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**Fresno COG Policy Board
MINUTES
Thursday, May 28, 2026
5:30 PM**

The meeting was held in the Fresno COG Sequoia Room.

Members Attending:

Mayor Nathan Vosburg, City of Coalinga
Mayor Freddy Valdez, City of Firebaugh
Mayor Jerry Dyer, City of Fresno
Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron
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 Cornejo, City of San Joaquin
Mayor Scott Robertson, City of Selma
Supervisor Garry Bredefeld, County of Fresno
Philip Vallejo, Caltrans
Robert Phipps, Executive Director
Doug Sloan, Legal Counsel

Absent:

Mayor Vong Mouanoutoua, City of Clovis
Mayor Juan Mejia, City of Fowler
Mayor Maria Pacheco, City of Kerman

Quorum: At the start of the meeting, twelve members were present, representing 82.46% of the population. A quorum was established to conduct business. Present cities/agencies included Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fresno, Huron, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Selma, and the County of Fresno. Absent: Clovis, Fowler, Kerman, and Sanger. Mayor Frank Gonzalez (Sanger) arrived at 5:50 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 5:41 p.m. by the Chair Martinez (Mendota).

Attendance Changes During the Meeting:

Mayor Nathan Vosburg (Coalinga) left the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of April 30, 2026 [APPROVE]**
- B. Fiscal Year 2025-26 Huron Transportation Development Act Claim (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- C. Fiscal Year 2026-27 Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Final Estimates (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- D. Fiscal Year 2026-27 State Transit Assistance (STA) Final Estimates (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- E. Fiscal Year 2026-27 State of Good Repair (SGR) Final Estimates (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- F. FY 2025-26 Third Quarter Report (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**

- G. **Fiscal Year 2025-26 Obligational Authority Report (Erin Haagenson) [INFORMATION]**
- H. **FY 2026-27 Unmet Transit Needs Assessment Public Hearing Update (Harold Sobrado) [INFORMATION]**
- I. **Measure C New Technology Reserve Program 2026 Grant Application/Call-For-Projects (Simran Jhutti Sangha) [INFORMATION]**

Mayor Beltran (Parlier) moved, and Mayor Dyer (Fresno) seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed.

Motion carried.

Absent: Clovis, Fowler, Kerman, and Sanger

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. **Fresno State Transportation Institute (FSTI) Measure C New Technology Funds Amendment (Simran Jhutti Sangha) [ACTION]**

Summary: The Fresno State Transportation Institute (FSTI) was awarded approximately \$3 million in funding programmed in 2017 through FY22/23. The contract was later amended in 2022 through FY25/26, with no additional funds due to the lapse in activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. To accommodate additional activities and utilize remaining funds, FSTI had requested a no-cost extension past the original contract deadline of June 30, 2026, to Dec. 31, 2026. The Fresno COG Policy Board approved this March 26, 2026. However, there was a \$300,000 charge from Fresno State to cover 30 percent of Dr. Tawfik's salary from 2022 to 2025, which was withdrawn directly from the Institute's accounts.

FSTI programs and activities have grown based on requests for additional studies and projects. The program has requested additional funding to continue its workload. (See attached letter). At the April Fresno County Transportation Authority meeting, the Board directed Fresno COG to allocate additional funding to the program. Fresno COG and FCTA staff coordinated with Dr. Aly Tawfik, an assistant professor of civil engineering who leads the Institute, and determined the best course is to allocate \$375,000 of Measure C New Technology funding to sustain FSTI's programs, research, employment of student interns, and activities through the remainder of its contract, Dec. 31, 2026. FSTI is also expected to compete with the next New Tech call-for-projects opening today.

Action: Staff and TTC/PAC request the Policy Board authorize the Fresno COG executive director to amend the contract with Fresno State Transportation Institute to allocate \$375,000 in Measure C New Technology funding through December 2026 and carry the amendment forward to the Fresno County Transportation Authority at its June 10 meeting.

Simran Jhutti Sangha (FCOG) presented a request to amend the Fresno State Transportation Institute contract by allocating an additional \$375,000 in Measure C New Technology Reserve funds through December 2026. She explained that the request was due to pandemic-related delays, contract extensions, and funding shortfalls associated with continued program operations.

Board members discussed the funding source, program oversight, and future eligibility for competitive New Technology Fund grants. Staff clarified that the allocation was a one-time funding request and that future funding would require participation in the competitive application process.

Mayor Beltran (Parlier) moved, and Mayor Robertson (Selma) seconded the motion.

All in favor, Reedley opposed.

Motion carried.

- B. **Fresno COG Regional VMT Mitigation Program Consultant Selection (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]**

Summary: Under SB 743, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) replaced level of service as a metric under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), reducing the significance of congestion as a consideration in traffic engineering generally, while emphasizing infill development and multi-modal transportation systems. It also requires VMT mitigation measures for new developments at either a local or regional level.

After the development of original SB 743 guidelines back in 2020, Fresno COG realized the need for the reduction of VMT impact, faced by residential and commercial developers. As a result, Fresno COG kicked off the first phase of its Regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Mitigation Program in 2023, which studied potential VMT mitigation options including a VMT bank, VMT impact fee, and VMT mitigation exchange.

This second phase of the project will build on the findings of first phase and work on developing the regional VMT mitigation program framework. Based on the outcomes of the first phase study, VMT banking was found to be the most appropriate program framework for implementation in the Fresno region.

The project will convene the stakeholder and technical committee to share their experience and insights and guide the implementation framework. The consultant will work with Fresno COG and the stakeholder committee to identify potential VMT mitigation measures to include in the program. The types of measures included will influence the type of program that should be considered. The consultant will also develop the cost estimates for all projects and programs, estimating the potential VMT reduction associated with each. The regional VMT mitigation program framework will be voluntary to its member agencies.

In February 2026, Fresno COG issued the request for proposals (RFP) seeking consultants for this project. Three consultants submitted the proposals. The scoring committee, comprising representatives from the City of Fresno, Clovis Transit, the City of Reedley, County of Fresno and Fresno COG, scored the proposals, with LSA being the highest scoring contractor.

LSA is a diversified transportation, environmental, and community planning firm with 50 years of experience helping public and private-sector clients. LSA developed the original regional VMT guidelines for Fresno COG and updated the guidelines in 2025. LSA recently developed the VMT mitigation program for the City of Fresno as well, and is very familiar with the Fresno County region. The project is anticipated to be completed by June 2027.

Action: Staff and the TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the executive director to enter a contract with LSA for the development of the Regional VMT Mitigation Program framework with the budget not to exceed \$309,924.

Santosh Bhattarai (FCOG) presented the consultant selection for the Regional VMT Mitigation Program, noting that SB 743 replaced LOS with VMT as the CEQA transportation metric. He summarized Fresno COG's prior work in 2020 and Phase I completion in 2023 and explained that Phase II will develop a voluntary regional VMT mitigation framework identifying measures, costs, and estimated reductions, with completion anticipated in June 2027.

Mayor Dyer (Fresno) moved, and Mayor Leon (Huron) seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed.

Motion carried.

C. Fresno Metropolitan Light Rail Feasibility Study Consultant Selection (Paul Herman) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG, in partnership with the City of Fresno/Fresno Area Express, received a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant in FY 2025-26 to conduct the Fresno Metropolitan Light-Rail Feasibility Study. The study will analyze the potential for a light-rail system in the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area (FCMA), primarily connecting major activity centers and neighborhoods within the FCMA such as the future California High-Speed Rail station, downtown Fresno, colleges, universities and K-12 schools, commercial and retail corridors, offices and industrial districts, and the Fresno Yosemite International Airport. The study will include an analysis of prior studies, existing transit networks, capital, and operational cost estimation, as well as a robust public engagement plan. This study is expected to be concluded by early 2028.

In October 2025, Fresno COG issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking consultants for the study, and formed a scoring committee to review and score the proposals. Staff received four proposals. The scoring committee, comprising representatives from the City of Fresno, Fresno Area Express (FAX), and Fresno COG, selected AECOM as the highest scoring proposer. AECOM is a leading global infrastructure consulting firm that provides professional services for planning, design, engineering, and construction management for major transportation

projects and programs.

In February, the City of Fresno requested that elements of the original proposal submitted by AECOM be reevaluated and modified based on city's prior experience with the consultant. After several meetings, Fresno COG and the City of Fresno agreed to split out the public engagement components of the study for the City of Fresno to directly conduct that task of the study. This change to the proposal will reduce the contract amount to AECOM from the original amount of \$758,297 to \$599,821. Staff is recommending two separate actions for this agenda item to capture these changes.

Action: Staff and the TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the executive director to enter a contract with AECOM for the Fresno Metropolitan Light Rail Feasibility Study with the budget not to exceed \$599,821.

Action: Staff recommend the Policy Board authorize the executive director to enter an agreement with the City of Fresno for the Fresno Metropolitan Light Rail Feasibility Study's public engagement task with the budget not to exceed \$158,476.

Paul Herman (FCOG) reported that Fresno COG and the City of Fresno/FAX received a Caltrans grant for the Fresno Metropolitan Light Rail Feasibility Study. He noted that four proposals were evaluated, with AECOM selected as the highest-scoring consultant. Paul added that the public engagement component will be completed by the City of Fresno under a separate agreement.

Mayor Dyer (Fresno) moved, and Mayor Leon (Huron) seconded the motion to authorize the Executive Director to:

1. Execute a contract with AECOM for the Fresno Metropolitan Light Rail Feasibility Study in an amount not to exceed \$599,821; and
2. Execute an agreement with the City of Fresno for the study's public engagement component in an amount not to exceed \$158,476.

All in favor, none opposed.

Motion carried.

III. CALTRANS REPORT (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

Philip Vallejo, Deputy District Director, provided updates on Caltrans operations, including in-house encampment response crews, mowing activities, and the implementation of a Complete Streets maintenance crew. He also reported on multiple capital projects across the district, including State Route 41, 168, 33, and related corridor improvements, as well as fencing and Clean California efforts. Board members discussed ongoing encampment issues, fencing improvements, litter abatement partnerships, and coordinated response efforts.

This item was informational. No action was required.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. Fresno COG Lease Agreement (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Summary: Approve five-year lease agreement with Fresno Park Tower, LP for office space at 2035 Tulare St, Suite 201, Fresno, CA 93721.

Action: Staff recommends the Policy Board authorize the executive director to sign a five-year lease agreement with Fresno Park Tower, LP through May 2031 totaling \$1,305,709.01.

Mayor Beltran (Parlier) requested discussion of Item A, the proposed lease agreement. Discussion centered on the five-year lease term, building maintenance concerns, and lease provisions. Staff outlined anticipated cost savings, planned tenant improvements, and ongoing efforts to address facility issues.

Mayor Valdez (Firebaugh) moved, and Mayor Pursell (Kingsburg) seconded the motion.

**All in favor, Parlier opposed.
Motion carried.**

V. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION ITEMS - None

VI. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

Robert Phipps (FCOG) provided an update on upcoming City Selection Committee appointments and reported on developments related to proposed federal surface transportation reauthorization legislation. He noted that several Fresno COG legislative priorities were reflected in the proposal and responded to members' questions regarding agricultural transportation funding provisions and the status of the legislation.

B. Items from Members

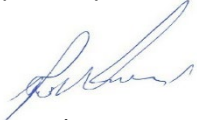
Mayor Robertson (Selma) announced an upcoming community line dancing event at Lincoln Park and invited interested attendees to participate.

VII. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS - None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Phipps, Executive Director

Staff:

Robert Phipps, Paul Herman, Simran Jhutti Sangha, Santosh Bhattarai, Mykia Byrd