



2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

Kern County's Strategic Plan is a mission statement for the next five years intended to set high-level goals and objectives that guide decision-making across all County business functions to support clear, concise, and measurable outcomes for our residents, our employees, and our organization. These outcomes are reflected in our annual County budget process and tracked through Departmental Performance Goals.

MISSION

To foster a thriving community by delivering high-quality services, effective governance, and fiscal sustainability.

VISION

Grounded and boundless, Kern County is a driving force for feeding, fueling, and defending California and the nation.



FOSTER SAFE, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES THAT THRIVE

We will foster thriving, resilient communities that are safe for all.

- Invest in innovative practices, crime prevention resources, and infrastructure to enhance public safety.
- Enhance the safety of the public and our communities by addressing the risks and conditions that contribute to unlawful activity and crime.
- Promote accountability and transparency in public safety operations.
- Strengthen community safety through timely response, availability of first responders, and regional disaster preparedness.
- Make investments in parks and open spaces that promote health, wellness, and community connections.
- Focus on approaches and partnerships that advance the health and well-being of our communities.
- Improve infrastructure and expand public transportation to strengthen community connectivity.

We will support vulnerable populations.

- Expand collaboration with homeless service providers to assist individuals experiencing homelessness with housing, healthcare, and essential services.
- Enhance access to healthcare, social services, and prevention programs for vulnerable residents.
- Strengthen interdepartmental coordination to deliver integrated services addressing housing, food security, healthcare, and employment.

We will support housing across the County that promotes stability and homeownership opportunities for all income levels.

- Utilize policies, facilities, infrastructure, and financing strategies to provide housing opportunities that meet community needs.
- Preserve and facilitate development of affordable housing.



BE A MODEL OF EXCELLENCE IN MANAGING OUR BUSINESS & WORKFORCE

We will manage and sustain the fiscal resources of the County through long-term planning.

- Strengthen internal controls and processes while maintaining efficiency and compliance.
- Maintain program and fiscal integrity through transparent, timely, and accurate reporting.
- Provide opportunities for employees to engage and apply continuous improvement methods that enhance service delivery.

We will use technology and data to drive decision-making, increase accountability, improve access, and foster innovation and efficiency.

- Leverage data analytics to assess service levels, optimize resource allocation, and prioritize fiscal responsibility.
- Implement proven best practices and innovative solutions to achieve organizational excellence through technology.
- Promote the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of county data and technological systems by implementing security standards, risk management, and resilient planning.

We will recruit and retain a high-quality workforce through training and career development pathways.

- Develop and implement recruitment and examination practices that accurately evaluate talent and improve retention.
- Apply innovative strategies to fill hard-to-recruit positions and reduce turnover.
- Enhance workforce engagement and performance by promoting an inclusive, collaborative, and positive workplace culture.



ADVANCE A DIVERSE & RESILIENT ECONOMY THAT DRIVES REGIONAL GROWTH

We will be the best place to start and grow a business in the State of California.

- Develop and implement long-term, comprehensive land use, permitting, and public policies aligned with regional economic development strategies and industry needs.
- Strengthen and sustain a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and business development through targeted incentives and workforce programs.
- Support opportunities for economic growth and development that benefit County residents and businesses.

We will strengthen and diversify our regional economy.

- Attract and support new business in sectors such as carbon management and renewable fuel production and innovation, aerospace, business services, and advanced manufacturing.
- Elevate workforce development initiatives that develop the skills needed to attract and retain a qualified and diverse workforce.
- Leverage educational and business partnerships to create career pathways that lead to quality jobs, increase employment and income levels, and strengthen the local economy.

We will promote and support the County's position as a national leader in energy, agriculture, and emerging industries in advanced manufacturing, business services, and aerospace and defense.

- Strengthen our position as an alternative energy leader among all counties in the State of California to maintain our position as a national leader in oil and gas production through responsible, streamlined permitting and long-term planning.
- Develop, support, and promote innovative water reuse, water banking, surface water storage, and storm water capture that reinforces our position as a national leader in agriculture.
- Bolster infrastructure, public facilities, and tax incentives to attract business expansion and formation.

