

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT PLANNING PROCESS

Summary Report

September 2010



Prepared by:

Mintier Harnish

In Association with:

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The Rios Company

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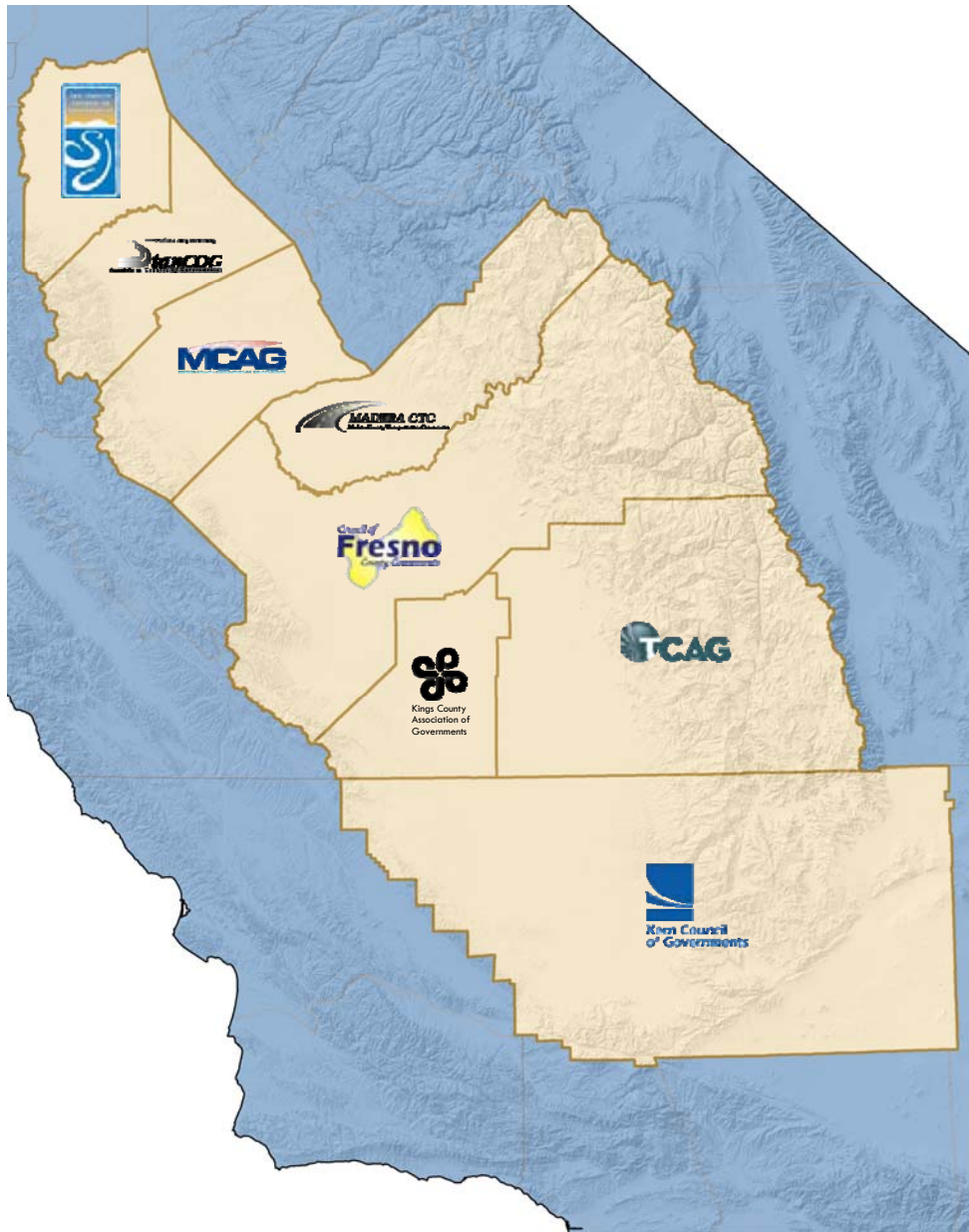
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The eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies carried out an ambitious, inclusive process that created a clear vision for future growth in San Joaquin Valley. Now the Regional Planning Agencies are embarking on the next phase of the Blueprint process: creating an ongoing framework for implementing the Blueprint to integrate the 12 Smart Principles and Preferred Growth Scenario concept into local planning practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint is the result of an unprecedented effort to plan for the future of the San Joaquin Valley. This report provides an overview of the first four years of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint (2005-2009), including the key players and participants, and the results of the Valleywide planning effort. The report is divided into six sections. Section 1 introduces the Valley Blueprint and provides some background on blueprint planning in California. Section 2 describes the agencies, organizations, and individuals that made the Valley Blueprint possible. Section 3 describes five stages of the Valley Blueprint planning process. Sections 4 and 5 describe the results of the Valleywide Blueprint effort and the eight county Blueprints that served as a foundation for the Valleywide Blueprint. Finally, Section 6 summarizes the next steps in implementing the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint.

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint planning process began in 2006. Merced County Association of Governments, in coordination with the Great Valley Center, led the Valleywide Blueprint effort on behalf of the San Joaquin Valley organizations. Seven Valley COGs and one RTPA participated in the Valley Blueprint: the Council of Fresno County Governments (Fresno COG), the Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG), the Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG), the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG), the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), the Stanislaus Council of Governments (Stan COG), and the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG). Throughout this report these eight organizations are referred to collectively as the Valley Regional Planning Agencies.

With funding from the California Regional Blueprint Planning Program, the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies prepared separate countywide blueprints, which were then consolidated into a single Valleywide Blueprint. The process included three major phases: 1) Values and Vision; 2) Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures; and 3) Evaluation of Alternative Growth Scenarios.

On April 1, 2009, the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, the decision-making body for the Valleywide process, approved Scenario B+ and 12 Smart Growth Principles, concluding the planning phase of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint planning process. The Valley Blueprint is a vision for the future of the San Joaquin Valley, in which less land is consumed for development, more resources are preserved for future generations, distinctive communities are enhanced, and more travel choices are available.



BLUEPRINT ORIGINS

Regional planning in California has evolved over the last six decades through a variety of initiatives, planning efforts, and other broad-based movements. Major forces such as the emergence of single-function State infrastructure planning agencies and heightened awareness of environmental and growth impacts have raised serious questions about how communities should grow.

Following World War II the State began building large-scale infrastructure systems (e.g., highways, water supply systems) to support increased demand for residential development. In 1962 the United States Congress passed legislation requiring the formation of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in regions with populations greater than 50,000. MPOs were charged with ensuring that expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs were based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. During this time local governments also began to form councils of governments (COGs) that served as Federal MPOs and as the State regional transportation planning agencies (RTPAs). In the 1960s and 1970s many COGs were formed through joint powers agreements.

Despite improved institutional arrangements at the local, regional, and state level, funding and maintenance of public facilities (e.g., schools, highways, water delivery systems) did not keep pace with growth. During the 1980s and 1990s rapid growth throughout the state's most populated areas alarmed citizens and lawmakers and raised concerns regarding growth-related challenges such as air quality, regional economic health, overcrowded schools, affordable housing, urbanization of prime agricultural land, and water shortages. These issues prompted COGs and MPOs to consider how they could address growth and manage resources on a regional scale.

State and local governance reforms in the 1990s set the stage for COGs/MPOs to begin conducting focused regional planning. As a result, innovative regional environmental programs (e.g., habitat conservation plans) provided new planning tools for coordinating local land use policy. At the same time a growing national "smart growth" or "sustainable development" movement was gaining popularity and promoting integrated planning for land use, infrastructure, and the environment. Several states, including Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, and Florida, passed new or modified regional growth management legislation that included smart growth themes

and a focus on regional coordination. California COGs/MPOs increasingly looked to these models to address their regional issues.

By the late 1990s California COGs/MPOs had taken on greater responsibilities and had expanded their traditional role as transportation planning agencies by addressing broader planning issues related to air quality, the environment, affordable housing, and land use. They began working with cities and counties to develop local land use strategies that would address regional issues. In the early 2000s, facing increasing growth pressures, four metropolitan regions (San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, San Diego, and Los Angeles) launched visioning processes to develop regional land use growth scenarios and smart growth principles. These were the first efforts by California COGs/MPOs to engage in blueprint planning.

Prompted by the success of these regional efforts, in 2005 the State created the California Department of Transportation's California Regional Blueprint Planning Program (Blueprint Program) to assist COGs/MPOs in conducting regional planning efforts that would result in consensus by regional leaders, local governments, and stakeholders on a "Blueprint" for a 20-year planning horizon (through 2025). The Blueprint Program emphasized collaboration with stakeholders at all levels to address issues such as housing needs, job creation, traffic congestion, and air quality. The Blueprint Program continues to provide resources and grant funding to COGs/MPOs to integrate local land use planning across broad, multi-jurisdictional regions, while recognizing the key land use authority of counties and cities.



LIST OF ACRONYMS

- California Air Resources Board (CARB)
- California Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency (BTHA)
- California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership)
- California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, Land Use, Housing, and Agriculture Workgroup (LUHA)
- California Regional Blueprint Planning Program (Blueprint Program)
- Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP)
- Council of Fresno County Governments (Fresno COG)
- Councils of Governments (COGs)
- Great Valley Center (GVC)
- Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG)
- Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG)
- Local Government Commission (LGC)
- Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC)
- Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA)
- San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG)
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)
- San Joaquin Valley Blueprint (Valley Blueprint)
- San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Coordinating Committee (BCC)
- San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Project Managers (Project Managers)
- San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee (BRAC)
- San Joaquin Valley Planners Workgroup (Planners Workgroup)
- San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council (Regional Policy Council)
- Stanislaus Council of Governments (Stan COG)
- Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)
- University of California at Davis Information Center for the Environment (UC Davis ICE)

2. PARTICIPANTS AND KEY PLAYERS

Many agencies, organizations, and individuals contributed to the success of the Valley Blueprint. The Valley Regional Planning Agencies and their member agencies coordinated and managed the Valley Blueprint planning process primarily through the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council and the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Project Managers (Project Managers). The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Coordinating Committee (BCC), made up of the Project Managers, State agencies, and other stakeholders, developed and oversaw major components of this process. The BCC, through various subcommittees, (e.g., the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee (BRAC) and the San Joaquin Valley Planners Workgroup (Planners Workgroup)), conducted stakeholder and community outreach campaigns and provided technical resources.

Many other organizations and individuals were also critical to the Blueprint planning process. City and county elected and appointed officials and staff supported their COG's efforts to make the Blueprint process relevant, effective, and meaningful. The Great Valley Center (GVC) played a pivotal role in providing research support and in coordinating the extensive outreach programs. The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley worked with the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and GVC throughout the process. The California Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency (BTHA), Caltrans, and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) provided critical funding and technical expertise. UC Davis Information Center for the Environment (UC Davis ICE) provided essential technical, analytical, and modeling support for the development and evaluation of alternative growth scenarios. Other partners, such as the Local Government Commission (LGC) and the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP) also provided invaluable assistance. Finally, the Valley Blueprint planning process relied on input from hundreds of community organizations and business leaders and thousands of Valley residents. These stakeholders were vital to the process.



VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES

The Valley Regional Planning Agencies came together in 2006 to initiate the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint Process. All eight of the Regional Planning Agencies were involved in each stage of the process.

FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



Fresno COG represents 16 member agencies including Fresno County and the cities of Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger, and Selma. Mayors from each of the cities and the chairman of the county supervisors sit on the COG 16-member Policy Board. The Policy Board directed and oversaw the Fresno COG Blueprint process, and ultimately selected a preferred growth scenario. The Policy Board was advised by the Fresno COG Blueprint Roundtable throughout the process. The Roundtable met monthly during the visioning and growth scenario planning phases to discuss and make recommendations on the Blueprint. Fresno COG Policy Board endorsed the Fresno Blueprint concept on May 29, 2008. In 2009 the Fresno COG took over the Valley Blueprint management role previously filled by MCAG (see below for additional information about the role of MCAG).

KERN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



Kern COG represents 12 member agencies including Kern County and the cities of Arvin, Bakersfield, California City, Delano, Maricopa, McFarland, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Taft, Tehachapi, and Wasco. City council members from each of the incorporated cities, two county supervisors, and ex-officio members representing Caltrans, the Golden Empire Transit District, and the Joint Planning Policy Board make up the Kern COG Board of Directors. To guide development of the Blueprint, Kern COG created four Roundtable groups: Planning Directors Roundtable, Community and Economic Development Directors Roundtable, Environmental and Social Equity Roundtable, and Business and Industry Roundtable. Kern COG staff participated in the Roundtable meetings and relied on input from the Roundtables to develop the structure of and content for the public outreach meetings. Kern COG staff updated the Kern COG Board monthly on the status of the Kern Regional Blueprint Program. The Kern COG Board of Directors approved the Final Report and preferred scenario on November 20, 2008.

KINGS COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

KCAG represents five member agencies including Kings County and the cities of Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford, and Lemoore. KCAG is governed by a commission of two county supervisors and one city council representative from each of the cities. A Kings County Blueprint Planners Group consisting of local planners was created to provide direction to KCAG staff throughout the Blueprint effort. KCAG staff communicated regularly with local advisory boards, city councils, and the County Board of Supervisors to keep them apprised of Blueprint progress. The KCAG Commission approved the KCAG Blueprint Principles and the KCAG Preferred Growth Alternative in August 2008.



MADERA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MCTC represents three member agencies including Madera County and the cities of Chowchilla and Madera. MCTC is governed by a Policy Board of three county supervisors, two city council members from the City of Madera, and a city council member from the City of Chowchilla. MCTC formed the Madera Blueprint Roundtable Committee early in the Blueprint process to facilitate a more focused discussion of the Blueprint and its implications for local agency planning efforts. The Madera Roundtable included planning staff from each of the cities and the county. MCTC staff facilitated all the Madera Roundtable meetings and provided the Policy Board with detailed information on public workshop input, Blueprint scenario development, and performance measures.



The MCTC Policy Board approved the Madera County Blueprint Report on September 17, 2008. The Report reflected a consensus among the Policy Board and Blueprint Roundtable that the Low Change scenario was most appropriate for Madera County. On May 20, 2009, the MCTC Policy Board reaffirmed support for the eight Blueprint principles developed during the Madera County Blueprint process.



MERCED COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS



MCAG represents seven member agencies including Merced County and the cities of Atwater, Dos Palos, Gustine, Livingston, Los Banos, and Merced. The MCAG Governing Board includes all five county supervisors and a city council member from each of the six incorporated cities. MCAG worked with an MCAG Planners Roundtable to develop the alternative growth scenarios.

MCAG coordinated the Valley Blueprint planning process including grant administration, coordination, and outreach from the beginning in 2006 through the approval of the Valley Blueprint vision and principles in 2009. In 2009 MCAG transferred management responsibilities for Valley Blueprint implementation to Fresno COG.

SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



SJCOG represents eight member agencies including San Joaquin County and the cities of Escalon, Lathrop, Lodi, Manteca, Ripon, Stockton, and Tracy. SJCOG is governed by a Board of Directors made up of three county supervisors, three elected officials from the City of Stockton, and one elected official from each of the other six jurisdictions. In addition, representatives from Caltrans District 10, the San Joaquin Regional Transit District, and the Port of Stockton are ex-officio members and play an advisory role to the SJCOG Board of Directors. SJCOG created two advisory groups: the Blueprint Leadership Group and the Blueprint Planners Roundtable. Both groups were responsible for reviewing staff work, providing input on the process, and recommending actions to the SJCOG Board of Directors. The Blueprint Leadership Group consisted of local community stakeholders representing a variety of interests, including local builders/developers, State/local agencies and advisory boards, advocacy groups, economic development, public transit agencies, farming/agribusinesses, citizen groups, environmental protection organizations, and educators. The Blueprint Planners Roundtable consisted of planning/community development directors from each jurisdiction in the county. SJCOG staff was responsible for the administrative, technical, and facilitation aspects of the process. The SJCOG policy board approved the San Joaquin County Regional Blueprint Vision on January 28, 2010.

STANISLAUS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Stan COG represents 10 member agencies including Stanislaus County and the cities of Ceres, Hughson, Modesto, Newman, Oakdale, Patterson, Riverbank, Turlock, and Waterford. Stan COG is governed by a 17-member Policy Board which includes the five county supervisors and elected-officials from each city.



TULARE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

TCAG represents nine member agencies including Tulare County and the cities of Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake. TCAG is governed by a 17-member Board of Governors that includes the five county supervisors and elected officials from each of the cities, three at-large members, and a representative from Caltrans. As part of the local Blueprint process, TCAG established a Local Planners Group that regularly advised TCAG on Blueprint scenarios and policies.





VALLEY BLUEPRINT ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the Valley Regional Planning Agencies, several committees, groups, roundtables, and commissions played critical roles in carrying out the Valley Blueprint planning process. The following describes the function and contributions of these groups.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY REGIONAL POLICY COUNCIL

The Regional Policy Council was created in 2006 by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) among the eight Regional Planning Agencies to: provide focus and guidance on interregional policy issues; represent the Valley at the State and Federal levels; and work with the Partnership. The Regional Policy Council consists of two elected officials and one alternate from each of the eight Regional Planning Agencies, and one representative from the SJVAPCD. The Regional Policy Council is the decision-making body for Valley Blueprint after each of the Regional Planning Agencies have weighed in. On April 1, 2009, the Regional Policy Council adopted the 12 Smart Growth Principles and the Preferred Scenario for the entire San Joaquin Valley. The Regional Policy Council continues to guide implementation of the Blueprint.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Valley Regional Planning Agencies established the BCC in 2006 to monitor and inform the Valley Blueprint planning process. The BCC included staff representatives from the Valley Regional Planning Agencies, GVC, Caltrans (Local Assistance, Headquarters, and District 6), the SJVAPCD, and State agencies. The BCC established an executive committee of Blueprint Project Managers to guide the process at the county level (see below for a description of the Project Managers). Since Blueprint adoption in April 2009, the BCC has taken a less active role and only meets on a quarterly basis.

The BCC established two subcommittees that played important roles in the Blueprint planning process: the Modeling Subcommittee and the Media Subcommittee.

Modeling Subcommittee

The Modeling Subcommittee was created in 2006 by the BCC to assist with technical modeling of the alternative growth scenarios. The Modeling Subcommittee included technical staff from each of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and was assisted by staff from UC Davis ICE (see descrip-

tion below). The Modeling Subcommittee is currently (2010) developing a Valleywide model to comply with SB 375 requirements.

Media Subcommittee

The Media Subcommittee was created in 2006 by the BCC to plan and coordinate Blueprint outreach and public relations efforts. The Media Subcommittee included Public Information Officers (PIOs) from each of the Regional Planning Agencies. Though the Subcommittee's role diminished in 2008 and 2009 due to a lack of funding, it continues to work with the GVC to maintain the www.valleyblueprint.org website. Recently (2010), Fresno COG reinstated a monthly e-newsletter to report on Blueprint implementation activities.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT PROJECT MANAGERS

The Project Managers was created in 2006 as an executive committee of the BCC to help manage the Valley Blueprint planning process and to coordinate the eight individual COG Blueprint efforts. It is made up of staff representatives from each of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies. Throughout the Valley Blueprint planning process, the Project Managers met on a monthly basis to coordinate local and regional Blueprint activities. The Project Managers continue to meet on a monthly basis to plan and coordinate implementation of the Blueprint.

VALLEY BLUEPRINT PLANNERS WORKGROUP

In January 2007, under the auspices of the BCC, John Wright, the former planning director for the City of Clovis, convened the Valley Blueprint Planners Workgroup (Planners Workgroup). This group, originally called the SJV Blueprint Professional Planning Review Panel and then the San Joaquin Valley Professional Planners Group, was created to engage professional planners from counties and cities participating in the Blueprint process.

The Planners Workgroup served in an advisory capacity to the Project Managers on major Blueprint activities, such as the selection of the preferred growth scenario. During the Valley Blueprint planning process the Planners Workgroup met quarterly to review and comment on Blueprint issues and progress. Since the adoption of the preferred growth scenario, the Planners Workgroup meets less frequently but still continues to assist with Blueprint implementation at the local level.



BLUEPRINT PARTNERS

GREAT VALLEY CENTER



The Valley Regional Planning Agencies partnered with the GVC, a non-profit organization focused on California's Central Valley, from the beginning of the Blueprint planning process. The GVC provided information and data, conducted marketing and outreach activities, managed the Valley Blueprint website, organized conferences and regional events, and operated leadership development programs. The GVC provided staff to the Blueprint Regional Advisory Committee and organized several Blueprint events including: the Kickoff Summit (June 2006), the Executive Forum (April 2008), and the Regional Summit (January 2009).



The Great Valley Center was instrumental in staging Blueprint events such as the Executive Forum (pictured above) and two Blueprint Summits.

CALIFORNIA BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION, AND HOUSING AGENCY

BTHA oversees 14 departments (including Caltrans and the Department of Housing and Community Development), several economic development programs (e.g., California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley), and commissions (e.g., Strategic Growth Council). BTHA programs affect a wide range of sectors involved in planning such as transportation, public safety, affordable housing, and economic development. In 2006 BTHA created a Blueprint Learning Network team to work with the regional Blueprint programs in a series of workshops on overcoming the challenges and obstacles to effective regional blueprint planning.

California Department of Transportation

Caltrans is the State agency responsible for funding, administering, and supporting the California Regional Blueprint Planning Program. Since 2005 Caltrans has awarded 20 million dollars in Federal regional transportation planning funds to develop regional blueprints. Since the start of the Blueprint Program, Caltrans has provided funding to 18 MPOs and 15 RTPAs. From 2005 to 2009 Caltrans awarded the Valley Blueprint a total of \$6,675,000: \$2,000,000 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2005/2006, \$1,950,000 in FY 2006/2007, \$1,375,000 in FY 2007/2008, and \$1,350,000 in FY 2008/2009. In addition, Caltrans staff from Districts 6 and 10 and State headquarters have participated in the BPCC and Planners Workgroup.

California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

In November 2006 the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley created a ten-year Strategic Action Plan, which details its goals to help the Valley achieve a prosperous economy, quality environment, and social equity. The Strategic Action Plan includes six major initiatives and recommendations for its ten working groups. The Strategic Action Plan specifically references the efforts of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies to enhance quality of life and identified the Valley Blueprint as an implementation strategy within two of its workgroups: Transportation, and Land Use, Housing, and Agriculture (LUHA).

Blueprint Learning Network

The Blueprint Learning Network (BLN) team included representatives from Caltrans, Housing and Community Development, California Center for Regional Leadership, and the University of California at Davis. The BLN conducted sessions in 2006 and 2007 on a range of topics including: forecasting demand for land use and housing needs; integrating transportation and land use planning; protecting environmental resources; correlating land use and greenhouse gas emissions; integrating natural resource protection and economic prosperity; and addressing environmental justice. All of the State MPOs were encouraged to participate in the BLN so that regions that were farther along in the planning process could share experiences with others just beginning the Blueprint process.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

The SJVAPCD encompasses part of the eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley. The SJVAPCD develops plans and implements control measures consistent with Federal and State requirements for non-attainment areas. It also conducts public education and outreach programs. The SJVAPCD was an active partner both financially and technically during the Blueprint. The SJVAPCD directly participated in the Blueprint planning process through its role on the BCC and as a member of the Regional Policy Council and the Planners Workgroup. The District provided nearly \$750,000 in matching funds during the first two years of the planning process and provided technical assistance throughout the process.



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The BRAC was created in 2006 to ensure Valleywide stakeholder participation. The BRAC, staffed by the GVC, reported to the Project Managers and the Regional Policy Council and then made recommendations for the creation of the Valley Blueprint. The BRAC included individuals nominated by each of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and representatives from public agencies and constituent groups. BRAC met quarterly, but attendance diminished over time. In 2009, after the Regional Policy Council adopted the 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Scenario, the BRAC was disbanded.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT PLANNERS ROUNDTABLES

Each of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies formed Blueprint Planning Roundtables (BRPs) or other similar advisory groups during the Blueprint planning process. The BPRs reviewed COG staff work and provided input on issues pertaining to the individual Blueprint efforts. The BPRs included professional planners working groups. Following is a list of the BPRs that were active during the Valley Blueprint planning process:

- Fresno COG Blueprint Roundtable
- Kern COG Planning Directors Roundtable
- Kern COG Community and Economic Development Directors Roundtable
- Kern COG Environmental and Social Equity Roundtable
- Kern COG Business and Industry Roundtable
- Kings County Blueprint Planners Group
- Madera County Planners Roundtable
- MCAG Planners Roundtable
- SJCOG Blueprint Leadership Group
- SJCOG Blueprint Planners Roundtable
- TCAG Local Planners Group

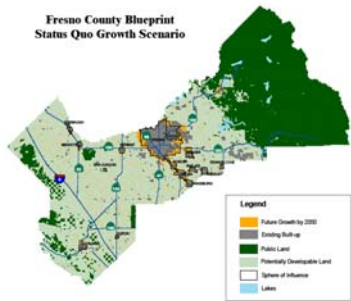
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT PLANNING PROCESS

Summary Report

CITIES AND COUNTIES

The sixty-two cities and eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley region were actively involved in the Valley Blueprint planning process. In many instances cities and counties sponsored and participated in Blueprint public workshops to help reach out to stakeholders and residents. City and county officials participated through their involvement on the COG boards and the Regional Policy Council. City and county staff participated through several venues including the Project Managers, BCC, Modeling Subcommittee, Media Subcommittee, Planners Workgroup, and the Blueprint Roundtables.





UC Davis ICE played a critical role in developing alternative growth scenarios for the Blueprint Planning Process.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT DAVIS INFORMATION CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

In collaboration with the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and the GVC, UC Davis ICE supplied data, modeling tools, and technical support for evaluation of alternative growth scenarios. UC Davis ICE specializes in the development and distribution of geospatial data and technologies and decision support systems geared to land use planning. UC Davis ICE is currently (2010) working with Caltrans to provide technical support for all of the Blueprint programs in the state.

The Valley Regional Planning Agencies used UPLAN, a computer-based Geographic Information System (GIS) tool developed by UC Davis ICE, to conduct Blueprint modeling. UPLAN enabled the Valley Regional Planning Agencies to modify variables based on projected population, land use policies from city and county general plans, attraction areas where growth was encouraged (e.g., existing centers), and discouragement areas where growth was not appropriate (e.g., wetlands, open space, floodplains). Planning professionals and elected officials from jurisdictions in each county consulted with COG staff on UPLAN assumptions and parameters to provide the most locally-relevant inputs for the model. UPLAN allowed users to modify land use patterns and densities to create future growth scenarios.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA REGIONAL OBESITY PREVENTION PROGRAM

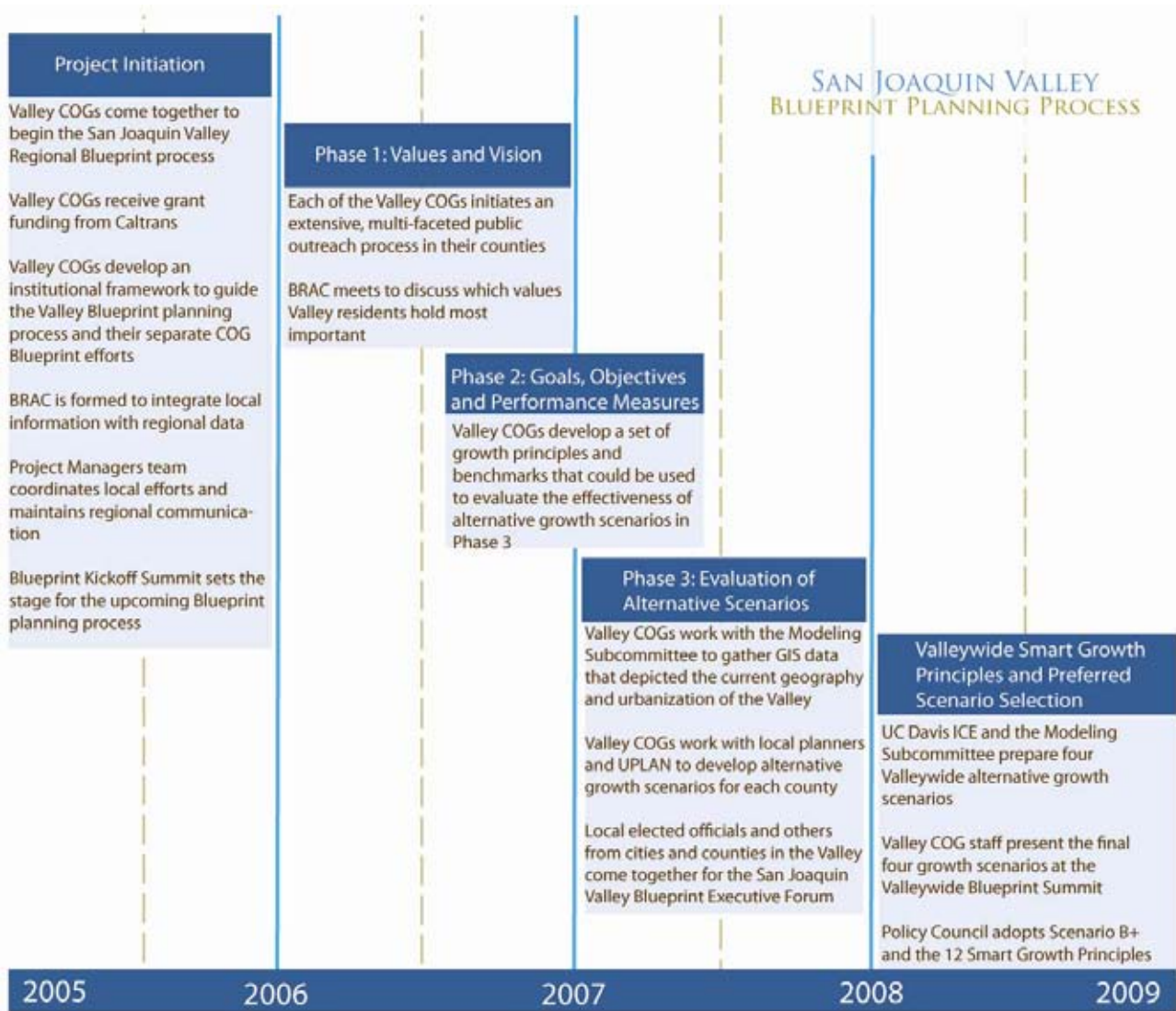
CCROPP coordinated with the Valley Blueprint to help conduct community outreach on health issues facing Valley communities. The program was developed by the Central California Public Health Partnership and is administered through the Central California Center for Health and Human Services at California State University, Fresno. The CCROPP mission is to address childhood and adult obesity through place-based policy that supports access to healthy, affordable foods, and physical activity. CCROPP worked with local stakeholders during the Blueprint planning process to address challenges to and solutions for creating healthier and safer communities. CCROPP also worked with Fresno COG to assess transportation challenges within local low-income communities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

LGC worked with the Valley Blueprint program to organize a workshop in 2007 entitled *Linking Water and Land Use in the Southern Central Valley Region*, and to conduct a Community Image Survey, which was presented at the Blueprint Summit in January 2009. LGC later adapted the Community Image Survey for small valley communities, which is an excellent method to illustrate housing choices that might otherwise be overlooked because of preconceived notions. The Community Image Survey helped community members and local agencies address concerns about increasing residential densities.

OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND INDIVIDUALS

Hundreds of community organizations, businesses, and individuals played a critical role in the Valley Blueprint planning process. Inclusive outreach to residents, stakeholders, and other interests (e.g., health professionals, builders/developers, NGOs, community groups, and educators) assured that a broad cross section of Valley residents was represented in each COG's Blueprint program.



3. PLANNING PROCESS

The Valley Blueprint planning process included five major steps. In the first step, Project Initiation, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies secured funding for the Blueprint program. Next, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies carried out a three-phase process within each county (i.e., Phase 1, Values and Vision; Phase 2, Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures; and Phase 3, Evaluation of Alternative Growth Scenarios) to develop a preferred growth scenario for each county. In the final step, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies integrated the county-level Blueprints into the Valleywide Blueprint and adopted the 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Growth Scenario.

PROJECT INITIATION (2005-2006)

Concerned about the impacts of projected population growth on local communities, resources, and the environment, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies came together in 2005 to initiate a regional planning process. MCAG, on behalf of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies, accepted a \$2 million grant from Caltrans through the California Blueprint Program. The SJVAPCD contributed \$500,000. The \$2.5 million was distributed among the Valley Regional Planning Agencies and the GVC to launch the Blueprint process.

In 2006 the Valley Regional Planning Agencies developed an institutional framework to guide the Valley Blueprint planning process and their separate COG Blueprint efforts. The Regional Planning Agencies created a Project Managers team made up of the program manager from the lead agency (i.e., MCAG) and project managers from each of the other seven Regional Planning Agencies to coordinate local efforts and maintain regional communication. The BRAC was formed to integrate local information with regional data. Each COG also developed a public outreach plan to solicit community input at the county level. Finally, in June 2006 the Valley Blueprint was officially launched with the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Kickoff Workshop.



PHASE 1: VALUES AND VISION (2006-2007)

During 2006 and 2007 the Valley Regional Planning Agencies carried out the first phase of the Blueprint planning process: Values and Vision. Each Valley COG initiated an extensive, multi-faceted public outreach process in their respective counties. They posed three questions to their communities:

- What are the values of the residents of the San Joaquin Valley?
- What values are most important to the quality of life for residents in the San Joaquin Valley?
- How can these values be translated into a regional vision that accommodates growth, enhances quality of life, and reflects local community values?

As a result of the Phase 1 workshop, several common values emerged:

- Preserving agricultural land
- Creating an effective transportation system
- Improving access to quality educational opportunities
- Creating a dynamic economy with quality local jobs
- Providing a variety of quality affordable housing choices
- Treasuring the bountiful environment with reasonable protection

PHASE 2: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES (2007)

In 2007 the Valley Regional Planning Agencies carried out the second phase of the Blueprint planning process: Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures. The purpose of this phase was to transform the values and vision developed in Phase 1 into a set of growth principles and benchmarks that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative growth scenarios in Phase 3. While the Valley Regional Planning Agencies were developing goals, objectives, and performance measures, they also held workshops with resource agencies, environmental justice organizations, and tribal governments. The goals, objectives, and performance measures continued to evolve throughout the Blueprint process. By the time the Blueprint was adopted in 2009, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies had developed common goals, objectives, and performance measures that would work in each of the counties and be consistent Valleywide.

PHASE 3: EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS (2007-2008)

In 2007 and 2008 the Valley Regional Planning Agencies conducted the third phase of the Valley Blueprint planning process: Evaluation of Alternative Growth Scenarios. Early in the growth scenario phase, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies worked with the Modeling Subcommittee of the BCC to gather GIS data that depicted the current geography and urbanization of the Valley. The Modeling Subcommittee worked closely with UC Davis ICE and local planners to use UPLAN growth scenario modeling software to develop Status Quo Scenarios. This iterative process involving UC Davis ICE, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies, and local planners and stakeholders was critical to ensuring that the Blueprint identified realistic development patterns. Since each Valley COG's traffic model used different socio-economic categories, each COG undertook its separate effort to translate local land use designations into the UPLAN land use categories. UPLAN analysis showed that if growth continued as it had during the previous five to ten years, an additional 760,000 acres of agricultural land throughout the Valley would be converted to urban uses by 2050.



The Valley Regional Planning Agencies next worked with local planners and the UPLAN model to develop alternative growth scenarios for each county. Each Valley COG developed two or three alternatives. Several UPLAN model runs were conducted for each growth scenario. With the help of the Planners Workgroup, the alternative growth scenarios were evaluated based on performance measures developed in Phase 2, such as land use patterns, transportation options, economic development opportunities, goods movement patterns, greenhouse gas emissions, agricultural land consumption, and habitat protection.

In April 2008, while the Valley Regional Planning Agencies were evaluating their alternative growth scenarios, local elected officials and others from cities and counties in the Valley came together for the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Executive Forum. Representatives from each of the 68 Valley cities and counties, including 46 elected officials, attended the Forum.

By Fall 2008 six of the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies (Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Kern, and Tulare) had selected countywide preferred growth scenarios. Each of these county-level preferred scenarios called for higher-density multi-family housing, marking a significant change from San Joaquin Valley's existing rate of about 91 percent single-family houses. The preferred scenario target densities ranged from Merced at 8.6 dwelling units per acre to Madera County at 4.7 units per acre. Subsequently, San Joaquin COG submitted a hybrid of its four original growth scenarios favored by workshop participants, web-based stakeholders, and Blueprint working groups. Stan COG selected a "status quo" scenario, recommending a continuation of current densities prescribed by local general plans.

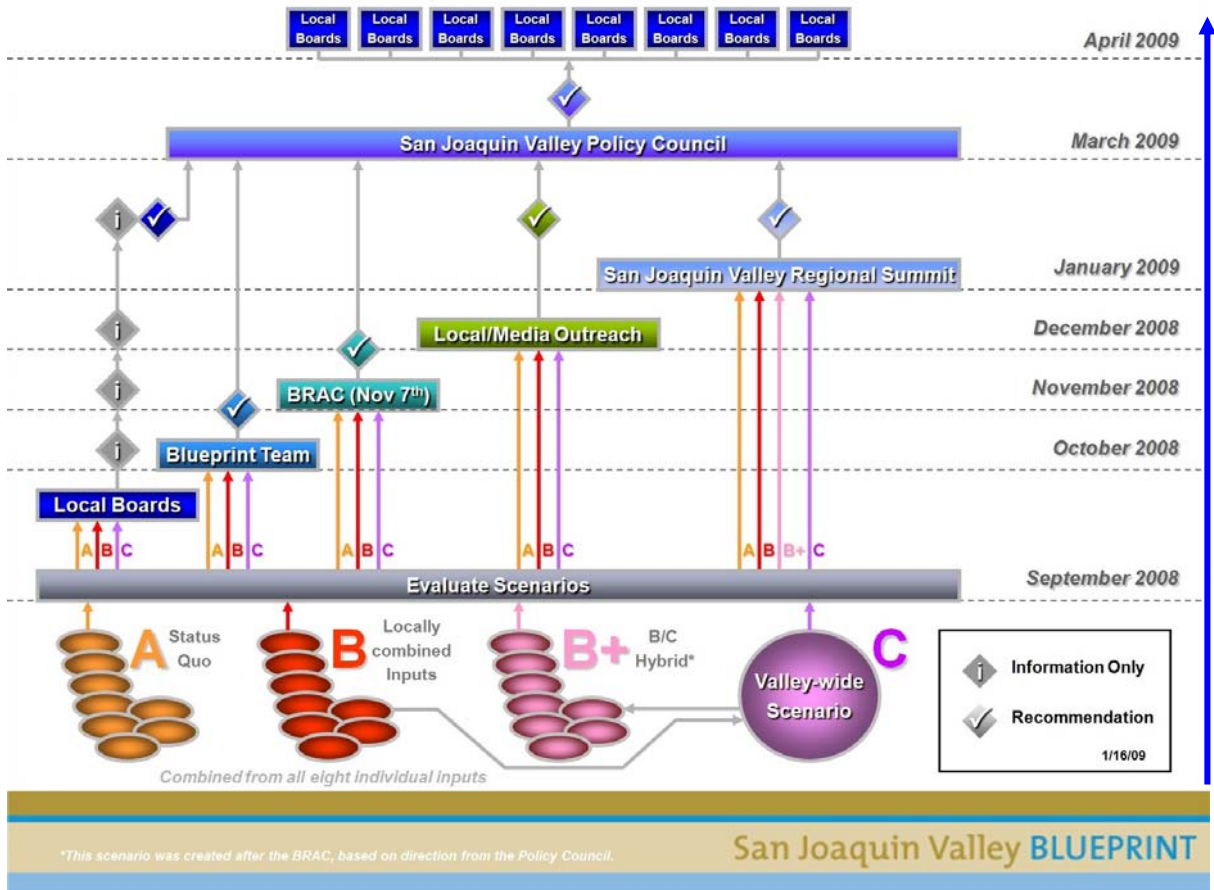
VALLEYWIDE SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES AND PREFERRED SCENARIO SELECTION (2008-2009)

Once each COG had completed modeling its preferred scenario, UC Davis ICE began modeling Valleywide scenarios. By November 2008 UC Davis ICE and the Modeling Subcommittee prepared three Valleywide alternative growth scenarios (i.e., A, B, and C). The growth scenarios were based on different levels of housing density, travel choices, and other variables. Example images, indicators, and graphics were developed to illustrate the potential changes in the urban footprint among the growth scenarios.

Next, the BRAC met to review the three growth scenarios. BRAC members recommended Scenario C for adoption. The three Valleywide growth scenarios, as well as the BRAC recommendation, were then reviewed and discussed by the Regional Policy Council at its December 2008 meeting. Based on the Regional Policy Council's recommendation, a fourth scenario, called B+, was developed that included additional regional transportation networks.

Valley COG staff presented the final four growth scenarios (see the next section for a description of the scenarios) and the BRAC recommendation at the Valleywide Blueprint Summit on January 26, 2009. At their February 25, 2009, meeting the Valley Planners developed a list of considerations to assist the Policy Council in making their determination on a preferred growth scenario for the Valley.

On April 1, 2009, the Regional Policy Council considered the four alternative growth scenarios, as well as input from the BRAC, Summit participants, and Planners Workgroup, and adopted Scenario B+ and the 12 Smart Growth Principles. This action officially concluded the third year of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint planning process and set the stage for the transition to implementation of the Valley Blueprint.



Source: Merced County Association of Governments, Valley Blueprint Planning Process timeline, January 2009.

4. VALLEY BLUEPRINT

This section describes the three core components of the Valley Blueprint: community outreach, the 12 Smart Growth Principles, and the alternative growth scenarios.

VALLEY BLUEPRINT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Throughout the Valley Blueprint planning process community members provided vital feedback that ultimately led to acceptance of the 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Scenario for the entire San Joaquin Valley. In addition to outreach conducted by the Regional Planning Agencies, several Valleywide events during the Blueprint planning process were critical to shaping the process including: the Blueprint Kickoff Summit; meetings with environmental justice communities, tribal governments, and resource agencies; the Blueprint Executive Forum; and the Blueprint Regional Summit.

Blueprint Kickoff Summit (June 2006)

On June 28, 2006, over 700 people participated in a kick-off summit in Fresno, sponsored by the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies and facilitated by GVC. The day-long event allowed policymakers, planners, farmers, developers, nonprofits, housing advocates, students, and a variety of public agency representatives to gain a regional perspective regarding their common assets and discuss how local planning issues related to the region. The Summit set the stage for the upcoming Blueprint planning process by providing information about the need for a regional approach, developing support for the initiative, and illustrating the common bond that already existed among Valley residents regarding quality-of-life issues.

Environmental Justice Outreach: Resource Agencies, Tribal Governments, and other Stakeholders

Beginning in early 2007 the Valley Regional Planning Agencies held a series of workshops to engage representatives from resource agencies, environmental justice organizations, and tribal governments (both Federally-recognized and non-recognized) in the Valley.

On March 2, 2007, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies hosted the Environmental Resource Areas Workshop directed at State and Federal resource agencies. The event attracted 34 participants from State and Federal resource agencies, local and regional governments, tribal representatives, and non-profit organizations. The participants ranked the priority of environmental layers used in mapping with clicker feedback technology.



Interactive clicker technology was used extensively throughout the community workshops and events to allow for quick and accurate feedback from participants.



Many of the Regional Planning Agencies held special outreach meetings for environmental justice groups as part of their Blueprint efforts. Kern COG conducted meetings in Spanish for the predominantly Hispanic communities of Lamont and Greenfield. The Dolores Huerta Foundation assisted in conducting the special outreach meetings. Additional meetings with Spanish translation services were held throughout the Valley.

In Spring 2009, lead by Kern COG, the Valley Regional Planning Agencies began focused outreach to the 34 tribal nations in the Valley. Three workshops were held throughout the Valley followed by a series of eleven conference calls to develop an action plan for tribal priorities in the region. The effort was funded by a Caltrans Environmental Justice Planning Grant. A preliminary summary of the process was incorporated into each COG's Regional Transportation Plan.

Blueprint Executive Forum (April 2008)

On April 25, 2008, local elected officials and other policy-makers from cities and counties in the San Joaquin Valley came together in Fresno for the Blueprint Executive Forum, which was facilitated by GVC. The Forum provided the policy-makers with an update on the progress of the Blueprint planning process and an opportunity to share concerns raised by their communities. The event also provided an opportunity for policy-makers to discuss critical issues and to share their visions of the future for the region.



Blueprint Regional Summit (January 2009)

On January 26, 2009, over 500 people came together to make their recommendation for how the San Joaquin Valley should grow to 2050. At this Blueprint Regional Summit, facilitated by GVC, participants learned about smart growth policies and other regional Blueprints throughout California, and asked questions of a panel of experts that had been involved in the Blueprint planning process.

In the presentation performance measures for each growth scenario showed how outcomes differed based on various development assumptions. Participants discussed the pros and cons of each alternative growth scenario. Finally, participants voted on a preferred growth scenario at the end of the Summit using interactive "clicker" technology. The voting results were as follows:

- 4 percent supported Scenario A (status quo development trends);
- 43 percent supported Scenario B or B+ (increased densities and smart growth principles); and
- 53 percent supported Scenario C (10 dwelling units per acre).

The final vote resulted in the majority of participants selecting the scenario that had the highest residential densities, Scenario C.



SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

The 12 Smart Growth Principles represent the core values of the Valley and will be used as the basis of future Blueprint planning and implementation. While each COG developed its own goals, objectives, and guiding principles, the Smart Growth Principles were intended to reflect a regional perspective. The Smart Growth Principles establish a benchmark for Blueprint-related decision-making and provide guidance for achieving the adopted San Joaquin Valley Blueprint. The adopted 12 Smart Growth Principles are:

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Take advantage of compact building design
- Enhance the economic vitality of the region
- Support actions that encourage environmental resource management

The following table shows how the value and vision statements developed by each COG correspond with the adopted Valley Smart Growth Principles.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BLUEPRINT PLANNING PROCESS

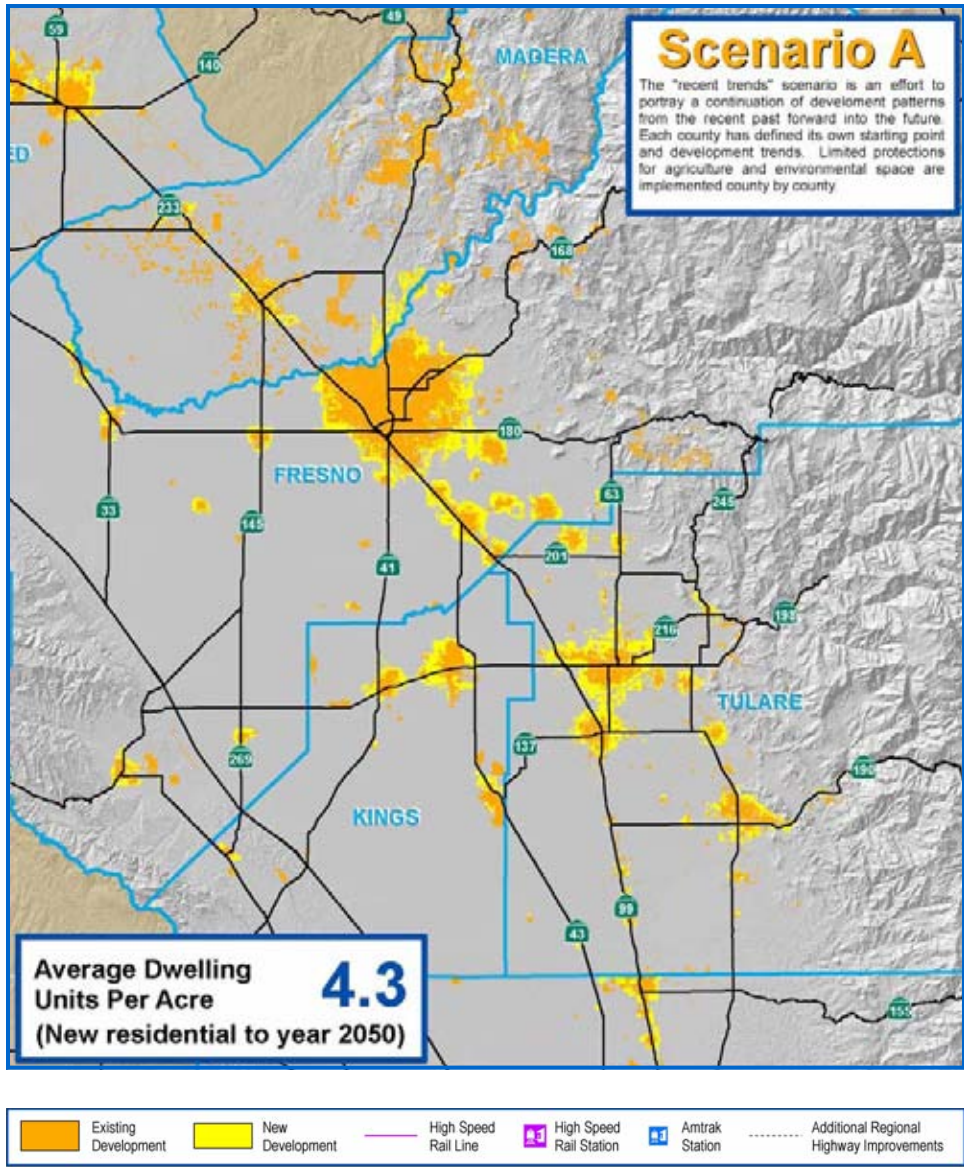
Summary Report

VALLEY SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES	VALLEY COG VISION AND VALUES							
	Fresno COG	Kern COG	KCAG	MCTC	MCAG	SJCOG	Stan COG	TCAG
Create a range of housing opportunities and choices	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆
Create walkable neighborhoods	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration	◆	◆	◆		◆		◆	
Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	
Mix land uses	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Provide a variety of transportation choices	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
Take advantage of compact building design	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
Enhance the economic vitality of the Region	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Support actions that encourage environmental resource management	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

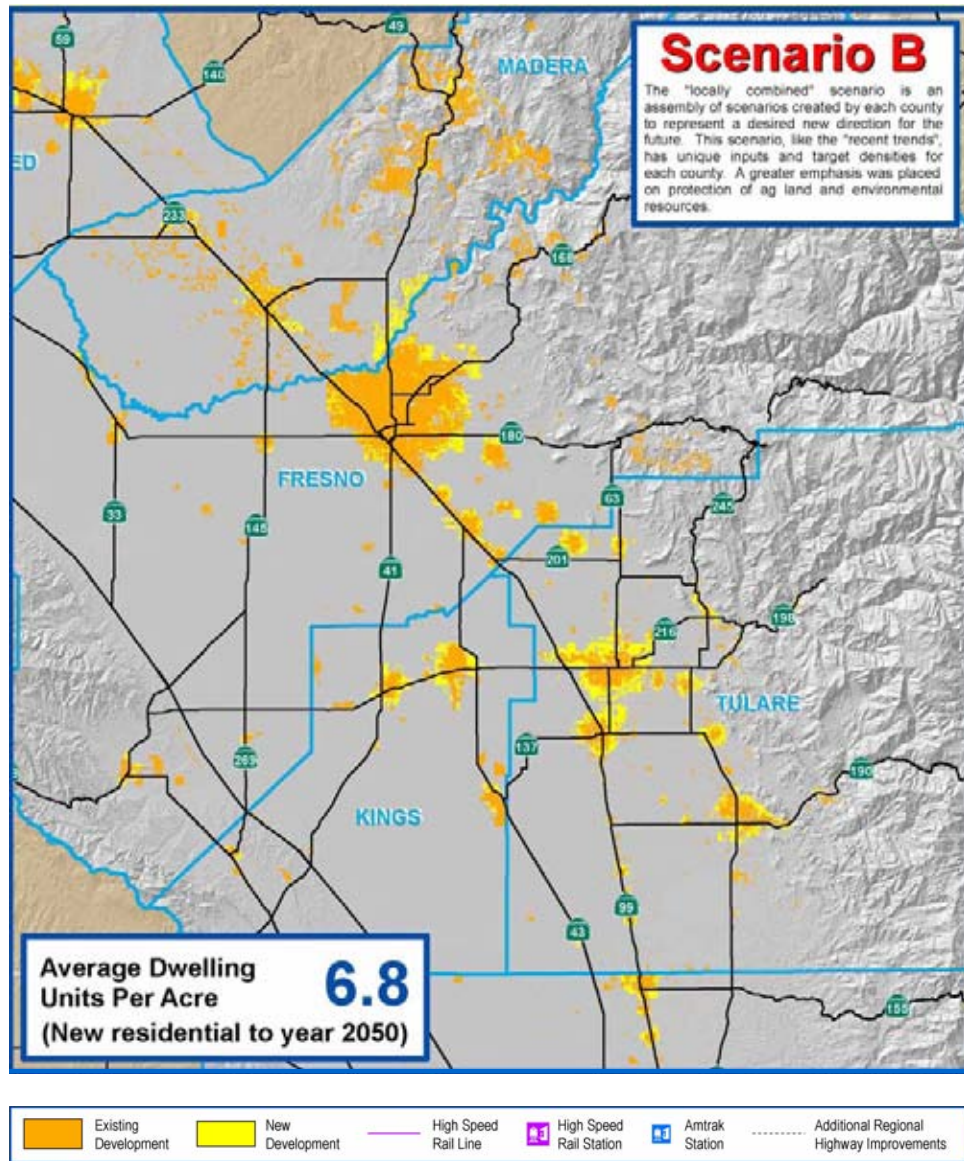


VALLEYWIDE ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS

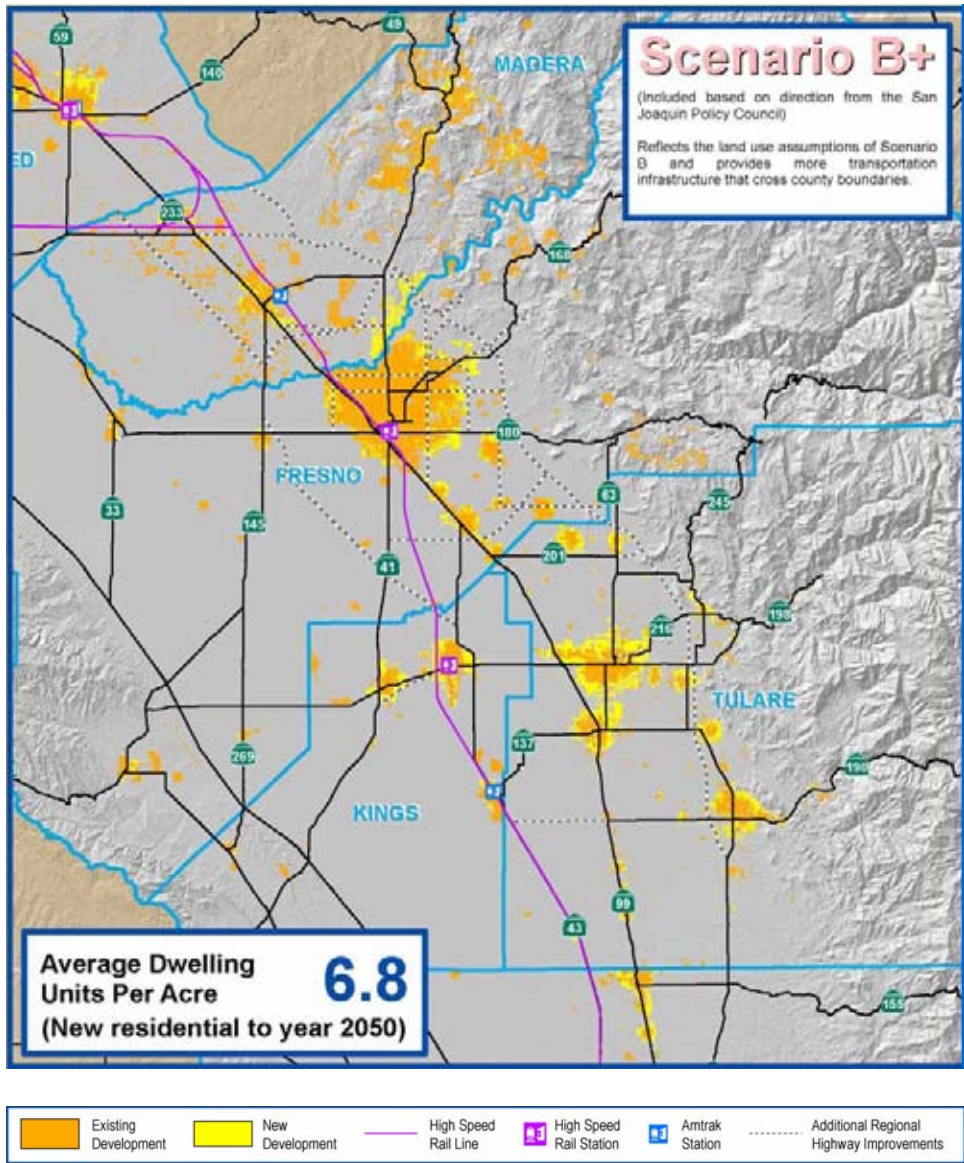
The process of developing and modeling the Valleywide Blueprint growth scenarios was an iterative process that required multiple rounds of coordination among the Regional Planning Agencies, UC Davis ICE, and the Valley Blueprint workgroups. Following Phase 2 community workshops, UC Davis ICE and the Valley Regional Planning Agencies worked together to consolidate the Regional Planning Agencies' alternative growth scenarios into four Valleywide alternative growth scenarios. The Valleywide scenarios presented a range of options for the future based on the status quo (Scenario A), local preference (Scenario B), local preference with regional transportation overlay (Scenario B+), and a hybrid compact growth (Scenario C). The following pages describes each of the alternative growth scenarios.



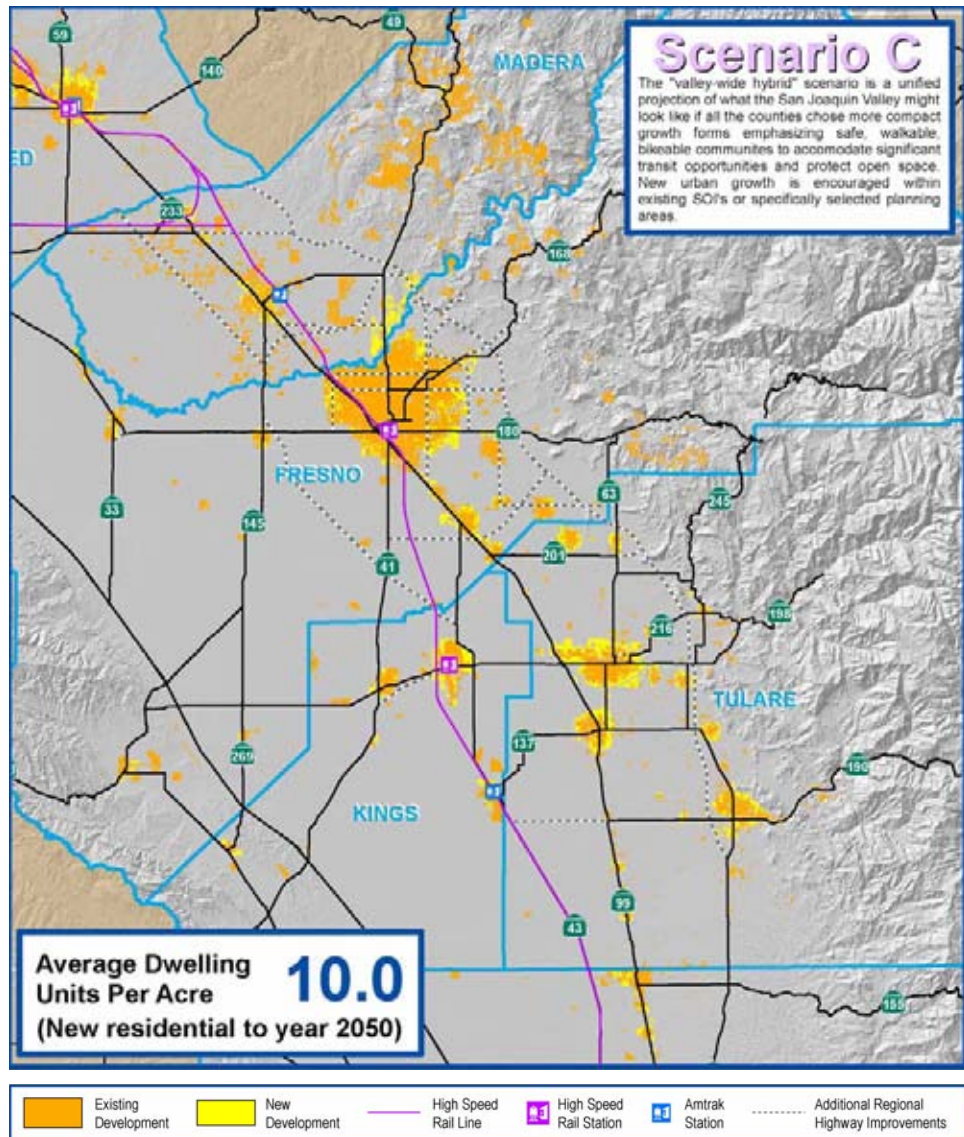
Scenario A. Scenario A was an aggregation of the local status quo growth scenarios from the eight counties. Each county defined its own starting point and development trends. This status quo scenario showed a continuation of development patterns from the recent past forward into the future. This growth scenario reflected limited protection of agriculture and environmental open space. The average density of new residential development was calculated at 4.3 dwelling units per gross acre.



Scenario B. Scenario B was an aggregation of the locally-preferred Blueprint growth scenarios selected by the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies. This growth scenario included inputs and target densities for each county. This growth scenario placed increased emphasis on protection of agricultural land and environmental resources. The average density of new residential development was calculated at 6.8 dwelling units per gross acre.



Scenario B+. Scenario B+ was developed based on the recommendations of the Regional Policy Council. Scenario B+ combined the densities of Scenario B with the increased transit emphasis from Scenario C. It assumed high-speed rail as envisioned in 2008, additional projects such as a high-capacity inter-connected multi-model system in the southern Valley counties, and a State Route 65 connector. The average density of new residential development was calculated at 6.8 dwelling units per gross acre.



Scenario C. Scenario C, developed based on input and recommendations from the BRAC, had densities higher than those envisioned in the preferred growth scenarios selected by each Valley COG (i.e., Scenario B). Scenario C envisioned more compact growth forms that emphasized safe, walkable, bikeable communities, accommodated significant transit opportunities, and protected open space. New urban growth was encouraged within existing spheres of influence or specifically selected planning areas. The average density of new residential development was calculated at 10 dwelling units per gross acre.

VALLEY PREFERRED GROWTH SCENARIO

The preferred growth scenario, B+, combines the preferred scenarios selected by each COG and regional transportation options. The preferred scenario prioritizes protection of environmental resources and agricultural land, and emphasizes compact growth within existing communities. The preferred growth scenario also illustrates regional transportation infrastructure to connect the Valley.

The preferred growth scenario will serve as a guideline for Valley cities and counties as they update their general plans. The preferred growth scenario envisions increased densities (i.e., dwelling units per gross acre) in all of the eight valley counties. Where current average densities range from 3.8 to 4.8 dwelling units per acre, in the preferred growth scenario average densities range from 4.7 to 8.6 dwelling units per acre.

COUNTY	COMPARING AVERAGE DENSITY	
	Current Trends	Preferred Growth Scenario
FRESNO	3.8	8.0
KERN	3.9	6.0
KINGS	4.1	7.4
MADERA	4.1	4.7
MERCED	4.8	8.6
SAN JOAQUIN	4.5	7.7
STANISLAUS	3.8	5.6
TULARE	4.3	5.3
VALLEY AVERAGE	4.3	6.8



5. EIGHT COG BLUEPRINTS

The Valley Blueprint planning process conducted by the Valley COG included successive rounds of community outreach and technical work. Each COG worked independently within its county to develop a vision, values and principles, and alternative growth scenarios. This work culminated with the selection of a preferred growth scenario in each of the eight counties.

A major feature of the individual COG blueprint programs was community outreach. The Regional Planning Agencies employed a wide range of outreach methods to ensure broad participation, initiate dialogue, and gain input. Each COG dedicated a section of its website to keep community members informed about the progress of the blueprint planning process. The Regional Planning Agencies issued regular progress reports and videos to update local residents about the process and promote and encourage public participation. The Regional Planning Agencies used television and radio media to engage the public. Finally, to reach out to the diverse communities of the San Joaquin Valley, the Regional Planning Agencies took a multi-lingual and multi-cultural approach by advertising community workshops in both English and Spanish, and conducting workshops with translators.

While the Regional Planning Agencies' planning efforts had much in common, such as the shared methodology for developing and analyzing the growth scenarios, each Valley COG conducted its own unique process. This section describes the common and shared approaches, as well as the separate efforts that resulted in distinct COG Blueprints.



COUNCIL OF FRESNO COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

Outreach

Fresno COG conducted extensive public outreach to provide residents with the opportunity to participate in planning the future growth of the county and its cities. During Phase 1 of the Blueprint process, Fresno COG conducted community values and vision workshops in all 15 cities. Over 2,600 participants attended these workshops and outreach events.

In Phase 2 Fresno COG conducted 20 public workshops throughout Fresno County to identify a preferred growth scenario for the county. Fifteen of the meetings were prearranged “stakeholder” meetings designed to gather public input from representatives of 40 different community, governmental, business, and cultural groups. The other five events were fairs, fiestas, and summits. Finally, an online survey was used to gather additional public input on a variety of topics.

Vision Statement, Values, and Guiding Principles

Based on public input Fresno COG developed a vision statement, values, and principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. In the future Fresno County and its cities will be composed of unique cities and communities supported by a competitive economy, a well-educated work force, and protected environment. The County communities will focus on cultural and community stewardship, where the community takes ownership of its problems and solutions. The values and guiding principles support the main ideas in the vision statement. Fresno County communities value environmental health and sustainability, a vibrant economy, public safety, world-class education, transportation options, housing choices, the worth of all people, aesthetic quality, cultural richness, and positive image of the communities. Fresno County has guiding principles that encourage community and stakeholder collaboration, foster communities with a strong sense of place, make development decisions predictable, provide transportation and housing options, take advantage of compact building design, create walkable neighborhoods, mix land uses, preserve open space and farmland, and direct development towards existing communities.



Preferred Growth Scenario

The Fresno COG preferred growth scenario is referred to as the “Hybrid” concept because it is based on elements of several alternative growth scenarios originally developed by the Fresno COG Blueprint Roundtable. The Hybrid concept includes a high-capacity, multi-modal transportation network that provides connectivity throughout the region. It involves a mix of infill development, greenfield development, and redevelopment. One of the principal objectives of the preferred growth scenario is to provide for employment centers to serve the west side of Fresno County, either along the I-5 corridor or in other appropriate locations. The preferred growth scenario also discourages growth on strategic farmland and resource conservation/open space land. By linking east-west transportation corridors to I-5 and balancing jobs and housing, the preferred growth scenario predicts lower VMTs than the status quo scenario.

The Fresno COG preferred growth scenario estimates that by 2050 county-wide average residential densities for new residential growth will be 8.0 dwelling units per acre. The density of new growth in the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Areas (FCMA) will be slightly higher, while the average density of new growth in the non-FCMA areas will be lower.



KERN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Outreach



Phase 1 Workshop. A Kern COG staff member presents a Power-Point slide show explaining the Blueprint Program.

Kern COG held conducted 34 meetings with 1,147 participants and reached out to 2,400 residents through a telephone survey during two phases of the Kern COG Blueprint. Kern COG engaged professionals and civic leaders in four Blueprint Roundtables: Planning Directors Roundtable; Community and Economic Development Roundtable; Environmental and Social Equity Roundtable; and Business and Industry Roundtable. Kern COG coordinated media coverage of the workshops and issued press releases to approximately 65 different media outlets, including three major TV network affiliates, radio stations, and most of the region's 35 newspapers.

During Phase 1 Kern COG conducted 18 workshops to ask participants what they valued about their community and what their vision is for their community to the year 2050. The meetings focused on involving participants in discussions about key issues and future growth related topics. Kern COG used the information gathered during Phase 1 workshops to develop draft growth principles and potential growth scenarios to take back to the communities during Phase 2.

Phase 2 workshops focused on reporting the outcomes of Phase 1 outreach activities, facilitating and recording participant comments on draft principles for growth management, and introducing conceptual growth scenarios and associated performance measures.

During both Phase 1 and Phase 2 workshops, Kern COG provided Spanish translators at several meetings to solicit input from Kern County's large Spanish-speaking population. Kern COG facilitated Blueprint meetings at the request of select organizations including the American Surveyors & Civil Engineers and the Department of Public Health. Additionally, Kern COG worked with Kern High School District to reach the student population.

On June 26, 2008, Kern COG hosted the Kern Regional Blueprint Summit with over 170 elected officials, members of city and county management, and other community leaders. Summit participants echoed input heard from the community during Phases 1 and 2, and supported the community's preferred alternative growth scenario.

Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles

Based on public input, Kern COG developed a vision statement, values, and guiding principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. The Kern COG Blueprint envisions maintaining unique, livable communities, protecting the environment, building the economy, expanding mobility, preparing youth for the future, preserving health and safety, enhancing parks and recreation, and expanding coordinated planning. Kern COG developed guiding principles to: conserve energy and natural resources; provide adequate and equitable services; enhance economic vitality; provide housing choices; use and improve existing community assets and infrastructure; encourage compact mixed-use development; provide transportation options; conserve land; and increase civic engagement.

Preferred Scenario

While the Kern COG preferred growth scenario is a hybrid of the four growth scenarios presented during Phase 2, it most strongly reflects the “Moderate Change” growth scenario. A key feature of the preferred growth scenario is a focus on residential and employment centers. There are four types of residential centers: metropolitan, community, town, and village. Each residential center has its own population, commercial, residential, and employment characteristics. Each center also has a list of “future enhancements” that typify the type of development encouraged by the Kern COG Blueprint including: appropriately-scaled mixed-use buildings; walkable design; improved public transit; and tourism.

The preferred growth scenario was compared to the status quo model using the eight performance measures. The results of this comparison showed a reduction of: 12 percent mega-watt hours of electricity used; 23 percent tons of CO₂ emissions; 23 percent acre feet of water consumed; 4 percent average daily miles travelled for households; 31 percent acres of land converted to residential uses; 29 percent likelihood of obesity; and 30 percent money spent on infrastructure per housing unit. The preferred growth scenario also showed higher population densities (19 persons or 6 households per acre) than the status quo scenario (13 persons or 4 households per acre).

The Kern Regional Blueprint Final Report includes a map depicting existing and potential employment centers, village centers, town centers, community centers and a metro center for the Kern region.



Phase 2 Workshop. Local residents participate in a card game and discussion that was designed to solicit participants' views about how effective each smart growth principle would be in achieving their community's vision for the future.

KINGS COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Outreach

KCAG conducted an extensive outreach campaign as part of the Blueprint planning process. Phase 1 public outreach focused on identifying the values and vision of Kings County residents through stakeholder meetings, public workshops, and surveys. In late 2006 through early 2007, KCAG staff conducted three community workshops, made presentations to five organizations and three community college classes, held focus group meetings, participated in local community events, distributed surveys, and met with local officials. Increasing affordable housing, clean air, improving healthcare, a strong economy, and reducing crime were identified as the most important priorities of the community. Overall, KCAG solicited information from more than 400 participants including college students, farmers, community members, business professionals, local planners, and elected officials. KCAG held a wrap-up workshop in Hanford on February 7, 2007, which was attended by over 60 community members, many of whom were elected officials. Interactive clicker technology was used to ask the participants what type of housing should be built in the future, how transportation dollars should be prioritized, and what values are the most important to consider when planning for future growth. The results of the workshop were later used to construct the scenario options and confirm the vision and values of Kings County.



Kings County Blueprint Phase 1
Countywide Summit on May 22,
2008

During Phase 2 KCAG conducted a series of presentations and community workshops in every community to gather public input on the alternative growth scenarios. Presentations were made to the Kings County Board of Supervisors, city councils, planning commissions, other governing boards, service clubs, and community members. Comments were incorporated into the final growth scenarios and presented to the public at a countywide summit in May 2008. Similar to the wrap-up workshop held in Phase 1, KCAG used the interactive clickers again to gather instant and anonymous feedback on a variety of questions. When asked if residential densities should be increased from the current norm, the majority of participants responded “yes.” When asked about their most significant concerns, the group most strongly favored preserving and supporting prime farmland and the environment, followed by water quality and quantity, and air quality.

Vision Statement, Values, and Guiding Principles

Based on public input, KCAG developed a vision statement, values, and guiding principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. In the future Kings County will have unique cities and communities, a healthy and sustainable environment, economic niches that provide an optimal quality of life, an education system that prepares and retains residents, a multi-faceted transportation system, and an innovative, energetic, and inclusive community. Kings County residents value clean air, well-designed housing choices, safe communities, natural resources, a vibrant and diverse economy, agricultural lands, educational opportunities, reliable sources of water, multi-modal transportation systems, quality healthcare services, and cultural activities.

Preferred Scenario

KCAG developed six alternative growth scenarios, each with a different planning emphasis and mix of residential densities. Of these growth scenarios, the economic development and transportation corridor growth scenario was ranked the highest by community workshop participants, followed closely by the agriculture and critical resource protection scenario. The economic development and transportation growth scenario focuses growth along transportation corridors and major job centers (e.g., industrial parks, community colleges). It provides additional transportation options through expansion of highways and a light rail system, emphasizes redevelopment infill, and promotes mixed use in existing and new urban developments. The agriculture and critical resource protection scenario discouraged growth on prime agriculture lands, environmentally sensitive lands, and the Lemoore Naval Air Station. This scenario also directed growth to the existing urban centers, discouraged ranchettes, and upheld individual community identities with agricultural buffers.

After the May 2008 countywide summit, the Kings County Blueprint Planners Group took the core planning assumptions from the top two scenarios and developed the preferred growth scenario. The KCAG Commission approved the preferred growth scenario and blueprint principles in August 2008.



Agriculture in Kings County



Example of Mixed Use in Hanford



MADERA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Outreach

MCTC conducted an extensive outreach campaign as part of the MCTC Blueprint planning process, which included seven public workshops involving 150 community residents. During Phase 1 MCTC hosted three public workshops to develop the vision statement and values for the future of Madera County. Over 100 participants voiced their opinions about future growth in Madera County using new polling technology. They also discussed their opinions on community values, long-range planning, transportation, and housing.

During Phase 2 MCTC hosted four Blueprint outreach workshops to present four alternative growth scenarios. MCTC staff also made presentations to city councils and the County Board of Supervisors. The growth scenarios represented status quo, low change, moderate change, and major change conditions. Residents were polled on issues concerning land use densities, new transit networks, and highway infrastructure for each of the four alternative growth scenarios. The MCTC Policy Board selected a preferred growth scenario based on the results of the local outreach process.

Vision Statement, Values, and Guiding Principles

Based on public input, MCTC developed a vision statement, values, and guiding principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. In the future Madera County will be composed of unique cities, communities, and a diverse population that is supported by a vibrant economy, a healthy and sustainable environment, and public safety. This will be accomplished through a land use and transportation system that connects the region and preserves agricultural and natural resources.

The values and guiding principles support the main ideas in the vision statement. Madera County values environmental health and sustainability, a vibrant economy, public safety, world-class education, transportation options, housing choices, the worth of all people, aesthetic quality, cultural richness, and positive image of the communities. MCTC developed principles that: preserve open space, recreation areas, farmland, and water resources; provide transportation options; foster distinct, attractive, and safe places to live; encourage a globally competitive market; create housing opportunities and choices; and provide educational, health, and cultural amenities.

Preferred Scenario

The MCTC preferred growth scenario is referred to as the “low change” growth scenario. It was developed as a variation on the status quo scenario and reflects the county’s desire to implement some aspects of smart growth without radically changing housing densities or transportation mode choices. Key features of the preferred scenario include expanding SR 65 through the eastern county, expanding SR 152 to intersect with the future alignment of SR 65, expanding transit to increase connectivity, and reducing residential lot sizes by 15 to 20 percent. Overall, the MCTC preferred scenario has an average residential density of 4.7 dwelling units per acre and a housing mix of 11.5 percent low-density, 68.5 percent medium-density, and 20 percent high-density.



Vision and Values workshops in Chowchilla and Oakhurst. The workshops were critical in developing the vision statement, values, and guiding principles that would guide the Madera County Blueprint Process.

MERCED COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Outreach

MCAG conducted an extensive outreach campaign as part of the Blueprint planning process, which included 27 public workshops involving 700 participants and community surveys. During Phase 1 MCAG conducted 24 workshops to determine a vision statement for Merced county to 2050. Half of the workshops were conducted in conjunction with Merced County General Plan Update meetings. Phase 2 outreach efforts included three workshops to evaluate various growth choices. Participants at these workshops discussed agricultural land preservation, housing choices, need for more higher paying jobs, compact growth, and water availability. Input from the meetings was used to develop five alternative scenarios.



Vision Statement, Values, and Guiding Principles

Based on public input MCAG developed a vision statement, values, and guiding principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. In the future Merced county will have productive agricultural land, vast open space, unpolluted skies, a world class multi-modal transportation network, compact urbanized areas, and prosperous smaller cities. Merced County has the values of: improving cooperation among governments; embracing cultural diversity; valuing neighborhoods, towns, and historic sites; designing unique communities with sustainable technologies; providing cultural amenities; preserving agricultural land; improving access to healthcare and education; and preserving environmental resources. MCAG developed guiding principles for: sustainable growth and development; preservation of agriculture; effective transportation systems; quality healthcare and services; a world-class education system; and a vibrant and diverse economy.



Community outreach was a vital part of every county blueprint process. MCAG held 27 workshops, gathering input from 700 participants.

Preferred Scenario

MCAG developed five alternative growth scenarios: A-Current Trends; B-Minor Changes (slight increase in residential densities); C-Moderate Change; D-Most Change; and E-West Side Growth. MCAG developed performance measures to compare the alternative growth scenarios in terms of: urbanized acres; agricultural acres converted; environmental impact acres; hours of delay for traffic; air quality; and greenhouse gas emissions. The Governing Board adopted D, which included the highest increase in the residential housing mix and focuses growth in the six cities and along highways.

SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Outreach

SJCOG provided numerous outreach opportunities during the Blueprint process. This outreach included facilitated public community workshops, targeted outreach to community groups, and specific outreach to high school students. Meetings were conducted throughout the county, including Spanish language workshops. SJCOG staff also made presentations to stakeholder groups, posted Blueprint information on the SJCOG website (including an interactive web-based survey of Phase II scenarios), and conducted a phone survey using a professional polling consultant.

During Phase 1 SJCOG conducted 14 formal workshops, attended by over 500 participants, to provide information on the Blueprint and develop vision and values for the process. Results from the workshop were summarized and distributed widely. The telephone poll conducted by Godbe Research reached 500 San Joaquin County residents, providing a statistically-relevant supplement to the results obtained in the Phase 1 workshops. Approximately 160 high school students also participated in two special Phase 1 presentations.

During Phase 2 SJCOG collected land use data and developed a status quo scenario and several alternative growth scenarios. County residents expressed their opinions about growth options for their communities and the region at 12 townhall meetings. Between the formal workshops, the interactive web-based survey, and several stakeholder presentations, over 400 residents participated in Phase 2 activities. SJCOG also conducted numerous workshops with over 100 high school students. Students were asked to discuss what they liked and didn't like about their community, vote on four possible growth scenarios for San Joaquin County, and present their ideas for implementation.

Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

Based on public input, SJCOG developed a vision statement and guiding principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. The vision statement is: "Creative community planning, combined with a shared regional vision, will result in a superior quality of life for all San Joaquin County residents, now and as we move forward. Sustainability in action as well as in vision will ensure this quality of life for future generations."



SJCOG conducted 26 workshops that were attended by over 900 community members.



Examples of historic town centers in Woodbridge and quality design in Ripon.

The guiding principles support the main ideas in the vision statement. The principles address: sustainable planning and growth; housing choices; transportation and mobility options; farming and agriculture; preservation of the environment; economic development; education and workforce development; and cultural richness and unique attractions. The guiding principles are further defined by at least one goal and one performance measure.

Preferred Scenario

Unlike the other Regional Planning Agencies, SJCOG did not develop a map to illustrate the SJCOG Blueprint preferred growth scenario. SJCOG concentrated on the principles and performance measures, some of which were derived from the UPLAN growth scenario modeling exercise. SJCOG staff felt that the map distracted participants from the larger message embodied in the Blueprint vision, concepts, principles, and performance measures. The following planning themes were embodied in the preferred scenario (as compared to the status quo scenario):

- Moderate mix of land uses in new areas
- Expanded housing options
- Better air quality
- Less traffic congestion
- Moderate decrease in average residential lot size
- Increase in public transit usage
- Moderate decrease in residential water and energy use
- More agricultural land available for productive agriculture

In the preferred scenario low-density residential development decreases from 98 percent in the status quo scenario to 73 percent; overall, new urban area residential growth increases from 4.5 dwelling units per acre to 7.7 dwelling units per acre.

STANISLAUS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Outreach

Over the two phases of the Stan COG Blueprint planning process, Stan COG conducted 28 workshops attended by over 690 local residents. Stan COG conducted three workshops for the Spanish-speaking population in various parts of the county.

During Phase 1 Stan COG staff conducted 14 vision and values workshops (including one in Spanish), in which 440 Stanislaus residents participated. The workshops gave residents the opportunity to develop guiding principles for the future of the county and its cities. Stan COG staff developed a summary of the vision statement and guiding principles following these workshops.

During Phase 2 Stan COG staff conducted 14 community workshops to evaluate the alternative growth scenarios. The workshops, attended by over 250 individuals, showed consistency with the Blueprint goals and a support for smart growth principles.

Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

Based on public input, Stan COG developed a vision statement and guiding principles to guide the direction of the COG Blueprint. In the future Stanislaus County will have a superior quality of life, prosperity, equality, and economic opportunity for future generations. To achieve this vision, Stan COG developed guiding principles organized around topics including: community, environment, land use, economy, transportation, education, government, and public safety.

Preferred Scenario

The Stan COG Board selected the “Moderate Change” growth scenario as the preferred Blueprint growth scenario. The Moderate Change growth scenario received the highest number of votes during Phase 2 workshops because it best represents the principles of smart growth promoted during the Blueprint planning process. Compared to the status quo growth scenario, the preferred scenario increases medium- and high-density housing from nine percent to 27 percent of all new residential development and creates greater local and regional transit opportunities.



TULARE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Outreach

TCAG conducted an extensive outreach campaign as part of the TCAG Blueprint planning process. TCAG also prepared newspaper and radio announcements to promote the community workshops conducted in both English and Spanish. During Phase 1 TCAG held a series of public meetings throughout the county to determine the values and vision of local residents for the future of Tulare County. These meetings were attended by hundreds of local residents. Additional input was collected through surveys at the Tulare County Fair, meetings with city councils, and presentations at service clubs. During Phase 2 TCAG presented the growth scenarios to local residents, city councils, and local community groups. A final wrap-up workshop gave participants the opportunity to vote on a preferred growth scenario.



Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, and Goals and Objectives

Based on public input, TCAG developed a vision statement and six principles to guide the direction of the TCAG Blueprint. The vision is to: preserve and enhance the Tulare County region's unique features its vibrant and culturally-diverse communities, its rivers, farmland, mountains, recreational opportunities, natural areas, and national parks; promote sustainability through a well-trained and educated workforce, and a healthy and diverse economy; and ensure that the urban and rural areas of the county are thriving and residents can enjoy a well-planned, designed, and maintained land use structure and transportation system that offers a variety of housing choices, mixed uses, and numerous ways to get from place to place. Six guiding principles are set out for air quality, transportation, land use patterns/urban form, housing, agriculture, and natural areas/habitat. Each of these six principles is supported by goals and objectives that serve to guide the implementation of each of the principles.

Preferred Scenario

The most important feature of TCAG's preferred growth scenario is a 25 percent increase in density for future residential development. Essentially, TCAG determined that to preserve farmland, improve air quality, and make the most out of costly existing infrastructure, building more on less land is key. TCAG's growth scenario also outlines the importance of focusing growth in existing urban areas, improving connectivity via transit and light rail, maintaining urban separators, and extending SR 65.

6. NEXT STEPS/IMPLEMENTATION

In 2009 the Valley Regional Planning Agencies, together with their partners, began the implementation phase of the Valley Blueprint process. The Valley Blueprint will be implemented in two primary ways: 1) through collaborative local and regional programs and planning processes; and 2) through on-the-ground projects built primarily by private sector developers. The following provides a summary of the many efforts currently (2010) identified to implement the Valley Blueprint:

VALLEY BLUEPRINT ROADMAP

In early 2010, on behalf of the eight Regional Planning Agencies, Fresno COG initiated preparation of the Valley Blueprint Roadmap. This effort will result in the preparation of a policy guide for implementing the Valley Blueprint vision and principles through local implementation strategies and a planners' toolkit.

- **Valley Blueprint Summary.** Prepare a report that summarizes the efforts of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies between 2005 and 2009 to develop the 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Scenario.
- **Valley Blueprint Implementation Program.** Prepare a Valley Blueprint implementation program that provides strategies and direction (i.e., goals, objectives, policies, and programs) for addressing regional issues and challenges and a schedule for implementing the Blueprint.
- **Monitoring.** Develop an indicators program to measure effectiveness of the Blueprint in creating positive change in San Joaquin Valley communities. Continue using adopted methods to evaluate success in implementing the Valley Blueprint.
- **Schedule and Milestones.** Prepare a detailed schedule and set of milestones for Phase 4 implementation tasks.
- **Planners Toolkit.** Prepare a Planners Toolkit that provides cities and counties realistic and effective strategies, tools, and applicable case studies so that they can: 1) integrate the 12 Smart Growth Principles into their planning processes; and 2) work towards the Preferred Scenario.
- **Public Outreach.** Continue public outreach efforts at the local level to solicit input and foster Valley Blueprint advocates. Engage traditionally underrepresented populations and students. Use both existing and new methods of public outreach and educational mate-



rials such as media coverage, websites, videos, brochures, print and electronic media advertising, and extensive project reports.

GRANT FUNDED INITIATIVES

As part of the FY 2008/2009 grant application to Caltrans, Fresno COG identified the following initiatives to help address challenges to overcome barriers to implementing the Blueprint. Many of these will be carried forward in the Blueprint Roadmap.

- **Member Agency Commitment.** Develop commitments from member agencies to implement the 12 Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Blueprint Scenario.
- **San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Awards.** Recognize local projects that exemplify and further the Blueprint principles.
- **Local Government Funding Challenges.** Engage local governments in a dialogue to examine the potential for changes to local government financial structures and address issues related to the “fiscalization of land use.”
- **SB 375 and Greenhouse Gas Directives.** Create a methodology for Valley MPOs to address new mandates in AB 32 and SB 375, while moving forward on implementing the Blueprint:
 - Investigate the potential for regional cooperation among the eight counties to develop a multi-regional sustainable communities strategy.
 - Analyze the feasibility of the Valley Regional Planning Agencies to implement multi-county activity-based models geared toward Blueprint implementation.
 - Identify the steps necessary for the Valley Regional Planning Agencies to transition from a four-step travel demand model to an activity-based travel demand model.
 - Implement the Model Improvement Program to increase the sensitivity of Valley modeling processes to account for: impacts from micro-scale land use changes; benefits of smart growth development such as density, diversity, destination, and design; and various other travel demand management strategies.
 - Coordinate among the Valley Regional Planning Agencies, SJVAPCD, CARB, Caltrans, and Federal Highway Administration.

- **Residential Density Issues.** Commission an economic study to show how different development densities impact the fiscal health of a county or city based on different density patterns and the cost to provide services for each density pattern. Determine the market demand for higher-density housing.
- **Jobs Housing Balance.** Work with the Central California EDCs and the Partnership to address jobs/housing balance. Gather data on out-commute patterns in the Valley.
- **Greenprint.** Incorporate Farmland Conservation Model Program mapping, which includes improved water resources information, into each COG Blueprint.
- **Partner Agencies.** Continue the Blueprint's Valleywide presence by maintaining collaborative working relationships with agencies and organizations, such as the Partnership, GVC, SJVAPCD, and Caltrans.



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