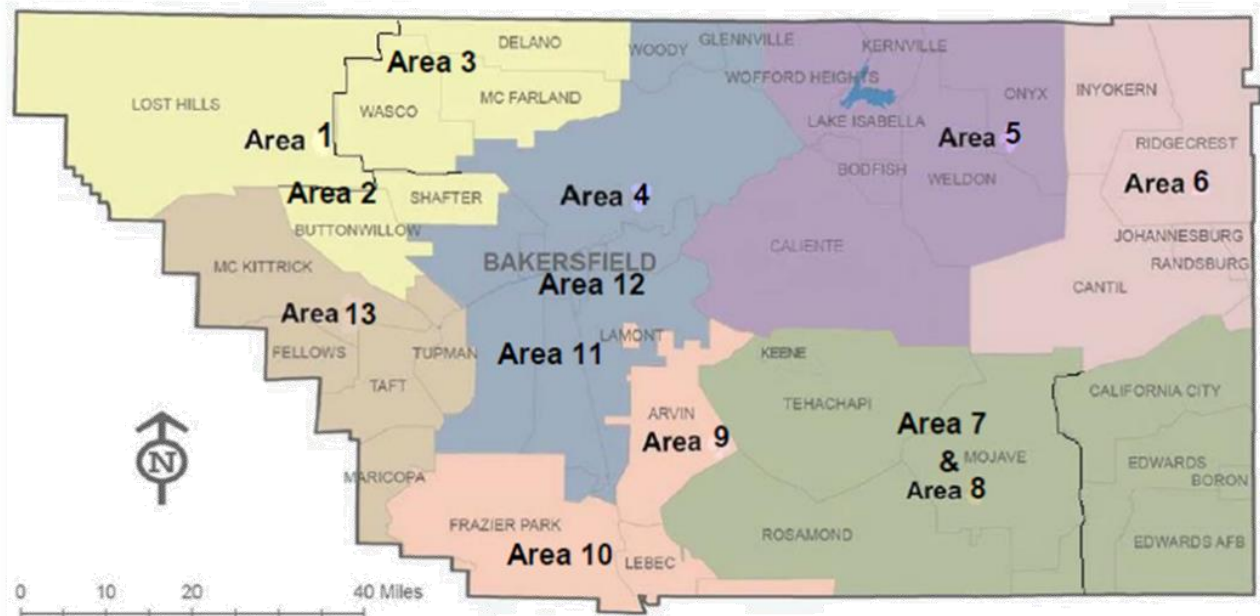


Purpose

The First 5 Kern Commission is beginning the 2020 Strategic Plan effort and the launch of the next 'Request for Proposal' effort. In preparation, staff met with communities across the county, hosting 12 Town Hall meetings for the purpose of:

1. Sharing First 5 Kern's history and planning steps for the next funding cycle beginning 2020;
2. Identifying priority needs and gaps in services that First 5 Kern can address in the next funding cycle;
3. Utilizing direct discussions with residents to better understand the needs throughout Kern County; and
4. Gathering attendee input, ideas and priorities to share with First 5 Kern Commission.



Meetings

Town Hall meetings were held in the following cities and surrounding communities (not in order of priority):

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Lost Hills – Area 1 | 7. Mojave – Areas 7 and 8 |
| 2. Shafter – Area 2 | 8. Arvin / Lamont – Area 9 |
| 3. Delano – Area 3 | 9. Mountain Communities – Area 10 |
| 4. Bakersfield - Oildale – Area 4 | 10. Bakersfield - Greenfield – Area 11 |
| 5. Kern River Valley – Area 5 | 11. Bakersfield - Southeast – Area 12 |
| 6. Ridgecrest – Area 6 | 12. Taft – Area 13 |

First 5 Kern’s Vision

All Kern County children will be born into and thrive in supportive, safe, loving homes and neighborhoods and will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

First 5 Kern’s Mission

To strengthen and support the children of Kern County prenatal to five and their families by empowering our providers through the integration of services with an emphasis on health and wellness, parent education, and early childcare and education.

The Process

Meetings were advertised throughout the County of Kern via flyers, networking and public service announcements. All meetings were open to the public.

Attendees were asked to share how they view programs and services in their surrounding region based on First 5 Kern’s focus areas: (I) Health and Wellness, (II) Parent Education and Support Services and (III) Early Childcare and Education.

SHAFTER TOWN HALL MEETING – AREA 2

First 5 Kern staff met with 16 residents of the Shafter area, including parents, children and early childcare providers. The two-hour event was held at the Richland Junior High Activity Center, Tuesday, May 16, 2017.

Town Hall Hosted By:

- Shafter Healthy Start (SHS)
Richland School District
300 N. Valley Street
Shafter, CA 93263

Rosa Romero, Director of Student and Family Support Services
661-746-8692
rromero@rsdshafter.org

The SHS provides direct family support services:

- a. Parenting classes (including Nurturing Parenting court-mandated classes).
- b. Promoting parents' knowledge of developmental milestones and norms;
- c. Has early learning, via center-based and kindergarten transition activities including early childhood development.
- d. Case management.
- e. Health screenings.

Discussion Results

I. Health and Wellness

- There is a need for transportation services to provide access to quality health care.
 - a. A lack of local access exists, especially to pediatric well-child visits.
 - b. Families must travel to Delano or Bakersfield often.
 - c. Transportation resources require a prescription for doctors' appointments. This prevents families from accessing transportation when a child is so sick they must go to urgent care or emergency room.
- There is only one pediatric office in town.
- No urgent care or emergency rooms exist.
- There are long waits to see the doctor.
- Better access to dental services is needed.
 - a. The mobile dental clinic does come to Shafter but more dental services are needed.
- Immunization services come once a month.
 - d. Communication is needed to better inform families of services that are available.

II. Parent Education and Support Services

- Parenting classes (court ordered and non-mandated), uses the Nurturing Parenting curriculum. These classes are well received by local residents who want them to continue.
 - a. Promoting these events and communicating to parents about classes would be helpful.
- Parents of children with special needs are in need of increased assistance to diagnose and respond to identifying secondary needs such as speech and language, vision, hearing, etc.
 - b. Residents need to learn more about Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) developmental screenings completed by SHS staff.
 - c. Attendees expressed a desire of greater access to Kern Regional Center services.
 - d. Parent support groups of children with special needs are needed.
- Increased publicity of 2-1-1 Kern County would help families to access services.

III. Early Childcare and Education

- Shafter Healthy Start program prepares four to five-year-olds for kindergarten through center-based activities.
- Assistance with kindergarten enrollment and kindergarten transition activities.
- Attendees expressed that the area needs:
 - a. More preschool classes/slots to encourage more parents to provide preschool education to their children (the waitlist period is very long).
 - b. Reading programs to better prepare children for kindergarten.

IV. Other Comments

- Transportation services are greatly needed to meet many different types of appointments and secure needed services.
- CPR and First Aid classes to protect children are needed.
- Affordable swimming lessons for children like 'Make a Splash' in Bakersfield are needed.
- Residents need car seat safety, car seats and other community resources.
- It was suggested that English and Spanish social media, texts, phone messaging e.g. phone trees, and emails would help involve more families.

--- **END SHAFTER** ---