

Kern County General Plan Update



Kern County 101

Kern County is the 3rd largest county in area in California and the 20th largest in the United States with 8,201 square miles. It contains 11 incorporated cities and has three distinct regions: valley, mountain and desert.



It's Law!

California State law requires counties and cities make General Plans which must include seven elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, and open space, noise and safety. Communities may voluntarily adopt additional elements covering subjects of local interest. Some examples include: air quality, healthy communities, or environmental justice.



Healthy Communities

A Healthy Community, as described by the US Department of Health and Human Services, is "one that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments, helping people support one another in aspects of daily life and to develop their fullest potential." (*Healthy People 2010*) It encompasses health, fresh food, clean air and water, safety, education, transportation, parks, recreation centers, art and culture.

Our County faces rising health issues such as asthma, diabetes and accidental injuries. Some of these can be mitigated through coordinated efforts with multiple jurisdictions. Changes can be made through improved living and working environments such as public transit, healthcare, fresh food, and education and training. Together we can make a difference and live healthily.

Get Involved!

A successful General Plan will reflect the community's priorities and your input is needed to confirm the community's values and establish its vision.

Website

<http://pcd.kerndsa.com/general-plan-update>

Visit the General Plan website to submit questionnaire responses and find out more about meetings, and the status of the General Plan

Workshops

Attend Workshops and share your ideas.

Newsletters

A series of newsletters will be prepared to provide information on upcoming workshops and an overview of the elements being discussed.

Mailing List

If you would like to be added to the General Plan Update mailing list, please visit our website or email us at GeneralPlanUpdate@co.kern.ca.us

Questions

1. What type of data gathering or analysis do you think should be done by Staff to develop potential healthy community goals and policies for the General Plan Update?
2. What is the best part about living in Kern County?
3. What is the worst part about living in Kern County?
4. What does the term healthy community mean to you?
5. Is your neighborhood a health community? If so, why? If not, why not?
6. What amenities do you look for in a community?



Our Schedule



General Plan Elements and Workshop Schedule



Healthy Communities Ensures walkable, bicycle-friendly communities with access to fresh food, health care and other factors of a healthy place to live and work.

Workshop: January 26 and February 23, 2017



Land Use Establishes land use designations and patterns to support economic stability while protecting our quality of life.

Workshop: February 23 and March 23, 2017



Circulation Guides transportation decisions for automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians and mass transit.



Open Space Provides measures to protect and improve open spaces.



Conservation Addresses protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources.

Workshop: March 23, 2017



Water Ensures water resources are available, sustained and protected for quality.



Housing Plans for housing to meet the needs of all sections of the county.

Workshop: April 27, 2017



Energy Provides measures that reduce energy use and encourage alternative energy development.



Military Readiness Addresses military needs such as land, restricted air space and housing.

Workshop: May 25, 2017



Safety Addresses hazards such as fires, flooding, geological hazards and hazardous materials.



Noise Addresses noise-generating and noise-sensitive land uses.

Workshop: June 22, 2017

General Plan Update Process

Workshops

General Plan element discussions to develop a potential framework such as plan objectives, goals, policies and implementation measures.

Staff Report to Board Of Supervisors

Plan Development

Finalize a Draft General Plan Document to be circulated for public review and comment.

Environmental Analysis

Analyze the environmental effects of implementing the General Plan through a Program Level Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Project Consideration

Circulate the final proposed General Plan and Program Level EIR for public review and comment.

General Plan Adoption

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will consider the General Plan at a series of public hearings.

Contact the General Plan Update Team

GeneralPlanUpdate@co.kern.ca.us or
Kern County Planning &
Natural Resources Department
2700 M Street, Suite 100
Ph: (661) 862-8600

What's New

A dedicated email address has been created for the General Plan Update. If you have questions, wish to be added to our mailing list or wish to submit answers to our questionnaires, please contact us at:

GeneralPlanUpdate@co.kern.ca.us

If you missed a meeting or would like to review documents, a portion of our website has been dedicated to the General Plan. Please visit:

<http://pcd.kerndsa.com/general-plan-update>



“Elementary, my dear Watson, Elementary”

Government Code dictates a community's General Plan must include seven elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, and open space, noise and safety. Communities may voluntarily adopt additional elements covering subjects of local interest. Some examples include: air quality, healthy communities, or environmental justice.

Although Mr. Holmes never uttered the above phrase in the original 56 short stories or 4 novels, the use of the word *element*, which is defined as, 'a component or constituent of a whole or one of the parts into which a whole may be resolved by analysis' is appropriate given these elements are the basic building blocks upon which all other structures of land uses are built.

It is within this framework of a series of public workshops that the Kern County Planning and Natural Resources departments intends to solicit public comment and input from interested parties and stakeholders to develop updated frameworks for each of the elements and optional elements.

Kern County General Plan

Most people who own property are familiar with zoning laws that regulate land use; however, most of those same people are not familiar with the fact that those laws and regulations are built upon the County's General Plan. A general plan is a community's broad blueprint for future development. It describes a community's development goals, objectives, and policies for future development and is the foundation for land use decisions made by the planning commission and/or board of supervisors.

A general plan consists of at least two parts. Not only must it contain a written text describing a community's goals, objectives, and policies for development, it must also contain a map (or maps) and diagrams that illustrate the generalized distribution of land uses, the road system, environmental hazard areas, the open space system, and other policy statements that can be illustrated.

Vision for the Future

The Kern County Board of Supervisors, the Kern County Planning Commission and the Kern County Planning & Natural Resources Department comprise the General Plan Update Committee. We are reaching out to you, the private individual, business owners, organizations, agencies, and interested stakeholders to provide input and share thoughts and visions for Kern County's future by developing a general plan that will take all Kern County residents into happier, healthier, more productive, and prosperous future.

The General Plan Update Committee understands and appreciates the diverse range of perspectives, experiences, and ambitions individuals or groups can bring to the planning and visioning process and together we can produce a document of which we can be proud.

Goals to consider

- Opportunity to live, work and be active in our communities
- Access to health, affordable food at school and work.
- Access to education and training for job stability and availability.



When Last We Met

On October 13, 2016, a Planning Commission meeting was held to introduce the General Plan Update and seek direction from the Commission. It was decided that the second Planning Commission meeting of each month (the fourth Thursday) for the first six months of 2017 would be set aside for the General Plan Update. It was also decided that the Planning Commission meeting would start at 7:00 p.m. but Staff would be available at 6:00 p.m. Several members of the community expressed their enthusiasm and support of the General Plan Update.



What's Next

Healthy Communities and Land Use

In February we will continue our discussion of Healthy Communities and hope to continue to hear from you. We will also start our discussion on Land Use.

Land use is the ultimate pattern of development for the county. It addresses future growth and physical development of the County, in other words it is the long-range view for short-term actions.

There are two types of land use designations: the General Plan and Zoning. The General Plan Land Use element addresses broad needs like separating heavy industrial from homes and schools. Zoning addresses specific uses like where in an area a home is placed.



Next Community Workshop

The Kern County Community is invited to participate in the County's General Plan Update

Healthy Communities

WHEN: Thursday, January 26, 2017 @ 6:00 p.m.

WHERE: Chambers of the Board of Supervisors, 1st Floor
1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield

