

COVID-19 INFORMATION AND UPDATE:

The Merced County Department of Public Health is closely following the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and California Department of Public Health on the novel (new) virus that is causing an outbreak of pneumonia illness. Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes diseases of varying severities, ranging from the common cold to more serious respiratory disease. For more information, including the latest updates please visit: www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus

MCAAG APPOINTS 2020 ANNA MARIA FUENTES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Last month, the MCAAG Governing Board appointed Livingston High senior, Harleen Thandi the 2020 Anna Maria Fuentes scholarship recipient.

The MCAAG Board established the scholarship program in 2010 in memory and tribute to MCAAG grants analyst, Anna Maria Fuentes. The scholarship, in its tenth year, continues to be funded by staff donations and is awarded annually to a graduating high school senior from a high school in Merced County with a grade point average of 3.8 or higher and has demonstrated a high level of participation in extracurricular activities.

Ms. Thandi was selected for her tremendous academic achievements which includes the A honor roll, the Seal of Biliteracy and her participation in extracurricular activities such as Punjabi club, California Scholars Federation, Sikh Honors and Service Society, Wolves Wellness club, and two-time Class President. Ms. Thandi plans to attend UC Davis in the fall and pursue a career in science.

On behalf of the Fuentes family and the MCAAG team we would like to congratulate Thandi for all of her hard work and accomplishments! For more information about the scholarship please visit: www.mcagov.org/Scholarship.



THE BUS SUSPENDS ALL FARES ON COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT SERVICE

The Bus suspended collection of all fares last month and is implementing additional safety measures aimed at protecting passengers and bus drivers during the COVID-19 emergency. In addition to daily disinfecting and social distancing measures already implemented on vehicles, plastic coverings will be added to the front of buses to separate the area between passengers and drivers. Passengers are strongly encouraged to wear a mask while on The Bus and may only use the service to provide or receive essential services in accordance with the order announced by the Merced County Public Health Officer on April 8, 2020. Bus drivers will be required to wear masks as supplies are available.



“The fare suspension is critical to protecting the drivers operating this essential service for our community,” said Christine Chavez, Transit Manager for The Bus. “By temporarily discontinuing the collection of bus fares, drivers will not have to come into close physical contact with each passenger boarding the bus or handle any cash transactions which is another potential source of exposure.”

Passengers are also encouraged to wash their hands often, cover all coughs and sneezes, stay home when sick, and avoid direct contact with sick individuals.

A public service announcement graphic with a blue border. At the top, it says 'EFFECTIVE APRIL 10, 2020' in a curved banner, followed by 'FARE SUSPENSION' in large, bold letters, and 'ON ALL SERVICE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE' below it. In the center is an illustration of a bus with a plastic shield on its front. To the left of the bus, an arrow points to the rear door with the text 'USE REAR DOOR WHEN AVAILABLE'. To the right, text says 'KEEP EVERYONE SAFE! PLEASE AVOID INTERACTING WITH DRIVERS'. At the bottom, there are two illustrations of people wearing face masks. To the left, it says 'WEAR A MASK'. In the center, it says 'PLEASE STAY SIX FEET AWAY FROM OTHERS'. At the bottom right is the 'THE BUS' logo, which consists of a stylized blue and green circular arrow forming a 'B' shape, with the words 'THE BUS' next to it. Below the logo, it says 'For more information: mercedthebus.com'.

MCAG MAY MEETINGS

05/13 Technical Review Board meeting, 12:00 pm

05/21 Governing Board meeting, 3:00 pm

Please note: All MCAG meetings will be held via video/audio conference until further notice. The call-in number and passcode will be located on the cover of each agenda. To access the agendas for the meetings listed, please visit:

www.mcagov.org/agendacenter

For more information about these meetings, please contact Eva Garibay at: eva.garibay@mcagov.org

THE BUS AWARDED \$3.1 MILLION FOR ELECTRIC BUSES

On the eve of Earth Day, the California State Transportation Agency announced that The Bus will receive more than \$3.1 million in state funding for the purchase of three electric buses to transport Merced County residents.

The three new zero-emission vehicles will be in operation in 18-24 months and represent an expansion of service rather than replacing buses scheduled for retirement. Two of the buses will be used to increase the frequency of service on routes between Merced and the communities of Planada and Le Grand. The other bus will serve the residential areas of Merced that are located north of Merced College. Service to both of these areas were identified as 'Unmet Transit Needs' by the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) in 2019. The SSTAC is composed of private citizens who depend on transit along with representatives from both social services agencies and the transportation industry. The group assesses the regional transit system every year and makes recommendations on transit services that they believe should be provided to the public.

"The addition of these vehicles to The Bus' fleet is not only important because of what they mean to the collective efforts aimed at improving air quality in our region, but also because they will allow us to expand service in communities who don't have the access to transportation they need," said Stacie Guzman, Executive Director of MCAG.

This is the third grant award to purchase electric buses that the Agency has received in the last year; the first was submitted in cooperation with the City of Merced. The full award announcement can be found at: <https://calsta.ca.gov/-/media/calsta-media/documents/2020-tircp-award-list.pdf>.

In total, all of the grant funding equates to the addition of nine electric buses that will be put in service throughout the County.

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

To receive text and/or email notifications from MCAG related to public meetings, traffic alerts, RFP releases, job opportunities, and more, visit www.mcagov.org and click on the "Notify Me" icon. You can also follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube!



84,170 TIRES
Diverted from the waste stream

Funded By
CalRecycle



HIGHWAY 59 LANDFILL

7040 N. Highway 59
Merced, CA 95348
Phone: 209-723-4481
Monday - Saturday
7:00 am - 3:30 pm

BILLY WRIGHT LANDFILL

17173 S Billy Wright Road
Los Banos, CA 95348
Phone: 209-826-1163
Monday - Saturday:
7:00 am - 3:30 pm

For more information about Regional Waste Authority please visit: www.mcrwma.org

MeasureV

MAY 2020—UPDATE

Measure V, Merced County's ½ cent transportation sales tax, was passed by Merced County voters with 71% approval in November 2016. In an effort to keep the community informed about this transformative measure, MCAG will feature monthly updates in this newsletter. You can also visit www.mcagov.org/measureV for the latest!

The second annual Measure V report to the community titled On the moVe has been released on the MCAG website. April 1st marked the third anniversary of the commencement of the local half-cent sales tax used exclusively for the improvement of transportation infrastructure in Merced County. The Measure, which was approved for 30 years and has surpassed \$50 million in revenue, allocates 50% of all its revenue to the cities of Merced, Los Banos, Gustine, Atwater, Livingston and Dos Palos, along with the County of Merced, to pay for local transportation projects including roads, bike paths, and sidewalks.

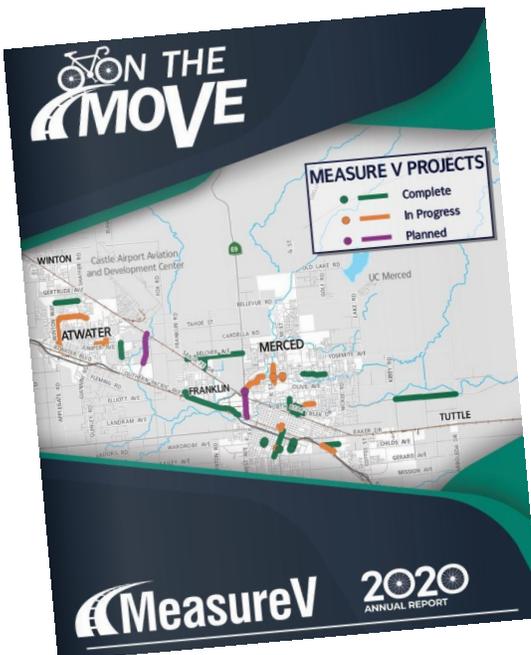
Regional transportation projects located on both the east and west sides of the county receive 44% of the funding with five percent reserved for public transit purposes. MCAG receives one percent of the monies to administer all fiduciary and reporting requirements.

HAVE YOU SPOTTED MEASURE V AT WORK IN MERCED COUNTY?

Snap a picture and send it to measurev@mcagov.org or tag us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

@mcag_merced
or use the hashtag

#MeasureV_mcag



The 2020 edition of On the moVe includes a summary of the audited financial statements approved by the Citizens Oversight Committee for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 along with highlights of transportation improvements throughout the County. English and Spanish versions of the report, along with information about how funds have been spent in each funding category, can be found at: www.mcagov.org/onthemove. Hard copies of the report will be available to the public at each of the six city halls, the County Administration building, and MCAG office upon their reopening to the public at the conclusion of the COVID-19 related shelter-in-place restrictions.

“On the moVe is our opportunity to demonstrate how Measure V continues to transform our local communities through much-needed transportation infrastructure improvements,” said Stacie Guzman, MCAG Executive Director. “This annual report to the public is a key promise made to voters – not only would measures be in place to ensure every penny from the sales tax is used for transportation purposes in Merced County, but we would remain committed to keeping the public informed and engaged in that process.”

CONTACT:

Mary-Michal Rawling, MPA, Public Affairs Manager
(209) 723-3153 x 119 or mary-michal.rawling@mcagov.org