



TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

Memorandum

To: Board of Directors

From: Todd Muck, Deputy Executive Director
Virginia Murillo, Transportation Planner

Subject: **Planning & Public Health Seminar**

On September 15th, we attended the California Chronic Disease Prevention Leadership's Capitalizing on New Opportunities: Planners and Public Health Work Together to Promote Healthy Communities seminar in Monterey. The Prevention Leadership is made up of California's local public health professionals engaged in cross-sector, interdisciplinary work that aims to reduce and prevent chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. The seminar focused on policy changes to enhance the built environment, recognizing that access to safe walking and biking paths has direct impact on the quality of life and the rate of chronic diseases. The seminar showcased best practices in public health and planning collaborations from around the state.

Planners, public health professionals, and non-profit advocacy representatives presented on the value of cross-sector partnerships, community engagement, and local and regional health policy initiatives. This conference was unique, in that each session was followed by small group discussions focused on local implementation. TAMC is currently in the process of updating the 2011 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and has already begun coordinating local public health partners for this planning effort. The following sessions of the workshop proved to be of specific interest for this planning effort.

- Planning & Public Health, a Growing Partnership: Kate Meis, Local Government Commission, noted that planning and public health partnerships are key to creating healthy communities, and key to meeting the state's climate change goals. In particular, Meis noted that there are local opportunities to enhance active transportation given that 34% of trips in California are less than 1 mile.

Dr. Elizabeth Baca, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, highlighted state level policy changes that are making it possible for jurisdictions to build multi-modal facilities. Both speakers emphasized the importance to build planning and public health partnerships as a way to create more livable communities and prevent chronic disease.

- Convening Cross Sector Partners to Design Healthy Communities: Sara Bosse, Fresno County Public Health Department, and Keith Bergthold, Fresno Metro Ministry, presented their efforts to make Fresno County healthier via active transportation infrastructure investment and other health programs targeted to disadvantaged areas of the county. Bosse presented a mapping tool that the County uses to identify investment area sites and noted that the tool will be available for other jurisdictions to use. Given that State funding is now focused on serving disadvantaged communities, Agency staff will follow-up on the potential to use the mapping tool presented by Bosse.
- Engaging Communities in Developing and Implementing a Shared Vision for Safe, Healthy Neighborhoods: Andrea Manzo, Building Healthy Communities East Salinas, Gary Petersen, City of Salinas, and Linda McGlone, Monterey County Health Department, presented the process of getting youth engaged in improving a local Salinas park. This example demonstrated that engaging stakeholders that are closest to the issue is key to developing a solution.
- Integration Healthy Community Policies at the City, County and Regional Levels: Andrew Chesley, San Joaquin Council of Governments, and Katelyn Sutter, Catholic Charities, presented on their partnership to develop the San Joaquin County Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Partnerships between advocacy organizations such as Catholic Charities has resulted in a robust plan for future growth and transportation improvements. Again, this case study demonstrated the importance of forming partnerships to develop more inclusive plans.

The content of this seminar was very relevant to transportation planning, as we coordinate with diverse local and county officials to plan for transportation infrastructure improvements. The seminar was well attended by planning and public health professionals from around the state, and especially well attended by local professionals. We were able to network with professionals from the local area that can serve as useful contacts for future planning efforts.