How much good can be done in five years with $66 million in southwest Fresno?

By BRIANNA CALIX

FEBRUARY 26, 2019 04:30 PM

The city of Fresno formally announces the signing of the Master Grant Agreement with $66.5 million in funding for the Transformative Climate Communities Collaborative program.

The city is moving full steam ahead on its Transform Fresno plan, which is expected to pump $66.5 million into downtown, Chinatown and southwest Fresno.

The Fresno City Council on Thursday is poised to approve the Transformative Climate Communities grant agreement with the state Strategic Growth Council for money geared toward projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Both Mayor Lee Brand and Council Member Miguel Arias said Tuesday the council is expected to unanimously approve the agreement.
“For many years, southwest Fresno and west Fresno was neglected,” Brand said. “This addresses a longterm neglect that, beyond the financial contributions, is almost a moral obligation for the city of Fresno.”

The TCC agreement required the city to match 50 percent of the funding for projects — but through private and public partnerships, $111 million of “leveraged funds” was identified in the agreement.

The state money will be used for 24 projects such as a community college campus in west Fresno and affordable housing in Chinatown, along with smaller projects for bike lanes, a community garden and solar power for homes.

**TRANSFORM FRESNO GRANT PROJECT AREA**

The city of Fresno is receiving about $66 million in state Transformative Climate Communities grant money. It will be used for projects in southwest Fresno, including downtown and Chinatown. Some of the more notable projects and their shares of grant funds are included on the map below.

The list of projects was proposed by and prioritized by a number of community groups and residents in what’s called participatory budgeting. It was heralded by Fresno leaders as historic and innovative.

“I think it’s clear that when various factions of the community come together in this way, the reward is greater than the sum of the parts,” said Tara Lynn Gray, CEO of the Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce.

Although it may be an exciting time, city and community leaders said now is when the real work will begin. The city and its partners must meet strict deadlines to complete the projects in five years.

Three plans that remain momentarily incomplete under the agreement are the plans for community engagement, workforce development and displacement avoidance.

The plans will be finalized in the first quarter of the grant term, according to grant agreement.

Grecia Elenes, a policy advocate with Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability, said she hopes the city tackles those plans sooner rather than later, noting the Strategic Growth Council will expect them.
“This next phase, it’s huge,” she said. “I’m hoping the city really does do right by these communities that have historically been disinvested in, and continues to engage them in these processes. There are hundreds of individuals involved who want to work collaboratively with the city despite the history there. They want to see their community be a better place.”
Redd Foreman

all that money and they can't build an access to the san joaquin river. a natural feature we should be using like sacramento does with american river. come on fresno.

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Diana Diehl

Cannot help but wonder how "successful" these "historic and innovative" gentrification measures really are when the street population is just pushed into a different area temporarily, but very glad to "finally" see some significant city commitment/investment in west fresNo.

That the west fresNo community is actively involved in the decisionmaking process this time gives me hope for some actual progress.

“This addresses a longterm neglect that, beyond the financial contributions, is almost a moral obligation for the city of Fresno.”

Very interesting quote from the mayor. Brand has been an elected in city government since 2004. His wikipedia page indicates he's been involved with city government since 1996.

Gotta love that vague passive third person "moral" "neglect" lest someone do the math and figure out just who might bear some actual responsibility for that neglect and expect a mea culpa.

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Jeff Rowell

I understand investing in infrastructure in areas of need, but providing solar power to homes on the taxpayers dime is outright theft.

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Susan Morrison

No, it’s a step forward to combat pollution.

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Jeff Rowell

If you believe that then buy me a Tesla. Back up your talk with money

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Tom Heaphy

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