

**Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy Roundtable
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, July 26, 2017
2:00 PM**

RTP Members Present

David Fey, LAFCo
Nicholas Don Paladino, Fresno Cycling Club
Jennifer Lekumberry, City of Mendota
Frankie Olivares, City of Selma
Mohammad Khorsand, County of Fresno
Mike Prandini, Building Industry Association
Joe Prado, Fresno County Dept of Public Health
Joe Denham, Measure C Citizen Oversight
Eric VonBerg, Valley Planners Network
Amanda Monaco, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
Dwight Kroll, City of Clovis
Mike Ratajski, Quad Knopf
Moses Stites, Fresno County Rural Transportation Agency
Adam Livingston, Southern Sierra Partnership (via phone)

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS - Dave Fey

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m. by Mr. Fey (Fresno LAFCo), Chair.

II. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no public presentations

III. FOLLOW UP ITEMS

There were no follow up items

IV. NEW INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Approve June 28, 2017 Meeting Summary [APPROVE]

Mr. Fey suggested adding page numbers to the meeting summary. Under item IV-D give credit to Mariah Thompson (CRLA) where it was asked if the measure of time for commute included time spent waiting for transit.

A motion was made by Mr. Khorsand, seconded by Mr. Stites to approve the June 28, 2017 meeting summary with corrections. A vote was called and the motion passed.

B. Regional Transportation Plan June 2017 Community Outreach Workshops Summary (Brenda Veenendaal) [INFORMATION]

Ms. Veenendaal (FCOG) reported that Fresno COG staff, working with the seven Regional Transportation Plan Mini-Grant recipient organizations, hosted 15 community workshops throughout the County between June 5 and July 6, 2017. Each of the 15 workshops included dinner, childcare, and Spanish presentations, when needed, as well as translation and interpretation services. In total, 516 people attended the workshops with 413 of them participating in our workshop demographic survey.

Fresno COG also developed an online survey in English and Spanish to provide opportunity for transportation project input to those who could not attend the workshops. The survey was available through July 9, 2017. In total, Fresno COG received online input from 92 participants.

These outreach efforts were focused on providing the public an opportunity to provide transportation project suggestions that could be submitted by local agencies in response to the RTP Call for Projects issued on July 1,

2017. The workshops were advertised through many means by Mini-Grant organizations and Fresno COG. Television advertisements were produced for each workshop and aired on KSEE 24 and KGPE 47 and interviews were scheduled with Central Valley Today and Univision. Flyers and information were posted to websites, emailed to databases and shared through social media. Many organizations shared workshop information at existing organization or group meetings and some even went door to door canvassing neighborhoods. Staff is waiting for final reports from each Mini-Grantee on their individual efforts.

During the workshops and through the online portal Fresno COG received 1,218 suggestions for projects, 663 from workshop attendees and 555 from online participants. The suggestions were separated into three categories:

1. Streets and Roads - Repairing roads, adding lanes, improving intersections, improving safety, reducing congestion or "other", 573 suggestions received
2. Transit - Adding bus stops or new service, improving service, improving safety, repairing assets or "other", 251 suggestions received
3. Active Transportation - Adding bike lanes, adding or repairing sidewalks or trails, improving safety, adding bike racks, or "other", 368 suggestions received

Fresno COG staff processed the workshop and online suggestions and forwarded all of them to local agencies for consideration. They will also be posted to the Fresno COG website at this link by Friday, July 21st:

<http://www.fresnocog.org/2018-regional-transportation-plan-public-outreach>

A handout with the participation demographics and final counts was provided. This item was information only, no further action was required.

C. Regional Transportation Plan Roundtable Proxy Voting (Kristine Cai) [INFORMATION]

Ms. Cai (FCOG) reported that Fresno COG has been in the process of developing the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) since the fall of 2016. The RTP Roundtable Committee was set up to provide guidance and advisory recommendations to the RTP process. Because of its broad and inclusive membership, the Roundtable provides input and recommendations that represent the voices of different sectors and various interests. The Roundtable meeting has been held monthly as a great resource for Fresno COG staff to vet the RTP/SCS process.

Because it is critical that all voices are heard and all votes are counted, members of the RTP Roundtable are strongly encouraged to attend the monthly meetings in person or call in to the meetings. However, in the case of conflicting schedules and unavoidable absence at the RTP Roundtable meeting, it has been suggested that as a last resort, a proxy voting system be set up so that members can request another RTP Roundtable member to vote on their behalf. It should be noted that with the proxy voting system members may need to speak with Fresno COG staff prior to meetings to develop a thorough understanding of the action items. In addition, members should notify Fresno COG staff to verify that their proxy will vote on their behalf on action items. Members will have to inform their proxy whether they want to delegate the vote if the action is modified by the Committee and different from the original staff recommendation. The proxy system will be voluntary and available to any members who wish to use it.

The pros of proxy voting are that more votes would be counted. The cons are that the member loses their opportunity for discussion and for offering alternative approaches and constructive ideas during the discussion of items. The Policy Advisory Committee gave direction to implement the proxy voting system, which will take effect in August.

Mr. Fey clarified that all members are eligible for proxy voting, but this should not be used as a substitute for participation. Proxy voting provides the ability to have a member's vote counted. Mr. Fey and Mr. Khorsand expressed support for proxy voting. Multiple members expressed their concerns with proxy voting. Members have the ability to send an alternate in their place to the meeting or can call into the meeting. Mr. Prado raised a specific concern about proxy voting on an item for which the recommendation has been modified after discussion at the meeting and if this were to happen the proxy vote should not stand.

This item was information only, no further action was required.

D. Policy Element Comment Letter (Meg Prince/Jennifer Soliz) [DISCUSSION/DIRECTION]

Ms. Prince reported that Fresno COG received a comment letter on June 26, 2017 on the Draft Policy Element from a group of five community based organizations (Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, Cultiva La Salud, Safe Routes to School Partnership, ClimatePlan, and Sequoia Riverland Trust). Fresno COG is asking the RTP Roundtable to provide direction on several of the prominent comments received in the letter and prepared a staff report to facilitate the discussion.

Fresno COG recommends that a Policy Element Subcommittee convene in early August to complete the updates to the Policy Element. The updated Policy Element will be brought back to the RTP Roundtable on August 30, 2017. Ms. Prince said that they would take volunteers to participate on the Policy Element Subcommittee at the end of the agenda item.

There was discussion of organizational clarifications of what was being asked of the Roundtable. Fresno COG staff referenced the documents being reviewed (staff report, draft policy element and comment letter) and clarified how each item would be discussed. Mr. Fey requested clarification on the role of the subcommittee and if the subcommittee's recommendations would override the Roundtable's recommendations. Ms. Cai (FCOG) responded that the subcommittee would follow the Roundtable's directions and weigh in on the remaining comments in the letter.

Transportation Equity

Ms. Prince (FCOG) reported that comments #1, 2, and 3 in the letter include suggested policies specific to transportation equity. Transportation Equity in the letter is defined as "Ensuring access to frequent, reliable, affordable and effective transportation options, regardless of race, income, age, location, nationality, primary language, sex, gender, culture, religion, or any other factor, so that all residents have access to opportunities, resources and services."

It is an essential priority of Fresno COG to improve mobility and accessibility for all Fresno County residents and to seek to ensure fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of transportation projects. However, to provide frequent, affordable, and effective transportation to all Fresno County residents regardless of location is a difficult and expensive task to commit to in the Policy Element. Transportation investment needs to be cost effective and sustainable due to limited funding. Providing all residents with equal access to transportation service is a noble concept, but is cost-prohibitive and hard to be a guaranteed right to everyone.

A motion was made by Mr. Khorsand, seconded by Mr. Paladino to not include Transportation Equity in the Policy Element. A vote was called and the motion passed. 8 yes votes, members Prado, Monaco, Ratajski and Lekumberry voting no.

Public Health

Ms. Prince (FCOG) reported that comments #1 & # 3 in the letter request that public health be identified as an explicit priority and primary goal for the regional transportation network in the RTP/SCS.

Fresno COG recommends incorporating public health into the Vision, but not to identify it as a "primary goal" for the transportation system. Fresno COG understands the connection between the built environment and public health, but its explicit priority as a transportation agency is to move people and goods. The transportation system plays an important role in air quality and safety, as well as encouraging physical activity. Increasing investments in active transportation projects can lead to increased physical activity, which can help communities lower rates of obesity, hypertension, and other chronic diseases. Fresno COG understands the connection between transportation and public health and will incorporate this into the Mission and Vision as such.

Mr. Prado commented that public health is not a primary goal of transportation but it is a major contributor. Ms. Monaco cited federal requirements of an MPO with regard to public health.

A motion was made by Mr. Khorsand, seconded by Mr. Prado to include public health in the Policy Element vision, but not to identify it as an explicit priority. A vote was called and the motion passed. 11 yes votes, members Livingston and Monaco voting no.

Land Use and Affordable Housing

Ms. Prince (FCOG) reported that comments #1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 in the letter include suggested policies specific to land use and affordable housing.

Fresno COG's role in providing access to affordable housing is limited due to the lack of land use authority, which the comment letter acknowledges. Fresno COG supports local control for land use decisions, but understands that transportation and land use are inextricably connected. Therefore, some of the policies may be incorporated where appropriate at the direction of the RTP Roundtable.

Mr. Khorsand stated that the cities and the County are the agencies with land use authority and are responsible for addressing affordable housing. Ms. Cai stated that the SCS requires the COG to look at both land use and transportation with a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Ms. Monaco cited federal requirements of an MPO with regard to affordable housing.

Mr. Fey suggested alternative language to state "compatible with adopted land use plans." Mr. Fey stated he would reject staff's recommendation with regard to #6. Mr. Livingston suggested breaking up this item into parts instead of in one motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Khorsand, seconded by Mr. Kroll to;

- (1) Approve the updated goal "A regional transportation network compatible with adopted land use plans and consistent with the intent of SB 375 (Senate Bill 375 also known as the Sustainable Communities Protection Act of 2008)";
 - (2) Approve the updated goal "Development of a regional transportation network which is environmentally sensitive, fosters sustainable regional growth, and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible";
 - (3) Confirmed that no future efforts are needed from Fresno COG on jobs-housing ratios; and
 - (4) Reject staff recommendation to add the following modified policy "Encourage jurisdictions to minimize the loss of groundwater recharge areas and other natural working lands with regard to construction of transportation projects."
- A vote was called and the motion passed. 9 yes, members Lekumberry, Ratajski, Monaco and Livingston voting no.

Ms. Prince (FCOG) began to report on comment #5. Mr. Fey called a point of order, that comment #5 was considered in previous motion. The consensus of the Roundtable was to not revisit comment #5.

Focus on Disadvantaged Communities

Ms. Soliz reported that comment #3 in the letter includes numerous suggested policies regarding serving the needs of disadvantaged communities.

Disadvantaged Communities in the letter are defined as "Communities whose median household income is less than 80% of the statewide median household income, or are within the top 25% most vulnerable census tracts in the state as identified by CalEnviroScreen."

Some of the policies suggested in the letter are supported by Fresno COG and align with its policies, federal requirements, and the RTP guidelines. However, some of the suggested policies fall under the responsibility of the local governments or specific programs. Fresno COG, at the direction of the RTP Roundtable, will incorporate the policies identified as feasible to support planning efforts in disadvantaged communities. These policies include:

- Ensure planning for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups is transparent and actively engages affected communities.
- Identify transportation needs in disadvantaged communities through meaningful engagement about project design and project implementation

- Enhance all residents' access to areas of opportunity (jobs, education, etc.), healthy food, clinics and hospitals, regardless of national origin, age, location, physical ability, or any other factor
- Support health and safe routes for children to schools and between activity centers
- Promote accessible and effective transportation options for seniors and persons with physical disabilities
- Growth patterns are encouraged to take into account the availability and quality of water resources for human consumption
- Incorporate environmental justice goals into SCS development and land use

A motion was made by Mr. VonBerg, seconded by Mr. Prado to defer comment #3 in its entirety to the Policy Element Subcommittee. A vote was called and the motion passed.

The Policy Element Subcommittee first meeting will be Tuesday, August 1, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm. Members will be Mohammad Khorsand (Fresno County), Representative (Fresno City), Dwight Kroll (Clovis), Representative (East Side), Jennifer Lukemerry (West Side), Moses Stites (Transit), Mike Prandini (BIA), Amanda Monaco (Community Based Organization) and Nicholas Paladino (Bike/Ped).

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

There were no items from staff.

B. Items from Members

There were no items from members.

Upcoming meeting dates:

August 30, 2017 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM.

September 27, 2017 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM.

October 25, 2017 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM.

February 28, 2017 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM.

AFTER MEETING: RTP Roundtable Member Spotlight - Dwight Kroll, City of Clovis

Members of the Public

Mary Savala, League of Women Voters

Lorena Mendibles, Caltrans

Tony Molina, Fresno Bicycle Coalition

Georgiena Vivian, VRPA Technologies

Fresno COG Staff

Kristine Cai

Trai Her-Cole

Donna Blocker

Esperanza Velazco

Brenda Veenendaal

Jennifer Soliz

Meg Prince

Peggy Arnest

Jeaneen Cervantes