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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF VENTURA
GOVERNMENT CENTER, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93009

October 25, 2005

Board of Supervisors
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Hybrid Vehicles in the County Fleet

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage county staff to continue to aggressively implement the county's hybrid vehicle policy.

DISCUSSION:
In 2002 our Board adopted a policy to encourage the conversion of county fleet vehicles to gasoline-electric hybrids when supported by underlying economics (attached). At the time, it was demonstrated that replacement of mid-sized sedans with hybrid sedans would result in net financial savings for the taxpayers, in addition to the environmental, health, and social benefits of hybrid vehicles.

Since that time, the number of hybrid vehicles in the county fleet has increased to 37, with 32 mid-sized sedans and 5 light SUVs (used by inspectors and field technicians). The average fuel consumption of the hybrid sedans has been 45 mpg, compared to 24 mpg for the medium-sized sedans, with even greater savings for the SUVs. The total annual fuel savings achieved by hybrids is approximately 7,800 gallons per year, with attendant cost savings to the taxpayers and greatly reduced air pollution emissions. Driver satisfaction reported to Fleet Services from county personnel assigned hybrids in place of medium-sized sedans has been high, and repair/maintenance costs have been equivalent.

The Board's decision to institute a hybrid vehicle policy in 2002 makes even more sense today in light of the recent dramatic increase in gasoline prices. Accordingly, we should encourage our staff to continue to implement this policy as aggressively as possible.

Cordially,

Steve Bennett

Steve Bennett
Supervisor, First District

Attachment

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ATTACHMENT

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF VENTURA
GOVERNMENT CENTER, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93009

September 24 , 2002

Board of Supervisors
800 South Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA

Subject: Adoption of Policy in Support of County Vehicle Fleet Purchase of Hybrid Vehicles

Recommendation:
Adopt Policy Statement below supporting the purchase of hybrid vehicles in the county fleet with consideration of cost impacts, and directing staff to pursue measures to reduce hybrid procurement costs.

Discussion:

Hybrid gasoline-electric vehicles offer an opportunity to implement clean-air motor vehicle technology at a relatively low cost, without sacrificing vehicle performance criteria (when comparing like vehicle sizes). The County General Services Agency has included 8 hybrids in the county's fleet of 116 compact cars, with 10 more scheduled for acquisition this fiscal year. To date, fleet managers and vehicle users are quite happy with the hybrids, and GSA has been able to provide an evaluation of life-cycle costs that compares purchase price and fuel costs over the vehicle's useful life. The GSA fleet currently schedules replacement of compact vehicles at 120,000 miles. The comparison below indicates that, while fuel savings reduce the life-cycle costs, hybrid vehicles still cost more under present assumptions. This cost comparison does not consider the probable higher value-quality of the Prius over the Cavalier.

Purchase Price	
Chevrolet Cavalier	$13,227
Toyota Prius	$22,181
Cost difference	$8,954

Fuel Cost Comparison, @ $1.28/gal.	
Cavalier @ 24 MPG city	$6,400
Prius @ 52 MPG city	$2,956
Cost difference	$3,444

Net Cost Difference: $5,510

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However, when comparing the Prius to a medium-size sedan, the Prius becomes the less expensive alternative:

Purchase Price		Fuel Costs	
Avg. Mid-size	$18,904	Mid-size @ 19 MPG	$8,084
Prius	$22,181	Prius @ 52 MPG	$2,954
Cost difference	$3,277	Cost difference	$5,130

Net Cost Difference: $1,853 (Prius less expensive)

While the current cost figures are the critical factor, when evaluating the acquisition of hybrid vehicles, there are a number of other factors our Board should take into consideration:

Are there funding sources available that would reduce the cost difference between hybrids and standard compact cars?

- APCD grant funding
- State or federal funding
- Fleet purchase discounts, perhaps in concert with other public agencies

What is the extra-monetary value to the public of County use of hybrid vehicles?

- Value of actual emissions savings- The EPA reports that the Prius emits 1/13th of the smog-forming compounds and less than half the green-house gas (CO_2) of the Cavalier. For a fleet, the difference is significant.
- Value of promoting clean-air technology
- Value of demonstrating environmental and technological leadership

Future savings-

There will be additional savings as gas prices increase above the $1.15 per gallon used in the comparison. The cost of the hybrid is fixed at the time of purchase; however, the savings in fuel economy will increase as gas prices increase. While an increase to $1.50 per gallon would still leave a difference of approximately $4,000 in life-cycle cost for compact cars, if this savings is combined with savings/value per the above, the cost difference would be reduced substantially. Additionally, the increasing availability of hybrid cars, trucks, and SUV's will likely bring future costs down and increase options.

Recommended Policy Statement:

In consideration of the economic, environmental, and social benefits of hybrid vehicles, I would like to see The County of Ventura increase its deployment of hybrids over time. However, in recognition of our current fiscal challenges, a conservative implementation of this policy is clearly necessary. Accordingly, I recommend our Board adopt the following policy statement and direction to staff:

1. Direct staff to pursue cost reduction strategies for increased hybrid vehicle acquisition.
2. Support increased conversion of the county fleet to hybrid vehicles as economics become more favorable.
3. Because hybrids currently offer cost-savings over mid-sized sedans, the County should buy hybrids instead of mid-sized sedans unless hybrids do not meet the necessary performance criteria.

Cordially,

Steve Bennett

Steve Bennett
Supervisor, First District