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MEMORANDUM

To: **Tony Boren**
Executive Director

Date: September 27, 2010

Subject: **Status report for September 2010**

The intent of the present document is to provide you with a **Status Report** regarding SRI's activities, to date, during the month of September 2010.

I'm presently involved in two major projects for Fresno COG; Transit Consolidation and Farmland Conservation; plus, several projects for the smaller cities who are members of the COG. Other projects will be forthcoming as directed by Fresno COG's Executive Director, of course.

Transit Consolidation in Fresno County:

As reported in the August 2010 status report, an **Exploratory Committee** has been formed to determine whether or not it is possible to create a seamless regional transit system to make it possible for people to traverse (navigate) from any point in the County to any destination in the County with minimal inconvenience and at a reasonable cost. Beyond providing seamless transportation, the intent is to minimize and/or eliminate the duplication of services among agencies; thus, maximizing the ROI (*return on investment*) of tax dollars earmarked for public transportation. This committee is comprised solely of professional staff (e.g., heads of the respective public transit agencies, transportation planners, and the like).

The first task of this Committee involved each of the three (3) public transit agencies in this consolidation study being given a comprehensive survey (questionnaire) to complete, which will provide the consultants who are handling the technical aspects of the project (Nelson\Nygaard, under the direction of Paul Jewel), with the form of "intelligence" needed for moving forward. The three Agencies are the City of Fresno's, Fresno FAX; the City of Clovis', Clovis Transit Service (Stageline and Round Up); and Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA).

All three surveys have been completed and submitted to Nelson\Nygaard; therefore, Paul Jewel and his team members are now positioned to prepare for the first of two Workshops that are scheduled to be conducted by year's end.

However, since it took longer than scheduled for the three surveys to be completed and returned to Nelson\Nygaard, the time line for completion of Phase 1 will have to be adjusted. I will provide the adjusted timeline in my next status report. In the interim, I will be assisting Paul Jewel in any way he deems helpful in preparing for Workshop 1; I will then Facilitate the Workshop; prepare Minutes of this event; and include the Minutes with the status report immediately following Workshop 1.

Farmland Conservation:

We are in the process of developing the Research Instrument (questionnaire) for a scientific, BENCHMARK survey of registered voters in Fresno County (much like the BENCHMARK survey conducted for Measure C). Part of this exercise is formalizing the **Model for Farmland Conservation** that came out of the Exploratory Stage of the study; the voter survey will be the final element, which will determine whether or not SRI will recommend moving forward with the effort aimed at Farmland Conservation or shelve this notion for the foreseeable future.

The timeline initially called for the scientific survey to be completed by the end of September; however, it's taking longer than anticipated developing the Model that will be "tested". We should have the 1st draft of the Research Instrument crafted by the end of next week; no later than the following week. The ultimate timing of when we will enter the field will ultimately depend upon how long it takes for those on the oversight committee to review the questionnaire and then resolve any concerns that will surface through this process. Fortunately, as noted in prior status reports, there is NOT a huge pressure for making a 'Go, No-Go' decision, since the depressed economy in the State has slowed the form of development in the Central Valley that is threatening the region's farmland. That said, we are moving forward with this process in the most expedient manner possible.

Once we have this "intelligence" in hand, we will be prepared to make a recommendation of what amounts to a 'Go or NO-Go' decision. At that point in time, all of the "intelligence" gathered, to date, will be synthesized, analyzed, and a recommendation made whether or not Farmland Conservation should be moved forward. The feasibility study will culminate with a comprehensive report.

Serving the smaller Cities, who are members of Fresno COG:

As reported in prior status reports, SRI has worked with several Cities, which are members of the Fresno COG; most of this work has been provided on a pro bono basis; one project involved a modest fee, however the City in that project was granted a 40% discount for the professional services provided (which involved a scientific survey). At the present time, we have been invited to submit a proposal to the City of Reedley to conduct a community survey to assist the City in addressing some logistical and fiscal challenges they are facing, today; including, but not limited to, the City's LLAD (Landscape and Lighting District). That proposal is under consideration as the present report is being written.

We will continue to assist members of Fresno COG in a variety of ways that bring to the members professional services that would otherwise not be feasible.

California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley:

SRI is anticipating working with ***The Partnership***, under the direction of Mike Dozier, Executive Director, to assist the organization in realizing specific goals, objectives, and expectations that are consistent with the professional expertise and resources that our Institute brings to the proverbial table. We anticipate beginning our first project within the month.

Of course, there are other projects that SRI will be asked to work on. However, the above projects are those that are on the front burner. If you have any questions and/or comments you would like to share, please know that I'm telephone close and I monitor my e-mails quite closely.

Respectfully submitted,

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