

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF THE
GREATER BAKERSFIELD SEPARATION OF GRADE DISTRICT

Held: November 10, 2025

A regular meeting of the Commission of the Greater Bakersfield Separation of Grade District was held on November 10, 2025, at 1518 Mill Rock Way, Suite 100, Bakersfield, California.

CALL TO ORDER:)
_____)

President Steven Ruettgers called the meeting to order at 5:22 p.m. and presided thereat. Barry Hibbard acted as secretary of the meeting.

ROLL CALL:)
_____)

The following Commissioners were present:

Steven M. Ruettgers
Jake Wood
Barry Hibbard

Also present were John D. Schuler, District Engineer, Sheila Plane, Assistant Secretary, and Vivian Bravo, Assistant Secretary; and Ben LeBeau, District Legal Counsel. Commissioners Jeremy Tobias and Jeevan Muhar were absent from the meeting.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS)
& COMMENTS:)
_____)

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES,)
REGULAR MEETING OF)
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025)
_____)

On motion of Commissioner Hibbard, seconded by Commissioner Wood, and unanimously carried, the minutes of the regular meeting of September 8, 2025, were approved on the following vote of the Commissioners.

Ayes: Steven M. Ruettgers
Jake Wood
Barry Hibbard

Noes: None

Absent: Jeremy Tobias
Jeevan Muhar

Abstain: None

ATTORNEY OF DISTRICT)
REPORT:)
_____)

1. Mr. LeBeau gave a report on changes to the Brown Act open meeting requirements due to recently enacted legislation known as SB 707. SB 707 requires certain governmental agencies to offer members of the public the opportunity to attend and participate in open meetings through virtual means, such as by telephone conference or video conference, beginning in July 2026. The requirements apply to most city councils and county boards of supervisors. For special districts, the requirements only apply if: (i) the boundaries of the special district include the entirety of a county with a population of 600,000 or more and the special district has over 200 full-time equivalent employees; (ii) the special district has over 1,000 full-time equivalent employees; or (iii) the special district has annual revenues exceeding four hundred million dollars (\$400,000,000) and employs over 200 full-time equivalent employees. The Greater Bakersfield Separation of Grade District does not meet any of these criteria. Because the Greater Bakersfield Separation of Grade District does not meet the criteria for a special district that is subject to SB 707's new virtual public participation requirements, Mr. LeBeau advised the Commissioners that the District will not be required to provide a mechanism for virtual participation to the public.

2. Mr. LeBeau next presented the Commissioners with a draft letter to the Clerk of the Kern County Board of Supervisors recommending the reappointment of Steven Ruetters and Jeremy Tobias, whose terms expire on January 11, 2026, each to an additional four-year term.

On motion of Commissioner Wood, seconded by Commissioner Hibbard, and unanimously carried, the letter was approved and Mr. LeBeau was directed to deliver it to the Clerk of the Kern County Board of Supervisors.

Ayes: Steven M. Ruetters
Jake Wood
Barry Hibbard

Noes: None

Absent: Jeremy Tobias
Jeevan Muhar

Abstain: None

3. Commissioners Ruetters and Hibbard have begun investigating stakeholder support for financing grade separation projects in the northwest corridor. Ben

recommended that the Commissioners adopt a motion establishing a temporary advisory committee for the purpose of investigating stakeholder support and ideas for various financing options for grade separation projects in the northwest corridor area. The committee would report on its findings to the full Commission at its next regular meeting. The committee would consist of two Commissioners. On motion of Commissioner Hibbard, seconded by Commissioner Wood, and unanimously carried, the Commissioners voted to establish the temporary advisory committee to investigate financing options for northwest corridor, and further appointed Commissioner Hibbard and Commissioner Ruettgers to said committee.

Ayes: Steven M. Ruettgers
Jake Wood
Barry Hibbard

Noes: None

Absent: Jeremy Tobias
Jeevan Muhar

Abstain: None

DISTRICT ENGINEER'S)
REPORT:)
_____)

Mr. Schuler reported as follows:

1. Project Funding Sources:

- a. Federal State Partnership (FSP) Inter-city Rail Program: NOFO released \$5 Billion, due January 7, 2026 (extended to Feb. 6, 2026).
- b. CRISI and RCE NOFOs anticipated in 2026.

2. Intercity Federal State Partnership (FSP) Grant Program:

- a. Cherry Ave/BNSF grant application: AECOM hired by BNSF to write grant application.
- b. Received debrief from FRA staff re: last year's grant application
- c. Change strategy to only include Cherry/BNSF in the application

3. High Speed Rail Impacts/Santa Fe Way Corridor/Edison Highway Corridor:

- a. HSR changing design concept through Shafter, not elevated.
- b. Changes grade separations in the City of Shafter and my impact Cherry/BNSF concept

4. Renfro-Jenkins/BNSF:
 - a. No change
5. Kratzmeyer – Olive @ BNSF:
 - a. Updated design concept per COB Circulation Element changes and KernCOG KARGO study
6. Morning Drive @ UPRR:
 - a. No change
7. Baker E./Truxtun/Beale @ BNSF:
 - a. No change
8. Baker Street @ UPRR:
 - a. New compact design concept from TY Lin submitted to CPUC nominations
9. Rosedale Highway @ Landco Branch SJVRR:
 - a. Ongoing discussions re Caltrans relinquishment of Rosedale Hwy to local agencies – No grade separation, but possible partial funding from State
10. Cherry Avenue & Los Angeles Street/Beech Avenue @ BNSF:
 - a. Concepts refined and cost estimate updated for FSP grant application
11. Nominations – CPUC Order Instituting Investigation (OII) 2026-2027, 2027-2028:
 - a. Nominations were completed for 8 new separations and 1 existing reconstruction and submitted to the CPUC at the end of October
 - b. Nominations were reviewed with the City of Bakersfield, City of Shafter and Kern County
12. Agency Communications – Materials and Strategies:
 - a. Commissioner Hibbard recommended that in order for the District to attract support for potential grade separation projects, the District should take measures to educate the stakeholder members of the public on what the District does and projects it is capable of being part of. Ms. Bravo and Ms. Plane provided some examples of pamphlets and website materials previously developed by Provost & Pritchard employees for other Districts, as well as CVs of those employees. The Commissioners discussed whether to engage the services of Provost & Pritchard's Rebecca Quist to develop a one-page marketing pamphlet that could be shared

with stakeholder members of the public. Commissioner Hibbard made a motion to engage the services of Ms. Quist to develop a marketing pamphlet, up to an amount not to exceed \$5,000. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wood and carried unanimously.

Ayes:	Steven M. Ruetters Jake Wood Barry Hibbard
Noes:	None
Absent:	Jeremy Tobias Jeevan Muhar
Abstain:	None

FINANCIAL REPORT:)
_____)

The Secretary then presented the Financial Report for September 2025, in the form attached as **Exhibit “A”**. Following discussion, on motion of Commissioner Wood, seconded by Commissioner Hibbard, and unanimously carried, the report was approved and ordered filed on the following vote of the Commissioners.

Ayes:	Steven M. Ruetters Jake Wood Barry Hibbard
Noes:	None
Absent:	Jeremy Tobias Jeevan Muhar
Abstain:	None

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:)
_____)

1. Electronic Record Keeping/Document Back-up and Disposal – Going back from most recent year to prior years.
2. District Mission, Function and Continuity – Sheila advised that she is putting together a process narrative.
3. SDRMA Election Results – Commissioner Ruetters was not elected.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:)
_____)

1. Right of Way: (Hibbard/Muhar) None
2. Advance Planning: (Ruettgers/Tobias) None
3. Budget: (Hibbard/Wood) None
4. Regulatory & Audit: (Ruettgers/Muhar) None
5. Government Relations: (Tobias/Wood) None

Recommended as its own. (New Finance Exploration Committee) for future Agendas.

CORRESPONDENCE:)
_____)

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:)
_____)

Commissioner Hibbard reiterated his recommendation that the District educate the public about its existence, mission, and potential projects to facilitate engagement in support of grade separation projects.

NEXT MEETING AND)
ADJOURNMENT:)
_____)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the President declared the meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

APPROVED:



Steven M. Ruettgers
President



Jeevan Muhar
Secretary of the Commission

EXHIBIT A

MONTHLY MEETING NOVEMBER 2025

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

DISTRICT EXPENSE FUND:

LeBeau Thelen	Legal Services - September 2025	\$ 3,187.50
California Special District	Annual Membership Dues Jan - Dec 2026	\$ 1,358.00
Counts Unlimited, LLC	Traffic Data Collection	\$200.00
Ruettgers & Schuler	Consulting Services Sept - Oct 2025	<u>\$ 64,811.27</u>
		<u>\$ 69,556.77</u>