

Draft 2022 Regional Transportation Improvement Program

RTIP cover to be added with Final RTIP

**Cover Letter to be included upon final approval of the 2022 RTIP
by the TCAG Board in December 2021**

2022 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (2022 RTIP)

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A. Overview and Schedule

Section 1. Executive Summary

The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) is the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) and metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Tulare County region. Every two years, TCAG prepares a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) which programs Tulare County Regional Improvement Program (RIP) fund shares for transportation projects in the Tulare County region. The TCAG Board has committed that all RTIP funding is to be assigned to State Highway projects. In addition, TCAG is one of the few RTPAs that does not take Planning, Programming and Monitoring (PPM) funding from the STIP. In conjunction with the RTIP, Measure R, Tulare County's regional transportation sales tax, is also heavily applied to State Highway System projects.

TCAG works closely with Caltrans District 6 in aligning proposed RTIP projects with the District's project priorities. TCAG's proposed 2022 RTIP is essentially a joint proposal with District 6 in that the funding priorities between the District and TCAG are identical.

On August 18, 2021, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted the 2022 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Fund Estimate (FE). The Tulare region has \$1,975,000 of target share programming capacity in the 2022 STIP. The Tulare region has an estimated \$6,587,000 of maximum share programming capacity. For the 2022 RTIP, TCAG will not be requesting to advance future STIP shares to program projects in the 2022 STIP. The projects proposed for programming are existing projects being carried over from the 2020 STIP. No new projects are proposed.

Section 2. General Information

Insert contact information in the text fields below.

- **Regional Agency Name**

Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)

- **Agency website links for Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).**

Regional Agency Website Link: <https://www.tularecog.org>

RTIP document link: <https://tularecog.org/tcag/programs-funding/regional-transportation-improvement-program-rtip/>

RTP link: <https://tularecog.org/tcag/planning/rtp/rtp-20181/>

- **Regional Agency Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer Contact Information**

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- **California Transportation Commission (CTC) Staff Contact Information**

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Section 3. Background of Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

A. What is the Regional Transportation Improvement Program?

The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) is a program of highway, local road, transit and active transportation projects that a region plans to fund with State and Federal revenue programmed by the California Transportation Commission in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The RTIP is developed biennially by the regions and is due to the Commission by December 15 of every odd numbered year. The program of projects in the RTIP is a subset of projects in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), a federally mandated master transportation plan which guides a region's transportation investments over a 20 to 25 year period. The RTP is based on all reasonably anticipated funding, including federal, state and local sources. Updated every 4 to 5 years, the RTP is developed through an extensive public participation process in the region and reflects the unique mobility, sustainability, and air quality needs of each region.

B. Regional Agency's Historical and Current Approach to developing the RTIP

Programming recommendations in the 2022 RTIP reflect the larger goals of TCAG's adopted 2018 RTP and Sustainable Communities Strategy of improving safety, efficiency of commuting, improving goods movement routes, congestion relief, and incorporation of multiple transportation modes.

TCAG has historically committed all RTIP funding to State Highway projects. In addition, TCAG is one of the few Regional Planning Transportation Agencies (RTPAs) that does not take Planning, Programming and Monitoring funding from the STIP. Tulare County's regional transportation sales tax, Measure R, is also heavily applied to State Highway System projects. The same approach is being proposed for the development of the 2022 RTIP.

Section 4. Completion of Prior RTIP Projects (Required per Section 68)

Project Name and Location	Description	Summary of Improvements/Benefits
Tagus 6-Lane Widening: Near the City of Tulare, from Prosperity Avenue to 1.2 mile south of Avenue 280 (PPNO 6400G)	Widening of approximately 4.6 miles of State Route 99 from four to six lanes.	Improve safety and flow of traffic by adding new traffic lanes

The Tagus 6-Lane Widening project is the continuation of a statewide effort to make the entire length of State Route 99 a six-lane or greater facility. This approximate 4.6 mile segment will pick up where the Middle Segment (Caldwell) 6-Lane (PPNO 6400C) leaves off just south of Visalia and continue 4.6 miles to the City of Tulare. In addition, this project will replace an on-ramp that merges into the number 1 (fast-lane) of northbound traffic. This unsafe on-ramp will be replaced with a flyover access road that will provide access to SR-99 north via the Tagus Ranch interchange. State Route 99 in Tulare County is a vital corridor for goods movement and interregional trips between the large urban centers in Northern and Southern California. Without this needed expansion, the corridor could suffer economically as congestion occurs on a more regular basis thereby impeding the efficient movement of goods up and down the state. Furthermore, heavier traffic congestion will continue to worsen the region’s air quality conditions which are expected to improve as circulation conditions improve along the corridor. The programming for construction of this project was approved in the 2020 STIP. Construction is funded by a combination of Caltrans IIP and TCAG RIP funds. The allocation for construction, in the amount of \$73,451,000, was approved by the CTC in August 2020. Construction began in September 2021 and is expected to be complete in July 2023.

Section 5. RTIP Outreach and Participation

A. RTIP Development and Approval Schedule

Action	Date
CTC adopts Fund Estimate and Guidelines	August 18, 2021
Caltrans identifies State Highway Needs	September 15, 2021
Public Notice and Comment Period begins for 2022 Draft RTIP	October 11, 2021
Caltrans submits Draft ITIP	October 15, 2021
Public Hearing for 2022 Draft RTIP	October 18, 2021
CTC ITIP Hearing, South	Oct/Nov, 2021
CTC ITIP Hearing, North	Oct/Nov, 2021
Public Notice and Comment Period ends for 2022 Draft RTIP	November 10, 2021
TCAG adopts 2022 RTIP	December 6, 2021
TCAG submits RTIP to CTC (postmark by)	December 15, 2021
Caltrans submits ITIP to CTC	December 15, 2021
CTC STIP Hearing, North	January 27, 2022
CTC STIP Hearing, South	February 3, 2022
CTC publishes staff recommendations	February 28, 2022
CTC Adopts 2020 STIP	March 23-24, 2022

B. Public Participation/Project Selection Process

The proposed 2022 STIP is consistent with TCAG's adopted 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2021 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). All TCAG RTIP funding goes to the State Highway System. Because of this commitment, TCAG works closely with Caltrans District 6 in determining priorities for funding. This Draft RTIP is a result of this coordination between TCAG and Caltrans.

Listed below are the project selection guidelines used for the development of the proposed draft 2022 RTIP:

- A. All projects must comply with the adopted State STIP Guidelines.
- B. Capacity increasing highway projects must not degrade air quality. This will be determined through the conformity process.
- C. Pre-programming documents (similar to a PSR) are required of all projects.
- D. Projects must be on the State Highway System.
- E. Highway projects will be prioritized using the following data:
 - 1. Projects must be on TCAG's system of Regionally Significant Roadways.
 - 2. A Level of Service Index (LOSI) will be calculated.
 - 3. A Safety Index (SI) will be calculated. (Scoring for rating: LOSI + (SI)(2))
- F. Individual interchanges, over crossings and grade separations will be considered only after a "Regional Significance" has been identified and documented.

C. Consultation with Caltrans District (Required per Section 17)

Caltrans District 6 serves as an ex-officio member of the TCAG Board. TCAG staff works closely with District 6 to develop RIP and IIP funding strategies address the transportation needs of the region. Quarterly meetings are held to discuss the status of STIP projects and other regional projects for which Caltrans is either the lead agency or provides oversight. During these meetings, TCAG and Caltrans staffs also discuss other funding and partnering opportunities. During the year, TCAG and Caltrans discuss the funding plans for implementing the region's priority projects and discuss ways of jointly funding State Highway projects with ITIP and RTIP funding.

B. 2022 STIP Regional Funding Request

Section 6. 2022 STIP Regional Share and Request for Programming

A. 2022 Regional Fund Share Per 2022 STIP Fund Estimate

Per the 2022 STIP Fund Estimate approved by the CTC on August 18, 2021, the Tulare region has \$1,975,000 of target share programming capacity and \$6,587,000 of maximum share programming capacity. For the 2022 RTIP, TCAG will not be requesting to advance future STIP shares and will not be proposing any new projects. The projects proposed for programming are existing projects being carried over from the 2020 STIP. TCAG will not be requesting the programming of PPM funds. The only new programming proposed is the addition \$1m for PS&E in FY 23-24 and \$1.9 million for Construction Support in FY 25/26 for the SR 65 Realignment & Operational Improvements (Oak St Roundabout), Phase 1 project (PPNO 104A).

B. Summary of Requested Programming

<u>Proposal for 2022 STIP Target</u>				
Project	PPNO	Project Location and Description	Proposal	Proposed <u>New</u> RIP Funds
SR 65 Realignment & Operational Improvements (Oak St Roundabout, Phase 1	0104A	In Tulare County on Route 65 from 0.1 mile south of Mariposa Street to Cedar Avenue; construct roundabout	Add funds for PS&E (in addition to previously programmed funds of \$1.5m) and Construction Support	\$2,900,000

Projects carried over from 2020 RTIP (Strike through/underline = change from 2020 RTIP)				
Project	PPNO	Project Location and Description	Proposal	Proposed RIP
Tulare 6-Lane N/S widening Av 200-Prosperity Av <u>SR99 Tulare City Widening</u>	6369	In and near the city of Tulare, from Avenue 200 to Prosperity Avenue. Widen from 4 lanes to 6 lanes.	No change	\$0
Caldwell Interchange SR99/Caldwell Avenue <u>Interchange</u>	6421	On Route 99 in Tulare County between 0.3 miles south of the Avenue 280 (Caldwell Avenue) Overcrossing to 0.4 miles north of the Ave 280 overcrossing. Re-construct Interchange.	No change	\$11,600,000
Commercial Avenue Interchange SR99/Commercial Ave <u>Interchange</u>	6940	Near City of Tulare at Commercial Avenue and State Route 99 between 0.9 mile north of Avenue 200 OC and Paige Avenue OC; Construct new interchange and construct north and south bound auxiliary lanes.	No change	\$0
<u>SR 65 Realignment & Operational Improvements¹</u>	0104	In Tulare County on Route 65 near Lindsay at various locations from Ave. 224 (Lindmore St.) to west of Cedar Ave. and on Route 198 at junction with Route 245 (Spruce Ave.); Realignment and operational improvements	No change	\$0

¹ Parent project of PPNO 0104A

Section 7. Overview of Other Funding Included With Delivery of Regional Improvement Program (RIP) Projects

Figures shown in \$1,000's

Proposed 2022 RTIP	Total RTIP	Other Funding							Total Project Cost
		ITIP	Private Funds	SR 99 Bond	Measure R	SB1 LPP	Fed Disc. (BUILD)	Future Unfunded Need	
Tulare City Widening (PPNO 6369)	\$2,150	\$6,300	\$0	\$2,070	\$0	0	0	\$116,000	\$126,520
SR 65 Realignment & Operational Improvements (Oak St Roundabout), Phase 1 (PPNO 0104A)	\$4,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,400
Caldwell Avenue Interchange (PPNO 6421)	\$16,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$51,600
SR99/Commercial Ave Interchange (PPNO 6940)	\$18,900	\$0	\$9,500	\$0	\$20,400	\$9,000	\$16,000	\$0	\$73,800
SR 65 Realignment and Operational Improvements (PPNO 0104)	\$5,650	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$78,000	\$83,650
Totals	\$47,700	\$6,300	\$9,500	\$2,070	\$68,400	\$9,000	\$16,000	\$194,000	\$352,970

Notes: In addition to the regular STIP projects, Tulare’s portion of CRRSAA funding (\$2.972m) is programmed entirely on the SR99 Delano to Pixley widening project (PPNO 7072): \$1.8m for E&P and \$200k for PS&E in FY22/23 and \$972k for Con Support in FY23/24.

PPNO 0104 is the parent project to PPNO 0104A. Two future additional projects are planned from the \$5.65m that was used for E&P on PPNO 0104.

Section 8. Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) Funding and Needs

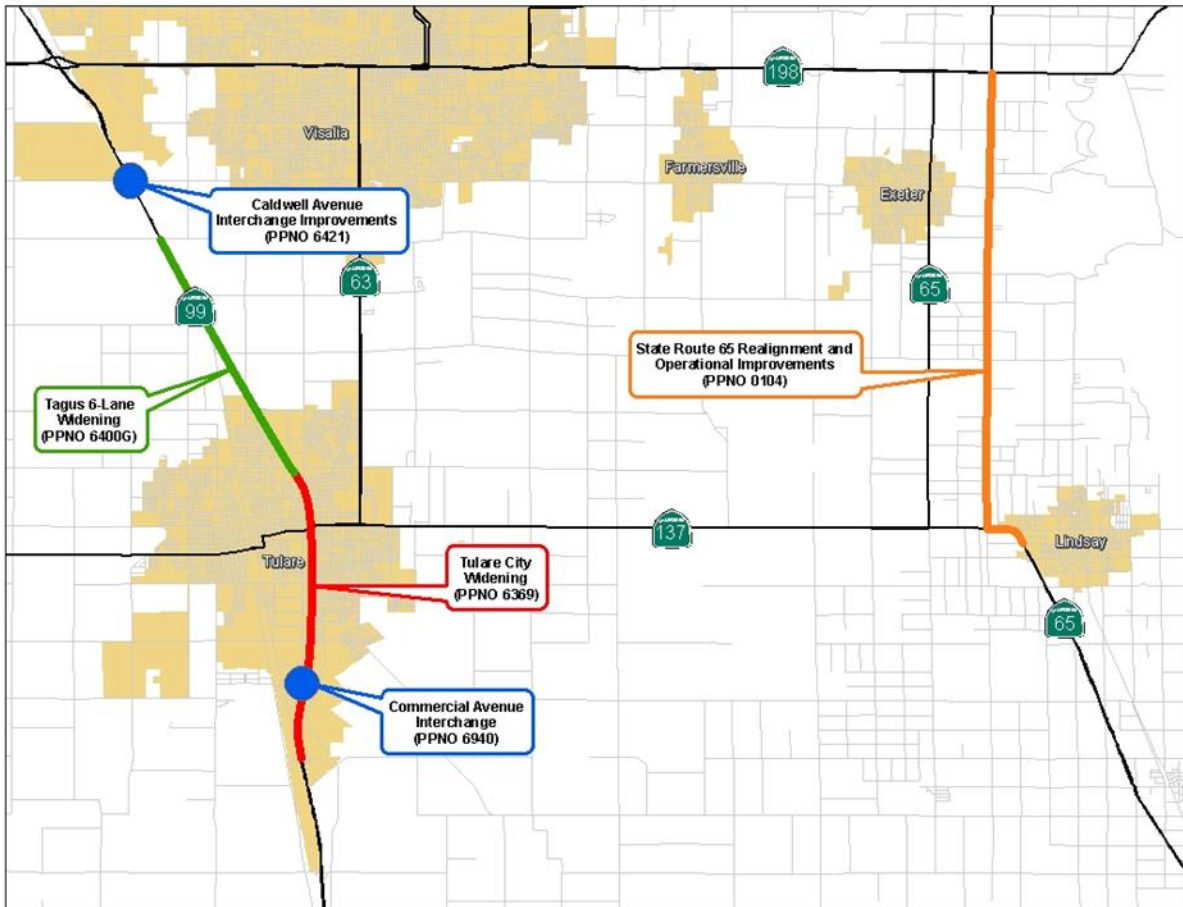
The purpose of the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) is to improve interregional mobility for people and goods in the State of California. As an interregional program, the ITIP is focused on increasing the throughput for highway and rail corridors of strategic importance outside the urbanized areas of the state. A sound transportation network between and connecting urbanized areas ports and borders is vital to the state's economic vitality. The ITIP is prepared in accordance with Government Code Section 14526, Streets and Highways Code Section 164 and the STIP Guidelines. The ITIP is a five-year program managed by Caltrans and funded with 25% of new STIP revenues in each cycle. Developed in cooperation with regional transportation planning agencies to ensure an integrated transportation program, the ITIP promotes the goal of improving interregional mobility and connectivity across California.

It is requested that existing ITIP funding from the 2020 STIP be carried over into the 2022 STIP. No new ITIP funding is being requested.

Section 9. Projects Planned Within Multi-Modal Corridors

There are no projects currently underway along any State Route corridor in Tulare County that could be impacted by projects proposed in the RTIP. Planned projects are shown on Figure 1 below. Four of the five projects proposed for RTIP funding are located on State Route 99. Widening projects along State Route 99 in Tulare County have been in progress since 2013. Widening has been completed on approximately 18 miles of the highway stretching from the Fresno-Tulare County line to south of Caldwell Avenue near Visalia. Upon completion of the Tagus 6-Lane and Tulare City Widening projects, SR-99 will be a six-lane facility from the Fresno-Tulare County line to Avenue 200 south of the City of Tulare (approximately 28 miles). The ultimate plan is to widen SR-99 through the rest of the Tulare County to the Kern County line.

In addition to the widening, there are two interchange projects proposed along State Route 99. Neither project would interfere with or impact the SR-99 widening projects. The projects would actually complement one another.



Section 10. Highways to Boulevards Conversion Pilot Program

There are no state routes within the Tulare region that would be potential candidates for the highways to boulevards conversion pilot program.

C. Relationship of RTIP to RTP/SCS/APS and Benefits of RTIP

Section 11. Regional Level Performance Evaluation (per Section 19A of the guidelines)

The 2022 RTIP furthers the goals of TCAG’s adopted 2018 RTP and Sustainable Communities Strategy. These goals include:

Goal 1. Comprehensive – Provide an efficient, integrated multi-modal regional transportation system for the movement of people and goods that enhances the physical, economic, and social environment in the Tulare County region.

Goal 2. System Performance – Develop an efficient, maintained, and safe circulation network that maximizes circulation, longevity, and fiscal responsibility while minimizing environmental impacts.

Goal 3 – Goods Movement – Provide a transportation system that efficiently and effectively transports goods to, from, within, and through Tulare County.

Goal 4 – Regional Roads and Corridors – Preserve and enhance regional transportation roads and corridors.

A. Regional Level Performance Indicators and Measures (per Appendix B of the STIP Guidelines).

Projects listed in TCAG’s 2018 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy (RTP/SCS) account for over \$5.7 billion (inflation adjusted) in transportation improvements in the Tulare Region, of which the 2022 RTIP reflects approximately \$466 million. The RTIP is just one of a number of funding sources which are relied upon to support transportation projects within the region. The performance measures listed in Table B1 below identify relevant data and tools available to the extent that may be reported.

The forecasted daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita with the RTIP projects will decrease by approximately 0.5% compared to the forecasted daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita without the projects. The performance measures presented in Table B1 shows a reduction in the percent of congested freeway VMT (at or below 35 mph).

Projects programmed in the 2022 RTIP further the goals of TCAG’s adopted 2018 RTP/SCS by providing an efficient integrated multi-modal regional transportation system for the movement of people and goods, enhancing regional accessibility and circulation, enhancing safety, improving capacity, and accommodating future transportation needs throughout the Tulare County region.

Table B1			
Evaluation – Regional Level Performance Indicators and Measures			
Goal	Indicator/Measure	Current System Performance (2042 No Project)	Projected System Performance (2042 RTP/SCS)
Congestion Reduction	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita.	18.3	18.2
	Percent of congested freeway VMT (at or below 35 mph)	42.6%	6.0%
	Commute mode share (travel to work)	18.7%	18.6%
Economic Vitality	Percent of housing and jobs within 0.5 miles of transit stops with frequent transit service	62.4%	64.5%
	Mean commute travel time (to work)	16.45 min	16.31 min
	Farebox recovery ratio		
Environmental Sustainability	Change in acres of important agricultural land outside SOI	2,311	1,518
	CO ₂ emissions reduction per capita	-18.6%	-17.0%

Section 12. Regional and Statewide Benefits of RTIP

TCAG's proposed 2022 Draft RTIP provides both regional and statewide benefits. Once completed, the Tagus Six-Lane and Tulare City Widening projects will facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods and people within the Tulare County region, and between the north and south parts of the State and beyond. State Route 99 is a major land-based shipping route between the international market centers of San Francisco and Los Angeles. As pointed out in *Freight Facts and Figures 2013*, State Route 99 is one of the most heavily traveled non-interstate highways in the nation.² In 2015, the Federal Highway Administration included State Route 99 as part of the highway-only Primary Freight Network under the National Freight Network.³ The purpose of the National Freight Network is to "assist States in strategically directing resources toward improved system performance for efficient movement of freight on the highway portion of the Nation's freight transportation system."⁴

The Cartmill and Commerical Avenue Interchanges and the State Route 65 realignment projects will bring regional benefits. Each of the projects will facilitate regional connections for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians, facilitating their safety and mobility as they travel adjacent to the State Route 99 and 65 corridors. When completed, the State Route 65 project will move regional traffic off of the current alignment of SR 65 through the City of Exeter to a new and improved alignment of SR 65 located east of the city.

² U.S. Department of Transportation, FHWA, *Freight Facts and Figures 2013*, p. 36-37

³ U.S. Department of Transportation, FHWA, *National Highway Freight Network Map*, http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/infrastructure/nfn/maps/nhfn_map.htm

⁴ U.S. Department of Transportation, *Final Designation of the Highway Primary Freight Network Federal Register Notice*, https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/FHWA-151002-013_F%20PFN.pdf

D. Performance and Effectiveness of RTIP

Section 13. Evaluation of Cost Effectiveness of RTIP (Required per Section 19)

Tulare County Association of Governments Performance and Effectiveness of the RTIP						
Indicator	Relation to STEP Section 19 Performance Criteria	Performance Measures			Current System	Projected
		Mode	Level*	Measures	Performance	Impact of
					(Baseline)	Projects
Safety	2	Roadway	Region	Fatalities / Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	N/A	See
	2			Fatal Collisions / VMT	0.000246489	Comment 1
	2			Injury Collisions / VMT	0.003439381	Below
Mobility	1	Roadway	Region	Passenger Hours of Delay / Year	10,547,770	9,992,970
	1			Average Peak Period Travel Time (2035 TCAG Model)	11.47 min.	11.47
	1			Average Off-Peak Period Travel Time (2035 TCAG Model)	11.42 min	11.43 min.
Accessibility	4 also 1,3,6,7	Transit	Region	Percentage of population within 1/2 mile of a rail station or bus route.	N/A	N/A
		All	Region	Average travel time to jobs or school	N/A	N/A
Reliability	1	Roadway	Comidor	Travel Time Variability (buffer index)	N/A	N/A
	1	Roadway	Comidor	Daily vehicle hours of delay per capita	N/A	N/A
	1	Roadway	Comidor	Daily congested highway VMT per capita	N/A	N/A
	5	Transit	Mode	Percentage of vehicles that arrive at their scheduled destination no more than 5 minutes late.	N/A	N/A
Productivity (Throughput)	7	Roadway Vehicles	Comidor	Average Peak Period Vehicle Trips	N/A	N/A
	7			Average Daily Vehicle Trips (ADT)	N/A	N/A
	6,7,8			Daily VMT per capita	N/A	N/A
	7	Roadway People	Comidor	Average Peak Period Vehicle Trips Multiplied by the Occupancy Rate	N/A	N/A
	7			Average Daily Vehicle Trips Multiplied by the Occupancy Rate	N/A	N/A
	7	Trucks	Comidor	Percentage of ADT that are (5+ axle) Trucks	N/A	N/A
	7			Average Daily Vehicle Trips that are (5+ axle) Trucks	N/A	N/A
	7	Transit	Mode	Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Hour	N/A	N/A
	7			Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Mile	N/A	N/A
	7			Passengers Mile per Train Mile (Intercity Rail)	N/A	N/A
7	Boardings per capita			N/A	N/A	
System Preservation	3	Roadway	Region	Total number of Distressed Lane Miles	391.92	N/A
	3			Percentage of Distressed Lane Miles	12.40%	N/A
	3			Percentage of Roadway at Given IRI Levels	N/A	N/A
	3			Percentage of highway bridges in need of repair	N/A	N/A
Environmental Impact	6	All	Region	Carbon dioxide emissions per capita	N/A	N/A
				Criteria pollutant emissions per capita	N/A	N/A
Return on Investment/Lifecycle Cost	1-7	All	Comidor	Percentage rate of return	N/A	N/A
Comment 1: Future projected accident rates are not prepared. Baseline safety calculations will be compared for each STIP to demonstrate system wide improvement.						
Comment 2: As discussed in the prior section of the text, TCAG ranks projects based on a scoring criteria that includes factors for ADT, LOS improvement, costs, and the use of Caltrans safety calculation procedures. TCAG will continue to refine performance measures as part of the upcoming 2016 RTP.						

Section 14. Project Specific Evaluation (Required per Section 19D of STIP Guidelines)

Please refer to Section 18 in the Appendices for the project specific benefit evaluations for each of the projects.

E. Detailed Project Information

Section 15. Overview of Projects Programmed with RIP Funding

Tulare City Widening

This project is a continuation of the lane widening efforts on State Route 99. It picks up where the Tagus 6-Lane Widening Project ends at Prosperity Avenue and continues south to Avenue 200 in the southern portion of Tulare. The project would convert the current four-lane freeway to six-lanes through a highly traveled and often congested section of State Route 99 through the City of Tulare.



Realignment & Operational Improvements (Oak St Roundabout), Phase 1

The project consists of the realignment of State Route 65 from its current alignment which takes it through the City of Exeter and moves it approximately 1 mile to the east on the current Spruce Road alignment. Other improvements include roundabouts and other intersection improvements along the realigned SR-65 corridor which will facilitate the safe and efficient movement of traffic.



SR99/Commercial Ave Interchange

s project would construct a new interchange and construct north and southbound auxiliary lanes between the project site and Paige Avenue. The project is located on State Route 99 and the existing Commercial Avenue alignment. The project is needed as an alternative for the functionally obsolete interchange located at State Route 99 and Paige Avenue.



Caldwell Avenue Interchange

This project would re-construct the existing interchange at State Route 99 and Caldwell Avenue (Avenue 280), just west of the City of Visalia. The project is needed as a replacement for the current interchange which is functionally obsolete. It will provide a safer and more efficient interchange for this location which is planned for extensive development in the near term.



Appendices

Section 16. Projects Programming Request Forms – To be added in the Final RTIP

Section 17. Board Resolution or Documentation of 2022 RTIP Approval – To be added in the Final RTIP

Section 18. Project Specific Benefit Evaluations – To be added in the Final RTIP