

## ***“County planning program wins national recognition”***

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As Riverside County maps the region for wildlife, roads and houses, a national transportation organization is taking note.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials has selected Riverside County for a national transportation planning pilot program, county officials said Wednesday.

The growth plan developed for Riverside County was one of three programs selected from California and will be monitored by the association to demonstrate ways in which the state Department of Transportation can better work with federal and state agencies, officials said.

"We view this as a very strong endorsement of our vision," said Eric Haley, executive director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission.

The recognition does not come with funds, but county officials hope it will give them clout as they seek government financing for a \$12 million study on the creation of four transportation corridors.

Overall, 10 pilot programs were selected from seven states including two for New Jersey and one each in Florida, Georgia, Oregon, Texas and Wisconsin.

The association consulted with the Federal Highway Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency in the selection of the pilot projects, county officials said.