

**FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS POLICY BOARD
ANNOTATED AGENDA**

Date: Thursday, March 24, 2011
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Place: COG Sequoia Conference Room
2035 Tulare St., Suite 201, Fresno, CA

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations

The Fresno COG offices and restrooms are ADA accessible. Representatives or individuals with disabilities should contact Fresno COG at (559) 233-4148, at least 3 days in advance, to request auxiliary aids and/or translation services necessary to participate in the public meeting / public hearing. If Fresno COG is unable to accommodate an auxiliary aid or translation request for a public hearing, after receiving proper notice, the hearing will be continued on a specified date when accommodations are available.

NOTICE:

**FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS POLICY BOARD MEETING WILL
BEGIN IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE FRESNO COUNTY RURAL TRANSIT AGENCY MEETING**

Fresno COG Sitting As the Transportation Policy Committee

I. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

All items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by COG staff and will be approved by one motion if no member of the Committee or public wishes to comment or ask questions. If comment or discussion is desired by anyone, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered in the listed sequence with an opportunity for any member of the public to address the Committee concerning the item before action is taken.

A. Fresno COG 2009/10 Financial and Compliance Audit [BESHEARS]

Summary: The CPA firm Dedekian, George, Small, and Markarian has completed the 2009/10 Financial and Compliance Audit for Fresno COG. The report details that Fresno COG managed its operations according to funding covenants, within budget and has no findings of non compliance. The report satisfies requirements of federal and state funding agencies. Total revenues were \$6,484,568, total expenses were \$6,926,968 and total fund balances at year end decreased \$442,400 to \$1,476,152. The reduction in fund balances reflects an anticipated budgetary draw down of reserves after several years of increase.

Action: Staff recommends acceptance of the Fresno COG 2009/10 Financial and Compliance Audit.

B. Results for the 2011 COG Administered FTA Sections 5316 (JARC) and 5317 (New Freedom) Grant Programs [SOBRADO]

Summary: In September 2010, Fresno COG issued a call for projects for the COG administered Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 New Freedom grant programs for the following amounts:

	5316 Program	5317 Program
FY 2009 / 2010 Funds	\$643,057.00	\$79,720.00
FY 2010 / 2011 Funds	\$239,005.00	\$86,322.00
Grant Projects Received	\$882,062.00	
Total Funds Available	\$0.00	\$166,042.00

The total funds available represents COG-administered JARC/NF funds available for future call for projects.

In response to the call-for-projects, Fresno COG received two grant applications from the Fresno County Employment Opportunities Commission (EOC) seeking operating funds to offset the reduction in funding received from the State of California.

EOC Transit has an agreement with the Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC) to provide transportation services for approximately 525 developmentally disabled adults. Due to recent State of California economic conditions, the California Department of Social Services reduced CVRC funding for the program effective September 1, 2009.

Fresno EOC is seeking JARC funding for two budget cycles in FY 2009 and FY2010 that matches with the JARC allocation provided to COG for FY2009 and 2010. Both grant applications seek \$441,031 in JARC funds with match requirements of 50% per application for a total of \$882,062, the total amount available through the COG-administered JARC Program.

After Fresno COG received the grant application from Fresno EOC, Fresno COG staff checked with past grant applicants (Fresno Area Express [FAX] and Fresno County Rural Transit Agency [FCRTA]) to see if they intended to submit grant applications for these same funds. Once staff confirmed that FAX and FCRTA did not intend to submit projects requesting these funds, the COG-administered JARC/New Freedom grading committee convened last year was informed via email of the new application and were asked to review the grant application. Objections or comments regarding Fresno EOC receiving the funds for the COG-administered JARC program were also requested and none was received from email recipients. As a result, Fresno COG staff is proceeding with the grant application from Fresno EOC.

Additional questions or comments can be addressed to Todd Sobrado at (559) 233-4148.

Action: This is an information item. Direction may be given at the discretion of the Policy Board.

II. TRANSPORTATION ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Formal Amendment (Type #5) to the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (Amendment No. 3), the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan (Amendment No. 1) and the Corresponding Conformity Analysis - PUBLIC HEARING [GARZA/MONGE]

Summary: Fresno COG is currently amending the 2011 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Corresponding Conformity Analysis. This amendment is a two-part process and is reflected as two separate amendments, Amendment No. 3 to the 2011 FTIP and Amendment No. 1 to the 2011 RTP. The 30-day public review and comment period for Amendment No. 3 to the 2011 FTIP and Amendment No. 1 to the 2011 RTP opened on March 11, 2011 and will close on April 11, 2011 at 5:00 p.m.; written comments are welcome. All documentation associated with this amendment is available for viewing on the Fresno COG website at www.fresnocog.org; the public hearing notice is enclosed. Amendment No. 3 to the 2011 FTIP and Amendment No. 1 to the 2011 RTP will be considered for adoption, by resolution, by the Fresno COG Policy Board at a regularly scheduled meeting to be held on April 28, 2011. For more information regarding the amendment process or the public review process please contact Melissa Garza at 559-233-4148 ext. 210 or Lindsey Monge at 559-233-4148 ext. 205.

Action: Public hearing to receive comments.

B. Resolutions 2011-04 and 2011-05 in Support of the City of Fresno's Application for Caltrans Planning Grants related to the High Speed Rail Station in Downtown Fresno [SOBRADO]

Summary: The City of Fresno is pursuing three FTA grants in order to secure funding for the planning of the High Speed Rail Station that will be constructed in downtown Fresno. Funding successfully secured through these grants would be used to fund the preliminary planning, conceptual design, and public outreach necessary to coordinate existing and future modes of transportation that will be incorporated into the multi-modal station and circulation downtown:

These grants include:

- 1) FTA Community-Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) Grant;
- 2) FTA Partnership Planning Grant; and
- 3) FTA Section 5304 Transit Planning Studies Grant

The City will be seeking the maximum request of \$300,000 from each grant. The CBTP will be applied for directly by the City, whereas the others will be pursued through a partnership with the Fresno COG where the COG is the primary applicant. The grant deadline is March 30, 2011. Please contact Todd Sobrado for additional questions or to request more information.

Action: PAC and Staff recommend approval of Resolutions 2011-04 and 2011-05.

C. Five Cities Planning Grant Application to Caltrans – Resolution 2011-06 [STECK]

Summary: This item came to COG's attention on 3/15/11 (after the PAC meeting) from the Five Cities in the Manning Avenue Corridor - Orange Cove, Reedley, Parlier, Selma and Fowler. Due to the pace of recent growth in residential and commercial areas, the new US Census data and the fact that all the cities involved have updated their general plans, the cities feel the need for further study of the corridor. There are gaps in transportation connections between the cities that need further planning to accommodate motor vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle and public transit. The purpose of the Caltrans planning grant application is to assist these local entities complete planning studies to address long-standing transportation needs. These studies will help establish priorities for state and Federal funding opportunities for implementation projects. The Five Cities Economic Development Authority is requesting that the COG submit a grant application for this purpose. The program will provide direct funding on a reimbursement basis of 90% of plan costs and the Five Cities Economic Development Authority will provide the 10% match (of which a portion of that amount may be an in-kind contribution). The study, if funded, would update the Manning Avenue Transportation and Economic Development Study of 2002 and the Manning Avenue Corridor Initiative of 2003.

Action: Staff recommends approval of Resolution 2011-06 supporting the Five Cities' request for Fresno COG to submit an application for a Caltrans Planning Grant on their behalf.

D. Blueprint Update [STECK]

Summary: In early 2006 the eight Regional Planning Agencies (MPOs) in the San Joaquin Valley came together in an unprecedented effort to develop a coordinated valley vision – the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint. This eight county venture has been conducted in each county, and was ultimately integrated to form a preferred vision for future development throughout the Valley to the year 2050. The Blueprint is a bottom up, voluntary endeavor that is intended to engage and guide local agencies in their pursuit of sustainable development patterns within their own jurisdictions and throughout the Valley.

The Blueprint planning process - Eight individual Valley MPOs planning in unison

Phase 1: Values and Vision – gathered from community input

Phase 2: Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures based upon Values and Vision

Phase 3: Evaluation of alternative “what if” growth scenarios in each county

- Selection of preferred county level scenarios for Valleywide analysis
- Evaluation of four Valleywide alternative scenarios
- Adoption of Smart Growth Principles and Preferred Growth Scenario for Valley

Phase 4: Develop documents to memorialize the Blueprint planning process, suggest strategies for implementation and provide a toolkit to assist planners with integrating the Blueprint Smart Growth Principles into local planning processes.

On April 1, 2009, after a full vetting in each of the eight San Joaquin Valley Counties, the Regional Policy Council reviewed the Valley MPOs' collaborative work on the Blueprint and took the following actions:

- Adopted a list of Smart Growth Principles to be used as the basis of Blueprint planning in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Adopted Scenario B+ as the Preferred Blueprint Growth Scenario for the San Joaquin Valley to the year 2050. This preferred scenario will serve as guidance for the Valley's local jurisdictions with land use authority as they update their general plans.

Since its inception, the Blueprint planning process has been billed as a bottom up and voluntary process. Those assurances remain as the Valley Regional Planning Agencies move forward in their work with their member agencies to help integrate the Blueprint Smart Growth Principles into local planning processes. The documents being discussed today have been developed to help in this pursuit.

In February 2010, the Valley RPAs entered into a contract with Mintier Harnish to prepare three deliverables that comprise the Blueprint Roadmap:

- SJV Blueprint Planning Process Summary Report [September 2010]
- Draft SJV Blueprint Guidance Framework (Implementation Strategy) [February 15, 2011]
- SJV Blueprint – Planners Toolkit (web based) – the as yet unreleased beta version is available at <http://toolkitvalleyblueprintorg.alias.strangeocode.com/>

The Blueprint Project Managers from each RPA, the Valley Planners Working Group, the RPA Directors and other stakeholder groups have all been involved in reviewing and commenting on the three deliverables that comprise the Blueprint Roadmap. The first two documents along with the comments received on the Guidance Framework through February 15, 2011 are available online at <http://www.fresnocog.org/document.php?pid=187>

At the Valley Planners Working Group meeting on February 23, 2011, the following items emerged as concerns related to the draft Guidance Framework:

1. The document should describe what traffic modeling was done during the development of the Blueprint. If traffic modeling was not done, the document should disclose that.
2. The document needs to state that the Blueprint is completely voluntary.
3. The word "implementation", as it is used in the document needs to be defined. For example since the Blueprint is voluntary, then "implementation" would apply to those wanting to incorporate the 12 Blueprint Smart Growth Principles and density targets in their local general plan and development codes. In short if an agency or agencies desire to promote or incorporate the Blueprint into their policies and land use/ transportation planning efforts then the Guidance Framework would provide them with assistance in implementing the Blueprint.

The Valley Regional Planning Agencies have engaged their local jurisdictions in the Blueprint Planning Process for five years. As promised it has been an inclusive, bottom up endeavor that is voluntary in nature. I believe that Caltrans intends for Blueprint planning to become an ongoing process that will lend itself to the upcoming work on Sustainable Communities Strategies. The outreach and engagement alone, along with information sharing and relationship

building will likely have long term benefits. What may be on many local agency planners' minds at this point is the lack of resources to do the work necessary to move toward implementation. Prop 84 will help, but the extent of need may be greater than the resources available. That remains to be seen.

This item is on the agenda this month as an information item prior to the material being presented to the Regional Policy Council. The Valley RPA Directors will discuss the comments and concerns we have received thus far on the Blueprint Roadmap deliverables to determine how best to respond and move this body of work on to the Regional Policy Council for their review on March 25th and their ultimate acceptance on June 24th. The schedule calls for each RPA to engage their member agencies in discussions on the documents so that any comments or concerns about the deliverables can be gathered for consideration and direction by the Regional Policy Council on June 24, 2011. Following the June 24th meeting, the Roadmap documents will be revised to reflect Regional Policy Council direction.

Action: This is an information/discussion item. Direction may be given at the discretion of the Policy Board.

E. Public Transportation Infrastructure Study (PTIS) Update [Downs]

Summary: The draft PTIS final report and associated recommendations are being reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and stakeholder agencies. The draft report is available for review on the Fresno COG website.

The final PTIS public event was a Smart Growth Conference that took place on March 2nd and 3rd at the Fresno Art Museum Auditorium. Stakeholders and members of the public heard perspectives from smart growth experts about the benefits and opportunities smart growth could provide Fresno County. Participants also engaged in discussions about strategies for implementing PTIS recommendations and other smart growth strategies.

The PTIS is on track for completion this May.

Action: This is an information/discussion item. Direction may be given at the discretion of the Policy Board.

F. SB 325 – Central California Railroad Authority Act [THOMPSON]

Summary: SB 325, the Central California Railroad Authority Act, would establish the Central California Railroad Authority as a measure of last resort to prevent the abandonment of short-haul rail lines in Kern, Tulare, Kings and Fresno counties. Short-haul railroads often hold monopolies over rail shippers and receivers and, because of increasing rates and other factors, are forcing them to ship by truck. As rail traffic decreases on the short-haul rail lines, they are then abandoned and the track and ties sold for their scrap value. Just recently, a 30-mile segment of short-haul rail from Jovista in northern Kern County to Exeter in Tulare County has been completely abandoned and the track removed.

The systematic removal of short-haul rail segments has significant environmental and economic impacts to Central California. Removing the rail option increases the number of goods shipped by truck, impacting local air quality and increasing maintenance costs for both local roads and state highways. The rail option can contribute to local economic development, particularly in an environment of rising fuel prices. Ideally, the Central California Rail Authority may eventually play a key role in establishing a short-haul network through the entire San Joaquin Valley, stretching from Kern County to the Port of Oakland, largely for agricultural and petroleum-based products.

Action: TTC and PAC recommend the Policy Board authorize the Fresno COG Board Chair to sign the letter in support of SB 325, the Central California Railroad Authority Act.

G. Status Update of the Route Adoption Study of the West Bound 180 Corridor, Bob Hull, Caltrans

Summary: Bob Hull, Caltrans will give an update on the study. Information and a map are included in the meeting package.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

H. Caltrans Report [CALTRANS]

Summary: A verbal report will be given by Caltrans staff. A written report is included in the package.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

Fresno COG Sitting As the Council of Fresno County Governments Policy Board

III. REAFFIRM ALL ACTIONS TAKEN WHILE SITTING AS THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

All items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by COG staff and will be approved by one motion if no member of the Committee or public wishes to comment or ask questions. If comment or discussion is desired by anyone, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered in the listed sequence with an opportunity for any member of the public to address the Committee concerning the item before action is taken.

A. February 24, 2011 Executive Minutes

B. Monthly Legislative Update [GARZA]

Summary: The enclosed report includes current bills in the 2011 legislative session that are relevant to the COG.

- To locate current and past year **state bill information** go to the Official California Legislative Information webpage at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/>
- To locate current and past year **federal bill information** go to THOMAS, The Library of Congress's bill information website (in the spirit of Thomas Jefferson) at: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Please contact staff person, Melissa Garza, if you have any questions.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

C. Regional Clearinghouse [SOBRADO]

Summary: Your agenda package includes this month's Clearinghouse Calendar containing "Project Notification and Review Reports" for grant proposal.

City of Fresno is applying for a Federal Aviation Administration Airport Improvement Program in the amount of \$166,250 (Federal), and \$8,750 State funding for a grant total in the amount of \$175,000.

Action: Per Board procedure, unless an item is pulled from the Consent Calendar, tacit authorization is given for staff to forward any comment(s) received, or any Committee/Board comment(s) generated as a result of this informational item, to the appropriate agency. It is understood that if in the event this item should be pulled from the consent calendar, discussion and comment by the Committee members and the public will be taken.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. High Speed Rail Update [BOREN]

Summary: Staff will provide an update at the meeting.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

B. Fresno COG 2011 One Voice DC Trip Update [GARZA]

Summary: Staff will provide an update at the meeting. Information about Fresno COG's One Voice activities is available online at: <http://www.fresnocog.org/document.php?pid=216>

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

C. Fresno COG 2011 One Voice Sacramento Trip – April 5th and 6th [GARZA]

Summary: Staff will provide an update at the meeting. Information about Fresno COG's One Voice activities is available online at: <http://www.fresnocog.org/document.php?pid=216>

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

D. California Consulting LLC Report [SAMUELIAN]

Summary: Steve Samuelian, California Consulting, LLC will provide a verbal report at the Policy Board. A written report is included in the meeting package.

Action: Information item. Direction may be provided at the discretion of the Policy Board.

VI. ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR [BOREN]

Summary: The special Board elections held earlier this year were to accommodate Board vacancies resulting from the November elections. Fresno COG's JPA calls for annual elections in March of each year.

Action: Election of Policy Board Chair and Vice Chair

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Items from Staff
- B. Items from Members

VIII. PRESENTATIONS

A. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the COG on items within its jurisdiction but not on this agenda. **Note: Prior to action by the COG on any item on this agenda.**

***Items listed as information still leave the option for guidance/direction actions by the Committee.**

****All enclosures are available on our website at www.fresnocog.org – Committees and Agendas**

