

MCTC 2026 State Legislative Platform - DRAFT

Issue	Goal	Strategy
1. MCTC's Funding Priorities	<p>Aggressively pursue funds through the State Budget, California Transportation Commission (CTC) allocation process or any other state sources.</p>	<p>MCTC will remain diligent in acquiring approved state funding and competing for additional state funds to improve safety, congestion management, and goods movement throughput, and general economic vitality on State Routes 41 and 99, and State Route 233 Interchange Project.</p> <p>MCTC will advocate for utilizing prospective excess auction revenues from the Cap and Invest Program to augment passenger rail service.</p> <p>MCTC will also assist local jurisdictions to pursue revenue made available through the Cap and Invest and Active Transportation Programs, including maintenance costs for awarded projects with coordination within Caltrans right-of-way, and for operations and capital needs for bus, rail and bicycle and pedestrian programs.</p> <p>MCTC supports increased permanent funding for the Active Transportation Program and advocating for maintenance costs to be covered by Caltrans for state highway and road projects located in its right of way.</p> <p>MCTC 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, school, or medical facilities. Balancing the need of weaning our dependence on petroleum to fund transportation, while ensuring that a regressive replacement funding mechanism to the gas tax is not imposed, is critical to protecting disadvantaged communities and Madera County residents in conducting daily activities. Utilizing the vehicle registration fee may prove to be a more equitable option. MCTC will monitor the Road User Charge Technical Advisory Committee's activities.</p>
2. Regional Partnerships	<p>Coordinate with the San Joaquin Valley Policy Council to raise awareness for the Highway 99 Corridor and highlight its'</p>	<p>MCTC will work with San Joaquin Valley COGs (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare) and Caltrans to raise awareness of the importance of Highway 99 and its need for improvements as one of the two major interregional corridors in the state and the vital role it plays in goods movement in</p>

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	<p>importance as a transportation facility of state and national significance.</p>	<p>addition to regional connectivity to major metropolitan areas.</p> <p>MCTC will collaborate with San Joaquin Valley partners to pursue funding to improve safety and goods movement conditions on Highway 99.</p> <p>MCTC will coordinate with the metropolitan planning organizations in the San Joaquin Valley to ensure that efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emission account for opportunities and limitations within the region.</p> <p>MCTC 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.</p>
<p>3. Pursue Transit Funding</p>	<p>Support potential changes to the Transportation Development Act that will assist local public transportation systems with funding eligibility.</p>	<p>MCTC will monitor the CalSTA TDA working group and support modifications to the TDA process as appropriate to ensure that the county's transit operators are provided with flexibility to continue accessing funding to maintain and expand service.</p> <p>MCTC will support efforts to advocate for additional flexibility for TDA, State Transit Assistance Program, and State of Good Repair funding. This includes supporting an extension of AB 149 of 2021, which provides relief from meeting farebox recovery ratios through FY 25-26, and seeking additional funding for operations, and a successor source to the sales tax on diesel to fund transit capital and operations.</p> <p>MCTC will also advocate for new formula funding to transit operators that provides dedicated public transit service for state and national parks. This would support YARTS service through Madera County (Mariposa, Merced, Tuolumne and Mono as well) to support access to Yosemite National Park.</p> <p>MCTC will advocate to protect and acquire its remaining share of SB 125 formula funds provided by the legislature for operations and capital needs.</p> <p>MCTC 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>

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4. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Mandates	<p>Monitor activities on conversations regarding the jobs-housing imbalance and the impact on vehicle miles traveled.</p> <p>Protect transportation funding from being withheld or diverted and find other alternatives to address meeting affordable housing goals.</p> <p>Support state funding to expand infrastructure and incentives for conversion to electric vehicles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Monitor the implementation of SB 743, potential modification of SB 375, and protect the ability to continue addressing congestion management and safety on the state highway system without compromising economic activity.</p> <p>Support legislation to provide flexibility in meeting state climate goals.</p> <p>Ensure predictability and stability of transportation revenue should conversion occur due to lack of reliance on petroleum consumption to address greenhouse gas emission reduction.</p>	<p>MCTC will work with organizations such as the California Chamber of Commerce, California League of Cities, California State Association of Counties, and Self-Help Counties Coalition, among others, to comply with the statewide mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and endorse policies that promote regional job and housing creation to reduce vehicle miles traveled. This includes acquiring funding to expand the infrastructure and incentives, particularly for disadvantaged communities, for electric vehicle conversion by minimizing concerns over range, cost, and infrastructure. MCTC will oppose efforts to continually revise emissions or vehicle miles traveled targets, which undermine previous investments and condition competitiveness for state funding beyond what is achievable for the region.</p> <p>MCTC will work with organizations such as the California Chamber of Commerce, California League of Cities, California State Association of Counties, San Joaquin Valley Policy Council, 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 potential extension of SB 375, and impacts on addressing safety, congestion management, goods movement on the state highway system to ensure that capacity projects are not precluded from being funded, and there is not a negative impact on the local economy.</p> <p>MCTC supports 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> <p>MCTC 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, and military operations.</p>

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5. Passenger Rail	<p>Provide enhanced passenger rail commuter service connecting the Valley to the Bay Area and Southern California</p> <p>Maintain and increase funding for commuter and intercity passenger rail for Ace/ San Joaquin. Pursue funding opportunities made available through CalSTA.</p>	<p>MCTC will work cooperatively with CalSTA, Caltrans Division of Rail, Amtrak, CTC, LOSSAN, ACE, San Joaquin, and Union Pacific Railroad to expand passenger rail service to accommodate for Madera County residents.</p> <p>MCTC will also continue to diligently work on establishing extended commuter/intercity rail service to not only offset the impacts of congestion on SR 99, but to also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and expand mobility options.</p> <p>MCTC will advocate to increase and acquire funding from CalSTA through the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program, State Rail Assistance and Transit Capital and Intercity Rail Program to expand transit and passenger rail service in the county.</p> <p>MCTC supports the Governor's plan for further passenger rail investments, the 2024 California State Rail Plan, and California High-speed Rail Authority's 2024 Business Plan to complete the Early Operating Segment between Merced and Bakersfield between 2030 and 2033.</p>