

San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Process

4th Year (FY 08-09) Grant Application

The San Joaquin Valley has been identified by Governor Schwarzenegger's California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley as "... one of the most vital, yet challenged regions of the state."



Rising to meet the San Joaquin Valley's most pressing issues, the eight Regional Transportation Planning Agencies representing the eight counties within the San Joaquin Valley came together in 2005 to initiate the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint planning process.

The goal of the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) Regional Blueprint planning process is to address critical issues facing the vitality of the San Joaquin Valley (as well as the State of California and the nation) in planning for the future of the world's foremost agricultural region. The SJV Regional Blueprint will guide the future of infrastructure development, and in turn accommodate the exploding population and economic growth in the region to the year 2050.

*As goes the San Joaquin Valley, so goes California...
and as goes California, so goes the nation.*
Governor Schwarzenegger

In 2006, the SJV Regional Blueprint planning process developed the foundation for the Blueprint by creating an institutional framework and citizen outreach plan. In addition, this joint venture initiated the development of the SJV Regional Blueprint Vision. In 2007 overall goals, objectives, and performance measures were developed and will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the SJV Regional Blueprint. In 2008, the Blueprint process continues to make progress with this historic and collaborative planning effort among the eight San Joaquin Valley Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (Valley COGs) and their working partners. During this period the SJV Blueprint has developed many relationships and has reached numerous milestones which are documented later in this proposal. In early 2009, the Valleywide Summit is planned where the Valleywide alternative scenarios will be presented to the public at large culminating with the final endorsement by the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council. The Regional Policy Council will endorse a preferred growth scenario for the San Joaquin Valley in spring of 2009. Please see Appendix D for the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Process Timeline.

Future plans, as proposed by this grant application, will include the integration of the Valley Blueprint into local city and county general plans within the Valley, which will ultimately result in a healthier, more vibrant economy, an improved transportation system through reduced

congestion and viable transit options, improved air quality, and will accommodate the housing infrastructure needs of the Valley's exploding population. Overall, implementation of the Valley Blueprint plan at the local levels will create sustainable communities and make the Valley a more desirable place to live.

Setting the Stage: The San Joaquin Valley – A Region in Need

The Region

The San Joaquin Valley is located in the geographic center of the State of California and is the agricultural heart of millions of acres of the world's most fertile farmland. The Valley is rich in natural resources and is integral to the economic well being of California, with annual agricultural sales in excess of \$20 billion dollars. As the Secretary of Food and Agriculture points out, if the San Joaquin Valley were a state, it would be ranked first in the nation in agricultural production.



If the eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley became their own state, they would be the number one agricultural state in the country, a \$20 billion powerhouse that may also prove to be the renewable fuel driver of our energy economy. The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley helps ensure the viability of this strategic resource.

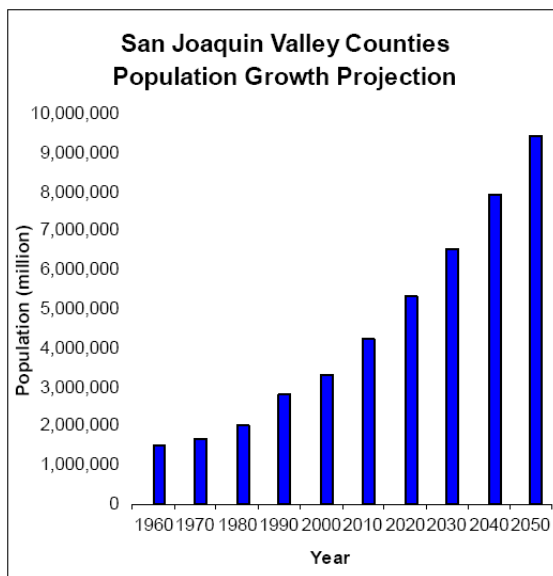
A.G. Kawamura
Secretary
Department of Food and Agriculture

The Valley is a long, narrow, and flat terrain (300 miles long and 100 miles wide) that is rimmed by mountains on the south, east and west that create a large "bowl". It occupies over 27,000 square miles of land across eight counties and serves as the primary trade corridor for the largest metropolitan areas in California ~ San Francisco to the north and Los Angeles to the south.

The Population

The San Joaquin Valley is home to a culturally diverse population of 4 million residents. Once a largely rural region, the eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley, linked by Highway 99, are now home to large metropolitan areas (Stockton, Fresno, Bakersfield) and growing cities and towns of every size.

Almost 60 percent of the Valley's growth since 2000 has been due to migration, yet there are important distinctions between the north SJV and the south SJV. In the north, migration has accounted for almost two-thirds of the growth. Seventy percent of those migrants are from other parts of the United States and California (primarily the Bay Area).



In the southern part of the Valley, however, natural increase accounts for almost half of the growth, and international migration is about equal in size to domestic migration. Most of the international migrants are from Mexico, are young, and tend to have more children than other residents.

From 2000 to 2008, the SJV region experienced an 18.9% population increase, the largest increase in the state (California Regional Progress Report). Over the next four decades, demographers project that the bulk of California's relentless population growth will occur within this expansive region, leaving it younger and more diverse than any other part of the state. In 2050 the San Joaquin Valley is projected to be home to 9.5 million people, an increase of 139% over today's population.

An Aging Population

In 2008 the San Joaquin Valley region's elderly population (aged 60 and over) is 530,410 and will grow in size to 1.9 million by 2050, an increase of 239%. At the same time, the San Joaquin Valley's oldest population (aged 85 or older) is 48,825 and will grow to 288,339, an increase of 491%. While the 2050 population of the SJV region is anticipated to be two and a half times that of 2008, the population of those 85 years and older in 2050 will be six times that of 2008.

Population Growth Pressures

The key questions about the future quality of life in the San Joaquin Valley Region are:

- How will the region accommodate the anticipated population growth?

- Will growth be accommodated through expansion of current cities or the development of new ones?
- What kind of housing will be needed to address the changing demographic?
- How will intraregional and interregional transportation facilitate commuters, travelers, and goods movement?
- How will the balance be maintained between the development of new infrastructure and the need to preserve the region's most important natural resources?

Urban Pressure



As a desirable and relatively affordable place to live, the San Joaquin Valley is under tremendous population growth pressure from the central coast and other metropolitan areas to the north and south. In the southern San Joaquin Valley, Kern County is under growth pressure from Los Angeles. In the north valley, the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced have become bedroom communities for people seeking less expensive, owner-occupied housing within commuting range of the Bay and Sacramento areas.

Air Quality

Unfortunately, the San Joaquin Valley is leading the state in another way – poor air quality. In fact, the San Joaquin Valley is home to six of the top ten cities with the worst air quality in the nation. With the San Joaquin Valley's unique "bowl like" geographical landscape and weather patterns, pollution becomes trapped in the Valley for extended periods of time. This unique topography creates a greater "air pollution carrying capacity" for the SJV than other regions in California.

SJV residents, especially children and the elderly feel the effects of air pollution the most. In fact, children in the SJV have one of the highest asthma rates in the nation.



Although the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (a SJV Regional Blueprint partner) has made great strides in improving the Valley's air quality in recent years with innovative rules and programs, additional work is still needed.

Past Neglect – Hope for the Future

For many decades the San Joaquin Valley region has been neglected by both federal and state governments and has not received its fair share of revenue. That situation is now changing with federal and state policymakers recognizing the extraordinary challenges facing the San Joaquin Valley. Through executive orders issued by two presidents, the Federal Interagency Task Force for the Economic Development of the San Joaquin Valley was formed to help coordinate federal efforts within the region. Through the Interagency Task Force, multiple initiatives have been created (Regional Jobs Initiative, Financial Education Initiative, Rural Infrastructure Initiative, Operation Clean Air, Affordable Communities Initiative: Housing Trust Fund, Clean Energy Organization) which have directed much needed attention to the quality of life in the San Joaquin Valley region.

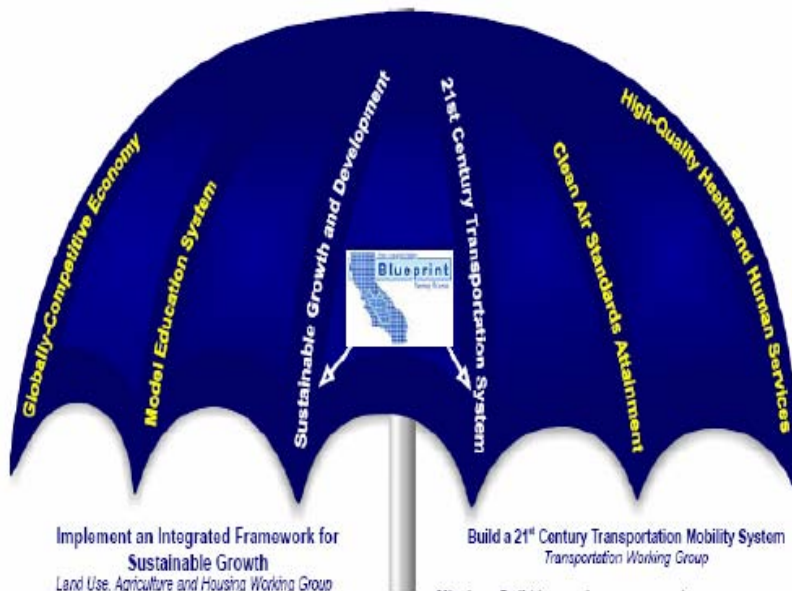
Many of the Valley's critical issues have no political or geographic boundaries, and are often made worse through parochial practices. Often, freeway congestion in one area transports air quality impacts throughout the Valley, just as land use and development policies in one area may create reactionary development in other areas. Regional collaboration is needed to address these kinds of situations.

State Remedies

Interface of the Blueprint and the Partnership

In response to these and other issues, Governor Schwarzenegger signed an executive order in 2005 creating the *California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership)* a state effort to direct resources to the San Joaquin Valley region. Through the Blueprint process, regional

leaders will assess regional issues jointly with the Partnership. Collaboration with the SJV Partnership will enable pooling of statewide resources, along with enhancing the multi-agency, multi-layer momentum to create a regional voice for the San Joaquin Valley.



In November 2006, the Partnership completed the Strategic Action Plan, which details its goals to achieve a Prosperous

Economy, Quality Environment, and Social Equity through six major initiatives and the

recommendations of its ten working groups. The Partnership's ten-year Strategic Action Plan references the efforts of the Valley's COGs to enhance quality of life concerns and specifically identifies the SJV Blueprint as the implementation strategy within two of its working group lists of recommendations: Transportation and Land Use and Agriculture and Housing. The interface of the Partnership and the Blueprint planning processes will allow the Valley to improve the quality of life for all residents through integrated and collaborative planning strategies.

Summary of Accomplishments to Date

Working in concert over the past three years, the eight COGs in the San Joaquin Valley have accomplished many goals that have moved the process closer to the benchmark of reaching consensus on a Valleywide preferred growth scenario. These accomplishments are even more noteworthy when one considers that each step along the way required approval or endorsement by eight separate and distinct policy boards. The sixty-two cities, eight counties and eight councils of governments are proud of the collaborative effort they have made to reach this point in the process and are committed to build upon the progress already made in the future. In general, the major tasks undertaken can be summarized as follows:

Institutional Framework, Project Management and Community Outreach: In order to reach the daunting goal of coordinating eight counties in an effort to reach a unified vision for growth, the SJV Blueprint process created a project management team comprised of a program manager from the lead agency and project managers representing each of the other seven COGs. This team was responsible for coordinating local efforts as well as maintaining the regional connection. During the initial phases, activities were conducted at both the county and the regional levels. The third-year activities will culminate in the selection of an integrated Valley Vision in early 2009. Extensive local community outreach touched thousands of community members and stakeholder groups throughout the Valley. Two major Valleywide events were conducted: the Blueprint Kickoff Workshop in June of 2006 and the Blueprint Executive Forum (aimed primarily at the Valley's elected officials) in April of 2008. A Valleywide Summit is planned for January 2009 where the Valleywide alternative scenarios will be presented to the public at large.

Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality Modeling: The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Project Modeling Steering Committee (see Appendix B for membership) worked closely with UC Davis's Department of Environmental Science and Policy and the Information Center for the Environment to become familiar with the UPlan modeling software and to collect GIS and demographic data. Extensive communication was required to assemble general plan information from all 78 jurisdictions involved. Status Quo scenarios were developed in each county to provide a base case for comparison. Alternatives scenarios were also created. All county level scenarios were analyzed using land use, traffic and air quality models in order to compare the scenarios based on performance measures. This process will be replicated at the Valleywide level.

Individual County Planning Process: As mentioned above, each of the eight Valley COGs conducted the Blueprint process at their local level, which included convening roundtable stakeholder groups, engaging their member agencies, and conducting outreach activities with community groups and the general public. Much time has been invested in working with local agency planners in order to gain their trust and commitment so that the ultimate Blueprint will be integrated at the local level.

Valley Planning Process: The Valley planning process has been ongoing since the SJV Blueprint grant was first awarded in 2006. The eight COGs have been collaborating on a Valleywide basis as part of the project management team and through partnering with the Great Valley Center and their staffing of the Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee (see Appendix B for committee membership). The SJV Air Pollution Control District has also been an active partner both financially and through in-kind contributions during the planning process. In addition, the individual COGs have worked closely with Caltrans and UC Davis on many of the technical activities.

Document Creation, Implementation Strategy, and Blueprint Certification Process: The SJV Blueprint has produced a variety of communication materials including websites, videos, brochures, print and electronic media advertising, and extensive project reports. Mapping exercises have produced a multitude of excellent graphic depictions which help member agencies, stakeholder groups and the general public to understand the sometimes complex concepts that are being portrayed. In fact, Fresno COG was recognized by the American Planning Association with a “1st Place Outstanding Planning Award/Best Practices” award for their extensive marketing campaign and public outreach efforts in the development of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint Plan. Fresno COG developed an ambitious marketing campaign, including many innovative strategies, to reach out and include community stakeholders in the Blueprint visioning process to foster greater participation in Fresno County.

Ultimately, the Blueprint must be integrated into local general planning processes in order to ensure implementation. Now, with the legal requirements of AB 32 and SB 375, some type of certification process will need to be established so that the planning principles defined in the Blueprint will be implemented throughout the Valley. The Blueprint will also need to show compliance with AB 32.

Modeling: It is widely known that the traditional four-step traffic model is not sensitive to the benefits of smart growth development such as Density, Diversity, Destination & Design (often referred to as 4-D). There have been efforts to integrate a 4-D process into the traffic model to compensate for the trip/vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction that smart growth can create through the SJV Blueprint process. The results were encouraging, and reinforced support of smart growth planning practices in the Valley. As the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint marches into the planning implementation stage, more smart growth projects are projected to be built. The scenario-based 4-D process, which was developed during the scenario planning stage, would not be applicable in the planning implementation stage. A project-based 4-D tool will be needed to measure the travel reduction benefits of smaller scale or even individual projects.

During the scenario planning stage of the Valley Blueprint process, UPlan, a scenario modeling tool developed by UC Davis, has been used by all eight Valley COGs. It was mostly run at the county level. Since each Valley COG's traffic model uses different socio-economic categories, individual efforts were taken by each COG to translate the UPlan land use categories into the categories in each of the eight traffic models in the Valley. Then the traffic model output was input into the Emission FACTors (EMFAC) model to measure the emissions from on-road mobile exhaust. In the planning implementation stage, when Blueprint principles will be incorporated into local projects, more fine-grained software choices will be explored for community, neighborhood, or even project-level planning.

Traditionally, socio-economic data projection for the traffic model has been performed manually through an agency review process, which has taken up to six months to complete. With the emergence of land use models, land use forecasting could be generated by computers. However, the rule-based land use models could direct future land use to improbable locations without human intervention. The consequence would be misrepresented traffic distribution if it is run through the traffic model. Therefore, inputs from local land use experts become critical in the land use modeling process. Throughout the scenario planning stage in the Valley Blueprint process, several iterations of UPlan model runs were conducted for each scenario with inputs from local planners and stakeholders. This "feedback" process is critical if we are to plan for realistic development patterns in the Valley Blueprint and this process will continue to be a central part of the planning implementation stage of the Valley Blueprint.

Visualization Tool Development and Scenario Planning Tools: The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Process has been and will continue to be conducted through a "bottoms-up" approach to securing local government and community support. Computer generated maps showcasing and explaining the local and Valleywide Blueprint options will be generated by UC Davis/Valley COGs and circulated to the Valley communities through public outreach efforts orchestrated by the Great Valley Center, and by each individual planning agency. Public meetings with interactive voting technology have and will be used to obtain feedback from the public and elected officials. Other technologies in use are interactive websites, media outlets for radio, television and print media, emailed updates and newsletters to established and growing distribution lists. The Valley COGs also work with a variety of community, business and government agencies throughout the region to disseminate information via presentations at their pre-scheduled meetings, posting articles in their newsletters, and online publications and by mailing printed documents.

Health and Obesity Awareness: According to the Prevention Institute, the built environment is the designated use, layout, and design of a community's physical structures - including its housing, businesses, transportation systems, and recreational resources, all of which affect patterns of living that influence health. Smart growth strategies can transform the built environment to encourage physical activity by making a community more walkable/bikeable and can provide greater access to healthy food options, thus contributing to healthier eating. To bridge land use, transportation, community design efforts and public health, a comprehensive approach to planning can be implemented that focuses on identifying priority areas where public health strategies can be incorporated within the local planning process. In the short-term, these planning efforts will help create healthier lifestyles; in the long-term, these efforts can have a

measurable impact upon chronic health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, stroke and heart disease. The SJV Blueprint process will coordinate with the Central California Regional Obesity Program (CCRPOP) on these issues. One of the land buffer tools discussed in the Farmland Conservation study being conducted in the Valley is that of locally grown food farm at the edge of urban areas. These areas would both preserve urban boundaries and supply healthy, locally grown food.

Other Tasks Completed

1. GIS Data Inventory / GIS Standards — A Model Steering Committee was convened by the SJV Blueprint project managers and has worked collaboratively to gather GIS data that represents the current geography and urbanization of the region. This data has been converted for use in the UC Davis developed UPlan modeling software for development of all the scenarios.
2. Status Quo Scenario Development – Working with the local planners of each county and the UPlan program, a growth scenario assuming existing trends was developed called the Status Quo Scenario. If growth continues as it has over the last 5-10 years, the UPlan forecasts that approximately 760,000 acres of land will be converted to urban uses.
3. Vision / Value Development and Outreach - During 2006, the eight SJV COGs implemented their local Citizen Participant Plan in the Blueprint Value / Vision Outreach component. Each of the SJV counties conducted public outreach to identify local values and how these values translate into a Vision for the San Joaquin Valley region to the year 2050.
4. Local Visioning Results - To no one's surprise, there were more common values identified across the eight-county region, than unique values of any specific county.

SJV Region - Common Values

Preserve agricultural land
Create an effective transportation system

Improve access to quality educational opportunities

Create a dynamic economy with quality local jobs

Provide a variety of quality affordable housing choices

Treasure our bountiful environment with reasonable protection

5. Goals and Performance Measures - With the help of the San Joaquin Valley Professional Planners Group convened by the SJV Blueprint Project Managers, SJV Goals and Performance Measures have been developed and will be used throughout each component of the Blueprint process. All performance measures used by other Blueprint processes were reviewed, evaluated and selected based on the current data available and the current forecasting capabilities. While there are additional Performance Measures that could be valuable in evaluating the Scenarios, the Valley COGs currently lack the

enhanced modeling capability necessary to generate them. The Goals and Performance Measures are included in Appendix C.

6. Engage Environmental Justice Communities, Tribal Governments, and Resource Agencies. The SJV COGs held a workshop in early 2007 with the purpose of engaging Environmental Justice Communities, Tribal Governments (both federally recognized and non-recognized tribes of Native Americans), and Resource Agencies in the SJV Regional Blueprint process. The workshop was a great success with good attendance of the targeted stakeholders. As a result of the inaugural workshop, the following has been implemented:
 - Spanish Language Workshops -SJV Region Blueprint Public Outreach Visioning workshops sessions have been conducted in Spanish to engage residents who speak Spanish as their primary language. These workshops have been well attended.
 - Tribal Governments - As a result of the inaugural workshop, ongoing engagement has been formalized with Tribal representatives. Numerous meetings have been held with Native American participants, including: Santa Rosa tribe, Tubatulabals, Chumash, Tejon Indians, and Tule River tribe.
 - Kern COG has recently been awarded an Environmental Justice Grant (Central Valley Tribal Collaboration Transportation Planning) to expand outreach to Tribal Governments throughout the SJV during the upcoming years. This effort will enhance existing efforts to engage traditionally underserved communities in the Blueprint process.
 - State Resource Agencies - State Resource Agency representatives will continue to be engaged in the SJV Region Blueprint Process.
7. State and Federal Level Coordination
 - At the state level, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Caltrans, the Business Transportation and Housing Agency, and the California Department of Fish & Game have been actively participating in the SJV Blueprint planning process. At the federal level, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Agency have been reviewing the SJV Blueprint Planning process and providing feedback through the annual certification of the eight Valley COG's Overall Work Programs.
8. Interregional / Intraregional / Local Partnerships & Interregional Coordination
 - Blueprint Learning Network (BLN) – The SJV COGs and their local BLN team members participate in the statewide conferences to learn from other Blueprint efforts in California. Although each of the conferences provides valuable information it is difficult to apply Blueprint practices across individual regions due to their own unique makeup.

- Local Government Commission – Blueprint representatives worked closely with the Local Government Commission (LGC) on the development the 2007 Water Workshop - *Linking Water and Land Use in the Southern Central Valley Region*. In the coming months the COGs will again be working with LGC to develop a Community Image Survey that will be used to help community members and local agencies overcome any inherent fear of increasing residential densities.
- Other regional partners:
 - California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG)
 - California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
 - League of California Cities
 - Great Valley Center
 - SJV Air Pollution Control District
 - American Planning Association (APA)
 - San Joaquin Valley Regional Association of Counties
- Intraregional Coordination:
 - COG Directors Association- Each of the eight Valley COG Directors is a member of the COG Directors Association helping manage the Blueprint efforts.
 - BRAC (see Appendix B for committee information).
The creation and engagement of the San Joaquin Valley stakeholders in the Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee (BRAC) to:
 - Become a champion of the final SJV Regional Blueprint Vision;
 - Advocate implementation of the SJV Regional Blueprint products to the local jurisdictions; and
 - Promote the SJV Regional Blueprint strategies at the state and federal levels.
- San Joaquin Valley Professionals Planners Group (see Appendix B for committee information) - Having identified a need to engage the Planning Directors of the region with a regional focus, John Wright, recently retired planning director from the City of Clovis, in conjunction with the Blueprint project managers, convened 40 plus planning directors and/or their key staff to help with the Blueprint development. While thinking regionally, this committee is acting as a professional advisor in order to assure successful implementation of the Blueprint at the local level. This committee is also ensuring that the Blueprint is useful and helpful to them in implementing good planning practices. This is a win-win relationship as these are the planners that handle the development requests and will make a difference in what moves forward.
- San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council-Two elected representatives from each of the Councils of Governments are commissioners on the San Joaquin

Valley Regional Policy Council and they are charged with making Blueprint related recommendations/decisions on behalf of the entire San Joaquin Valley.

- California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) - Blueprint project managers from each of the SJV COGs attend many of the ten working group and quarterly Partnership Board meetings to maintain the critical link between both efforts. The Partnership has a scope of work, and resources well beyond that of the SJV Blueprint process. At this time the Blueprint process is primarily focused on three of the Partnership work groups: (1) Transportation (2) Land Use, Agriculture & Housing, and (3) Air Quality.
- Elected Congress Summit - Blueprint project managers and the Great Valley Center developed a Blueprint Congress Summit targeted at elected officials that was convened in April, 2008. The focus of this Summit was to engage elected officials in the evaluation of the SJV Status Quo UPlan Modeling and discuss the fact that we cannot continue business as usual planning practices in the SJV and expect different results that affect every aspect of the quality of life in our Valley.
- San Joaquin Valley Affordable Communities Initiative - Under the San Joaquin Valley Affordable Communities Initiative, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has worked in concert with the Partnership and the Blueprint process to create the San Joaquin Valley Affordable Housing Trust. The purpose of this Trust is to:
 - Link housing policies with land use, transportation, jobs, economic development, and workforce development;
 - Establish a multi-million dollar Trust as a dedicated stream of flexible seed funding for affordable housing;
 - Create a regional organization with expertise to administer the fund, promote, guide, and assist affordable community planning and development; and
 - Support projects that demonstrate the three strategic SJV Affordable Communities Initiatives elements.

9. Local Coordination:

- Local Roundtable focus groups
Each of the SJV COGs has established its own Roundtable group (focus groups, planners, economic development, etc.) for the following reasons:
 - Share information and learn from local experts,
 - Educate on Blueprint process,
 - Engage in each component of the Blueprint process,
 - Gather information on best practices for the Blueprint development,
 - Review Blueprint products as they are developed,
 - Create new collaborative relationships, and
 - Enhance existing relationships
- Local Municipal Advisory Councils (MACs)

SJV Blueprint efforts have included outreach to the MACs that represent the unincorporated areas of the counties.

- **Local Planning Commissions**
The Planning Commissioners of the cities have been engaged at various levels in the Blueprint process. In some counties, Planning Commissioner Summits are being scheduled to encourage regional thinking when making local decisions.
- **Local Elected Officials**
Each of the local Councils, Boards of Supervisors, and local COG Boards have been encouraged to be actively engaged in the Blueprint Process.

10. **Address Goods Movement** - The November 2007 San Joaquin Valley Goods Movement Action Plan (SJV GMAP) is a collaborative effort between the eight COGs of the San Joaquin Valley and their working partners. The SJV GMAP focuses on removing choke points of goods movement into and out of the Valley to increase statewide throughput in an effort to provide outlets for the \$20 billion of agricultural products headed to national and international markets in a timely manner.

11. **Developed strategies to effectively engage local government land use decision makers** - The SJV Regional Blueprint process utilizes every opportunity available to inform local land use decision makers on the process and why change is needed for the future. The SJV Regional Blueprint Process Decision Making Chart (see Appendix D) highlights the iterative nature of the process with the engagement of local and regional stakeholders in every step of the process.

12. **Strategies for higher density housing** - Compact land uses in the Valley are evolving because of increased housing and land costs. Planners are using this as an opportunity to encourage higher densities, mixed uses and more compact design. The Blueprint is an opportunity for all involved in local planning and decision making to encourage elected officials to embrace the local and regional benefits of more compact development. A strong desire in the Valley to preserve agricultural land is also creating land use policies to use land more efficiently.

13. **Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions / Energy / Environmental Considerations**

- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** – GHG emission reductions, specifically Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), is an emerging area of Climate Change that will be addressed in response to AB 32 (2006) and SB 375 (2008) requirements. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has adopted the 1990 emissions inventory that is the basis for the development of CARB's Climate Change Scoping Plan. The Draft Climate Change Scoping Plan has been developed as of the writing of this grant proposal and specific requirements are delineated for all sectors in California, including local governments and metropolitan planning regions. The Draft plan is expected to be adopted by CARB in late 2008. The SJV Blueprint process will address GHG integration. The California Transportation Commission has also adopted new Regional Transportation Planning Agency Guidelines that COGs

will use to integrate GHG analysis in future Regional Transportation Plans. SB 375 has just recently been chaptered into state law and the Blueprint plans will be the likely growth scenarios for the sustainable communities strategies required to be developed by SB 375, which when integrated with the planned regional transportation networks and the housing elements in local general plans, will attempt to achieve the GHG emission reduction goals in AB 32 through reduction in vehicle miles traveled. SB 375 encourages regional cooperation among the eight counties in the SJV by allowing that two or more counties work together to develop a multiregional sustainable communities strategy. This will complement the existing efforts for the planning implementation of the Valley Blueprint Plan.

- Energy - The Partnership's Energy work group has created the San Joaquin Clean Energy Organization with the mission of leading a regional effort to develop, plan, and implement energy efficiencies and clean energy throughout the eight-county SJV region.
- Environmental Considerations – Farmland Conservation Model in 2007. Fresno COG was awarded Partnership seed grant funds to create a Farmland Conservation Model Program. As the process develops with data development and analysis the SJV Regional Blueprint Planning process will look to integrate this information.

14. Local General Plan Development Coordination - At a time when many of the San Joaquin Valley counties and cities are feeling tremendous pressures of population growth and urbanization, local agencies have initiated updating their local General Plan documents. Wherever it has been possible the local COG's Blueprint effort has coordinated with the local general plan update process. In fact, some of the SJV COGs have been able to coordinate general plan development and Blueprint public outreach efforts to engage the public.

15. Funds and Resource Leveraging - Funds have been leveraged from private sources via private contributions and from the SJV Air District for the local match. While in-kind contributions of time and effort by all the parties involved cannot be precisely measured, they are certainly invaluable. The following planning processes are being coordinated and leveraged to further improve the Blueprint process:

- General Plans
As stated above, General Plan updates are being coordinated with the Blueprint process. Blueprint funds are being leveraged with the integration of outreach efforts that results in a cost savings for the Blueprint.
- RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Assessment)
The SJV COGs have recently updated, or are in the process of updating their local Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Plans as required every 5-year period. This information will be used in the Blueprint scenarios and help eliminate a duplication of planning effort. The current process has created

conflicts in goals and policies. The Blueprint offers a comprehensive planning approach to resolve these conflicts.

Over the past three years, representative stakeholders from public health, education, local government, resource and regulatory agencies, developers, economists, business and commercial interests, and many, many more have come to the table to address future challenges and reach consensus on a smart growth vision for the San Joaquin Valley. In early 2009, a Great Valley Center Blueprint Summit will take place that will be the culmination of developing the Valleywide preferred growth scenario. The Blueprint Summit is expected to bring together approximately 700 members from the public to discuss the alternative growth scenarios developed through the Blueprint process and to seek their invaluable input into a final desired growth scenario for the Valley. The alternative growth scenarios, along with the feedback from the summit, will then be presented to the SJV Regional Policy Council (Valley elected officials) in the spring of 2009 for ultimate selection and adoption of a preferred growth scenario for the entire Valley. This will bring the third year of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint planning process to a close.

This holistic approach to planning for the Valley's future aims to break down barriers in geography, jurisdiction, and agency goals. Decisions in one arena can affect change in others. For example, land use policies that fail to curb urban sprawl will contribute to reduced investment in existing areas, producing downward pressure on existing land values. It can raise the cost to municipalities to provide utilities, water, police and fire services. Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increases stress on the roadways. Congestion rises and air quality worsens.

As we move toward completion of the tasks for the third year of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint planning process, we are gratified by the progress we have made in collaborating across such a vast geographic area. Our common goal is to develop a Valley Vision that will lead to thoughtful planning and an enhanced quality of life for all who live here. We have met many challenges during this effort to change the way we approach the future, but we have had a tremendous amount of success in moving forward. Much still remains to be done, however. In fact, some of the most important and challenging work lies ahead: turning the *vision* into a *reality* and making the transition from a planning *process* to planning *implementation*.

Looking Forward to the Fourth Year

Valleywide Blueprint Final Report: Carrying forward from the third year activities, we will create a Valleywide Blueprint Final Report that provides goals, objectives and measurable outcomes to track progress. In this document the Blueprint's regionally endorsed goals, objectives and performance measures will be *detailed* in each of the respective areas from land use to agricultural preservation and resource management. The Report will also include a section evaluating the SJV Regional Blueprint planning process including "lessons learned". Finally, there will be a section that suggests a viable certification process in light of the recent passage of SB 375. The report will address the unique differences faced by metropolitan areas and by small

cities and rural areas. Special help will be needed to help smaller cities who have very limited professional resources.

Toolkit for Implementation: This Valleywide Report will be the basis for development of a comprehensive ***toolkit*** to provide practitioners at the local level with the resources they will need in order to turn planning goals into policy. The toolkit will create systematic methods for agencies to implement the common goals of the Blueprint through the use of procedural templates. The intention of the toolkit is not only to streamline the planning implementation processes in like-agencies, but to address the many issues agencies face when they interact. This will be especially critical in streamlining processes between agencies and regulators.

Translate Valley Blueprint principles into local implementation strategies and develop local government commitment: An important task will be to translate the goals and principles contained in the Valleywide Blueprint into strategies that local planners can then integrate into their planning processes. While local agencies have been involved in the ongoing Blueprint planning process, there may be new regional components that need to be considered. In addition, the process will be developing a planning toolkit to assist local agencies to get on board with the Blueprint. It will also be incumbent upon COG staff throughout the Valley to develop a commitment from their member agencies on implementation of the Blueprint smart-growth principles. The primary challenge is likely to be addressing increased residential density issues. Conducting economic and market studies will assist with this endeavor.

Convene meetings with local officials to discuss funding challenges of local government (and related “fiscalization of land use”): Currently, the funding of local government in California has created a situation where land use planning is more a function of potential tax benefits to the governing agency than a rational and deliberative process based on sound planning principles. This “fiscalization of land use” refers to a policy environment in which land use decisions are made mostly or entirely based on fiscal considerations, rather than an eye toward healthy and balanced communities. All too often communities are forced to make land use planning decisions based entirely on budgetary decisions asking, “Will this project bring in money - or cost money to service?” Cities compete with each other for commercial centers and often reject affordable housing. Counties scramble for revenues to meet their state imposed obligations to provide local health, welfare and criminal justice services. Schools and municipalities compete for dollars rather than working together to build communities where Californians will want to live. The question of how to create healthy, balanced communities has become secondary to the immediate need to balance the budget. (California Planning Roundtable)

The Blueprint planning process, with its focus on smart growth and improved mobility, provides an excellent opportunity to address the issue of fiscalization of land use and its relationship to local government funding. In order to implement the goals of the Blueprint and achieve improved performance measures, municipalities must be able to make their planning decisions based on sound principles and community values. We believe that Blueprint implementation must include the opportunity for local governments to engage in a dialogue that examines the potential to change the financial incentives that currently exist. While this is not included within the stated goals of the Blueprint per se, the San Joaquin Valley COGs will include initiating the conversation among its implementation tasks.

Address new greenhouse gas directives (SB 375): In order to reach the greenhouse gas emission reduction goals set out in AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, we need to rethink how we design our communities. SB 375 (2008) helps do this by providing emission reduction goals around which regions can plan, thereby integrating disjointed planning activities and providing incentives for local governments and developers to follow new growth patterns.

SB 375 enhances the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) ability to reach our AB 32 goals by directing CARB to develop regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets to be achieved from the automobile and light truck sectors for 2020 and 2035. CARB will also work with California's 18 metropolitan planning organizations to align their regional transportation, housing and land-use plans and prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" to reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled in their respective regions and demonstrate the region's ability to attain its greenhouse gas reduction targets. Spending less time on the road is the single-most effective way for California to reduce its carbon footprint. The Blueprints will be the likely framework for the sustainable communities strategies.

Additionally, SB 375 provides incentives for creating attractive, walkable/bikeable and sustainable communities and revitalizing existing communities. The bill also allows home builders to get relief from certain environmental reviews under the California Environmental Quality Act if they build projects consistent with the new sustainable community strategies. It will also encourage the development of more alternative transportation options, which will promote healthy lifestyles and reduce traffic congestion. (Governor's Press Release, 9/30/08) SB 375 encourages regional cooperation among the eight counties in the SJV by allowing that two or more counties work together to develop a multiregional sustainable communities strategy. This will complement the existing effort to develop the Valley Blueprint Plan.

Develop adequate modeling tools for compliance with SB 375: The California Transportation Commission (CTC) will provide continued guidance to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) for updating their travel demand models to meet the goals of SB 375. Any updates to the guidelines for the models will be in consultation with MPOs as well as local governments. CTC will hold workshops on updated guidelines. Factors to be included in the guidelines for MPOs are:

- Size and available resources of MPO;
- Relationship between land use density and household vehicle ownership and VMT;
- Impact of enhanced transit service levels on household vehicle ownership and VMT;
- Changes in travel and land development resulting from highway or passenger rail expansion;
- Mode splitting that allocates trips between autos, transit, carpool, and bicycle and pedestrian trips (if model is unable to forecast bike and pedestrian trips then other means may be used);
- Speed and frequency, days, and hours of operation of transit service.

MPOs will submit to CARB the technical methodology to be used to estimate GHG emissions from planning strategies. CARB needs to approve the above.

The San Joaquin Valley has unique multijurisdictional air quality challenges and the ability of the Valley MPOs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is no different. The California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Draft AB 32 Scoping Plan and SB 375 share similar goals with the Valley Blueprint Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and set the San Joaquin Valley MPOs on the path to do the same.

This task would create a methodology for the Valley MPOs to move towards the technical implementation of the Blueprint. ARB's Draft AB 32 Scoping Plan as well as SB 375 place great emphasis on the interaction between vehicle miles traveled growth, land use, and transportation planning. Currently the Valley MPO transportation demand models do not contain a level of sensitivity adequate to measure the impacts from microscale land use changes, the benefits of smart growth development such as Density, Diversity, Destination and Design and various other travel demand management strategies. This task would develop/identify the steps necessary for the Valley MPOs to transition from a four step travel demand model to an activity based travel demand model.

This task will involve coordination between the eight Valley MPOs, CARB, FHWA, and Caltrans to ensure a coordinated implementation plan that identifies the implementation process to increase the sensitivity of the Valley modeling process to the impacts from microscale land use changes, the benefits of smart growth development such as Density, Diversity, Destination and Design and various other travel demand management strategies. This task will also analyze the feasibility of the Valley MPOs to implement multicounty activity based models geared toward Blueprint implementation.

Peer review would be sought from agencies that are currently undergoing the development/refinement of activity based modeling. The urban/rural densities of the eight counties that comprise the San Joaquin Valley also make the Valley unique. Although the Valley is home to several large metropolitan cities, the Valley is still largely rural. As part of the technical implementation plan the modeling needs of the rural areas as well as the urban areas will be assessed.

Address the increasing of residential densities: The idea of increasing residential densities is often distasteful to elected officials, agency staff, developers and the general public. We believe there are many myths associated with this negative perspective and that implementation of Blueprint planning principles is an optimum time to examine the issue. To this end, we are proposing two separate but related strategies.

- ***Determine the impact of various development densities on the fiscal health of cities and counties in the San Joaquin Valley:*** The idea here is to commission an economic study to show how different development densities impact the fiscal health of the county or city. It would be broken down into different density patterns and the cost to provide services for each density pattern (very low, low, medium and high). We will also incorporate transportation costs into the model so that it fits with the intent of the Blueprint guidelines.

- **Determine the market demand for higher density residential housing projects:** In the discussion of smart growth and higher densities the questions often arises, “But will it sell?” This is a reasonable concern for both developers and local governments. Developers are in a business that relies on creating a desirable and sellable product. Local governments want these products to contribute to quality, livable neighborhoods. Add to this the need to provide a mix of housing that is affordable to all income levels, and we can justify the need to examine the marketability of higher density housing products.

Greenprint - incorporate Farmland Conservation Model Program mapping, that includes improved information on water resources into the Blueprint for each of the Valley Counties:

The information acquired from Fresno COG/American Farmland Trust study, “*Farmland Conservation Model Program*” would be valuable to incorporate into the Blueprints maps for each of the SJV counties. Jerry Prieto (recently retired Fresno County Ag Commissioner) has initiated the conversation with the Ag Commissioners throughout the San Joaquin Valley. The Commissioners are ready to start the process of gathering the information for mapping the availability and cost of surface and ground water for each county. Mike McCoy (U.C. Davis) would be able to integrate this information into mapping activities.

Work with Central California EDCs and Partnership for SJV to address jobs/housing issue:

The jobs/housing balance (or imbalance) issue exists to different degrees in the San Joaquin Valley. The northernmost counties (San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced) and Kern County in the south all have commute sheds that lend to the problem of Valley residents commuting to jobs in distant metropolitan areas. The Blueprint planning process offers us the opportunity to work with the Valleywide Economic Development professionals to address this issue. “What if” industries in the Bay Area and Los Angeles, that have reached their growth capacity, consider relocating to the less expensive Valley where their workforce resides? The benefits of such relocation would be significant both to workers’ quality of life and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reductions. Potential benefits suggest that Blueprint planners need to discuss the possibilities with economic development professionals. Our work with the professionals would include gathering data on commute patterns out of Valley.

Continue Blueprint’s Valleywide presence by maintaining partnership with Great Valley Center for website oversight and production of one Valleywide Blueprint event:

The eight SJV COGs have partnered with the Great Valley Center since we entered into the Blueprint planning process. GVC has staffed the Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee (BRAC), conducted marketing activities and organized several Valleywide conference type events. While we hope to transfer the activities now handled by the BRAC to the SJV Regional Policy Council (elected officials), we believe that our relationship with the Great Valley Center is valuable, especially from the regional perspective. We hope to engage GVC in the tasks that we have noted above.

Continue Using Adopted Methods to Measure the Effectiveness of the Regional Blueprint Plan:

The eight Valley COGs have adopted a set of Blueprint Valleywide Performance Measures that have been and will continue to be used throughout the process to evaluate the effectiveness of the regional blueprint plan. The goals, objectives, performance measures, tools,

and methodologies used to quantify the benefits of the Valley Blueprint are described in detail in Appendix C as they relate to the following six topic areas:

1. Transportation
2. Mass Transit/Choices
3. Air Quality
4. Economy & Housing/Jobs Balance
5. Agricultural Land Preservation
6. Environmental Conservation

Continue Extensive Public Outreach Efforts: The eight Valley COGs have been very successful so far in engaging the general public and area stakeholders in every phase of the Valley Blueprint process and will work diligently to continue this extensive public outreach effort during the next phase of the Valley Blueprint process currently being proposed in this grant application. A heavy emphasis will be placed on seeking and soliciting input from the public with special emphasis on engaging traditionally underrepresented populations, as we move forward into implementing the adopted Valleywide preferred growth scenario into the eight Valley counties. Using existing and new methods of public outreach and educational materials such as media coverage, websites, videos, brochures, print and electronic media advertising and extensive project reports will be necessary. In addition, mapping exercises provide graphic depictions which help member agencies, stakeholder groups and the general public to understand the sometimes complex concepts that are being portrayed. Providing stakeholders with visual representations and computer simulations of smart growth projects that are described in the Valley's preferred growth scenario will be extremely helpful in engaging the public in the process.

Ultimately, the Blueprint must be integrated into local general planning processes in order to ensure implementation so there will need to be training and educational materials provided to the public and local stakeholders in every county to help integrate the Valley Blueprint into the local planning processes.