



# TOWER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT DOCUMENTS

August 21, 2025



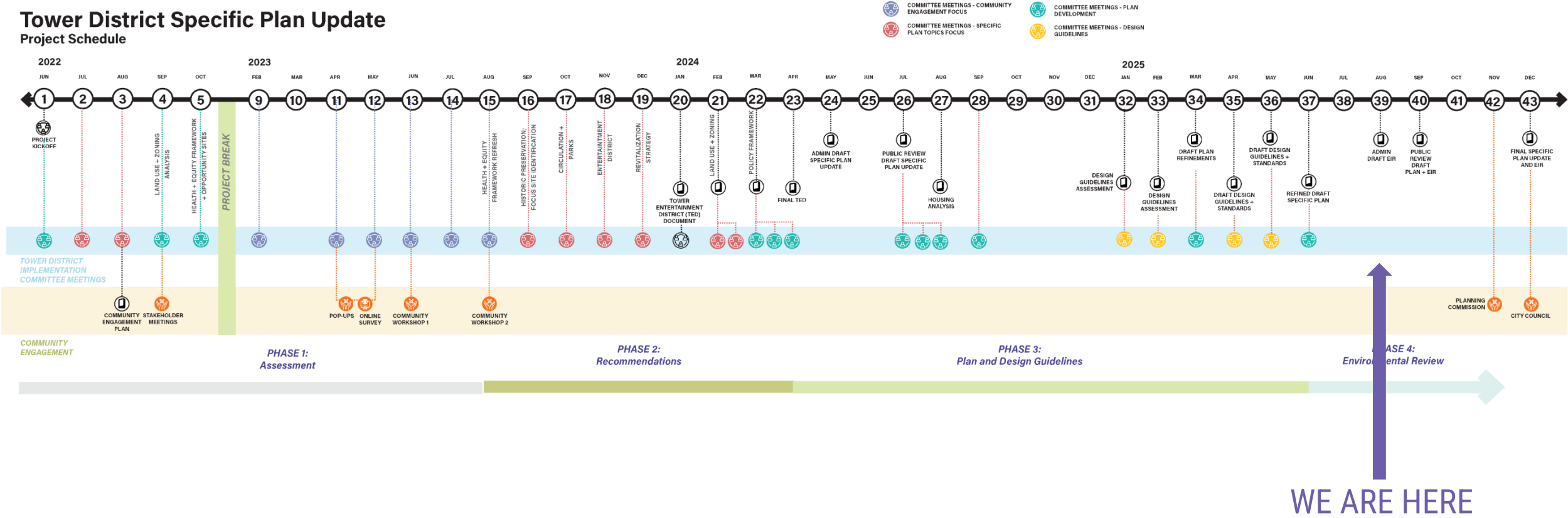
# PRESENTATION AGENDA

1. Tower District Specific Plan
2. Tower District Design Standards & Guidelines
3. Draft EIR
4. Next Steps

# ORIENTATION TO TODAY'S WORK

## Project Schedule

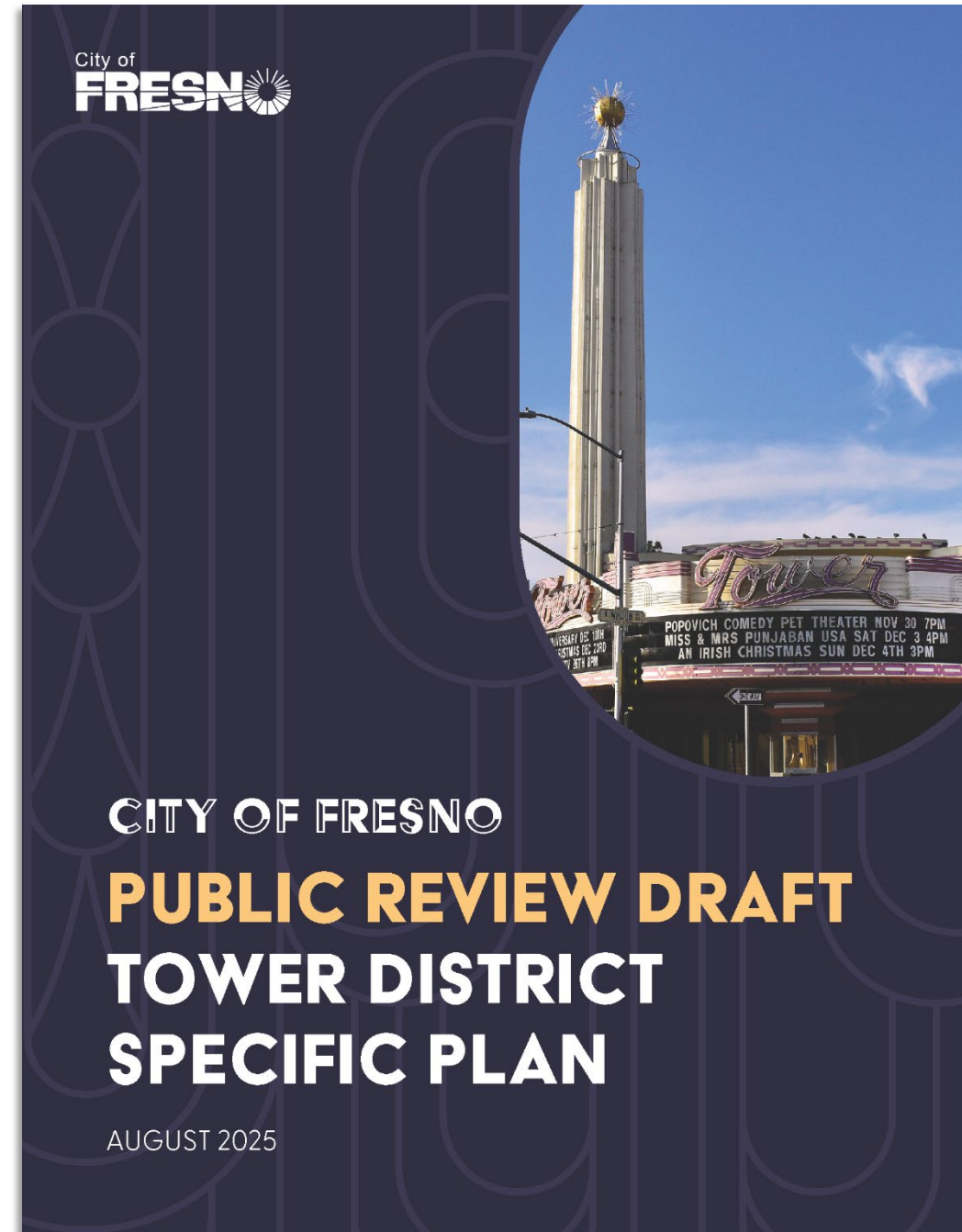
### Tower District Specific Plan Update Project Schedule



## ORIENTATION TO TODAY'S WORK

# Draft Tower District Specific Plan Update Edits

- ❖ Received Tower District Implementation Committee (TDIC) and public comments on first draft Specific Plan in August 2024
- ❖ Received additional Staff comments, and worked on Design Standards & Guidelines
- ❖ Provided progress update to TDIC in March 2025, and previewed revised Draft Plan in June 2025
- ❖ Public Review Draft Specific Plan, Design Standards & Guidelines, and EIR released August 15, 2025!







01

# TOWER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN





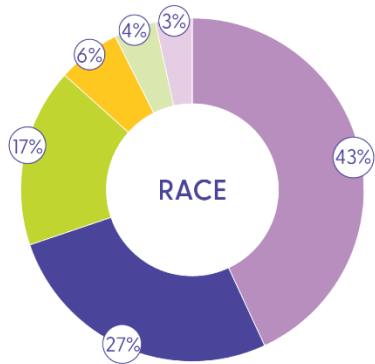
01

**INTRODUCTION**

01 INTRODUCTION

Demographics & Community Character

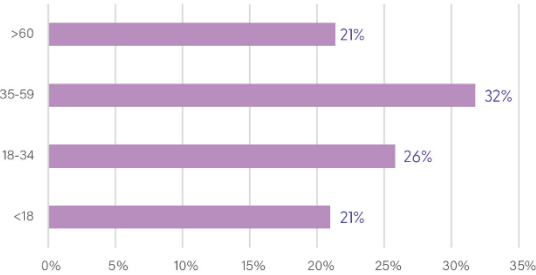
TOWER DISTRICT  
RACE & ETHNICITY



- White alone
- Some other race alone
- Population of two or more races
- Black or African American alone
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Asian alone

Note: In the United States, "Latino" or "Hispanic" is considered an ethnicity, not a race, according to the US Census Bureau. This means that individuals who identify as Latino or Hispanic may be of any race. Therefore, the Ethnicity diagram above represents 100% of the total population of the Tower District.

AGE RANGE



POPULATION



Approximate  
Data reflects all census tract block groups whose population is all or mainly in Tower District.

FIGURE 1.4 | Community Components





# Community Engagement



The second community workshop, attended by over 200 Tower District residents, featured energetic small-group discussions (top and middle left). A "pop-up" booth at Porchfest provided another opportunity for feedback (above and bottom left).



# Guiding Principles

I

Enhance the **livability and social diversity** of the Tower District's residential neighborhoods, and create housing opportunities that make the District inclusive and welcoming.

II

Nurture the mutually supportive relationship between the Tower District's residential neighborhoods and **vibrant commercial areas**.

III

Conserve and revitalize the Tower District's **historic resources**.

IV

Shape the **character of new development** to complement the Tower District's character as a walkable place not dominated by the automobile.

V

Provide **effective transportation access** for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users, and emphasize the importance of pedestrian-friendly environments.

VI

Increase **opportunities for recreation** within walking distance of Tower District residents.

VII

Promote **environmental sustainability and climate resilience**.

A large, stylized white number '02' is positioned on the left side of the image. The background is a solid orange color with a subtle, repeating geometric pattern of vertical lines and rounded shapes. The number '0' is a simple circle, and the '2' is a bold, blocky shape with a small circle inside its upper loop.

02

# CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

02 CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic Context



Historic streetcar running along Fulton Street  
Source: Interurbans Publications



Commercial storefront with big windows to engage  
Source: Fresno Bee Editorial Archives

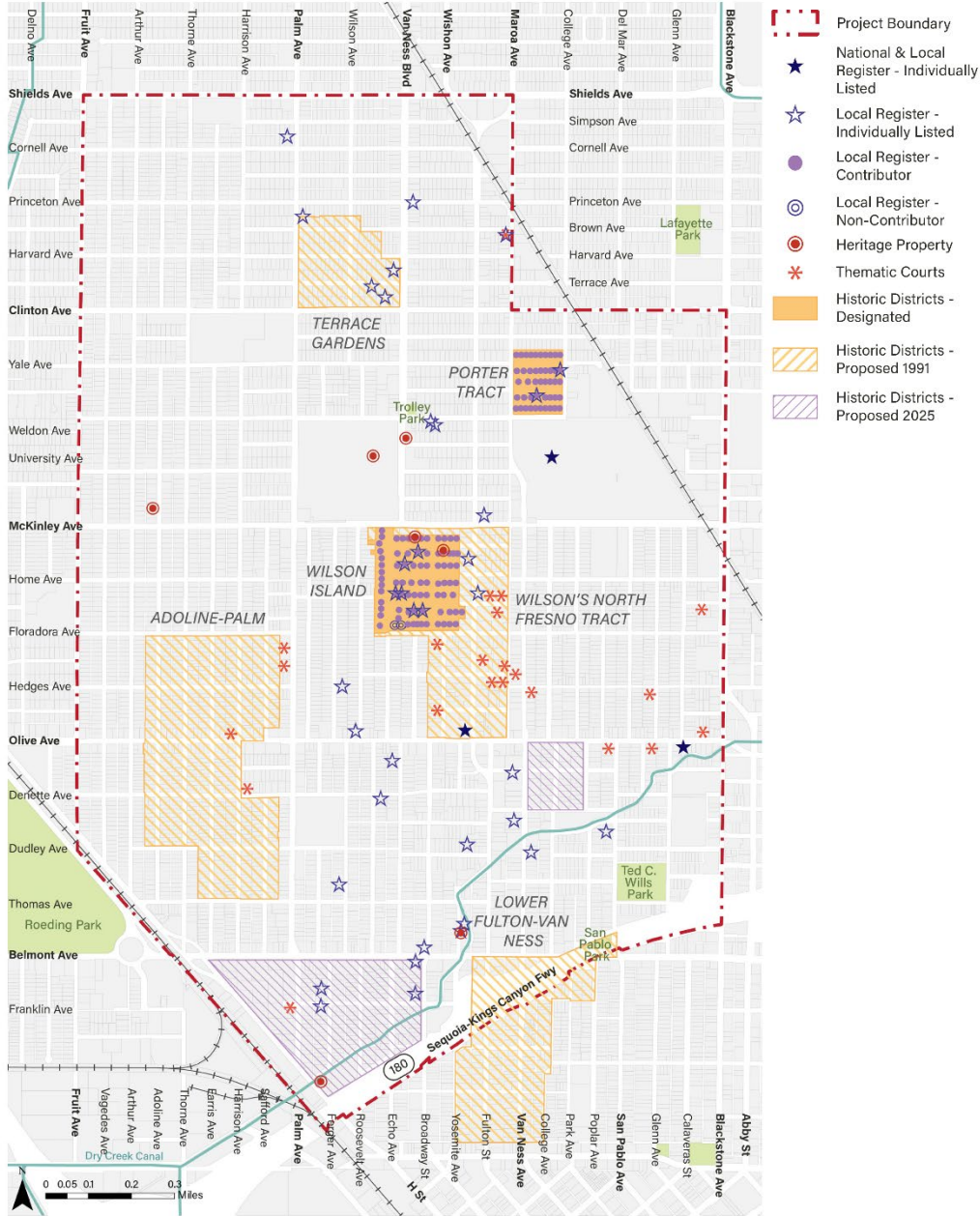


Royce Hall, Fresno High in 1960s



Van Ness Boulevard  
Source: Wayne Paperboy & Printing Corp.

Historic Resources and Districts



## Community Priorities

In a 2023 survey **99 percent** of respondents said it is important to preserve and protect historic buildings and resources in the Tower District.

**Preserving architecture in the Tower District holds significant value.**

**I'm proud to continue the care of my 1924 California adobe and count it a responsibility to the neighborhood to do so.**

**Historical preservation is very important to retain the rich character of the district.**

### What We Heard

#### TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR PRESERVATION

- More art and history focus
- Reuse existing buildings
- Maintain historic quality of neighborhood



## Health & Equity Considerations

### Health and Equity Considerations

- **Balancing Growth with Neighborhood**

**Character:** If not carefully managed, new development can lead to displacement and reduced housing access. Integrating growth with preservation goals is essential to support community stability and equitable access to housing and services.

- **Limiting Affordable Housing Options:**

Regulations protecting historic buildings can restrict housing development and density, limiting opportunities for affordable housing construction or adaptive reuse.

- **Unequal Representation in**

**Preservation Efforts:** Past preservation policies have often focused on architectural history over

cultural and social histories, potentially overlooking historically marginalized communities' contributions to the District's identity.

- **Economic Challenges for Small Businesses in Historic Buildings:** Older commercial buildings may require costly retrofits for accessibility, energy efficiency, and seismic safety, creating financial burdens for small business owners and limiting economic activity.

- **Environmental Quality of Older Buildings:** Many historic structures may have poor ventilation, lead paint, or asbestos, contributing to indoor air quality issues and health risks for residents and businesses.

## Objectives & Policies

### CHP 1: RECOGNIZE AND PROTECT THE TOWER DISTRICT'S HISTORIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY.

- Develop a **historic context statement** for the Tower District.
- Protect the Tower District's **cultural history** and resources.
- Conduct new **historic resources** survey(s) of the Tower District.
- Revive designation efforts for previously proposed **historic districts** and newly proposed areas.
- Protect the **Tower Theater** as a community asset in alignment with the historic preservation ordinance.
- Evaluate designation of potential resources in **the public right-of-way**.
- Highlight assets important to **community identity**.
- Elevate the visibility of **historic elements** in the Tower District.
- Heritage Trust and **Historic Preservation Fund**.
- Historic **museum**.

### CHP 2: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS.

- Provide historic preservation information, training and accountability..
- Protect and maintain existing character-defining streetscape elements.
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in historic properties
- Affordable housing

### CHP 3: USE ZONING AND DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER.

- Refine **design standards and guidelines**.
- **Pedestrian-oriented** commercial development.
- Encourage the rehabilitation and **adaptive reuse** of historic buildings.
- Continue to pursue **Code Enforcement** to ensure historic resources are adequately maintained.



03

LAND USE



# 03 LAND USE

## Community Priorities

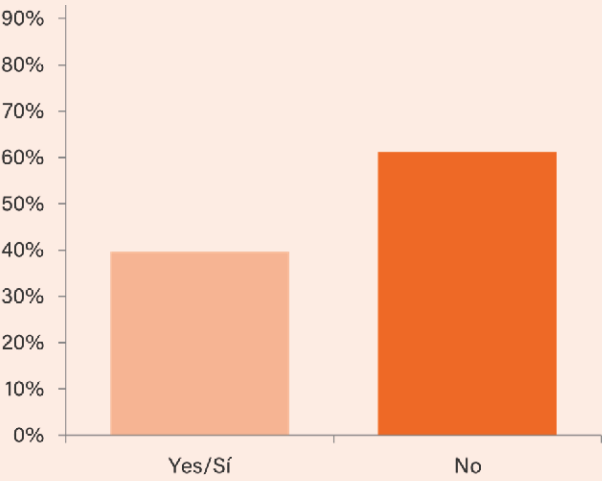
### What We Heard

**Community character** was considered important by over 650 respondents to a 2023 survey:

**73%** of respondents saw the need to create an environment that promotes health and well-being.

**58%** saw the need to create more mixed-use development along “main streets.”

#### DO YOU THINK THERE IS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE TOWER DISTRICT?



About **75%** respondents regularly travel outside of the area for **services** (medical, dental, auto service, childcare, postal services, education and for **healthy food** options.

#### TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR HOUSING AND BUSINESSES

- Grocery store/ healthy food access
- Public restrooms
- Non-bar late night gathering spots
- Focus on local businesses
- Affordable housing/ housing programs for new homeowners
- Limit investment purchases of homes/ require buyers to live in their homes
- Less smoke shops and liquor stores
- Streamline permitting to encourage small business
- More high density and mid density housing





## Health and Equity Considerations

### Health and Equity Considerations

- **Housing Affordability and Displacement:** Long term residents are potentially vulnerable to displacement if Tower District becomes a more desirable place to live. Balancing new development with affordability protections is important.

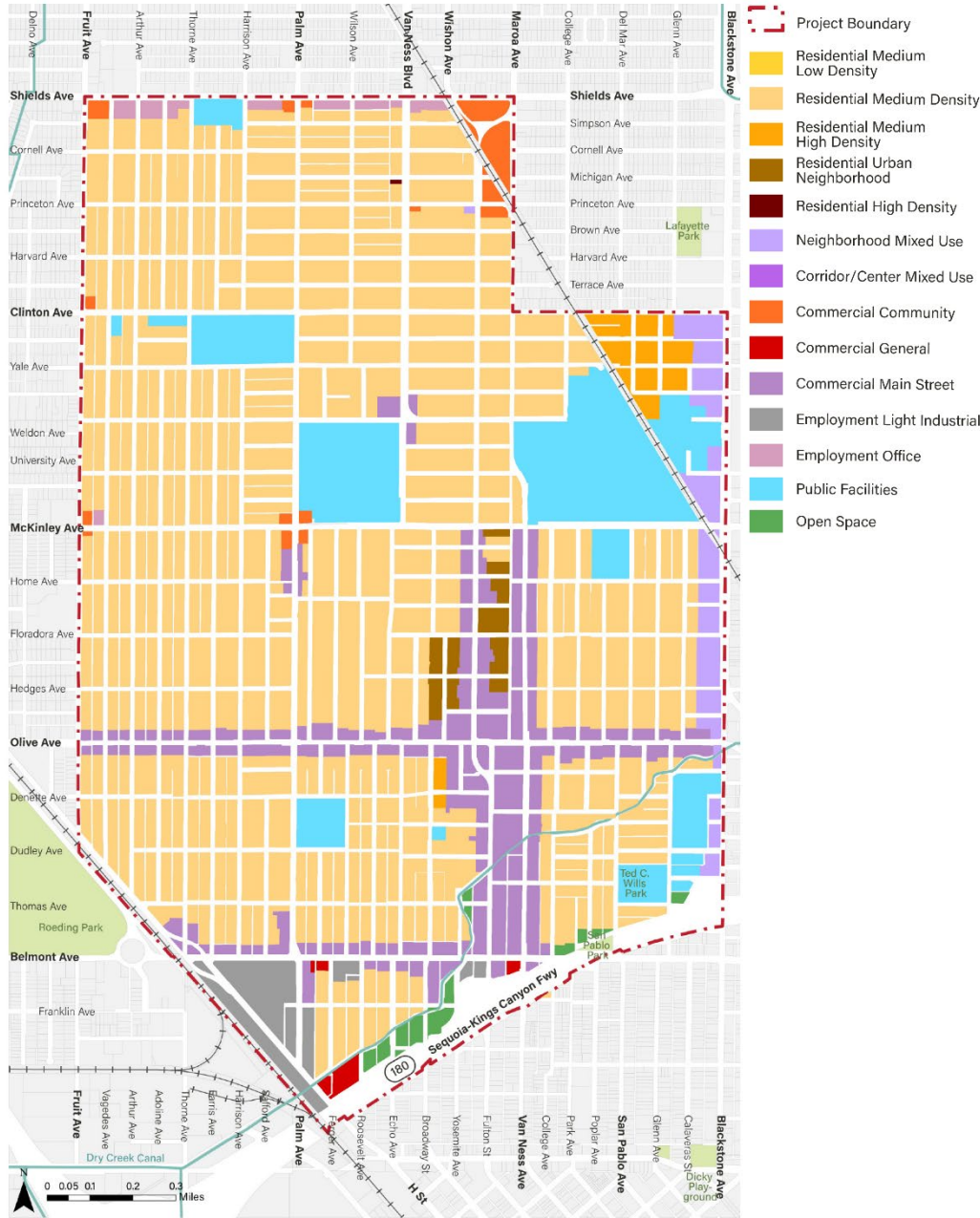
- **Commercial Vitality:** Some neighborhood-serving retail corridors have experienced disinvestment, leading to vacant storefronts and reduced economic opportunities for small businesses and workers. Greater vibrancy could create additional economic opportunities.

- **Air Quality Concerns:** Proximity to major roadways like Blackstone Avenue and Highway 180 and truck traffic from industrial land uses exposes residents to air pollution, affecting public health and quality of life.

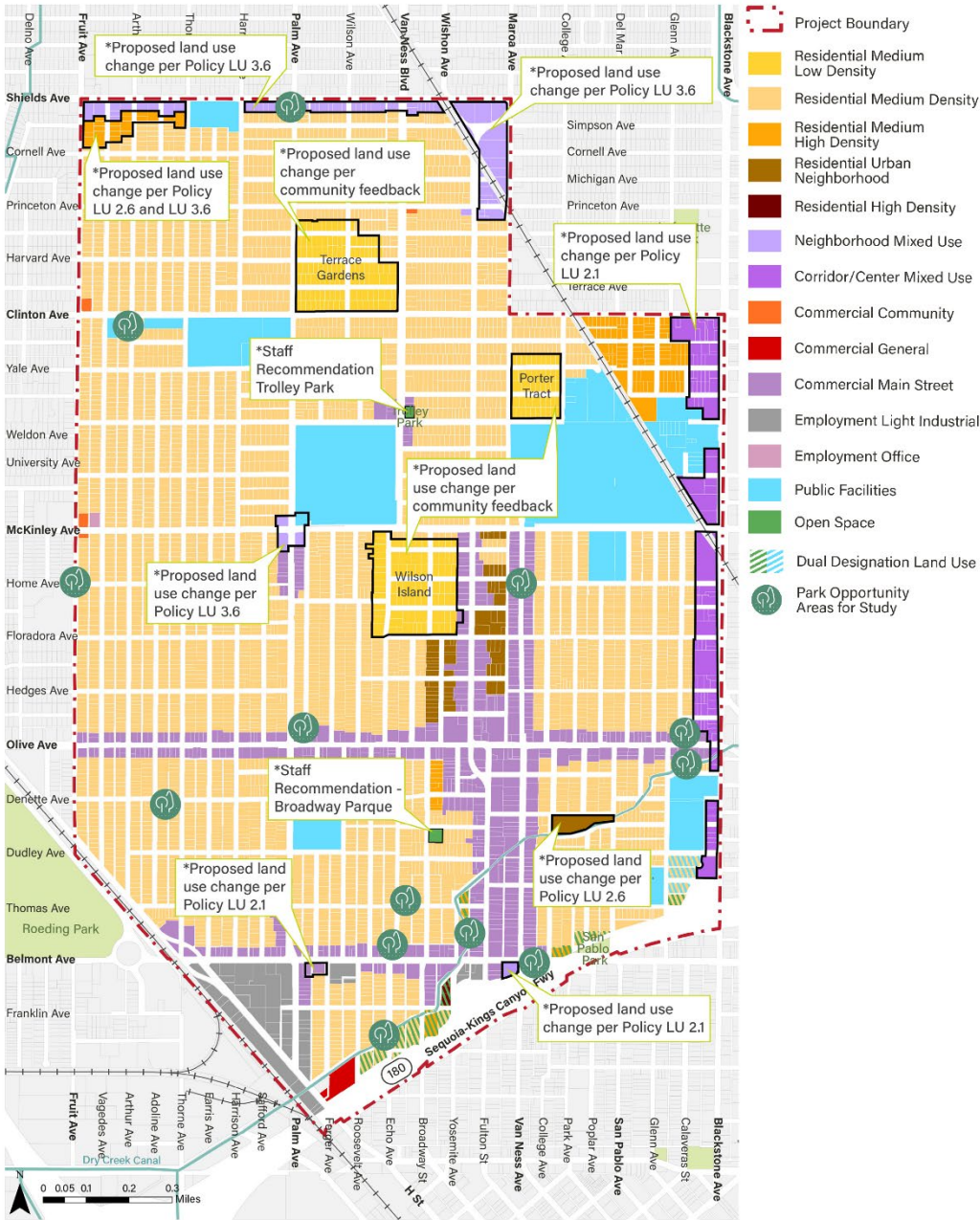
- **Access to Food:** Some areas lack grocery stores and fresh food options, making it more difficult for residents to access healthy food within walking or transit distance.

# Planned Land Use

Existing General Plan Land Use



Tower District Specific Plan Land Use



## Objectives & Policies

### LU 1 MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOWER DISTRICT AND ITS VARIOUS SUBDISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS.

- Require that new housing respects the **character of existing housing stock**.
- Implement proactive **code enforcement** as violations occur, particularly as they relate to public safety and the condition of buildings and landscaping.

### LU 2 RETAIN AND EXPAND THE EXISTING INVENTORY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE TOWER DISTRICT TO ADDRESS DISPLACEMENT OF ITS RESIDENTS.

- Promote **mixed-use development** along commercial corridors.
- Enable development of well-designed **Missing Middle Housing** within single-family neighborhoods and other areas.
- **Discourage the redevelopment of existing residential** uses for commercial-only development.
- Support **reinvestment in older building stock** to support affordability and maintain neighborhood character.
- Encourage the application of citywide **anti-displacement policies** within the Tower District.
- To be consistent with existing use, **rezone existing legal non-conforming multi-family residential uses** with property owner support to the density-appropriate zoning district.
- Provide **resources and education** to Tower District residents of programs available such as eviction protection and buyer assistance programs, as well as other resources the City may have available.

## Objectives & Policies

### LU 3 ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE MIXED-USE AND MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT BY REDUCING OBSTACLES TO FEASIBILITY OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

- Streamline residential project review through the adoption of **objective development standards** and environmental clearance as required by California law.
- Enact regulatory changes to **reduce costs and risks associated with mixed-use and multifamily development**, such as to reduce parking requirements... and provide greater flexibility in addressing private open space requirements.
- **Increase potential residential yields**, such as by increasing allowable densities and building heights as appropriate.
- Emphasize **placemaking** in Tower District.
- Actively increase the **affordable housing inventory** in Tower District.
- Proactively **identify underutilized parcels** for affordable housing and mixed-use development where appropriate.

### LU 4 MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE EXISTING AND PROMOTE NEW NEIGHBORHOOD-SERVING PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED RETAIL SERVICE BUSINESSES WITHIN THE TOWER DISTRICT.

- Support **small commercial businesses**.
- Require commercial projects to place **pedestrian-oriented storefronts** along public sidewalks and restrict parking along public sidewalks.
- Do not allow auto-oriented uses, such as **drive-through restaurants**, in the Commercial Main Street zone district.
- Emphasize the creation of **active frontage on Palm Avenue** between McKinley Avenue and Olive Avenue.
- Use design standards and guidelines to **promote safety** for both daytime and nighttime (after dark) activities.
- **Encourage grocery stores** that offer fresh produce and other healthy foods. Consider incentives such as streamlined permitting for Healthy Food Grocers.



## Objectives & Policies

### LU 5 BALANCE NEIGHBORHOOD SERVING COMMERCIAL NEEDS AND QUALITY OF LIFE WITH THE CULTIVATION OF A SUCCESSFUL CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT.

- Encourage **restrooms** that are available to the public, such as in public buildings and parking garages.
- Utilize zoning standards to **mitigate conflicts and potential noise impacts**, and support business owners by providing clear sound mitigation guidelines and strategies to ensure code compliance.
- Encourage increased **police presence** at night and during major events.
- Support future **street vending programs** that establish consistent procedures and appropriately incorporate street vendors into the Tower District neighborhood.
- Support the Tower Marketing Committee or other [organization] to support **on-going commercial area marketing, organization of festivals and other events, enhanced landscape maintenance and sidewalk cleaning, graffiti abatement, and other beneficial programs.**

### LU 6 ENSURE COMPATIBILITY AMONG LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES IN THE TOWER DISTRICT.

- Maintain industrial zoning for existing industrial uses, while striving to **mitigate their negative effects** on residential areas.
- Allow light industrial uses to have **neighborhood-serving retail.**
- Support the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District in **monitoring emissions.**
- Where applicable, require improvements to properties to be accompanied by **streetscape improvements and neighborhood landscape buffering**, in accordance with existing streetscape standards per the Department of Public Works.

### LU 7 RECOGNIZE THE UNIQUE STRENGTHS AND ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF TOWER DISTRICT'S SUBDISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS.

- Reinforce **Fulton Street, Olive Avenue, and Van Ness Avenue** as major corridors with commercial destinations that serve Tower District's Central Area and adjacent neighborhoods.



04

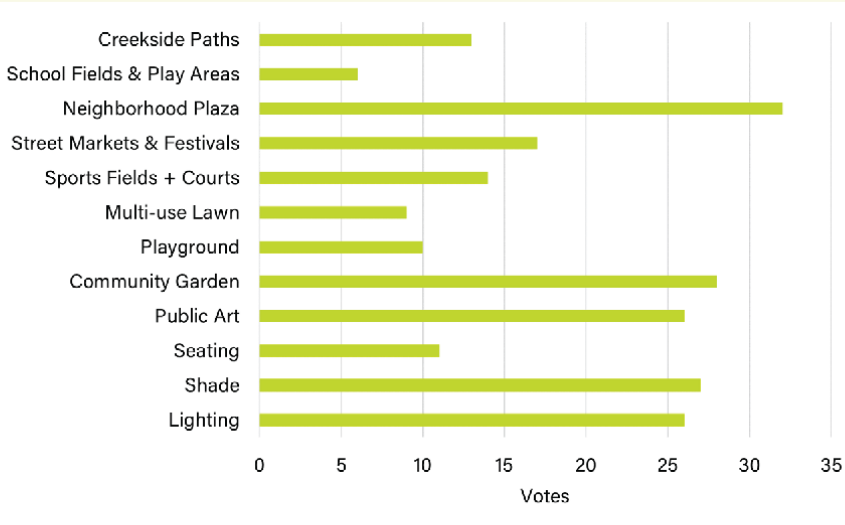
**PARKS AND  
PUBLIC FACILITIES**

# 04 PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

## Community Priorities

**89%** of all survey respondents believed that Tower District has insufficient green spaces and recreation.

### WHAT PUBLIC SPACE ELEMENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE TOWER DISTRICT?



### What We Heard

#### TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

- Access to green space
- Tower public library
- Community garden
- Playgrounds for kids
- Recreational opportunities at Ted C Wills
- Dog park
- Build Broadway Parque
- Open schools for evenings and weekend green spaces
- Parks/public space with native drought tolerant plants, public art
- Diverse street trees
- Sports courts

**More parks, more parks, more parks!**

**Ted C Wills needs a garden, aquatic center, back entrance and to turn the dirt/football field with more events**

**Need for more garbage cans**

**BELMONT AVENUE PARK & OPEN SPACE  
RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMUNITY**



## Health and Equity Considerations

### Health and Equity Considerations

- **Limited Park Access:** The Tower District has a parkland deficit, providing just 0.36 acres per 1,000 residents, well below the City's target of 3 acres per 1,000 residents, limiting opportunities for recreation.

- **Unequal Distribution of Green Spaces:** Some areas, particularly the western part of Tower, have fewer parks within a 10 minute walk, leading to limited recreational opportunities for residents.

- **Urban Heat and Climate Resilience:** The lack of shade and green infrastructure exacerbates the urban heat island effect particularly in South Tower, increasing health risks for vulnerable populations, including seniors and low-income households.

- **Parks and Housing Balance:** Expanding parkland and enhancing open spaces must be considered alongside housing needs to avoid potential displacement or affordability challenges.

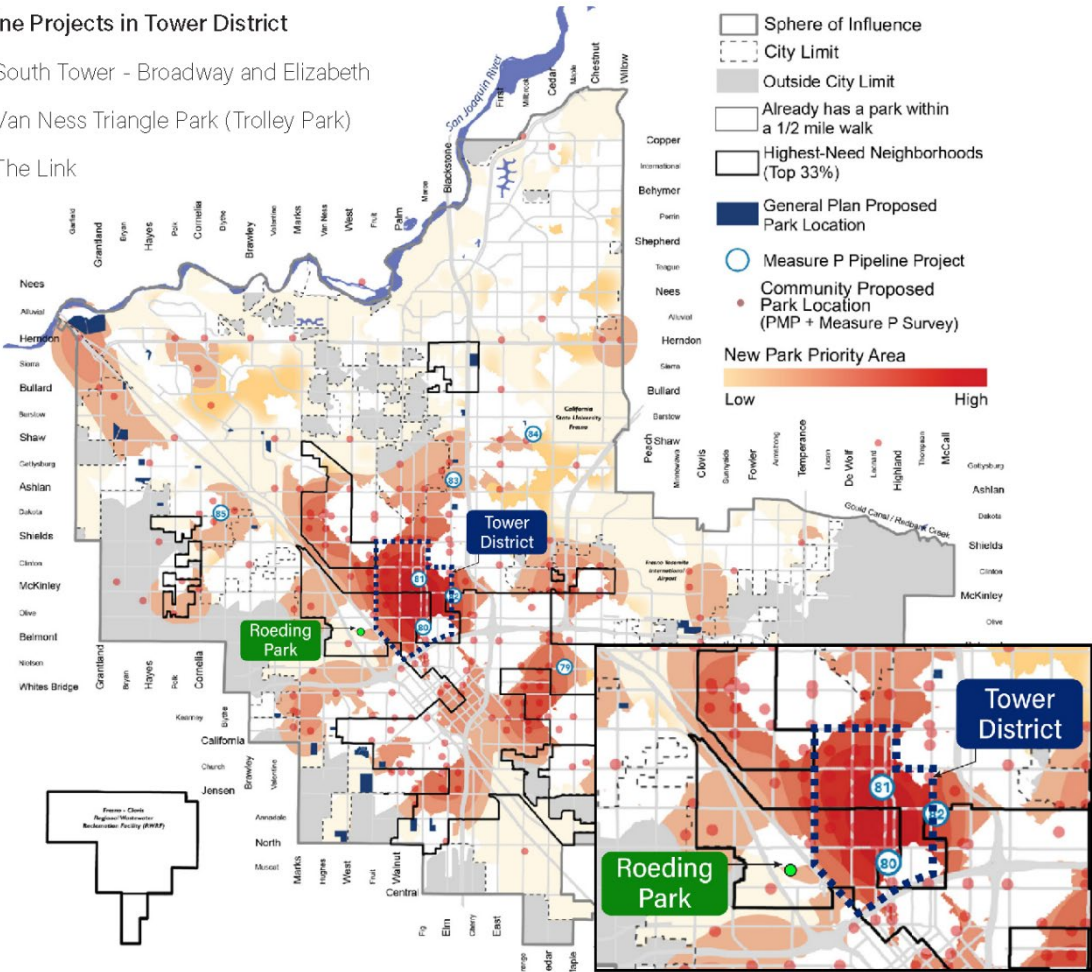
04 PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

# Parks, Park Access, and Park Opportunities

## Priority Areas for New Parks (Measure P)

Pipeline Projects in Tower District

- 80 South Tower - Broadway and Elizabeth
- 81 Van Ness Triangle Park (Trolley Park)
- 82 The Link



## Parks, Park Access, and Park Opportunities



## 04 PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

### 4.6 Objectives and Policies

POS 1 INCREASE AND ENHANCE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AREAS AND AMENITIES IN THE TOWER DISTRICT.

POS 2 IMPROVE ACCESS TO PARKS FOR TOWER DISTRICT RESIDENTS

POS 3 RECOGNIZE THAT STREETS SERVE AS PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND PROVIDE FOR THEIR IMPROVEMENT IN TOWER DISTRICT.

POS 4 ALIGN PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES WITH COMMUNITY NEEDS TO SUPPORT QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE TOWER DISTRICT.





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**05**

**CIRCULATION**

## Community Priorities

### What We Heard

Nearly **60%** of all respondents got around on foot and a **24%** got around by bike.

But over **27%** respondents did not feel safe getting around on foot, and by bike in Tower District.

**Tree and sidewalk maintenance pose hazards for our community.**

**A continued effort is needed to make Olive Ave walkable, bike-friendly, and safely drivable.**

**Safety! Please! At night it is not safe to walk through the Tower District because of the bars.**

### TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR CIRCULATION

- Safer speeds through neighborhoods
- Safe routes to school
- Walkability
- Shaded sidewalks, more trees
- Better biking infrastructure
- Parking availability for residents
- Alleys should be developed or blocked off
- More public transit/ light rail/ weekend trolley
- Better maintenance - street trees, sidewalks, lighting, streets, garbage
- Speed cameras on street light poles, more bike cops, security cameras; more security to keep civilians safe

## Health and Equity Considerations

- **Impact of Regional Freeways on Connectivity and Neighborhood**

**Disruption:** The construction of regional freeway infrastructure, including State Route 180, has influenced mobility patterns in and around the Tower District. Like many freeway projects in urban areas across the country, the expansion of Highway 180 introduced significant changes to the built environment, altering the connections between neighborhoods, shifting commercial activity, and increasing traffic-related air quality concerns. The freeway's alignment created a physical separation between South Tower and adjacent neighborhoods such as Lowell and Downtown, affecting historical community ties and the economic vitality of nearby commercial districts. Over time, changes in transportation infrastructure and regional development patterns have contributed to shifting land use trends, including reduced investment in older commercial corridors and localized air quality challenges near high-traffic roadways for part of the south and eastern Tower District.

- **Traffic Safety and Injury Risks:** High vehicle speeds on major corridors create unsafe conditions for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists, increasing the risk of traffic-related injuries and fatalities. In the Tower District, key roads like McKinley Avenue, Belmont Avenue, and Blackstone Avenue experience a high frequency of collisions, especially at intersections. Cut-through traffic in neighborhoods adds to safety hazards. Tower District is a very walkable neighborhood, but gaps in pedestrian infrastructure pose safety risks.
- **Public Transit Access:** While the Tower District has multiple bus routes, transit frequency and coverage may not fully meet the needs of residents who rely on it for jobs, healthcare, and daily necessities, particularly shift workers and lower-income populations. Transit users often experience long wait times, limited late-night service, and inadequate stop infrastructure such as shelters and seating. These issues disproportionately affect those without cars, including seniors, students, and low-income residents.

## Health and Equity Considerations

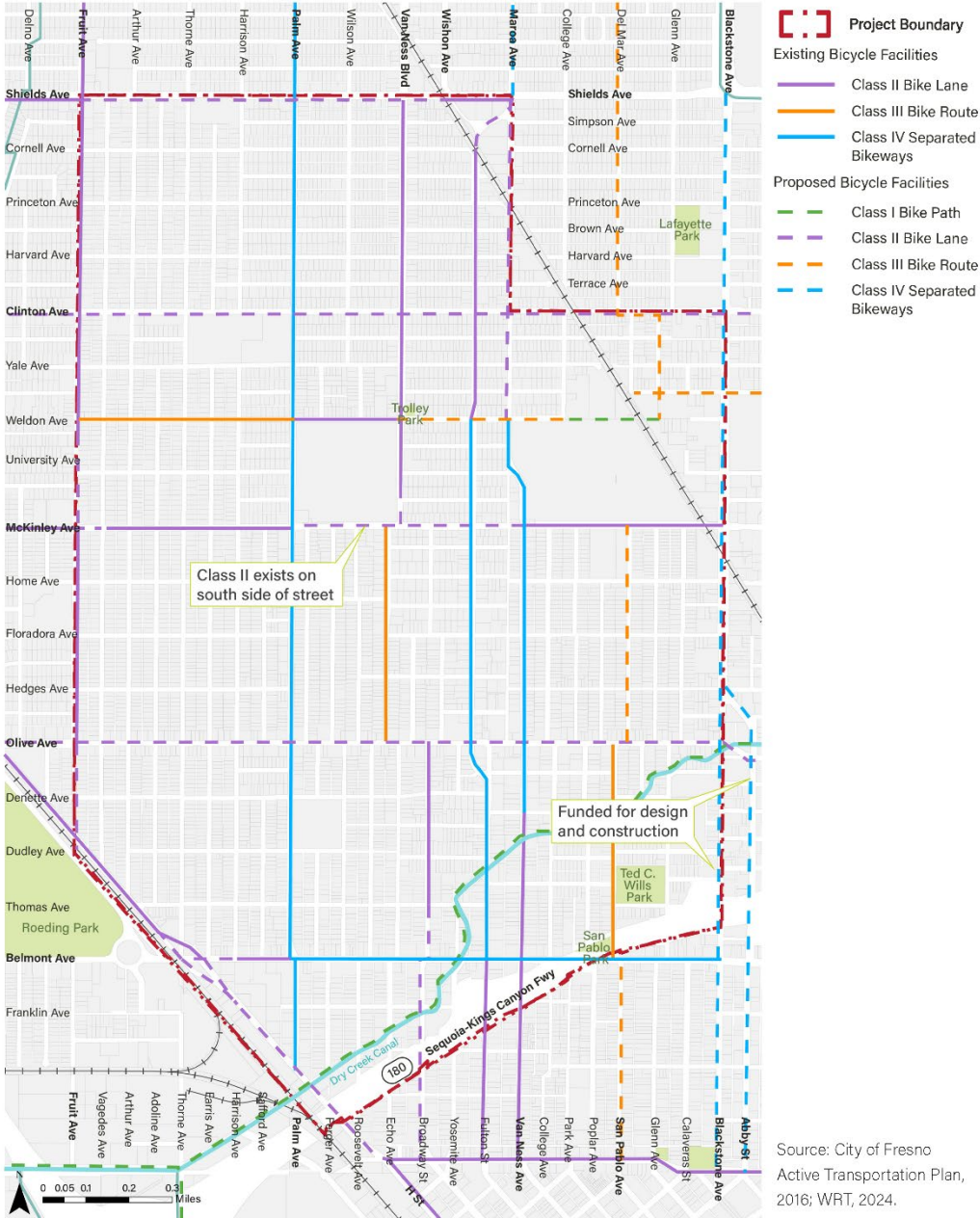
- **Lack of Shade and Heat Exposure:** Many streets in the Tower District lack sufficient tree canopy, intensifying the urban heat island effect and making walking, biking, and waiting for transit uncomfortable, especially in the South Tower area. Key routes like Olive Avenue, Belmont Avenue, and Blackstone Avenue show increased heat exposure for pedestrians and transit users. This issue disproportionately impacts lower-income residents who often lack access to air conditioning or personal vehicles.
- **Disproportionate Exposure to Air Pollution:** Residents living near major roadways face elevated pollution levels that can lead to serious health issues such as respiratory illnesses and heart disease. In the Tower District, those living near Highway 180, Blackstone Ave, and designated truck routes face some of the highest concentrations of vehicle emissions, including diesel particulate matter from heavy freight traffic. In South Tower, the combined effects of being close to freeways and increased truck traffic have created a significant environmental burden for the residents, many of whom belong to historically underserved communities.



# Complete Street Enhancements



Existing and Planned Bike Network





## 05 CIRCULATION

### 5.12 Objectives and Policies

C 1 IMPROVE TOWER DISTRICT STREETS TO ENHANCE ACCESS USING ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION AND CREATE A BETTER ENVIRONMENT.

C 2 FOCUS CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS ON PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.

C 3 ENHANCE SAFETY ON LOCAL INTERIOR NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS.

C 4 INITIATE PROJECTS THAT HELP MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS RESULTING FROM REGIONAL CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS.

C 5 MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF TRUCK TRAFFIC ON THE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE TOWER DISTRICT.

C 6 DEVELOP AND ADOPT A PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM) STRATEGY FOR THE TOWER DISTRICT THAT SUPPORTS COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY AND ENHANCES THE PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

C 7 ENHANCE THE UNIQUE IDENTITY OF THE TOWER DISTRICT WITH PLACEMAKING.

C 8 CREATE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TOWER DISTRICT.





06

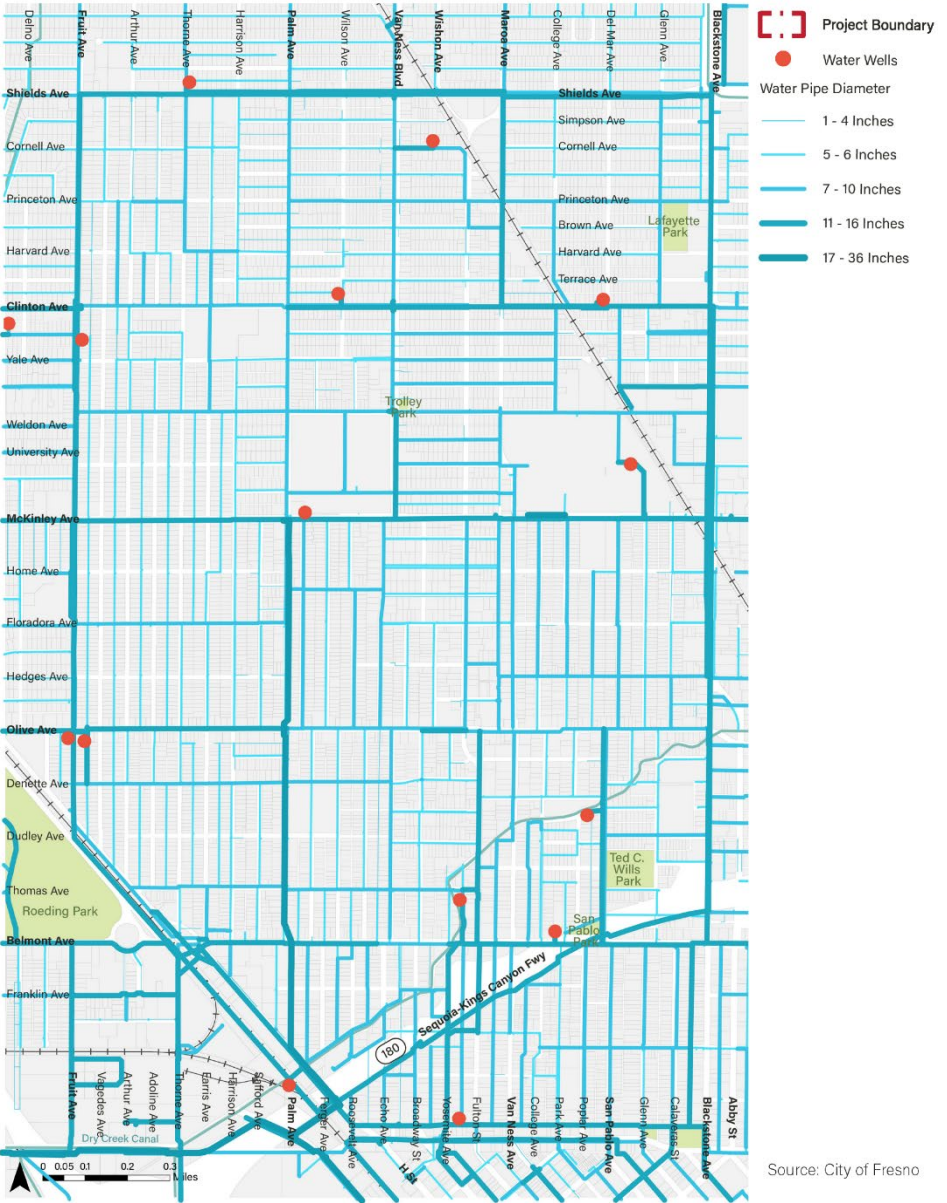
UTILITIES



# Water and sewer system maps

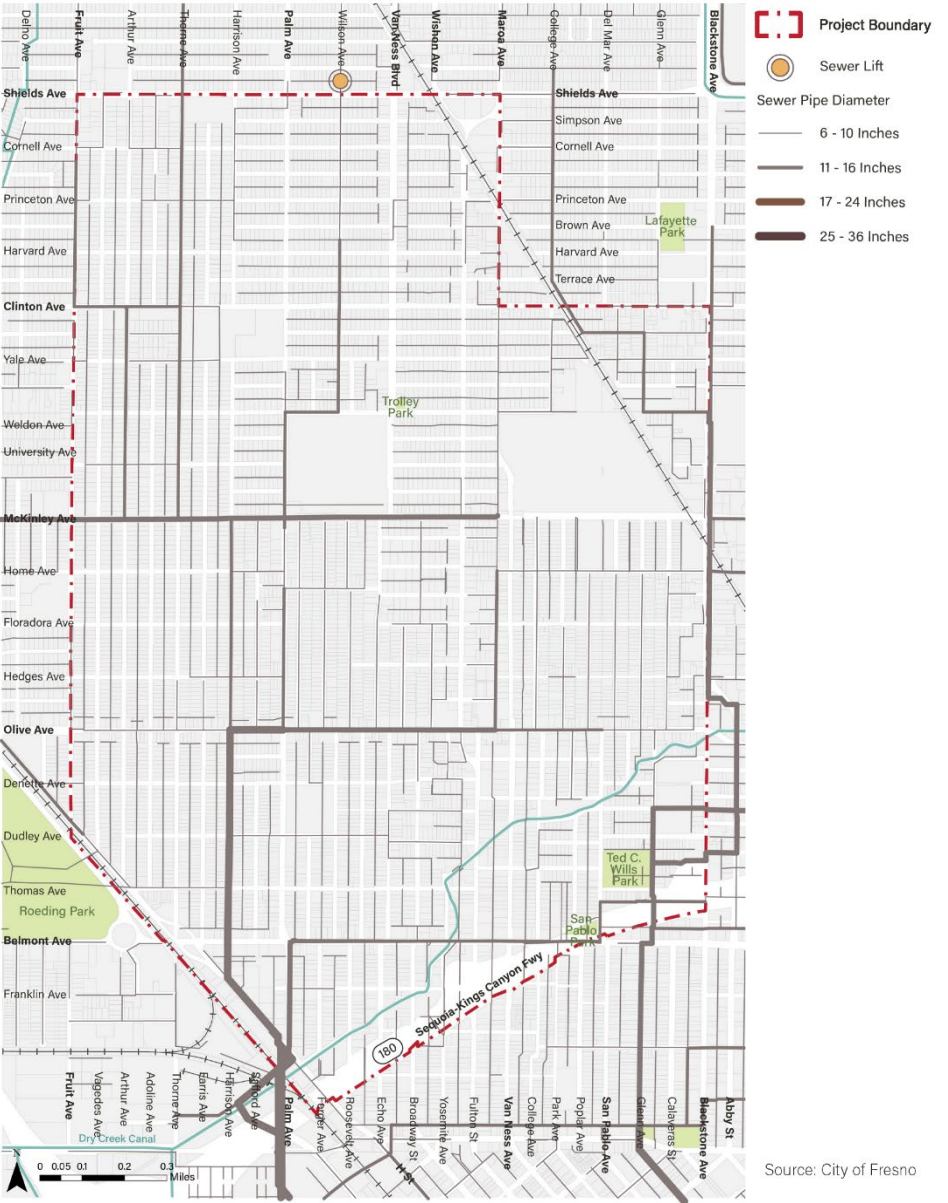
## Water Infrastructure

FIGURE 6.1| Existing Water Infrastructure



## Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure

FIGURE 6.2| Existing Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure





Stormwater system and flood zone maps

FIGURE 6.3 | Existing and Planned Stormwater Infrastructure

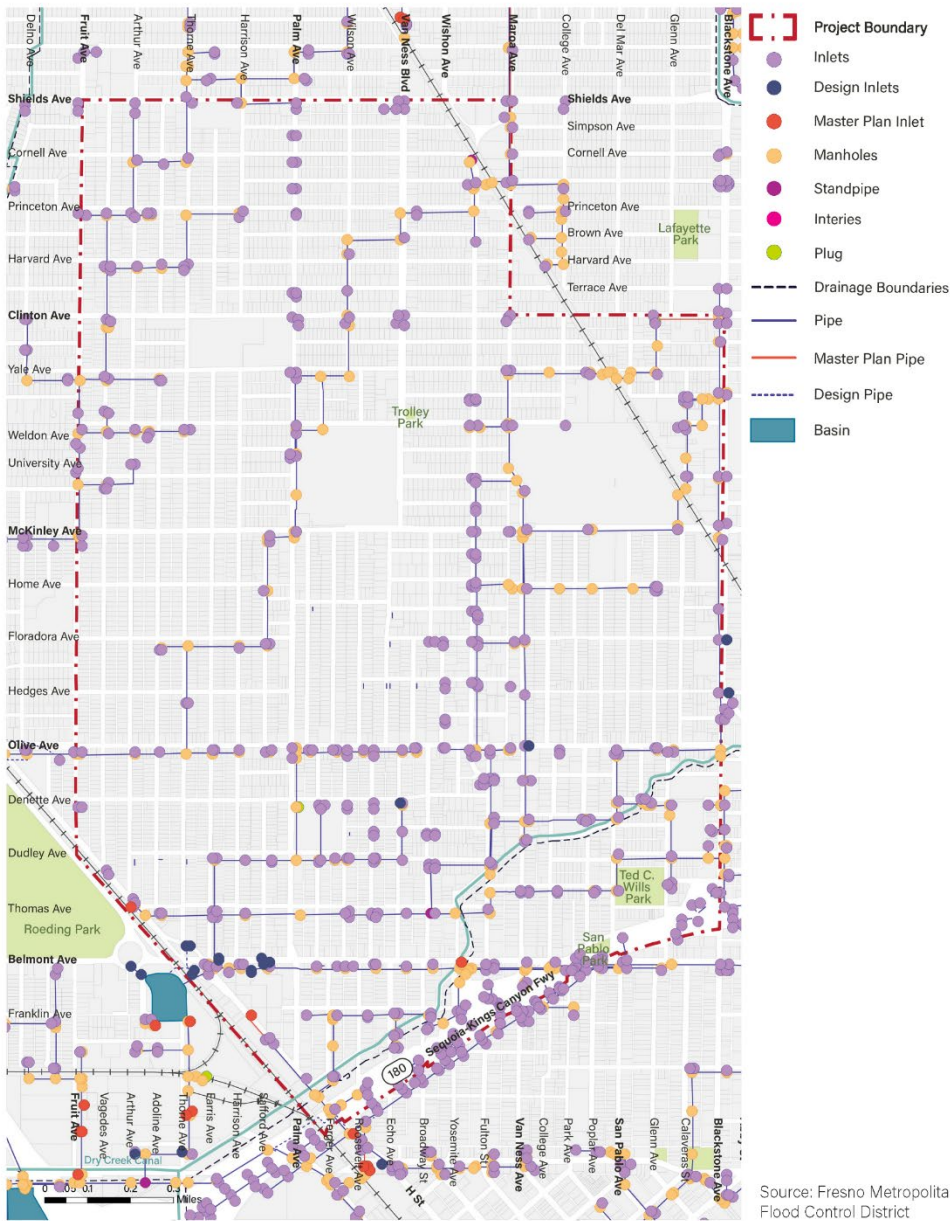


FIGURE 6.4 | Existing FEMA Flood Zone Designations



## 06 UTILITIES

### 6.5 Objectives and Policies

- **UT 1** PROVIDE FOR THE ORDERLY PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES IN THE TOWER DISTRICT.
- **UT 2** ADDRESS UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS IN WAYS THAT ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE TOWER DISTRICT.
- **UT 3** ENCOURAGE RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABLE FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT.







**07**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

07 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Matrix

Studies, Programs, Regulations, and Improvements	Related Plan Policies	Timeframe	City of Fresno Department Principally Responsible	Review Bodies	Partner Agencies & Organizations	Resources & Potential Funding
Transportation Programs						
Evaluate and address curbside management needs in commercial districts.	C 1.9	Near-Term	DPW PDD	City Council	TDPA NFMA TDIC	California Housing and Sustainable Communities Grants
Address potential impacts from street closures and rerouted vehicles during special events, in light of motorist, pedestrian, and bicyclists needs.	C 4.4, C 7.5					
Develop a landscape improvement program to beautify Tower District streets.	C 4.5			PRAC City Council		
Manage parking availability, incl. on-street parking, shared parking facilities, residential parking permits, and parking demand reduction.	C 6.1, C 6.2, C 6.4, C 6.5, C 6.6	Mid-Term		City Council	TDIC	

# HEALTH AND EQUITY FRAMEWORK

## Health & Equity Appendix

Policy Recommendations	Air Quality		Environmental comfort		Active Lifestyle		Access to Food		Housing Stability		Access to Jobs	
	H	E	H	E	H	E	H	E	H	E	H	E
<b>C 1 Improve Tower District streets to enhance access using all modes of transportation and create a better environment.</b>												
C 1.1 Improve the multi-modal functions of key corridors.	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	○	○	+	+
C 1.2 Enhance Main Streets.	○	○	+	+	+	+	○	○	○	○	○	○
C 1.3 Encourage active transportation modes by improving bicycle access, safety, and comfort for users of all ages and abilities.	+	+	+	+	+	+	○	○	○	○	+	+
C 1.4 Provide universal accessibility.	○	○	○	○	+	+	+	+	○	○	+	+
C 1.5 Increase transit frequency.	+	+	○	○	○	○	+	+	○	○	+	+
C 1.6 Increase late night transportation options.	+	+	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	+	+
C 1.7 Establish mobility hubs.	○	+	○	+	+	+	+	+	○	○	+	+
C 1.8 Improve transit amenities.	○	+	+	+	+	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
C 1.9 Coordinate curbside activities.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
C 1.10 Encourage "Green Alleys."	+	+	+	+	+	+	○	○	○	○	○	○





02

# DESIGN STANDARDS + GUIDELINES





CITY OF FRESNO

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

# TOWER DISTRICT DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

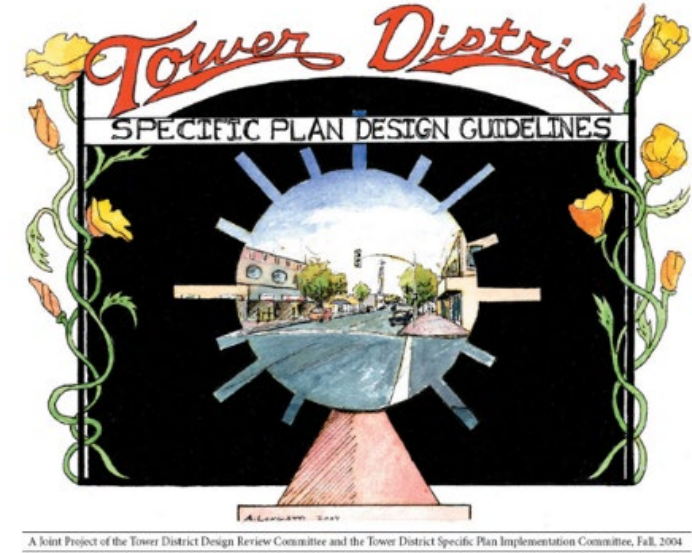
AUGUST 2025





# How is the STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES document different from the 2005 Guidelines?

1. **Update** terminology to match the Citywide Development Code.
2. **Refer to Development Code** where guidelines have already been codified.
3. Split each topic into **two subsections: Standards and Guidelines**.
  - a) When a guideline is already fairly objective, make it an objective standard.
  - b) When a guideline is more subjective (*i.e. surrounding "compatibility"*) keep it as a guideline to maintain flexibility.
4. **Add** Standards and Guidelines to provide a clear and complete framework, especially in light of State streamlining laws.





# ORIGINAL STRUCTURE

## E. Parking/Vehicular Access

### 1. Surface Parking Lot Design

- The rear of the lot is the preferred location for surface parking.
- Surface parking lots adjacent to a street should only be approved if site conditions make it impossible to locate the parking behind the building. Under no circumstances should a parking lot be located between a building and the street for new construction.
- In no case should surface parking occupy more than 50% of a lot.
- Handicapped and bicycle parking should be provided for per current City standards.
- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, a clearly marked pedestrian walkway must be provided from the sidewalk to the entrance of the building.
- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, it should be buffered from the street with a screening wall or fence 3 to 4 feet in height in order to enclose the parking lot. Screening walls or fencing must be attractively designed and must use complementary (or the same) materials used for the building or materials that are specific to the area.
- Screening walls should be located 2 to 3 feet back from the sidewalk to allow adequate room for landscape materials. In addition, greenery/vegetation on or through the wall or fence is encouraged.
- Screening walls must have one pedestrian access point for every 50 feet of street frontage.

**THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment house is behind the main structure, accessed by a driveway along the side of the building. This is the preferred placement for Multiple family parking.*

**NOT THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment complex is in front of the main structure. This arrangement is never appropriate.*

# NEW STRUCTURE

*Refine general narratives to be Guidelines, such as at beginning of sections (not shown)*

*Divide items into Standards and Guidelines sub-sections*

## E. Parking Setback

*Change terminology to match Development Code*

### 1. Surface Parking

#### a. Standards

- Surface parking shall be located behind the primary building and shall not be located between any primary building and a public sidewalk or street. For corner lots, this standard shall apply to the street with the highest classification per the Land Use and Circulation Map in the Fresno General Plan.
- Surface parking shall occupy no more than 50% of any lot.

#### b. Guidelines

*When a surface parking is permitted adjacent to a public sidewalk or street due to a corner location, the following guidelines will apply:*

- A clearly marked pedestrian walkway should be provided from the sidewalk to the entrance of the building.
- The surface parking area should be buffered from the street with a screening wall or fence 3 to 4 feet in height. Screening walls or fencing should be attractively designed and should use complementary (or the same) materials used for the building or materials that are specific to the area.
- Screening walls should be located 2 to 3 feet back from the sidewalk to allow adequate room for landscape materials. In addition, greenery/vegetation on or through the wall or fence is encouraged.
- Screening walls should have one pedestrian access point for every 50 feet of street frontage.

**THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment house is behind the main structure, accessed by a driveway along the side of the building. This is the preferred placement for Multiple family parking.*

**NOT THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment complex is in front of the main structure. This arrangement is never appropriate.*

# ORGANIZATION OF DOCUMENT

## I. Introduction

## II. Residential Single-Family Districts

## III. Residential Multi-Family Districts

## IV. Mixed-Use and Commercial Districts

## V. Architectural Style

ZONING DESIGNATION	APPLICABLE SECTION
Residential Single-Family Districts (RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RS-4, or RS-5)	Section II. Residential Single-Family Districts
Residential Multi-Family Districts (RM-1, RM-2, RM-3, or RM-MH)	Section III. Residential Multi-Family Districts
Mixed Use Districts (NMX, CMX, or RMX)	Section IV. Mixed-Use and Commercial Districts
Commercial Districts (CMS, CC, CR, CG, CH, or CRC)	Section IV. Mixed-Use and Commercial Districts
All Other Districts	Not Applicable

Subareas within the Tower District are also regulated by the Apartment House Overlay (AHO) zoning designation, which allows multifamily development without ground-floor commercial where it would otherwise be required, along with other AHO requirements.



## **SECTIONS IN EACH CHAPTER** *(names same as Development Code)*

**A. Purpose**

**B. Uses**

**C. Density and Massing**

**D. Site Design**

**E. Facade Design**

## **SOURCES OF CONTENT** *(noted in blue italic text)*

- Original TDDG text
- Proposed alteration/adaptation of original text
- Development Code references for consistency and ease of use
- New text proposed by consultant

# APPROACH AND RATIONALE

1. Follow outline and section names in Development Code
2. Adhere to original TDDG and Development Code content as much as possible.
3. Clarify critical TDDG and Development Code provisions if ambiguous.
4. Make original Guidelines into Standards where critical to the design character of Tower District.
5. Add new “best practices” where incomplete.
6. Anticipate that some project proposals will qualify for streamlined “ministerial” approvals pursuant to State law.

*(State streamlining allows qualifying housing projects to follow a ministerial path using objective standards, free from subjective interpretations and discretionary decisions.)*



01

**INTRODUCTION**



# **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. History of the Tower District** - better flow and up to date.
- B. Vision** – adapted from original TDDG and Specific Plan update.
- C. Purposes** – from original TDDG, recent best practices, consistency with Housing Element and State.
- D. Applicability** – relationship of chapters to zoning districts.
- E. How to Use This Document**

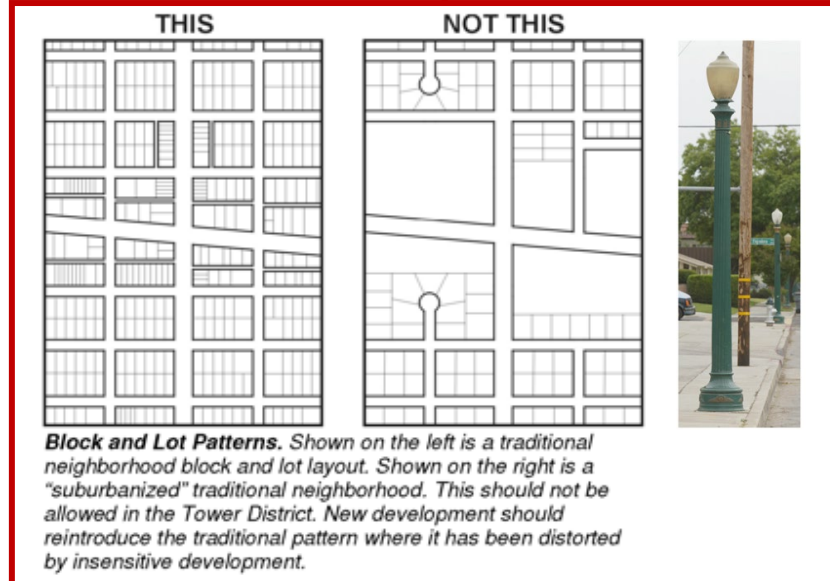


02

**RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-  
FAMILY DISTRICTS**

## D. Site Design

- Parking Access Location
- Parking Buffering
- Parking Design
- Pedestrian Access and Street Frontage
- Blocks, Streets, and Alleys



**Detached Garage Behind The House.** The place where the car lives should not visually dominate the place where the people live. Streets lined with homes like this one are pleasing and popular.



**The Snout House.** This garage dominates the façade of the house. To a pedestrian, this street looks more like a warehouse district than a neighborhood. The Tower District would not be a special place if homes like this were allowed to proliferate.



## E. Facade Design

- Architectural Style
- Facade Articulations
- Roofs
- Cladding Materials and Finishes
- Windows
- Primary Entrance Design
- Attic Vents






	Style	Cladding Materials	Roofing Materials	Other Features
	<b>Neo-Classical</b>  <i>Including Colonial Revival, Italianate, etc.</i>	Brick, clapboard, smooth stucco	Wood shingles, composite shingles, sometimes ribbed tin.	Pedimented doors and gables, classical columns, porticos, ornamented cornices, balustrades,
	<b>Mediterranean</b>  <i>Including Spanish Colonial, Monterey, Mission Revival, etc.</i>	Smooth stucco.	Red ceramic tile of various types—straight barrel mission tile, tapered mission tile, Spanish tile, or American Spanish tile.	Quatrefoil windows, shaped parapets, arched entry porches.
	<b>Tudor</b>	Usually smooth stucco, sometimes brick or stone.	Wood shingles, slate shingles, composite shingles as a replacement.	Half-timbering, multiple front gables, multi-level eaves, rounded entryways.
	<b>Craftsman</b>	Usually clapboard, sometimes split wood shingles or stone.	Wood shingles, composite shingles.	Eaves decorated with exposed rafter tails and cutout brackets, large porches with tapered piers, low-pitched roofs.
	<b>Prairie</b>	Stucco, clapboard.	Clay tiles, wood shingles, composite shingles as a replacement.	Wide eave overhangs that are boxed without brackets, low pitched roofs, geometric patterns of small pane window glazing, tall casement windows.

Table from original TDDG.

F. Additional Site Standards & Guidelines

- Fencing & Security
- Ground-Mounted Mechanical Equipment
- Outdoor Lighting and Illuminations
- Signs



Image from original TDDG.

TABLE 15-2608: PERMITTED SIGN TYPES BY ZONING DISTRICT							
Zoning District (Frontage)	Permitted Sign Types						
	Awning	Monument	Pole	Projecting	Roof	Wall	Window
Buffer, Residential, and Public and Semi-Public Districts							
All Districts	See <a href="#">Section 15-2609</a> , Signage Allowances for Specific Uses						
Mixed-Use Districts							
NMX	Permitted	-	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CMX	Permitted	Permitted	—	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
RMX	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted



03

**RESIDENTIAL MULTI-  
FAMILY DISTRICTS**





04

**MIXED-USE AND  
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS**



05

**ARCHITECTURAL  
STYLE**

# GLOSSARY

See also Development Code Section 15-6802, Definitions. Terms defined in Section 15-6802 are indicated by an asterisk (\*) below.

**Accessory Dwelling Unit.** A smaller self-contained residential unit located on the same parcel as a principal residential building.

**Accessory Structure.\***

**Active Fronts.** Ground-level building frontages with frequent doors, windows, and uses (like shops or cafés) that encourage pedestrian interaction.

**Addition.** An expansion to an existing building that increases its floor area or footprint.

**Alley.\***

**Apartment House Overlay (AHO).** A zoning tool that permits apartment buildings in zoning districts where they might not otherwise be allowed. See Development Code Section 15-1609, Apartment House Overlay District.

**Appearance.** The characteristics of a building or features that are visible and not concealed.

**Architectural Compatibility.** The degree to which a building's design harmonizes with other parts of the same building and/or harmonizes with its surroundings, such as through massing, materials, or composition.

**Architectural Diversity.** Variation in building styles, forms, and materials within a neighborhood or development.

**Art.** Artwork used as a placemaking or decorative element in the built environment.

**Art Deco.** A design style from the early 20th century characterized by geometric shapes, streamlined forms, and ornamental detailing.

**Arts and Crafts.** An architectural and design movement emphasizing handcraftsmanship, natural materials, and simplicity.

**Awning.\***

**Awning, Retractable.** A type of awning that can be extended or retracted, mechanically or manually, to adjust the extent of shade.

**Balcony.\***

**Balcony, Juliet.** A shallow balcony in front of a window or door, which may be deep enough to stand but not for dining.





# 03

## DRAFT EIR



# PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

## TOWER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

### FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

City of Fresno  
Planning and Development Department  
2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, California 93721

State Clearinghouse Number: 2025050309



August 2025

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04

NEXT STEPS





**THANK YOU!**