

## **Hydrogen and electric fueling-station networks get a boost**

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The permitting process to install fueling stations for zero emission vehicles will be streamlined to “significantly expand” California’s hydrogen and electric vehicle capacity, says Kish Rajan, California state economic development director.

“California is a world leader in zero emission technology and our infrastructure needs to reflect that dynamism,” says Mr. Rajan.

He says the state is partnering with Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Honda, Hyundai and other automotive companies to ensure California has the necessary infrastructure to meet the goal of delivering more hydrogen and electric vehicles to market.

Automobile manufacturers plan to roll out hydrogen fuel cell vehicles in the 2015 to 2017 timeframe. And nearly four out of every ten plug-in electric vehicles currently on the road are in California, he says.

“When Toyota’s hydrogen fuel cell vehicle comes to market in 2015, a convenient and reliable fueling infrastructure must be ready for our customers,” says Jim Pisz, Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. North American business strategy corporate manager. “

The state will work with government agencies, hydrogen station developers, station hosts, electric vehicle regional planners, installers, and hosts, in addition to the automobile companies and other interested parties, to accelerate the permitting and establishment of both the hydrogen fueling and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

“California is working to transform our transportation fleet with a goal of 1.5 million zero emission vehicles on the road by 2025,” says California Energy Commissioner Janea Scott. “A key component of achieving that is establishing the necessary infrastructure.”

The California Energy Commission has voted unanimously to provide a total of \$300,000 over the next two years to fund a position in state government to spearhead the effort.

“Hydrogen-powered electric vehicles represent the next generation of electric vehicle technology,” says John Krafcik, president and CEO of Hyundai Motor America. “Their refueling speed and range will delight their owners, and we’ll all share the environmental benefits. We’re excited to be working with California to bring H2EV technology and infrastructure to market as quickly as possible.”

## **Study: Parts of particle pollution may contribute to heart disease**

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Some components of the miniscule particles found in air pollution may be linked to the progression of heart disease, the leading cause of death in the U.S., according to a study released Friday by the California Air Resources Board.

Funded by the California Air Resources Board and led by Michael Kleinman of the University of California, Irvine, the study used a novel approach to look at health impacts associated with exposure to particles, 0.18 microns in diameter or smaller. A human hair is about 60 microns in diameter, or at least 300 times wider than the diameter of particles examined in the study.

The particles examined in this study are a subset of particle pollution known as PM10 and PM2.5, particulate matter that is equal to or less than 10 and 2.5 microns in diameter, respectively.

Numerous scientific studies have linked exposure to PM2.5, which can be deeply inhaled into the airways and lungs, to a variety of problems, including premature death, especially in people with pre-existing heart disease, CARB notes.

The particles used in the UC Irvine study, which come primarily from internal-combustion exhaust and from chemical reactions in the air, may pose a great health risk, yet relatively little is known about the emissions, exposures or health effects of these ultrafine particles, says CARB.

The study provides information that is significant to help CARB expand its understanding of the role of different components of exhaust emissions so that it can better target control policies, it says. Reducing particulate matter air pollution already is one of California's highest public health priorities.

[Fresno Bee editorial, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2013:](#)

### **Bus Rapid Transit will benefit Fresno residents**

A metropolitan city — especially one as sprawling as Fresno — needs mass transit that will cheaply and quickly move people to work, school, medical care, entertainment and shopping.

Lacking such a system, the barriers to education and employment are more formidable for residents without access to personal transportation.

Recognizing the need to enhance Fresno's public bus service, then-Mayor Alan Autry put the city on a course to develop Bus Rapid Transit routes on the Blackstone Avenue and the Ventura Avenue/Kings Canyon Road corridors in 2001.

Mayor Ashley Swearingin has continued the push for BRT and, indeed, a City Council supermajority approved a 2035 general plan update that seeks to revitalize Fresno's urban core. That plan and the noble aspirations behind it have little chance of succeeding without improved mass transit.

Now, after 12 years of cooperation between City Hall and federal, state and regional transportation officials working to make BRT a reality, there are some on the City Council who want to stop the upgrade.

They fear that BRT will be a boondoggle and point to past City Hall decisions that turned into expensive blunders. It's important that our elected leaders take their oversight responsibilities seriously. It's equally important that they aren't timid and slaves to the status quo.

The fact is that BRT (often thought of as light rail with rubber wheels) is less expensive to build than light rail. It's also a fact that the \$50 million construction cost for the Fresno project is being underwritten by federal and state grants. Finally, Fresno's BRT plan has always been pitched as a demonstration: If it successful, other routes will be added; if it flops, the operational losses will be much less than if Fresno had tried light rail.

Fresno's biggest urban myth perhaps is that no one rides the bus. True, some buses on some routes during particular parts of the day are nearly empty. But there are also routes jammed with riders, particularly those taking students to school and those running along Blackstone Avenue between downtown and the north end. According to the American Public Transportation Association's latest ridership report, Fresno Area Express carried 5.4 million passengers during the first half of this year.

With BRT's quicker and more frequent service, ridership is likely to rise — helping residents, helping our economy and reducing air pollution.

As City Hall nears the completion of plans and start of BRT construction, it is reassuring to know that City Manager Bruce Rudd has extensive knowledge of bus operations. We are confident that Rudd will be a tough and thorough taskmaster on this project.

More than 30 U.S. cities have BRT and a dozen more cities are planning systems. Fresno should join the list. BRT must not be brought to a halt by the Fresno City Council.