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Northern Region Office
4800 Enterprise Way
Modesto, CA 95356-8718
(209) 557-6400 • FAX (209) 557-6475

Central Region Office
1990 East Gettysburg Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726-0244
(559) 230-6000 • FAX (559) 230-6061

Southern Region Office
34946 Flyover Court
Bakersfield, CA 93308-9725
(661) 392-5500 • FAX (661) 392-5585

DATE: February 18, 2021
TO: SJVUAPCD Governing Board
FROM: Samir Sheikh, Executive Director/APCO
Project Coordinator: Jonathan Klassen



RE: **ITEM NUMBER 10: DISCUSS NEXT STEPS FOR ATTAINMENT PLANNING EFFORTS FOR FEDERAL PM2.5 AND OZONE STANDARDS**

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the status and next steps for District attainment planning efforts for federal PM2.5 and ozone standards.

BACKGROUND:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) periodically reviews and establishes health-based national ambient air quality standards for ozone, particulate matter, and other criteria air pollutants, guided by the federal Clean Air Act (CAA). The District has adopted several air quality attainment plans that identify measures needed in the Valley to attain the increasingly stringent federal standards. Over the past decades, the District has implemented several generations of emissions control measures for stationary and area sources under its jurisdiction. Similarly, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has adopted regulations for mobile sources. Together, these efforts represent the nation's toughest air pollution emissions controls. In addition to having the toughest air regulations in the nation, the District also operates the most effective and efficient incentive grants program, investing over \$3.5 billion in public/private funding towards clean air projects to date that have achieved over 189,000 tons of emissions reductions.

Due to the significant investments made by Valley businesses and residents and stringent regulatory programs by the District and CARB, the Valley's ozone and PM2.5 precursor emissions are at historically

low levels, and air quality has improved significantly, providing Valley residents with associated health benefits.

Most recently, the District's *2018 Plan for the 1997, 2006, and 2012 PM2.5 Standards (2018 PM2.5 Plan)* was adopted by your Board in November 2018. The development of the Plan utilized extensive science and research, state of the art air quality modeling, and the best available information in developing a strategy for bringing the Valley into attainment with the federal health-based 1997, 2006, and 2012 PM2.5 standards as expeditiously as practicable by the applicable federal deadlines. The attainment strategy includes a combination of innovative regulatory and non-regulatory measures for both stationary and mobile sources. District and CARB staff are actively implementing the control strategies detailed in the *2018 PM2.5 Plan*, and recent air quality trends reflect continued improvement due to ongoing emission reduction efforts. EPA is the oversight agency responsible for the review and approval of District plans into the State Implementation Plan. In June 2020, EPA approved the portions of the *2018 PM2.5 Plan* related to the 2006 PM2.5 standard. EPA is now in the process of reviewing the portions of the *2018 PM2.5 Plan* related to the 1997 and 2012 PM2.5 standards.

In addition to implementing the *2018 PM2.5 Plan*, the District is mandated under CAA requirements to develop and submit to EPA a new attainment plan for the recently revised federal 8-hour ozone standard by August 2022 (*2022 Ozone Plan*). In October 2015, EPA strengthened the standards for ground-level ozone from 75 parts per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb. The Valley air basin is classified as an "extreme" nonattainment area for this revised standard, with an attainment deadline of 2037. To meet the latest 8-hour ozone standard of 70 ppb by the federal attainment deadline, significant further reductions in ozone precursor emissions (NOx is primary precursor) and ozone design values will be needed. This will require concerted effort by the District, CARB, EPA, Valley residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to continue implementing effective and efficient air quality strategies. Given that over 85% of remaining NOx emissions in the Valley come from mobile sources under state and federal jurisdiction, it will be particularly important that continued efforts to reduce emissions from passenger vehicles, heavy duty trucks, locomotives, and other mobile sources be pursued. The new ozone plan will build on existing air quality strategies, and the comprehensive NOx emissions reduction strategies included in existing adopted ozone and PM2.5 attainment plans will greatly contribute to meeting the new federal ozone standard.

Based on Board direction, District staff have initiated development of the new *2022 Ozone Plan*, and your Board has taken action to address some of the initial federal requirements, including approval of the 2020 Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) Demonstration and the Emissions Statement Program Certification in June 2020. This year, the District will work with CARB and U.S. EPA to address the remaining elements of the *2022 Ozone Plan*, including:

- Updating the stationary, mobile, and area source emissions inventory for the San Joaquin Valley
- Conducting air quality modeling and additional technical analysis to establish the Valley's carrying capacity and emissions reductions targets needed to attain the federal ozone standard
- Evaluating District and CARB measures to ensure that Reasonably Available Control Measures (RACM) are being implemented
- Evaluating additional measures as technologically and economically feasible to reduce NOx and VOC emissions to expedite attainment of the federal ozone standard
- Evaluating potential contingency measures
- Addressing other federal requirements

Strategies for attainment of the 2015 8-hour ozone standard will be developed through a public process, building on decades of effective control strategies. Consistent with public engagement processes used to assist in the development of recent attainment plans, the District will establish stakeholder engagement opportunities to discuss key topics of interest, and solicit input from affected sources, community-based organizations, residents, and other Valley stakeholders. Additionally, District staff will present regular updates regarding the development of the plan at public meetings and workshops, including upcoming meetings of the District Governing Board, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Environmental Justice Advisory Group (EJAG). Through this extensive public process, the District will prepare the *2022 Ozone Plan* for Board consideration by mid-2022.