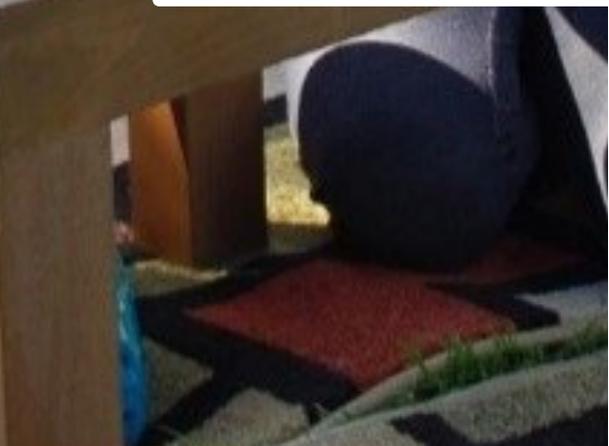




# CHAPTER 3

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## The Building Blocks Policies and Supportive Strategies



# THREE

The policies in this element of the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy are the building blocks for developing the plan and maintaining internal consistency with other plan elements. They tackle San Joaquin County transportation issues and quantify regional needs through 2046.

The plan policy element carries forward core policies from 2018 and focuses on supporting implementation and accelerating it through innovation.

Overall, the policy element is used to build a financially constrained action plan. The policies help balance investments that maintain the roadway system, enhance safety and provide congestion relief, and integrate technological advances as part of the transportation solution.



## The Policy Element

The policy element advances the requirements of what the plan must include under Senate Bill 375. In detail, it must:

- Identify existing and future land use patterns.
- Consider statutory housing goals and objectives.
- Identify areas to accommodate long-term housing needs.
- Identify areas to accommodate eight-year housing needs.
- Consider resource areas and farmland.
- Identify transportation needs and the planned transportation network.
- Set forth a future land use pattern to meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
- Comply with federal law for developing the Regional Transportation Plan.

The plan, with all that it is required to do, cannot

dictate local general plans. Land use development decisions remain the purview of local agencies. Instead, the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) component of the plan provides a regional policy foundation for local governments to build on. To promote sustainability goals across the region, local jurisdictions can use the SCS and potential streamlining benefits to advance new development that is consistent or exceeds the goals outlined in the plan.

To encourage sustainable development, SJCOG continues to support compatible land use projects by helping public and private developers in seeking grants and taking advantage of streamlining benefits provided by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). While carrying out the construction of billions of dollars in transportation improvements is a clear measure of progress, SJCOG plays many roles to further the ambitious goals of the plan. Some of these are ongoing programs for SJCOG, while others represent new areas of work.





## Stockton Mobility Collective

The Stockton Mobility Collective (SMC) is an exciting new and transformative project, which was established due to funding from the California Air Resources Board (CARB). CARB awarded SJCOG \$7.4 million from its grant program called Sustainable Transportation Equity Project (STEP). The goal of the project is to increase transportation equity in disadvantaged and low-income communities. The project is aimed at improving and increasing transportation options for Stockton residents who are looking for clean, affordable ways to travel.

**Community Engagement:** There will be early and on-going opportunities through 2024 for the community to receive updates and provide feedback on the project. Community engagement activities include stakeholder working group meetings, demonstration events, workshops, and more.

**Vamos Mobility:** The Vamos Mobility App is being expanded to connect Stockton residents with the SMC carsharing and bikesharing services. Additionally, EZHub mobile ticketing on the app will be expanded to Stanislaus County transit systems.

**Carsharing Services:** The carsharing program will provide 30 electric vehicles at approximately six or seven stations centered in Downtown Stockton along major north-south transportation corridors connecting city residents to services, resources, shopping, schools and jobs. The service is scheduled to be operational by the end of 2022.

**Bikeshare Service:** The SMC's bikesharing program will provide Stockton residents access to 100 electric-assist smart bikes at approximately 12 stations or hubs that host five to 12 bikes per station. The service is scheduled to be operational by the end of 2022.

**Workforce Development:** The project will focus on creating a pipeline for jobs in shared mobility operations and their components such as Electric Vehicle Service Equipment (EVSE) installation, electric vehicle (EV) maintenance and equipment repair, and management and operations of EVs and e-bikesharing fleet networks.

**Mobility Wallet:** A new pilot program will provide transit incentives to qualifying residents in the project area to reduce any cost burden associated with using the new shared mobility programs.

## Foundational Elements in the Policy Development Process

### San Joaquin Valley Blueprint

In 2006, the eight counties comprising the San Joaquin Valley secured funding from the California Department of Transportation to develop a valley-wide transportation, land use, and environmental Blueprint Vision to the year 2050. The Blueprint recognized that economic, environmental, and social issues are interdependent and only integrated approaches would affect needed changes. The Blueprint effort recognized that addressing one topic without recognizing potential impacts in other areas would not be enough. As an example, the location of jobs, housing and commerce affects the transportation system, the nature of the transportation system affects air quality, and air quality affects health outcomes.

After a series of community-based workshops conducted throughout the region in January 2010, the SJCOG Board of Directors adopted the San Joaquin County Regional Blueprint Vision to the Year 2050.

The Blueprint established a coordinated, long-range regional vision for transportation, land use, and the

environment from an overall quality-of-life perspective.

Building the Blueprint involved a bottom-up approach beginning with input from the community. The related technical analyses and public outreach efforts laid the groundwork for the planning framework for subsequent RTP/SCS plans.

### Regional Congestion Management Process

The Regional Congestion Management Process (RCMP) is an essential component of the plan development because it:

- Provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the entire multimodal transportation system.
- Assesses the level of congestion on the regional transportation network.
- Organizes and integrates strategies into the RTP.
- Uses performance measures to assess the benefits RTP strategies provide the region.
- Generates and collects data to apply the performance measures for system monitoring.
- Implements a process that minimizes to the extent possible single-occupancy vehicle trips from new development.

The RCMP roadway network includes all highways and regionally significant arterials adopted by the SJCOG Board of Directors. Its assessment and monitoring help determine near-term, midterm and long-term projects, making it an important tool for project funding prioritization. This is significant due to performance-based planning requirements in the 2022 plan.

SJCOG staff are actively monitoring new requirements for regional and local agencies and disseminating information to its local agency partners.



## Measure K Expenditure Plan

In November 2006, San Joaquin County voters renewed Measure K for an additional 30 years beyond the original 2011 expiration date. The Measure K Expenditure Plan identifies the countywide transportation facility and service improvements, including highway, public transit, railroad grade crossing, passenger rail, and bicycle projects to be delivered by a half-cent sales tax dedicated to transportation improvements in San Joaquin County. The Expenditure Plan also outlines the distribution of all project category allocations between the local jurisdictions in the county. The sales tax revenue generated by the Measure K program along with the policies, projects and programs identified in the Measure K Expenditure Plan have been incorporated into the plan as appropriate.



## Regional Transit System Plan

In 2016, SJCOG completed the comprehensive update to the San Joaquin County Regional Transit Systems Plan (RTSP). The RTSP is a long-range transit plan that looks at bus and rail transit needs, their related costs, and a financial forecast of anticipated funding through 2024.

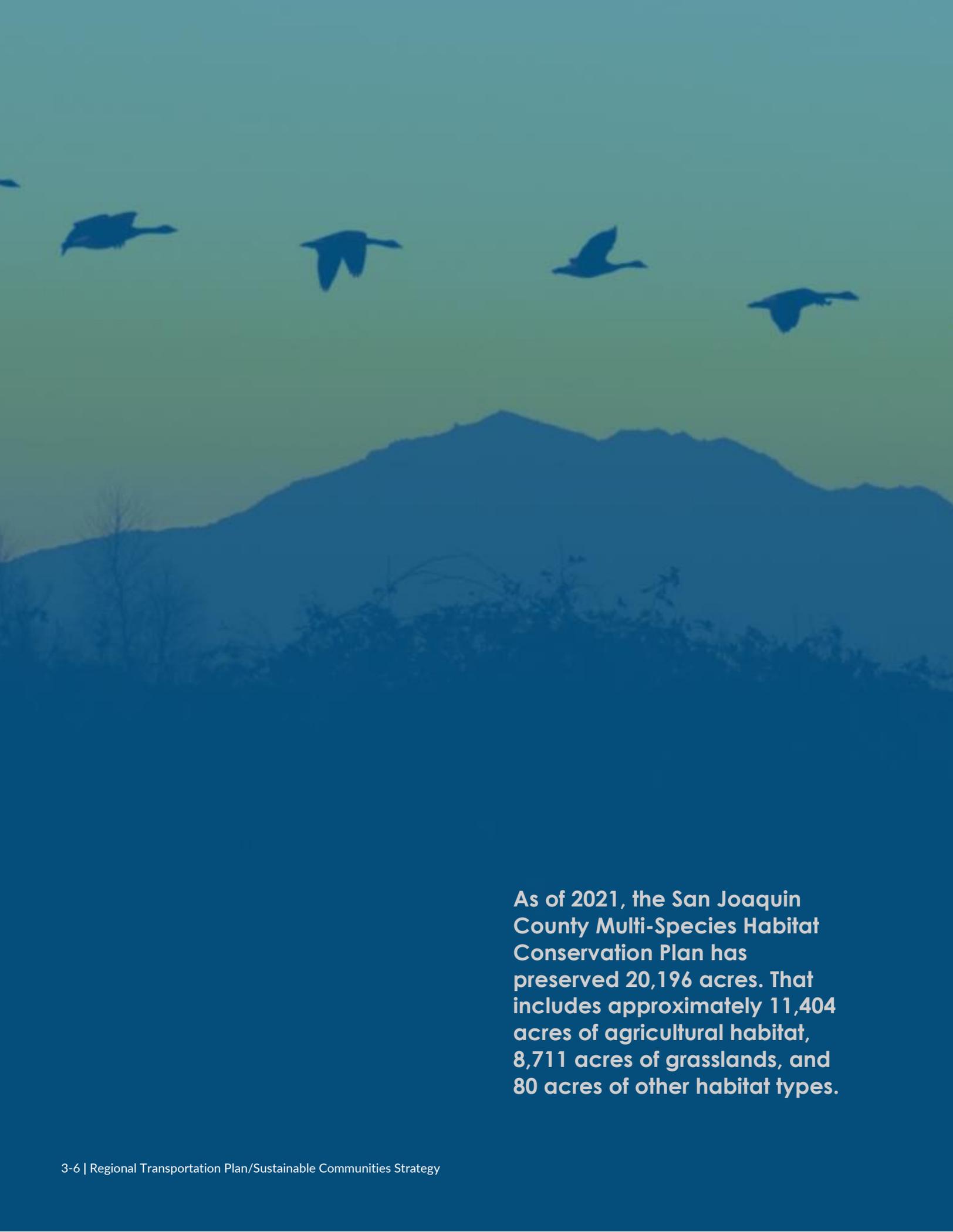
The RTSP showed that many transit operators did not receive enough revenue to finance their proposed systems, resulting in funding shortfalls. Overall, the RTSP forecasted \$1.02 billion in project revenue against \$1.23 billion in anticipated transit costs. This required transit operators to reexamine their system expansion plans and reduce operating costs, identify strategies to bring in discretionary funding, and find other innovations to deliver public transit services.

The RTSP delved further than simply outlining funding shortfalls. It included a discussion of strategic transit investments and identified policies and practices to be developed. Six “action areas” have been initiated for guiding decision-making in the years to come:

- Collaborative forums and coalition building.
- Find cost and investment efficiencies.
- Improve the fiscal health of transit.
- Modernize the transit system.
- Enhance supportive land use policies and practices.
- Change funding policy.



Photo Credit: San Joaquin Regional Transit District



**As of 2021, the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan has preserved 20,196 acres. That includes approximately 11,404 acres of agricultural habitat, 8,711 acres of grasslands, and 80 acres of other habitat types.**

## San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan

SJCOG Inc., a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization whose governing board consists of SJCOG Board members, administers the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP). The key purpose of the SJMSCP is to:

- Provide a strategy for balancing the need to conserve open space and the need to convert open space to non-open space uses, while protecting the region's agricultural economy.
- Preserve landowner property rights.
- Provide for the long-term management of plant, fish, and wildlife species, especially those that are currently listed, or may be listed in the future, under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).
- Provide and maintain multiple-use open spaces which contribute to the quality of life of the residents of San Joaquin County.
- Accommodate a growing population while minimizing costs to project proponents and society at large.

The SJMSCP helps to reduce the loss of wildlife and property by lessening the impact of development on open space in San Joaquin County. Through the SJMSCP, SJCOG looks at potential impacts to agricultural and resource lands and tracks actual development activities, as compared to the projected development in the plan.

## Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian and Safe Routes to School Master Plan

This document was instrumental in developing the future bicycle infrastructure network and pinpointing possible need for revenues to be allocated to the Active Transportation Element of the plan. As local agencies are currently developing updates to their own bicycle master plans, SJCOG will monitor the need and feasibility of updating the Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian and Safe Routes to School Master Plan.

## Higher Density Housing Study

The 2012 Valley Blueprint completed by The Concord Group looked at a variety of current economic and demographic data to produce a snapshot of both consumer- and viability-driven estimates of demand for various housing product types. The conclusions and results of this study were directly incorporated into the scenario planning exercises for the 2018 plan. The housing split goals of the 2022 plan were directly connected to this study.



Photo Credit: Captivating Photos

## Local Agency Climate Action Plans

There are several local agencies that have adopted climate action plans. Tracy adopted its Sustainability Action Plan in 2011 to become the first local agency to have a climate action plan in San Joaquin County. Manteca, Lodi, and Stockton followed Tracy's lead by adopting their climate action plans in 2013 and 2014. These climate initiatives are well into their implementation phases and continue to help shape the planning process.

## Resiliency and Climate Adaptation

"Resiliency" is a term commonly used in disaster risk management to describe how durable something is in emergency conditions and its ability to return to normal if affected. For example, resiliency may refer to the ability of a bridge to withstand an earthquake. In the context of transportation infrastructure, projects are usually planned for everyday use but not

for disruptive events such as extreme weather or terrorist attacks. A new federal planning requirement asks MPOs such as SJCOG to ensure future transportation planning efforts focus not only on daily travel but also on enhancing the resiliency and reliability of the entire system.

“Adaptation” is a term used to refer to the built environment reacting to changing conditions brought about by the effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels or temperature fluctuations. State guidance encourages regional agencies to incorporate actions that will help in meeting state goals for adaptation preparedness in responding to climate change. Considerations will differ regionally and may include preparing for effects associated with flooding of airports or roadways, landslides that may interrupt traffic flow or rail lines, heat waves or subsidence causing roadway buckling, or increased maintenance attributable to fire damage or erosion.

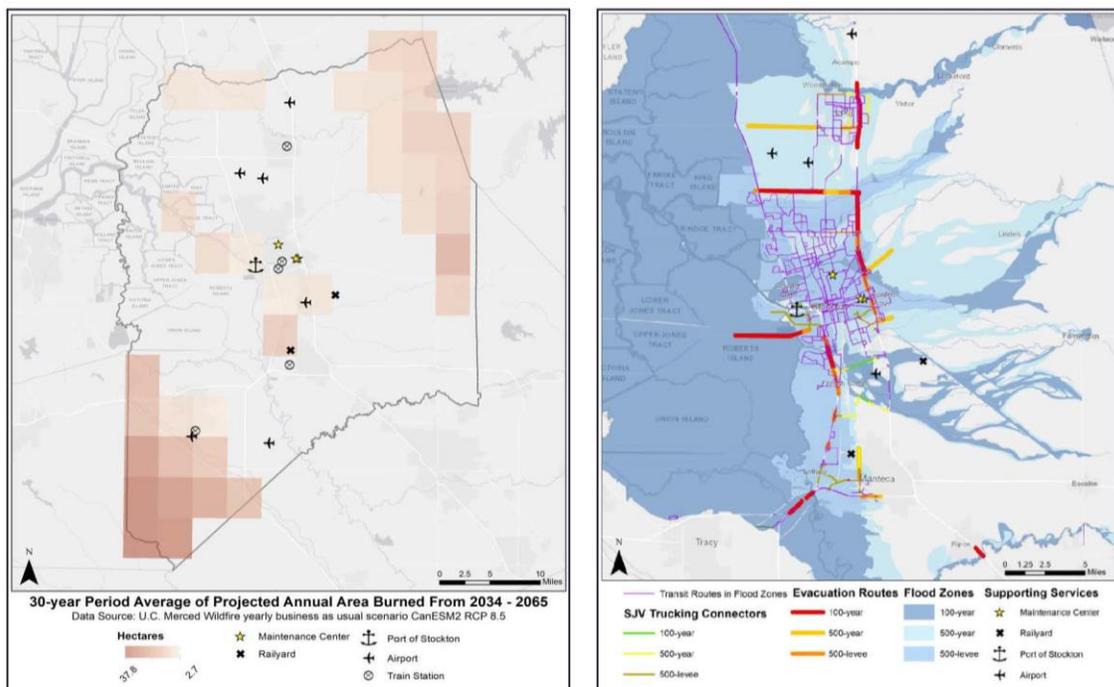
Transportation infrastructure durability and resilience is a priority for SJCOG and, as an initial step in preparing a transportation resiliency plan for the county, the agency will partner with local jurisdictions and provide supportive tools to ensure the region can withstand changes to the climate or other disrupting events.

In 2020, SJCOG completed the Adaptation and Resiliency Study to determine the vulnerability of the region’s transportation system to extreme weather, such as increased rainfall, high heat, flooding, draught, and wildfires (Figure 3.1). The study also identified gaps in existing plans throughout the county when it came to evacuation and hazard mitigation.

Other existing regional initiatives in climate adaptation include increasing the availability of affordable housing, encouraging sustainable land use planning that reduces farmland loss, and investing in sustainable transportation. Local agency climate action plans are instrumental in carrying out these activities.

Plan strategies and policies focusing on climate change will build on existing local, state, and federal regulations supporting resiliency planning and adaptation measures. In addition to local efforts, SJCOG supports state implementation of Assembly Bill 1482 (Climate Adaptation), Senate Bill 246 (Climate Change Adaptation), Senate Bill 350 (Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Supporting Act of 2015), and associated executive orders, and looks forward to collaborating with various state agencies to achieve targets and goals.

**Figure 3.1 - Maps from SJCOG’s Adaptation and Resiliency Study**





# The Plan in Action

## Future Studies for Implementation

Senate Bill 1, The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, provides planning funds to metropolitan planning organizations to implement RTPs and their SCS elements. In 2022, SJCOG will continue studies for ongoing efforts to support plan policies and supportive strategies. Four studies are outlined below:

- **Regional Resiliency Implementation Plan and Adaptation Guidance (Phase II):** The study includes strategy recommendations, project development guidance, and resources and tools to promote transportation resiliency and reliability in SJCOG's planning and programming activities.
- **Gentrification and Displacement Risk Assessment of San Joaquin County:** This is a regional assessment to understand the risk of gentrification and displacement. This will guide future regional planning and investment and assist local agencies with implementing policies to protect existing residents as new major investments in public infrastructure are made.
- **Active Transportation Plan in Priority Neighborhoods:** This study examines existing bike and walking infrastructure across the region to determine what barriers communities with higher rates of health disparities may face in improving physical health. It determines program and project needs for improving public health, reducing congestion, and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions at the neighborhood scale and helps local jurisdictions with pursuing implementation funds.
- **Alternative Fuels Vision Plan:** This study will evaluate connection gaps of electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling locations in the regional transportation system. A strategic roadmap for the region and local agencies will help shape the build-out of a robust alternative fuels network and assist with securing implementation funding.

## The Plan Policies and Supportive Strategies

The policies listed in this section (Table 3.1) have been carried forward from the 2018 plan due to their continuing relevancy to the current aspirations of the region. The supportive strategies for the policies are the result of a different approach than that for the 2018 plan. For the 2018 plan, SJCOG staff developed discrete scenarios and recommended one to the SJCOG Board of Directors. For the 2022 plan, SJCOG staff evaluated potential strategies based

on their performance in identified future trends using the following metrics: 1) Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), 2) Transit Ridership, and 3) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.

Many of the following strategies performed well in multiple future trends and received strong public support during the outreach process for the plan. Please see Chapter 1 and Appendix S for more details on the strategy development and selection process.

**Table 3.1: Policies and Supportive Strategies**

### **Policy: Enhance the Environment for Existing and Future Generations and Conserve Energy**

**Strategy No. 1:** Encourage efficient development patterns that maintain agricultural viability and natural resources.

**Strategy No. 2:** Encourage preservation of natural resources.

**Strategy No. 3:** Enhance the connection between land use and transportation choices through projects supporting energy and water efficiency.

**Strategy No. 4:** Improve air quality by reducing transportation-related emissions.

### **Policy: Maximize Mobility and Accessibility**

**Strategy No. 5:** Optimize the public transportation system to provide efficient and convenient access for users of all income levels.

**Strategy No. 6:** Encourage infill development and development near transit, including transit-oriented development to maximize existing transit investments.

**Strategy No. 7:** Provide transportation improvements to facilitate nonmotorized travel, including incorporation of complete streets elements as appropriate.

**Strategy No. 8:** Improve freight access to key strategic economic centers.

**Strategy No. 9:** Promote safe and efficient strategies to improve the movement of goods by air, water, rail, and roadway.

**Policy: Increase Safety and Security**

**Strategy No. 10:** Facilitate projects that reduce the number and severity of traffic incidents.

**Strategy No. 11:** Support local and state efforts for transportation network resiliency, reliability, and climate adaptation.

**Policy: Preserve the Efficiency of the Existing Transportation System**

**Strategy No. 12:** Prioritize projects that make more efficient use of the existing road network.

**Strategy No. 13:** Support the continued maintenance and preservation of the existing transportation system.

**Strategy No. 14:** Promote electric power, alternative fuels and autonomous technologies for freight and agriculture.

**Strategy No. 15:** Manage the adoption of electric vehicles and private connected and autonomous vehicles.

**Strategy No. 16:** Promote electric power, alternative fuels, and autonomous technologies for public transit.

**Policy: Support Economic Vitality**

**Strategy No. 17:** Support transportation improvements that improve economic competitiveness, revitalize commercial corridors and strategic economic centers, and enhance travel and tourism opportunities.

**Strategy No. 18:** Support workforce training across industries, particularly transportation-related industries.

**Strategy No. 19:** Encourage and/or strengthen small business while supporting large employer recruitment.

**Strategy No. 20:** Invest in high-speed internet infrastructure to support e-business and reduce commuting.

**Policy: Promote Interagency Coordination and Public Participation for Transportation Decision-Making and Planning Efforts**

**Strategy No. 21:** Provide equitable access to transportation planning.

**Strategy No. 22:** Engage the public early, clearly, and continuously.

**Strategy No. 23:** Use a variety of methods to engage the public and encourage representation from diverse income and ethnic backgrounds.

**Policy: Maximize Cost-Effectiveness**

**Strategy No. 24:** Support efforts to streamline the development process.

**Strategy No. 25:** Support the use of state and federal grants to supplement local funding and pursue discretionary grant funding opportunities from outside the region.

**Strategy No. 26:** Support projects that maximize cost-effectiveness.

**Strategy No. 27:** Maximize funding of existing transportation options.

**Policy: Improve the Quality of Life for Residents**

**Strategy No. 28:** Promote a broader range of housing types.

**Strategy No. 29:** Support the development a regional trust fund dedicated to addressing housing issues.

**Strategy No. 30:** Enhance public health through active transportation projects.



Photo Credit: Visit Stockton

## Conclusion

As a result of the civic engagement process, SJCOG was able to conclude that the goals and many of the supportive strategies in the 2018 plan continue to resonate with San Joaquin County residents. Continuing forward with a similar set of goals and performance measures allows staff to focus on implementation efforts for realizing the plan's ambitious sustainability focus. The resulting 2022 plan continues to identify increased housing and employment densities to support a multimodal transportation system, while also promoting transportation alternatives to the car. It encourages

active transportation such as biking and walking, which helps improve the health of those in our communities. It complies with federal Clean Air Act goals and SB 375 greenhouse gas emissions targets through a transportation system that reduces harmful air pollution emissions in accordance with these laws. With its ambitious approach to carrying out these policies, the plan builds a transportation system that ultimately keeps pace with projected population, employment, and housing growth.