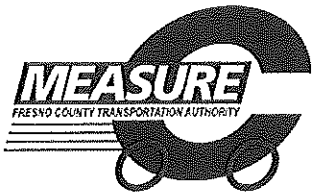


FEBRUARY 6, 2019
FCTA Board Meeting
Item VII
Advocate Status Report



Office of the Advocate

OFFICE OF THE ADVOCATE STATUS REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 6, 2019
TO: FRESNO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
FROM: ROSE WILLEMS

The Office of the Advocate was created in 1993 to serve Fresno County residents as an ombudsman; to address questions regarding our local, regional, and state transportation systems. Our office researches inquiries from the public regarding plans for construction of Measure C funded projects and the implementation of Measure C funded programs. The office also provides information and educational material to the public regarding the 2006 Measure C Extension Expenditure Plan.

Originally, the emphasis of the Advocate was with Urban Freeways 168/180 due to the 1993, lawsuit filed by the "STAND Committee" and "1,000 Friends of Fresno" to stop the project. The suit was settled and presently our attention is focused on Measure C Regional projects including: SR180 Design-Build Braided Ramps Landscaping-Phase, SR180 Kings Canyon Expressway; SR180 Mendota Passing Lanes, SR41 Auxiliary Lanes/Soundwalls; SR 269 Huron Bridge Replacement; Veterans Boulevard managed by the City of Fresno; Shaw Avenue Widening between DeWolf/McCall managed by the City of Clovis; Golden State Corridor managed by COG; as well as, Academy Avenue Widening managed by the City of Sanger.

Our goal of providing prompt, personalized service is the reason behind our high success rate in resolving property owner's concerns. The staff is continually networking to gain knowledge and new resources to address the various types of transportation issues that concern Fresno County residents.

This Status Report identifies issues from September – January our office addressed. It explains strategies used to resolve concerns facing the residents impacted by Measure C projects during the past four months.

INVOLVEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY MEASURE C PROJECTS

- Presented role of the Advocate and updated Measure C project information to:
 - SR 41/Auxiliary Lanes/Soundwalls-Variou Property Owners
 - SR168/Weldon Avenue-Variou Property Owners
 - SR 180/Willow-Variou Property Owners
 - SR 180/Fowler-Wright
 - SR 180/Centerville & Minkler-Variou Property Owners
 - SR 180/Mendota Passing Lanes-COG/County/City-staff updates
 - SR 99/Clinton Overcrossing-Variou Property Owners
 - County of Fresno/staff update SR180 Kings Canyon Expressway
 - COG/staff update Golden State Corridor/SR269/Van Pool Program
 - City of Clovis/staff updates Shaw Avenue Widening
 - City of Huron/staff updates SR269
 - City of Reedley/staff updates SR180
 - City of Sanger/staff updates SR180/Academy Avenue Widening/
All-Electric Buses
 - Central Unified School District/staff updates All-Electric Buses
 - Sanger Unified School District/staff updates SR180/All-Electric Buses
 - Fresno City College; Reedley College; Fresno State; "How Will the Road to Your Future Be Paved?" update w/engineering students
 - Millerton Road Widening Status/Brighton Crest CAC/County Staff
 - California High Speed Rail Authority/staff updates
 - Helping the community take advantage of the Measure C Taxi Scrip, and Ride Share Programs; keeping Measure C in people's minds and an eye toward 2027

- Community Outreach:
 - School Safety Programs:
 - "Don't Take a Chance" safety program presented to elementary schools & Measure C Roadshow attendees throughout the Region.
 - Education
 - Provided Measure C fact sheets and Project Updates:
Sanger Unified School District
 - Graffiti Cleanup
 - SR-168 Weldon Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing coordinated volunteers with the Mayfair Homeowners' Association
 - Measure C Road Show 2018-2019 Tentative Events:
 - Sanger Blossom Trail—Run, Car Show and Festival
 - Reedley Street Faire and Car Show
 - Kerman Independence Day Celebration
 - Asian Access Fair; Fresno Grizzlies Baseball Games
 - The Big Fresno Fair and Children Education Program

Fresno Veteran's Day Parade
Kingsburg Santa Lucia Festival
Coalinga-Huron Christmas Parade and Festival
Mendota Christmas Parade and Festival

- Provided the following services and materials:
 - Updating Measure C social media accounts:
www.MeasureC.com
 - Measure C - Fresno County; Facebook
 - Staffing Measure C Information Booths upon request
 - Measure C Speakers Bureau presentations upon requested
 - Information on SB-1 funded Projects in our Region
 - Send out Measure C publications upon request:
 - FCTA Annual Report
 - Office of the Advocate—services provided
 - Measure C funded program fact sheets provided in Spanish/English:
 - Promises Made. Promises Kept. 1987-2007 Report Card
 - Continuing Measure C 2007-2027
 - Taxi Scrip; Vanpool; & Carpool programs

INVOLVEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY MEASURE C PROJECTS

- Provided residents with updated construction information, as follows:
 - Attended progress meetings regarding Measure C construction projects with contractor and Caltrans staff
 - Worked directly with Public Information Office & Traffic Management Center on road detours/closures
 - Assisted homeowners with solutions to trash, dust, noise or property damage
- Educated the public on the Caltrans Right-of-Way Clearance Process:
 - Explained the difference between auctioning and demolishing a house
 - Interpreted the Caltrans condemnation procedure
 - Provided time lines for utility relocation & construction phase
- Supplied updated information of Caltrans' auctions of excess land & homes:
 - The bid process on houses & other improvements
 - Interpreted Caltrans procedure with the City, County & State
 - Guidelines in accordance with the Contract of Sale
 - Translate sale of excess land to monolingual community
- Assisted property owners/tenants living within the Right of Way:
 - Explained the Relocation Assistance Program

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- Interpreted Caltrans & County procedures to residents
- Coordinated and attended meetings with property owners and staff from the County or Caltrans
- Provided updated maps and information to real estate professionals

- Media Relations:
 - 10/19/18;
 - Ribbon Cutting SR180 Mendota Passing Lanes; \$6 million Measure C promises made, promises kept Regional Project
 - 11/1/18;
 - Ground Breaking SR269 Huron Bridge; \$30.1million Measure C promises made, promises kept Regional Project
 - 11/14/18;
 - Press Conference; Fresno City College Receives \$1.9 million Grant from the Measure C New Technology Reverse Program. The Grant will provide funding to the Advanced Propulsion Systems Training Campus for students in the Advanced Transportation Automotive, Fleet and Alternative Fueled Vehicles Program
 - 1/9/19;
 - Press Conference; Central Unified School District Receives Two All-Electric School Buses; \$1.1 million Grant from the Measure C New Technology Reverse Program
 - On-going;
 - Implement media plan in coordination with Fresno COG on Measure C funded Rideshare & Taxi Scrip Programs to maximize outreach dollars.

PROVIDE TIMELY SERVICE

- Ability to explain Caltrans & County procedural handbooks, paperwork and time lines
- Organize and attend meetings with Caltrans & County personnel to address individual concerns
- Available for early morning or evening appointments

INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Our staff deals with various items of concern from our Fresno County communities. At this time, most of the concerns are in regard to the following areas:

- Implementation/Amendment Policy of 2006 Measure C Extension Expenditure Plan
- SR168 east to Shepherd Avenue

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- SR180 west to I-5 and east to Sequoia National Park
- Academy Avenue from Mountain View Avenue to SR168
- Mountain View from Bethel Avenue to the Tulare County Line
- Veterans Boulevard in the City of Fresno
- Shaw Avenue from Sunnyside to McCall Avenues in the City of Clovis
- Golden State Corridor from American Avenue to the Tulare County Line
- SR269 between SR198 and the City of Huron
- SR41 Downtown Fresno

GOALS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Educational Projects:
 - Expand the Freeway & Safety talks to more students, faculty & parents
 - Provide the "Don't Take a Chance" program to all the schools impacted by roadway construction
 - Speak to high school & college classes to discuss the Measure C program
- Staff Involvement:
 - Continue organizing neighborhood/community meetings to address residents' concerns
 - Revive Neighborhood Watch Programs along freeway corridors
 - Attend local, civic, church and school functions to explain Advocate's role
 - Inform the public of Measure C funded projects including: transit, construction, rail, as well as environmental enhancement programs
 - Continue promoting support of volunteer groups to beautify our community
 - Attend Measure C Steering Committee/Task Force Meetings and Chamber Transportation Committee meetings
 - Public Outreach Program Coordinator: FCTA contracts with Jeffrey Scott Agency and Infor Marketing Tours, both are local firms.

MEDIA RELATIONS

- "Continuing Measure C" updates:
 - Organize special events for Measure C projects
 - Provide fact sheets, new releases & schedules for Measure C projects
 - Coordinate press conferences & other media events with our funding partners
 - Update Measure C social media accounts

SUMMARY

The Office of the Advocate provides a variety of services to residents including; resolution of individual concerns, outreach to community groups, educational support through local schools and environmental enhancement projects. Our staff continues to be a positive resource for the community the FCTA serves and our agency partners at Caltrans, Fresno-COG, the Public Works Department of the County and, the 15 Cities within Fresno County.

During the past five months property owners' concerns regarding impacts of upcoming construction projects; taxi scrip and ride share programs; pedestrian trails along canals; bike lanes; rural transit services; urban BRT services; and weed abatement along with other maintenance issues were all addressed by staff.

The Communities along SR180 east of Academy Avenue are pleased \$34.66 million of STIP funding was allotted to leverage with local Measure C dollars to build phase three of Kings Canyon Expressway from Smith Avenue to Frankwood Avenue. Our office coordinated with Caltrans and the staff at Centerville Elementary School to host community meetings regarding the relocation of 32-properties at Sandy Point mobile home park east of Smith Avenue in order for this 4.5-mile segment of SR180 construction to begin in 2017. An official groundbreaking celebrating this \$55.5 million project, which includes building new structures over nine-waterways, was held in October 2017; a Construction Update for the Media to highlight the Conveyer Belt Operation was held in January 2018; DETOURS on local roads are currently in place to construct new intersections to tie into the NEW SR180 near Centerville and the entire project is scheduled for completion in 2020.

Our staff coordinated with COG and Caltrans to announce the completion of the SR180 Mendota Passing Lanes project and SR41 Auxilliary Lane/Soundwall project in Downtown Fresno. Staff worked with COG and Caltrans to hold on a ground breaking to construct a new bridge and drainage channel to address seasonal road closures due to flooding along SR269 between SR198 and the City of Huron. Staff continues to work with residents throughout the Region including those impacted by the upcoming Golden State Corridor project from American Avenue to the Tulare County Line; Shaw Avenue Widening project from Sunnyside to McCall Avenues in the City of Clovis; Academy Avenue Widening during the various project stages in the City of Sanger and County of Fresno.

By providing current information to the community and explaining the stages of the freeway/local roadway construction process, we have found the community more willing to accept change. We work as a TEAM with all of our agency partners to address the concerns of the public. Please contact our office if you have further questions or comments. We will gladly assist you.