



## Kings Canyon USD

675 W Manning Avenue  
Reedley, CA 93654  
(559) 305-7025



## City of Reedley

Office of the City Manager  
1717 Ninth Street  
Reedley, CA 93654

October 28, 2008

Ms. Jackalyne Pfannenstiel, Chair  
Mr. James D. Boyd, Vice-Chair  
Mr. Arthur H. Rosenfeld, Ph.D., Commissioner  
Mr. Jeffrey Byron, Commissioner  
Ms. Karen Douglas, J.D., Commissioner

## DOCKET

08-OIR-1

DATE OCT 28 2008

RECD. NOV 25 2008

Dear Madam Chair and Commissioners:

As partners, we would like to propose a creative and valuable project for the California Energy Commission and the Central San Joaquin Valley. The project is the **Central Valley Regional Transportation Center: Good Jobs - Clean Energy**. As you conduct the important business of the State, we would respectfully ask that you consider this project.

The rural communities of the Central Valley have vast challenges in meeting its transportation needs. After many years of agencies operating independently and becoming increasingly inefficient, a new model has been envisioned, tested and is now ready for full implementation.

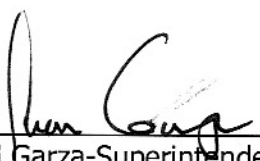
This project has been 5 years in the making. It began with the City of Reedley and the Kings Canyon Unified School District collaborating on how to meet the transportation needs in the rural communities located in Fresno and Tulare Counties.

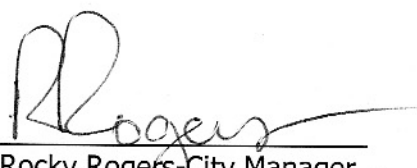
Due to the expanding needs of the student, worker, medical, social, cultural and commercial aspects of this small rural community, these two government entities created a joint partnership to effectively share resources and eliminate duplicate expenditures. In an effort to decrease the high rate of medical issues facing valley residents in one of the worst air quality regions in the country, a "green" platform was considered essential.

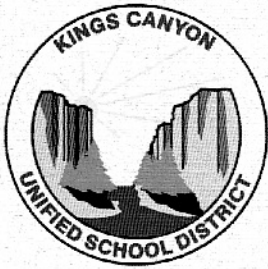
Over the past decade, we have been able to expand services, initiate cost effective protocols and better our air quality. This initial success has gained the support of several school districts, communities and agencies to expand this effort to the surrounding region. The local support includes higher education and commercial entities that believe that a regional approach would create new jobs, offer new technology job training and create a variety of public/private partnerships that would benefit the community.

We respectfully submit this proposal and request that the California Energy Commission consider this creative and valuable project: **The Central Valley Regional Transportation Center: Good Jobs - Clean Energy**.

Sincerely,

  
Juan Garza-Superintendent

  
Rocky Rogers-City Manager



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### **History of Commitment**

The City of Reedley (City) and the Kings Canyon Unified School District (School District) have been working collaboratively for the past five (5) years to develop an innovative, state-of-the-art, high performance, LEED certified, solar-powered Central Valley Regional Transportation Center that promotes good jobs and clean energy technologies.

With one of the highest unemployment rates in the state, high fuel costs, aging fleets, and the second worst region in the nation for air quality, the Central Valley is faced with limited resources that are necessary to keep pace with the environmental regulations and with implementing green technologies. For example, seventy-three percent (73%) of Kings Canyon Unified School District's students are designated as socio-economically disadvantaged as measured by the federal free and reduced lunch count. Also, the Fresno Bee recently reported on October 29, 2008 that a study conducted by the Fresno Works for Better Health Advocacy Center and California State University-Fresno concluded "that Fresno County is mired in a low-wage economy and has a large pool of unskilled workers. Fresno has become well known nationwide for its concentration of urban poverty; however, rural poverty among smaller towns surrounding the metro area is much worse." Finally, the State Senate hearings have found that three of the four dirtiest cities in the entire nation in terms of air pollution are in the Central Valley – Fresno (#2), Bakersfield (#3), and Visalia (#4). With asthma rates in the San Joaquin Valley three times the national average, the State Senate also discovered that 1 in 6 children going to school today in Fresno carry books, pencils, paper, and a respiratory inhaler.

Together, it is our commitment to be good stewards of change despite diminishing resources. It is imperative we change how we view and treat our environment by educating our next generation of young learners on how to preserve resources, produce and use clean energy, and contribute to the advancement of green technologies. In the process, we will provide a high unemployment region an understanding of the importance of clean energy while providing career pathways and good jobs in an emerging green economy.

### **Partnering for Success**

The City and the School District along with future partners including surrounding school districts, neighboring cities, counties, public agencies, private schools, community colleges, the agriculture industry, and private businesses have a common goal to build a transportation facility with a multi-operational use and regional capacity. "Partnering for Success" is the City's long-standing commitment to the community and a commitment the School District shares in the region.

## **The City**

The City is prepared to share its resources including mechanics, fueling, wash racks, training facilities, and solar technology necessary to sustain the City's Public Works operation and shared risk management opportunities. The City plans to relocate the Public Works Yard to the shared facility that includes the Water Division personnel, Streets personnel, Disposal personnel, Parks Maintenance personnel and their associated vehicles and equipment. This would also allow for shared use of the City's equipment during times of emergency. The City also commits to converting most of their fleet to alternative fuels including compressed natural gas (CNG).

The City is prepared to work with the School District and other regional partners in determining fees, annexation, and utility infrastructure necessary to accommodate the facility. The City and the School District currently have Joint-Use Agreements and are preparing to enter into Joint Powers Agreements (JPA) with other regional partners.

## **The School District**

As a Central Valley leader in the transportation field and operating one of the largest natural gas fleets in the area, the Kings Canyon Unified School District is recognized throughout the Central Valley and is at the forefront of environmentally sound safety practices. Since the early 1990's the School District has been involved with the California Energy Commission AB 35 Katz Safe School Bus Clean Fuel Efficiency Demonstration Program in Phases II, III, IV and V. The School District has demonstrated their use of advanced diesel, methanol, and compressed natural gas technology on school buses and has participated closely with the California Air Resources Board Lower Emissions School Bus Program. Currently our district facility is available to our surrounding school district partners who seek fuel and service support.

The School District's current shop technicians maintain the highest fleet vehicle standards in the industry and have all attended John Deere University and CNG Tank Cylinder Inspection Certification courses. The School District also maintains the largest limited public access CNG fueling station in the area. The School District has achieved satisfactory terminal/vehicle inspections by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) for over twenty years. Many of the CHP inspections at Kings Canyon Unified School District have had no noted defects in the school bus fleet. Finally, approximately one-third of the School District's existing fleet have already converted to CNG and nearly all of their diesel school buses have Level I diesel particulate filter (DPF) retrofit devices and are being prepared to receive Level III devices in the coming years.

## **Other Regional Partners**

Other supporters and potential regional partners of the proposed transportation facility include:

1. Assembly Republican Leader Mike Villines
2. Senator Dean Florez
3. Assembly Member Juan Arambula
4. County of Fresno
5. Council of Fresno County Governments
6. Fresno County Rural Transit Agency
7. City of Reedley
8. City of Orange Cove
9. City of Dinuba
10. City of Parlier
11. Reedley College



12. Kings Canyon Unified School District
13. Dinuba Unified School District
14. Parlier Unified School District
15. Immanuel Schools
16. Traver School District
17. Clay Elementary School District
18. Chevron Energy Solutions
19. Valley Regional Occupational Program
20. H & S Trucking

### **Good Jobs, Clean Energy**

It is the common goal and commitment of all participating partners to help meet the state's climate change policies by constructing a regional transportation facility that will be a development center for good jobs that produce clean energy as well as vehicles and fleets operating on alternative fuels and green technology.

Specifically, the goals of the *Central Valley Regional Transportation Center: Good Jobs, Clean Energy* are to:

- Provide career pathways for the next generation of "Clean Green Vehicle Technicians"
- Provide the region with access to "Alternative Fueling"
- Provide necessary resources to our partners to help meet local and state clean air regulations
- Provide a school bus carpool model that will encourage parents to minimize travel through traditional means
- Encourage and educate behavioral changes towards our environment by encouraging recycling and other energy efficient practices
- Promote partnerships with surrounding school districts, city, county, regional and public agencies, private schools, colleges, the local agricultural industry, and businesses to meet the common and coordinated effort of improving the economy by creating sustainable jobs through clean energy and sustainable green technology
- Reduce the overall carbon footprint measured by a geographical location of the Central Valley transportation systems
- Reduce traffic congestion on major city streets by providing access to alternative routing
- Promote carpooling, cycling, and walking to work through the City's Rails to Trails Program which is in close proximity to the facility

### **Good Jobs**

Regional partners will have the ability to use the proposed transportation facility as a training ground for the next generation of "Clean Green Vehicle Technicians." We will collaborate with business, agriculture, and industry partners to respond to their needs and create green jobs. We will provide work force training programs that will house public education and will promote clean air technologies to create career pathways for high school, college, and adult learners. The facility will meet the state's health and safety regulations for all service technicians.

We are aware of the need to grow and cultivate the next generation of “Clean Green Vehicle Technicians” with an emphasis on clean air. Our current workforce partners include Valley Regional Occupational Program, State Community College District, auto shop and diesel shop programs currently operating at our high school, private high schools in the region, agriculture, and small businesses. We are collaborating with these partners to implement clean services with a cost effective economy of scale approach.

Some of our school district partners have expressed concerns regarding their challenge to keep pace with the stringent clean air regulations. They have shared concerns regarding the challenge to maintain their current fleets. Most have fleets that qualify for the bus replacement program grants; however, they lack the financial resources to meet the match. These partners have expressed excitement about the opportunity to pool resources and are fully supportive of the proposed transportation facility.

### **Clean Energy**

We will accomplish High Performance Green construction by installing high efficiency solar panels over covered carport structures, high performance HVAC units, energy management systems, high efficiency lighting with day lighting, a storm water recovery system for vehicle wash operations to reduce city water usage, and drought tolerant landscaping. We will work diligently to use recycled materials throughout the transportation facility with the overall goal of minimizing any potential carbon footprint.

The School District has been collaborating with Chevron Energy Solutions to assist in identifying all available opportunities to build the most efficient facility. Chevron Energy Solutions is an industry leader in all green, high performance, low energy use technologies and are a worldwide leader in alternative fuels.

The Central Valley Regional Transportation Center will house alternative and renewable fuels that will make available the necessary resources currently lacking within the region. The facility will have the ability to dispense fuel using a card lock system. The facility will also include clean fuels such as bio-diesel blend fuels, low sulfur diesel fuels, ethanol blend fuels, and compressed natural gas.

Currently there are no facilities offering a variety of alternative fuels within our region. The closest available large full public access CNG fueling facility is approximately 30 miles away. The School District currently offers CNG fuel on a limited basis by pre-determined arrangements.

Currently the site contains a high-pressure natural gas line running in close proximity to the proposed facility. The local natural gas utility provider has committed to provide all required infrastructure to the proposed CNG fueling station.

Sufficient space will be made available for hydrogen fuel and the eventual expansion of hydro electric and solar electric vehicle charging technologies as the need arises or as technologies improve.

Several of our agriculture partners have expressed an interest and this facility could assist in offering retrofit devices with the ability for particulate trap regeneration and cleaning which are services currently unavailable to most within the region.



## **Collective Success**

The total cost estimate today for the proposed transportation facility is \$45 million.

The School District owns nearly 40 acres of prime industrial property located in the southeast part of the City bordering the Fresno/Tulare County line that will be used for the proposed facility. The School District and the City have also committed \$1 million secured jointly through a CMAQ grant for the CNG infrastructure.

There is strong Central Valley support to cultivate partnerships from our surrounding school districts, communities, and public agencies to pool limited and diminishing resources spawned by the fiscal crisis facing the Central Valley, the state, and the nation. By pooling and by sharing limited resources we are able to collectively maximize funding and increase our ability to construct a model transportation facility for our community and state. Collectively we can thrive and succeed.

With the California Energy Commission's assistance, this facility will achieve outstanding results envisioned by our community, our region, and our state.