

# StanCOG Regional News



Planning for Tomorrow's  
Transportation Needs Today

## On the Move

A quarterly publication of the Stanislaus Council of Governments

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Special Report on City of Waterford Traffic Signal and SR-99 Project

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### Opening of New Whitmore/SR-99 Interchange in Ceres

The completion of the highly-anticipated Whitmore/State Route 99 Interchange was commemorated with great fanfare at a Caltrans ribbon-cutting ceremony in April attended by dignitaries, officials, and citizens of Ceres—including the Ceres High School Band.

The \$41.9 million project brings to Ceres a new and widened overpass, the widening of Whitmore Avenue between Blaker Road and Central Avenue, and reconfigured intersections on both sides of the freeway. "It will alleviate congestion on Whitmore Avenue, and increase the mobility of people and goods along this vital Valley Corridor," according to Carrie Bowen, Caltrans District 10 Director.

Ceres Mayor Chris Vierra thanked the many people who worked on the "impressive overpass" which links both western and eastern portions of the city. He said that the new overpass not only offers new and improved access onto and off of Highway 99 but also greatly improves the safety of students attending Ceres High School.

"We are so pleased to see the Whitmore Interchange completed," said StanCOG Executive Director Vince Harris. StanCOG was involved in the project for 10 years helping to secure the necessary funds.

Assemblyman Bill Berryhill summed it up by saying, "It's a great day in Ceres to have this, to help with the flow of traffic. It's changed the whole look of this community."



Dignitaries gathered for the Ribbon Cutting of the new SR-99 Whitmore Interchange included StanCOG Policy Board Members Supervisor Jim DeMartini and Ceres City Council Member Guillermo Ochoa, and Executive Director Vince Harris.

### Study Ranks Modesto Transit Coverage 10th in Nation

Modesto ranked 10th among the nation's top 100 metropolitan areas in a recent study for how well households are connected to jobs via transit.

Conducted by the Brookings Institute, the study evaluated routes operated by Modesto Area Express (MAX) and Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT). Three key components determined the ranking: fixed-route transit coverage, frequency of transit service, and access to regional jobs provided by the transit system.

The study found that 90% of Modesto's working age population has access to transit, far exceeding the 69% average established by the 100 metro areas combined. Additionally, 38% of the working age population can access their jobs within 90 minutes via transit; the combined metro areas' average was 30%.

Modesto's ranking highlights the importance of transit in the region, and recognizes the great transportation opportunities afforded to the region's residents through the MAX and StaRT transit systems.

Complete study, *Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metro America*, available at:  
[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0512\\_jobs\\_and\\_transit.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0512_jobs_and_transit.aspx).

## Executive Director's Corner



Many years ago Kaiser Cement Corporation displayed one of my favorite expressions on its trucks. It read: "find a need and fill it." I've always liked this phrase because it aligns so many more of life's circumstances than simply filling holes with concrete. As it relates to the Stanislaus Region's transportation needs, I'm sure it comes as no surprise that these needs far outweigh our funding streams. But like so many other issues facing our Nation, transportation demands require dedicated and collaborative solutions.

This week, the long-awaited House of Representatives proposed Surface Transportation Bill was rolled out by Congressman John Mica, Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The new House version of the Transportation Bill called, "A New Direction," is intended to set a new tone for federal transportation spending nationwide. It proposes no dedicated project funds (earmarks) for any Region of the country, and proposes a 20% reduction in total program funding relative to the current law (SAFETEA-LU). The Bill proposes a total program at \$230 billion over a six year period. StanCOG, in conjunction with our seven other San Joaquin Valley planning agency partners, anticipated this approach to the new Bill. All eight Valley Regions have been working with Congressman Jeff Denham and other Members of the Valley - (cont'd at right)

## Around the Region

### City of Waterford Awarded Funding for Needed Traffic Signal

A much-needed traffic signal will be installed in Waterford this summer at the corner of State Route 132 and Western Avenue. The improvement of this intersection has been a priority for the City of Waterford for some time, and with the successful assistance of StanCOG and Caltrans, the City was able to secure the necessary funding recently to move this project to reality.



By helping to ease access and improve safety, the project will have an immediate positive effect on the bicyclists, motorists, and pedestrians who use the intersection on a frequent basis. It will also assist in improving the city's economic development efforts because of renewed interest by prospective businesses.

Local contractor Teichert Construction was awarded the contract which is scheduled to be completed in September. Congratulations to the City of Waterford!

### \$95 Million for Region for SR-99 Resurfacing and Restoration Project

The California Department of Transportation announced that it will resurface and restore approximately 25 miles of the existing pavement on State Route 99 in Stanislaus County. The \$95 million project, funded by the State Highway Operation and Protection Program, will run from the San Joaquin County line to the Merced County line.

This project will replace the pavement utilizing three different strategies: 1) replacement of the existing base and pavement with new concrete pavement; 2) concrete slab replacement; and 3) crack-seal and overlay the existing pavement with new asphalt concrete.

The project will also include installing shoulder rumble strips on the inside and outside medians, fog sealing, restriping the roadway, and replacing pavement markers.

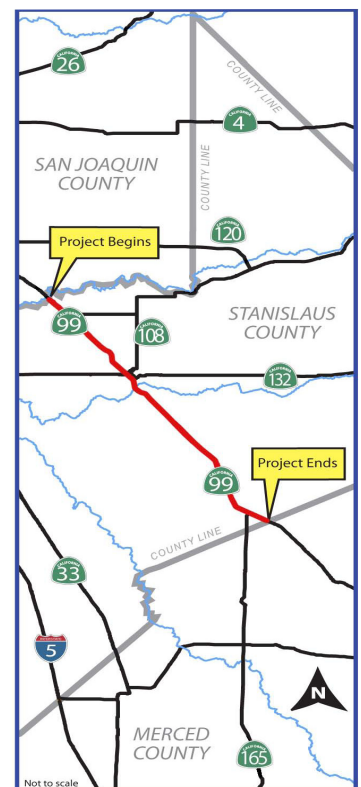
It is scheduled to go to construction in the Spring of 2012, with completion in the Summer of 2014.

## Executive Director's Corner - cont'd

legislative delegation, to craft criteria-based programs that well-position our Region to qualify for continued federal transportation funds under this new approach. The next step in this process will be the roll-out of the Senate version of the Transportation Bill, which is expected in late July 2011.

Working collaboratively, StanCOG is committed to the development and maintenance of an effective and efficient regional transportation network that includes a mix of local street and road projects; major regional corridor upgrades; and the implementation of a more robust and expanded transit system. This edition of *On-the-Move* highlights a number of these activities that continue to "speed" our Region forward.

- Vince Harris



## StanCOG in the Community

### StanCOG Seeks Comments from the Bike Riding Public

StanCOG and its Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee are inviting the public to provide their thoughts and opinions on bike riding in Stanislaus County. A special survey is located at [www.stancog.org](http://www.stancog.org) for those wishing to submit comments.

The purpose of the survey is to collect input from those who bike that will be incorporated into an update to the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for the Stanislaus Region. The public is encouraged to participate in the survey and to get involved in the transportation planning process in the Stanislaus region!

### Caltrans Training Held

StanCOG hosted a training on April 28th for our Member Agencies on Federal Aid Construction Management and Contract Administration procedures. The well-attended training, presented by Caltrans Construction Oversight Engineer Mike Giuliano, provided valuable information to our Member Agencies' Engineering and Public Works staffs on how to manage and administer federal aid contracts, and how to pass a federal (FHWA) audit.

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

StanCOG meetings listed below are open to the public. Citizens are encouraged to attend. Meeting times and agendas available at [www.stancog.org](http://www.stancog.org).

### JULY

No Meetings Scheduled

### AUGUST

- 2 Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)
- 2 Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Steering Committee
- 3 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- 4 Management & Finance Committee
- 17 StanCOG Policy Board

### SEPTEMBER

- 6 Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)
- 6 Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Steering Committee
- 6 Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
- 7 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- 8 Management & Finance Committee
- 21 StanCOG Policy Board

### Save the Date

San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies Fall Policy Conference  
October 11 - 13, 2011

The Pines Resort  
54432 Road 432  
Bass Lake, CA

Hosted by: Madera County Transportation Commission

### Hispanic Leadership Council

At the invitation of Ceres City Council Member and StanCOG Policy Board Member Guillermo Ochoa, Vince Harris addressed the Hispanic Leadership Council of Stanislaus County on May 6th to provide them with information about StanCOG and its role in the region.

If you would like StanCOG to speak to your organization, please contact our office at (209) 525-4600.

### California Transportation Commission Meeting

The California Transportation Commission met May 11-12 in Los Angeles. Shown at right is California Transportation Commissioner Darius Assimi with StanCOG Executive Director Vince Harris.



### Amgen Tour of California & Lifestyle Festival

Modesto was a Stage 3 Finish for the 2011 Amgen Tour of California Professional Bike Race and StanCOG was there! Not only did StanCOG have a bird's eye view from its office located right at the finish line, but StanCOG also hosted a booth at the daylong Lifestyle Festival. Information was disseminated to local cycling enthusiasts about StanCOG, its Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and the bike survey that is currently being conducted (see story above). A few familiar faces at the booth included StanCOG Policy Board members Charles Goeken, Mayor of Waterford; Ed Katen, Mayor of Newman; and Luis Molina, Mayor of Patterson, along with StanCOG staff Charles Turner, Mike Costa and Debbie Trujillo. A crowd estimated at 25,000 spectators lined the streets for the major sporting event which was telecast internationally.



## StanCOG Member Agencies and Policy Board Members

### City of Ceres

Councilmember Guillermo Ochoa

### City of Hughson

Councilmember Matt Beekman

### City of Modesto

Mayor Jim Ridenour \*

Councilmember Brad Hawn

Councilmember Garrad Marsh

### City of Newman

Mayor Ed Katen

### City of Oakdale

Mayor Pat Paul

### City of Patterson

Mayor Luis Molina

### City of Riverbank

Mayor Virginia Madueno \*

### City of Turlock

Councilmember Mary Jackson

### City of Waterford

Mayor Charles Goeken, Vice Chair \*

### Stanislaus County

Supervisor Vito Chiesa \*

Supervisor Jim DeMartini

Supervisor Dick Monteith

Supervisor Bill O'Brien, Chair \*

Supervisor Terry Withrow

### Ex-Officio

Carrie Bowen, Caltrans District 20

\* Executive Committee Member



Executive Director: Vince Harris

## On the Move

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## Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)

StanCOG has embarked upon developing a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) for the Stanislaus region as required by law.

AB 32, passed in 2006, requires the state to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. SB 375 (2008) addresses the single largest contributor of GHG emissions, automobiles, by requiring the development and adoption of a SCS as part of all Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) to address ways to reduce emissions by integrating transportation and land use planning.

StanCOG has created a SCS steering committee to help develop a plan that utilizes strategies to reduce emissions. It is comprised of a wide range of individuals and interests so that input and knowledge can be ascertained from a cross-section of representatives.

The SCS Committee, open to the public, meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 10 am in the StanCOG Board Room. For more information contact Jaylen French at 525-4600.

## StanCOG Policy Board Elects New Chair and Vice Chair for Fiscal Year 2011/12

The StanCOG Policy Board elected Stanislaus County Supervisor Bill O'Brien to serve as their new Chair for the 2011/12 fiscal year beginning July 1st, and the City of Waterford Mayor Charles Goeken as the new Vice Chair. These two members were also selected to represent StanCOG on the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, along with Stanislaus County Supervisor Vito Chiesa who will be their Alternate.

## In Brief

- Thanks and Best Wishes to Chuck Deschenes, longtime City of Waterford Administrator who retired in May, for his many years of service on the StanCOG Management and Finance Committee;
- And, welcome to new City of Waterford Administrator Tim Ogden, who began his new job in June;
- Special thanks to Dennis Wann of Modesto for nearly 8 years of service on the Citizens Advisory Committee;
- Welcome to new Citizens Advisory Committee Member Alan McFadon of Hughson and new Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee Member Greg Jacquay of Turlock, both appointed by the Executive Committee in April;
- The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Toolkit received a Best Practices Award from the Sacramento Valley and Central Section American Planning Associations;
- StanCOG Executive Director Vince Harris is the new Chair of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors Association;
- StanCOG Staff Members Rosa de León Park and Jeanette Fabela have been appointed to the Statewide Task Force on Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Funding



Celebrating 40 Years!

StanCOG is an association of county and city governments. It was created in 1971 by the County of Stanislaus and its nine incorporated cities to provide a regional forum for the discussion and resolution of issues which go beyond their individual boundaries. Under federal law, StanCOG is the federally-mandated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and under state law, it is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for the Stanislaus region.