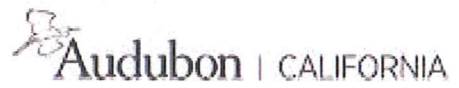




Council on American-Islamic Relations



March 24, 2021

Chair, David Cardenas
Fresno County Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street Suite 201
Fresno, California 93721

Chairman Buddy Mendes
Fresno County Transportation Authority
Fresno County Plaza Building
2220 Tulare Street, 8th Floor Room A
Fresno, California 93721

RE: Measure C Renewal Process

Dear Mr. Boren and Chairman Mendes,

Reauthorization of Measure C will create monumental opportunities for the Fresno County region. projected to generate 2-3 billion dollars, Measure C can and will have a significant impact on our fast growing community..

Measure C reauthorization and associated expenditure plan must be guided and ultimately decided through a community driven process that provides residents with decision making authority. A community driven process will allow all of us to work together to elevate and prioritize critical immediate, medium-term and long term transportation, air quality, housing, racial justice and climate challenges and opportunities facing our communities today. .

We urge you to work with community leaders to establish and launch an inclusive community driven participatory process - a process that we can all be proud of and that is not unheard of in our community.

We must ensure that all residents have the opportunity to engage in this process for three simple reasons beyond the fact that they will be paying Measure C:

- Residents in the region know what transportation investments are needed to address existing and emerging mobility options and to move toward an environmentally sound and environmentally just Fresno;
- A process that excludes the community and community expertise will fail, just like the Measure C renewal effort failed in 2001; and
- Community leadership is the cornerstone of the following Guiding Principles for a Just and Equitable Transportation System¹
 - Promote Environmental Justice
 - Address Transportations Injustice
 - Equitable Investment of Public Dollars
 - Prioritize Racial Justice in Plan Development
 - Community Driven Solutions and Plans
 - Reach California Climate Goals

Community driven project development has led to huge successes that redound to the benefit of the region as a whole. Recently, Fresno residents participated in a community-wide planning process through the Southwest Specific Plan. Prior to that, through the state's Transformative Climate Communities program bringing \$70 million to the area, another process involving hundreds of residents was conducted. Measure C poses to have an even far greater impact on the quality of life for all county residents and warrants even greater community-wide engagement.

To date, the Measure C renewal process has made no attempts to seek input from community members and seems divorced from principles guided by transparency and community engagement. The MC3 Executive Committee and the Technical Working Group were selected behind closed doors; there is a complete lack of community representation in the executive committee; voter polls were developed and implemented without any input from any committee or external stakeholders, as there has been demonstrated resistance to addressing lack of engagement and transparency in the process.

The tax is due to expire in 2026 and if we want to experience the progress we imagine, we must ensure an inclusive, transparent process. That will create a Measure C grounded in principles of environmental justice and just democracy, that will build the trust needed to get Measure C passed, and that will lay the framework for effective implementation of the significant Measure C resources.

We look forward to working together to establish a just and equitable community driven participatory process to reauthorize Measure C.

¹ <https://leadershipcounsel.org/guiding-principles-for-a-just-and-equitable-transportation-system-in-fresno-county/>

Respectfully,

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
Building Healthy Communities Fresno
Cultiva La Salud
Faith in the Valley
Inspiration Transportation
Central California Environmental Justice Network
Friends of Calwa
Fresno Barrios Unidos
Sierra Club, Tehipite Chapter
Jakara Movement
League of Women Voters
Council on American Relations
Audubon California
Central Air Quality Coalition
Youth Leadership Institute
USGBC, Central California
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries
Keil Schmidt
Jim Grant

CC:

Tony Boren, Executive Director, Fresno Council of Governments
Mike Leonardo, Executive Director, Fresno County Transportation Authority
Measure C Executive Committee
Measure C Technical Working Group
Rural Mayors of Fresno County