

Policy Advisory Committee
MINUTES
Friday, January 12, 2024
10:00 AM

The meeting was held at FCOG Sequoia Conference Room.

John Holt, City of Clovis
Ben Gallegos, City of Firebaugh
Wilma Tucker, City of Fowler
Michael Rogers, City of Fresno
John Jansons, City of Kerman
Alexander Henderson, City of Kingsburg
Nicole Zieba, City of Reedley
Elizabeth Cabrera, City of San Joaquin
Fernando Santillan, City of Selma
Christopher Xiong, Caltrans District 6
Robert Phipps, FCOG
Moses Stites, FCRTA

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Mrs. Tucker (Fowler), Co-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:

- Reminder of grant applications out.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

A. Executive Minutes of November 3, 2023 [APPROVE]

B. TDA Claims (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

1. City of Huron FY 2023-24 TDA Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
2. City of Fresno FY 2023-24 TDA Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
3. City of San Joaquin 2022-23 TDA Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

C. 2024 Safety Performance Targets - PM1 (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]

D. Fresno County Regional Transit On-Board Survey Consultant Selection (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]

E. State and Federal Transportation Grants -- Notices of Funding Opportunities (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

F. Fresno County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Jeff Long) [ACTION]

G. Caltrans FY 2024-25 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program Applications (Paul Herman) [INFORMATION]

H. Technical Support Contract for the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Paul Herman) [ACTION]

I. Measure C TOD 12th Funding Cycle Call for Projects (Simran Jhutti) [INFORMATION]

J. Fresno COG's 2023-24 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 3 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

K. Archive Central California Household Survey data at Transportation Secure Data Center (Shichen Fan) [INFORMATION]

L. Regional Early Action Planning Grants (REAP 2.0) Juan Ramirez [INFORMATION]

- Mrs. Tucker called for any items wishing to be pulled by members or the public.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Holt (Clovis) motioned, and Mrs. Zieba (Reedley) seconded to approve the consent agenda items A-L as presented.

**All in Favor, no opposed.
Motion passed.**

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. **2023-24 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Regional Bid Project Funding Recommendations (Ofelia Abundez)** **[ACTION]**

Summary: On June 29, 2023, Fresno COG's Policy Board issued a formal call-for-projects for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) regional bid program, with \$33.4 million in available funding for this cycle. Staff received 41 applications by the Oct. 6, 2023 deadline, requesting over \$61 million in funding.

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) scoring committee convened on Dec. 5, 2023, to deliberate on the recommended program of projects. The scoring committee comprised representatives from: urban city (Clovis), county, east side, west side, Caltrans, Fresno COG, and transit. The scoring committee project recommendations are included as an enclosure along with the contingency list, regional bid results by agency, and the total funding distribution results.

Action: Staff requests that TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the scoring committee's project recommendations for the 2023-24 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program. The Committee may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Ofelia Abundez (FCOG) provided an update of the STBG Grant Program.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mrs. Cabrera (San Joaquin) motioned, and Mr. Holt (Clovis) seconded to approve the action as presented.

**All in Favor, no opposed.
Motion passed.**

B. **Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Funding Recommendations (Juan Ramirez)** **[ACTION]**

Summary: On Dec. 6, 2023, a regional scoring committee comprising eight representatives from various agencies -- including an urban representative (Clovis), east side, west side, transit and others -- prioritized Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program project applications received in September. From the call for projects, Fresno COG received 36 applications from member jurisdictions totaling \$56,027,809 in requests against \$30,014,382 in available funding. Of the 36 applications, 20 projects were recommended for funding (attached).

Action: Staff requests that TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the scoring committee's project recommendations for the 2023-24 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. The Committee may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Juan Ramirez (FCOG) provided background information and updates on the CMAQ funding recommendations.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Henderson (Kingsburg) motioned, and Mr. Santillan (Selma) seconded to approve the action as presented.

**All in Favor, no opposed.
Motion passed.**

C. **Carbon Reduction Program Funding Recommendations (Juan Ramirez)** **[ACTION]**

Summary: On Dec. 7, 2023, representatives from various agencies evaluated and scored projects for funding for the newly established Carbon Reduction Program under the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs (IIJA) Act. The committee received 10 applications for a total request of \$4,414,296. Out of the 10 applications, eight received funding under the first two years of the program totaling \$3,268,211. Two of the projects were funded through the CMAQ scoring committee and were not considered for funding under CRP.

Action: Staff requests that TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the scoring committee's project recommendations for the 2023-24 Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The Committee may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Juan Ramirez (FCOG) gave an update of the carbon reduction program.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Henderson (Kingsburg) motioned, and Mrs. Cabrera (San Joaquin) seconded to approve the action as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

D. Caltrans 2023 Construction Contract Standards (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: On Sept. 5, 2023, Caltrans issued its latest implementation memo to local agencies regarding construction contract standards for off-highway projects. The now-annual update includes standard specifications, plans and bid items that local agencies must use to receive approvals, allocations, obligations and/or authorizations for the construction phase after Oct. 31, 2023.

Previously, Caltrans issued new contract standards approximately every three years with an allowance for local agencies to adopt when appropriate. Now, standards are changing annually and deadlines for adoption are imposed. On Dec. 8, the cities of Fresno and Clovis, along with the County of Fresno, issued a joint letter opposing the requirements as an infeasible mandate and will impact dozens of critically needed infrastructure improvements. The letter argues that the standards and implementation deadline run counter to Caltrans' Division of Local Assistance mission to provide a helping hand to local agencies in completing their projects.

Fresno COG received two requests from the City and County of Fresno to issue a similar letter on behalf of all local jurisdictions in the region. As this is most likely a multi-jurisdictional concern, Fresno COG has drafted a letter for the Policy Board chair's signature.

Action: Staff requests that TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the Chairwoman to sign a letter to Caltrans' Division of Local Assistance opposing the 2023 Construction Contract Standards for local public agencies.

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) provided background information on the construction contract.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Rogers (Fresno City) motioned, and Mr. Jansons (Kerman) seconded to approve the action as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

E. Safe Routes to Schools Subcommittee (Jennifer Rodriguez) [ACTION]

Summary: In August 2023, Fresno COG staff began working with urban and rural school districts to initiate a regional planning process to identify an inventory of Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) needs in Fresno County.

The intent is for the school districts' SRTS planning processes to work in conjunction with Fresno COG member agencies' Active Transportation Plan (ATP) planning processes by developing a SRTS inventory that will be included in Fresno COG's Regional ATP Plan update and the next Measure C renewal effort.

Fresno COG staff began reaching out to school districts in August 2023 for an initial meeting to discuss the SRTS/ATP planning process. Outreach includes emails, letters, and phone calls.

Since the start of outreach in August, Fresno COG has met with 26 of 32 school districts in the county. Of the 26 districts, 16 have submitted an inventory of needs to Fresno COG. The table below illustrates with which school districts FCOG staff has met, those that have submitted inventory, and in which member jurisdiction the district is located. In addition, Fresno COG has been meeting with member agencies whose school districts have submitted inventory.

The timing is right for a Fresno COG SRTS Subcommittee comprising, initially, Policy Board members who will facilitate an SRTS inventory by working closely with school districts' staff. This subcommittee is expected to grow to include school district staff and other interested stakeholders who will help establish a thoroughly vetted project list for the Regional ATP Plan update.

This project and the SRTS Subcommittee come in response to the Measure C renewal process. Voters who were opposed to the measure felt that Measure C has not adequately supported safe routes to schools within the region. Staff's goal is that this cross-jurisdictional (transportation-education) regional planning process and subcommittee will advance safe routes to schools through a project inventory and collaborative discussions of SRTS.

School District	Met W/	Survey Submitted/ Inventory Collected	Local Jurisdiction/SOI
Alvina Elementary	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Big Creek Elementary*			County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Burrel Union Elementary	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Caruthers Unified*			County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Central Unified	X		Fresno
Clay Joint Elementary	X		County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Clovis Unified	X		Clovis
Coalinga-Huron Unified	X	X	Coalinga, Huron
Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified	X	X	Firebaugh
Fowler Unified	X	X	Fowler
Fresno Unified	X		Fresno
Golden Plains Unified	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Kerman Unified	X	X	Kerman
Kings Canyon Joint Unified	X	X	Reedley, Orange Cove
Kingsburg Elementary Charter	X		Kingsburg
Kingsburg Joint Union High	X		Kingsburg
Laton Joint Unified	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Mendota Unified	X	X	Mendota
Monroe Elementary*			County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Orange Center School	X		Fresno
Pacific Union Elementary*			County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Parlier Unified	X	X	Parlier
Pine Ridge Elementary	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Raisin City Elementary*			County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Riverdale Joint Unified	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Sanger Unified*			Sanger
Selma Unified	X		Selma
Sierra Unified	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Washington Colony Elementary	X	X	County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Washington Unified	X	X	Fresno
West Park School District	X		County of Fresno (Unincorporated)
Westside Elementary	X		County of Fresno (Unincorporated)

*Have not met with Fresno COG staff

Action: Staff requests that TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board appoint a Fresno COG Safe Routes to Schools Subcommittee initially comprising Policy Board members.

- Jennifer Rodriguez (FCOG) gave a summary of the Safe Routes to Schools Subcommittee.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Gallegos (Firebaugh) motioned, and Mr. Santillan (Selma) seconded to approve the action as presented.

**All in Favor, no opposed.
Motion passed.**

F. Measure C Regional Transportation Program Update Fiscal Year 2023/24 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

Summary: The Measure C Regional Transportation Program includes major highway infrastructure projects approved by the voters when Measure C was extended in 2007. Total anticipated revenues across all sources increased \$271,099,000 to \$1,505,394,000 from the 2020 adopted plan. Actual project cost and internal borrowing cost increased \$151,129,000 to \$1,663,349,000.

Revenues

Sales Tax expectations for 2023 were adjusted upward 10.2% to reflect the above trend effects of the current inflation, raising sales tax projections \$57,020,000 to \$614,816,000.

The regional component of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds dedicated to the South Fresno Interchanges of North/Cedar and American Ave. increased \$54,353,000.

The state component of the STIP, the Interregional Improvement (IITIP) increased \$31,000,000 for SR 41 – Excelsior to Kings County.

The Local Partnership Program (LPP) increased \$7,272,000 for the Golden State Corridor Project.

The High-Speed Rail Authority completed the \$61,373,000 Herndon @ UPRR in Fresno.

The state SHOPP program contributed \$14,000,000 to SR 41 – Excelsior to Kings County.

Local contributions increased \$26,661,000 on the Herndon undercrossing @ SR 99.

Interest earnings increased \$9,250,000.

T

he Urban Program

The Urban program has an estimated \$876,403,000 in revenues, \$845,113,000 in expenses and a net surplus of \$31,250,000 to provide a contingency for \$222,883,000 in projects that are expected to be bid in the next four years.

Net project cost increased \$47,165,000, primarily for the North Cedar Interchange (\$25,400,000), California – Fruit to Ventura (\$13,727,000), Peach Ave. – Church to Jensen (\$4,216,000) and Peach – SR 180 to McKinley (\$5,777,000).

The North Cedar Interchange is presently programmed for \$45,345,000 in STIP funding. Caltrans proposes to begin Right of Way subsequent to signing the freeway agreement scheduled for adoption in December and the project is proposed for construction in 2025-26.

The California – Fruit to Ventura project (\$25,011,000) is proposed for construction in 2024/25. The Peach projects (\$9,993,000) are scheduled in 2024-25 and 2025-26.

The Rural Program

The Rural program has an estimated \$628,991,000 in revenues, \$818,236,000 in expenses and a net deficit of \$189,245,000 associated with the SR180 - I5 Connection.

Net project cost increased \$103,944,000, primarily on Golden State (\$16,696,000), SR 99 American Interchange (14,000,000) and for the addition of SR41, Excelsior to Kings County (\$70,800,000).

The first phase of Golden State is under construction. Discussion continues on the best way to deliver phase II in light of significant cost increase proposed by the Union Pacific Railroad.

The American Avenue phase of South Fresno Interchange was approved for \$42,353,000 in 2024 STIP funding and is proposed for construction in 2024/25 in sync with the North/Cedar Interchange.

Caltrans is completing preliminary studies to explore improvements along the SR 180 West connection to I5 with the intent of developing a financeable improvement during the life of the current measure that could extend into a proposed third measure.

Recommendation: Adopt Resolution 2024-05 Updating the Measure C Regional Transportation Plan. The updated plan will be forwarded to the Transportation Authority for consideration.

- Les Beshears (FCOG) gave a summary of Measure C Regional Transportation Program.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mrs. Tucker (Fowler) motioned, and Mrs. Cabrera (San Joaquin) seconded to approve the action as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. Regional Clearinghouse Calendar (Ofelia Abundez) [INFORMATION]

Summary: The Regional Clearinghouse is a process of informing local agencies of federal grant requests, providing an opportunity to comment, and potentially avoid duplication of effort. Clearinghouse items are brought before the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and, if appropriate, the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) for review and comment. Any resulting TTC/PAC comments, and any comments received from other agencies as a result of the Clearinghouse notification process, are noted on a monthly report brought forward to the Fresno COG Policy Board.

COG Policy Board action would be to authorize staff to forward any comments received or any Board comments to the State Clearinghouse and other appropriate agencies. The applicants have been notified of this meeting. While participation by the agency is optional, they have been personally requested to attend the Policy Board meeting in case there should be any questions. It should be noted that if in the event any of these items should be pulled from the consent calendar, that discussion and comment by the Committee/Board members and the public will be taken. Project notification and review reports describing these projects are attached.

Action: Per Board procedure, unless an item is pulled from the Consent Calendar, tacit authorization is given for staff to forward any comment(s) received, or any Committee/Board comment(s) generated as a result of this informational item, to the appropriate agency. It is understood that if in the event this item should be pulled from the consent calendar, discussion and comment by the Committee members and the public will be taken.

B. 2024 Fresno COG Meeting Calendar (Denise Flores) [ACTION]

Summary: The following are changes to the 2024 Fresno COG meeting calendar:

- Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) as well as the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), needs to be changed from February 9, 2024 to February 16, 2024.
- Airport Land Use Committee (ALUC) needs to change from April 1, 2024 to April 8, 2024.

Action: Staff request the PAC recommend the Policy Board adopt the 2024 Fresno COG Meeting calendar with these changes.

C. Contract with Sebastian for Sequoia Room Audio-Visual Equipment Upgrade (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: During the COVID pandemic in 2020, Fresno COG staff contracted with Sebastian to install a new camera and digital sound control improvements to outfit the Sequoia Board room for Zoom meetings and webinars.

As a cost-saving measure, the upgrade was limited to only those components necessary for the existing audio-visual system to interact in a Zoom environment. The Sequoia room employs 31 microphones, one camera, one personal computer, three television displays, an audio recorder and one VoIP telephone line for audio and video conferencing. There are additionally four ceiling microphones with LED indicators for recording all participants and noise in the room.

The original items that remain connected to the system are older analog mixers that are starting to produce unpredictable results and scratching noises and an amplifier for the room that is still in good condition. The need to maintain these devices results in numerous service calls to try to resolve or just minimize these issues. For example, audio may be too loud inside the room but too quiet for Zoom participants to hear the proceedings. From the visual standpoint, the room's only camera is generally in a fixed, wide-angle position, which doesn't allow Zoom participants to immediately see who is speaking.

The proposed AV system upgrade will provide several significant enhancements to the existing conference room. Though peripherals were replaced, which added functionality to the room, the core components have not been updated. This is reflected in the audio being produced and creates some end user workarounds. Sebastian has carefully selected the components added to the system with the expectation that they would eventually work more efficiently with an updated core and reduce confusion for users. By replacing some of the older analog core devices in the system we can refresh the room experience and simplify the user interface.

Consequently, staff recommends entering into a sole-source contract with Sebastian to complete the transition to a fully digital AV system, including a specialized Dell digital server from QSC built to process each microphone individually to provide the best sound for conferencing and control the room's peripherals.

Action: Staff requests that the TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve a sole-source contract with Sebastian not to exceed \$54,384.12 and authorize the executive director to sign.

D. COG Office Server License Renewal with AMS.NET (Kai Han) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG operates several computer servers to provide network connections, secure firewalls, anti-virus, email filtering, and file backup services. It is important to maintain these services to keep up with ever-escalating internet hacking threats. The current server licenses expired at the end of 2023. To keep an uninterrupted operation, Fresno COG and AMS.NET negotiated a new three-year renewal of the licenses that will cover the period of 2024-2026.

Detailed renewal items and the costs are listed below:

Server License	Renewal Cost
Meraki	\$17,321.04
Cisco SMARTnet	\$2,983.84
Barracuda Backup	\$24,823.80
Cisco AMP	\$3,229.20
Cisco Umbrella	\$2,657.88
Total	\$51,015.76

Action: Staff requests that PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the renewal with AMS totaling \$51,015.76 and authorize the executive director to sign.

- Mrs. Tucker 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-D as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. One Voice Washington, D.C. Priorities (Brenda Thomas) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG staff is recommending the following list of 11 regional priorities for the 2024 One Voice D.C. Advocacy Trip, scheduled for March 17-21. A Regional Priorities Summary spreadsheet and submittal forms for each of the topics is attached to the agenda for review.

The recommended priorities include the following:

- SR 168 Enterprise Canal Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge
- Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FAT) New Air Traffic Control Tower Facility Project
- Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FAT) Runway Reconstruction Project
- Shaw Avenue/State Route 99 Freeway Interchange Improvement Project
- Millerton Road Widening and Safety Improvements
- Business Friendly Administrative Relief at the United States Department of Labor
- High Speed Rail for Fresno County - Funding for the Finish!
- RAISE Grant Application – South Fresno SR-99 Corridor Project

- House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Bill
- City of Clovis Kings River Raw Water Pipeline
- City of Parlier Rails to Trails

Action: Staff requests that the PAC recommend the Policy Board approve Fresno COG's 2024 One Voice regional priorities.

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) provided information on the One Voice priorities.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mr. Holt (Clovis) motioned, and Mr. Santillan (Selma) seconded to approve the action as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

B. Officer Elections (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: Time conflicts and personnel changes have necessitated new officer elections for both the Chair and Vice-Chair positions prior to the normal June 2024 agenda item.

Action: Elect a new Policy Advisory Committee Chair and Vice-Chair.

- Mrs. Tucker called for nominations for Chair.
- John Jansons (Kerman) was nominated for Chair.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mrs. Zieba (Reedley) motioned, and Mrs. Tucker (Fowler) seconded to approve the action as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

- Mrs. Tucker called for nominations for Vice Chair.
- Elizabeth Cabrera (San Joaquin) was nominated for Vice Chair.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mrs. Zieba (Reedley) motioned, and Mrs. Tucker (Fowler) seconded to approve the action as presented.

All in Favor, no opposed.

Motion passed.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) thanked Caltrans for letters of support.
- Paul Herman (FCOG) reminded everyone that January 18th is the deadline for letters of support.

B. Items from Members

- None.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

A. Public Presentations

- None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Phipps, Interim Executive Director

Public:

None.

Staff:

Denise Flores, Robert Phipps, Simran Jhutti, Juan Ramirez, Ofelia Abundez, Shichen Fan, Pankaj Joshi, Les Beshears, Jennifer Rodriguez, Brenda Thomas, Jeff Long, Kai Han.