

THE SUN-GAZETTE

Groundbreaking Kicks Off Farmersville Transit Center

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FARMERSVILLE – What was once an old freight train will soon take locals to larger cities, because the town’s new transit center has broken ground.

The city embarked on a journey to increase transportation through the buses and trains that will stop at the new transit center once finished in May next year.

On July 21, the City of Farmersville and Self-Help Enterprises – in partnership with Tulare County Association of Government (TCAG), QK Inc, Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA), and Teter Architects and Engineer – celebrated the groundbreaking of Farmersville’s first transit center. The Farmersville Transit Center which will serve as a hub for fixed-route bus services in Farmersville and will connect residents to destinations throughout Tulare County.

“The city’s first transit center was previously based-off the design of the old railroad station in Farmersville, and it’ll be where all the (mainstay) bus lines that run through Farmersville (stop),” project manager at Self-Help Enterprises Jose Flores said.

Flores explained that the railways will eventually take passengers to other cities as well, such as Visalia. According to him, the construction of the transit center will start in September and be finished by May 2024. The planning has been in progress for a number of years now, with the beginning stages of planning dating back to 2020.

The building will be a total of 3,643 square feet including 1,432 square feet of enclosed office area and 2,211 square feet of covered outdoor transportation space. The transit center includes two bus bays for City of Visalia service and the opportunity to access micro-transit which will be offered in partnership with the Tulare County Regional Transit Authority.

Self-Help Enterprises is also constructing 108 affordable rental units in conjunction with the transit improvements, and anyone in need of housing in Farmersville should call 559-239-9343 for an application.

Funding for the project includes \$2.6 million from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program, over \$900k of Measure R funding from the Tulare County Association of Government and \$1.8 million from the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 also from TCAG.

Measure R, which was approved by Tulare County voters in 2006, is a half-cent sales tax that addresses regional, local, and transit, bike and environmental transportation needs in the county.

The project is deemed transformational because it will connect with the future Cross Valley Corridor, which will connect residents in Farmersville and the surrounding communities to High-Speed Rail.

According to an interview the Sun-Gazette had with city manager Jennifer Gomez in October 2022, the transit center is the first step to a larger vision. At the time, she noted the plan to convert an existing railroad in Farmersville, which is only for freight train use now, into a system that will transfer passengers across the Valley to the future location of the anticipated High Speed Rail station in Hanford.

She noted in the past interview that, once passengers make it to the future High Speed Rail station, they can travel to their desired locations from there.