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**Fresno COG Policy Board
MINUTES
Thursday, September 26, 2024
5:30 PM**

The meeting was held at the Fresno COG Sequoia Room

Members Attending:

Mayor Lynne Ashbeck, City of Clovis
Mayor James Horn, City of Coalinga
Mayor Pro Tem Freddy Valdez, City of Firebaugh
Councilmember Amarjeet Gill, City of Fowler
Councilmember Mike Karbassi, City of Fresno
Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron
Mayor Maria Pacheco, City of Kerman
Mayor Brandon Pursell, City of Kingsburg
Mayor Victor Martinez, City of Mendota
Mayor Gilbert Garcia, City of Orange Cove
Mayor Alma Beltran, City of Parlier
Councilmember Mary Fast, City of Reedley
Mayor Frank Gonzalez, City of Sanger
Mayor Julia Hernandez, City of San Joaquin
Mayor Scott Robertson, City of Selma
Michael Navarro, Caltrans
Robert Phipps, Interim Executive Director
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel

Absent:

Supervisor Sal Quintero, County of Fresno

Quorum: At the start of the meeting, there were 15 members representing 84.17% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business.

The meeting was called to order at 5:50 p.m. by Mayor Beltran (Parlier), Chair.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of July 25, 2024 [APPROVE]**
- B. City of Sanger TDA Claims FY 2023-24 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- C. City of Sanger TDA Claims FY 2024-25 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- D. City of Mendota TDA Claims FY 2024-25 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- E. City of Huron TDA Claims FY 2024-25 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- F. 2024-25 Measure "C" Claims (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**

- G. Access for All Allocation of Funds for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 (Jake Martinez) [ACTION]
- H. TDA Triennial Performance Audit Consultant Selection (Matthew Shimizu) [APPROVE]
- I. 2024-25 Overall Work Program and Budget Amendment No. 1 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- J. Golden State Boulevard Cooperative Agreement and Engineering Contract (Pankaj Joshi) [ACTION]

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to pull any items.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Mayor Ashbeck (Clovis) seconded to approve consent items A-J.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2026 Regional Transportation Plan Project Evaluation Criteria Approval (Ofelia Abundez) [ACTION]

Summary: The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Programming Technical Working Group developed an RTP Project Evaluation Criteria Focus Group to discuss in-depth revisions and updates to the 2026 RTP Project Evaluation Criteria.

The 2026 project evaluation criteria will be used to score the priority of projects submitted during the call for projects process that will begin on Oct. 1 for forecasted funding available through the RTP's sunset year (2049). The RTP Programming Technical Working group met on three separate occasions, July 23, Aug. 1 and Aug. 13.

The RTP Programming Technical Working Group comprised staff from the cities of Fresno, Clovis, Fresno County, a rural west side community, a rural east side community, a transit staff member, Caltrans, and representatives from various non-governmental organizations with interests in bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, air quality, health, and transportation equity. The group collaborated on the revisions and agree with the totality of the revised document.

Highlights of the revisions include:

- Revisions to the project topic score weight
- Updated the bike/pedestrian connectivity question
- Removed climate adaptation question 9 from the road capacity-increasing category
- Rephrased several questions in several categories
- Remaining revisions were mostly grammatical in nature; word choice, sentence structure, clarifications, etc.

This criteria will be used solely to determine a project's ranking in the RTP in terms of projected funding; not actual funding available during a program call-for-projects. The criteria will be used to create the RTP's constrained and unconstrained list of projects. Once the project scoring criteria is approved by Fresno COG's Policy Board, the call-for-projects will begin on Oct. 1 and end on Nov. 16. The final decision will be Dec. 1.

The Financial Element Technical Group recommended approval of the 2026 RTP project evaluation criteria from the RTP Roundtable.

Action: Staff, the RTP Programming Technical Working Group, the RTP Roundtable and the TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the final draft of the 2026 RTP Project Evaluation Criteria.

- Ofelia Abundez (FCOG) presented on the RTP Project Criteria.

- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Councilmember Fast (Reedley) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

B. Project Funding for Measure C New Technology Reserve Program 2026 (Simran Jhutti) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG released the Measure C 2024 application for New Technology funding on May 10. The program includes \$7.2 million available for the fiscal year 24/25 award cycle. Fresno COG releases an application for New Technology projects/proposals on a biennial basis.

The New Technology Reserve Subprogram sets aside Measure C funding to finance new transit technologies that may be developed in the future. To further its Measure C New Technology Program goals, Fresno COG is focusing on technological advances in public systems, safety features, fuel efficiencies and alternatives, intelligent transportation system (ITS) applications, and information dissemination — ultimately, areas that help to promote passenger safety and satisfaction, attract customers, improve capital and operating efficiencies, reduce environmental pollution, and ease dependence on fossil fuels.

This cycle, staff received three applications requesting approximately \$4.6 million against an available \$7.2 million. The scoring committee comprised representatives from each: the County of Fresno, City of Fresno, City of Clovis, east-side city, Measure C Citizen Oversight Committee, transit staff, Fresno COG, Fresno County Transportation Authority, as well as two members of the public.

On Aug. 20, the scoring committee met to interview the applicants and discuss the applications. The scoring committee unanimously recommended all for funding:

Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) Kingsburg Resiliency Hub Phase 2: FCRTA plans to construct a resiliency hub in the City of Kingsburg consisting of a solar carport, 16 solar-powered/battery-backed level II charging stations, and energy storage. The resiliency hub will help FCRTA transition to a zero-emission vehicle fleet and provide EV charging to the public.

- New Tech Requested Funds: \$986,936
- New Tech Recommended Funds: \$986,936

City of Fresno Advanced Technology Pilot Project Friant Road: The pilot research & development project will system engineer next generation connected vehicles to traffic signals safety technologies (Vehicle To Everything “V2X” Detection Systems, speed detection and bicycle detection systems) along the Friant Road Corridor between Audubon and Copper River drives (seven signals). The R&D project will be deployed along the City of Fresno’s most congested multimodal corridor, which interconnects the traveling public to commercial, residential, entertainment, parks and trails. The ITS program will publish City ITS Standards that are used by all Central Valley agencies.

- New Tech Requested Funds: \$3,000,000
- New Tech Recommended Funds: \$3,000,000

City of Reedley Manning Avenue Adaptive Signal Control Technology: The proposed project will install an adaptive signal control technology (ASCT) system via wireless technology that will optimize traffic flow in the City of Reedley along Manning Avenue between I Street and Buttonwillow Avenue. The ASCT will use wireless vehicle detection technology that will allow for real-time monitoring and continuous synchronization. These improvements will produce a reduction in travel time and greenhouse gas emissions.

- New Tech Requested Funds: \$685,000
- New Tech Recommended Funds: \$685,000

Total Recommended for Funding: \$4,671,936

Total New Tech Funding Available (2024): \$7,200,000

Total New Tech Funding to roll over to next cycle (2026): \$2,528,064

For more information, please click here.

Action: Staff, the New Technology Scoring Committee and TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the New Technology applications totaling \$4,671,936 for funding and forward to the Fresno County Transportation Authority for consideration.

- Simran Jhutti (FCOG) reported on project funding for Measure C New Technology Program.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Ashbeck (Clovis) moved, and Mayor Pacheco (Kerman) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

C. Regional Active Transportation Program Cycle 7 Funding Augmentation (Simran Jhutti) [ACTION]

Summary: Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds are separated into three main components: the statewide competitive program, the small urban- and rural-area competitive program (managed by the State), and the large, urbanized area competitive program [managed by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs)] – also known as the Regional Competitive ATP.

The program encourages active transportation modes, such as biking and walking. Large MPOs such as Fresno COG have the option of developing their own policies, procedures and project selection criteria that differ from those the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted, provided the CTC approves them. The Fresno COG Policy Board approved the regional ATP guidelines on April 25, which were then approved by the California Transportation Commission at its June 2024 meeting.

Unfortunately, due to the State budget deficit, ATP funding has been substantially reduced. Fresno COG was originally proposed to receive \$6.3 million, which has been amended to \$1.87 million.

The State initiated its seventh-cycle ATP call for projects from March 22 through June 17, 2024. Meanwhile, Fresno COG is now accepting applications for the regional program from June 27 to Nov. 20. ATP cycle 7 will cover four years of funding – FY 2024-25 through FY 2028-29.

Because Fresno COG's share provides only \$1.8 million, and to raise the available balance to the original amount anticipated, staff has identified the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program as a viable resource to contribute \$4,449,000 to augment the budget deficit.

Both CMAQ and ATP have coinciding principles for projects. The agency will still have roughly \$24 million available for the CMAQ call for projects in January. Projects will be funded solely to one funding source to ease reporting. The guidelines, which were previously approved in April of this year, are attached with revisions to accommodate this augmentation.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	4-year Total
ATP Proposed	\$1,112	\$1,137	\$2,026	\$2,051	\$6,326
ATP Amended	\$235	\$235	\$469	\$938	\$1,877
CMAQ	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$4,449

*(\$ in thousands)

Action: Staff and TTC/PAC recommend that the Policy Board approve augmenting the Regional Active Transportation Program with Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program funds totaling \$4,449,000 over the next four years.

- Simran Jhutti (FCOG) reported on ATP Cycle 7 Funding Augmentation.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Mayor Pacheco (Kerman) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

D. RTP Community Survey Results (Brenda Thomas) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) contracted with Rea & Parker, a qualified consultant with substantial experience in designing and conducting opinion surveys, to conduct research within the Fresno County region.

They were directed to enlist survey participants reflective of the county’s demographics, including non-English speaking populations, from urban and rural areas of the region. They asked participants to rank defined values and transportation funding priorities and develop the findings report.

The survey data collected informs Fresno COG’s Regional Transportation Plan by identifying and ranking Fresno County residents’ transportation spending priorities and their community values. Rea & Parker associates will present the survey findings at the meeting.

Action: Information and discussion. The Policy Board may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) introduced Lou Rea and Richard Parker to give a presentation.

Information item, no action needed.

E. Fall 2024 Regional Transportation Plan Community Outreach Overview (Brenda Thomas) [INFORMATION]

Summary: This outreach effort launched September 16 to gather transportation project suggestions from our region’s residents via hard copy or online survey through October 31. The effort will assist member agencies with community outreach prior to responding to the RTP call-for-projects Dec. 1 deadline, and to provide an opportunity for community members to participate early in the RTP planning process.

For this community engagement effort, Fresno COG, our outreach consultant and four mini-grant recipients are using the following outreach strategies at minimum.:

Online community survey available in English, Spanish, Punjabi and Hmong
E-newsletters and emails

Social media posts and ad purchases in English and Spanish, Punjabi and Hmong as needed
Flyers and fact sheets that include QR code links to the surveys in all languages

Dedicated voicemail phone line and email address to receive comments
Requests to members agencies, transit agencies, the RTP Roundtable membership and other government and community agencies to share social posts, emails, flyers with their contacts
Booths at community events across the county – 31 booked/held
Presentations to groups or organizations as requested – 5 scheduled
Virtual meetings to present the RTP Update and the survey opportunity
A detailed listing of how to participate is included on the attached English/Spanish flyer and on Fresno COG’s PlanFresno website.

COG will forward all project suggestions to corresponding local agencies for review and consideration prior to their RTP project submittal’s due date. The list of projects and location mapping will be available to the public on Fresno COG’s PlanFresno.com website on or before Nov. 15.

Action: Information and discussion. The Policy Board may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) presented on the RTP Community Outreach efforts.

Information item, no action needed.

F. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

- Michael Navarro (Caltrans) reported the following:
 - Working on Mendota Firebaugh project and three projects in Fresno.
 - Reached out for transit shelters.
 - 99 Corridor website coming next month.
 - Public engagement this month.
 - SR 180 roundabout (6-month construction).
 - SR 41 Excelsior Express Way design wrapped up next month.
 - Coalinga route diet design by Spring 2025.
 - 41 Ashlan/Shaw wrapped up at end of the year.

This item is informational. No action is required.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

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

Summary: Your agenda package includes this month’s Clearinghouse Calendar containing “Project Notification and Review Reports” for grant proposal.

1. USDA Rural Development

Project Subject to Review:

PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW REPORT

Regional Clearinghouse Number:	RCH #08-2024-287
Project Title:	USDA Rural Development
Applicant Agency:	A & M Consulting Engineers
Contact Person:	Javier Andrade
Address:	1100 E. Parlier Ave. Parlier, CA 93648
Phone:	559-429-4747
Federal Catalog#:	10.766
Status:	New

Area of Impact
Federal Funding Agency:

City of Parlier
USDA Rural Development

Applicant	Federal Funds	State	Total Funds
City of Parlier	\$875,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	\$3,375,000.00

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 authorizes staff to forward any comments received 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. 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.

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to discuss the items.

Information item, no action needed.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Closed Session for PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT, Title: Executive Director (Pursuant to Gov. Code, § 54957)

Summary: The Policy Board's Executive Director Recruitment Subcommittee will discuss the applicants for the executive director position. The Subcommittee will make a recommendation to the full Board, which will be considered in closed session.

Action: The full Board may either approve the Subcommittee's recommendation or provide alternative direction to the Subcommittee and Fresno COG's recruiting consultant.

- Mayor Beltran, Chair, resumed to regular session.
- No Action to report.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff
None.

B. Items from Members

- Mayor Beltran, Chair – suggested the October 31st board meeting be rescheduled to October 24th. All board members are in agreement.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

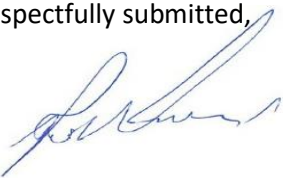
A. Public Presentations

- Michael Seley, City of Fresno D7 – Policy Director for Fresno City Councilmember Nelson Esparza, introduced himself to the board.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Phipps

Public:

Michael Seley

Staff:

Denise Flores; Robert Phipps; Moses Stites; Janelle Del Campo; Brenda Thomas; Jake Martinez; Les Beshears; Ofelia Abundez, Matthew Shimizu, Paul Herman, Pankaj Joshi, Simran Jhutti.