



July 20, 2015

Mary D. Nichols, Chairwoman
California Air Resources Board
1001 "I" Street
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Re: Support for CARB certification that Kern COG's 2014 RTP/SCS meets SB 375 GHG targets

Dear Chairwoman Nichols:

As active stakeholders in developing the KernCOG 2014 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy (RTP/SCS) we would like to express our thanks and support for staff's recommendation to certify Kern's RTP/SCS. We concur with Staff's conclusion that the RTP/SCS as outlined will meet CARB's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction targets for our region, resulting in reductions of 5% per capita by 2020 and 10% reduction per capita by 2035 (relative to 2005) when implemented.

Our organizations represent the interests of the business community (Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce, Kern Citizens for Sustainable Government), agriculture (The Wonderful Company, Grimmway Farms), realtors (Bakersfield Association of REALTORS®), home builders (Home Builders Association of Kern County), and taxpayers (KernTax) of our region. This SCS is the result of one the most open and successful SCS processes in California to date, garnering input from more than 8,000 participants or 1% of all the residents in the region. The SCS has resulted in a regional strategy that strives to balance the divergent stakeholder interests while maximizing air quality and other benefits.

The RTP/SCS presented by Kern COG proposes to allocate the majority of projected future growth to existing communities and near existing and future planned job centers. We believe that this plan is a significant

milestone in achieving the requirements of SB375 and the desires of our community. While it will result in changed growth patterns in Kern County, we support the KernCOG RTP/SCS for the following reasons:

- The RTP/SCS represents a change from business as usual in how our region grows and how it provides for transport. This change will likely result in some stress to our industries as they grow, but after in-depth review, our business community recognizes that the RTP/SCS strikes a compromise that addresses the projected needs of our region while ensuring that our region meets the Greenhouse Gas reduction targets set by CARB.
- While it represents a change from traditional growth patterns in Kern County, the RTP/SCS preferred plan does incorporate the perspective of County and City general plans to ensure alignment and consistency with these important planning tools for our region developed through intensive community-level planning processes.
- The RTP/SCS proposes to substantially increase investment in transit infrastructure and alternative modes of transport, such as bikeways.
- The RTP/SCS projects reasonably likely growth patterns for industry and allocates funding for necessary major infrastructure projects.
- Through the combination of these strategies, the RTP/SCS ensures our region can meet the ambitious goals of SB 375 and the GHG reduction targets set by CARB.

Kern is already seeing the benefits of improved air quality, health and jobs in the region. As you know, Kern is leading the charge for alternative energy production and green jobs, with more than 2.5 times the clean energy generation of the next largest California county, resulting in 1,500 permanent jobs in Kern.

We will continue to work closely with CARB and Kern COG staff to implement this very ambitious RTP/SCS. It is clearly no longer business as usual in Kern and we are wasting no time to fully realize the plan's benefits. Thank you for understanding that with so many unique regions in California, one size does not fit all.

Sincerely,

Linda Jay, Bakersfield Association of REALTORS®
Nicholas Ortiz, Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Huckaby, Grimmway Farms
Donna Carpenter, Home Builders Association of Kern County
Lauren Skidmore, Kern Citizens for Sustainable Government
Michael Turnipseed, Kern County Taxpayers' Association (KernTax)
Bill Phillimore, The Wonderful Company