



2035 Tulare St., Ste. 201 tel 559-233-4148
Fresno, California 93721 fax 559-233-9645
www.fresnocog.org

**Fresno COG Policy Board
MINUTES
Thursday, June 27, 2024
5:30 PM**

The meeting was held at the Fresno COG Sequoia Room

Members Attending:

Mayor Lynne Ashbeck, City of Clovis
Mayor James Horn, City of Coalinga
Mayor Elsa Lopez, City of Firebaugh
Mayor Councilmember Amarjeet Gill, City of Fowler
Councilmember Mike Karbassi, City of Fresno
Mayor Rey Leon, City of Huron
Mayor Brandon Pursell, City of Kingsburg
Mayor Maria Pacheco, City of Kerman
Mayor Victor Martinez, City of Mendota
Mayor Gilbert Garcia, City of Orange Cove
Mayor Alma Beltran, City of Parlier
Councilmember Mary Fast, City of Reedley
Mayor Frank Gonzalez, City of Sanger
Mayor Scott Robertson, City of Selma
Michael Navarro, Caltrans
Robert Phipps, Interim Executive Director
Bryan Rome, Legal Counsel

Absent:

Mayor Julia Hernandez, City of San Joaquin
Supervisor Sal Quintero, County of Fresno

Quorum: At the start of the meeting, there were 14 members representing 83.81% of the population. There was a quorum to conduct business.

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Mayor Beltran (Parlier), Chair.

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Executive Minutes of May 30, 2024 [APPROVE]**
- B. City of Kerman TDA Claim FY 2023-24 (Les Beshears) [ACTION]**
- C. Formal Amendment No. 17 (Type 5) to the Federal Transportation Improvement Program; 2022 Regional Transportation Plan Amendment No. 3 and; Corresponding Air Quality Conformity Analysis (Ofelia Abundez) [ACTION]**

- D. Fresno Area Express (FAX) and Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) Urban and Rural Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) Operations, Program, and Budget (OPB), FY 2024-2025 (Janelle Del Campo) [ACTION]
- E. Clovis Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) FY2024-2025 Operations, Program and Budget (OPB) (Harold Sobrado) [ACTION]
- F. Federal and State Grant Opportunities (Robert Phipps) [INFORMATION]
- G. Project-Level Air Quality Conformity (Hot-Spot Analysis) Process (Matthew Shimizu) [INFORMATION]

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to pull any items.
- Councilmember Fast (Reedley) pulled item C.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Ashbeck (Clovis) moved, and Mayor Guerra-Silva (Orange Cove) seconded to approve consent items A; B; D; E; F; G.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: San Joaquin, Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

- **Item C.** – Councilmember Fast asked for clarification regarding the amendment.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Martinez (Mendota) moved, and Councilmember Karbassi (Fresno City) seconded to approve consent item C.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: San Joaquin, Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Draft 2025 Federal Transportation Improvement Program, Draft 2022 Regional Transportation Plan Amendment No. 4, and Draft Corresponding Air Quality Conformity Analysis -- Public Review Period (Ofelia Abundez) [INFORMATION]

Summary: On May 31, Fresno COG submitted the Draft 2025 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), Draft 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Amendment No. 4, and Draft Corresponding Air Quality Conformity Analysis for interagency consultation and public review. Associated documentation is attached.

2025 FTIP: The 2025 FTIP is a near-term listing of capital improvement and operational expenditures using Federal and State monies for transportation projects in Fresno County during the next four years.

2022 RTP Amendment No. 4: Includes a summary of programming changes to the 2022 RTP and corresponding financial table updates. Draft Amendment No. 4 reflects funding, open-to-traffic date, and scope changes to regionally significant, capacity-increasing projects. The amendment changes are consistent with the design concept and scope or schedule of existing regionally significant projects, and does not change the timeframe of the transportation plan.

Conformity Requirements: The Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis supports a finding that the 2025 FTIP and 2022 RTP meet air quality conformity requirements for ozone and particulate matter. The Conformity Analysis Documentation Checklist is included as Appendix A of the document.

Public Involvement: Includes the Draft Public Notice and Adoption Resolution.

The public review and comment period is open for 30 days commencing May 31 through June 30. Staff held a public hearing on June 12 at Fresno COG's Sequoia Board Room and via Zoom webinar. Public comments are due orally or in writing by 5:30 p.m. on June 30.

Fresno COG's Policy Board will consider adopting the 2025 FTIP, 2022 RTP Amendment No. 4, and corresponding Air Quality Conformity Analysis during its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. on July 25.

The Draft 2025 FTIP, Draft 2022 RTP Amendment No. 4 and Draft Corresponding Air Quality Conformity Analysis is available on Fresno COG's website at Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) - Fresno Council of Governments (fresnocog.org)

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

- Ofelia Abundez (FCOG) gave a brief presentation.

Informational only. No action needed.

B. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Access For All Program (Jake Martinez) [ACTION]

Summary: Access for All (AFA) is a state-funded program that Fresno COG administers regionally. Senate Bill 1376 established AFA in 2018 by directing the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to design a program that offers accessibility for persons with disabilities to transportation network companies' (TNCs, e.g., Uber & Lyft) services, including wheelchair users who need a wheelchair-accessible vehicle (WAV).

To fund the program, the CPUC instituted a \$0.10 access fee collected on each TNC ride. There are two different ways to meet the statute's overall goal of expanding and improving on-demand WAV transportation in California. The first is for TNCs to invest access fee revenue to expand or improve on-demand WAV service in a particular county. In return, they can file offset requests allowing the TNC to keep some of the revenue they collect, equal to the amount they invest in a particular county.

The second method allows the CPUC to set aside remaining monies (not claimed by the TNCs in the offset process) in an access fund. These funds are then distributed to access providers, such as transit operators, through Local Access Fund Administrators (LAFAs), which is how Fresno COG has been classified since 2021. The CPUC allocates funds annually proportional to the percent of fees originating in that county.

As of June 30, 2024, Fresno COG has awarded \$373,534 to fund projects and improvements toward "dial-a-ride" services to both the Fresno County Rural Transportation Agency (FCRTA) and Clovis Transit.

Action: Staff and TTC/PAC recommend the Policy Board approve Fresno COG to serve as the designated Local Access Fund Administrator for FY 2024-25 and to distribute \$191,651 toward eligible projects focused on "on-demand" paratransportation by signing both the "Lafa Board Resolution 2024-23" and "Lafa Consent Form."

- Jake Martinez (FCOG) presented on the Access for all program.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Leon (Huron) moved, and Mayor Horn (Coalinga) seconded to approve the action.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: San Joaquin, Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

C. FY 2024-2025 Fresno Council of Governments Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) Assessment Report (Harold Sobrado) [ACTION]

Summary: Fresno COG has completed the FY 2025 cycle of the Unmet Transit Needs process, which includes the Unmet Transit Needs Assessment Report. Fresno COG released the FY 2024-2025 draft Unmet Transit Needs Assessment Report with the agenda for the May 6 Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee

(SSTAC) meeting, during which the Committee approved the release of the draft report for a 30-day public review and comment period.

Fresno COG staff regularly exceeds minimum public outreach requirements, this year holding seven public meetings, six of which were in-person, and one that took place virtually.

Feedback was also collected online with a survey, social medial posts, a dedicated email address, and an “800” line during February and March. The sole public hearing requirement was satisfied at the April 25 Policy Board meeting, where staff received two public comments, both of which have been added to the draft report.

Examples of public comments received, included:

- Feedback on FAX, FCRTA, and Clovis Transit routes and services,
- Questions on FAX, FCRTA, and Clovis Transit routes and services, and
- General transportation-related comments.

This cycle, staff received 38 comments, five of which were unmet needs, but none of which were found reasonable to meet. All comments received, transit agency responses, and determinations of unmet needs are within the report and include the comment letter received from Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, along with Fresno COG’s official response.

Action: Staff, SSTAC and TTC/PAC recommend that the Policy Board adopt Resolution 2024-22, approving Fresno COG’s FY 2024-2025 Unmet Needs Assessment Report, and to find that there are five unmet transit needs, none of which are “reasonable to meet.”

- Harold Sobrado (FCOG) reported on the Unmet Transit Needs.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Leon (Huron) moved, and Mayor Martinez (Mendota) seconded to approve the motion.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: San Joaquin, Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

D. Fresno COG’s Draft 2024 Public Participation Plan -- Public Hearing (Brenda Thomas) [PUBLIC HEARING]

Summary: Fresno COG released its Draft 2024 Public Participation Plan (PPP) for a 45-day public review and comment period beginning May 17 through June 30, 2024. The PPP identifies opportunities for the public to participate in Fresno COG’s planning processes and provides the Fresno COG Policy Board and staff with guidance on conducting public outreach and interagency consultation early and often during the regional planning process. It contains policies, guidelines, processes, and procedures Fresno COG commits to implementing while seeking and fostering open public involvement during the decision-making process, regarding all matters within its discretion.

At 5:30 p.m. on June 27, Fresno COG’s Policy Board will conduct a public hearing during its normal monthly meeting in the Sequoia Conference Room at 2035 Tulare Street, Fresno, CA 93721 in downtown Fresno. The meeting is accessible to the people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may call Fresno COG (with three-working days’ advance notice) to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate. Translation services are available (with three-days’ advance notice) to participants speaking any language other than English. Public comments are welcomed at the public hearing or they may be submitted in writing via mail or email to the following:

Brenda Thomas, Fresno COG Administrative Services Manager

bthomas@fresnocog.org

2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201, Fresno, CA 93721

After addressing all submitted comments, the 2024 Public Participation Plan will be considered for adoption, by resolution, on July 25 by the Fresno COG Policy Board at its regularly scheduled meeting. All documents are available for review or download on the Fresno COG website at fresnocog.org or in hard copy at the Fresno COG offices.

Action: Staff recommends the Policy Board open the public hearing, receive comments and close the public hearing.

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) reported on the Public Participation Plan.
- Mayor Beltran – Chair, opened the public hearing at 6:38pm.
- Mayor Beltran – Chair, hearing no comments, closed the public hearing at 6:38pm.

Public Hearing. No action needed.

E. Caltrans Report (Caltrans) [INFORMATION]

- Michael Navarro (Caltrans) gave a PowerPoint presentation on the SR 99 projects.

This item is informational. No action is required.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. Contracts/Extensions (Fresno COG Staff) [ACTION]

1. Circuit Planner and Engineer Program Contract Renewal (Simran Jhutti) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize Fresno COG's interim executive director to renew the contract with Rincon Consultants for \$120,000 for FY 24/25.

2. Fresno County Comprehensive Climate Action Plan Consultant Selection (Simran Jhutti) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director to enter into a contract with LSA Associates for the Fresno County Comprehensive Climate Action Plan for an amount not to exceed \$450,000.

3. Regional Early Action Planning (REAP 1) Program: Local Grant Awards -- Agreement Extensions (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend the Policy Board approve a time extension and authorize the interim executive director to sign agreement amendments for REAP Local Housing Planning Grant projects with the cities of Fresno, Kerman, Selma, and the County of Fresno.

4. San Joaquin Valley Regional Early Action Planning (REAP 1) Program -- Precision Engineering Contract Extension (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend that the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director extend the contract with Precision Engineering through Dec. 31, 2024.

5. Multijurisdictional Housing Element -- PlaceWorks Contract Extension (Robert Phipps) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director to extend the contract with PlaceWorks through June 30, 2025.

6. Southwest Strategies Contract Renewal for Measure C Program Marketing/Advertising (Jake Martinez) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director to amend the existing contract with Southwest Strategies for an amount not to exceed \$180,000 through June 30, 2025.

7. Technical Support for the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy Contract Extension (Paul Herman) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director to execute a contract extension with LSA through June 30, 2025 for an amount not to exceed \$70,000.

8. Contract with GHD for On Call RTMF Services (Les Beshears) [ACTION]

Recommendation: Staff and PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director to extend the contract with GHD for on-call RTMF services to FY 2024-25 at a cost of \$50,000.

9. Replica Contract Renewal: Data Support for Activity Based Model and Safety Related Projects (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director to renew the existing contract with Replica for through June 30, 2026 for an amount not to exceed \$96,000.

10. Modeling On-Call Contract with RSG (Santosh Bhattarai) [ACTION]

Action: Staff and the PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the interim executive director enter into an on-call support contract with RSG for an amount not to exceed \$40,000 through June 30, 2025.

- Chair Beltran asked if any member wished to pull any items.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Mayor Leon (Huron) moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Garcia (Orange Cove) seconded to approve consent item A; 1-10.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: San Joaquin, Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Fresno COG Executive Director Recruitment (Brenda Thomas) ACTION

Summary: Attached is the draft recruitment brochure provided to staff for Fresno COG's executive director replacement. The recruiting consultant, CPS HR, has requested a salary range to publish in the brochure. The Policy Board's subcommittee overseeing the recruiting process requested the range be identified, discussed, and approved by the board.

Action: The Subcommittee requests the Policy Board provide direction.

- Brenda Thomas (FCOG) gave an update on the Executive Director Recruitment.
- Councilmember Karbassi motioned the Board return this to the Subcommittee to evaluate the salary range.
- After an opportunity for public comment, Councilmember Karbassi (Fresno City) moved, and Mayor Pacheo (Kerman) seconded to approve the motion.

Vote: All in favor, no opposed.

Absent: San Joaquin, Fresno County.

Motion passed by acclamation.

V. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items from Staff

Robert Phipps announced the following:

- Congratulations to the Cities of Reedley, Kerman, Huron, and San Joaquin adopted and in compliance.
- New camera and sound system have been installed.

B. Items from Members

Alma Beltran – thanked Robert Phipps and Brenda Thomas for the work on the One Voice trip.

VI. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

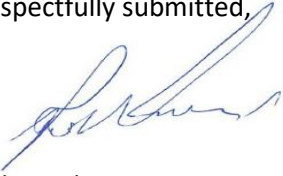
A. Public Presentations

- None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Robert Phipps

Public:

None.

Staff:

Denise Flores; Robert Phipps; Moses Stites; Janelle Del Campo; Brenda Thomas; Jake Martinez; Les Beshears; Jennifer Rodriguez, Ofelia Abundez.