



Kern COG is an association of city and county governments primarily created to address regional transportation issues. Its member agencies include the County of Kern and its 11 incorporated cities.

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Golden Empire Transit
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Gail Miller

Kern COG meetings are broadcast at 7 p.m. each Monday on Kern Government Television.

At its January 16, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

2014 Regional Transportation Plan Preliminary Alternatives Development Update

Board members voted unanimously to include four alternative growth scenarios in the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, including a Preliminary Plan that includes new investments in highway maintenance and transit/bicycle/pedestrian funding and assumes roughly a 17 percent decrease in total housing acreage compared to the existing plan. The Intensified Plan builds on the transportation planning assumptions in the Preliminary Plan and invests still more in transit/bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, assuming a 22 percent decrease in total housing acreage consumed in metropolitan Bakersfield. Regional Transportation Plan alternatives are expected to be considered more closely in the coming months, with the document scheduled for adoption in June.



Agreement with County of Kern for bicycle facilities in East Bakersfield
The Board approved an agreement for \$398,799 with the County of Kern to build bicycle lanes and other facilities in an area of east Bakersfield generally bordered by College Avenue, Morning Drive, Brundage Lane and Mount Vernon Avenue. Project funding comes from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Planner Gail Miller provided an update:



⇒ The South Bakersfield project to widen State Route 99 from six to eight lanes south of Wilson Road continues with concrete pavement completed for the southbound lane. Work continues on the northbound lane and the concrete median.

- ⇒ The contractor working on the westbound San Canyon bridge interchange along State Route 58 near Tehachapi is waiting for warmer night temperatures to pave, stripe and delineate. Detours remain in place and completion is expected by the end of the month.
- ⇒ Bridge construction will continue through the end of the year on the Red Rock Canyon bridge replacement on State Route 14 north of Mojave.

KERN COG

Discussion on removing call boxes from metropolitan Bakersfield
Board members received an update on a plan to remove approximately 72 call boxes from highways in the metropolitan Bakersfield area as a cost-savings measure and because of low call volumes. The call boxes, which are intended to serve as a lifeline for stranded motorists, are seeing less use as cell phones proliferate. The Board expressed concern, however, about rural areas that may not have adequate cellular coverage.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ Kern COG is in the midst of considering office leasing options, including a lease renewal for its downtown Bakersfield office. To date, staff has looked at six other buildings and will make a decision by July 1.
- ⇒ The Regional Awards program will be held March 6 at the Petroleum Club in Bakersfield. Awards Committee members have chosen to honor 12 individuals and programs for 2013.

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At its February 20, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Final Program of Projects

The Board approved \$19.8 million in projects funded through the federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program, which is targeted at communities with poor air quality. The list of projects from throughout the Kern region falls into five broad categories, including: public



transit, partnership programs, fueling stations, traffic operations and discretionary projects. The projects will be included in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program, which requires approval from both state and federal officials.

Active Transportation Program

Guidelines and Call for Projects

Board members agreed to participate in the California Transportation Commission's call for projects under the new Active Transportation Program (ATP). For 2014-15, Kern is

estimated to receive \$2.36 million in ATP funds, which may be used on projects designed to increase bicycling or walking trips; improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians; help reduce air pollution; improve public health; provide safe routes to schools; and other, similar uses.

Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Deputy District Director Gail Miller provided an update:

- ⇒ Reconstruction and rehabilitation work on State Route 99 north and south of Lerdo Highway was completed on Feb. 14.
- ⇒ Contractors on the State Route 178 interchange at Morning Drive are working on the eastbound on- and off-ramps on the south side of the highway. Paving will begin in the next two weeks.
- ⇒ Work is 98 percent complete on the State Route 99 auxiliary, south-bound off-ramp at Panama Lane in Bakersfield.
- ⇒ K-rail is being replaced on State Route 58 at the Cottonwood Road, "P" and Madison street bridges in Bakersfield to prepare them for widening.



KERN COG

2014-15 Draft Overall Work Program

The Board voted to circulate Kern COG's draft 2014-15 Overall Work Program, a narrative budget of all work and activity the agency plans for the coming year under 47 separate "elements." The document envisions more than 55 percent of all staff work and funding to be concentrated on the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, now under development.

2012-13 Kern COG Financial and Compliance Audit Reports

Board members received and filed Kern COG's 2012-13 financial audit, which was an unqualified opinion of the agency's financial condition. Audit firm Brown Armstrong partner Steve Starbuck said the report found two material weaknesses in Kern COG's financial processes; however, conditions are improving with additional oversight and training.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ The California Transportation Commission included a \$1 million rumble strip on State Route 99 near McFarland in its most recent project approvals.
- ⇒ Congratulations to Tehachapi and Ridgecrest, which both have project bids going out soon for an extension to Challenger Drive and widening West Ridgecrest Boulevard, respectively.



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At its March 20, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Draft 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, 2015 Transportation Improvement Program and accompanying documents

The Board received an update on the public review period now open for several planning documents including: the 2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, a long-range master plan of transportation projects using federal funds; its accompanying environmental impact report; the 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Program, a short-range project listing covering the next five years; the Air Quality Conformity plan, demonstrating that planned projects will not increase air pollution; and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation plan, a community-by-community detail of the number and types of housing units needed to accommodate future population growth. The public review period on all the documents ends on May 6. Adoption is expected in June.

Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Substitution Project Policy

Board members approved new policies and a list of \$7 million in substitution projects for the federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program that could be funded if higher-ranking projects are unable to be completed. The CMAQ program is reserved for regions with poor air quality to help fund projects to reduce air pollution. Eligible expenses include public transit purchases, stoplight synchronization, paving dirt roads and pedestrian or bicycle facilities.



Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Planner Paul Marquez provided an update:



- ⇒ Improvements to the California Avenue on-ramp to State Route 99 are 95 percent complete. Replanting will be finished by April 1.
- ⇒ Four seismic bridge restorations in Kern County are under way, including overpasses at Elmo Highway in McFarland, Pond Road near Delano, both off State Route 99.

KERN COG

Kern Energy Watch Program Evaluation and Future Contract Consideration
The Board voted to continue the Kern Energy Watch Partnership with utility companies Pacific Gas and Electric; Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas. The partnership is designed to assist municipal governments with energy-efficient equipment and facility upgrades. Board members also agreed to form an ad-hoc committee to evaluate the program to determine how it can better be implemented.

Election of Officers

Board members reappointed Bakersfield City Councilman Harold Hanson as Chair and California City Councilwoman Jennifer Wood as Vice-Chair, replacing Taft Councilman Paul Linder, who has decided not to run for re-election.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ The California Transportation Commission included a \$33 million advance for the Centennial Corridor in Bakersfield with its March approval of the State Transportation Improvement Program.



Board Actions

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At its April 17, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Draft 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, 2015 Transportation Improvement Program and accompanying documents



The Board heard testimony from more than 25 residents during the public hearing for several planning documents including: the 2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, a long-range master plan of transportation projects using federal funds; its accompanying environmental impact report; the 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Program, a short-range project listing covering the next five years; the Air Quality Conformity plan, demonstrating that planned projects will not increase air pollution; and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation plan, a community-by-community detail of the number and types of hous-

ing units needed to accommodate future population growth. The public review period on all the documents ended on May 6. Adoption is expected on June 19th.

Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Deputy District Director Gail Miller provided an update:

- ⇒ State Route (SR) 99 is being widened from six lanes to eight lanes in South Bakersfield from Wilson Road to SR 119. This project will be completed on May 16th.
- ⇒ The SR 58 Gap Closure project will widen the freeway to six lanes from Cottonwood Road to SR 99 in Bakersfield. On April 18 the Chester Avenue and H street westbound onramp to SR 58 will be closed due to modifications to an adjacent storm drain pump station.
- ⇒ Earth is being moved on the north side of SR 178 at Morning Drive in preparation of interchange construction. This project is 25 percent complete and is expected to be finished in late 2015.



KERN COG

2014-15 Kern Motorist Aid Authority (KMAA) Financial Plan

Board members reviewed the 2014-15 Kern Motorist Aid Authority (KMAA) budget. KMAA administers the 5-1-1 traveler information system, highway litter removal programs and roadside call box program. Its proposed budget for 2014-15 is \$973,992, with a operating deficit of \$278,782, which is covered through reserves. Three separate highway litter removal programs are budgeted at \$300,000. Ridgecrest City Councilmember Marshall Holloway proposed that Kern COG increase the \$300,000 set aside for highway litter removal or send some of the money to eastern Kern.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ Kern County Supervisors Zack Scrivner and David Couch, along with Senator Jean Fuller's office, obtained \$5.8 million in State Highway Operation Protection Program funding to extend passing lanes east of Taft on SR 119. This will save the county at least \$2 million.
- ⇒ The Leadership Council and the Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment have issued a news release mentioning that \$360 million is available for alternative transportation projects through the state's Active Transportation Program.



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At its May 15, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Policy and Procedures Update for the Active Transportation Program Board members approved an update to Kern COG's project delivery policies and procedures to include the state's new Active Transportation Program. The Active Transportation Program (ATP) was created to encourage active modes of transportation such as riding a bike or walking. The California Transportation Commission ATP guidelines, adopted in March, describe the policies, standards, criteria and procedures for ATP project development, adoption and management. More than 1,000 applications are expected statewide for the new program, which will include \$300 million in funding.



Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Planner Paul Marquez provided an update:

⇒ Reconstruction and repainting of several southern Kern County bridges between State Route (SR) 119 and SR 65 in Bakersfield is scheduled to continue through 2014.

⇒ The bridge at Red Rock Canyon on SR 14 at Red Rock Canyon north of Mojave is being replaced. The construction is expected to be complete this fall.

⇒ Rumble strips are being installed and shoulders are being widened on SR 223 between Old River Road and east of Cuba Drive near Bakersfield.

⇒ Construction of a mechanic's shop to the Mojave Maintenance Station will begin this summer.

KERN COG

Kern COG 2014-2015 Financial Plan

The Board adopted the 2014-2015 financial plan, which includes estimated operating revenues of \$5.6 million and appropriations totaling \$5.6 million, including capital outlays of nearly \$40,000 for replacement computers and network switches.

Kern Motorists Aid Authority (KMAA) 2014-2015 Financial Plan

The Board adopted the 2014-2015 financial plan for the KMAA, which proposes operating revenues totaling \$973,992, operating appropriations totaling \$1.3 million and a net operating deficit of \$278,782 to fund more than 500 call boxes, the 511 traveler information system and litter removal throughout the region. The operating deficit is covered by prior year reserves.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

⇒ Wednesday, May 21 is the groundbreaking ceremony for the West Ridgecrest Boulevard widening project.

⇒ A ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the new lane on State Route 99 in south Bakersfield between SR 119 and Wilson Road will be held on May 29.

⇒ Kern COG will staff booths at the Taft Rails-to-Trails Car Show on May 31 and at the Kern County Nut Festival on June 7.

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At its June 19, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Final 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, 2015 Transportation Improvement Program and accompanying documents

After testimony from 23 speakers, Kern COG's Board unanimously approved the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and its accompanying environmental document, represent-



ing extensive coordination with federal, state and local agencies responsible for land use, conservation and environmental protection. The 2014 RTP is an \$11.2 billion, 26-year plan to help achieve a coordinated regional transportation system for Kern. The draft for the plan circulated for public review for 55 days ending on May 6, 2014, with more than 8,000 residents solicited for their input. In the same action, Board members also approved the RTP's

environmental document; the 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), a five-year funding document for local transportation projects; the air quality conformity document, which demonstrates compliance with the Clean Air Act; the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, which allocates the number of housing units by jurisdiction necessary to accommodate population growth.

Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Planning Director Gail Miller provided an update:

- ⇒ Overhead, extinguishable message signs for the escape ramp on north-bound Interstate 5 near Lebec will be upgraded..
- ⇒ The State Route (SR) 99 widening between SR 119 and the Wilson Road overcrossing in south Bakersfield has opened to traffic. A second widening project on 99, from Airport Drive to the Beardsley Canal in north Bakersfield, should be completed soon
- ⇒ Operational improvements are being conducted on SR 58 in Bakersfield as the freeway is widened from SR 99 to Cottonwood Road.



KERN COG

Kern COG office lease amendment No. 3

Board members approved a new, 10-year lease agreement with M.D. Atkinson through 2023. Lease costs will graduate semi-annually from \$10,507 to \$12,223 per month over the life of the agreement. The arrangement includes renovation work to add office space, move the computer server room and replace carpeting.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ July 15 is the deadline to submit project applications for the Transportation Development Act, Article 3 program.
- ⇒ On August 8, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff will recommend projects to be funded through the Active Transportation Program. The final list will be adopted on Aug. 20.



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At its September 18, 2014 meeting, Kern Council of Governments' Board of Directors was briefed or took action on the following items:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Fiscal Year 2014-2016 Active Transportation Program Projects
Board members approved \$3.64 million in Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds over eight projects throughout the region. This is in addition to \$4.5 million awarded to six Kern projects by the California Transportation Commission in August. ATP projects provide education and infrastructure; assure safe routes to schools; support planning efforts for physically active transportation and non-motorized transportation such as walking and bicycling. Thirty-eight project proposals were submitted from the Kern region. Kern COG awarded the following projects: Wasco's Clemens and Jefferson School Bike and Pedestrian Improvements program for \$305,827; Kern County's Walter Stiern Middle School Pedestrian Improvements program for \$125,000; Arvin's Sidewalk Improvements at various locations for \$680,000; Wasco's Highway 43 Pedestrian Lighting for \$593,565; and Prueitt Elementary School Bike and Pedestrian Improvements for \$473,136; Tehachapi's Safe Routes to School Gap Closure Project — \$884,622; Bakersfield's Bike Lane and Route Projects Group B (West) program for \$270,000 and Safe Routes to School Improvements at Frank West School for \$311,850.



Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 Planning Director Gail Miller provided an update:



- ⇒ State Route (SR) 58 (Rosedale Highway) is being widened to four and six lanes between Allen Road and east of Gibson Street in Bakersfield.
- ⇒ The eastbound Sand Canyon bridge on State Route 14 near Red Rock Canyon will be replaced beginning in early 2015.
- ⇒ The Morning Drive interchange and widening project on State Route (SR) 178 at Morning Drive in will be completed in spring 2015.

KERN COG

2014-2015 Overall Work Program and Financial Plan Amendment No. 1

The Board approved budget amendment No.1 representing a net increase of \$276,957. This amendment includes \$211,761 in additional federal funds and \$65,196 in local funds. The additional funding will offset a variety of projects and expenses, including: \$75,404 for a Kern River Valley Transportation Development Plan; \$39,228 for a McFarland Transportation Development Plan; \$39,229 for a Taft Transportation Development Plan and; \$30,000 for regional technical assistance for the City of McFarland's Bicycle Plan.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ On September 10, Kern COG's CommuteKern program was recognized and awarded the *Air Quality Improvement or Pollution Prevention* award at the Kern Green Awards ceremony.
- ⇒ September 19, is the 2014 Partnership Summit "Champions for Regional Change".



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TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE



Revised 2018 Regional Transportation Plan timeline & SB 375 target-setting update
Board members were briefed on a California Air Resources Board's (CARB) staff report that proposes updates to air pollution targets in state legislation. SB 375 requires air pollution reduction targets to be established from passenger vehicle travel for each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the state. CARB is expected to review Kern COG's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan for compliance with those targets before June 2015.

Caltrans' Report

Caltrans District 6 planner Paul Marquez provided an update:

- ⇒ Shoulders are being widened and rumble strips installed on State Route (SR) 223 between Old River Road and east of Cuba Drive near the city of Bakersfield. Work is about 18 percent completed.
- ⇒ Utility relocation work continues on the SR 178/Morning Drive interchange. North of the freeway crews have excavated and formed the fittings for the retaining wall at the west end of the project. The contractor has also completed the base paving for the westbound freeway lanes from Terria Drive to just east of Morning Drive bridge.



KERN COG

CalVans presentation and appointment of new Board member

The Board appointed Wasco City Councilmember Cheryl Wegman as Kern COG's new representative for CalVans. CalVans is a public vanpool service that serves central and southern California. CalVans director Ron Hughes briefed the board on his organization and its relationship to Kern Council of Governments.

Rideshare Program

Susanne Campbell (Rideshare Coordinator) presented a variety of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, including ridesharing and the rideshare program's growing role in Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Rideshare week is an annual statewide campaign designed to promote and encourage people to use other forms of transportation such as carpooling, vanpooling, transit, bicycling, and other alternatives to driving alone as a means of improving air quality and easing traffic congestion. This year's rideshare week was October 6-10 and garnered a 35 percent increase in pledges over last year. Rideshare week gave CommuteKern the opportunity to discuss new services, such as Uber and Lyft.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Ahron Hakimi briefed Board members on the following items:

- ⇒ December 1st is the deadline for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 grant applications.
- ⇒ The Regional Awards Nominating committee will meet December 11th at 5:30 p.m.
- ⇒ January 5th is the Overall Work Program (OWP) coordination meeting with Federal Highway administration/FTA and Caltrans.