

November 17, 2025

Mayor Alma Beltran, Chair
Fresno Council of Governments Policy Board
2100 Tulare Street, Suite 200
Fresno, CA 93721

Dear Chair Beltran and Members of the Fresno Council of Governments Policy Board:

As long-standing transportation professionals and citizens with many decades of combined experience delivering Measure C and other transportation improvements, we remain fully committed to the successful renewal of Measure C. Many of us actively participated in the 2022 renewal effort and have closely followed the 2026 renewal process since then.

With the Steering Committee's proposed Renewal Allocation Plan now moving to your Board, we respectfully submit that, while the Plan reflects consensus within the Committee, it may not align with the needs, expectations, and priorities of Fresno County residents and voters. The electorate will ultimately decide renewal, and the expenditure plan must address key transportation needs and voter priorities.

We offer the following three major concerns:

1. *Local Street and Road Repair Must Be Funded at a Sustainable Level*

Fixing and preserving existing streets, roads, and highways was the top priority identified during the 2022 effort, and it remains the highest priority today. While the Steering Committee allocates significant funding to this category, it still may not meet the scale of need documented by local jurisdictions.

Underfunding local streets and roads today only increases long-term costs. Deferred maintenance leads to more expensive full reconstruction later. Moreover, this category supports critical local safety and other transportation projects, including improvements for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists, which residents consistently expect Measure C to deliver.

Ensuring adequate investment in this category will be crucial for maintaining public trust and securing a successful renewal vote.

2. *The Regional Transportation System Is Critically Underfunded*

The regional highway and arterial network carries at least 95% of all trips within and through Fresno County. It is the backbone of goods movement, regional mobility, and economic growth. Yet the Steering Committee proposal significantly underfunds this critical system.

Although significant freeway expansions may be less common today, essential safety and operational improvements on the state highway and local arterial systems are still urgently needed to reduce accidents and avoid the congestion and gridlock now common in other regions of California.

Historically, Measure C has delivered critical regional projects such as:

- ✓ Veterans Boulevard Interchange on State Route 99
- ✓ Herndon and Shaw Corridor Improvements
- ✓ State Route 41/168/180 Braided Ramps
- ✓ State Route 41 widening to Excelsior Avenue
- ✓ Blackstone-McKinley Grade Separation
- ✓ Improvements along Willow, California, Peach, and Temperance Avenues
- ✓ Golden State Boulevard Improvements
- ✓ State Route 269 Bridge Improvements to Mountain View, Mendocino, and Academy Avenues
- ✓ Extension of State Route 180 west and east
- ✓ Rural Corridor Upgrades

These projects were made possible because Measure C provided substantial local revenue, which successfully leveraged state and federal funds at a minimum 7:1 ratio (seven non-Measure C dollars for each Measure C dollar).

Without a robust Regional Connectivity Program in the next Measure C, Fresno County will lose out on substantial federal safety and mobility funding now available through FHWA and other programs. Neither Caltrans nor the local agencies will have sufficient revenues to address needed improvements without Measure C matching funds.

Looking ahead, a strengthened regional program could deliver:

- ✓ Replacement of the obsolete and unsafe Shaw Avenue/State Route 99 Interchange
- ✓ Managed lanes and smart corridor technology on urban freeways
- ✓ Completion of the Blackstone-McKinley Grade Separation Project
- ✓ Light rail, should it later prove economically feasible
- ✓ Safety and operational improvements on Academy, Manning, Reed, and Jensen Avenues, Millerton Road, and other major rural corridors
- ✓ Replacement of outdated interchanges south of Fresno
- ✓ Safety improvements on rural highways, including State Route 180, 145, 33, 269, 198, and others (for example: passing lanes)

These are countywide needs that voters expect to be addressed. Further, we have invested billions of dollars in improving this system. Voters expect us to continue maintaining and improving it.

We recommend a minimum of 18% allocation to the regional system to maintain Fresno County's ability to leverage outside funds and address critical congestion and safety needs.

3. The Proposed Transit Allocation Exceeds Ridership Reality

The Steering Committee proposes dedicating 25% of Measure C revenues to transit, nearly identical to the 24% included in the 2006 Measure, which was intended to increase ridership significantly. After almost two decades of this investment level, transit still accounts for approximately 2% of trips countywide, a figure that has remained stable for over 20 years.

Transit is essential for the residents who rely on it, and we support continued investment. However, a 25% allocation will not materially increase ridership without structural changes in how service is delivered. Funding alone cannot resolve underlying service design and operational challenges.

The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) plan allocates 25% of the funds to transit, which accounts for about 2% of the trips. In contrast, the Fresno COG plan allocates only 4% of its revenues to the Regional system, which accounts for approximately 95% of the trips.

A transit allocation of 11–12% would still generate nearly \$1 billion over 30 years, enough to maintain and improve operations if agencies modernize their service models. Reducing the transit share now does not preclude future light rail; a properly structured Regional Connectivity Program can make light rail eligible if forthcoming studies show economic viability.

A Constructive Path Forward

While there are other elements of the allocation plan that present challenges, they are less significant than the three major issues addressed above.

We respectfully request a meeting with the Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) and the Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) to discuss potential revisions prior to the Policy Board taking action. Our goal is to support the renewal effort fully, and we believe adjustments can be made to align the Plan with voter priorities, transportation system needs, and long-term fiscal responsibility.

Enclosed is a comparison of the Steering Committee Allocation Plan reflecting an alternative allocation that we believe more accurately reflects Fresno County's transportation needs.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Malcolm Dougherty

Professional Consulting Engineer; past Caltrans Director, Chief Engineer, and District 6 Director



Diana Gomez

Consulting Engineer; past Caltrans District 6 Director; past CAHSR Central Region Director



Tony Boren

Professional Transportation Planner; retired Executive Director, Fresno COG



Mike Leonardo

Professional Transportation Engineer; retired Executive Director, FCTA; past Caltrans Chief Engineer and District 6 Director



Georgiana Vivian

Professional Transportation Planner, President, VRPA Technologies, Inc. (significant and long-standing support to Fresno COG and FCTA)

Enclosure: Comparison Exhibit

cc: Fresno Council of Governments Policy Board
Fresno County Transportation Authority Board
Fresno County Board of Supervisors
All Fresno County City Councils