



# FRESNO General Plan

**July 2, 2014**

**Development and Resource  
Management Department**

City of  
**FRESNO** 

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*Front Cover photo credit: Heather Heinks (left photo)*

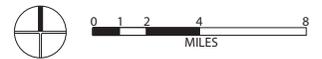
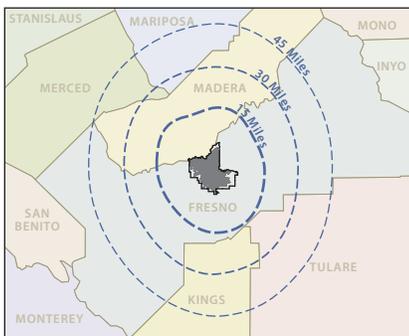
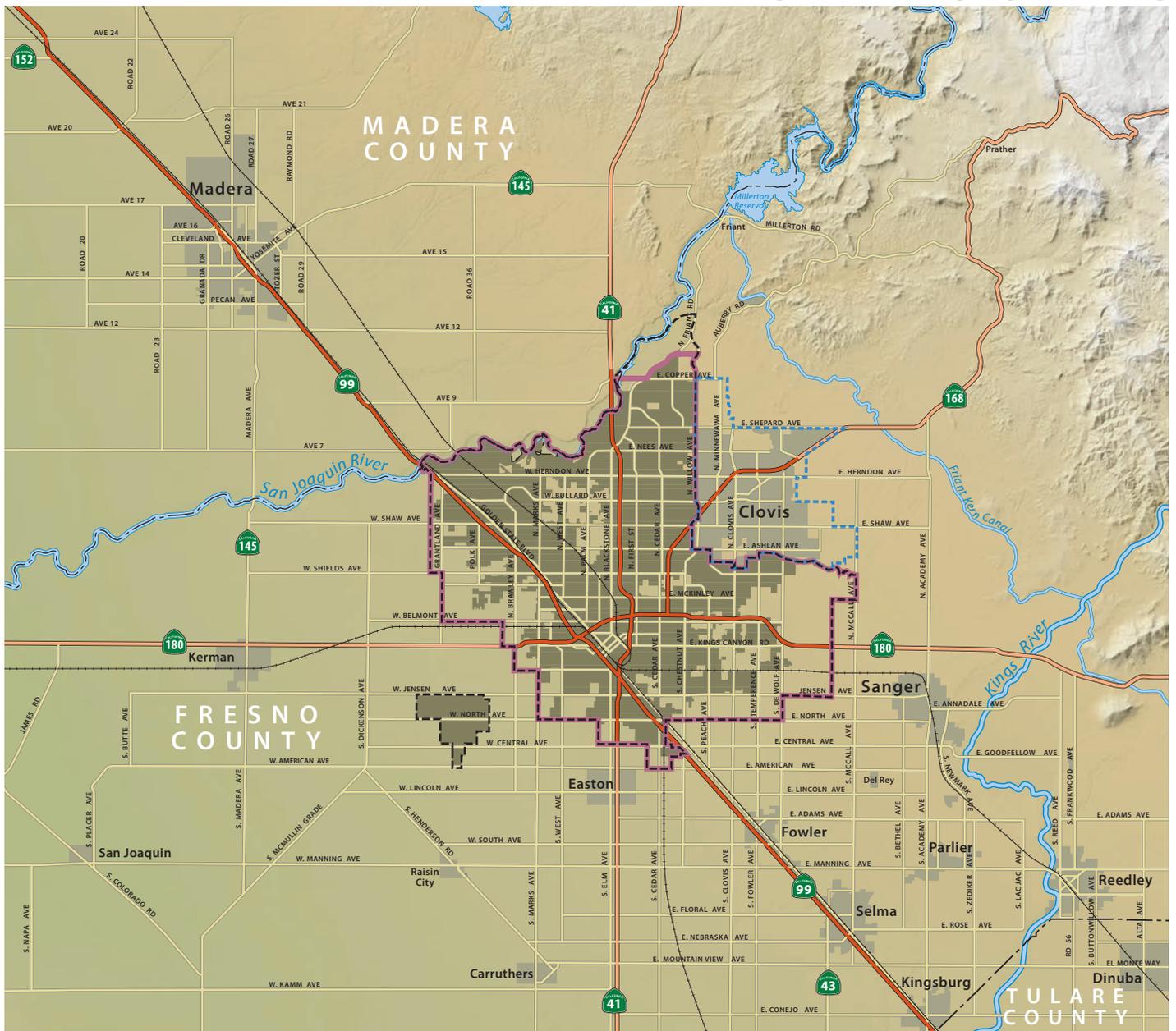
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Figure I-2: Existing Regional Setting



- Planning Area Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Fresno City Limits
- Clovis Sphere of Influence
- County Line
- Other Cities

Source: City of Fresno, 2014.

- Market the Fresno Green Strategies (New City Beautiful, Sierra View 2025, Solar Valley, Green Enterprises and Economic Development, and City as a Good Steward) throughout the community.
- Incorporate sustainable policies into the General Plan.
- Measure successes of Fresno Green Strategies and present a periodic report to the Council, which could be integrated into the General Plan annual report.

### Relation between Urban Form and Resource Conservation

Making efficient use of public infrastructure and reducing the financial resources devoted to energy use will save money for residents, businesses, and the City government. By strategically regulating urban form elements through this Plan, such as development types, intensity, building massing and orientation, landscaping size and type, and the mix of land uses, the city can produce significant energy and water savings.

The Plan also seeks to prevent an overextension of its developable area and manage land use impacts on municipal revenues more effectively. Low-density residential developments on the urban fringe in county areas that require annexation are expensive for the City to serve with both physical infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) and public services (fire and police). In addition, because of tax sharing arrangements with the County of Fresno, these annexed areas contribute significantly less revenue to the City's general fund than land developed within the city limits. Meanwhile, Fresno has vacant and undervalued parcels located in its urban core, particularly along key transit corridors. In established neighborhoods, infrastructure and services are already provided, and tax benefits are much greater for the City than those generated by newly annexed land. Ultimately, the amount of land available to the City for future growth is finite, as further expansion of the City's SOI is blocked in certain directions by the Madera/Fresno county line and the city of Clovis, is contingent on County of Fresno plans, and may consume valuable farmland. Infill development is also important to other aims of the Plan, including ensuring that the cost of doing business goes down, revenues are maximized, and scarce financial resources are used efficiently.

### 7.2 USE OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Continued growth outwards creates transportation and air quality issues, as well. The continued siting of major retail and commercial uses, as well as jobs, at Fresno's urban fringe is lengthening travel times and increasing traffic levels (and air pollution) disproportionately faster than the rate of population growth, due to inefficient location selection. Given the restrictions on and impacts of increasing

Fresno's land area, the Plan promotes the highest and best use of land within Fresno's current city limits, phases growth into unincorporated areas of the SOI, and avoids de-investment in Downtown and established neighborhoods. Furthermore, certain patterns of land development can increase costs to the City in excess of related revenues and essentially reduce fiscal resources. The Plan seeks to discourage this type of development and, at the least, ensure that all development covers its fair share of public costs.

### **Communication and Broadband**

Making efficient use of public infrastructure and reducing the financial resources devoted to energy use will save money for residents, businesses, and the City. This section addresses broadband and telecommunications infrastructure opportunities as they relate to the progression, redevelopment of the inner city and development of additional services to constituents. Broadband has become an important part of the lives of every citizen as it is used for social interaction, education, business, and healthcare, and has been a key factor in economic development for many cities. As technology evolves and content becomes more readily available, the need for higher communication speeds and access to the technology has also increased.

The City of Fresno Information Services Department (ISD) has used excess fiber of the Intelligent Transportation System, as well as its own implemented fiber, for data transport and connectivity. The City of Fresno Intelligent Traffic System is designed and implemented by the City of Fresno Public Works Department with the City of Fresno ISD as a partner from a technology aspect. Most of the fiber implemented was funded through grants in order to install conduit and fiber to synchronize traffic signals. To date, most of the construction has been in major thoroughfares where there is a need to control traffic for ease of congestion and improve air quality.

Utilizing the excess fiber, the City has been able to realize a cooperative effort between the region's biggest agencies – the City of Fresno, the County of Fresno and the City of Clovis, as they share data services. In 2003, these three agencies entered into the Fresno Regional E-Government System agreement. Since the initiation of this agreement, the City of Fresno ISD has been able to connect multiple agencies (including educational institutions) together to provide shared services such as GIS sharing, public safety data sharing, educational services, data services, as well as video broadcast services. Through this process, the City has been a good steward of taxpayer funds in that they have been able to connect other agencies via this same fiber allowing higher connection speeds without monthly communication fees while realizing additional savings in construction

costs. The fiber is also used for other regional services such as video policing and radio services for public safety. In essence, the concept of using excess and additional fiber is a cost savings to the City and its constituents because fiber was installed in trenches while streets were open, thereby only digging once.

Construction costs for installing a fiber network to allow high speed broadband for City operations, as well as to reach the City's constituents is costly. While there are costs in purchasing and installing fiber, the most costly portion of installing a fiber optic network is the trenching and installation of conduit. For this reason, many agencies have considered or have adopted a "dig once" policy. While a trench is open for any reason, one or more conduits are placed in the trench either with fiber installed or it is left empty for future fiber installation. The fiber is then used for a multitude of purposes including connecting locations, video surveillance (video policing), wireless services, or it is opened up to the communication carriers who may lease the conduit space for their build outs, thereby offsetting construction costs. Not only will this cut costs of fiber implementation, it will pave the way to ensure that there is a pathway for higher speed broadband as the needs increase.

In areas of development, where there is a need, fiber can be installed to connect facilities and agencies. This can include many City Fire Department and Police Department stations as many of these have been built near neighborhoods or in locations where City fiber does not exist. Additionally, as the City of Fresno Video Policing program evolves and the need arises for high-tech strategies for the City Fire and Police Departments, the foundation will be in place for a cost effective means of providing connections. If the City ever decides to provide Internet or other services to the public or expand services at City parks, the connectivity can either be installed while construction is commencing or the means will be there for a cost effective implementation at a later date.

In the case where the City will allow private communication companies to lease the conduit, the conduit will remain a City asset with the potential to receive lease revenues consistent with the requirements of the California Public Utilities Commission's regulations and State laws. If other agencies or institutions would like to connect, they may do so under the current Fresno Regional E-Government System Agreement, which covers data sharing and not Internet transport where the City provides Internet connectivity in competition with other carriers.

## OBJECTIVE

**RC-1** Make efficient use of existing and future public infrastructure.

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**RC-1-a** **Setting Service Standards.** Set service delivery standards at existing levels or formulate and commit the City to an investment program that will meet an improved standard of service.

*Commentary: Implementation of this policy will be coordinated with the policies and strategies for fiscal sustainability presented in the Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability Element.*

**RC-1-b** **Capital Improvement Program.** Prepare and adopt a long-term Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that describes City-sponsored capital projects related to General Plan implementation.

*Commentary: The CIP will define what areas or projects it would enable and include funding sources covering the complete cost of the projects, as well as intended phasing. It will be updated annually and comprehensively reviewed every five years so that it accurately reflects the City's priorities, community needs, fiscal realities, and State mandates. It also will include an analysis of how improvements implement the General Plan and how they reflect the City's commitment to environmental justice and fair share issues relative to individual neighborhood needs. Implementation of this policy will be coordinated with the policies and strategies for fiscal sustainability presented in the Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability Element and with technical work on service standards and infrastructure improvements mandated by policies in the Public Utilities and Services Element.*

**RC-1-c** **Prioritize Revenues.** Give priority for the purpose of increasing property tax and sales tax revenues by supporting, streamlining, and providing incentives for projects that create the largest impacts on property values and the city's retail base and also, to the extent feasible, support Downtown and older neighborhoods.

*Commentary: These incentives could include giving priority to supporting redevelopment of vacant and underutilized land, particularly in mixed use and higher density corridors and Downtown, over the conversion of active farmland to urban uses.*

**RC-1-d**      **Coordinate Public Construction.** Coordinate public construction with other public and private agencies, particularly with respect to streets, sewerage, water, gas, electric, irrigation improvements, flood control facilities, and communication to seek the greatest public benefit and efficiencies at the least public cost.

**RC-1-e**      **Dig Once.** Whenever a suitable trench is dug, one or more telecommunication conduits shall be placed in the trench, either with fiber installed or with space available for future fiber installation, to expand or upgrade the fiber optic network as appropriate.

*Commentary: Implementation of this policy will require identification of funding sources.*

**RC-1-f**      **Telecommunications Strategy.** Develop a process for communication carriers to use excess fiber optic conduit with the City in a manner that will allow for appropriate cost recovery and that is consistent with State and federal law.

**RC-1-g**      **Grant Funding.** Seek grant funds for the construction or implementation of the fiber optic system to provide expanded public services (such as services for educational, economic, public safety, or underserved communities).

**OBJECTIVE**

**RC-2**      Promote land uses that conserve resources.

**IMPLEMENTING POLICIES**

**RC-2-a**      **Link Land Use to Transportation.** Promote mixed-use, higher density infill development in multi-modal corridors. Support land use patterns that make more efficient use of the transportation system and plan future transportation investments in areas of higher-intensity development. Discourage investment in infrastructure that would not meet these criteria.

**RC-2-b Provide Infrastructure for Mixed-Use and Infill.** Promote investment in the public infrastructure needed to allow mixed-use and denser infill development to occur in targeted locations, such as expanded water and wastewater conveyance systems, complete streetscapes, parks and open space amenities, and trails. Discourage investment in infrastructure that would not meet these criteria.

#### OBJECTIVE

**RC-3** Actively engage, listen to, educate, and enlist the support of the Fresno community on the need and strategies for resource conservation.

#### IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**RC-3-a Track Trends in Resource Consumption.** Provide and periodically update written materials and information on the City’s website that tracks public and private rates of resource consumption in Fresno and related fiscal and environmental costs.

*Commentary: The City of Fresno Department of Public Utilities will work with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and other resource agencies to determine and publish such information, with the frequency of updates dependent on budgetary resources.*

**RC-3-b Community Outreach and Joint Solution Making.** Host an ongoing education and listening session series with the public to inform them of public and private rates of resource consumption, costs, impacts, and projected future constraints.

**RC-3-c Multi-jurisdictional Efforts.** Work actively with the public to develop and champion realistic, effective solutions to conserve resources at the local, regional, and state levels.

*Commentary: The City will forge partnerships with other resource agencies, time and resources permitting, to provide information, answer questions, and suggest solutions.*

### 7.3 AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Fresno is located in the center of the San Joaquin Valley Air (SJVA) Basin. The air quality in the SJVA Basin is among the worst in the nation, and routinely exceeds federal and State air quality health standards for ozone and particulates. The poor