



2019 Kern Regional Awards Program

The 2019 Kern Regional Awards of Merit Ceremony was held at Seven Oaks Country Club on March 5, 2020. Awards are given to honor individuals and organizations dedicated to improving Kern County's quality of life through innovative, cooperative, regional efforts. Awardees are nominated by their peers. Kern COG Vice Chairman, Zack Scrivner was emcee for the event that was attended by approximately 160 people.

Mayor Peggy Breeden and Chief of Police Jed McLaughlin were honored for their commitment and diligence in helping ease the residents of Ridgecrest's fears following the July earthquakes. Westside Healthcare District was honored for the work the Executive Director and Board of Directors committed to bringing quality health care to the residents of western Kern County. GET Bus was honored for coordinating "Stuff the Bus" and food distribution throughout the year for residents in need and for the promotion of their "half-off pass" to help encourage new riders.

The City of Taft was honored for the development of a new transit and community center in downtown Taft. The City of Tehachapi was honored for creating a centralized and safe location for commuters to park and utilize alternative transportation and also for utilizing their community videos to help educate residents about the safety concerns surrounding the mandatory power shutoffs. Bike Bakersfield was honored for managing several community programs during the month of May that promoted safety when bicycling. Shafter Police Captain Diana Burnett was honored for her many years of service and commitment to the residents of Shafter. Ron Hughes of CalVans was honored for his development and commitment of creating a certified and licensed vanpool service for commuters. City of Taft Mayor, Dave Noerr was honored for his commitment to improve the community of Taft. Alan Tandy was honored for his years of service as the City Manager of Bakersfield. Mark Evans was honored for his years of dedication to improve the road infrastructure of Kern County through his design, contracting, and management of a variety of road projects.



Golden Empire Transit Board Approves Purchase of Multiple Alternately Fueled Buses

Demonstrating its commitment to low and zero-emission technology, Golden Empire Transit approved the purchase of multiple alternatively fueled buses during its February meeting. The purchase includes 22 Renewable Compressed Natural Gas buses to replace old buses within the fleet, 5 Renewable Compressed Natural Gas buses to increase service to the new RYDE Micro-transit service, and 5 Hydrogen Fuel-cell electric buses for the fixed-route service.

GET is also partnering with Phoenix Motorcars to submit a proposal for funding to the U.S. Department of Energy advanced Vehicle Technologies Research funding Opportunity. The concept proposal was submitted in February and includes paratransit shuttles and fast chargers with battery storage and solar generation.





TRANSITIONS

[Local Transit Agencies Gather to Learn About Zero Emission Vans and Buses](#)



On February 27, 2020, more than 80 people gathered in Bakersfield to hear from a slate of 21 speakers at the Kern Council of Governments TRANSITIONS 2020 Transit Symposium. Kern COG offers this Symposium to help its member agencies, San Joaquin Valley transit agencies and school districts to comply with California Air Resources Board regulations and to help the region meet air quality improvement goals, while stemming the tide of rising operational expenses. The event featured esteemed industry speakers Tim Reeser, CEO of Lightning Systems, Yachun Chow, Manager of the Zero Emission Truck and Bus Program for the California Air Resources Board, and representatives from AC Transit, Foothill Transit and San Diego MTS. San Joaquin Valley Transit Agencies can soon take advantage of expanded training opportunities hosted by SunLine Transit, AC Transit and Fresno City College.

Eight vendors brought 11 vehicles for people to check out and take test rides.

Those participating included GreenPower Motors, Phoenix Motors, Lightning Systems, ADOMANI, NorCal Vans, BYD (Kern Transit Bus), MioCar Shared Mobility and GET RYDE.

Presentations are posted to the Kern COG website: <https://www.kerncog.org/?s=transitions>

Air Resources Board Approves Air Plan for Shafter

On February 13, the California Air Resources Board met in Shafter to vote on a proposed Community Emissions Reduction Program for the City. Shafter and the South Fresno area were chosen to be the first two communities to form committees after the passage of Assembly Bill 617 which concentrates on reducing emissions in the communities of California. The two areas were chosen based on the high risk factors that exist in both communities, including high cancer rates and emission levels higher than the state's mandated levels for a safe environment. The Shafter committee targeted a variety of sources of emissions, including cars, residential energy usage, heavy duty trucks, oil and gas fugitive dust and agriculture sources, including pesticides. The program is making \$29 million available for the different programs that will work to reduce emissions in the community. Now that the Community Emissions Reduction Program is passed, the committee now has six months to begin implementation of the measures laid out in the plan.



Samir Sheik, Director of the San Joaquin Air Resources Board, spoke to attendees about the Plan.

Upcoming Events

March 25 & 26 - California Transportation Commission Meeting

April 29, 2020 - Joint CTC/CARB Meeting in Sacramento

May 13 & 14 - California Transportation Commission Meeting in San Diego