

Kern COG Quarterly

BETTER PLANNING. BETTER TRANSPORTATION.



**Kern Council
of Governments**

FALL 2016

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Public invited to help plan Kern region's active transportation future

Kern County residents are encouraged to help plan the future of the region's walking and bicycling network by participating in a series of "walking audits" and community workshops that will identify challenges and opportunities for people traveling on foot and bicycle.

These events are part of the Kern Region Active Transportation Plan (ATP), a regional planning effort led by the Kern Council of Governments (COG) to improve walking, bicycling and transit access throughout Kern County. Working with local, regional and statewide partner agencies and organizations, Kern COG aims to develop project and program recommendations to make walking, bicycling and transit integral parts of daily life for residents and visitors alike.

Audit participants will walk with professional planning staff in communities throughout the Kern



The public is invited to help plan the future of Kern's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure by participating in "walking audits" and community workshops over the next month.

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Kern awarded Active Transportation Program funding

Five projects throughout the Kern region will share \$9.6 million from the state-funded Active Transportation Program (ATP), which provides funding for projects that encourage walking and bicycling. An additional \$2.5 million is available for regionally adopted projects.

The projects funded by the state's share of the ATP include:

Delano Safe Routes to School Sidewalk Gap Closure Project, which will close 32 sidewalk gaps along 13 streets, benefiting seven schools with 6,005 students.

Delano will receive \$537,000 towards the \$602,000 project cost. This project was the third-highest ranked in the state.

Kern County Boron/Desert Lake Pedestrian Path: County of Kern officials will build a six-foot-wide, paved, multi-use path for 1.5 miles and one mile of sidewalks connecting Desert Lake to Boron and community destinations. The project includes sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks and solar-powered street lights. Pedestrian crossings with safety features will be built over two dangerous, heavily-trafficked railroads. The County was

awarded \$1.97 million to help pay for the \$2.3 million project.

Kern County Rexland Acres Community Sidewalk Project. The County of Kern was also awarded \$5.6 million to build storm drain lines, sidewalks, curbs, gutters and bike lanes along the major transportation corridors throughout Rexland Acres in metropolitan Bakersfield. High visibility crosswalks, solar-lighted safety signs, solar-powered street lights and a pedestrian refuge island will be installed as needed, based on accident data and design requirements. The project cost is \$6.37 million.

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Kern COG hosts California Transportation Commission

Kern COG hosted California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff and four Commissioners in September for a town hall-style meeting and tour of a double tracking rail project near Tehachapi. The meeting offered transportation agencies throughout the San Joaquin Valley the opportunity to showcase their best projects and programs.

The 11-member Commission is responsible for programming and allocating funds for highway, passenger rail, active transportation, aeronautics and transit improvements throughout California.

CTC Chairman Bob Alvarado was joined by Commissioners Yvonne Burke, Fran Inman and Lucetta Dunn at the Rabobank

Convention Center in Bakersfield to hear presentations from the City of Bakersfield, County of Kern, Tejon Ranch and representatives from San Joaquin Valley transportation agencies including: Kings, Tulare, Fresno and San Joaquin counties.

The presentations focused on how the San Joaquin Valley transportation network is expanding to address its accelerated population growth relative to the rest of California, including projects for freight movement and new opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Commissioners and their staff also toured the final Tehachapi Rail Improvement Project, which dedicated \$50 million

in state bond funding as a match with private-sector capital to widen more than eight miles of freight track through Caliente and Keene.

“We rarely get the chance to have the CTC’s attention for a full two days,” said Kern COG Executive Director Ahron Hakimi. “This was our opportunity to shine and show them exactly what we’re doing with our federal and state transportation funding to meet the challenges of our growing population.”

Commissioners last visited Bakersfield in 2009 when they helped break ground on the Mohawk Extension, the first-phase of what would become the Westside Parkway.

Invitation to share on transportation networks nets 1300 responses

Kern COG asked residents to share their hopes and vent their frustrations about local and regional transportation networks recently and the response was tremendous.

Since August, more than 1,300 people have participated in the agency’s newest public outreach strategy, which asks local travelers to mark maps illustrating the kinds of transportation improvements they’d like to see in their own communities and throughout the entire county.

Using a series of seven differently colored markers, participants at festivals around the region pointed out bicycle paths or lanes, maintenance projects, road widenings, new bus routes, turn

improvements, sidewalks and other projects they’d like to see built or added in their neighborhoods and communities.

Kern COG staffed booths at the Tehachapi Mountain Festival, Wasco Rose Festival, Kern County Fair, Delano Harvest Holidays and the Desert Empire Fair in Ridgecrest to talk with residents about their transportation network. Not surprisingly, road maintenance was the top priority for the vast majority of citizens.

The information will be summarized in a public outreach report to inform expenditure proposals in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan, a 20-year master plan for Kern’s regional transportation network.

Kern COG awards funding for non-motorized transportation projects

Kern Council of Governments awarded more than \$720,000 for a dozen bicycle and pedestrian transportation projects throughout the region at its September meeting, including funding to complete a bicycle transportation network near Bakersfield College and sidewalks near Beale Avenue and River Boulevard in Bakersfield.

The County of Kern and five cities submitted 14 project proposals requesting \$1.07 million in Transportation Development Act Article 3 funding, which is generated through the state sales tax. The funding can be used for bicycle parking facilities, bicycle and pedestrian safety programs, and bicycle and pedestrian travel facilities.

The city of Bakersfield will use \$107,450 to complete its bicycle transportation

network in the Bakersfield College area by constructing additional bike lanes and routes. The project will be completed in 2017. Additionally, the city received \$15,000 to install additional bicycle parking fixtures throughout downtown while another \$10,000 was approved to help with bicycle education and outreach.

Taft was awarded \$3,000 to provide additional bicycle parking and \$136,526 to build a connection from Main Street to the popular Sunset Railway Rails-to-Trails linear park. The connection is anticipated to be completed in 2017

The County of Kern will spend \$286,000 for pedestrian improvements near Beale Avenue and River Boulevard in Bakersfield to improve pedestrian safety. Design work

is beginning shortly and the project is scheduled for completion in 2018.

California City was awarded \$82,181 to construct sidewalk in-fills on Heather Avenue. Completion is expected in 2017.

McFarland will use \$20,250 to install bike lanes on Browning Road from Browning Park to Sherwood Avenue. Construction will be completed in 2017.

Wasco will use \$19,000 for pedestrian improvements on 7th Street, to be completed in 2017. An additional \$2,000 for bicycle safety programs was also distributed.

On-going funding to projects in Arvin, Bakersfield Tehachapi and Wasco were also approved.

Kern COG 2016 fall quarterly report - project delivery

The regionally adopted 2017 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (2017 FTIP) reflects nearly \$233 million in programming of local and regional transportation projects for fiscal year 2016-17. The programming includes five categories of transportation improvements listed below:

Program Name	Total Number of Projects	Total Value of Projects
Active Transportation Program	5	\$ 4,879,000
Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality	11	\$ 12,279,484
Regional Surface Transportation	16	\$ 11,724,000
State Highway Capacity	3	\$ 86,579,000
State Highway Maintenance	27	\$ 117,538,691
Total		\$233,000,175

Active Transportation Program (ATP): ATP projects improve safety and connectivity for pedestrian and bicycle access.

Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP): RSTP dollars finance street and road maintenance throughout the region.

Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Program (CMAQ): Eligible projects must reduce congestion, improve air quality and improve safety.

ATP, CMAQ, and RSTP projects are generally delivered by local jurisdictions. Meanwhile, the status of several regionally significant projects are provided below:

Project Description	Delivery Status	Expected Completion
SR 58 Rosedale Hwy widening	Nearly Completed	fall 2016
SR 58 & 99 Beltway operational improvements	under construction	summer 2017
SR 178 Widening Vineland to Miramonte	under construction	summer 2017

A comprehensive status report on Projects of Regional Significance throughout Kern County may be downloaded at: http://www.kerncog.org/images/docs/progress_report_201610.pdf. The report is updated quarterly; the latest version is the October 2016 Edition. Kern COG staff may be reached at 661-635-2914 with any questions you may have.



Public commits to CommuteKern's 2016 Rideshare Week

More than half of the 1,200 participants who pledged to rideshare at least one day during CommuteKern's Rideshare Week Oct. 3-7 are new to ridesharing. Commuters are now recognizing that ridesharing helps to save money, reduce traffic headaches and clean the air.

This year, Rideshare Week promoted sustainable transportation beyond carpooling and vanpooling. Commuters were invited to try other alternative transportation options such as: riding the bus, bicycling, walking, brown bag lunches and telecommuting. Staff worked with local media and businesses to help promote Rideshare Week activities and to educate commuters about participation prizes, such as: a bicycle donated by Sniders Cyclery, an iPad, iPod shuffles, movie passes and Starbucks gift cards.

Rideshare Week sponsors included: the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Valley Clean Air Now, Snider's Cyclery, Golden Empire Transit District, Kern Transit, Kern Green and Bike Bakersfield.

To help commuters get involved and have fun at the same time, CommuteKern offered a variety of tools for employers and commuters. More than 50 large employers throughout the county received marketing materials and additional information and activities were available on the commutekern.org website.

To celebrate Transit Tuesday, Kern COG, GET and Kern Transit staff served coffee and snacks during the morning rush hours, and cookies and water in the afternoon to all bus commuters.



GET bus commuters enjoy snacks during Rideshare Week's Transit Tuesday.

Rideshare Week has enabled CommuteKern to introduce commuters to commutekern.org, which offers information and links to begin ridesharing as well as a free carpool matching service.

Transportation Projects (Continued from page 1)

region to point out specific parts of town, intersections, corridors and other areas where bicycling and walking are challenging. Challenges often include damaged infrastructure, system gaps, line-of-sight or vehicle speed concerns or other issues that make walking or riding a bike difficult.

The public is also invited to attend a series of community workshops designed to gather feedback about the existing walking and bicycling environment and how it may be improved. The audits and workshops will run from Nov. 30 through Dec. 15 throughout the region. A complete schedule is provided below.

Walk Audit Staging Locations

3 to 6 PM Wednesday, Nov. 30:
Bakersfield
Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street, Third Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

2PM-5 PM Monday, Dec. 5:
Ridgecrest City Hall
100 West California Avenue
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

1PM-4 PM Tuesday, Dec. 6
Mojave Veterans Hall
15580 "O" Street
Mojave, CA

1 PM-4 PM Thursday, Dec. 8
North of the River (NOR) Veterans Hall
400 West Norris Road
Bakersfield 93308

3-6 PM Tuesday, Dec. 13
Lamont Boys & Girls Club
8301 Segrue Rd.
Lamont, CA 93251

9 AM—Noon Wednesday, Dec. 14
Shafter Veterans Hall
301 James Street
Shafter, CA 93263

2 PM- 5 PM Wednesday, Dec. 14

Delano City Hall
1015 11th Avenue
Delano, CA 93215

9 AM-Noon Thursday, Dec. 15
Westside Recreation and Parks District
500 Cascade Place
Taft, CA 93268

3-6 PM Thursday, Dec. 15
Arvin Veterans Hall
141 North "A" Street
Arvin, CA 93203

Community Workshops

4-6 PM Monday Dec. 12
Hummel Community Building
2500 20th Street West
Rosamond, CA

Noon-2 PM Monday Dec. 12
Arts and Community Building
10400 Heather Ave.
California City, CA 93505

Noon-2 PM Tuesday Dec. 13
Kernville Chamber of Commerce
11447 Kernville Road
Kernville, CA 93238

Residents are also encouraged to visit the project website, kernatp.org. Website visitors can complete an online survey, illustrate current and desired walking/bicycling routes via an interactive map, and learn more about the overall planning effort.

The data, opinions and information gathered from these outreach efforts will be included in the Active Transportation Plan, which will serve as the basis for future funding and grant requests to support and encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel, including new or improved walkways, bikeways, trails and crossings.

6-8 PM Tuesday Dec. 13
Tehachapi Community Room
220 West "C" Street
Tehachapi, CA 93561

1-3 PM Wednesday Dec. 14
McFarland Veterans Hall
107 West Sherwood
McFarland, CA 93250

5-7 PM Wednesday Dec. 14
Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street Third Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

1 PM-3 PM Thursday Dec. 15
Old Courthouse
810 8th Street
Wasco, CA 93280

6-8 PM Thursday Dec. 15
Frazier Park Recreation Building
3801 Park Drive
Frazier Park, CA

Transportation program funding (Continued from page 1)

The Delano Safe Routes to School Intersection Enhancement and Education Project includes improvements at 13 intersections throughout the city, with 1,875 feet of concrete sidewalks; 41 curb ramps and bulb-outs; 48 ladder-back crosswalks; 21 advanced pedestrian crossing and yield signs and; advance stop bars that improve pedestrian visibility to motorists. ATP will cover \$589,000 of the \$669,000 project cost.

Kern officials will building pedestrian paths along Rosamond Boulevard from 20th Street West to Elberta Street and 20th Street West from Orange Street to Rosamond Street as part of the **Kern County Rosamond Boulevard Pedestrian Path Project**. The paths will include high visibility cross walks, solar-powered street lights & additional signage. Of the \$997,000 project, ATP awarded \$880,000.

During this cycle the Kern region was awarded the most funding per capita of any region in the state; nearly four times more than would be expected based on population alone.

Another \$2,505,000 is available for allocation on a regional basis. The regional projects will be selected in December 2016.