

2026

KERN COUNCIL *of* GOVERNMENTS



REGIONAL AWARDS

Call for Nominations

Celebrating leadership, innovation,
and dedication that strengthens our region.



Kern Council
of Governments

Kern Council of Governments is pleased to present its 2026 Annual Regional Awards Program. This special event provides Kern County residents the opportunity to thank and honor citizens, community-based organizations and public officials who have made, and are still making, significant contributions to this region's quality of life. Those who will be recognized are the impetus behind valuable programs and projects and have dedicated themselves to this area's success.

You are cordially invited to submit your nominations celebrating both the pacesetters and visionary projects that have contributed significantly to our region in 2026.
Thank you for your support.



Bob Smith | 2026 Chair
Kern Council of Governments

Awards will be presented in the following categories:

RONALD E. BRUMMETT REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

offers three opportunities for recognition of those individuals who have shown extensive dedication and leadership in the course of their career, or in service to the public good in the following categories:

- Lifetime Achievement Award to an Elected Official
- Lifetime Achievement Award to a Public Official *
- Lifetime Achievement Award to a Private Citizen

DARREL HILDEBRAND REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP

offers three opportunities for recognition of individuals or groups demonstrating excellence in leadership by promoting strong, representative local or regional government in the following categories:

- Distinguished Leadership Award to an Elected Official
- Distinguished Leadership Award to a Public Official*
- Distinguished Leadership Award to a Private Group or Individual

REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

is presented to an individual or organization for contributions to improving a community within the region.

- Community Development Award for Excellence in Planning
- Community Development Award for Transformative Development

REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR TRANSPORTATION

is presented to an individual or organization for contributions to improving transportation within the region.

- Transportation Award for Public Group or Individual
- Transportation Achievements

REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

honors the efforts of citizens taking a leadership role in improving or enhancing the visual quality of our community, the availability of services, or the public's understanding of regional issues.

REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

recognizes excellence of individuals or organizations at the local government level for cooperative service, delivery, productivity improvements or public-private partnerships.

REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR INNOVATION

recognizes those individuals, products, programs or services that demonstrate groundbreaking thought in introducing a new idea or method.

RICHARD A. MAXWELL REGIONAL AWARD OF MERIT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

is presented to an individual or an organization for contributions to improving public safety within the region.



*Public officials are defined as planning commissioners and public agency staff

Nomination Guide

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals, public and private entities, educational institutions, and service organizations in Kern County that have demonstrated outstanding achievement in any of the categories are eligible nominees. Past Regional Awards individuals are not eligible. Past organization recipients are only eligible under new projects.

JUDGING

Nominations may be submitted by any individual, organization or agency in Kern County. Nominees will be judged by a peer committee appointed by Kern Council of Governments Board of Directors. Completed nomination forms and accompanying support documents are the only materials that will be used to judge each entry.

DEADLINE

All nominations for the 2026 Regional Awards of Merit program must be received by Kern Council of Governments, 1401 19th Street, Suite 300, Bakersfield, California, 93301 by **5pm, Friday, October 30, 2026.**

NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS

Winners will be notified by mail and awards will be presented at a date to be determined.

PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

To prepare your entry, attach the official entry form to a typewritten submission of not more than two pages, describing why you think the individual or organization deserves a Regional Award of Merit. Applications may be submitted by email, fax, or mail to Kern Council of Governments' office.

Please utilize email as an electronic form submission:
vromerovaldivia@kerncog.org

MORE INFORMATION

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Victoria Romero Valdivia at Kern Council of Governments (661) 635-2903, or email: vromerovaldivia@kerncog.org

THE FOLLOWING POINTS MUST BE ADDRESSED WHEN PREPARING YOUR ENTRY:

- 01 ORIGINALITY**
Is this an innovative concept or a refinement of existing techniques and procedures?
- 02 TRANSFERABILITY**
Can this concept or approach be sustained in a different environment?
- 03 QUALITY**
Does this concept/person display excellence of thought, analysis, writing, graphics and character or presentation?
- 04 IMPORTANCE**
Is this concept/person recognized as significant to the study area or field of planning?
- 05 IMPLEMENTATION**
Is the work effective? Has it been carried out to completion? Does it show promise of being implemented?
- 06 COMPREHENSIVENESS**
Have planning principles been observed, especially in considering the effects of the project on other public objectives?
- 07 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT**
Has the project/principle provided lasting results and improved the local quality of life?
- 08 REGIONALISM**
How does the project contribute to a better regional community or foster a regional identity?

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY

Please mail, deliver or email (*as attachment or Dropbox link*) the complete submission with all supporting documentation and images to:

Victoria Romero Valdivia
Kern Council of Governments
1401 19th Street, Suite 300 Bakersfield, CA 93301
vromerovaldivia@kerncog.org

Regional Awards of Merit Program Nominations

Entry deadline: by 5pm, Friday, October 30, 2026
All fields below must be completed in order to be considered.

NOMINEE NAME

PROJECT/PROGRAM TITLE

CATEGORY

NOMINATOR NAME

NOMINATOR EMAIL

Continued on the next page



Regional Awards of Merit Program Nominations (continued)

WHY DOES THIS NOMINEE DESERVE RECOGNITION?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS