

**Kern Council of Governments  
Clean Mobility Options Voucher Pilot Program (CMO)  
Summary Report**

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## **Executive Summary**

In 2020, Kern Council of Governments partnered with Providence Strategic Consulting Inc. on the Community Transport Needs Assessment Voucher application. The Clean Mobility Options (CMO) Voucher Pilot Program is part of California Climate Investments (CCI), a statewide initiative that invests billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the environment and public health. The statewide initiative provides funding for zero-emission shared mobility options to under-resourced communities in California. CMO is available throughout California to eligible disadvantaged communities, as well as eligible low-income tribal and affordable-housing communities, to increase access to safe, reliable, convenient and affordable transportation options.

The CMO Voucher Pilot Program is designed to streamline the delivery of funding to small-scale clean mobility options projects around the state. This voucher provides funding for the awarded agency to conduct a survey to assess the need and desire for an e-bike rideshare program in the Kern community.

Needs Assessment Vouchers are intended to support communities in identifying their transportation needs and evaluating gaps through a community transportation needs assessment process. This application effort will seek to help the clean mobility needs of the outlying areas of Kern County's newly re-recognized federal Tejon Tribe and the state recognized Tubatulabal Tribe, along with 13 other disadvantaged communities in the outlying areas of Kern County. Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) seeks to determine the interest in these communities to use alternative transportation options that are good for our air, such as conventional and electronic bicycles.

The Needs Assessment conducted by Providence included a thorough digital campaign, community survey creation and distribution, engagement and outreach. Providence was responsible for managing all outreach efforts for the survey. The outreach events managed by Providence included the creation of two Clean Mobility Options (CMO) surveys, a website for the surveys, creation and management of social media sites (Facebook and Instagram), Facebook ads, a booth at the United Way Professional Development Conference event, and a newsletter blast through the Tubatulabal Tribe newsletter in Lake Isabella- including collaborations with the Tubatulabal Tribe's chairman. Providence was also able to reach out to the Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership (FIELD); who were able to assist in distribution of surveys among staff and members.

Through the surveys, Providence was able to conduct a giveaway. Participants who completed the survey were entered for a chance to win one of twenty \$50 Visa gift cards. The giveaway was announced on the Clean Mobility Options survey website and on social media.

# Introduction

This Summary Report links the mobility needs found in the Kern County’s Community Transportation Needs Assessment (CTNA) with potential mobility solutions.

This report is structured as follows: we begin with background information of CMO, the CTNA, and the organization, transition into methodologies used to conduct our transportation access data analysis and community engagement, then discuss observations and findings from the assessment, propose solutions, and conclude with the next steps.

## Background

### CMO Overview

CMO is a statewide initiative that provides funding for zero-emission shared mobility options to under-resourced communities in California. CMO is available throughout California to eligible disadvantaged communities, as well as eligible low-income tribal and affordable-housing communities, to increase access to safe, reliable, convenient and affordable transportation options.

CMO is funded by California Climate Investments (CCI), a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment — particularly in disadvantaged communities.

The CMO Voucher Pilot Program is designed to streamline the delivery of funding to small-scale clean mobility options projects around the state. Funds are distributed statewide through a “voucher” system intended to simplify the application process and provide equitable opportunities across under-resourced communities. A voucher agreement is a “promise to pay” that enables awardees to develop partnerships and incur costs with assurance that all eligible and approved costs will be reimbursed by the Program Administrator. Application eligibility is determined using the minimum eligibility criteria established in this manual. Any application that meets the eligibility criteria will be qualified to receive a voucher award upon availability of funds.

Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) was awarded the Community Transportation Needs Assessment Project Voucher (Needs Assessment Voucher). Needs Assessment Vouchers are intended to support communities in identifying their transportation needs and evaluating gaps through a community transportation needs assessment process. This awarded voucher enabled comprehensive needs assessment and to begin planning and design of a clean mobility options project based on our assessment then to be able to apply for the Mobility Project Voucher application in future window(s).

## **CTNA Overview**

The purpose of the CTNA is to conduct mobility need assessments and make determinations of services that can mitigate any mobility gaps in conjunction with residents

## **Organization Description**

Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) provides technical expertise and collaboration that supports our communities' visions for improvement.

Kern County is one of the fastest growing counties in California. With a population of 917,600, the county covers the southern end of the Central Valley, Sierras, and a portion of the Antelope Valley, encompassing 8,200 miles. The county is twice the area of L.A. County with 1/10th the population.

Due to Kern County's geographic location, severe air pollution is a real problem. Kern County falls second to Los Angeles as having the worst air quality in the state of California. The topography in this county traps the particulates during the winter months and increases the ozone during the hot summer months. According to the American Lung Association's (ALA) 2018 State of the Air Report, Kern County experiences 40 days a year where the particulate matter alone is in the unhealthy range.

The rural, outlying areas throughout Kern County require long travel distances which include low development densities. Transit service in these areas can be infrequent and difficult to access. Kern County's disadvantage communities also have some of the highest child poverty levels compared to other counties in the state of California. Many families are unable to afford one automobile, let alone two. This lack of transportation options leaves the residents in these communities without access to health care, groceries, child care or jobs.

Kern County's outlying areas include the newly re-recognized federal Tejon Tribe with lands in Mettler, and the state recognized Tubatulabal Tribe with several tribal allotment lands in the Lake Isabella area. Both tribes have suffered from a long history of underrepresentation and discrimination by the government. This application effort will seek to help the clean mobility needs of these two groups along with 13 other disadvantaged communities in the outlying areas of Kern County.

Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) would like to determine the interest in these communities to use alternative transportation options that are good for our air, such as conventional and electronic bicycles. With the recent pandemic, more people are resorting to riding bicycles not only as a form of recreation and exercise, but also to run errands. In the rural areas, where most of the residents tend to work in agriculture or the service industry, the cost for owning your own bicycles might not be an option; however, the cost for a service such as bike-sharing is relatively a lot lower than other motorized options.

Research has been conducted in the County regarding shared use mobility such as ride sourcing and carsharing, but that research did not include bicycles or e-bikes. Conventional cargo bikes would be a

great option for the rural communities to have access to local services, whereas the e-bikes (which are also offered with cargo attachments) is ideal for longer distance commuting.

## Project Area Overview

The number of eligible communities in the needs assessment is dependent on the existence of eligible low-income residential developments in the AB 1550 eligible communities. A minimum of 13 communities (TEJON TRIBE, TUBATULABAL TRIBE, DELANO, MCFARLAND, Lost Hills, WASCO, SHAFTER, Buttonwillow, TAFT, Lamont, ARVIN, Lake Isabella, and Bodfish)\* are SB 535 disadvantaged communities and will be surveyed under this program. Up to 9 more communities (MARICOPA, Frazier Park, TEHACHAPI, Kernville, RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA CITY, Mojave, Boron, and Rosamond)\* could be added as AB 1550 eligible communities if a qualifying residential development is found in these communities for a potential total of 21 communities in the project area. The needs assessment will only compile information on eligible communities or developments in the project area. (\*lowercase communities are unincorporated.)

Project Census tracts extracted SB 535/CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Census Tract List available online at:

|CensusTract |Scor.|PRange |Pltn. |PopC |Pop. |Cnty |ZIP |Near Community

6029006304	42.89	81-85%	79.93	69.87	3895	Kern	93203	Arvin
6029006202	42.14	76-80%	90.85	58.22	6401	Kern	93203	Arvin
6029003700	45.85	81-85%	91.14	65.15	3953	Kern	93206	Buttonwillow
6029006500	42.27	76-80%	52.50	90.05	5152	Kern	93505	California City
6029004800	57.75	96-100%	89.71	89.76	9297	Kern	93215	Delano
6029005003	47.43	86-90%	76.64	82.27	3543	Kern	93215	Delano
6029004901	45.66	81-85%	60.07	91.07	5733	Kern	93215	Delano
6029006401	39.95	76-80%	68.96	71.56	8320	Kern	93241	Lamont
6029004500	48.63	86-90%	95.33	64.40	3937	Kern	93249	Lost Hills
6029004604	59.32	96-100%	92.26	89.51	15845	Kern	93250	McFarland
6029004702	41.96	76-80%	57.29	85.52	4051	Kern	93250	McFarland
6029004701	41.27	76-80%	55.52	85.23	8868	Kern	93250	McFarland
6029003304	41.58	76-80%	96.50	49.56	5248	Kern	93251	McKittrick
6029004102	50.93	86-90%	81.17	86.06	5451	Kern	93263	Shafter
6029004000	46.91	86-90%	82.13	76.79	7704	Kern	93263	Shafter
6029004200	46.83	86-90%	88.39	69.95	1320	Kern	93263	Shafter
6029004101	45.08	81-85%	84.37	70.72	4917	Kern	93263	Shafter

6029003900 NA (Pollution >95) NA 96.19 NA 2250 Kern 93263 Shafter  
6029003400 42.85 76-80% 60.35 85.07 4318 Kern 93268 Taft  
6029003500 39.73 76-80% 83.10 60.23 6156 Kern 93268 Taft  
6029004402 53.09 91-95% 83.17 88.27 5437 Kern 93280 Wasco  
6029004301 48.12 86-90% 86.37 74.99 7416 Kern 93280 Wasco  
6029005204 44.56 81-85% 74.18 78.40 6158 Kern 93285 Lake Isabella

Header Abbreviations:

Census Tract = U.S. Census Tract Number

Scor. = CalEnviroScreen3.0 Score

PRange = CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Percentile Range

Pltn. = Pollution Burden Percentile

PopC = Population Characteristics Percentile

Pop. = Total Population

Cnty = California County

ZIP = Approximate Zip Code

Near Community = Nearby City (to help approximate location only)

The Needs Assessment will reach out to all the residents of the project area which is all of Kern County except metropolitan Bakersfield. The following demographics are from the U.S. Census and based on the countywide average. The disadvantaged communities in the project area will be considerably worse than the countywide average:

- Median household income in Kern County is \$52,479 compared to national median of \$60,293.
- 30.4% of the children in Kern County are considered living in poverty compared to 19.5% nationally.
- Average household size is 3.31, 3.35 for renters and 3.11 for home owners.
- Residents over the age of 60, make up 16% of the population.
- 44.1% speak a language other than English at home.
- 52.8% of Kern County residents are Hispanic ethnicity (which can be of different races)
- 25% of all residents identify as non-white.
- 26% of residents lack a high school diploma or equivalent compared to 12% nationally.
- Women with children in the project area that are without vehicles rely on alternative methods of transportation.
- Residents that have difficult access to technology and face extra hurdles to receive services. The project area includes 3 communities with the new electric car-share pilot program, Mio-car which has found that approximately one third of interested users never finish signing up for the

service. This may be partially due to technology; on-line banking hurdles and other issues undocumented populations may struggle with.

Kern COG desires to learn if local residents of the disadvantaged communities would be interested enough in utilizing bicycles and e-bikes as a mode for local transportation if their community had a bike sharing program. Although much of our past research has taught us that families want there to be a safe environment for them to ride their bikes or walk, we want to determine that once the infrastructure is complete, would they actually ride the bicycles. Bicycles, and particularly e-bikes, can be an easy way for these residents to run errands, attend classes, or go to appointments if they do not have their own vehicles, or the primary vehicle is in use by the family member of the household who works. The availability of these bikes can also assist in the rural outlining communities with the first and last mile concerns of transit. If the resident lives a distance away from the transit station, they can utilize an e-bike to get them there and the assistance of our regional inter-city transit service, Kern Transit, can continue their trip into Bakersfield or other outlining communities.

The residents of our disadvantaged communities are not in a position to purchase an e-bike and having an opportunity to use one for their local commutes at a lower cost than transit, taxi or ride sourcing can provide them with the experience of the convenience this form of mobility offers.

## Methodology

### Transportation Access Data Analysis

Kern COG partnered with the consulting firm, Providence Strategic Consulting Inc. to conduct surveys to gauge the need for a clean mobility program. We worked closely with Providence Consulting on designing a process for outreach that is convenient, efficient, and unique to the communities we serve. The survey was developed using the Alchemer survey tool that CALSTART provided. Providence Consulting worked closely with CALSTART at narrowing down the questions. The survey was created in both English and Spanish – in both a long and short version. A bi-lingual staff for in-person outreach was available to ease the accessibility for everyone. The survey was available on Kern COG Clean Mobility Options website, Facebook and Instagram pages. Facebook advertising in English and Spanish were used to target residents in the project area.

### Community Engagement Efforts

The analysis should include a clear discussion of community context and history of transportation inequities and must increase awareness by educating residents about clean, shared mobility options.

1. What types of engagement events did you conduct?

The Providence team conducted five different forms of engagement which included creating and distributing two Clean Mobility Options (CMO) surveys, creating and monitoring a website for the two surveys, creating and monitoring two social media accounts, participating in a newsletter, and attending an event where the team was able to distribute flyers and speak with guests about the CMO project. Through these engagements the team

offered participants a chance to win one of twenty \$50 Visa gift cards by fully completing the survey.

a. Why did you select those types of events?

Providence selected these engagements because they allowed our team to reach the most people amid a pandemic. Online surveys ensured easy distribution for anyone with internet access. Our team was able to inform and distribute the online surveys through social media channels, which are proven to be an effective form of communication. Social media channels like Facebook and Instagram allow you to use tags and hashtags to get further engagement and bring awareness. Providence was also able to post Facebook digital ads that helped gain more survey responses. The Kern Valley Tubatulabal Tribe was chosen because they are a historically underrepresented community. This voucher pilot program was a great opportunity to help seek clean mobility needs for this disadvantaged, outlying Kern County community. The United Way Community Professional Development Conference (UWCPDC) was one of few in person local events being held. This event allowed our team to physically participate and provided various networking opportunities with organizations in rural Kern County areas.

b. How did you organize the events? When and where were they held? How many people did you invite? How many attended? How did you facilitate the events? Incentives provided to participants. How many people did you engage?

Providence created two online surveys with the website Alchemer. One survey was 13 minutes long, the other was 20 minutes long. The surveys served to determine which, if any, Kern County areas were in need of Clean Mobility Options and which clean mobility options were preferred. The surveys asked for zip codes which helped determine which rural, outlying areas in Kern County should be focused on. The shorter of the two surveys was linked in the website Providence created for the Clean Mobility Options survey. The website created for the CMO survey was [www.kerncogcleanmobilityoptions.com/](http://www.kerncogcleanmobilityoptions.com/). It gave participants information about the CMO voucher pilot program and two quick links to take the CMO survey, while also giving them the option to enter their information to contact someone on our team. The website also contained links to the social media accounts created by our team to promote the CMO voucher pilot program and the survey. Providence created a Facebook ([www.facebook.com/KernCOGCleanMobilityOptions](https://www.facebook.com/KernCOGCleanMobilityOptions)) account and an Instagram ([www.instagram.com/kerncogcleanmobilityoptions/](https://www.instagram.com/kerncogcleanmobilityoptions/)) account. The accounts were used to promote the survey and the \$50 Visa gift card giveaway, while informing the public of the CMO voucher pilot program (the who, what, where, when, and why). Posts were scheduled at least three times a week from May 2021 to August 2021. Facebook digital ads were also used to spread awareness of the project.

On June 14, 2021 Providence contacted the Tubatulabal Tribe's chairman, Robert Gomez via email for possible collaborative work. The Tubatulabal Tribe is an Indigenous tribe of the Kern River Valley, specifically the Lake Isabella area. Providence's goal was to attend an event in the Lake Isabella area, where we could set up a booth and inform the tribe and public of the CMO voucher pilot program and get members of the tribe to

participate in either paper surveys or online surveys. Providence was prepared to provide the hard copy forms and/or tablets/iPad to complete the online survey. Due to COVID19 restrictions there were no events scheduled for the months prior to the end of the program, instead Chairman Gomez included the CMO information and survey in the Tubatulabal Tribe's June newsletter (<https://www.tubatulabal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NewsleterJune2021.pdf>). To maintain clarity, Providence provided necessary information about Kern COG and the CMO voucher pilot program. The newsletter was distributed through email to those subscribed to the Tubatulabal Tribe newsletter and members of the tribe.

On July 20, 2021 the Providence team was able to secure a booth at the United Way Community Professional Development Conference at the Bakersfield Marriott. The conference was a closed event for nonprofit organizations who registered and purchased tickets. The conference had over 50 attendees and was held from 7 am to 3 pm. Providence attended as representatives of the Kern Council of Governments where we were able to educate attendees on the CMO voucher pilot program and distribute handouts and flyers with clear examples of clean mobility options. The handouts and flyers were made and printed by Providence staff. Providence was also able to get 45 attendees to participate in a four-question paper version of the online CMO survey. All 45 participants of the paper survey were entered to win one of nine \$50 Visa gift cards at the end of the conference. The \$50 Visa gift cards were an incentive for attendees to participate in the brief paper survey. The survey included the following questions:

1. "Overall, the current mobility options available to me fulfill my transportation needs: (Yes/No)"

2. "Please rank your THREE most used modes of transportation:"

1. \_\_\_\_ Walk
2. \_\_\_\_ Personal Vehicle
3. \_\_\_\_ Public Transit
4. \_\_\_\_ Carshare
5. \_\_\_\_ Electric Bike
6. \_\_\_\_ Electric Scooter
7. \_\_\_\_ Bikeshare (Lime, Jump)
8. \_\_\_\_ Bicycle
9. \_\_\_\_ Scooter/moped
10. \_\_\_\_ Lyft/Uber
11. \_\_\_\_ Shuttle/Micro transit

3. "Are any of the following not easy to access based on the current options available to you? (Circle all that apply)"

1. Work
2. Visiting family and friends
3. Social activities
4. School
5. Outdoor/public space

6. Grocery stores
  7. Medical/health services
  8. General errands
  9. "It's hard to get to town for anything without driving"
  10. Jury duty is impossible for a senior that needs to be driven to and from
  11. Mental health clinic
4. "I am open to trying new modes of transportation I currently do not use:  
(Yes/No)"

- a. Who are the people that attended?
  1. Race Distribution?
  2. Age?
  3. Gender?
  4. Other characteristics?
  - 5.

What did you discuss? Per IM, Section R.2, here are some questions:

- How are existing transportation system(s) in the community structured and what options are currently available? Who has access to the current options?
- What is the transportation planning process like in your community?
- Who is/are the lead entities and who has been traditionally involved or excluded from transportation planning?
- What populations in the community have been traditionally underrepresented?
- What are community perspectives on transportation needs, preferences, and input on potential mobility solutions?
- How did you incorporate clarity, accessibility, representative outreach, transparency into the events?

Clarity: Clear communication about the purpose of the engagement and transportation needs, assessment and the community's role in mobility project planning.

Providence's team incorporated clarity when representing Kern COG at the UWCPDC by handing out flyers with detailed information and examples of CMO. The team also gave verbal examples and descriptions of the scope of the project. For the Tubatulabal Tribe's newsletter, the team provided Robert Gomez, the tribe's chairman, detailed information about Kern COG and the CMO Voucher Pilot Project. This ensured there would be no miscommunication or misunderstandings in their monthly newsletter.

Accessibility: Accessible times and locations of events, meetings, and gatherings (e.g. meetings conducted in the evening; meeting location is close to a transit stop or transportation is provided; meeting location is neutral). Please note that creative and accessible virtual engagements are encouraged due to special circumstances when in-person interactions are limited.

The UWCPDC was a closed event held from 7am to 3pm at the Bakersfield Marriott. For this reason, it was not the most easily accessible event. The event was only open to nonprofit

organizations and people who registered and purchased tickets online. The Tribe newsletter was only distributed to those who signed up for the newsletter and members of the tribe. The newsletter was distributed through email, giving only those with internet access to the newsletter.

Representative outreach: Activities reach a broad and representative subset of the whole community, including those not typically served well by existing public feedback processes; CBOs and community groups are engaged to expand outreach and are compensated for their time.

Transparency: Notice of engagement activity is provided well in advance through multiple relevant communication avenues (e.g. utility bills, community center postings, etc.); notes are taken by designated members of the community and voucher awardee teams to reflect multiple perspectives; notes and materials are provided to attendees and the public (and translated in other languages if necessary); follow-ups are planned, communicated, and conducted with clear indication of the intended purpose and a focus on solutions. To ensure transparency our team had text in both English and Spanish for event flyers and social media postings. We prepared for the possibility that our audience would speak one or the other. Spanish text was sent for approval to ensure it was colloquial.

## Findings

### Transportation Access Data Analysis

- **Long Survey Results**
  - 74% of the participants that took this survey are employed full-time
  - 22% of respondents reported having a condition that makes it more difficult for them to walk while 25% reported having a condition that makes it more difficult to bike; 23% of respondents reported they have a condition that makes it more difficult to take public transit
    - Overall, most participants reported having some condition that makes it difficult to walk, bike or take public transit
  - Only 18% of respondents have an annual household income of 50,000 or more; the majority of participants reported an annual household income of less than \$50,000
  - 65% of respondents remain neutral when asked if it is easy for them to get where they need to go; only 5.7% strongly agreed
  - 97% reported having a driver's license (\*note—this does not indicate if they own/drive a car; question only asked, "Do you have a driver's license?")
  - 70% of participants only have 1 vehicle that they own/lease per household (includes family members/roommates); only 7% had 2 or more cars
  - One of the top reasons for not owning/leasing a car:
    - 34% said they cannot afford gas or insurance
  - 77% of participants own 1 bicycle
  - 88% of respondents use public transit regularly

- Out of those that do not use public transit regularly, 56% of respondents said that it takes too long and 33% say that there are no stops or pick-ups nearby
- About 14% of respondents said they spend, on average, \$309/month on transportation
  - Most participants spend \$515 or less, on average, per month on transportation (includes bus fares, car payment, car insurance, gas, tolls, parking, etc.)
- Comments/feedback
  - One respondent noted that “it would be great if there was free car sharing”
  - Challenges that participants face include affordability (costs of rides increasing), lengths of rides becoming longer, little access to buses (run less often)
  - Another respondent noted that there needs to be a combination of services that are specific to region/neighbor (i.e. ride bike to light rail station and then take a bike to destination)
- Summary
  - Most participants of this survey...
    - Have a full-time job
    - Take public transit
      - Those that do take public transit say that it either takes too long or there are no nearby stops
    - Do not have more than one car per household
      - Affordability is a top reason for not owning/leasing a car
    - Own one bicycle
    - Have an annual household income of \$49,999 or less
- **Short Survey Results**
  - When asked if the current mobility options available fulfill their transportation needs, 10% of respondents strongly disagreed, 15% disagreed and 24% remained neutral; only 10% strongly agreed
  - The top three most used modes of transportation:
    - Personal vehicle
    - Riding with friends or family
    - Walking
  - Based on the survey, most respondents reported that medical and health services were not easy to access based on current transportation options
    - Visiting family/friends, school, and getting to the grocery store were also reported as difficult to access based on current transportation options
  - Limited or no access to public transportation, limited access to or no vehicle, destinations too far away, services unavailable when needed and limited walkability (poorly maintained sidewalks, hard to cross streets, rural area) were cited as the top reasons that made it hard to go places
  - When asked if costs for transportation, per month, were affordable, 11% of respondents disagreed, 31% remained neutral and 36% agreed

- When asked if they were open to trying new modes of transportation that are not currently used, 49% of participants agreed and 15% strongly agreed
  - One respondent said: “I live far away from transportation services, bus stops or terminals. I need reliable departure and arrival times. Long hours waiting for services makes me vulnerable to crime. Carrying my groceries on public transportation makes me vulnerable to crime. I fear being stranded.”
- When asked if they would be interested in using...
  - Shuttle/microtransit, 80% of respondents were interested
  - Bikeshare, 41% were interested
  - Scootershare, 36% were interested
  - Carpool, 53% were interested
  - Rideshare, 67% were interested
  - Carshare, 58% were interested
  - Electric car, 68% were interested
  - When asked the reasons they would be interested in trying the above, one respondent said it is because “I am disabled and unable to drive.” Another participant said “Because I think...that I will save much more money per month.” Additionally, one respondent said that “if you are able to get a job, it is difficult to get there. The unemployment rate is very high in Kern County.” Another participant said “because I don’t have a car.”
- 27% of survey respondents reported an annual household income of \$25,000 to \$34,999 while 15% reported an annual income of \$25,000 or less
- When asked if they would like to learn more about this project, 15% said “yes, please text me,” 28% said “yes, please email me” and 26% were willing to take a longer online survey

## Community Engagement Efforts

### 1. What were the results of the Community Engagement Efforts?

#### a. When were events held? Where were events held.

The United Way Community Professional Development Conference was held at the Bakersfield Marriott on July 20, 2021. The conference was held from 7 am to 3 pm. The Tubatulabal Tribe’s newsletter was done and distributed online, through email, and to those signed up to receive their monthly newsletter. The newsletter was distributed in June.

#### b. Who and how many people participated?

The UWCPD Conference’s participants included members of United Way, as well as other nonprofit organizations who registered for the event. The tribe’s newsletter was distributed to members of the tribe and those who signed up for their newsletter.

#### c. What did they share? What were topics of interest?

Participants of the UWCPD Conference had the opportunity to take part in Kern COG’s four question paper survey, which entered them into a raffle to win one of nine \$50 Visa gift cards. In total 45 conference goers participated in the paper survey and nine out of the 45 won a \$50 Visa gift card. Contact information was exchanged between Providence’s team and the participating nonprofit organizations.

- d. What was not covered during these events that you wish were?
- e. Did those that were compensated participate more or less than others?

Those who wanted a chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card participated in the survey. Our team noticed that the incentive option gave more people a reason to participate in the survey. Once the incentive was mentioned, more people opted to participate.

## Discussion & Solutions

1. Describe the main underlying causes in transportation gaps and challenges in the project area.

Overall, most participants reported having some condition that makes it difficult to walk, bike or take public transit. Other transportation challenges include the length of time the bus routes take as well as not providing sufficient pick-up locations, which are main deterrents for the community utilizing and accessing the public transportation system in Kern County. Further challenges include affordability, inefficiency in lengths of routes, unreliability in travel times and the lack of bus access in certain areas.

- a. Based on your transportation access data analysis, and complemented with community engagement, what are some issues?

The majority of survey participants are employed and mentioned their difficulty in utilizing the local public transit system as the lengths of rides have become longer, run less frequently, are unreliable and certain areas in the outlying areas of Kern still have little access to bus services.

- i. The built environment?

Rural, outlying areas of Kern County currently experience difficulty with access to public transportation and long travel distances are required. In addition, long wait times with inconsistency and unreliability in arrival and departure times expose users in certain areas to crime as they await public transit.

- ii. Lack of awareness of different options?
  - iii. Affordability? What did they share?

Affordability is a main challenge for participants as they shared in their responses that the costs of rides have increased.

2. Describe main factors that are, or could, contribute to successful transportation options in the project area.

Main factors that could contribute to more successful transportation options in the projected area include affordability, frequency of rides and additional routes to serve the underserved communities in the more rural areas and outlying areas of Kern.

- a. Affordable options, coupled with what?

As prices increase, public transportation becomes too costly- the implementation of e-bike services would be a cost-efficient alternative. According to survey participants, more affordable car sharing options would assist with the employed users as well as those lacking access to current bus routes. Another factor mentioned by a respondent is that a combination of services specific to each region is needed—such as riding a bike to a light rail station and then taking a bike to the destination would better suit their needs.

3. Describe a list of actions that could be taken to enhance clean mobility in the community.
  - a. More investments? More time and resources?

More investments, time and resources could be utilized to enhance clean mobility by offering diversification of options to suit the needs of public transit users as well as include additional locations to ensure the system better assists underserved communities. Installment of e-bike services in outlying areas in addition to other clean mobility options such as a light rail or car sharing option would better meet the needs of the community.
4. Describe the process for how actions or solutions were identified and prioritized.
  - a. “We selected this list because of...”

The action items and solutions listed are based on the results from survey responses sourced from the Transportation Access Data Analysis. Based on survey comments and feedback in both the long and short surveys- key responses provided the foundation for proposed action items listed.
5. Describe if:
  - a. Community members are supportive of solutions that are eligible project models for Clean Mobility Options Project Voucher funding.

Most community members that participated in the survey offered supportive feedback of the project as it would address certain transportation challenges.
  - b. There are any “quick start” actions (i.e. small, simple, inexpensive projects like installing a bicycle rack, etc.) that could be implemented to immediately improve the quality of the built environment for transportation in the community.

Based on community feedback provided in the survey, initial actions such as installment of bike racks in the different neighborhoods currently underserved by the public transit system would be well received and utilized by the community. However, those lacking mobility such as those unable to walk or ride bicycles must also be considered in the execution of the CMP for Kern County.
  - c. There are any entities with whom this information could be shared to help promote better land use and transportation planning needs (i.e. local planners, elected officials), and explain how this information will be provided to them.

## Next Steps

Kern Council of Governments will continue accessing input from our Disadvantaged Communities through our Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategies outreach that is conducted every year. Results from this CMO outreach will assist Kern COG in addressing the areas of most concern regarding active and clean transportation options. Kern COG also oversees the Active Transportation Program funding and works closely with the agencies awarded these funds in providing adequate, active and clean transportation options throughout the county.