



City of Visalia Joint Study Session

Date: Wednesday, March 30, 2005

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Location: Visalia Convention Center

Participants: Hanford City Council, Tulare City Council, Visalia City Council, and College of the Sequoias Board of Trustees

Note: Item/break times stated are not specific and listed only as reference.

5:30 p.m.

1. Flag Salute
2. Introductions

5:45 p.m.

2. Public Comment

6:00 p.m.

3. Presentation by COS President, Dr. Badrkhan:
 - a. Review of the past COS Bond Measures on the ballot
 - b. Vision of the COS District
 - c. Process and Community Involvement
 - d. Bond Options
4. Joint Discussion of a future COS Bond Measure

7:00 p.m.

5. Break

7:10 p.m.

6. High Speed Rail Presentation by City of Visalia Assistant City Manager, Carol Cairns, Community Development/Public Works Director, Michael Olmos and Senior Administrative Analyst, Traci Myers

8:00 p.m.

7. Break

8:10 p.m.

8. City of Visalia, City of Tulare joint discussion.
 - Presentation by City of Tulare Director of Recreation, Parks and Library, Bill Wagenhalls, and City of Visalia Assistant Community Development/Public Works Director, David Jacobs regarding County/Tulare/Visalia Trail System
 - Presentation by TCAG Representatives Ted Smalley and/or Bob Stocker regarding TCAG Light Rail Study
 - Status Report by TCAG Representatives Ted Smalley and/or Bob Stocker on TCAG/LAFCO Independent Staff Study
 - Status Report on County & Cities General Plan Process by County and City Staff Representatives
 - Report on graffiti prevention efforts by the City of Visalia Assistant Chief of Police Dennis Swiney and City of Visalia Fire Department Fire Chief George Sandoval and/or Fire Battalion Chief Doyle Sewell, Vorisia Henderson, Fire Inspector,

with an additional update on prevention efforts
from City of Tulare Fire Chief Michael Threlkeld

8:50 p.m.

9. Plans for follow-up topics and/or meetings from tonight's discussions

9:00 p.m.

10. Adjourn

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in meetings call (559) 713-4512 48-hours in advance of the meeting. For Hearing-Impaired - Call (559) 713-4900 (TDD) 48-hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time to request signing services.

MEMORANDUM

Item 6

*TO: City Councils
Visalia, Tulare and Hanford*

FROM: TRACI MYERS, Senior Administrative Analyst

DATE: March 24, 2005

RE: Status of California High Speed Rail Project

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is the state entity responsible for planning, constructing, and operating a high-speed train system serving California's major metropolitan areas. The Authority has a nine-member policy board and a small core staff. All environmental, planning, and engineering work is performed by private firms under contract with the Authority.

The Authority has prepared a draft program-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a 700-mile high-speed train system serving Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County and San Diego. High-speed trains would be capable of maximum speed of at least 200 miles per hour with an expected trip time from San Francisco to Los Angeles in just under 2 hours and 30 minutes. The Authority is the lead state agency for the state EIR, and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead federal agency for the federal EIS.

At a Board Meeting on November 10, 2004 attended by Mayor Link, Tulare County representatives and Visalia City Staff, the HSRA Staff presented part 2 of the staff preferred recommendations identifying preferred alignments and stations locations for portions of the high speed rail system for the Board's consideration. Part 2 included that portion of alignment options through the Central Valley from Fresno to Bakersfield. That Staff's recommendation was to adopt the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) alignment with a bypass west of Hanford and with **no station stop between Fresno and Bakersfield.** (emphasis added)

The City of Visalia (the "City") expressed concerns to the Authority about the rail alignment and station locations proposed to serve the South San Joaquin Valley. The City noted that the alignment recommended by the High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) staff, along with the recommendation to not provide a station in the Kings/Tulare Counties region, is short sighted, will not adequately serve the

rapidly growing population in the two county area, and will cause increased air pollution and other environmental effects by requiring residents and business people to drive in excess of 1 hour to a station in Bakersfield or Fresno. In response, the Authority took no action at that meeting regarding the rail alignment or station locations in the South San Joaquin Valley to enable local stakeholder entities to explore possible alternative alignments with a station to serve the Kings/Tulare Counties region and outlying communities.

The attached HSR Statewide System Map shows the paucity of station locations in the South Valley as compared to other areas of the state.

Based upon the HSR Staff recommendation of no station stop in the 2 County region, it was evident of the little consideration given to the South Valley's needs. An informal coalition of South Valley communities subsequently formed to support the need for a further analysis of the South Valley to identify an alternative alignment with a station stop in the Tulare/Kings County areas. The informal coalition consists, to date, of Tulare County, TCAG, and the cities of Tulare, Kingsburg, Selma and Fowler, Hanford, Woodlake, Dinuba, Orange Cove, Corcoran, Porterville, Tulare, Selma, Kingsburg, Fowler and Visalia, all supporting further rail corridor analysis and potential Kings/Tulare station.

State Senator Roy Ashburn and Assembly members Nicole Parra and Bill Maze have been strong supporters of city and county efforts from the South Valley and have been active in urging the HSR Board to recommend a study on the corridor between Hanford and Visalia for a possible alternative alignment to the high speed rail route through the Central Valley with a potential station site somewhere in the two County area.

At the January Authority meeting after a presentation to the Board by Senator Ashburn and Assembly Members Parra and Maza, the Board accepted the staff recommendations on identifying general alignment and station locations as preferred alternatives in the Final Program EIR/EIS with the following exception. The Board directed that an additional study of an alignment option between Fresno and Bakersfield to serve a potential Kings/Tulare station provided that a potential station be located in an existing and/or planned urbanized area. Further, the corridor study is to be conducted prior to the commencement of project-level environmental documents for this segment and submitted to the Authority for any appropriate action, provided, however, that such additional study is to be undertaken only if sufficient funds to complete it are provided in the 2005/06 FY state budget. The estimated cost of the additional study is \$500,000.

The HSR Board was also very clear that it was committing only to prepare the study under the above stipulations, and making no commitment at that time to an alternative alignment or station location to serve the 2 County area.

On behalf of the informal coalition, the City of Visalia took the initiative in the preparation and submission of a budget request letter to the Assembly and Senate Budget Subcommittees requesting augmentation of the High Speed Rail budget to include additional funding in the amount of \$500,000 for the supplemental South Valley Corridor Study. The request went to the Senate Budget Subcommittee on March 16, 2005 and was approved. It is expected to go before the Assembly sometime in April 2005.

Next steps in the environmental process for the proposed high-speed train system:

- The Authority and FRA prepare Final Program EIR/EIS that may identify preferred alignment and station options and includes responses to comments
- Determine whether to advance high-speed train system to next phase - Project Development and Project Environmental Analysis Phase.
- Development of the Implementation Plan for the high-speed train system.

Next steps in the Central Valley Coalition quest to obtain funding for study and further pursue an alternative alignment and station stop in Central Valley:

- Continue with participation in legislative procedure for augmentation of the HSR Budget
- Work with HSR Outreach Team to hold a South Valley Forum for local entities to participate in the anticipated corridor/station study
- Actively participate in Corridor Study

Clearly, the South Valley continues on an uphill climb to secure a suitable high speed rail alignment and station to serve our region. Ongoing interest and active participation by local communities and other entities will be crucial in future efforts to achieve this goal. The City of Visalia will continue to be proactive in this effort and will seek ongoing participation from other communities and stakeholders in our region.

**City of Visalia
Agenda Item Transmittal**

Meeting Date: March 30, 2005 Item 8 Santa Fe Street bike pat/Visalia Trail System

Agenda Item Number (Assigned by City Clerk):

Agenda Item Wording: Santa Fe Street bike path.

Submitting Department: Community Development and Public Works

Contact Name and Phone Number: David Jacobs 713-4492

Department Discussion:

The City of Visalia is currently in negotiations with American Trails association to purchase rail right of way from Avenue 264 (City of Visalia's Urban Area Boundary) and St. Johns River. The right of way ranges in width from 22 feet to 100 feet. The right of way will be used for road widening and a proposed bike path. The City is trying to finalize the purchase of the railroad right of way by the end of 2005.

A Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant application was submitted to Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) for the bike path between Tulare Avenue and Avenue 272. The application was not funded in the current round of projects due to the fact other projects ranked higher than this bike path. The City will continue to try to acquire grant funding for this bike path.

It appears that the City of Tulare has completed its urban trail to Prosperity Avenue. This means that a gap will remain between Avenue 264 and Prosperity of approximately three (3) miles in length. Some of the former right of way along the alignment may now be owned by private parties. If so, future connection of a path between Tulare and Visalia will likely require negotiations with San Joaquin Valley Railroad, whose line ends at Avenue 256, and private land owners along the alignment south of Avenue 256. The City of Tulare may own some of the alignment north of prosperity which will help complete a trail connection.

Attachments: Project Map

City Manager/Executive Director Recommendation:

03/28/2005
10:45 AM

Item 8 Light Rail Study

Light Rail Feasibility

On August 9, 2004, the Tulare County Association of Governments adopted the Regional Transportation Plan. The Plan included a rail policy to develop a feasibility study for light rail in the City of Visalia and Tulare within 5 years. In the fall of 2004, TCAG applied for a regional planning grant from Caltrans to conduct the light rail feasibility study. As of this date Caltrans has not provided a summary of award winners. In the event a grant is not received, the TCAG Board could consider partnering on the study in the future.

Item 8 TCAG Independent staff study

TCAG Autonomy Study

On February 28, 2005, the draft Tulare County Association of Governments Financial feasibility Autonomy Study was presented to the TCAG Board at a public workshop. As a result of the study, the TCAG Board recommended further information and review be conducted by a Steering Committee.

At the March 21, 2005 TCAG Board meeting, the TCAG Autonomy Steering Committee was officially voted on by the member agencies. Chairman Cox requested that the subcommittee members forward their ideas on the next steps needed to move forward with the study. The subcommittee is anticipated to have the first meeting at the end of March or early April. The committee members include:

TCAG Board members

Mr. Allen Ishida/Tulare County
Mr. Richard Ortega/City of Tulare
Mr. Paul Boyer/City of Farmersville
Mr. Bill McKinley/Member-at-large

City/County Staff

Mr. Dan Meinert/City of Dinuba
Mr. Brad Dunlap/City of Porterville
Mr. Mike Olmos/City of Visalia
Mr. Biran Haddix/Tulare County

TCAG

Mr. Phil Cox/TCAG Chair
Mr. Bob Stocker/TCAG Assistant Executive Secretary



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Item 8

AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT: Tulare County General Plan 2025 Update

SUMMARY: A comprehensive update to the Tulare County General Plan was initiated by the Board of Supervisors in July 2003. J. Laurence Mintier & Associates were hired as consultants to assist Long Range Planning Branch staff with the three year, three phase process.

The Tulare County Planning Commission was designated as the sponsor of the General Plan and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of approximately 30 people was established, consisting of city planners; local, state and federal agency representatives; economic development interests; the building and development industry; and non profit organizations operating land use programs in Tulare County. A web site was also established, linked to the county home page at www.co.tulare.ca.us, as a place to notice upcoming events and as a repository for documents produced during the update.

Public Process – Qualitative Input

The process for determining policy direction to date has revolved around public workshops, each developed in conjunction with the TAC, and feedback of findings from the workshops to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, for their discussion and direction.

The first of two workshop series during Phase I focused on Issues Identification. Priority concerns identified include: air and water quality impacts on health; water quantity; economic diversification; urban growth impacts on agriculture and natural landscapes and social issues that could hold the county back. Top assets that need to be protected or enhanced were also identified as being: the scenic working and natural landscapes of the county; cultural diversity and high quality farming. These

workshops resulted in the preparation of a *Preliminary Issues Report*, available in both English and Spanish.

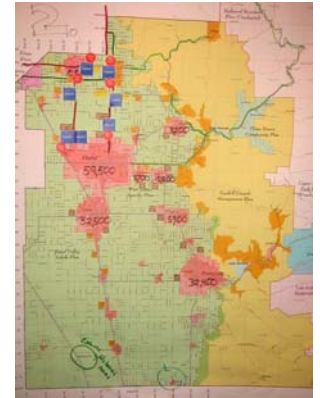
The second workshop series focused on the development of Alternative Futures Scenarios. Teams of participants used maps as ‘game boards’ and scaled land use ‘game pieces’ to identify ways to manage future growth while addressing the county’s priority issues and preserving and enhancing the county’s valued assets. This resulted in the creation of over twenty future growth alternatives and allowed for the identification of trends illustrating conceptual ways to manage population growth.



Infill Emphasis



Role of Small Communities



Community Centric

Phase II, the current phase of planning, entails the refinement and evaluation of the growth scenarios, and will culminate in late Spring 2005, in the selection by the Board of Supervisors of a preferred alternative for both policy development and *Environmental Impact Report* (EIR) analysis.

Growth patterns mapped during the Alternative Futures Workshops were consolidated into three scenarios and refined to serve as hypothetical foci for policy discussion. These scenarios are: City Centered Development; Rural Community Development; and Proportional Growth. Each of the scenarios has a different set of policy implications. A description of these scenarios is attached.

During three public Policy Choices Workshops, the best features of each model were discussed and recorded. A summary of workshop findings was shared at a Board of Supervisors/Planning Commission Joint Workshop held on March 8, 2005 at which the elected officials directed the further refinement of the scenarios for a final round of public discussion. As a product of these meetings, a *Draft Policy Framework and Guiding Principles* for the General Plan will be formulated, to be used as a basis for a new round of public and TAC discussion.

Next Steps – Qualitative Analysis

Next, to be added to the discussion will be a quantitative analysis of how the land use concepts actually work. Specifically, Mintier & Associates will rely upon a newly

consolidated GIS data base of all existing land use designations within Tulare County to quantify: the number of people located within the existing urban growth boundaries

(UGB's) of the cities and unincorporated communities; how much land is left over within the UGB's; and how much of the projected population growth can be accommodated within the framework of the existing General Plans and Community Plans. The three discussion scenarios for allocating growth will also be modeled and analyzed, giving a realistic portrayal of what it would mean if the ideas were to be implemented. For instance, what would it look like if population growth were to be concentrated in the cities or evenly distributed proportionally between the cities and unincorporated communities? How do these distributions overlay with prime agricultural land, available clean water and available infrastructure capacity? How do the scenarios affect the future circulation system and air quality, future energy plans, biological resources, and other factors?

Four meetings are currently scheduled to explore these issues:

Public Workshop
Tuesday April 12, 2005, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Tulare Library
113 N. F Street, Tulare, CA

Public Workshop
Wednesday April 13, 2005, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Three Rivers School
41932 Sierra Drive, Three Rivers, CA

Tulare County Association of Governments Working Group Workshop
Monday April 18, 2005, 12:00 p.m.
Conference Rooms A & B, Board of Supervisors Chamber
County Civic Center, 2800 West Burrel, Visalia, CA

General Plan Technical Advisory Committee # 7
Monday April 25, 2005, 1:30 p.m.
Conference Rooms A & B, Board of Supervisors Chamber
County Civic Center, 2800 West Burrel, Visalia, CA

From this discussion, a hybrid growth model will be developed to incorporate the best features of each discussed option, along with a set of alternatives. In May, the Planning Commission will be requested to make an advisory recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Shortly thereafter, the Board will be asked to select a preferred alternative for *Environmental Impact Report* analysis and policy development. This decision will be published in the *Policy Framework and Guiding Principles*.

Also of Note

The *General Plan Background Report* is due for completion in early Summer 2005, delayed in order to adequately address priority issues, such as water quantity and quality concerns, through expanded consultant services.

An overall General Plan Schedule showing tasks through to adoption is attached. The General Plan process is well on track towards presentation of a plan and EIR for adoption within the established timeframe of January to June 2006.