

APPENDIX

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS



August 31, 2022

Mr. David Padilla, Branch Chief  
Transportation Planning – North  
Caltrans District 6 Office  
2223 West Olive Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93778

**Draft 2022 Madera County Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy  
Response to Comment**

Dear Mr. Padilla,

Thank you for providing comments on the Draft 2022 Madera County Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Respectfully, Madera County Transportation Commission staff provide the attached responses to the comments provided in your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Stone", written over a faint dotted line.

Dylan Stone  
Principal Regional Planner

## California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 6 OFFICE  
1352 WEST OLIVE AVENUE | P.O. BOX 12616 | FRESNO, CA 93778-2616  
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August 9, 2022

DRAFT 2022 RTP/SCS  
DRAFT Program EIR  
REVIEW LETTER

### **SENT VIA EMAIL**

Dylan Stone  
Madera County Transportation Commission  
2001 Howard Road, Suite 201  
Madera, CA 93637

Dear Mr. Stone:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) Draft 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The document is well-written, providing a clear picture of the existing transportation system in Madera County, as well as a clear understanding of current and future needs. Caltrans recognizes the significant effort MCTC put into seeking comments from their constituency and for diligently working to attain air quality targets for the area. By hosting workshops throughout the County including the unincorporated areas, and in conjunction with other community activities, MCTC's public engagement seemed interactive rather than prescriptive. MCTC is commended in providing ongoing transportation activities and ensuring unmet transportation needs are being addressed for the County of Madera and their surrounding communities. Our comments for the Draft 2022 RTP/SCS are as follows:

### **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING – DISTRICT 6**

MCTC's vision to provide for a "sound multimodal transportation system facilitating a vibrant economy, enhancing the physical and cultural environment, and ensuring a high quality of life for citizens in Madera County," is complementary to Caltrans' vision for the statewide transportation system. Caltrans concurs with MCTC's supposition that the direction and nature of transportation, "can be accomplished by either reinforcing positive opportunities and trends already in place or stimulating change in a new direction to achieve desired outcomes." It is also agreed that the successful execution of that vision requires that Madera County, the cities of Chowchilla and Madera, and MCTC must work together. The stated principles to success (improved quality of life, prosperity, cultural diversity, health and environment) as well as the stated goals and objectives, if followed, will foster a thriving community.

**Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants Comment:**

Caltrans has previously engaged with the County/MCTC and provided feedback on the MCTC Project Prioritization Study, Madera County Active Transportation Plan, and State Route (SR) 233 Corridor Study.

In general, Caltrans concurs with the County's/MCTC continued efforts for a more active transportation network. Caltrans supports active transportation efforts that address safety, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)/GHG reduction, and overall quality of life and public health, especially for underserved communities/communities of need. Caltrans appreciates the coordination the County/MCTC has had with our office and recommends continuous engagement with our office during project implementation.

**Air Quality Comments:**

Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) Chapter 1, Page 1-4:

This is the third SCS prepared for Madera County to address requirements set forth with the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 375, with the goal of ensuring that the MCTC region can meet its regional greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board (ARB). In 2018, the ARB issued emission reduction targets to each of the eight (8) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the San Joaquin Valley, including MCTC. The targets included a percentage reduction of GHG emissions from 2005 of 10% by the year 2020 and a reduction in GHG emissions of 16% by the year 2035.

**Transit Comments:**

MCTC is encouraged to continue to apply for Rural Transit & Intercity Bus - FTA Section 5311 and 5311 (f) funds, Active Transportation Planning Grants, Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants and FTA Section 5339 (b) Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program funding opportunities recently made available to further efforts in transit planning projects. Caltrans welcomes continued collaboration with MCTC on new projects that may be eligible under SB1.

**TECHNICAL PLANNING BRANCH – DISTRICT 6:**

**Draft RTP Page 1-11:**

SR 99 Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) Grant – The first sentence of the paragraph states CTC unanimously approved recommendations. Based on the title of the paragraph it should also say that the 6-lane project was awarded funding through the TCEP program.

**Draft RTP Page 4-11:**

Description of SR 99 should include the recently opened 6-lane segment from Ave 12 to Ave 17.

**Draft RTP Page 4-13:**

Figure 4-7 doesn't match existing 6-lane conditions through downtown Madera. This Figure was developed before that project was completed. Should update Figure.

**Draft RTP Page 4-14:**

Suggest adding language to the front of the Finish The 99 paragraph regarding developing projects in alignment with current Caltrans and Federal priorities while maintaining past priorities as well.

**Draft RTP Page 4-15:**

Suggest removing the phrase “increase capacity” from project descriptions.

**Draft RTP Page 4-16:**

Last sentence of second paragraph should say “project” not “projected”.

**Draft RTP Appendix B Page D-2**

Two projects are listed for SR 99/SR 233. We believe one project is proposed to do both improvements. Please clarify if the two projects are for the two phases of the overall.

**SYSTEM PLANNING BRANCH – DISTRICT 6**

**General Comments:**

In the previous Fiscal Year, MCTC participated in Caltrans’ effort to update the Corridor Plan for SR 145. At the time, Caltrans had a project on our project list from the 2018 MCTC RTP, to widen SR 145 from 2 to 4 lanes from SR 99 to Yosemite Avenue. This may not be consistent with our vision for the Corridor or with Caltrans’ current direction, especially given the Downtown CAPM project, a proposal for a road diet in the City of Madera – our most recent draft Corridor Plan and Summary Chart envisions this segment as a 2-lane facility with Complete Street elements by 2027.

**OFFICE OF TRAFFIC OPERATIONS – DISTRICT 6**

**Draft Program Environmental Impact Report:**

Roundabouts were largely omitted as a mitigation and energy conservation impact strategy. Studies have shown, modern roundabouts can reduce emissions as much as 20-30% compared to a signalized intersection. Roundabouts notably have lower maintenance and electricity costs in comparison to traffic signals and require drivers to consume less fuel. Roundabouts are effective engineering countermeasures for intersection safety and have a proven record of accident reduction. Caltrans encourages their use and we continue to educate stakeholders and community members regarding their benefits.

**General Comments:**

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities were proposed at various locations throughout Madera County, the connectivity between bicycle facilities should be planned, and the connectivity between pedestrian facilities should also be planned.

A VMT Mitigation Bank Program or a VMT Mitigation Impact Fee Program should be established to help reduce VMTs.

Thank you for considering our comments for inclusion in the Final 2022 RTP/SCS. Caltrans will continue to be available to MCTC as a resource in evaluating regional

issues, population and traffic growth projections and multimodal solutions to accommodate future transportation needs. Caltrans is invested in ensuring that planned projects in the RTP are equitable and sustainable, and are developed in an open and collaborative manner, which MCTC has shown a commitment to. Improving existing motor vehicle traffic, aviation, freight, mass transit, rail planning and promoting Active Transportation Programs with the implementation of complete streets features in planned projects will assist in providing a safe, sustainable, integrated transportation system. These fundamentals will help support transportation infrastructure, and smart growth that lead to Green House Gas (GHG) and VMT reductions for Madera County and the San Joaquin Valley.

If you have any further questions, please contact Nicholas Isla at (559) 981-7373 or email [nicholas.isla@dot.ca.gov](mailto:nicholas.isla@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



DAVID PADILLA, Branch Chief,  
Transportation Planning – North

C: Caltrans-D6 - Michael Navarro, Alec Kimmel, Albert Lee, Eric Olson  
Caltrans-HQ - Jennifer Duran, Kevin Mariant, Gilbert Valencia, Jelani Young,

## **Response to comments received from California Department of Transportation**

### **Transportation Planning - District 6**

#### *Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants*

Comment noted. MCTC will continue to coordinate with District 6 partners for project planning and implementation.

#### *Air Quality*

Comment noted.

#### *Transit*

Comment noted. MCTC will continue to collaborate with District 6 partners in pursuit of funding opportunities.

### **Technical Planning Branch - District 6**

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP 1-11*

Additional clarification has been added regarding the funding being awarded from the TCEP Program on page 1-11.

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP 4-11*

The Avenue 17 to Avenue 12 project has been added to the SR 99 description on page 4-11.

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP 4-11*

The Avenue 17 to Avenue 12 project has been added to the Figure 4-7 on page 4-11.

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP 4-14*

Additional language has been added to the Finish SR99 section on page 4-14.

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP 4-15*

Future SR 99 project descriptions have been edited on page 4-15.

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP 4-16*

"projected" has been edited to read "project" on page 4-16.

#### *Technical Planning Draft RTP Appendix B*

The two referenced SR233/SR99 projects have been edited for clarity on D-2. If the projects can be combined to a singular project in the future, it will be reflected in the RTP.

### **System Planning Branch - District 6**

#### *General Comments*

MCTC understands future improvements on this segment may change. MCTC will continue to work with the City of Madera and Caltrans to make any amendments and air quality analyses as necessary if future changes are warranted.

#### **Office of Traffic Operations - District 6**

##### *General Comment 1*

Appendix K - Madera County Active Transportation Plan of the RTP is the primary planning document from which bicycle and pedestrian projects listed in the RTP are derived. Improving network connectivity was a key performance measure of the ATP development including how effective enhancements or expansions to the active transportation network are at bridging facility gaps. MCTC will continue to prioritize connectivity in future active transportation planning efforts.

##### *General Comment 2*

MCTC will continue to work with local agency partners in exploring appropriate VMT mitigation options including but not limited to Mitigation Bank and Mitigation Impact Fee Programs and reflect any new program establishment in the RTP.





August 31, 2022

Madeline Harris  
Regional Policy Manager  
Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability  
2210 San Joaquin St.  
Fresno, CA 93721

**Draft 2022 Madera County Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy  
Response to Comment**

Dear Ms. Harris,

Thank you for providing comments on the Draft 2022 Madera County Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Respectfully, Madera County Transportation Commission staff provide the attached responses to the comments provided in your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dylan Stone", is written over a faint, light-colored signature line.

Dylan Stone  
Principal Regional Planner



August 15, 2022

Madera County Transportation Commission % Dylan Stone & Patricia Taylor

Submitted electronically to:

[dylan@maderactc.org](mailto:dylan@maderactc.org)

[patricia@maderactc.org](mailto:patricia@maderactc.org)

Dear Mr. Stone and Ms. Taylor,

I am writing to provide comments on the Madera County Draft 2022 RTP/SCS update. Our organization and community residents in Fairmead and La Vina have uplifted a list of several projects in these communities to the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) and Madera County over the course of the past several years. Community leaders expressed these needs and priorities to MCTC at several workshops in 2021, requesting that they be added to the RTP/SCS update. We are writing to remind MCTC of the list of uplifted projects in Fairmead and La Vina as well as to reiterate residents' request that these projects be included in the RTP/SCS with clearly identified funding sources and implementation timelines.

**I. Public Transit:**

- A. Expanding Bus Service<sup>1</sup> in La Vina:** Restore the 6pm Bus Service, Expand Bus Service to Mondays, Expand Dial-a-Ride Eligibility, & Explore an Electric Rideshare Program.
- B. Adding a Second Bus Stop in Fairmead:** The RTP update should include transportation planning goals aimed at coordinating future public transit and other transportation improvements with the land use planning currently underway via the Fairmead Area Plan update. (E.g.: planning future transportation improvements around future development. Future affordable housing developments and the future Fairmead community center and library would be ideal locations for bus stops in Fairmead in the future.) The RTP must include language around this and plans to fund additional public transportation services and clean mobility infrastructure to future development in the community.

**II. Active Transportation & Clean Mobility Infrastructure:**

**A. La Vina:**

One of the key transportation priorities of La Vina residents for the past several years has been implementation of the La Vina Mobility Study. The Study was completed in January 2019, and

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<sup>1</sup> The bus service must be paired with basic active transportation infrastructure like sidewalks and street lighting (mentioned again below) in order to facilitate the first and last miles of our trips. This is particularly crucial for members of the community who use wheelchairs, which have a hard time moving through dust, dirt, and mud in areas where the community currently lacks sidewalks.

accepted by Madera County in July of 2019. We are glad to see that the Mobility Study is included in the Draft RTP/SCS, but urge MCTC to clearly identify the funding sources, concrete steps the County will take to implement the mobility study, and implementation timelines for each of those steps.

In addition to the projects outlined in the mobility study, residents would like for the following active transportation projects to be included in the RTP/SCS:

- Street lights along Avenue 9 (towards Rd 24 and Rd 23 ½)
- Installation of speed bumps on Ave 9 between Rd 24 and Rd 23 ½
- Installation of a stop sign with flashing lights at the intersection of Rd 24 and Ave 7.
- Installation of gutters/stormwater drainage at the La Vina Elementary parking lot and construction of additional parking and school dropoff space.

**B. Fairmead:**

The following active transportation projects were raised by Fairmead residents to MCTC during the community tour and RTP/SCS workshop MCTC held in the community of Fairmead.

- Sidewalks, speed bumps, and street lighting on Maple St and Ave 22 ¾ in front of Fairmead Elementary School
- Flashing stop signs and regular stop signs throughout the community
- Street lighting or flashing lights along Fairmead Blvd near Gordon Street since this is a long bend in the road where it is very dark at night.
- Street lighting on Sycamore Ave
- Streets lighting near Fairmead Blvd
- Stormwater Drainage at Ave 22 1/2 and Hickory. It floods here when it rains (near the two-story white house with the white fence).
- Include EV charging stations at the future Fairmead community center and library on the project list.

**III. Road Repair and Repavement:**

Fairmead and La Vina residents also advocated to MCTC that the following projects be included in the RTP/SCS with clear funding sources and timelines:

**A. La Vina:**

- Repave Rd 24 (the small patch fixes haven't been working and it needs to be repaved)
- Repave Rd 23 and Rd 25
- Repave/rehabilitate Ave 7 near the community
- Canal cleanup at the intersection of Rd 24 and Ave 10, and Rd 25.

**B. Fairmead:**

- Prioritize and emphasize local road repair and ensure industry is paying for damage to local roads through impact fees. (E.g.: one resident shared that dairy trucks come up and down Fairmead Blvd every day and cause a lot of damage to the road.)
- Hickory street needs to repaved
- Paving Sycamore Street and other dirt roads nearby which connect several homes to Fairmead Elementary School. This route is a route for children to get to school and is difficult or impossible to walk when it rains.
- Maple St and Ave 22 1/2 has a giant dip in the road that floods and causes damage to cars. It must be re-graded and repaved, and there should be additional stormwater drainage here as well.
- The Fairmead Landfill produces a lot of truck trips through Fairmead on the west side of Hwy 99 which causes lots of damage to local roads. Caglia should be paying for these impacts and these roads must be repaired.
- Ave 22 and Ave 22 1/2 are also streets where heavy duty agricultural equipment and trucks from nearby ranches cause impacts to the local roads. The repairs/repavement should be paid for by the companies causing these impacts.
- The truck trips and heavy duty ag equipment that travels through the community pose significant air quality problems in the community. The RTP/SCS must include policies and projects to reduce the GHG emissions from industrial transportation in the community and include mitigation measures like truck rerouting to correct this environmental injustice in Fairmead.

#### **IV. High Speed Rail Road Improvements & Construction in Fairmead:**

A. Fairmead Community & Friends has executed a memorandum of understanding with the High Speed Rail Authority in which the Authority agreed to directly fund and construct the following projects. The Draft RTP/SCS update should include these projects for the sake of consistent transportation planning and indicate that the HSRA will fund and construct these improvements:

- Road 18 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and Road 20 - Two vehicular crossings.
- Avenue 22 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.5 miles).
- Arnott Drive - Sidewalk installation (0.15 miles).
- Moore Street - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.15 miles).
- Multi-use trail along Road 19 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> between Avenue 24 and Avenue 22 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (1.25 miles).
- Avenue 23 - Sidewalk installation (0.75 miles).
- Grading of Sycamore St between Avenue 22 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> and Avenue 22 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (0.25 miles).
- Yates Avenue - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.3 miles).
- Road 19 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.25 miles).
- Elm Street - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.3 miles).
- Fairmead Circle - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.12 miles).
- Hickory Street - Roadway repairs and sidewalk installations (0.25 miles).

- Fairmead Blvd. - Roadway improvements, sidewalk installations, and landscaping (1.65 miles).
- Sinclair Drive - Roadway improvements, sidewalk installations, and landscaping (0.2 miles).
- Maple Street - Roadway improvements, sidewalk installations, and landscaping (0.4 miles).
- Avenue 22 ½ - Street repair, sidewalk installation, and stormwater management (0.75 miles).
- Avenue 22 ½ bus stop - Installation of streetlights.
- HSR corridor - Landscaping (1.75 miles).
- Road 19 ½ bus stop - As part of the landscaping improvements, HSRA will work with FC&F to consider and design lighting for the planned.

## **V. Broadband Infrastructure**

Both Fairmead and La Vina residents have expressed that broadband infrastructure is a key priority for their communities given the high cost and low reliability of internet in their communities. MCTC clarified at the RTP/SCS workshops that broadband infrastructure is a critical transportation issue, and we are glad to see that expanding broadband internet access is a key priority in the Draft RTP/SCS. That said, the Action Element fails to outline what steps will be taken and by whom in order to move this priority forward, beyond highlighting the Broadband for All Initiative as one possible resource. Funding sources and a timeline for next steps (e.g. allocating ARPA dollars, applying for grants, conducting a feasibility study, etc.) should be included to make this priority implementable.

## **VI. Clarification on Financially Constrained vs. Unconstrained Projects**

Upon reviewing the current RTP draft, we also found that the constrained project list was unclear as only the unconstrained project list is clearly identified, and some of the projects on the comprehensive project list have timelines and cost estimates while others do not. We urge MCTC to amend their RTP to include each of the projects community advocated for on their constrained project list with identified funding sources and clear timelines for implementation, which are currently missing.

Do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions about the contents of our letter. We hope you will work directly with us to advance these priorities and equitably plan to meet the needs of Madera County communities in this RTP/SCS update.

Respectfully,

Madeline Harris  
Regional Policy Manager

## **Response to comments received from the Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability**

### **Public Transit**

#### *Expanding Bus Service<sup>1</sup> in La Viña*

Comment noted. The Madera County Connection has recently expanded service on the Eastern Arcola - Ripperdan - La Viña to include Monday Service. MCTC will forward all prospective new public transit service requests and related infrastructure project to the responsible agency and continue to collaborate and plan on effective strategies to deliver all needed improvements. MCTC will coordinate with the responsible agency to collect all necessary information to amend these projects into the RTP upon request of the responsible agency.

#### *Adding a Second Bus Stop in Fairmead*

Additional language has been added to RTP page 4-35 to reflect MCTC commitment to supporting Fairmead planning efforts. MCTC is in contact with Madera County and Mintier Harnish about planning efforts occurring in Fairmead in an effort to ensure effective coordination and planning related to transportation improvements in the area. MCTC will work with Madera County transit providers to ensure they can appropriately consider changes to the Fairmead area as they make operational decisions for their services to Fairmead residents.

### **Active Transportation & Clean Mobility Infrastructure**

#### *La Viña*

Comment noted. MCTC continues to support Madera County efforts to fund and implement the La Viña Mobility Plan and their efforts to leverage state or federal funding program opportunities to expediate implementation. Additionally, MCTC will forward all prospective new projects to the responsible agency and continue to collaborate and plan on effective strategies to deliver all needed improvements. MCTC will coordinate with the responsible agency to collect all necessary information to amend these projects into the RTP upon request of the responsible agency.

#### *Fairmead*

Comment noted. MCTC have contacted Madera County and Mintier Harnish about planning efforts occurring in Fairmead in an effort to ensure effective coordination and planning related to transportation improvements in the area. MCTC will forward all prospective new projects to the responsible agency and continue to collaborate and plan on effective strategies to deliver all needed improvements. MCTC will coordinate with the responsible agency to collect all necessary information to amend these projects into the RTP upon request of the responsible agency.

### **Road Repair and Re-pavement**

#### *La Viña*

Comment noted. MCTC will forward all prospective new projects to the responsible agency and continue to collaborate and plan on effective strategies to deliver all needed improvements. MCTC will coordinate

with the responsible agency to collect all necessary information to amend these projects into the RTP upon request of the responsible agency.

#### *Fairmead*

Comment noted. MCTC have contacted Madera County and Mintier Harnish about planning efforts occurring in Fairmead in an effort to ensure effective coordination and planning related to transportation improvements in the area. MCTC will forward all prospective new projects to the responsible agency and continue to collaborate and plan on effective strategies to deliver all needed improvements. MCTC will coordinate with the responsible agency to collect all necessary information to amend these projects into the RTP upon request of the responsible agency.

#### **High Speed Railroad Improvements & Construction in Fairmead**

MCTC is currently in the process of coordinating with the responsible agency to collect all necessary information for projects relevant to the Fairmead/CHSRA MOU so they may be amended into the RTP.

#### **Broadband Infrastructure**

MCTC will continue to work with local agencies and partners to identify potential funding opportunities and establish clearly defined projects able to meet broadband infrastructure needs in the region.

#### **Clarification on Financially Constrained vs. Unconstrained Projects**

Projects, both federally funded and non-federally funded, deemed to be regionally significant additions or modifications to the existing transportation network are required to indicate the open to traffic year so they may be properly accounted for in required state and federal air quality assessments.

Fiscal constraint is the demonstration of sufficient funding (Federal, State, local and private) to operate and maintain transportation facilities and services and to implement planned and programmed transportation system improvements. The projects in the unconstrained project list are illustrative. Unconstrained projects may be included in the RTP if additional funding or resources were to become available. The unconstrained projects are listed apart from the fiscally constrained projects.