

Fresno COG Policy Board  
MINUTES  
Thursday, July 30, 2020  
5:30 PM

Meeting held via Zoom.

**Members Attending:**

Mayor Drew Bessinger, City of Clovis  
Mayor Ron Lander, City of Coalinga  
Mayor Elsa Lopez, City of Firebaugh  
Mayor David Cardenas, City of Fowler  
Councilmember Paul Caprioglio, City of Fresno  
Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron  
Mayor Michelle Roman, City of Kingsburg  
Mayor Beltran, City of Parlier  
Mayor Pro Tem Mary Fast, City of Reedley  
Mayor Amarpreet Dhaliwal, City of San Joaquin  
Mayor Frank Gonzalez, City of Sanger  
Mayor Louis Franco, City of Selma  
Michael Navarro, Caltrans  
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel  
Tony Boren, Executive Director

**Absent:**

Mayor Pro Tem Gary Yep, City of Kerman  
Mayor Rolando Castro, City of Mendota  
Mayor Victor Lopez, City of Orange Cove  
Supervisor Sal Quintero, County of Fresno

**Quorum:** At the start of the meeting, there were 11 members representing 78.75% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business. (Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno City, Kingsburg, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger, Selma).

The meeting was called to order at 5:39 pm by Mayor Cardenas (Fowler), Chair.

**I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. Executive Minutes of June 12, 2020 [APPROVE]
- B. City of Fowler Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [APPROVE]
- C. City of Huron Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [APPROVE]
- D. Measure C 2020-21 Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [APPROVE]
- E. Grant Solicitation: Sustainable Transportation Equity Project (STEP) (Trai Her-Cole) [INFORMATION]
- F. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Network Plan Update (Trai Her) [INFORMATION]

After an opportunity for public comment, Councilmember Caprioglio (Fresno City) motioned and Mayor Dhaliwal (San Joaquin) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. A roll call vote was taken 11 yes, members Huron, Kerman, Mendota, Orange Cove and Fresno County absent. The motion passed.

**II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy**

- 1. 2022 RTP/SCS Schedule and Milestones (Kristine Cai) [INFORMATION]

Ms. Kai (FCOG) provided a brief summary of the 2022 RTP/SCS development schedule and process milestones. A list of the 2022 RTP/SCS key milestones and timeline was provided.

This item was informational only; no further action was required

## **2. Introduction to Futures Planning (Seth Scott) [INFORMATION]**

Mr. Scott (FCOG) reported that uncertainty about the future is a major challenge inherent in long-range planning. To combat uncertainty, planning agencies are developing diverging assumptions of future conditions against which to model the resilience of their strategies. Notable examples include the California Transportation Plan 2050 (Caltrans) and Plan Bay Area 2050 (Metropolitan Transportation Commission).

Fresno COG has adopted this practice and will include futures analysis in its 2022 SCS. Each planning scenario's strategies will be tested against several futures: one base future, as well as two-to-three others. Each scenario will be reported and evaluated based on its performance alongside each future, providing a sort of "stress test" for the strategies identified in that scenario.

The presentation introduced the concept of futures and how they will operate within the framework of the development and testing of the SCS scenarios. Next month, staff will propose specific futures for consideration and approval.

This item was informational only; no further action was required

**Quorum:** Huron joined, there were 12 members present, representing 79.47% of the population.

## **B. Amendment to the 2021 Regional Active Transportation Program Guidelines, Resolution 2020-11, Amending Resolution 2020-28 (Jennifer Soliz) [APPROVE]**

Ms. Soliz (FCOG) reported that in April, Fresno COG's Policy Board approved the 2021 Regional Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 5 Guidelines. Those guidelines were submitted to the California Transportation Commission (CTC), with approval originally scheduled for the May meeting. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the CTC approved an amendment to the 2021 ATP schedule on April 29, 2020, and the program was delayed by approximately three months.

On May 14, 2020, Fresno COG held a virtual workshop to discuss and finalize a revised schedule to align with the amended 2021 ATP. Following the revised schedule, CTC staff reviewed Fresno COG's regional guidelines and recommended changes to maintain the regional scoring committee. To get feedback from the regional Multidisciplinary Advisory Group (MAG), CTC staff delayed the regional guidelines to the August CTC meeting. Based on the discussion at a June 23 workshop, the MAG and staff's proposed changes to the 2021 Regional ATP Guidelines include:

- Point distribution changes to the small infrastructure application scoring criteria in the following categories:
  - Benefit to disadvantaged communities
  - Need
  - Scope and plan layout consistency
  - Leveraging
  - New category added – consistency with Fresno COG's adopted 2018 RTP or an adopted Active Transportation Plan
  - Added clarifying language in funding set-aside, project application and submittal requirements, and scoring criteria categories
  - Supplemental Application required for Regional ATP Call-for-Projects (Appendix B in Guidelines)

The proposed changes are identified in the guidelines. These changes are consistent with the statewide guidelines. Regional ATP documents are all included for review and approval and are posted to [fresnocog.org](http://fresnocog.org). Enclosures for this item include:

- Amending Resolution 2020-28
- Amended FCOG 2021 Regional ATP Guidelines (Tracked Changes Shown)
- Amended FCOG 2021 Regional ATP Guidelines (Tracked Changes Accepted)

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Fast (Reedley) motioned and Mayor Bessinger (Clovis) seconded to recommend Policy Board approve amending Resolution 2020-28 and the amended 2021 Regional Active Transportation

Program Guidelines. A roll call vote was taken 11 yes, members Kerman, Mendota, Orange Cove, San Joaquin and Fresno County absent. The motion passed.

**C. SB 743 Implementation Regional Guidelines (Kristine Cai) [ACCEPT]**

Ms. Cai (FCOG) reported that Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) was passed by the State legislature in 2013, and incorporated in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines in 2018. The actual implementation of SB 743 began on July 1, 2020. SB 743 requires level of service (LOS) be replaced with vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the metric for transportation impact analyses in the CEQA process. SB 743 is going to have profound changes to how local land use development projects and transportation capacity projects are approved. It serves the State's overall climate change goals by encouraging infill development and discouraging greenfield development; supporting green projects, such as transit and active transportation projects and minimizing capacity increasing projects. The intended transportation and land use changes through SB 743 will help people drive less, promote a diversity of land use mixes and encourage alternative transportation such as transit, walking and biking.

Fresno COG has been working closely with the local governments and a consultant team on developing regional guidance and recommendations for SB 743 implementation in the Fresno region. The regional guidelines are intended to provide local agencies with technical tools to navigate through implementation.

Fresno COG's process has resulted in a series of screening criteria to help local jurisdictions screen out projects that have less-than-significant VMT impacts. The regional guidelines provide recommendations for thresholds and methodologies for VMT analysis. The guidelines also provide substantial evidence for a threshold alternative of 13 percent VMT reduction, as opposed to the State's 15 percent for residential and office projects. Fresno COG staff and its consultant team are developing a VMT tool to estimate VMT/person & VMT/employee for individual projects. This is expected to be available by the end of July. A list of mitigation measures will be included with the tool.

In order to help our member agencies understand and adapt to the new requirements of SB 743, Fresno COG staff will offer a training workshop to local agencies and stakeholders on methodologies and tools recommended.

Fresno COG is not a lead agency for any land use or transportation projects. The recommendations in the regional guidelines are advisory, and may be used by member agencies at their discretion, based on their individual growth policies and economic development goals.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Dhaliwal (San Joaquin) motioned and Mayor Bessinger (Clovis) seconded to recommend that the Policy Board accept the SB 743 Implementation Regional Guidelines. A roll call vote was taken 11 yes, Reedley voted no, members Kerman, Mendota, Orange Cove and Fresno County absent. The motion passed.

**D. Measure C Regional Transportation Program Update Fiscal Year 2020-21 (Les Beshears) [APPROVE]**

Measure C's Regional Transportation Program includes major highway infrastructure projects approved by the voters in 2007. Total anticipated revenues across all sources increased \$12.5 million from the 2017 adopted plan. Actual project costs declined \$1.27 million; however, total outlays increased \$36 million, reflecting increased internal borrowing costs from Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee projects that Measure C finances.

**Revenues**

Sales tax expectations for 2020-21 were adjusted downward 8.6 percent to reflect the COVID-19 recession, lowering sales tax projections by \$22.2 million.

Currently, \$45.3 million in future State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds are dedicated to the North\Cedar phase of the South Fresno Interchange. The recession may affect future STIP revenues.

The state's three-year SB 1 Local Partnership Program (LPP) formula cycle (2020-21-2022- 23) includes \$1.9 million in additional funding for the final phase of Veterans Boulevard. Staff has submitted an application to the LPP competitive pot of \$7 million for the Golden State Corridor Project and holds \$3.8 million in formula funding reserved, pending award of the competitive program.

The California High-Speed Rail Commission increased the City of Fresno's award to build structures spanning the railroad right-of-way at Veterans Boulevard \$5.8 million to \$33.84 million. The City of Fresno was also awarded a \$10.54 million federal BUILD grant for Veterans Boulevard. That project is now fully funded.

During the 2020 update to the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee (RTMF), the nexus was expanded and the fee increased to provide funding for the North\Cedar phase of the South Fresno Interchange, increasing anticipated RTMF revenues by \$32 million.

Non-RTMF local development fees decreased \$16.18 million as the City of Fresno secured additional grant funding sources described above to perfect funding for Veterans Boulevard.  
Interest earnings increased \$2.1 million.

### **The Urban Program**

The urban program has an estimated \$752.87 million in revenues, \$797.92 million in expenses and a net deficit of \$45 million. Net project costs increased \$1.7 million.

Veterans Boulevard costs are anticipated to be \$5.8 million less than in the previous plan. The project is being built in five phases, with the Bullard Extension completed and the UPRR grade separation under construction. The Shaw-to-Barstow connection will be completed in 2020, while the full interchange and Herndon Avenue connection will finish in 2021.

The North/Cedar interchange is the next major project on the urban tier 1 list. Planning, acquisition and design on North/Cedar will proceed concurrently with the rural program, including American Avenue as a single two-phased project with construction anticipated in 2023-24. Cost estimates for North/Cedar are \$9,1 million less than in the previous plan.

The SR 180 landscaping project – from Brawley to Hughes West – is programmed for 2020-21 in the 2020 STIP.

Shaw Avenue – Dewolf to McCall – increased by \$5.37 million to \$24.5 million. The measure will fund 80 percent of the construction cost, with local Clovis development fees providing a 20 percent match.

Herndon – Polk to Milburn – increased by \$9.68 million to \$24 million. The Measure will fund 80 percent of the construction cost, with local Fresno development fees providing a 20 percent match. Due to the reduction in sales tax estimates, construction must be delayed one year to 2022-23.

### **The Rural Program**

The rural program has an estimated \$481.41 million in revenues, \$727.52 million in expenses and a net deficit of \$245.11 million. Net project costs decreased \$2.4 million.

Design continues on Golden State Boulevard, with construction anticipated in 2020-21. After performing preliminary engineering studies, the Union Pacific Railroad determined the class A trail planned along the project would require significant enhancements to various intersections, resulting in a prohibitive cost increase. After conferring with participating member agencies, Fresno COG removed the trail and will work with members to develop an equivalent improvement in each jurisdiction.

The rural program includes \$61.9 million to environmentally clear, design, acquire right-of-way, and construct the American Avenue phase of South Fresno Interchange in sync with the North/Cedar Interchange.

FCTA has approved conducting preliminary studies to explore improvements along the SR 180 West connection to I-5, with the intent of developing a financeable improvement during the life of the current measure that could extend into a proposed third measure.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Bessinger (Clovis) motioned and Mayor Lander (Coalinga) seconded to recommend that the Policy Board approve the Measure C Regional Transportation Program Update for Fiscal Year 2020-21. A roll call vote was taken 12 yes, members Kerman, Mendota, Orange Cove and Fresno County absent. The motion passed.

## **E. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]**

Mr. Navarro (Caltrans) reported:

- A new Caltrans Director, Diana Gomez, started on July 13th.

- COVID-19 – Homeless has been an issue. Caltrans is working with local jurisdictions. Caltrans has to follow CDC guidelines and removal can only be done if there is immediate safety issue or other structure hazard.
- California Transportation Plan 2050 – Long-range vision document for Caltrans. It is going out for public review in August.
- Kingsburg to Selma SR99 rehabilitation – Thank Mayor Roman for coordinating a meeting for the project team speak with city officials and collaborate on the expressed safety concerns through the area. Caltrans has been working with CHP and the City of Kingsburg to address the concerns. Construction is scheduled to continue to the spring of 2021.
- City of Selma to Fowler SR 99 rehabilitation – The next phase of the SR99 rehab, construction to begin in the Summer of 2021. Plan to work with the City of Selma and Fowler to address safety issues early on.
- Coalinga Rest Stop – Work continues, completion is expected in December 2020.
- South Fresno Corridor SR99 Project - Interchanges at SR99, Cedar, North and American Avenues. Working on environmental clearances. Anticipate draft environmental review document out by 2021.
- Kings Canyon Expressway SR 180 Segment 3 - The project is estimated to be completed by September.

Mayor Pro Tem Fast (Reedley) asked if there would be a dedication ceremony for the SR 180 East project when complete. Mr. Navarro responded that he will follow up with project manager. Mayor Roman (Kingsburg) expressed thanks to Caltrans for speaking at the council meeting to address safety concerns. Mayor Roman asked if CHP will patrol the area more as there is still some safety issues in the area. Mr. Navarro responded that he will follow up with CHP. Mayor Dhaliwal (San Joaquin) asked about the status of SR 180 West route? Mr. Navarro responded that the project in question is SR 180 West to I-5, Route Adoption Study. It is in the early planning stages and Caltrans technical team is working with FCTA to plan what the project would look like. Mr. Boren (FCOG) responded that he would have Mike Leonardo at a future meeting to update the Policy Board. Councilmember Caprioglio (Fresno City) asked about the mandate for removal of homeless on the freeway. Mr. Navarro responded that he was aware of an injunction for local agencies in southern California. He stated that Director Diana Gomez sent correspondence to the City of Fresno. He will follow up and send the letter to Councilmember Caprioglio and Tony Boren.

This item was informational only; no further action was required

### III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

#### A. Regional Clearinghouse (Jennifer Soliz) [APPROVE]

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Bessinger (Clovis) motioned and Mayor Dhaliwal (San Joaquin) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. A roll call vote was taken 12 yes, members Kerman, Mendota, Orange Cove and Fresno County absent. The motion passed.

### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

There are no administrative action discussion items

### V. OTHER ITEMS

#### A. Items from Staff

- Mr. Boren reported that there will be no August meeting.

#### B. Items from Members

There were no items from members.

### VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

#### A. Public Presentations

There were no public presentations.

The meeting was adjourned to FCRTA at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Tony Boren

Public:

Tony Petros

Jasmin, FHWA

Monte Cox, Fresno EOC

Staff:

Jeaneen Cervantes

Kai Han

Braden Duran

Jen Soliz

Trai Her-Cole

Kristine Cai

Les Beshears

Seth Scott

Brenda Veenendaal

Meg Prince

Suzanne Martinez

Moses Stites