



VALLEY VOICE DC

FEDERAL PLATFORM 2024



About California's San Joaquin Valley

California's San Joaquin Valley comprises eight counties (San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern) and 62 cities. This area of 27,383 square miles (larger than the state of West Virginia) lies between the Sierra Nevada Mountain range to the east, the Tehachapi Mountains to the south, the coastal ranges to the west, and the Sacramento Valley to the north. The San Joaquin Valley is an agricultural-based economy that provides 25 percent of the nation's food supply.



State Route 99, also referred to as California's main north-south artery, plays a crucial role in transporting goods from southern California to northern California through the major cities of the San Joaquin Valley (Valley). Because of its central location in the state, the Valley is a vital transportation hub for moving people and goods in California and across the United States. In addition to improvements to State Route 99 (SR 99), significant rail investments are underway in the Valley, including construction of the first segment of the California High-Speed Rail project, which will ultimately connect cities along the corridor from the Bay Area in northern California to San Diego in Southern California. The Central Valley High-Speed Rail segment includes rail and station development from Merced to Bakersfield, with service anticipated to begin in the early 2030s. Station area development is underway, with transformational change and welcome economic growth expected for host cities, including Merced, Madera, Fresno, Hanford, and Bakersfield.

The Valley has approximately 4.4 million residents, accounting for about 11% of California's population. It is growing; by 2060, the eight counties are projected to capture almost 13% of the state's population. These growth estimates pose opportunities and challenges to the regional transportation system, offering significant investment potential from state and federal sources. The Valley has disproportionately high rates of low-income and minority communities and is challenged by air quality impacts. Investments in green infrastructure will greatly benefit local communities across the Valley.

San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

The Regional Policy Council for the San Joaquin Valley was formed to serve as a platform for collaboration on key regional issues and to showcase the commitment of its regional transportation planning agencies working together. This collaborative partnership includes two elected officials from each of the eight regional transportation planning agencies, the Executive Directors of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority. Honorary members include the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the California High-Speed Rail Authority. "Valley Voice" serves as the Policy Council's advocacy program, conveying the region's priorities to policymakers and agency staff in Washington, DC, and Sacramento. Chair Daron McDaniel, who serves as a Supervisor for the County of Merced, leads the council.



*Daron McDaniel,
Valley Voice Chair*



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Highway Projects



The San Joaquin Valley alone generates 25 percent of the nation’s agricultural products. This results in the need for enhanced freight movement infrastructure along the SR 99 corridor to export these products throughout the state, supporting access to fresh produce in the state’s urbanized areas. In addition, the demand to transport freight from existing West Coast maritime ports to inland markets and beyond has grown significantly. Since freight is projected to surpass 500 million tons annually by 2040, safe and efficient goods movement corridors and associated logistics sector investments are critical to ensuring supply chain reliability.

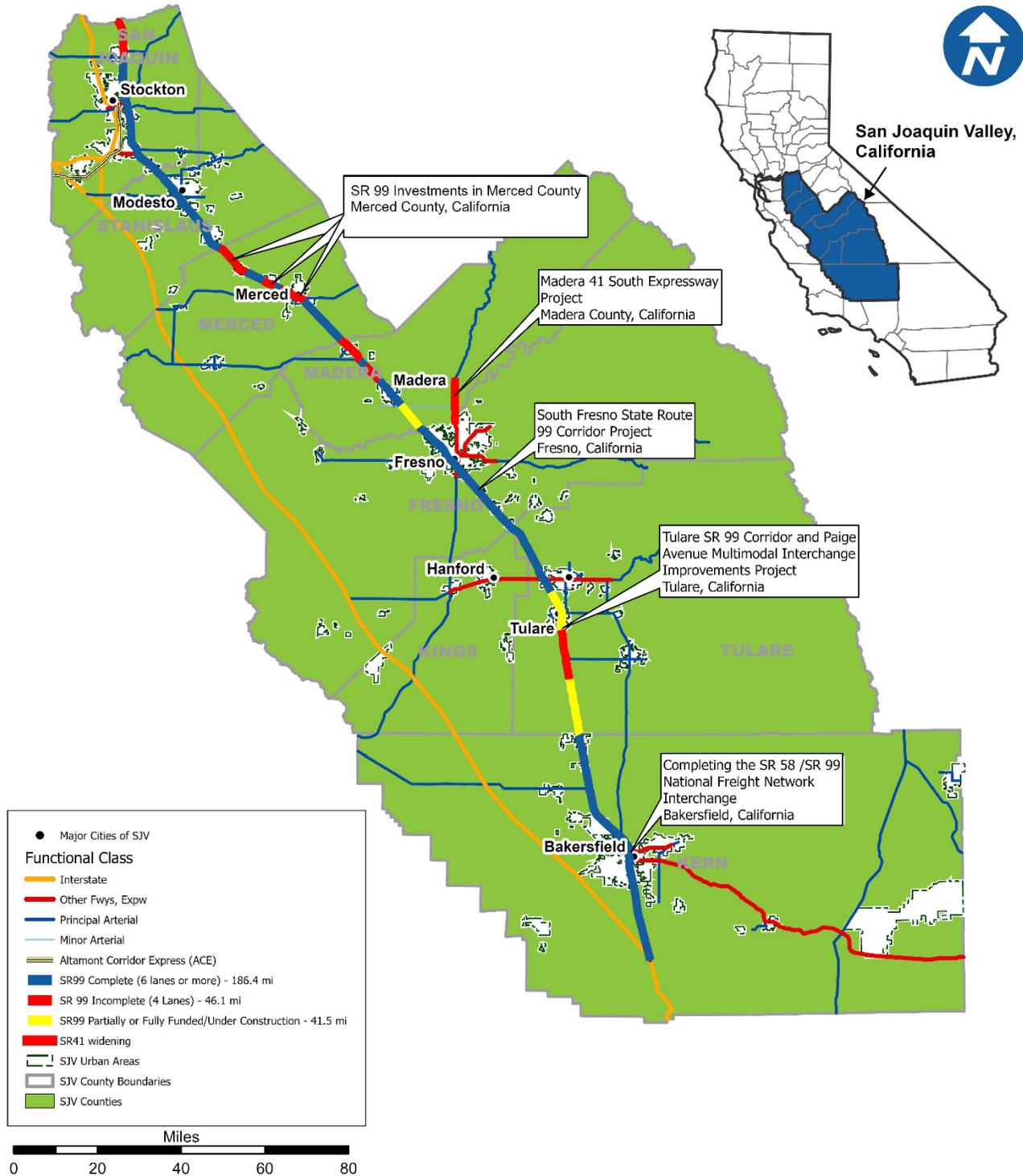
The Regional Transportation Planning Agencies are 100% united in working collaboratively with federal and state partners to prioritize investments in SR 99, ensuring safety for both goods movement and passengers and enhancing the Valley’s economic backbone. Our delegation seeks federal funding to support the planning, design, and construction of key segments and connections identified as regional priorities to modernize the SR 99 corridor.

These requests, which are essential to maintain a state of good repair and improve travel and goods movement along SR 99, are reflected in the table below on the related map on the following page.

Federal Funding Project Requests – Highway Projects

Project, Lead Agency, and Location	Pending Funding Requests
<p>Completing the SR 58/SR 99 National Freight Network Interchange to Protect Local Neighborhoods</p> <p>Kern Council of Governments Bakersfield, California</p>	<p>The Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) has a pending request of \$25 million to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) seeking assistance through the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 and 2026 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG) to construct a direct connector ramp, from southbound SR 99 to westbound SR 58, completing the final missing movement to this National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) freeway to freeway interchange on the SR 58 corridor connecting Interstate (I)-40 to I-5.</p>
<p>South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project</p> <p>Fresno Council of Governments, Fresno, California</p>	<p>The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) has a pending request of \$25 million to DOT seeking assistance through the FY 2025 and 2026 INFRA Grant Program to replace a non-standard, split interchange at North/Cedar Avenues and a non-standard, half-interchange at American Avenue with project components to replace two aged overcrossings, realign and widen ramps, eliminate isolated ramps, install signalized intersections, provide sidewalk and bicycle facilities and electric-vehicle (EV) charging stations, install a sound barrier to mitigate traffic noise, and replace and rehabilitate existing pavement.</p>
<p>Madera 41 South Expressway Project</p> <p>Madera County, Madera County, California</p>	<p>Madera County has a pending request of \$20 million to DOT through the Rural Surface Transportation (Rural) Grant Program under the FY 2025 and 2026 MPDG to upgrade a 4.5-mile segment of SR 41 in the Central Valley from a two-lane roadway alignment to a four-lane limited access, divided expressway.</p>
<p>Tulare SR 99 Corridor and Paige Avenue Multimodal Interchange Improvements Project</p> <p>Tulare County Association of Governments and Caltrans, Tulare, California</p>	<p>The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG), in partnership with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), has a pending request of \$98 million to DOT seeking assistance through the Rural Grant Program under the FY 2025 and 2026 MPDG to improve vehicle and freight movement along State Route (SR) 99 by providing a consistent six-lane cross-section to close facility gaps.</p>
<p>Future SR 99 Investments in Merced County</p> <p>Merced County Association of Governments, Merced County, California</p>	<p>The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) looks forward to future discussions on potential partnerships to complete the remaining four-lane segments of SR 99 in Merced County. Located adjacent to the future California High-Speed Rail, Altamont Corridor Express, and Amtrak San Joaquins shared rail station, federal investment combined with local and state funding will be needed to ensure safe and efficient multi-modal connectivity in the region.</p>

San Joaquin Valley, California State Route Highway Projects



Air Quality

The Regional Transportation Planning Agencies and their partners seek federal support for regional efforts to reduce emissions from the transportation and agricultural sectors to improve air quality and public health outcomes throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Member agencies prioritize investments in electrification; clean vehicles, locomotives, and agricultural equipment; and expanding passenger rail service and multimodal connectivity.

Projects

- **Zero-Emission Vehicle Infrastructure** - San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Air District) and the cities of Tracy, Buttonwillow, Kettleman City, and Visalia. The Air District and Prologis Mobility are seeking \$37.6 million from the US DOT's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program to plan and implement Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure hubs in Tracy and Buttonwillow for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. The Air District is also partnering with Greenlane Infrastructure, LLC., on a \$72.2 million CFI grant application to deploy two publicly accessible medium- and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicle charging and hydrogen fueling complexes in Kettleman City and Visalia.
- **San Joaquin Valley Locomotive Emissions Reduction Project** - SJVAPCD. The Air District has requested \$48.4 million from the FRA FY 2023 and 2024 CRISI Program to replace 15 old, high-polluting locomotives with newer, cleaner Tier 4 locomotives.
- **Heavy-Duty Vehicle Replacement** - SJVAPCD, Fresno and Stanislaus Counties. The Air District has a pending Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles (CHDV) Grant request to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeking \$8,933,333 to replace 26 class 6/7 trucks owned and operated by fleets in Fresno and Stanislaus Counties.
- **Agricultural Burning and Equipment** - SJVAPCD. The Air District has pending requests to the USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for \$25 million to replace high-polluting tractors with low-emission ones and another \$25 million for equipment to help farmers chip and reincorporate orchard and vineyard materials into the soil.

Policy: Working Together to Avoid Sanctions

There are ongoing concerns about the EPA's disapproval of the 2016 Ozone Plan contingency measures. The Air District and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies are working to resolve this issue, as federal funding sanctions could occur as early as November 2024 if a resolution is not attained. Sanctions could impact the ability to deliver transportation and infrastructure projects, which would work against the Biden Administration's goals of advancing transportation projects and improving air quality as authorized through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The cooperation of EPA and federal partners is sought to approve the 2018 PM2.5 Plan contingency measures and avoid potential impacts on project delivery. The Valley Regional Transportation Planning Agencies have identified \$4.5 billion of projects "at risk" from the possible EPA sanctions.

Rail Projects



The Regional Transportation Planning Agencies continue to work together to enhance multimodal connectivity, reduce carbon emissions, and improve air quality for Valley residents. Our delegation is prioritizing passenger rail investments that are aligned with the Administration’s policy goals for mobility, economic opportunity, sustainability, resiliency, and environmental justice.

Expanding passenger rail service and improvements to freight rail in our planning efforts are vital to supporting population growth, economic development, workforce strategies, interregional connections, and federal clean air standards compliance. We encourage lawmakers and the Administration to support the San Joaquin Valley’s regionally significant rail projects described in the table on the next page and shown on the related map.

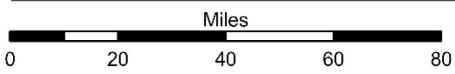
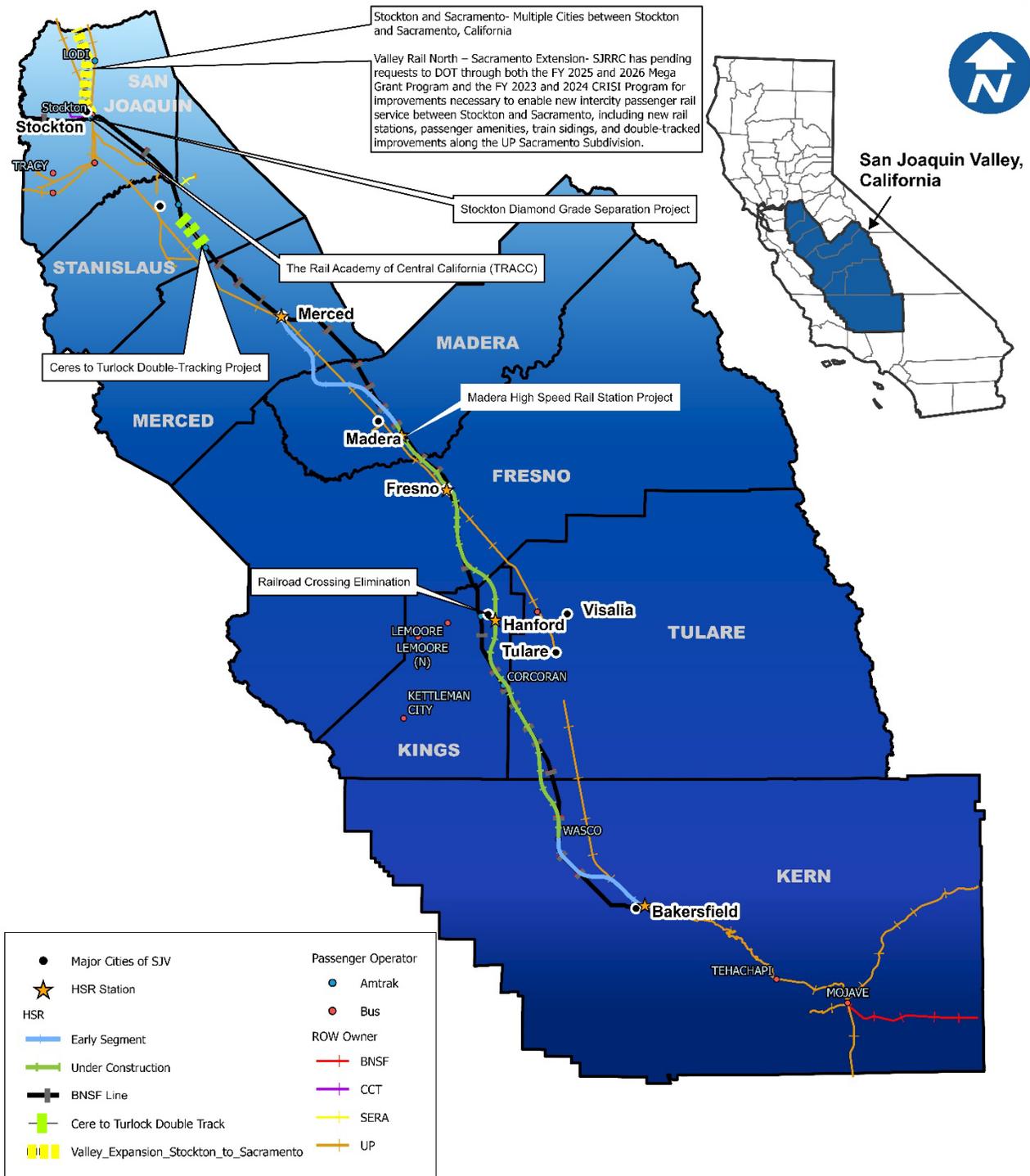
Learn more about the San Joaquin Valley’s Vision for Integrated Passenger Rail and Transit Services at the following link: <https://bit.ly/4g63L2h> or by scanning the QR Code below.



Federal Funding Project Requests – Rail Projects

Project, Lead Agency, and Location	Pending Funding Requests
Grangeville Boulevard Grade Separation, City of Hanford, Kings County Association of Governments, Congressional Districts: CA-20 and CA-22	The City of Hanford is submitting a grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approximately \$6 million through the FY 2023 and 2024 Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program to advance the construction of an underpass at the intersection of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway line and Grangeville Boulevard in the City of Hanford.
Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Stockton, California	The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC) has a pending FY 2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) request to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Maritime Administration (MARAD) to construct a new grade-separated railroad crossing in downtown Stockton, routing the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) over the BNSF.
Ceres to Turlock Double-Tracking Project, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Ceres, and Turlock, California	SJRRRC has a pending request to DOT seeking assistance through the INFRA Grant Program under the FY 2025 and 2026 MPDG to construct a new, second mainline track along an approximately ten-mile portion of the UP that will provide the opportunity for future extension of the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) passenger rail service southward to the City of Turlock.
Madera High-Speed Rail Station Project, San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, Madera, California	The San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) has a pending request to DOT seeking assistance through the National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) Grant Program under the FY 2025 and 2026 MPDG to construct a new station in Madera County for California’s Interim High-Speed Rail (HSR) Service between Merced and Bakersfield.
Valley Rail North – Sacramento Extension, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Multiple Cities between Stockton and Sacramento, California	SJRRRC has pending requests to DOT through both the FY 2025 and 2026 Mega Grant Program and the FY 2023 and 2024 Consolidated Rail and Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program for improvements necessary to enable new intercity passenger rail service between Stockton and Sacramento, including new rail stations, passenger amenities, train sidings, and double-tracked improvements along the UP Sacramento Subdivision.
The Rail Academy of Central California (TRACC), San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Stockton, California	SJRRRC has a pending FY 2023 and 2024 CRISI Program request to the FRA to support a strategic partnership between educational and business entities to train and place students into quality transportation-related jobs in the railroad and transit sectors.

San Joaquin Valley, California Passenger Rail



Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

Budget and Appropriations



Programmatic Priorities

As appropriators work on FY 2025 spending bills, we urge Congress to avoid cuts to transportation programs authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). It's important to maintain critical investments, particularly in the FY 2025 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (T-HUD) spending bill, as discretionary grant programs are vital for our ongoing work to enhance mobility, safety, goods movement, transit, and air quality in the Central Valley. Cuts would impact our ability to fully realize the potential of federal investments in our regional infrastructure. We also oppose any legislative efforts to rescind previously awarded federal grants supporting transportation projects, which would thus also benefit the local communities and workforce of the San Joaquin Valley.

Project Priorities

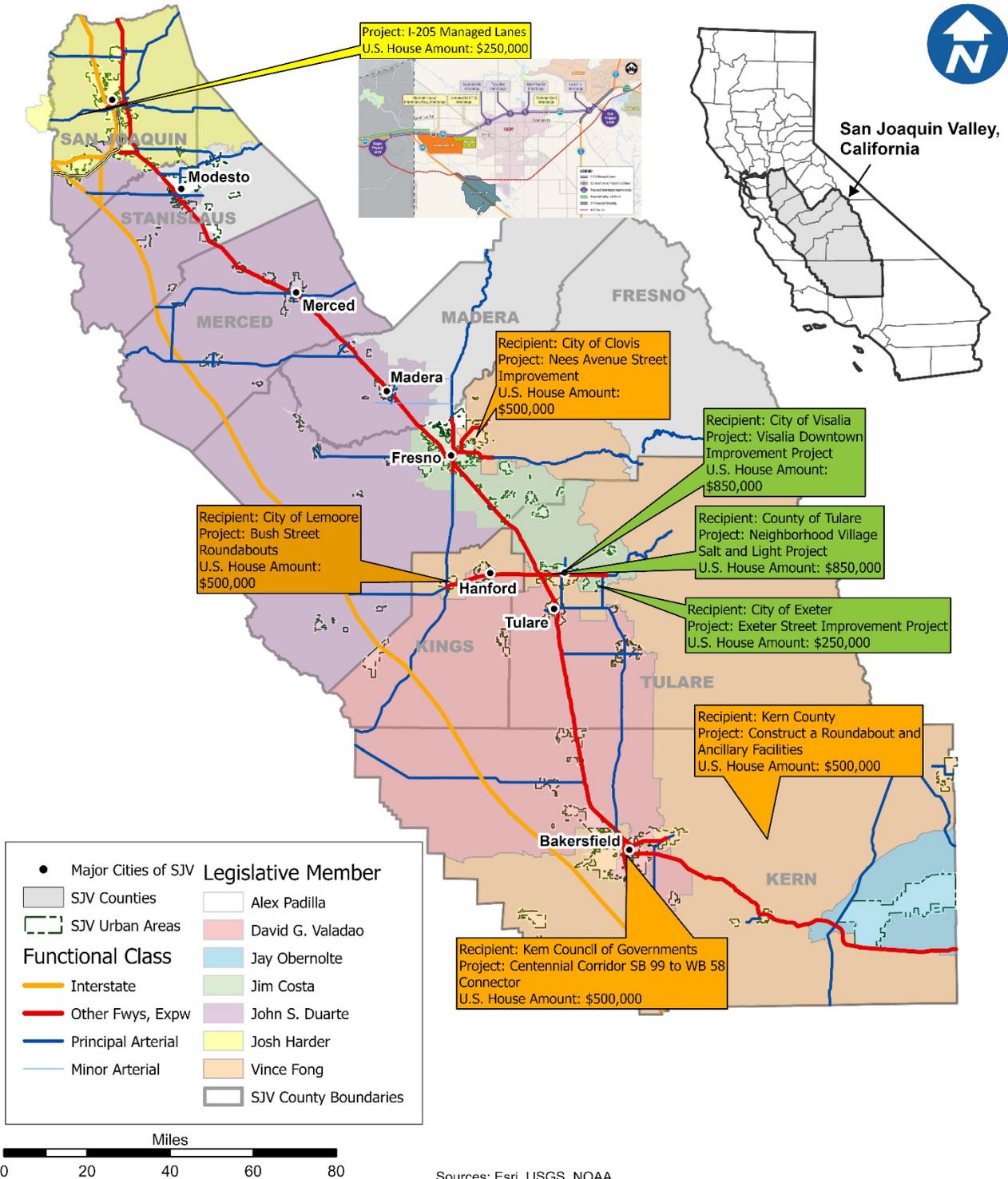
As negotiations for FY 2025 spending bills progress, we urge lawmakers to maintain the Community Project Funding and Congressionally Directed Spending requests submitted by our San Joaquin Valley Congressional delegation. Details are included in the table on the next page and highlighted on the related map.

Project Priorities Table

Senator/ Congressman	Agency	Account	Recipient	Project	Location	Amount	Requestor
Senator Alex Padilla	Department of Transportation	Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements	San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission	Modesto & Empire Terminal Railroad PTC Installation for Expanded ACE Rail Service	CA	\$2,900,000	Padilla
Congressman Jim Costa	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiatives	City of Visalia	Visalia Downtown Improvement Project	CA	\$850,000	Costa
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiatives	City of Exeter	Exeter Street Improvement Project	CA	\$250,000	Costa
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiatives	County of Tulare	Neighborhood Village Salt and Light Project	CA	\$850,000	Costa
	Environmental Protection Agency	STAG-Clean Water State Revolving Fund	County of Tulare	East Orosi Sewer Project	CA	\$1,105,800	Costa
	Environmental Protection Agency	STAG-Clean Water State Revolving Fund	City of Woodlake	Storm Drain Enhancement Project	CA	\$1,105,800	Costa
Congressman John Duarte	Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	SR 132 Dakota Avenue to Gates Road	CA	\$2,000,000	Duarte
	Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	SR-41 Expressway	CA	\$3,000,000	Duarte
	Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	State Route 99/233 Chowchilla Multimodal Interchange Improvement	CA	\$4,000,000	Duarte
Congressman Vince Fong	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiative	Kern Council of Governments	Construct a Roundabout and Ancillary Facilities	CA	\$500,000	Fong
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiative	Kern Council of Governments	Centennial Corridor SB 99 to WB 58 Connector	CA	\$500,000	Fong
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiative	City of Clovis	Nees Avenue Street Improvement	CA	\$500,000	Fong
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiative	City of Clovis	Sunnyside and Nees Traffic Signal	CA	\$1,000,000	Fong
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiatives	County of Tulare	Spruce Road Safety Improvement and Congestion Relief Project	CA	\$1,000,000	Fong
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiatives	City of Visalia	Tulare Avenue Safety Improvements	CA	\$2,000,000	Fong
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	Economic Development Initiatives	City of Lemoore	Bush Street Roundabouts	CA	\$500,000	Fong
Congressman Josh Harder	Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	I-205 Managed Lanes	CA	\$250,000	Harder
Congressman Jay Obernolte	U.S. Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	SR58/Edwards AFB North Gate Intersection Improvement	CA	\$2,000,000	Obernolte
Congressman David Valadao	U.S. Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	State Route 43/7th Standard Road Roundabout	CA	\$2,500,000	Valadao
	Department of Transportation	Highway Infrastructure Programs	CA	Avenue 192 and Road 192 Farm to Market Corridor	CA	\$2,500,000	Valadao

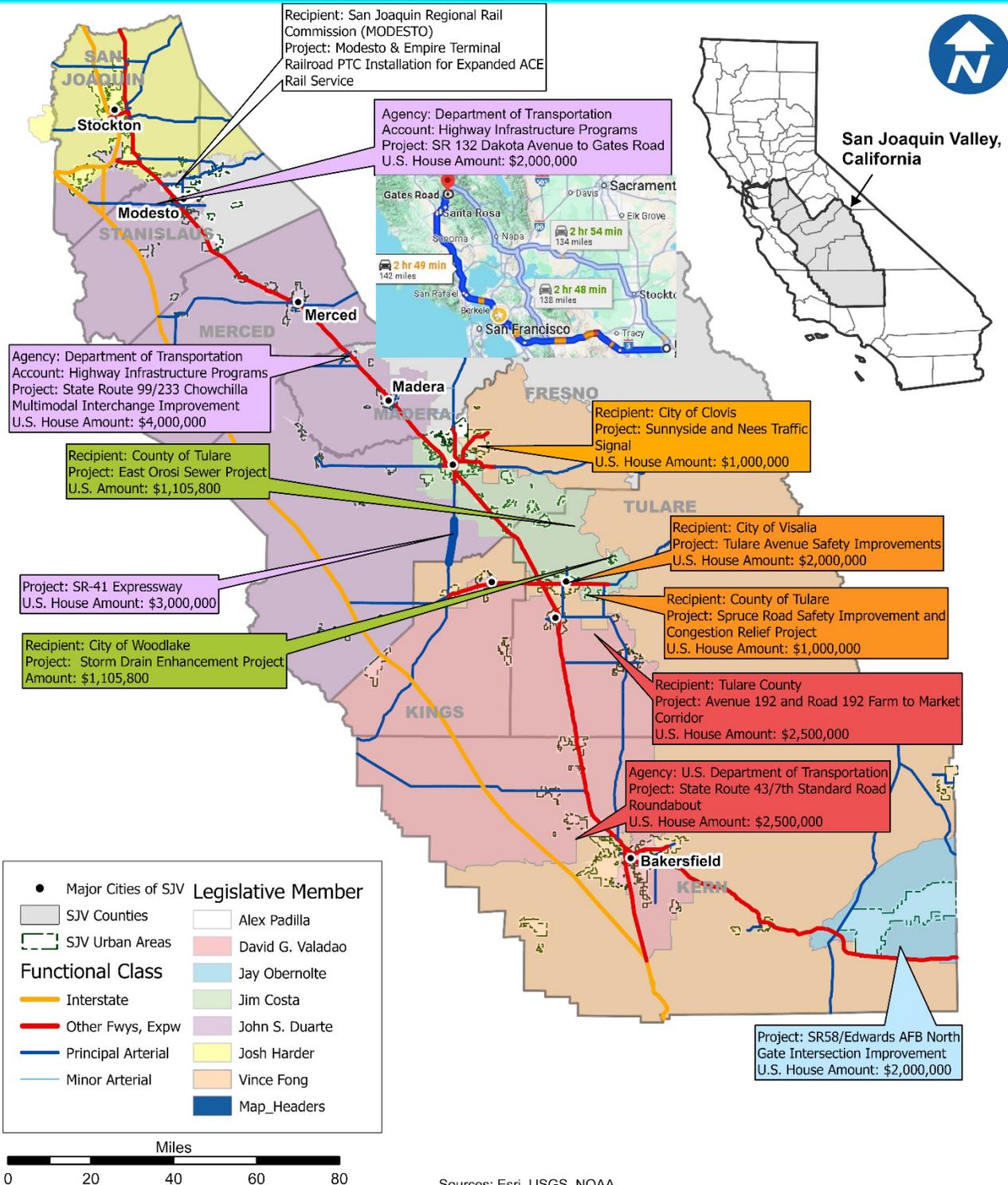
San Joaquin Valley, California

Legislative State Route Highway Projects (under \$1,000,000)



San Joaquin Valley, California

Legislative State Route Highway Projects (\$1,000,000+)



IIJA/IRA Implementation



Lawmakers must hold states accountable throughout the implementation of the IIJA and IRA, ensuring that state governments appropriately coordinate with regional or local government partners and distribute federal resources as required by the law and intended by its spirit.

As the Administration continues to focus on improving safety outcomes as its top policy priority, we ask our federal and state partners to recognize that allowing additional highway and road capacity improvements throughout the Valley, where improvements have lagged for decades, is critical to helping to prevent crashes, injuries, and fatalities, especially on aging two-lane facilities in our most disadvantaged communities.

Reauthorization Principles



Ensuring the Solvency of the Highway Trust Fund

As Congress discusses reauthorization, we urge our Members to find stable funding for the Highway Trust Fund, such as raising federal fuel taxes or introducing new taxes/fees on electric vehicles, commercial trucks, and Vehicle Miles Traveled. Acknowledging the fiscal impacts on our low-income rural residents, including essential farmworkers, we encourage lawmakers to consider special programs that counteract increased costs for rural disadvantaged drivers in the Valley, where residents and their families may need to travel long distances for basic trips such as work, education, and medical services.

Prioritizing Regional and Local Funding

Regional governments, including councils and planning organizations, are uniquely positioned to work with federal, state, and local entities to plan and implement infrastructure projects, striving for equitable distribution of funds and representation of diverse communities. We urge lawmakers to allocate a greater share of federal formula funds for programs such as the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, and the Metropolitan Planning (PL) Program directly to regional and local governments to maximize federal funding for impactful projects and services. We also urge lawmakers to expand eligibility for regional councils and MPOs across the full spectrum of discretionary and competitive funding opportunities.

Maintaining a State of Good Repair

In October 2023, a CBO report found that state and local governments spent \$180 billion on highways in 2022, three times the federal government's spending. This accounted for 0.71% of GDP. The report also highlighted that operations and maintenance comprised 57% of state and local spending. We encourage federal lawmakers to prioritize funding programs for maintaining highways in good repair in the next reauthorization.

Reauthorization OR Farm Bill Principles

Farm-to-Market Routes

The Regional Transportation Planning Agencies support federal funding, specifically through a set aside in the next Farm Bill or surface transportation reauthorization, for maintaining critical farm-to-market routes subject to heavy truck traffic carrying agricultural products. Trucks hauling dairy can weigh up to 80,000 pounds each, putting immense stress on roadway and bridge infrastructure and costing local governments throughout the region significant maintenance expenses.

While the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Rural Development (RD) administers grants to support public facilities and infrastructure improvements, the federal award size and share are often insufficient to address these specific infrastructure needs in our local communities. Additionally, those commercial trucks bringing food to market often traverse exurban and suburban communities with populations greater than 20,000 people in route to ultimate destinations. Still, the small rural communities along the way are not the beneficiaries of the goods movement and, in fact, suffer from the deterioration of local roads.

Potential solutions include creating a new grant program to be administered by either the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) or USDA for this sole purpose, creating a formula set aside for local corridors to be designated under existing transportation programs, or increasing the maximum grant award and federal share and expanding eligibility for RD programs administered by USDA. Any of these changes can help remove barriers and better enable the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies to overcome challenges associated with seeking federal resources to help maintain farm-to-market routes locally.



2024 Valley Voice DC Delegation

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