

## Project Description

The project, as defined pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21065, is the preparation of the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) is in the process of preparing the 2022 RTP/SCS as required by Section 65080 et seq., of Chapter 2.5 of the California Government Code, federal guidelines pursuant to new requirements established in the federal surface transportation reauthorization, “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (MAP-21) and the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Acts, Transportation Conformity for the Air Quality Attainment Plan per 40 CFR Part 51 and 40 CFR Part 93, and requirements set forth in *Assembly Bill 32, The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*, and *Senate Bill 375 The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008*. Finally, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) has prepared guidelines (most recently adopted by the CTC on January 18, 2017) to assist in the preparation of the RTP/SCS.

The last comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the RTP was completed in July 2018, which addressed transportation improvement projects, programs, and funding reflected in the 2018 RTP/SCS including funding from the approved ½ Cent Sales Tax Measure Extension (Measure C).

The 2022 RTP/SCS will address all transportation modes including motor vehicles, transit (commuter and local), rail (commuter and interregional), goods movement (rail freight and trucking), bicycle and pedestrian facilities, aviation systems, and transportation systems management (TSM) programs and projects considering the horizon year of 2046. In addition, the 2022 RTP/SCS will:

- ✓ Identify the region’s transportation goals, objectives, and policies
- ✓ Include the SCS, which demonstrates how the region will meet its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target through integrated land use, and housing and transportation planning. *Once adopted by Fresno COG, the SCS becomes an integral part of the RTP*
- ✓ Set forth an action plan of projects and programs to address the needs consistent with the Policy Element
- ✓ Document the financial resources needed to implement the plan
- ✓ Reflect results of the Transportation Conformity Analysis
- ✓ Highlight the 2022 RTP/SCS EIR process and results
- ✓ Detail the RTP/SCS public outreach process
- ✓ Include the Environmental Justice analysis process

Specifically, the RTP/SCS will include the following recommended and required sections:

- ✓ Executive Summary – Provides a regional perspective & identifies challenges & objectives
- ✓ Regional environmental issues
- ✓ Air quality documentation needs
- ✓ Potential environmental mitigation activities to maintain/restore the affected environment
- ✓ Policy Element - Identifies legislative, planning, financial & institutional issues & requirements, & areas of regional consensus

- ✓ *Action Element* - Describes programs & actions to implement the RTP, including the SCS, & assigns implementation responsibilities
- ✓ *Financial Element*: Identifies current & anticipated revenue sources & financing techniques to fund planned investments described in the Action Element
- ✓ *Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)*: A forecasted development pattern integrated with the transportation network, measures & policies, resulting in reduced GHG emissions

## Preliminary 2022 RTP Project Alternatives & SCS Alternative Scenarios

The following preliminary 2022 RTP/SCS project alternatives may be addressed in the PEIR:

- ✓ No Project
- ✓ Preferred SCS Scenario
- ✓ Other Alternative SCS Scenarios

## CEQA Streamlining (SB 375 and SB 226)

Senate Bill (SB) 375 and SB 226 provide “exemptions” for certain types of projects from CEQA review or projects may qualify for streamlined review if they conform to the regional SCS or the APS (if applicable). Projects qualify for streamlined California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review even if they conflict with local plans following adoption of the SCS.

## Environmental Issues to be Addressed in the PEIR

The programs and projects to be included in the 2022 RTP/SCS will be analyzed through development of the PEIR. This will allow Fresno COG to analyze the regional or general impacts of the programs and projects. A more detailed or project level environmental assessment (if required) of the various projects included in the RTP/SCS will be conducted by the various responsible agencies including Caltrans, Fresno County, and the cities within the County before the projects are approved for construction and implementation.

Potential environmental impacts that could result from the Project include project impacts to:

- ✓ Aesthetics
- ✓ Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- ✓ Air Quality
- ✓ Biological Resources
- ✓ Climate Change
- ✓ Cultural Resources & Tribal Cultural Resources
- ✓ Energy and Energy Conservation
- ✓ Geology/Soils/Mineral Resources
- ✓ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ✓ Hydrology and Water Quality
- ✓ Land Use, Planning, and Recreation
- ✓ Noise and Vibration

- ✓ Population, Housing, and Employment
- ✓ Public Utilities, Other Utilities, and Services Systems
- ✓ Social and Economic Effects
- ✓ Transportation/Traffic
- ✓ Alternatives (noted above), Cumulative Effects, Growth Inducing Impacts, and Other Issues required by CEQA
- ✓ Mandatory Findings of Significance