



# **Fresno Council of Governments**

## **Final Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan**

**Approved by the Fresno COG Policy Board on July 28, 2016**



**2016**

# FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS 2016 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE NUMBER
I. Introduction	
About Fresno Council of Governments .....	3
Purpose of the Public Participation Plan.....	3
Fresno COG’s Commitment to Public Participation .....	4
II. Federal & State Public Participation Requirements	
Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act .....	6
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 .....	7
Executive Orders.....	7
The Brown Act.....	8
Americans with Disabilities Act .....	9
Code of Federal Regulations.....	9
2008 California Legislation .....	9
Other Requirements .....	9
III. Opportunities for Project Public Engagement	
Fresno COG’s Boards, Commissions and Committees .....	10
Valleywide Committees.....	15
IV. Project or Plan Specific Public Participation Requirements	
Regional Transportation Plan .....	17
Federal Transportation Improvement Program.....	19
Federal Transit Administration Program of Projects	
Public Participation Requirements.....	22
Annual Listing of Obligated Projects .....	23
Congestion Management Process .....	23
Air Quality Conformity Public and Interagency Consultation .....	23

Intergovernmental Review Via Regional and State Information Clearinghouses .....	24
Unmet Transit Needs Assessment .....	24
V. Consultation and Coordination.....	26
VI. Public Participation Plan Evaluation and Updates .....	27
VII. Public Participation Strategies.....	28
VIII. Additional Fresno COG Public Participation Policies .....	32

## Appendices 34

---

Appendix A: 2018 Fresno COG Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy Public Participation Plan	
Appendix B: Consultation Listing	
Appendix C: Other Organizational Contacts	
Appendix D: Public Notice Documentation	
Appendix E: Public Comment	

# FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS 2016 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

As a Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) addresses issues of mutual concern to the county and the cities in the Fresno County region, and satisfies Federal and State transportation planning and programming mandates. Fresno COG provides a forum for planning, discussion, and study of area-wide issues, prepares and adopts regional plans and programs, serves as the regional agency for federal and state transportation programs and funding opportunities and addresses other area-wide issues based on the desires of the member jurisdictions. Fresno COG represents its member jurisdictions as planner, programmer, and broker in developing an efficient and effective inter-modal transportation system that provides for the mobility needs of people, goods, and services while protecting the environment.

Fresno COG and its member agencies are responsible for determining policy, adopting plans and programs, and awarding funds to implement these plans. This procedural document is intended to give the Fresno COG elected officials and staff guidance in providing for public involvement and interagency consultation in the regional planning process. It contains procedures and strategies Fresno COG uses to instigate, seek and foster greater public involvement regarding transportation matters within its discretion. Fresno COG's documented participation plan defines a process for providing reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

### PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Fresno COG developed this Public Participation Plan (PPP) as a guide to meeting the Metropolitan Planning Organization requirements for early coordination, public involvement and project development. The PPP is intended to provide direction for public participation activities conducted by Fresno COG and contains the requirements, procedures, strategies and techniques used by Fresno COG to communicate with the public and appropriate, affected agencies. This plan defines a process that outlines roles, responsibilities and key decision points for consulting with affected public agencies, the transportation sector, transportation providers and other interested parties, and providing reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

## FRESNO COG'S COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Commitment 1: Early Engagement

- Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to, a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)
- Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about Fresno COG's issues and processes
- Early coordination with appropriate agencies and the public aids to determine the type of environmental review documents and action required, the scope of the document, the level of analysis, and related environmental requirements, from the inception of a proposal for action to preparation of the environmental review documents

### Commitment 2: Access to All

- Employ visualization techniques to describe the RTP and FTIP
- Make public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web
- Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services
- No individual shall, on the basis or grounds of disability, race, age or sex, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities, or be subjected to discrimination by Fresno COG. All public meeting agendas prominently display the following notification:

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.

- When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the [metropolitan transportation plan](#) and the TIP.
- (d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the [metropolitan transportation plan](#) and the TIP.

**Commitment 3: Response to Public Comment**

- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the RTP and the FTIP
- Forward all formal public comments to the Fresno COG Policy Board or appropriate committee for consideration during decision making

**Commitment 4: Open Communication**

- Provide additional opportunity for public comment, if the final RTP or FTIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the Fresno COG and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts
- Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes

**Commitment 5: Review**

- Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in this PPP to ensure a full and open participation process.

## II. FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS

Developing an effective public involvement/participation plan involves the identification of techniques designed to meet the needs of a given situation relating to the development of a transportation plan, program, project, or the need for public input regarding the operation and management of a transportation facility. Current Federal statutes and regulations provide general guidelines for public involvement processes and procedures. There is great flexibility available to transportation agencies in developing specific public involvement/participation plans. However, while the set of techniques for any given situation may differ depending upon such factors as demographics and identified potential impacts, the general approach to developing a public involvement/participation plan contains element that are relevant and responsive to all communities. This information is provided to help practitioners identify legal requirements related to engaging the public that were created to protect and promote good practices. Phrases are provided from statute, regulation, and executive orders relating to different aspects of engaging the public. To understand the broader context of those requirements, we encourage you to refer to the complete statute, regulation, or executive order.

### Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

New Federal Surface Transportation legislation, known as the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, (H.R. 22), signed into law in December 2016, underscores the need for public involvement as did its predecessor. The law requires metropolitan planning agencies such as Fresno COG to “provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation agency employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, public ports and certain private providers of transportation, including intercity bus operators and employer-based commuting programs and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on transportation plans and programs. In addition, MPOs should consult with agencies and officials responsible for tourism and natural disaster risk reduction in developing plans and TIPs.

The FAST Act also requires Fresno COG — when developing the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) — to coordinate transportation plans with expected growth, economic development, environmental protection and other related planning activities within our region. Toward this end, this Public Participation Plan outlines key decision points for consulting with affected local, regional, state and federal agencies and Tribal governments.

## TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that transportation planning and programming be non-discriminatory on the basis of race, color, national origin or disability. The federal statute was further clarified and supplemented by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and a series of federal statutes enacted in the 1990s relating to the concept of environmental justice. The fundamental principles of environmental justice include:

- Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Ensuring full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and
- Preventing the denial, reduction or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income communities.

## EXECUTIVE ORDERS

An Executive Order is an order given by the President to federal agencies. As a recipient of federal revenues, Fresno COG assists federal transportation agencies in complying with these orders.

- Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

In February 1994, President William Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice for Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which mandates that federal agencies make achieving environmental justice part of their missions. This order requires that disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations be identified and addressed in order to achieve environmental justice. Minority populations are defined in the order as Black/African-American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian and Alaskan Native. Low-income populations are defined in the order as persons whose household income (or in the case of a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines, with those at 0 percent of median income classified as low income and those at 50 percent of median income classified as very-low income.

- Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166 states that people who speak limited English should have meaningful access to federally conducted and federally funded programs and activities. It requires that



all federal agencies identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency and develop and implement a system to provide those services so all persons can have meaningful access to services.

- Executive Order 13175 — Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments  
Establishes regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have tribal implications, to strengthen the government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes, and to reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian tribes.
- Executive Order 12372: Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs  
Executive Order 12372 calls for intergovernmental review of projects to ensure that federally funded or assisted projects do not inadvertently interfere with state and local plans and priorities. The Executive Order does not replace public participation, comment, or review requirements of other federal laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), but gives the states an additional mechanism to ensure federal agency responsiveness to state and local concerns.

#### THE BROWN ACT (STATE OF CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 54950-54962)

The Ralph M. Brown Act governs the meeting and actions of governing boards of local public agencies and their created bodies. Requirements of the Brown Act also apply to any committee or other subsidiary body of a local agency, whether permanent or temporary, decision-making or advisory, which is created by such a governing board. The Brown Act sets minimum standards for open meetings relative to access to the public, location of meetings, notice posting, agenda distribution, and public input. The public agency may adopt reasonable regulations ensuring the public's right to address the agency, including regulations to limit the total amount of time allocated for public testimony. The Fresno COG Board and its standing committees all adhere to these requirements involving proper noticing, access and the ability to address the Board and committees.

Due to time constraints, unscheduled comments by the public may be limited to 3 minutes in length, however the agency encourages interested citizens to provide written copies of presentations to the Board/Committees, particularly if the statement is too long to be presented in its entirety. Citizens unable to attend the meetings may submit their concerns and ideas in writing to staff, who will then present the comments to the respective Board/Committee in either a written or oral format.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) stipulates involving the community, particularly those with disabilities, in the development and improvement of services. All events held for programs or projects with Federal aid and open to the general public must be made accessible to everyone, including the disabled. Fresno COG is in compliance with the ADA by providing accessible and usable formats, notifications and locations for workshops, meetings and public hearings, consulting with individuals from the disabled community, conducting outreach by maintaining an extensive mailing and email lists, developing contacts, and by other means of notification and accommodation to participate in the planning process.

## CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is an annual codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. The CFR is divided into 50 titles representing broad areas subject to Federal regulation. Each Title is divided into chapters that are assigned to agencies issuing regulations pertaining to that broad subject area. The purpose of the CFR is to present the official and complete text of agency regulations in one organized publication and to provide a comprehensive and convenient reference for all those who may need to know the text of general and permanent Federal regulations. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) public participation requirements outlined in the CFR (23 CFR 45.316) are carefully considered and addressed throughout this entire PPP.

## 2008 CALIFORNIA LEGISLATION

State law (SB 375, Steinberg, Chapter 728, 2008 Statutes) calls on agencies such as Fresno COG to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy — a new element of the Regional Transportation Plan — to integrate planning for growth and housing with long-range transportation investments, to strive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for cars and light trucks. The law also calls for a separate Public Participation Plan for development of the Regional Transportation Plan and the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Appendix A contains the Public Participation Plan for the Fresno region's long-range transportation plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A number of other federal and state laws call on Fresno COG to involve, consult with and notify the public in its decisions. Fresno COG complies with all other public notification requirements of the California Public Records Act, the California Environmental Quality Act and Assembly Bill 52, as well as other applicable state and federal laws.

### III. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

#### FRESNO COG BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Below are descriptions of each of Fresno COG's standing or advisory boards, committees and commissions. They offer the organization an excellent opportunity for expanding public participation opportunities during the transportation planning process. This is accomplished not only by active membership but by presentations made before them and attendance at the open meetings. To find out more about each group, who staffs them and how to get involved with the work they are doing, contact the Fresno COG at 559-233-4148, email COG staff at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org) or view each committee with a link to related webpages on the Fresno COG website at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org).

The following statement is placed on each Fresno COG formal meeting agenda:

*"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."*

#### ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM MULTIDISCIPLINARY ADVISORY GROUP

The Active Transportation Program (ATP) Multidisciplinary Advisory Group (MAG) assists in the development and update of the program guidelines and scoring criteria, and participates in the evaluation of project applications. In forming the MAG, the Subcommittee sought participants with expertise in bicycling and pedestrian transportation, including Safe Routes to Schools projects, and in projects benefiting disadvantaged communities. The representatives are geographically balanced representing tribal agencies, state agencies, FCOG, local jurisdictions in Fresno County, and non-governmental organizations. The MAG prioritizes and ranks the applications, and ensures that 25% of available funds are dedicated to projects and programs benefiting Disadvantaged Communities as identified in the state guidelines and in the Fresno COG Regional Competitive ATP Guidelines.

#### AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION OF FRESNO COUNTY

The Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) is in existence to protect the public health, safety and welfare by ensuring that orderly development and prevention of excessive noise and safety hazards around public use airports is followed in accordance to state and local laws. ALUCs prepare Compatibility Land Use Plans (CLUP), establish the policies on land uses around the airport ensuring

they are compatible with airport operations, evaluate the compatibility of proposed local agency land use policy actions with the relevant provisions in the CLUP, and they review individual development projects to ensure they are within the noise and safety standards in accordance with state laws and the CLUP.

#### ASSOCIATION FOR THE BEAUTIFICATION OF HIGHWAY 99

The Association for the Beautification of Highway 99 was formed in 1998. Its members include concerned businessmen, community activists, government agency staff and elected officials. The group's role is to advise Caltrans, Fresno County, and the cities of Fresno, Fowler, Selma, and Kingsburg on matters relating to the aesthetics of Highway 99. Fresno COG provides staff support to the Association, and also funded the *Highway 99 Beautification Master Plan* of 2000, and the updated to the 2000 Master Plan which will be completed in late 2016. The Committee typically meets bimonthly at the Fresno COG, on the fourth Monday of the month.

#### CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS (CMP) STEERING COMMITTEE

The CMP was developed to provide guidance to the congestion management process, which is required by the federal planning regulations. The CMP Steering Committee consists of representatives from the local cities/the County, Caltrans, transit operators, and the general public. The CMP Steering Committee has extensive technical expertise in traffic engineering, and provides advice on subjects such as traffic monitoring, traffic congestion, system performance, etc. The Committee currently works with Fresno COG on the CMP Update, and reviews and approves important matrix such as performance measures, CMP network, etc.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

Fresno COG traditionally forms an Environmental Justice (EJ) Task Force to assist Fresno COG in identifying target EJ populations and developing the Fresno COG EJ Plan. The Task Force was composed of transportation planners, community leaders, and representatives of low-income and minority populations. They provided input and guidance during the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update in 2012-2014 to assist staff with development, ensuring it complies with Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements.

Fresno COG is now convening an Environmental Justice Advisory Group, structured to serve as a subcommittee of Fresno COG's Transportation Technical Committee (TTC). The subcommittee would meet when Fresno COG staff, the TTC, the Policy Advisory Committee or the Fresno COG Policy Board request recommendations on items involving Environmental Justice populations. They would also meet to assist Fresno COG staff in setting thresholds for Environmental Justice Populations for Environmental Justice Plans. The subcommittee would report all advisory actions to

the TTC through an Environmental Justice Representative. Then the TTC's recommendations would be referred to the Policy Advisory Committee and Fresno COG Policy Board as needed. The Fresno COG Policy Board approved the following 11 positions on the EJ Advisory Subcommittee:

- One Member agency staff who represents the Urban Fresno County region
- One Member agency staff who represents the West Side of the Fresno County region
- One Member agency staff who represents the East Side of the Fresno County region
- Minority representatives from the following EJ populations: Hispanic, African American, Asian American, Native American
- 2 Low Income Representatives
- One Senior (Person 65 or older)
- One Person with disabilities to represent the disabled community

### FRESNO COG POLICY BOARD

Policy decisions are made by the Fresno COG Policy Board. The Board is composed of the mayors of each incorporated city and the Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors, or their designated elected representatives. The Fresno COG Policy Board meets on the last Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at Fresno COG.

### FRESNO COUNTY MODEL STEERING COMMITTEE

The Fresno County Model Steering Committee oversees improvements and updates to the travel demand model. The Model Steering Committee is a subcommittee of the Fresno COG Transportation Technical Committee that meets as needed. The model and its assumptions are continually updated based upon the latest planning information.

### MEASURE C CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Measure C Citizen Oversight Committee was developed as an advisory body to the Fresno COG Board and the Fresno County Transportation Authority, to inform the public, and to ensure that the Measure C funding program revenues and expenditures are spent as promised to the public. Fresno COG staffs the Committee and provides technical and administrative assistance to support and publicize the Committee's activities, with the staff assignment subject to approval of the Committee. The Committee meets as deemed necessary on the second Thursday of the month at Fresno COG.

### MEASURE C NEW TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

A The Measure C New Technology Committee works in an advisory fashion to assist COG staff prior to releasing grant applications, by reviewing and updating specific subprogram goals, scope and criteria for project solicitation and selection, and developing a draft timeline for distribution of funds. The committee consists of Fresno COG staff, industry, academia, public, and transit members.

### MEASURE C NEW TECHNOLOGY MULTIDISCIPLINARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A 12-member Measure C New Technology Multidisciplinary Advisory Group (New Tech MAG) has been established for purposes of reviewing, evaluating, scoring and recommending projects for funding as directed by the Fresno COG Policy Board and the Fresno County Transportation Authority Board. The New Tech MAG will make advisory recommendations to the Fresno COG Policy Board and Fresno County Transportation Authority regarding Measure C New Technology Program project funding.

### MEASURE C TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Measure C TOD Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed to provide guidance to the development of the Measure C TOD program. The TOD program was created as part of the transportation sales measure, Measure C, to encourage transit supportive land use, and boost transit ridership. The TOD TAC developed the TOD program guidelines and policies, which provides guidance for the annual award of grant under the TOD program. The TOD TAC also makes recommendations for any revision or update related to the TOD program Guidelines and Policies.

### MEASURE C TOD SCORING COMMITTEE

The Measure C TOD Scoring Committee was created to provide funding recommendation for the Measure C TOD program. The TOD Scoring Committee meets annually. The Committee reviews the TOD grant applications, scores the projects, and makes funding recommendation to Fresno COG's TTC/PAC, and Policy Board. The TOD Scoring Committee consists of COG's member jurisdictions, Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA), transit operator, and public members.

### NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

As a result of Fresno COG's 2014 RTP/SCS update process, this committee was formed to guide the commissioning of a Transportation Needs Assessment study. The Committee identified the scope for the Needs Assessment study, and reviewed and provided comments to the regional gap analysis and the transportation connectivity/accessibility analysis which is part of the Needs Assessment study and currently being conducted by a consultant team.

### POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) is composed of the Chief Administrative Officer or City Manager of each member agency or their designated representative. With the exception of urgency matters, all items must first be considered by the PAC before submission to the Policy Board. The PAC meets on the second Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at Fresno COG.

## REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN ROUNDTABLE

This committee guides the development of Fresno COG's Regional Transportation Plan during the time when the Plan is being updated. RTP's must be updated every 4 years. Membership typically includes Fresno COG staff, Caltrans, member agency representatives, interested stakeholders, transportation sector representatives, business and education representatives and the public-at-large.

## SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Fresno COG Policy Board established its Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) in 1988 to aid in its review of transit issues with emphasis on the annual identification of transit needs within Fresno County. Transit needs include the needs of transit dependent and transit disadvantaged persons, including the elderly, disabled and persons of limited means. The Fresno COG's establishment of this Advisory Council is consistent with State law (SB 498, Chapter 673, 1987) which mandates both the purpose and minimum membership of this body. All SSTAC meetings are open to the public. Citizens can request to be placed on the mailing list to receive committee agendas. SSTAC meets the third Tuesday of the month, January through June or as needed.

## TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) serves as a standing committee that reviews materials and issues monthly before forwarding them to the Policy Advisory Committee. Membership includes member agency staff and representatives from a wide variety of transportation and community interest groups. The TTC meets on the second Friday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at Fresno COG.

## VALLEYWIDE COMMITTEES

Fresno COG staff is also actively involved on Valleywide committees consist of COG staff members from all eight San Joaquin Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). These groups meet regularly on issues of mutual interest. In addition to the committees or groups listed below, the San Joaquin Valley MPOs are also active in the state's high-speed rail efforts, promotion of State Route 99, goods movement through the Valley, RTP/SCS development and other areas of mutual concern. Together they have developed a San Joaquin Valley Council of Governments website: [www.sjvcogs.org](http://www.sjvcogs.org)

### MODEL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Model Coordinating Committee (MCC) has been established to provide a coordinated approach to valley air quality, conformity and transportation modeling issues. The committee's goal is to ensure Valleywide coordination, communication and compliance with Federal and State Clean Air Act requirements. Each of the eight Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) are represented. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the California Air Resources Board and Caltrans are all represented on the committee.

### PROGRAMMING COORDINATION GROUP

The Valley Programming Coordination Group has been established to provide a coordinated approach to Valley air quality and transportation programming issues. The committee's goal is to ensure Valley wide coordination, communication and compliance with federal and state Clean Air Act requirements. Each of the eight Valley Transportation Planning Agencies (TPAs) and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) are represented. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the California Air Resources Board and Caltrans are all represented on the committee.

## SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY GREENPRINT PLANNING PROCESS STEERING & TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Greenprint Planning Process addresses rural land management challenges and opportunities that deepen our understanding of the land, water and living resources in the region and assures that those resources continue to benefit the region economically and environmentally for future generations. The Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee will work to assemble the perspectives of the residents of the region into a shared vision, and to identify a series of strategies for the conservation and management of the region's land, water and living resources. These strategies will be developed with extensive public input and will be based on sound science and economics. The resulting "Greenprint" can then serve as a guide to local, state,



federal and private sector decision makers as they make choices about the future of the Valley's resources.

#### SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES – REGIONAL POLICY COUNCIL

The creation of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council is a key partnership that exemplifies the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies' approach to working on regional issues. This sixteen member Regional Policy Council was established to discuss and build regional consensus on issues of Valley importance. The Council consists of two elected officials and one alternate appointed from each of the regional planning agencies' policy boards. The Council is positioned to have a unique and potentially pivotal position in further Valley collaborative efforts and improving the quality of life for all Valley residents. The Policy Council provides guidance on common interregional policy issues and also represents the San Joaquin Valley at public forums such as the California Transportation Commission, the Governor and his administration, as well as State and Federal legislative bodies that require a common voice from the San Joaquin Valley.

#### SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES – DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE

The Valley Executive Directors meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual importance to all of the Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Meeting agendas, minutes and information about the SJV Directors meetings are available online at [www.sjvcogs.org](http://www.sjvcogs.org).

#### VALLEY PLANNERS NETWORK

In 2007, as part of the Valleywide Blueprint planning activities, the Regional Planning Agencies sponsored the formation of the Valley Blueprint Planners Network (Planners Network). This group, originally called the SJV Blueprint Professional Planning Review Panel, then the San Joaquin Valley Professional Planners Group; and now the Valley Planners Network (VPN), was created to engage professional planners from counties and cities participating in the Blueprint process. Because Fresno COG serves as the lead agency on the Valley Blueprint activities, it continued to host the group, which is chaired by John Wright, former planning director for the City of Clovis. In 2016, the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) at Fresno State took over as the staff lead, while Fresno COG continues to coordinate activities and hosting.

The Planners Network served in an advisory capacity to the Project Managers on major Blueprint activities, such as the selection of the preferred growth scenario. During the Valley Blueprint planning process the Planners Network met quarterly to review and comment on Blueprint issues and progress. Since the adoption of the preferred growth scenario, the Planners

Network continues to meet quarterly to engage local agency staff with regional and state planning topics.

## IV. PROJECT OR PLAN SPECIFIC PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

There are two key transportation initiatives that are specially called out in federal law as needing early and continuing opportunities for public participation — development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). These two documents are linked. The long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) prioritizes and guides all Fresno County transportation development over 25 years. While the FTIP is the programming document that identifies funding for only those programs and projects that are included in the RTP/SCS.

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP)

The RTP is the comprehensive blueprint for transportation investment (transit, highway, local roads, bicycle and pedestrian projects), and establishes the financial foundation for how the region invests in its surface transportation system by identifying how much money is available to address critical transportation needs and setting the policy on how projected revenues are to be spent. The RTP is generally updated every four years, with a limited number of amendments as needed. Because of its comprehensive, long-term vision, the RTP provides the earliest and the best opportunity for interested residents and public agencies to influence Fresno COG's policy and investment priorities for Fresno County transportation. It is at this early RTP development stage where investment priorities and major planning-level project design concepts are established, and broad, regional impacts of transportation on the environment are addressed. Under California Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg, Chapter 728, 2008 Statutes), the RTP must include a SCS to integrate planning for growth and housing with long-range transportation investments, including goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for cars and light trucks.

Opportunities for public participation for the RTP are different for RTP updates versus RTP amendments. RTP Updates include significant revisions to the RTP document, while RTP amendments are generally specific to project scopes, schedules, or costs.

- **RTP Update**

This is a complete update of the most current long-range RTP, which is prepared pursuant to state and federal requirements. The RTP update reflects reaffirmed or new planning priorities and changing projections of growth and travel demand based on a reasonable forecast of future revenues available to the region. As necessary, Fresno COG prepares two technical

companion documents for RTP updates: a program-level Environmental Impact Report per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, and transportation air quality conformity analyses (to ensure clean air mandates are met) per federal Clean Air Act requirements. Certain revisions to the RTP may warrant a revision or update to these technical documents.

Both of the RTP and SB 375 updates call for separate Public Participation Plans that specifically addresses outreach for the RTP and the SCS. Appendix A includes Fresno COG's RTP/SCS Public Participation Plan that details the strategies Fresno COG will use to communicate with nontraditional as well as traditional audiences to include them in the transportation planning process. This program will help ensure that environmental justice issues are addressed and that interested members of the public have ample opportunity to understand and provide meaningful input while the RTP is in its early stages and throughout the planning process.

- **RTP Amendment**

An amendment is a major revision to a long-range RTP, including adding or deleting a project, major changes in project costs, and/or design concept and scope (e.g., changing project locations, open to traffic dates, or the number of through traffic lanes). An amendment requires public review and comment, demonstration that the project can be completed based on expected funding, and/or a finding that the change is consistent with federal transportation conformity mandates. Amendments that require an update to the air quality conformity analysis will be subject to conformity and interagency consultation procedures. Changes to projects that are included in the financially unconstrained portion of the RTP (as information only) do not require an amendment.

- **RTP Administrative Modification**

This is a revision to the RTP for minor changes to project/project phase costs, or funding sources. An administrative modification does *not* require public review and comment, demonstration that the project can be completed based on expected funding, nor a finding that the change is consistent with federal transportation conformity requirements. As such, the public participation process for RTP amendments follows the requirements as outlined for the FTIP, as applicable.

## FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (FTIP)

The Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) implements the policy and investment priorities expressed by the public and adopted by Fresno COG in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In this way, public comments made as part of the RTP are reflected in the FTIP as well. The FTIP covers a four-year timeframe, and all projects included in the FTIP must be consistent with the RTP. The FTIP is a comprehensive listing of Fresno County Area surface transportation projects — including transit, highway, local roadways, bicycle and pedestrian investments that:

- Receive federal funds, or are
- Subject to a federally required action, or are
- Regionally significant, for federal air quality conformity purposes.

The FTIP includes a financial plan that demonstrates there are sufficient revenues to ensure that the funds committed (or “programmed”) to the projects are available to implement the projects or project phases. Adoption of the FTIP also requires a finding of conformity with federal transportation-air quality conformity mandates.

The FTIP is updated every two years, with amendments occurring as needed. FTIP “updates” or “adoptions” are generally considered similar to the Type 5 amendment (see below), and follow a similar public participation process. For FTIP Amendments, FHWA identifies six types, each with specific participation requirements, as indicated below.

Expedited Project Selection Procedures (EPSP) allows eligible projects to be moved between FTIP fiscal years as long as the project cost and scope do not change. Fresno COG staff is federally authorized to utilize EPSP without additional State or Federal approval action. Fresno COG does not require a formal public participation process for EPSP actions. A more detailed description of the EPSP Policy is available from Fresno COG staff upon request and is incorporated into the FTIP document.

Federal rules allow MPOs to group or combine projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual listing. Such grouped projects are often referred to as “Grouped Projects”, also previously referred to as “Lump Sums”. Fresno COG uses this ability to program Grouped Projects within the FTIP. Such projects may be grouped by function (e.g., bike lanes), work type (e.g., maintenance), or geographical area. Once grouped, the MPO is required to maintain, outside of the FTIP, a detail list of the projects contained in each group called a “Grouped Project Detailed Listing”.

Modifications to the projects or costs within the Grouped Project Detailed Listings are conducted on an as needed basis and do not require a formal public participation process. However, any changes to

the overall Grouped Project costs or scope are done in accordance with the amendment types below. Grouped Project Detailed Listings are made available through the Fresno COG website and distributed to Caltrans and FHWA.

### **FTIP Technical Correction**

Technical corrections may be made by Fresno COG staff as necessary. Technical corrections are not subject to an administrative modification or an amendment, and may include revisions such as: changes to information and projects that are included only for illustrative purposes; changes to information outside of the FTIP period; changes to information not required to be included in the FTIP per federal regulations; or changes to correct simple errors or omissions including data entry errors. These technical corrections cannot significantly impact the cost, scope, or schedule within the FTIP period, nor will they be subject to a public review and comment process, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination.

### **FTIP Amendment Type 1. Administrative Modifications**

Administrative Modifications include minor changes to project cost, schedule, or funding sources. Administrative Modifications do not require published public notices, public review and comment or a public hearing, with the exception of certain types of Federal Transit Administration Projects which must go through a formal amendment process. Administrative Modifications only require approval by Fresno COG (\*\*\*see below). State and Federal agencies are notified, but do not take approval action on Administrative Modifications. Administrative Modifications do not require re-demonstration of fiscal constraint or conformity determination. These modifications are posted on Fresno COG's website at the time of action, and are later posted on Caltrans website.

*\*\*\*Consistent with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) letter dated June 7, 2011, Fresno COG has the discretion to delegate authority to the Executive Director to approve FTIP Administrative Modifications to the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) consistent with approved FSTIP/FTIP Administrative Modification and Amendment Procedures. Such delegation of authority was granted as part of Fresno COG's Resolution No. 2011-25 which was reaffirmed on April 26, 2012 and approved by Caltrans on May 11, 2012. The following procedures apply to this delegation of authority: Fresno COG will send copies of the approved administrative modification to Caltrans, FHWA, and FTA. Once the administrative modification is approved by Fresno COG, the administrative modification will be deemed part of the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP). Fresno COG will demonstrate in a subsequent amendment that the net financial change from each administrative modification has been*

*accounted for. Caltrans will conduct periodic reviews of Fresno COG's administrative modification process to confirm adherence to the procedures. Noncompliance with the procedures will result in revocation of the MPO's delegation.*

**FTIP Amendment (Type 2. Formal Amendment) – Funding Changes**

Type 2 amendments primarily include project cost changes that are greater than minor changes identified under Administrative Modification procedures. The projects in a Type 2 amendment do not change in design concept or scope and the conformity analysis years as assumed for the regional analysis of the currently conforming RTP/SCS and the FTIP remain unchanged. Type 2 amendments do not require published public notices or a public hearing, with the exception of certain types of Federal Transit Administration Projects. Type 2 Formal Amendments require approval by Fresno COG, Caltrans, and FHWA/FTA. Publicly accessible notification of a Type 2 formal amendment is posted on Fresno COG's website at least 7 days prior to action, and distributed to local agency partners through Fresno COG's standing committees. Fresno COG will consider public comments on the amendment prior to approval action.

**FTIP Amendment (Type 3. Formal Amendment) – Exempt Projects**

Type 3 amendments significantly revise, add or delete exempt or non-regionally significant projects or project phases to/from the FTIP. Type 3 amendments require approval by Fresno COG, Caltrans, and FHWA/FTA. Public notification of a Type 3 formal amendment is posted on Fresno COG's website at least 7 days prior to action, and distributed to local agency partners through Fresno COG's standing committees. Type 3 do not require published public notices, or a public hearing, with the exception of certain types of Federal Transit Administration Projects. Fresno COG will consider public comments on the amendment prior to approval action.

**FTIP Amendment Type 4. Formal Amendment – Conformity Determination that Relies on a Previous Regional Emissions Analysis**

Type 4 amendments primarily include adding or deleting projects that have already been appropriately modeled for air quality purposes as part of the adopted RTP/SCS. In this case, the federal approving agencies can use a previous analysis of the project's impact on air quality for approval purposes. Type 4 amendments may be accompanied by an RTP/SCS amendment to maintain consistency. The FTIP amendment and RTP/SCS Amendment (if applicable) follow the same public process. Type 4 amendments require approval by Fresno COG, Caltrans, and FHWA/FTA.

Public notification of a Type 4 formal amendment includes the following:

- Legally noticed 30-day public comment period
- Legally noticed public hearing
- Posting of amendment information on Fresno COG's website during public comment period
- Publishing amendment information as part of the following publicly available Fresno COG agendas: Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee and Fresno COG Policy Board
- Consideration and response to public comments received during comment period

#### **Amendment Type 5. Formal Amendment – Conformity Determination and New Regional Emissions Analysis**

Type 5 amendments are the highest level amendment and primarily involve adding or deleting new projects that must be modeled for their air quality purposes as part of the RTP/SCS. Type 5 amendments require an Air Quality Conformity Document that demonstrates conformity with applicable air quality requirements and a new regional emissions analysis. This type of amendment is also used when a non-exempt, regionally significant project makes a change to either the design concept or scope or conformity analysis completion year which is not consistent with the existing regional emissions analysis. The FTIP amendment, Air Quality Conformity Document, and RTP Amendment (if applicable) follow the same public process. Type 5 amendments require approval action by Fresno COG, Caltrans, and FHWA. Public notification of a Type 5 formal amendment includes:

- Legally noticed 30-day public comment period
- Legally noticed public hearing
- Posting of amendment information on Fresno COG's website during public comment period
- Publishing amendment information as part of the following publicly available Fresno COG agendas: Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, and Fresno COG Policy Board
- Consideration and response to public comments received during comment period

#### **FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM OF PROJECTS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

As required by federal law and guidance, a Program of Projects (POP) for FTA projects must be developed by the Designated Recipient of FTA funds. The POP is a list of proposed FTA funded projects that must undergo a public review process. Guidance provided by FTA allows the FTIP to function as the POP as long as the public is notified through public notice that the FTIP public review

process satisfies the public participation requirements of the POP. Once the FTIP is approved, the document will function as the POP for recipients of FTA funds in the Fresno COG region. Fresno COG's public participation process for the FTIP is intended to satisfy the funding recipients' public participation process for their POP.

This Public Participation Plan follows the procedures for public involvement associated with the FTIP development and therefore satisfies public participation requirements for the POP. All public notices of public involvement activities and times established for public review and comment on the FTIP will state that they satisfy the POP requirements of FTA programs such as Section 5307, Section 5337 and Section 5339 Programs.

#### ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATED PROJECTS

By federal requirement, at the end of each calendar year Fresno COG publishes an annual listing of obligated projects, which is a record of project delivery for the previous year. The listing is also intended to increase the awareness of government spending on transportation projects to the public. Copies of this annual listing may be obtained from Fresno COG's web site at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org). Hard copies are also available upon request by contacting the Fresno COG office at (559) 233-4148.

#### CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Under the new Federal FAST Act legislation, Fresno COG is required to prepare a congestion management process (CMP) document for Fresno County. The CMP is a systematic process for managing congestion. It provides information on transportation system performance and on alternative strategies for alleviating congestion and enhancing the mobility of persons and goods to levels that meet State and local needs. Fresno COG is currently working on a CMP update, which is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2017.

#### AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY PUBLIC AND INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION

Fresno COG provides opportunity for early coordination with appropriate agencies and the public in determining the type of environmental review documents an action requires, the scope of the document, the level of analysis, and related environmental requirements. This involves the exchange of information from the inception of a proposal for action to preparation of the environmental review documents.

A dialogue between agencies regarding air quality transportation conformity considerations must take place in certain instances prior to adoption of its RTP/SCS or FTIP. These consultations are conducted through the San Joaquin Valley Interagency Consultation Group which includes representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration



(FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the eight San Joaquin Valley MPOs, and Caltrans Headquarters and District 6 office. These agencies review updates and, in certain instances, amendments to the RTP/SCS and FTIP to ensure they comply to federal transportation conformity regulations via air quality transportation conformity analysis.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW VIA REGIONAL AND STATE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSES

The intent of intergovernmental review, per Executive Order 12372, is to ensure that the Fresno region's federally funded or assisted projects do not inadvertently interfere with state and local plans and priorities. Applicants in Fresno County with programs/projects for inter-governmental review should submit documentation to Fresno COG and/or the State Clearinghouse in Sacramento (as required by Executive Order 12372), which are responsible for coordinating state and local review of applications for federal grants or loans.

## OVERALL WORK PROGRAM (OWP)

The OWP is a critical document for the scheduling and distribution of work, especially the allocation of resources needed to address each task required of Fresno COG. In effect, the OWP constitutes a set of instructions for the planning and programming work to be carried out by staff or consultants each year. Throughout the course of each year, Fresno COG staff works with the local agencies, Caltrans, other transportation planning agencies, other public and private associations and the general public independently and through Fresno COG committees to develop the program for the year. A draft of the OWP is taken through the Fresno COG committee process with a final adoption by the Policy Board in May. Staff and the Board usually begin to gather public input on the OWP in February, prior to the adoption of the Final OWP.

## UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS (UTN) ASSESSMENT

Each year, pursuant to the Transportation Development Act (TDA) requirements, Fresno COG, as the RTPA and MPO for Fresno County, is required to identify any unmet transit needs that may exist in the Fresno County region. Should any unmet transit needs be identified, a further determination must be made to establish whether or not those needs are reasonable to meet. In accordance with state law, TDA funds must be allocated first to unmet transit needs, which are found to be reasonable to meet, before any remaining funds can be distributed to local jurisdictions for non-transit purposes. At the conclusion of each UTN process, the Fresno COG Policy Board must adopt a resolution making one of the following three findings: there are no unmet transit needs; there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; or there are unmet transit needs, including transit needs that are reasonable to meet.

Under TDA regulations, the UTN Assessment must include the following elements:

1. An annual assessment of the size and location of identifiable groups likely to be transit dependent or transit disadvantaged, including, but not limited to, the elderly, the handicapped, including individuals eligible for paratransit and other special transportation services, and persons of limited means, including, but not limited to, recipients under the CalWORKs program;
2. An analysis of the adequacy of existing public transportation services and specialized transportation services, including privately and publicly owned services; and
3. An analysis of the potential alternative public transportation services and specialized transportation services, including privately and publicly owned services.

To further implement the UTN Assessment process, the Fresno COG Policy Board has adopted definitions for both “unmet transit need” and “reasonable to meet” which are reviewed every five years in compliance with the TDA requirements. All unmet transit needs received during the annual UTN Assessment process are reviewed by the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC).

Public participation is an important component in the UTN Assessment process. The TDA requires Fresno COG to hold at least one public hearing for the purpose of receiving public input regarding potential unmet transit needs in the region. Although the TDA only requires Fresno COG to hold one public hearing, staff makes the effort to go beyond the minimum requirements to provide public hearings throughout the region as well as to make presentations about the unmet transit needs process to seniors at congregate meal sites, community groups, and the legislative bodies of local jurisdictions. Public hearings are typically held during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Policy Board. Public notice of the hearing, including the date, time, location, and specific purpose is provided at least 30-days in advance of the meeting through publication in one or more newspapers of general circulation, including a Spanish language publication. Written notification is also provided to those persons and organizations (over 400) that have indicated an interest in the unmet transit needs process, including the private social service agencies and public transit operators that are represented on the SSTAC.

Public hearings are held to give members of the public the opportunity to identify potential unmet transit needs in the region. After the conclusion of a hearing(s), a report is prepared that addresses the three required UTN Assessment elements listed above, analyzes any identified unmet transit need for “reasonable to meet”, and provides a recommended finding for the Policy Board to adopt. Any new

comments received after the public hearing, or during the Policy Board's hearing to adopt the UTN finding, are assessed during the subsequent year's UTN Assessment process.

SB375 mandates that MPO's must meet certain greenhouse gas reductions standards set by the Air Resources Board. Fresno COG, along with other MPO's in the valley have worked diligently on meeting those targets through the use an integrated land use, transportation, and housing plan. The goal is to have greenhouse gas emissions reduced to 2012 levels by 2040. Air quality conformity findings are distributed for a 30-day public comment period, and a public hearing is held by the Fresno COG Policy Board to elicit public input. All applicable posting requirements will be followed.

## V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Fresno COG, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Fresno County region, needs to consult with groups responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area (i.e. state and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, land use management, conservation and historic preservation, airport operations, and freight interests) and other agencies such as Indian Tribal governments, federal land management agencies and project sponsors. These provisions address both the MPO's preparation of the RTP/SCS and the FTIP.

Crucial decisions whether or not to support or fund a transportation program or project in the region are made in the development of the RTP/SCS. In contrast, the FTIP defines project budgets, schedules and phasing for those programs and projects that are already part of the RTP/SCS. The FTIP does not provide any additional information regarding environmental impacts beyond those found in the program level environmental analysis prepared for the RTP/SCS. Further environmental review occurs at the project delivery agency or jurisdiction with project specific environmental impacts report.

Starting at the RTP/SCS development stage, Fresno COG staff concurrently consults with appropriate agencies regarding the FTIP. Fresno COG consults extensively with many agencies in the preparation of the RTP/SCS. For the FTIP, this consultation includes:

- Communication of the schedule of upcoming amendments and FTIP adoption;
- Special workshops;
- Coordination with agencies for review of preliminary draft documents to agencies before releasing draft documents for public review;
- Presentations on the Draft Formal Amendments to the Standing Committees and the Policy Board.

## VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN EVALUATION AND UPDATES

Fresno COG's Public Participation Plan is not a static document, but an on-going strategy that will be periodically reviewed and updated based on our experiences and the changing circumstances of the agency and the transportation community it serves.

As part of every public outreach and involvement program developed for the regional transportation plan, Fresno COG will set performance measures for the effectiveness of the participation program and report on the results. These performance reports will serve to inform and improve future outreach and involvement programs, including future updates to this Public Participation Plan. Additionally, Fresno COG will periodically evaluate various components of the items identified under the RTP Public Outreach Strategy Section IV "Public Participation Strategies" which form the core of Fresno COG's public involvement activities.

This Public Participation Plan may be subject to minor changes from time to time. Any major updates will include a review by Fresno COG's Transportation Technical Committee's, Policy Advisory Committee and Policy Board, 45-day public comment period with wide release and notification of the public about the proposed changes and approval by the Fresno COG Policy Board. We will extend the public comment period by an additional 45 days in instances where major revisions are proposed in response to comments heard. Major updates will include an evaluation of the current Public Participation Plan, using the Section II. Commitments on pages 4 & 5 of this document, as well as the Section VIII. Additional Public Participation Policies as performance measures.

## VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES

Fresno COG Staff uses several strategies to provide interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the planning process. Staff understands that prior to involvement in Fresno COG's planning activities, members of the public must understand what Fresno COG's mission is, and what issues are under consideration.

A list of participation strategies follows that includes tried-and-true approaches as well as new suggestions received during the Public Participation Plan development process. Fresno COG staff will define appropriate outreach strategies for each plan/program on a case-by-case basis, and select appropriate options from the following lists.

### **Public Meetings/Workshops**

- Participate in or speak at meetings of existing agencies/community groups
- Co-host workshops with community groups, business associations, etc.
- Partner with community-based organizations in low-income and minority communities for targeted outreach

### **Techniques for Public Meetings/Workshops**

- Open Houses
- Facilitated discussions
- Question-and-Answer sessions with planners and policy board members
- Break-out sessions for smaller group discussions on multiple topics
- Interactive exercises
- Customized presentations
- Vary time of day for workshops (day/evening)

### **Visualization Techniques**

- Maps
- Charts, graphs, illustrations, photographs
- Table-top displays and models
- Web content and interactive games
- Electronic voting
- PowerPoint slide shows and videos

### **Polls/Surveys**

- Statistically valid telephone polls
- Electronic surveys via Web
- Intercept interviews where people congregate, such as at transit hubs
- Printed surveys distributed at meetings, transit hubs, on-board transit vehicles, etc.

**Focus Groups**

- Participants recruited randomly from telephone polls
- Participants recruited by interest area

**Printed Materials**

- User-friendly documents, including use of executive summaries and simplified or translated language
- Post cards
- Maps, charts, photographs, and other visual means of displaying information

**Targeted Mailings/Flyers**

- Work with community-based organizations to hand deliver flyers to community members, businesses and schools
- Mail to targeted database lists—either COG’s an outside agency’s or purchased
- Distribute “Take-One” flyers to key community organizations
- Place notices on board transit vehicles and transit hubs

**Utilize local media**

- News Releases
- Submit human interest stories that center around COG projects
- Invite reporters to news briefings
- Meet with editorial staff
- Opinion pieces/commentaries
- Purchase display ads/radio & TV advertising
- Negotiate inserts into local printed media
- Visit minority media outlets to encourage use of Fresno COG news releases
- Place speakers on radio/TV talk shows
- Public Service Announcements on radio and TV
- Develop content for public access/cable television programming
- Civic journalism partnerships

**Electronic Access to Information**

- Website with updated content and simplified layouts, and translation readily available – [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org)
- Audio/videocasts of current and past public meetings/workshops
- Electronic duplication of open house/workshop materials
- Interactive Web with surveys, visuals and opportunity to comment
- Access to maps, charts, plans
- Provide information in advance of public meeting
- Post event/meeting information on online news sites, calendars, community & discussion websites

**Notify Public via**

- Blast e-mails and e-newsletters
- Notice widely disseminated through new partnerships with community-based and interest organizations
- Social Media accounts on Facebook and Twitter
- Printed materials
- Electronic access to information
- Local Media
- Notices placed on board transit vehicles and at transit hubs
- Public utility bill inserts

**Newsletters**

- Fresno COG's e-newsletter "Coming Up at Fresno COG"
- Project specific email and print pieces
- Submit articles for publication in community/corporate/online newsletters
- Fresno COG Annual Report

**Techniques for Involving Environmental Justice Communities**

- Make regular reports to Fresno COG's ongoing committees such as the ADA Advisory Council, SSTAC, etc.
- Grants to community-based organizations to organize & tailor meetings, customize presentation materials, provide incentives and remove barriers to participation in their communities
- "Take One" flyers on transit vehicles and transit hubs
- Outreach in the community (flea markets, churches, health centers, employer sponsored events, etc.)
- Partner with other agencies to reach the public at scheduled meetings/events
- Convert materials going out to the general public to an appropriate reading level
- Translate materials; have interpreters available at meetings as requested
- Include information on meeting notices on how to request translation assistance
- Provide access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of the information and data by such members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities
- Robust use of "visualization" techniques, including maps and graphics to illustrate trends, choices being debated, etc.
- Use of community and minority media outlets to announce participation opportunities
- When conducting public outreach on regional plans/projects, develop explanations of the impacts to each city or local area involved

**Techniques for Reporting on Impact of Public Comments**

- Summarize key themes of public comments in staff reports to Fresno COG standing committees
- Direct mail and email to participants from meetings, surveys, etc. to report final outcomes
- Newsletter articles
- Updated and interactive Web content

**Other Outreach**

- Information/comment tables or booths at community events and public gathering spaces
- Form a public review committee during plan development to review documents for readability
- Form a public outreach committee with representatives from each member agency as well as community groups



## VIII. ADDITIONAL FRESNO COG PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICIES

The following requirements will apply as deemed appropriate by the Fresno COG management staff and Policy Board Chair:

1. No person shall be denied participation.
2. As required, a public notice will be placed in the legal advertising sections of at least one newspaper of general circulation within the affected community, including a Spanish-language publication when possible.
3. Fresno COG shall provide appropriate assistance, auxiliary aids, a translator/interpreter for non-English speaking and hearing impaired individuals and/or services when necessary if requested 3 working days in advance of the meeting, to afford disabled individuals an equal opportunity. If Fresno COG is unable to accommodate a request for a public hearing then the hearing will be continued on a specified date when accommodations are available. Fresno COG staff is available to speak with members of the public in English and Spanish, and may be available in additional languages. After calling Fresno COG's main line phone number, 559-233-4148, an English or Spanish option is given to each caller. Select your preference. Then when prompted dial 0 for the operator who will connect you to a bilingual staff member.
4. Fresno COG's website shall maintain a link to a translation service for information contained on the agency site.
5. Meeting agendas and minutes are currently made available upon written request via regular mail, and they are added regularly to Fresno COG's internet website. Agendas are also posted at meeting locations are posted at least 72 hours before regular meetings of advisory or standing committees or 24 hours before special meetings. Fresno COG circulates an annotated agenda with supporting documents to all committee members and support staff, and annotated agenda packets are sent to the main branch of the Fresno County library. The Brown Act (CA Government Code 54954.1) also states that any person may request a copy of the agenda or a copy of all the documents constituting the agenda packet, of any meeting of a legislative body be mailed to that person. That request is valid for the calendar year in which it is filed, and must be renewed following January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. The legislative body may establish a fee for mailing the agenda or agenda packet, which fee shall not exceed the cost of providing the service.

6. Public hearings will be held prior to a decision point as a formal means to gather citizen comments and positions from all interested parties for public record and input into the decision making process. Fresno COG hearings are required for the adoption of major plans, programming of money and for the annual Unmet Transit Needs analysis. Notices for public hearings will be published in a general circulation newspaper. Fresno COG will accept prepared comments from the public during the period between the notice and hearing date. These comments will be considered part of the public record. Also during this period, Fresno COG staff will accept questions and provide clarification on issues raised by the public.
7. Fresno COG's media list includes newspapers, radio, magazine, online and television broadcast media, and appropriate community, business or government publications and contacts serving Fresno County.
8. If major amendments are made to any plans or programs during the review and comment period, the plan(s) will be made available for an additional 30-45 day public review and comment period prior to final adoption. Such changes shall also be advertised via news release to all media outlets, on community flyers and on the Fresno COG website as deemed necessary in the specific project area prior to final adoption.
9. The Executive Director or her designee will coordinate with the state to enhance public consideration for the State Transportation Plan or the State Transportation Improvement Plan.
10. For high-profile projects/plans Fresno COG may form an advisory committee specific to that particular plan or project, or determine what, if any, existing committees would appropriately review the plan or project.

# **2018 Fresno COG Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy**

*Including a public participation plan for the  
Fresno County  
Sustainable Communities Strategy*

*Released for public review and comment on May 13, 2016  
Scheduled for final approval on July 28, 2016*

Fresno Council  
of Governments



## Forward:

The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) is a consensus builder, developing acceptable programs and solutions to issues that do not respect political boundaries. Fresno COG is a voluntary association of local governments, one of California's 38 regional planning agencies, and one of 500+ nationwide. In 1967 elected officials of Fresno County and its incorporated cities informally created the agency, formalizing Fresno COG in 1969 through a Joint Powers Agreement. Fresno COG undertakes comprehensive regional planning with an emphasis on transportation, provides citizens an opportunity to be involved in the planning process, and supplies technical services to its members.

### **Fresno COG's Member Agencies:**

City of Clovis	City of Mendota
City of Coalinga	City of Orange Cove
City of Firebaugh	City of Parlier
City of Fowler	City of Reedley
City of Fresno	City of San Joaquin
City of Huron	City of Sanger
City of Kerman	City of Selma
City of Kingsburg	County of Fresno

**Public Outreach Strategy  
for the  
2018 Fresno COG Regional Transportation Plan  
and Sustainable Communities Strategy**

**Table of Contents**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Introduction to the RTP.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Summary of RTP Public Outreach Strategy Requirements</b>	
A.	Public Participation Plan Requirements .....	4
B.	RTP’s SCS Additional Public Participation Requirements .....	5
C.	Input and Consultation with Elected Officials .....	7
D.	Interagency Coordination Consultation & Coordination Requirements .....	7
E.	Other Consultation & Coordination Requirements.....	8
	Private Sector Involvement .....	8
	Consultation with Interested Parties.....	8
	Native American Tribal Government Consultation & Coordination.....	8
	Consultation with Resource Agencies .....	9
	State of California .....	9
	Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plans .....	9
<b>III.</b>	<b>Public Outreach Program Objectives for the RTP</b>	
A.	Objectives .....	10
B.	Performance Measures .....	10
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Implementation of RTP Public Outreach Strategy</b>	
	Initiating Plan Development – Participation Strategies .....	12
	Timeline .....	17
<b>V.</b>	<b>Get Involved in the RTP Process</b>	
	How-To Guide.....	18



## I. Introduction

Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) are planning documents developed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) in cooperation with Caltrans and other stakeholders. They are required to be developed by MPOs and RTPAs per State legislation, (Government Code Section 65080 et seq.) and Federal regulation (Title 23 USC Section 134).

The purpose of the RTP is to establish regional goals, identify present and future needs, deficiencies, and constraints, analyze potential solutions, estimate available funding and propose investments.

A comprehensive public involvement program is an important component for developing a RTP. As Fresno COG undertakes the development of the 2014 RTP a major goal of the public outreach effort is to communicate with nontraditional as well as traditional audiences to include them in the transportation planning process. This program will help ensure that environmental justice issues are addressed and that interested members of the public have ample opportunity to understand and provide meaningful input while the RTP is in its early stages and throughout the planning process.

## II. Summary of RTP Public Outreach Plan Requirements

### A. RTP Public Participation Requirements:

The RTP Planning Process must foster involvement through a proactive public participation process with the all interested parties. Title 23 CFR Part 450.316(a) states the following concerning participation and consultation:

*“The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens,*

- *affected public agencies*
- *representatives of public transportation employees*
- *freight shippers*
- *providers of freight transportation services*
- *private providers of transportation*
- *representatives of users of public transportation*
- *representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities,*
- *representatives of the disabled*
- *other interested parties*

*with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.”*

- When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft RTP and as a result of the participation process or the interagency consultation process a summary, analysis and report of the proposed comments shall be made as part of the final RTP

- The public participation plan should be prepared prior to the development of the RTP. The public participation plan should have public input during its preparation and have a 45-day comment period before the MPOs/RTPAs board adopts it. This enhanced public participation plan is a new requirement as a result of SAFETEA-LU. *(Fresno COG's Public Participation Plan was adopted March 22, 2012 – this RTP public outreach strategy is supplemental to that document.)*
- Title 23 CFR part 450.316(a)(1)(iii) now requires the participation plan to use visualization techniques to describe the RTP and FTIP. Visualization techniques range from a simple line drawing or hand written chart to technologically complex web cast public meetings and GIS modeling and computer generated maps. The specific type of visualization technique is determined by the MPO/RTPA.
- The public participation plan and both the draft and adopted RTP shall be posted on the MPO/RTPA's website to the maximum extent practicable and for the life of the RTP.
- It is also recommended MPOs/RTPAs place hard copies of the draft and adopted copies of RTPs in local libraries and other locations where the public would have access to these documents.
- The MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies. Non-MPO public participation efforts shall at minimum develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities and provides outreach efforts to all sectors of the local community.
- MPO's and RTPA's are also encouraged to involve the media, including ethnic media as appropriate, as a tool to promote public participation in the RTP development, review and commenting process.

#### **B. The RTP's Additional SCS Public Participation Requirements:**

Public participation and consultation for the development of the RTP remains an essential element of the overall RTP process. Mapping and visualization tools should be used, to the extent practicable, to create visual representations of proposed scenarios, the SCS and the APS, if applicable. Use of these tools will help facilitate more effective and meaningful public involvement in development and refinement of the SCS and APS, if applicable. A Public Participation Plan includes public outreach, public awareness, and public input beginning with the planning stage.

The MPO shall adopt a Public Participation Plan in advance of developing an SCS and/or APS to include:

- 1) Outreach efforts encouraging the active participation of a broad range of stakeholders in the planning process, consistent with the agency's adopted Federal Public Participation Plan. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - affordable housing advocates
  - transportation advocates
  - neighborhood and community groups



- environmental advocates
  - home builder representatives
  - broad-based business organizations
  - landowners
  - commercial property interests
  - homeowner associations
- 2) Consultation with congestion management agencies, transportation agencies, and transportation commissions.
  - 3) Regional public workshops with information and tools providing a clear understanding of policy choices and issues. At least one workshop in each county. At least three workshops for counties with a population greater than 500,000. To the extent practicable, each workshop shall include urban simulation computer modeling to create visual representations of the SCS and APS.
  - 4) Preparation and circulation of a draft SCS (and APS, if one is prepared) not less than 55 days before adoption of a final RTP.
  - 5) For multiple-county MPOs at least three public hearings shall be held on the draft SCS in the RTP (and APS, if any). For a single county MPO, at least two public hearings shall be held. To the maximum extent feasible, the hearings shall be in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.
  - 6) A process enabling the public to provide a single request to receive notices, information and updates.

This (SCS) public participation plan is not required to be reviewed or approved by any state agency and is not necessary to be included as part of the RTP. However, the MPO should maintain a record of its public participation efforts relative to the SCS and APS if applicable, and therefore, it is recommended these additional requirements should be included in the federally required public participation plan.

#### **Input and Consultation with Local Elected Officials on SCS Development**

During the development of the SCS (and APS if applicable), the MPO must conduct at least two informational meetings in each county for members of the board of supervisors and city councils. Only one informational meeting is needed in each county if it is attended by representatives of the county board of supervisors and city councils that represent a majority of the cities representing a majority of the population in the incorporated areas of that county. The purpose of this meeting (or meetings) shall be to present a draft of SCS (and APS if applicable), to the members of the board of supervisors and city council members in that county and to solicit and consider their input and recommendations.

Continuing with a collaborative transportation planning process, MPOs work and consult with local elected officials as key stakeholders in the regional transportation system. While local elected officials serve on regional agency boards, expanded consultation is required pursuant to

Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(E) and (F) to provide outreach to all local elected officials and their member jurisdictions affected by the SCS (and APS if applicable).

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(G), in preparing an SCS, the MPO shall consider spheres of influence that have been adopted by Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) within the region. MPOs should also consult with LAFCOs regarding special districts within the region that provide property-related services such as water or wastewater services, and should consult with these regional special districts, as appropriate, during development of an SCS (and APS if applicable).

Additionally, MPOs should consider consultation with school districts within their region during development of the RTP. School-related trips constitute a significant portion of all vehicle trips.

#### **Interagency Coordination on SCS Development**

As the MPO works on RTP development and approval, interagency coordination with both federal and state agencies provides necessary information for the RTP, and notification to all interested parties. Advanced and continuous coordination with all appropriate agencies is highly recommended. MPO development of the RTP should include interagency coordination with, but not limited to, the following entities:

1. Federal agencies including: Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
2. California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
3. California Air Resources Board (ARB)
4. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
5. Appropriate Resources Agencies (see list in Section 4.9)
6. Adjacent MPOs and RTPAs with which the MPO shares a significant amount of interregional travel.

MPOs are also encouraged to work with HCD to incorporate the appropriate Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) within their RTPs.

## **C. Other Consultation & Coordination Requirements:**

### **Private Sector Involvement**

Federal regulations require private sector involvement as a component of the regional transportation planning process. Title 23 USC Part 134 (g)(4), Title 23 USC Section 135(e) and Title 23 CFR Part 450.316 (a) require the transportation planning process include input from the goods movement industry and other transportation organizations.

### **Consultation with Interested Parties**

Consulting with interested parties on plans, programs and projects shall include individuals or organizations that are mentioned in Title 23 CFR Part 450.316(a). Title 23 CFR Part 450.316(d) requires MPOs to consult with federal land use management agencies as appropriate during the development of RTP. RTPAs shall comply as well. Title 23 CFR part 450.322(g) states that MPOs shall consult as appropriate with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation during the development of their RTP. RTPAs shall comply with this as well.

The U.S. DOT defines consultation as when: *“one or more parties confer with other identified parties in accordance with an established process and, prior to taking action(s), considers the views of the other parties and periodically informs them about action(s) taken.”* Some areas of consultation could include transportation, land use, employment, economic development, housing, community development and environmental issues.

The U.S. DOT definition of “interested parties” to be engaged in statewide and metropolitan transportation planning has been expanded. The MPO/RTPA shall provide the following interested parties with reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed RTP:

1. Citizens
2. Affected public agencies
3. Representatives of public transportation employees
4. Freight shippers
5. Private providers of transportation
6. Representatives of users of public transportation
7. Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
8. Representatives of people with disabilities
9. Providers of freight transportation services
10. Other interested parties.

### **Native American Tribal Government Consultation and Coordination**

Title 23 CFR part 450.316(c) requires MPOs to involve the federally recognized Native American Tribal Government in the development of the RTP and FTIP. RTPAs shall comply as well. Title 23 CFR part 450.316 (a)(1), the participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies and desired outcomes. The requirement of including interested parties in the development of the participation plan and the RTP would include federally recognized or non-federally recognized tribes.

**Consultation with Resource Agencies**

Title 23 CFR part 450.322(g)(1) & (g)(2) requires that the MPO shall consult, as appropriate, with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the *2010 RTP Guidelines* 74 development of the transportation plan. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate: (1) Comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps, if available; or (2) Comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources, if available. In addition, the discussion of mitigation activities required by SAFETEA-LU Section 450.322(f)(7) (and described more fully in Section 5.3) shall be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies.

**State of California**

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), consultation with agencies, governments or individuals that could potentially be impacted by transportation projects in the RTP. Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(v) requires that MPOs develop a sustainable communities strategy (which is part of the RTP) that shall gather and consider the best practically available scientific information regarding “resource areas” and “farmland” as defined in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Government Code Section 65080.01.

**Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plans**

Title 23 CFR Part 450.306(g) states the regional planning process should be coordinated and consistent with the preparation of the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan as required by Title 49 U.S.C. Parts 5310, 5316 and 5317.

### III. Public Outreach Strategy Objectives for the RTP

Fresno COG's Public Participation Plan calls for setting and measuring progress on involving the public in Fresno COG's Regional Transportation Plan

#### A. Objectives:

- Solicit participation from a broad range of groups and individuals in the 2018 RTP decision-making process
- Raise awareness and offer opportunities for public input about the 2018 RTP
- Provide information to the residents in the Fresno County region and other stakeholders
- Stimulate dialogue about the transportation challenges facing the Fresno County region
- Develop and incorporate into the 2018 RTP update realistic solutions that address the diverse mobility needs of the region's residents, visitors and business people
- Build public support for, and understanding of, the transportation improvements outlined in the 2014 RTP

#### B. Performance Measures:

**Diversity:** Participants must represent a range of socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural, geographic and user (mode) groups. They must also include a range of people with varying interests: social service, business, environment, social justice/equity, etc.

- Targeted groups include all those listed under "Summary of Outreach Requirements" including additional Fresno COG contacts
- Participating citizens represent a cross-section of people of various interests, places of residence and primary modes of travel, as reported on surveys and comments or other communications received throughout the update process

**Reach:** The program should make every effort to include the greatest number of people possible. Different levels of participation will make it more inviting for people with a range of involvement preferences to join the discussion. The success of the program will be measure by the following:

- Number of comments received
- Number of individuals who actively participated in the Fresno COG RTP 2018 Public Outreach Program, as measured by survey responses, focus group attendance, comments received and community outreach involvement. (excluding repeat attendance)
- Number visits or "views" to the Fresno COG RTP 2018 section website and/or requests for information during active periods of the public outreach and involvement program
- Assessing active participation from residents or their representatives from urban and rural locations.

**Accessibility:** Every effort should be made to ensure that anyone who wants to participate can do so. This goal can be met by taking the participation activities to where people already are located, whenever possible. It can also be met by providing ways to participate, regardless of individuals' language or ability to attend a meeting, access to the Web, etc.

- Meetings are held in communities and during existing meeting dates/times whenever possible
- 100 percent of meeting locations are accessible by transit with the exception of rural unincorporated communities and other town pockets that lack the public transportation needed to access all viable meeting locations in the area.

- Meetings are linguistically accessible to 100 percent of participants, with 3 working days' advance request for translation. Meeting announcements will offer translation services with advance notice to participants speaking any language with available professional translation services. At most public workshops Fresno COG will automatically provide translators and Spanish language materials as need is anticipated.
- All meetings are accessible under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Impact:** The feedback received through this Outreach and Involvement Program should be analyzed and provided to the Fresno COG Policy Board wherever appropriate. Interested participants should be informed of Board's actions. Decisions to not incorporate recommendations should be noted, with a rationale provided and ready to be discussed.

- 100 percent of written comments received are logged, analyzed, summarized and communicated in time for consideration by staff and the Fresno COG Policy Board
- 100 percent of the written comments are acknowledged in the form received, so that the person making them knows whether his or her comment is reflected in the outcome of a Policy Board action or, conversely, why the Policy Board acted differently.

**Education:** This outreach program is an opportunity for Fresno COG to inform a wide range of people about transportation issues in the Fresno County region, as well as the link to climate change and sustainable growth, among other issues. Each step of the process should include an educational element, whether it is about Fresno County area transportation in general, specific projects being considered for inclusion in the long-range plan or background on the outreach results to date.

**Participant Satisfaction:** People who take the time and energy to participate should feel it was worth their while to join in the discussion and debate. The following targeted performance measures are associated with each of the goal topics.

Majority of participants rate the Fresno COG RTP Outreach Program as *Excellent or good* on each of the following performance dimensions (or other specific features to be determined):

- Accessibility (meeting locations, materials presented in appropriate languages for targeted audiences, etc.)
- Adequate notice
- Sufficient opportunity to comment
- Clear understanding of items that are established policy versus those that are open to public influence
- Clear information at an appropriate level of detail
- Educational value of presentations and materials
- Responsiveness to comments received
- Understanding of other perspectives and differing priorities
- Quality of the discussion

## **IV. Implementation of RTP/SCS Public Outreach Strategies & SCS Participation Plan**

### **Initiating Plan Development – Participation Strategies and Planning**

Under state law (SB 375, Steinberg, Chapter 728, 2008 Statutes), Fresno COG must develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to integrate planning for growth and housing with long-range transportation investments, including goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for cars and light trucks. The law also calls for a Public Participation Plan that addresses outreach for an SCS and the Regional Transportation Plan. Fresno COG is overseeing a Proposition 84 grant which will fund a large part of the SCS Public Outreach Strategies for the eight county San Joaquin Valley area.

Fresno COG intends to implement the following public outreach strategies throughout the development of the 2018 RTP and SCS.

#### **1. Regional Transportation Plan Roundtable**

Fresno COG has formed a RTP Roundtable “committee” whose purpose is to support the Fresno COG staff and COG standing committees in their development and preparation of the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Roundtable is vital to the success of the process as they consider issues that support development of the 2014 RTP/SCS and provide comments and community-based consensus that support the final decision on the RTP by the Fresno Council of Governments’ Policy Board.

The 35-member Roundtable is comprised of a representative from each of our local member agencies, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, LAFCo, Caltrans, public transportation, transportation planners, agriculture, building/development, environment, the Environmental Justice Task Force, Bicycle/Pedestrian advocates, banking/finance or real estate, health, affordable housing, goods movement, broad-based business, Federally recognized tribal governments, and it includes three positions for those who represent the public-at-large.

#### **2. Fresno COG’s Stakeholder Focus Groups**

To consult and coordinate the development of the RTP and SCS with stakeholders specifically interested or involved with plans or projects identified in individual work elements, these focus groups will be organized topically and could include the following:

- Non-Motorized Transportation – Users and providers of bicycle, pedestrian and multi-use trails, Fresno COG’s bike/trails committee
- Rail Transportation – Providers and users of rail service and freight shipping
- Aviation – The Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission will be consulted as an aviation focus group.
- Environment– Air District, Environmental Resource Agencies, Community groups with an environmental focus
- Health
- Natural Resources

- Transportation Providers – Providers and users of public, private and school transit services (urban and rural) and public transportation employees, Limousine and taxi company representatives, bus companies, vanpool leasing companies, etc.
- Business and Industry Representatives – Large employers, Chambers of Commerce, business organizations, developers, trucking companies and associations.
- Social Equity – Representatives of the disabled and elderly population including Fresno COG’s Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee and Fresno COG’s Environmental Justice Task Force.
- Other – Representatives from Federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribal governments, school districts representatives, other individuals or organizations that do not specialize in one of the categories listed above.

### 3. **RTP Survey of the community**

Fresno COG is working with a survey firm to conduct “scientific” surveys whose participants are reflective of the county’s demographics, including the homeless and non-English speaking populations from the urban and rural areas. The consultant will be responsible for preparing a detailed list of findings that assess whether or not values and priorities of the Fresno County community that were identified during the Blueprint Planning Process public outreach efforts still hold true today, as well as assessing whether the transportation priorities defined during Measure C survey development are still priorities to our communities. Survey findings will feed directly into Regional Transportation Plan development, including the drafting of Fresno COG’s Sustainable Communities Strategy.

### 4. **Community-Based Mini-Grant Outreach Program**

To help ensure diverse and direct input from all populations Fresno COG will award grant funding to community-based organizations, schools, and groups to conduct outreach to individuals not typically involved in the regional transportation planning process. The selected organizations will conduct outreach activities to secure public involvement from stakeholders in their communities and populations currently served, engaging them in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan and generating feedback on the 2014 RTP and SCS.

5. **Emails:** Regular updates regarding RTP development will be included in the “Coming Up at Fresno COG” e-newsletters. Additional emails will be sent to government and other stakeholder agencies seeking their involvement and coordination as required by the Guidance document. If the public would like to submit a single request to receive all notices, information and updates regarding the RTP and SCS development they may do so by contacting Fresno COG staff member Brenda Veenendaal by phone at (559) 233-4148 ext. 219 or via email at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).

6. **Social Networks:** Updates, workshops and meeting announcements will be posted to the Fresno COG Facebook Fan page as well as any other opportunities to participate in the RTP and SCS development.



7. **Website:** RTP meetings, agendas and packets and public comment/participation opportunities will be available and accessible under the Get Involved, Planning/RTP, Grants (mini-grants) and Announcements sections of the Fresno COG website.

8. **Regularly scheduled meetings:** The following lists of Boards and Committees will be involved in the development of the RTP & SCS as scheduled below.

Fresno COG's Standing Committees and Boards consulted and coordinated monthly:

- **EJ Task Force** – Meets monthly to discuss the Environmental Justice (EJ) Plan update and provide feedback on public outreach to EJ communities
- **RTP Roundtable**—Meets monthly during the development of the RTP and SCS (*See page 12 for a full description of Roundtable*)
- **Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)** - Standing items included on TTC agendas each month brief committee members on RTP and SCS development issues and public outreach opportunities
- **Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)**—Standing items included on PAC agendas each month brief committee members on RTP and SCS development issues and public outreach opportunities
- **Fresno COG Policy Board** - Standing items included on Policy Board agendas each month brief committee members on RTP and SCS development issues and public outreach opportunities

Other Fresno COG committees or boards that will be consulted or coordinated with during the RTP/SCS development:

- **Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) of Fresno County**
- **Association for the Beautification of 99**
- **Social Service Technical Advisory Council (SSTAC)**
- **Measure C Citizen Oversight Committee**

Previously consulted/involved Fresno COG committees:

- **SB 375 Task Force** – This task force met monthly for one year discussing and defining Greenhouse Gas Reduction targets for the SCS Plan. The Task Force no longer meets, but many members of the committee now sit on the RTP Roundtable.

Valleywide Committees and Boards that will be consulted or coordinated with during the RTP/SCS development.:

- **Model Coordinating Committee/Programming Coordination Group**
- **San Joaquin Valley Greenprint Committee**
- **San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies – Regional Policy Council**
- **San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies – Executive Directors Committee**
- **Valley Blueprint Planners Network**

9. **Community Meetings**—Fresno COG staff will make presentations at existing community meetings for organizations and community groups or associations as requested in partnership with the Valleywide SCS Outreach, and as available through additional channels.

**10. Technical Working Groups**—Fresno COG staff will be working with Technical staff from our member agencies to develop/draft technical portions of the plans that require specific expertise or qualifications. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

**11. Local Agency call systems**—Some of Fresno COG’s local agencies have calling systems that phone residents to inform them of information pertinent to their community. The cities are willing to send out messages to their residents on our behalf announcing public outreach opportunities.

**12. RTP Workshops – Past and Present:**

WORKSHOPS PREVIOUSLY HELD:

○ **EJ workshop we had for RTP kick off – June 18, 2012**

Fresno COG hosted a seminar on June 18<sup>th</sup> as a kick-off for the Regional Transportation Plan development process entitled “Promising Practices for Integrating Social Equity and Health into Regional Planning”. Jonathan London, from the UC Davis Center for Regional Change presented a free, interactive seminar that introduced participants to a range of methods for integrating social equity issues and values into regional planning on issues such as transportation, land use, housing, environmental protection, public health, and youth development. The goal of the seminar was for participants to gain new understanding of how they might use promising practices on social equity on their own work in the San Joaquin Valley, including the development of regional Sustainable Communities Strategies. The seminar was held at Fresno COG, with 81 people registered to attend in person, and 17 webinar locations registered for online attendance.

○ **Regional Transportation Plan Introductory Workshop – August 15, 2012**

Fresno COG hosted a workshop for those who had applied for representation on the RTP Roundtable. All prospective members were given an overview of what the RTP is, what is required of Fresno COG during the RTP and SCS development, a timeline of the processes, and what their role will be as a newly formed Roundtable.

○ **Member Agency Workshop —August 23, 2012**

Fresno COG hosted a workshop for our Policy Board, Policy Advisory Committee and Transportation Technical Committee members giving them an overview of what will be expected of them and their local agency as Fresno COG staff updates the RTP and drafts the new SCS. They were also provided with detailed background information on the SB 375 Target Setting, and SCS scenario planning processes.

FUTURE SCS WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS/HEARINGS:

○ **Required workshops/meetings and hearings on the DRAFT SCS**

Senate Bill 375 requires that at least three regional public workshops with information and tools providing a clear understanding of policy choices and issues on the Draft SCS are held in Fresno County during the SCS process.

Informational meetings must also be held in each county for members of the board of supervisors and city councils on the Draft SCS. Only one informational meeting is needed in each county if it is attended by representatives of the county board of supervisors and city councils that represent a majority of the cities representing a majority of the population in the incorporated areas of that county. The purpose of this meeting (or meetings) shall be to present a draft of the SCS to the members of the board of supervisors and the city council members to solicit and consider their input and recommendations.

Then, at least two public hearings shall be held on the Draft SCS in the RTP (and APS, if any). To the maximum extent feasible, the hearings shall be in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.

**13. Additional tasks as identified during the process**

As appropriate and effective opportunities arise during the RTP and SCS development process each opportunity will be evaluated and discussed. If it is a viable approach to providing public education or receiving public input into the planning process, and if it is financially feasible, it will strongly be considered for implementation.

## V. Get Involved in the RTP/SCS Process

### How-To Guide

Below you will find a list of how you may participate in the Fresno COG Regional Transportation Plan development and Sustainable Communities Strategy planning process via the participation strategies listed in the previous chapter.

#### 1. Regional Transportation Plan Roundtable

The RTP Roundtable meets monthly on the third Wednesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Meeting agendas and packet contents are posted to the Fresno COG website at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org) under Agendas.

#### 2. Fresno COG's Stakeholder Focus Groups

If you are a stakeholder specifically interested or involved with plans or projects identified below then you may request to be included in the following focus groups:

- [Non-Motorized Transportation](#)
- [Rail Transportation](#)
- [Aviation](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Natural Resources](#)
- [Transportation Providers](#)
- [Business and Industry Representatives](#)
- [Social Equity](#)
- [Other](#)

*Request participation in one of the focus groups by contacting Brenda Veenendaal, Fresno COG Public Outreach Coordinator, at (559) 233-4148, ext. 219, or via email at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).*

#### 3. RTP Survey of the community

Fresno COG is working with a survey firm to conduct “scientific” surveys whose participants are will be selected randomly through a detailed process, and will be reflective of the county’s demographics. Questions included on the survey have already been identified by Fresno COG staff and more cannot be added without increasing the survey budget.

*Voluntary participation in the actual survey is not possible. But results will be posted online at the Fresno COG website by the beginning of November, and presentations of the survey findings will be made by the survey consultant to the RTP Roundtable and the Fresno COG Policy Board during their November meetings.*

#### 4. Partnership with Valleywide SCS Outreach Strategy Implementation

The Valleywide SCS Outreach Strategy was released for public review and comment on Tuesday, August 28, 2012. *Comments may be submitted as indicated on the document.*

5. **Community-Based Mini-Grant Outreach Program**

To help ensure diverse and direct input from all populations Fresno COG will award grant funding to community-based organizations, schools, and groups to conduct outreach to individuals not typically involved in the regional transportation planning process. The selected organizations will conduct outreach activities to secure public involvement from stakeholders in their communities and populations currently served, engaging them in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan and generating feedback on the 2014 RTP and SCS.

*Requests for Proposals (RFP) will be released to the public by November 1, 2012. A notice of the RFP will be emailed out to all of Fresno COG's contact listings, and it will be emailed or mailed directly to those who have requested notification. It will also be posted on the Fresno COG website with links to it in many locations. The RFP will be included in the agenda packets of Fresno COG's Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, RTP Roundtable, EJ Task Force and the Fresno COG Policy Board as an information item.*

6. **Emails:** Regular updates regarding RTP development will be included in the "Coming Up at Fresno COG" e-newsletters. Additional emails will be sent to government and other stakeholder agencies seeking their involvement and coordination as required by the Guidance document.

*If you would like to submit a single request to receive all notices, information and updates regarding the RTP and SCS development you may do so, or you may be added to specific email lists only. To submit a request please contact Brenda Veenendaal, Public Information Officer for the Fresno COG, at (559) 233-4148 extension 219 or email her at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).*

7. **Social Networks:** Updates, workshops and meeting announcements will be posted to the Fresno COG Facebook Fan page as well as any other opportunities to participate in the RTP and SCS development.

8. **Website:** RTP meetings, agendas and packets and public comment/participation opportunities will be available and accessible under the Get Involved, Planning/RTP, Grants (mini-grants) and Announcements sections of the Fresno COG website.

9. **Regularly scheduled meetings:** The following lists of Boards and Committees will be involved in the development of the RTP & SCS as scheduled below. Listed below are each Board and Committee with their typical meeting dates and times and/or where you can find information about their meetings.

Fresno COG's Standing Committees and Boards consulted and coordinated monthly. Meeting agendas and packet materials are available online on the Fresno COG website at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org) under Agendas.:

- **EJ Task Force** – Monthly meeting dates and times are not yet established.
- **RTP Roundtable** – Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 2:00

- **Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)** – *Meets the second Friday of each month at 8:30 a.m.*
- **Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)** -- *Meets the second Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m.*
- **Fresno COG Policy Board**

Other Fresno COG committees or boards that will be consulted or coordinated with during the RTP/SCS development. *Meeting agendas and packet materials are available online on the Fresno COG website at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org) under Agendas.:*

- **Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) of Fresno County** –
- **Association for the Beautification of 99** --
- **Social Service Technical Advisory Council (SSTAC)** –
- **Measure C Citizen Oversight Committee** – *Meets the second Thursday of the month. Don't meet each month.*

Valleywide Committees and Boards that will be consulted or coordinated with during the RTP/SCS development – *meeting agendas posted to announcement on the Fresno COG website calendar at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org):*

- **Model Coordinating Committee/Programming Coordination Group**
- **San Joaquin Valley Greenprint Committee**
- **San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies – Regional Policy Council**
- **San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies – Executive Directors Committee**
- **Valley Blueprint Planners Network**

10. **Community Meetings**—Fresno COG staff will make presentations at existing community meetings for organizations and community groups or associations as requested in partnership with the Valleywide SCS Outreach, and as available through additional channels. *If you would like to request a presentation at a meeting of your organization, agency or group please contact Brenda Veenendaal, Public Information Officer for the Fresno COG, at (559) 233-4148 extension 219 or email her at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).*
11. **Technical Working Groups**—Fresno COG staff will be working with Technical staff from our member agencies to develop/draft technical portions of the plans that require specific expertise or qualifications. *Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings as an observer. All meetings will be posted to the Fresno COG website calendar at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org).*
12. **Local Agency call systems**—Some of Fresno COG's local agencies have calling systems that phone residents to inform them of information pertinent to their community. The cities are willing to send out messages to their residents on our behalf announcing public outreach opportunities.

*If your business or agency has a similar system or other method of communication we may utilize to share information with employees or community members please*

*contact Brenda Veenendaal, Public Information Officer for the Fresno COG, at (559) 233-4148 extension 219 or email her at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).*

13. **Required workshops/meetings and hearings on the DRAFT SCS**

- Senate Bill 375 requires that at least three regional public workshops with information and tools providing a clear understanding of policy choices and issues on the Draft SCS are held in Fresno County during the SCS process.
- Informational meetings must also be held in each county for members of the board of supervisors and city councils on the Draft SCS to solicit and consider their input and recommendations.
- Then, at least two public hearings shall be held on the Draft SCS in the RTP (and APS, if any). To the maximum extent feasible, the hearings shall be in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.

*All workshop meeting and hearing announcements will be announced via the website, email, and through meeting agenda items for various committees. We will also utilize the media for some announcements through our Valleywide SCS grant funding with press releases and media buys.*

14. **Additional tasks as identified during the process**

As appropriate and effective opportunities arise during the RTP and SCS development process each opportunity will be evaluated and discussed. If it is a viable approach to providing public education or receiving public input into the planning process, and if it is financially feasible, it will strongly be considered for implementation.

*If you have an outreach idea or opportunity for Fresno COG to consider utilizing please contact Brenda Veenendaal, Public Information Officer for the Fresno COG, at (559) 233-4148 extension 219 or email her at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).*



**Fresno COG's contact information:**

Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG)

2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201

Fresno, CA 93721

559.233.4148 Phone

559.233.9645 Fax

[www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org)



## Appendix B: Partnerships/Organizational Contacts/Committees

The United States Department of Transportation defines consultation as: “one or more parties confer with other identified parties in accordance with an established process and, prior to taking action(s), considers the views of the other parties and periodically informs them about action(s) taken.” Some areas of consultation could include transportation, land use, employment, economic development, housing, community development and environmental issues.

Existing federal regulations require Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to consult with resource agencies, State and local agencies responsible for land use management, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation and Native American Tribal Governments concerning the development of the Regional Transportation Plan. MPOs must seek input/comments from resource agencies early in the planning process to prevent project delays at a later time. In other words, consulting with resource agencies early in the planning process may lead to better coordination, minimal litigation, possible project cost savings and an upfront understanding of resource agency issues. The following tables list the agencies that Fresno COG contacts for early consultation during the development of the RTP/SCS.

Federal Agencies:	
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health	U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency
Federal Highway Administration	U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Federal Railroad Administration, Office of Policy and Plans	U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, REGION IX
Federal Transit Administration	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Air Quality Planning
Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Activities Office, CMD-2
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Sacramento and San Francisco Districts	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture	U.S. Geological Survey, Office of Environmental Affairs
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service	U.S. National Park Service, Pacific Great Basin System Support and Pacific West Region
U.S. Department of Energy	
State Agencies:	
California Air Resources Board	California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA)
California Environmental Protection Agency	California Transportation Commission
California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program	California Water Institute
California Department of Forestry	California Department of Water Resources
California Department of Health Services	Caltrans - Headquarters, Districts 6 & 10, Divisions of Aeronautics & Rail and Mass Transportation
California Department of Housing and Community Development	Governor's Offices of Planning and Research and Emergency Services (Cal OES)
California Department of Water Resources	State Department of Fish and Wildlife Environmental Services Division
California High Speed Rail Authority	State Office of Historic Preservation, Archaeological Inventory
California Highway Patrol	Strategic Growth Council
California Public Utilities Commission	

**Tribal Governments:**

Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians	Dunlap Band of Mono Historical Preservation Soc
Dumna Wo-Wah Tribal Government	Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band
Santa Rosa Rancheria	Kings River Choinumni Farm Tribe
Big Sandy Rancheria	North Fork Rancherian Tribal Office
Table Mountain Rancheria	Sierra Nevada Native American Coalition
Tule River Indian Reservation	Choinumni Tribe

**Regional Agencies:**

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
CalVans	San Diego Association of Governments
Inyo County Planning Department	San Joaquin Council of Governments
Kern Council of Governments	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
Kings County Association of Governments	San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
Local Agency Formation Commission	Southern California Association of Governments
Madera County Transportation Commission	Stanislaus Council of Governments
Merced Association of Governments	Tulare County Association of Governments
Metropolitan Transportation Commission	Valleyrides
Monterey County Planning Department	

**Local Agency Elected Officials, City Managers and Planning Staff:**

City of Clovis	City of Fresno
City of Coalinga	City of Huron
City of Firebaugh	City of Mendota
City of Fowler	City of Kerman
City of Kingsburg	City of San Joaquin
City of Orange Cove	City of Sanger
City of Parlier	City of Selma
City of Reedley	County of Fresno

**Rail:**

Union Pacific Railroad	BNSF Corporation
High Speed Rail Authority	San Joaquin Valley Railroad

**Aviation:**

Association of California Airports	New Coalinga Municipal Airport
California Airport Land Use Consortium	Reedley Municipal Airport
Firebaugh Airport	Selma Airport
Fresno Chandler Executive Airport	Sierra Sky Park Airport
Fresno Yosemite International Airport	William R. Johnston Municipal Airport
Harris Ranch Airport	

Schools and School Districts:	
Alvina Elementary	Mendota Unified
Big Creek Elementary	Monroe Elementary
Burrel Elementary	Orange Center Elementary
Caruthers Unified	Pacific Union Elementary
Central Unified	Parlier Unified
Clay Elementary	Pine Ridge Elementary
Clovis Unified	Raisin City Elementary
Coalinga-Huron Unified	Riverdale Unified
Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified	Sanger Unified
Fowler Unified	Selma Unified
Fresno Unified	Sierra Unified
Golden Plains Unified	Washington Colony Elementary
Kerman Unified	Washington Unified
Kings Canyon Unified	West Park Elementary
Kingsburg Elementary	Westside Elementary
Kingsburg High School	California State University Fresno
Laton Unified	
Other Agencies and Organizations:	
American Farmland Trust	Mead & Hunt
Aries Consultant	Pacific Gas and Electric
California Native Plant Society	Placer Land Trust
California Trucking Association	Provost & Pritchard Engineering
California Wildlife Federation	Ricondo & Associates
C&S Companies	Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter
Gouveia Engineering	Sierra Research Consulting Firm

## Appendix C: Other Organizational Contacts:

These contacts receive newsletters, annual reports and any “special” mailings or emails such as notices, project specific newsletters or flyers as requested. If you would like to have your agency added to this listing, please provide your agency contact information to Fresno COG staff at 559-233-4148 or [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org):

1000 Friends of Fresno	A Recovery Center for Chemical Dependency
Adult Protective Services	Alzheimer’s Disease and RDA
American Lung Association of Central CA	American Protective Services, Inc.
American Red Cross	Asian Interpreting Services
Association for Retarded Citizens	Balderas Elementary School
Bella Vida Group Home	Big Brothers, Big Sisters
Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad
California Armenian Home	California Conservation Corps
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Fresno	California Dept. of Fish and Game
California Department of Rehabilitation	California Detoxification Corp. Baart Clinic
CSUF (Several Departments)	Central Community Church
Central Valley Aids	Central Valley Regional Center
Center for Independent Living	Central Valley Indian Health Center
Centro La Familia	Children and Family Services
Children’s Services Network	Civil Air Patrol
Clovis Chamber of Commerce	Clovis Unified School District
Coalinga Senior Center	Coalinga-Huron Recreation & Parks
Coalition for Community Trails	Community Food Bank
Comprehensive Youth Services	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service
Delno Terrace Elderly Housing	East Fresno Baptist Church
Easter Seal Society of Central CA	Employment Development Department
EOC Local Conservation Corps	Evangelicals for Social Action/LOVE Inc.
Exceptional Parents Unlimited	Fowler Chamber of Commerce
Firebaugh Community Health Center	Frente Indigena Oaxaqueno Binacional
Fresno Air National Guard	Fresno Association of Realtors
Fresno Bee	Fresno City College
Fresno County Adult Services	Fresno County Adult Protective Services
Fresno County Bicycle Coalition	Fresno County Democratic Party
Fresno County Fire Protection District	Fresno County Hispanic Comm. on Alcohol
Fresno County Info. & Referral Network	Fresno County Office of Education
Fresno County Sheriff’s Office	Fresno Covenant Foundation
Fresno Cycling Club	Fresno Fire Department
Fresno Food Bank	Fresno Metro Ministry
Fresno Pacific University	Fresno Police Department
Fresno Rescue Mission	Fresno Unified School District
Fresno West Economic Development Corp.	F.X. Singleton Emergency Food
Golden Valley Girl Scouts	Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
Habitat for Humanity	Highway City Thrift Center
Hinton Center	Hmong-American Advisory
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Housing Authority
Hy-Pana Convalescent Hospital	I-5 Social Services Cooperation, Inc.
Interdenominational Refugee Ministries	Kerman Senior Center
Kingsburg Office of Emergency Services	Kingsburg Senior Center
Lao Buddhist Temple	Lao Family Community
Lao Veterans of America	Las Casitas Village, Sr. Nutrition
Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability	
Malaga Community Center	Mennonite Disaster Services
Mosqueda Center, Senior Nutrition	New United Way
National Parks Conservation	North-Central Fire Department

Older Adult Social Services  
People First  
Proteus  
Reedley Senior Services  
San Joaquin River Conservancy  
San Joaquin Senior Center  
Senior Citizens Village  
SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc.  
Sierra Oaks Senior Center  
S.P.C.A.  
Ted C. Wills Center, Senior Nutrition  
United Hmong Foundation  
USDA Forest Service  
Valley Caregivers Resource Center  
Volunteer Bureau  
Woodward Park Mobile Homeowners Assn.  
Workforce investment Board  
Young Women's Christian Association

Parlier Senior Services  
Poverello House  
Reedley Chamber of Commerce  
Salvation Army  
San Joaquin River Parkway Trust  
Selma Senior Center  
Sequoia Safety Council  
Sierra National Forest  
Southern Baptist Convention  
State Center Community College District  
United Cerebral Palsy of Central CA  
United Way of Fresno County  
Valley Advocacy & Communications Center  
Victory Christian Fellowship  
Winners on Wheels  
World Relief Refugee Services  
Young Men's Christian Association

# The Fresno Bee

fresnobee.com

Central Valley  
The Valley's Lifestyle Magazine

SIERRA STAR  
Serving Eastern Madera Since 1957

Vida  
en el valle

**Customer**  
COUNCIL OF FRESNO COUNTY GC

**Payor Customer**  
COUNCIL OF FRESNO COUNTY GC

**Customer Account**  
332627

**Payor Account**  
332627

**Customer Address**  
2035 TULARE ST STE 201, ,  
FRESNO CA 93721-2004 USA

**Payor Address**  
2035 TULARE ST STE 201, ,  
FRESNO CA 93721-2004 USA

**Customer Phone**  
559-233-4148

**Payor Phone**  
559-233-4148

**Sales Rep.**  
chall@fresnobee.com

**Order Taker**  
chall@fresnobee.com

**PO Number**  
Brenda Veenendaal

**Payment Method**

**Blind Box**

**Tear Sheets**  
0

**Proofs**  
0

**Affidavits**  
1

**Net Amount**  
\$942.76

**Tax Amount**  
\$0.00

**Total Amount**  
\$942.76

**Payment Amt**  
\$0.00

**Amount Due**  
\$942.76

**Ad Number**  
0002443245-01

**Ad Size**  
2.0 X 91 Li

**Color**  
<NONE>

**Product Information**  
**Placement/Classification**

**# Inserts**

**Cost**

**Position**

**Run Dates**

**Run Schedule Invoice Text**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

#2443245

May 13, 2016

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG)  
Public Participation Plan release for 45-day review

The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) is releasing their Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan (PPP) for 45-day public review and comment and is requesting your review of the draft document. The 45-day public review and comment period for this document begins on May 13, 2016 and will be extended until June 30, 2016 to provide additional time for public comment. The PPP is an update to the previously adopted 2012 PPP. It is a document intended to give the Fresno COG elected officials and staff guidance in providing for public involvement and inter-agency consultation early and often during the regional planning process. It contains policies, guidelines and procedures Fresno COG commits to implement to seek and foster open public involvement during the decision-making process, regarding all transportation matters within its discretion. It defines the processes for providing reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process, how to receive information about available opportunities, and whom to contact for more information.

Fresno COG will hold a public hearing on the Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan during the Fresno COG Policy Board's regularly scheduled meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 30, 2016 in the Fresno COG Sequoia Conference Room located at 2035 Tulare St., Suite 201, Fresno, California. The hearing will consider the Adoption of Fresno COG's 2016 Public Participation Plan. Public comments are welcomed at the public hearing or they may be submitted in writing, prior to the hearing, to the following mailing or email addresses, attention Brenda Veenendaal, Fresno COG Public Information Officer:

Fresno COG Office  
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201  
Fresno, California 93721,  
brendav@fresnocog.org

After addressing all comments, the 2016 Public Participation Plan will be considered for adoption, by resolution, by the Fresno COG Policy Board at a regularly scheduled meeting to be held on Thursday, July 28, 2016 at 5:30, also at the address listed above.

Individuals with disabilities may call Fresno COG (with 3-working-day advance notice) to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public hearing. Translation services are available (with 3- working-day advance notice) to participants speaking any language with available professional translation services.

All documents are available for public review at either the COG Office, located at 2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201 in Downtown Fresno, 559-233-4148, or on the World Wide Web at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org). Please contact Brenda Veenendaal with any questions about the plan at (559) 233-4148 by 5:00 pm on June 30, 2016.

###

TONY BOREN, Executive Director  
Fresno Council of Governments

FRS- The Fresno Bee:Print:FRS- Full Ru 1 \$942.76

0300 - Legals Classified

0301-Legals & Public Notices

5/13/2016

#2443245 May 13, 2016 PUBLIC NOTICE Fresno Council of



## Appendix D: Public Notice Documentation Item 2

**The Fresno Bee**  
fresnobee.com

**Central Valley**  
The Valley's Lifestyle Magazine

**SIERRA STAR**  
Serving Eastern Madera Since 1957

**Vida**  
en el valle

**Customer** **Payor Customer**  
COUNCIL OF FRESNO COUNTY GC COUNCIL OF FRESNO COUNTY GC

**Customer Account**  
332627

**Payor Account**  
332627

**Customer Address**  
2035 TULARE ST STE 201, ,  
FRESNO CA 93721-2004 USA

**Payor Address**  
2035 TULARE ST STE 201, ,  
FRESNO CA 93721-2004 USA

**Customer Phone**  
559-233-4148

**Payor Phone**  
559-233-4148

**Sales Rep.**  
chall@fresnobee.com

**Order Taker**  
chall@fresnobee.com

**PO Number** **Payment Method** **Blind Box**  
Brenda Veenendaal

**Tear Sheets** **Proofs** **Affidavits**  
0 0 1

**Net Amount** **Tax Amount** **Total Amount**  
\$527.00 \$0.00 \$527.00

**Payment Amt** **Amount Due**  
\$0.00 \$527.00

**Ad Number** **Ad Size** **Color**  
0002452412-01 2.0 X 62 Li <NONE>

**Product Information** **# Inserts** **Cost**

**Placement/Classification**

**Position**

**Run Dates**

**Run Schedule Invoice Text**

FRS-Vida en el Valle:Print:FRS-VIDA FR 1 \$527.00

0200 - Announcements

0275-Misc. Announcements

5/18/2016

#2452412 May 13, 2016 PUBLIC NOTICE Fresno Council of

### PUBLIC NOTICE

#2452412

May 13, 2016

### PUBLIC NOTICE Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) Public Participation Plan release for 45-day review

The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) is releasing their Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan (PPP) for 45-day public review and comment and is requesting your review of the draft document. The 45-day public review and comment period for this document begins on May 13, 2016 and will be extended until June 30, 2016 to provide additional time for public comment. The PPP is an update to the previously adopted 2012 PPP. It is a document intended to give the Fresno COG elected officials and staff guidance in providing for public involvement and interagency consultation early and often during the regional planning process. It contains policies, guidelines and procedures Fresno COG commits to implement to seek and foster open public involvement during the decision-making process, regarding all transportation matters within its discretion. It defines the processes for providing reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process, and states how to receive information about available opportunities.

Fresno COG will hold a public hearing on the Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan during the Fresno COG Policy Board's regularly scheduled meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 30, 2016 in the Fresno COG Sequoia Conference Room located at 2035 Tulare St., Suite 201, Fresno, California. The hearing will consider the Adoption of Fresno COG's 2016 Public Participation Plan. Public comments are welcomed at the public hearing or they may be submitted in writing prior to the hearing to the following mailing or email addresses, attention Brenda Veenendaal, Fresno COG Public Information Officer:

Fresno COG Office  
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201  
Fresno, California 93721  
brendav@fresnocog.org

After addressing all comments, the 2016 Public Participation Plan will be considered for adoption, by resolution, by the Fresno COG Policy Board at a regularly scheduled meeting to be held on Thursday, July 28, 2016 at 5:30, also at the address listed above.

Individuals with disabilities may call Fresno COG (with 3-working-day advance notice) to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public hearing. Translation services are available (with 3-working-day advance notice) to participants speaking any language with available professional translation services.

All documents are available for public review at either the COG Office, located at 2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201 in Downtown Fresno, 559-233-4148, or on the World Wide Web at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org). Please contact Brenda Veenendaal with any questions about the plan at (559) 233-4148 by 5:00 pm on June 30, 2016.

###

TONY BOREN, Executive Director  
Fresno Council of Governments

## Appendix E: Public Comment - Comments Received

**From:** Bryan-Sanchez, Jennifer@DOT [mailto:jennifer.bryan-sanchez@dot.ca.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 29, 2016 11:36 AM  
**To:** Brenda Veenendaal  
**Subject:** RE: Fresno COG Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan

Good Morning Brenda,

Regarding the Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan, Caltrans District 6 staff has the following comments:

- Page 6 - Federal and State Requirements: This section should include the Executive Order 13175 and AB 52.
- Page 10 - III. Opportunities for Public Engagement, Active Transportation Program Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee: Caltrans recommends that District participate in the Active Transportation Program Multidisciplinary Advisory Group. This recommendation is in relation to state routes that serve as main streets and other state facilities within Fresno County.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me. Thanks and have a wonderful day.

Jennifer Bryan-Sanchez  
Associate Transportation Planner  
Caltrans-DO6  
1352 W. Olive Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93728  
(559)488-7307



July 7, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Jennifer Bryan-Sanchez  
Associate Transportation Planner  
Caltrans-DO6  
1352 W. Olive Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93728

RE: Comments on Fresno Council of Governments 2016 Public Participation Plan and 2018  
Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy

Dear Jennifer,

I would like to thank you for reviewing and commenting on Fresno COG's 2016 Public Participation Plan (2016 PPP) and 2018 Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy. This letter is in response to your comments, with an explanation of how each comment affected the final draft plan.

Your comment:

Page 6 - Federal and State Requirements: This section should include the Executive Order 13175 and AB 52.

Fresno COG's Response: In response we have added Executive Order 13175 to the 2016 PPP page 8 in the listing on Section II's Federal and State Requirements as follows:

▪ Executive Order 13175 — Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments

Establishes regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have tribal implications, to strengthen the government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes, and to reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian tribes.

We also added AB 52 in Section II under the heading "Other Requirements". It is mentioned in the same paragraph stating we comply with the California Environmental Quality Act, page 9 of the 2016 PPP.

Your comment:

Page 10 - III. Opportunities for Public Engagement, Active Transportation Program Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee: Caltrans recommends that District participate in the Active Transportation Program Multidisciplinary Advisory Group. This recommendation is in relation to state routes that serve as main streets and other state facilities within Fresno County.

Fresno COG's Response: Two Caltrans District 6 staff members are very actively involved on that committee – Pedram Mafi and Jim Perrault.

Again, thank you for your comments. If you have any questions about our responses please contact me at 559-233-4148 ext. 219 or via email at [brendav@fresnocog.org](mailto:brendav@fresnocog.org).

Sincerely,

Brenda Veenendaal  
Senior Regional Planner  
Public Information Officer  
Fresno Council of Governments

## Appendix E: Public Comment - Comments Received

**From:** Darlene Christiansen [mailto:Darlene.Christiansen@fresno.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 24, 2016 6:26 PM  
**To:** Brenda Veenendaal  
**Subject:** RE: Fresno COG Draft 2016 Public Participation Plan

Hi Brenda,

A few comments on Appendix B – under State Agencies:

- The Caltrans listing may have been cut off. I believe it should have a comma after Aeronautics, and then say “Division of Rail and Mass Transportation”.  
Current listing: Caltrans - Headquarters, Districts 6 & 10, Division of Aeronautics Division of Rail.
- You may want to add the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, aka Cal OES, since they handle a portion of transit-specific Prop1B funding.
- You may want to add the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA). Here’s a link to their site if you need more info: <http://www.calsta.ca.gov/>.

Best,  
Darlene

July 7, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Darlene Christiansen  
Fresno Area Express  
City of Fresno

RE: Comments on Fresno Council of Governments 2016 Public Participation Plan and 2018 Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy

Dear Darlene,

I would like to thank you for reviewing and commenting on Fresno COG's 2016 Public Participation Plan (2016 PPP) and 2018 Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy. This letter is in response to your comments, with an explanation of how each comment affected the final draft plan.

Your comment: A few comments on Appendix B – under State Agencies:

- The Caltrans listing may have been cut off. I believe it should have a comma after Aeronautics, and then say "Division of Rail and Mass Transportation".  
Current listing: Caltrans - Headquarters, Districts 6 & 10, Division of Aeronautics Division of Rail.

Fresno COG's Response: Thank you, that has been corrected and added.

Your comment:

- You may want to add the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, aka Cal OES, since they handle a portion of transit-specific Prop1B funding.

Fresno COG's Response: Thank you, that has been corrected and added.

Your comment:

- You may want to add the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA). Here's a link to their site if you need more info: <http://www.calsta.ca.gov/>.

Fresno COG's Response: Thank you, that has been corrected and added.

Sincerely,

Brenda Veenendaal  
Senior Regional Planner  
Public Information Officer  
Fresno Council of Governments

## Appendix E: Public Comment - Comments Received



June 30, 2016

Brenda Veenendaal, Senior Regional Planner & Public Information Officer  
Fresno Council of Governments  
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 210  
Fresno, CA 93721

### **RE: Comments on Fresno Council of Governments 2016 Public Participation Plan and 2018 Regional Transportation Plan Public Participation Plan**

Dear Ms. Veenendaal,

We are writing to provide comments on the Fresno Council of Governments' (Fresno COG) 2016 Public Participation Plan and 2106 Regional Transportation Plan Public Participation Plan (Plan). We thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to help guide Fresno COG's efforts to make the transportation planning process equitable and inclusive of all residents of Fresno County. We hope to work in partnership to create a comprehensive and equitable public process that is inclusive of diverse voices and communities.

We are pleased to see strategies and objectives in the draft Plan that clearly lay out the importance of community engagement. We believe the strategies and objectives in the draft provide a clear roadmap to how Fresno COG will meet its objectives. We offer the following recommendations in an effort to strengthen the current draft to ensure that public outreach efforts are inclusive of all Fresno County residents.

#### **I. Fresno COG 2016 Public Participation Plan Commitments**

We applaud Fresno COG's commitments laid out in the draft plan. We firmly believe that early engagement, accessibility, responsiveness and transparency will lead to strong policies and programs that will advance and meaningfully meet the needs of all communities. While

Fresno COG references early and ongoing communication with diverse audiences throughout the five proposed commitments, we recommend that Fresno COG include an explicit sixth commitment to partner with diverse community based organizations to ensure broad based engagement in all transportation related activities and upcoming 2018 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2018 RTP/SCS).

## **II. Establish the Environmental Justice Committee as a stand-alone committee**

While we appreciate Fresno COGs efforts to provide multiple opportunities for engagement through multiple committees, we respectfully request that the Environmental Justice Committee be established as a stand-alone committee that reports directly to the Policy Board instead of as a subcommittee to the Transportation Technical Committee. Low-income communities of color are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution and have traditionally lacked access to basic services such as adequate and reliable public transit and pedestrian and biking infrastructure to support active travel. Fresno County residents in environmental justice communities will not shift their mode of travel unless we provide real transportation choices that get resident to where they need to go and disparate impacts are addressed. This can only be achieved through a committee dedicated to assessing and providing recommendations on proposed Fresno COG policies and programs that will further the needs of environmental justice communities.

## **III. Additional Public Participation Strategies**

### **A. Develop partnership with local schools**

To increase community resident participation, we suggest Fresno COG coordinate closely with local schools to host workshops and public hearings. Schools serve as key resource centers for many communities and in particular, low income communities of color. Close partnerships with teachers, principals and superintendents have led to strong public participation in efforts aimed at improving services and conditions in local communities. These facilities are also readily accessible to the community; they are often within walking or biking distance and accessible through public transportation. Often residents have a well-established working relationship with schools making it a familiar space, and it is more affordable.

### **B. Engage bilingual staff**

We believe it is important for Fresno COG staff to be in direct communication with community residents. It is crucial for non-English speaking residents to be able to communicate directly to COG staff over the phone to provide input or raise concerns without having to rely on a third party. Residents from disadvantaged rural communities who lack access to public transportation are often not able to attend public workshops in certain areas of the County. We recommend Fresno COG establish a clear process through which residents can contact staff directly in their native language.

### **C. Performance measures**

We commend Fresno COG for acknowledging the need to consistently evaluate performance. To build on this, we suggest Fresno COG incorporate performance measures in the Plan that

will be used to assess public outreach efforts. This will allow the public to understand how Fresno COG will measure its efforts and to provide meaningful feedback based on their experiences.

#### **D. Use of social media**

As part of the social media outreach strategy proposed in the Plan, we recommend Fresno COG include schools as a main location to post and distribute bilingual flyers/notices inviting residents to public workshops or hearings. This is especially important in the disadvantaged unincorporated communities that do not have access to broadband or internet services. The schools act as the principal resource for residents to access public information.

#### **IV. Development of 2018 RTP/SCS**

We look forward to working closely with Fresno COG to develop the 2018 RTP/SCS. While we are in strong support of the various strategies identified in the draft Plan, we recommend that Fresno COG identify a clear process through which scoring criteria will be determined to rank and prioritize transportation projects; land use scenarios will be modeled; policies and programs will be developed; and finally, development of performance evaluation criteria. We further recommend that at each stage of this process Fresno COG provide ample opportunity for public review and input.

Finally, we applaud Fresno COG for its efforts to ensure broad based community engagement by providing grants to local community based organizations. We are in strong support of continuation of this program as we saw its success in the development of the 2014 RTP/SCS.

\* \* \* \* \*

We thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to working with Fresno COG to ensure barriers to public participation are removed and ensure that input from low income communities is reflected in Fresno COG policies and programs. Please feel free to contact me with any question at (559) 369 2790.

Sincerely,

Leticia Corona  
Community Advocacy Director  
Leadership Counsel for Justice and  
Accountability

Marty Martinez  
Northern California Policy Mgr.  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership

Genoveva Islas  
Executive Director  
Cultiva La Salud

Nayamin Martinez, MPH  
Central California Environmental Justice  
Network

Kevin D. Hamilton, RRT  
Chief Executive Officer  
Central California Asthma Collaborative  
Medical Association of Health Associates

Susie Rico-Vasquez, MPH  
Community Engagement Director-Fresno  
American Lung Association

Sophia DeWitt  
Better Blackstone Project Manager  
Fresno Metro Ministry

Charles Ashley  
Fresno Resident

Wendy Alfsen  
Executive Director  
California Walks



July 7, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Leticia Corona  
Community Advocacy Director  
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability  
[lc Corona@leadershipcounsel.org](mailto:lc Corona@leadershipcounsel.org)

RE: Comments on Fresno Council of Governments 2016 Public Participation Plan and  
2018 Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy

Dear Leticia,

We first would like to sincerely thank the following agencies for taking time to review and  
comment on the 2016 Fresno Council of Governments Public Participation Plan and the  
2018 Regional Transportation Plan Public Outreach Strategy:

- Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
- Safe Routes to School National Partnership
- Cultiva La Salud
- Central California Environmental Justice Network
- Central California Asthma Collaborative
- Medical Association of Health Associates
- Community Engagement Director-Fresno
- American Lung Association
- Fresno Metro Ministry
- California Walks
- As well as Fresno resident, Charles Ashley.

Your comments were encouraging and helpful, and each comment will be responded to  
individually in this letter. As you will notice in the Final Draft version of the 2016 Public  
Participation Plan (PPP), many comments resulted in additions or changes to the document  
language. Where a change was not made in the plan language we have provided an  
explanation as to the finding. If you are concerned with any of the additions, changes or lack  
thereof, please contact Brenda Veenendaal directly via phone, email or mail to set up a time  
to discuss any possible issues and solutions.

#### **I. Fresno COG 2016 Public Participation Plan Commitments**

##### Your comment:

We applaud Fresno COG's commitments laid out in the draft plan. We firmly believe that  
early engagement, accessibility, responsiveness and transparency will lead to strong policies  
and programs that will advance and meaningfully meet the needs of all communities. While  
Fresno COG references early and ongoing communication with diverse audiences  
throughout the five proposed commitments, we recommend that Fresno COG include an  
explicit sixth commitment to partner with diverse community based organizations to ensure

broad based engagement in all transportation related activities and upcoming 2018 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2018 RTP/SCS).

Fresno COG's response:

Fresno COG's firm commitment to partnership with community agencies for the 2018 RTP/SCS development outreach is reflected in the RTP Public Outreach Plan, Appendix A of the 2016 PPP. The section of the 2016 PPP in which you request we include that commitment refers to overarching commitments to public outreach agency wide as required by Federal or State legislation. Therefore, it would not be the appropriate location in the PPP for a specific, project-based, stand-alone commitment such as this. However, we do mention it on page 28 of the PPP that addresses Public Participation Strategies, in two bullets points under Public Meetings/Workshops. We also have a line item budgeted amount committed to RTP Mini Grants in the Fresno COG 2016-2017 Overall Work Program recently approved by the Fresno COG Policy Board under Work Element 170, section 170.06. It is a strong commitment, and we look forward to working with the community organizations for yet another very successful and enhanced outreach effort.

**II. Establish the Environmental Justice Committee as a stand-alone committee**

Your comment:

While we appreciate Fresno COGs efforts to provide multiple opportunities for engagement through multiple committees, we respectfully request that the Environmental Justice Committee be established as a stand-alone committee that reports directly to the Policy Board instead of as a subcommittee to the Transportation Technical Committee. Low-income communities of color are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution and have traditionally lacked access to basic services such as adequate and reliable public transit and pedestrian and biking infrastructure to support active travel. Fresno County residents in environmental justice communities will not shift their mode of travel unless we provide real transportation choices that get resident to where they need to go and disparate impacts are addressed. This can only be achieved through a committee dedicated to assessing and providing recommendations on proposed Fresno COG policies and programs that will further the needs of environmental justice communities.

Fresno COG's response:

The establishment of our Environmental Justice committee format and positions was approved by the Fresno COG Policy Board earlier this year at their February 2016 meeting (Item IIE). Staff proposed the new format for several reasons outlined as follows:

1. Due to the nature of the work completed, the EJ Committee should be a subcommittee of the Transportation Technical Committee (planners, community and transportation stake holders), rather than the Policy Advisory Committee (city managers) or Policy Board (elected officials).
2. In the past, Environmental Justice (EJ) Task Forces were formed during the RTP development processes to establish EJ performance measures. However, once the measures were established, the Task Force was disbanded or, as in the case of the 2014 RTP EJ Task Force, most members ceased attending continued Task Force meetings. With this format, any of the standing committees could request that the Environmental Justice Committee weigh in on any given item during the year, keeping the subcommittee viable and the work relevant to Fresno COG's planning responsibilities.

3. Previously, EJ Task Force work was established as a stand-alone Advisory Committee. Therefore, their comments, agenda items and work completed did not always require review, input or communication to Fresno COG's standing committees and subsequent Policy Board. With this new format, establishing the EJ Committee as a subcommittee to the Transportation Technical Committee, all items addressed on the subcommittee agenda and work completed would automatically be reported to the entire Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee and Policy Board, fostering better communication with the Policy Board members.

### **III. Additional Public Participation Strategies**

#### **A. Develop partnership with local schools**

Your comment:

To increase community resident participation, we suggest Fresno COG coordinate closely with local schools to host workshops and public hearings. Schools serve as key resource centers for many communities and in particular, low income communities of color. Close partnerships with teachers, principals and superintendents have led to strong public participation in efforts aimed at improving services and conditions in local communities. These facilities are also readily accessible to the community; they are often within walking or biking distance and accessible through public transportation. Often residents have well established working relationship with schools making it a familiar space, and it is more affordable.

Fresno COG's response:

Thank you for your valuable recommendation. Fresno COG is actively seeking innovative ways to develop and implement outreach strategies that will open the doors to increased public participation. Fresno COG did invite and meet with School District Superintendents and other representatives during the development of the current RTP/SCS and they remain in our contact databases. Local school representatives are included on Fresno COG committees such as the Active Transportation Program Multidisciplinary Advisory Group and the Programming Subcommittee Group, helping to develop funding guidelines, evaluating, scoring and awarding project funds. We have also held several workshops and events with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, as we value the safety and security of our youth and the impact they have on planning and implementing alternative modes of transportation.

Fresno COG staff also manages a circuit planning team currently working on a school traffic safety zone plan with the City of Kingsburg, further assisting our agencies with addressing the safety and security of youth in transportation. These efforts work to provide outreach, support, and promotion through the schools.

During the development of the 2014 RTP/SCS effort, part of our outreach implementation strategies consisted of hosting many public meetings at school facilities, and flyers were distributed to the schools we were meeting at. Unfortunately the curriculum requirements of the districts did not allow ample time for schools to address the RTP/SCS issues as part of the school day's curriculum, resulting in workshop attendees indicating that they did not receive workshop notification through school flyers. During past RTP outreach processes staff also disseminated flyers to various elementary schools inviting parents and families to meetings, but received no participation as a result of that effort. Fresno COG plans to work

closely with community organizations like yours to strengthen the relationships needed with schools in the local communities and this would be best achieved as part of the mini-grant outreach programs planned for RTP/SCS development. Furthermore, in response to your recommendations, language has been added to the first bullet point under Targeted Mailings/Flyers on page 29 of the 2016 PPP incorporating school district outreach goals to the outreach strategies. We welcome discussing outreach goals and implementation strategies with you as we move forward collectively.

## **B. Engage bilingual staff**

### Your comment:

We believe it is important for Fresno COG staff to be in direct communication with community residents. It is crucial for non-English speaking residents to be able to communicate directly to COG staff over the phone to provide input or raise concerns without having to rely on a third party. Residents from disadvantaged rural communities who lack access to public transportation are often not able to attend public workshops in certain areas of the County. We recommend Fresno COG establish a clear process through which residents can contact staff directly in their native language.

### Fresno COG's response:

Staff strongly agrees with this comment. Several Fresno COG staff members are bilingual, two of which were recently hired. Our staff is happy to speak with community members by phone or at public meetings in Hmong, Spanish, and Chinese. We also publish notifications on all public meeting agendas on how to request an interpreter for any language and for any Fresno COG public meeting, free of charge. Language is already included on pages 10 and 32 of the 2016 PPP indicating how community members may request interpretation assistance prior to Fresno COG public meetings. Fresno COG's phone system is also accessible in English and Spanish. However, in response to this comment language has been added to the 2016 PPP on page 4, and a description has been added to page 32 regarding the languages currently available by phone should community members wish to call and speak with our staff.

In addition, Fresno COG historically offers free transportation to all community members via bus or van to scheduled workshops (RTP/SCS) as funding allows, as well as free child care and meals.

## **C. Performance measures**

### Your comment:

We commend Fresno COG for acknowledging the need to consistently evaluate performance. To build on this, we suggest Fresno COG incorporate performance measures in the Plan that will be used to assess public outreach efforts. This will allow the public to understand how Fresno COG will measure its efforts and to provide meaningful feedback based on their experiences.

### Fresno COG's response:

Page 27 of the 2016 PPP states that Fresno COG will develop performance measures specifically for the 2018 RTP Public Outreach Strategy, which is located on page 10 of that

document (see Appendix A). Staff has also drafted new language addressing 2016 PPP performance measures, now included on page 27 of the document.

#### **D. Use of social media**

##### Your comment:

As part of the social media outreach strategy proposed in the Plan, we recommend Fresno COG include schools as a main location to post and distribute bilingual flyers/notices inviting residents to public workshops or hearings. This is especially important in the disadvantaged unincorporated communities that do not have access to broadband or internet services. The schools act as the principal resource for residents to access public information.

##### Fresno COG's response:

Once again, during past RTP outreach processes staff also disseminated flyers to elementary schools inviting parents and families to outreach meetings but received no participation as a result of that effort. Perhaps the relationships Fresno COG needs to establish in the local communities to make that effort successful would be best established as part of the mini-grant outreach programs planned for RTP/SCS development and then continued where communities felt the effort was valuable to them.

#### **IV. Development of 2018 RTP/SCS**

##### Your comment:

We look forward to working closely with Fresno COG to develop the 2018 RTP/SCS. While we are in strong support of the various strategies identified in the draft Plan, we recommend that Fresno COG identify a clear process through which scoring criteria will be determined to rank and prioritize transportation projects; land use scenarios will be modeled; policies and programs will be developed; and finally, development of performance evaluation criteria. We further recommend that at each stage of this process Fresno COG provide ample opportunity for public review and input.

Finally, we applaud Fresno COG for its efforts to ensure broad based community engagement by providing grants to local community based organizations. We are in strong support of continuation of this program as we saw its success in the development of the 2014 RTP/SCS.

##### Fresno COG's response:

As you requested above, Fresno COG will identify a clear process through which scoring criteria will be determined to rank and prioritize transportation projects; land use scenarios to be modeled; policies, needs and programs that will be developed; and finally, the development of the SCS performance evaluation criteria. We will also continue to provide ample opportunity for public review and input during each stage or phase of the RTP and SCS development.

Fresno COG staff is planning a kick-off meeting for late summer/early fall 2016 at which a clear process for all of those items will initially be discussed. The planning process will continue to be evaluated by Fresno COG's standing committees and the Policy Board, and will be open to public input and formal comment. However, Fresno COG will not be including those processes in the 2018 RTP Public Outreach Strategy at this time, as the

timeline and federal and state guidelines for those processes have not be finalized by state and federal agencies yet.

Once again, Fresno COG sincerely thanks you for your comments and participation in our planning efforts . We truly look forward to working with each of you in various capacities as we move forward. Please do not hesitate to contact us to further discuss your comments and Fresno COG's responses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brenda Veenendaal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brenda" being more prominent than the last name "Veenendaal".

Brenda Veenendaal

Senior Regional Planner & Public Information Officer

Fresno Council of Governments

This page intentionally left blank

**Fresno COG's contact information:**

Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG)

2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201

Fresno, CA 93721

559.233.4148 Phone

559.233.9645 Fax

[www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org)



Fresno Council  
of Governments