



MERCED COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Minutes

The One Voice Meeting was held Thursday, October 25, 2007 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. at the Los Banos City Hall.

In Attendance

Katie Albertson, County Executive Office	Frank Amaral, Councilman, City of Gustine
Robin Adam, Legislative Dir. for ASM Galgiani	Jesse Brown, MCAG
Patti Dossetti, Program Development, MUHSD	Robert Fore, Superintendent, MUHSD
Richard Gerbi, Business owner	Joy Gort, MCAG
Lynnette Gerbi, Business owner	Ashley Leffard, MCEDCO
Marvin Heppner, Business owner	Gene Lieb, Los Banos Enterprise
Mike McAdam, KUBB/KHTN Radio	Joe Oliveira, Councilman, City of Gustine
Hicham Eltal, MID	Gonzalo Rodriguez, Brookfield Land
Sylvia Smith, MUHSD	Elaine Post, City of Los Banos
Dr. Steve Tietjen, Los Banos USD	Candice Steelman, MCAG
Rich Green, MCAG	Anna Fuentes, MCAG
Mike Villalta, Councilman, Los Banos	Thane Young, Van SCOYOC Association
Hank Vander Veen, Merced Sun Star	Laura Morgan, Van SCOYOC Association

1. Following introductions, Chair Joe Oliveira announced public comment period. Los Banos Redevelopment Manager Elaine Post and Council Member Mike Villalta welcomed One Voice to Los Banos.
2. MCAG Public Information Officer Candice Steelman reviewed the project lists from the September 27th meeting. The lists were the result of conversations with county and city managers, as well as input from our last meeting. Breakout groups were formed for discussion and the groups were asked to rank their list of priorities.
3. Thane Young from Van Scoyoc Associates spoke about some of the changes that have occurred in Washington, D.C. since the fiscal year, including the fact that none of the 12 appropriations bills have been passed. He handed out a list of Congressional Delegation FY08 Earmarks from Senator Dianne Feinstein. Thane has been busy looking for other funding opportunities through meetings with the appropriations subcommittees and legislative representatives and staff.
5. Candice Steelman discussed the dates for the trips to Sacramento (Feb. 12-14) and Washington, D.C. (April 20-24). Candice asked those who have not signed up for the Sacramento or Washington, D.C trips to do so. A choice of hotels was given with a list of accommodations. The group said that they definitely do not want to stay in the Georgetown area of the city, nor do they want to stay in Virginia and take the Metro in. The group stated that they preferred areas that were walkable to meetings

and safe to walk in at night. Several other hotels were mentioned. Staff will investigate availability and cost.

6. Joe Oliveira stated that the next One Voice meeting will be held on November 29, 9:00-10:30 at the Multicultural Arts Center, 645 West Main Street, in Merced.

The following pages show projects that were better defined from the first meeting and favored by the breakout groups. The projects are matched with the most appropriate funding source. However, further details on projects may lead to other funding recommendations from MCAG's lobbyist.

PROJECT

**FEDERAL
APPROPRIATIONS
BILL**

Transportation

Transportation/HUD

- #1 Hwy 152 realignment; treat it as an east/west trade corridor
- #2 Hwy 165 Hilmar bypass
- #3 Hwy 99 – widen to 6 lanes
- #4 Street and road maintenance
- #5 Campus Parkway

Also discussed:

- Atwater-Merced Expressway
- Hwy 33 safety improvements
- State only: Reduce 2/3rds vote requirement for measure passage
- Update/modernize land use and transportation plans

Education

#1 Environmental science summer program for 9th-12th graders from Gustine, Delhi, Livingston, Merced, Atwater and Los Banos.

Commerce/Justice/Science

#2 Engineering Academy pilot program for 9th-12th graders from Atwater.

Labor/HHS/Ed , NASA (?)

#3 Algebra summer program for 7th & 8th graders from Hilmar, Planada, Livingston, Merced & Ballico/ Cressey.

#4 English language skills summer program for 3rd-5th graders in Merced.

Economic Development

Farm Bill, USDA grants & programs

#1 Downtown revitalization

Project: Creamery building – Los Banos

#2 Federal only: USDA funding – grants tied to loans and increase in rate structure not making it practical for jurisdictions to use

Project: Business incubators – Los Banos, Merced, Merced College

#3 tie: Industrial park – Gustine

#3 tie: Infrastructure to recruit large recycling operation - County

#3 tie: Food processing relocation and retention – Los Banos

#4 Solar energy component manufacturing – Atwater

Comprehensive economic dev studies

Rural wells/treatment plants – USDA funding?

Water

Interior & Environment or Energy & Water Development

In top 5 for State only: Support Governor's water plan, the only one that includes water storage.

In top 5 for both: Westside regional drainage plan, which has most of the needed funding; needs the last \$40 million

In top 5 for both: Flood control/Merced streams project, includes Black Rascal Creek, Garza Creek, possibly a new dam or existing dam improvements (through IRWMP). Regarding flood control, Congressman Cardoza supports building the new Haystack Dam. As part of this, revise FEMA maps. People are now paying for flood insurance that don't need to.

In top 5 for both: Unified vision on recycled water, at the federal and state levels

In top 5 for Federal only: Support HR2498, Cardoza's comprehensive watershed plan for the Central Valley

In top 5 for Federal only: Merced Regional groundwater basin; state committed to \$1 (State is doing a comprehensive water management plan in which MID is one of the participating agencies.)

There was recognition that individual jurisdictions need wastewater treatment plants. However, One Voice breakout group participants acknowledged that legislators have told us that they now will only fund regional solutions for wastewater.

Other

(As there were no breakout group participants, the project list contains those projects that generated the most discussion at the September meeting.)

- Planning/Modifying City growth patterns to include new development
- Funding to combat rural crime (mostly gang/drug) **Commerce/Justice/Science**
- Look into Federal health Center program **Labor/HHS/Ed**
 - Stanislaus County received funding
 - Merced County not considered rural any more; can definition of rural be changed?
 - Can we receive funding if we are considered to be a "Health Professional Shortage" area?
- Rural public safety/gang activity **Agriculture**
- Legislators make it harder to farm every year **state policy**
 - Almonds must be pasteurized now
 - Dairies have many regulatory problems
- Lack of rural services/infrastructure **Labor/HHS/ Ed**