jen Covino	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. RTP/SCS Updates and Air Quality Issues		
a. SB 375 – 2026 GHG Reduction Targets Update	Ted Smalley Ryan Niblock	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Clean Air Act Waiver Rescission Update	Alex Marcucci	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 2026 Policy Council and Directors' Committee Retreat	Georgiena Vivian	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Draft 2026/27 San Joaquin Valley Regional Agencies Overall Work Program (OWP), Budget, and Meeting Schedule	Georgiena Vivian	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS		
The following items are for informational purposes only and require no action. Individuals noted will be present to provide a verbal update.		
1. 2026 Valley Voice Sacramento, Trip - Planning Status	Gus Khouri & Georgiena Vivian	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. OTHER ITEMS		
1. Executive Committee Report	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Executive Directors' Committee Report	Stacie Guzman	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Policy Council Member Comments	Members	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. PUBLIC COMMENT		
This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Council on items within its jurisdiction but NOT on this agenda. Public comment will be allowed during the Discussion Items above.		<input type="checkbox"/>
H. ADJOURN	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Other Meeting Participants

Yes	No	Director Agency	Yes	No	Director Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jay Schlosser Kern COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gus Khouri Khouri Consulting
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephan Sanchez Kern COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mitch Weiss Khouri Consulting
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rob Ball Kern COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jen Covino Covino, Smith & Simon
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ted Smalley TCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	David Gellman Covino, Smith & Simon
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ben Kimball TCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aly Hernandez Covino, Smith & Simon
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Steven Ingoldsby TCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Georgiena Vivian SJV Coordinator VRPA Technologies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roberto Brady TCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carolina Ilic VRPA Technologies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Terri King KCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dena Graham VRPA Technologies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Phipps Fresno COG Vice Chair, Directors' Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Vivian VRPA Technologies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul Herman Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Samer Shaath CHSRA
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ofelia Abundez Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Augie Blancas CHSRA
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Simran Jhutti Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peter Whippy CHSRA
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Thomas Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Navarro Caltrans D6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patricia Taylor MCTC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nabeelah Abi-Rached Caltrans D6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dylan Stone MCTC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Braden Duran Caltrans D6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Findley MCTC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grace Magsayo Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stacie Guzman Chair, Directors' Committee MCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Mather Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Forte MCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tom Dumas Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meg Prince MCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Duper Tong Caltrans, D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kate Miller StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gurwinder Sekhon Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jose Luis Caceres StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caleb Brock Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monica Streeter StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill Higgins CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nick St. Cook StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sabrina Bradbury CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diane Nguyen SJCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gregory McAteer CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Niblock SJCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vincenzo Caporale CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kim Anderson SJCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Linda Launer City of Dinuba TCAG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Samir Sheikh SJVAPCD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patricia Matthews City of Lemoore KCAG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark Montelongo SJVAPCD			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Morgan Lambert SJVAPCD			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dan Leavitt SJJPA			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ahdel Ahmed SJJPA			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Hanebutt SJJPA			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

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AGENDA ITEM 1

August 22, 2025, Regional Policy Council

Meeting Minutes

Chair
Supervisor Daron McDaniel
Merced County



Vice Chair
Supervisor Vito Chiesa
Stanislaus County

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

Friday, August 22, 2025
10:00 a.m.

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Merced County Association of Governments

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Stanislaus County

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<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84662342467?pwd=nyDzfCtsgSNq8Ctwya4SjRdavKOmiX.1>

Meeting ID: 846 6234 2467

Passcode: 710536

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



Valleywide Coordinator, Georgiena Vivian
(559) 259-9257



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2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
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Fresno Council of
Governments
Fax (559) 233-9645

Fresno Council
of Governments

Kern Council of
Governments

Kings County
Association of
Governments

Madera County
Transportation
Commission

Merced County
Association of
Governments

San Joaquin
Council of
Governments

Stanislaus
Council of
Governments

Tulare County
Association of
Governments

San Joaquin Valley
Air Pollution
Control District

San Joaquin
Joint Powers
Authority



San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

Roll Call

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Member	Alma	Beltran	Mayor	City of Parlier	N
Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG)					
Member	Saul	Ayon	Mayor	City of McFarland	Y
Member	David	Couch	Supervisor, 4 th District	County of Kern	N
Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG)					
Member	Alvaro	Preciado	Mayor	City of Avenal	Y
Member	Doug	Verboon	Supervisor, District 3	County of Kings	N
Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC)					
Member	Robert	Poythress	Supervisor, District 3	County of Madera	Y
Member	Jose	Rodriguez	Councilmember, District 2	City of Madera	Y
Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)					
Member – Chair	Daron	McDaniel	Supervisor, District 3	County of Merced	Y
Member	Pat	Nagy	Mayor	City of Gustine	Y
San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG)					
Member	Robert	Rickman	Supervisor, District 5	County of San Joaquin	Y
Member	Gary	Singh	Mayor, At-Large	City of Manteca	N
Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)					
Member – Vice Chair	Vito	Chiesa	Supervisor, District 2	County of Stanislaus	Y
Member	Rosa	Escutia-Braaton	Councilmember, District 1	City of Modesto	N
Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)					
Member	Dennis	Townsend	Supervisor, District 5	County of Tulare	Y
Member	Rudy	Mendoza	Mayor	City of Woodlake	N
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)					
Member	Samir	Sheikh	Executive Director	SJVAPCD	Y
San Joaquin Powers Authority (SJPA)					
Member	Ahdel	Ahmed	Public Relations Manager	SJPA	Y

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Agenda Item	Speaker	Enclosure
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C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 23, 2025, Meeting	Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Member Poythress made a motion to approve the minutes, which Member Rodriguez seconded. The minutes were approved by roll call vote.

D. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

1. State Budget, Policy, and Legislative Update	Gus Khouri	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Gus Khouri, Khouri Consulting, provided updates on legislative matters. He noted that the legislature is currently in session, having returned on a Monday, and will adjourn on September 12. One key focus of this session is the realignment of congressional maps, which was recently signed into law by Governor Newsom. This realignment creates five additional safe Democratic seats for the upcoming November special election, reducing the number of safe Republican seats to four. The changes will affect congressional districts, notably for incumbents such as Assemblymember Gray, Congressman Valadao, and Congressman Harder.

Gus also highlighted ongoing discussions about California's cap-and-trade program. The governor is advocating for a \$1 billion earmark, although recent auction proceeds were lower than expected due to market uncertainties regarding the program's extension. Some legislators are considering temporarily extending the program while refining it in future sessions. However, funding limitations have emerged because the legislature has used portions of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to address general fund deficits, thereby affecting available resources for cap and trade.

2. Federal Budget, Policy, and Legislative Update

a. Federal Budget, Policy, and Legislative Update	Jen Covino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Jen Covino, Covino, Smith and Simon, discussed key developments regarding pending grant applications during the congressional recess. She alerted participants to the Department of Defense's announcement of preliminary project selections for its Defense Community Infrastructure Program. Notably, within California, only the North County Fire Protection District's project for a new fire station at Camp Pendleton has been selected to proceed, which represents a significant update from their last meeting concerning pending DOD DCIP grant applications.

Jen also provided insights into the federal appropriations process, particularly regarding congressionally directed and community project funding requests. She noted that, after recent Senate Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) disclosures, only one project sponsored by Senators Schiff and Padilla, a Positive Train Control installation for the Regional Rail Commission, has moved forward.

Additionally, Jen stated that there are ongoing House requests, including several community project funding initiatives such as the TCAG's project in Azalia sponsored by Congressman Costa, SJCOG's I-205 managed lanes led by Congressman Josh Harder, and Kern COG's roundabout project at SR 43rd and 7th Standard Road, backed by Congressman Valadao. Another request includes a \$3 million project by Congressman Fong for the Centennial Corridor SR 99 to the westbound SR 58 connector.

Jen highlighted that while the Transportation Housing and Urban Development (THUD) spending bill currently includes only five requests from MPOs, there are numerous other earmarks from individual cities and counties across various spending bills.

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As the month of September approaches, Jen indicated the likelihood of a long-term continuing resolution (CR), as the House and Senate may struggle to agree on all 12 spending bills. She mentioned a potential stopgap resolution to keep parts of the federal government funded beyond October 1st. A key point of concern is that, traditionally, earmarks fall off during a CR. However, there is some optimism as members of the House Freedom Caucus, notably Chair Andy Harris, are advocating for the inclusion of earmarks in the CR, which, if accepted, could lead to local projects being funded despite broader budgetary disagreements. Covino emphasized the importance of local stakeholders advocating for the inclusion of earmarks while Congress reviews the spending bills in September.

- b. **ACTION:** 2025 San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council Federal Legislative Platform **Jen Covino**

Jen Covino, Covino, Smith, and Simon, began by introducing the platform's list of policy priorities, highlighting the addition of transportation conformity language in collaboration with the Air District and other stakeholders. She emphasizes that only projects selected for funding will be included in the platform, as the funding cycle has concluded.

Jen then presented the current list of grant applications received. This includes several projects seeking funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program, including:

1. A \$2.4 million request from MCAG at the City of Merced for their G Street safety and connectivity project.
2. A \$1.069 million request from MCTC in the City of Chowchilla for SS4A implementation funding.
3. A \$3.852 million request from Kern COG for Kern County's SS4A project.
4. A \$20 million request from the Kings County Area Public Transit Agency for the Federal Transit Administration's Grants for Bus and Bus Facilities program.

Jen noted that an update will be provided should the status of these grants change before the scheduled meeting in September. She also mentioned that some Department of Defense (DOD) projects have been excluded from the current list due to recent developments, noting that those projects will be revisited next year when the DOD reopens its program.

Additionally, Jen informed the team that the Air District's request is not included in the Senate's THUD (Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development) spending bill and suggests a potential reassessment of its placement in other spending bills. There was some confusion regarding the status of specific earmarks, but Jen assured the group that she would verify this information.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Member Poythress, MCTC, and seconded by Member Nagy, MCAG, to approve the Federal Platform. The role was taken, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

- c. Policy Council Speaker Assignments – 2025 Valley Voice, Washington, D.C., Federal Legislative and Department Sessions **Jen Covino**

Jen Covino, Covino, Smith and Simon, recommended that each member agency with pending projects or earmark requests should be ready to speak about their own initiatives during the week. The topics of conversation will include priorities for the next surface transportation reauthorization, with an emphasis on maintaining local control of formula funding, freight focus, and infrastructure like bridges.

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Additionally, there will be a focus on securing ongoing funding for intercity passenger rail, including high-speed rail projects, which may provoke differing opinions. The technical aspects of air quality, including state implementation plans and transportation conformity issues, will also be discussed. Volunteers are encouraged to take on various discussion topics, and executive directors may be called upon to assist in identifying participants.

The Chair expressed appreciation for the expertise among the committee members and acknowledged the TCAG staff's willingness for member Mendoza to volunteer on the goods movement topic. Rob Poythress from Madera County suggested going through the discussion items one by one to provide clarity, which the chair agreed to pursue.

Overall, the conversation reflected a collaborative approach to strategizing for the upcoming meeting, focusing on the involvement of member agencies in addressing significant transportation issues and ensuring representation for their respective regions.

- 3. **ACTION:** Approve the Final 2025/26 San Joaquin Valley Regional Agencies Overall Work Program, Budget, and Meeting Schedule **Georgiena Vivian**

Georgiena Vivian, SJV Coordinator, presented the draft Overall Work Program for fiscal year 25/26, which was approved by both the Director's Committee and the Executive Committee. Key changes from the prior year are highlighted in yellow, with minor adjustments made throughout. An error in Member Rickman's name was acknowledged for correction.

The current major activities are outlined, with a focus on simplifying the section detailing relationships with external agencies by emphasizing high participation levels from Policy Council members. The work program also introduces the Executive Committee's role and plans for a retreat to develop organizational vision and goals and improve protocols.

Furthermore, the budget has been adjusted to reflect increases in consultant activities, including a notable rise in costs for the Valleywide Coordinator due to an uptick in meetings, including the reestablishment of the Executive Committee and the addition of the annual Policy Council and Directors' Committee Retreat. Overall, the program featured strategic planning and collaborative development efforts for the upcoming fiscal year.

Following further discussion, a motion was made by Member Poythress, MCTC, and seconded by Member Rodriguez, MCTC, to approve the OWP. The role was taken, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

E. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS **Chair**

The following items are for informational purposes only and require no action. Individuals noted will be present to provide a verbal update.

- 1. 2025 Valley Voice Washington, D.C. Trip - Planning Status **Georgiena Vivian**

Georgiena Vivian, SJV Coordinator, provided an update on the planning for the upcoming Valley Voice DC trip. She acknowledged the efforts of Jen Covino, who has been instrumental in organizing the trip and preparing related materials. Georgiena mentioned that attendees will arrive in Washington, D.C. on September 7th, with a breakfast meeting scheduled for September 9th at the La Meridian Hotel. During this meeting, the latest

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agenda for the sessions will be discussed. The trip will include various sessions and a dinner event at Truluck's, concluding with departures on September 11th.

F. OTHER ITEMS

1. Executive Committee Report

Chair



Stacie Guzman, Chair of the Directors' Committee, MCAG, provided an overview of previous Executive Committee meetings. Key highlights include:

1. Meeting Frequency: The Executive Committee has been convened three times since the last Regional Policy Council meeting on July 7th.

2. High Speed Rail Authority Request: The committee received a request from the High Speed Rail Authority for a statement of support regarding federal funding agreements. The staff were directed to use earlier language from a previous letter sent to the Authority to maintain consistency in their communication.

3. Federal Funding Rescission: The Executive Committee's discussions occurred around the same time as the federal administration's decision to rescind \$4 billion in funds allocated for the high-speed rail project. This decision was noted as significant and led to further contemplation on the implications for regional projects.

4. Opportunities for Alternative Funding: Following the rescission of the funds, there was a discussion about exploring possibilities to redirect that funding toward other projects in the Valley. Staff were directed to investigate these options during meetings on July 25th and August 8th.

5. July 25th Meeting Outcomes: The July 25th meeting included the recommendation to approve the Valley-wide OWP budget for FY 25/26 and actions to postpone the San Joaquin Valley Policy Conference for a year due to a lack of a host. The Executive Committee also decided to create a host rotation schedule beginning in 2027.

6. August 8th Meeting Discussion: During the August meeting, it was determined that the funds in question were subject to litigation and could not easily be moved while disputes were ongoing. Consequently, the recommendation was to "stay the course" until the legal matters were resolved, resulting in no immediate action on the issue.

Chair McDaniel, MCAG, emphasized the importance of maintaining transparency with the Regional Policy Council by keeping the report on Executive Committee activities as a standing item on future meeting agendas.

Member Preciado, KCAG, raised a query about attendance at the meetings. In response, Stacie acknowledged the need to regularly compile and share attendance details alongside meeting summaries for improved standard practice.

Overall, the report reflected significant organizational discussions about federal funding, regional project funding priorities, and a commitment to transparency moving forward.

2. Executive Directors' Committee Report

Stacie Guzman



Stacie Guzman, Chair of the Directors' Committee, MCAG, highlighted two significant issues discussed during previous Directors' Committee meetings:

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1. Air Quality Challenges: There is a new standing item on the Executive Committee and future Regional Policy Council agendas dedicated to addressing pressing air quality concerns. These issues are linked to California's SB 375 requirements, focusing on greenhouse gas emissions targets for the 2026 Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) process. Additionally, the recent federal rescission of California's Clean Air Act waivers poses challenges that could impede progress on various projects.

2. Updates and Leadership: Stacie emphasized the importance of regular updates from technical staff involved in addressing these air quality issues. There's mention of a subcommittee led by Ted Smalley from TCAG, supported by air quality specialists, including Ryan Niblok from San Joaquin and consultants from Trinity Consultants. This group is tasked with advancing initiatives concerning air quality.

3. Policy Council Member Comments **Members**

It was noted that the California Transportation Commission will meet in Merced on October 16th and 17th, with plans for a reception and other details to be communicated as they develop. No comments were provided.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Member Mendoza, formally a participant in the meeting, raised concern about the absence of an agenda on the website, emphasizing the need for timely posting before meetings. Georgiena noted that in the future, all agendas will be posted once the meeting packages are emailed to the Policy Council. He also recalled a request from Georgiena for members to provide updated contact information. Georgiena noted that most of the information has been provided.

H. ADJOURN **Chair**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 AM.

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Other Meeting Participants

Yes	No	Director Agency	Yes	No	Director Agency
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jay Schlosser Kern COG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gus Khouri Khouri Consulting
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Becky Napier Kern COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mitch Weiss Khouri Consulting
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rob Ball Kern COG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jen Covino Covino, Smith & Simon
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ted Smalley TCAG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	David Gellman Covino, Smith & Simon
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ben Kimball TCAG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aly Hernandez Covino, Smith & Simon
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steven Ingoldsby TCAG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Georgiena Vivian SJV Coordinator VRPA Technologies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roberto Brady TCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carolina Ilic VRPA Technologies
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Terri King KCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dena Graham VRPA Technologies
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Phipps Fresno COG Vice Chair, Directors' Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Vivian VRPA Technologies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Paul Herman Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Samer Shaath CHSRA
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ofelia Abundez Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Toni Tinoco CHSRA
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Simran Jhutti Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peter Whippy CHSRA
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Thomas Fresno COG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Navarro Caltrans D6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patricia Taylor MCTC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nabeelah Abi-Rached Caltrans D6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dylan Stone MCTC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Braden Duran Caltrans D6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Findley MCTC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grace Magsayo Caltrans D10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stacie Guzman Chair, Directors' Committee MCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eric Mather Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Forte MCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Dumas Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Meg Prince MCAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Duper Tong Caltrans, D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elisabeth Hahn StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gurwinder Sekhon Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jose Luis Caceres StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Caleb Brock Caltrans D10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monica Streeter StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bill Higgins CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nick St. Cook StanCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sabrina Bradbury CALCOG
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diane Nguyen SJCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gregory McAteer CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Niblock SJCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vincenzo Caporale CALCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kim Anderson SJCOG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Linda Launer City of Dinuba TCAG
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Samir Sheikh SJVAPCD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patricia Matthews City of Lemoore KCAG
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark Montelongo SJVAPCD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diego Virmontes, City of McFarland
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Morgan Lambert SJVAPCD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	C. Prout
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dan Leavitt SJJPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carolyn N
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ahdel Ahmed SJJPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sommer Sison
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Hanebutt SJJPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alex Marcucci
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

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AGENDA ITEM D.1.b.

***2026 San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy
Council State Legislative Platform***

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

2026 State Legislative Priorities-DRAFT

Issue	Goal	Strategy
<p>1. Pragmatically Address Air Quality, Equity, and Mobility Goals Through Operational Improvements, and without compromising economic activity</p>	<p>Protect transportation funding by reconciling conformity to environmental mandates</p> <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>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 will strongly advocate for 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 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 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. 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.</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>SJVRPC will also support greater regional and geographic appropriate investments into transit priority projects, operational improvements such as telecommuting, vanpools, shipping more freight via rail, availability of more e-bikes, and 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 Invest, 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 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, to achieve critically needed air quality and GHG emission reductions. The FARMER program’s strong demand has resulted in over \$700 million in pending applications. If funded, these projects would deliver highly cost-effective ozone and PM2.5-forming NOx, cancer-causing diesel particulate matter, and greenhouse gas emissions.</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>
<p>2. Leveraging State Funding to Address Safety, Goods Movement, and Mobility</p>	<p>Aggressively pursue funds through the State Budget, California Transportation Commission (CTC) allocation process or any other state sources to address safety,</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>

Issue	Goal	Strategy
	<p>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 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>
<p>3. Access Transit Funding</p>	<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 and acquire the remaining balance of SB 125 formula funds provided by the legislature for operations and capital needs.</p> <p>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.</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>

Issue	Goal	Strategy
<p>4. Enhance Passenger Rail Infrastructure and Service</p>	<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 Joaquins, 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 Joaquins, 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>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.</p> <p>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.</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> <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>