

Spring Valley Community Planning Group

*** MEETING MINUTES ***

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.

A. ROLL CALL – QUORUM

12 Present (Lowes, Robles, Pierce, Wallace, Eugenio, Lawson, Shaffer, Pearson, Custeau, Gettmann, Woodruff, Christie), 2 Absent (Gonzalez, Gibbons), 1 Vacant. There was a quorum.

B. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – Opportunity for the public to speak to the Planning Group on any subject matter within our jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda.

Jennifer, a Spring Valley resident, appreciated having the flooding issues at the top of the CIP list and she would like a copy when the list is approved. She addressed the ADA ramps needed, the lack of sidewalks, and the need for red curbs to prevent parking right up to the intersection. There seems to be plans for bike lanes, but no sidewalks. Community member, Angelica, regarding Caltrans or the county have opened the fencing around the property that was designated for a tiny home project. Now homeless have entered the property and are setting up habitation. She has contacted all related authorities, but no action is being taken. People are showing up with trucks to offload material and possessions. She is asking for help to prevent this takeover. This is the Caltrans property near Elkelton Blvd and Jamacha Road. Pierce asked that she keep up contact attempts with Caltrans. A contact with Supervisor Montgomery Steppe's office, Joshua Dunn, spoke to Caltrans today about the issue and Caltrans will be visiting the site and others occupied by encampments. The supervisor's office has made it a priority to clear those encampments. County programs are also working to get treatment for homeless with substance abuse issues. Supervisor Desmond's office has made proposals to reduce fires that occur from specific types of encampments. There are also grants for funds to nonprofits to help the homeless and the application period ends on April 1st. Eugenio spoke about commercial vehicles parking along the north side of Campo Road off of Sweetwater Springs Blvd, east of the Jack in the Box. He has reported multiple time about the illegal parking. A community member mentioned some kind of junk yard on the right side of Jamacha Blvd, just before Sweetwater Springs Blvd. Pierce asked that she report it to Code Compliance. Harriet Taylor, Sweetwater Community Planning Group, asked about Quarry Road storage, but it is on the agenda for this meeting. Lawson is going to run for office in the 79th assembly district. A community member spoke about Caltrans properties being full of trash, even without homeless and that the supervisor's office has not been helpful. Spring Valley is full of trash and no one is helpful. Pierce recommended that she reach out to the state elected representatives about trash on state properties. A community member also spoke of confusion because of Spring Valley having two county supervisors, the push to have solar panels on the reservoir, the water being necessary for firefighting, that Spring Valley is rarely mentioned in the media or officially, such as being a community within the special election area. There are many code violations, much graffiti, planning group agenda items outside of Spring Valley and nothing is being done; might as well become a city. She thanked the planning group for the efforts so far, but much more needs to be done.

C. ACTION ITEMS with designation as to whether there will be vote or not on the item:

1. Approval of Minutes: 2/11/2025. Vote on this item.

Motion to approve by Pearson, second by Wallace. Vote is 11 Yes (Robles, Pierce, Wallace, Eugenio, Lawson, Shaffer, Pearson, Custeau, Gettmann, Woodruff, Christie), 0 No, 1 Abstain (Lowes), 2 Absent (Gonzalez, Gibbons), 1 Vacant. The motion carried.

2. Informational Item: SR-94/125 Interchange Project Update from Caltrans. Presenters: Jake Stelten (Project Manager), Jim Bolz (Assistant Project Manager), Tyler Hicks (Public Information Officer). No vote on this item.

Stelten began by introducing his group and to give an update on the subject project, the last update was about 2 years ago. The interchange was built in 1974 without a southbound 125 to eastbound 94 connector. The lack of connector forces southbound traffic to exit SR125 at Spring St, go under the bridge and take a ramp onto SR94. This connection

causes backups onto SR125. This is an operational and safety concern. Similarly, the Campo Rd connector causes issues with westbound SR94.

South to east and west to north connectors were envisioned in the current project. An auxiliary lane on southbound SR125 and on eastbound SR94 and the destruction of the Mariposa bridge to accommodate widening. The environmental

documents were in 2015. In 2021 there were delays due to funding concerns and that groundwater was going to pose a greater effect on the original design than anticipated. More environmental projects were needed, especially on the connector portions. The decision was made to have two project phases in order to provide what was designed by leveraging the funding. The 1st phase is the planned auxiliary lanes and additional northbound lane requested by the community. The Mariposa bridge reconstruction and lengthening, sound wall and bike lane improvements are also in phase 1. Phase 2 would include the connector affected by the groundwater, sound and retaining walls and bike lanes. Phase 1 is fully funded through construction. Design will be complete by this summer, put to bid by the end of the year, begin construction by spring of 2026 and open to traffic by winter of 2027-2028. Phase 2 is funded through design, further funding is being explored, design will begin this fall and be complete in summer of 2027 and construction to begin in 2028, to be open for traffic in 2028. Pearson thanked Stelten for the overview and went over date and funding highlights. Stelten said they are immediately looking for funding for phase 2 construction. Lowes asked if the project will be completely done by 2030, yes it will. Custeau asked about the funding source for phase 1. This was state funds funneled through SANDAG. SVCPG will continue to work with SANDAG to secure this funding. Custeau said the focus of SANDAG has been north County and Spring Valley rarely benefits. He is now on the SANDAG transportation committee and he will comment on the funding need whenever he can. The board of supervisors and state reps also need to be reminded of this funding need. Gettmann asked about remediation for the significant ground water issue. Is this water a revenue source? The volume of water is not known, a revenue concept is an interesting idea and that the water is contaminated with selenium. The water would need to be treated after extraction. Karen Jewel, Caltrans team, Project Director spoke on the credit to community speakers who addressed SANDAG which then sourced phase 1 funding and phase 2 environmental design. The next phase of funding is a priority for the agencies involved. A treatment plant to process the ground water and permits are very expensive. Christie asked about the source of the selenium. It is naturally sourced. Custeau said the project needed to be completed as the tolls on SR125 are likely ending and will add to the traffic congestion on SR125 going through Spring Valley. Also, it's nonsensical to bring 2 onramps onto a fwy in a short distance and then immediately ending a traffic lane for northbound traffic. Lowes asked about traffic disruption during construction. There are plans to mitigate disruption, but not fully known until design is complete. Pierce asked if the new port of entry (POE) will be a toll. That is a SANDAG project and is due to start construction in the fall. The roads leading to the POE are Caltrans and are complete.

Toll funds are earmarked to pay for that project. Gettmann asked if the POE is also funded by ICE/BP? There are Federal funds for the building of the POE facility. Since the federal project affects SR125, couldn't federal funds also help pay for our interchange? Karen said she can look into the traffic study and see if there federal mitigation plans. Harriet Taylor spoke on Bonita also being affected by toll roads causing more traffic in Bonita. Jennifer asked how Unincorporated areas are represented in SANDAG. Pierce defined the APG and that Custeau is our rep on the advisory Board. Pierce asked about current work on SR125 through Spring Valley. It's not a widening but just asset management Such as pavement work. Robles brought up the Jamacha exit and work/cleanup needed there. Tyler Hicks described how to follow up after a ticket has been closed, but the work is incomplete. Communicate to him, with pictures if possible, and he will research. The discussion continued regarding homeless camp issues on Caltrans property. Once legal notice process is complete, Caltrans will come in to clean up and repair any fencing. Robles asked if there is a group consensus to have an agenda item where all the official parties convene to discuss the new county camping ordinance. Wallace asked about whether Caltrans has a community forum when they are working in a neighborhood. Most projects are small and community outreach is during any design steps. When construction begins, they have announcements or attend

community meetings such as planning groups. Karen Jewel said that community meetings will happen once construction is scheduled. Wallace said announcements would be very helpful for commuters. Jewel said the news and social media are where announcements are posted about closures/detours. Gettmann commended Caltrans for their Quickmap phone app. Stelten said that daytime/nighttime work decisions are based on various factors, but they do try to minimize impact. They can even email road closures to anyone interested in being notified.

3. Informational Item: Information about the upcoming special primary election on April 8, 2025 to fill the vacant Supervisor position in the District 1 Office. Presenter: Griselda Ramirez. No vote on this item.

Ramirez, internal affairs for the District 1 office, shared information on the special election. Voting in person has started. Registration to vote can still happen up to April 8th, on March 29th, 7 voting locations have opened to spread the word. Lowes asked about where is the district 1 boundary. This would include the La Presa census tract of Spring Valley. Ramirez distributed a flyer with election details. The winner will serve until January 2029 and if no candidate receives a majority, the top two candidates will move on to the general election on July 1st. Also, this is the budget time of year, so a good time to share what you want in your communities. On April 2nd, the clerk of the board is launching a new system for those requesting to speak at meetings and she has handouts. There will be 3 sessions on this system, April 5th, and April 7th with two sessions, noon and 7pm. Her office still supports the district's inhabitants and there will be a rep at the Bonita meeting with the same information. Jennifer, a community member, said her zip code was not included on the ROV website. Ramirez said that was an error and she asked for the zip code to be added. She also added that, in 5 years, there will be another census and redistricting. So be part of the process and maybe bring our community back together. A discussion continued about the splitting effect on Spring Valley in the last redistricting. Gettmann described how the current split occurred and the difference between zip codes, census tracts and the county districts.

4. Letter: Unsafe Camping Ordinance Letter Request. Presenter: Office of Supervisor Joel Anderson. Vote on this item.

No rep from the supervisor's was present. A letter was sent out to the group. Pearson sent out 4 attachments, one minutes from the supervisors meeting of March 11th where all four supervisors voted in favor of the letter. Pearson made a motion to approve the letter, Custeau seconded. Gettmann appreciates the letter's goal but it does not address the underlying issue of driving the homeless off public property onto private. An example was an earlier program to remove camping around the swap meet area. The camps moved to private land where an expensive cleanup occurred. He went on to state what caused the large fires in the county, which were not homeless. Custeau is in favor of the letter due to fires that put firefighters at risk and that some recent fires were caused by encampments. Angelica, a community member spoke about a neighbor who had a property fire caused by homeless. Group member Lawson said the bigger issue is not being addressed. Community member Stephanie said the letter doesn't address where the homeless will go. That the ordinance has no solutions. Custeau said this is a social issue with no solutions. Vote on the motion is 7 Yes (Robles, Pierce, Eugenio, Shaffer, Pearson, Custeau, Woodruff), 4 No (Wallace, Lawson, Gettmann, Christie) 1 Abstain (Lowes), 2 Absent (Gonzalez, Gibbons), 1 Vacant. The motion fails.

5. Letter: Cottonwood Sand Mine Letter Request. Presenter: Ed Woodruff. Vote on this item.

This is on the end of the old Cottonwood golf course, 241 acres of sand will be dynamited, ground up and hauled out by 150-200 trucks down Jamacha Blvd to SR94, 8:30am to 3:30pm each day. There are also environmental issues. Woodruff attended the Valle De Oro Community Planning Group (VDECPG) meeting that also discussed this topic. Air and water quality will be affected along with the national wildlife refuge nearby and crowded roads. There should a letter from SVC PG as well. VDECPG voted 11-1 in favor of a letter and proponent attended, but did not comment. There is one step for this permit before it goes to the supervisors. Stopcottonwoodsandmine.org provided a letter for us to use. Motion to approve by Shaffer, seconded by Roble. Custeau said the zoning change allowing the sand mining operation goes to the planning commission on April 18th, but if approved, it is very difficult for the supervisors to vote it

down. Pierce asked if it could be appealed. Planning commission votes if the permit is a change of character and zoning. Right now, the land is recreational use zoned. This mine goes against the community plan and the general plan. Pierce said we should edit the letter to emphasize the surrounding communities and not so much Rancho San Diego. Gettmann said this should have been a major use permit because of the nonconforming issues. Robles asked, besides the letter, what else can we do? As citizens, we can voice our opposition to the planning commission. Harriet Taylor said she had already been to the commission and

PDS supported the Quarry storage project. Her group has appealed to the supervisors regarding the storage project. A CPG can appeal a planning commission decision to the supervisors. PDS doesn't seem to care even when a project goes against a community plan. Pierce is concerned about the road use by the trucks and the dust involved. Vote is 12 Yes (Lowe, Robles, Pierce, Wallace, Eugenio, Lawson, Shaffer, Pearson, Custeau, Gettmann, Woodruff, Christie), 0 No, 0 Abstain, 2 Absent (Gonzalez, Gibbons), 1 Vacant. Motion is passed.

6. Letter: Quarry Road Storage in Bonita Letter Request. Presenters: Harriet Taylor & John Taylor. Vote on this item.

Bonita is a small and unincorporated area and a neighbor to Spring Valley. They show the location of the proposed storage business; follow Sweetwater Road down to Quarry Road. This is all housing, zoned rural residential. This business will cover an area of 4 football fields. 3 stories of storage, 34 feet tall with outside storage as well. 1st came to their planning group in 2021 as a much smaller scope. The builder does not want to rezone in their major use permit. PDS said it was OK. Gettmann said the property owner is probably calling the project commercial and so does not need to rezone. Robles said that other than what is stated in the permit, all else is speculation and this area also does not have a supervisor. Robles made a motion to approve the letter, seconded by Lawson. Eugenio commented that with the current housing shortage, that property could hold 20 residences. Gettmann said that, as an amendment, this permit is inconsistent with the county's goals in the housing element of the general plan. Vote is 12 Yes (Lowe, Robles, Pierce, Wallace, Eugenio, Lawson, Shaffer, Pearson, Custeau, Gettmann, Woodruff, Christie), 0 No, 2 Absent (Gonzalez, Gibbons), 1 Vacant. The motion passes.

7. Discussion: Prioritize SVCPCG Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Top 10 Lists. Vote on this item.

Pierce asked if the group members had been reviewing their lists. He had heard from PDS that the group should prioritize the list. Custeau said sidewalks near schools such as Bancroft Elementary. Discussion continued on specific sidewalk location requests near the school. Harriet Taylor said Bonita does sidewalk requests on only one side of the street. Pierce moved the elementary school sidewalk to No.1. Robles asked if the requests are specific on locations. Pierce confirmed. Christie asked on warning signage for streets, but those are not CIP items. Pierce asked about other schools needing sidewalks. Jamacha Road from Elkelton to Darby, on one side, should be a priority and also on Kenwood near the Spring Valley Academy. South Barcelona by Highlands Elementary will also be a priority. Robles asked that the sidewalk requests be lumped as a category or corridor, but Pierce countered that individual locations need to be specified. Pearson commented that it seems only 2 short stretches of sidewalks were completed last year at great expense. The discussion continued on whether to list specific project locations or define a corridor for projects. Gettmann felt the corridor concept was for construction management as some projects are quite close together. Robles said we could have 26 items on the list but have 10 corridors for those 26 items. Wallace agreed with the corridor concept. Pierce commented that items within a corridor may have very different priorities. Gettmann and Pierce gave an example of a possible corridor of sidewalks for schools. Shaffer said they want a priority list but also projects that fit a current funding source. Gettmann said a school sidewalk corridor makes it politically hard to ignore. Using the corridor concept may help focus on funding sources such as Safe Passage for schools. PDS wants a top ten list, as priorities, and then list the rest as well. Pierce continued to build the top ten list and asked about other school areas to add. He asked if any group members have heard any community concerns about sidewalks. Next list to review was road improvements. Pierce asked the group to prioritize this category. Examples were crosswalk, traffic lights and turn lane requests. Flood control needs in at least 2 locations were noted. Synching of a traffic light is not so much a CIP item as a TAC issue. Discussion was also about adding a traffic light on Sweetwater Springs Blvd near Cristobal or Del Rio due to traffic speed on the boulevard. A recommendation was made to study a light in this area. Motion to approve the current list by Shaffer, second by Woodruff. Vote is 12 Yes (Lowe, Robles, Pierce, Wallace, Eugenio, Lawson, Shaffer, Pearson, Custeau, Gettmann, Woodruff, Christie), 0 No, 0 Abstain, 2 Absent (Gonzalez, Gibbons), 1 Vacant. The motion passes. Pearson suggested that

there be a subcommittee to research and prepare a presentation and background materials for this list next time around. Gettmann and Lawson volunteered as well.

D. GROUP BUSINESS

1. Announcements:

2. Reports:

☐ Chair:

☐ CSA 128: Pearson is the only holdover with the other seats being vacancies due to changes in supervisors of the two districts covered.

☐ TAC: Nothing new from TAC

☐ Highway cleanup: Eugenio has sent back the permit paperwork to Caltrans and the next scheduled clean-up is March 30th at 8:00am, Sweetwater Springs Blvd.

☐ APG: Custeau attending his 1st meeting on the SANDAG transportation committee and he was warmly welcomed by the group, including two supervisors, Montgomery Steppe and Anderson. Custeau will send the meeting information to SVCPG members. He noticed that a lot of what they discuss happens elsewhere and comes to their committee after the fact. There is a Mobility working group with members whom Custeau is familiar. He sent an email to that group to identify grants for mobility issues. These grant responses are due by August 1st.

☐ Other: Gettmann attended the quarterly chairs' meeting. County housing plan to the state is on track, unincorporated areas are doing okay but there will be shortfalls down the road. A lot of progress is driven by ADUs. Also discussed cannabis report that prior criminal sellers would be suited to the current industry. Scott Shaffer is leaving the group as he is going on active duty. So, there are now 2 vacancies. Gettmann is coordinating candidates for the positions. There has been comment from the community that we don't have enough meetings, but we need more agenda content. Spring Valley Day will be April 26th; does the group want to have a booth? The group wants to have a table.

3. Next scheduled SVCPG meeting: April 8, 2025

E. ADJOURNMENT at 8:59pm

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

We strive to protect personally identifiable information, by collecting only information necessary to deliver our services. All information collected becomes public record, subject to inspection and copying by the public, unless an exemption in law exists. In the event of conflict, governing the County's disclosure of records, the County ordinance or other law will control. You can review any personal information collected about you. You may recommend changes to your personal information, which you believe is in error, by submitting a written request that shows, credibly, the error. If you believe your personal information is being used for purposes other than those intended, you may contact us. In all cases, we will take reasonable steps to verify your identity, before granting access or making corrections.

Purpose of Planning and Sponsor Groups

Advise the County on Discretionary projects as well as on planning and land use matters that are proposed within their respective community planning or sponsor group area.