
FRESNO LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION (LAFCO)
EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

DATE: July 11, 2018
TO: Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission
FROM: David E. Fey, Executive Officer 
SUBJECT: Consider Approval of a Policy and Procedures Manual update for format, numbering and organization

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Analysis

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH) requires that the commission have policies and procedures:

It is the intent of the Legislature that each commission, not later than January 1, 2002, shall establish written policies and procedures and exercise its powers pursuant to this part in a manner consistent with those policies and procedures and that encourages and provides planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns with appropriate consideration of preserving open-space and agricultural lands within those patterns.
Government Code (GC) sec. 56300(a)

Fresno LAFCo initially adopted its policies, standards, and procedures manual (hereafter "policy manual") on April 3, 1986. The Fresno LAFCo policy manual expresses the goals and objectives of the commission; it is used on a regular basis by staff seeking guidance and standards for its day-to-day work.

The current policy manual is in need of update in these areas:

Document organization: The policy manual organization is antiquated and incomplete. This makes it difficult to access, which takes more time to find the appropriate policy or procedure; the public and local agencies do not access the manual and instead rely on staff to do their research, if they are even aware the manual exists.

Purpose and mission: The issues that serve as the foundation for the policies are themselves nearly 50 years old, reflect obsolete conditions, are focused largely on growth issues that have been resolved, and almost exclusively focus on growth in the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area. For example, when adopted in 1986, the policy manual noted,

In Fresno County over the last 22 years [since 1964], the commission has identified the following list of problems and needs locally which pertain to the commission's responsibilities, and have developed policies, standards, and procedures in this

document in order to help resolve the problems and meet needs within the commission's jurisdiction.

The list has remained essentially unchanged in the intervening 32 years, even though the nature of the 'issues' has been altered substantially due the resolution of many of the problems underlying the issues and changing regulatory environment.

Staff recommends approval of the attached update as the 'point of beginning' for a comprehensive policy manual update process. The benefit of this is an updated format and organization that is easier to read and access the policies and information than the current format.

The draft policy manual represents the following improvements:

- Table of contents is now linked to page numbers, existing TOC serves simply as a list of the contents of the manual rather than as an aid to finding the content;
- Uniform formatting of headings, eliminates excessive bolding, underlining, punctuation;
- References to government code were not consistent and occasionally supplanted local policy;
- Section and subsection headings have been completed and are uniform;
- References to "chairman" are now a gender-neutral "chair"; and
- An introduction by the chair of the commission has been added.

Staff avoided—where possible—making any substantive changes to policies and sought to focus exclusively on format and organization. It was, however, necessary in limited occasions to make amendments for internal clarity and consistency. These are highlighted in the document.

Due to the complexity of the format and organizational changes, a "tracked changes" version is not attached but is available for viewing on the LAFCo website (www.fresnolafco.org) under the "Documents for Public Review" tab.

Outreach and notification process

This action was noticed in the Fresno Business Journal on June 20, 2018. A courtesy notice was issued to all local agencies (cities and independent special districts) and Fresno County (dependent special districts). As a baseline, staff currently provides legal notice by mail and email to all local agencies about upcoming policy manual amendments.