

Fresno COG Policy Board
MINUTES
Thursday, November 18, 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
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
David Padilla, Caltrans
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel
Tony Boren, Executive Director

Absent:

Mayor Jerry Dyer, City of Fresno
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 45.43% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business. (Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, Sanger, Selma and Fresno County).

The meeting was called to order at 5:44 p.m. by Mayor Cardenas (Fowler), Chair.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of Sept. 10, 2021 [APPROVE]
- C. Fresno COG Draft Financial Statements for FY 2020/21 (Les Beshears) [INFORMATION]
- D. 2022 Fresno COG Annual Meeting Calendar [APPROVE]

Mayor Fast (Reedley) pulled item B.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Beltran (Parlier) motioned and Mayor Ramsey (Coalinga) seconded to approve the balance of the consent agenda. 10 yes, members Fresno City, Huron, Mendota, Orange Cove, Sanger and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

- B. First Quarterly Financial and Work Element Report (Les Beshears) [INFORMATION]

Mayor Fast (Reedley) asked what the San Joaquin Valley Travel Survey. Ms. Cai (FCOG) responded that the survey is the data needed to update the eight valley MPOs used to conduct air quality conformity and also the RTP/SCS.

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

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Access for All Program Update (Suzanne Martinez) [INFORMATION]

Ms. Martinez (FCOG) reported that in April 2021, staff requested and received approval from the TTC, PAC, and COG Policy Board to certify Fresno COG as the Local Access Fund Administrator (LAFA) for the Access for All (AFA) Program in Fresno County. This item details the next steps in that process.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) created the transportation network company (TNC) Access for All Program following Senate Bill (SB) 1376 (Hill: 2018), which directed CPUC to establish a program to address the accessibility of TNC services for people with disabilities, including wheelchair users who need a wheelchair-accessible vehicle (WAV).

A \$.10 fee collected from every TNC trip is redistributed to each MPO region to develop programs that incentivize on-demand transportation services for people with disabilities, including wheelchair accessible vehicles/rides. CPUC approved Fresno COG's LAFA application on June 28 (resolution attached), and subsequently received the FY 2021-2022 LAFA allocation totaling \$222,436.80 in mid-August 2021.

The next steps for the Access for All program include:

- Creating an Overall Work Program (OWP) work element for the AFA program and executing an OWP budget amendment to include the funding awarded to Fresno COG for implementation of the AFA program in FY 2021-2022. (See Item 2B of this agenda)
- Gather local disability community stakeholders and other interested parties for input into the AFA program planning process
- Establish and finalize an AFA competitive solicitation process and release a request for proposals
- Screen received proposals for program eligibility, select provider(s), and execute program contract(s)
- Institute a data collection process and submit quarterly/annual reports to CPUC.

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

B. Overall Work Program Amendment No. 3 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

Mr. Beshears (FCOG) reported that Fresno Council of Governments' 2021-22 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 3 increases the budget \$222,437 to \$35,653,219.

Work Element 131 – Access for All – The California Public Utilities Commission identified Fresno COG as the Local Access Fund Administrator for Fresno County and provided \$222,437 to assist disabled persons seeking access to transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Ramsey (Coalinga) motioned and Mayor Robertson (Selma) seconded to recommend the Policy Board adopt Resolution 2021-48, approving Fresno Council of Governments' 2021-22 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 3. 12 yes, members Fresno City, Huron, Sanger and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

C. 2022 Regional Transportation Improvement Program Resolution 2021-47 (Jennifer Soliz) [ACTION]

Ms. Soliz (FCOG) reported that The California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopts a new State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) every two years. The STIP is a five-year capital improvement program of transportation projects on and off the state highway system, funded from the State Highway Account and other sources. As part of the STIP development process, each region must produce a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), which comprises regional priorities for 75 percent of the funding in the STIP. Concurrent with the RTIP development at the regional level, Caltrans is required to produce the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) for the remaining 25 percent of STIP funding. The ITIP comprises interregional priorities Caltrans establishes in collaboration with the regions. Caltrans merges the regions' RTIPs and Caltrans' ITIP into the statewide document – the STIP – and submits it to the CTC by Dec. 15. The CTC will hold public hearings in January and February and adopt the STIP in March 2022.

Fresno COG's RTIP is dedicated to the region's priorities as listed in the 2006 Measure C Expenditure Plan. The Fresno region has a longstanding policy of leveraging state and federal funding on major transportation improvements by partnering those resources with Measure C sales tax funding.

In the 2020 STIP, FCOG programmed \$69.7 million. Of this, \$5.74 million is reserved for landscaping, which finishes the State Route 180 West freeway project constructed during the original 1987-2006 measure. Another \$2 million in RTIP was programmed to match \$8 million Caltrans programmed in the Interregional STIP (ITIP) to design and acquire right-of-way for the six-mile SR 41 Excelsior gap closure project to the Kings County line. Additionally, \$14.6 million was programmed for the Veterans Boulevard interchange on SR 99. Another \$45.3 million was programmed for the multiphase South Fresno interchanges on SR 99. Finally, \$1.99 million was programmed for FCOG Planning, Programming and Monitoring (PPM) over the five-year STIP period.

The 2022 STIP fulfilled funding commitments from the 2020 STIP and provided another \$22 million in new regional programming capacity. Fresno COG proposes programming \$11.9 million on projects and leaving \$10.1 million in reserve for the 2024 STIP programming cycle.

The reasons for leaving unprogrammed RTIP in reserve are two-fold: First, the Measure C Expenditure Plan is aggressively pursuing construction on three major projects totaling \$165.7 million in the 2023/24 – 2024/25 timeframe (South Fresno Interchanges – North\Cedar and American Avenue, and SR 41 Excelsior Avenue). There are signs inflation may be a serious concern, and the CTC's G-12 policy allows up to a 10 percent contingency that may be charged to RTIP county shares should bids come in over engineer estimates. It is therefore appropriate to leave an unprogrammed reserve to provide that contingency.

Second, when Fresno COG and the Fresno County Transportation Authority boards approved Amendment No. 6 to the Measure C Expenditure Plan – adding SR 41 Excelsior to the Measure's rural tier I list – they committed to hold existing project schedules harmless. Leaving RTIP in reserve for future projects is consistent with this commitment.

The \$11.9 million in proposed new RIP funding will provide \$1.1 million for cost increases for SR 180 landscaping, \$10 million for constructing SR 41 Excelsior, and \$399,000 a year in Planning Program Monitoring (PPM) for the two years added to the STIP.

SR180 landscaping. – The project cost is now \$7.46 million, of which \$6.86 million is RTIP and \$603,000 is measure funding. It will bid for construction in January 2022.

SR 41 Excelsior - The estimated project cost is now \$70.8 million. Construction in 2024-25 is estimated at \$60.8 million, of which Caltrans is proposing \$23 million to come from the ITIP and \$14.8 million from the State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP). This recommendation proposes programming \$10 million in RTIP, with the remaining \$13 million funded by Measure C.

The CTC has also made \$4.76 million in COVID relief funding available in a 2021 mid-cycle STIP adjustment that must be programmed no later than June 2024. Staff proposes programming it on South Fresno Interchange – American Avenue. This will free up rural Measure C funding, which is also consistent with the commitment to hold rural measure project schedules harmless despite adding SR 41 Excelsior to the rural tier I list.

The American Avenue interchange is estimated to cost \$56.1 million, with the \$47.2 million construction phase occurring in 2023-24 concurrent with the North-Cedar interchange.

The 2022 RTIP project funding schedule is detailed on the programming document provided.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Lopez (Orange Cove) motioned and Mayor Flores (Reedley) seconded to recommend the Policy Board adopt Resolution 2021-47 to submit Fresno COG's 2022 RTIP to the California Transportation Commission, proposing \$11.914 million in regional county shares and \$4.76 million in mid-cycle STIP. 12 yes, members Fresno City, Huron, Sanger and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

D. Regional Safety Plan Top 20 locations (Santosh Bhattarai) [INFORMATION]

Mr. Bhattarai (FCOG) reported that in September 2020, Fresno COG and Kittelson and Associates kicked off the Regional Safety Plan (RSP). The safety plan is designed to reduce fatalities and serious injuries for all motorized and non-motorized modes and users in Fresno County.

The planning team released for public review an existing conditions report in April that included a draft plan, policy review and data analysis of the five most recent years of crash data, focusing on regional crash patterns and trends. Kittleson and

Assoc. calculated a severity score for each intersection and roadway segment across the region to identify the priority locations. The more severe a collision, the greater the weight it was given in the severity score. The weighting aligns with how the state prioritizes grant funding for safety projects.

The plan includes a regional countermeasure toolbox that identified 20 priority locations across the region to illustrate how it can be applied and used as safety project opportunities for the region to explore funding and implementation options with its partner agencies.

The team prioritized 15 intersections and five roadway segments, based on severity score and geographic location (e.g., east and west side cities, unincorporated county). The social equity index for the immediate surrounding community was also considered. Out of 15 intersections, three each are in Fresno, Clovis, and unincorporated Fresno County. Another one each are in: Kingsburg, Firebaugh, Sanger, Mendota, Selma, and Coalinga -- totaling three locations each east and west of Highway 99. The list of 20 locations is attached. The locations' concept designs are included in the plan as ideas for consideration only. The agencies that own and operate these facilities have full decision-making authority regarding the appropriateness and feasibility of the potential improvements illustrated.

In addition, Fresno COG set up a regional safety tool that provides crash locations and a severity analysis of historical crash data for Fresno County. Also in progress is a safety education campaign.

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

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

Mr. Boren reported that last week the Executive Committee discussed and voted on the final composition of Measure C executive committee membership.

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

F. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

Mr. Hatton (Caltrans) presented on Clean CA program.

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

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Regional Clearinghouse (Jennifer Soliz) [APPROVE]
- B. Resolution Supporting Rural Broadband Infrastructure Improvements (Robert Phipps) [APPROVE]

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Lopez (Orange Cove) motioned and Mayor Castro (Mendota) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. 12 yes, members Fresno City, Huron, Sanger and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Special Meeting to Address AB 361 Emergency Declaration Mandate (Robert Phipps) [APPROVE]

Mr. Phipps (FCOG) reported that AB 361 requires that each legislative body wishing to continue meeting remotely during a state of emergency issue findings reaffirming the need to do so no more than 30 days prior to the meeting date. On Nov. 10, Gov. Newsom extended California's state of emergency regarding the COVID pandemic through March 22, 2022. Fresno COG last issued its findings at the October 2021 regular meeting.

After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Robertson (Selma) motioned and Mayor Flores (Clovis) seconded to approve a special meeting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 6, 2022, to readopt findings contained in Resolution 2021-46. 12 yes, members Fresno City, Huron, Sanger and San Joaquin absent. The motion passed.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

Mr. Boren reported that there will be no December 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 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Tony Boren

Public:

Curt Hatton, Caltrans
Blake Konczal, Workforce Development
Ashley Matthews
Lauren Nikkel
Jose Flores
Martha Espinoza
Mzuri Reed

Staff:

Kai Han, Braden Duran, Les Beshears, Kristine Cai, Robert Phipps, Brenda Veenendaal, Jennifer Soliz, Meg Prince, Suzanne Martinez, Santosh Bhattarai, Moses Stites, Janelle Del Campo, Jeaneen Cervantes