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**Fresno COG Policy Board
MINUTES
Thursday, July 31, 2025
5:30 PM**

The meeting was held at the Fresno COG Sequoia Room

Members Attending:

Councilmember Diane Pearce, City of Clovis
Mayor Nathan Vosburg, City of Coalinga
Mayor Freddy Valdez, City of Firebaugh
Mayor Juan Mejia, City of Fowler
Mayor Dyer, City of Fresno
Mayor Maria Pacheco, City of Kerman
Mayor Brandon Pursell, City of Kingsburg
Mayor Victor Martinez, City of Mendota
Mayor Diana Guerra-Silva, City of Orange Cove
Mayor Alma Beltran, City of Parlier
Mayor Matthew Tuttle, City of Reedley
Councilmember Cristina Covarrubia, City of San Joaquin
Mayor Frank Gonzalez, City of Sanger
Mayor Scott Robertson, City of Selma
Supervisor Garry Bredefeld, County of Fresno
Jim Perrault, Caltrans
Robert Phipps, Executive Director
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel

Absent:

Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron

Quorum: At the start of the meeting, there were 15 members representing 99.33% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business. (Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno City, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger Selma, Fresno County). Member Huron absent.

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. by Mayor Beltran (Parlier), Chair.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

A. Executive Minutes of June 26, 2025 [APPROVE]

B. FY 25-26 City of Firebaugh Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

C. FY 25-26 City of Mendota Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

D. FY 25-26 City of Orange Cove Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

E. FY 2021/22-23/24 Transportation Development Act Triennial Performance Audits (Matthew Shimizu) [ACTION]

F. FY 25-26 City of Kingsburg Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

- G. Adoption of State-Provided Performance Targets for Locally Owned NHS Assets (Pankaj Joshi) [ACTION]**
H. 2025-26 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 2 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
I. 2025-26 Fresno Council of Governments Measure "C" Claims Resolution 2025-39 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
J. Fresno Area Express - Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Claim - Resolution 2025-40 (Less Beshears) [ACTION]
K. Fresno County Rural Transit Agency - Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Claim - Resolution 2025-41 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
L. Clovis Transit - Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Claim - Resolution 2025-42 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]
M. Obligation Authority Quarterly Report (Blake Rincon) [INFORMATION]
N. Measure C Safe Routes to School Program Call-for-Projects (Paul Herman) [INFORMATION]
O. Senate Bill (SB) 743 Implementation Regional Guidelines Update (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to pull any items.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Valdez (Firebaugh) moved, and Mayor Vosburg (Coalinga) seconded to approve consent items A-O.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: Huron

Motion passed by acclamation.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2025-26 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Regional Bid Project Funding Recommendations (Blake Rincon) [ACTION]

Summary: On Nov. 21, 2024, Fresno COG's Policy Board issued a formal call-for-projects for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) regional bid program, with \$35.0 million originally made available for funding this cycle. An additional \$3 million in reserves was added to supplement the call for projects. Fresno COG staff received 51 applications by the March 3, 2025 deadline, requesting over \$75 million in funding.

The STBG scoring committee convened on June 5 to deliberate on the recommended program of projects. The scoring committee comprised each respective sector of the county, including urban metro, east side rural, west side rural, transit, county government, Caltrans, and Fresno COG staff. 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 and TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the scoring committee's project recommendations for the 2025-26 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program. The Committee may provide additional direction at its discretion

- Blake Rincon (FCOG) reported on the item.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Dyer (City of Fresno) moved, and Mayor Martinez (Mendota) seconded to approve the motion.

Vote: All in Favor

Absent: Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

B. 2025-2026 Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program Regional Bid Project Funding Recommendations (Matthew Shimizu) [ACTION]

Summary: On Nov. 21, 2024, the Fresno COG Policy Board issued a formal call for projects for the 2025–26 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) regional bid program. Initially, approximately \$25.2 million was

expected to be available for this funding cycle. However, that amount increased by nearly \$3 million, bringing the available CMAQ funding to \$28 million.

By the application deadline of March 14, 2025, staff received 44 project proposals requesting over \$59.7 million in funding.

On June 11, the CMAQ Scoring Committee convened to evaluate and recommend a program of projects. The committee comprised representatives from the City of Fresno, Fresno County, east and west side jurisdictions, Caltrans, Fresno COG, regional transit agency, and a sister Valley metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Out of 44 submitted applications, 26 were selected for full funding. The recommendations are attached to this report.

Action: Staff and TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve the scoring committee's project recommendations for the 2025-26 Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Program.

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

Vote: All in Favor

Absent: Huron.

Motion passed by acclamation.

C. Measure C 2026 Renewal Process and Steering Committee Activity (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Since the regular June Policy Board meeting, the Measure C 2026 Steering Committee has met three times following the new consolidated effort and timeline approved last month. DKS Project Manager Kendall Flint will provide an updated overview on the committee's activities and deliberations.

During those meetings, committee members learned about the state of the regional pavement condition index (PCI) and the history of the Measure's Regional Program, developed a vision statement and list of priorities, and also began its discussion of categorical allocations based on nearly completed datasets of public input received to date. Minutes for all but the July 30 meeting are attached to this report.

Transportation For All and Fresno COG's public outreach dataset paints an impressive picture of thoughtful, thorough insights and survey results culled from throughout the region, with more than 3,000 comments accumulated to date. Sources also include but are not limited to:

- 1,400+ survey responses
- 650+ online comments
- Nine community workshops
- 57 community events/canvassing dates/pop-ups
- Community canvassing: 5,823 homes with 609 surveys and 500 comments
- Mini-grant outreach (Vet Net): 2,250 connections with 165 surveys
- Seven focus groups (results shared at the June Board Meeting)

Certain key themes and insights have emerged. Some of these include the following:

Online Allocation Preference Survey Results (As of July 24, 2025, 1,300+ respondents)

These percentages reflect how the public would prefer to have funds allocated from Measure C in broad categories. The number of surveys completed continues to rise, however these numbers have remained consistent since June.

- Local Streets and Roads 46%
- Bike/Ped/SRTS 19%
- Transit 18%
- Regional Projects 14%
- Other/Local Programs 3%

Generally, the public is registering strong interest in local street and road maintenance, safety enhancements, public transit improvements, equitable distribution of resources and infrastructure quality, among other broad topics. More specifically, these include:

Infrastructure Maintenance and Quality

Road conditions: Strong emphasis on pothole repairs, resurfacing, and consistent maintenance, especially on neglected rural and south Fresno roads (e.g., Fowler, Sunnyside, Biola).

Sidewalk gaps: Persistent issues with missing or inconsistent sidewalks, particularly near schools and residential zones. ADA-compliant sidewalks are repeatedly requested.

Safety Enhancements

Traffic calming: Widespread calls for speed bumps, stop signs, and crosswalks near schools and high-traffic residential areas.

Street lighting: Requests to address dark, unsafe streets (e.g., Jefferson Ave, rural outskirts).

Reflective markings: Need for better road paint and reflectors for nighttime visibility.

Public Transit Improvements

Expanded service: Desire for more bus routes, longer service hours, and equitable coverage for rural communities.

Accessibility: Emphasis on elder and disabled access, including paratransit and ADA-compliant bus stops.

Comparisons to Other Cities: Frustration at lower transit quality versus cities like Los Angeles.

Equity and Resource Distribution

North vs. South Fresno: Perception that northern, wealthier neighborhoods receive better infrastructure investments.

Rural neglect: Outlying communities (e.g., Orange Cove, Biola, Auberry) cite lack of sidewalks, transit, and safe road conditions.

Parks, Recreation, and Green Spaces

Requests for more **parks, trails, splash pads, and shaded areas**.

Emphasis on recreational facilities for children and teens to foster community and reduce crime.

Environmental and Aesthetic Concerns

Calls for **tree planting, shade structures, and urban greening** to combat heat and improve livability.

Requests for **trash cleanup, alley maintenance, and beautification** along major corridors and underpasses.

Community Engagement and Trust

Comments reflect **distrust in government transparency**—concerns about mismanaged funds and unclear decision-making.

Requests for **more outreach and education** about how funds are allocated and used.

Recommendations Based on Feedback

Recommendations to the Steering Committee emerged based on the combined outreach results. Some of those recommendations include:

Infrastructure Focus – Prioritize Local Roads

Prioritize **comprehensive road and sidewalk repairs** with equitable geographic distribution.

Invest in **ADA-compliant pedestrian facilities** near schools and community hubs.

Safety Enhancements

Expand **traffic calming measures** (speed bumps, stop signs, crosswalks) in school zones and residential neighborhoods.

Improve **street lighting and reflective road markings** in high-risk corridors.

Transit

Review **bus frequency and coverage**, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Integrate **elder and disabled transit services** into Measure C planning.

Community Equity

Allocate funding using an **equity framework** to ensure historically underserved areas receive proportionate investment.

Address **north-south infrastructure disparities** explicitly in public communications.

Recreational and Green Spaces

Support creation of **parks, trails, and shaded public spaces** to improve quality of life.

Link recreational planning with **active transportation corridors** (bike and pedestrian networks).

Transparency and Public Engagement

Publish **regular public updates** on Measure C project selection and spending.

Conduct **bilingual outreach** and targeted engagement in rural and low-income neighborhoods.

The July 17 Steering Committee meeting included a joint presentation from Transportation For All and Fresno COG regarding outreach efforts. The minutes of that meeting and the previous four meetings are attached for reference, as are the rules for member participation, which the committee agreed to follow.

Following that presentation, members discussed a vision statement and a set of priorities to guide the plan. A draft vision statement was approved in concept by 83% of members and 94% of members approved the priorities.

While the vision statement is still being refined, the committee embraced multiple priorities with a strong interest in street and road maintenance underpinning each one. These include:

- Support Community Health & Resilience
- Enhance Safety
- Ensure Accessibility and Connectivity for All
- Make Equitable Investments

The mission statement is scheduled to be discussed further at the July 30 Steering Committee meeting. Should consensus be reached on exact wording, the Board will be provided with the recommended statement.

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

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) gave an update on the item.
- Kendall Flint gave a PowerPoint.
- Discussion ensued.

Information item only. No action needed.

D. State Route 41 Expressway-Elkhorn to Excelsior Funding Strategy (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

Summary: The funding strategy for widening the remaining six miles of State Route (SR) 41 from Elkhorn to Excelsior avenues in Fresno County is at a critical juncture requiring immediate action from Fresno COG and the Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) boards. Complicating the issue is the oversight involvement of

multiple agencies, including the California Transportation Commission. As of this writing, the situation is evolving and subject to change.

Fresno COG is providing multiple recommendations for action to address the situation, all of which involve increasing funding shares to help cover Caltrans-projected or actual cost overruns.

Widening SR 41 from the outskirts of Fresno to Kings County was a priority in the original 1986 Measure C Expenditure Plan. Fresno COG, FCTA and Caltrans partnered to construct 16 miles of four-lane expressway to approximately Elkhorn Avenue.

The majority of project funding came from Measure C, with a small amount of State and Local Partnership Program (LPP) funding. Kings County also made improvements to SR 41 on its end to link the corridor; however, when the 16-mile segment was constructed, design and environmental on the final segment to close the six-mile gap between Fresno and Kings Counties had not begun.

During discussions among the partners leading up to the 2007 Measure C ballot, a strategy evolved to program the remaining gap (the Excelsior Expressway) in the State's Interregional Improvement Program (IIP), and funding also appeared in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for a few years; however, due to state budget issues in 2008, the project fell out of the STIP.

In order to restore the IIP funding, Fresno COG agreed to match \$8 million of IIP with \$2 million in Regional Improvement Program (RIP) to develop the project.

In 2020, discussions among the partners intensified, and in 2022 Fresno COG and the FCTA amended the Rural Tier I list and programmed Measure C and State Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds to match State IIP and State Highway Operations and Protection (SHOPP) funds.

The project's total cost was expected to be \$70.8 million, with SHOPP contributing \$14.8 million, the IIP \$31 million, the RIP \$12 million and \$13 million in Measure C funding. Construction was programmed in 2024-25. In 2025, FCTA added \$4.1 million in formula LPP to offset part of the Measure contribution.

The design and right-of-way are now essentially complete; however, construction cost overruns delayed the anticipated 2024-25 list date.

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved a time extension on the funding but the project must be allocated in October. For the project to proceed to construction, the Cooperative Agreement between Caltrans and FCTA must be modified in August to perfect the Measure funding.

The construction cost increase is \$24,408,000. Of that, \$13,780,000 comes out of the SHOPP and IIP, while the RIP must increase \$4,191,000 and the Measure \$6,437,000. Caltrans District 6 is working with its Local Programs Division in Sacramento to approve the SHOPP and IIP.

Fresno COG administers the Regional County Shares (75 percent) of the State Transportation Improvement Program. Fresno COG programmed the balance of RIP county shares in the 2024 STIP on American Avenue, so there is no RIP funding available today.

The fund estimates for the 2026 STIP released in June set Fresno COG's initial target at \$14,611,000, providing enough to cover the \$4.1 million; however, the funding is not available for programming until 2028-29 or beyond. Staff will work with the CTC to advance the RIP share of the project when the Commission allocates the project in October. This will require future action by the FCOG board.

In February the Authority approved a cooperative agreement with Caltrans for \$8,836,000. The revised commitment, for the Measure share of the cost overrun is \$15,273,000. This means the revised agreement

would increase the Measure contribution by \$6,437,000. However, \$4,164,000 of this was previously programmed in the existing Expenditure Plan, so this represents a net increase in Measure programming of \$2,273,000.

Staff has identified \$2,273,000 in programmed funding from the original 1986 Measure that has recently been freed up by closing out old contractual obligations and through repayments of Regional Transportation Mitigation fee loans.

ACTION: Staff recommends approving the following two recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Authorize an additional \$2,273,000 in original, rural Measure C to be programmed against SR 41 Excelsior Expressway in the Measure C Regional Transportation Plan Rural Tier 1.

Recommendation 2: Recommend FCTA amend the SR 41 Excelsior Expressway cooperative agreement with Caltrans to be increased \$6,437,000 to \$15,273,000.

- Les Beshears (FCOG) gave an update on the plan.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Mayor Dyer (City of Fresno) seconded to approve the motion.

Vote: 14 Yes, 1 (County of Fresno) No.

Absent: Huron.

Motion passed.

E. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

- Jim Perrault (Caltrans) reported the following:
 - Sustainable planning Grants are awarded 1.577 million throughout the county.
 - New grant opportunity: Clean California Community Clean-up grant 25 million state wide grant. Guidelines published in mid-August and calls for projects in December.

This item is informational. No action is required.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

- **None.**

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- **None.**

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

- Robert Phipps (FCOG) announced a board meeting will be held in August on the Measure C item.

B. Items from Members

None.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

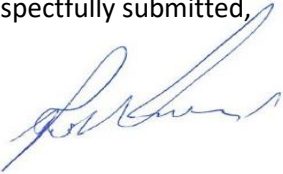
A. Public Presentations

- None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Phipps', is written over the text 'Respectfully submitted,'.

Robert Phipps, Executive Director

Public:

Kendall Flint

Staff:

Denise Flores, Robert Phipps, Moses Stites, Janelle Del Campo, Brenda Thomas, Les Beshears, Ofelia Abundez, Matthew Shimizu, Blake Rincon, Simran Jhutti, Paul Herman.