

October 18, 2011

NOTICE
Call for Regional Priorities
Fresno Council of Governments 2012 “One Voice”

Dear Interested Stakeholders,

Over the past several years, the Fresno COG has embarked upon an annual “One Voice” advocacy visit to Washington D.C. The purpose of the trip is to seek regulatory relief and federal funding for issues and projects of regional significance within Fresno County. To this end, a contingent of elected officials, public administrators and regional stakeholders from the public and private sectors travel to Washington D.C. The goal of this “One Voice” delegation is to meet with our congressional and federal departmental representatives and advocate for the regional priorities that have been identified and prioritized through a COG selection process. In the past we looked forward to the Fresno region garnering federal earmarked funds that it might not receive otherwise. However, Congress has issued a moratorium on earmarks, so now more than ever it is important to advocate for policy and regulatory reform, and preservation of funding that is crucial to project delivery.

Our representatives in Washington have welcomed our efforts and responded positively. We have been encouraged to continue the effort, as our presence helps the representatives understand our regional priorities as they to shepherd them through the federal process. With that encouragement in mind, we are in the midst of launching our 10th annual “One Voice” endeavor. The trip is planned for February 25-March 1, 2012.

With input from our Washington, D.C. lobbyist, a task force, comprised of participants from earlier “One Voice” trips, developed a regional priority submittal criteria. These criteria require that:

- Each regional priority that an agency submits for review and selection must be a request for regulatory reform with an example of how the policy revision will impact local projects. Please identify the project and provide all of the information requested in the application packet.
- The request for regulatory reform must advance the goals of the region; therefore, the policy request and the project impacted should be of regional significance.
- Example projects must be limited to transportation and infrastructure (*physical infrastructure/capital improvements*) or be social/economic initiatives that have regional impact and an economic development focus
- Regional priorities should be limited in number and in dollar amount
 - o Projects should be shelf ready
 - o Projects should be collaborative in nature (i.e. more than one agency involved)
 - o Projects should cover a large service area, have potential to have a meaningful impact on the region, have support of decision makers, have quality leadership, fall within the community agenda and meet a “highest and best use” standard

- ITEM IV C
- Proponent(s) submitting a regional priority must be part of the “One Voice” delegation going to Washington D.C.
 - All submittals must include a one-paragraph abstract of the priority request, and if selected, a one-page “white paper” will be required.
 - Priority may be given to the requests that were part of the 2011 “One Voice” priority list that meet the criteria and to projects that have received partial funding.

We are now ready to solicit Regional Priorities for the 2012 trip. This letter is intended to serve as a call for regional priorities. The process entails COG’s contacting a large number of public agencies and regional stakeholders, allowing them until November 10, 2011 to determine if they have regionally significant priorities they would like to submit, convening the task force to select and prioritize the requests and gaining COG Policy Board approval of the priority list. These efforts will culminate with the “One Voice” trip to Washington D.C in February, 2012.

Enclosed is a project application that you will need to complete if you have a request for regulatory reform and an example project to accompany your request that you would like to see considered for the regional priority list. This package is also available on our website at www.fresnocog.org.

The deadline for submittal of project application forms is 5:00 PM on Thursday, November 10, 2011. Forms should be submitted to mday@fresnocog.org or mailed to:

Fresno Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721

Thanks in advance for your interest in this important process. If you should have any questions regarding “One Voice”, please feel free to contact me or Melissa Garza at 559-233-4148, Extension 210.

Sincerely,



TONY BOREN, Executive Director
Fresno Council of Governments

Enclosures: Application
 Sample format
 Simon & Company Recommendations

2012 “One Voice” – Regional Priority Request Application

Please answer the questions below in as much as detail as possible.

Organization making request: _____

Division: _____

Address: _____

Contact person(s) in organization: _____

Phone number(s): _____

Email: _____

Regulatory/Policy Reform request: Description, including purpose and need (“the ask”): please attach a one-paragraph abstract.

Name of project impacted by the above policy revision: _____

Project location: _____

Amount being requested (please include future years, if applicable; e.g.: “\$50,000 for FY 211, \$250,000/3 years”; “\$100,000 for FY 2012; ongoing program”):

Prior federal funding history (e.g.: “\$0 in FY 2010; \$100,000 in FY 2009, last year authorized”):

Did you make a similar request last year for FY 2011, through 2011 “One Voice” or on your own (if yes, please note project name and amount) _____

Sources and amounts of matching funds (state, county and local contributions): _____

Possible funding sources: _____

Please identify the Congressional and Senate district(s) in which the project lies: _____

Current status of project for which request is made: _____

Individual(s) from your organization must participate in the 2012 One Voice trip to Washington, D.C.(please provide names of possible delegates): _____

PLEASE ATTACH AS MANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS APPLY TO YOUR PRIORITY REQUEST:
ATTACH AN ABSTRACT FOR THE REGULATORY REFORM REQUEST, ALONG WITH A NARRATIVE AND 3
PHOTOS FOR THE PROJECT– SEE SAMPLE

Project Description, including purpose and need and how the project is or will be impacted by the proposed policy revision _____

Background/Justification for this request (budget projections, reports, brochures, letters of support, etc.) _____

Which representatives, departments, or organizations in Washington, D.C. would be most interested in this project? _____

What other organizations, in California, Washington DC, or nationally, might be expected to support this request? _____

What other organizations, in California, Washington DC, or nationally, might be expected to oppose this request? _____

How is the Project related to economic development? _____

Request for Regulatory Reform**THE REQUEST:**

We are requesting that the Internal Revenue Service be directed to provide to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development aggregate data based on the designated regions (through ZIP codes) to allow for 1) better tracking, 2) better management and 3) quantifiable defense for the renewal of this incentive program.

ABSTRACT:

The Empowerment Zone (EZ) was established to spur the creation of businesses in economically distressed areas and to create job opportunities for economically disadvantaged workers. These tax incentives are an important component of the larger economic development and revitalization strategies in these federally designated areas. The extension of these tax incentives are part of the current on-going budget negotiations. To advocate that these tax incentives be renewed, the designated regions must be able to provide accurate data that reflects the efficacy of the program.

**EXAMPLE OF A REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT THAT WOULD
BENEFIT FROM THE ABOVE REQUEST****GOLDEN STATE CORRIDOR
PHASED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS**

PROJECT NEED: To facilitate revitalization and job creation by upgrading transportation infrastructure along Golden State Blvd. Golden State is a regional industrial and commercial corridor that parallels Freeway 99 and links three neighboring cities (Fowler, Selma, and Kingsburg) with the Fresno Metro Area.

The proposed infrastructure improvements will create a dynamic economic synergy in an underutilized and under invested area with outdated and deteriorating infrastructure. This investment exemplifies smart growth by stimulating attraction of new jobs in infill areas near major transportation corridors and the Cities' population centers, reducing vehicle travel and emissions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Golden State Corridor Economic Development Project is an initial phase of a long-term revitalization effort to upgrade transportation infrastructure and improve mobility along the Corridor. Preliminary environmental work and design has been initiated by the partners using Measure C local transportation sales tax funds.

The project comprises construction of high-priority intersection improvements and a class I connecting trail along the Golden State corridor to improve safety and mobility for commercial users and local residents. Improvements variously include roadway rehabilitation, traffic signals, channelization and auxiliary lanes, railroad grade crossing protection, bike lane delineation, trail and pedestrian facilities, and landscape and hardscape features. The locations are:

- South Avenue, Temperance Avenue, and Valley Drive intersections with Golden State Blvd. (Fowler)
- Dockery Avenue and Dinuba Avenue intersections with Golden State Blvd. and new public road connection at Highland/Dockery (Selma)
- Kamm/Bethel Avenues and Stroud Avenue Intersections with Golden State Blvd. and Simpson Avenue improvements (Kingsburg)
- 1 mile of class I trail (County and/or City)

The Golden State Corridor is an area specifically planned for industrial and commercial development within the contiguous spheres of influence of the cities of Fowler, Selma, and Kingsburg. It has excellent access to State Route 99 and the Union Pacific Railroad. The three cities have made a concerted effort to develop a comprehensive proposal to build on the natural logistic advantages of the corridor. Additional funding for Golden State has been secured as a Regional Measure C Tier 1 project. Each of the cities will construct staged improvements within their jurisdiction as funds allow, and each activity will provide independent utility.

RECIPIENT:

Fresno Council of Governments, on behalf of the cities of Fowler, Kingsburg, and Selma, and Fresno County.

CONTACT:

Tony Boren, Deputy Director, Fresno Council of Governments
(559) 233-4148 or email: tboren@fresnocog.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tony Boren
Marla Day
Barbara Steck
Melissa Garza

FROM: Len Simon

SUBJECT: 2011 Fresno COG “One Voice”: *Observations and Recommendations*

DATE: May 6, 2011

Thank you again for the opportunity to work with the 2011 Fresno COG “One Voice” delegation. Especially after “*The Lost One Voice of 2010*” it was great to get back in gear and see you all. It seemed everyone’s participation was excellent and the agenda worked well.

Here’s some observations and recommendations based on the total experience and events since:

- (1) The Later Date. I think the later date worked quite well in terms of the weather and Congress and the Administration being further ahead on their agendas for the year. *I recommend roughly those same dates for 2012.*
- (2) The Congressional Visitors Center (CVC). The CVC makes a great base for “One Voice”, with its comfort, easy access for lawmakers, and first-rate facilities. *I recommend the same venue for next year.*
- (3) Earmarks. As of now it looks certain that the earmark ban will be sustained, certainly for appropriations projects and more than likely for authorization projects. *I recommend that the transition that “One Voice” has been making away from projects and towards policy continue.*
- (4) Going to the Agencies. I think it worked well for the “One Voice” delegates to head to the agencies for afternoon meetings – a good experience for both sides. *I recommend we continue this practice.*
- (5) The White House. It was great to have the White House Council on Environmental Quality to join with us at “One Voice”. *I recommend we invite them back next year and also try to secure the White House Office of Intergovernmental Relations.*
- (6) Transportation Reauthorization. We will make some progress on transportation reauthorization this year but the big push is likely to come next year. *I recommend we make that a major focus of “One Voice 2012”.*
- (7) Briefing Book. I was impressed as to how streamlined and compact the COG Briefing Book was in 2011. *I think that approach is a good one and should be continued for 2012.*
- (8) Presentations. Providing the “Briefing Book” to Congressional staff and others on a flash stick in addition to hard copy is a good idea. *It should be continued.*

(9) Allied Organizations. It is great to meet with NARC – they bring a very sharp perspective. *I recommend additional organizations involved n priority issues be added as well.*

(10) Press Briefing. Rather than having the press randomly track down “One Voice” delegates, *I recommend we set up a press briefing in an organized fashion at the end of the meeting.*

We hope that you find this information helpful as you begin to think about “One Voice” 2012. Please let us know if you have any questions or if we may be of further assistance.

We look forward to talking with you soon.