



## Sustainable Goods Movement Committee (SGMC) Meeting

Tulare County Association of Governments  
210 N. Church St., Suite B  
Visalia, CA 93291  
Sequoia Room  
Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 11:00AM

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### AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Public Comments  
*This portion of the meeting is reserved for person wishing to address the TCAG SGMC Advisory Committee on items within its purview but not on this agenda. Unscheduled comments are limited to 3 minutes. Note: Prior to the action by the Committee on any item on this agenda, the public may comment on that item.*
3. Action: Approval of June 11, 2024, Meeting Minutes
4. Update on Caltrans Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan for State Route 99 (CMCP)
5. Discussion: TCAG Sustainable Multi-modal Goods Movement Study – Consultant Selection
6. Discussion: Federal Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Award for I-5  
<https://theashlandchronicle.com/oregon-receives-102-million-in-fed-funding-along-with-ca-and-wa-for-zero-emission-truck-charging-refueling-on-interstate-5/>
7. Economic Development Update

8. SGMC Member Q/A Discussion
9. Next Meeting- Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am
10. Adjourn

### **TCAG SGMC Membership**

**Mayor Brian Pochigian** – City of Visalia (Chair)

**Marc Mondell, City Manager** – City of Tulare

**Jason Ridenour, Assistant City Manager** – City of Porterville

**Airica de Oliveira** – Tulare County EDC

**Devon Jones** – Economic Development Manager, City of Visalia (Vice Chair)

**Lisa Wallis-Dutra**, 4-Creeks - City of Dinuba

**Michael Washam**, Associate Director RMA - County of Tulare

**Pedro Ramirez** – Caltrans District 6

**Derek Winning** – TCAG

**Giancarlo Bruno**- TCAG

**Tulare County Association of Governments**  
**Sustainable Goods Movement Committee**

**June 11, 2024**

**ATTENDANCE LIST**

<b>Mayor Brian Poochigian</b> - City of Visalia	Present
<b>Marc Mondell</b> - City of Tulare	Present
<b>Jason Ridenour</b> - City of Porterville	Present
<b>Airica de Oliveira</b> - Tulare County Economic Development Corporation	Present
<b>Devon Jones</b> - City of Visalia	Present
<b>Lisa Wallis-Dutra</b> - City of Dinuba/4-Creeks	Present
<b>Michael Washam</b> - Tulare County RMA	Present
<b>Pedro Ramirez</b> - Caltrans District 6	Absent
<b>Derek Winning</b> - Tulare County Association of Governments	Absent

**Other TCAG Staff:** Ted Smalley, Giancarlo Bruno

**SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES**

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**I. Welcome & Introductions**

Sustainable Goods Movement Committee (SGMC) members and TCAG staff in attendance introduced themselves.

**II. Public Comments**

No public comments were received.

**III. Action: Ratify SGMC Bylaws**

Upon a motion by Vice Chair Jones and a second by Member Washam, the bylaws were unanimously approved with 1 revision to Article VIII, Section 1 regarding the meeting time.

**IV. Action: Approval of March 12, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were approved unanimously as presented upon a motion by Member Wallis-Dutra and a second by Vice Chair Jones. Member Washam abstained.

**V. Caltrans Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan for State Route 99 (CMCP)**

Mr. Smalley provided a brief background, explaining that the Caltrans Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan for State Route 99 was a requirement for approval of SR99 widening projects in Madera and Tulare counties. He

**VI. California Tradeport Update**

Member Winning provided a brief update on the efforts to establish an inland port in the South Valley. He shared that he and Member Washam had discussed some potential sites in Tulare County with GLD Partners for Tradeport California. They have expressed particular interest in locations in the northern portion of Tulare County. Member Winning then shared a video highlighting key features of the Tradeport California proposal.

Vice Chair Jones asked if Tradeport California was affiliated with the proposal for an inland port at the former Castle Air Base in Merced County. Mr. Smalley answered that they were not affiliated with one another, and that the Merced County project had progressed further so far. Member Winning added that the Merced County project had received \$50 million in federal funding, had secured a site, and had reached an agreement with a shipper. He noted that proponents of Tradeport California have argued that there is sufficient long-term demand for more than one inland port in the Central Valley.

Chair Poochigian inquired whether a trade port would be required to utilize union labor. Mr. Smalley responded that he did not believe that the proposals had advanced far enough to determine this.

Member Mondell shared the City of Tulare's latest plans for distribution centers. The upgrades to the interchange at International Agri-Center Way will open adjacent lands for development. He added that the city is seriously considering abandoning its current corporate yard on S 'K' St to construct a connector road that would connect a future business park to the west of SR 99 to the Paige Avenue and International Agri-Center Way interchanges. This would require a flyover of the Union Pacific line. The unincorporated land directly west of this site is likely to be annexed and master planned by the city. Another small project near the airport involves electric truck charging and alternative fuels. Member Mondell anticipated most of this work would be completed in the next 3-5 years.

Vice Chair Jones raised the question of what GLD Partners will offer such projects if local agencies are already planning similar development. Member Mondell suggested that it might be politically advantageous to team up with a larger regionwide effort to make a concerted request for funding. He said that he believed it was worth investigating the California Tradeport proposal, but the City of Tulare already had some firm plans related to goods movement.

Chair Poochigian said that the City of Visalia is attempting to determine whether the project would be a net benefit for the region, particularly if it would bring good jobs and support the growth of the Visalia Industrial Park.

Member Mondell opined that inland ports themselves are essentially just transfer facilities, with all the associated noise and odor concerns, and that the greatest value of

an inland port would be its ability to attract new development and more employers. He stressed that a master planned project that included light manufacturing, office space, and even recreational areas would be more desirable but expressed concern about the opportunity costs presented by a large inland port taking land that could have been used to develop warehouses and distribution centers that would produce more jobs.

Vice Chair Jones asked if the inland port could help mitigate some environmental justice concerns in exchange for this opportunity cost. Member Mondell stated that he believed the interest groups would fight the proposal in any case.

Member Winning added that the GLD proposal seemed to rely heavily on rail, though he was not aware of them reaching any agreement with Union Pacific.

Chair Poochigian shared that in his experience shipping by truck is consistently faster than rail, which is a major priority for shippers of perishable goods. He referenced an attempt to use rail to ship apples in Washington state that was very unsuccessful. He added that whether the facility used union or non-unionized labor was also an important consideration for many shippers like him.

Member Mondell stated that he believed that an agreement with an inland port should pay a transaction fee to the local government for each unit of goods moved.

Member Winning noted that the constraints on track traffic mean that rail is likely to play a larger role in goods movement in years to come. It might be beneficial to have logistics hubs to receive goods arriving from seaports to the Central Valley by rail, from which trucks can take them to their destination.

Chair Poochigian stated that there is a clear trend away from big box stores towards e-commerce that has been accelerated by covid.

## **VII. TCAG Sustainable Multi-modal Goods Movement Study- Draft Scope**

Mr. Bruno stated that TCAG had budgeted approximately \$300,000 to develop a Sustainable Multi-modal Goods Movement Study and that staff had drafted an outline of what this study might look like as a starting point for the discussion. He presented the draft outline and explained the rationale for each section.

Member Winning emphasized key questions such as hydrogen corridors, strategic locations for alternative fueling or electrical charging, managed lanes on SR99, data collection, and mitigation strategies for environmental justice concerns.

Member Mondell asked if the study could take inventory of planned and programmed infrastructure improvements as well as those already existing. He also asked if it would

be appropriate to examine issues ancillary to goods movement such as labor costs and shortages.

Member Winning answered that it was perfectly valid to look at these other factors, as they are important considerations for economic development.

Member de Oliveira asked if there was sufficient power available in Tulare County to both charge electric vehicles and attract new industrial operations. Member Winning replied that TCAG had requested funding for development of an Electric Vehicles Plan that would further investigate issues such as these. Mr. Smalley stressed that the Sustainable Goods Movement Study should clearly identify short-term infrastructure projects that are needed for goods movement and the clean energy transition.

Vice Chair Jones asked if the study's examination of goods inflows and outflows would consider only agricultural and non-agricultural commodities or if there would be granular information about the flows of non-agricultural products. Mr. Bruno responded that the study was intended to gather as detailed information about goods flows as possible.

Member Mondell inquired what the desired outcome for the study would be. Chair Poochigian answered that it would be an assessment of what we have, what we need, and how we are going to get there. Mr. Smalley agreed with this and added that it was political leverage and a tool to secure funding.

Member Mondell then suggested that the study should also identify opportunity sites to increase the odds of obtaining federal funding. Member Ridenour and Vice Chair Jones replied that they felt this was absolutely something the study should do in addition to identifying key infrastructure needs. He asked TCAG staff when they hoped to complete the study. Mr. Smalley answered they hoped to have it done by next summer.

Member Wallis-Dutra noted that the quarterly meeting schedule might make it difficult to receive input from the SGMC in time to complete the study by that time. Mr. Smalley responded that staff could prepare a draft RFP and a special Zoom meeting could be called for the SGMC to approve it or request changes to the scope.

### **VIII. Economic Development Update**

No economic development updates were shared.

### **IX. SGMC Member Q/A Discussion**

No questions or further discussion items were raised.

**X. Committee Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Bruno and Member Winning agreed to work with the SGMC to schedule subsequent quarterly meetings. Mr. Smalley suggested that Tuesdays might be a suitable day for regular meetings. Member Mondell stated his preference for a standing meeting time.

**XI. Adjournment.**

Chair Poochigian expressed that he felt this was a productive first meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am on March 12, 2024.