

CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING



OVERVIEW

This chapter seeks to integrate a wide range of social and economic matters that figure into KCAG's transportation planning process. It offers an understanding of how KCAG will approach transportation problems, make decisions, and develop recommendations. Its aims are to set forth the basic socio-economic facts of this region and to spell out important transportation planning and programming issues that KCAG must consider.

ASSUMPTIONS AND INVENTORIES

POPULATION ASSUMPTIONS

1. Kings County is, and will remain for many years, a predominantly rural, sparsely settled, agricultural county. Of the County's 1,391 square miles, approximately 90 percent of all land is devoted to agricultural uses. Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone Contracts continue to discourage premature urban growth. The Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone Program for Kings County represent the most cost effective and extensive agricultural land preservation mechanism available to the County. Of the approximate 810,887 agricultural acres within the County, approximately 84% (682,823 acres in 2008) were under contract. In 2008, Williamson Act Contracts accounted for 53% (361,864 Acres) and Farmland Security Zone Contracts accounted for 47% (320,959 Acres). Kings County remains one of the highest land ratios for Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone contracted land to total countywide acreage. Therefore, this program serves as the most effective agricultural land preservation tool available to Kings County and ensures long term use of the County's highly valued agricultural land resources remain in agriculture while also providing beneficial support to local farming operations.
2. Kings County is the home of the Lemoore Naval Air Station (LNAS), one of the Navy master jet bases in the United States. The air station will continue to strongly influence the population and cultural characteristics of Kings County by bringing new people into the area. The future role of the U.S. Navy and the closures of military bases around the country may affect LNAS. The Kings County General Plan assumes a constant base population of 7,500 through the year 2030.

3. Kings County will have a large percentage of young adults (due in part to the presence of LNAS), a high birth rate (due in part to the high number of young adults), and a growing elderly population.
4. The surrounding agricultural land preserves, the capacities of sewer and water facilities, and land use policies of the county and cities will restrict growth in the rural communities of Armona, Kettleman City, and Stratford.
5. The community of Armona will continue to grow as a residential community with the possibility of incorporation in the future.
6. The Santa Rosa Rancheria of the Tachi Yokut Tribe is located 4 miles south of Lemoore on 370-acres of trust land. The Rancheria now includes 370 acres of trust land and 1,500 acres of fee land for roughly 2,300 acres. The Rancheria, first established in 1934 with land purchased by the federal government, is developed as a residential community. Consultation with the tribe on the future of the Rancheria is ongoing. The population of the Rancheria according to the 2019 5-year estimate of the American Community Survey is 1,028.

The Palace Indian Gaming Center, a Tribal Enterprise, is the main source of livelihood and income for tribal members on the Rancheria and employs more than 1,400 people. Other sources of employment income include the tribal government, farming, and ranching. In addition, a tribal headquarters building, Head Start facility, park, and playground are located on the Rancheria. The Palace Indian Gaming Center is located at the northern edge of the site. This facility includes a casino, a hotel, and warehouse space. The hotel includes restaurants, a conference center, and an amphitheater. With the activities at the Palace Indian Gaming Center, it is expected that there will be an increase of population residing on the Rancheria, an increase in available jobs, and an increase in traffic on local and regional roads leading to the Rancheria.

7. Kettleman City will continue as an agricultural employee housing community for the western portion of the County and as a highway service center for statewide travelers on Interstate 5 and State Highway 41.
8. Stratford will continue to function as an agricultural service center and agricultural employee housing community.
9. The California State Prison in Avenal is located about two miles southwest of downtown and occupies about 640 acres. As of December 2021, it has the capacity to employ over 1,200 prison service workers. Over 300 employees live in Kings County, but only less than 20 percent of those employees live in Avenal. Based on employment and housing data resulting from the opening of the prison in 1987, it is assumed that 75% of the new employees would come from outside the local area. About 60% of the relocated employees are expected to reside in the communities of Avenal, Hanford, and Lemoore. As a result of these prison facilities, the population of Avenal as well as other cities in Kings County will

continue to expand over the next few years. The Kings County General Plan assumes a constant population of 7,200 through the year 2035. As of December 31, 2021, the estimated inmate population of the Avenal State Prison is 3,376.

10. The California State Prison in Corcoran was opened in 1988 and held 11,150 inmates as of January 1, 1999, and employs about 2,300 workers. It is estimated that 15% of the employees live in Corcoran, 35% in Hanford, and the remaining 50% outside Kings County. As of December 31, 2021, the estimated inmate population of the Corcoran State Prison is 3,259.

In addition to CSP-Corcoran, a second state prison and a Substance Abuse Treatment Facility were constructed in 1997 and located immediately south of the existing prison. It has the capacity to house 5,130 inmates at the prison and 1,900 inmates at the treatment facility. Employment at these two facilities ranges from 1,350 to 1,900 persons, depending on the occupancy rate of the facilities. The California Department of Corrections added emergency housing facilities within both prisons. As of December 31, 2021, the estimated inmate population of this facility is 4,969.

11. As shown in

- 12.

13. Table 2-1, below, between 2010 and 2019, the total Kings County population stayed flat, decreasing by only 0.03%. According to the 2019 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates), there were 43,452 households (33,431 family and 10,021 non-family); with an average household size of 3.13 living in Kings County. About 67.5% of households did not include any person aged 60 or above, whereas 32.5% of households did have one or more persons 60 or above. About 7.7% of households have three or more generations living together. Most households included only two people, making up 26.0% of the total. The next closest groups were three people at 17.6%, one person at 17.5%, and four people at 17.3%. Of the total 46,287 housing units, 95.3% (44,100) were owner-occupied with a 4.7% (2,187) vacancy rate. A population pyramid for Kings County is included as Figure 2-1, below.

14. The average annual population growth rate in Kings County will continue to be between 0 and 2%, with a long term annual average growth of about 0.5%. The California Department of Finance, as shown in Figure 2-2, below, forecasts a modest annual growth rate peaking at 0.78% in 2026 before declining to 0.3% in 2060.

TABLE 2-1: POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS IN KINGS COUNTY JURISDICTIONS (1940-2020)

AREA	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
KINGS COUNTY								
POPULATION	46,768	49,954	64,610	73,738	101,469	129,461	152,982	152,486
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE	0.45%	0.68%	2.93%	1.41%	3.75%	2.58%	1.82%	-0.03%
AVENAL								
POPULATION	3,982	3,147	3,035	4,137	9,770	14,674	15,505	13,696
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE		-2.09%	-0.36%	3.63%	13.61%	3.21%	0.57%	-1.17%
CORCORAN								
POPULATION	3,150	4,976	5,249	6,454	13,364	14,458	24,813	22,339
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE	5.05%	5.76%	0.55%	2.29%	10.70%	1.27%	7.16%	-1.00%
HANFORD								
POPULATION	10,028	10,133	15,179	20,958	30,897	41,686	53,967	57,990
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE	2.18%	1.00%	4.98%	3.81%	4.74%	2.59%	2.95%	0.75%
LEMOORE								
POPULATION	2,153	2,561	4,219	8,832	13,622	19,712	24,531	27,038
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE	2.58%	1.89%	6.47%	10.93%	5.42%	3.05%	2.44%	1.02%

Includes State Prison inmate population.

Source: 2020 U.S. Decennial Census

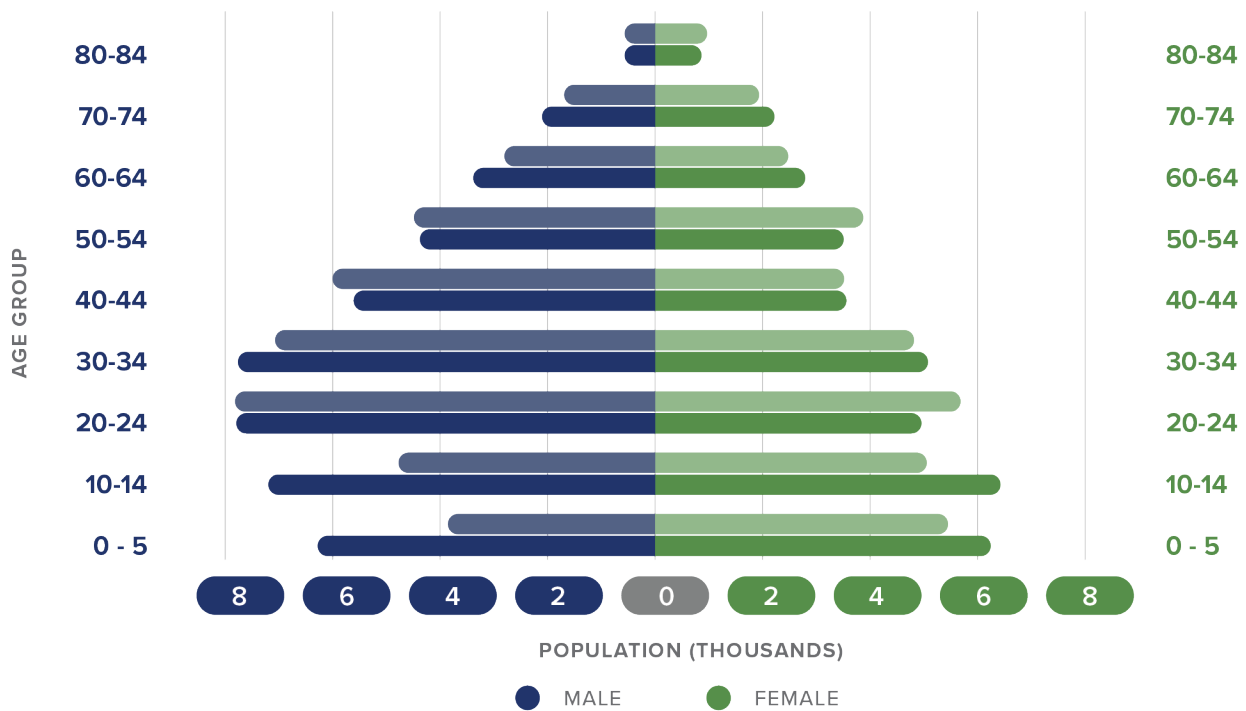


FIGURE 2-1: KINGS COUNTY POPULATION: BY AGE AND SEX (2019)

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)

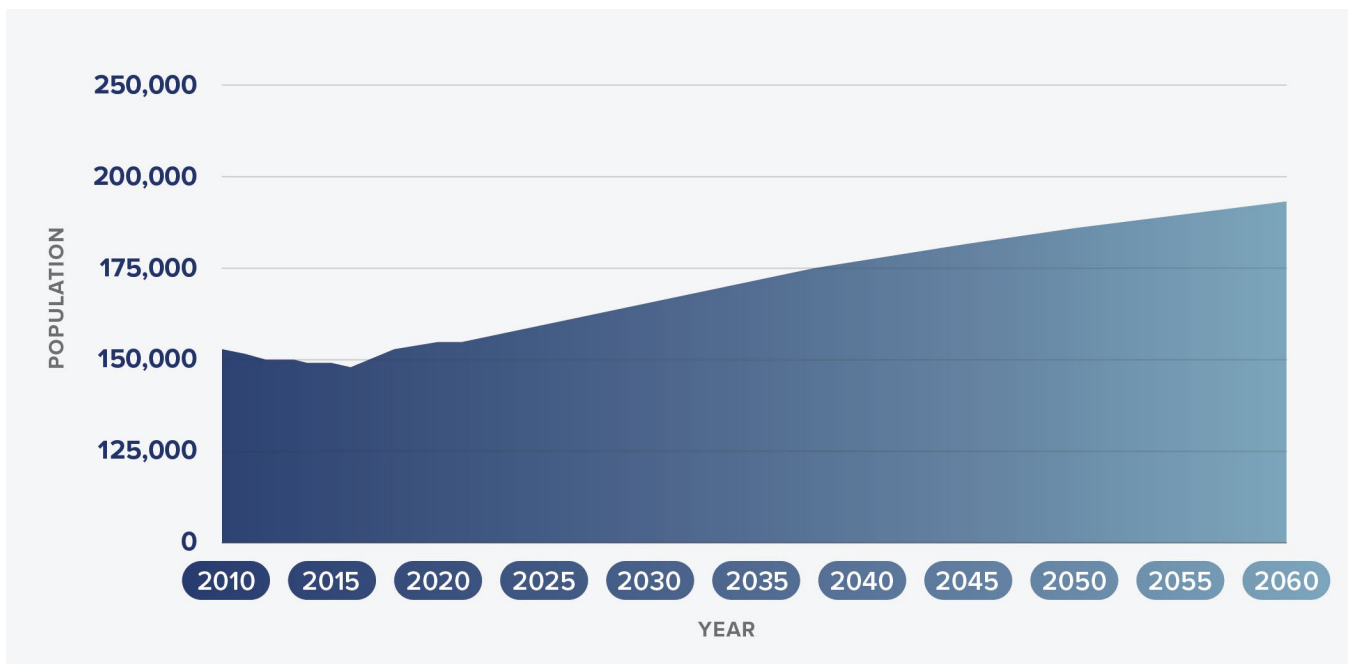


FIGURE 2-2: KINGS COUNTY POPULATION: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE (2010 – 2060)

Source: Department of Finance, State of California

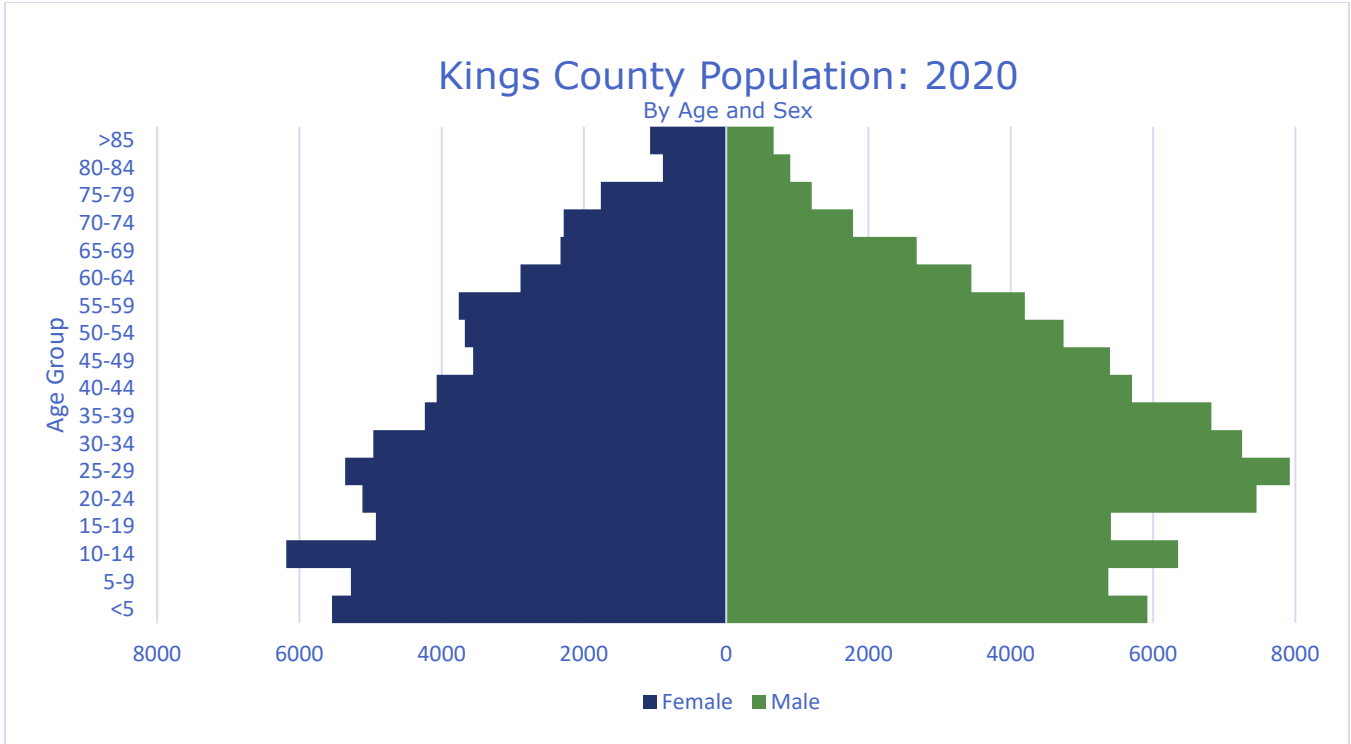


FIGURE 2-3: POPULATION PYRAMID OF KINGS COUNTY

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)

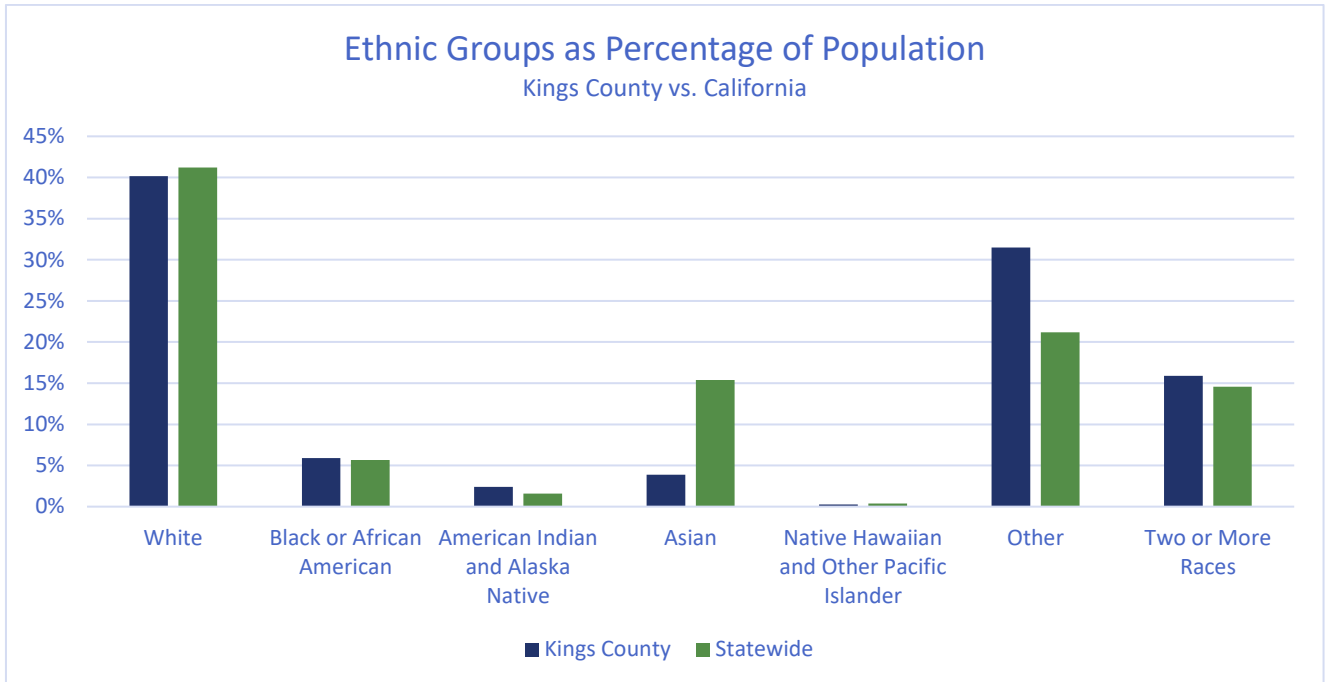


FIGURE 2-4: ETHNICITY OF RESIDENTS OF KINGS COUNTY VS CALIFORNIA

Source: 2020 U.S. Decennial Census

ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS

1. Agriculture and related industries will remain the dominant sector of this region's economy. That sector, together with LNAS and the California State Prisons in Avenal and Corcoran, will help buffer Kings County from sharp economic fluctuations. Poverty rates over time and Employees by Industry are shown below in Table 2-2 and Table 2-3.
2. Kings County is a low-income county. It will continue having a larger percentage of low-income persons and a smaller percentage of upper-income persons, than does the state overall, due to the large farm worker population and lack of large industries. The annual average unemployment rate for Kings County in 2020 was 11.6 percent, higher than the statewide average of 10.1%. Historical labor force data and unemployment rates are shown in Figure 2-5 and Figure 2-6.
3. Per the California Economic Development Department, through the year 2028, most of the non-agriculture jobs created in Kings County are expected to be in retail trade, services, and manufacturing. Even though government is one of the largest employment industries, the industrial machinery servicing sector will lead in employment gains. Modest growth is expected in the number of agricultural technicians.
4. Kings County will continue to be a key member of the Valley economy.

TABLE 2-2: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF THOSE IN POVERTY

	COUNTY TOTAL					
	1969	1979	1989	1999	2012	2020
PERSONS BELOW POVERTY LINE	12,092	10,386	16,218	21,307	27,819	21,908
PERCENT OF GROUP POPULATION	19.20%	14.57%	18.18%	19.50%	21.20%	16.00%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)

TABLE 2-3: KINGS COUNTY CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES BY INDUSTRY, 2020

INDUSTRY	NUMBER	PERCENT
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	10825	20.16%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	8271	15.41%
Public administration	6924	12.90%
Retail trade	5489	10.22%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4089	7.62%
Manufacturing	4013	7.47%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3691	6.88%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2992	5.57%
Construction	2096	3.90%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1521	2.83%
Wholesale trade	1412	2.63%
Information	467	0.87%
Other services	1897	3.53%

Note: Includes only residents age 16 and above

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)

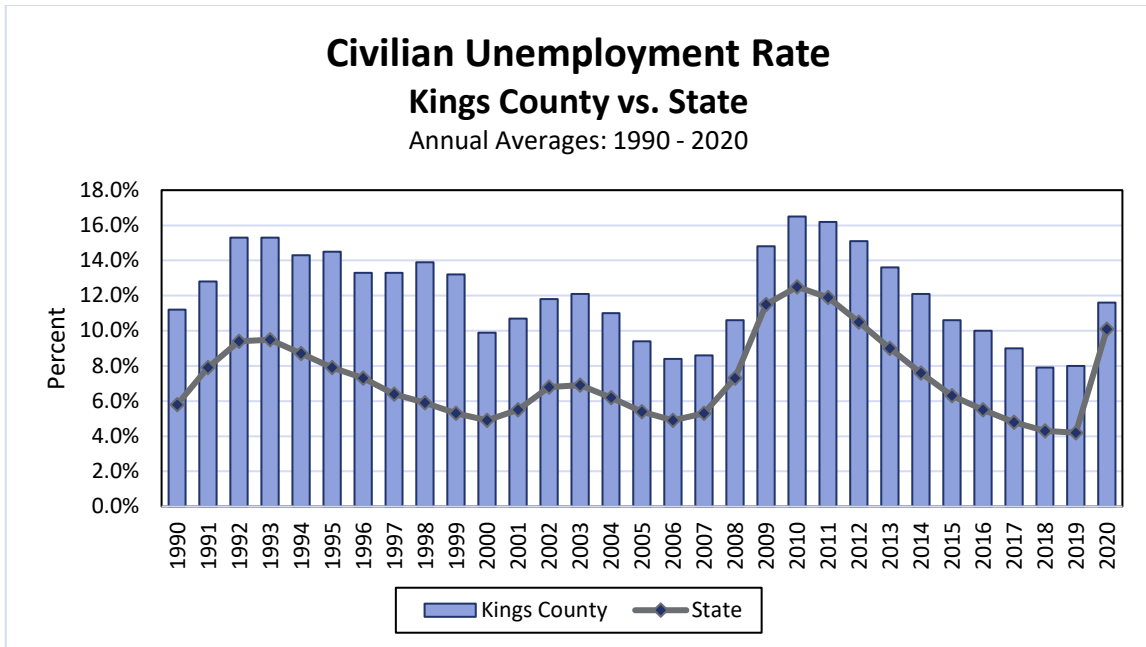


FIGURE 2-5: CIVILIAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN KINGS COUNTY VS. STATEWIDE

Source: California Economic Development Department

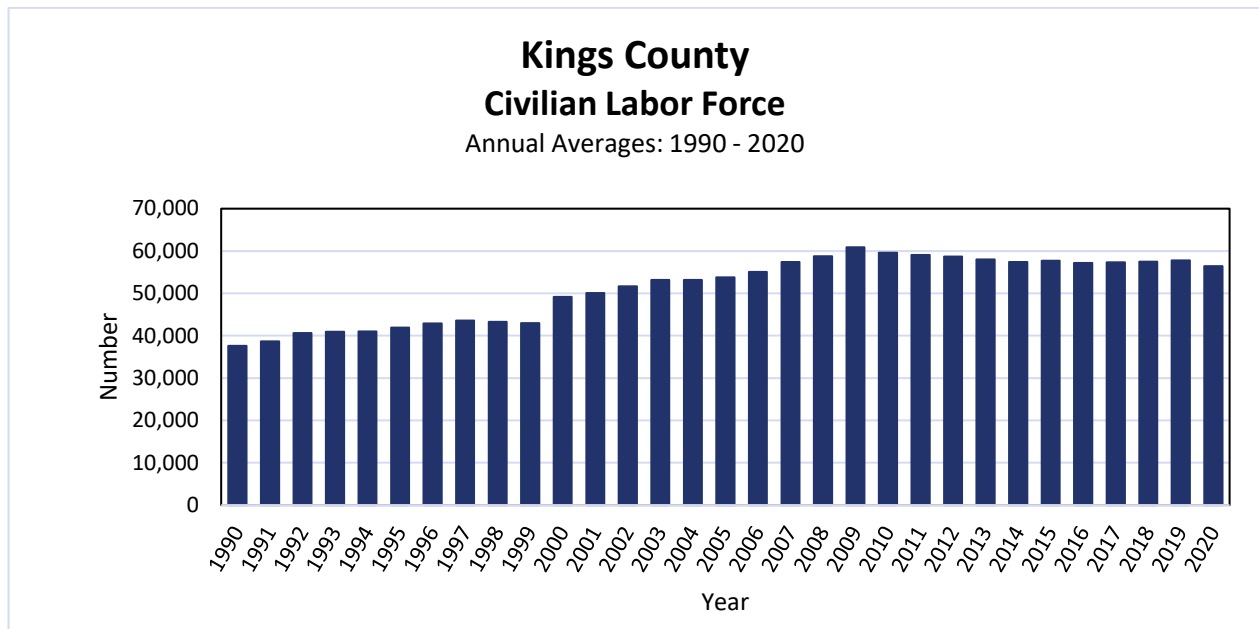


FIGURE 2-6: KINGS COUNTY CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

Source: California Economic Development Department

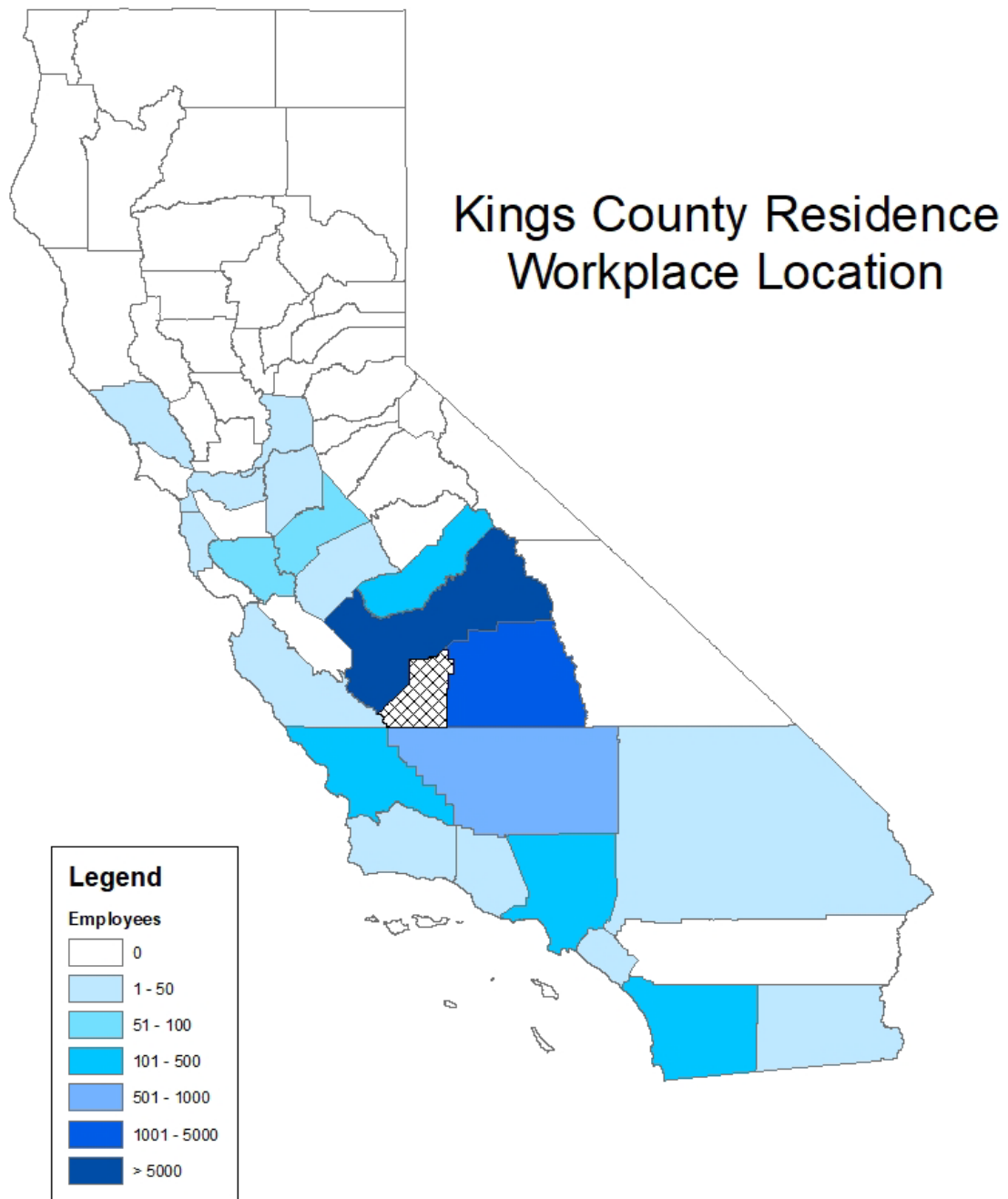


FIGURE 2-7: WORKPLACE LOCATION FOR THOSE RESIDING IN KINGS COUNTY

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Analysis, 2011-2015 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)

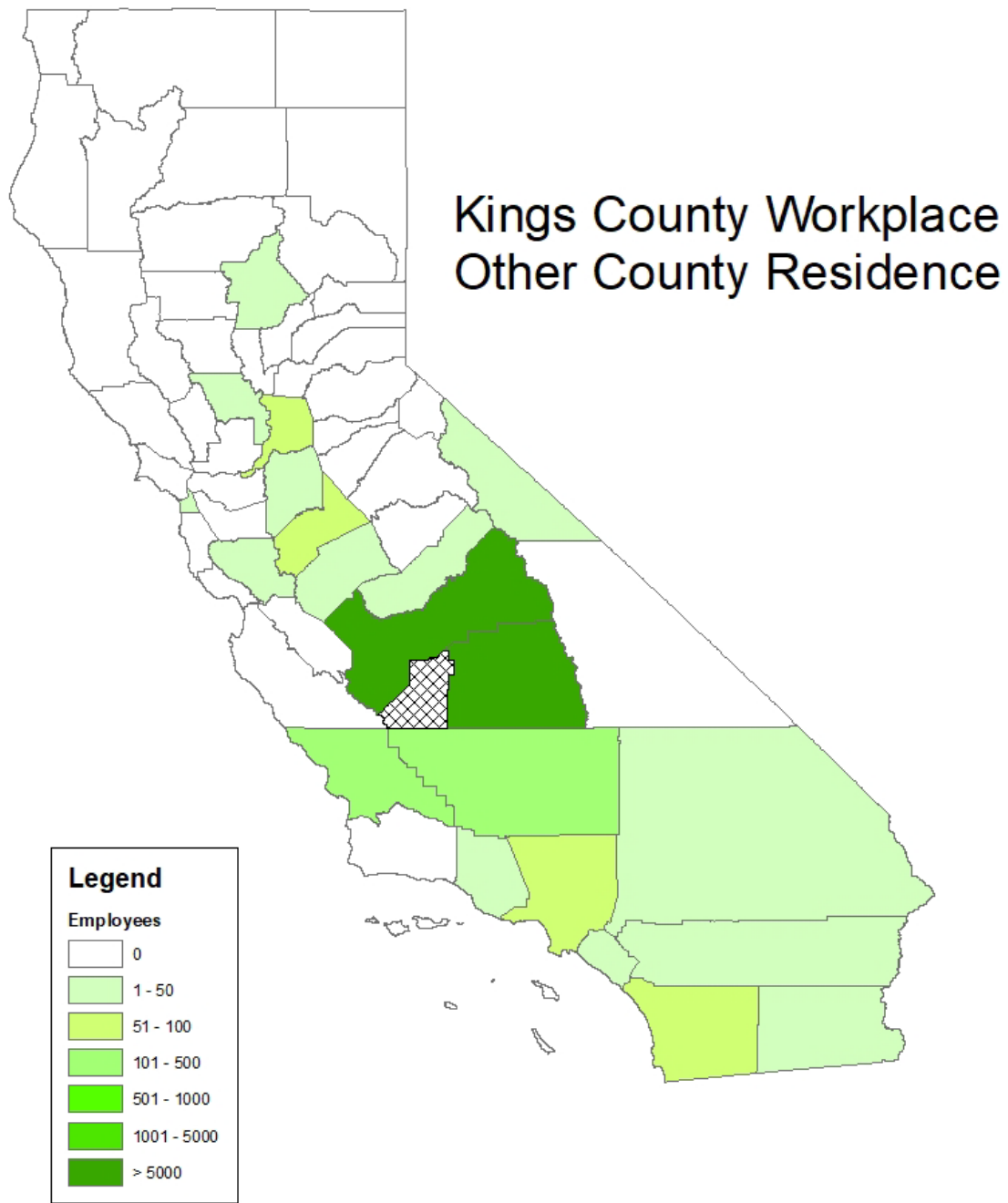


FIGURE 2-8: RESIDENTS OF OTHER COUNTIES WORKING IN KINGS COUNTY

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Analysis, 2011-2015 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)

PRINCIPAL LAND USE POLICIES AND ASSUMPTIONS

1. Adopted city and county general plans will continue to direct growth in the region. The following are significant long-term land use policies of city and county general plans. All are based on the premise that development must be contained in those areas where urban services are most readily available. The idea is to lessen public service costs, while slowing the conversion of prime farmland to urban uses. As a whole, these policies will help Kings County maintain its present pattern of development long into the future as a vast expanse of prime farmland with several articulated urban concentrations along state routes.

Avenal General Plan

- Preserve and enhance Avenal’s unique and small-town character and minimize urban sprawl and leap-frog development.
- Prioritize the development of vacant, underdeveloped, and/or redevelopable land within the boundaries of the existing developed area and where urban services are or can be made available.
- Maximize farmland, open space, and wildlife habitat preservation on lands outside of the City.

Corcoran Area General Plan

- Maintain and enhance Corcoran’s physical diversity, visual qualities and small-town characteristics.
- Minimize urban sprawl and leap-frog development and provide for an orderly and efficient transition from rural to urban land uses.
- Give priority consideration to infill development of vacant and underutilized land within the City limits.
- Identify greenbelt areas on lands outside of the City in order to maximize farmland, open space, and wildlife habitat preservation.

Hanford General Plan

- Promote a well planned community that grows in an organized fashion.
- Development preference of vacant and underutilized properties with limitation of urban sprawl-style development patterns in new growth areas.
- Recognize and protect the right of agricultural uses within the growth boundary to exist and continue to operate in proximity to new development on the fringes of the City.

Lemoore General Plan

- Promote a sustainable, balanced land use pattern that satisfies existing needs and safeguards future needs.
- Maintain a well-defined compact urban form, with a defined urban growth boundary and development intensities on land designated for urban uses.
- Preserve Prime Farmland not needed to accommodate urban area growth.

- Work to preserve State-designated Prime Farmland, retain agricultural use designation and encourage the continuation of farming activities outside the City.

Kings County General Plan

- Establish Community Plan land use policies and associated improvement standards to integrate smart growth principles and compact urban design to revitalize existing communities.
- Prioritize infill development of vacant and underutilized parcels within the existing special district boundaries.
- Require urban growth to be contiguous to existing urban development and to annex to a city or community services district.
- Preserve the integrity of the County’s agricultural land resources through agricultural land use designations and other long term preservation policies.

Urban Service Areas Policy Plan

- Promote the orderly growth of Kings County's urban areas by directing new development into incorporated cities where services are provided.
- Ensure that growth in unincorporated communities is coordinated with general plan and special district's improvement programs and capabilities.
- Prevent haphazard, sprawling, or "leapfrog" growth by infilling vacant or under-utilized lots within the community fringes.

Additional plans, including specific plans and other future plans, are detailed further in this RTP/SCS.

2. As the general plans will guide urban growth into compact, land-sparing configurations, the proportion of persons living in urban and incorporated areas will continue to increase.

TABLE 2-4: KINGS COUNTY URBAN POPULATION CHANGE: 1960, 1980-2010

CATEGORY	1960		1980		1990		2000		2010	
	POP	%	POP	%	POP	%	POP	%	POP	%
RURAL FARM	2,666	5.3%	4,659	6.3%	2,679	2.6%	2,520	1.9%	N/A	N/A
RURAL NON-FARM	26,471	53.0%	20,084	27.2%	28,241	27.8%	14,441	11.2%	16,601	10.9%
URBAN	20,817	41.7%	48,995	66.4%	70,549	69.5%	112,500	86.9%	136,381	89.1%
TOTAL	49,954	100%	73,738	100%	101,469	100%	129,461	100%	152,982	100%

Source: 2010 U.S. Decennial Census

Notes: Rural Non-Farm: Unincorporated areas near cities, and rural towns of less than 2,500 persons. Urban: A community of 2,500 or more persons. The 2010 Census did not define rural as previous years did.