

Kern County Administrative Office



County Administrative Center

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County Administrative Officer

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Board of Supervisors
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PROPOSED 2015 COUNTY GOALS TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY, MAXIMIZE RESOURCES AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO KERN COUNTY RESIDENTS

Fiscal Impact: None

This report is provided to present an overview of select goals that have been identified as attainable in 2015. The purpose of these goals is to better position Kern County for the economic and legislative challenges that lie ahead and to reexamine County operations and the provision of services. As the availability of resources become increasingly scarce and the County endeavors to comply with State and federal mandates, a departure from the status quo will be required to meet these challenges. The traditional model of cutting services, supplies and positions during lean budget years has been an effective mechanism due to the leadership and planning of your Board and County managers. However, this approach is not a sustainable method of improving services to the residents of Kern County. Rather than trying to determine how much funding County departments or functional areas are going to receive, many of the goals in this report incorporate long-term, sustainable approaches to solving some of Kern County's challenges. Also, they are attainable in the near future and can hopefully be a springboard for additional goals and objectives that will enhance the lives of our County's residents.

DISCUSSION AND GOALS

The goals listed in this report are statements of intended results that can be accomplished in the next year. Each goal identifies what the County intends to accomplish rooted in three guiding principles:

1. To maintain a vision of customer-centered government and approaches that encourage flexibility, creativity and continuous improvement.
2. To ensure that the goals are rooted in the values of Kern County residents.
3. To communicate that these goals are not only worthy of pursuit, but are attainable.

From these broad principles, plans and actions based on clear goals are more likely to succeed in meeting the community's needs. The list of goals in this report represent the highest priority outcomes that can make a positive impact for Kern County government and its communities.

Goal: Complete a departmental reorganization analysis to achieve cost savings and more effective use of resources.

This goal would be a continuing effort that builds on the successful consolidation of the Public Health Department and the more recent consolidations of the Roads Department, Waste Management and Engineering, Surveying and Permit Services into a Public Works Department and Employers' Training Resource, Board of Trade and Economic Development into a Division of Economic and Workforce Development. Also, a previous study was performed by the County Administrative Office that provides a strong foundation for further analysis on reorganization prospects. The County Administrative Office can provide an updated analysis for the potential of

additional departmental reorganizations or your Board may request a new analysis of existing reorganization opportunities for the County.

Goal: Use Lean/Six Sigma methodologies to author departmental customer service plans.

As your Board is aware, Lean/Six Sigma is an approach used to eliminate waste and create the most efficient systems possible. The implementation of training in Lean/Six Sigma is achievable in the near term, however, the completion of customer service plans by all County departments may take additional time, especially for larger and more complex departments consisting of multiple divisions. In addition, there will be some cost involved to make sure key County personnel receive the training and that the training filters down to departmental staff. Although this would require a significant effort by all departments, there is evidence that other counties and jurisdictions that have undertaken Lean/Six Sigma training experienced a positive return on their investment and sustained long-term savings as a result. Both Ventura County and select departments within Los Angeles County experienced better customer service and efficiency measures subsequent to implementation of Lean/Six Sigma process improvement methodologies.

Goal: Civil Service Reform: Creating a Merit System for the 21st Century.

This goal is to continue the reforms of Kern County's Civil Service System that began with voter approved changes in June of 2012 which provided flexibility in probationary periods and expanded certifications to a "Rule of Seven." The Civil Service Commission and County Personnel structure was instituted in 1956 through adoption of an enabling ordinance. Under the current structure, both the Personnel Director and Personnel Department staff are under the authority of the Civil Service Commission. In addition, the Civil Service Rules and changes to those Rules require approval by the Commission. Kern County is one of the last counties in California to retain this structure as other counties have modernized their system. Additional reforms could include an ordinance change related to the structure of the Commission and County Personnel, as well as building on the 2012 measures by providing greater flexibility in the Rules related to classification, recruitment and examination, test and measurement, certification and leaves of absence.

Goal: Initiate a Countywide review of Volunteer/Internship Programs

The County currently provides support to the Volunteer Center of Kern County and a few County departments use their own decentralized process for volunteers and/or internships. The goal is to generate a plan for comprehensive and Countywide volunteer/internship opportunities. The plan should support and encourage the use of volunteers/interns to augment paid staff, not replace paid staff, and establish a policy which provides guidelines on the use of volunteers/interns in County programs. This can be done through the management of a Countywide program from within the County or through a contract with an outside organization such as the Volunteer Center of Kern County.

Goal: Form a Kern County Foundation to encourage private support for County projects and services.

This goal is to create a Kern County Foundation that encourages private support for County projects and services. The Foundation would serve as a means for constituents to donate to County projects and services that benefit the community. The Kern County Foundation would be organized as a California non-profit corporation organized as a 501(c)(3) that accepts gifts, grants and contributions on behalf of Kern County and the County's programs, services and special events. The foundation would be organized exclusively for charitable contributions.

Goal: Develop a Civic Crowdfunding Strategy and a Pilot Campaign.

The goal of a Civic crowdfunding strategy is to establish online fundraising capabilities for specific projects. The idea is very simple: communities making small contributions that, when combined together, generate a bigger

result of positive change. From 2010 to March of 2014, there were 1,224 local and regional civic campaigns in the United States with a total of \$10.74 million raised, averaging about \$6,357 per project. Generally, the most common projects are gardens and parks because they are usually volunteer-based, quicker to build and non-controversial. Large metropolitan areas such as New York, San Francisco and Philadelphia have all successfully used civic crowdfunding to finance smaller projects of community interest. It is an example of direct democracy at its core by allowing constituents to have direct control over what projects they feel are worthy of contributions.

Goal: Adopt a "2030 Plan" for Kern Medical Center.

The goal for a "2030 Plan" for Kern Medical Center is to develop a plan of achieving compliance with California hospital seismic safety law by 2030. Much of the Medical Center's facility is not currently constructed to meet seismic regulations for in-patient care. If Kern Medical Center becomes a stand-alone Hospital Authority, strategic goals such as this will no longer be under the direction of the Board of Supervisors. However, this goal of compliance is critical to the future of the hospital regardless of the oversight of Kern Medical Center.

Goal: Determine if the County will form a Water Department

Due to the State of California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the County will be a key participant in the development of local policies related to groundwater sustainability. In December 2014 your Board approved a plan to address the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act through the addition of external consultants and an internal position within the County Administrative Office. Through the use of these positions and other collaborative efforts, the goal is to determine if a County Water Department is the most effective method to ensure compliance with the Act. Since counties will be presumed to be the Groundwater Sustainable Agencies (GSA) for all unmanaged basins, over the next year, Kern County needs to determine the efficacy of establishing an internal Water Department.

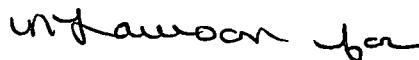
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The County Administrative Office is seeking new and unique ways to address operational challenges for Kern County. The goals outlined above represent concrete examples of achievable outcomes, many of which are new approaches of collaboration, public-private partnerships and structural changes. The goals are also consistent with the County's vision of creating and maintaining a customer-centered County government and the mission of enhancing the quality of life in Kern County by protecting and serving the citizens.

In addition to the results driven goals included in this report, many of the goals incorporate processes that are important to the sustainability of effective county government. Ideas such as modernization, public-private partnerships and structural reorganizations are all important components to increasing the flexibility needed to meet Kern County's challenges.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board receive and file the report, discuss the identified goals and provide direction.

Sincerely



John Nilon
County Administrative Officer