

San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

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Jason Paukovits

07-7-7

9/27/07

September 26, 2007

Mary D. Nichols, Chairman
Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Ms. Nichols:

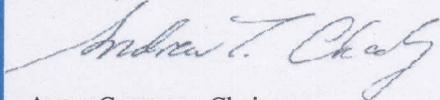
The Executive Directors of the eight San Joaquin Valley (SJV) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are providing additional clarification regarding the need for updated eight-hour ozone and particulate matter (PM-10) budgets. Recent comments made by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Air Resources Board (ARB) staff, and other interested parties, including testimony at a San Joaquin Valley Air District public hearing in September 2007, indicate some confusion over the timeline and impact of these budgets on transportation projects.

The San Joaquin Valley MPOs worked closely with the Air District to ensure that transportation data and associated conformity budgets contained within the eight-hour ozone attainment demonstration plan and PM-10 maintenance plan were accurate. ARB staff has assured us that EPA will make adequacy findings on these updated vehicle budgets in January 2008. Without adequate budgets, the San Joaquin Valley MPOs will not be able to add new transportation projects or make changes to existing projects. EPA generally needs 90 days to issue adequacy findings, but may need longer depending on comments received.

It is currently anticipated that all eight MPOs will begin development of the 2009 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) in January 2008. The FTIP is the four-year program of transportation projects that is part of the long-range transportation plan and included in the overall state FSTIP. Adoption of the FTIPs by the MPOs is scheduled to occur in May 2008 with draft documents available by March 2008. Local adoption of the FTIPs will not be possible without EPA adequacy findings for BOTH ozone and PM-10 budgets. Last minute changes, delays, or attempts to make "technical corrections" to the air quality plans create serious risks that could impact the approval of the FTIP documents; this has significant consequences for projects funded by hundreds of millions of transportation dollars in the San Joaquin Valley.

We support the air quality plans submitted by the Air District, and request that the State continue to move forward with submittal to EPA as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,



ANDY CHESLEY, Chairman
Executive Director's Committee

cc: Linda S. Adams, California Environmental Protection Agency
Cindy Tuck, California Environmental Protection Agency
Judy Case, ARB Board Member
Dorene D'Adamo, ARB Board Member
Lynn Terry, California Air Resources Board
Seyed Sadredin, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

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