

City of Tehachapi

Community Outreach – Cycle 2



Kern Council
of Governments

I. Introduction

Directions to 2050 is the public participation program in support of the Regional Transportation Plan update and Sustainable Community Strategy (RTP/SCS) development process. The Directions to 2050 program builds on the Kern Regional Blueprint program to seek consensus in public input for the region's future. The Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) is working with local communities to identify and prioritize the next steps for the future of the economy, transportation, housing, energy, community services, and open space in the Kern region. The Directions to 2050 program results will be incorporated into the region's plans to achieve the Kern region's mutual vision.

Purpose of Community Outreach in Cycle 2

Directions to 2050's Cycle 2 community outreach events and meetings provided an opportunity for community members to identify transportation project priorities for the future and to better understand the RTP/SCS project. Kern COG hosted booths at three summer festivals (Tehachapi Mountain Festival, Kern County Fair, and Ridgecrest Desert Empire Fair) and presented and solicited input at stakeholder and community organization meetings in several Kern County cities between August 2012 and March 2013.

A second online game was developed for Cycle 2 so that community members could contribute feedback from home. All possible forms of participation in Cycle 2 events were advertised through press releases, local newspapers, e-mail blasts, outreach to local organizations, and the Directions to 2050 website. Effort was made to attend at least one meeting of every community group that requested information about the project.

Outreach Approach

At each of the festivals, the Kern Council of Governments staffed a fun and engaging booth that included a transportation spending priorities game and a trivia spin wheel (primarily for children). Upon entering the booth, festival attendees were given three poker chips of a certain color (depending on what part of Kern County they live in: Desert, Mountain, or Valley). Then, they were shown five transportation spending options and could place their three poker chips in any of the corresponding buckets to indicate a vote for that project type. Children were involved by answering trivia questions from a spin wheel, while adults placed their transportation project votes.

During the community group meetings, participants learned about the Directions to 2050 project and its relationship to the Blueprint Principles for Growth. They also learned about recent studies conducted by the Kern Council of Governments to prepare for the development of the RTP/SCS, watched a demonstration of the online game, and then played the game in small groups. The game allowed participants to see how different transportation spending scenarios would impact the regional budget and community priorities. Lively discussion was had and attendees were encouraged to play the game again at home in order to submit the scenario they support most to the record.

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II. Community Meeting in Tehachapi

On Tuesday, November 13, 2012, the Kern Council of Governments gave a presentation on Cycle 2 of the Kern RTP/SCS at the Tehachapi Chamber board meeting.

In small groups, meeting participants played the online budgeting game. The first step of the game was to select up to six priorities for Tehachapi from the following nine options:

- Energy independence
- Enhanced economic vitality
- Increased public safety
- Reduced household expenses
- Access to community services
- Reduced government regulation
- Healthy lifestyles
- Adequate water
- Improved air quality

Then, as a group, participants developed a transportation spending scenario that would best meet the selected priorities.

Key Findings from Tehachapi

In Tehachapi, adequate water, healthy lifestyles, and access to community services were the top priorities.

III. Conclusion

Directions to 2050 Cycle 2 community feedback results will inform the draft Kern RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS policies and implementation actions will address the key priorities identified by participants in each Kern County city.

