

Fresno County Regional Long-Range Transit Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #1 Notes

Tuesday, May 30, 2017

1. Introductions

- a. Fresno COG & Partners: Fresno Area Express (FAX), Clovis Transit, and Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA)

Kristine Cai, Fresno COG
Amy Hance, City of Clovis

Jeff Long, FAX
Moses Stites, FCRTA

- b. VRPA Team: VRPA, CDM Smith, Mobility Planners and Nelson\Nygaard

Richard Lee, VRPA Technologies
(VRPA)
Hector Guerra, VRPA

Via Telephone:
Cliff Chambers, Mobility Planners
Ronny Kraft, Mobility Planners
Greta Vohlers, Nelson\Nygaard
Bhanu Kala, CDM Smith

- c. Steering Committee Members, representing Cities of Fresno and Clovis, Fresno County, smaller cities, Caltrans and other stakeholders

Jill Gormley, City of Fresno
Dwight Kroll, City of Clovis
Harpreet Kooner, County of Fresno
Rey Leon, Mayor City of Huron

Lorena Mendibles, Caltrans
Mike Navarro, Caltrans
Amanda Monaco, Leadership Council
for Justice & Accountability

- d. Transit Needs

Rey Leon, City of Huron, discussed that the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) currently is conducting a corridor study that is looking at passenger rail in the San Joaquin Railroad corridor, which parallels SR 198 in Tulare and Kings Counties. Huron is the proposed western terminus in the study. Richard Lee noted that VRPA is part of the project team, and that this study will be considered in relation to the Long Range Transit Plan.

Amanda Monaco, Leadership Council for Justice & Accountability, stated that her organization's main focus is seeing a long-term vision for existing communities, and investing in transportation infrastructure in disadvantaged communities in rural Fresno County.

Amy Hance, City of Clovis, said that Clovis Transit is looking at increased connectivity with neighboring communities, which include California State University, Fresno and the City College system. Clovis Transit is also exploring electrification of their fleet and all associated infrastructure.

Jeff Long, Fresno Area Express (FAX), stated that they are looking at the establishment of some new transit centers. Potential locations include California State University, Fresno, the north end of Fresno, and the Fancher Creek development. There are also needs that the system has identified but there are currently no funds for service. Such items include expanding service west of SR 99, and linking up to the recently opened college campus in northeast Fresno.

Harpreet Kooner, County of Fresno noted the need to coordinate transit infrastructure (e.g. stops and shelters) with other infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks and bikeways).

Jill Gormley, City of Fresno, said that the City will be interested in how their work with infrastructure can be integrated with the transit and land use decisions that are being made.

Dwight Kroll, City of Clovis, stated that Clovis' General Plan update in 2014 includes land use planning that incorporates public transit element. This includes higher density in Loma Vista and Heritage Grove, Clovis two first urban villages. The City of Clovis also intends to collect fees from development to be able to install improvements for public transit in the urban villages.

2. Relationship to other studies. The LRTP will build on prior transit studies as well as new and ongoing studies that relate to the long-term future of transit in Fresno county. These

- a. FAX Route Restructure Public Engagement Study

The goal the FAX Route Restructure Public Engagement Study is to adjust routes and services so that the BRT is optimized, and to ensure that all transit users benefit from and understand the changes. The Route Restructure/Public Engagement study is just getting under way. FAX's BRT services will launch in early 2018.

- b. Fresno COG 2018 RTP/SCS

The Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy is a 25-year transportation plan updated every four years. The 2018 RTP/SCS is underway and a draft plan will be developed by the end of 2017. Transit projects that can help meet the RTP/SCS goal of substantially reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) due to less private vehicle use is a key linkage between the RTP/SCS and the LRTP.

Fresno COG Active Transportation Plans (ATP)

Fresno COG is also currently conducting a regional Active Transportation Plan to integrate and coordinate pedestrian and bicycle planning throughout the region. One common goal between the LRTP and the ATP is for improved bicycle and pedestrian connection to and from transit for the "first and last mile" of transit trips.

- c. Transit Operators' Short Range Transit Plans (SRTPs)

SRTPs provide direction in planning transit system operations looking ahead 5 – 7 years; these plans are also used to justify federal and state grants for transit operations and capital projects. FCRTA's Rural Fresno County Area SRTP was adopted by Fresno COG in April, and the Urban Area SRTP (covering FAX and Clovis Transit's service areas) is slated for adoption in June. These plans will provide an important base for longer term (2050) LRTP.

- d. Other relevant background plans and documents

Other plans and studies and interest to the LRTP include general plans for the Cities and County of Fresno, High-Speed Rail studies, and Caltrans statewide Public Transportation and Rail Plans.

3. Project Overview and Vision & Goals Discussion

a. Proposed Vision Statement

The steering committee agreed that proposed Vision Statement #2 best encompasses the goals and objectives that steering committee members are most concerned with. The vision statements reads as follows: “A responsive, integrated public transportation system that is **safe**, affordable, uses **innovative technologies**, provides equitable **access**, **enhances regional and local mobility**, and provides sustainable transportation **choices**. The system will have multiple operators to ensure **responsiveness to local constituents**, but will be perceived by users as **one seamless system** throughout Fresno County.”

It was suggested by the steering committee that the word “welcoming” be added to the first part of the Vision Statement.

There was also a discussion about whether the word “choices” in the proposed Vision Statement should be replaced with the word “options.” The thought was that transit riders do not get to choose if they want to use public transit because they are transit dependent.

b. Goals of the Project

- i. **Integrate** the aims, projects and operations of Fresno’s major transit agencies
- ii. Establish a **2050 vision** shared by elected officials and stakeholders
- iii. Develop a public transportation **investment guide** that:
 - Meets State / federal goals for sustainability, preservation, mobility, safety, innovation, economy, health and equity of the transit systems
 - Identifies long-range transit and multimodal projects for placement into Fresno COG’s 2018 and 2022 RTP/SCS
 - Bitwise Industries is the mothership of technological education, collaboration and innovation in Fresno Public Outreach: Plans and Events

4. Public Outreach: Plans and Events

During the project’s April 28 kickoff meeting it was determined that the LRTP outreach should occur in the fall, before the holiday season. The consultant team is targeting September/October for dedicated outreach workshops. There will be one urban workshop in Fresno-Clovis, and two rural workshops, one for communities west of SR 99, and one for communities east of SR 99.

During the summer, and prior to the LRTP workshops, the study team will track and provide information for RTP/SCS workshops and other outreach events to inform attendees of the LRTP, its goals, and the upcoming fall workshops.

5. Next Steering Committee meeting/call date and time

The next Steering Committee Meeting was scheduled for: **Tuesday, July 11th from 2:00 - 4:00PM at Fresno COG.**

6. Other items/Next steps

In the course of the meeting it was suggested that two agencies be contacted and kept apprised of the progress of the LRTP:

- ✓ Ron Hughes of CalVans, an innovative provider of vanpool services throughout the Valley.
- ✓ Irma Olguin Jr, Co-Founder & CTO, Bitwise Industries. Bitwise is a Fresno based consortium involved in technological education, collaboration and innovation in Fresno. Rey Leon suggested that Bitwise could provide useful advice on software applications that can enhance transit and paratransit coordination in the Fresno region.

Over the next six weeks, the consultant team will be focused on reviewing and summarizing existing transit conditions and reviewing prior and concurrent transit related plans and studies.

7. Adjourn – At approximately 3:45 PM.