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Agenda Item: ID#15-1032 (5:30 P.M.)

Date: 11/19/15

CITY CLERK, FRESNO

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Supplemental Information Packet

Agenda Related Item(s) – ID#15-1032 (5:30 P.M.)

Contents of Supplement: A Letter from the American Lung Association in California

Item(s)

Attached please find a Supplement to File ID#15-1032 (5:30 P.M.)
The title of the item is as follows:

CONTINUED HEARING to consider Text Amendment No. TA-15-001, Plan Amendment Application No. A-15-003 relating environmental finding for adoption of the Citywide Development Code

Supplemental Information:

Any agenda related public documents received and distributed to a majority of the City Council after the Agenda Packet is printed are included in Supplemental Packets. Supplemental Packets are produced as needed. The Supplemental Packet is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, 2600 Fresno Street, during normal business hours (main location pursuant to the Brown Act, G.C. 54957.5(2)). In addition, Supplemental Packets are available for public review at the City Council meeting in the City Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. Supplemental Packets are also available on-line on the City Clerk's website.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The meeting room is accessible to the physically disabled, and the services of a translator can be made available. Requests for additional accommodations for the disabled, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or translators should be made one week prior to the meeting. Please call City Clerk's Office at 621-7650. Please keep the doorways, aisles and wheelchair seating areas open and accessible. If you need assistance with seating because of a disability, please see Security.



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November 9, 2015

Mayor Ashley Swearengin and Members
Fresno City Council
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Subject: Support for Fresno's Development Code Update

Dear Mayor Ashley Swearengin and City Council Members,

On behalf of the American Lung Association in California, I am writing to express our support for moving forward with the update to the City of Fresno's Development Code that will facilitate additional infill development as the City grows. The lung association views this as an important step to boost equitable downtown revitalization and limit traffic-generating sprawl.

The American Lung Association's State of the Air 2015 report found Fresno to be the nation's most polluted metro area in terms of particle pollution, and the fourth most ozone-polluted. Fresno residents cannot afford to delay progress on planning efforts that should help to improve transit service, revitalize our downtown and make all communities more vibrant, accessible places to live and breathe healthier air.

We believe the Development Code Update is an important step toward building out the City's General Plan's focus on infill and investment in downtown Fresno's future, and also supporting the Fresno Council of Governments' Sustainable Communities Strategy goal of reducing harmful traffic emissions.

The Lung Association supports planning that focuses on community health, revitalizing urban cores like the Blackstone Corridor, and reducing air pollution burdens through alternatives to sprawl development and overreliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips. In particular, we appreciate the focus on Mixed-Use Districts, as noted in the staff documents:

These districts should provide options which reduce the need for private automobile in order to minimize air pollution from vehicle miles traveled. The goal is to achieve an active social environment with a revitalized streetscape by transforming certain auto-oriented boulevards and corridors into vibrant, diverse, and attractive areas that support a mix of pedestrian-oriented retail, offices, multi-family housing, and community gathering & public spaces.

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Lung Association research related to the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy found that mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods can reduce traffic pollution and avoid tens of millions in health costs in Fresno County, including premature deaths, thousands of asthma attacks and hundreds of lost work days due to respiratory-related illness (*Public Health Crossroads: Sustainable Growth for Healthier Fresno Neighborhoods*, 2014, attached). We strongly support efforts to create vibrant, low-pollution areas that are accessible to residents of all income levels.

As the City Council continues to evaluate the Code in the current update and into the future, we encourage a strong focus on:

- Ensuring adequate protection and sufficient public process and notice in the event of industrial zoning or re-zoning near residential or other sensitive uses. The public should remain aware of, and able to participate in, any decisions with potential air quality and health impacts on their neighborhood.
- Providing appropriate incentives for continued investment in existing communities and neighborhoods in a manner that promotes mixed use development and avoids displacement of existing residents and business. Further, new development should ensure a mix of housing density and affordability is achieved to afford all residents with walkable, accessible neighborhoods.
- Requiring that new development or subdivision projects not unduly strain or diminish existing City services, including low-polluting transportation infrastructure. For example, new subdivisions should not drain resources away from ensuring adequate sidewalk and bike lane infrastructure from existing neighborhoods, and in particular, low-income and disadvantaged communities.

The Lung Association urges the Fresno City Council to move forward with the Development Code Update, and to continue to evaluate all opportunities to improve health and air quality, particularly in those neighborhoods most disadvantaged by local pollution sources and inadequate transportation and housing choices.

Sincerely,



Susie Rico-Vasquez, MPH
Community Engagement Director

Public Health Crossroads: Sustainable Growth for Healthier Fresno Neighborhoods

California's groundbreaking Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) offers the San Joaquin Valley region an exciting opportunity to embark on a healthier, clean air future. By adopting and acting on strong Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS), local communities can become vibrant and healthy places for people to live, shop, work, play and study.

With community planning that prioritizes walking, biking, transit and infill development, Fresno County residents could see significant reductions in respiratory health impacts and costs related to traffic pollution. A new vision for healthier growth is necessary and should prioritize investment in existing communities and real transportation alternatives to driving, through more walkable, bike-friendly, diverse housing and transit-accessible neighborhoods.

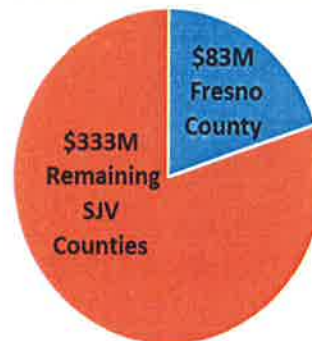
What is SB 375?

Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg), known as the *Sustainable Communities Act*, promotes healthy growth by requiring a blueprint for coordinated land use and transportation planning called a "*Sustainable Communities Strategy*" (SCS). Fresno County's Council of Governments will adopt a plan of *locally generated strategies* in June to meet regional climate pollution reductions targets.

More walkable Fresno County communities could reduce pollution-related health impacts by \$83 Million

The American Lung Association in California has compiled new data on health outcomes and costs based on the Council of Infill Builders' 2013 *A Home for Everyone* report, and compares a scenario with a greater emphasis on growth that is more walkable and interconnected with existing neighborhoods to a business as usual scenario. A future in which new growth in Fresno County is 40 percent more walkable and interconnected with existing built neighborhoods, compared to the currently considered Fresno SCS scenario, could reduce traffic-pollution health impacts by 27 percent. Compared to historical planning, this scenario could reduce health costs by \$83 million in 2035 alone. Valleywide, this healthier future growth scenario could reduce these health costs by \$416 million compared to historical planning. Growth that revitalizes existing neighborhoods, emphasizes active transportation and locally accessible services supports good health for all.

\$416 Million
Reduced Health Costs, 2035



San Joaquin Valley leaders have a choice. They can set a new course for healthier development, or follow the past trend of inefficient growth that will cement asthma-causing traffic pollution, obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other chronic illnesses into the fabric of our communities, and particularly into communities that can least afford it.

Healthier Growth will benefit San Joaquin Valley Residents

Reduce Health Damages by \$416 Million in 2035

A focus on making existing communities more vibrant with real walking, biking and transit opportunities could help reduce pollution-related health costs in Fresno County in 2035:

- \$83 Million in reduced traffic pollution-related health and economic impacts
- 4,600 fewer asthma attacks and other respiratory health impacts
- 789 fewer lost work days

Health incidences include only traffic pollution-related health impacts and deaths (e.g. asthma attacks, bronchitis and other respiratory symptoms, ER visits, hospitalizations, heart attacks, work loss days). Impacts reported here do not include the significant physical activity-related health conditions or deaths (e.g. obesity, diabetes, heart disease, mental health, cancers) or traffic safety related injury or deaths (e.g. bike, pedestrian, motorist) that can be avoided through safer, more active community designs.

WHY WE NEED HEALTHY GROWTH

Fresno County faces serious air pollution and illness burdens related to the built environment

Air Pollution: San Joaquin Valley communities face air pollution levels unparalleled in the United States. Fresno ranks as the second-most polluted American city by deadly particulates. It is well documented that air pollution burdens Valley residents, impacting **children's** genetics and immune systems, including \$6 billion in annual costs to the economy, \$135 million in annual hospitalization charges for asthma, and taking the lives of 1,500 Valley residents per year.

- **All Valley Counties** have higher rates of asthma than the state average
- 23.6 percent of **Fresno County** children have been diagnosed with asthma

City	US Rank 2013
Bakersfield	1
Fresno	2
Hanford	3
Modesto	4
Merced	6
Stockton	12
Visalia	14

Watch for State of the Air 2013: April 30, 2014

Illness Rates	Obesity	Childhood Obesity	Asthma	Childhood Asthma	Diabetes
California	23.5	36.5	13.7	15.4	7.7
Fresno	29.4	40.4	17.3	23.6	9.0

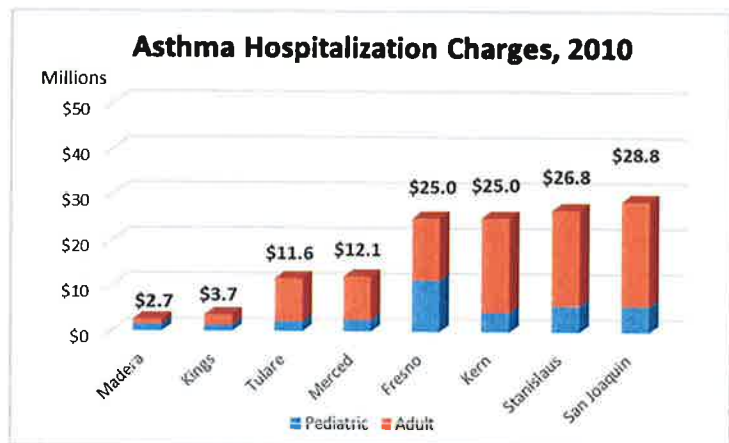
Sources: California Department of Public Health, San Joaquin County Dept. of Health

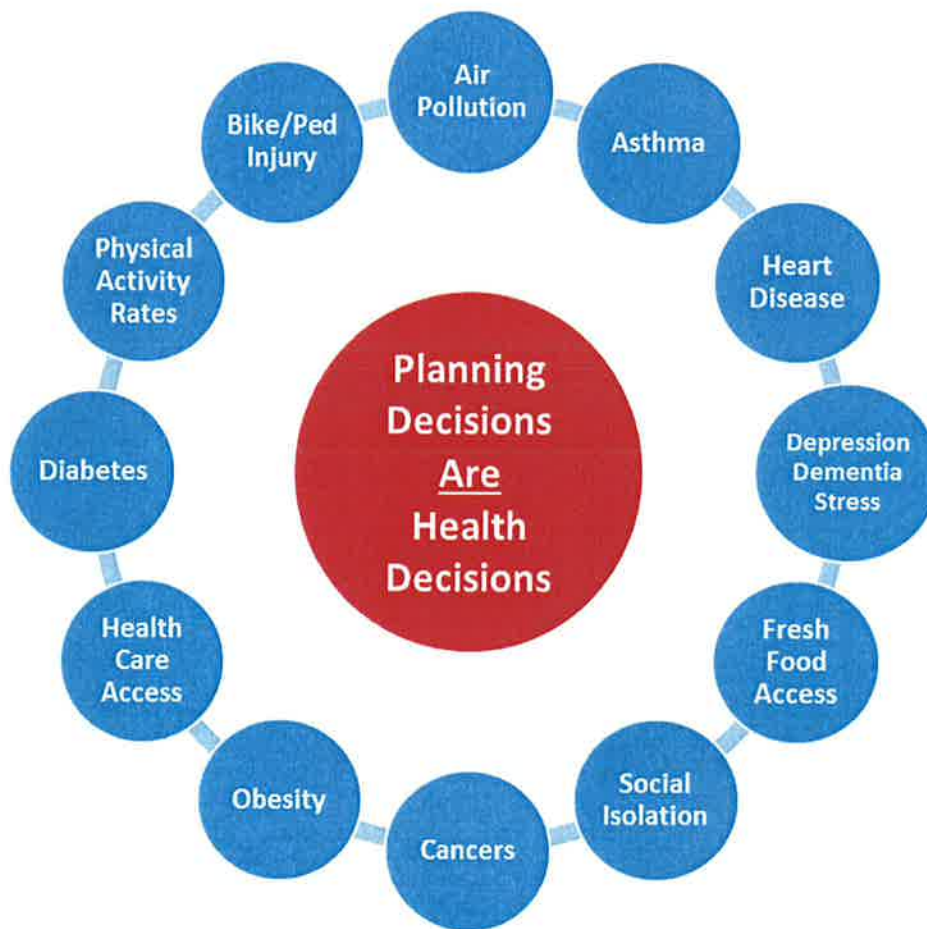
Chronic Disease: Beyond air pollution-related impacts, Valley residents are disproportionately impacted by chronic disease burdens that are related to the built environment, including heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

- Forty percent of children in **Fresno County** are obese.
- **Fresno County's** death rate due to heart disease is higher than the state average and has the 7th highest rate of death due to diabetes.

"As an asthma and allergy specialist, I see the undue burden of air pollution on my patients' health. It is critical that we grow healthy communities that reduce the need to drive and provide more transportation options to create cleaner air and improved breathing for everyone."

Dr. Praveen Buddiga, MD, Fresno





WE CAN PLAN FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE

Fresno County residents deserve healthier neighborhoods than past plans have delivered

As the Fresno Council of Governments moves toward adopting its initial SCS plan in 2014, it is critical that our elected leaders seize the opportunity to plan for a healthier future:

- Recognize that we can't afford another generation of unhealthy planning
- Adopt a strong plan that moves beyond "business-as-usual" planning of the past
- Assess active transportation infrastructure needs in disadvantaged Fresno County communities lacking healthier transportation options
- Support a local government grants program to help make existing neighborhoods more walkable, bikable, and transit friendly
- Prioritize growth and transportation investments to serve existing downtowns and community cores, rather than fringe areas or new towns that encroach on critical natural and agricultural resources
- Promote infill, transit oriented development and access to transit, Bus Rapid Transit and other innovative cleaner air transportation options for people of all incomes
- Focus road investments on "fix it first" maintenance, rather than building expensive new roads
- Front-load investments that enhance walking, biking and transit options
- Support more efficient and zero- and near-zero emission freight strategies
- Invest in planning models such as UrbanFootprint that can estimate health impacts and benefits of future planning scenarios

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