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Planning and Community Development
Engineering, Surveying and Permit Services
Roads Department

September 15, 2011

File: SB 375 Planning

Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street, Suite 300
Bakersfield, California 93301

**RE: September 15 agenda items: IV –I, IV –O and VII Regarding formulation
of a Framework for SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategy**

Dear Board Members,

Since the 2008 passage of SB 375 your Staff has been working with the cities and counties to understand the implications of this new mandate and formulate a direction. We appreciate all the work that has been accomplished to date regarding our efforts to have a target adopted by CARB that would fit our unique circumstances. As you know, that did not happen and now we are tasked with the creation of a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), possibly in conjunction with the other San Joaquin Counties that meet those targets while addressing the very different geographic and economic makeup of Kern.

On your Board agenda tonight are three items that need a different direction than shown on the agenda. They all relate to the work needed to create an acceptable SCS for our region. These items are:

- IV-I – Project Selection Process Update (Ball)
- IV- O Revised 2012 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy Development Timeline (Ball)
- VII- Contract for Community Participation Facilitator (Ball/Napier)

If approved tonight these items would result in various activities being performed in different meetings with different people, all to address the formulation of a Draft SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategy. I have been involved in all the meetings of the Kern COG Kern Climate Change Task Force which began this difficult process. I believe it is time for a more focused approach to provide the decision points and options your Board needs to participate fully in this very important issue.

I have discussed the following action with Mr. Ball of your staff and believe we concur on a direction in two parts:

1. The first request is that your Board provide direction that the Project Selection Process project be delayed along with implementation of the Community Participation Facilitator. As a point, the TTAC and RPAC did not see or approve the Scope of Work attached to the proposed Community Participation Facilitator contract and therefore no one understood the connection to the formulation of the SB375 framework. (Items IV-I and VIII)
2. The second, and most critical request is that a referral be made to the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) that they formulate a draft SB 375 SCS framework with options and a revised work plan for presentation to your Board at the October meeting and no later than the January meeting. This framework will be the broad structure of the SB 375 implementation for the entire county and include innovative, creative solutions for our unique geographic and economic features. Your Board can then review these frameworks and options to provide clearer direction to staff on future work product and presentations at public workshops.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (661) 862-8866 or Lorelei@co.kern.ca.us.

Sincerely, 

Lorelei H. Oviatt, AICP, Director
Kern County Planning & Community Development Dept.

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cc: County Administrative Officer
Kern County Roads Department
Supervisor McQuiston
Supervisor Watson