



## Importance of Responding to the 2020 Census

As a nation, Americans have responded to the 2020 Census at about 60% so far. California's response to date is 62.1%, down from 68.2% in 2010. Normally at this time the numbers would be getting prepared and tallies reported to leaders so they could begin commenting on the direction the available funds should go. But with the ongoing coronavirus pandemic essentially shutting down entire communities, the deadline for completing the census has been extended into October 2020.



Carla Hutcherson, a partnership specialist with the Census Bureau stated that a lot of people do not realize the importance of participating in the census. She stated that "the Census helps determine the amount of funds that communities receive for a large variety of programs. These programs include schools, Healthy Start and so many more programs that help residents thrive."

Census results influence highway planning, public transportation, as well as schools. Local schools are allocated so much for the Head Start program and for grants that support teachers and special education. Programs that support rural areas, prevent child abuse and help provide housing assistance for older adults are also affected. From disaster planning to small business development, Medicare Part B to highway construction, policymakers use census data to plan and fund many programs that affect rural communities.

**Remember, by law, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, your home, or your business, even to law enforcement agencies. That's protected under Title 13 of the U.S. Code. The law ensures that your private data is protected and that your answers cannot be used against you by any government agency or court.**



## Antelope Run Bike Path Expansion Project - Tehachapi

While many of us suffered through the Stay-at-Home order due to COVID-19, the City of Tehachapi forged ahead by completing major improvement projects, including the Antelope Run Bike Path Expansion Project. The Antelope Run is a storm drain network that runs from Highline Road and travels north to Tehachapi Boulevard. The bike path is an additional leg to the existing network and ties into some Kern county regional bike paths to more local, smaller bike paths. In 2018, Tehachapi applied to the Transportation Development

Act and was approved to install a Class 1 bike lane north from Highline Road and connect to the Antelope run. The project had two targeted areas of improvement. One is the extension of the existing Antelope run Bike Path with the second being a paved parking lot off tucker Road so residents who do not live immediately adjacent to the path will have a place to park their vehicles and use the path. Jay Schlosser, Development Services Director for the City of Tehachapi said that about five years ago, Kern County widened Highline Road to include a bike path, but it was missing the eighth-mile length connecting it to the Antelope Run. Now, people have a way to get down into Tehachapi and all the way into Golden Hills.



## New Roundabout for Shafter Community

The Shafter City Council voted to approve a plan to move forward on the engineering phase of a roundabout project that includes Santa Fe Way, Los Angeles Avenue, State Route 43 North and State Route 48 South. The project's aim is to alleviate traffic congestion and reduce safety risks that the current intersection presents. The current funding strategy that Shafter Public Works is considering consists of the City covering the preliminary engineering and right-of-way acquisitions at a cost of approximately \$4 million. Caltrans has committed to fully funding the construction, which based on similar roundabout projects will cost between \$6 and \$8 million. The plan is to begin design and right-of-way acquisition in August 2020 with construction beginning in December 2021.



Example of a Roundabout

## Kern County Re-opens Splash Parks

With temperatures expected to hit the hundreds now residents can cool down at the city or county spray parks. The splash parks had been closed due to concerns of the coronavirus and trying to limit the spread. The Kern County Public Health Department gave the green light on opening spray parks with guidelines in place as part of the county moving into Phase Three. Spray park users are encouraged to keep six feet of social distancing as well as use soap and water to wash hands.



Example of a Splash Park

There will be signage at each spray park reminding people to take precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. All shared and commonly touched surfaces will be sanitized as much as possible.

## Upcoming Events

June 24 - California Transportation Commission Virtual Meeting

June 26 - San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council and Multi Agency Working Group (Housing) Meeting

August 12 & 13 - California Transportation Commission Meeting in Oakland