

**Policy Advisory Committee
MINUTES
Friday, June 11, 2021
10:00 AM**

Meeting held via Zoom.

Luke Serpa, City of Clovis
Ben Gallegos, City of Firebaugh
Wilma Quan, City of Fowler
John Jansons, City of Kerman
Cristian Gonzalez, City of Mendota
Matt Flood, City of San Joaquin
Isaac Moreno, City of Selma
Jean Rousseau, County of Fresno
David Padilla, Caltrans
Tony Boren, Fresno COG

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Ms. Quan (Fowler), Vice Chair. With eight members present via Zoom, there was a quorum to conduct business.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of May 14, 2021 [APPROVE]
- B. 2021 FTA Section 5310 Funding Resolution 2021-19 (Peggy Arnest) [ACTION]
- C. Regional Housing Needs Allocation Member Jurisdiction Survey Results (Meg Prince) [INFORMATION]
- D. Fiscal Year 2021-22 Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Final Estimates (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- E. Fiscal Year 2021-22 State Transit Assistance (STA) Final Estimates (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- F. Fiscal Year 2021-22 State of Good Repair (SGR) Final Estimates (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- G. Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area Short-Range Transit Plan Fiscal Year 2022-2026 Resolution 2021-26 (Todd Sobrado) [ACTION]
- H. New Member Appointment and Re-appointments for the Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee (Todd Sobrado) [ACTION]
- I. Urban and Rural Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) Operations, Program & Budget, Fiscal Year 2021-22 (Todd Sobrado) [ACTION]
- J. Clovis Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) Operations, Programming & Budget, Fiscal Year 2021-22 (Amy Hance) [ACTION]
- K. Notice of Availability for the Draft Version of the Fresno-Madera State Route 41 and Avenue 9 Sustainable Corridors Study (Braden Duran) [INFORMATION]
- L. TAMP Financial Planning Workshop Summary (Suzanne Martinez) [INFORMATION]

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Rousseau (Fresno County) motioned and Mr. Serpa (Clovis) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

1. Draft Action Element Outline (Jennifer Soliz/Meg Prince) [INFORMATION]

Ms. Soliz (FCOG) reported that the Action Element is a required Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) component that describes the programs and actions necessary to implement the RTP's goals and policies. It will consist of

short and long-term activities that address regional transportation issues and needs and will address all transportation modes. Fresno COG is the responsible agency for all actions but will collaborate closely with partnering agencies to ensure the actions are implemented.

The Draft Action Element Outline has been developed to support the vision, overarching goals, and supporting policies of the approved draft Policy Element. The Draft Action Element has been consolidated and updated to align with the Policy Element. The Action Element and Policy Element will be combined to provide a more cohesive document and will also be consistent with the Financial Element to identify investment strategies, alternatives, and project priorities.

The Draft Action Element is available for public review and will be presented to the RTP Roundtable for approval in June.

This item was informational only; no further action was required.

B. Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act of 2021 and 2020 Highway Infrastructure Program Funding (Jennifer Soliz) [ACTION]

Ms. Soliz (FCOG) reported that the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act of 2021: Enacted on Dec. 27, 2020, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) appropriates \$10 billion for the Federal Highway Administration to apportion to state departments of transportation. On Jan. 15, the Federal Highway Administration made the apportionments available and issued additional guidance on Feb. 24. Under the Act, funds may be used for a broad range of surface transportation purposes listed in Section 113(b) of Title 23 of the U.S. Code, and are meant to “prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus”. California’s apportionment is \$911.8 million and is available until Sept. 30, 2024. The CRRSAA funds will be split 60/40 with 60% for the state (State Highway Operations and Protection; and Interregional Transportation Improvement Program) and 40% for regional programs. From the regional portion, the funding was further split and distributed between STIP and STBG programs. The funding distribution was approved at the March CTC meeting, and guidance for the STIP and STBG programs was approved at the May California Transportation Commission meeting. Fresno COG received \$9,295,806 in CRRSAA funds. Another \$4,760,313 in State Transportation Improvement Program funding will be included in the next Regional Transportation Improvement Program and will be brought back to the Policy Board for approval later this year. The \$4,535,493 STBG distribution and the program guidelines will follow the STBG provisions of Title 23.

Highway Infrastructure Program: The fourth cycle of the Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) apportionments was announced in January. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) distributes HIP funding to states, which are required to coordinate with the relevant metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) as required by the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. HIP follows the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) provisions of Title 23, and for the previous three cycles, Fresno COG funded STBG projects from the STBG contingency list. Fresno COG's apportionment for the 2021 HIP cycle is \$812,858.

CRRSAA and HIP program funds will not be included as part of the annual allocation of federal funding to the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and funds will not be included in Fresno COG's annual obligation authority targets. Both program funds must be obligated by September 2024, or they will be lost to the region and state. Since both programs follow the provisions of Title 23 and align with STBG eligibility, Fresno COG staff recommends adding \$4,535,493 of CRRSAA funds and \$812,858 of HIP funds to the 2021-22 STBG regional bid program. Available funding for the STBG regional bid program would be \$18,504,655.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Serpa (Clovis) motioned and Mr. Rousseau (Fresno County) seconded to approve allocating CRRSAA funds distributed by STBG and 2020 HIP funding to the 2021/22 STBG regional bid program.

C. 2021/2022 CMAQ and STBG Guidelines, Application Packets, and Call for Project Initiation (Jennifer Soliz/Braden Duran) [ACTION]

Mr. Duran (FCOG) reported that the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) programs are authorized in the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) and are the cornerstones for transportation funds distributed to regions.

Fresno COG, acting in its role as a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), is responsible for programming future federal transportation revenues for the Fresno region in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). CMAQ and STBG funds are reimbursable federal-aid funds, subject to the requirements of Title 23, United States code.

Program guidelines describe the policy, standards, criteria, and procedures for developing, managing, and adopting Fresno COG's CMAQ and STBG programs. The 2021/2022 CMAQ and STBG programs will cover four years of programming, 2022/23 through 2025/26. CMAQ and STBG funds are distributed by both *regional bid* and through a *targeted performance program*. The competitive, *regional bid* funding is based on scoring criteria and evaluated by a scoring committee. *Targeted performance program* funding is available to Fresno COG's member agencies and can be used in a variety of ways, including to enhance awarded regional bid projects by supplementing regional bid funds or bolstering against cost overruns. Additionally, the program assists in providing member agencies support in accelerating their prioritized projects that help Fresno COG meet its performance targets, San Joaquin Valley regional commitments, and FAST Act requirements. Together, the two programs will distribute over \$63 million during this two-year cycle.

The Fresno COG Programming Subcommittee met each month in February through May to update and finalize guidelines, application packets, and scoring criteria for the upcoming 2021-22 CMAQ and STBG calls-for-projects. Updates for both programs include funding distribution language updates, adding language regarding scope changes, updates to the expedited project delivery policy, and minor changes to the applications. A *targeted performance program* leveraging category was added to both programs' scoring criteria. The programming subcommittee approved the adjustments to the scoring criteria.

The [CMAQ](#) and [STBG](#) program guidelines and application packets can be found on Fresno COG's website. Upon Board approval of the application packets, the call-for-projects will be initiated.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Rousseau (Fresno County) motioned and Mr. Jansons (Kerman) seconded to approve the CMAQ and STBG guidelines and application packets and initiate the call-for-projects on June 24.

D. Fiscal Year 2021-22 Unmet Transit Needs Assessment Findings Report (Todd Sobrado) [ACTION]

Mr. Sobrado (FCOG) reported that the Under California's Transportation Development Act, Fresno COG's Policy Board must determine that public transportation needs within Fresno County will be reasonably met in fiscal year 2021-22 before approving Local Transportation Fund claims for streets and roads. The Fresno COG Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) is responsible for evaluating unmet transit needs.

Each year the SSTAC begins soliciting comments by sending approximately 400 letters to agencies and individuals interested in providing feedback on their public transportation needs within Fresno County. The request for comments letters, in English and Spanish, was sent in February 2021.

Usually, outreach occurs in the form of six formal meetings split evenly between Fresno County urban and rural communities. Because of the extraordinary circumstances brought on by COVID-19, public outreach was virtual and broken down into two components; virtual meetings and an online survey.

The virtual meetings -- five on Zoom and one on Facebook -- took place throughout the day on Feb. 25, and March 2. Attendance ranged from a few to a handful of participants per meeting. They were an excellent forum for transit

agency staff to engage in meaningful dialog with members of the public. Relevant comments were added to the list of public comments received.

The second component of public outreach was an online survey. Fresno COG ran a digital marketing campaign between Feb. 9 and March 2, targeting Facebook users within Fresno County. While there was modest participation in the virtual events, most of the feedback came from the online survey. Stakeholders and the public submitted 67 comments, including a letter from Leadership Counsel. A summary of the comments received includes:

- Several requests for transit service to Clovis Community College.
- Feedback about recent route changes to the FAX fixed-route network.
- Comments about service between outlying rural communities and the Fresno metropolitan area.

A public hearing for the Unmet Transit Needs Assessment was held at the last Fresno COG Policy Board meeting on April 29. Two public comments were received. They have been added to the attached Unmet Transit Needs Assessment for 2021-2022.

After a thorough review of all comments and issues, the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), at its April 20, 2021 meeting, found an unmet transit need in Fresno County that is reasonable to meet.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Serpa (Clovis) motioned and Mr. Gallegos (Firebaugh) seconded to adopt resolution 2021-20, approving Fresno COG's 2021-22 Unmet Need Assessment and find that there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet.

E. Measure C Renewal Update (Tony Boren) [INFORMATION]

Mr. Boren (FCOG) provided an update regarding ongoing Measure C renewal efforts at the committee and staff levels.

This item was informational only; no further action was required.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. Contracts

1. Regional Transportation Planning Agencies Valleywide Coordinator (Roberts Phipps) [ACTION]
2. Circuit Planner and Engineer Program Contract Renewal / Extension (Meg Prince) [ACTION]
3. San Joaquin Valley Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Technical Assistance Contracts (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]
4. Modeling On-call Contract with RSG (Kristine Cai) [ACTION]
5. WSP – RTMF On-Call Contract 2021-22 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
6. Better Blackstone Design Challenge Contract Extension (Peggy Arnest) [ACTION]
7. Fresno-Madera State Route 41 and Avenue 9 Sustainable Corridors Study Contract Extension (Braden Duran) [ACTION]
8. On-Call Contract with LSA (Kristine Cai) [ACTION]
9. On-call Contract with NCE (Kristine Cai) [ACTION]

B. Fresno County Rural Transit Agency Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

C. City of Reedley Transportation Authority Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Rousseau (Fresno County) motioned and Mr. Moreno (Selma) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

There are no Administrative Action/Discussion Items

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

There are no items from staff.

B. Items from Members

There are no from members.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

A. Public Presentations

There are no public presentations.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37am

Respectfully submitted,



Tony Boren

Public:

Carolina Ilic, Fresno Area Express

Joe Vargas, Fresno Area Express

Mariana Alvarenga

Eunice Choi

Olivia Munoz

Staff:

Kai Han, Braden Duran, Trai Her-Cole, Les Beshears, Kristine Cai, Robert Phipps, Brenda Veenendaal, Jen Soliz, Meg Prince, Suzanne Martinez, Peggy Arnest, Santosh Bhattarai, Pankaj Joshi, Moses Stites, Janelle Del Campo, Todd Sobrado, Jeaneen Cervantes