

Together, at last

City of Fresno, Madera County set joint meeting on common issues.

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The decision to hold a joint meeting between leaders from the city of Fresno and Madera County makes a lot of sense, because the two governments are contending with many of the same regional problems. Some might even ask why it's taken until now to get these two agencies together.

But the session Monday morning at Children's Hospital Central California in Madera County holds much promise, with elected officials vowing to tackle common issues such as air pollution, growth and transportation.

The two agencies share 12 miles of boundary along the San Joaquin River from Willow Avenue and Friant Road to Freeway 99. While there may be a government line that separates Fresno from Madera County, the public has blurred the distinction.

Thousands of Madera County residents travel Freeway 41 to work in Fresno and to shop in places such as the north-end shopping areas along Blackstone Avenue. Others live in Fresno and work at Children's Hospital, and parents from all over the region take their children to the Madera County hospital for care.

This is a heavily traveled corridor, and growth only serves to increase problems such as air quality and transportation. That was noted by the elected officials in setting up the joint meeting. Fresno Council President Tom Boyajian had this to say: "We have common interests. Everything that we do, like growth, affects them."

Last year, Madera County leaders began regular meetings with members of the Fresno County Board of Supervisors. Madera County Board Chairman Vern Moss envisions three-way meetings between both county boards and the Fresno City Council. "A lot of these problems will not be taken care of unless they're done on a regional basis," Moss said.

So let's get working on regional solutions.

'First to pollute'

Letter to the Editor, Fresno Bee

By Rose Ohanesian

Fresno

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I was deeply disturbed by the article in The Bee [Feb. 11] about the tank that might be filled with toxins that are bad for the environment. I feel that people generally are ignorant about what is happening with the environment and this article proves it.

People know that there is a tank full of chemicals and toxins that are horrible for the environment, but they are still the first to pollute and deplete the resources in our environment. We should really be more considerate to the environment and actually know and understand what's going on, for once.