

# The Fresno Region

## Heart of the San Joaquin Valley

**Fresno County** is located in the heart of California within the Central San Joaquin Valley. It is the tenth most populous county in California and the sixth largest in size. Agriculture is the primary industry making it the number one agricultural county in the nation.

Fresno County was formed in 1856 from parts of Mariposa, Merced and Tulare counties. Originally much larger than it is today, parts of the county's territory were given to Mono County in 1861 and to Madera County in 1893. The original county seat was along the San Joaquin River in the foothill community of Millerton, but was moved to the rapidly growing city of Fresno on the newly built Southern Pacific Railroad line after a flood destroyed much of the town. Today the city of Fresno is the fifth largest city in California. Fresno County now has 15 incorporated cities and many other towns and smaller communities.

Transportation planning has relied heavily in the past upon the analysis of separate and discrete transportation modes. However, as we try to deal with congestion and the problems of air pollution, there is a growing awareness that solutions must be evaluated within the context of an integrated system, rather than by individual mode only. This approach is helped by looking at the characteristics of our County which may affect travel demands.

Major watercourses are the San Joaquin River, Kings River, Delta-Mendota Canal, Big Creek, Friant Kern Canal, Helm Canal and Madera Canal. Fresno County is bordered on the west by the Coast Range and on the east by the Sierra Nevada, with four National protected areas residing in part within Fresno County. State Route 41 north out of the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area (FCMA) is the primary corridor to Yosemite, one of the two most visited national parks in the nation.

The county is crossed by two north-south corridors, Freeway 99 and Interstate 5. Each of them is key to the statewide network. Recreational trips are also served by several state highways: Routes 33, 41, 168, 180, 99, and Interstate 5.

As the largest producer of farm commodities in the world, Fresno County has a strong "farm to market" travel demand affecting local roads and the state highway system. Movement of goods occurs throughout the County, as farm and other commodities are brought to market and to inter-regional routes.

Fresno-Yosemite International Airport provides a hub airport service to its service area of six counties, while Fresno is also served by Amtrak, which has experienced increasing ridership. Existing rail lines also offer potential for an expanding share of commodity movement.

The distances between local destinations have encouraged automobile usage, yet there is a large rural and urban population within Fresno County in need of public transit service. The systems that are in place are in need of increased, stable financing as well.

The climate and terrain within the Fresno County region are compatible with bicycle use and walking for short commutes and recreational trips. Most transit services provide easily accessible bike racks or other storage to make multi-modal travel easily accessible.

### **Regional Transportation Planning**

Regional Transportation Plans address the mobility needed to keep our region moving and our communities connected. Fresno COG's 2014 Regional Transportation



Plan (RTP) charts the long-range vision of Regional Transportation through the year 2040. As we address new requirements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions it has been and will remain our goal to plan in partnership with our communities throughout the region, providing transportation choices that encourage and cultivate thriving economies and cultural richness. This RTP identifies existing and future transportation related needs, while considering all modes of travel, analyzing alternative solutions, and identifying what can be completed with anticipated available funding for the 1,100 projects and multiple programs included within it. It contains a variety of different elements or chapters, augmented by additional documentation contained in the Appendices.

### **People, Choices, Community**

Through an extensive outreach effort spanning a two year period of time, we presented ideas, solicited comments, and considered concerns communicated to us in a wide variety of ways. We spoke with community, government and business representatives at public workshops, 18 in all, and during many standing committee meetings. We received feedback through surveying, online communications, workshop comment forms, in face to face meetings and via mail and email.

### **Metropolitan Planning Organizations**

MPOs are federally mandated and federally funded transportation policy-making organizations in the United States that are made up of representatives from

local government and governmental transportation authorities. Congress created MPOs in order to ensure that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive ("3 C") planning process. In other words, the federal government wished to see federal transportation funds spent in a manner that has a basis in metropolitan region-wide plans developed through intergovernmental collaboration, rational analysis, and consensus-based decision making.

### **Fresno Council of Governments - A region of diverse partners, building a progressive future with one voice**

Fresno COG was formalized in 1969 through a Joint Powers Agreement between the incorporated cities in Fresno County and the County of Fresno. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Fresno County, we address issues of mutual concern to the county and the cities in the Fresno County region, while satisfying Federal and State transportation planning and programming mandates.

Fresno COG is a consensus builder, developing acceptable programs and solutions to issues that do not respect political boundaries. We undertake comprehensive regional planning with an emphasis on transportation, facilitating collaboration of governments, interested parties, and residents in the planning process.

# Contents

*Clavis, California - Country sunset*

## Table of Contents

### Introduction

i	Table of Contents.....	iii
ii	Fresno Council of Governments Committees and Staff.....	iv
iii	Glossary.....	vi
iv	List of Figures, Tables and Sources.....	vii

### Chapter 1 Building the RTP: Putting the Pieces Together

1.1	Building the RTP.....	1-2
1.2	Environmental Impact Reporting.....	1-3
1.3	Scope of the Plan.....	1-4
1.4	The Region.....	1-4
1.5	Regional Growth Policies.....	1-8
1.6	Regional Planning Assumptions and Forecasts.....	1-8
1.7	The Use of Land Use Modeling Projections for Traffic and Air Quality Modeling.....	1-12
1.8	Regional Planning Process.....	1-12
1.9	Making the Transition to Interactive Regional Planning.....	1-14
1.10	MAP-21.....	1-17

### Chapter 2: Public Participation: Working Together for a Better Plan

2.1	Public Participation.....	2-2
2.2	Valleywide SCS Outreach Tools.....	2-4
2.3	Fresno COG Public Participation Implementation.....	2-5
2.4	Environmental Justice Task Force.....	2-8
2.5	Community Workshops.....	2-8
2.6	Public Outreach and a fourth scenario.....	2-12
2.7	Public Comment.....	2-13
2.8	Consultation.....	2-13

<b>Chapter 3:</b>	<b>Environmental Justice Report: Ensuring Meaningful Involvement for All People</b>	
3.1	Fresno COG’s Planning Approach to Environmental Justice.....	3-2
3.2	Demographic Profile.....	3-3
3.3	Equity Analysis - Defining Population Groups.....	3-4
3.4	Performance Measures.....	3-6
3.5	Modeling Results - Accessibility and Mobility.....	3-8
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>Sustainable Communities Strategy: People. Choices. Community.</b>	
4.1	Sustainable Communities Strategy.....	4-2
4.2	SCS Co-benefits.....	4-3
4.3	San Joaquin Valley Blueprint.....	4-4
4.4	Targets for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....	4-5
4.5	Creating the SCS Scenarios.....	4-6
4.6	SCS Public Participation.....	4-8
4.7	Land Use Scenarios and Outcomes.....	4-11
4.8	Scenario Outcomes.....	4-13
4.9	The SCS Land Use Pattern.....	4-15
4.10	Protecting Resources and Farmland.....	4-17
4.11	Accommodating the Eight-Year Regional Housing Needs Assessment - RHNA.....	4-22
4.12	Transportation Strategies.....	4-23
4.13	Consultation with the Local Agency Formation Commission.....	4-27
4.14	Considering Social Equity in the SCS.....	4-28
4.15	Considering Public Health in the SCS.....	4-29
4.16	Streamlining the CEQA Process.....	4-30
4.17	What is next? .....	4-31
<b>Chapter 5:</b>	<b>Actions: Assessing Our Transportation Needs</b>	
5.1	Moving People and Goods.....	5-2
5.2	Multimodal.....	5-3
5.3	Highways, Streets and Roads.....	5-10
5.4	Urban Mass Transportation.....	5-26
5.5	Fresno County Rural Area Public Transportation and Social Service Transportation.....	5-42
5.6	Aviation.....	5-78
5.7	Non-Motorized Transportation.....	5-93
5.8	Rail.....	5-100
5.9	Specific Transportation Strategies and Management Systems.....	5-110
5.10	Air Quality.....	5-119
5.11	Environmental Mitigation.....	5-128

**Chapter 6: Policies: Foundations of the Plan**

6.1 Vision.....6-2  
6.2 Fresno County Blueprint.....6-3  
6.3 The Policy Element.....6-4  
6.4 Goals and Objectives.....6-4

**Chapter 7: Financing Mobility: Funding Our Transportation System**

7.1 Developing a Fiscally Constrained Financial Plan.....7-2  
7.2 RTP/SCS Revenue Projections.....7-2  
7.3 Revenue Projection Scenarios.....7-11  
7.4 RTP Call for Projects.....7-12  
7.5 Transportation Projects in the SCS.....7-13  
7.6 Maintenance and Rehabilitation.....7-14  
7.7 Other Potential Revenue and Funding Opportunities.....7-15  
7.8 Sustainable Planning and Infrastructure Grant Program.....7-20  
7.9 From Planning to Programming.....7-20

**Appendices**

A RTP Checklist  
B Valleywide Information  
C Financing Mobility: Reference Materials  
D Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and Materials  
E Public Review and Adoption Materials  
F Congestion Management Program  
G Building the RTP: Reference Materials  
H Public Participation: Reference Materials  
I Environmental Justice Report  
J Sustainable Communities Strategy: Reference Materials  
K Actions: Reference Materials

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# Glossary of common acronyms and definitions

ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials	AASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Its primary goal is to foster the development, operation, and maintenance of an integrated national transportation system.
AB 32	Assembly Bill 32	Signed into law on September 26, 2006, it requires that the state's global warming emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. This reduction will be accomplished through an enforceable statewide cap on global warming emissions that will be phased in starting in 2012. In order to effectively implement the cap, AB 32 directs the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop appropriate regulations and establish a mandatory reporting system to track and monitor global warming emissions levels.
Active Transportation		A mode of transportation that includes walking, running, biking, skateboarding, and other self-propelled forms of transportation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990	Guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. It prescribes federal transportation requirements for transportation providers.
ADT	Average Daily Traffic	Total daily volume of vehicle traffic of a highway or road
AIA	Airport Influence Area	The area around an airport that includes the overflight, noise and safety zones that the Airport Land Use Commission uses to determine compatibility of land uses surrounding the airport.
ALP	Airport Layout Plan	A graphic representation of the current conditions and the future long-term planned development for an airport that airports must keep up to date in order to receive federal assistance.
ALUC	Airport Land Use Commission	The Commission assists local agencies in ensuring orderly development around airports and discouraging incompatible land uses, including limiting the public's exposure to excessive noise and health and safety hazards.
ALUCPP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Policy Plan	Required by the State Aeronautics Act for all public use airports. Also known as a CLUP - Compatibility Land Use Plan - a policy planning tool that details the safety and noise compatibility criteria for development around airports, and is developed and used by Airport Land Use Commissions to conduct reviews to determine compatibility of proposed land uses on and around airports.
AMTRAK	National Railroad Passenger Corporation	Publicly funded railroad service operated and managed as a for-profit corporation
APCD	Air Pollution Control District	The Fresno area is under the auspices of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) which works with state and federal air quality agencies to attain health air in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin.
ARB	Air Resources Board (also referred to as CARB, California Air Resources Board)	This is the state level air quality agency which works with local and federal air quality agencies to attain healthier air in California.
AVA	Abandoned Vehicle Abatement	A means to remove abandoned vehicles that create a public nuisance and a health or safety hazard
Base Year		The year 2008, used in the RTP performance analysis as a reference point for current conditions.
BNSF		Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit	Bus transit service that seeks to reduce travel time through measures such as traffic signal priority, automatic vehicle location, dedicated bus lanes, limited stop service, and faster fare collection policies.
BTA	Bicycle Transportation Account	Annual program providing state funds for city and county projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters.

ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION
CAA	Clean Air Act (Federal)	The Clean Air Act (CAA) is the comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources.
CAAP	California Aid to Airports Program	Provides grants to public agencies — and, in some cases, to private owners and entities -- for the planning and development of public-use airports that are included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems
CALCOG	California Association of Councils of Government	Association made up of the 35 Councils of Government in California
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation	State of California government agency whose mission is to maintain, repair and improve roads and highways throughout the State
Caltrans Headquarters	Caltrans Headquarters	Sacramento division of Caltrans that oversees state activities and Local Assistance
Caltrans Local Assistance	Caltrans Local Assistance	Division of Caltrans that assists Local and Regional Agencies by ensuring specific program requirements are met, project applications are processed, and projects are delivered in accordance with Federal and State requirements
CARB	California Air Resources Board	See definition for ARB on previous page
CASP	California Aviation System Plan	The means by which continuous aviation system planning is conducted by the State
CCAA	California Clean Air Act	The Clean Air Act (CAA) is the comprehensive state law that regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources.
CCR	California Code of Regulations	The official compilation and publication of the regulations adopted, amended or repealed by state agencies pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA)
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act	State law providing certain environmental protections that apply to all transportation projects funded with state funds.
CIP	Capital Improvement Program	7-year program to maintain or improve traffic LOS & transit performance and to mitigate impacts identified by the CMP
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality	Federal funding account designated for projects that improve air quality and reduce congestion.
CMP	Congestion Management Program	Established by Proposition 111 in 1990, requires each county to develop and adopt a CMP that includes highway and roadway system monitoring, multimodal system performance analysis, transportation demand management program, land-use analysis program, and local conformance.
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas	Is an alternative fuel for use in combustion-can reduce some criteria air pollutants.
CO	Carbon Monoxide	A colorless, odorless, poisonous gas formed when carbon in fuels is not burned completely. It is a byproduct of highway vehicle exhaust, which contributes about 60 percent of all CO emissions nationwide.
COG	Council of Governments	A governmental agency formed by joint powers agreement by all the member governments within a given region. Specific powers vary by agency, but usually involve transportation issues.
Corridor		In planning, a broad geographical band that follows a general directional flow or connects major sources of trips. It may contain a number of streets and highways, as well as transit lines and routes.
CTC	California Transportation Commission	A board appointed by the governor to oversee and administer state and federal transportation funds and provide oversight on project delivery.
CTSA	Consolidated Transportation Service Agency	Designated under auspices of the Social Services Transportation Improvement Act to achieve the intended transportation coordination goals of that Act

ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION
EIR	Environmental Impact Report	An informational document, required under CEQA, which will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, possible ways to minimize significant effects, and reasonable alternatives to the project.
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirement for assessing the environmental impacts of federal actions that may have a significant impact on the human environment
EJ	Environmental Justice	Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (Federal)	This is the federal level agency which works with local and state air quality agencies to protect the environment to provide healthy living conditions and welfare for the nation.
EPSP	Expedited Project Selection Procedures	Process used to design and construct a project prior to the programmed year shown in the FTIP by moving the funds forward to the current year.
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration	Federal agency responsible for issuing and enforcing safety regulations and minimum standards, managing air space and air traffic, and building and maintaining air navigation facilities.
FAX	Fresno Area Express	Transit system serving the Fresno Metropolitan Area
FCMA	Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area	The geographical area representing the combined respective spheres of influence of the cities of Clovis and Fresno.
FCRTA	Fresno County Rural Transit Agency	Transit Agency serving the rural areas of Fresno County
FCTA	Fresno County Transportation Authority	The Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) is the entity created by legislation to administer the Measure C Program(s) and ensure the revenue is received and distributed appropriately.
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year	October 1 through September 30
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	Federal agency responsible for administering the Federal-Aid Highway Program, which provides federal financial assistance to the states to construct and improve the National Highway System, urban and rural roads, and bridges.
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration	Federal agency created to promulgate and enforce rail safety regulations, administer railroad assistance programs, conduct research and development in support of improved railroad safety and national rail transportation policy, and consolidate government support of rail transportation activities.
FSP	Freeway Service Patrol	The CHP, Caltrans and local transportation agencies joined forces to provide emergency roadside services during commute periods. The goal of the program is to remove impediments to traffic to expedite the flow of traffic.
FSTIP	Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program	Caltrans four year planning document that is updated every two years (made up of all MPO's in California FTIPs)
FTA	Federal Transit Administration	The federal agency responsible for administering federal transit funds and assisting in the planning and establishment of areawide urban mass transportation systems. As opposed to FHWA funding, most FTA funds are allocated directly to local agencies, rather than to Caltrans.
FTIP	Federal Transportation Improvement Program	A three-year list of all transportation projects proposed for federal transportation funding within the planning area of an MPO.
FY	Fiscal Year	July 1 through June 30
GHG	Greenhouse Gases	Components of the atmosphere that contribute to the greenhouse effect. The principal greenhouse gases that enter the atmosphere because of human activities are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases.

ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION
GIS	Geographic Information Systems	Powerful mapping software that links information about where things are with information about what things are like. GIS allows users to examine relationships between features distributed unevenly over space, seeking patterns that may not be apparent without using advanced techniques of query, selection, analysis, and display.
HOV	High Occupancy Vehicle	Generally vehicles with more than one person, depending on the usage could mean many riders.
HPMS	Highway Performance Monitoring System	A federally mandated program designed by FHWA to assess the performance of the nation's highway system.
HSR	High Speed Rail	Intercity passenger rail service that is reasonably expected to reach speeds of at least 110 mile per hour.
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991	Federal transportation planning and policy law (1991-1998)
ITIP	Interregional Transportation Improvement Plan	The portion of the STIP that includes projects selected by Caltrans (25 percent of STIP funds).
JPA	Joint Powers Agency	Two or more agencies that enter into a cooperative agreement to jointly wield powers that are common to them. JPAs are a vehicle for the cooperative use of existing governmental powers to finance and provide infrastructure and/or services in a cost-efficient manner.
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission	LAFCos review proposals for the formation of new local governmental agencies and for changes in the organization of existing agencies.
LOS	Level of Service	A qualitative measurement of traffic flow. Is measured on a scale from A to F in which A signifies the least congested (free flow) while F signifies most congested.
LTF	Local Transportation Fund	Monies distributed to regional transportation planning agencies by the State of California. The annual allocation is the local share of revenues from ¼ cent of the state sales tax rate. COG receives this money and distributes it to the local jurisdictions based on population. The money must first be used to fill any unmet transit needs, and then can be used for local road and street expenses. A small portion of the money is also reserved for pedestrian/bikeway and planning expenditures. Is part of the Transportation Development Act fund.
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act	Federal transportation planning and policy law (2012-Present).
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization	Federally mandated transportation policy-making organization made up of representatives from local government (required in any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000).
OWP	Overall Work Program	A list of the tasks that the Council of Governments expects to perform over a given year. The program is used as a management tool.
PAC	Policy Advisory Committee	Fresno COG's standing committee comprised of member agency City Managers.
PPP	Public Participation Plan	Fresno COG's guiding document to fulfilling federal public outreach requirements.
PL-Funds	Metropolitan Planning Funds	Made available to each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated for an urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 individuals and responsible for carrying out the 3-C (continuing, cooperative and comprehensive) metropolitan planning process.
PM 2.5	Particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns	Very small specks of particulate matter found to be harmful to human health and welfare. The smaller the particle, the more dangerous it is to human health.
PM10	Particulate matter smaller than 10 microns	Tiny specks of particulate matter found to be harmful to human health and welfare.
PSR	Project Study Report	Defines and justifies the project's scope, cost, and schedule. Prepared for state highway projects and projects not on the State Highway System.

ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION
PTIS	Public Transportation Infrastructure Study	An effort to identify strategies for transportation investments and land use policies that would result in measurable reductions in vehicle miles travelled (VMT) and improve mobility choices for greater Fresno County residents.
PUC	Public Utilities Code/ Commission	Regulates privately owned telecommunications, electric, natural gas, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies.
RFP	Request for Proposals	A document used to solicit bids for the preparation of a plan of completion of a project.
ROG	Reactive Organic Gases	Organic compounds assumed to be reactive at urban/regional scales. Those organic compounds that are regulated because they lead to ozone formation.
RSTP	Regional Surface Transportation Program	Federal funding account commonly used for maintenance or capacity increasing road projects.
RTIP	Regional Transportation Improvement Program	A seven year listing of proposed highway, transit and airport projects that implement the Regional Transportation Plan. Projects are listed in priority order with costs and funding sources identified. COG and other regional transportation planning agencies must prepare this document and submit it to the California Transportation Commission by December 1st of every odd year. Projects must be listed in the RTIP in order to be considered for funding in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
RTMF	Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee	A fee program intended to ensure that future development contributes to its fair share towards the cost of infrastructure to mitigate the cumulative, indirect regional transportation impacts of new growth in a manner consistent with the provisions of the State of California Mitigation Fee Act.
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan	Metroplitan planning organization (MPO) 25 year transportation planning document that is updated every four years.
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agency	Federally mandated transportation policy-making organization made up of representatives from local government (required in any rural or local area with a population less than than 50,000).
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users	Signed into law by President Bush on August 10, 2005, it authorized the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period of 2005–2009.
SB 375	Senate Bill 375	Established to implement the state’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emission-reduction goals, as set forth by AB 32, in the sector of cars and light trucks. This mandate requires the California Air Resources Board to determine per capita GHG emission-reduction targets for each metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in the state at two points in the future—2020 and 2035. In turn, each MPO must prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that demonstrates how the region will meet its GHG reduction target through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning.
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy	A plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through coordinated transportation and land use planning.
SHOPP	State Highway Operation and Protection Plan	Four year program of projects that have the purpose of collision reduction, bridge and roadway preservation, mobility enhancement and preservation of other transportation facilities
SIP	State Implementation Plan	The planning document prepared to show how the State will attain the national ambient air quality standards.
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	The Fresno area is under the auspices of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) which works with state and federal air quality agencies to attain health air in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin.
SOV	Single Occupant Vehicle	Privately operated vehicle that contains only one driver or occupant.



ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION
SSTAC	Social Service Transportation Advisory Council	Committee that reviews transit issues with emphasis on the annual identification of transit needs within Fresno County.
STA	State Transit Assistance	State funding program for mass transit operations and capital projects. Current law requires that STA receive 50 percent of PTA revenues.
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program	Caltrans four year planning document that is updated every two years.
STP	Surface Transportation Program	Provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities for projects on any federal-aid highway, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities. A portion of funds reserved for rural areas may be spent on rural minor collectors.
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee	A committee that provides ideas and feedback on plans or programs.
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zones	Zone system used in travel demand forecasting.
TCM	Transportation Control Measure	A project or program that is designed to reduce emissions or concentrations of air pollutants from transportation sources. TCMs are referenced in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the applicable air basin and have priority for programming and implementation ahead of non-TCMs.
TDA	Transportation Development Act	State law enacted in 1971 that provided a 0.25 percent sales tax on all retail sales in each county for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian purposes. In non-urban areas, funds may be used for streets and roads under certain conditions.
TDM	Transportation Demand Management	Strategies that result in more efficient use of transportation resources, such as ridesharing, telecommuting, park-and-ride programs, pedestrian improvements, and alternative work schedules.
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century	Federal transportation planning and policy law (1998-2005).
TOD	Transit Oriented Development	A planning strategy that explicitly links land-use and transportation by focusing mixed housing, employment, and commercial growth around bus and rail stations (usually within ½ mile). TODs can reduce the number and length of vehicle trips by encouraging more bicycle/pedestrian and transit use and can support transit investments by creating the density around stations to boost ridership.
TSM	Transportation Systems Management	The Transportation Systems Management (TSM) approach to congestion mitigation seeks to identify improvements to enhance the capacity of existing system of an operational nature. Through better management and operation of existing transportation facilities, these techniques are designed to improve traffic flow, air quality, and movement of vehicles and goods, as well as enhance system accessibility and safety.
TTC	Transportation Technical Committee	The Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) serves as a standing committee that reviews materials and issues monthly before forwarding them to the Policy Advisory Committee. Membership includes member agency staff and representatives from a wide variety of transportation and community interest groups.
VMT	Vehicle Miles of Travel	On highways, a measurement of the total miles traveled by all vehicles in the area for a specified time period. It is calculated by the number of vehicles times the miles traveled in a given area or on a given highway during the time period. In transit, the number of vehicle miles operated on a given route or line or network during a specified time period.
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound	Organic gases emitted from a variety of sources, including motor vehicles, chemical plants, refineries, factories, consumer, and commercial products, and other industrial sources. Ozone, the main component of smog, is formed from the reaction of VOCs and NOx in the presence of heat and sunlight.

# List of Tables *with sources*

<b>Chapter 1- Building the RTP: Putting the Pieces Together</b>			
<b>Table #</b>	<b>Name of Table</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
1-1	Population shares of county	1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 U.S. Censuses, California State Department of Finance	1-5
1-2	Employment by Industry	2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates	1-6
1-3	Fresno County Population, Housing and Employment Forecasts	California State Department of Finance and The Planning Center	1-10
1-4	Population of Fresno County and California	U.S. Bureau of the Census, California State Department of Finance, The Planning Center, California State Department of Finance final projection released January 2013	1-10
<b>Chapter 2- Public Participation: Working Together for a Better Plan</b>			
<b>Table #</b>	<b>Name of Table</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
2-1	RTP Roundtable Committee Listing	Fresno Council of Governments	2-5
2-2	Survey Findings for community Transportation Spending Priorities	Fresno Council of Governments	2-7
2-3	Fresno COG survey results of Community Values	Fresno Council of Governments	2-8
2-4	Fresno COG print advertising	Fresno Council of Governments	2-12
2-5	Valleywide SCS Outreach -- media	Fresno Council of Governments	2-12
2-6	Table of agencies Fresno COG consulted during RTP development		
<b>Chapter 3- Environmental Justice Report: Ensuring Meaningful Involvement for All People</b>			
<b>Table #</b>	<b>Name of Table</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
3-1	Income Comparison	American Community Survey 2006-2010	3-3
3-2	EJ Area Characteristics	Fresno COG EJ Task Force and U.S. Federal Highway Administration	3-6
3-3	Roadway Level of Service (LOS) Descriptions	U.S. Federal Highway Administration	3-8
3-4	Accessibility to Major Job Centers	Fresno Council of Governments	3-9
3-5	Accessibility to Parks	Fresno Council of Governments	3-9
3-6	Accessibility to Schools	Fresno Council of Governments	3-10
3-7	Accessibility to Medical Facilities	Fresno Council of Governments	3-10
3-8	Mobility (PM Peak Period Average Travel Time)	Fresno Council of Governments	3-11
3-9	Average Additional Daily Transit Passenger Miles Traveled (PMT) per \$1,000 Investment	Fresno Council of Governments	3-11
3-10	Percentage of Passenger Miles Traveled (PMT) and Expenditures for 2040 Build	Fresno Council of Governments	3-11
3-11	Percent Average Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) LOS E or Worse Conditions	Fresno Council of Governments	3-12
3-12	Average Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)	Fresno Council of Governments	3-12
<b>Chapter 4- Sustainable Communities Strategy: People. Choices. Community</b>			
<b>Table #</b>	<b>Name of Table</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
4-1	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets	California Air Resources Board and Fresno COG	4-5
4-2	Forecasts for Fresno County 2008-2040, Preferred Scenario	Fresno Council of Governments	4-6



**Chapter 5- Actions: Assessing Our Transportation Investment Needs**

Table #	Name of Table	Source	Page
5-1	Fresno Area Express (FAX) Performance History (1993-2012)	Fresno Area Express	5-40

**Chapter 6- Policies: Foundation of the Plan**

Table #	Name of Table	Source	Page
6-1A	General Transportation, Multimodal System - Support and Enhancement of Economy	Fresno Council of Governments	6-7
6-1B	General Transportation, Multimodal System - Future Travel Demands & Financial Resources	Fresno Council of Governments	6-8
6-1C	General Transportation, Environmental Justice	Fresno Council of Governments	6-8
6-1D	General Transportation, Planning Outcomes	Fresno Council of Governments	6-9
6-1E	General Transportation, Regional Transportation Network	Fresno Council of Governments	6-9
6-1F	General Transportation, Intergovernmental Coordination	Fresno Council of Governments	6-10
6-1G	General Transportation - Air Quality	Fresno Council of Governments	6-11
6-2A	Highways Streets and Roads, Integrated Network	Fresno Council of Governments	6-12
6-2B	Highways Streets and Roads, Transportation Funding	Fresno Council of Governments	6-12
6-2C	Highways Streets and Roads, Acceptable level-of-service (LOS)	Fresno Council of Governments	6-12
6-3A	Mass Transportation - Fiscal Responsibility	Fresno Council of Governments	6-13
6-3B	Mass Transportation - Mass Transportation Goals - Safe and Reliable	Fresno Council of Governments	6-13
6-3C	Mass Transportation - Efficient and Effective	Fresno Council of Governments	6-13
6-3D	Mass Transportation - Public Image	Fresno Council of Governments	6-13
6-3E	Mass Transportation - Multimodal	Fresno Council of Governments	6-13
6-3F	Mass Transportation - Land Use and Air Quality	Fresno Council of Governments	6-13
6-4	Aviation Goal	Fresno Council of Governments	6-14
6-5A	Non-Motorized Transportation - Health	Fresno Council of Governments	6-14
6-5B	Non-Motorized Transportation - Multimodal	Fresno Council of Governments	6-15
6-5C	Non-Motorized - Education and Enforcement	Fresno Council of Governments	6-16
6-5D	Non-Motorized - Maintain and Expand	Fresno Council of Governments	6-16
6-6A	Rail - Promote Usage	Fresno Council of Governments	6-17
6-6B	Rail - Goods Movement	Fresno Council of Governments	6-17

**Chapter 7- Financing Mobility: Funding Our Transportation System**

Table #	Name of Table	Source	Page
7-1	Revenue Projection by Transportation Mode	Fresno Council of Governments	7-12
7-2	Revenue Programmed by Transportation Mode	Fresno Council of Governments	7-13
7-3	Updated Dollar Amounts by Transportation Mode	Fresno Council of Governments	7-13

# List of Figures *with sources*

<b>Chapter 1- Building the RTP: Putting the Pieces Together</b>			
<b>Figure #</b>	<b>Name of Figure</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
1-1	Fresno-Heart of California	Fresno Council of Governments	1-4
1-2	Population Growth Rate Since 1970	U.S. Decennial Censuses	1-5
1-3	Employment by Industry	2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates	1-6
1-4	Unemployment Rate	2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates	1-7
1-5	Educational Attainment	2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates	1-7
1-6	Median Household Income	2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates	1-7
1-7	Per Capital Federal Government Expenditures	Consolidated Federal Funds Report for Fiscal Year 2010, U.S. Census Bureau	1-7
1-8	Percent of Population Under 25 Years of Age	2010 U.S. Census	1-7
1-9	Percent of Minority Population	2010 U.S. Census	1-8
1-10	Fresno Regional Transportation System	Fresno Council of Governments	1-12
<b>Chapter 2- Public Participation: Working Together for a Better Plan</b>			
<b>Figure #</b>	<b>Name of Figure</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
2-1	Valley-Visions.org, the Valleywide Planning Agencies SCS landing page	Fresno Council of Governments - AIS Market Research	2-3
2-2	Workshop listing with dates, times, languages and accommodations	Fresno Council of Governments - AIS Market Research	2-10
<b>Chapter 3- Environmental Justice Report: Ensuring Meaningful Involvement for All People</b>			
<b>Figure #</b>	<b>Name of Figure</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
3-1	Ethnic profile of Fresno County	American Community Survey 2006-2010	3-3
3-2	Population for whom poverty status was determined	American Community Survey 2006-2010	3-3
3-3	Demographic changes for 2000-2040	2000 Census data, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Population projections from the California Department of Finance	3-4
3-4	Defined EJ Communities Percentage	Fresno COG EJ Task Force	3-5
3-5	Environmental Justice Areas (EJ – FHWA)	U.S. Federal Highway Administration	3-13
3-6	Environmental Justice Areas (EJ – TF)	Fresno COG EJ Task Force	3-14
3-7	Areas of Interest - Urban Area	Fresno Council of Governments	3-15
3-8	Areas of Interest - County	Fresno Council of Governments	3-16
3-9	Communities Map with Overlay of Fresno County Rural Transit Agency Routes	U.S. Federal Highway Administration, Fresno County Rural Transit Agency	3-17
<b>Chapter 4- Sustainable Communities Strategy: People. Choices. Community</b>			
<b>Figure #</b>	<b>Name of Figure</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
4-1	Fresno COG's SCS development process and timeline	Fresno Council of Governments	4-3
4-2	SCS Scenario Comparisons	Fresno Council of Governments	4-12
4-3	Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions compared to 2005	Fresno Council of Governments	4-13
4-4	Housing Types	Fresno Council of Governments	4-13
4-5	Residential Density (units per acre)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-13
4-6	Compact Development (persons per acre)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-13
4-7	Transit Oriented Development (% growth within 1/2 mile of Bus Rapid Transit --2008-2035)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-13

4-8	Land Consumption (acres)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-13
4-9	Important Farmland Consumed (by SB 375 definition, in acres)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-14
4-10	Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (million miles)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-14
4-11	Criteria Pollutants Emissions (tons per day)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-14
4-12	Active transportation and transit travel (thousand person trips)	Fresno Council of Governments	4-14
4-13	2035 Land Use Pattern	Fresno Council of Governments	4-15
4-14	Housing Growth Density	Fresno Council of Governments	4-16
4-15	Employment Growth Density	Fresno Council of Governments	4-17
4-16	Farmland	Fresno Council of Governments	4-18
4-17	Critical Habitat	Fresno Council of Governments	4-19
4-18	Wetlands, Riparian Forests and Vernal Pools	Fresno Council of Governments	4-19
4-19	Floodplains and Groundwater Recharge Zones	Fresno Council of Governments	4-20
4-20	Parks and Open Space and Williamson Act Land	Fresno Council of Governments	4-20
4-21	Proposed Investments in the Revenue Constrained Transportation Network in the SCS	Fresno Council of Governments	4-23
4-22	Comparison of 2011 RTP and 2014 RTPs projects programmed by mode	Fresno Council of Governments	4-23
4-23	Capacity Increasing Projects	Fresno Council of Governments	4-26
4-24	Proposed Bus Rapid Transit Network	Fresno Council of Governments	4-26
4-25	Bike and Pedestrian Network	Fresno Council of Governments	4-27
4-26	Bus Rapid Transit Network	Fresno Council of Governments	4-30

### Chapter 5- Actions: Assessing Our Transportation Investment Needs

Figure #	Name of Figure	Source	Page
5-1	Intermodal Transportation Network in Fresno County	Fresno Council of Governments	5-5
5-2	High Truck Volumes in Fresno County	Fresno Council of Governments	5-8
5-3	Regionally Significant Road System, Metro Area	Fresno Council of Governments	5-11
5-4	Regionally Significant Road System, Rural Area	Fresno Council of Governments	5-12
5-5	2010 Measure "C" Program, Urban Projects	Fresno Council of Governments	5-13
5-6	2010 Measure "C" Program, Rural Projects	Fresno Council of Governments	5-14
5-7	Fresno-Madera East-West Corridor Study	Fresno Council of Governments	5-19
5-8	Highway 99 Beautification Master Plan	Fresno Council of Governments	5-19
5-9	Southeast Corridor Study	Fresno Council of Governments	5-20
5-10	Herndon Avenue Specific Study	Fresno Council of Governments	5-21
5-11	SR 180 Western Extension Corridor Study	Fresno Council of Governments	5-22
5-12	Transit Services - Urban Area	Fresno Council of Governments	5-28
5-13	FCRTA Services	Fresno Council of Governments	5-43
5-14	Airport Locations in Fresno County	Fresno Council of Governments	5-78
5-15	Bikeway System - Metro Area	Fresno Council of Governments	5-94
5-16	Bikeway System - Rural Areas	Fresno Council of Governments	5-95
5-17	Rail Network - Metro Area	Fresno Council of Governments	5-100
5-18	Rail Network - Rural Areas	Fresno Council of Governments	5-101

### Chapter 7- Financing Mobility: Funding Our Transportation System

Figure #	Name of Figure	Source	Page
7-1	Transportation Funding Flow Chart	Fresno Council of Governments	7-21