



San Joaquin Council of Governments

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a 25-year vision and investment plan that provides a comprehensive look at future transportation needs in San Joaquin County. In San Joaquin County, SJCOG serves as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency and the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for developing, adopting, and regularly updating the RTP to develop regional goals and priority lists of transportation projects. The current RTP was adopted by the SJCOG Board of Directors in 2014, and work is now underway for the 2018 RTP update.

Federal and state regulations require every region in California to adopt an RTP in order for transportation projects to qualify for federal and state funding. They involve years of modeling, planning, and public outreach and are required to be updated every four years. SJCOG is responsible for leading the RTP process every four years to reflect emerging trends in population growth and economic development, as well as to report progress on projects and Plan performance. By the time an RTP is completed, there is often little or no time to implement and assess it before it is time to start developing the next one.

Proposed Change to RTP Update Requirements

In addition to several other Metropolitan Planning Organizations, SJCOG believes that RTPs would be more useful if they were required to be updated less frequently. Allowing RTPs to be updated every eight to ten years instead of every four would save the County significant time and money and make the process of planning and programming much more efficient.

The San Joaquin Council of Governments supports modifying the RTP schedule to more than four years to avoid the following:

- The legal exposure of RTPs adopted every four years. The costs associated with defending an RTP to a legal challenge can easily increase an MPO's expenses by over 50%. This is not an eligible federal expense.
- The existing schedule of adopting an RTP every four years means staff is constantly working on an RTP. As a result, staff is unable to undertake meaningful planning work in order to produce what is meant to be a comprehensive document, every four years.
- The Regional Transportation Plan now runs concurrent with the Regional Transportation Improvement Program producing something of a programming overlap in the two documents. In modifying the RTP schedule, we hope to use the RTP as a long-range outlook as it was intended.

SJCOG and One Voice support legislation that would allow RTPs to be updated every eight to ten years instead of every four. SJCOG is working with other California Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Kern and Tulare counties and Leader McCarthy's office on draft legislation.