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**Fresno COG Policy Board
MINUTES
Thursday, January 30, 2025
5:30 PM**

The meeting was held at the Fresno COG Sequoia Room

Members Attending:

Mayor Vong Mouanoutoua, City of Clovis
Mayor Nathan Vosburg, City of Coalinga
Mayor Freddy Valdez, City of Firebaugh
Councilmember Annalisa Perea, City of Fresno
Mayor Maria Pacheco, City of Kerman
Mayor Brandon Pursell, City of Kingsburg
Mayor Victor Martinez, City of Mendota
Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert Garcia, City of Orange Cove
Mayor Alma Beltran, City of Parlier
Mayor Matthew Tuttle, City of Reedley
Mayor Frank Gonzalez, City of Sanger
Mayor Adam F. Cornejo, City of San Joaquin
Mayor Scott Robertson, City of Selma
Supervisor Brian Pacheco, County of Fresno
Michael Navarro, Caltrans
Robert Phipps, Executive Director
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel

Absent:

Mayor Juan Mejia, City of Fowler
Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron

Quorum: At the start of the meeting, there were 14 members representing 98.70% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business. (Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fresno City, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, Sanger, San Joaquin, Selma, Fresno County). Members Fowler, Huron absent.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Mayor Beltran (Parlier), Chair.

I. APPOINTMENTS

A. San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Commission/Joint Powers Authority (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, which operates the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) service between San Joaquin County and San Jose, is also the managing entity of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (JPA), which administers the Amtrak San Joaquin intercity passenger rail service.

Amtrak San Joaquins travels over 365 miles of track and stops at 18 stations. The train system today serves over one million riders annually on its route from Bakersfield to Oakland and Sacramento. Fresno COG holds one seat on the SJVJPA Board.

Action: Appoint one representative to fill the seat on the San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Commission/Joint Powers Authority formerly held by Fresno County Supervisor San Quintero.

- Chair Beltran asked for nominations.
- Mayor Martinez nominated Mayor Freddy Valdez.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

B. California Association of Councils of Governments (CalCOG) (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: The California Association of Councils of Governments (CalCOG) is a nonprofit, professional and social welfare organization formed to serve regional governments. As a member in good standing, Fresno COG is assigned one Board representative and one alternate.

CalCOG's membership totals 47 member agencies. In recognition of the interrelationship between regional and local governments, both the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities may also appoint a representative to the CALCOG Board of Directors.

The interests and character of individual members may vary considerably. Member organizations range in size from the Lake County/City Area Planning Council (population 64,000) to the Southern California Association of Governments (population 18 million). Most of these organizations are involved in planning and funding transportation infrastructure; many actually deliver specific projects, and a few also operate transit systems.

Some members (including Fresno COG) benefit from self-help or county-based sales tax revenue (when a county has passed a sales tax measure to support transportation), and 18 of the 47 members are federally designated metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) responsible for developing regional transportation plans under federal law and sustainable communities strategies under state law.

CalCOG provides a statewide forum to share technical and policy information among members. CalCOG staff also educate others about the role that regional governments play and encourage discussions about how our members can partner to find new solutions for the problems for tomorrow.

Action: Appoint one alternate member.

- Chair Beltran asked for nominations.
- Mayor Martinez nominated Mayor Scott Robertson.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

C. Fresno State Transportation Institute (FSTI) (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: The Fresno State Transportation Institute is a collaboration among the 15 cities within Fresno County, Fresno State's Lyles College of Engineering, Sid Craig School of Business and College of Social Sciences and Fresno Council of Governments. The Institute began in 2017 upon the approval of \$3 million of Measure C New Technology Reserve funds from the the Fresno County Transportation Authority and Fresno Council of Governments.

The Institute addresses four measures consistent with Fresno COG's Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy, including education, research, technical service and public outreach.

Action: Appoint one representative to replace City of Firebaugh Councilmember Felipe Perez.

- Chair Beltran asked for nominations.
- Mayor Cornejo nominated Mayor Maria Pacheco.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

II. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of November 21, 2024 [APPROVE]
- B. 2024-25 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 2 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
- C. 2025 Safety Performance Targets - PM1 (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]
- D. Annual List of Obligated Projects for FFY 2024 (Ofelia Abundez) [Information]
- E. Measure C TOD 13th Funding Cycle Call for Projects (Simran Jhutti) [Information]
- F. Federal and State Grant Opportunities (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to pull any items.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) pulled item D and requested that the name on the Fresno Cog Policy Board list be corrected to Mayor Victor Martinez for the City of Mendota.
- Mayor Victor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Mayor Valdez (Firebaugh) seconded to approve consent items A-F.

Item B-F Vote: 14 in favor

Item A Vote: 13 in favor, 1 abstain (Coalinga).

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

III. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. 2026 RTP/SCS Environmental Impact Report and Legal Services (Elliot Racusin) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG will conduct a "program-level" environmental impact report (EIR) for the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The EIR will be completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act); Senate Bill (SB) 375; and all other applicable State and Federal laws. In addition, the grant will be combined with a "legal services" award to provide legal assistance to Fresno COG with developing the RTP, SCS and EIR.

Staff received two proposals for this project. The scoring committee consisted of representatives from Fresno COG, County of Fresno, City of Fresno, City of Reedley, City of Selma, and City of Coalinga. After an exhaustive evaluation of proposals, Fresno COG found that LSA Associates was the most qualified candidate with relevant years of experience necessary to complete the project.

The consultant will take primary direction from the Fresno COG project manager. All work is intended to be completed within 18 months of negotiating a contract, in accordance with the schedule component, and the consultant's work will begin immediately upon receiving a notice to proceed, with an estimated completion date no later than July 2026.

Action: Staff and the TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve LSA Associates for the 2026 RTP/SCS environmental impact report and legal services, and authorize the Fresno COG executive director to execute a contract for an amount not to exceed \$350,000.

- Elliot Racusin (FCOG) presented on the item.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Robertson (Selma) moved, and Councilmember Perea (Fresno City) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

B. Fresno County Extreme Heat Analysis (Elliot Racusin) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG was awarded a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant in fiscal year 2024-25 to conduct a Fresno County Extreme Heat Analysis.

The analysis is intended to provide valuable data for future climate adaptation and mitigation responses to extreme heat induced by climate change. The plan will also identify native and drought-tolerant tree canopy and vegetative cover improvement projects in communities most vulnerable to extreme heat, based on the extreme heat vulnerability analysis, and bike and pedestrian traffic analysis. This plan will inform general plans, long-range plans, and the design and retrofit of future and present infrastructure.

The parties involved in this project will be Fresno COG, each of the 15 local incorporated cities; Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger, and Selma; along with Fresno County, community organizations, and the general public.

Staff received three proposals for this project. The scoring committee comprised representatives from: Fresno COG, County of Fresno, Fresno Area Express, and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. After a thorough evaluation of proposals, the scoring committee approved Dudek as the most qualified firm.

The consultant will take primary direction from the Fresno COG project manager. All work is intended to be completed within 18 months of negotiating a contract in accordance with the schedule, and the consultant's work will begin immediately upon receiving a notice to proceed (estimated completion date no later than July 2026).

Action: Staff and the TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve Dudek for the Fresno County Extreme Heat Analysis, and authorize the Fresno COG executive director to enter a contract for an amount not to exceed \$235,503.

- Elliot Racusin (FCOG) reported on the item.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Robertson (Selma) moved, and Mayor Martinez (Mendota) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

C. 2026 Measure C Contracts (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: In October 2024, the Policy Board approved a \$1.75 million cooperative agreement from the Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) for Fresno COG to contract with a project manager, survey firm, public

outreach firm and a committee facilitator to begin developing the proposed 2026 Measure C expenditure plan. The FCTA Board followed suit in December 2024.

Specifically, staff proposed the \$1.75 million be allocated over a roughly 18-month timeframe in the following manner:

- Project manager, to organize and manage statutory requirements and information/input from the public, MC3 renewal committee(s), stakeholders and elected representatives, develop and craft the final draft expenditure plan, as directed: \$650,000
- Public outreach firm, to coordinate and hold a minimum, anticipated 40 public workshops/meetings throughout the region, create and manage social media and radio advertising, billboards, focus groups, and multiple other strategies designed to maximize transparent, thorough and meaningful public input from community residents on specific project ideas, program areas and other components that make up the next Measure C initiative: \$750,000, with a minimum \$150,000 reserved for community-based organizations to host public workshops/meetings
- Meeting/Community Facilitator to bring together disparate interests, stakeholders, jurisdictional representatives and the public as part of one or more committees to receive, address and consider public input as well as professional, technical and policy analysis in making recommendations to the Fresno COG and FCTA boards of directors: \$200,000
- Survey firm to provide statistically valid survey results to determine public familiarity with Measure C and its performance to date, test voter sentiment regarding the viability of a renewal initiative and recommend communications/messaging suitable for a renewal effort: \$150,000.

To this end, Fresno COG solicited for all four contracts in November 2024 and received multiple proposals for each in December, as depicted in the table below.

2026 Measure C3 Proposals

	Facilitator	Project Manager	Public Outreach	Survey/Polling
DKS/Provost & Pritchard/LSA/FM3	X	X		
Estolano	X			
FM3 Research				X
Problosky Research				X
Southwest Strategies	X		X	
Trepepi Smith	X		X	
Vista Consulting			X	
VRPA	X	X		

Staff assembled four separate scoring committees that included: former Clovis Mayor Lynne Ashbeck, three city managers (Ben Gallegos [Firebaugh], Elizabeth Cabrera [San Joaquin], Nicole Zieba [Reedley]); a public works director (Scott Mozier [Fresno]); a member of the Measure C Citizens Oversight Committee (Gail Miller) and; Fresno COG and FCTA staff (Robert Phipps, Terry Ogle, Paul Herman, Brenda Thomas, Rose Willems).

After reviewing all proposals and interviewing the top two to three firms for the facilitator, project manager and public outreach contracts, the scoring committees separately voted to award the four contracts accordingly:

Facilitator:	DKS/Provost & Pritchard,	\$199,629.82;
Program Manager:	DKS/Provost & Pritchard/LSA/FM3,	\$649,931.22
Public Outreach:	Tripepi Smith, not to exceed	\$750,000
Public Survey/Polling:	FM3 Research,	\$149,250
Total:		\$1,748,811.04

Action: Staff and TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board award the following contracts totaling \$1.75 million, and authorize the executive director to execute the agreements:

Facilitator:	DKS/Provost & Pritchard,	\$199,629.82;
Program Manager:	DKS/Provost & Pritchard/LSA/FM3,	\$649,931.22
Public Outreach:	Tripepi Smith, not to exceed	\$750,000
Public Survey/Polling:	FM3 Research,	\$149,250

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) reported on the Measure C contracts.
- Discussion ensued.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Councilmember Perea (Fresno City) moved, and Mayor Gonzalez (Sanger) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Fowler, Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

D. Measure C Renewal Committee Formation - Expression of Interest (Brenda Thomas) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Fresno COG and the Fresno County Transportation Authority invite interested stakeholders who would like to sit on the Measure C Renewal Committee to submit an expression of interest form by Jan. 31. The committee will be responsible for developing both a draft and a final expenditure plan for the proposed 2026 Measure C sales tax extension, which will be placed on the 2026 ballot.

Committee members will engage in a collaborative, participatory process, contributing their expertise and perspectives as representatives of Fresno County taxpayers. Their work will help ensure that the renewal plan reflects the community’s needs and priorities for improvements throughout the region. Committee members may expect to meet monthly for up to two hours, with the first meeting anticipated to be a half-day. Only Fresno County residents are eligible to sit on the committee.

If you are interested in sitting on the Renewal Committee complete an Expression of Interest Form.

All meetings will be hybrid (virtual and in person options), open, public meetings. Meeting recordings will be available following each meeting on the Renewal community information hub and Fresno COG’s YouTube channel.

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

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) reported on Measure C Expression of Interest.

This item is informational. No action is required.

E. Measure C Local Pass-Through Funded Project Lists (Brenda Thomas) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) staff is updating the Measure C website and is requesting a short list of six to eight completed local Measure C pass-through funded projects from each agency partner to showcase the accomplishments of Measure C throughout Fresno County. The project lists will be used to create digital fact sheets for each city and transit agency, the FYI airport and Fresno County, with a rotating carousel of photos highlighting examples of how local agency pass through funds have been spent. The goal is to include at least one improvement from each councilmember or Supervisor’s District in each city or County community.

FCTA is requesting the list of six to eight projects by Jan. 31. Please include project limits and the type of Measure C improvement that was completed. Details about each project are not necessary. If photos were taken of submitted projects, please forward them as well. FCTA will have representative photos taken to post on the website if none are supplied. Email project lists and photos to rose@measurec.com.

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

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) reported on the item.

This item is informational. No action is required.

F. Regional Transportation Plan Project Suggestions Community Summary (Brenda Thomas) [INFORMATION]

Summary: The Fall 2024 Regional Transportation Plan’s Transportation Needs Community Survey was open to gather project suggestions from Sept. 6 – Oct. 31. Fresno COG garnered over 1,000 project suggestions from the public. A map and the list of each project suggestion submitted is now available at the following link:

RTP Project Suggestions Interactive Mapping Tool

Click on any of the project suggestions in the list to view it and watch the mapping tool zoom into its location within Fresno County, if location was provided in the survey.

The project suggestions were forwarded to the city, county, or transit agency responsible for the location or service identified by survey participants. The agencies then reviewed the suggestions, evaluating them based on current or future plans and available resources with the option to submit them back to Fresno COG in response to the RTP “Call for Projects”.

Over 2,800 transportation projects were received by December 13, 2024, in answer to the call. They are scored for possible funding availability over the next 20+ years.

[Click here to view the survey results, including the graphed demographics as provided by the survey software.](#)

Staff will provide a brief summary of the survey results.

Action: Information only. The Policy Board may provide direction at its discretion.

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) reported on the item.

This item is informational. No action is required.

G. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

- Machael Navarro (Caltrans) reported the following:
 - The cycle grant is closed. Awarded 1 to FCOG, 1 to FCRTA, and 3 Fresno.
 - AR 99 multi mobile options public engagement February 11th in Madera.
 - I 5 paving and striping complete in April 2025, SR 41 Express way, SR 33 Coalinga starting Summer/Fall.

This item is informational. No action is required.

- **Mayor Gonzalez (Sanger) has left the meeting. Quorum is now 13 @ 96.10%**

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. Modeling On-Call Contract with RSG Amendment #1 (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG's activity-based model (ABM) is a cutting-edge, travel-demand forecasting model that has been used to develop plans such as the RTP/SCS, conduct air quality conformity analyses, and analyze traffic and vehicle-miles-traveled impacts. The ABM is an essential planning tool for COG and the Fresno County region.

Since 2019, Fresno COG has maintained an on-call contract with RSG, which built the ABM for Fresno COG and has been providing technical assistance to Fresno COG modeling staff. The RSG team helps COG staff troubleshoot the model, provides training on new model enhancements, and fixes any bugs related to the code.

Fresno COG completed the base-year update of the ABM in September 2024. With some unforeseen transit and interregional trip-related issues being carried over from FY 23-24 into FY 24-25, the on-call budget for this fiscal year was expended by September 2024. To continue the on-call services through the end of this fiscal year, additional money is needed.

Also, the 2026 RTP/SCS scenarios development and modeling will start in spring 2025. With a newly updated model, COG staff will be testing high-capacity commuter rail services like light-rail transit (LRT) and regional rail services as an aspect of the 2026 SCS scenarios. To incorporate these scenarios, a model enhancement is needed, which requires an estimated budget of \$19,006 and is scheduled to be completed by February. Altogether, staff proposes an additional \$57,500 to the existing on-call contract for the FY 24-25, for a total of \$97,500. Attached is the scope of work for the new model enhancement.

Action: Staff and PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the executive director to amend the existing on-call support contract with RSG by \$57,500 for a new total of \$97,500.

B. 2025 Fresno COG Legislative Platform (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG's legislative platform includes advocacy priorities in State and Federal legislative matters. It provides a consistent, reliable voice when communicating legislative priorities to State and Federal lawmakers, as well as to relevant State and Federal agencies. It also offers Fresno COG staff and partners guidance when advocating on the Policy Board's behalf. Attached is the final 2025 Legislative Platform for review and comment.

Action: Staff and PAC recommend the Policy Board approve and adopt the 2025 Fresno COG Legislative Platform. The Policy Board may provide additional direction at its discretion.

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to pull any items.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Garcia (Orange Cove) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.
Absent: Fowler, Huron, Sanger.
Motion passed by acclamation.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- NONE

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

Robert Phipps (FCOG) – presented a plaque to Mayor Martinez (Mendota) for Safe Routes to School.

B. Items from Members

- None.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

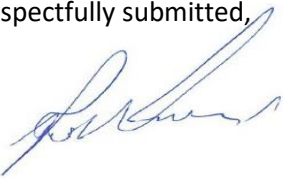
A. Public Presentations

- Mayor Martinez (Mendota) stated that there are many people from the community who are living in fear of the recent immigration laws. A resolution on behalf of the City of Mendota in support of the community was read aloud.
- Mayor Beltran (Parlier) announced a meeting with various Central Valley leaders to discuss immigration. The meeting will be held on February 12th from 12pm -2pm at Legends in Selma.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Phipps

Public:

Terry Ogle

Staff:

Denise Flores; Robert Phipps; Moses Stites; Janelle Del Campo; Brenda Thomas; Les Beshears; Paul Herman, Ofelia Abundez, Santosh Bhattarai, Elliot Racusin.