



Fresno City Council Tower District Specific Plan Update



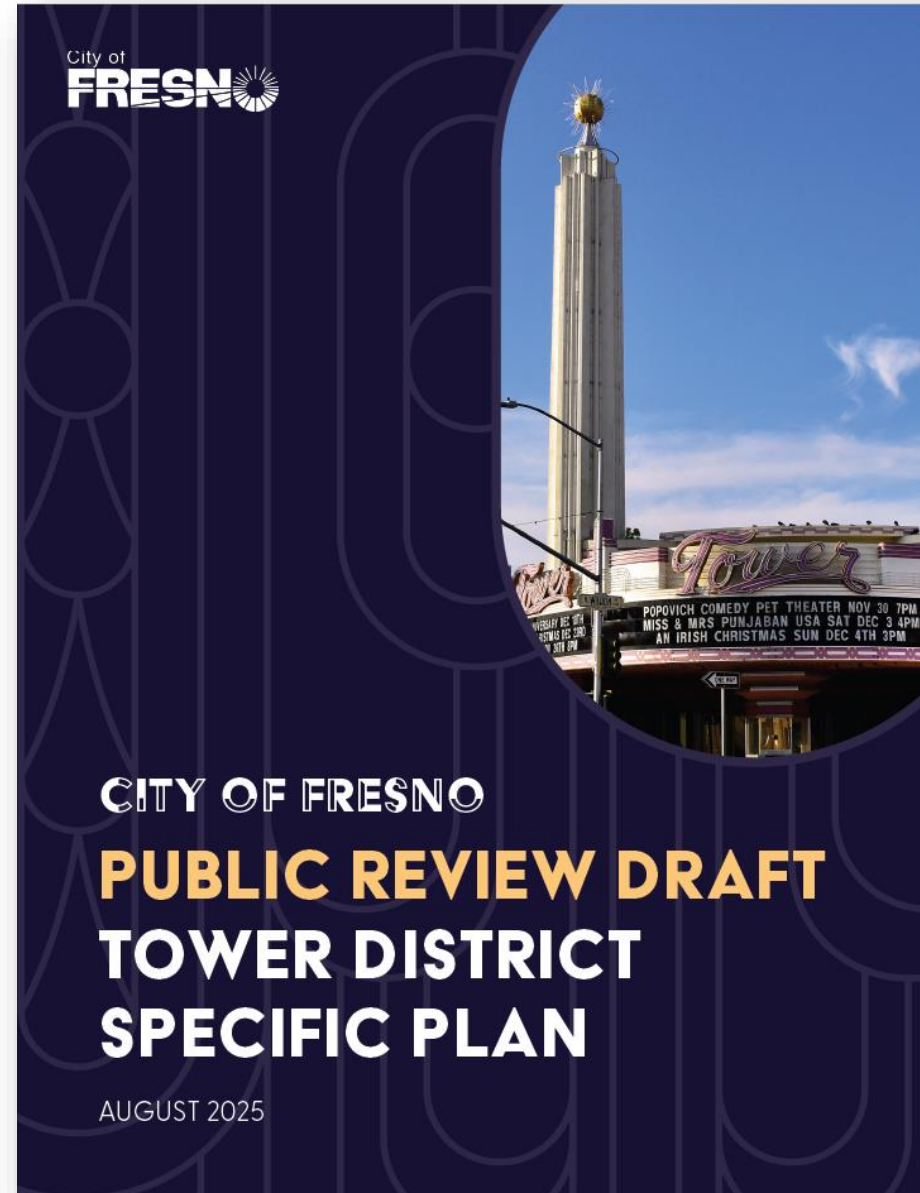
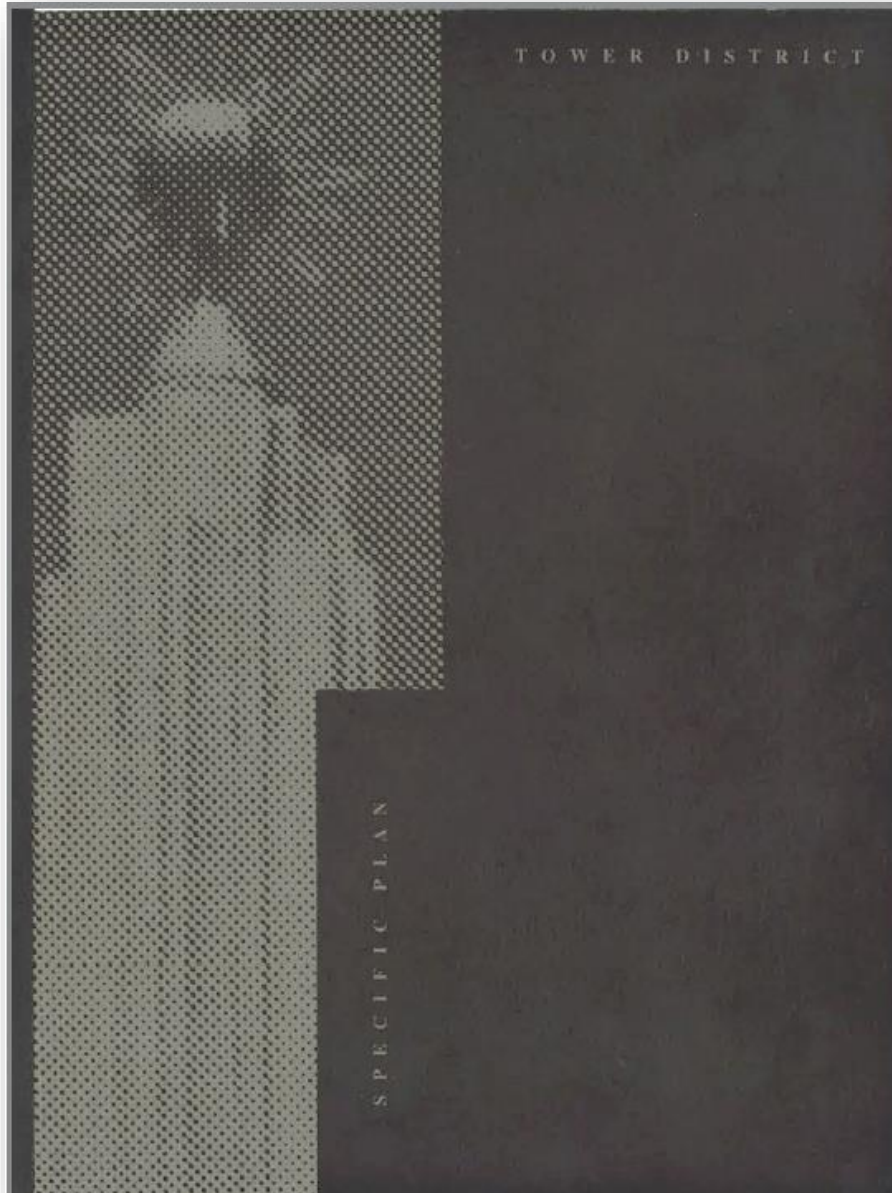
PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Background
2. Outreach & Engagement
3. Plan Overview
4. Design Standards and Guidelines
5. Environmental Impact Report
6. Public Comment
7. Findings & Staff Recommendations

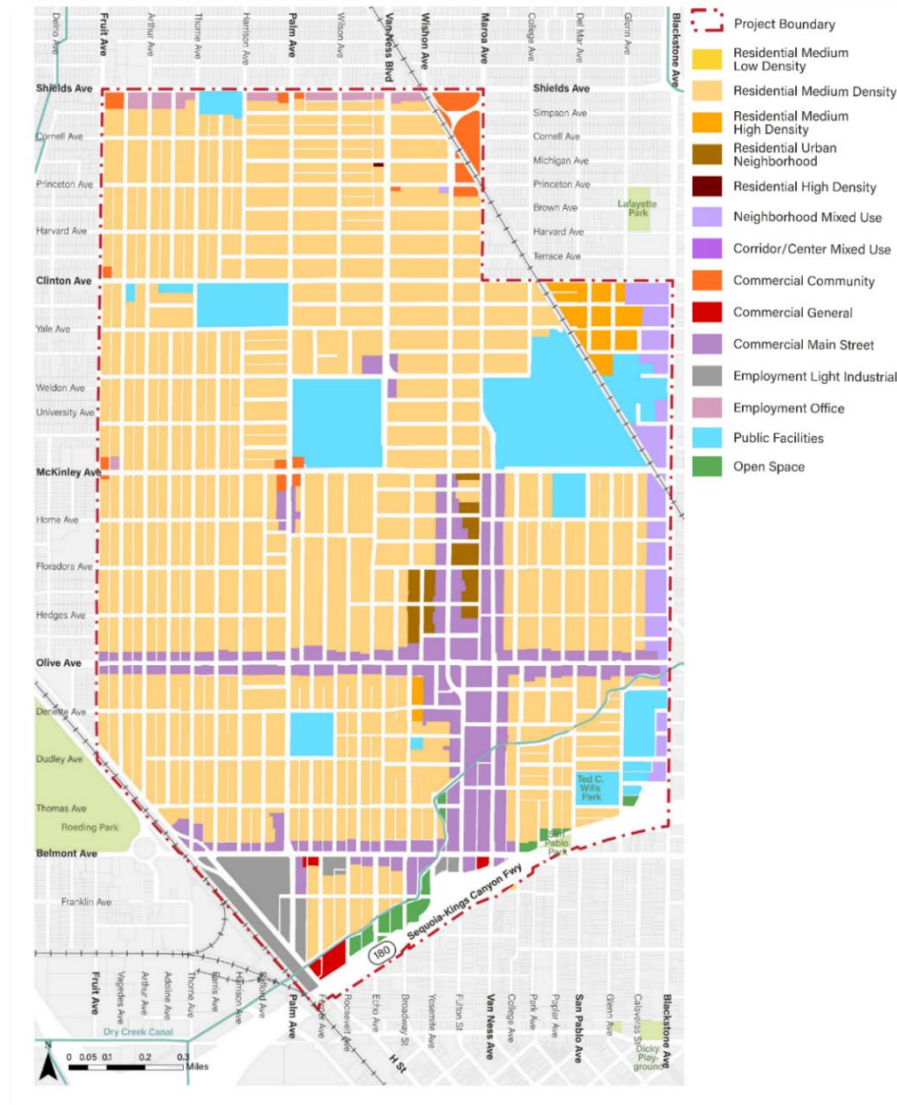




1. BACKGROUND



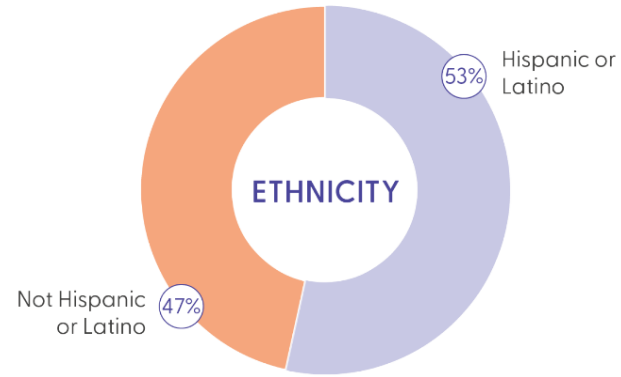
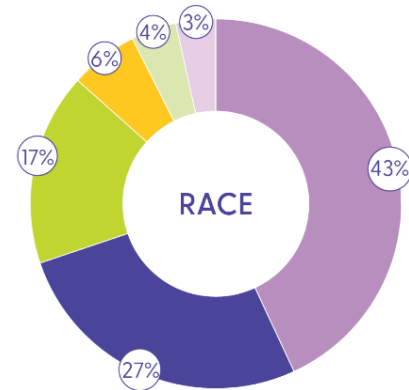
Tower District Specific Plan



Demographics & Community Character

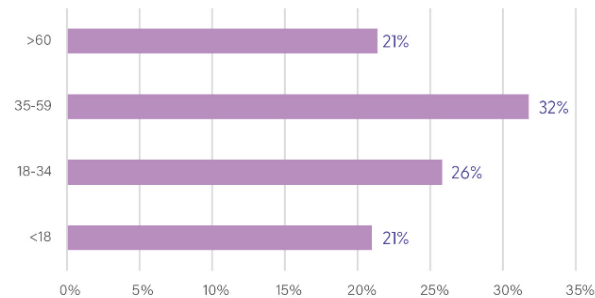
TOWER DISTRICT

RACE & ETHNICITY

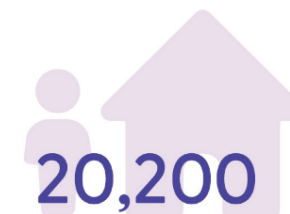


Note: In the United States, "Latino" or "Hispanic" is considered an ethnicity, not a race, according to the US Census Bureau. This means that individuals who identify as Latino or Hispanic may be of any race. Therefore, the Ethnicity diagram above represents 100% of the total population of the Tower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

AGE RANGE

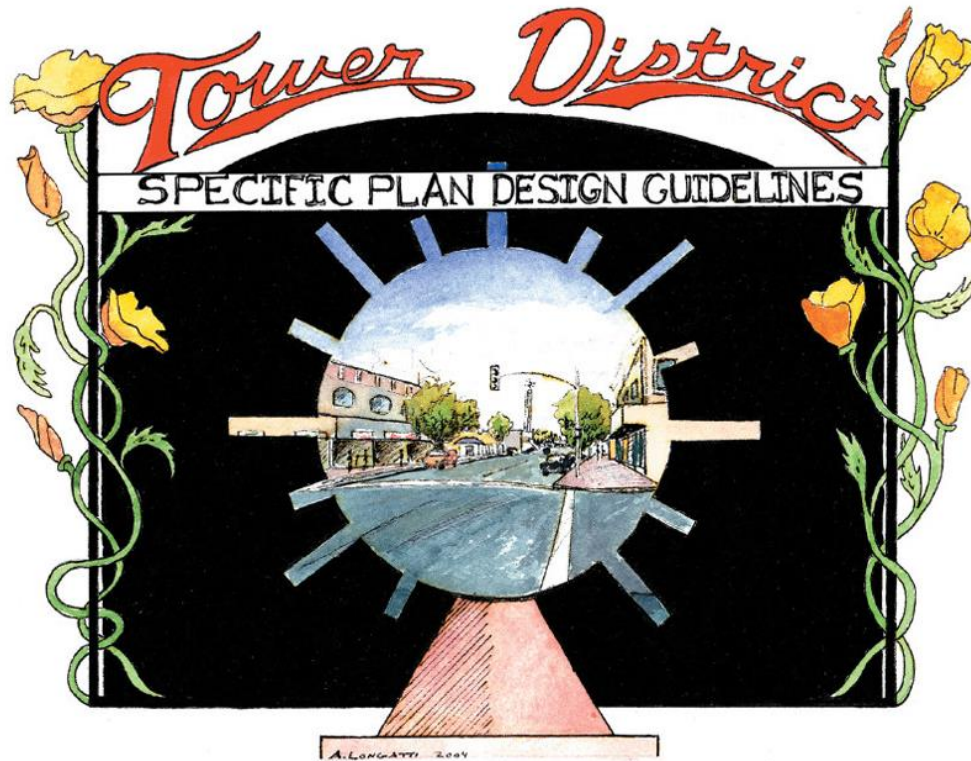


POPULATION



Approximate

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



A Joint Project of the Tower District Design Review Committee and the Tower District Specific Plan Implementation Committee, Fall, 2004

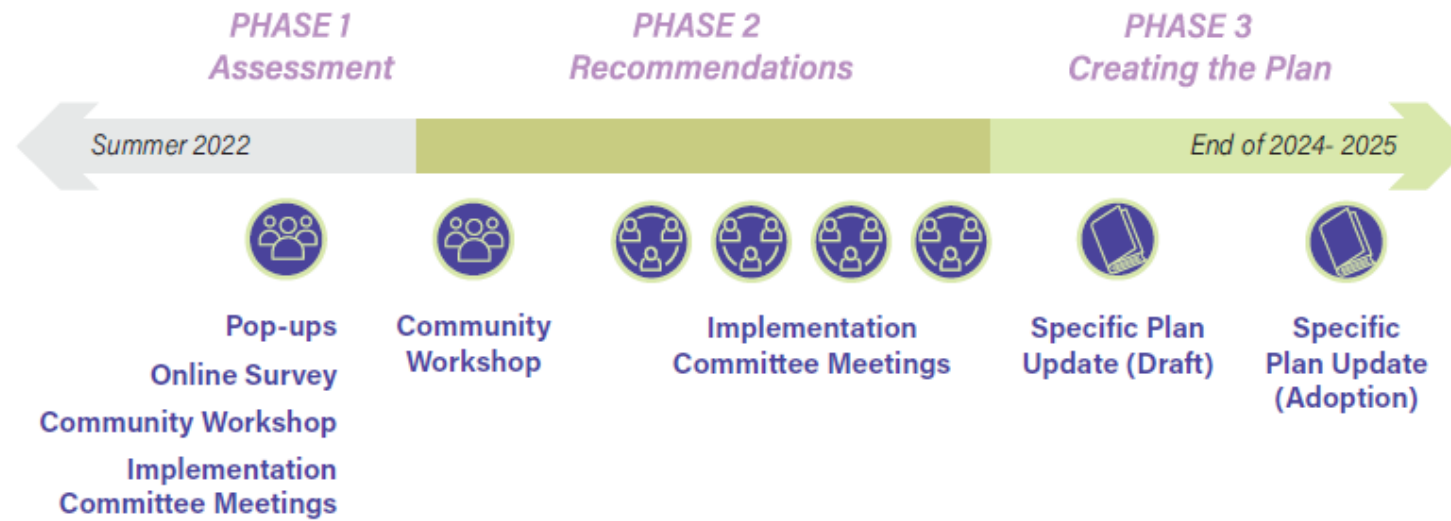


2. Outreach and Engagement



Outreach and Planning Process

FIGURE 1.8 | Project Schedule



Outreach and Engagement

- Email
- Direct mail
- Flyers
- Tabling events
- Social media/webpage
- Community workshops
- Implementation Committee meetings
- Canvassing
- Surveys
- Special Events: Tower Rocks



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).

Community Priorities

What We Heard

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.

TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR PRESERVATION

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

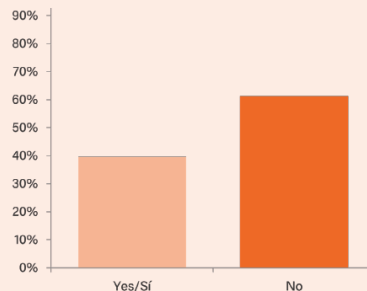
What We Heard

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

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.

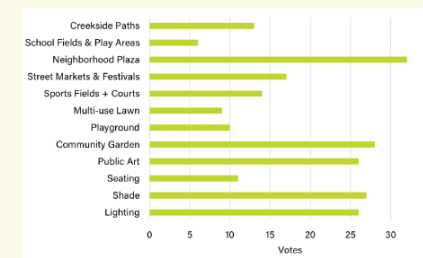
TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR CIRCULATION

- 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

What We Heard

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?



More parks, more parks, more parks!

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

Need for more garbage cans

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

BELMONT AVENUE PARK & OPEN SPACE
RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMUNITY



Guiding Principles and Health and Equity

- 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**.

24 | TOWER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN

FIGURE 1.9 | Health and Equity Indicators



3. PLAN OVERVIEW



CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Historic streetcar running along Fulton Street
Source: Interurbans Publications



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

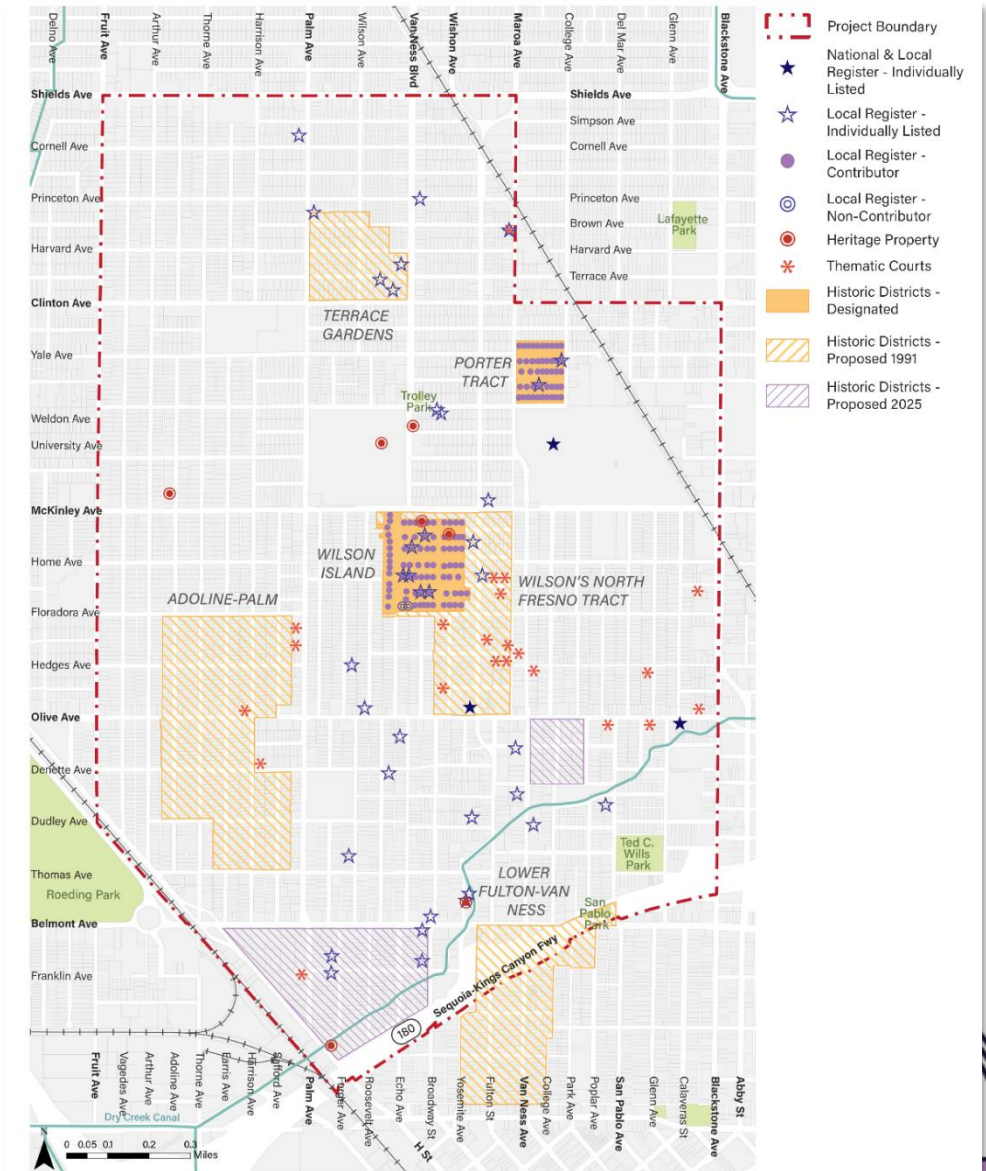


Royce Hall, Fresno High in 1960s



Van Ness Boulevard
Source: Wayne Paperboy & Printing Corp.

Historic Resources and Districts

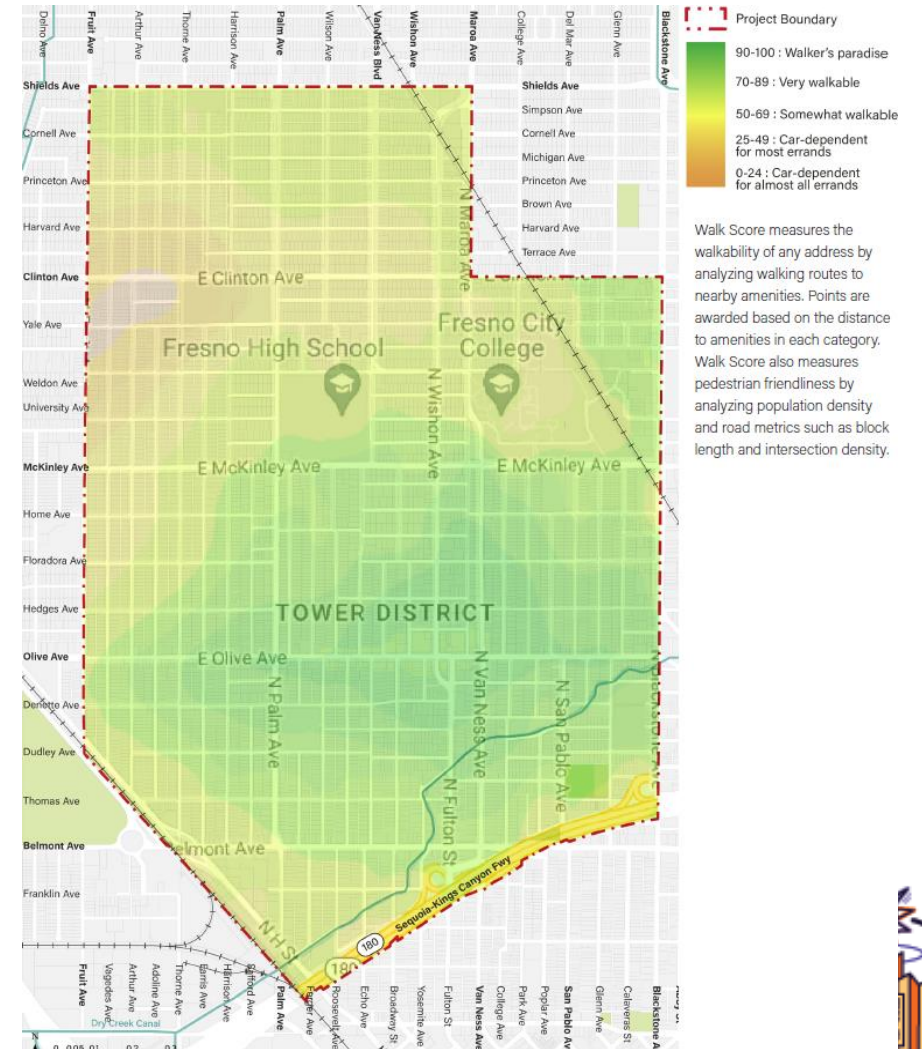


PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES



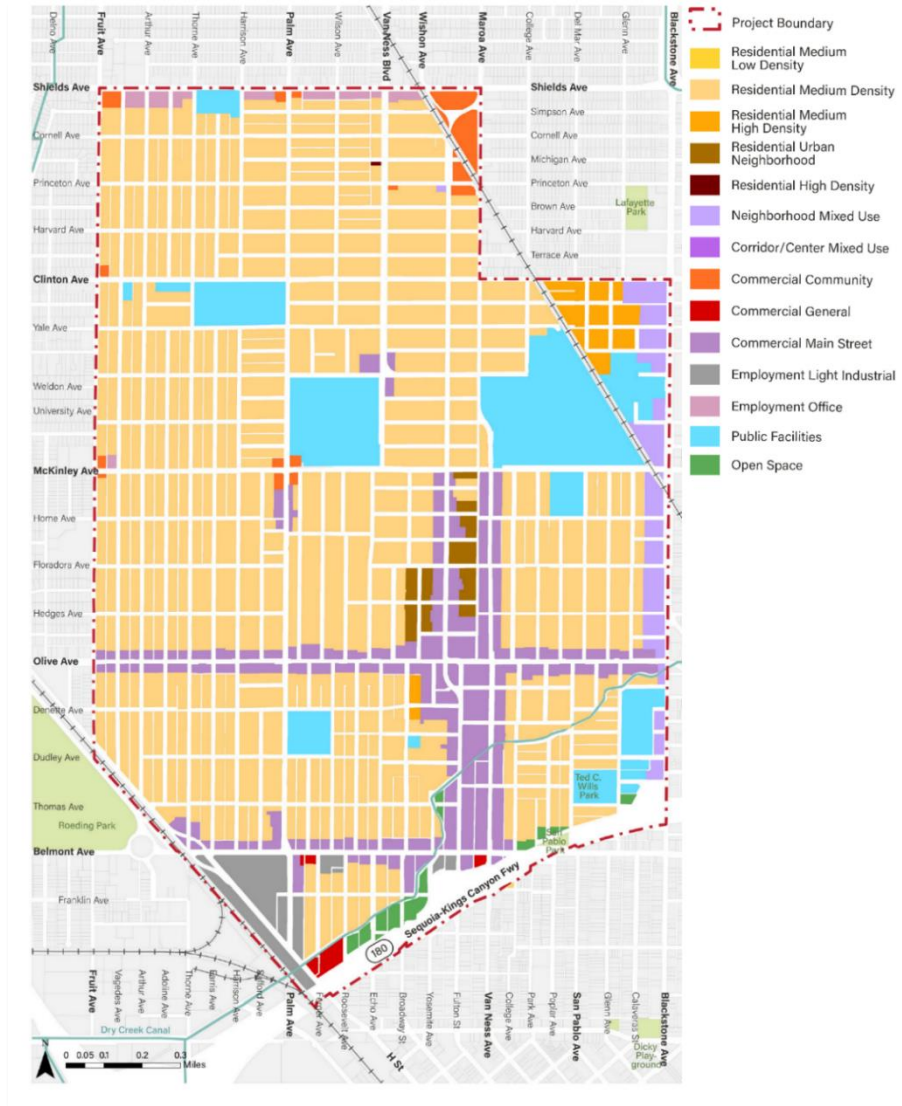
Parks, Park Access, and Park Opportunities



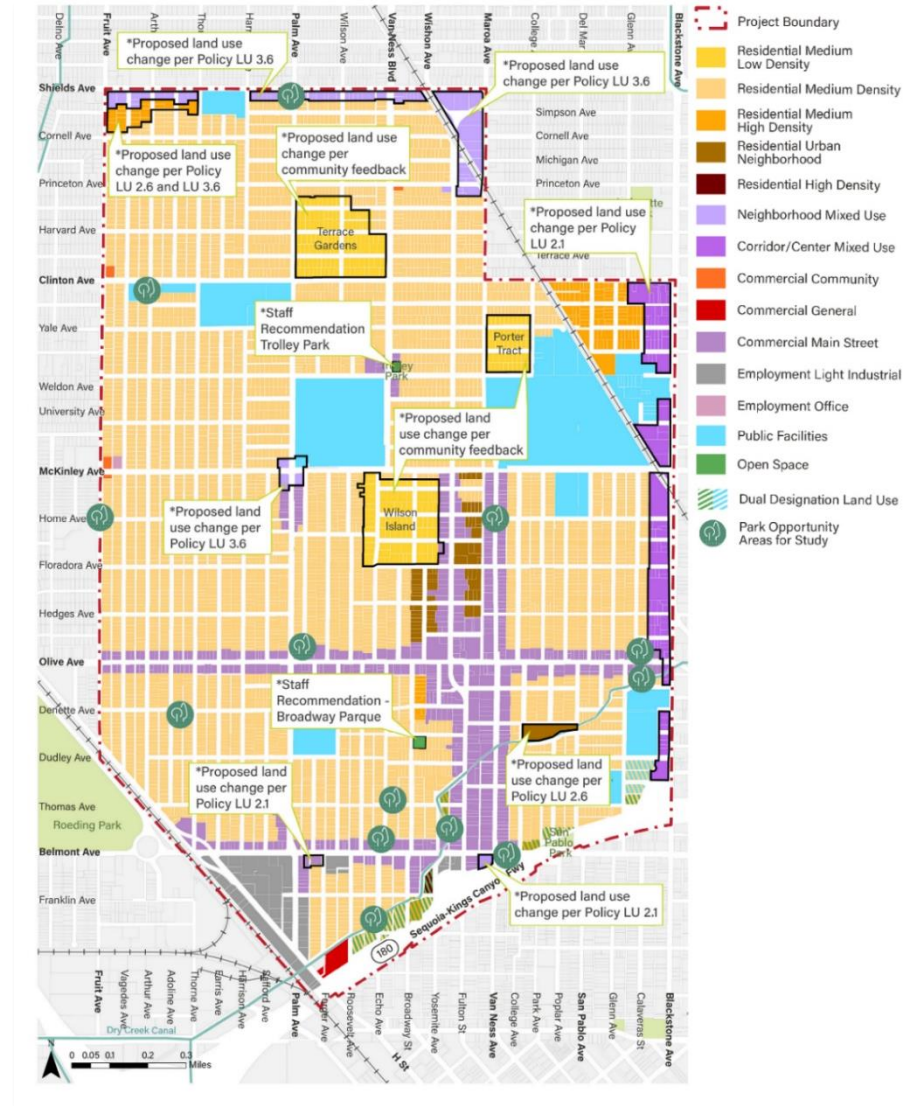


LAND USE

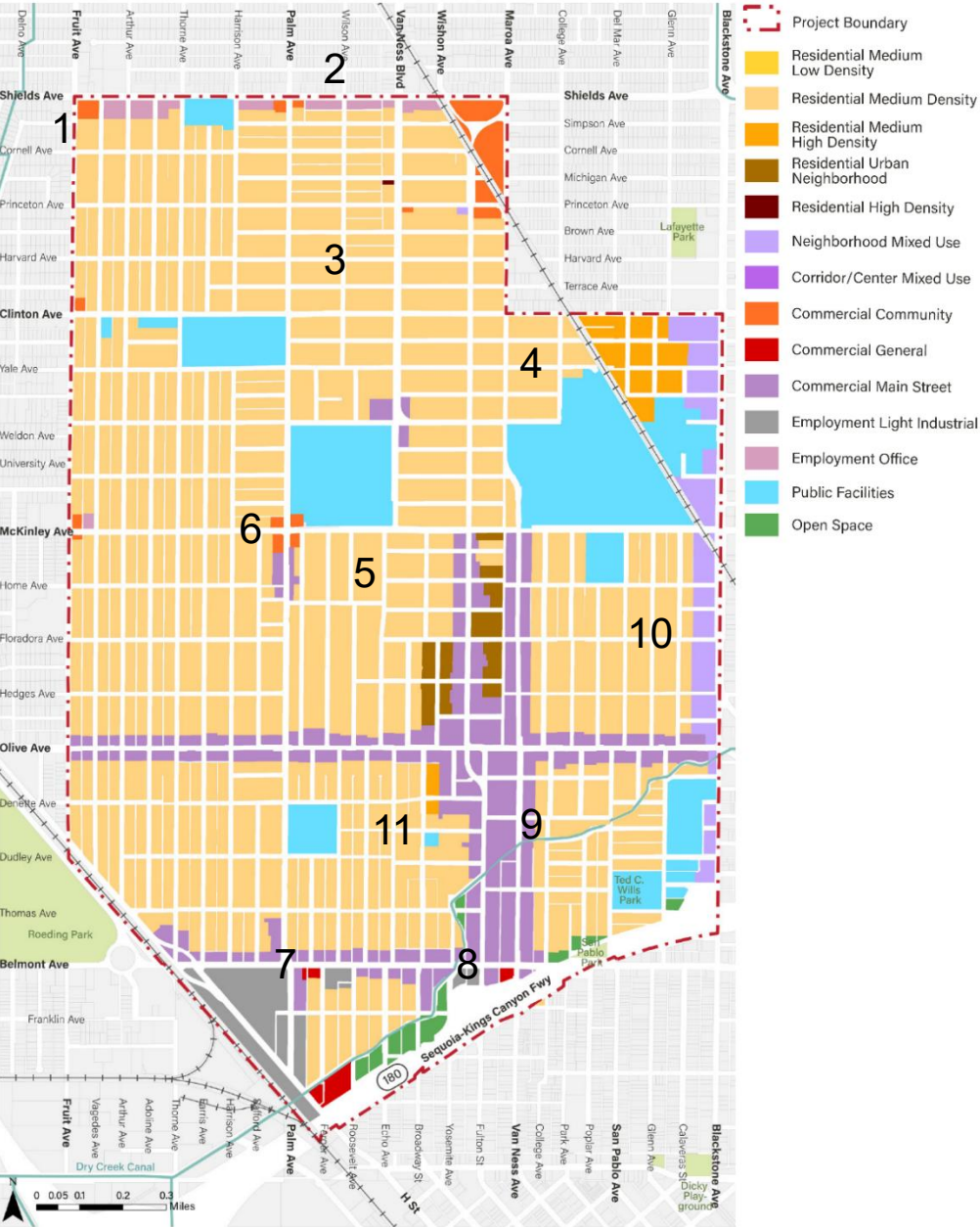
Existing General Plan Land Use



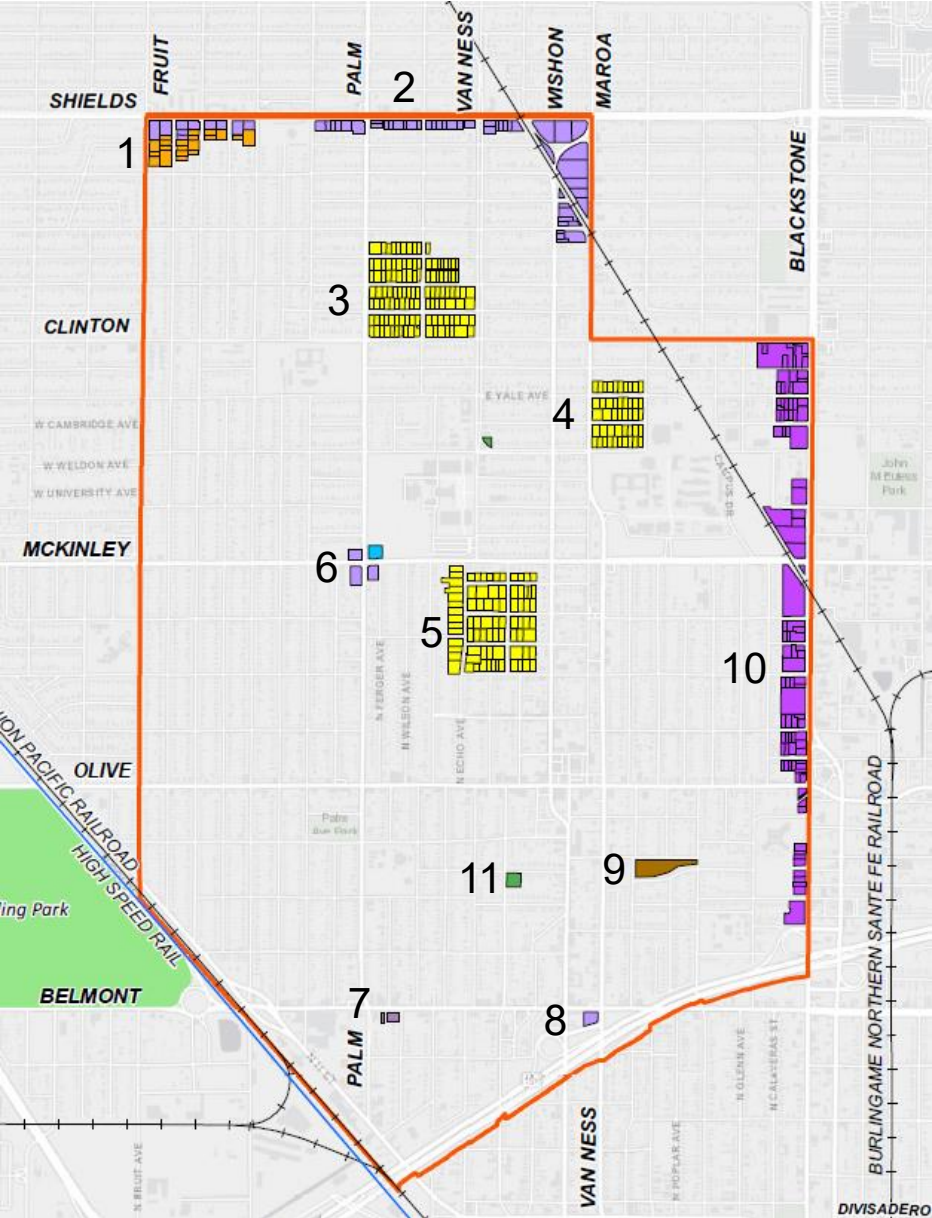
Tower District Specific Plan Land Use



Existing General Plan Land Use



Tower District Specific Plan Land Use



 Project Boundary

The Tower Entertainment (TE) Overlay District is intended to support a variety of entertainment businesses in the Tower District and ensure that the commercial uses integrate well with the surrounding residential areas.

The Apartment House (AH) Overlay District is intended to preserve and enhance the pattern of pedestrian-oriented small-footprint apartment houses, grand homes, and small commercial buildings that exist in some pre-World War II neighborhoods.

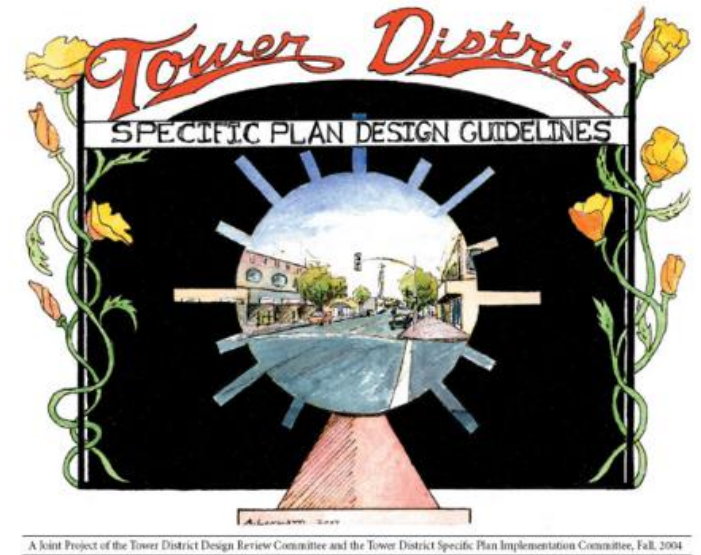




4.DESIGN STANDARDS + GUIDELINES

Why add Standards and update the Guidelines?

- The 2004 Guidelines are over 20 years old and conditions and design practices have changed.
- Key Guidelines were written into zoning in 2015, when the Citywide Development Code was adopted.
- Specific Plan policies need to be integrated.
- Development feasibility needs to be addressed to implement Fresno's Housing Element.
- California law requires "objective standards" to expedite review of qualifying housing projects



5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



Environmental Impact Report

- NOP: May 7, 2025
- Scoping Meeting: May 27, 2025
- Circulation of Draft EIR: August 15-September 29, 2025
 - 13 Comments Received
- Final EIR Released: November 7, 2025

Impact Areas Analyzed:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Resources
- Geology, Soils and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise
- Public Services and Recreation

6. PUBLIC COMMENT



EIR Comments

- Clarifications from public agencies re: project level implementation
- Clarifications from businesses re: mitigation measures
- Comments regarding impacts of industrial uses:
 - Aesthetics/lighting
 - Air Quality
 - Noise
- Lack of park land
- Traffic, including truck traffic

**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

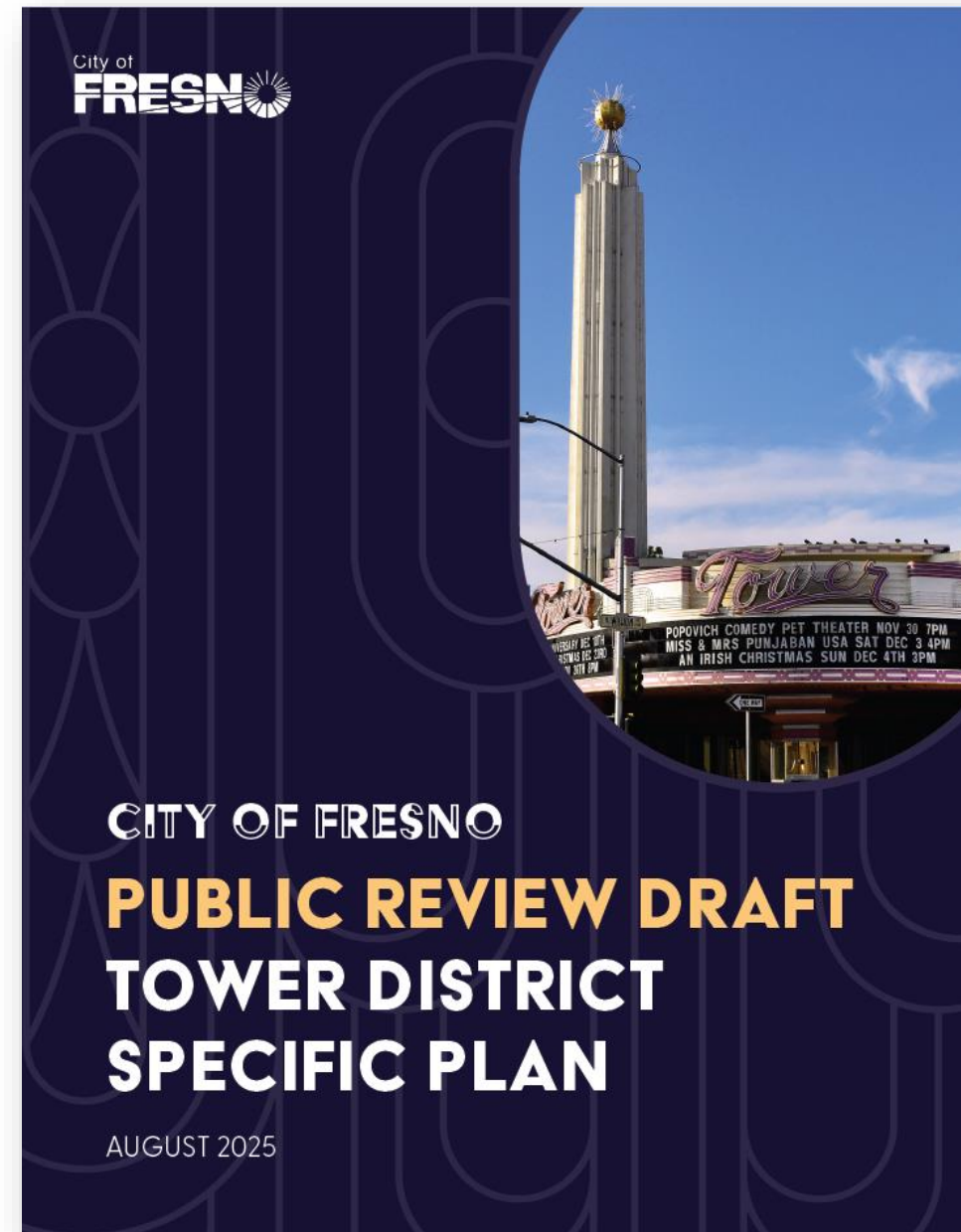
LSA

August 2025



Plan Comments

- Residential density changes
- Parks
- Industrial compatibility
- Residential and entertainment compatibility, including noise, traffic, and trash
- Traffic, including truck traffic
- Infill challenges related to electrical and solid waste services



Design Standards & Guidelines Comments

- Photos, graphics
- Clarifications regarding:
 - Exterior cladding
 - Window details
 - Garages
 - Signage
- Industrial guidelines



Recommended Revisions

Tower District Specific Plan

- Photo replacements
- Caption and map text corrections
- Addition of Belmont Phoenix Palms and Deodar Cedars as potential historic resources to Policy CHP 1.7
- Two new policies to help remove barriers to infill development
- Changes to land use indicator in Health and Equity section of Appendix B
- Land Use Change Requests

Tower District Design Standards and Guidelines

- Photo additions and replacements
- Clarifications on
 - Garages and carports
 - Exterior cladding
 - Window details
 - Signage

Land Use Change Requests

Request 1 – Technical Correction

- Remove parcels designated as Commercial Main Street acquired for public right of way

Request 2 – Council Motion

- Council approved motion to change planned land use and zoning from Medium Density Residential RS-5 to Neighborhood Mixed Use

Request 3 – Map Correction

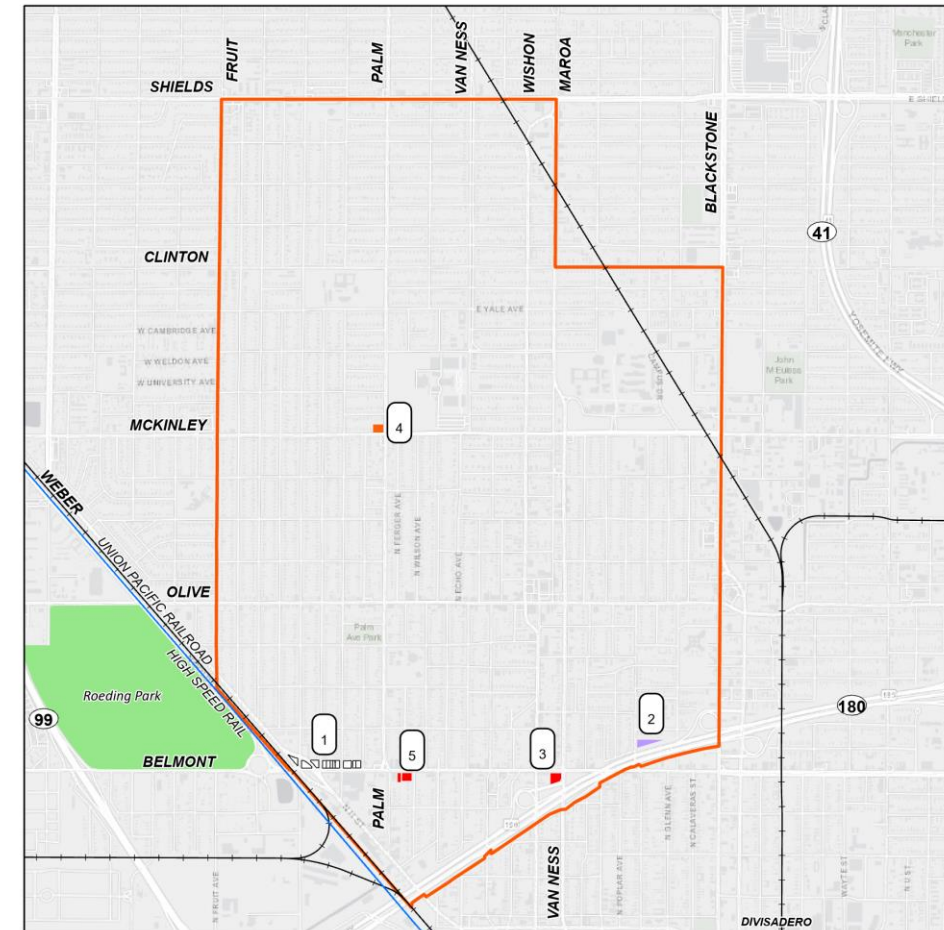
- Parcel designated as Neighborhood Mixed Use in error. Request to change to General Commercial

Request 4 – Land Use Change Request

- Neighborhood Mixed Use to Commercial Community

Request 5 – Land Use Change Request

- Neighborhood Mixed Use to General Commercial



PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES IN THE TOWER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

Legend

- Existing Railroad
- High Speed Rail Unofficial Alignment
- Tower District Specific Plan Boundary
- Commercial Community
- Commercial General
- Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- Parcels Acquired for State Roadway Facilities

Source: City of Fresno GIS Data
Prepared by the Planning and Development Department
11/12/2025

Tower District Specific Plan
0 0.25 0.5 Miles



7. FINDINGS & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS



Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations

1. The project meets the **objectives** established by the City;
2. The project would enhance **livability and social diversity** within the Tower District by supporting mixed-use infill, reinvestment in aging infrastructure, and new housing opportunities at varied affordability levels. This would improve neighborhood vitality and help meet the City's housing goals while maintaining the area's historic character.
3. The project would encourage **small business development, cultural programming, and entertainment uses** that strengthen the Tower District's role as a local and regional destination. These activities would generate employment, expand the local tax base, and reinforce the district's identity as Fresno's historic arts and cultural hub.
4. The project would support **walkability, bicycle and transit** connectivity, and multimodal street design consistent with the Fresno General Plan and Active Transportation Plan. By promoting sustainable infill growth, energy efficiency, and reduced vehicle trips, the project would contribute to sustainability and climate-adaptation goals citywide.
5. The project is consistent with and would contribute to achieving the policies, goals, and objectives established by the City of Fresno **General Plan**.

Staff Recommendations

- **Recommend approval** of certification of the EIR, including:
 - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
 - Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations
- **Recommend approval** of Plan Amendments to repeal the 1991 Tower District Specific Plan and the 2005 Tower District Specific Plan Design Guidelines
- **Recommend approval** of Plan Amendments to adopt the Tower District Specific Plan and the Tower District Design Standards and Guidelines
- **Recommend approval** of the corresponding Plan Amendment to Figure LU-1 of the Fresno General Plan for 118 acres;
- **Recommend approval** of the Rezone for consistency with the Plan Amendments for 138 acres, including the Apartment Overlay Zone.
- **Recommend approval** of changes to the Tower District Specific Plan and Tower District Design Guidelines as detailed in Exhibit D
- **Recommend authorization** of the Planning and Development Director to update the text, policies, maps, tables and exhibits contained in the documents noted above to reflect the final action of the City Council.

End of Presentation