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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

May 26 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

May 18, 2021

06-KER-GEN
NOP
2022 RTP/SCS PROGRAM EIR

SENT VIA EMAIL

Ms. Becky Napier, Deputy Director of Administration
Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street, Suite 300
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Ms. Napier:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Kern Council of Governments (KCOG) Notice of Preparation (NOP) on the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) component.

Caltrans commends KCOG for their timely outreach and preparation efforts to seek comments from their local partners and constituents.

KCOG as the lead agency will prepare a Program EIR and use the previously certified EIR for the 2018 RTP to update the 2022 RTP/SCS. The RTP is required to be updated every 4 years to secure and allocate federal and state funding for regional transportation projects. The SCS component will identify strategies and policies to balance land use and the transportation system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Senate Bill 375, Assembly Bill 32 & 197 - Global Warming & Green House Gas Emission). The RTP will integrate information from Kern County's new Regional Active Transportation plan, the Long-Range Transit Plan, the Cross-Valley Corridor Plan and the Intelligent Transportation System Strategic Deployment plan. The proposed RTP addresses the effects of planned growth and development on the existing and planned transportation system, identifies needs and issues, sets forth an action plan and documents the financial resources needed to implement the plan.

Although the RPT/SCS does not propose any specific development projects, it is anticipated that recent and future developments within the Kern County will increase traffic volumes on the State Highway System within the County. The impact to State facilities, due to the increased traffic volumes, needs to be

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mitigated as part of project specific development and as part of regional effort. The DEIR should identify the impact to the State transportation facilities and included mitigation measures for the traffic impacts generated by development.

Caltrans looks forward to partnering with KCOG in evaluating regional issues, population and traffic growth projections and recommend multimodal solutions to accommodate future transportation needs. Caltrans will work in partnership with KCOG and its local partners to ensure that planned projects in the RTP are equitable and sustainable, and are developed in an open and collaborative manner, which is also consistent with the Caltrans' mission, vision and values. Improving existing motor vehicle traffic, aviation, freight, mass transit, rail planning and promoting Active Transportation Programs with the implementation of complete streets features in planned projects will assist in providing a safe, sustainable, integrated transportation system. These fundamentals will help support transportation infrastructure and smart growth that lead to Green House Gas (GHG) and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reductions for Kern County and the San Joaquin Valley.

Caltrans looks forwards to the opportunity provide comments and recommendations on the Draft EIR for KCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS when completed and routed for Caltrans review.

If you have any other questions, please call Lupita Mendoza, Transportation Planner at (559) 981-7066

Sincerely,



LORENA MENDIBLES, Chief
Transportation Planning – South

Copy via email: Michael Navarro – Caltrans D6
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