



For Immediate Release

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**MCAG GOVERNING BOARD ADOPTS
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY**

MERCED- The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) Governing Board adopted the Merced County Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) at the August Governing Board meeting. The RTP/SCS is a collaborative effort between MCAG, the County of Merced, and the cities of Atwater, Dos Palos, Gustine, Livingston, Los Banos and Merced and serves as the blueprint for investments in roads, freeways, public transit, bike trails and other ways people move around the county over the next 25 years.

Over the past year MCAG staff worked to prepare the 2018 update to the RTP to address current regional goals and priorities for our growing and evolving communities. Ultimately, the RTP seeks to ensure that the Merced County transportation system will continue to operate efficiently with sufficient capacity to meet demand and that mobility options are available for all of Merced County's residents. Growth in Merced County is expected to be driven in part by lower housing costs relative to neighboring regions, with people choosing longer commutes in exchange for affordability. While agribusiness is expected to continue as the leading job provider in the county, health care and service jobs are also on the rise.

The RTP includes comprehensive improvements to the regional and local transportation networks, referred to as the Tier I Project List and focuses on infill development in downtowns and centers in close proximity to jobs and services. In addition, the RTP emphasizes transportation investments in active transportation facilities to improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility.

The goals for the 2018 RTP/SCS were established to meet the regulatory requirements of the FAST Act, the Clean Air Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, SB 375, the California Complete Streets Act, and the California Environmental Quality Act. They were tailored specifically to the unique needs of Merced County and the feedback that was received from the public during the planning process. This RTP was developed in accordance with state and federal requirements, including the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375), which is intended to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which requires a performance-based approach to the Plan's development.

For more information please visit the project website www.mercedregionalvision.com or the Merced County Association Of Governments website www.mcagov.org

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