

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date: Friday, March 13, 2015
Time: 10:00 AM
Place: COG Sequoia Conference Room
2035 Tulare St., Suite 201, Fresno, CA

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The Fresno COG offices and restrooms are ADA accessible. Representatives or individuals with disabilities should contact Fresno COG at (559) 233-4148, at least 3 days in advance, to request auxiliary aids and/or translation services necessary to participate in the public meeting / public hearing. If Fresno COG is unable to accommodate an auxiliary aid or translation request for a public hearing, after receiving proper notice, the hearing will be continued on a specified date when accommodations are available.

CONFERENCE CALL-IN INFO:
TOLL FREE NUMBER: 888-398-2342
PARTICIPANT CODE: 740166
PLEASE TURN ON MICROPHONE BEFORE SPEAKING
THINK GREEN, KEEP FRESNO COUNTY CLEAN!

PAC Agenda and Annotated Agenda in pdf format - ALL EXHIBITS ARE AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE

Exhibits: March 13 2015 PAC Agenda March 13 2015 PAC Annotated Agenda

PRESENTATIONS

JOINT Transportation Technical Committee / Policy Advisory Committee

The TTC and the PAC will meet as a joint Committee to consider scheduled public presentations brought before the Committees. This portion of the meeting is scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m.

1. Caltrans Report [CALTRANS]

Exhibits: Caltrans Report CTP Flyer

Summary: Caltrans staff will provide an update at the meeting. A copy of the Caltrans Quarterly Report is included as an exhibit to this item.

Action: This is an information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

2. ALUC Presentation [Fawcett] [INFORMATION]

Summary: Fresno COG staff will give an update.

Action: Information. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committees.

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

About Consent Items:

All items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by COG staff and will be approved by one motion if no member of the Committee or public wishes to comment or ask questions. If comment or discussion is desired by anyone, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered in the listed sequence with an opportunity for any member of the public to address the Committee concerning the item before action is taken.

A. Executive Minutes of February 13, 2015 [APPROVE]

Exhibits:

 ITEM I A

B. FY 2014-15 Transportation Funding Claims [Fawcett] [INFORMATION]

Summary: All Member Agency TDA claims for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 have been approved by the Fresno COG Policy Board. Once the final LTF and STA apportionment estimates and FCRTA budget have been approved by the Fresno COG Policy Board, TDA claims for FY 2015-2016 will be submitted.

Action: Information.

C. FTA Section 5310 Call for Projects [Arnest] [INFORMATION]

Summary: The Fresno COG is pleased to announce the following Call for Projects for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 grant program.

FTA Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program

Section 5310 provides funding to improve access to mobility, remove barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities throughout the Fresno Urbanized Area.

Applications are available for download on the Fresno COG website at <http://www.fresnocog.org/fresno-cog-administered-grant-programs>.

Applications are due to Fresno COG by Friday, April 10, 2015 at 12:00 PM PST

Please contact Peggy Arnest at Fresno COG (233-4148 x241) parnest@fresnocog.org to request additional information.

Action: Information. Direction by be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

D. Prop 84/Greenprint Update [Terry] [INFORMATION]

Summary: (Prop 84 Round 2) Following is a brief report on the status of Round 2 activities:

- (Task 1) San Joaquin Valley Greenprint Phase II activities began in August of 2014 with the formulation and release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services, and subsequent retention of the consultant team led by Mintier-Harnish. Phase II will build on and extend the work completed in Phase I. It will conclude with the development of a guide for resource management, including examples of strategies and tools used elsewhere, that governments, businesses and communities can self-select to address their economic and resource objectives. The development and implementation of a pilot projects program is also a significant component of Phase II. The purpose of this program is to demonstrate how agencies can use the Greenprint mapping tools and information developed in Phase I in local and regional planning. The kick-off meeting for Phase II between the

consultant team and the Greenprint Advisory Committee (formerly Steering Committee) took place on Thursday, January 22nd at 1:00 p.m.

For any questions regarding the Greenprint, please contact Clark Thompson at (559) 233-4148 Ext. 203 or via email at clarkt@fresnocog.org.

- (Task 2) Model Land-Use Revalidation activities (Model Improvement Program Phase 2) began in January 2014, and are on-going. Fehr and Peers, as the selected consultant, are conducting the activities associated with the project, including data collection and processing, refinement of model input data; and model estimation, calibration, validation, evaluation and associated training activities. In addition, the consultant is overseeing all project management and information sharing details.

For any questions regarding Model Land-Use Revalidation efforts, please contact Mike Bitner at (559) 233-4148 Ext. 216 or via email at mbitner@fresnocog.org.

- (Task 3) SCS Implementation efforts have begun at each of the valley MPOs. Due to the completion of several anticipated Round 2 activities within Round 1, DOC representatives have approved the re-allocation of line item funds to increase the amount of funding for both SCS printing/duplication for outreach and public involvement, as well as the amount available to assist with RHNA coordination. A total of \$55,000 for RHNA coordination and \$88,674 for SCS printing/duplication reflect the new line items. These amounts are to be allocated to each COG based upon population percentages (utilizing the Planning Center data), similar to other valley activities in the recent past. With 24% of the Valley's overall population, Fresno COG's proportion of these funds is \$20,841.54 for SCS activities, and \$13,200 for RHNA activities.

For any questions regarding SCS Implementation activities, please contact Rob Terry at (559) 233-4148 Ext. 222 or via email at rterry@fresnocog.org.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

E. **Cap and Trade [Terry] [INFORMATION]**

Summary: AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, directed the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to address climate change using multi-year programs to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions throughout the State. ARB adopted a Scoping Plan that describes the approach the State will take to reduce GHG emissions and achieve the goal of reducing emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020.

The Cap-and-Trade Program, which ARB labels as a key element in the Scoping Plan, began in 2012. A portion of the GHG emissions permits (allowances) established by the Cap-and-Trade Program are sold at quarterly auctions and reserve sales. The Legislature and Governor appropriate auction proceeds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to State agencies and programs through the Budget process, consistent with the implementing legislation. Funding allocations are organized into three categories: Transportation and Sustainable Communities Funding, Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Funding, and Natural Resources and Waste Diversion Funding. Attachment 1 provides a chart briefly describing the funding categories and their related programs (information for the all programs may be found on the ARB's website at: http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/ggrf_programpage.htm). Below is more detail on each of the five Transportation and Sustainable Communities Funding programs.

- **Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program:** This program is administered by the Strategic Growth Council (SGC), and implemented by both the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and Natural Resources Agency's, with a funding allocation of \$130 million. The program aims to fund land-use, housing, transportation, and land preservation projects to support infill and compact development that reduce GHG emissions, while significantly benefiting disadvantaged communities and providing affordable housing. Program activities are intended to yield in projects that include transit-oriented development, intermodal affordable housing, transit capital projects, active transportation and complete streets. Final guidelines were released January 20, 2015, and can be found at: http://sgc.ca.gov/docs/FINAL_AHSC_Guidelines_adopied_1_20_2015.pdf. The program provides for two types of projects: TOD (Corridor, District or Neighborhood) Project Areas, and Integrated Connectivity Projects (ICP), with total funds awarded accounting for no less than 40% to TOD and no less than 30% to ICP projects.

Conceptual applications for this program were due February 19, 2015. As discussed during the January TTC/PAC and Policy Board meeting, Fresno COG's role in the process (as the region's MPO) is to assist with the review of submitted conceptual applications by providing feedback to the SGC relating to whether a project supports the implementation of the region's SCS. Fresno COG will not be involved in any activities such as the ranking or direct scoring of project applications. Fresno COG will be available to provide any technical assistance to agencies that may be invited to participate in the full application process, scheduled to be announced by the SGC on March 11, 2015.

- **Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation (SALC) Program:** This program is administered by the California Department of Conservation, as directed by the SGC, with a funding allocation of \$1 million (as part of the \$130 million allocated to the SGC as part of the AHSC Program). Activities associated with this program include the formulation/placement of Sustainable Agricultural Land Strategy Plans. Draft guidelines for this program were released on September 22, 2014, and can be found at: http://www.sgc.ca.gov/docs/Sustainable_Ag_Lands_Conservation_Program_Guidelines_092214_DRAFT.pdf. Adoption of the guidelines is took place at the SGC meeting on January 20, 2015. Grant types in this program may fall under two categories: Agricultural Land Conservation Easements (Applications were due February 20, 2015); and Sustainable Agriculture Land Strategy (applications due March 20, 2015).
- **High Speed Rail Program:** This program is administered by the High Speed Rail Authority, with a funding allocation of \$250 million. Activities within the program consist of the planning, design, and right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the initial operating segment. The Authority currently has a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) out for the building of the Phase Three of High-Speed Rail in the Central Valley, with submissions that were due January 30, 2015. Additional information can be found at: <http://hsr.ca.gov/>
- **Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP):** This program is administered by the California State Transportation Agency, with a funding allocation of \$25 million. Activities within this program consist of capital improvements and operational investments that will modernize California's transit systems and intercity, commuter, and urban rail systems to reduce GHG emissions, expand and improve rail service and increase ridership, integrate the rail service of the state's various rail operations, including integration with the high-speed rail system, and improve safety. Draft discussion guidelines were released for review and comment on December 3, 2014. The draft guidelines were presented to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) on January 22, 2015, for final approval. Guideline workshops were held in Northern and Southern California on January 20th and 21st, respectively. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/tircp.html>.
- **Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP):** This program is administered through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), with a funding allocation of \$25 million. Activities within this program are designed to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce GHG emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities. Approved projects in LCTOP will support new or expanded bus or rail services, expand intermodal transit facilities, and may include equipment acquisition, fueling, maintenance and other costs to operate those services or facilities, with each project reducing greenhouse gas emissions. For agencies whose service area includes disadvantaged communities, at least 50 percent of the total moneys received shall be expended on projects that will benefit disadvantaged communities. Draft guidelines for the program were released November 7, 2014, and can be found at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/docs/DiscussionGuidelinesLCTOP_11_07_14.pdf. Additional information on the program can be found at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/lctop.html>.
- **Low Carbon Transportation Program:** This program is administered by the California Air Resources Board (ARB), with a funding allocation of \$230 million. Within this program, Cap and Trade auction proceeds provide an additional funding source for ARB's advanced technology, clean transportation incentive programs, thus expanding the types of projects ARB has funded through the Air Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). Activities within the program include zero and near-zero emission passenger vehicle rebates, heavy duty hybrid/ZEV trucks and buses, freight demonstration projects, and pilot programs (car sharing, financing, etc.) in disadvantaged communities. Additional details for the various program activities can be found at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/aqip/aqip.htm>.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

F. **Monthly Grant/Call for Project/Request for Proposals Reminder [Chargin] [INFORMATION]**

Exhibits:

 ITEM I F

Summary: See attached memo. For the latest information on grants, Fresno COG member agencies and partnering agencies can register for EfficientGov's GrantFinder database service. Fresno COG has subscribed to this service and is offering free membership to local agencies and partnering agencies. If you or someone from your agency is interested in signing up for this service, or if you have any questions, please contact Lindsey Chargin at 559-233-4148 ext. 205 or lindseyc@fresnocog.org.

EfficientGov offers grantwriting assistance and provides real-time, comprehensive, grant information for all federal, state, foundation and corporate grants that are available to municipalities, counties and non-profit agencies. The database is updated daily with new grants as well as important updates to existing grants within the database. Additionally, the service provides for unlimited access to EfficientGov news, articles and the GrantIntel newsletter, which focuses specifically on grant funding.

If your agency has already subscribed, but a tutorial on how to search for grants is needed, EfficientGov offers a free monthly demo for all of its users. You can sign up for the next available tutorial here: <http://efficientgov.com/refresh>.

G. **RTMF Update [Beshears] [INFORMATION]**

Status of Appeal

Summary: On February 26, 2015, pursuant to a court order, the Fresno County RTMF Board again held a hearing for the Clovis Herndon LLC appeal. The debate evicted strong convictions from either side however the final vote was again deadlocked. The official vote was 11-4 supporting the denial of the appeal. However, the 40% population prong of Fresno COG's dual weighted voting system could not be met which results in a deadlock. This leaves the agency in a quandary. During the previous court proceeding Judge Cabrera clearly indicated the agency must make a determination and adopt findings. He was not interested in hearing the merits of either side of the argument until a determination is made by the agency. For this reason County Counsel proposed the Board adopt a Resolution that would modify the appeal process to provide that a voting deadlock constitutes a technical denial of the appeal and the recommendation of the Executive Director becomes the determination of the RTMF agency. This would allow Board members to retain their strong convictions while providing the determination required by the court and allow the judge to rule on the merits of the issue, one way or the other. County Counsel is presently developing the Resolution to be presented to the Board.

Action: Information. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

H. **FCRTA items [Stites] INFORMATION]**

I. Fresno-Sequoia Kings Canyon National Parks Shuttle

Summary: The Sanger City Council recently (2/19/15) approved the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) to work with the City of Sanger in developing an agreement to establish and operate the public shuttle to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. This project is funded for a two (2) year period for \$522,000 from an award under CMAQ and SVJAD. This demonstration project will operate from Memorial Day weekend until Labor Day weekend each year with three (3) shuttle buses making six (6) stops twice per day to and from the parks. Key stops in Fresno will be the Fresno-Yosemite Airport, Greyhound and Amtrak stations. Arrangements are currently under way to coordinate this project with multiple agencies; FCOG, City of Sanger, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks, FEOC and YARTS. An extensive media and marketing campaign will get under way soon in order to market and advertise this new service since it will only operate during the peak summer season.

Action: Information. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Fresno/Madera Corridor Origin-Destination and Fiscal Study [Terry] [APPROVE]

Exhibits:

☑ ITEM II A

Summary: To provide for a comprehensive understanding of transportation movements and effects between Fresno and Madera Counties, the Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) and the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) – in partnership with the Counties of Fresno and Madera, and the City of Fresno – released an RFP to retain a consultant to conduct a joint study focusing on the traffic movements along the entirety of the Highway 41 corridor running through both Fresno and Madera Counties, and the various impacts associated with such movements. The joint study will consist of two parts. Part one will consist of an analysis of origin and destination traffic movements between the two counties. Part two will provide an analysis of the fiscal impacts of such movements on the local and regional economy. The total study has a budget of \$250,000, with \$125,000 allocated to each part of the study. The results of the joint study are intended to better inform local decision-making bodies regarding commuter patterns and their economic impacts as these agencies continue discussions relating to development patterns of interest to each jurisdiction, in-line with previous agreements to consider such activities and potential impacts. In addition, deliverables are also intended to improve the Fresno COG and MCTC's abilities to implement their respective Sustainable Communities Strategies.

The total timeline of the complete project will consist of a 12-month period; allowing for approximately 6 months of traffic analysis, and 6 months of fiscal analysis, with integrated administrative report editing/review and completion taking place concurrently. An RFP for Part Two activities would be released when Part One activities are entering into their final tasks.

On November 19, 2014, an RFP for Part One activities was released, with two responses being submitted (Fehr & Peers and Airsage). The scoring committee, which included representatives from all of the aforementioned agencies, unanimously recommended the consulting firm of Fehr & Peers be awarded the contract, not to exceed the amount of \$125,000, as indicated in the RFP. Originally, contract work associated with Part One activities was anticipated be completed by June 30, 2015. TTC and PAC recommendations and Policy Board action seeking contract approval were scheduled to take place during the February meetings. However, during the Special Joint Meeting of the Fresno and Madera County Board of Supervisors, held on January 27, 2015, several Board members indicated a desire to expand the proposed scope to include State Route 99 (SR 99), potential river crossings to address congestion issues and movement of goods and services, and evaluation of alternative modes of transportation. To allow for this request to be appropriately addressed, the February agenda items associated with this project at Fresno COG were postponed, allowing for staff at both the Counties of Fresno and Madera to receive direction from each of their respective Boards, and return with clarified direction.

After review, staff at Fresno COG, MCTC, and both Fresno and Madera County's concur that the inclusion of SR 99 and alternative modes of transportation are items that can be analyzed within the existing scope of the project, and that the additional cities located along the SR 99 Corridor throughout both Fresno and Madera Counties (Chowchilla, Madera, Fowler, Selma and Kingsburg) be invited to participate in the study. Regarding further discussions of additional river crossings, all staffers concur that the topic should be addressed as a separate issue, and should first include a collaboratively review of previous studies and activities, such as the Fresno & Madera County East-West Corridor Study – San Joaquin River Crossing Feasibility Study, before considering additional activities such as updates to previous studies, or initiation of a new study.

Given the overlapping timing of the March meetings and agenda releases amongst the Counties of Fresno and Madera and the Fresno COG, additional details regarding Fresno and Madera County Board of Supervisors official actions and recommendations will be delivered verbally by Fresno COG staff at the TTC and PAC meetings. Should those actions support the staff recommendations notated within this report; staff will be looking for a recommendation to move forward in the consultant selection process.

Action: Staff recommends that TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board award the Fresno/Madera Highway 41 Origin-Destination Study Part One contract to Fehr & Peers, not to exceed the amount of \$125,000, as indicated in both the RFP and the consultant's proposal and attachments.

B. Transportation Project Ag Mitigation Ad-Hoc Committee [Terry] [INFORMATION]

Summary: In June of 2014, the Fresno COG Policy Board adopted the region's first Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) following considerable effort and input from Fresno COG member agencies and interested stakeholders. With this approval, the Policy Board also approved 3 follow-up programs as part of the 2014 RTP/SCS implementation efforts, which included the formation of an ad-hoc committee charged with discussing potential mitigation activities relating to the transportation project impacts upon farmlands. The Committee includes one representative from each of the incorporated fifteen cities, the County of Fresno, Fresno LAFCo, Caltrans, the Blueprint Planner's Network, the building/development community, the environmental protection/conservation community, the environmental justice community, and two representatives from the agricultural community. Outreach efforts to assemble the committee roster began in November 2014. The first meeting was held Thursday, February 26, 2015, where the group appointed John Wright (Planning Consultant, and former Planning Director for the City of Clovis) to the Committee Chair position, with Mohammad Khorsand (Senior Planner, Fresno County) to serve as Vice-chair. The first meeting was largely dedicated establishing the background and purpose of the Committee. To begin this process, the group began identifying/discussing previous activities, programs, studies, etc., that relate to ag mitigation for use and/or reference by the Committee. The next meeting of the Ad-hoc Committee is scheduled to take place March 25, 2015 at 1:30 at the Fresno COG Offices.

If your agency has not already done so, please contact Rob Terry at Fresno COG (rterry@fresnocog.org) to indicate the individual from your organization that you wish to be designated for committee inclusion.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

C. Keep Fresno County Beautiful [Dawson] [INFORMATION]

Exhibits:

ITEM II C

Summary: In response to COG Policy Board direction and following the recommendation issued by the Fresno County Grand Jury, Fresno Council of Governments is in the process of becoming an affiliate of the national Keep America Beautiful organization. This is an update on progress since the last Committee/Board update provided in September 2014.

In your meeting package is 1) a summary of the benefits of becoming a Keep America Affiliate, 2) some interesting data from the Keep America Beautiful *National Visible Litter Survey and Litter Cost Study*- including the costs of littering, who litters, why they litter, and the hot-spots for litter accumulation and 3) the text of SB516-discussed below.

In an attempt to locate a funding source for litter removal, COG staff researched the *Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies* (SAFE Program) to see if this stream of funding could be used for litter removal. The existing law authorizes the establishment of a service authority in any county to impose a fee of \$1 per year on vehicles registered in the counties served by the authority. Existing law limits expenditure of the funds to implementation, maintenance and operation of a system of call boxes. There is a proposed amendment, SB 516, which would make that funding available for a variety of motorist aid systems, not limited to call boxes, and potentially provide a funding stream for litter removal. Staff will track and report as more information becomes available.

COG staff also researched the availability of using funds from the *Caltrans LOGO Sign Program* for litter removal. The LOGO Program signs are only allowed at or near rural freeway interchanges, and the fees charged cover the costs to administer the program, to process the permit, and installation and maintenance of the signs. The basic annual permit and rental fee is around \$350 per year. The enabling legislation is in the Streets and Highways Code, Division 1, article 3, section 101.7 Information Signs. A change in the law would be necessary to use the funding from the LOGO Program for litter removal, or to generate any significant amount of money by raising the fees.

COG staff provided informational handouts regarding litter, and the laws relating to littering at the Fresno Women's Conference (both in English and Spanish), and for a local elementary school.

Work continues to establish the Keep Fresno County Beautiful Community Team. The national headquarters of Keep America Beautiful is scheduling the tentative training dates, while I am in the process of securing volunteers for the Committee.

COG staff met with Caltrans management staff and the CHP on February 23, 2015 to work through logistics of potential approaches to address the litter problem on Fresno County highways. In addition to the successful use of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) work crews, Caltrans released a Commuter Alert notifying the media of plans to utilize moving lane closures for litter removal on along 1) northbound and southbound SR99 from Jensen Ave. to Ashlan Ave. and 2) at various interchanges (SR99/180, SR41/180, and SR180/168). The lane closures and sweeping took place on Wednesday 3/4/15 and Thursday 3/5/15.

Fresno COG and our member agencies are invited to support the Caltrans-CHP Litter Clean-Up and Enforcement Day. This annual event will be held on Thursday April 23, 2015. The CHP will implement maximum enforcement effort-focusing on uncovered loads, improperly maintained equipment, and waste material spilled or thrown onto the roadways. Caltrans crews will provide maximum staffing available to clean-up efforts along the highways within the District. Another large clean-up event will be held in September.

The Caltrans PIO is in the process of contacting local media (radio/TV) to get PSA's that have already been developed for the "Don't Trash Fresno" campaign aired. In addition, anti-litter messaging will be added to the Caltrans' Facebook and Twitter social media pages.

Just a few of the other activities in process include the addition of additional litter penalty signs, a request was made to the CHP to add a tag line to their morning TV and radio traffic reports: "Litter Laws are being Enforced" or "Don't Trash Fresno", COG staff will inquire about the status of a court referral program for litter removal, Caltrans will check into the possibility of adding an anti-litter message to the changeable message signs above the highways, and the thirty-three School Superintendents in Fresno County received notification about a school-based recycling contest sponsored by the Keep California Beautiful organization.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee

D. **High Speed Rail Update [Boren] [INFORMATION]**

Summary: Staff will give an update at the meeting.

Action: Information. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

III. **ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS**

About Consent Items

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A. **Monthly Legislative Update [Garza] [INFORMATION]**

Summary: The continued debate over a multi-year authorization bill for federal transportation programs is still in flux. In 2012, Congress adopted MAP-21, a two-year transportation authorization bill that originally expired in September 2014. However, in July 2014, Congress realized that a long-term authorization bill would not be agreed upon so they approved legislation to extend the authorization of the transportation bill through May 31, 2015, and to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent until then by transferring additional General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund. *By way of background, since 1956, federal excise gas tax revenues have been funding the Highway Trust Fund and in 1993, the gas tax was increased to 18.4 cents/gallon. However, it has not changed since then and after losing pace with inflation for more than 20 years, that revenue source has lost approximately one-third of its purchasing power. Since 2008, Congress has transferred a total of \$65.3 billion from General Treasury funds to offset HTF shortfalls.* Because the federal excise tax on gasoline continues to generate less than MAP-21 authorized, Congress will need to come up with alternative funding sources or raise the gas tax in order to make the Highway Trust Fund whole. Even with gas prices currently falling to the lowest levels in many years, there continues to be a lack of agreement on whether to raise the gas tax or to

use another form of revenue. Congress understands that the current “pay-as-you-go” principle of user fees paying for transportation infrastructure is no longer effective, but trying to pass a viable option continues to be debated. The attached enclosure provides details on some of the discussions and proposals taking place in Washington. Since the current extension of the transportation authorization bill, MAP-21 ends this May. The most likely scenario is several short-term extensions of MAP-21 until after the 2016 presidential election, funded by transfers from the general fund or other existing revenues.

To locate current and past year **state bill information** go to the Official California Legislative Information webpage at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/>

To locate current and past year federal bill information go to THOMAS, The Library of Congress's bill information website (in the spirit of Thomas Jefferson) at: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Please contact staff person, Melissa Garza, if you have any questions or comments.

B. Regional Clearinghouse [Arnest] [APPROVE]

Exhibits:

 ITEM III B

Project	Applicant
1. City of Parlier – K-9 and Equipment (Car)	City of Parlier

Summary: Your agenda package includes this month’s Clearinghouse Calendar containing “Project Notification and Review Reports” for grant proposal.

1. City of Parlier – Narcotics K-9 Unit – Federal -\$22,000; Applicant-\$18,000 – Total \$40,000

Action: Per Board procedure, unless an item is pulled from the Consent Calendar, tacit authorization is given for staff to forward any comment(s) received, or any Committee/Board comment(s) generated as a result of this informational item, to the appropriate agency. It is understood that if in the event this item should be pulled from the consent calendar, discussion and comment by the Committee members and the public will be taken.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2015 One Voice Regional Priorities [Garza] [APPROVE]

Summary: The Annual Fresno COG One Voice trip to Washington D.C. for elected officials, business leaders, and community partners is scheduled for April 11th -16th, 2015. This trip provides an opportunity for a delegation of local public and private representatives to expand upon the relationships with Congressional representatives and federal staff members, while advocating for legislative relief for priorities of regional significance. There are currently 25 delegates registered to participate in the 2015 One Voice trip to Washington, DC.

During the One Voice kick-off meeting in late September, the One Voice steering committee recommended that the One Voice delegation focus trip efforts, but not limit it, to water policy, transportation, jobs, and jobs training for skilled labor. The Fresno COG Policy Board agreed with this direction. Fresno COG then issued a call for regional priorities in December that closed in January. During the month of January and February the One Voice Steering Committee met to review and discuss the regional priorities submitted. Taking into consideration the direction from the Policy Board, the One Voice steering committee recommended the following:

- That we continue with the requirement that each regional priority must have a designated representative going on the trip that can speak and present the priority issues and requests to those we will meet with in Washington DC.
- As part of the Call for Regional Priorities, each request submitted for consideration must have included a white paper explaining the request in detail. Those requests that did not include a white

paper were considered incomplete and were subject to either full withdrawal from consideration or became part of a larger discussion, if applicable, but would not be considered a stand-alone priority request.

- The steering committee also reviewed each priority submitted on the basis of whether it was “regional” or “local” and only applicable to individual jurisdictions.
- The steering committee took into consideration the direction given by the Policy Board in 2010 regarding One Voice priorities, that Fresno COG would not support taking positions or advocating for issues that could be detrimentally “divisive” and that jurisdictions would have to take those issues to each individual councils/boards before the Fresno COG Policy Board could entertain a position or action.

Therefore, the One Voice Steering committee, on February 23, 2015, recommended consideration for approval of the following seven One Voice Regional Priorities to be presented in Washington, DC. Delegates will focus their efforts on bringing prosperity to Fresno County, and seeking potential short-term and long-term relief on the following:

WATER

1. Water Policy: Support for Federal legislation and funding to assist the San Joaquin Valley in dealing with the negative impacts of continuing drought conditions, improved flexibilities to existing Delta pumping restrictions and the construction of long term water supply reliability projects.

- a. Support for Community Services Block Grant Program as a tool used in the region to mitigate the impacts of emergencies and disasters, such as a drought.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Surface Transportation Reauthorization: A long term transportation bill, continued federal formula allocations to regions, streamlining efforts, and flexibility in grant requirements

2. High Speed Rail Training Facilities: Create requirements that high-speed rail training facilities be located alongside high-speed rail testing facilities in the Central Valley.

AGRICULTURE

1. Pest Prevention and Exclusion of Pests Programs: Increased funding to support California’s high-risk pest and Disease Prevention and exclusion programs. In FY 2014-15 Fresno County received \$50,775 compared to \$92,712 in FY 2009-10.

2. Agriculture Canine Inspection to protect agriculture from invasive pest introduction: Increased funding to support existing and additional canine detection teams to protect agriculture from invasive pest introduction through parcel facilities.

3. Expand Drip Opportunities to Tenants: A temporary waiver to USDA regulations during times of officially declared drought so small-scale farmers who use temporary irrigation systems can access USDA EQIP funding as well as the inclusion of programs benefiting small-scale farmers when federal emergency drought assistance funds are released.

AIR QUALITY

1. Designation of an Air and Health Quality Empowerment Zone, new incentive funding, and tax incentives for plant/fleet modernization.

2. Funding and support for projects that establish community urban forestry

COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1. Community and Economic Development

- a. Economic Development and Redevelopment: Creation of federal legislation and programs that provide financial assistance directly to communities designated as “disadvantaged” for the purpose of economic development and/or redevelopment of blighted areas.

- b. Continued and Increased funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program: The FY 2015 funding for CDBG as set by Congress and signed by the President was \$3 billion, a total of

\$30 million below the FY 2014 levels.

2. Workforce Development

a. Funding for developing Career Technical Educational Training Programs or specific skill certifications, grants or other funding mechanisms for area businesses that provide internships to vocational program(s) participants.

b. US DOT to Establish Consistent Policies for Targeted Hiring Program & Workforce Development Funds: A uniform policy pertaining to focused hiring programs within the U.S. DOT and U.S. DOT should identify workforce training funds that can be used by schools screened by Workforce Investment Act-recognized workforce boards and those used by union apprentice programs.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY

1. Public Safety:

a. Future Funding through the US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP)

OTHER

1. Continuation of Payments in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILT): Loss of funding will impact essential County services, such as search and rescue operations, law enforcement, sanitation, and road maintenance.

Lastly, Fresno COG is requesting financial sponsorship support for the 2015 One Voice advocacy effort. To date, we have received official support from the following companies:

Hatch Mott MacDonald - \$2,000

Quad Knopf Inc. - \$1,000

Kleinfelder Inc.- \$1,000

The Hospital Council - \$1,000

VRPA Technologies - \$750

Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc. - \$250

The deadline for sponsorship is March 13, 2015. Sponsorship information is available by contacting Brenda Veenendaal at brendav@fresnocog.org or on the Fresno COG website at this link: <http://www.fresnocog.org/one-voice>

Action: The One Voice Steering Committee and staff recommend approval of the 2015 One Voice Regional Priorities for the Washington, DC trip. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

B. Sacramento Valley Voice Update [Boren/Garza] [INFORMATION]

Exhibits:

ITEM IV B Agenda ITEM IV B Brochure

Summary: The eight Council of Governments representing the San Joaquin Valley held their annual advocacy trip to the State Capitol on Wednesday, March 4, 2015. The topic of discussion was “how to fix our ailing transportation system” along with detailed discussions pertaining to goods movement, Amtrak passenger rail, water and other regional priorities specific to the San Joaquin Valley. Approximately 13 elected officials from the policy boards of our Valley COGs lead the discussions including Fresno COG’s board members, Mayor Dhaliwal of the city of San Joaquin and Councilmember Gary Yep of the City of Kerman. The agenda and regional priorities brochure that includes a list of participants is attached.

Action: Information. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

C. **Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element Update [Chargin] [INFORMATION]**

Summary: Work on the Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element has been underway since late last year and important progress is being made. Two stakeholder workshops were held on March 4, 2015, in Kerman and Selma, where the consultant ,Mintier Harnish, gave a presentation on data gathered thus far, then talked with attendees about housing issues facing the Fresno County area. Staff will present information from the workshops and provide an updated timeline for the project. More information about the Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element can be found at <http://www.fresnocog.org/multi-jurisdictional-housing-element>. If you have any questions please contact Lindsey Chargin at lindseyc@fresnocog.org.

Action: Information/Discussion. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Committee.

V. **OTHER BUSINESS**

A. **Items from Staff**

B. **Items from Members**

VI. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

A. **Public Presentations**

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Committee on items within its jurisdiction but not on this agenda. **Note: Prior to action by the Committee on any item on this agenda, the public may comment on that item. Unscheduled comments may be limited to 3 minutes.**