**Project Description**

The project, as defined pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21065, is the preparation of the 2022 RTP/SCS. MCTC is in the process of preparing the RTP/SCS as required by Section 65080 et seq., of Chapter 2.5 of the California Government Code, federal guidelines pursuant to new requirements established in the federal surface transportation reauthorization, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century” (MAP-21), and the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Acts, Transportation Conformity for the Air Quality Attainment Plan per 40 CFR Part 51 and 40 CFR Part 93, and requirements set forth in *Assembly Bill 32, The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006,* and *Senate Bill 375 The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008***.** Finally, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) has prepared guidelines (most recently adopted by the CTC on January 18, 2017) to assist in the preparation of the RTP/SCS. The last comprehensive EIR on the RTP/SCS was completed and certified in August 2018, which addressed transportation improvement projects, programs, and funding sources.

The 2022 RTP/SCS addresses all transportation modes including motor vehicles, transit (commuter and local), rail (commuter and interregional), goods movement (rail freight and trucking), bicycle and pedestrian facilities, aviation systems, and transportation systems management (TSM) programs and projects considering the horizon year of 2046. In addition, the 2022 RTP/SCS:

* Identifies the region’s transportation goals and policies.
* Includes the SCS, which demonstrates how the region will meet its GHG reduction targets (currently being discussed by the California Air Resources Board and the eight San Joaquin Valley Regional Transportation Planning Agencies) through integrated land use, and housing and transportation planning. *Once adopted by MCTC, the SCS becomes an integral part of the RTP.*
* Documents the financial resources needed to implement the plan.
* Reflects results of the Transportation Conformity Analysis.
* Highlights the 2022 RTP/SCS EIR process and results.
* Details the RTP/SCS public outreach process.
* Includes the Environmental Justice analysis process.
* Sets forth an action plan of projects and programs to address the needs consistent with the Policy Element such as:
* Facilitating the development of mixed land use districts, which promote living, working, shopping and recreation accessible by foot or bicycle, and which are served by centrally located transit routes.
* Maintaining and improving the regional street system, connecting local jurisdictions within the County, and connecting Madera County to adjacent counties, consistent with Measure T and its re-authorization.
* Enhancing and maintaining existing transit systems and the frequency of current services.
* Developing connecting bikeway systems and facilitating and encouraging their use.
* Improving connectivity between highways, streets and roads, transit and rail, transit, and air travel, cycling and transit, etc.
* Reservation of future “park and ride” opportunities.
  + An organized public education effort.
  + Appropriate financing, including both operations and capital investment.

The Draft PEIR for the 2022 RTP/SCS has been prepared to focus on the evaluation of the environmental effects of the SCS, the required element of the RTP. In addition, the PEIR is also intended to address cumulative and growth inducing impacts and other issues resulting from the RTP and the SCS as required by CEQA.

Specifically, the RTP/SCS will include the following chapters:

* ***Chapter 1 Introduction* –** Introduces the setting and purpose of the RTP/SCS, the key guiding regulations, previous regional milestones, and preview of the plan contents.
* ***Chapter 2 Policy Element* –** a comprehensive listing of goals, objectives, and strategies that identifies the necessary steps to implement the RTP/SCS.
* ***Chapter 3 Sustainable Communities Strategy* –** A detailing of the collaborative process behind the creation of a planning scenario able to achieve the goals of SB 375 for the Madera region.
* ***Chapter 4 Action Element* –** Describes the regional assumption, transportation system and how needs are addressed across various modes.
* ***Chapter 5 Financial Element* –** Outlines the projected revenues for the region and expenditures to implement the RTP/CS.
* ***Appendices* –** A collection of documents providing supporting information for the contents of the plan.

**Environmental Issues to be Addressed in the PEIR**

The programs and projects included in the 2022 RTP/SCS have been analyzed through development of the PEIR. This has allowed MCTC to analyze the regional or general impacts of the programs and projects. A more detailed or project level environmental assessment (if required) of the various projects included in the RTP/SCS will be conducted by the various responsible agencies including Caltrans, Madera County, and the cities within the County before the projects are approved for construction and implementation.

Environmental impacts assessed Include:

* Aesthetics
* Agricultural and Forestry Resources
* Air Quality
* Biological Resources
* Climate Change
* Cultural Resources & Tribal Cultural Resources
* Energy and Energy Conservation
* Geology/Soils/Mineral Resources
* Hazards and Hazardous Materials
* Hydrology and Water Quality
* Land Use, Planning, and Recreation
* Noise and Vibration
* Population, Housing, and Employment
* Public Utilities, Other Utilities, and Services Systems
* Social and Economic Effects
* Transportation/Traffic
* Wildfire
* Alternatives (noted above), Cumulative Effects, Growth Inducing Impacts, and Other Issues required by CEQA
* Mandatory Findings of Significance