

CITY OF SHAFTER

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee (Committee), of the 2009-2010 Kern County Grand Jury visited the City of Shafter (City) on August 18, 2009, to inquire into the operations and management of the City. The Committee also inquired into federal compliance of the City with respect to the legal eligibility of employees to work in the United States as per form I-9. The visit was for the purpose of conducting an investigation pursuant to California Penal Code §925a.

PROCESS:

The City's office is located at 336 Pacific Avenue, Shafter CA, 93263. The Committee met with the City Manager (Manager) and a member of his staff. The meeting was held in a conference room.

BACKGROUND:

The City covers approximately 21 square miles. The City was incorporated in 1938 and became a charter city in 1995. A general law city is governed by a City council of five members, a City Clerk, a City Treasurer, a Police Chief and any subordinate officers or employees as required by law. A charter city provides for any form of government including the "strong Mayor" and "City Manager". There is only one other charter city in Kern County. The Manager has been in his current position for 11 years and has worked for the City for 26 years.

FINDINGS:

1. The population of the City is approximately 15,000. The number includes about 500 inmates in the City's Community Correctional Facility (CCF).
2. The budget for the City is almost thirty million dollars, including the budget for the CCF.
3. There are approximately 650 businesses operating within the City.
4. The City has 140 employees of which 5-10 are new hires. The City is in compliance with Department of Homeland Security Employment Eligibility Verification (form I-9). The form documents that each new employee (citizen and noncitizen) hired after November 6, 1986, is authorized to work in the United States.
5. The City is compliant with ethics training for all elected City Officials.

6. Upon the Committee's arrival for the meeting the Committee noticed the City did not have a handicapped parking space in the parking lot, a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City has less than 25 parking spaces and ADA requires the City to have one handicapped parking space for a van.
7. The City Council members receive no salary. The only compensation received is \$60 per day for trips and lodging, plus any mileage reimbursement while on City business. Council members also get a form 1099 for compensation received.
8. The Manager stated the attraction for residents to become active in local government, is the residents see serving an honor rather than an opportunity to make money.
9. Each department head has the ability to work separately to obtain city grants.
10. According to the Manager all water issues with the City of Bakersfield have been settled as of now.
11. The new animal control shelter has been completed and should be fully operational by September 2009.
12. The City's disaster plan is four years old and is currently being updated.
13. The broadband system discussed in the 2007-2008 Kern County Grand Jury Report has completed its third phase. The third phase ties government buildings in the City together.

COMMENTS:

The City is to be complimented for a timely reaction in correcting the disabled parking situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The City should survey all City facilities to determine they are in compliance with all ADA regulations.
2. The City of Shafter should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.

Note: Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed through the Kern County Library system and on the Kern County Grand Jury website: www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury

RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 60 DAYS TO:

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE 2ND FLOOR
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**cc: FOREMAN
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**