

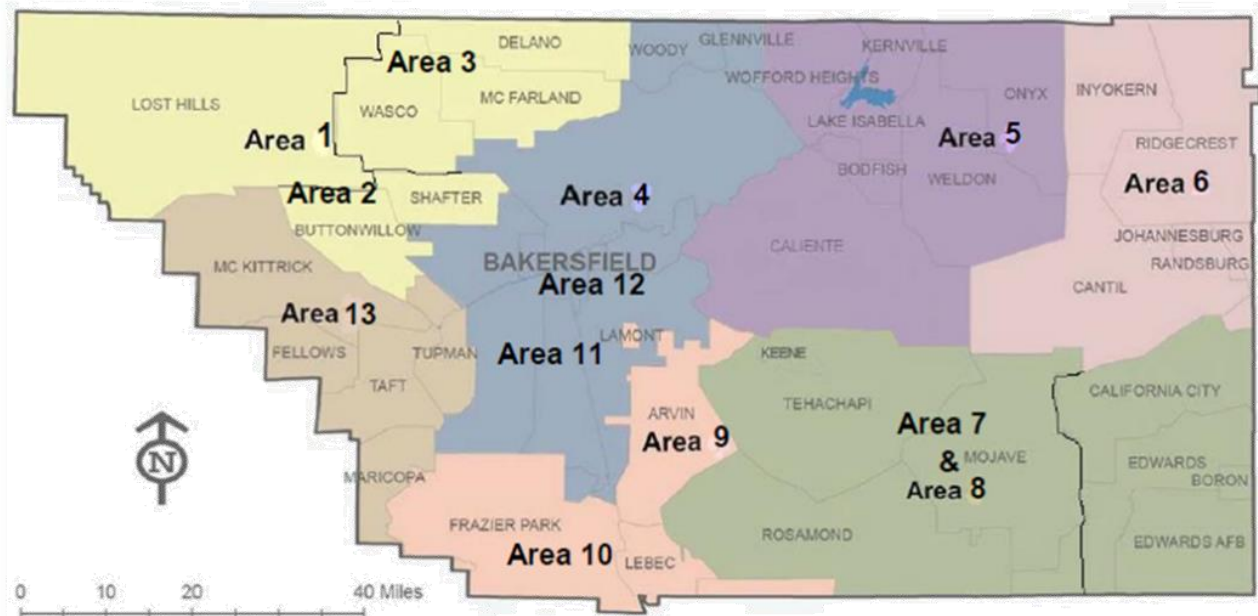


## 2017 Town Hall Meeting **RECAP**

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

## TAFT TOWN HALL MEETING – AREA 13

First 5 Kern staff met for two hours with 45 area residents and providers at the Westside Recreation Center in Taft on Wednesday, April 12, 2017.

### **Town Hall Hosted By:**

- West Side Community Resource Center (WS CRC)  
Taft City School District  
915 N. 10th Suite 20  
Taft, CA 93268

Sandy Koenig, Coordinator  
661-765-7281  
[skoenig@taftcity.org](mailto:skoenig@taftcity.org)

The WS CRC provides direct family support services through:

- a. Case management.
- b. Parenting classes.
- c. Health screenings and referrals.
- d. Promoting parents' knowledge of developmental milestones and norms.
- e. Early learning center-based and kindergarten activities.

### **Discussion Results**

#### **I. Health and Wellness**

- More accessible transportation services and coverage for school, doctor's appointments, and other services are needed both locally and into Bakersfield.
  - a. There is a reliance on bus service.
  - b. Finding access to various resources general transportation e.g. Dignity Health who offers bus passes, is helpful.
- Behavioral health services
  - a. Local providers are needed to avoid traveling to Bakersfield.
  - b. More services for children's behavior management is needed.
  - c. Counseling would strengthen families, especially young couples (including separated and divorced couples to co-parent their children).
  - d. Substance abuse counseling and treatment support services are needed.
  - e. Respite services for parents with special needs children was requested.
  - f. Adverse Childhood Experience Support (ACES) related to parent education (via grant programs) would be helpful.
- Education services are requested including:
  - a. Community resource training for parents and providers.
  - b. Nutrition education.
  - c. Prenatal education and support.
  - d. Car seat installation and proper use.
  - e. Chronic medical condition prevention (e.g. asthma, obesity, etc).
  - f. Infection prevention and management (e.g. hygiene/handwashing).

- Better access to fresh fruits and vegetables is needed particularly in Maricopa.
- Breastfeeding support services are requested.
- Private and infant care providers are needed in the area.
- Special need services are not available.
- Weather-appropriate clothing for children.

## **II. Parent Education and Support Services**

- Transportation to parent education classes and support groups are needed.
- Parents need assistance with accessing services for a path out of poverty.
- More parent education classes are needed to reach more families at risk with ongoing case management, especially in a child's earliest years.
- Homeless services, including food and nutrition services are needed.
- Creative outreach services and campaigns would be helpful so parents are empowered through parenting support classes and services.
  - a. One recommendation was community fairs that encourage parental participation in a fun atmosphere.

## **III. Early Childcare and Education**

- WS CRC provides screenings using Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) to help parents determine if their child's development is on track for their age.
- Publicize early intervention services to address concerns and conditions as early as possible.
- Parent workshops and fairs are needed to encourage reading and singing.
- Increased early childhood capacity is needed since:
  - a. Head Start no longer located in Maricopa.
  - b. Infant care is unaffordable.
  - c. Three-year-olds need services and interaction with peers.
  - d. Infant focused care and support are needed.
- Pairing parent education with early childhood services would help overcome parental resistance, especially if developmental delays are identifiable, e.g. speech and language services.
- A *Mommy and Me* program would create support among mothers.
- A *Daddy and Me* program to engage fathers and provide support is needed especially for single fathers.

- The community needs to support the ‘Preschool for All’ effort in California.

#### **IV. Other Comments**

- More community activities are requested e.g. resource fairs for parents and providers and a community resource guide.
- Social media outreach will be helpful.
- Counseling center for all families.
  - a. Currently only available to Medi-Cal recipients.

**--- END TAFT ---**