

Fresno COG Policy Board  
MINUTES  
Friday, June 24, 2021  
5:30 PM

**Members Attending:**

Mayor Jose Flores, City of Clovis  
Mayor Ron Ramsey, City of Coalinga  
Mayor Alfredo Valdez, City of Firebaugh  
Mayor David Cardenas, City of Fowler  
Councilmember Esmerelda Soria, City of Fresno  
Mayor Gary Yep, City of Kerman  
Councilmember Michelle Roman, City of Kingsburg  
Mayor Rolando Castro, City of Mendota  
Mayor Victor Lopez, City of Orange Cove  
Mayor Alma Beltran, City of Parlier  
Mayor Mary Fast, City of Reedley  
Mayor Eli Ontiveros, City of Sanger  
Mayor Scott Robertson, City of Selma  
Supervisor Sal Quintero, County of Fresno  
Michael Navarro, Caltrans  
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel  
Tony Boren, Executive Director

**Absent:**

Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron  
Mayor Julia Hernandez, City of San Joaquin

**Quorum:** At the start of the meeting, there were 13 members representing 97.33% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business. (Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno City, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, Sanger, Selma and Fresno County).

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Mayor Cardenas (Fowler), Chair.

**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]
- M. Fresno COG/County of Fresno Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Grant Conflict Waiver (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Lopez (Orange Cove) motioned and Supervisor Quintero (Fresno County) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed. 13 Yes, Members Huron, Parlier and San Joaquin absent. 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 Outline was circulated for review and comments and the updated draft will be presented to the RTP Roundtable for approval on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Draft Action Element Outline will then be incorporated into the Draft 2022 RTP/SCS for public review and comment in spring of 2022.

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, Mayor Valdez (Firebaugh) motioned and Mayor Ontiveros (Sanger) seconded to approve allocating CRRSAA funds distributed by STBG and 2020 HIP funding to the 2021/22 STBG regional bid program. 13 Yes, Members Huron, Orange Cove and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

**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, Mayor Robertson (Selma) motioned and Mayor Ramsey (Coalinga) seconded to approve the CMAQ and STBG guidelines and application packets and initiate the call-for-projects. 13 Yes, Members Huron, Orange Cove and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

**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. 14 Yes, Members Huron and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

#### **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.

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

Mr. Navarro (Caltrans) reported:

- **Kingsburg to Selma SR 99 Rehab** - Roadway rehab on SR 99 in and near the City of Kingsburg from SR 99/SR 201 separation to 0.3 mile south of Second Street under-crossing. Traffic still switched in the NB direction and work continues. Detour and emergency access signs have been installed per the traffic handling plans and the local agencies have been informed about the closures. All ramps and Lanes 2 and 3 on the SB 99 are open to traffic. NB 99 Sierra Ave on ramp, Bethel Ave off ramp and on ramp are closed. The project completion date is estimated to be at end of July
- **Selma to Fowler Rehab** - Roadway rehab on SR 99 from Second Street in Selma to just north of Merced Ave in Fowler. Funding: SHOPP. Construction has not yet started. The tentative start date is June 28, 2021. Caltrans met virtually on June 10, 2021, with the cities of Selma and Fowler to discuss this project with the city staff. We plan to provide mapping of segments.
- **South Fresno 99 Corridor Project** - (SR 99/North/Cedar Avenues & SR99/American Avenue Interchanges). Project is in the environmental clearance phase. Draft environmental document is scheduled for circulation in middle of 2021 with the public hearing to take place in August. Construction is targeted for late 2024.
- **Veterans Interchange** - Target to advertise the project late June 2021. Contractor would begin work in around November. Project has Federal BUILD grant funding.
- **Excelsior Median Barrier Update** – Construction has started on a temporary median barrier that will be placed between the northbound and southbound lanes. The project was awarded to Cal Valley Construction. Paving work will begin the week and k-rail assembly in the next couple weeks. Project will be completed in August 2021
- **Excelsior Expressway** - Caltrans is changing the design of the future expressway to make use of the existing pavement. This approach will reduce the cost of the project. Utilizing the existing pavement also allows Caltrans to tap into SHOPP funding which can bring up to \$14.8M in funding. The FCTA board also amended the project into the expenditure plan. If construction funding materializes then the design would be completed by June 2024 and a contractor would be on board by the end of 2024 with work starting after the rainy season (i.e. spring 2025).

### **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]
  - D. Resolution in Support of Jose Ramirez (World Champion Boxer) - Champion Advocate for the San Joaquin Valley (Tony Boren) [ACTION]

Mayor Cardenas (Fowler) pulled item III-D.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Robertson (Selma) motioned and Mayor Yep (Kerman) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. 14 Yes, Members Huron and San Joaquin absent. 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 6:44pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Tony Boren

#### Public:

Amy Hance, City of Clovis

Cesar Lucio

Eric VonBerg

John Stanbouljian

Karla Martinez

Leslie Martinez

Mariana Alvarenga

Michelle Tutunjian

Monte Cox, FEOC

Olivia Munoz

#### Staff:

Kai Han, Braden Duran, Trai Her-Cole, Robert Phipps, Brenda Veenendaal, Jen Soliz, Meg Prince, Moses Stites, Janelle Del Campo, Jeff Long, Jeaneen Cervantes