



**Kern Council
of Governments**



DRAFT

**Public Information Policies and Procedures
September 2009**

Article IX: Public Involvement Procedures and Policies

Section 1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance for Kern Council of Governments' (Kern COG) elected officials and staff in public participation and interagency consultation throughout the regional planning process. It contains the policies, guidelines and procedures Kern COG uses in developing the metropolitan planning process. This includes the development and approval of the Regional Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Improvement Program, and other environmental review documentation related to growth, transportation, and air quality, and any product prepared by Kern COG staff that statutorily requires public participation, or for which the Kern COG Board of Directors determines it is necessary. These have been broadened to include additional requirements under the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments; and the 2005 Safe, Accessible, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

Kern COG carries out its transportation and air quality planning responsibilities in a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive manner in conformance with United States Code Section 5303 of Title 23; and California Government Code Section 54950, the state-mandated Ralph M. Brown Act (The Brown Act). While this directive remains in effect, the federal government has now made it clear that more specific public participation and involvement is a critical element of the funding eligibility criteria.

A vigorous public information process not only serves Kern COG by meeting federal requirements, but also allows for a fruitful exchange of ideas while developing of programs or projects that may be controversial.

Section 2. Background

The federal government has mandated that public involvement in the metropolitan planning process meet minimum requirements. How effectively planning agencies have provided opportunities for public input is an important criterion to determine federal fund allocation for local, regional and state projects and programs. While legislation such as SAFETEA-LU; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and awareness of environmental justice issues have broadened the scope of public participation in the planning and programming process, prior federal transportation acts also required public participation.

The Brown Act has long required California agencies to perform their duties in the public's full view and with opportunities for public input. All environmental documents related to transportation plans include the public comment provisions

of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Kern COG has always complied with California law in addition to meeting federal statute mandates.

Kern COG's Board of Directors and technical advisory committees assist the bottom-up planning process and frequent, ongoing public and interagency participation at all stages of the process. Outreach programs are designed in cooperation with technical advisory committees and other transportation and air quality agencies. These programs will complement the decentralized planning process, which was established to increase participation in regional policy development.

Effective public involvement requires that affected individuals and groups be encouraged to participate developing local, regional, and state plans. The following policies, guidelines and procedures are designed to encourage participation. Included are:

- A. Regional Transportation Plan
- B. Transportation Improvement Program
- C. Environmental impact studies or reports
- D. Any product prepared by Kern COG staff that statutorily requires public participation or for which the Kern COG Board of Directors determines it is necessary.

Section 3. Partnerships

Kern COG staff maintains regular contact with the following agencies:

American Lung Association	City of Arvin
Amtrak	City of Bakersfield
Bakersfield Senior Center	City of California City
Bakersfield Association of Realtors	City of Delano
Bakersfield Downtown Business Association	City of Maricopa
Bureau of Land Management	City of McFarland
California Air Resources Board	City of Ridgecrest
California Department of Conservation – Oil, Gas & Geothermal Division	City of Shafter
California Department of Finance	City of Taft
California Environmental Protection Agency	City of Tehachapi
California Highway Patrol	City of Wasco
California Office of Planning and Research	Council of Fresno County Governments
Caltrans Districts 6 and 9	County of Kern
	Downtown Business Association
	East Kern Alliance
	Edwards Air Force Base
	Environmental Protection Agency

Federal Highway Administration
 Federal Transit Administration
 Golden Empire Transit District (GET)
 Greater Bakersfield Chamber of
 Commerce
 Greyhound
 Independent Living Center
 Indian Wells Valley Airport District
 Inyo County Transportation
 Commission
 Kern Congestion Management
 Agency
 Kern County Aging & Adult Services
 Department
 Kern County Air Pollution Control
 District
 Kern County Building Industry
 Association
 Kern County Commission on Aging
 Kern County Economic Opportunity
 Corporation
 Kern County Housing Authority
 Kern County Superintendent of
 Schools
 Kern County Water Agency
 Kern Economic Development
 Department
 Kern Motorist Aid Authority
 Kern Regional Center
 Kern Transportation Foundation
 Kern Wheelmen Bicycle Club
 Kings County Regional Planning
 Agency

Local Agency Formation
 Commission
 Madera Local Transportation
 Commission
 Merced County Association of
 Governments
 Metro Bakersfield Consolidated
 Transportation Service Agency
 Mexican-American Opportunity
 Foundation
 Minter Field Airport District
 Mono County Transportation
 Commission
 Mojave Town Council
 Naval Air Weapons Station - China
 Lake
 North of the River Recreation & Park
 District
 Project Clean Air
 San Joaquin County Council of
 Governments
 San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution
 Control District
 Santa Fe Railways
 Sierra Club
 Southern California Auto Club
 Stanislaus Area Association of
 Governments
 Tulare County Association of
 Governments
 Various chambers of commerce
 Wasco Association for the
 Developmentally Disabled
 Wasco Housing Authority

Section 4. Guidelines

Kern COG is committed to developing and maintaining an effective citizen participation process. In order to accomplish this commitment, the following principles guide the public involvement process:

1. It is the right and responsibility of citizens to be involved in the transportation planning process.
2. Citizens should be educated about the needs and issues and encouraged to participate in finding solutions.

3. Early and timely involvement of citizens is necessary to build community agreement on the needs and solutions before alternatives are proposed.
4. Agreement on the final product is a desirable goal, but agreement does not mean 100 percent unanimity by all parties. Negotiation and compromise are essential ingredients to building agreement.
5. The process by which a decision is reached is just as important as the product. Citizens should end the process satisfied that they had the opportunity to be significantly involved and that their voices were heard and reflected in the final document.
6. After decisions are made, actions should follow to maintain confidence in the community involvement process.

The process of community involvement is not a one-time step. The manner in which the public is involved may change as the process progresses.

In Attachment A, Public Involvement Chart, Kern COG defines a public participation program for each document it produces. Final documents will reflect the needs and desires of affected communities within the region. This includes establishing procedures and responsibilities for:

- A. informing, involving, and incorporating public opinion into the planning process;
- B. consultative involvement of designated agencies on technical data and modeling used in developing regional plans and determining transportation improvement program and regional transportation improvement program conformity;
- C. clearly designating a lead staff person who is knowledgeable about the entire planning process to be responsible for the public involvement program; and
- D. providing adequate funds and schedule expenditures to implement the public participation program.

Section 5: Procedures

Kern COG will notify interested or affected citizens who may be impacted by the plan through customary and electronic meeting announcements, newspapers, public service announcements, press releases, special mailers, publications and committee agendas, meetings and other opportunities to participate, as appropriate. Community members or organizations may include but are not limited to:

Academic and scientific communities
 Airport authorities
 Appropriate private transportation providers

Bicycle and pedestrian groups
 Business and industry
 Elected officials
 Environmental organizations

Freight shippers and receivers
Health and handicapped organizations
Local public and private transit operators
Local, State and Federal agencies
Minority and ethnic groups
Native American associations
Operators of major modes of transportation

Recreation groups
Senior citizen groups
Service organizations
Traffic, ridesharing, parking, and enforcement agencies
Youth services groups

1. Kern COG encourages public participation and acknowledges the value of this input.
2. Kern COG will provide complete and easily understood information and summaries. Planning issues and alternatives will be addressed in a realistic manner.
3. Kern COG will publish public comments in a newsletter or report. Reports will include specific agency responses, the effect of citizen input on decisions, and (when appropriate) updated reports of citizen participation.
4. Kern COG will conduct a thorough review of the program, including staff and citizen evaluation.

Level I Procedures

Level I procedures address routine documents that serve as a subset of or facilitate more significant plans or determinations. These documents are subject to the minimum levels of public outreach under these policies. These procedures become effective once an initial draft document has been produced.¹

All Documents and Formal Meetings including:

- A. Regional Transportation Plan and amendments
 - B. Federal Transportation Improvement Program
 - C. Regional Transportation Improvement Program
 - D. Air quality conformity determinations
 - E. Formal transportation improvement plan amendments (excluding technical or administrative amendments)
 - F. Miscellaneous studies
 - G. Public involvement procedures
 - H. Short-range transit plans
 - I. Transit development plans
1. No person shall be denied participation.
 2. A legal notice will be placed in the legal advertising sections of at least one newspaper of general circulation within the affected community, including a Spanish-language publication, if possible.

¹ See Attachment A, Kern COG Document Public Involvement Chart, for specific requirements on specific documents.

3. Display ads will be placed as deemed necessary and targeted specifically to affected communities to encourage involvement and address key decision-making points.
4. Non-traditional approaches, such as postal and electronic mailings to non-profit organizations, churches and chambers of commerce will be used to encourage involvement of the underserved and transit dependant in project development and public workshops. Spanish-language advertising will be included in these non-traditional approaches.
5. Public meetings are defined as those regular COG meetings normally held on the third Thursday of each month.
6. Public workshops are defined as forums established specifically for the public to gain information and provide input on Kern COG documents and processes. This definition does not include technical workshops for member agency staff or elected officials even though they are technically open to the public.
7. Announcements dealing with documents and/or meetings and workshops shall be posted on the Kern COG Web site.
8. A mailing list of individuals who have expressed interest shall be maintained.
9. Meeting notices shall be mailed to individuals who have expressed interest.
10. Kern COG shall provide appropriate assistance, auxiliary aids and/or services when necessary to afford disabled individuals an equal opportunity. Individuals with disabilities will be provided an opportunity to request auxiliary aids.
11. Kern COG shall provide audio/visual presentations along with its maps, charts and graphics whenever practical to help the public better understand the plans, programs, projects or determinations it adopts.
12. Kern COG shall provide an interpreter, when requested, at any and all public hearings and workshops, and shall maintain its subscription to a language line for day-to-day public inquires.
13. Kern COG's Web site shall maintain a link to a translation service for information contained on the agency site.
14. Projects must be evaluated for their potential for public interest. Projects likely to have considerable public interest must also include Level III requirements.

Level II

Additional Public Involvement Requirements

Level II procedures address core agency plans, programs and declarations. These documents are subject to a higher level of public outreach than Level I documents under these policies. These procedures become effective before an initial draft document has been produced. The following documents also meet the public involvement requirements listed in Level I.

- A. Negative Declarations ¹
- B. Environmental Documents ¹
- C. Congestion Management Programs
- D. Regional Transportation Plan
- E. State Transportation Improvement Program
- F. Regional Transportation Improvement Program

G. Federal Transportation Improvement Program
H. Regional Housing Needs Assessment

1. Public review by various funding agencies submitting projects for the transportation improvement program will be accepted up to the final determination.
2. A copy of draft transportation plans and draft transportation improvement programs, environmental documents, and the Congestion Management Program will be made available for review at Kern Council of Governments, the main branch of the local library system, college libraries, boards of trade, and chambers of commerce within affected areas. Individual copies of all documents will also be distributed to any interested parties for a fee to offset printing charges.
3. Public comments and responses, and the disposition of any comments, will be made part of final transportation plans and transportation improvement programs, environmental documents, and the Congestion Management Program.
 - A. **Written summary/verbal presentation** – Staff will review all comments, synthesize them and prepare a narrative summary highlighting key points.
 - B. **Listing all comments** – Using a summary chart format, staff will review and summarize all comments, categorizing them by topic and type of comments (e.g. question, fact, desire, opinion).
 - C. **Responding to significant comments** – Staff will respond, in writing within 30 days, to significant comments. Those responses will be made part of the final document.
 - D. **Providing the full record** – The decision-making body will be given copies of the meeting notes, the transcript (for public hearings) or taped transcripts.

¹ *Please see guidance document for additional public participation requirements.*

4. The Regional Transportation Plan, its environmental impact report and Kern COG's Public Information Policies and Procedures shall be made available for public review for no less than 45 days.
5. Transportation improvement programs, environmental documents, and the Congestion Management Program will be made available for public review for no less than a 30-day public review period.
6. Programs, projects, or plans routed through the state clearinghouse shall adhere to the public information requirements of the clearinghouse and also be made available no less than 30 days.
7. If regionally significant changes are made to the transportation plan, transportation improvement programs, environmental documents, and the Congestion Management Program during the review and comment period, the plan(s) will be made available for 30-day public review and comment period prior to final adoption.
8. Minor, technical or administrative amendments to the transportation improvement programs will have a 14-day public review period and may be approved by the executive director.
9. Regionally significant changes to the transportation plan, TIPs, environmental documents and the Congestion Management Program during the review and

- comment period shall also be advertised via press release to all media outlets, through electronic notice to Kern COG's address database and on the Kern COG Web site as deemed necessary in the specific project area prior to final adoption.
10. The executive director or his designee will coordinate with the state to improve public awareness of the State Transportation Plan or the State Transportation Improvement Plan.
 11. Records relating to the transportation plans, transportation improvement programs, EIRs and the Congestion Management Program will be made available for public review upon request.
 12. Technical and policy information relating to the transportation plans, transportation improvement programs, EIRs, will be made available for public review upon request.
 13. Staff will hold at least one formal public workshop every four years in each local jurisdiction on the Regional Transportation Plan. These public meetings/workshops will be announced in a variety of formats, including public notices, display ads, press releases and direct mail and/or electronic mail notices in the affected communities.
 14. All project, determination and plan amendments not considered administrative in scope shall be advertised via public notice and held for a 30-day review period.
 15. Refer to the California Transportation Commission's 2007 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines regarding addendums, supplemental and subsequent environmental documents to the Regional Transportation Plan.

Level III

Anticipated high-profile projects

The following also meet the criteria listed in levels I and II. Level III procedures address plans that Kern COG staff determines to be controversial based on their environmental impacts, project scope or other determining factors. These documents are subject to the highest levels of public outreach under these policies. These procedures become effective before an initial draft document has been produced.

1. Staff will help form a citizens' advisory committee.
2. Kern COG will develop a calendar of public workshops.
3. Identify the appropriate media contact to respond to media inquiries.
4. Develop a quarterly newsletter specific to the plan or project.
5. Mail newsletter to the plan/project participants at regular intervals.
6. Coordinate a news conference and/or press release highlighting the plan/program and coordination between Kern COG and public participation. Press releases will be sent to the appropriate radio stations, television channels, and newspapers.

Process for Receiving Public Comments

The following public involvement techniques may be used to educate the public and/or gather information. Techniques may be selected at the discretion of Kern COG to best meet the needs of a plan or program being developed:

A. Formal Public Meetings/Workshops

One or more formal public meetings and/or workshops may be held during the process. The format for the workshops will be at the discretion of Kern COG. All Kern COG meetings and public workshops will be held in buildings accessible to persons with disabilities. The format options include:

1. 'Theater' style with a presentation followed by audience response.
2. 'Open-house' style with individual comments provided directly to a recorder, typed in by the participant, or via written comment sheets.

A mixed format with an 'open house' style meeting followed by a 'theater' style comment period.

In each case, Kern COG shall provide audio/visual presentations along with its maps, charts and graphics whenever practical to help the public better understand the plans, programs, projects or determinations it adopts.

B. Small Group Sessions

A meeting of selected citizens, businesses, and/or neighborhoods may be invited to participate in small group sessions to discuss options and give opinions on specific transportation topics. Participants may be presented with materials and asked to respond. The following are types of small groups that might be involved in the process:

Plan/Program Advisory Committee (PAC) - An advisory committee established for the development of a plan or program may consist of a broadly representative group of citizens who understand other citizen concerns, needs and wants, technical and administrative staff from various organizations and officials from appropriate local and state entities.

A PAC with citizen participation can be a valuable asset. Generally, PACs provide and consider citizen input and advice regarding regional goals and objectives, problems and needs, and to discuss potential options and solutions regarding the activity and be responsive to the citizen input.

PAC members may be expected to attend several public and neighborhood meetings. They may also be asked to assist, provide support and be responsible for the dissemination of information and facts, give testimony to the benefits and importance of the activity to the community, actively seek informed responses from the community regarding transportation problems and priorities and elicit potential solutions.

Kern COG will specifically consider the need for a PAC with regard to major transportation plans, studies, programs and projects. If the Board elects to form a PAC, the PAC shall be organized with a special effort to appoint persons who are or will represent the needs of the

persons traditionally underserved such as low income, minorities, elderly and disabled. The ways and means of determining PAC membership, committee structure, and specific roles and responsibilities for an activity shall be presented to the TTAC and Board for their approval. Membership will not be permanent, thus PAC members will serve for the length of the development and completion of a plan or program.

Stakeholders - Interview or meet with individuals or groups that have a vested interest in the outcome of a Kern COG-developed plan or program. Interviews and meetings would be conducted to identify issues and concerns. Such groups may include business, neighborhood, environmental, and others.

PAC and stakeholder meetings may include the use of various public involvement techniques to keep the group informed, obtain information, identify preferences and resolve conflicts.

Focus Groups - Kern COG may use this approach to uncover information that is difficult to access. This includes uncovering attitudes, opinions, and emotions on specific issues or topics from a group of 'screened' participants. This method may also be used to clarify issues so as to develop surveys. Kern COG will use a format that meets the current public involvement thought regarding the development of focus groups.

C. Internet

Whenever possible, Kern COG will provide access to plans and programs through the Internet. When applicable, an e-mail address will be presented and made available for public access to make and receive comments.

D. Fairs and Festivals

Kern COG may attend community fairs and festivals to present various aspects of transportation planning, programming and projects as set forth in the RTP as well as the FTIP. Participants are encouraged to view exhibits, ask questions, consider the information and give comments. Fairs create interest and dramatize a plan, program or TIP project through visualized graphics and interactive audiovisuals.

E. Public Opinion Surveys

Surveys report what people know or want to know. Surveys test whether a plan, program or an element of them is acceptable to the public as it is being developed. An appropriately sized random sample will be drawn from the targeted population and surveyed to develop a sense of general public attitudes. Surveys can be formal such as a direct mailing to citizens, businesses, and community organizations or informal such as a self-administered questionnaire attached within a draft document.

G. Phone/In-person Comments

A period of time may be provided to allow citizens to telephone or walk in their comments. Kern COG's phone number and address will be provided to the media and may be included on documents related to the plan or program. Kern COG will summarize verbal comments.

Section 6. Public Involvement Policy Evaluation

1. Significant changes to Kern COG's Public Involvement Procedures shall be published and available 30 days for public review and comment before final adoption.
2. Kern COG staff and the public will review the public review process biennially.

Evaluation Methodology

In order to regularly evaluate the Public Involvement Procedures, five performance measures are proscribed.

1. The accessibility of the outreach process to serve diverse geographic, language and ability needs;
2. The extent or reach of the process in involving and informing as many members of the public as possible.
3. The diversity of participants in the outreach process and its ability to reflect the broad range of ethnicities, incomes and special needs of residents in the Kern region.
4. The impact of public outreach and involvement on the plan/program and on policy board actions.
5. The satisfaction with the outreach process expressed by participants.

For each of these five performance measures, there is a set of quantifiable indicators. They will be applied as appropriate to each plan/program's level requirements.

1. Accessibility Indicators:
 - Meetings are held throughout the county.
 - 100 percent of meetings are reasonably accessible by transit.
 - All meetings are accessible under Americans with Disability Act requirements.
 - Meetings are linguistically accessible to 100 percent of participants with three working days' advance request for translation. (*Meeting announcements will offer translation services with advance notice to participants speaking any language with available professional translation services.*)
2. Reach indicators
 - Number of comments logged into comment tracking and response system.
 - Number of individuals actively participating in outreach program.
 - Number of visits to the specific section of the Kern COG Web site.

- Number of newspaper articles mentioning the plan/program.
 - Number of radio/television interviews or mentions on the plan/program.
3. Diversity indicators
- Demographics of targeted workshop/charette/meeting roughly mirrors the demographics of the Kern region.
 - Percentage of targeted organizations and groups participating in at least one workshop/charette/meeting.
 - Participants represent a cross-section of people of various interests, places of residence and primary modes of travel.
4. Impact Indicators
- 100 percent of written comments received are logged into a comment tracking system, analyzed, summarized and communicated in time for consideration by staff and the policy board.
 - 100 percent of significant written comments are acknowledged so that the person making them knows whether his or her comment is reflected in the outcome of a policy board action, or, conversely, why the policy board acted differently.
5. Participant Satisfaction (*This information would be obtained via an online and written survey available on the Kern COG Web site, and at each workshop/charette/public meeting involving the plan or program in question.*)
- Accessibility to meeting locations.
 - Materials presented in appropriate languages for targeted audiences.
 - Adequate notice of the meetings provided.
 - Sufficient opportunity to comment.
 - Educational value of presentations and materials.
 - Understanding of other perspectives and priorities.
 - Clear information at an appropriate level of detail.
 - Clear understanding of items that are established policy versus those that are open to public influence.
 - Quality of the discussion.
 - Responsiveness to comments received.

Section 7. Media Resources

Print Media Resources

Kern County is situated in California's southern San Joaquin Valley occupying 8,075 square miles. It is the third largest county in the state and is larger than the states of Delaware, Connecticut, and Rhode Island combined, and is larger than the entire states of Massachusetts or Hawaii. The county is divided into three distinct geographical regions: The eastern third of the county resides in the Mojave Desert; the middle section straddles the Southern Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Transverse Ranges; The western portion is in

the San Joaquin Valley. As of January 1, 2005, the county had a population of 753,070 registering an increase of more than 209,000 people over 1990. According to census data, 43.6 percent of the population is non-Hispanic White, 6.1 percent is non-Hispanic Black, 1.3 percent Native American, 43.3 percent Hispanic, and 5.5 percent other. Because of the diversity in the market profile and geography of Kern County, it is necessary to address the county in segments. Public Notices must be carefully placed depending on the project and affected communities.

Countywide Publications	Type	Adjudicated
The Bakersfield Californian	Main / Greater Kern County	X
El Mexicalo	Hispanic Interest	X
Indian Wells Valley	Type	Adjudicated
The Daily Independent	Main / Ridgecrest	X
NWC Rocketeer	Military / China Lake	--
News-Review	Main / Ridgecrest	X
Southeastern Kern County	Type	Adjudicated
Antelope Valley Press	Main / Palmdale	X
The Bulletin	Main / North Edwards	--
Desert Wings	Military / Edwards Main	--
Lancaster Desert Mailer	Lancaster / Main	X
Mojave Desert News	Main / Mojave	X
Rosamond Weekly News	Main / Rosamond	X
Southeast Kern Weekender	Ridgecrest	
Tehachapi News	Main / Tehachapi	X
Kern River Valley	Type	Adjudicated
Kern Valley Sun	Main /Lake Isabella	X
Arvin/Lamont	Type	Adjudicated
Arvin Tiller	Main /Arvin	X
El Popular	Hispanic Interest	X
Lamont Reporter	Main / Lamont	X
Southwestern Kern County	Type	Adjudicated
The Pine Mountain Pioneer	Main / Frazier (monthly)	--
Mountain Enterprise	Main / Frazier Park (weekly)	X
Metropolitan Bakersfield	Type	Adjudicated
The Bakersfield Californian	Main / Kern County	X
Bakersfield News Observer	African-American Interest	X
El Mexicalo	Hispanic Interest	X
El Popular	Hispanic Interest	X
Northwest Kern County	Type	Adjudicated

Delano Record	Main / Delano	--
El Popular	Hispanic Interest	X
Shafter Press	Main / Shafter	X
Wasco Tribune	Main / Wasco	X
Western Kern County	Type	Adjudicated
The Midway Driller	Main / Taft	X

Section 8. Legal and Display Ad Minimum Requirements

Legal Notice:

Date, time, and place of public hearing or meeting;
Identity of the hearing body or officer;
General explanation of the matter to be considered;
General description, in text or by diagram, of the location of the real property, if any, that is the subject of the hearing or meeting;
The following statement when appropriate – “Individuals with disabilities may call Kern COG to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public meeting/hearing.”

Kern Council of Governments
Address
Contact name
Telephone number
Web site: www.kerncog.org
E-mail: rbrummett@kerncog.org

Notice of Intent to Adopt:

Period during which comments will be received;
Date, time, and place of any public meetings or hearings on the proposed project;
Brief description of the proposed project and its location;
Address where copies of the proposed negative declaration are available for review;
The following statement when appropriate – “Individuals with disabilities may call Kern COG to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public meeting/hearing.”

Kern Council of Governments
Address
Contact name
Telephone number
Web site: www.kerncog.org
E-mail: rbrummett@kerncog.org

Notice of Determination: – Filed ONLY with Kern County Clerk's Office

Information identifying the project, including common name and location;
Brief description of the project;

Date on which Kern COG determines the project will not cause any significant adverse environmental effects;
Address where copy of the negative declaration may be examined;
The following statement – "Kern COG has complied with the California Environmental Quality Act in the preparation of this negative declaration;"
The following statement when appropriate – "Individuals with disabilities may call Kern COG to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public review process."

Kern Council of Governments
Address
Contact name
Telephone number
TTY number
Fax number
Web site address
Project manager e-mail address

Notice of Preparation:

- A. Description of project;
- B. Project location on a map;
- C. Statement of probable environmental effects of project;
- D. The following statement when appropriate -"Individuals with disabilities may call;
- E. Kern COG to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public review process.

Kern Council of Governments
Address
Contact name
Telephone number
TTY number
Fax number
Web site address
Project manager e-mail address

Notice of Completion:

- A. Description of project;
- B. Project location;
- C. Date, time, and place of any public meetings or hearings on the proposed project;
- D. Address where copies of the Draft EIR are available for review;
- E. Period during which comments will be received;
- F. The following statement when appropriate -"Individuals with disabilities may call.

Kern COG to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public review process."

Kern Council of Governments
Address
Contact name
Telephone number
TTY number
Fax number
Web site address
Project manager e-mail address

Sample notice

Notice of Public Hearing

Date

Before the Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) in the matter of STATE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC HEARING:

- A. WHEREAS, Kern COG, in its capacity as the INSERT DESIGNATION will hold a public hearing to receive public comments regarding the INSERT PLAN, PROJECT, PROGRAM and
- B. WHEREAS, NAME DOCUMENT AND PURPOSE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT:

- C. A PUBLIC HEARING will be held in the Kern COG conference room, 1401 19th Street, Suite 300, Bakersfield, California at 7:00 pm, on Thursday, STATE DATE, for the purpose of receiving public comments and testimony regarding INSERT PLAN, PROJECT, OR PROGRAM. This hearing will be a part of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Kern Council of Governments.
- D. The INSERT PLAN, PROJECT, OR PROGRAM will be considered for INSERT ACTION by the Kern Council of Governments following the public hearing.
- E. Any person wishing to present testimony related to INSERT PLAN, PROJECT, OR PROGRAM may be heard, or may submit written comments to Kern COG, 1401 19th Street, Suite 300, Bakersfield, California 93301, for inclusion in the official record of the hearing. Individuals with disabilities may call Kern COG to request auxiliary aids necessary to participate in the public review process.

Ronald E. Brummett,
Executive Director
Kern Council of Governments

(805) 861-2191
TTY (805) 832- 7433
Fax: (661) 324-8215
Web site: www.kerncog.org
rbrummett@kerncog.org
DATE OF PUBLICATION

Display ads

Newspaper display ads, which may be inserted anywhere in the paper and are not confined to the classified section, will be used for the following documents: Regional Transportation Plan; Regional Transportation Improvement Program; Federal Transportation Improvement Program; all corridor studies; transit studies, including the unmet transit needs process; and all special studies.

These advertisements should run at the beginning, middle, and toward the end of the document development process. They shall announce either a public input period, draft review availability or a final review period.

Display ads should be no smaller than 2 columns in width by no less than 4 inches deep. If financial constraints allow, display ads should run 2 columns wide by 7 inches deep or larger.

Given the larger canvas with which to work, display ads should contain at least one art element to draw the eye in. This should include, but not necessarily be limited to the Kern COG logo. The number of different fonts used should be limited to two.

Sign In Sheets

Have a sign-in sheet available. This will become part of your official record. Make sure people write legibly, this information will become a part of your mailing list. At a minimum, include: name, address (street city, zip), daytime contact telephone number and e-mail address. The information needed from the sign-in sheet may vary from meeting to meeting. If quite a bit of information is needed, consider developing an information card that attendees can complete at their seat.

Have Kern COG materials available

There are several items that will help the public to understand the purpose of the agency, the project and your role. As many questions as can be answered prior to the meeting, saves everyone time during the meeting.

- A. Comment Sheets
- B. Project Information Guide
- C. Kern COG Information Guide
- D. Presentation-specific support materials

Visual Aids

- A. PowerPoint presentation

- B. Slides
- C. Enlarged diagrams and graphs
- D. Enlarged maps
- E. Videos
- F. Handouts

Anticipate Questions

Several of your anticipated questions will be developed and answered when the Project Information Guide is created. Despite this, it is likely the audience will have many more. The process of transportation planning is not an easy one to grasp. Many members of the audience will have wishes and desires that simply cannot be fulfilled. How you respond to their questions or statements of desire will make a difference with their opinion of our effort to get them involved. Create ways of telling the audience the planning process instead of telling the audience “No, we can’t.”

Are there creative ways to help the audience understand? Creative ways that put the audience in your shoes can help them to understand that transportation planning is a dynamic give-and-take process.

Attachment A: Kern COG Document Public Involvement Chart

	OWP	COG	KMAA	RTP	RTP*	RTIP	FTIP	TIP**	Corridor	Transit	Housing	Special	Air Quality	Population & Socio-	Public Information	
	Budget	Budget	Budget		EIR			Amend	Studies	Studies	Assessment	studies	Conformity	Economic Forecast	Policies/Procedures	
Document/Process Inception																
Display Ads (Newspapers)				●			●		●	●	●	●				
Direct Mail/Electronic Notices				●			●		●	●	●	●				●
Press Releases				●					●	●	●					●
Public/COG meeting	●	●	●													
Workshop(s)				●			●		●	●		●				
Draft Document/Process																
Display Ads (Newspapers)				●			●		●	●	●	●				
Direct Mail/Electronic Notices				●			●		●	●	●	●				●
Press Releases				●		●	●		●	●	●	●				
Public/COG meeting	●	●	●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●		●	
Workshop(s)				●		●	●		●	●		●		●		
Final Report/Plan/Study/Process																
Display Ads (Newspapers)				●			●		●		●	●	●			
Direct Mail/Electronic Notices	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Press Releases				●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	
Public/COG meeting	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	●		●	●		●	●
14-day Review Period																
30-day Review Period	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	
45-day Review Period				●	●											●
Legal Notice		●	●	●	●		●	●					●			
Public Hearing		●	●	●			●	●					●			

Display ads: Bakersfield Californian, El Popular, Arvin Tiller, Delano Record, Kern Valley Sun, Ridgecrest Daily Independent or Ridgecrest News-Review, Shafter Press, Taft Midway-Driller, Tehachapi News, Wasco

*Refer to California Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines and California Environmental Quality Act for addendum, subsequent and supplemental environmental documents.

**Minor TIP amendment types 2 and 3 will have a 14-day review period. Regionally significant types 4 and 5 will have a 30-day review.