

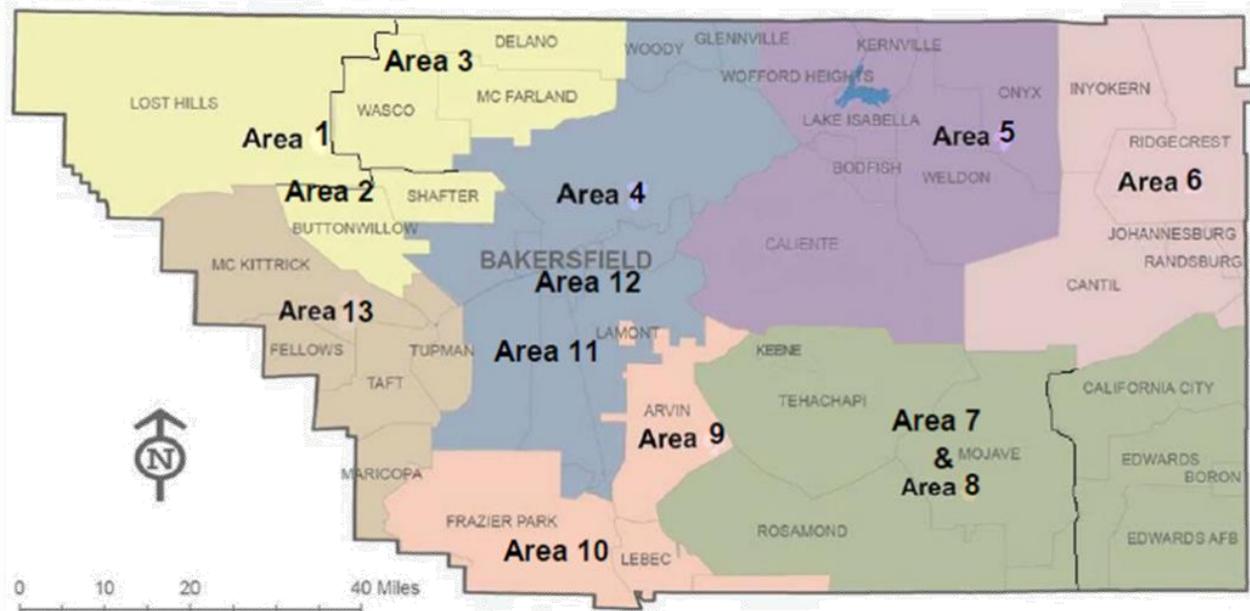


## 2017 Town Hall Meeting **RECAP**

### 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.

## BAKERSFIELD / OILDALE TOWN HALL MEETING – AREA 4

First 5 Kern staff met with 39 residents of the North of the River area of Bakersfield, including parents and early childcare providers. The two-hour event was held at the Neighborhood Place Community Learning Center gymnasium, Tuesday, April 25, 2017.

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

- Neighborhood Place Community Learning Center (NPCLC)  
North of the River Recreation and Park District  
401 Willow Drive  
Bakersfield, CA 93308

Sonia E. Quill, Community Services Supervisor  
661-392-2029  
[squill@norrecreation.org](mailto:squill@norrecreation.org)

The NPCLC provides the following services:

- a. Parenting classes, including:
  - i. Nurturing Parenting court-mandated classes.
  - ii. Pre-kindergarten parent workshops
- b. Early learning through center-based and kindergarten transition activities.
- c. Tutoring and English as a Second Language (ESL), reading and literacy.
- d. Crafts and gardening programs for parents and children up to five-years-old.

### **Discussion Results**

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

- Transportation services to provide better access to quality health care as identified by:
  - a. Increased local access to pediatric well child visits.
  - b. To reduce long waits to see a doctor.
- Better access to dental services.
- Immunization services access.
- Mental health services and education access.
- A nutritionist to work with parents and their children who are picky eaters.

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

- Parenting classes using the Nurturing Parenting court-mandated curriculum is offered in twelve-week sessions by the NPCLC. These classes are well received by local residents and want them to continue.
  - a. Childcare is needed to increase participation.
  - b. Parents would like additional one-hour classes to increase parental knowledge from car seat safety to general educational and social services' resources.

- c. Co-parenting classes would be helpful for parents who are jointly raising their children.
- d. Behavioral issues of children within the classes would be of assistance.
- e. Parent meditation classes may lessen parental stress and improve their parenting abilities.
- f. Potty training classes to assist parents in the process with their children.
- g. Provide parents with information about what to expect and how to prepare their children for school as they grow up (transitioning through the grades).

### III. Early Childcare and Education

- NPCLC provides quality childcare.
  - a. Parents and children are in a co-learning environment.
  - b. Little Learners fills a critical gap for parents.
- Parent/teacher conferences are needed so parents can be better informed about their child's development.
- More learning materials, such as music and books, to use in the home are requested.
- An increased amount of teachers/times/slots would encourage more parents to provide their children with a preschool education.
  - a. Parents would help with fund raising to achieve this goal.
- Further publicity about First 5 Kern's centers and programs would be helpful.
  - a. Include social media, texts, and email to communicate with and involve more families.

### IV. Other Comments

- Letters submitted by parents:
  - a. Parent 1: *"My daughter has been coming since the beginning of the year. It has been so beneficial for her. She loves it. She was always so sad dropping off her two older brothers and her older sister at school. She would always ask me: 'Momma, I go to school?' My friend told me about this program and I was amazed. Now she gets to be like her brothers and sister and go to school. Now I am confident she will be ready and prepared for kindergarten. She is only two-years-old and has only been in the program for four months. She can sing her ABCs and I even catch her counting. This program has been such a blessing and it is absolutely amazing and we are so thankful!"*
  - b. Parent 2: *"This program has helped my four-year-old son so much. Not only does he get to have the social interactions but he is learning so much! This God send of a program sends home the work of writing their names but they also send home homework so he gets even more practice with his writing and learning his numbers and letters. He is always excited to get the homework because he can do it while I do mine (for graduate school). I am so thankful for this program and I hope that it can continue to help other children like it has helped mine."*

--- END BAKERSFIELD / OILDALE ---