

Policy Element Outline for the 2018 RTP

1. Mission and Vision

Mission: To foster a region of diverse partners building a progressive future as one voice.

Vision: Support the composition of unique cities and communities with a diverse population in a connected high quality environment that focuses on:

[To be updated.]

- Preserving existing facilities and services
- Sound financial leveraging of resources
- Connecting transportation needs with land use and air quality impacts

Introduction

The Policy Element seeks to identify the transportation goals, objectives, and policies that meet the regional needs. Goals, objectives, and policies are established to direct the courses of action that will provide efficient, integrated multimodal transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people, including accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and freight, while fostering economic prosperity and development, and minimizing mobile sources of air pollution.

The 2018 RTP reflects transportation planning for Fresno County through the year 2042.

Because Fresno County is one of eight MPOs that make up the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, we are linked for regional transportation planning through air quality guidelines. As such, the Needs Assessment is addressed on the regional Valley level and can be found in the San Joaquin Valley Regional Transportation Chapter; the Regional Setting, State and Federal Issues Chapter; and is further developed in the Needs Assessment and Action Element Chapter. The Action Element describes the programs and actions necessary to implement the Goals of the Policy Element. The Financial Element Chapter summarizes the cost of plan implementation constrained by a realistic projection of available revenues.

The 2018 RTP continues to build upon the Fresno COG Policy Board accepted Blueprint Principles. The 2018 RTP seeks to improve the transportation system to provide for accessibility and mobility to support land use patterns developed by the Sustainable Community Strategies scenarios.

2. Fresno County Blueprint

Fresno County Blueprint Principles: SJV Adopted Smart Growth Principles

1. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
2. Create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods
3. Encourage community & stakeholder collaboration
4. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
5. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective
6. Mix land uses
7. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities

10. Take advantage of compact building design
11. Enhance the economic vitality of the region
12. Support actions that encourage environmental resource management

The Fresno Council of Governments' Policy Board accepted the Blueprint Principles July 30, 2009.

3. Themes

[To be updated.]

The Policy Element for the 2018 RTP supports three overarching themes:

Preservation of existing facilities and services:

Maintaining existing facilities and services is a responsibility that is primarily tasked to the local agencies, since the majority of state and federal funds that come to Fresno COG are mainly limited to capital improvements. Fresno COG supports multimodal uses and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation which can be a cost-effective approach to delivering more complete streets. The transit system works to gain efficiency from coordinating diverse services, leading to better customer service and ridership. Potential improvements are investigated to make transit attractive to new users, while enhancing the experience for the transit-dependent population, inclusive of low-income and minority areas. Transportation demand management works to help residents find alternatives to single occupancy driving. Fresno COG continues with a well-developed rideshare and senior taxi script programs.

Sound financial leveraging of existing funding:

The effects of the national recession continue to be felt in Fresno County. With the shortfalls in the county and cities' budgets it continues to be important for Fresno COG to provide support to local planning efforts while seeking additional funding. The decreased jobs and housing growth along with slower rates of population growth projections creates less money forecasted for investment.

Connecting transportation needs with land use and air quality impacts:

The 2018 RTP was developed following Fresno COG member agency input, Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, Policy Board direction, state and federal requirements, along with input from the 2018 RTP Roundtable Committee and community stakeholder input. While continuing to build on the Blueprint Principles the 2018 RTP Sustainable Communities Strategy integrates the transportation system with land use and more compact development. Mixed use development with better balance of jobs and housing will help meet the changing needs of our communities. Successful incorporation of this future development can lead to shorter commutes, fewer trips overall, and providing more transportation choices including bike/pedestrian and transit availability.

4. Values

The 2018 RTP supports the following values, as discussed during the January 2017 RTP Roundtable Meeting:

- Transportation Options
- Vibrant Economy
- Environmental ~~Health and~~ Sustainability
- Public Health
- Positive Image

- Housing Choices
- Public Safety
- All People Have Worth (Social Equity)
- World-class Education
- Cultural Richness
- Aesthetic Quality
- Coordination with Federal, State and Local Directives

5. Goals and Objectives of the RTP

For the purpose of the Regional Transportation Plan, the following definitions will apply:

Goal: A “Goal” is the end toward which the overall effort is directed; it is timeless, general and conceptual. The intent of the overall goals is to provide a framework for subsequent objectives and policies.

Objective: An “Objective” provides clear, concise guidance to obtaining the goal. Objectives are successive levels of achievement in movement toward a goal. Individual objectives are capable of being realistically attained.

Policy: A “Policy” is a direction statement that guides present and future decisions on specific actions. Policies should support the attainment of objectives.

The goals, objectives and policies are presented below and are organized into six broad transportation mode based categories:

- General Transportation (content applies across all transportation modes)
- Highways, Streets, and Roads
- Mass Transportation
- Aviation
- Non-Motorized (includes bicycle, pedestrian, active transportation)
- Rail

5.1 General Transportation Goals

The Goals, Objectives and Policies in this section are general in nature and apply to all transportation modes.

Goal: An efficient, safe, integrated, multimodal transportation system.

Objective: Develop an integrated multimodal transportation network that supports and enhances the region’s economy and serves the needs of a growing and diverse population for transportation access to jobs, housing, non-emergency medical, recreation, commercial, and community services as well as goods movement.

Policies:

- Develop a regional streets and highways system that has a balanced mix of high speed and local corridors which are functional and flexible for intermodal use, providing connectivity to the region, state and nation.

- Pursue development of strategies and methods to enhance the efficient movement of freight through the multimodal network.
- Work cooperatively with the private sector to ensure that the collected information accurately reflects existing and forecasted conditions that are of importance from a freight transportation perspective.
- Ensure that public and private transportation providers and other interested parties have an opportunity to provide input into the transportation planning process.
- Integrate transportation modes through a coordinated transportation system management process.
- Provide for efficient, multi-destination trips through the coordination of urban and rural public transportation.
- ~~Develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities as viable alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle use.~~ Improve multimodal mobility and accessibility for all people.
- Develop air transportation facilities and services that are complementary to other modes of transportation.
- Decisions on improvements to the transportation system shall take into account the effective use of all modes and facilities.
- Encourage and support the development of methods to expand and enhance transit services and to increase the use of such services.
- Encourage jurisdictions to ensure that the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and individuals with disabilities are included in the project review process.
- Support the coordination or consolidation (where appropriate) of transit and paratransit services to provide more effective, efficient and accessible transportation services. (Senior specific transportation).
- Encourage local jurisdictions to provide incentives to promote public transit, walking and bicycling, and ridesharing.
- Encourage and promote ridesharing, including carpooling and vanpooling as an alternative to single-occupancy vehicle use. Continue valley wide outreach for rideshare.
- Fresno COG continues to encourage local jurisdiction's efforts to facilitate development of housing in all price ranges, to meet the housing needs of the local workforce and population, including low income residents. Fresno COG will develop the required Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan to guide local agencies' assessments of housing supply and price ranges.

Objective: Maintain and improve existing facilities as the basic system which will address existing and future travel demands.

Policies:

- Manage the transportation system in a manner designed to increase operational efficiency, conserve energy and space, reduce air pollution and noise, and provide for effective goods movement, safety, personal mobility and accessibility.
- Continue support for the preservation of existing transportation facilities and, where practical, addressing transportation needs by using existing transportation modes efficiently.

- Maintain stringent safety requirements for all transportation modes, and identify problem (hazardous) locations and implement counter measures for anticipated problems wherever possible.
- Identify those transportation problems where transportation systems management can be effective.

Objective: Manage the financial resources which are available from government, the private sector, and users of the transportation system in a cost-effective manner to meet regional needs.

Policies:

- Procure and leverage federal, state and local transportation funding to the maximum degree possible, in order to develop a regional transportation network which serves the residents of the region in the most economical, effective and efficient manner possible.
- Encourage new or reconstructed facilities to incorporate design standards which extend the life cycle and reduce maintenance costs.
- Pursue additional funding sources for development of major transportation programs and projects.
- Work with all interest groups to reach consensus and initiate an active public information program regarding transportation funds needed.

(Highlighted items above were broken out into two separate bullets. No other changes.)

Goal: Improved mobility and accessibility for all regardless of race, income, national origin, age, or disability.

Objective: To incorporate concern for environmental justice into transportation **planning** and **implementation** decisions.

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.

Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies.

Meaningful involvement means that:

- (1) People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health
- (2) The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision
- (3) **All Their** concerns will be considered in the decision making process
- (4) The decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected

Policies:

- Seek to ensure fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of transportation projects.
- Seek to ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- Encourage local transportation agencies to leverage federal funding to address unique challenges of ~~the low income, disabled and elderly populations~~. people who are economically, socially, or physically disadvantaged in order to support their full participation in society.

Goal: Planning outcomes that are consistent with various planning efforts.

Objective: Ensure consistency with emerging planning efforts.

Policies:

- During planning processes, seek to ensure that planning efforts are as consistent as feasible with planning efforts such as: the Blueprint Planning Principles, Health in All Policies, the intent of SB375 (Senate Bill 375 also known as the Sustainable Communities Protection Act of 2008), Caltrans' Complete Streets Program, performance-based planning initiated by MAP-21, and statewide and federal air quality goals, etc.
- Planning and programming processes should incorporate performance measures and outcomes as integral components.
- Minimize the loss of farmland with regard to construction of transportation projects.

Goal: A regional transportation network consistent with the intent of SB375 (Senate Bill 375 also known as the Sustainable Communities Protection Act of 2008).

Objective: Development of a regional transportation network which is environmentally sensitive and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible.

Policies:

- Avoid or fully mitigate all significant impacts of new transportation facilities on environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources, as feasible.
- Encourage infill development in areas ~~that which~~ take advantage of remaining capacity in existing transportation facilities.
- Encourage energy conservation through alternatives to single occupancy vehicles, increased transportation efficiency and facility design.
- Project level decisions should give priority to improved safety, air pollution reduction, noise impacts and energy conservation considerations.
- Support the implementation of Transportation System Management, Transportation Demand Management, and Transportation Control Measures that reduce emissions on the traffic circulation system.

- Continue participation in the development of State Implementation Plans (SIP's) to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (criteria pollutants) with the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District.
- Continue to support coordinated transportation planning efforts between **and among** the eight Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) located in the San Joaquin Valley nonattainment air basin.
- Endeavor to ensure the consistency of regional transportation planning efforts with applicable Federal, State, and local energy conservation programs, goals, and objectives.
- **Encourage active transportation projects and public transit that will provide other transportation options than private autos and advance public health.**
- **Support and encourage local jurisdictions to adopt Complete Street Policies where feasible**

Goal: Support cooperative efforts between local, State, federal agencies and the public to plan, develop and manage our transportation system.

Objective: Strengthen intergovernmental organizational relationships and lines of communication which foster an understanding and awareness of the overall impacts of transportation/land use/air quality decision making.

Policies:

- Coordinate with other public agencies to ensure that the overall social, health, economic, energy and environmental effects of transportation decisions are understood, and given opportunity for input, by the general public and groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in planning processes.
- Work closely with local land use agencies to ensure that land use planning is coordinated with transportation planning to fully mitigate the traffic impacts of new development to the greatest degree **possible-feasible.**
- Ensure that existing and future land use plans of the communities within the region are recognized in the formulation of transportation decisions.
- Work together with the appropriate public agencies to identify and potentially preserve rights-of-way for construction of future transportation projects.
- Communicate with local land use agencies on the likely impacts of transportation policy decisions on land use and development; and strive for consistency (where appropriate) between transportation plans and programs and applicable land use and development plans.
- **Coordinate with county and city emergency services and other appropriate regulatory enforcement agencies to ensure an effective emergency response network.**

Goal: Attainment and maintenance of ~~federal and state~~ California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (criteria pollutants) as set by the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

Objective: Participate in and support the coordinated transportation and air quality planning efforts between the eight Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Caltrans, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, the California Air Resources Board, and local agencies charged with land use planning.

Policies:

- Participate in developing the transportation/air quality modeling protocol for State Implementation Plans (SIPs) with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.
- Work with community members and organizations, including those that have been traditionally underrepresented, to provide outreach and involvement in relevant air quality policies, programs and issues.
- Support the efforts of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to integrate appropriate policies and implementation measures identified in the Air Quality Guidelines for General Plans into local general plans.
- Support the air pollution enforcement and educational efforts of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.
- ~~Continue Fresno COG's partnership with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District as a Healthy Air Living Business Partner.~~ Continue Fresno COG's support of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Healthy Air Living initiative, providing education and opportunities to make changes in transportation choice to improve air quality. Fresno COG actively encourages employees to use ridesharing, alternative transportation and also offers employees a flexible work schedule to reduce weekday commutes.

Objective: Implement all appropriate Transportation System Management, Transportation Demand Management, and Transportation Control Measure strategies as technologically and economically feasible.

Policies:

- Insure consistency between and among the goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures of the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and State Implementation Plans (SIPs).
- Policies: Improve vehicular flow and efficiency of the region's circulation system using intelligent transportation systems where feasible.

Objective: Integrate land use planning, transportation planning, and air quality planning to make the most efficient use of public resources and to create a more healthy and livable environment.

Policies:

- Consider the air quality impacts of mobile sources when planning transportation systems to accommodate expected growth in the community thereby reducing the consumption

and dependence upon non-renewable energy resources. ~~used by mobile sources of emissions.~~

- Non-single occupancy and lower/zero emission vehicle modes shall be pursued as preferred alternatives where feasible.
- Support the development of infrastructure required for alternative fueled vehicles as well as zero emission vehicles.
- Continue Fresno COG's established policy to fund cost-effective projects that facilitate air quality improvement through emission reductions with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement funds.

5.2 Highways, Streets, and Roads Goals

Goal: **An integrated and efficient highways, streets and roads network.**

Objective: Develop and implement an integrated highways, streets and roads network that meets mobility needs for both urban and rural residents and the movement of goods.

- Policies:**
- Improve the urbanized area circulation system, including the future urban freeway network.
 - Prioritize transportation improvements that accommodate travel, while fostering the development of safety, maintenance and operational improvements on the streets and highways network within Fresno County.
 - Continue work with member agencies to ensure that the inter and intra county movement of agricultural commodities remains a priority.
 - Preserve and promote the use of existing transportation facilities where feasible.
 - Promote development of a highways, streets and roads network that provides for connectivity of the metropolitan network with the system outside the metropolitan network.
 - Preserve rights of way for construction of future street and highway projects where feasible.
 - Develop a convenient, safe and efficient interface between transportation modes.

Goal: **Efficient use of available transportation funding.**

Objective: Pursue all possible federal, state and local transportation funding related to development, maintenance and rehabilitation of the highways and streets network.

- Policies:**
- Track overall transportation financing issues to ensure that Fresno County agencies are aware of, and able to react in a timely fashion to, any new or innovative financial strategies.

Goal: ~~Acceptable level of service for the~~ **An efficient** highway, street and road network.

Objective: ~~Maintenance of acceptable levels of service on the~~ **Maintain an efficient** highway, street and road network that will allow for **efficient effective** movement of people and goods.

Policies:

- Facilitate communication between Fresno COG and local land use agencies to analyze impacts on the regional transportation system during the decision making process.
- Enhance the development of a highway and street network which will relieve current and future congestion.
- Monitor ~~levels of service on the performance of~~ the street and highway network within Fresno County to ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods.
- Work cooperatively with the private sector to ensure that the mobility needs of the business community within Fresno County are addressed.
- Continue to coordinate regional transportation network planning with the eight Valley Regional Planning Agencies.
- Manage the highway, street and road network in a manner designed to increase operational efficiency, reduce air pollution and provide adequate mobility for both people and goods.

5.3 Mass Transportation Goals

Goal: **An efficient, safe, and fiscally responsible public transportation mobility system.**

Objective: Continue to pursue expanded federal, state and local funding for both public and social service transportation, to provide mobility opportunities to the maximum number of people in the region.

Policies:

- Provide a transit system that meets the public transportation needs of the service area.
- Provide transit services that serve low income, elderly, and disabled communities, and include those users in the project review process.
- Support the continued coordination and consolidation of social service transportation.

Goal: **A quality, convenient, safe and reliable public transportation service.**

Objective: Encourage and Prioritize safety, appropriate frequency of bus service, reasonable fares and the provision of adequate service to satisfy the transit needs which are reasonable to meet.

- Policies:
- Provide reliable and convenient public transit service.
 - Provide clean, attractive and comfortable vehicles and facilities.
 - Provide a safe system.

Goal: An efficient and effective public transportation system.

Objective: Consider/evaluate advantages and disadvantages of projects, including economic, environmental and social factors.

- Policies:
- Maximize public transportation patronage.
 - Minimize operating and capital expenses.
 - Encourage the private sector to provide service when economically feasible.

Goal: Public transit's services with a positive public image in communities served.

Objective: Provide complete and accurate information that makes public transportation "user friendly".

- Policy:
- Create and produce publications that promote the use of public transportation to all segments of the region.

Goal: An integrated multimodal transportation system which facilitates the movement of people and goods.

Objective: Develop a seamless multimodal transportation network.

- Policies:
- Coordinate service to facilitate multimodal and inter-system transfers.
 - Coordinate fare and transfer policies along with service information programs.

Goal: A coordinated policy for public transportation that complements land use and air quality/climate change policies.

Objective: Support transportation investments that work toward accomplishing air quality and climate change goals, ~~optimize~~ optimizing the utilization of land and encouraging a stable economic base.

- Policies:
- Provide incentives to reduce dependency on single vehicle occupancy vehicle travel without compromising travel mobility.

Goal: Achieve or maintain transit networks in a state of good repair.

Objective: Maintain assets more effectively, using condition-based approaches and using predictive and preventive maintenance strategies to reduce costs while improving service delivery

- Policies:
- Implement a Transit Asset Management (TAM) program that uses asset conditions to help prioritize funding.

- Establish Condition Assessment Process and Measurement Procedures
- Incorporate lifecycle cost, risk, and performance trade-offs into capital programming and operations & maintenance budgeting

5.4 Aviation Goal

Goal: A fully functional and integrated air service and airport system that is complementary to the regional transportation system.

Objective: Maintain and improve the airport system in Fresno County.

- Policies:**
- Provide for the orderly and timely development of a system of airports adequate to meet the air transportation needs of the region while minimizing airport-related land use, noise, and other environmental ~~problems-concerns~~.
 - Encourage air travel as an energy efficient mode of transportation for long-distance travel.
 - Coordinate airport planning with airport owners and managers, the Airport Land Use Commission, the Federal Aviation Administration, Caltrans Division of Aeronautics and local agencies in the areas of transportation, land use, economic development and resource utilization.
 - Administer the policies and procedures of the Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission as listed in the California Land Use Planning Handbook.
 - Participate in efforts to promote airport land use planning such as the California Airport Land Use Consortium.
 - Adopt the Basic Utility Stage 1 classification, as defined by the Federal Aviation Administration, as the minimum standard for public use airports.
 - Prepare site selection studies for the location of new airports as appropriate.

5.5 Non-Motorized Transportation Goals (includes bicycle, pedestrian, active transportation)

Goal: Maximize bicycling and walking through their recognition and integration as valid and healthy transportation modes in transportation planning activities.

Objective: Increase bicycling and pedestrian trips as a percentage of all trips.

- Policies:**
- Include bicycle and pedestrian transportation planning as integral parts of the Fresno COG's transportation planning program.
 - Maintain representation of the bicycling community on Fresno COG's Transportation Technical Committee.
 - Encourage and assist member agencies to develop new or update existing bicycle and pedestrian transportation plans which are integrated with the regional bikeways system and which provide for bicycle use and walking as

alternatives to the automobile for shorter trips.

- Encourage member agencies to include bicycling and pedestrian sections in all transportation-related documents including, but not limited to, circulation elements of general, community, and specific plans.
- Encourage and facilitate interagency cooperation and coordination in the development and implementation of bicycling and pedestrian plans and projects.
- Coordinate Fresno County's bikeways system with those of adjoining counties.
- Encourage member agencies to provide for bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly development, including bicycle travel and walking in new development plans and projects.
- Encourage member agencies to include bicycle parking requirements in all land-use/site development requirements that address automobile parking.
- Participate in efforts of member agencies and other groups and organizations to work with irrigation districts, railroads, and other owners of linear rights-of-way that have the potential to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the development of which would strengthen the Countywide bicycle transportation system.
- Encourage through educational and promotional efforts bicycling and walking as transportation modes which promote cleaner air, ease traffic congestion, conserve nonrenewable sources of energy, and promote health.
- Publicize bicycling and walking planning projects through the dissemination of articles, newsletters, reports and other appropriate methods.
- Provide information to the public on the regional bikeway system and its support facilities.
- Encourage member agencies to work with major employers to provide incentive programs for bicycling including shower facilities, guaranteed ride home programs and mileage reimbursement for work-related bicycling miles.

Goal: **Safe, convenient, and continuous routes for bicyclists and pedestrians of all types which interface with and complement a multimodal transportation system.**

Objective: Increase connections between bicycling and pedestrian facilities and other modes of transportation.

Policies:

- Support the development of a countywide system of designated bikeways and pedestrian connections that link communities, activity centers (schools, libraries, community centers, colleges, universities, hospitals, medical offices, senior residences, parks, athletic facilities, governments services, employment centers, high-density residential areas, and commercial centers) to regional and local public transit systems (including rail) at stops, stations and terminals and

provides for all types of bicyclists and pedestrians.

- Encourage member agencies and Caltrans, to the extent feasible and practical, to maintain the regional bikeways system free of deterrents to bicycling such as debris, gravel, glass, leaves, and any other extraneous materials.
- Encourage member agencies to adopt policies or design standards to include accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian travel on all new construction, reconstruction, or capacity increasing projects on major roadways where reasonably feasible. Such accommodations may be made by a separate bike and pedestrian path, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, or a shared roadway. A shared roadway would include a wide outside lane or a paved shoulder.
- Encourage member agencies and Caltrans to develop, stripe and sign bikeways consistent with state design standards in order to develop a visually consistent, clear, simple and recognizable bikeways system with clearly defined travel areas and boundaries.
- Support member agency implementation of AB 1581, effective January 1, 2008, requiring that a traffic-actuated signal be installed and maintained so as to detect lawful bicycle traffic on the roadway.
- Encourage member agencies and Caltrans to install bicycle-safe drain grates.
- Encourage member agencies and Caltrans to give priority to bikeway and pedestrian projects that will link existing separated sections of the system and that will serve the highest concentration of bicyclists and pedestrians and destinations of highest demand.
- Encourage member agencies to provide bicycle parking facilities, including secured storage facilities where appropriate, at public and commercial areas, centers of employment, schools, recreational areas, health service facilities, air and bus terminals, major transit stops, and other places that attract large groups of people.
- Encourage member agencies and Caltrans to provide support facilities on appropriate bikeways, including rest stops with restrooms, water, and tables.
- Encourage member agencies and Caltrans to install, to the extent feasible and practicable, trees along trails, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities that will provide shade on summer afternoons.
- Encourage local agencies and Fresno County Rural Transit Agency to establish bicycle-to-transit connections throughout the County, including bicycle park-and-ride facilities at transit centers to serve regional route use and the accommodation of bicycles on public transit.
- Assist member agencies to implement the Complete Streets Act by incorporating complete street considerations in the Valley-wide Blueprint Implementation Roadmap.

Goal: Improved bicycle and pedestrian safety through education and enforcement.

Objective: Reduce the number of bicycling and pedestrian injuries and deaths.

- Policies:
- Support the development and promotion of an education plan and program which increases awareness of the rights and behavior of bicyclists and pedestrians within the traffic environment.
 - Support enforcement of traffic laws related to cyclist and pedestrian behavior and cyclist/pedestrian/motorist conflicts.
 - Disseminate information to member agencies, school districts, and other appropriate agencies and organizations on model programs to increase bicycle helmet use and bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Goal: Increased development of the regional bikeways system, related facilities, and pedestrian facilities by maximizing funding opportunities.

Objective: Maintain and expand bicycling and pedestrian facilities.

- Policies:
- Identify available and potential new bicycle and pedestrian funding sources and their requirements and provide this information to member agencies and other interested groups.
 - Work with member agencies to define priorities for, and progress towards, implementation of the regional bikeway system.
 - Provide favorable comments on reviews of grant applications for projects that seek to enhance bicycling and pedestrian facilities.

5.6 Rail Goals

Goal: A safe, efficient and convenient rail system which serves the passenger and freight needs of the region and which is integrated with and complementary to the total transportation system.

Objective: Promote the growth of rail passenger and freight usage.

- Policies:
- Seek ways to either relocate all mainline Burlington Northern Santa Fe passenger and freight rail traffic to the Union Pacific alignment through the City of Fresno or relocate BNSF and/or UP freight rail traffic to an alignment west of the Fresno Metropolitan Area to assure smoother, faster and safer service.
 - Consider development of a multimodal transportation terminal facility in, or in close proximity to, the Central Business District.
 - Give high priority to grade separation construction programs.

- Close grade crossings of main lines with minor streets and alleys wherever possible to avoid unnecessary conflict.
- Protect grade crossings of main lines with automatic gates.
- Seek legislative changes to rail abandonment procedures to require that all lines proposed for abandonment be brought under public ownership as a precondition to abandonment.
- Consider all advantages and disadvantages of projects, including economic, environmental, and social factors.
- Endorse the following Amtrak San Joaquin Route passenger rail service improvements:
 - Additional train service for the San Joaquin Route.
 - Improved station facilities servicing the San Joaquins.
 - Additional direct train service to Sacramento.
 - Additional direct train service to the East Bay Area.
 - Direct train service to Los Angeles.
- Incorporate design awareness of multimodal transportation facilities in development of highway systems.
- Support planning for rail services at a similar level of detail as is currently done for roads.
- Support the planning and construction of a High Speed Rail System in the San Joaquin Valley which directly connects the major population centers within the Valley.
- Support the location and development of the High Speed Rail Heavy Maintenance Facility in Fresno County.
- Maintain representation of the rail community on Fresno COG's Transportation Technical Committee.

Goal: **A transportation system that efficiently and effectively transports goods throughout Fresno County.**

Objective: Increase the use of air and rail transportation and the efficiency of the truck transportation system.

- Policies:**
- Encourage the multimodal movement of goods through Fresno County where possible.
 - Recognize freight rail service in Fresno County as a significant transportation mode, providing service to industry.
 - Provide special consideration to transportation projects that improve the operational efficiency of goods movement and air quality.

Summary of Changes and Feedback

RTP Roundtable 3/22/17:

- Moses Stites pointed out that under the objective for the first goal under 5.1 General Transportation Goals that “medical” should be changed to “non-emergency medical” to add clarification.
- Michael Ratajski asked if something relating to the Cross Valley Corridor Plan and Huron’s station should be included. It was discussed that the goals/objectives/policies should be broad and overarching, but perhaps a general policy could be incorporated to speak to coordination between other counties for rail projects.
- Amanda Monaco suggested that there be a new category for equity that outlines policies for increasing investment in EJ communities. It was discussed that the categories for goals/objectives/policies are broken out by modes, and that there is a section for EJ under 5.1 General Transportation Goals.
- Amanda Monaco also stated that the vision was not very inspiring. Fresno COG clarified that the vision will be revisited during the process.
- Amanda Monaco asked if the value Environmental Health and Sustainability could be broken out into two values: Environmental Sustainability and Public Health. This update has been made.
- It was asked if the Policy Element should address changes to gas tax funding. Fresno COG explained that the Financial Element will likely speak to this, but it may also be incorporated into the Policy Element as well.
- Mohammad Khorsand, regarding the goal of “An efficient highway, street, and road network,” said that perhaps LOS should remain within the document since some jurisdictions still use LOS. It was discussed that because SB 743 eliminates LOS as a basis for determining significant impacts under CEQA, to more appropriately balance the needs of the State related to reduction of GHG emissions, that Fresno COG would leave LOS out of the policy language. LOS can still be applied in roadway designs by local governments. As part of the federal rule making for transportation performance measures, FHWA’s proposed performance measures for system performance don’t include LOS. Instead, the measures are more travel-time based.

Ongoing Input:

- 4/6/17 Nick Paladino
 - Regarding 5.2 Policy: “Improve the urbanized area circulation system, including the future urban freeway network.” Nick asked if the urban freeway network has been built out and whether or not this is still applicable. Staff will look into this and discuss.
 - Regarding 5.6 Policy: “Seek ways to either relocate all mainline Burlington Northern Santa Fe passenger and freight rail traffic to the Union Pacific alignment...” Nick pointed out that the Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail may just be freight, not passengers. Nick also asked if rail consolidation is still a major

goal for the area. If not, perhaps this policy should be removed. Staff will look into this and discuss.

- 4/12/17 Nick Paladino
 - 5.5 Non-Motorized Transportation Goals under the first objective, add policy "Encourage member agencies to develop and implement a bicycle count program to provide reliable data on the number of bicyclists." Mr. Paladino recommends the COG and its member agencies collect information on the number of bicyclists as they do on the number of vehicles using the streets and roads network. This will assist in determining where improvements for bicycling should be made. Staff will look into this and discuss.