

Policy Advisory Committee
MINUTES
Friday, March 8, 2024
10:00 AM

The meeting was held at FCOG Sequoia Conference Room.

John Holt, City of Clovis
Wilma Tucker, City of Fowler
Nicholas Mascia, City of Fresno
John Jansons, City of Kerman
Alexander Henderson, Kingsburg
Nicole Zieba, City of Reedley
Elizabeth Cabrera, City of San Joaquin
Jerome Keene, City of Selma
Mohammad Almini, Fresno County
David Padilla, Caltrans District 6
Robert Phipps, FCOG
Moses Stites, FCRTA

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Mr. Jansons (Kerman), Chair. With 9 members present, there was a quorum to conduct business.

JOINT Transportation Technical/Policy Advisory Committee

A. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

David Padilla reported the following:

- Submit the FGA Grant for buses by April 5th.
- Introduced Eric Olson – Office Chief District 6 office.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

A. Executive Minutes of February 16, 2023 [APPROVE]

B. Fiscal Year 2023 Productivity Evaluation (Jeff Long) [ACTION]

C. Upcoming Federal Grant Opportunities (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

D. Fresno COG's 2020 Public Participation Plan Update (Brenda Thomas) [INFORMATION]

E. 2023/24 Obligational Authority and Project Delivery Update (Matthew Shimizu) [INFORMATION]

- Mr. Jansons called for any items wishing to be pulled by members or the public.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Holt (Clovis) motioned, and Mr. Henderson (Kingsburg) seconded to approve the consent agenda items A-E as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2023-24 Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Guidelines, Application Packet, and Call-for-Projects Initiation (Matthew Shimizu) [ACTION]

Summary: The Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) is authorized in the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). This program provides Fresno County with Federal transportation funds to be distributed to the Fresno County region through a performance-driven process. Fresno COG, in its role as a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), is responsible for programming future federal transportation revenues in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). CRP funds are reimbursable federal-aid funds, subject to the requirements of Title 23, United States Code.

Program guidelines describe the policies, standards, criteria, and procedures for developing, managing, and adopting Fresno COG's CRP program. These funds are distributed through a competitive, regional bid program based on scoring criteria and evaluated by a scoring committee. Fresno COG estimates that a total of \$5,494,620 will be available funding for the FFY 23/24 mid-cycle CRP.

The updated guidelines for CRP includes funding distribution policies, changes to the local match requirement, language regarding programming construction funds, changes to address project contingencies, and minor changes to the application.

The CRP program guidelines and application packet can be found on Fresno COG's website. Upon Board approval of the application packet, the call-for-projects will be initiated.

Action: Staff and the programming subcommittee request the TTC/PAC recommend the Board approve the CRP guidelines and application packet and initiate the call-for-projects.

- Matthew Shimizu (FCOG) provided an update of the Carbon Reduction Program.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mrs. Cabrera (San Joaquin) motioned, and Mr. Holt (Clovis) seconded to approve the consent agenda items A-E as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

B. Circuit Planner and Engineer Program (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Fresno COG offers a Circuit Planner and Engineer Program, which provides technical assistance to small cities in Fresno County for efforts that further Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy goals. Such assistance includes but is not limited to: planning studies, project deliveries, grant applications, environmental documents, engineering services (i.e., conceptual design or preliminary engineering), permitting needs assessment, and quality (QA/QC) reviews as needed.

Rincon Consultants Inc. has completed projects nearly all jurisdictions. Projects include zoning code reviews and revisions, assistance with the adoption of CEQA VMT thresholds and EV charging ordinances, updates to general plans, vesting of maps, and preparation of documents for board hearings.

Fresno COG member agencies may use these services, typically funded annually at about \$100,000, especially the rural cities with less resources for compliance with State and Federal mandates. Fresno COG encourages the member agencies to solicit support for planning and engineering projects.

Action: Information. The Committee may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) reported on the Circuit Planner and Engineer Program.

This item is Informational. No action needed.

C. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Update (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Following on Fresno COG’s Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), approved in February, staff – with assistance from circuit planner consultant Rincon – are working quickly to develop a Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) that will meet Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements on a tight timeline (April 1) while capturing as many eligible projects as possible.

Acting as the lead applicant for transportation measures under the PCAP for the region, Fresno COG has solicited projects from member agencies and others in an attempt to build a broad coalition of partners with greenhouse gas-reducing projects that are effectively shovel-ready and able to be constructed within a three- to five-year timeframe.

This approach has led COG back to its list of unfunded ATP and CMAQ projects from the most recent 2023 cycle that could meet eligibility requirements. Staff is also awaiting word from the City of Fresno on a potential hydrogen fuel generation project that is still being scoped, which may be added to the list of projects for submission.

Through a series of stakeholder steering committee meetings held during the PCAP development, and with representation from all 16 jurisdictions, Fresno COG staff have moved very fast to build an inventory of projects across multiple economic sectors, develop consensus on a strategy and approach for project development and to find a list eligible projects.

The list includes ATP projects from the cities of Fowler and Fresno, as well as CMAQ projects from Clovis, the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency, Firebaugh, Fresno, Mendota and Parlier.

Action: Information. The Committee may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) gave an update on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant.

This item is Informational. No action needed.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

- None.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- None.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

- None.

B. Items from Members

- Nicole Zieba (Reedley) – encourage all to attend quarterly emergency fire meetings. Next meeting is April 26th.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

A. Public Presentations

- None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Phipps', written in a cursive style.

Robert Phipps, Interim Executive Director

Public:

Eric Olson

Jamie Kratz

Staff:

Denise Flores, Robert Phipps, Jeff Long, Kai Han, Paul Herman, Matthew Shimizu.