

**Policy Advisory Committee
MINUTES
Friday, July 9, 2021
10:00 AM**

Meeting held via Zoom.

Wilma Quan, City of Fowler
Luke Serpa, City of Clovis
Greg Barfield, City of Fresno
John Jansons, City of Kerman
Alexander Henderson, City of Kingsburg
Cristian Gonzalez, City of Mendota
Nicole Zieba, City of Reedley
Elizabeth Nunes, City of San Joaquin
Ralph Jimenez, City of Selma
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 June 11, 2021 [APPROVE]
- B. 2021-22 Measure C Claim (Les Beshears) [ACCEPT]
- C. City of Kingsburg 2021-22 Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- D. City of Selma 2021-22 Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- E. City of Huron 2021-22 Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- F. City of Kerman 2021-22 Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- G. County of Fresno 2021-22 Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- H. Upcoming Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program/Surface Transportation Block Grant Application Workshop (Braden Duran) [INFORMATION]
- I. Circuit Planner and Engineer Program End-of-Year Summary Report (Meg Prince) [INFORMATION]
- J. Obligational Authority and Project Delivery Update (Jennifer Soliz) [INFORMATION]
- K. REAP Housing Survey for the San Joaquin Valley (Meg Prince/Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]
- L. California Prohousing Designation Program [INFORMATION] (Meg Prince)

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

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

1. Environmental Justice Equity Indicator and Low-Income Threshold (Trai Her-Cole) [ACTION]

Ms. Her-Cole (FCOG) reported that an environmental justice (EJ) analysis is a required component of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The EJ analysis evaluates the RTP's transportation investments to determine if environmental justice communities within Fresno County equitably benefit without bearing a disproportionate share of the burdens. Federal guidance requires the EJ analysis to consider minority and low-income populations; therefore, the EJ subcommittee (subcommittee) has established a low-income threshold that is representative of the Fresno County region at 150% of the federal poverty level.

At the May RTP Roundtable meeting, staff presented an initial recommendation from the subcommittee for the equity indicator in Sustainable Communities Strategy scenario development. The subcommittee's initial recommendation was to use "equitable housing mix." That recommendation was tabled to allow further discussions and address technical modeling issues related the equitable housing mix indicator. Subsequently, staff met with the EJ subcommittee and presented potential methodologies for calculating a housing mix, the assumptions, and challenges with each methodology.

The subcommittee expressed the importance of addressing housing issues, and FCOG staff is committed to including the modeling results of the regional housing mix and concentration of EJ households in the full RTP equity analysis. However, for the purposes of selecting an equity indicator to help compare the performance of RTP scenarios, the EJ subcommittee has recommended "accessibility to destinations within EJ vs non-EJ areas for auto and transit" as the EJ indicator.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Barfield (Fresno City) motioned and Mr. Chapa (Sanger) seconded to accept accessibility to destinations as the EJ indicator for SCS scenario development and set the low-income threshold at 150% of the federal poverty rate.

2. Draft Regional Transportation Plan Action Element Outline (Jennifer Soliz/Meg Prince) [ACTION]

Ms. Soliz (FCOG) reported that the draft 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) action element outline supports the draft policy element outline's vision, overarching goals and policies. It has been consolidated and updated to align with the policy element. The action element and policy element will be a combined chapter in the draft RTP/SCS to provide a more cohesive document, and will also be consistent with the financial element to identify investment strategies, alternatives, and project priorities.

The outline was presented to the RTP Roundtable in May and circulated for comments, which were due on June 18. Staff received two formal comment letters (attached). The comments were reviewed and considered for approval. Attached is the final outline with tracked changes to easily identify the updates.

Staff requested that actions in the outline be included in the draft RTP, which will be circulated for public review and comment in spring 2022.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Serpa (Clovis) motioned and Mr. Chapa (Sanger) seconded to recommend the Policy Board approve the draft action element outline.

3. Sustainable Communities Strategy Scenarios Community Engagement (Brenda Veenendaal) [INFORMATION]

Ms. Veenendaal (FCOG) reported that on August 25, Fresno COG staff is planning to release four Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) scenarios for public review and comment. Fresno COG's community engagement will run through Sept. 22 leveraging bilingual, in-person and virtual strategies. Engagement planning is underway, and staff welcomes all suggestions and partnering opportunities to engage as many of our Fresno County residents as possible.

Strategies currently being discussed include the following: In-person workshops scheduled throughout the county, virtual workshops held via Zoom and posted live on Facebook and YouTube, virtual and in-person presentations to community and service groups, public and private agencies and associations, workshop presentation video available online through Fresno COG's YouTube channel, Fresno COG and Plan Fresno websites as well as social media accounts, online and printed interactive "surveys" that mirror feedback forms used at in-person workshops and presentation, survey and workshop invitations sent out via social media and email and focus groups to define the general outreach message.

Staff is contacting member agencies, community-based organizations, service groups and other associations, requesting time on upcoming agendas to present information about the SCS scenarios. More details regarding this upcoming outreach effort will be presented by staff at the Committee meeting.

Upon completion, community input will be relayed to Fresno COG's RTP Roundtable in September, and the TTC, PAC and Policy Board in October. Community input will provide a better understanding of what Fresno County

residents believe is important when planning for future growth. This will assist our committees in providing an advisory SCS scenario recommendation to the Fresno COG Policy Board.

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

B. Fresno-Madera State Route 41 and Avenue 9 Sustainable Corridors Study (Braden Duran) [ACTION]

Mr. Duran (FCOG) reported that Fresno COG, in partnership with Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), conducted a study to determine State Route 41's future transportation needs in the City of Fresno as well as the southern segment in Madera County. In addition, the study analyzed future transportation needs along the Avenue 9 corridor in Madera County between SR 41 and SR 99. This project began in July 2020. Fresno COG and MCTC chose the consulting team of IBI Group, BluePoint Planning, and RSG to lead the study.

The study is recommending sustainable improvements to address residents' transportation needs in both counties for issues such as: mobility, access, safety, and connectivity for all modes of travel, including: automobiles, transit, walking, and rolling/cycling. A bi-county travel model, built on Fresno COG's activity-based model (ABM) platform guided the project by providing travel demand forecasting. Fresno COG staff notes that the study's recommendations are advisory. Each appropriate agency would have to institute the recommended improvements.

A steering committee helped identify challenges and solutions to both corridors. The steering committee included representatives from: Fresno COG, MCTC, City of Fresno, County of Madera, County of Fresno, Caltrans, Fresno Area Express, California Highway Patrol, Building Industry Association of Fresno and Madera, Valley Children's Hospital, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, and local stakeholders such as active transportation groups and business organizations.

Due to COVID-19, outreach efforts were conducted using innovative online techniques, including a public workshop/open house, interactive activities and surveys, and a mass social media campaign that included a digital information center. These efforts were intended to be inclusive and maximize diverse community and stakeholder participation. Outreach materials were available in various languages and via an "offline" option.

The study was circulated for a public review and comment period that began June 11, with the project team then incorporating received comments into the final draft. The final draft is available to view here:

<https://www.fresnocog.org/project/fresno-madera-state-route-41-and-avenue-9-sustainable-corridors-study/>

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Serpa (Clovis) motioned and Mr. Jimenez (Selma) seconded to recommend the Policy Board accept the Fresno-Madera State Route 41 and Avenue 9 Sustainable Corridors Study.

C. Reverse Triangle Transportation Area Plan (RTTAP) Final Report (Kristine Cai) (ACTION)

Ms. Cai (FCOG) reported that in 2018, Fresno COG, in partnership with City of Fresno and the County, received a Caltrans grant to study industrial growth impacts in the area formerly known as the "Reverse Triangle." The study area is bounded by SR 41 to the west, SR 99 to the east, Church Avenue at the north and Adams Avenue to the south. The project develops a transportation plan that provides recommendations for mitigating potential impacts created by industrial growth.

The project team worked with a steering committee that comprised staff from: Fresno COG, City of Fresno, County of Fresno, Caltrans, the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, FCRTA, FAX, Malaga Community Water District, and other stakeholders. The study area is a disadvantaged and low-income community, according to CalEviroscreen and AB 1550.

The challenges include but are not limited to increases in pollution, congestion and safety issues associated with increased truck traffic and in-commute trips, limited transit service and multi-modal infrastructure, lack of safe routes to school, etc. Four outreach workshops gathered input and feedback. The project team proposed a comprehensive package of strategies to address current and potential issues. The recommended strategies include multimodal facilities along roadways and at intersections to improve connectivity and safety; transit and transportation demand management strategies to support mobility needs; capacity and operational improvements to address deficiencies; Safe Routes to School programs, etc.

While the Reverse Triangle Transportation Area Plan (RTTAP) was being developed, there were also multiple planning efforts underway, such as the Fresno South Central Specific Plan and the AB 617 Truck Re-route study. The RTTAP deferred truck issues and potential land use revisions in the area to these planning efforts.

The draft plan was posted on the project website, as well as Fresno COG's website for a month for comment. Comments have been incorporated into the final draft. The final draft plan is available at: <https://www.fresnoreversetriplan.com/>. It should be noted that recommendations in the RTTAP are advisory. Implementing the recommended improvements rests with the local governments.

After an opportunity for public comment, Ms. Zieba (Reedley) motioned and Mr. Serpa (Clovis) seconded to recommend that the Policy Board accept the RTTAP final report.

D. Fresno Council of Governments 2021-22 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 1 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

Mr. Beshears (FCOG) reported that the 2021-22 Fresno Council of Governments Overall Work Program Amendment No. 1 increases the budget \$575,000, primarily through new grant sources.

Work Element 164 – California Inland Port Study - Phase Two. This project is part of a larger, multi-phase planning endeavor to be funded with future grant funds. The amendment increases local funds \$90,000 to be used in preparing federal applications for future phases.

Work Element 165 – San Joaquin Valley Household Travel Survey. This \$1.5 million study was carried in the budget by programming a combination of FHWA PL transfer funds from Kings County, SJV Regional Early Action Planning and potential Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account (RMRA) funds from the SJV COGs. The project was awarded \$692,149 in Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant funding, supplanting the need for Valley COGs to transfer RMRA funds. The amendment only swaps funds. The net effect on the work element is zero.

Work Element 168 – California Inland Port Feasibility Study – Phase Three. FCOG also received a \$388,000 Caltrans Strategic Planning Grant to perform Phase Three of the California Inland Port study. SJV COGs will provide \$80,000 in matching funds with FCOG or California Forward providing \$17,000 of the \$485,000 project.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Barfield (Fresno City) motioned and Ms. Zieba (Reedley) seconded to recommend the Policy Board adopt Resolution 2021-38, approving 2021-22 Fresno Council of Governments' Overall Work Program Amendment No. 1.

E. Fresno COG Quadrennial Federal Certification Review (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

Mr. Phipps (FCOG) reported that on June 28, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced that they have recertified Fresno COG's planning process and federal funding streams for another four years, through March 2025. The announcement and detailed report followed a three-day operations audit in April that included a careful review of Fresno COG's cooperative, continuous and comprehensive planning process across all federally required documents, such as the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) and Public Involvement Policies and Procedures (PIP).

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

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan Contract Addendum (Meg Prince) [APPROVE]
- B. Regional Clearinghouse (Jennifer Soliz) [APPROVE]

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

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Election of Chair/Vice Chair [ACTION]

Appoint a Chair to the Policy Advisory Committee replacing Teresa Gallavan, City of Selma, effective August 2021-March 2022.

Current Vice Chair is Wilma Quan, City of Fowler.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Barfield (Fresno City) nominated and motioned and Ms. Nunez (San Joaquin) seconded to appoint Wilma Quan, City of Fowler as Chair.

After an opportunity for public comment, Ms. Quan (Fowler) nominated and motioned and Mr. Barfield (Fresno City) seconded to appoint Jean Rousseau, County of Fresno as Vice Chair.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

- Mr. Boren (FCOG) welcomed Interim City Manager Ralph Jimenez from the City of Selma.
- Mr. Boren (FCOG) 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 presentation

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07am

Respectfully submitted,



Tony Boren

Public:

Gary Mills, GHD
Catherine Thibault, IBI Group
Dylan Stone
Karla Martinez
Thomas Dulin

Staff:

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