

PRESS RELEASE

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
San Joaquin Council of Governments
Sacramento Area Council of Governments

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Joining forces in a megaregion scale transportation collaboration

*Representatives from 3 regional planning agencies pledge backing
for ‘Megaregion Dozen’ projects*

For the first time, representatives of three regional planning agencies spanning major population centers from the Bay Area to the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada foothills are pledging to advocate for a select list of interregional transportation projects known as the “Megaregion Dozen.”

Those projects are in the Northern California Megaregion, which includes 16 counties and 136 cities with a total population of nearly 11 million.

The [Megaregion Working Group](#), made up of board members and commissioners of the [Metropolitan Transportation Commission](#) (MTC), [San Joaquin Council of Governments](#) (SJCOG), and [Sacramento Area Council of Governments](#) (SACOG), agreed Friday to back the slate of 12 transportation improvement projects that will benefit quality of life, transportation and commerce throughout Northern California. They include highway improvements, passenger rail expansions, a new truck scale facility, and electric truck charging infrastructure.

“The Megaregion Dozen are a package of projects that guide and advance the transportation principles and strategies that this working group approved,” SJCOG Executive Director Diane Nguyen told the members Friday. “And those framing principles — of interregional functionality, policy alignment, persuasive leverage and strategic investment — helped the executive directors of MTC, SJCOG, and SACOG narrow down to four projects from each agency that we felt advanced those core principles.”

Praise for the collaborative effort was quick and clear.

“In just three meetings, we were able to complete the first-ever branding for the interregional list of projects,” said SJCOG Board member and San Joaquin County Supervisor Robert Rickman, who this year chaired the Megaregion Working Group. “And this is an outstanding outcome this year under the leadership of the megaregion policy members, Vice Chair and Napa County Supervisor Alfredo Pedroza of MTC, and agency staff. The San Joaquin Council of Governments was the host agency responsible for the agenda setting this year and we appreciate the work of SJCOG Executive Director Diane Nguyen on this joint advocacy concept.”

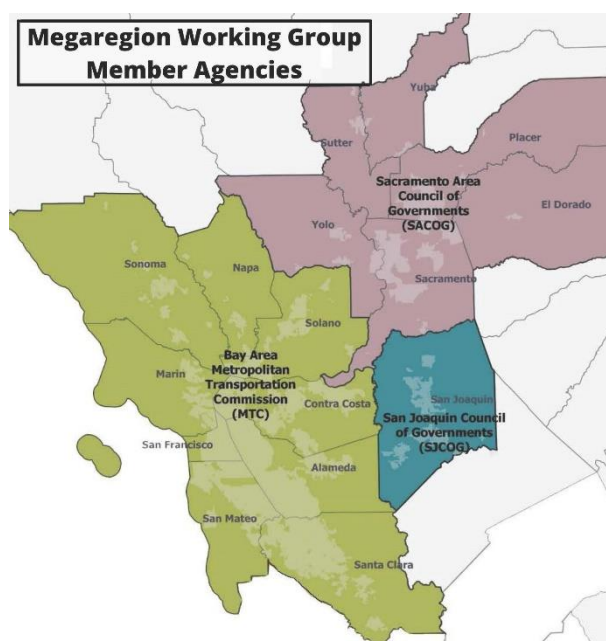
It is that work and coordination that has been key to the success of the Megaregion Working Group so far.

“Coordination and cross-disciplinary planning, I think, is critical,” Pedroza said. “By the time things come to us, it’s harder to go back and talk about collaboration, because we’re dealing with the aftermath. And I think investing in collaboration on the frontside will be so critical. I really see a lot of value in us coming together and trying to identify that advance coordination that can potentially lead to better outcomes from a policy perspective or investing in projects.”

The pieces are falling together to give the Megaregion Dozen a better chance for being realized.

“The fact that we all got together and supported each other’s projects is laying the foundation,” SACOG Executive Director James Corless told the group. “And it’s not lost on any of us with some trips coming up to (Washington, D.C.), that we have an infrastructure bill that’s bipartisan sitting in Congress we hope will get passed that has a huge plus-up for things like megaregion projects, mega projects and the new (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity grants), so this is excellent timing. And I think what we have heard from you is an intent to focus and to deliver (projects).”

Group members believe the effort will significantly help to push forward those interregional transportation projects and that more people will know about the work being done.



“I think this is a very solid, constructive step for us to take,” said Don Saylor, a Yolo County supervisor and a member of the SACOG board and Megaregion Working Group. “I chair the Capital Corridor Joint Power Authority this year and we have some active opportunities for passenger rail — the San Joaquins, Altamont Commuter Express, the Capital Corridor — and I want us to be able to support as a megaregion those efforts as they advance. ... It feels to me like we’re kind of at a point where we’ve been hiding our light under a basket for too long and maybe now we’re at a point where we can let others know about the megaregion efforts that this group has been working on relatively quietly.”

The Megaregion Working Group takes into consideration issues beyond highway and rail projects.

“All three of our regions have realized — and particularly over the past year — how the intersecting issues of transportation, housing, climate and the environment, and the economy all really filter down and impact the success of delivering infrastructure that will be to the benefit of our collective residents,” said MTC Executive Director Therese McMillan, calling the group’s action “a significant step forward.”

MTC will host the Megaregion Working Group in the coming year and McMillan also briefed its members on future policy work.

The Megaregion Dozen projects will be essential for moving goods and people throughout the megaregion in the future and will require strong support from business leaders.

“Part of our action plan for the megaregion project is to strengthen and develop business partnerships to advance the planning and the funding efforts for the megaregion branded projects,” Nguyen said.

She added that the business community has strongly supported the collaborative megaregion planning efforts.

[Bay Area Council](#) CEO Jim Wunderman, a longtime supporter of the concepts represented by the Megaregion Dozen projects, again Friday offered support to the Megaregion Working Group.

“To me, you’re doing exactly what we had hoped you would do,” said Wunderman.

“Being able to plan where they live and how they live and how they move about is going to be much more important in the future than it was moving into this,” Wunderman said. “In a way, you’re really getting ahead of the issue at a time when you absolutely need to be ahead of it. I think the project list, the Megaregion Dozen, is a really good list.”

About the Metropolitan Transportation Commission

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. MTC helps the Bay Area's nearly 8 million residents — and countless visitors — get around. As a Metropolitan Planning Organization, MTC supports the region's network of streets, roads, highways, public transit systems, airports and other transportation resources, including the movement of goods through ports and freight rail lines. MTC touches it all, with a focus on building a better transportation system that works for everyone while supporting a resilient economy and environment. MTC works with cities and counties to establish short- and long-term goals and provides resources to help them reach these goals. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, making safer streets that work for everybody and making sure all residents have equal access to transportation resources are just a few of these goals. Visit the [MTC website](#) for more information.

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About San Joaquin Council of Governments

The San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) is the planning, financing and coordinating agency for the San Joaquin region overseeing transportation, housing and habitat conservation. SJCOG is a joint-powers authority comprised of representatives from San Joaquin County and the cities of Stockton, Lodi, Manteca, Tracy, Ripon, Escalon and Lathrop. SJCOG's broad range of responsibilities include managing the Measure K transportation sales tax program, collecting county demographic and economic data, airport land use planning, and regional air quality. SJCOG partners with a network of local governments, private organizations and community groups to deliver a variety of local, state and federal programs that support the streets, roads, highways, public transit, and other transportation resources that help our residents get where they need to be. It is also responsible for assigning each city and the county its fair share of affordable housing. Visit the [SJCOG website](#) for more information.

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About Sacramento Area Council of Governments

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is where local government leaders in the six-county Sacramento region come together to advance the goals of economic prosperity, connected communities, and vibrant places. SACOG works with its 28 member cities and counties to solve challenges that are too big for any one jurisdiction to solve on its own. The SACOG staff are guided by a board of elected officials from each city and county within the region. SACOG plays a central role in transportation infrastructure planning and funding assistance for cities, counties, transit operators, and other entities responsible for providing for the transportation needs of the region's residents. Visit the [SACOG website](#) for more information.

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