

# Directions to 2050 – Metro Bakersfield Workshop Results

## Introduction

Directions to 2050 is the public participation program in support of the Regional Transportation Plan update and Sustainable Community Strategy (RTP/SCS) development process. The Directions to 2050 program builds on the Kern Regional Blueprint program to seek consensus in public input for the region’s future. The Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) is working with local communities to identify and prioritize the next steps for the future of the economy, transportation, housing, energy, community services, and open space in the Kern region. The Directions to 2050 program results will be incorporated into the region’s plans to achieve the Kern region’s mutual vision.

## Purpose of the Metro Bakersfield Workshops

Directions to 2050’s Metro Bakersfield community workshops provided an opportunity for participants to learn about four preliminary transportation investment scenarios Kern COG developed for use in the Metro Bakersfield workshops. Information gained through the public input process will be used to develop the preferred alternative for the 2014 RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS will include policies and actions that will help to implement the preferred alternative (once it is chosen), and community feedback will be vital to making the final alternative selection.

The Metro Bakersfield workshops were held in two identical sessions to provide a multiple opportunities to participate. The first session was held on August 21, 2013, from 6 to 8 PM at the Rabobank Convention Center. The second session was held on August 27, 2013, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at Fresno Pacific University. Forty-four (44) people attended session one only, 33 people attended session two only, and 9 people attended both sessions. Polling responses were only counted once for those who attended both sessions. All materials used during the workshop were available in Spanish and English. Spanish-language interpreters assisted participants at both sessions.

## Summary of Attendance by City\*

City	Session 1	Session 2	Total
Bakersfield	30	22	52
Delano	12	2	14
Lemoore	2		2
Shafter		1	1
Fresno		1	1
Springville		1	1
Visalia	1		1
Oxnard	1		1
Three Rivers	1		1

*\*A zip code was not collected for every participant.*

## Outreach Approach

Participants were welcomed to each meeting, asked to sign in, and asked to sit in small groups. PMC and Kern COG staff presented a summary of the Directions to 2050 project, shared community feedback results to date, and provided an overview of four preliminary regional transportation scenarios. The final regional transportation investment alternative will be selected by the Kern COG Board and will guide policies included in the Kern region’s RTP/SCS.

For the interactive portion of the meeting, participants were first asked a series of questions about their transportation, housing, and scenario preferences. Responses were collected and analyzed in real time using TurningPoint technology. Then, each small group engaged in a discussion of scenario tradeoffs facilitated by a project team member. Comments were recorded on large tabletop posters. Finally, participants were asked to complete a short survey regarding their willingness to support potential strategies for implementation of the RTP/SCS. To close the meeting, the live polling questions about scenario preferences were asked again to see if small group conversation had an impact on responses. Participant questions were encouraged and answered throughout both workshop sessions.

## Summary of Participant Comments

### Live Polling Results

Below is a summary of the questions asked during the live polling session. Questions about scenario preferences were asked both before the small group tradeoff discussion and again afterward.

A dash (–) indicates that polling results were lost due to a computer error. The answer with the greatest percentage response is indicated with shading.

1. Where do you live?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
Greater Bakersfield area	–	21	21	77.78
Outside the greater Bakersfield area, but within Kern County	–	5	5	18.52
Outside of Kern County	–	1	1	3.70

2. Taking into account your income, what type of housing would you prefer to live in?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
A single-family home on a lot less than or equal to 6,000 sq. ft.	–	10	10	34.48
A single-family home on a lot greater than 6,000 sq. ft.	–	12	12	41.38
A townhome or condominium	–	5	5	17.24
A building with offices and stores on the first floor and condominiums on the upper floors	–	1	1	3.45
An apartment	–	1	1	3.45

3. What type of transportation do you typically use to go to work or school?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
Bicycle	–	0	0	0
Carpool	–	1	1	3.45
Drive alone (car, truck, motorcycle, scooter)	–	21	21	72.41
Public transit (bus or shuttle)	–	0	0	0
Walk	–	1	1	3.45

4. What would encourage you to use alternative transportation, such as carpooling or bus service?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
Better transit schedule/more bus routes	–	7	7	25
Carpool incentives from my employer	–	4	4	14.29
Cheaper/discounted transit fares	–	2	2	7.14
Express bus service	–	4	4	14.29
Higher gas prices	–	1	1	3.57
Public transit stops near my home/work	–	7	7	25
Nothing/not interested	–	3	3	10.71

5. What transportation projects would you like to see where you live?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
Maintain local streets and roads	–	7	7	25.93
Increase bicycle lanes, paths, and sidewalks	–	9	9	33.33
Easy access to transit from housing and jobs	–	8	8	29.63
Encouragement of carpools and bus trips	–	2	2	7.41
New highway lanes primarily for freight	–	1	1	3.70

6. What percentage of transportation funds should be spent on providing alternative transportation (bus service, light rail, and carpool programs)?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
80–100%	4	3	7	12.07
60–79%	4	8	12	20.69
40–59%	6	5	11	18.97
20–39%	10	10	20	34.48
Less than 20%	5	2	7	12.07
None	1	0	1	1.72

7. What percentage of transportation funds should be spent on maintaining and expanding streets and highways?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
80–100%	6	2	8	12.12
60–79%	7	7	14	21.21
40–59%	12	7	19	28.79
20–39%	6	9	15	22.73
Less than 20%	6	3	9	13.64
None	1	0	1	1.52

8. What type of housing should the Kern region prioritize?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
Single-family, large-lot, detached homes	5	6	11	16.18
Single-family, small-lot, attached homes	4	5	9	13.24
Multi-family housing	6	2	8	11.76
A mix of all three types of housing	20	15	35	51.47
Other	4	1	5	7.35

9. What mix of housing should be developed in Metro Bakersfield?				
Answer Choices	Session 1	Session 2	Total	%
17% multi-family on small lots, 83% single-family on small lots	2	3	5	7.81
25% multi-family, 75% single-family	8	3	11	17.19
40% multi-family, 60% single-family	15	10	25	39.06
50% multi-family, 50% single-family	9	10	19	29.69
Other	3	1	4	6.25

For the remaining questions, (A) indicates the first time the question was asked (before small group discussions) and (B) indicates the second time the question was asked (after small group discussion).

10. Of the four scenarios, which scenario best meets the needs of the Kern region?								
Answer Choices	Session 1 (A)	Session 2 (A)	Total (A)	% (A)	Session 1 (B)	Session 2 (B)	Total (B)	% (B)
Scenario 1	6	3	9	13.64	2	1	3	5.08
Scenario 2	5	3	8	12.12	4	3	7	11.86
Scenario 3	5	4	9	13.64	3	6	9	15.25
Scenario 4	25	15	40	60.61	27	13	40	67.80

11. Of the four scenarios, which scenario least meets the needs of the Kern region?								
Answer Choices	Session 1 (A)	Session 2 (A)	Total (A)	% (A)	Session 1 (B)	Session 2 (B)	Total (B)	% (B)
Scenario 1	26	17	43	75.44	28	18	46	82.14
Scenario 2	2	1	3	5.26	1	1	2	3.57
Scenario 3	2	2	4	7.02	2	0	2	3.57
Scenario 4	5	2	7	12.28	2	4	6	10.71

12. Do the scenario options go far enough to achieve regional goals?								
Answer Choices	Session 1 (A)	Session 2 (A)	Total (A)	% (A)	Session 1 (B)	Session 2 (B)	Total (B)	% (B)
Yes, Scenario 1 is enough.	2	1	3	4.76	0	0	0	0
Yes, Scenario 2 is enough.	4	1	5	7.94	0	0	0	0
Yes, Scenario 3 is enough.	4	4	8	12.70	4	3	7	14
Yes, Scenario 4 is enough.	16	10	26	41.27	14	8	22	44
No, a new scenario should be developed.	12	9	21	33.33	12	9	21	42

13. Do the scenario options go too far in achieving regional goals?								
Answer Choices	Session 1 (A)	Session 2 (A)	Total (A)	% (A)	Session 1 (B)	Session 2 (B)	Total (B)	% (B)
Yes, Scenario 1 requires too much change.	2	1	3	4.76	1	2	3	7.32
Yes, Scenario 2 requires too much	4	1	5	7.94	1	0	1	2.44

change, but 1 is OK.								
Yes, Scenario 3 requires too much change, but 1 and 2 are OK.	4	4	8	12.70	2	0	2	4.88
Yes, Scenario 4 requires too much change, but 1, 2 and 3 are OK.	16	10	26	41.27	7	6	13	31.71
No, the scenario options are appropriate as is.	12	9	21	33.33	22	0	22	53.66

### Tradeoffs Discussion Summary

The table below outlines the key tradeoffs that were discussed during both workshop sessions. A complete record of small group discussions is included as Appendix A.

	Key Points from the Tradeoffs Discussion	
<b>Scenario 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many residents want to live in single-family homes</li> <li>Positive change has happened over the last few years, so potentially Scenario 1 is enough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining status quo is not good enough (no change = no gain)</li> <li>Current driving conditions are very challenging</li> <li>Not enough connections between transit and desirable destinations, especially for seniors, workers, students, and the disabled</li> <li>Sprawl and greenfield development is not desirable</li> </ul>
<b>Scenario 2</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Still not enough change</li> </ul>
<b>Scenario 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for mixed-use housing and increased density (2–4-story buildings)</li> <li>Support for revitalizing downtown</li> <li>Support for increased public transit options</li> <li>Support for bike and pedestrian infrastructure improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air quality is a key issue, and Scenario 3 still doesn't go far enough to improve air pollution</li> </ul>
<b>Scenario 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for accelerated timeline</li> <li>Most supported scenario overall</li> <li>Support for an improved sense of place/community cohesion</li> <li>Support for drastic improvement in transit/walk/bike options</li> <li>Best option for air quality and improved public health</li> <li>Creates more diverse types of housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some risk involved in innovation</li> <li>Funding not secured</li> <li>May be challenges due to significant cultural change</li> </ul>

## Policy Survey Results

Policies that are received more than five “No” votes between both sessions are highlighted in dark grey.

#	Potential Policies	Session 1		Session 2		Total	
		Support	Do not Support	Support	Do not Support	Support	Do not Support
<b>Bicycle and Walk Strategies</b>							
1.1	If existing and future bikeways in the Kern region were enhanced and connected, would you use a bicycle for some of your trips?	7	3	4	1	11	4
1.2	If bicycle racks and lockers were available at Kern County multimodal stations (i.e., transit/train), would you use them?	7	3	3	3	10	6
1.3	Should additional funding be used to maintain existing bike paths and bike lanes?	9	1	4	2	13	3
1.4	Should additional funding be used to construct bike tie-downs and racks on commuter trains and buses?	9	1	4	2	13	3
1.5	If your employer provided shower facilities so you could walk or cycle to work, would you use either mode of transportation to get to work?	4	6	2	3	6	9
1.6	If safety were improved for biking and walking, would you use either mode of transportation for short trips (i.e., one mile or less)?	7	3	4	1	11	4
1.7	If a walking path was located near your home and provided easy access to transit, would you consider riding the bus?	9	1	5	1	14	2
1.8	Should additional money be spent to provide more safety education for bicyclists and pedestrians?	8	2	5	0	13	2
1.9	Should transportation dollars be spent to plant trees to make biking and walking more pleasant?	7	3	5	1	12	4
<b>Commute Solutions Programs</b>							
2.1	If your employer created a voluntary ridesharing program, would you use it?	8	2	3	2	11	4
2.2	Would you carpool to work at least three days per week if your employer provided financial incentives?	8	2	4	1	12	3
2.3	If your employer provided a free vanpool from a designated park-and-ride lot to your work location, would you use it?	8	2	4	2	12	4
2.4	If there was an “emergency ride home” program, would you carpool, vanpool, or ride transit?	5	5	2	2	7	7
2.5	If your employer allowed you to work a compressed workweek, would you take advantage of this option?	6	3	4	2	10	5
2.6	If your employer allowed you to telecommute from home, would you use this option?	8	2	4	1	12	3
2.7	If your employer provided preferred parking spaces to carpoolers, would you carpool?	6	4	4	0	10	4
2.8	If you had to pay for parking at your work location, would this encourage you to use alternate transportation such as the bus or to bike or walk?	4	3	4	1	8	4
2.9	Should peak-hour high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes be provided on congested routes in Metro Bakersfield?	5	2	4	1	9	3

2.10	Should ramp-metering be used on congested on-ramps during peak hours?	6	1	3	1	9	2
2.11	Should traffic circles and roundabouts be considered to help smooth traffic flow?	5	2	3	2	8	4
2.12	Should transportation dollars be spent on stabilizing unpaved roads, alleys, and shoulders to cut down on air pollution caused by dust?	6	1	3	3	9	4
2.13	Should transportation dollars be spent to provide dust-efficient street sweepers for municipalities to reduce air pollution?	6	1	4	2	10	3
2.14	Should transportation dollars be spent to repave or overlay paved roads with rubberized asphalt to decrease asphalt dust?	6	1	5	1	11	2
<b>Transit</b>							
3.1	If your employer provided you a free monthly bus pass, would you ride the bus at least three days every week?	7	2	5	0	12	2
3.2	Should bus-only lanes with traffic signal priority be considered to keep transit schedules on time?	8	1	4	0	12	1
3.3	If a transit stop was located within ½ mile of your home and work, would you consider riding the bus instead of driving alone?	8	1	3	1	11	2
3.4	Would the availability of a home in a transit-oriented development vs. a non-transit-oriented development have an impact on the decision as to where you purchased a home?	5	1	2	3	7	4
3.5	If you could ride the bus to your destination in approximately the same amount of time as driving alone, would you consider taking the bus?	8	1	5	0	13	1
3.6	If the cost of your auto insurance included pay-as-you-drive costs based on annual mileage, would you be encouraged to bike, walk, or use alternate transportation options such as transit for some trips?	6	2	3	2	9	4

## Additional Comment Card Responses

- No bike/pedestrian outcomes on the scenarios sheet.
- Delano people want to know exactly what is happening in Delano – too much focus on Metro Bakersfield.
- When 75% vote for one scenario and the others are evenly distributed, that is a spike not mere diversity!
- In Delano, we need more help with people who work for the City, they need more supervision.
- Can VMTs be limited by eliminating suburban-style convoluted street grids?
- Future development around current grid styles can multiply VMT considerably.
- I prefer Scenario 4 for all of the reasons on the chart. I would like to see more bicycle lanes and mixed-use development. I would like to see more mixed-use buildings with housing units on top of local businesses; more sidewalks and parks. I would like to see more sustainable/eco-friendly urban planning and policies, such as restrictions on water-wasting landscaping, incentive programs to convince property owners to replace grass with drought-tolerant plants; bans on leaf-blowers; more community gardens, more parks. I would like to see more dense urban planning that would result in more walking and bicycle riding. It would improve community health and there would be less traffic.
- Return service to pre-2010 service level.
- Though the metro part of Bakersfield was the main focus of tonight's presentation, I felt that it lacked the focus of the other parts of Kern County. You mentioned that Metro Bakersfield had different focuses (clean water) than those on the Kern poll, yet you clumped up all the small towns and assumed they needed the same thing as District 3/Bakersfield. Our input was heard, and I hope future action will be made for those small towns in order to allow them to grow.
- Question 7 in live poll lumped spending on road maintenance and expansion in same question; didn't let participants prioritize or distinguish between maintenance of existing roads vs. building new roads. Too many staff comments seemed to dismiss Scenario 4 as too difficult to fund. The conversation should focus on funding tradeoffs in other creative ways to fund these new ideas.
- Brainstorm: transit takes too long. Maybe needs an express in certain locations. Ex: transit takes too long, maybe expand transit center to Rosedale area and southwest and add express to major locations. Frequently traveled auto mall, valley playa Panama to Olive connect on Allen.
- Scenario placemat comment: % of maintenance funded: will consume resources (water, fuel) at unsustainable levels. Best responds to historic housing demands.
- Re: one of the opening slides – 50 years ago it did not take 12 hours to get to LA. I moved here 51 years ago and could get over the hill to north end of the SF Valley in under 3 hours. That was before the 40s, went through the valley. We took Sepulveda, a surface street, in West LA and Santa Monica. 12 hours was from maybe 1920s. We should be concerned about negative impacts on roads and highways and air quality from HECA project.
- Thanks for soliciting input! (1) High-speed train going downtown is a terrible idea! Don't break up family neighborhoods like Westchester! (2) Turning 24th Street into a freeway is also bad. Don't disrupt neighborhoods with heavy-duty traffic. (3) Work on our downtown – more senior



housing (near banks, the library, stores!!) (4) Bike paths and walking paths along the canals.  
(5) Encourage businesses to provide bus transportation vouchers (for free bus trips when they purchase items) – especially from malls.

- Important project and presented well. Thank you.

## Conclusion

Directions to 2050 community feedback will inform the draft Kern RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS policies and implementation actions will address the key priorities identified by participants in each Kern County city.

The following statements summarize key findings from the participant input outlined above:

- The majority of Session 2 participants prefer to live in single-family homes, but would like the Kern region to prioritize a mix of all types of housing.
- The majority of Session 2 participants drive personal vehicles; however, increased transit options and additional bike lanes, sidewalks, and paths would encourage them to utilize alternative forms of transportation.
- Communities like Delano, Shafter, and Greenfield would like to better understand how the updated RTP/SCS will affect them, in addition to what will happen in Metro Bakersfield.
- The majority of all participants think Scenario 4 best serves the needs of the Kern region and Scenario 1 least serves the needs of the Kern region. *See Tradeoff Discussion table (page 5) for more detail.*
- There were only three potential policies where a significant number of participants showed a lack of support:
  - Bicycle racks and lockers at Kern County multimodal stations.
  - Shower facilities to encourage walking or cycling to work.
  - An “emergency ride home” program.
- Across polling periods at each workshop, scenario preferences did not change significantly.