

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR THE KERN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS 2026 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines § 15087 (d), the Kern Council of Governments (COG), as the Lead Agency, has prepared a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) that identifies and evaluates the environmental impacts of the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan.

PROJECT TITLE

2026 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) (State Clearinghouse # 2025041115)

PROJECT LOCATION

Kern COG is an association of city and county governments created to address regional transportation issues. Its member agencies include the County of Kern and the 11 incorporated cities within Kern County including Arvin, Bakersfield, California City, Delano, Maricopa, McFarland, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Taft, Tehachapi, and Wasco. The Kern COG Board of Directors is comprised of one elected representative from each of the 11 incorporated cities in Kern County, two Kern County Supervisors, and two ex-officio members representing Caltrans and the Golden Empire Transit District. **Figure 1, Map of the Kern COG Region**, illustrates the Kern COG region.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 2026 RTP is a long-range regional planning document that establishes a vision for Kern County's future transportation system, land use patterns, and mobility needs through the planning horizon year. The Plan identifies regional transportation policies, strategies, and projects intended to improve mobility, enhance connectivity and safety, support economic development, and address regional environmental and infrastructure challenges. The 2026 RTP also evaluates how future transportation investments and land use patterns can support attainment of applicable federal air quality standards and state greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction goals. Kern COG's last RTP was adopted in 2022, and the 2026 RTP builds upon prior regional transportation plans as well as more recent federal, state, and regional policy direction related to sustainability, resilience, multimodal transportation, active transportation, goods movement, and equitable transportation planning. Pursuant to federal metropolitan transportation planning requirements, Kern COG is responsible for preparing and periodically updating the RTP to



identify regional transportation needs, prioritize transportation improvements, and maintain eligibility for federal and state transportation funding programs.

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Based on the analysis in the Draft PEIR, the Project would result in significant impacts in the following categories:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population, Housing, and Employment
- Public Services-Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The Lead Agency invites public comment on the Draft PEIR in response to this NOA. A 45-day comment period will begin on May 18, 2026 and end on July 2, 2026.

The Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) is available online at:

<https://www.kerncog.org/category/docs/rtp/>

A hard copy of the Draft EIR is available for review at 1401 19th Street, Suite 300, Bakersfield, CA 93301. Written public comment on the Draft EIR may be submitted between May 18, 2026, and July 2, 2026.

Please submit comments on the Draft EIR by July 2, 2026, at 5:00 PM via: Email: braymond@kerncog.org

Mail: ATTN: Ben Raymond, Regional Planner
1401 19th Streets, Suite 300
Bakersfield CA 93301

The Lead Agency has scheduled public hearings at the time indicated below. The purpose of the public hearings is to receive verbal and written input on the technical adequacy of the Draft PEIR and alternatives. The Lead Agency will consider all comments, written and oral, during the preparation of the Final PEIR.



Public Hearings

Date: June 1, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location: Tehachapi Police Department Community Room, 220 West C St., Tehachapi, CA 93561

Date: June 18, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Location: Kern Council of Governments, 1401 19th Street, Suite 300, Bakersfield, CA 93301