



SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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January 23, 2012

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We at SJCOG, along with the Central Valley and Northern California transportation community, mourn the passing of our Deputy Director Dana Cowell, who passed away on the morning of January 21, 2012 after a long bout with cancer.

Dana joined SJCOG in 2006 after serving in a number of key transportation posts over the course of 26 years with the California Department of Transportation.

SJCOG Executive Director Andrew Chesley stated, “We have lost a friend, a colleague, a mentor, a true professional who brought dedication, enjoyment, and excellence to his work. We were indeed fortunate to have Dana’s talents in San Joaquin County.”

Last year Dana was named “Transportation Manager of the Year” by the California Transportation Foundation for his dedication to overcoming obstacles to transportation projects. “Dana leads by example and has dedicated his career to team work and overcoming opposition to deliver the best transportation projects possible for the citizens of California,” Caltrans’ District 4 Deputy Director Julie Dunning wrote in her nomination of Dana for the award. “He has always instilled a sense of trust between partners.”

Among Dana’s recent notable accomplishments are critical safety improvements about to go into construction along State Route 12 through San Joaquin County. Dana led a partnership with Caltrans to develop intersection upgrades between Interstate 5 and Potato Slough Bridge highlighted by the complete redesign of the SR 12-Tower Parkway-Glasscock Road intersection. The construction contract for this \$20 million project was awarded earlier this month. Projects on I-5, Route 99, I-205 and Arch Road in Stockton all benefited from his commitment to transportation.

Dana also worked with Sacramento and Bay Area transportation leaders to craft the Northern California Trade Corridor Projects, directed SJCOG’s organization of the Valley Wide State Transportation Improvement Program and initiated SJCOG efforts to advance modeling techniques and planning tools in response to Senate Bill 375, which requires reductions of greenhouse gas emissions.

Dana was well-known and respected by transportation planners throughout the state. His significant knowledge and contributions, dedication, and warm friendship will be missed in the profession.

Dana is survived by his wife, Van Ha To-Cowell, and the couple's two sons Evan and Andrew. He is also survived by his mother, and two brothers and their families, as well as by numerous members of his wife's family, with whom he was every close.

Dana was raised in Wisconsin and received his Masters of Science in Urban Planning from the University of Tennessee, where he met Van Ha To. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Geography from Carthage College, Wisconsin.

His Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, February 4, 2012 at 11:00 a.m. at the Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton.

SJCOG has created a memorial page on Facebook where you can leave condolences for Dana's family or share a special memory.