



**2015 Washington D.C. Trip (April 11-16, 2015)
"ONE VOICE"**

DATE: February 23, 2015
TIME: 10:30 AM – 12:00 Noon
PLACE: Fresno Council of Governments (Sequoia Room)

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Self-Introductions.

Regional Priority Discussion:

Melissa Garza gave an overview of the priorities and highlighted that not all priorities submitted have a sponsor to present on behalf of the issue and request in DC. It was also discussed that some priorities may not be supported by the Policy Board because they may be considered "divisive" in nature as was discussed and directed at the Board Development Workshop that took place in 2010. Tony Boren mentioned that in 2010 some board members wanted to take a position on immigration and overall the board gave direction that issues like immigration, which are outside of our Fresno COG's "wheelhouse", can be very divisive and extremely hard to find consensus on and it is possible that once again the issue of "immigration reform" can raise a red flag. Mr. Boren felt like the Fresno COG Board will not be comfortable with the issue but the committee had the discretion to discuss and make a recommendation. Policy Board Chairman Amarpreet Dhaliwal stated that he agreed with Mr. Boren and, because One Voice is supposed to be One Collective Voice, he did not recommend that this regional priority move forward for recommendation at this time and that we should focus on regional priorities that we can ALL agree on. Lee Ann Eager also agreed that immigration reform was not appropriate for this trip, but if the Policy Board felt very strongly about it, then maybe there could be consideration for a separate regional trip. The group concurred that advocating about immigration reform should not be recommended at this time.

Brian Haddix, asked what role the Policy Board will pay on the 17 priorities. Staff responded that they will make the final decision but that this committee, TTC and PAC play an important role in the recommendation. Jeff Roberts asked that there be some changes to the Reauthorization priority because Veterans Blvd is not on there and there seems to be a greater discussion about BRT and "fix it first". Ms. Garza responded that she did not receive a request prior to today to include Veteran Blvd and the "fix it first" funding request is what the Regional Policy Council advocated for in September as part of the Valley Voice and our Policy Board had approved it. Mr. Roberts requested that we add something about Veterans within the discussion about reauthorization and that he would be happy to speak on it as he had done in prior years. Mr. Boren has been asked by the City of Fresno that anything that involves City of Fresno projects should be consulted with the City first to ensure that all are on the same page and that the Mayor give it a thumbs up. Mr. Boren would want to make sure that the City would be in support, even though they have been in support of Veterans Blvd as part of the One Voice for many years now. Mr. Roberts stated that on Thursday the City would be voting to approve \$1.5 million of Measure C to acquire the ROW, which brought up the question of whether the City of Fresno would be sending a representative on the trip to advocate for their issues. Ms. Garza responded that at this time the City of Fresno did not have a representative going on the trip. She also stated that Mayor Victor Lopez would not be attending after all due to health related issues and that at this time, have not heard of an alternate from Orange Cove.

Vince DiMaggio was concerned about the Urban Forest priority because he felt like it was more of a local issue such as planting and developing, rather than a regional issue and also asked if someone from the City of Clovis would be attending. Ms. Garza responded that Mayor Lynne Ashbeck would be attending and that Jen Covino believes that they may be applying for a grant under community partners since they administer several existing grants. If this is the case, the City of Clovis may benefit more from this request if the City provided more detailed information on the project and not recommend it as a standalone issue.

Mr. DiMaggio agrees that it is important and admirable; however, many times it's up to the individual cities to make these decisions and not up to the region. He suggested it become a bullet point under Air Quality but not a stand-alone request. Paul McLain-Lugowski agreed and the committee concurred.

Mr. Roberts asked about the TOD request from the City of Fresno, and Ms. Covino responded that the City of Fresno is requesting regulatory request for flexibility that other mid-size cities would also benefit from. It's beneficial for other small cities too. If it can be merged under MAP-21 Reauthorization, then Mr. Roberts said that as a TOD developer, he would be happy to present this issue on behalf of the City of Fresno and that Mr. Boren should speak about it from a regional perspective. The issue is regarding fixed guideways and dedicated lanes and could be discussed with DOT since it is pretty limited on who has jurisdiction over these details. Lydia Zabrycki is concerned that because the issue includes dedicated lanes, then in reality only mid-size cities are the only ones that truly will benefit and the small cities will not, regardless. Jen said that she didn't think that was the case, because the regulatory reform change would be to open it up for all to compete—"inclusive of all".

Ms. Zabrycki said that she noticed that some priorities may be receiving a discussion amongst the committee and that there was not a complete white paper submitted. In order for this committee to make a well informed recommendation to the Policy Board, it is standard process that white papers be submitted by the deadline in order to avoid last minute surprises. She also said that there were deadlines set and that the committee should adhere and respect the deadlines, and that priority sponsors should also adhere to those deadlines. Also, she was very concerned about this group recommending priorities to the board if there is nobody going on the trip that can speak or present the issue and priority. She also reminded the committee that we have established parameters in the past about complete priority submittals and representatives going on the trip to speak on behalf of their requests and we should adhere to them. The committee agreed that all stand-alone presentations must have a white paper.

Expanded drip irrigation—Ms. Eager did not think this request was appropriate for this trip and recommended removing it; however, Lacey Kiriakou suggested that it be considered as part of a broad water relief discussion. Not a stand-alone discussion. [\(This recommendation was later changed, see below\)](#)

With regard to Economic Development and Redevelopment, Ms. Covino will send a memo on EDA funding programs available for disadvantaged communities (infrastructure and community development). There are some established guidelines as to who is considered disadvantaged based on census tracts. EDA is a 50/50 match, but if disadvantage, the feds can match up to 80%. She requested that there be a follow-up with some specific projects/applications that may be in the pipeline. Ms. Eager stated that EDC applied for EDA and USDA funds in the past and truly disadvantaged communities in our area did not qualify for funding under the current criteria. Mr. DiMaggio stated that he is well aware that there are programs out there, but believes that those programs do not strictly address what the real need is in disadvantaged communities such as:

1. Replacement to the flexibility that we had with the old RDA program (State program)
2. Flexibility in being able to partner with developers, who want to invest in these communities, and provide incentives for them. Infrastructure incentives don't address the need.

Mr. McClain agreed and said that EOC had to take over a project from an agency that had it for 15 years and it speaks to how these programs are not "user friendly". He recommended that we remove the bullet on EDA from the CSBG priority (bullet 3) and move to the Economic Development priority. The committee concurred.

Mayor Pro-Tem Raul Villanueva asked if the board would be discussing the list. Ms. Garza responded that it would go to the TTC/PAC first then to the Board.

Ms. Garza presented the list of all attendees who have registered thus far. [Included in the list were Mayor Pro-Tem Gary Yep and Supervisor Andreas Borgeas; however, both individuals have dropped out since the One Voice Committee meeting.](#) Mr. Haddix said that Sanger would confirm on March 5th if the City would be sending Mayor Joshua Mitchell, Councilmember Tony Pacheco and himself.

Mayor Silva requested to be a speaker on the Water and Mario Santoyo said that he would be updating the white paper. However, Mr. Santoyo is concerned that nobody from Orange Cove will be attending and that maybe we should ask if Sam Escobar, city manager, would attend unless they are going on a separate trip.

The east side cities, especially Orange Cove, are going to be impacted the most in the near term and Orange Cove has such a strong story to tell. Ms. Eager said that maybe Sam Escobar could go on behalf of the City. Mr. Santoyo said that he would check with them.

Mr. Santoyo is concerned that if we introduce issues that are about conservation and efficiency instead of strictly requesting MORE WATER, then administrators and legislators will find it easier to respond to conservation and efficiency relief, instead of addressing the main concern about water availability and policy decisions. Water Policy Support should be stand alone. However, Paul McClain requested that CSBG be withdrawn as a stand-alone request and incorporated as *1A under Water Policy discussion. Mr. McClain believes it will add to the discussion. Mr. Santoyo said that he doesn't disagree. He also mentioned that when they met with the President to discuss the water policy, legislation and the issues with the Delta, the focus was to get him to take action that would make a difference here. What he brought to the table was relief (funding for food banks, etc.) but not necessarily addressing the environmental issues. Mr. Santoyo and Mr. McClain will work together to rework the request to incorporate CSBG to highlight the human toll/factor of the drought that is being assisted by CSBG. That is the only thing that makes a difference. The committee agreed with this approach.

With regard to immigration reform, Len Simon said that the President moved forward with his executive action, but the Texas Court has put a temporary hold on that, the President said that as soon as Congress decides to put forth immigration reform legislation; he will withdraw his executive action. Mr. Simon doesn't believe that they will be able to do that because there is a lot of division on this issue even amongst the Republican Party. The question is not only about the executive action but the timetable of implementation. There is no momentum or anticipation right now for any legislation.

With regard to global climate change, Mr. Roberts said that it seems more apparent than ever that the discussion/question about global climate change seems to come up and that we must be ready to answer how we would address global climate change. TOD comes to mind, but not sure how the other regional priorities fit into this. Mr. Simon agreed that it is a consistency amongst the administration. The White House just completed the work of a state/local government task force on climate prep and resilience and the recommendations are being developed. They produced resiliency information on flood plains proposals. Trying to figure out if there will be grant programs developed or planning requirements. Does not recommend a stand-alone discussion, but we should have a list of question and list of concerns that we can divide up amongst the various agencies and the congressional delegation because it comes up in appropriations and budget discussions.

Mr. Simon mentioned that discretionary domestic funding for grants is being reduced, areas like transportation, job training, and housing are being diminished. The agencies are turning to different instruments like TIFIA for transportation, WIFIA from Water Resources, Public Private Partnerships.

Ms. Garza announced that the Mayflower Renaissance block of rooms is sold out. We were able to obtain a few rooms at the government rate of \$289. We will be traveling on Delta Airlines, leaving on the 6:20 AM flight and we will secure a shuttle to and from the hotel. Flights are about \$700 for a roundtrip.

Len Simon provided an overview of the agenda outline. However, Ms. Covino will send a follow up draft outline/agenda that will be the official draft schedule. There will be no meeting at the White House so security clearance information will not be needed this year. The room secured for two days is in the Capitol Visitor Center. Simon and Company is working on getting the third day secured.

Ms. Eager requested that FRA be added to the schedule.

Mr. Santoyo requested that we request a meeting with Secretary or Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Interior because in terms of water, they both have overview over the biological opinion on issues of the Delta. Ms. Covino said that Secretary of Commerce has a staff person assigned to work on SJV issues. The committee prefers "the higher the better" approach because they are the administrators that make the decisions, especially when there is more pressure on them.

The water subcommittee provided an update on the video that Brenda Veenendaal, Lydia Zabrycki and Mario Santoyo have been working on with KMPH. It will be a 5-6 minute video to show in Washington, DC

(Interior Secretary and the Administration). Ms. Veenendaal said that we could upload it to YouTube and on thumb drives. She will work with Ms. Covino on the AV capabilities.

Mr. Boren would like to show the 1-1.5 minute heavy maintenance facility video to FRA.

All of the priorities were discussed individually and some speakers were assigned. Below is a summary of the change requests and information on whether the priority submitted has a sponsor attending the trip:

Topic	Request Changes	Sponsor attending DC trip and potential speakers
Water Policy Support	Will be revised by Mario in conjunction w/ Paul from EOC	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mario Santoyo • A County Supervisor (Supervisor Perea perhaps?-Toni Tinoco to confirm) • Mayor Silva requested to be a speaker • Possibly someone from Orange Cove (if they go)
Goods Movement	Change title from "Goods Movement" to "Surface Transportation Reauthorization" Update to include STIP funding for Veterans Blvd Integrate BRT and TOD request from the City of Fresno into the overall Reauthorization Discussion as bullet points and not a stand-alone request.	Yes (City of Fresno not attending, Tony and Jeff will cover the items on behalf of the City) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Boren • Jeff Roberts
High Speed Rail Training Facilities	No changes	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Henry Perea • Lee Ann Eager • Tony Boren
Pest Prevention & Exclusion of Pests Programs	No changes	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Henry Perea (Toni Tinoco will confirm)
Agriculture Canine Inspection to protect agriculture from invasive pest introduction	No changes	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Henry Perea (Toni Tinoco will confirm)
Expand Drip Irrigation Funding Opportunities to Tenants	Committee suggested it be moved under Water Policy, but the final recommendation was that it should stay under Agriculture. No changes needed. **This will be addressed with Agency staff and Interior Secretary (if a meeting is confirmed).	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lydia Zabrycki, WIB board member

Air and Health Quality Empowerment Zone Designation	No changes	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Dhaliwal Jeff Roberts
Funding to Establish Community Urban Forests	Remove as a stand-alone request and place as a discussion under Air Quality and funding opportunities	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councilmember Lynne Ashbeck
Economic Development and Redevelopment Support	Minor change: Add EDA information from bullet 3 of the CSBG priority.	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Silva Vince DiMaggio Lee Ann Eager Paul McLain-Lugowski Brian Haddix available to support reinforcement of this regional issue
Support Continued & Increased Funding of the Community Development Block Grant	No changes	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor Perea
Support for CSBG funding, reauthorization, and Business/Workforce Development Initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remove as a stand-alone request, remove bullet 1 and 2 in the request and merge under Water as a bullet under the broad water policy discussion. Remove 3rd bullet regarding EDA initiatives and merge into discussion on Economic Development and Redevelopment Remove 3rd bullet regarding OCS-CED DOL initiatives and add to discussion on Job Training programs 	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brian Angus Paul McLain-Lugowski,
Job Training Program	<p>Will be updated by Brian and will include the OCS-CED DOL discussion that will be removed from CSBG.</p> <p>Will also remove some of the attachments because the documents were too large to make available electronically.</p>	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Joshua Mitchell Councilmember Tony Pacheco Brian Haddix Paul McLain-Lugowski
US DOT to Establish Consistent Policies for Targeted Hiring Program & Workforce Development Funds	No changes	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lydia Zabrycki Lee Ann Eager Lacey Kiriakou asked after the meeting to be added as a backup

<p>Future Funding through the US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP)</p>	<p>No changes</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undersheriff Steve Wilkins
<p>Immigration Reform</p>	<p>Removed per the recommendation of the committee due to its divisive nature.</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Continuation of Payments in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILT)</p>	<p>No changes</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Perea