

City of Fresno

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

**FUND INTERCHANGES CRITICAL TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY
IN FRESNO**

Submitted by:

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FUND INTERCHANGES CRITICAL TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY IN FRESNO

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

Interchange reconstruction is needed along State Route 99 at North Avenue, American Avenue and Central Avenue to support the movement of goods through the Central Valley. SR-99 is an extremely important trucking route for the export of billions of dollars in Fresno County agricultural commodities and manufactured goods. Without reconstruction to improve capacity, bottlenecks will continue. Existing travel delays are costly, increase the risk of collisions and discourage private investment. Local funding has been allocated for project development, right of way and construction costs for North Avenue and American Avenue interchanges. Funding is needed for the Central Avenue interchange.

REQUEST SUMMARY-PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILED“ASK”:

1. Allocate \$47 million for land acquisition and construction for the Central Avenue Interchange.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

State Route 99 is an important regional and local facility within the San Joaquin Valley. It is a major truck route which provides critical access for shipment of agricultural goods to markets outside of the Valley. It is also a commuter route within and between cities located along its length, and provides significant recreational access during the summer months. Route 99 extends in the south-north direction to link the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys from Interstate 5.



Existing freeway ramps at North Avenue, American Avenue and Central Avenue are one-way stop controlled and operate at an unacceptable level of service. The purpose of the proposed improvements is to relieve congestion from heavy truck traffic and increase traffic capacity. Competitive grant programs for large infrastructure are heavily weighted in favor of funding “shovel- ready” projects that have substantially completed design and right-of-way phases and are ready to break ground on construction. Preparing a large project for construction requires significant upfront capital investment, which presents a barrier for mid-sized cities like Fresno. Fresno has over half a million residents, with an annual median income of \$41,842 and a median home price of \$232,800. A large population with limited resources has led to a depressed tax revenue base relative to the size of the city. Demand for transportation, safety and other needs far exceed available revenues – though recent private investments in the area point to new opportunities. Distribution centers for Ulta and Amazon opened in south Fresno in 2018 bringing thousands of high quality jobs to the area and solidifying the need for modern freeway interchanges that can accommodate growing demand.

Given the priority of these improvements to the City and region, grant funds and local measure funds have been used to initiate the path to constructing the interchanges. Local and state investments of over \$1 million on the projects have focused on studies and specific plans that identify project alternatives, multimodal

connections and determine the impacts of development. Local and state investments totaling more than \$156 million are allocated for future engineering, right of way and construction costs. A Federal investment of \$47 million to support the Central Avenue interchange will demonstrate a commitment to improving the nation's infrastructure in America's emerging markets and core communities. To remain competitive in the growing economy, mid-sized cities like Fresno need enhanced Federal funding opportunities to prepare projects that improve traffic flow and goods movement, facilitate regional travel and support local job creation.

PROJECT STATUS

An Operational Analysis Report for Route 99 at North Avenue was completed by Caltrans Traffic Operations Branch in 2016. A Project Study Report (PSR) to request programming for project approval and environmental document phases was approved in November 2016. Further analysis of interchange design alternatives including the addition of American Avenue and Central Avenue to the Project Study Report is currently underway and expected to be completed in 2019. The projects will then be ready to move into the development phase which includes: project approval and environmental review, plans, specifications, estimates and right of way acquisition. Construction will follow upon completion of the project development phase.

IF NOT A TRANSPORTATION RELATED REQUEST, ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

N/A

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

The economic development benefits of this project include: reduced traffic congestion and improved safety. These benefits are expected to result in increased investment from the private sector which will support continued job growth and economic prosperity in the region.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

No

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City of Fresno

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

**SUPPORT INCREASED FUNDING FOR
VETERANS BOULEVARD INTERCHANGE &
CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Submitted by:

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SUPPORT FUNDING FOR VETERANS BOULEVARD INTERCHANGE & CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

The City of Fresno is poised to move dirt, lay asphalt and get people and goods moving along State Route 99 (SR-99) through the construction of the Veterans Boulevard Interchange Project. Unfortunately, available funding for transportation infrastructure falls severely short of local needs. A funding gap resulting from the recent recession currently prevents moving ahead with construction.

To address the funding gap, an application was submitted to the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program for the interchange and roadway extension components of the project. Corridor improvements on Herndon and Shaw avenues were included in the March 2019 application as two additional project phases, bringing the total request for funding to \$25 million dollars. Non-Federal funding committed to the project totals over \$75 million. With Federal investment, Veterans Boulevard could be fully operational by 2023.

REQUEST SUMMARY-PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILED“ASK”:

1. Reach out to the Department of Transportation to advocate for Veterans Boulevard Interchange and Corridor Improvement project funding from INFRA.
2. Move expeditiously to issue a Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program.
3. Increase federal funding to support large-scale transportation infrastructure needs that strengthen nationwide economic vitality.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Existing block grants and competitive funding sources are significantly oversubscribed, with nearly all programs receiving requests for projects which exceed available funding by hundreds of millions of dollars. While needs go unfunded, local roadways deteriorate, traffic conditions worsen and regional economic growth is stifled.

Like nearly all municipalities nationwide, the City of Fresno has a backlog of critical transportation infrastructure projects. One such project is the Veterans Boulevard Project along SR-99. Veterans Boulevard is a regionally significant project which will construct a six-lane connecting arterial roadway in northwest Fresno, an interchange at SR-99, grade separations over the Union Pacific Railroad, High Speed Rail line and Golden State Boulevard, a multipurpose trail and make improvements to roadways surrounding the project.

Each day thousands of residents face delays due to inadequate infrastructure for an area which has seen significant growth in the last 20 years. These delays clog roadways, negatively impacting residents' commutes and slowing goods movement through the region. Traffic impacts response times for emergency responders such as police, fire and paramedics. School buses get caught in the queue and delayed.



Investing in Veterans Boulevard demonstrates a federal commitment to transformative infrastructure which will improve traffic flow and goods movement, facilitate pedestrian travel and stimulate the economy through local job creation. The project will also improve east-west connectivity between north Fresno and the rural communities west of Highway 99. To truly rebuild America's infrastructure, funding must be identified to complete Veterans Boulevard.

PROJECT STATUS

Environmental work will be required for Phase 6 of the project which widens the Herndon Avenue Overcrossing along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) alignment located between Polk and Milburn. Design work is complete for Phase 1, and will be completed in 2019 for Phases 2-5. Design work for phases 6-7 will be complete in 2020. Environmental analysis and right of way acquisition will be needed for corridor improvements; however, there is more than adequate time allotted in the schedule submitted as part of INFRA to complete all remaining milestones well in advance of funding obligation deadlines. Funding in the amount of \$25 million for construction is the last remaining piece of the financial portfolio which will advance the project to construction.

IF NOT A TRANSPORTATION RELATED REQUEST, ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

N/A

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

Cost benefit analyses suggest a nearly 2:1 return on investment coming primarily from improved safety outcomes and travel time savings. An increase of over 23,000 hours of active travel annually is also expected due to trail and bicycle facilities. Other benefits include improved interactions between roadway users, support for existing and future development, rural connections, job training, elimination of a two mile structural divide and the elimination of bottlenecks in the freight supply chain as a result of grade separations.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

Yes – an aerial rendering and a map of the project are enclosed. A project phasing chart is also attached.

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Veterans Boulevard Phasing (INFRA)

Phase One	Extend Bullard Avenue to its connection with Veterans Boulevard. <i>Fully Funded</i>
Phase Two	Construct a grade separation over Union Pacific Rail Road and California High Speed Rail Tracks and vacate Carnegie Avenue from Bullard to existing Golden State Boulevard. <i>Fully Funded</i>
Phase Three	Construct the State Route 99 interchange and grade separation over the realigned Golden State Boulevard. <i>INFRA Funding Requested</i>
Phase Four 4a: Shaw to Barstow 4b: Riverside to Herndon	Extend Veterans Boulevard to connections with Herndon Avenue to the north and Shaw Avenue to the south. <i>INFRA Funding Requested for 4b</i>
Phase Five 5a: Herndon to Hayes 5b: Hayes to Shaw	Construct Veterans Boulevard Class I multipurpose trail from Shaw to Herndon. <i>Fully Funded</i>
Phase Six	Herndon Avenue Bridge widening from four lanes to six lanes from Polk to Milburn. Construct pedestrian trail on the north side to bridge a gap in an existing east-west trail facilities. <i>INFRA Funding Requested for Construction</i>
Phase Seven	Installed Adaptive Signal Control Technology and traffic signal preemption equipment on Shaw Avenue from Grantland to Polk. <i>INFRA Funding Requested</i>

Veterans Boulevard Interchange Aerial Rendering



Regional Fire Training Center

Short Introduction:

Fresno is home to over 520,000 residents, the 5th largest city in California. It has one of the busiest fire departments, with over 45,000 calls for service each year. While Fresno, and the Fresno Fire Department (FFD) are leaders in the Central Valley (both in size and services) its fire training facilities are 88 years old.

The current training facility in Fresno was built in phases starting in the 1930's with the last major upgrade completed in 1953. The facility was built for an organization that protected a population of 50,000; and had 100 firefighters. Today, the FFD has 309 members protecting a population of over half a million people.

Additionally, firefighters throughout the Central Valley come to Fresno to train alongside the FFD. Annually, Fresno is host to over 650 firefighters who come to train at a week-long training symposium. A Regional Fire Training Center needs to be built.

Request Summary – specific detailed ask:

The Regional Fire Training Center in Fresno would serve not only FFD members, but also the fire agencies in the surrounding communities throughout the Central Valley. There is no Regional Fire Training Center within a 100-mile radius of the City of Fresno.

Specifically, the Regional Fire Training Center would consist of:

- Parking for up 50 cars and 8 fire apparatus
- 4-5 story training tower with Class-B burn props
- Training village with a closed-loop water retention/recycling system
- Drafting pit for pump operations
- Hazardous Materials training systems
- Confined Space training systems
- Office space and lunch room for 10-12 people
- 3-4 classrooms (25-40 seats) and 1 classroom with seating for 100 -120
- Modular “burn box” for Live Fire training
- Showers and Locker rooms
- Training video production studio

The City of Fresno owns approximately 24 acres of land for the development of the Regional Fire Training Center near Marks and Belmont; which is right off Highway 99 at the Belmont exit.

While architectural drawings were developed up to the “design phase”; the project has stalled due to the lack of funding for several years. We believe the Regional Fire Training Center could be developed for \$30- 40 million dollars.

Regional Significance:

Michael Richwine, Chief, State Fire Training, CALFIRE, Office of State Fire Marshal, states,

“The Central Valley has always been underserved in terms of adequate fire training facilities. This is becoming more and more evident as the public safety mission continues to grow, and yet there remains a significant gap in the middle of the state that does not have access to an accredited regional fire training facility. Fresno is a very logical choice to position such a facility for many reasons. It is the only major metropolitan City and Fire Department that could support such an endeavor; is centrally located in the state; and is already recognized as an equitable location for Northern and Southern California fire agencies to meet, in that the annual California Fire Chief’s Association – Training Officers Symposium has been held in Fresno for the past 23 years. State Fire Training and the quality of their programs would greatly benefit from this type of project, as long as the facility can truly meet the needs of the region as a whole.”

Economic Development Benefits:

Due to a lack of facilities the regional fire agencies must send their personnel away to Southern California or the Bay Area to get the specialized training necessary to meet the critical needs of the changing fire service. Beyond the additional cost of having to travel out of the area to attend training, the local area loses out on revenue received via sales taxes by hosting classes. The Regional Fire Training Center will provide this much needed training locally, which will draw students from throughout the state. The economic benefit to the community is significant.

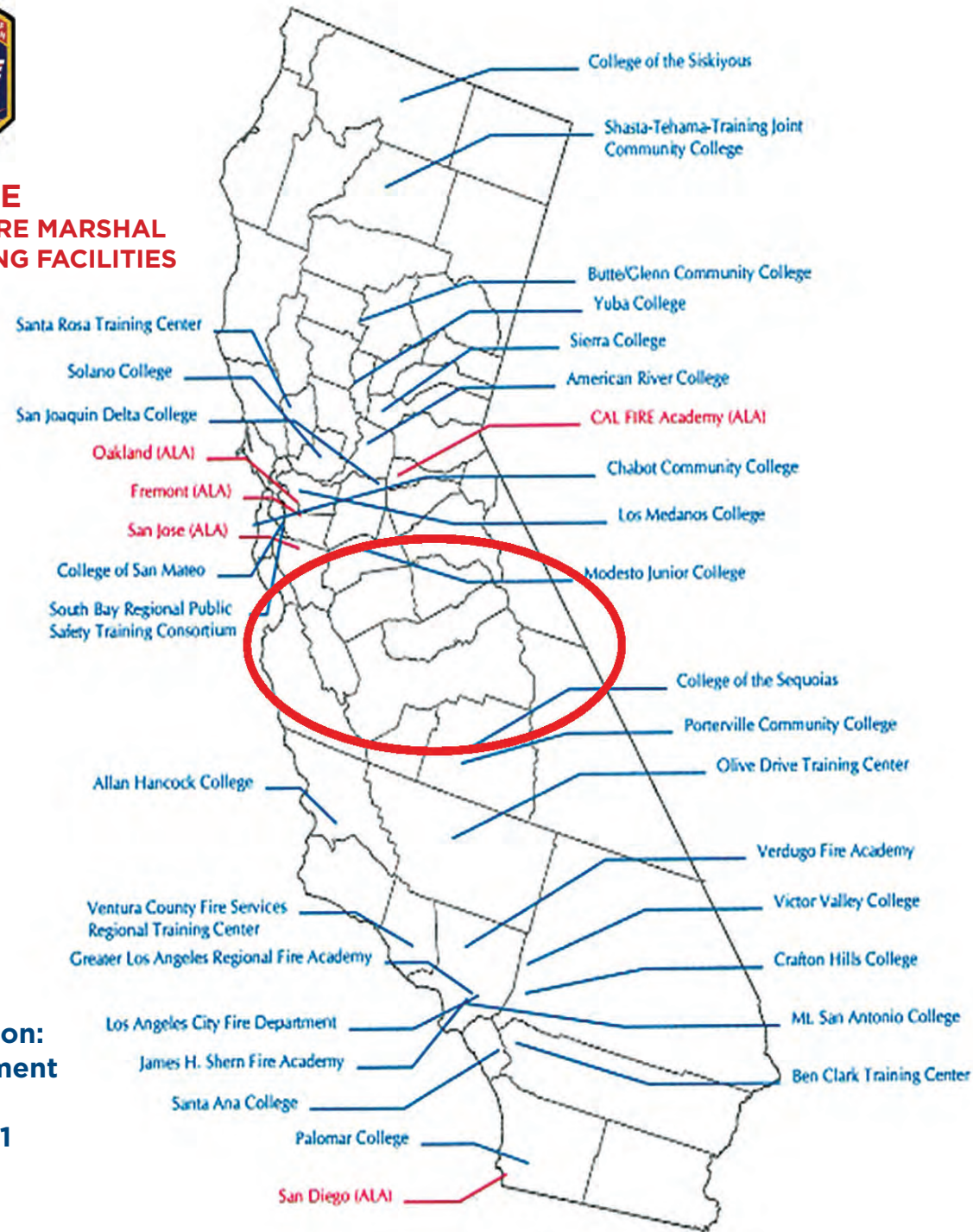
STATE FIRE TRAINING CHIEF STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

“The Central Valley has always been underserved in terms of adequate fire training facilities. This is becoming more and more evident as the public safety mission continues to grow, and yet there remains a significant gap in the middle of the state that does not have access to an accredited regional fire training facility. Fresno is a very logical choice to position such a facility for many reasons. It is the only major metropolitan City and Fire Department that could support such an endeavour; is centrally located in the state; and is already recognized as an equitable location for Northern and Southern California fire agencies to meet, in that the annual California Fire Chief’s Association - Training Officers Symposium has been held in Fresno for the past 22 years. State Fire Training and the quality of their programs would greatly benefit from this type of project, as long as the facility can truly meet the needs of the region as a whole.”

- Michael Richwine, Chief, State Fire Training, CALFIRE, Office of State Fire Marshal



CALFIRE
OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL
ACCREDITED TRAINING FACILITIES



For More Information:
Fresno Fire Department
911 H Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 621-4001

Fresno Regional Fire Training Center



Fresno Regional Fire Training Center

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED

The current training facility in Fresno was built in phases starting in the 1930's with the last major upgrade completed in 1953. The facility was built for an organization that protected a population of 50,000; and had 100 firefighters. Today, the City of Fresno is the 5th largest city in the State of California. The Fresno Fire Department (FFD) has 309 members protecting a population of 525,000; all requiring a minimum number of 200+ training hours annually.

Firefighters throughout the Central Valley come to Fresno to train along side the FFD. Annually, in November, Fresno is host to over 600 firefighters who come to train at the week-long training symposium.



Water-recycling system will save over 7.2 million gallons of water per year.



Photo Courtesy of Lawrence Anderson

Training for Excellence

PROPOSED REGIONAL FIRE TRAINING CENTER

The Fresno Fire Department currently has 24 acres of land available for development of a Regional Fire Training Center. This land is adjacent to the current location for Fire Station 19 near Marks and Belmont, right off the Highway 99 corridor. Draft architectural drawings for the design phase of the project were completed several years ago, but the project stalled at that time.



TRAINING FACILITY NEEDS:

- 6-Story Training Tower with Class-B Burn Props
- Training Village with Closed-Loop Water Retention/Recycling System
- Drafting Pit for Pump Operations
- Hazardous Materials Training Systems
- Confined Space Training Systems
- Modular "Burn-Box" for Live Fire Training (Container Modules)
- Classrooms (3-4 rooms - with seating from 30-80)
- Training Administration Offices, Shower/Locker Rooms, Lunch Room
- Video Production Studio for Training Videos
- Fitness Facility
- All buildings will utilize "Silver" certified L.E.E.D. technology.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

There are no Regional Fire Training Centers within a 100-mile radius of the City of Fresno. The City of Fresno Fire Department and the Central Valley are in severe need of a Regional Fire Training Facility.

Funding continues to be a significant issue; while funding sources are being pursued, we need help to support our local fire agencies training needs.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Due to a lack of facilities the regional fire agencies must send their personnel away to Southern California or the Bay Area to get the specialized training necessary to meet the critical needs of the changing fire service. Beyond the additional cost of having to travel out of the area to attend training, the local area loses out on revenue received via sales taxes by hosting classes. The Regional Fire Training Center will provide this much needed training locally, which will draw students from throughout the state. The economic benefit to the community is significant.



All buildings will utilize "green" technology which will make this project the first self-sustainable training center in the State.

City of Fresno Airports Department

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

**Modernizing the Federally Authorized
Passenger Facility Charge (PFC)**

Submitted by:

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Modernize the Federally Authorized Passenger Facility Charge (PFC)

SHORT INTRODUCTION:

The PFC is a \$4.50 user fee paid as part of purchasing an airline ticket at airports throughout the country, including FAT. The PFC's that FAT receives is used exclusively for capital improvements at our airport – local dollars, jobs and economic development. It is the primary funding source for FAT's infrastructure, such as terminal expansion and modernization, to accommodate Central California's growth. The FAA Reauthorization bill in 2018 failed to increase the PFC authorization level, which has not changed since 2000. At a time when U.S. airports have \$100 billion in unfunded capital improvement needs, including \$190 million at FAT over the next five years, Congress must be urged to modernize the PFC as part of its anticipated Transportation Infrastructure Package. FAT's ability to meeting the growing demands of Central California is critical key to maintaining and growing air service, which is a key component to Central California's economic growth.

REQUEST SUMMARY:

The 5-year FAA Reauthorization bill, passed in 2018, ignored the effect of inflation on airport capital improvement funding. Authorization levels were kept at the 2000 level for PFC's. The industry's only option to improve airport infrastructure funding will be to support the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, and the Ways and Means Committee efforts to bring forward a Transportation Infrastructure Package. Moving this initiative forward is in unison with the national airport associations; Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA) and the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), and ensures our respective messages are consistent.

1. Advocate participation in, and support of the new Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chair's stated desire to develop an infrastructure package which will address the need for PFC modernization.

2. Advocate participation in, and support of the new Ways and Means Committee intention of forming a Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee to focus solely on infrastructure funding.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Fresno airport system has a regional catchment area that reaches 1.8 million people and represents an annual economic impact of \$788 million and 9,300 direct, induced and indirect jobs – and we are growing.

The Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) has been an indispensable component of airport capital improvement funding/financing. PFC revenue is used to fund approved capital projects on a pay-go basis like a grant. However, unlike grants, it is also used leverage debt by paying debt service and fund eligible projects on a reimbursable basis. It is a very efficient capital funding source that is generated at the airport and collected by airlines, which is remitted directly to the airport monthly. It is not filtered through Washington D.C. – it is local revenue used for Fresno airport capital projects, creating local jobs and generating local economic activity.

The issue is that Congress authorized the PFC nearly three decades ago, and increased it from \$3.00 to \$4.50 in 2000. For nearly the past two decades the PFC level remains unchanged from 2000. By comparison, airport construction costs have increased 32% just the past two years according to a study by ACI-NA. With FAT's \$190 million capital improvement program (CIP) over the next five years and a quarter billion dollar CIIP over the next 10 years, a diminishing level of available capital funding will make needed capital improvements increasingly difficult to accomplish.

IF NOT A TRANSPORTATION RELATED REQUEST, ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

N/A

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

Air service connectivity is a significant business growth consideration and key component of regional economic growth. In 2017 the Fresno Airport system provided an annual economic impact of \$788 million and 9,300 direct, indirect and induced jobs. The ability to efficiently fund FAT's capacity-enhancing infrastructure projects is vital to serving the growing needs of California's Central Valley. Modernizing the PFC will have a direct positive impact on FAT's ability to accommodate the region's growth. Without a PFC modernization capacity-enhancing infrastructure projects will be in jeopardy of timely execution.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

Attachment; Overview of FAT's infrastructure needs and the significant role that the PFC plays in successful implementation.

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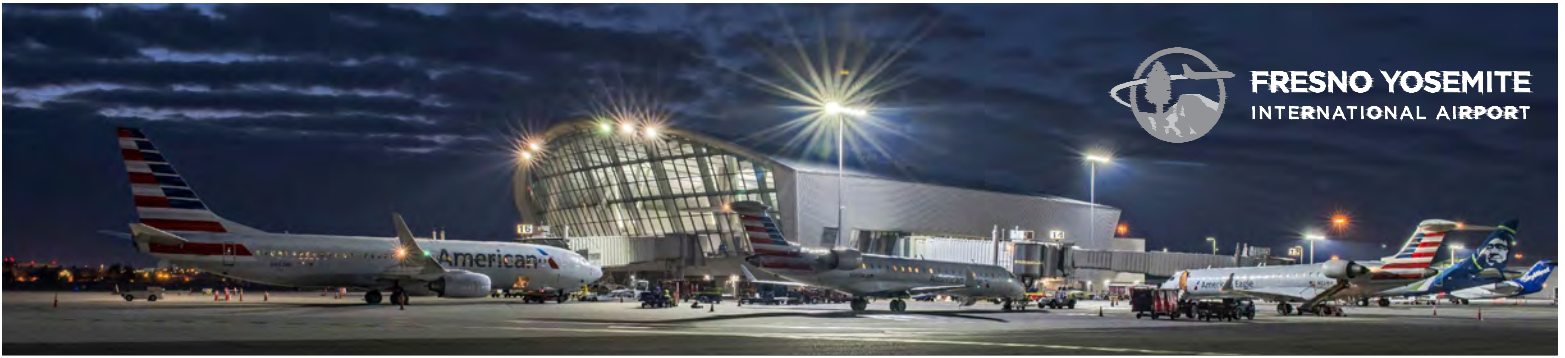
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email



FRESNO YOSEMITE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



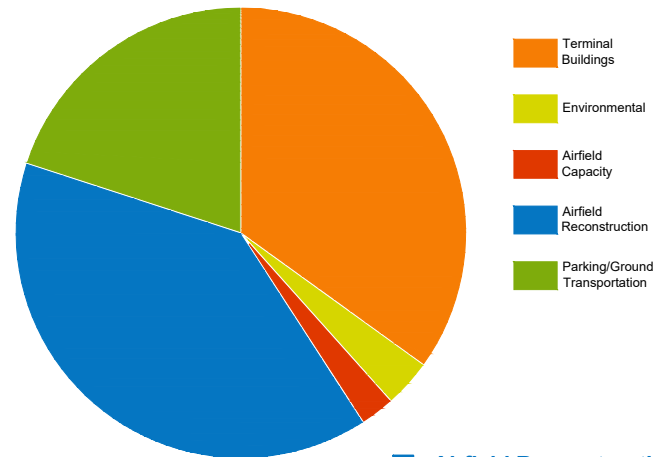
9,800 JOBS **\$844** MILLION IN ANNUAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT **1.75** MILLION PASSENGERS

KEEP AMERICA'S AIRPORTS FROM FALLING BEHIND

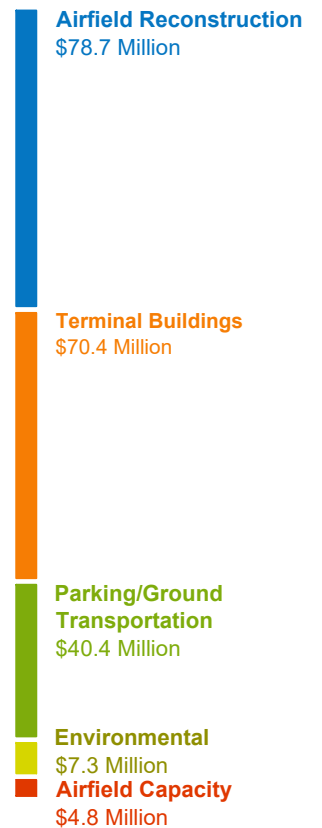
Fresno's airport needs new infrastructure investments to modernize for 21st century air travel demands. With \$202 million in infrastructure needs over the next 5 years, current funding only scratches the surface of airport funding requirements. We can meet our airport infrastructure needs by:

1. Eliminating federal restrictions on the local Passenger Facility Charge user fee.
2. Increasing the Airport Improvement Program.

AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS BY TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT



F A T ' S 5 - Y E A R
 INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS:
\$202 MILLION
 JOB CREATION POTENTIAL:
2,143
 ECONOMIC IMPACT:
\$320 MILLION



THE PASSENGER FACILITY CHARGE USER FEE ENHANCES THE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

- INCREASED COMPETITION
- LOWER AIRFARES
- ON-TIME FLIGHTS
- MODERN SECURITY CHECKPOINTS
- FASTER, SHORTER LINES
- BAGGAGE SYSTEM UPDATES

**INVESTING IN FRESNO'S AIRPORT COULD CREATE
 2,143 NEW JOBS**

County of Fresno, Department of Public Works & Planning

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities, Washington, D.C.

Millerton Road Widening Project

Submitted by:

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Millerton Road Widening Project

SHORT INTRODUCTION:

Support funding for the Millerton Road Widening Project. The proposed project would widen an approximately 4.7-mile stretch of Millerton Road, from North Fork Rd. to 1 mile west of Auberry Road, from a two-lane rural roadway to a four-lane divided arterial roadway. This project would accommodate a higher level of traffic to meet projected demand, and would promote improved traffic operations, as well as bike and motorist safety. The project could further contribute to community safety by decreasing the California Fire Department's response times to fires in the region. It is expected to bolster regional tourism by better accommodating seasonal traffic to the scenic Millerton Lake State Park, and to improve access to the tribal lands of Table Mountain Rancheria. The project has been preliminarily designed by Table Mountain Rancheria's consulting firm, AECOM.

The project will achieve these objectives by transforming the current two-lane rural roadway into a four-lane divided arterial roadway with paved shoulders, which will include signed and striped bicycle lanes. Several public road intersections, private road intersections, and driveway intersections would be improved to accommodate the widening of the road and median improvements. Additionally, the project will include the incorporation of new, pocketed, left-turn lanes, and a new, two-lane, pre-stressed I-girder bridge to complement the already existing bridge and to accommodate the additional two lanes. These improvements will contribute to a higher level of safety and utility for motorists and bicyclists. Finally, erosion control measures will be utilized on all embankment area slopes, as well as on cut slopes when the slope material will support growth. Relocation of electrical and telephone utilities will also be required in certain areas, and will similarly provide opportunities to improve the existing system as a side effect of this project. The reconstructed roadway would generally follow the alignment of the existing roadway, with deviations to upgrade the horizontal and vertical geometry to current standards.

REQUEST SUMMARY:

Provide funding for the Millerton Road Widening Project, to complete the design, right of way acquisitions, utility relocations, and the construction of the project.

- 1. The County of Fresno advocates for the allocation of funding to complete the design, right of way, and construction of the Millerton Road Widening Project. Total remaining project costs are estimated at \$30,000,000.**

BACKGROUND AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Millerton Specific Plan, adopted by the Fresno County Board of Supervisors in December of 1984, and subsequently amended on multiple occasions, provides for a mixed-use development on 1,420 acres. The ultimate population of this development will be between 8,000 and 10,000 people, who will reside in approximately 3,500 dwelling units. The residential population will support and be supported by retail commercial land uses, public services and utilities, parks, and a public school. The objective of the Millerton Specific Plan necessitates the upgraded of Millerton Road to accommodate the increased traffic volumes associated with the adopted land uses and the increased densities allowed by these developments. The Millerton Road Widening Project will establish design and improvement standards for future road improvement projects and new adjacent and adjoining roads in the area. Therefore, it is imperative that the Millerton Road Widening Project set a precedent of minimizing visual impact and maintaining a semi-rural character whenever possible for the future of the community.

The project was included in the Fresno Council of Government's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, and designed to meet federal guidelines. The County has submitted several grant applications to the United States Department of Transportation for consideration under their TIGER and BUILD grant programs for various components of the project, but has yet to receive funding.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

The recreational activities at Millerton Lake State Park result in a considerable contribution to the local economy. The tourism greatly increases traffic flows and congestion, but the negative effects of this traffic influx will be offset by the proposed road improvements. Additionally, the improved traffic conditions will improve the experience and safety of Millerton Lake State Park's visitors.

Several housing and commercial developments are currently in various stages of planning and construction along Millerton Road. Increased connectivity and accessibility – along with the other developments, currently underway, will increase commercial opportunities and economic prospects. The improvements which will be constructed as a part of this project will better tie the foothill area to the Fresno/Clovis metropolitan area. By supporting regional development and economic growth, property values can be improved and the related construction and service industries will be buoyed. Additionally, it is expected that the residual impacts and job creation caused by such investment will be positively felt throughout the region.

Millerton Road is the primary corridor that the Table Mountain Rancheria tribe members rely on to access their lands and governmental operation. It is used by more than 1,300 employees of Table Mountain Rancheria and thousands of patrons and is integral to their economic success.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

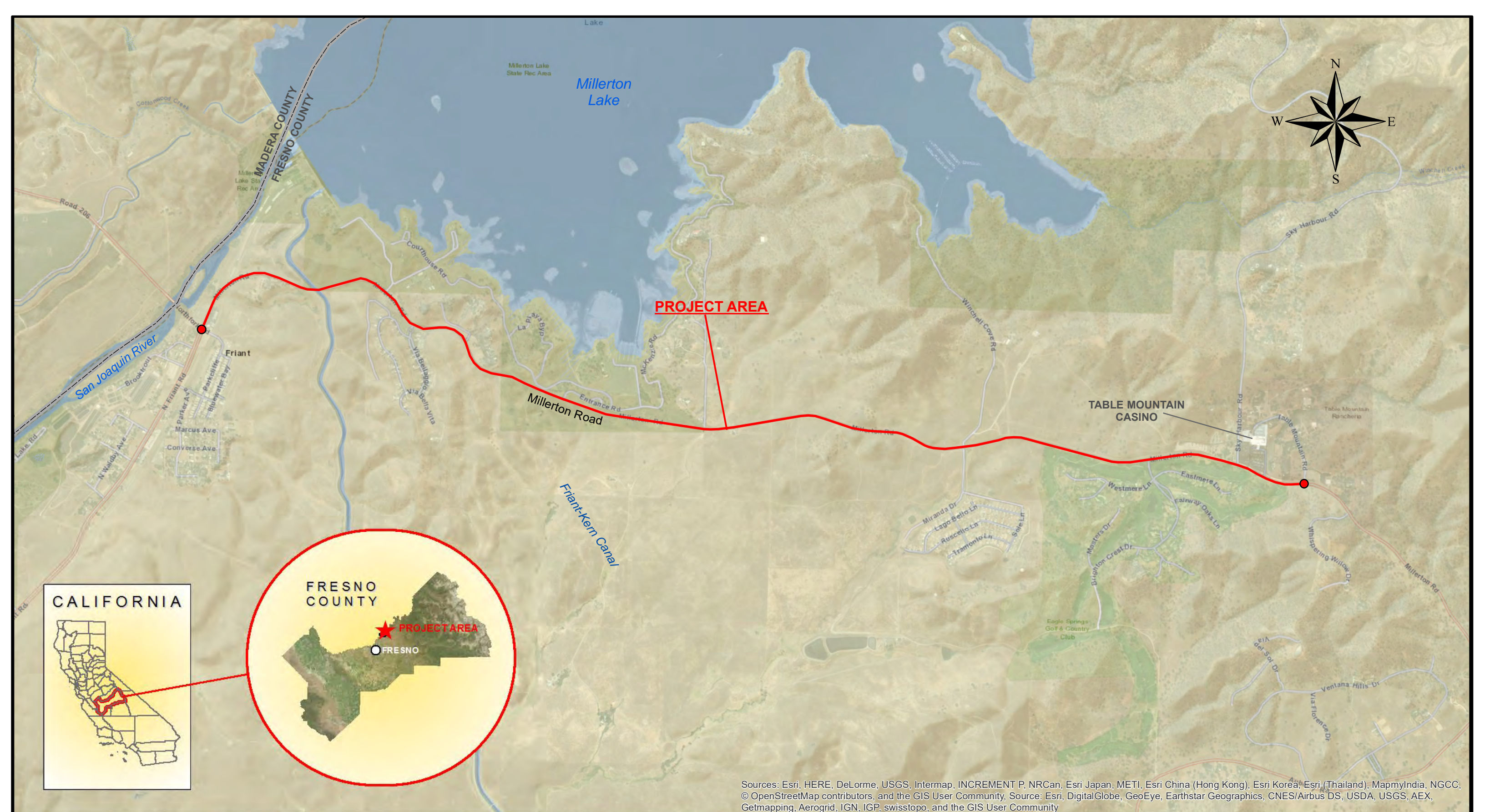
A location map is enclosed, which shows the proposed project terminus points and an aerial view.

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Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, NGCC, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

	DATE:	SCALE IN YARDS
DESIGNED: D.N.	10/03/2017	
DRAWN: D.N.	01/18/2018	
STATE BRIDGE NO. N/A		



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & PLANNING

**MILLERTON ROAD WIDENING
NORTH FORK ROAD TO TABLE MOUNTAIN ROAD**

Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

Updating FEMA HMA Funding Guidelines

Submitted by:

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Updating FEMA HMA Guidelines

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

The United States Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant funds with guidelines that have been in place for decades, since the founding of FEMA in 1979. These outdated guidelines have become roadblocks for agency's seeking to mitigate hazards from California's historic and record-setting wildfires. Specifically, the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) sought to train unemployed and underemployed youth to remove dead and dying trees, but was denied access to grant funds because training cannot be one of the main components to qualify for grant funding as it is considered a "contingent action" by FEMA.

REQUEST SUMMARY-PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILED"ASK":

1. Update the FEMA HMA grant funding guidelines to include hazard mitigation training by a qualified agency such as a community college, local conservation corps, or other training provider listed on the local Workforce Development Board's Eligible Training Provider List, as one of the qualifying fundable activities.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

As stated in the Fresno County Hazard Mitigation plan, one of our goals is to "improve communities' capabilities to mitigate hazards and reduce exposure to Hazard-Related Losses" by "reducing wildfires, protecting life, property, and natural resources from damaging wildfires." In addition we are seeking to develop and maintain a robust training program for disaster management.

IF NOT A TRANSPORTATION RELATED REQUEST, ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

Dead trees create many hazards, including several transportation impediments as many of the dead and dying trees are located near the state highway system.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

The greatest long-term benefits would result from training unemployed and underemployed young adults for work. The skills learned and experiences gained in forestry management training programs are transferable to a wide range of growing, in-demand industries, including, but not limited to, construction, high-value agriculture, manufacturing and logistics, and energy.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

No.

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Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

Establishment of a Central Valley Forestry Corps

Submitted by:

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Establishment of a Central Valley Forestry Corps

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

Half a decade of severe drought combined with unusually high temperatures have put California's trees under considerable stress. The result is a massive natural disaster for forests within California's Sierra Nevada range. As of December 2017, the United States Forest Service has identified a record 129 million dead trees within 8.9 million acres of California's drought stricken forests. Millions of additional trees are weakened and are expected to die in the coming months and years. Dead trees create many hazards, including massive wild fire risks, damage to homes and businesses, and several transportation impediments as many of the dead and dying trees are located near the state highway system. Although California and the U.S. Forest Service have taken action to address the disaster, additional assistance in removing dead and dying trees is desperately needed. As this crisis requires substantial human capital and investments from all levels of government, we are prepared to work with all interested entities in an effort to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.

REQUEST SUMMARY-PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILED "ASK":

1. The Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board in partnership with its Local Conservation Corps and Community Colleges, requests the establishment of the Central Valley Forestry Corps through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, in coordination with the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

2. We are requesting \$1.26 million to recruit, train, and deploy 105 young adults tasked with the removal and replacement of dead trees in the Sierra Nevada Range.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

A significant untapped resource exists in Central California's mountain communities and in the San Joaquin Valley – a large number of unemployed young adults. Over 5 years, this project would enroll 1,000 unemployed young adults (18 - 24) into Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) one-stop job centers, then California Community Colleges would train them through a six-week Forestry Tech program, and finally, using federal funds, local conservation corps would employ them for up to 2 months, after which they would be placed in private sector, unsubsidized jobs.

ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

Dead trees create many hazards, including several transportation impediments as many of the dead and dying trees are located near the state highway system.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

As mentioned above, the greatest long-term benefits would result from training unemployed young adults for work. The skills learned and experiences gained through the Central Valley Forestry Corps are transferable to a wide range of growing, in-demand industries, including, but not limited to, construction, high-value agriculture, manufacturing and logistics, and energy.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

No.

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#

Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

**United States Department of Transportation – Consistent
Policies for Targeted Hiring Programs and Related Workforce
Training Funds**

Submitted by:

**Blake Konczal, Executive Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation – Consistent Policies for Targeted Hiring Programs

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

Currently the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and its various administrative units do not have a uniform policy for targeted hiring initiatives and funding related to job training. This discrepancy gets in the way of local workforce development boards and their partners from implementing additional methods of getting unemployed and underemployed people back to work. In order to realize the maximum benefit of federal infrastructure projects and achieve President Trump’s vision of rebuilding our infrastructure while putting millions of Americans to work, consistent policies are needed to address targeted hiring and funding related to job training at the operating administrations within the Department (Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and Federal Highway Administration, etc.).

REQUEST SUMMARY-PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILED“ASK”:

1. A uniform policy pertaining to targeted hiring programs implemented by all administration departments within the U.S. DOT.
2. All administration departments within the DOT identify workforce training funds that can be used by vocational training schools screened by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) recognized workforce boards and those used by apprenticeship programs, not just for on-the-job training.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

After years of work, the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board’s recommended targeted hiring policies for the California High Speed Rail project were deemed constitutional by the DOT’s Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and adopted by the California High Speed Rail Authority. During the course of this long-drawn-out process, discrepancies between the DOT’s administrative units became apparent. While the Targeted Hiring recommendations were eventually cleared by the FRA, and nearly-identical recommendations made by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority were cleared by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), confusion still exists within the DOT’s other administration units – namely the Federal Highway Administration (FHA). During a meeting with California Department of Transportation’s Director, he stated that targeted and/or focused hiring initiatives are not allowed by the FHA. This sentiment has been echoed by those within that administration, despite the fact that targeted hiring initiatives have been allowed by FRA and FTA after full vetting from their legal counsels. What is deemed legal by two administrations within the same department should be allowed by administrations throughout the DOT. Clearly, a uniform policy is needed, the result of which could be increased job opportunities for Americans in disadvantaged communities that need them most.

Federally-funded public infrastructure projects have the potential to produce multiple economic benefits, including the creation of employment opportunities for the nation’s most economically disadvantaged areas. In its 2017 Annual Report, the DOT estimates that transportation accounted for 13 million jobs or 9% of the U.S labor force. Targeted hiring initiatives and related job training strategies increase the likelihood that unemployed and underemployed individuals in economically distressed communities have access to these jobs. Currently, the U.S. DOT and its various administrative units lack a uniform policy for either targeted hiring initiatives or funding for concomitant job training.

IF NOT A TRANSPORTATION RELATED REQUEST, ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

N/A

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

There is plenty of historical evidence of targeted hiring policies getting folks back to work during economic downturns. In order to create job opportunities for unemployed and underemployed residents, we are seeking targeted hiring recommendations that were adopted by the CA High Speed Rail Authority. The FRWIB is now recommending across the board for the DOT.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

No.

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Fresno County Economic Development Corporation
Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission

2019 One Voice Regional Priorities, Washington, DC

Transportation Training

United States Department of Transportation
Transportation Training Facility

Submitted by:

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TRANSPORTATION TRAINING

BACKGROUND:

Fresno County will, in the next 20 years, experience massive, unprecedented public works projects. While this is welcome to a region characterized by unabated poverty, these opportunities require the preparation of a local workforce able to meet the workforce demands of such economic expansion. Among the projects primed to deliver exceptional employment and career opportunities are:

- Infrastructure projects funded by SB1 the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017
- Major Caltrans projects
- High Speed Rail and the High Speed Rail Maintenance Facility
- Significant expansion of Community Medical Centers
- Fresno's downtown Intermodal Transit Hub
- City of Fresno's Water Infrastructure Bond
- State Center Community College District infrastructure projects
- Fresno Unified School District bond projects

As the focus of the Council of Governments (COG) is on transportation projects, we highlight the Transportation Training Facility as a priority for COG during this year's One Voice trip.

Transportation Training Facility and Preparatory, Support Services for trainees

SHORT INTRODUCTION:

Create policy or regulations that require Transportation Training facilities be located near the High Speed Rail Testing facility and additional infrastructure projects in Fresno County.

REQUEST SUMMARY:

Provide support to create Fresno as the hub for training workers for transportation careers including infrastructure construction including roads and bridges, truck driving, welding, and training for e-commerce employment and high-speed rail careers. A permanent facility of this kind will be necessary to keep up with the advancing technology in all areas of transportation.

REQUEST BACKGROUND:

The California High-Speed Rail project is well underway with thousands of jobs projected in the next 10 years. In addition, the Central Valley has billions of dollars worth of infrastructure planned for the future. The Fresno County Economic Development Corporation, the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board, California State University, Fresno, Fresno City College, along with many other partners are proposing a campus intended for training workers for road and bridge construction, truck driving, welding, e-commerce employment training, and the construction of and maintenance of the high-speed rail. Because high-speed rail is new to the United States, it is necessary to train workers not only to build but also maintain the high-speed rail

line in a world of ever-changing technology. Fresno County has both the land and population to create a Transportation Training educational center, not only for the State of California, but for the entire country.

The proposed facility is part of a broader vision associated with all facets of training including, road & bridge construction, truck driving, welding, e-commerce career training, and the location of the California High-Speed Rail Authority's heavy maintenance facility in Fresno County. That vision includes an educational center, transportation operations facility, an ongoing training site, a facility for businesses and countries to showcase their products, and an industrial park for companies that provide services and products to the community including the high speed rail. As this burgeoning industry grows, it will be able to rely upon both the training and the firsthand experience of the professionals involved in the projects.

The need for the training facility is necessary as the Central Valley has an unacceptably high unemployment rate and the lack of skilled workers to fill the jobs that the transportation industry faces. Fresno County is among California counties with the highest rates of poverty (26%) compared to (14%) rate in California. Identified as an economically distressed area due to its low per capita income figures, the region is representative of those areas needing to diversify job opportunities through technical training. With the infrastructure and roads construction that SB1 the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 is providing and the construction of high-speed rail and the need for a trained labor force to fill the jobs, the proposed training facility is exactly what is needed to grow our local economy.

Fresno County has a collaborative team which includes workforce development, economic development, education, and trade organizations, that together have developed a strategic plan to implement our vision. Fresno County's eighteen public and private universities, community colleges, and technical institutes stand fully prepared to implement a cutting edge curriculum to train the workforce for road and bridge construction, welding, truck driving and high speed rail. We are asking for your support to make Fresno County the hub for Transportation Training for the United States.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

First and foremost the Transportation Training facility would provide training to our unemployed population as well as our underemployed. California's SB1 the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, road and bridge construction projects, Caltrans projects, need for trained truck drivers and the California High-Speed Rail project will bring much needed business and capital to numerous industries in the Central Valley.

ARE THERE ANY WATER POLICY CONNECTIONS?

There are no water policy connections.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

To follow.

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Categorical Exclusions for C-listed Projects

Issue:

Despite its authority to do so under NEPA delegation from the Federal government, Caltrans typically requires unnecessary documentation/studies to approve Class “C” categorical exclusions (CE) for routine transportation maintenance and operational projects. This issue can be addressed through language revisions to the memorandum of understanding that FHWA and Caltrans jointly approve granting CE authority.

Background:

Categorical exclusions (CEs) are categories of actions that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the human environment either individually or cumulatively. In its regulations for National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) implementation, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) directed all federal agencies to adopt procedures for identifying actions that are categorically excluded, e.g., that normally do not require either an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment. Pursuant to CEQ's regulations, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has defined categories of actions that do not involve significant environmental impacts. These actions are defined in 23 CFR 771.117.

Under 23 CFR 771.117, CEs are divided into two groups based on the action's potential for impacts. The first group consists of categories of actions that experience has shown almost never cause significant environmental impacts. These categories involve minor construction activities and activities that do not lead to construction. They are listed in subsection (c) of 23 CFR 771.117 (Class “C”). These actions are automatically classified as CEs, except where unusual circumstances occur. The determination that the action is excluded must be documented by the completion of the CE/CE form.

The second group of CEs consists of actions that normally do not involve significant impacts, but may, depending upon circumstances, have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts (Class “D”). These projects require potentially expensive environmental studies and documentation to verify environmental impacts.

Treating C-type CEs as though they require the same documentation and standards of analysis as D-type exemptions delays local projects unnecessarily and requires federal funds to be used inappropriately on studies that are not federally required rather than on construction activity for which they were intended.

A May 31, 2016 memorandum of understanding among the Federal Highway Administration, California Divisions and the California Department of Transportation allowed the State to assume responsibility for categorical exclusions. That MOU is due to be renewed in May 2019.

Despite its authority to do so under a pilot program delegating NEPA certification approval to certain states, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) typically declines to approve CE forms out of legal liability concerns, despite FHWA rulemaking regarding CE dispositions.

The renewed MOU should include language that requires Caltrans to approve Class “C” CEs and therein releasing the State from legal liability for those actions.

Action:

The San Joaquin Valley requests the following change in language to the MOU between FHWA's California Divisions and Caltrans for its pending May 2019 renewal:

Proposed MOU wording mark up:

- IV. State performance requirements
 - B. Processing projects assigned under this MOU – State identification, documentation, and review of effects...
 - 2. ~~For CEs other than those designated in 23 CFR 77.117(c), carry out a review of CE determination for CEs, including those designated in 23 CFR 771.117(c),~~ carry out...

This change is consistent with the cited federal regulations as of September 26, 2018, as well as wording in the federal MOU template and MOUs from all other states that have assumed responsibility for categorical exemptions.

Fresno Council of Governments

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

Cross Valley Rail in Huron

Submitted by:

Robert Phipps, Deputy Director

559-233-4148 Ext. 210

TITLE

Cross Valley Corridor in Huron

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

The Cross Valley Corridor (CVC) is a vital east-west rail corridor among communities in Fresno, Tulare, and Kings Counties in the Central San Joaquin Valley. While existing rail is active in certain segments and abandoned in others, the corridor presents a unique opportunity to unlock mobility improvements for the region, advance local economic development, and to improve local air quality. With a proposed California High-Speed Rail station located in the middle of the corridor, there is an opportunity to improve regional and statewide connectivity and mobility throughout the communities along the corridor, which include Huron, Naval Air Station Lemoore, Hanford, Visalia, Farmersville, Exeter, Lindsay, and Porterville.

REQUEST SUMMARY:

1. Congressional delegation support for future grant applications for the Cross Valley Corridor in general and for rail station construction in Huron, specifically.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

In 2016, Tulare County Association of Governments began the Cross Valley Corridor Plan to study connectivity and mobility improvements in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The project aims to increase transit service efficiency, enable communities and cities in the Cross Valley Corridor (CVC) to promote developments that support transit usage, encourage revitalization and economic development, and facilitate growth in support of the California High-Speed Rail (HSR) investment. This project evaluated a range of new public transit service alternatives that would be able to accommodate future population and economic growth, while being compatible with existing land uses and future development opportunities. By planning for a CVC transit system well in advance, right-of-way and land needs can be identified and protected now, avoiding costly acquisitions or eminent domain processes later.

The Cross Valley Corridor (CVC) is approximately 75 miles long between the cities of Huron and Porterville, with 7-13 potential stops in cities in between, and could serve as the backbone for a future transit corridor. The majority of the corridor is currently occupied by single track freight railway owned and operated by the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVRR). However, existing track conditions are not yet suitable for passenger rail operations as many structures, including railway, bridges, culverts, and crossings are aging and obsolete. The existing right-of-way (ranging from 50-200 feet wide) would be suitable for passenger rail via a mixed use (freight and passenger rail). The alignment connects the corridor cities' downtown areas, making it an ideal route to serve the region's major activity centers and populations. Commute patterns analyzed in the development of the Cross Valley Corridor Plan suggest that there are strong internal connections between the Cross Valley Corridor communities.

A connection between the proposed Kings/Tulare Regional High-Speed Rail Station and the CVC could benefit the region by potentially linking the communities to each other. The HSR station that will ultimately link the Central Valley with the HSR system is located near the City of Hanford, and will open as part of the first phase of the HSR project from San Jose to Bakersfield.

The process of designing and implementing a large-scale rail project can span decades and come with a hefty price tag that may be alarming to stakeholders who are unsure that the project benefits outweigh the costs. In consideration of this, the CVC Plan proposes a phased approach to demonstrate value in the near-term by implementing a bus or BRT service along the approximate proposed route to spark awareness among the communities along the corridor while allowing for data collection in ridership and usage trends that could be helpful in future rail planning efforts.

Huron residents would benefit from both the positive economic and environmental improvements that the CVC would provide. According to the California EPA CalEnviroScreen 3.0 tool, the City of Huron ranks in the top 70-85th percentile of pollution burden in California. Specifically, the concentration of particulate matter, or PM2.5, in Huron is in the 95th percentile, meaning it is higher than 95% of the census tracts in California. PM2.5 comes from cars, trucks, and other activities, and can have serious health effects, including heart and lung

disease. Increasing local transit opportunities will help to reduce local PM2.5 concentrations. Additionally, Huron is defined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development as a low-income community. Connecting Huron to cities along the CVC, as well as the California High-Speed Rail, will improve Huron residents' access to jobs and services.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

The CVC would have long-term economic development benefits for the City or Huron and improve the quality of life for residents through increased access to jobs and services, as well as environmental benefits related to air quality, energy use, noise reduction, and land use. When fully operational, California HSR service throughout the Central Valley and to the major employment hubs throughout the State can have a transformational impact on local and regional economies. The CVC presents an opportunity to better harness the High-Speed Rail's statewide impacts, and enhance intra-regional connectivity and economic integration.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?







Cross Valley Corridor Plan
Cross Valley Corridor Map

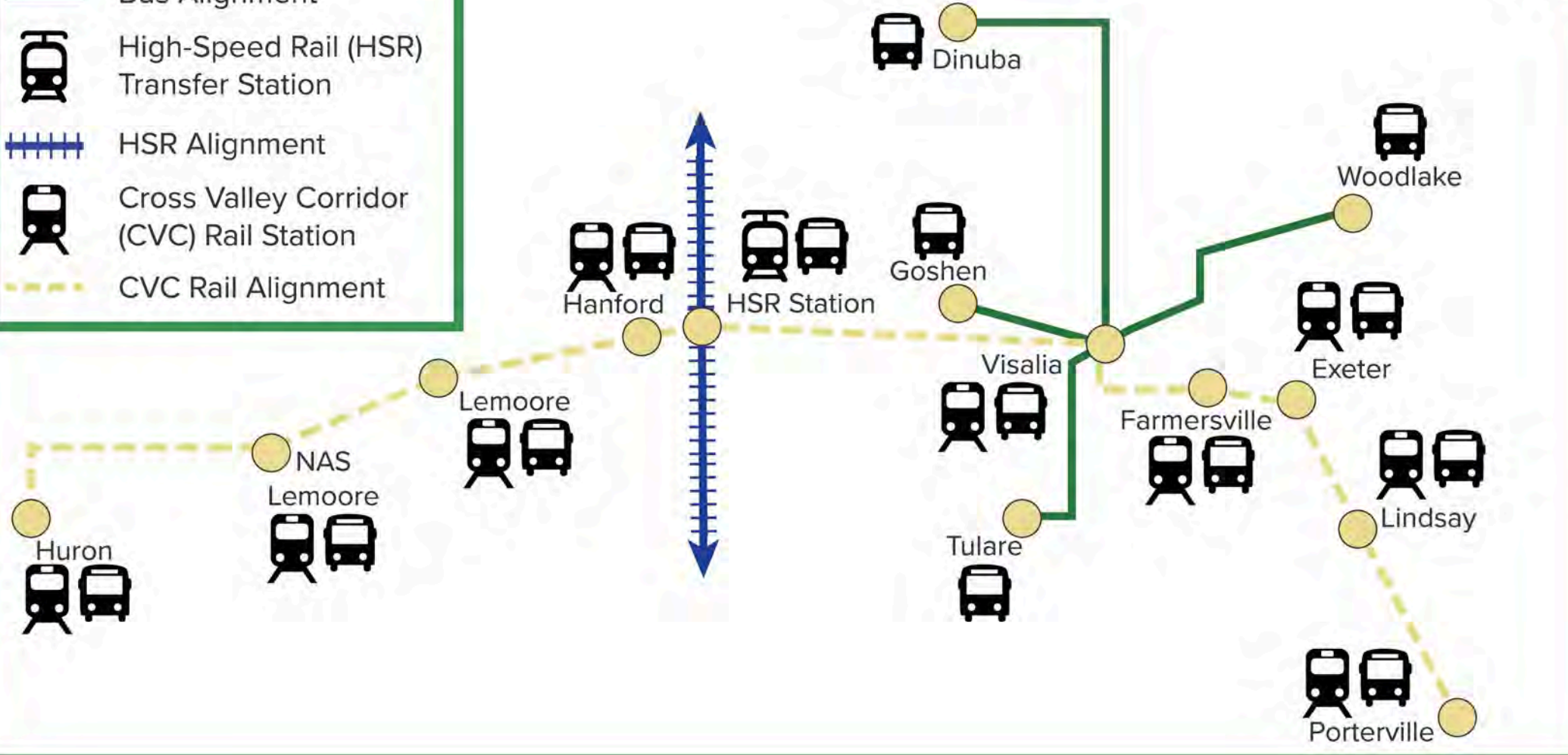
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Attending the One Voice trip

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-  Bus Transfer Station
-  Bus Alignment
-  High-Speed Rail (HSR) Transfer Station
-  HSR Alignment
-  Cross Valley Corridor (CVC) Rail Station
-  CVC Rail Alignment



Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

Connecting People with Jobs

Submitted by:

Brian Angus

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CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH JOBS

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

Fresno EOC respectfully asks that the One Voice Delegation approve requesting increased funding for transportation access to jobs and training for Fresno County residents on social assistance.

Transportation is a barrier for many individuals throughout our county. Those wishing to better their circumstances through employment and training often cannot access those opportunities. Even when public transit is available, the hours of operation don't always coincide with the employer's needs. This leaves many unable to break the cycle of poverty and reliance on social programs.

In an effort to bridge the transportation gap, Fresno EOC operates a program in the Fresno Metropolitan Area funded through The County of Fresno Department of Social Services for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Welfare to Work (WTW) participants who work swing or graveyard shifts. While this program provides opportunities for many, the limited scope only scratches the surface of the needs in Fresno County.

REQUEST SUMMARY

Fresno County receives funding from the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families through the State's CalWORKs WTW program. The County's Department of Social Services utilizes a portion of that funding to contract with Fresno EOC to provide transportation to and from approved work and training sites (including to and from daycare) for CalWORKs WTW recipients.

1. Increase funding for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, specifically allocated for transportation to and from jobs and job training programs.

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Unemployment in Fresno County is at the lowest point in the past decade at 5.9%. At the same time one quarter of our population lives in poverty and around 20% of households receive SNAP benefits.

Fresno County has understood the challenges many people in poverty face in accessing employment and training for changing labor market requirements and has made funding available to Fresno EOC to provide transportation to CalWORKs WTW clients. The clients referred to Fresno EOC by County caseworkers are those who work during hours not served by public transit in the Fresno Metropolitan area of the county. This funding, however, is limited in the amount and scope it can cover. The current contract is \$403,620 a year with 330 participants approved. Funding for this program comes from CalWORKs Employment Services Single Allocation which is funded through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

There remains a huge need for affordable transportation. Access to this resource could mean the difference between obtaining and keeping employment or remaining unemployed. Community members aren't able to access workforce development and job opportunities that they may qualify for based on where they live and not having reliable transportation. This is especially true for residents outside of the Fresno Metropolitan Area. Most of the services intended to assist people with training and education are located in the urban center while a huge need persists in the rural areas.

With additional transportation funding focused on getting people to and from work, to and from educational opportunities, we can break family cycles of poverty. Once a person is on the path to self-sufficiency they will no longer need CalWORKs.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

The entire community benefits when people are afforded the opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty and off of social assistance.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

No.

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Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission

2019

One Voice Regional Priorities Washington, DC

Community Services Block Grant

Submitted by:

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COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

SHORT INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY AND ISSUE:

Fresno EOC respectfully asks that the One Voice Delegation promote the continued funding of the Community Services Block Grant program. This is the source for emergency, human service interventions, and economic development Fresno EOC extends to our county's most vulnerable residents.

We also ask that members encourage our local Congressional delegation to support and co-sponsor reauthorization of the Community Economic Opportunity Act when it is reintroduced. The Act authorizes funding for the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG). Our federal representatives have consistently recognized the value of CSBG to their constituents and have all supported reauthorization and stable funding for the program. Maintaining federal CSBG funding is the single most important tool our community has to mitigate the impacts of emergencies, such as the opioid epidemic, and to create economic opportunities for our neediest residents. Fresno EOC is the locally designated steward of CSBG funds for Fresno County.

REQUEST SUMMARY

For FY 2019 CSBG was approved at \$724.65 million, which amounted to only about a \$10 million increase from FY 2018, below the targeted amount that we requested of \$749.6 million. Unfortunately, the increase fell short of meeting the needs.

- 1. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) FY 2020 funding at 800 million.**
- 2. Reauthorization of CSBG: Community Economic Opportunity Act (when introduced)**

REQUEST BACKGROUND AND EXPLAIN THE REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:

CSBG honors local assessment and design of programs that meet urgent local needs and generate economic opportunities. It correctly requires governance of the CSBG-funded agency by locally appointed and elected leaders, as well as those representing service recipients. CSBG is particularly critical to our county, where one in four live in poverty. It is a responsible, local instrument allowing for local determination and the creation of local solutions to ameliorate the persistent, unabated poverty our region has become all too well known for.

- a. CSBG funding makes it possible for Fresno EOC to deliver emergency services such as food and utility assistance to thousands of our county residents each year.
- b. CSBG has catalyzed robust economic initiatives such as Access Plus Capital, a Community Development Financial Institution lending to small businesses through which hundreds of jobs have been created.
- c. It was the source through which vital human services such as the Sanctuary Youth Shelter, the drop in center, Central Valley Against Human Trafficking (CVAHT), the Conservation Corps, and SOUL charter school were started.
- d. CSBG has also been leveraged to create social enterprises such as Fresno EOC's growing solar installation business, catering, and commercial recycling efforts all of which employ and train disadvantaged workers and generate discretionary revenue for new local ventures.
- e. CSBG has been utilized to grow new, promising programs like our Valley Apprenticeship Connections which provides construction job training skills and connects them to a good paying job upon completion.

IF NOT A TRANSPORTATION RELATED REQUEST, ARE THERE ANY TRANSPORTATION POLICY CONNECTIONS?

Because of its flexible nature, CSBG funding can be used for any policy matters that improve conditions for our community, including transportation. In addition to having a transit program, transportation is a component in many of our programs.

ARE THERE ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS?

Fresno EOC has prioritized economic stimulus and entrepreneurship with its allocation of CSBG funding. We know that it is only through access to opportunity that people can lift themselves out of poverty.

- a. Access Plus Capital has provided \$27.3 million in loans and technical assistance to 771 businesses and borrowers low-to-moderate income neighborhoods since 2009.
- b. Turn-key commercial recycling operations recovering CRV containers, used oil, tires, and electronic

- waste.
- c. Commercial food production center producing and delivering more than 7,500 meals per day.
- d. Commercial vehicle fleet detailing.
- e. Nielsen Conference Center.
- f. Solar PV and solar water heater installations.
- g. Taxi scrip services.
- h. Landscaping and grounds maintenance.
- i. Investment in the formation of a thriving credit union in southeast Fresno.
- j. Catering business.
- k. Job training.

ARE THERE ANY ATTACHMENTS?

No.

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