

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT 10 DIRECTOR

P.O. BOX 2048, STOCKTON, CA 95201

(1976 E. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD 95205)

PHONE (209) 948-7943

FAX (209) 948-3670

TTY 711

www.dot.ca.gov

*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

July 16, 2018

Mr. Matt Fell
Transportation Planning Manager
Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)
369 W. 18th St.
Merced, CA 95348

Dear Mr. Fell:

We appreciate the opportunity to review and provide comments on the 2018 Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Department would like to provide the following comments for you to take into consideration:

MCAG is commended for:

- Developing a great Executive Summary, highlighting the 2018 RTP, and providing resources for public understanding;
- Completing a robust public participation plan with many nodes of access for input throughout the development of the plan.

RTP Checklist Comments:

The RTP Checklist should be signed, and should reference RTP content locations in the body of the RTP and give the appropriate page number locations whenever possible, not just Chapter or Appendix references.

In Chapter 5, Future Conditions – Appendix A is referenced as containing the complete forecast for Merced County. However, Appendix A is slated to contain the Adoption Resolution. Please ensure that the appropriate appendix is referenced.

Since agriculture is such a valuable industry in Merced County, the plan would benefit from further discussion of agricultural land use and goods movement.

Mr. Fell
July 16, 2018
Page 2

The Checklist that is on the Office of Regional Planning (ORP) website is the Checklist that MPOs must use if they adopt their RTP on or after May 27, 2018. The Checklist that MCAG submitted (Appendix E) is incorrect. Please visit the ORP website at the following link to the correct 2018 Regional Transportation Planning Guidelines Checklist for MPOs:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/orip/rtp/>

The following comments correspond to the RTP Checklist numbering system that MCAG submitted:

General

#4(c). Please clarify where the RTP identifies areas within the region sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the region pursuant to Government Code Section 65584.

#4(e). Please identify where MCAG gathered and considered the best practically available scientific information regarding resource areas and farmland in the region as defined in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Government Code Section 65080.01.

Programing/Operations

#4. Appendix K contains a list of constrained projects. Please indicate where the RTP contains a list of un-constrained projects.

Financial

#2. Please identify where the RTP contains a consistency statement between the first 4 years of the fund estimate and the 4-year State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) fund estimate (65080(b)(4)(A)).

#5. Please identify where the cost estimates for implementing the projects identified in the RTP reflect "year of expenditure dollars" to reflect inflation rates (23 CFR part 450.324(f)(11)(iv)).

#9. Please identify in the Final Adopted document where the RTP addresses the specific financial strategies required to ensure the identified Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) TCMs from the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) can be implemented.

Mr. Fell
July 16, 2018
Page 3

Environmental

#2. Please further identify where the RTP contains a list of projects specifically identified as TCMs since there was not a discussion of it in Appendix K.

#3. Please identify where the RTP contains a discussion of SIP conformity since there was not a discussion of it in Appendix K.

#4 and 5. These are a bit confusing because MCAG does not specify mitigation activities (23 CFR part 450.324(f)(10)) in number 4, but in number 5, they are saying that the EIR addresses mitigation activities in Appendix D, which is Goods Movement. Please ensure that the Adopted RTP/EIR addresses this issue.

#7. Please further specify where in the RTP the TCMs are to be implemented in the region since TCMs are not mentioned in the identified Appendix K.

Due to the importance of the environmental component of the RTP, it would be more appropriate to specify the applicable pages. Although some of the Checklist questions can be found in the indicated Appendices and EIR, garnering page ranges will be more beneficial to the viewing public.

General RTP Comments:

Executive Summary

- Preferred Scenario front and center is great. It helps to know exactly what the scenario entails given the detailed description before going into the RTP.

Maps (throughout the document)

- The maps presented within the document all have a north arrow that was not easily distinguishable and no map scale. Adding these small changes can help for fast reference and comparison between various maps.
- Map on Page 55 needs to be reworked.

Safety (Page 7)

- A chart tracking safety metrics (per Federal MAP-21 PM 1) could show how MCAG is addressing injuries and fatalities over time and show progress towards zero death initiative.
- Delineating injury and fatality state may add clarity

Mr. Fell
July 16, 2018
Page 4

California Transportation Plan 2040 Alignment

- CTP 2040 is not mentioned at all in this plan. It is imperative the RTP, which already aligns with the policies and goals outlined in the CTP, are explicitly expressed showing linkage to other RTPs statewide and the statewide long range transportation plan.

Jobs-Housing Balance (Page 38)

- There is a great point within the 2nd paragraph, moving away from simply improve travel times to encourage Merced County to become a desirable destination for employers and employees. Having this as a standout statement shows the MPO commitment to increasing livability at the individual and household level, outside of simply decreasing travel time.

Transportation Technology (Pages 38-39)

- After talking with some District 6 stakeholders, we found that Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) have a huge role to play as an emerging trend. How prominent are TNCs in the area? What are the biggest players and what patterns are emerging as it relates to pick up and drop off? How should the region address public-private partnerships moving forward? Electric charging stations are worth mentioning as well, in addition to zero emission vehicles.

Public Engagement

- We suggest summarizing the public's input on the scenarios, showcasing real messages from real people and not only the quantity of engagement. Was the scenario chosen simply due to the forecasts presented?
- Perhaps, an illustration/graphic including a timeline of when and where engagement occurred would better show the robust public engagement activities.

If you have any questions, please contact Steven Martinez at (209) 942-6092 (email: steven.r.martinez@dot.ca.gov) or me at (209) 941-1921. We look forward to continuing to work with you in a cooperative manner.

Sincerely,



TOM DUMAS, Chief
Office of Metropolitan Planning