



2025-26 Fresno COG One Voice Advocacy Trip

Regional Priorities Submittal Form

Submittal Deadline: Wed., Jan. 15, 2026

Keep your regional priority content to less than three pages long. Do not change the font (*Arial*). Contact Brenda Thomas at bthomas@fresnocog with questions.

One Voice Proposed Priority title: Principles for the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill

Sponsoring agency/business: Fresno Council of Governments

- 1. Request summary** – provide specific “ask”. Keep this brief. It should not include the project history or background:

As Congress considers legislation to succeed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) asks lawmakers to consider several policy points that align with Congressional and Administration priorities.

- 2. About the Priority:** (Provide specific information about your proposed priority. Include information you want included in the trip materials.)

Principles for the Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Prioritizing Formula Funding and Local Decision-making

As Congress considers legislation to succeed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Fresno COG asks lawmakers to prioritize distributing federal funds to the local level, specifically to Metropolitan

Planning Organizations (MPOs). We encourage lawmakers to direct dollars through key formula programs rather than discretionary or competitive programs. Formula programs provide reliable and predictable resources to the Valley on an annual basis – and these dollars are more accessible to smaller agencies that struggle with the capacity to apply for competitive or discretionary programs.

Further simplification of the competitive grant application process may enhance access for small and rural agencies. The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program uses a simple application that has proven accessible to communities of all sizes and agencies with limited technical or financial capacity. That can be replicated to advance President Trump's goals of improving federal oversight of grantmaking and ensuring that more local governments and other institutions are well-positioned to become effective stewards of taxpayer dollars.

Fresno COG advocates for directing federal funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), and the Metropolitan Planning Program (MPP). Lawmakers ought to consider increasing shares of mandatory suballocations to the local level for pass-through programs.

Addressing Demand for Investment in Bridges and Rural Goods Movement

In recent years, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has seen immense demand for bridge programs that remain oversubscribed year after year. We urge lawmakers to increase funding for the Bridge Formula Program (BFP) and Bridge Investment Program (BIP) to better address that demand in our region and nationwide.

We ask lawmakers to direct more federal funding to strengthen local roads with exposure to excessive wear and tear caused by heavy-duty trucks and equipment supporting agricultural production and goods movement. Fresno COG supports the *Farm-to-Market Road Improvement Act* (H.R. 3572), introduced by Representative David Valadao and sponsored by Representatives Jim Costa and Vince Fong. The bill would provide a ten percent set-aside within the Rural Surface Transportation (Rural) Grant Program to help address these local needs in eligible counties with the highest annual agricultural yields.

Protecting Clean Air

Fresno COG requests that lawmakers maintain funding for programs designed to address air quality challenges in the region, with eligibility for more efficient, innovative vehicles and equipment, as well as clean air technologies. Member agencies would give priority for U.S. EPA 103 and 105 grants, Targeted AirShed grants, and Diesel Emission Reduction grants.

Further Streamlining NEPA

As the Administration moves forward with implementing its common-sense deregulatory agenda, please know that Fresno COG supports legislative and regulatory solutions that seek to further streamline project permitting efforts and reduce administrative burdens and project delays associated with *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)* reviews. We encourage federal policymakers to require that interagency coordination ought to be fulfilled on reasonable, established timelines.

Increase Federal Planning (PL) Funds for MPOs

Federal planning requirements have grown dramatically, but federal planning dollars have not. California MPOs — especially those in the San Joaquin Valley — are now being asked to deliver work far beyond the scale that PL was designed to support.

- PL funding is flat while costs have risen 55+ percent over the last decade.
- Raise PL authorization levels in the next surface transportation bill
- Increase the PL “carve-out” percentage from total federal highway funding.
- Recognize that MPO planning mandates have expanded dramatically (performance management, resilience, housing integration) while planning dollars have not scaled accordingly.
- Consider freight metrics. The nation's goods arrive at California ports from overseas and are then traveling through the Valley to the rest of the nation via truck or rail.

3. **Priority background** – (Include the priority issues, history and an explanation of the regional significance if not provided in question 1)

4. **Attach high-resolution photos, graphics or other explanatory attachments for the One Voice trip materials. Do not copy and paste them here, attach them as separate electronic files. Then, describe the attachments and include them with your submittal.**







5. **Contact** – Include the contact information for the priority submittal **and** the contact information of the person that will be attending the One Voice trip to speak on behalf of the priority:

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