



**Policy Advisory Committee
MINUTES
Friday, May 8, 2026
10:00 AM**

The meeting was held at FCOG Sequoia Conference Room.

Paul Armendariz, City of Clovis
Ben Gallegos, City of Firebaugh
Nicolas Mascia, City of Fresno
Virginia Penaloza, City of Huron
John Jansons, City of Kerman
Alexander Henderson, City of Kingsburg
Sam Escobar, City of Orange Cove
Nathan Olson, City of Sanger
Eddy Otanez Maria, City of San Joaquin
Samantha Buck, Fresno County
Braden Duran, Caltrans District 6
Robert Phipps, FCOG

Members Absent: City of Coalinga, City of Fowler, City of Mendota, City of Parlier, and City of Selma

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair John Jansons (City of Kerman). With nine members present, a quorum was established to conduct business.

JOINT Transportation Technical/Policy Advisory Committee

A. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

Braden Duran reported on a recent Caltrans walk assessment in Kerman focused on active transportation improvements and encouraged agencies to participate in future assessments. He also provided updates on upcoming Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant announcements, stakeholder workshops, federal rail funding opportunities, and available Caltrans letters of support for grant applications. Lastly, he invited attendees to the District 6 Workers' Memorial Ceremony on May 12.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of April 10, 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 Haagenon) [INFORMATION]**

Mr. Gallegos (Firebaugh) moved and Mr. Mascia (Fresno) seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed.

Motion carried.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Measure C New Technology Reserve Program 2026 Grant Application/Call-For-Projects (Simran Jhutti Sangha) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Fresno COG is seeking proposals from eligible public agencies for advanced transit and transportation projects that have the potential for broad benefits to Fresno County residents and will assist the region in meeting its air quality goals. Fresno COG and the Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) are proposing to fund projects of regional significance in the areas of research, development, demonstration, and deployment that will advance public transit and transportation. This cycle of the Measure “C” New Technology Reserve Program will make approximately \$7,625,000 available for eligible new technology projects/programs. The 2026 application is attached to this item and is also available on the Fresno COG website.

Timeline:

| <u>ACTIVITY</u> | <u>DATE</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Request for Proposals Released | May 8, 2026 |
| Last day to submit requests for clarification | June 15, 2026 |
| NEW: Deadline for Electronic Proposal Submittal for agencies wishing to partner with Fresno COG | June 22, 2026 |
| Deadline for Proposal Submittal | July 29, 2026 |
| Scoring (Tentative) | August 3 – August 7, 2026 |
| Potential Interview Date (Tentative) | August 12-20, 2026 |
| Policy Board Approval (Tentative) | September 24, 2026 |
| FCTA Board Approval (Tentative) | October 14, 2026 |
| Notice to Proceed – Subject to Contract Signing (Tentative) | January 2027 |

In February 2016, the Policy Board approved a formal process to solicit and accept members to sit on a Multidisciplinary Advisory Group (MAG). The MAG will review, evaluate, and score the New Tech applications and recommend projects for funding. Nominees are needed from the following categories: City of Fresno, City of Clovis, east side city, west side city, County of Fresno, Measure C Citizens Oversight Committee, FCTA, transit, business, education, and two public seats. **The MAG application is available and is due June 25.** Those interested in serving on the scoring committee or who would like to nominate someone else, please notify Principal Planner Simran Jhutti Sangha.

For more information regarding the Measure C New Technology program please visit <http://www.fresnocog.org/measure-c-new-technology-reserve-fund> and/or contact Simran Jhutti Sangha at jhutti@fresnocog.org.

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

Simran Sangha (FCOG) presented the biennial Measure C New Technology Reserve Program Call for Projects. The program includes approximately \$7.625 million for innovative transportation technology projects, with applications and scoring committee materials available on the Fresno COG website.

This item was presented for information only.

B. 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 to allocate \$375,000 in Measure C New Technology funding through December 2026.

Simran Sangha (FCOG) presented an amendment allocating \$375,000 in Measure C New Technology Reserve funds to the Fresno State Transportation Institute to support program activities and student interns through the end of the year. Staff noted the adjustment was developed in coordination with the Fresno County Transportation Authority to address a funding shortfall while allowing the institute to remain eligible for future grant applications.

Mr. Henderson (Kingsburg) moved and Mr. Escobar (Orange Cove) seconded the motion.

**All in favor, Chair Jansons (Kerman) opposed.
Motion carried.**

C. 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 requests that 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.

Paul Herman (FCOG) presented the selection of LSA as the top-ranked consultant to develop Phase 2 of the Regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Mitigation Program under SB 743. The program will build on Phase 1 findings to establish a regional framework—primarily focused on VMT banking, with potential measures such as transit, active transportation, and mobility programs—leading to future pricing and an eventual environmental review in a later phase.

Committee members expressed support for a regional approach to reduce the burden of requiring individual jurisdictions to independently develop their own programs.

Mr. Gallegos (Firebaugh) moved, and Mr. Otanez Maria (San Joaquin) seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed.

Motion carried.

D. San Joaquin Valley Air Quality Conformity Modeling Efforts (Robert Phipps & Paul Herman) [INFORMATION]

Summary: Section 176(c) (42 USC 7506) of the Federal Clean Air Act requires Federal projects, transportation plans, and programs to conform to the State’s Air Quality Implementation Plan for specified pollutants such as nitrogen oxides, reactive organic gases, and particulate matter, or face penalties for failing to do so.

As a frequent non-attainment area for several of these pollutants, the eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) air basin are routinely faced with potential Federal sanctions, including a “lockdown” on capacity-increasing transportation projects and/or a withholding of Federal transportation funding.

Air quality conformity findings are updated at least every two years alongside the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) biennial cycle, and also on an as-needed basis as new projects are introduced via amendments to the FTIP and Regional Transportation Plan.

The eight Valley metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) within the SJV air basin are simultaneously undergoing the latest round of updates to their respective RTPs, FTIPs and corresponding air quality conformity documents. Although each region develops its own planning process separately, the common air basin requires that either all transportation plans and programs meet air quality conformity requirements or risk the potential for mass failure should even a single region fall short in its conformity findings.

This potential for failure has led the Valley MPOs to determine that for the 2026 RTP/FTIP, it will be necessary to pool collective resources to provide any air quality “savings” from some regions to provide for those who are unable to demonstrate conformity. Consequently, the Valley MPOs are proposing a collective, Valleywide air quality conformity budget for the entire air basin.

Fresno COG is still modeling the projects in its RTP and FTIP for conformity purposes; however, staff believes it will have some room to spare in terms of emissions savings, which will serve as a credit to other regions in this scenario. The draft of the Fresno COG 2026 RTP/FTIP will be released in June for public comments, with the final 2026 RTP/FTIP anticipated to be adopted by the Fresno COG Policy Board in September.

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

Robert Phipps and Paul Herman (FCOG) provided an informational update on San Joaquin Valley air quality conformity modeling under federal Clean Air Act requirements. Several valley counties, including Kern, Tulare, and potentially Stanislaus, are at risk of not meeting conformity standards, prompting a coordinated valley-wide approach with the California Air Resources Board and EPA. Staff noted ongoing model updates and monitoring.

This item was presented for information only.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

None.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

None.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

Robert Phipps (FCOG) introduced new Fresno COG Senior Planner Erin Haagenon and extended Mother’s Day wishes to attendees. Members discussed plans to host presentations from both Measure C replacement efforts in mid-June. Mr. Phipps also provided a brief update on Measure C signature gathering efforts, noting that the Better Roads, Safer Streets initiative had submitted signatures and was awaiting certification, while no official update was available on the Fix Our Roads effort.

B. Items from Members

Chair Jansons (Kerman) acknowledged and welcomed the County representative in attendance Samantha Buck.

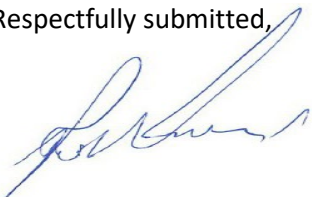
VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Phipps, Executive Director

Public: None.

Staff:

Robert Phipps, Paul Herman, Simran Sangha, Erin Haagenson, and Mykia Byrd.