

Regular Council Meeting

March 19, 2026

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Public Comment Packet

ITEM(S)

CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

2026 MAR 19 P 1:29

RECEIVED

9:10 A.M. (ID 26-277)

HEARING to Receive Public Comment on the 2025 Housing Element Annual Progress Report

Contents of Supplement: Public Comment Received

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):

The meeting room is accessible to the physically disabled, and the services of a translator can be made available. Requests for additional accommodations for the disabled, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or translators should be made one week prior to the meeting. Please call City Clerk's Office at 621-7650. Please keep the doorways, 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]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: For Fresno City Manager White: A copy of my email to the Planning Commission, City Council, and Mayor Dyer, Regarding the Housing Element Draft
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 10:31:38 AM

Good morning:

See public comment below that arrived via 311 regarding the 9:10 am item (ID26-277) on tomorrow's agenda (3/19/26).

Sophia Pagoulatos | Program Administrator
Planning & Development Department

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 10:16 AM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] >
Subject: FW: For Fresno City Manager White: A copy of my email to the Planning Commission, City Council, and Mayor Dyer, Regarding the Housing Element Draft

I would check with the clerk on whether they have received this or not.

Sent from my Galaxy

----- Original message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 3/18/26 10:09 AM (GMT-08:00)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: For Fresno City Manager White: A copy of my email to the Planning Commission, City Council, and Mayor Dyer, Regarding the Housing Element Draft

Constituent email below forwarded from 311.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 9:01 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: For Fresno City Manager White: A copy of my email to the Planning Commission, City Council, and Mayor Dyer, Regarding the Housing Element Draft

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 8:53 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: For Fresno City Manager White: A copy of my email to the Planning Commission, City Council, and Mayor Dyer, Regarding the Housing Element Draft

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

First Name	Michaela
Last Name	Bennett
Email	[REDACTED]
Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Subject	For Fresno City Manager White: A copy of my email to the Planning Commission, City Council, and Mayor Dyer, Regarding the Housing Element Draft

Message Copy for City Manager White:

Michaela Bennett
[REDACTED], and 3 others
.
Wed, Mar 18 at 8:50 AM
Message Body
Dear Fresno Planning Commission, Fresno City Council Members, Mayor Dyer, and Fresno City Manager White:

1) I have read the 2025 Housing Element draft, and I have come away alarmed that Fresno has yet again failed to "hit the mark" on the lack of affordable housing stock.

I am so concerned by Fresno's failings, that I will be writing Governor Newsom and Attorney General Bonta about this.

2) The report contains all kinds of private property approvals for remodeling garages into ADU's. Nothing states that these will be affordable, and Fresno simply can't and hasn't enforced that.

3) I continue to be alarmed by how Fresno has closed existing and low-income housing by a failure to plan. A motel on Blackstone Ave was closed that housed medically ill citizens because some group in Los Angeles who ran it didn't get funding according to the Fresno Bee's newspaper articles on the matter and local news stations.

We then heard excuses from Fresno that these people had supposedly been moved to new housing. Oh really? Where IS that new housing? We don't have enough housing.

4) I am NOT laughing at Fresno's FAILURE to plan for appropriate finances for these places. Why didn't Fresno set aside a minimum emergency budget of 3 months, building up to a year, for that needed medical patients' motel on Blackstone Ave?

Why hasn't Fresno built up a financial reserve of 1 year's worth of money to run that entire Blackstone medical motel?

I have NEVER seen Fresno do what Catholic Charities in the San Francisco Bay Area does and ask religious groups, civic groups, volunteer groups, and private citizens to fund 1 room for 1 year. I have never seen Fresno ask, on media (tv, newspaper, social media, radio, emails, personal speaking engagements and other forms of communicating with the public for these financial needs to be met and the city DOES need help.)

The taxpayers now pay top dollar for hospital emergency room visits, medical conditions that become acute for these people, that require longer, more expensive hospital stays. It's becomes a revolving door without the stabilization of housing.

This according to researchers at the University of California at San Francisco's Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative that study the problems versus the public policies:

Cite: 

UCSF researchers say: "Housing is health." Spot on.

5) Likewise, motels to house the unsheltered out on Golden State were also shut down by the City of Fresno.

We can't afford NOT to house people! We will pay top dollar for the medical

care and for first responders, hospitalizations, and medical teams.

This is akin to going to the store and buying the most expensive caviar instead of peanut butter and jelly. Good grief. Can anybody here do basic math? Do you truly understand the critical public health and medical health issues, and how these bad policies consistently overwhelm our hospital emergency room teams and first responders?

6) Fresno continues to carry on the stigmas about homelessness, as does Poverello on their website. It is nothing short of shocking to me that you folks can't do basic research.

Fact from UCSF Homelessness and Housing Initiative researchers at the University of California at San Francisco: A whopping 50% of today's unsheltered are over the age of 50, are law-abiding, have worked and paid taxes, and lack affordable housing and support networks.

Most do not need mental health, drug, or alcohol treatment. That is a continued stigma that Fresno carries on. These are people who have lived responsible and productive lives and can no longer afford housing in their senior years.

The majority of their support networks have died or are tapped out, responsible for other family members and problems.

University of California at San Francisco researchers have said that the government is a whopping 40 years behind on building affordable housing, and NEVER planned for aging Baby Boomers who were entering their senior citizen years.

7) The report's statements that you will be planning for housing along Blackstone and downtown Fresno where unsheltered people are located is simply unacceptable. Some people are there.

The majority of homeless, law-abiding senior citizens are hiding out in their cars in much safer areas of Fresno, and would NEVER think to go near Blackstone Ave and downtown Fresno as a matter of personal safety.

8) Fresno has failed to start a Safe Parking Lots Program like Santa Barbara, CA's 20+ year old program, with security, case management, etc.

San Jose, CA and Mountain View, CA, as well as other cities have copied this program. Fresno lags behind.

9) Fresno has failed to plan for the whopping 50+% of foster youth who become homeless within 6 months of aging out of foster care because they lack proper familial support systems.

Oklahoma has a tiny house community, with case management, just for these

youth. It works very well. Oklahoma State University students built the tiny homes, Oklahoma architects designed the tiny homes, and the community provided all new furnishings for each tiny home which is like a big studio apartment. They are beautiful.

Cite: [REDACTED]

10) I am a former paralegal with epilepsy (2 or more seizures). I am 64 years old, woman, no drugs/drink/crimes, homeless for 7 years in my car due only to epilepsy.

I was raised in a well-educated but extremely violent family (my father was a Child Protective Social worker and my mother was a school teacher. They have both died.) I, and my siblings, were subjected to savage beatings and shakings, multiple times a week, from the time we were tots. For years I was covered in bruises, my entire backside, and other parts of my body covered by my clothing. It was so painful, that for years I could not sleep on my back.

Like 30% of epileptics, I sustained Traumatic Brain Injury from the level of beatings and shakings. The human body can only take so much damage, and then it breaks, including the brain.

11) It is nearly impossible for our medically disabled people to get approved for Social Security disability. It takes years. The more cognitive impairments people have, and the less support, they will simply not get it. This is a gamed system, and it is intentionally designed to NOT pay out.

12) Our homeless senior citizens want safe places, not Blackstone, not downtown Fresno. They wish to be near public libraries, grocery stores, pharmacies, medical offices, etc.

They have lived and worked for the majority of their lives, and they are tired of the stigma that Fresno places on them, and this "Leper's Colony" mentality that they must be shunned in our community.

13) I have spent 7 years sleeping in my car, no help nor housing available for me. I have epilepsy, a neurological condition. You should be grateful that I don't require substance abuse treatment, nor any other treatment.

I REFUSE to stay in bad, dangerous parts of the city. And should you ever try it with me, I'll sue you over it.

You all need a comprehensive education about the changing demographic of homelessness, because so far you've all blown it.

Quit treating law-abiding senior citizens, who worked and paid taxes, who need affordable housing in safe places with access to services, like they are trash.

We are all sick of it.

14) I was quite shocked that there is not a better and more comprehensive plan to help people in mobile homes. The report said that you evaluated 13%, 5% more than you were required to do.

That's nice.

But again, it fails to explain why the Fresno Bee and other news outlets covered the story of the senior citizen couple who DIED in their Fresno mobile home because they couldn't afford air conditioning.

Can we get solar panels and insulation, and other things to help these seniors. People shouldn't get the death penalty because they can't afford air conditioning.

15) I have repeatedly seen Fresno, both the city and the county, have the Fresno Police's HART team go out and clean up homeless folks belongings, with a dump truck.

One man at Cedar/Herndon was mentally ill, had schizophrenia, didn't have a mailing address, and his Social Security disability income was cut off because he didn't return a form to Social Security.

This man needs help, and active case management.

Why isn't Fresno sending out social workers, medical professionals, and other case management teams to do advance work with folks? Why are you being so heavy-handed with sick people who simply need help.

I asked Fresno Police, who seemed nice enough and professional, if they had social workers, medical professionals, to help them with these cases. I told them, as a paralegal who worked on conservatorships for San Francisco Bay Area law offices, about what I had learned from this ill man about his history. Fresno Police said, "No."

16) Can you folks do anything correctly? This is just shocking! The total lapses. The inability to cross your "t's" and dot your "i's", the inability to be thorough, pro-active and problem solve.

I've worked for top San Francisco Bay Area attorneys who had Ivy League educations. Fresno's slacker attitude drives me nuts, all of the missed opportunities to stabilize people and to help them. The heavy-handed, useless policies.

17) Conclusion. As a retired paralegal, I will be writing Governor Newsom and Attorney General Rob Bonta about Fresno's failures. It is my moral and ethical duty to inform them what is going on.

This is unacceptable. You've had plenty of time to improve, and haven't. If you need to be sued to improve, so be it.

I give you "F's" in problem solving skills, "F's" in research, and "F's" in copying other US communities "best practices" that have actually worked. There is no excuse for this. None.

Regards,

Ms. Michaela Bennett

[REDACTED]

IP Address	[REDACTED]
User-Agent (Browser/OS)	[REDACTED]
Referrer	[REDACTED]
