

City Council Regular Meeting

June 12, 2025

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Public Comment Packet

ITEM(S)

5:35 P.M. (ID 25-757) Consideration of Plan Amendment Application No. P23-03006, Rezone Application No. P23-03006 and related Environmental Assessment pertaining to approximately 55.31 acres of property bounded by East Annadale Avenue to the north, State Route 41 to the east, South Elm Avenue to the west, and East Chester/East Samson Avenue (alignment) to the south (Council District 3) - Planning and Development Department.

[TITLE TRUNCATED FOR SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET COVER PAGE]

Contents of Supplement: Public Comment Received

Item(s)

Supplemental Information:

Any agenda related public documents received and distributed to a majority of the City Council after the Agenda Packet is printed are included in Supplemental Packets. Supplemental Packets are produced as needed. The Supplemental Packet is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, 2600 Fresno Street, during normal business hours (main location pursuant to the Brown Act, G.C. 54957.5(2)). In addition, Supplemental Packets are available for public review at the City Council meeting in the City Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. Supplemental Packets are also available on-line on the City Clerk's website.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

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CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

aisles and wheelchair seating areas open and accessible. If you need assistance with seating because of a disability, please see Security.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Letter Received for 6.12.25 Council Agenda ID 25 757
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 10:30:39 AM
Attachments: [Letter Received for 6.12.25 Council Agenda ID 25 757.pdf](#)

Hello – I've attached a letter that was received for the 6/12/25 agenda for item ID 25-757.

Gabriela Olea | Chief of Staff
Office of Council Vice President Miguel A. Arias
City of Fresno – District 3
Office: [REDACTED]

CAPITOL OFFICE

SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

DISTRICT OFFICES

MERCED, CA 95340

FRESNO, CA 93721

WWW.SENATE.CA.GOV/CABALLERO

California State Senate

SENATOR
ANNA M. CABALLERO
FOURTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



CHAIR
APPROPRIATIONS
MEMBER
ENERGY, UTILITIES
& COMMUNICATIONS
HOUSING

INSURANCE

JUDICIARY

JOINT COMMITTEE ON
FAIRS ALLOCATION
& CLASSIFICATION

JOINT COMMITTEE ON RULES

LEGISLATIVE ETHICS

PUBLIC SAFETY

June 10, 2025

Mayor Jerry Dyer
Fresno City Hall
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Dear Mayor Dyer,

This letter is written to share my concerns regarding the proposed Elm Avenue rezone application, which is scheduled to come before the Fresno City Council on June 12, 2025. Let me begin by saying that while I respect the authority of local government to make planning decisions, having served in local government myself, I feel compelled to speak in solidarity with the residents of Southwest Fresno who have been in contact with my office and long fought for a healthier, more equitable future for their community.

The Southwest Fresno Specific Plan (SFSP), adopted in 2017, is a model of community-led planning, anchored in equity, environmental justice and the vision of transforming neighborhoods historically burdened by industrial development into places for families to live, thrive and breathe clean air. The plan reflects years of robust public engagement and any major departure from its goals warrants the utmost care, transparency and accountability.

The current proposal to rezone an additional 55 acres along Elm Avenue to light industrial, which is not consistent with the SFSP, not only risks undermining the plan's original intent—it jeopardizes the health, housing potential and most importantly, the trust of the community. The potential loss of future housing units, increased exposure to environmental pollutants and a process perceived as lacking transparency raises significant red flags.

Southwest Fresno families deserve safe places to live, work and raise children just as much as any other neighborhood. I strongly urge your office and the City Council to consider the long-term implications of this decision and to honor the community's vision for a more livable, inclusive Southwest Fresno. If I can be of assistance in this endeavor, please contact me. I stand ready to be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Anna Caballero
California Senate District 14

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: June 12, 2025, City Council Agenda Item No. 25-757
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 2:21:56 PM
Attachments: [Fresno City Council - June 12, 2025, Consideration of Elm Avenue Rezone 4935-0730-7596 v.2.pdf](#)

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Good afternoon,

Attached please find a correspondence of today's date. Hardcopy to follow via mail.

Thank you,
Hannah N. Wilhelm
Legal Assistant/Paralegal to:
John P. Kinsey
Nicolas R. Cardella
Hunter C. Castro
Kathleen DeVaney
Wanger Jones Helsley PC

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Fresno, CA 93720

[REDACTED])

[REDACTED]

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WANGER JONES HELSLEY PC
ATTORNEYS

TIMOTHY JONES*
MICHAEL S. HELSLEY
RILEY C. WALTER
PATRICK D. TOOLE
SCOTT D. LAIRD
JOHN P. KINSEY
KURT F. VOTE
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CRAIG A. CARNES, JR.†

* Also admitted in Washington
** Also admitted in Idaho
*** Emeritus
† Of Counsel
†† Also admitted in Texas

[REDACTED]
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93720

AND

[REDACTED]
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

MAILING ADDRESS
[REDACTED]
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93729

TELEPHONE
[REDACTED]

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Website:
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Writer's E-Mail Address:
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DANIEL J. FREA
JESSICA L. VIVED
JOSHUA P. JENDIAN
RACHEL L. ALSTROM
HANNAH L. RAVIZZA

OLIVER W. WANGER***

LEGAL ADMINISTRATOR
LYNN M. HOFFMAN

June 10, 2025

VIA EMAIL & UNITED STATES MAIL

Fresno City Council
c/o City Clerk
CITY OF FRESNO
2600 Fresno Street, [REDACTED]
Fresno, CA 93721

Re: June 12, 2025, City Council Agenda Item No. 25-757

Dear Honorable Councilmembers:

My office serves as counsel for the landowners who are the subject of Plan Amendment Application No. P23-03006, Rezone Application No. P23-03006 and related Environmental Assessment (collectively, the "Project"), which is scheduled as Item No. ID 25-757 on the agenda for the City Council's June 12, 2025, meeting.

As you may be aware, although the Project does not contemplate the construction of any new buildings, the rezone of the subject properties back to Light Industrial (IL) would result in a theoretical loss of residential units. As a result, to comply with S.B. 330, the applicants have been informed by the City Attorney's Office that the City Council must consider the Project at the same hearing as an item that would result in a commensurate increase in residential units.

The June 12, 2025, City Council meeting creates a rare opportunity for the City Council to consider the Project for approval, due to the Council's concurrent consideration of Text Amendment Application No. P25-00996 (the "Text Amendment"). If the Project is not heard concurrently with Text Amendment, it is unclear when there will be another opportunity for the Project to be heard.

WANGER JONES HELSLEY PC

Fresno City Council

c/o City Clerk

June 10, 2025

Page 2

The applicants sincerely appreciate the opportunity for the Project to be considered on its merits, and look forward to a robust discussion at the June 12, 2025, City Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender. Below the box, the name "Wenger Jones Helsley" is partially visible in blue ink.

cc: Andrew Janz, Esq. (*via email*)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Please Choose People over Profit
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 10:24:56 AM

Email received for the 6/12/25 agenda for item ID 25-757.

-Gabriela
[REDACTED]

From: Booker Lewis II [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 8:18 AM
To: Annalisa Perea [REDACTED]; Mike Karbassi [REDACTED]
Miguel Arias [REDACTED]; Tyler Maxwell [REDACTED]; Brandon Vang
[REDACTED] Nick Richardson [REDACTED]; Nelson Esparza
[REDACTED]
Cc: Laura Rios [REDACTED]; Alyssa Stevens [REDACTED]; Gabriela Olea
[REDACTED]; Laura Garcia [REDACTED]; Carmen Iniguez
[REDACTED]; Nicole DeMera [REDACTED]; Celida Garcia Lopez
[REDACTED]
Subject: Please Choose People over Profit

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear Council Members,

I pray this email finds you and your family in good health and well-being.

Thank you for meeting with our team regarding our concerns related to the latest Elm Avenue application ID 25-757 (Rezone Application No. P23-03006).

Please consider that if you approve this application, you will be undoing years of work to reverse the unfair saturation of industrial business operations in Southwest Fresno. I suspect that reversing the zoning definitions adopted in the Southwest Specific Plan in 2017 may be seen by some as a correction to zoning policy. However, we must remember that the development of the Southwest Specific Plan was an incredible example of community and Civic engagement rarely experienced by the most vulnerable residents in our city.

The Southwest Specific Plan is in fact the correction to planning and development policy that has burdened our community for over seven decades. To correct the correction made in 2017 is to reinstate unfair and harmful business development practices that

plague our community.

Please allow me to reiterate why this rezone application should be denied.

- 1. These industrial facilities are too close to schools, housing, and medical facilities.**
- 2. These businesses threaten the health and well-being of our community.**
- 3. No jobs will be lost as a direct result of denying this application.**
- 4. Our city must preserve the integrity of the SW Specific Plan and policy that protects our most vulnerable communities.**
- 5. The life expectancy challenge in Southwest Fresno is a documented reality.**
- 6. We must reverse the impact of historical industrial racism and injustice in our city.**

Please deny this application.

Since I'm sending this communication as Pastor Lewis, I can earnestly say that I pray God's blessings on each of you and prayerfully solicit your favorable consideration.

Pastor B. T. Lewis II

Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church, Fresno

Office: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

'Compelled by the Love of Christ' 2 Cor. 5:14

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: SUPPORT: ID 25-757 – Plan Amendment & Rezone Application No. P23-03006
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 11:17:26 AM
Attachments: [6.10.25 - INVEST Fresno - Elm Ave Rezone Support Letter.pdf](#)

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

On behalf of INVEST Fresno, please see the attached letter expressing our support for Plan Amendment Application No. P23-03006, Rezone Application No. P23-03006, and the related Environmental Assessment (Elm Ave. Rezone).

Approval of the Elm Ave. Rezone and the restoration of light industrial zoning will promote a healthy mix of land uses, support job creation, and signal that Fresno is once again open for business. This move is a critical step toward achieving long-term economic and fiscal stability.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Thank you,

--

Ben Granholm
Executive Director
INVEST Fresno
www.INVESTFresnoCA.com

June 10, 2025

Mike Karbassi, President
City Council
City of Fresno
2600 Fresno Street, [REDACTED]
Fresno, CA 93721
clerk@fresno.gov

Submitted Electronically

RE: SUPPORT: ID 25-757 – Plan Amendment & Rezone Application No. P23-03006 and related Environmental Assessment – Elm Avenue Rezone

Dear Council President Karbassi and Members of the Council:

On behalf of INVEST Fresno, a coalition of residents, businesses, and community organizations committed to building a diverse and sustainable economy in Fresno, to express our strong support for Plan Amendment Application No. P23-03006, Rezone Application No. P23-03006, and the related Environmental Assessment pertaining to approximately 55.31 acres bounded by East Annadale Avenue to the north, State Route 41 to the east, South Elm Avenue to the west, and East Chester/East Samson Avenue to the south (Elm Ave. Rezone).

For the past two years, the City of Fresno has operated with budget deficits—over \$40 million in 2025 and an anticipated \$20 million in 2026. Fresno's budget is closely tied to the strength of its local economy. By attracting new businesses, encouraging housing development, and revitalizing underutilized areas, the city can expand and diversify its tax base. A broader tax base increases property tax, sales tax, and business license revenue without necessarily raising taxes on residents and consumers. Fresno needs sustainable economic development that not only increases city revenues but also boosts employment and enhances the overall quality of life.

The Southwest Specific Plan, adopted in 2017, and the subsequent downzoning of properties marked the beginning of a series of policy decisions that signaled to business owners—large and small—that Fresno was no longer prioritizing economic development.

Downzoning severely impacts landowners and employers by rendering their properties inconsistent with new zoning regulations. These changes diminish Fresno's appeal to reputable, well-capitalized businesses interested in investing in

the city. Rezoning that results in legal non-conformities makes obtaining conventional financing nearly impossible, hindering essential capital improvements for maintenance, beautification, and clean energy upgrades.

Legal non-conforming uses also present significant challenges. Property owners face restrictions when changing tenants, even under favorable economic conditions. During a downturn, maintaining legal non-conforming status becomes even more difficult. Owners are prohibited from switching between different non-conforming uses, and any enlargement of an existing use requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), further deterring national industrial tenants and reducing opportunities to re-lease these properties.

The downzoning of heavy and light industrial land uses in the Southwest Specific Plan—coupled with the city’s limited space for industrial growth—has discouraged economic investment and pushed opportunities to neighboring communities, undermining Fresno’s natural competitive advantage.

A well-balanced land use plan that promotes job creation and other tax-generating uses is essential to strengthening the city’s economic position. Industries that create jobs offer stable employment opportunities for Fresno residents and generate crucial revenue through sales taxes, business licenses, and property taxes. This revenue directly supports essential public services, including public safety, infrastructure, and community programs.

Approval of the Elm Ave. Rezone and the restoration of light industrial zoning will promote a healthy mix of land uses, support job creation, and signal that Fresno is once again open for business. This move is a critical step toward achieving long-term economic and fiscal stability.

We appreciate your time and consideration and respectfully urge the Planning Commission to approve Plan Amendment Application No. P23-03006, Rezone Application No. P23-03006, and the related Environmental Assessment. Doing so will help build a thriving, affordable, and economically resilient city—one that supports families, strengthens neighborhoods, and secures Fresno’s future for generations to come.



Ben Granholm
Executive Director



Ethan Smith
Chairman

cc: Jerry Dyer, Mayor
Georgeanne White, City Manager
Councilmembers, City of Fresno