



San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

# VALLEY VOICE WASHINGTON D.C.

2021



Draft



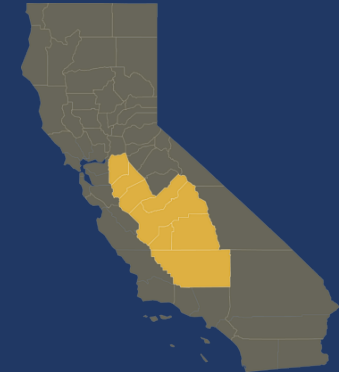


# Introduction

The **Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act** was signed into law by President Barack Obama in December 2015, authorizing \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for highway, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail, and research, technology, and statistics programs. With the legislation set to expire on **Thursday, September 30, 2021**, this information booklet outlines priorities from the San Joaquin Valley for inclusion in the next surface transportation reauthorization package, as well as other current transportation, air quality, and water infrastructure priorities.

# About California's San Joaquin Valley

California's San Joaquin Valley 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 region is comprised of eight counties (San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern) and 62 cities. Most of the Valley is rural and economically driven by agriculture and goods movement, with 25 percent of the nation's food supply coming from the region. However, a significant proportion of its residents reside in urban areas, most of which are along the major transportation corridors. The Valley is also home to 23 of the 30 most disadvantaged communities in California.

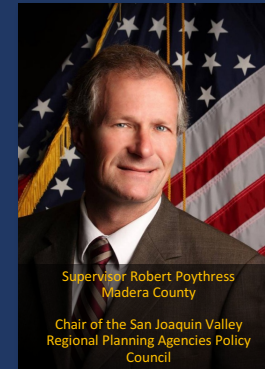


The Valley is currently home to more than four million people, which is about 10 percent of the state's population. However, by 2060, it is estimated that the region will be home to 5.7 million people, a 44 percent increase in population compared to 21 percent for California during the same time period. These growth projections promise to challenge an already stressed regional transportation network, but also provide tremendous opportunity for state and federal investments.

# About the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council is a partnership that exemplifies the regional transportation planning agencies' commitment to working collaboratively to address regional issues, challenges, and opportunities. The 18-member Policy Council was established to build regional consensus and provide a forum for the Valley to organize, coordinate, and communicate as a region. The Policy Council consists of two elected officials from each of the eight regional planning agencies' policy boards, and the Executive Directors of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and the San Joaquin Joint Power Authority.

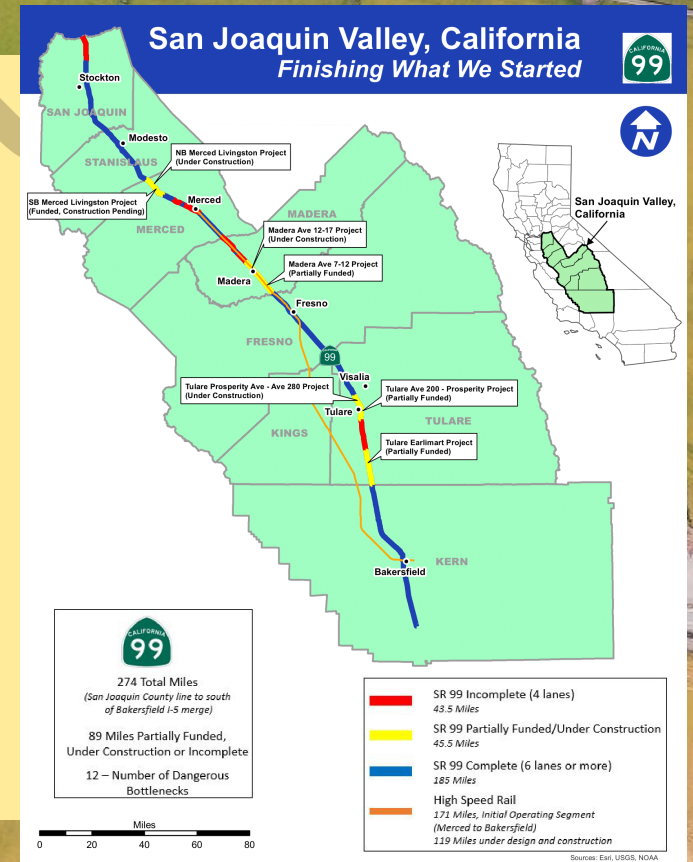
Valley Voice is the Policy Council's advocacy program that communicates the region's priorities to policymakers and agency staff in Sacramento and Washington, DC. Each year for the last ten years, a coalition of elected officials and COG staff from throughout the region travel to Sacramento and Washington, DC to advocate on behalf of the Valley with a unified voice.



# State Route 99

**State Route (SR) 99**, also known as the backbone of California—is a major goods movement state highway connecting southern California to northern California through the major cities of the San Joaquin Valley. SR 99 is on the National Primary Freight Network and has higher than average truck volumes. Lack of capacity for SR 99 results in congestion, fatal accidents, and poor air quality. The Valley Voice delegation encourages Congress and the Administration to support robust federal investments for this critical corridor.

Goods movement has become an increasingly important transportation, economic, and environment issue for the eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley. The region's dominant industries include agriculture, food production, energy and construction, among many others. The critical role that the San Joaquin Valley plans in California and the nation's food supply will continue to require an effective goods movement system to distribute and export products quickly and efficiency.



# Policy Principles

We support passage of a multiyear surface transportation reauthorization such as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Understanding that the House is likely to consider that bill without further amendment, we urge members of our congressional delegation to make use of the budget reconciliation process to advance the following policy priorities and secure additional federal resources for our local needs:

- Investments in water infrastructure and storage capacity.
- Robust investments in emissions reduction such as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program.
- Investments in electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, clean vehicles, and climate resiliency programs.
- Investments in agriculture conservation, drought, and forestry programs to prevent wildfires.
- Investments in workforce development and job training.

# Pending Federal Grant Applications

The Valley Voice delegation encourages Congress and the Administration's support for the following projects seeking federal grant assistance through programs administered the U.S. Department of Transportation:

- 1) **State Route 99 Madera South-Operational Improvement Project.** The Madera County Transportation Commission's application for \$10 million in funding through the Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program for \$16.4 million.
- 2) **California Inland Port Study.** The Fresno Council of Government's application for \$1 million in RAISE funding for \$2.5 million. This project would assess the feasibility of a new intermodal spine connecting seaports to key consumption and production markets.
- 3) **North Lathrop Transfer Station and Lathrop Wye Project.** The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission's (SJRRC) application for \$25 million in RAISE funding.
- 4) **Kings County Zero-Emission Fleet Conversion Project.** The Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA) application for \$192,000 in funding through the Areas of Persistent Poverty Program administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- 5) **West Coast Electric Highway Corridor.** The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's application for \$25 million in RAISE funding for a 1,300-mile zero-emission freight corridor.



# Surface Transportation Reauthorization

## Member Designated Projects Requests

The Valley Voice delegation welcomes the restoration of Congressionally directed spending measures through the surface transportation reauthorization process and urges lawmakers to ensure that Member Designated Projects included in the INVEST in America Act are ultimately funded. The Valley supports the following Member Designated Project (MDP) requests submitted by the region and included in the surface transportation reauthorization bill passed by the House of Representatives:

- 1) **State Route 99 Madera South-Operational Improvement Project.** Madera County Transportation Commission is seeking \$10 million.
- 2) **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Fleet Expansion Project.** Merced County Association of Governments is seeking \$2.25 million.
- 3) **Atwater-Merced Expressway (AME) Phase 1B project.** Merced County is seeking \$2 million.
- 4) **State Route 132 West Project.** Stanislaus Council of Governments is seeking \$12 million.
- 5) **State Route 41 Excelsior Corridor Project.** Fresno County is seeking \$20 million.
- 6) **Elm Avenue Road Diet Reconstruction and Class IV-Ventura/California to North Avenue project.** City of Fresno is seeking \$3.75 million.





# Budget and Appropriations

## Community Project Funding Requests

The Valley Voice delegation also welcomes the restoration of Congressionally directed spending measures through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations process and urges lawmakers to ensure that proposals from the Valley are ultimately funded. The Valley supports the following Community Project Funding (CPF) requests in FY 2022 appropriations bills passed by the House of Representatives:

- 1) Merced County Courthouse Museum.** Merced County is seeking \$2 million through the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.
- 2) Dos Palos Water Plant Clarifier Replacement project.** City of Dos Palos is seeking \$279,664 through the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.
- 3) Gustine Water Loop Line Improvements project.** City of Gustine is seeking \$950,000 through the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

# Thank You!



## San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies Policy Council

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