

City of Shafter

General Plan Update

Help us

SHAPE OUR CITY

for the next 20 years

Shape Our City was a workshop series conducted between May and July 2025, asking the community to weigh in on key issues that will influence the types and locations of land uses and roadways in Shafter. The community was invited to participate online or at any of the three in-person events. The input collected is understood to be a partial representation of the Shafter community's perspective for consideration by City staff, advisory groups, and decision makers in updating the General Plan.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP SERIES

In the Spring of 2025, the City of Shafter launched the "Shape Our City" workshop series to help guide the General Plan update. Outreach took place at various locations and events and an online survey:

- Shafter Cinco de Mayo | May 3, 2025 (11:30 am to 3 pm); over 1,000 attendees and 143 providing direct input, representing a mix of Shafter residents and visitors
- Shafter High School | May 7, 2025 (lunchtime); 73 student participants
- First Fridays | June 5, 2025 (6 to 9 pm); 43 visitors providing direct input
- Online Survey | May 23 to July 21, 2025; 173 participants (90% residents, mostly 30 to 49 years of age)

Community members were invited to share their thoughts on important issues that will inform future discussions about how and where the City might grow and invest its resources over the next 20 years. All activities were conducted in English and Spanish to ensure broad participation from Shafter community members. The City promoted the events through multiple communications channels, including utility mailers and social media. Collectively, the Shafter General Plan team interacted with hundreds of community members of all ages, including over 300 who provided direct input.

The workshop series also kicked off a parallel effort, the "Block by Block" Community Mural art project, which invited residents to illustrate their vision of what Shafter might look like in the year 2050. Submissions for the community art project were collected between May and September 2025 (a summary of these submittals will be provided separately).



PURPOSE

The "Shape Our City" workshop series is a bilingual, interactive exercise designed to:

1. Engage a wide range of Shafter community members, especially those that may not normally participate due to language barriers or age
2. Collect public input on potential land use priorities and community vision
3. Gather perspectives on Shafter's future development through 2050

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Through the “Shape Our City” workshop series, community members shared many valuable inputs that will help inform planning for the General Plan. The following are some key takeaways from the outreach effort.

- **Local trails for connectivity.** Participants largely preferred the creation of additional local pedestrian and bicycle facilities compared to investing in a regional trail.
- **Support for some growth.** Participants at in-person events expressed support for residential and commercial growth, whereas slightly more survey respondents preferred limited development.
- **Continue to expand communication.** Input suggests residents would appreciate additional communication on potential City decisions and submitted projects through a variety of communication methods.
- **Route trucks away from the core.** Participants generally preferred routing trucks away from the city core and residential areas.
- **Improvements to public amenities/facilities.** Based on additional public comments, participants would like more parks and recreation opportunities and improvements to transportation infrastructure that make it safer to walk and bike in Shafter.

VOTING RESULTS

The following table demonstrates the results from the interactive board activities and online survey. Due to the varied types of participants, the results are displayed independently.

Question 1: What is most important for creating a more connected community?								
Event	Cinco de Mayo		Shafter HS		June 1st Friday		Online Survey	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Option A. Regional Trail. Connect the core of Shafter to Gossamer Grove and the Kern River through a regional trail, increasing access to open space and supporting an intercity natural trail network.								
Votes	62	43%	28	39%	8	21%	44	25%
Option B. Local Connections. Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure to create a safe, walkable, and bikeable city core.								
Votes	81	57%	43	61%	30	79%	129	75%
Total	143	--	71	--	38	--	173	--

Notes: The majority vote for each event is displayed in bold. Not all attendees submitted votes for each question.

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Question 2: How many new homes and shops should Shafter plan for?								
Event	Cinco de Mayo		Shafter HS		June 1st Friday		Online Survey	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Option A. More places to live, more places to shop. Housing growth to increase population, attracting more shopping, services, and dining options. Residents would no longer need to travel outside the city for daily needs.								
Votes	97	69%	68	93%	39	85%	79	46%
Option B. Limited housing and retail expansion. Limited growth may require residents to travel outside the city for some daily needs.								
Votes	43	31%	5	7%	7	15%	94	54%
Total	140	--	73	--	46	--	173	--

Notes: The majority vote for each event is displayed in bold. Not all attendees submitted votes for each question.

Question 3: What would most improve City processes so that resident input can affect the outcome of City decisions?								
Event	Cinco de Mayo		Shafter HS		June 1st Friday		Online Survey	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Bilingual City Staff	51	21%	26	21%	7	10%	8	5%
Access to Materials	39	16%	24	20%	4	6%	60	35%
Online Engagement	38	15%	16	13%	5	7%	63	36%
Public Meetings	42	17%	10	8%	15	21%	77	45%
Language Services	31	13%	16	13%	12	17%	6	4%
Notifications	30	12%	15	12%	25	36%	58	34%
Surveys	16	6%	16	13%	2	3%	69	40%
Total	247	--	123	--	46	--	341	--

Notes: The majority vote for each event is displayed in bold. Not all attendees submitted votes for each question.

Shape Our City Workshop Summary

Question 4: How do we route trucks from industrial areas in Bakersfield and Shafter to SR 99?								
Event	Cinco de Mayo		Shafter HS		June 1st Friday		Online Survey	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Option A. Cherry Avenue. Plan for truck traffic along Cherry Avenue with design features to reduce impacts on future residential areas.								
Votes	44	31%	24	35%	30	71%	63	36%
Option B. South of Lerdo Highway. Route truck traffic away from growth near Shafter's core to avoid impacts on future residential areas.								
Votes	99	69%	44	65%	12	29%	110	64%
Total	247	--	123	--	46	--	341	--

Notes: The majority vote for each event is displayed in bold. Not all attendees submitted votes for each question.

Question 5: Over the Next 20 years, what other issues should the City plan for?

Cinco de Mayo Summary (see appendix B-1 for original responses):

- More diverse shopping and dining options. Participants shared a desire for more diverse retail and commercial options, including grocery stores, larger retail (Target, Walmart, Costco), and restaurants. They expressed frustration with the prevalence of car washes and Starbucks.
- Address housing needs. The city needs more affordable housing and more types of housing (townhomes, apartments, etc. in addition to single-family homes to address rising rent and provide housing choices for a wider range of incomes and needs for people who wish to stay in Shafter.
- Roadway improvements. Input on infrastructure and transportation highlighted the need to improve and maintain roads, address safety concerns with some identifying a desire for more traffic signals and stop signs, improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and expand public transit options.
- More parks and recreation opportunities. Participants would like more parks and recreation facilities, including family fun spots (theaters, amusement centers), teen hangout areas, community pools, and gyms.
- Improve access to jobs and education. Participants expressed a call for increased educational opportunities and jobs for youth, specifically suggesting the development of a local Community College/vocational Campus.

High School Summary (see appendix B-2 for original responses):

- More shopping, dining, entertainment, and recreational options. Participants expressed interest for more food, retail, and entertainment options (with emphasis on popular chains and entertainment venues).
- Extended hours for Dial-A-Ride services and improved transportation options. A small handful of participants commented on the need to extend Dial-A-Ride services and other transportation services.

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- More urgent care and other medical facilities. A few people commented on the desire for more healthcare facilities, such as an urgent care and hospital.

June First Friday Summary (see appendix B-3 for original responses):

- More shopping, dining, entertainment, and entertainment options. They commented on the need for more variety of commercial, shopping, and dining establishments, such as more markets and shopping centers, restaurants, and entertainment and recreation facilities.
- Improvements to infrastructure and connectivity. Some participants showed support for connecting existing roads, like a "Zachary & Driver Road connection to Lerdo Highway", as well as improving bike lane accessibility.
- More affordable housing options. Several participants expressed support for more residential development, particularly apartments that are affordable.
- Healthcare and Services. Requests for daycare facilities, PopMart shopping options, and improved access to essential services

Online Survey Summary (see appendix C for original responses):

- Preserve Shafter's small-town identity and manage growth. Many respondents shared the sentiment to keep Shafter small.
- Improve existing infrastructure and public safety. Many people expressed support to have roads and lighting as a top priority for new additions and improvements. Pedestrian and vehicle safety were also priority concerns.
- Revitalize and focus on "Old" and Downtown Shafter. Multiple respondents commented on the desire for rebuilding and improving the historic downtown, including highlighting and supporting local small businesses along Main Street. There was a focus on the "Old" Shafter and supporting local businesses and agricultural businesses as essential for community identity.
- Enhance community engagement and transparency. Several respondents commented on the need for more town meetings and for local government to receive and implement community input from Shafter residents.
- More community open space and recreation opportunities. Multiple people noted the desire for more community amenities, such as parks, a dog park, and improving recreational programs.

Please see:

Appendix A-1 for an image of the boards where votes were cast at in-person events.

Appendix A-2, Findings by Event, for a detailed summary of each event, including the online survey.

Appendix B, for a list of all open ended comments collected

Appendix C, for the online survey results.