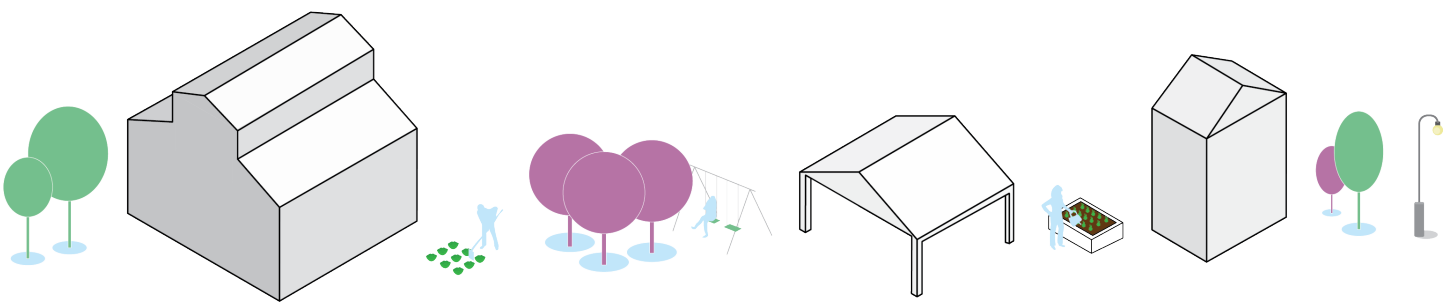
SPECIFIC PLAN OF THE WEST AREA

INITIATION REPORT | MAY 2019



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1 PLAN INTRODUCTION

image taken by City staff of West Area agriculture on Shields Ave and Grantland Ave

1.1 Introduction

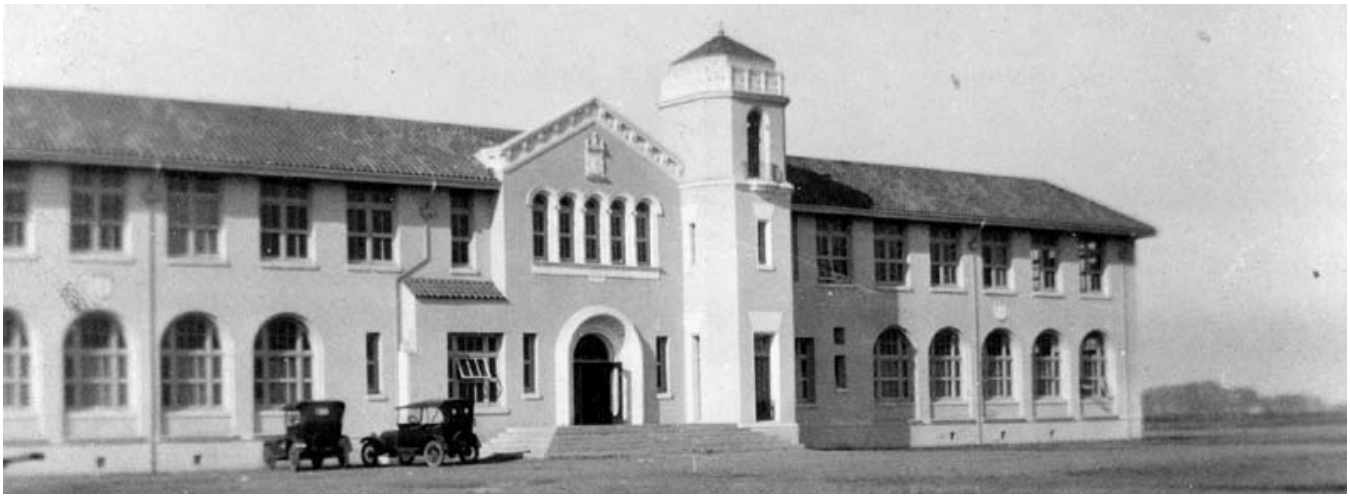
The last time the West Area was comprehensively planned for was in 2002 when city leaders adopted the 2025 General Plan. That Plan included the West Area Community Plan which consisted of 13 pages of policies and goals. Before the Community Plan was adopted, a small portion of the Plan Area was included in the Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan which was completed in 1998. However, that plan applies to only 5% of the West Area. The people of the West Area wanted a new long-range planning tool that updated the vision provided in these older plans that addressed current issues.

The Specific Plan of the West Area (the Plan) will serve as the catalyst for development as well as a vital instrument for much needed infrastructure improvements. The West Area has long been considered "Forgotten Fresno" due to limited commercial amenities, a fragmented roadway system, and leapfrog development. The residents of the West Area continue to advocate for transportation improvements, development that respects agriculture, and commercial amenities.

The Plan lays the foundation to make the West Area a complete neighborhood that moderates residential development and increases opportunities for commercial growth.

The Plan reiterates, and in some instances, refines policies from the General Plan on a range of topics that include land use and development, transportation, the environment, parks, and public utilities. The Plan will be used by policymakers to guide decisions about the future of the Plan Area, to make land use determinations, and to acquire federal and state grant funding for public projects. The Plan will also be used by community organizations, developers, and residents as a basis for future partnerships and planning.

1.2 Plan Area History



Central Union High School, 1922, Fresno County Public Library, Special Collections.

Fresno was established as a settlement in 1872 by the Central Pacific Railroad Company, and more specifically by the choice of Leland J. Stanford, a Director for the Railroad, who is credited with the site selection for what was at the time the new station. Twenty-two years after California had become a state and after the Gold Rush had come and gone, Stanford was impressed by the 2,000-acre wheat field belonging to A. Y. Easterby and announced, "Wonderful! Here we must build the town!"

During its earliest years, Fresno experienced a population boom, contributed to by settlers arriving from eastern and southern states, as well as abroad. Chinese immigrants were the earliest foreign settlers in Fresno and rapidly grew in numbers, to the point that Fresno obtained the second largest Chinatown in California. Fresno was established as the county seat in 1874 and 1885 became incorporated as a city. The Central California Colony, established in 1875 south of Fresno, encompassed approximately 3,840 acres.

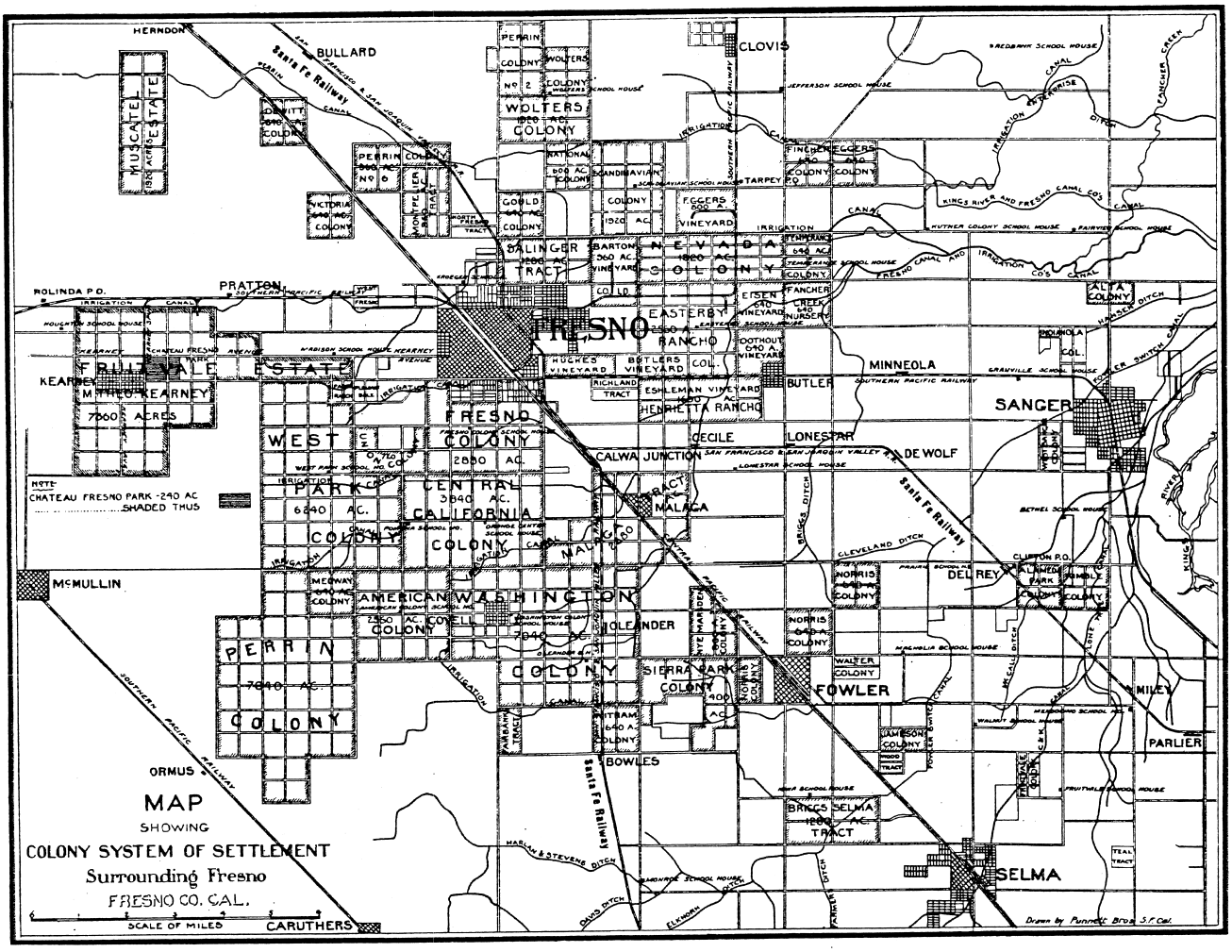
During the 1880s, Fresno continued to see incoming settlers from abroad, at an increase and in greater diversity - specifically settlers from Armenia, Germany, and Japan, among other groups.

During the early 20th century, there was a large influx in the Hispanic population. Today, Fresno celebrates a diverse citizenry of more than seventy different ethnic groups in the metropolitan area.

As the geographic center of the State, Fresno County is located in the San Joaquin Valley – cradled by the coastal ranges to the west and the Sierras to the east. The two large rivers that flow through the county are the San Joaquin River and the Kings River – both heading from the Sierras.

By 1903, there were forty-eight separate colonies in Fresno County. Tracts of land were subdivided ranging from 20-acre to 40-acre parcels, irrigated from a system of canals, and often landscaped with boulevards of palms, eucalyptus, figs, walnuts, oranges, and drought-resistant trees. The Muscatel Estate as well as portions of the Dewitt and Victoria colonies were within the boundaries of what is now Specific Plan of the West Area. By 1910, the colony system had begun to lose its popularity, and large holders were beginning to sell off portions of their land to farming families.

Fresno was established as a railroad town but it thrived in agriculture.



Map showing Colony System of Settlement, Fresno Co.

The following excerpted from an exposé on "Fresno Vineyards" from The Examiner, San Francisco on April 6, 1890 provides a narrative glimpse of Fresno's origins in agricultural vibrancy:

"It is not many years ago that the vast expanse of level plains that constitute the valley of the San Joaquin was by most people considered a barren desert of little or no value. If the winter season had been a sufficiently wet one there would be a little pasture for large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle that roamed about at will in the wild and unsettled region until the intense heat of a July sun, withering and scorching every bit of herbage, would compel them to resort to the foothills and mountains again. If, however, the season had been a dry one, these thousands of acres were at best deemed utterly worthless. / Enterprise, combined with push and energy, have wrought miracles, and to-day Fresno county - the principal portion of which lies in the valley of the San Joaquin - is the scene of agricultural industries of all kinds. / Here there are wheat fields - through which one may drive all day without reaching the end.

Fruits of every variety flourish here, and yield prolifically. In this valley are grown and dried the finest white figs produced in the State. Peaches, pears, apricots and nectarines have all been planted and have produced marvelous results. / The product, however, which will cause the name and fame of Fresno to be sounded far and wide is the grape. Without exception, the natural advantages afforded here for the cultivation of

vines, and especially for the curing of raisins, are unequaled in this State, if not in the whole world. Already Fresno wines and Fresno raisins are famous throughout the length and breadth of the county."Specific reference is also made to the Muscatel grape: "The sweet Muscatel variety is the grape used for raisin-making. This was the first brought from Spain, where it is known as the Muscatel de Gordo Blanco. Muscatel is the Moorish for large white, and Gordo Blanco - the Spanish for fat white." In the introduction to her 1942 Master's thesis entitled "Pioneer Colonies of Fresno County," Virginia Emily Thickens actually references these colonies very early in their history as "the principal competitor of Spain in viticulture." Enterprise was key to the success of agriculture in Fresno County, through pioneer leaders such as M. Theodore Kearney, but so was advertising. The article referenced above is one example.

Most famously, Kearney "embarked on a campaign which was painted so attractively as to lure the least gullible of speculators or homeseekers."

In 1912, James Clayton Forkner moved to Fresno. He helped establish Highway City, a neighborhood for the occupation of industrial and farm workers. The neighborhood name refers to its straddling of Highway 99, which is the eastern boundary for the Specific Plan of the West Area. Therefore, it is the southwestern portion of Highway City that falls within the boundaries of this Plan. The West Area is approximately bounded by Highway 99 to the northeast, West Clinton Avenue to the south, and North Garfield Avenue to the west.

When it was established, Highway City was not incorporated, or within the city limits of Fresno. In fact, it was not until the 1970s when any portion of what is now referred to as the West Area began being annexed. Outside of this portion of Highway City, a significantly large portion of the West Area remained farmland until Highway 99 was established and began undergoing improvements for automobile access. Ultimately, these improvements encouraged further land development and population growth within this region northwest of the city's urban core. The city annexed land west of Highway 99 as recent as the early 21st century, which includes undeveloped and underutilized lands adjacent to established commercial corridors.

Highway 99 as it is known today is a relatively recent creation. Native populations found value in the north-south route prior to the existence of a California. Once the route's modern era began, it gained momentum at a rapid pace – "horses, carts, and stages gave way to railroads, and railroads then yielded to today's paved lanes" (Provost, Highway 99, XI). "In its passage through the long, level stretch of the San Joaquin Valley," also known as California's heartland and more precisely between the towns of Wheeler Ridge and Sacramento, "Highway 99 was heralded as, and continues to be known as, the Golden State Highway" (Buckley, "Highway 99," 28). Much of the highway through the Valley was widened to at least twenty feet by the early 1930s, but a portion near Fresno was widened to thirty feet to accommodate the Valley's heaviest agricultural traffic (Livingston, That Ribbon of Highway II, 60).

By 1960, the multi-lane upgrading of Highway 99 through Fresno was completed to allow for faster transit. In contrast to the modern thoroughfare, motorists driving north from Fresno in 1916 would have encountered a sign that read the following: "Motorists attention! You are on your honor. Fresno County has no speed cops. Drive so they will not be needed. Speed limits 30 miles per hour" (Buckley, "Highway 99," 32-33).

THE EXAMINER, SAN FRANCISCO: SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 6, 1890.

FRESNO VINEYARDS.

It is not many years ago that the vast expanse of level plains that constitute the valley of the San Joaquin was by most people considered a barren desert of little or no value. If the winter season had been a sufficiently wet one there would be a little pasture for large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle that roamed about at will in the wild and unsettled region until the intense heat of a July sun, withering and scorching every bit of herbage, would compel them to resort to the foothills and mountains again. If, however, the season had been a dry one, these thousands of acres were at best deemed utterly worthless.

Enterprise, combined with push and energy, have wrought miracles, and to-day Fresno county—the principal portion of which lies in the valley of the San Joaquin—is the scene of agricultural industries of all kinds.

Here there are wheat fields through which one may drive all day without reaching the end. Fruits of every variety flour-

ments to be seen on all sides. The banking institutions, nearly all of which are located in handsome and costly brick buildings, possessing genuine architectural merits, would do credit to a much larger city. The greater number of these buildings was erected last year. Among the newer buildings that cannot fail to attract attention is the new depot of the Southern Pacific, without exception one of the neatest and most commodious depots in the State.

First-class hotels, fully equipped with all modern improvements, constitute another feature of which the city may well be proud. Other prominent buildings are the Masonic Temple, the Y. M. C. A. Building and a large number of fine business blocks.

In the center of the park, at the head of Mariposa street, stands the courthouse, one of the most substantial courthouses in the State, from the cupola of which a magnificent birdseye view of the surrounding country may be obtained.

All the various Christian denominations are well represented, several of which have erected magnificent houses of worship. There are also ample school facilities. In addition to the High School, a three-story brick building that was completed last year

the finest varieties, pears, peaches and figs predominating.

There is no more interesting sight than the vineyard at the time of the harvest. During the season of picking and packing 400 men are employed on the ranch. All these hands are lodged and provided for on the ranch, and the care and labor it requires to superintend the work can be imagined. This force is usually kept busy for four months; during the rest of the year it is reduced to sixty or seventy men.

THE MUSCATEL GRAPE.

The sweet Muscatel variety is the grape used for raisin-making. This was first brought from Spain, where it is known as the *Muscatel de Gordo Blanco*. Muscatel is the Moorish for large white, and Gordo Blanco the Spanish for fat white. The probability is that the grapes were first

one vineyard that covers [illegible] which is in full bearing.

THE PACKING-HOUSE.

The packing-house is one of the largest in the State and is thoroughly equipped in every respect. It measures 140x204 feet. Attached to it is a large double-chambered Blatchly dryer, the second one that was built in the State, with a capacity of sixty tons. This dryer is used for the purpose of curing late crops by the means of hot air and steam pipes. This process is only resorted to when the season has advanced too far, as raisins that are cured by the sun's heat are always preferred.

As a rule, it is the second crop that has to be subjected to this treatment, as at the time when it is quite ripe and picked the season has advanced so far that early rains would frequently do serious damage to im-

districts of Spain to study the methods employed by the Spanish viticulturists.

PRAISE FROM AN EASTERN TRADE JOURNAL.

The *American Grocer*, a very conservative trade journal published in New York, has for years been watching the development of the raisin industry in this State with keen interest. Although it gave the enterprising men who have made an experiment a success all the encouragement it could, yet it would never admit in its columns that the American raisin was equal to the Spanish. There was always some flaw somewhere, always something lacking, until last year, when it unhesitatingly made the statement that Butler's Clusters were not inferior to the finest imported raisins.

That is a triumph, indeed!

Point for point Mr. Butler has overcome all objections; inch by inch he has conquered all obstacles; slowly but surely he has climbed the difficult road to success, until even his severest critics and his sternest judges felt in duty bound to admit that here were produced raisins that in quality and appearance were second to none—raisins that in flavor and size could not be equaled anywhere in the world.

In the *American Grocer* for October 16, 1889, page 24, appears the following: "We have now on this market samples of the various grades of California raisins from the largest and best packing-houses in the State of California, both from the Fresno and Riverside districts. The general character of the crop is ahead of that of any previous year, and reflects great credit upon those engaged in the packing industry.

PACKED IN ATTRACTIVE STYLE.

"Samples of A. B. Butler's raisins have been shown, including California Dehesas, the finest grade of California raisins seen on this market this season. The fruit is packed in neat and attractive style, the bunches on the top layer being tied with red, white and blue ribbon. There is an esthetic finish to the trimmings at the ends of the top layer that would be difficult to beat, being simple, chaste and artistically beautiful in color and design. On the sides are two gaily dressed maidens in street costume, partially hiding the dark-haired, olive-complexioned girl who forms the centerpiece, and from whose turbaned head droops a long tasseled cord over a royal purple sack which encases her shoulders. Quality and style are to be found in the Butler brands.

"The fruit is large, uniform in color, the bloom being well retained; the texture soft—a decided gain over previous years' packing. The California clusters, the four-crown loose Muscatels, are of exceptional quality, the latter showing large thumb-pressed raisins for the top that delight the eye and gratify the palate.

"It is the careful and conscientious packing of such large packers as A. B. Butler

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Fresno Vineyards, The Examiner San Francisco, 1890.

The sign of course became obsolete over the years, as did the series of improvements to the roads that followed leading to the construction of the freeway.

Several landmarks in Fresno were associated with old Highway 99 that ultimately became bypassed with the construction of the freeway including the Van Ness Entrance Gate welcoming motorists to Fresno; Belmont Circle that routed traffic from H Street via an underpass onto Motel Drive and alongside Roeding Park; one of the Richfield Beacons located approximately every fifty miles along Highway 99 that aided in guiding motorists as well as flyers; and more relevant to the West Area – the recently-demolished Astro Motel, located on the north end of what was known as Motel Drive between W Ashland and W Dakota avenues. The Astro was one of many motels along Motel Drive, an example of the numerous motel strips that "sprang up at entryways to cities along the highway… The bright neon beckoned nighttime travelers to stop for the night and grab some shut-eye" (Provost, Highway 99, 159).

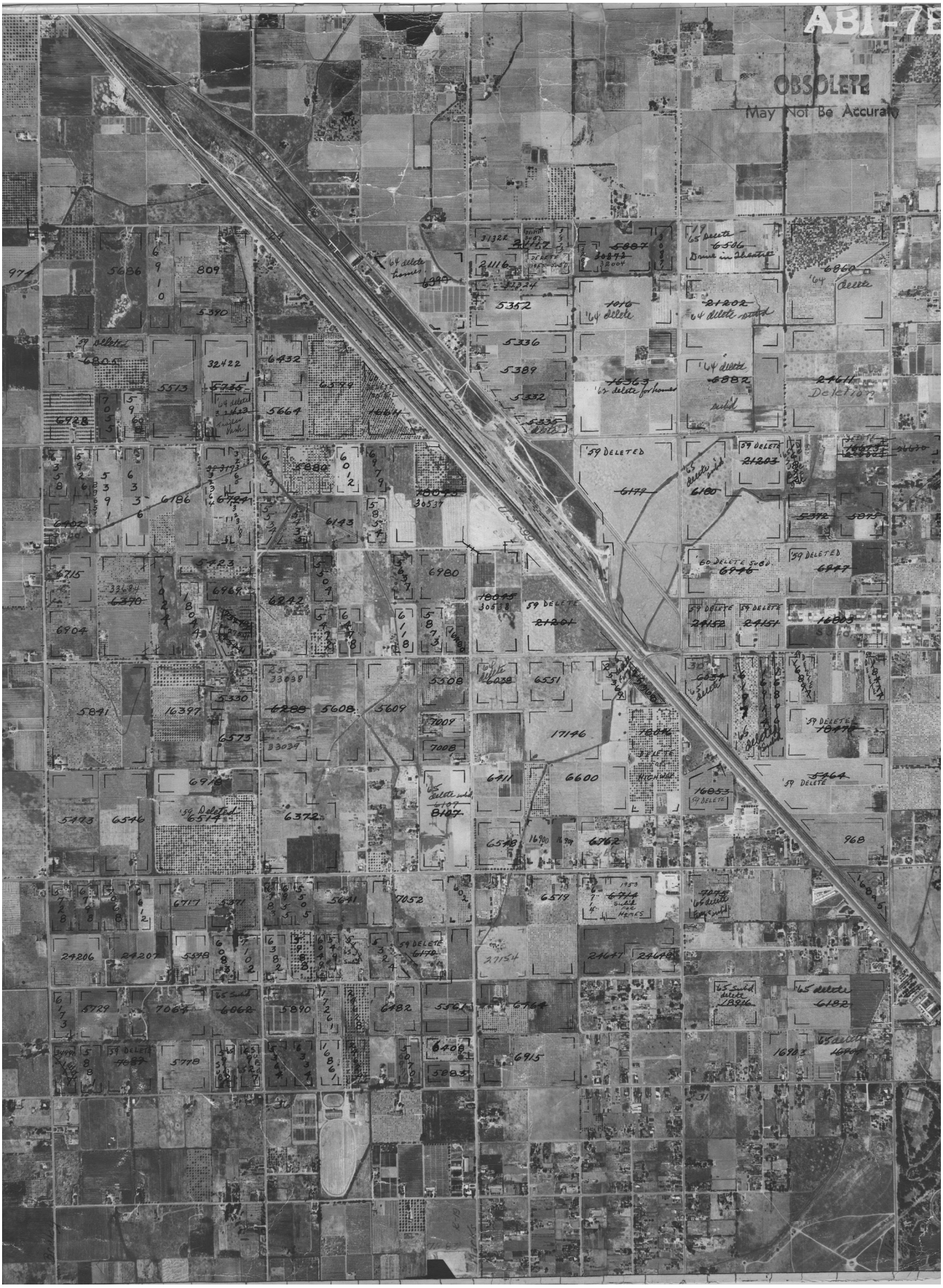
The West Area currently has one designated historic resource. The Brewer Adobe, also referred to as the José Garcia Adobe, is located near the southwest corner of West Shaw Avenue and North Hayes Avenue - within the boundaries of Highway City and fairly central within the West Area. The Brewer Adobe was constructed between 1923 and 1937 as a residential property type and is the only extant example of a vernacular building in the Fresno area that employs three construction techniques: traditional adobe brick, board and batten over frame, and hardpan with brick masonry construction. José Garcia was the first known tenant and owner. The property was first evaluated as a historic resource in 1996 and referred to as the Brewer Farm, with Les Brewer as the property owner.

Located in an area that was originally known as "Hardpan City", the residents in this locale utilized those building materials which were available to them, including adobe brick and hardpan. This building exhibits a traditional Hispanic use of earthen materials in the construction of a house which closely resembles a bungalow. The fusion of these attributes became relatively common in the Central Valley by the 1920s, and interest in the use of adobe in particular increased by the economic Depression during the 1930s. The influences of Baldassare Forestiere's Underground Gardens, another designated historic resource located seven-tenths of a mile east of the Brewer Adobe, undoubtedly influenced the use of hardpan as a building material.

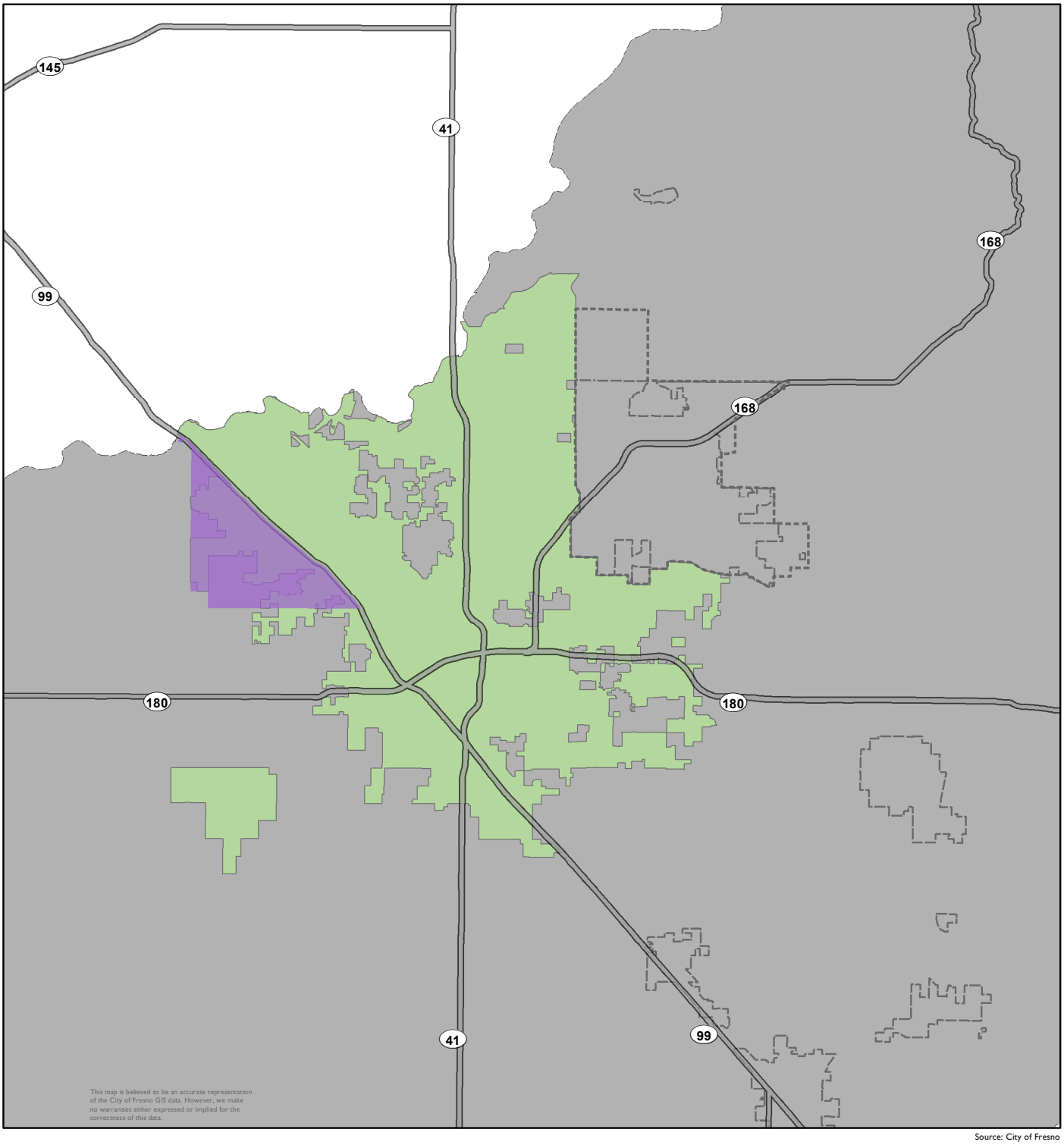
Property research from 1997 revealed that the area within the area where the Brewer Adobe is located, there has been an ethnic diversity among residents which included people of Mexican, Italian, and Swedish descent.

And, it was found that the Brewer Adobe embodies the exchange of construction and design ideas that could develop in such a region. The Brewer Adobe is a fragile but extraordinary resource that is critical to the understanding of the area's working class history and the story of adobe and hardpan construction in the San Joaquin Valley.

Despite the fact that the region of Fresno now referred to as the West Area was not incorporated into the city until more recent years and that there is currently only one designated historic resource within its boundaries, it is a region that has a history dating back to the original settlement of Fresno which has yet to be fully explored. It remains the final frontier for the city and further research will undoubtedly reveal more hidden gems.



Fresno County Highways Aerial, 1942.



Source: City of Fresno

FIGURE 1–1 Regional Location Map

Specific Plan of the West Area

Fresno City Limits

Fresno County

1.3 The Plan Area

The Plan Area is triangular in shape and located west of Highway 99. It is bounded on the south by the north side of West Clinton Avenue, and to the west by Grantland and Garfield Avenues. The Plan Area includes the southwest portion of Highway City adjacent to Highway 99. Figure 1.1 shows the Plan Area in relationship to the region.

The West Area is vast in land area which presents opportunities for development. For purposes of comparison, the size of the West Area is larger than the Capitol cities of Maryland (Annapolis), New Jersey (Trenton), Pennsylvania (Harrisburg), and Vermont (Montpelier). The West Area encompasses 7,077 acres or a little more than 11 square miles. A significant amount of land in the Plan Area is farmland or rural residential lots with large, uneven, and underutilized parcels. Of the eleven square miles, 6.9 square miles are in the city limits and 4.1 square miles in the growth area. The growth area is land outside the city limits but within the city's Sphere of Influence boundary, which is the adopted limit for future growth.

1.4 Farmland

Fresno County is ranked as one of the top agricultural counties in California. In 2017, county produce had nearly $6.1 billion in crop value. A majority of the crops are grapes, almonds, cotton, and citrus. The Fresno region has rich history in agriculture that spans from A.Y. Easterby's lush wheat field to Sicilian immigrant Baldassare Forestiere's Underground Garden. Currently, residential and commercial development in the West Area abuts prime farmland. For many years the West Area was largely fig orchards. This Plan will incorporate policies that respect agriculture, and incorporate components of agriculture into the West Area's future.

The West Area has approximately 3,070.95 acres of land that is classified as Urban and Built-Up, according to the State Department of Conservation. Prime farmland is principally located outside of the Plan Area. The West Area has 285.65 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance which is located primarily in the western edge of the Plan Area. Unique Farmland has 509.39 acres within the Plan Area and is located within the southwest portion of the Plan Area. Farmland of Local Importance has approximately 1,562.82 acres located throughout the entire Plan Area. Vacant or Disturbed Land and Rural Residential Land account for approximately 1,650.17 acres within the growth area.

1.5 Politcal Background

The Plan Area is situated in the 16th Congressional District, the 8th State Senatorial District, and the 23rd and 31st State Assembly Districts. The Plan Area is also situated in County Supervisorial District No. 1. In addition, the Plan Area is represented by three City Council Districts. Council District No. 1 represents a majority of the Plan Area's population and covers a significant portion of the land in the middle of the Plan Area extending from the south side of West Shaw Avenue to the north side of West Shields Avenue. Council District No. 2 covers land in the northern portion of the Plan Area extending from the north side of West Shaw Avenue to the northern edge of the city's boundary. Council District No. 3 includes land in the southeast portion of the Plan Area extending from the south side of West Shields Avenue to the north side of West Clinton Avenue.

Image taken by City staff, Grantland Ave and Olive Ave.

1.6 Other Planning Efforts Impacting the West Area

This Plan serves as the first major specific planning effort, environmental evaluation, and infrastructure analysis for the West Area. However, other planning efforts have occurred or are in process as described below.

- **The Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan (1998)**

  The Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan was adopted January 6, 1998 and was prepared to address problems, issues, and opportunities of the Highway City neighborhood, especially for individuals who live, work or have a long-time involvement in the community. One of the guiding principles for the Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan encouraged development of traditional neighborhoods characterized by a diverse but compatible arrangement of residential, commercial, industrial, and public uses that was to be reinforced by existing and established single-family residential areas. The Specific Plan of the West Area would repeal a portion of the Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan to avoid overlap and confusion with the Specific Plan of the West Area, but would carry forward any relevant area-specific policies.

- **The West Area Community Plan (2002)**

  The West Area Community Plan was adopted on February 1, 2002 as "Appendix W" of the 2025 General Plan. The core goals of the Community Plan were to develop the West Area as a planned community with a complete range of services, facilities and public infrastructure development, and to minimize land use conflicts between agriculture and urban uses. This Plan would replace the Community Plan, but would carry forward any relevant policies.

- **The General Plan (2014)**

  The General Plan was adopted on December 18, 2014 and sets the stage for the initiation of this Plan. This Plan refines the General Plan's vision for the West Area. The General Plan created policies and implementation plans to achieve a long-term vision which emphasizes infill development, complete neighborhoods, and multi-modal transportation.

  The General Plan emphasizes supporting established neighborhoods in Fresno with safe, well maintained, and accessible streets, public utilities, education and job training, proximity to jobs, retail services, health care, affordable housing, youth development opportunities, open space and parks, transportation options, and opportunities for home grown businesses. Another key goal of the General Plan that will be reiterated in this Plan is to resolve existing public infrastructure and service deficiencies, make full use of existing infrastructure, and invest in improvements to increase competitiveness and promote economic growth.

  The Shaw Avenue Corridor from Highway 99 to Grantland Avenue is envisioned to be developed as a mixed-use corridor supported by enhanced transit service. This corridor includes high density and urban neighborhood residential components, along with retail, employment and civic uses. The General Plan proposes the location of a 40-acre park along the east side of the Veterans Boulevard between Shaw Avenue and Barstow Avenue, which will anchor a West Shaw Transit Village. The proposed park is bisected by a Class I bike trail along the Herndon Canal. This vision is supported by the West Area community and will continue in this Plan, albeit with lower density and possibly with integration of more open space.

A regional mixed-use center is designated between Veterans Boulevard and Grantland Avenue. These land uses will be mixed both vertically and horizontally, and represent the transit – oriented cores of Complete Neighborhoods that connect with surrounding residential areas.

It is important to note that the General Plan's vision for the West Area is to provide opportunities for the development of Complete Neighborhoods. The concept of Complete Neighborhoods is to enable Fresnans to live in communities with convenient services, employment, and recreation within walking distance. It provides residents with amenities that make it mostly self-sufficient, walkable, and interconnected. The General Plan acknowledges that completeness is unlikely to be accomplished in each neighborhood; however it provides that the following characteristics can be combined to create an enhanced quality of life and increased property values:

- A range of housing choices;
- Neighborhood-serving retail;
- Employment opportunities;
- Public services, such as health clinics;
- Entertainment and cultural assets;
- Parks and public schools within or near the neighborhood;
- Community services, such as a library, recreation center, senior center, and/or community garden;
- Public plaza/civic space; and
- Access to public transit.

- **Fresno Municipal Code Chapter 15: Citywide Development Code (2015)**

  The main purpose of the Development Code, which was adopted in 2015, is to implement the General Plan and other adopted plans. The Development Code is the city's zoning code, and it seeks to protect and promote the public health, safety, peace, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the residents of the City of Fresno. It allows for the orderly allocation of land for development by classifying the city into districts or zones that allow various land uses, including residential single-family, residential multi-family, mixed-use, commercial, public and semi-public, downtown and employment districts. This Plan will reference the Development Code and applicable regulations for the West Area.

- **The Active Transportation Plan (2017)**

  The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) was adopted on March 2, 2017 and serves as the city's comprehensive guide outlining the vision for active transportation. The ATP envisions a complete, safe, and comfortable network of trails, sidewalks, and bikeways that serve as a means for people to safely get to their destinations while reducing roadway congestion and improving the air quality. This also results in replacing vehicle miles traveled with walking or biking. Both existing and planned Class II bike lanes are outlined for the West Area. Class I bicycle and pedestrian paths are planned for in the West Area with three eastward connection points over Highway 99 at Herndon Avenue, Veterans Boulevard, Gettysburg Avenue, and the Herndon Canal which abuts West Shaw Avenue. The ATP will be referenced in this Plan.

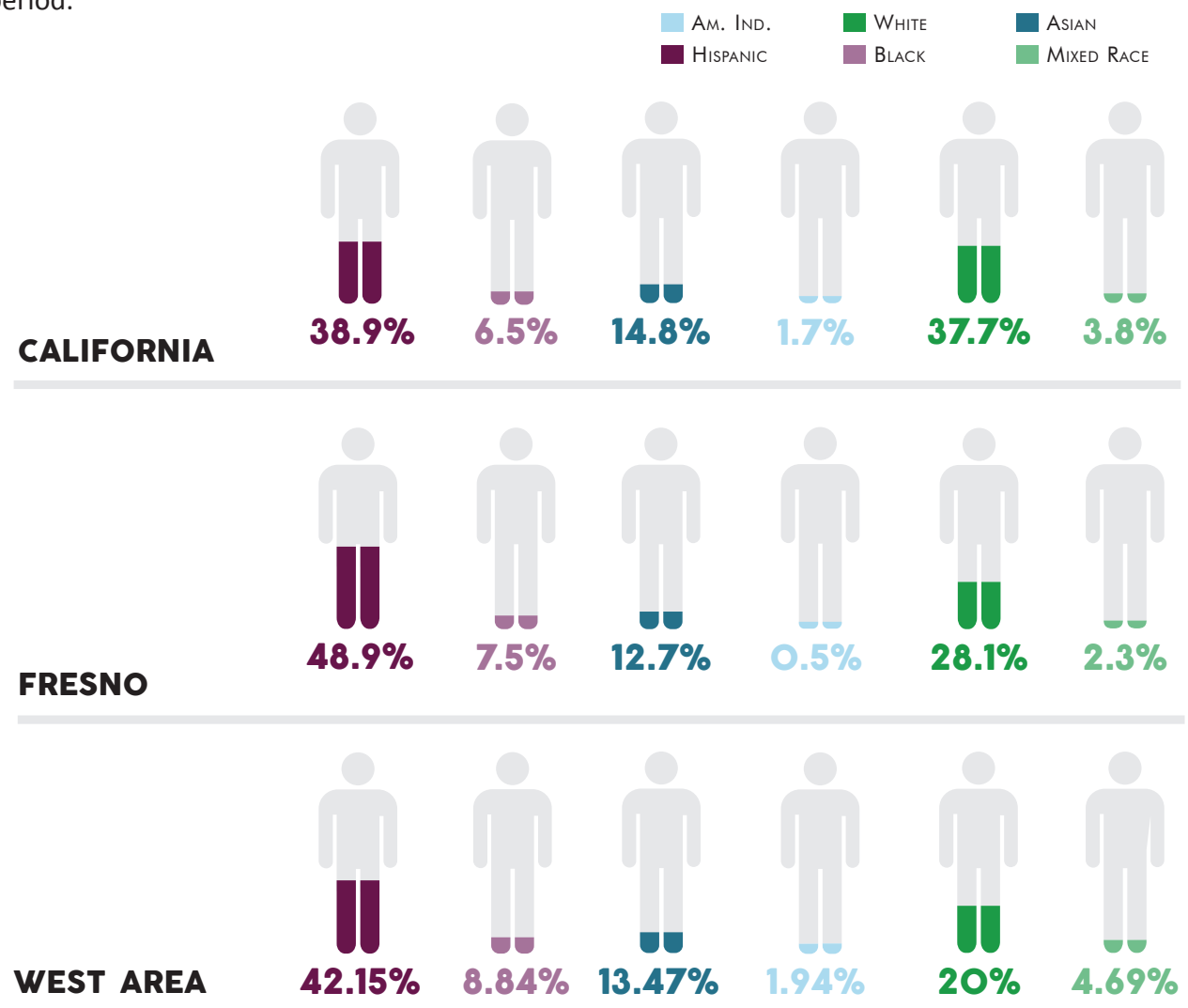
- **The Parks Master Plan (2017)**
  The Parks Master Plan (PMP) was adopted on December 14, 2017 and serves as a community-based vision and road map for planning a complete and functional park system in the city of Fresno. It examined the General Plan's level of service goals for park land and determined the amount of acreage needed for the city's existing and future population. The PMP articulates a vision for improving Fresno's park and open space system formed by public input and based on thorough analysis. Priorities of Fresno community members, institutional leaders, and policy makers are reflected in the PMP. The goals and recommendations of the PMP for the Plan Area will be mentioned at a later period.

1.7 West Area Profile

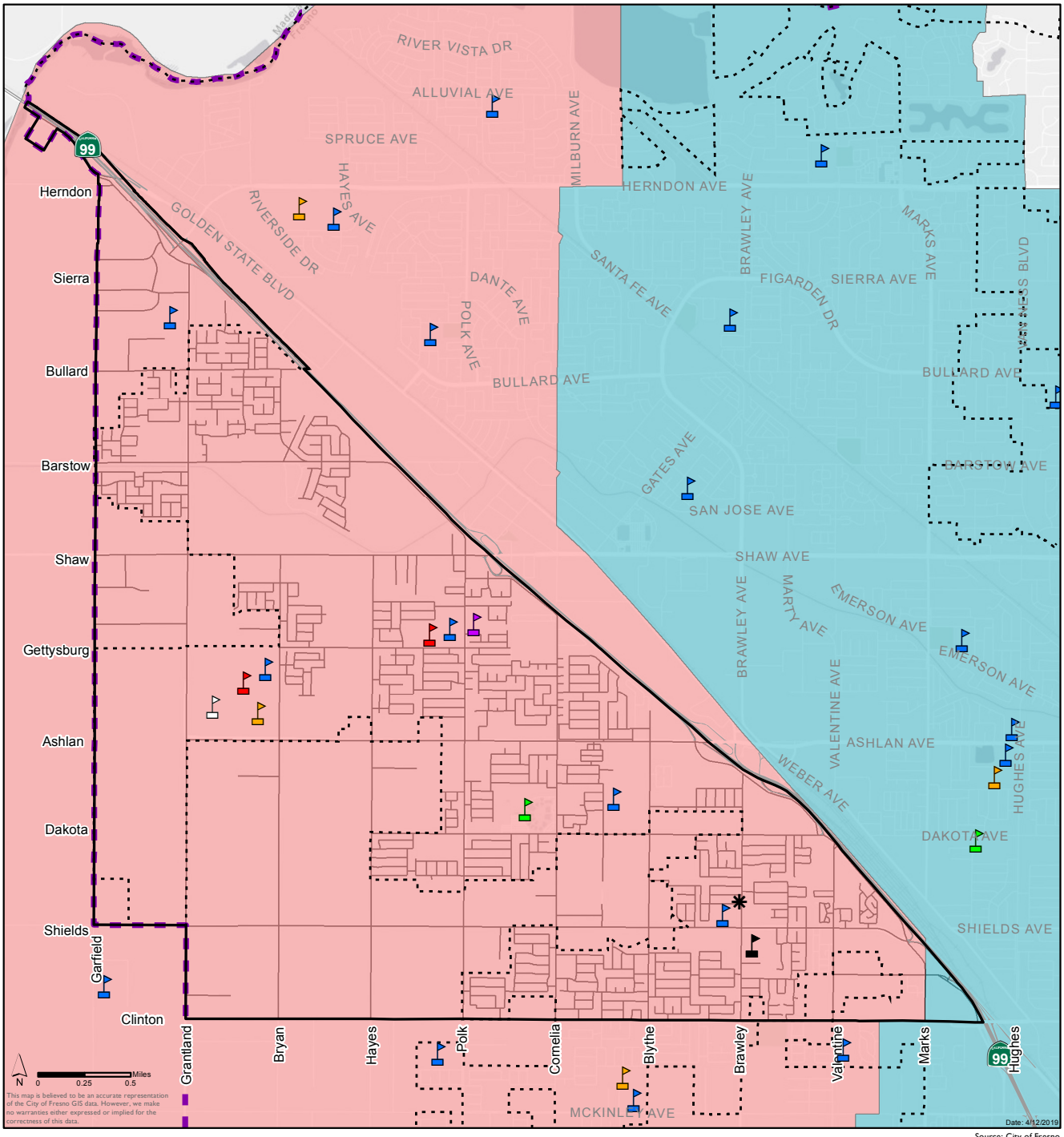
1.7 A. Race and Gender

According to the United States Census Bureau, the Hispanic community is the largest ethnic group in Fresno, and the West Area. The Hispanic ethnic group includes Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and any other Hispanic or Latino groups. This trend is also representative throughout the entire state of California and is not limited to the city of Fresno and the West Area. In 2015, the Hispanic community edged out Caucasians as the largest ethnic group in the state of California. Gender dynamics in the state of California, city of Fresno, and the Plan Area show a nearly even divide between male and female portions of the population.

FIGURE 1-2 RACE



Source: The United States Census Bureau



Source: City of Fresno

FIGURE 1-3 Parcels Proposed for Change Proposed Land Use Change Map

School Facilities

- Head Start
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Administration
- Alternative School
- Deran Koligian Stadium

School Districts

- Central Unified
- Fresno Unified

BOUNDARIES

- Fresno City Limts
- Specific Plan of the West Area
- Sphere Of Influence

*Proposed Elementary School

1.7 B. Secondary Education

Public education is provided by 21 public schools within the Central Unified School District (CUSD) serving approximately 15,772 pupils. The following schools located in the Plan Area are:

- **Central High School – East Campus**. This school was built in 1996 to accommodate rapid growth and development within CUSD's coverage area.

- **Central Learning Adult School Site (CLASS)**. CLASS is an alternative high school located on a campus it shares with the adult school. CLASS is a hybrid independent study program that incorporates direct instruction into traditional independent study model.

- **Glacier Point Middle School**. Glacier Point Middle School enrolls approximately 893 students and provides a rigorous learning environment.

- **Harvest Elementary School**. Harvest Elementary educates approximately 680 pupils in grades transitional kindergarten through sixth.

- **Herndon-Barstow Elementary School.** Herndon-Barstow Elementary was originally a rural school without a natural population within its boundary to fill it to capacity. However, an increase in development has caused enrollment to spike.

- **Teague Elementary School.** Teague Elementary School is located in close proximately to Inspiration Park and the proposed Highway City Community Resource Center.

- **Polk Elementary School.** Polk Elementary was named after former President James K. Polk, and is the first Fresno County schools to be themed on Californian history and the Westward Movement.

- **Preschool.** Preschool services are provided for children who are 4 years of age.

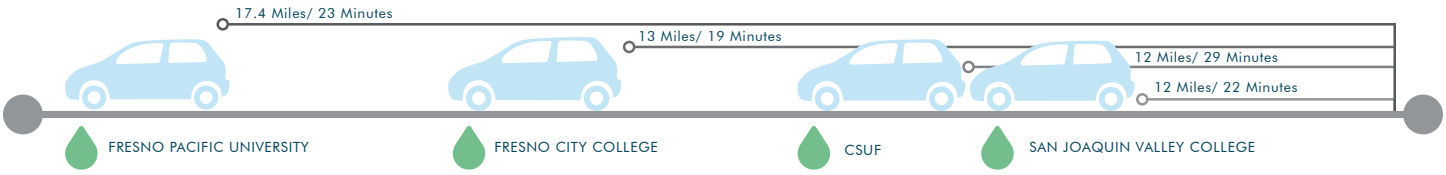
CUSD, as a whole, spans across and beyond the Plan Area amounting to a coverage area of approximately 88 square miles. CUSD primarily serves rural and suburban populations. Fuel by increased residential development since the early 2000's, CUSD has experienced a hike in enrollment and as result has built new schools. The Board of Trustees serves as CUSD's governing body, each elected from and representing an area, 3 trustee areas are located within the Plan Area. CUSD is preparing to build a new high school which is scheduled to open for the 2021-22 school year. In addition, CUSD is also preparing to construct two new elementary schools totaling approximately $50 million. At the time of adoption of the General Plan, CUSD had 19 public schools; today CUSD has 2 additional schools.

CUSD has large undeveloped tracts of land available for additional school buildings that are planned for within the Plan Area. The only school building currently located in Council District No. 3 is the Central Learning Adult School located near Shields and Brawley.

1.7 C. Postsecondary Education

The city of Fresno is home to several institutions of higher learning. California State University, Fresno, commonly referred to and known as Fresno State, is located in the northeastern section of the city, approximately X miles from the Plan Area. Fresno State is one of the largest and fastest growing campuses among the 23 CSU campuses. Another key postsecondary educational institution is the State Center Community College District, which operates Fresno City College. A new campus is proposed to be built south of the Plan Area is Southwest Fresno which will be situated approximately 5 miles south of the Plan Area. Fresno City College offers associate degrees and vocational training. The only postsecondary facility located within the Plan Area is A-1 Truck Driving School (A-1). A-1 provides educational assistance to students seeking to obtain a commercial driver license from the California Department of Motor Vehicles in order to operate large commercial vehicles for employment.

FIGURE 1-4 DRIVING DISTANCES

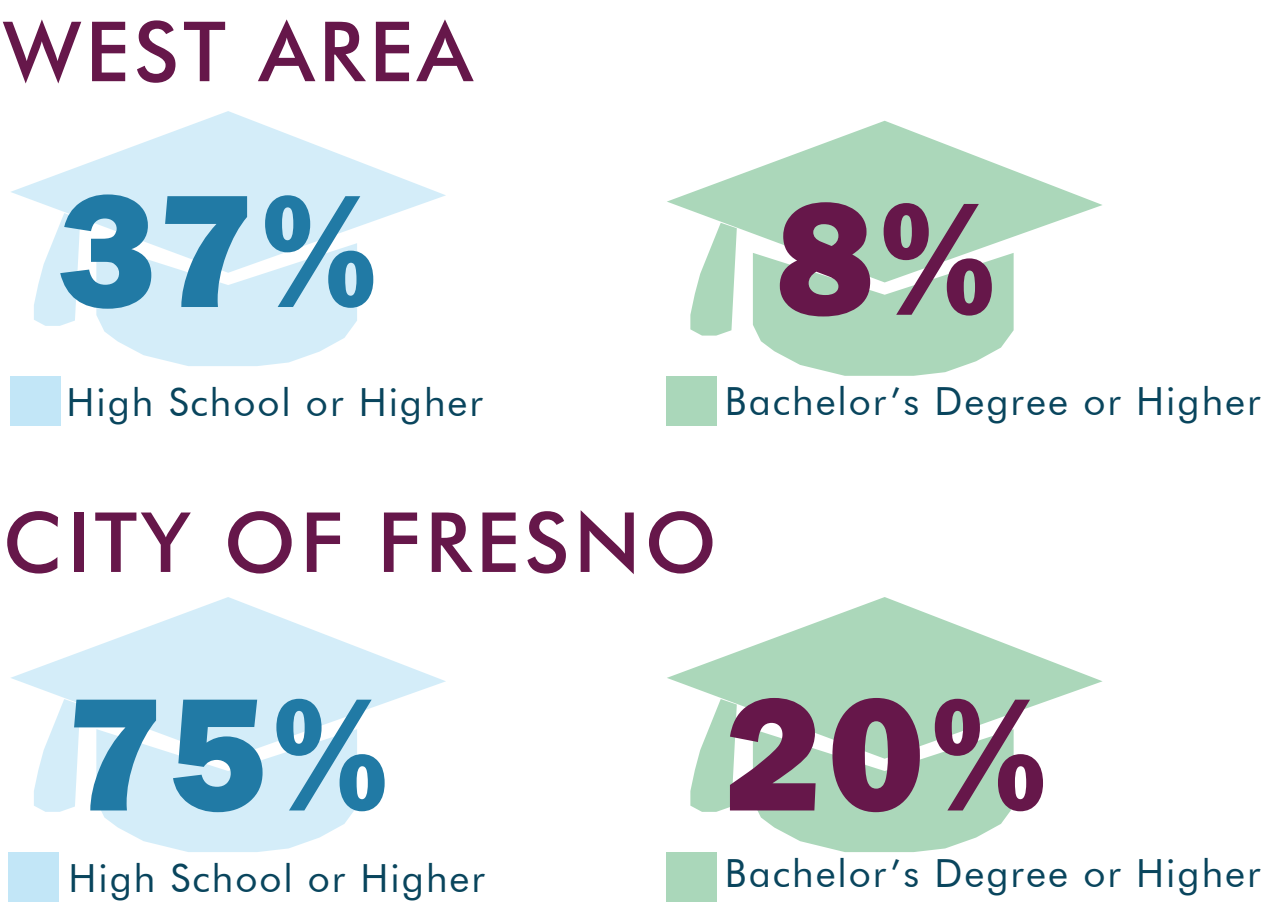


Source: Directions, Google Maps

1.7 D. Educational Attainment

Approximately 82% of the state's population has a high school education or higher, to include some college or an associate's degree. 31% of the state has attained a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. Educations levels are in the city as compared to the state. 75% of city residents have attained a high school education or higher, and 20% have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. The West Area's educational attainment level is lower than the state of California and the city of Fresno in all categories. 37% of West Area residents have attained a high school education or higher. Furthermore, a little over 8% of West Area residents have attained a bachelor's degree or higher level. This subsection describes the educational attainment levels of the West Area population, as compared to the City of Fresno and the State of California.

FIGURE 1-5 EDUCATION



Source: *United States Census Bureau*

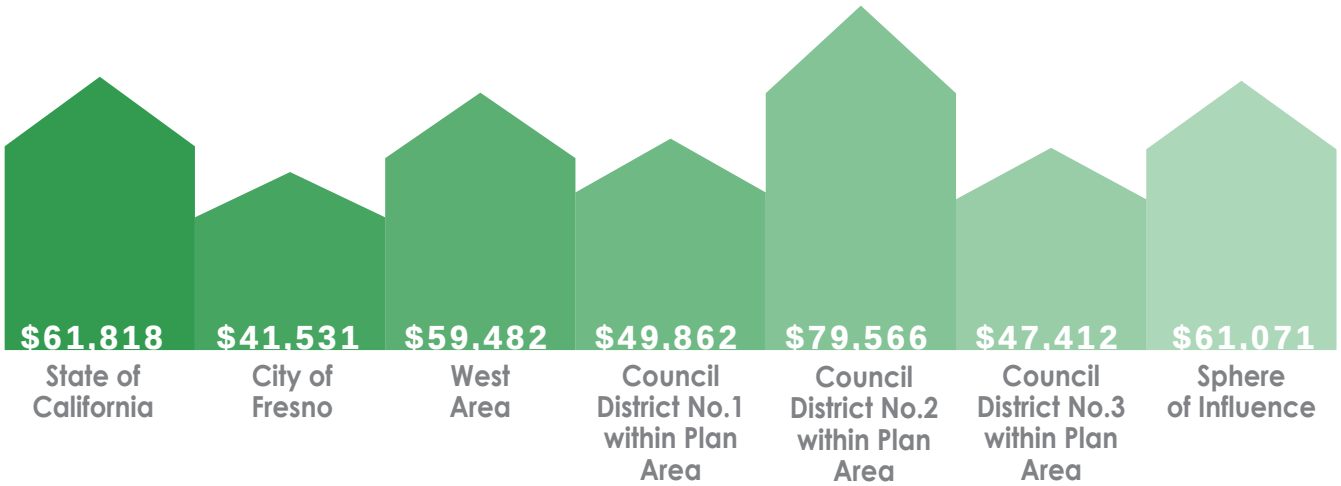
1.7 E. Income and Jobs

While the educational attainment level is lower than both the city and the state, the median household income levels of the Plan Area are higher than the city's median household income level. The median household income for the state of California is $61,818 while the median household income for the city of Fresno is 41,531 while the median household income is $59,482. Further analysis of the Plan Area breaks down the income levels in Council District No. 1, Council District 2, Council District 3, and the growth area. The figure shows that the median household income of Council District No.2 surpasses the median household income level of both the state and city. It could be assumed that low education levels will translate to lower income levels. However, over 50% of the plan Area population is employed within the healthcare, agricultural, blue collar, or service sector employment.

Blue collar employment is defined as having a job that is not performed in an administrative setting and is skills-based such as a welder, plumber, warehouse personnel, or maintenance.

It is believed the reason income levels are fairly high in the Plan Area even though education levels are lower is because of blue collar and service sector employment. For example, 44% of those working within the blue collar employment sector have transportation jobs. According to a 2015 report from the American Trucking Association (ATA), the median annual wage for a truck driver is approximately $73,000. The ATA has noted compensation for truckers has increased approximately 12% per year. This is one example of an industry where the job may require only a high school diploma or GED, but the earning potential can exceed $70,000 per year.

FIGURE 1-6 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: ArcGIS and United States Census Bureau

FIGURE 1-7 JOBS

Professional Service

Management
Business Financial
Computer/Mathematical
Social Sciences
Social Services
Legal
Office/Administration
Architect/Engineer

32%

Blue Collar Employment

Building Maintenance
Construction
Maintenace/Repair
Transportation
Production

30%

Service Sector

Sales
Food Preparation
Protective Services

17%

Health Care

Health Practice
Health Support
Personal Service

12%

Education & Recreation

Education
Library Services
Arts
Entertainment
Recreation

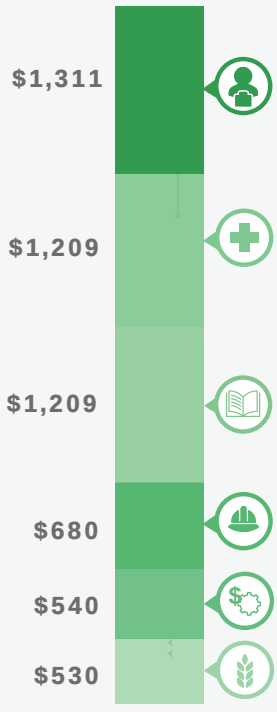
6%

Agriculture

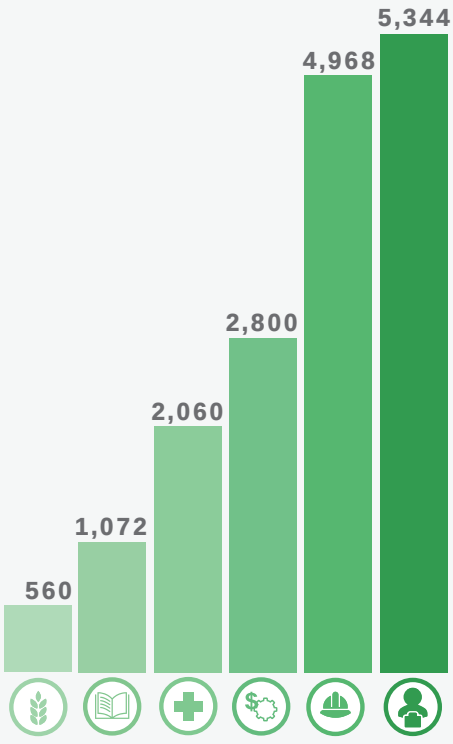
Farm
Fisheries
Forestry

3%

MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS



TOTAL AMOUNT OF JOBS



Source: *1. ESRI; Vintage 2017; 2017 Jobs (ESRI)*
2. Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers- Third Quarter 2017. Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor. October 18, 2017.

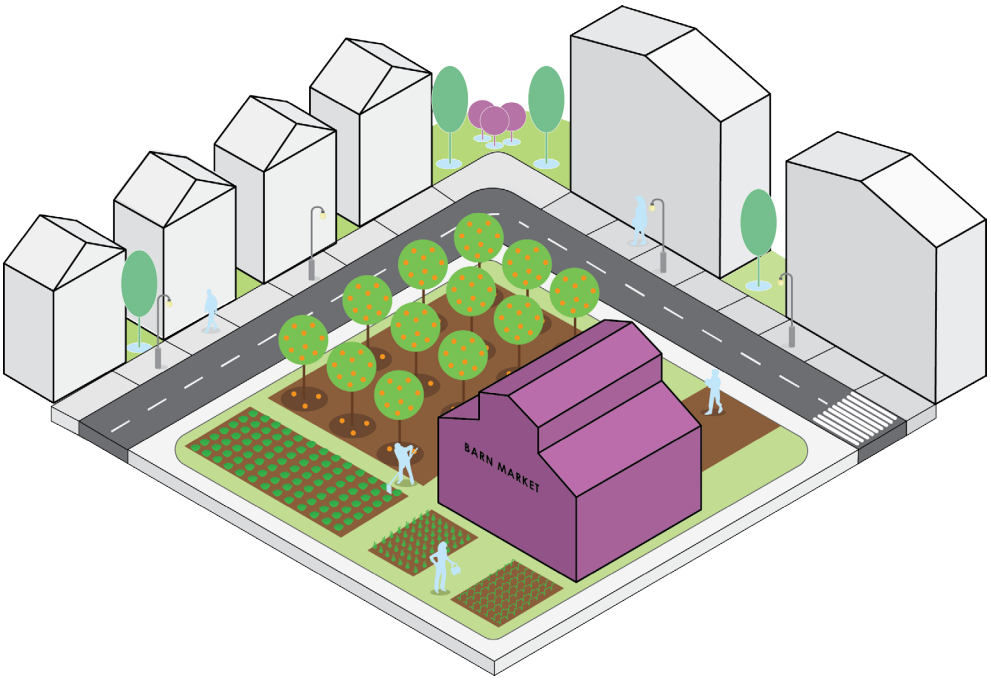
1.7 F. Public Safety

Image taken by City staff, Clinton Ave and Polk Ave.

The City of Fresno provides vital public safety services to its residents, police and fire protection. The Police Department is headquartered at 2323 Mariposa Street in Downtown. Fresno has five policing districts and the West Area is located in Police District 5 – Northwest, but the police district office is not located in the Plan Area. It is located approximately 2.5 miles east at 3080 W. Shaw Avenue. It is important to note that Ambulatory services are contracted out and performed by American Ambulance.

The Fire Department is headquartered at 911 H Street with 23 stations located across Fresno. The department has two stations located in the Plan Area. Fire Station No. 16 is situated at the northeast corner of the intersection of West Clinton Avenue and North Polk Avenue at 2510 N. Polk Street. In the northern portion of the Plan Area, Fire Station No. 18 is located off of West Bullard Avenue at 5938 North La Ventana Avenue. Fire Station 18 will be relocated to a permanent location on the south side of the 6000 block of West Shaw Avenue to maximize the department's "4 Minutes to Excellence" response time goal.

2 PLAN PROCESS & VISION



Graphic example of a Agrihood

Why are we doing this plan?

The Specific Plan of the West Area (Plan Area) currently consists of a large amount of developable land within city and county limits. The West Area has the potential to grow and develop into its own vibrant community. The Specific Plan of the West Area (the Plan) seeks to provide for the orderly and consistent development that promotes and establishes the West Area as a complete neighborhood with enhanced transportation infrastructure, development of core commercial centers, creation of additional parkland, and encouraging the development of a diverse housing stock. The Plan Area does not have needed commercial amenities, forcing residents to travel east of Highway 99 for retail services. The Plan Area also lacks a complete roadway network and parkland.

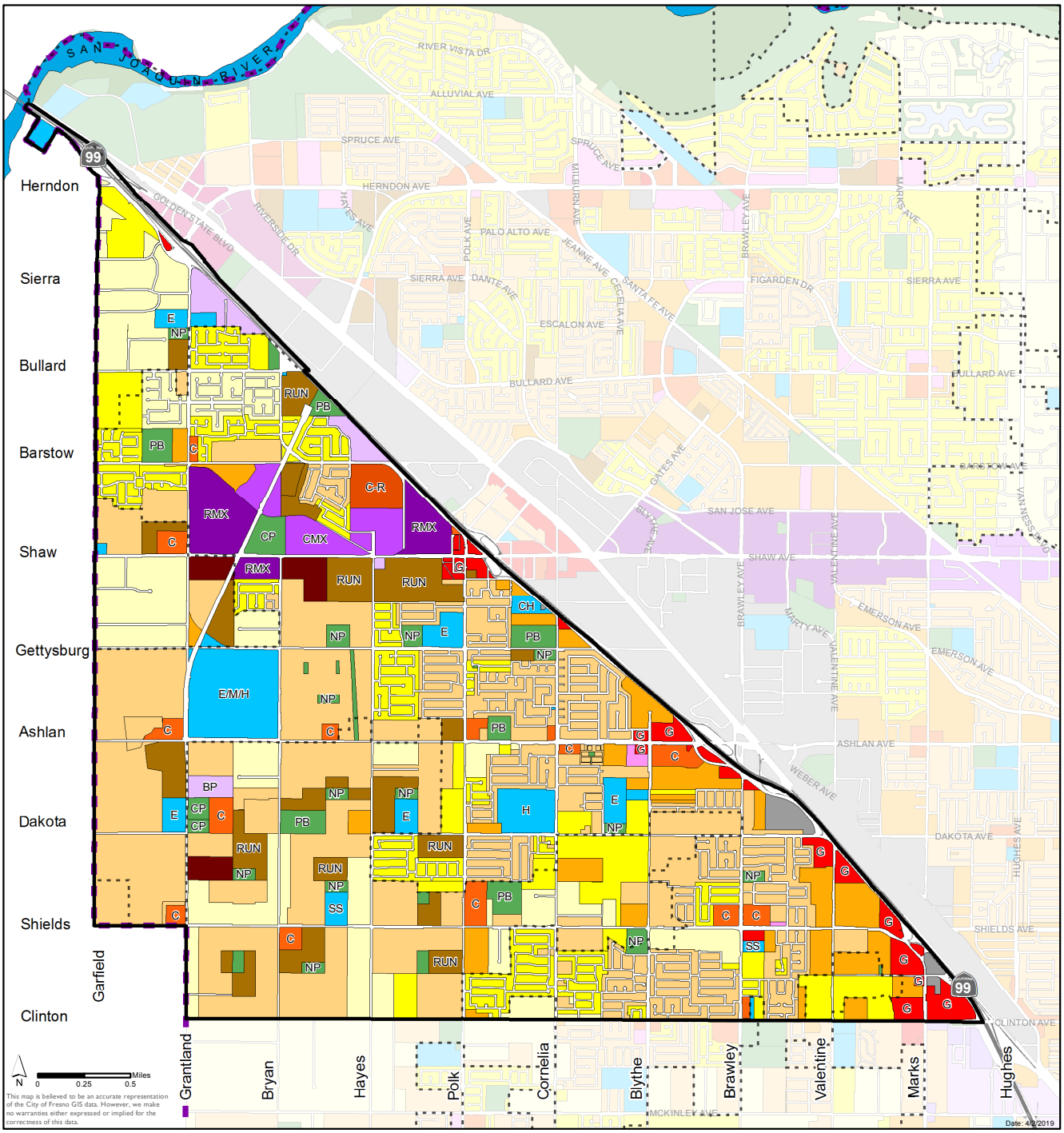


FIGURE 2-1 General Plan Land Use Map

RESIDENTIAL
- Low Density (1-3.5 D.U./acre)
- Medium Low Density (3.5-6 D.U./acre)
- Medium Density (5.0-12 D.U./acre)
- Medium High Density (12-16 D.U./acre)
- Urban Neighborhood (16-30 D.U./acre)
- High Density (30-45 D.U./acre)

COMMERCIAL
- Community
- Recreation
- General

EMPLOYMENT
- Office
- BP Business Park
- Light Industrial

MIXED USE
- CMX Corridor/Center Mixed Use
- RMX Regional Mixed Use

OPEN SPACE
- CP Community Park
- PB Open Space - Ponding Basin
- NP Neighborhood Park
- Open Space
- P Park

PUBLIC FACILITIES
- Public/Quasi-public Facility
- SS Special School
- E Elementary School
- E/M/H Elementary, Middle & High School
- H High School
- CH Church
- FS Fire Station

BOUNDARIES
- City Limits
- West Area Specific Plan Boundary
- Sphere Of Influence

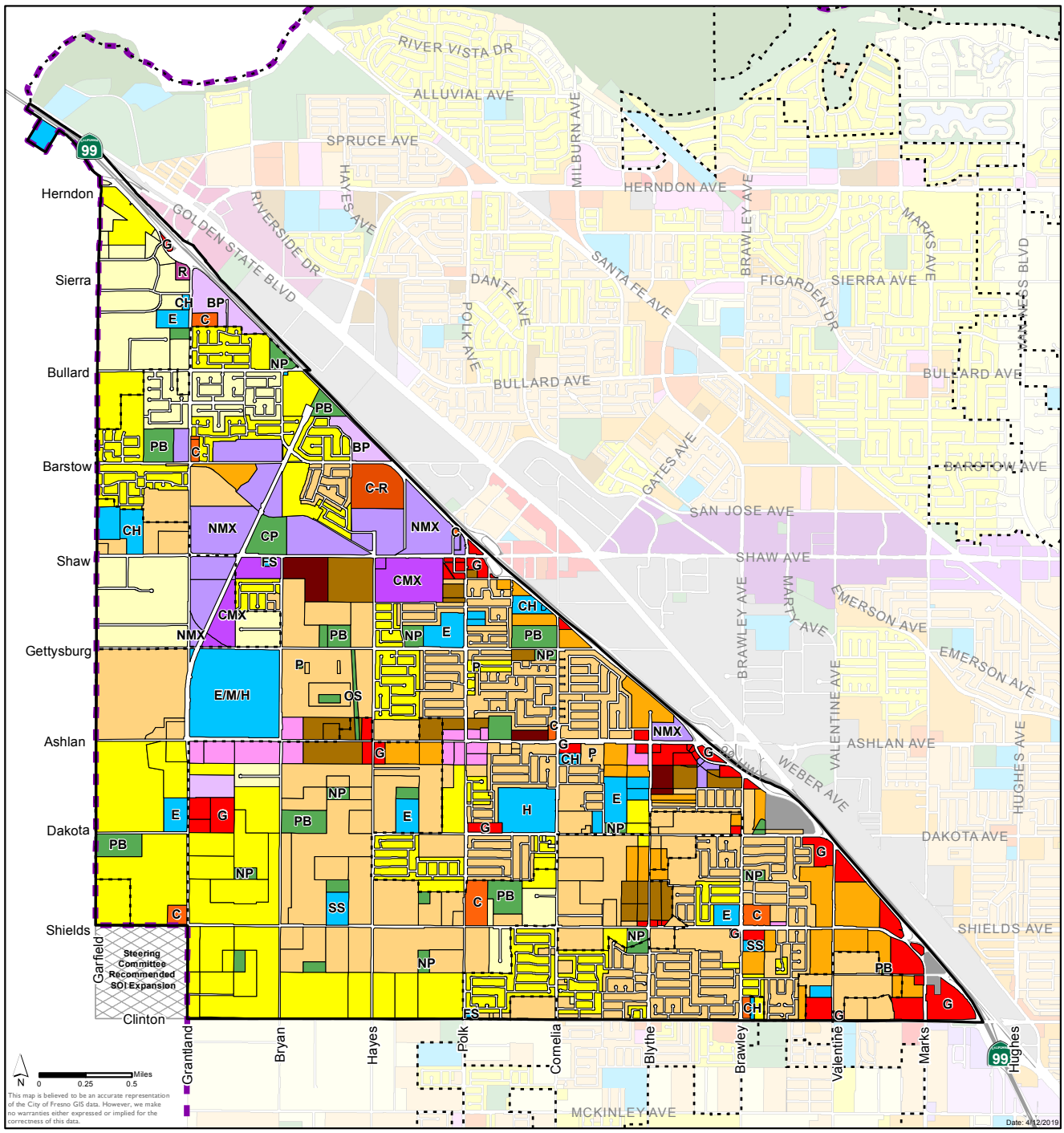


FIGURE 2-2 Proposed Land Use Map

RESIDENTIAL
- Low Density (1-3.5 D.U./acre)
- Medium Low Density (3.5-6 D.U./acre)
- Medium Density (5.0-12 D.U./acre)
- Medium High Density (12-16 D.U./acre)
- Urban Neighborhood (16-30 D.U./acre)
- High Density (30-45 D.U./acre)

COMMERCIAL
- Community
- Recreation
- General
- Regional

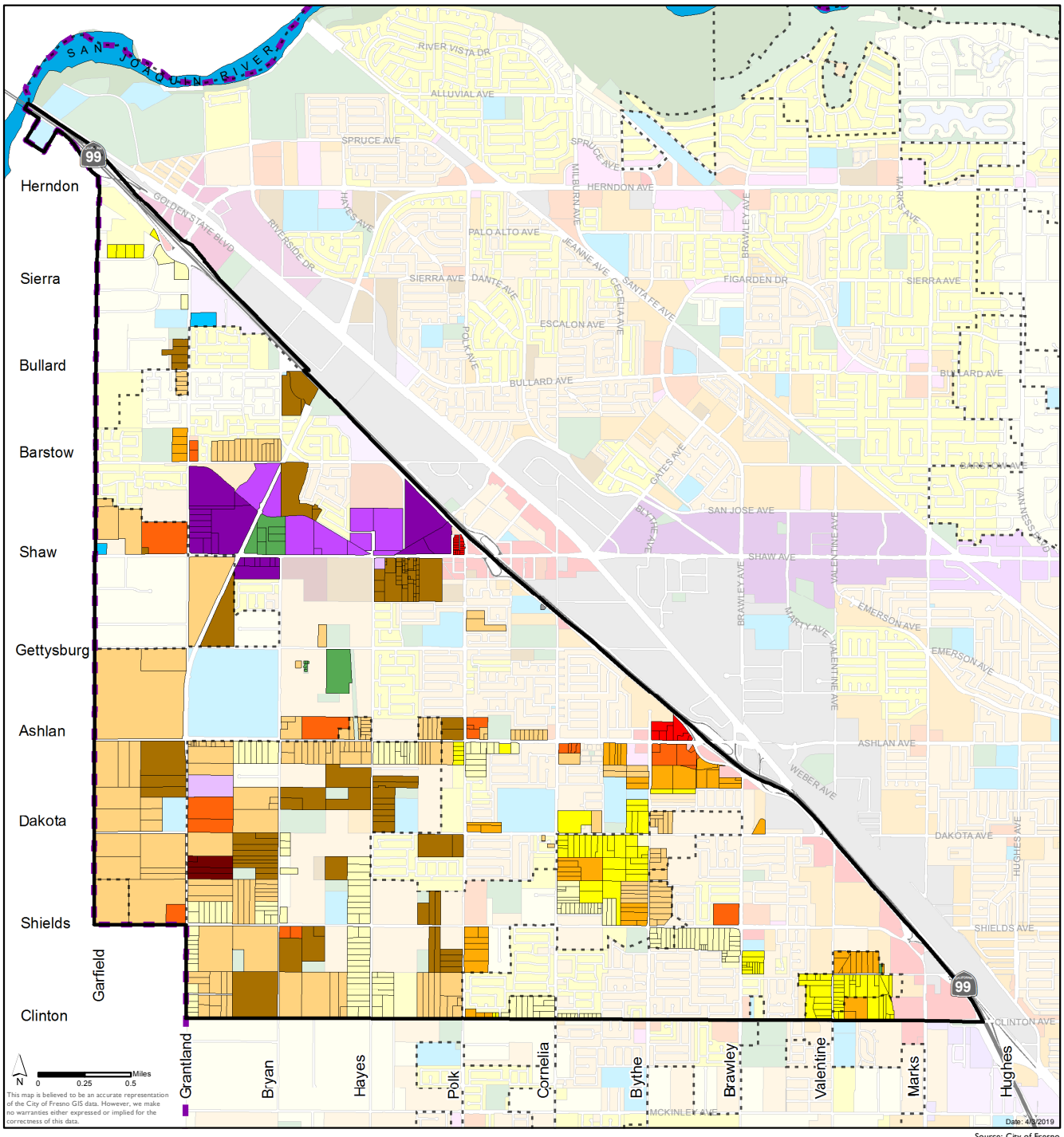
EMPLOYMENT
- Office
- Business Park
- Light Industrial

MIXED USE
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Corridor/Center Mixed Use
- Regional Mixed Use

OPEN SPACE
- Community Park
- Pocket Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Open Space
- Park
- Ponding Basin

PUBLIC FACILITIES
- Public/Quasi-public Facility
- Special School
- Elementary School
- Elementary & Middle School
- Elementary, Middle & High School
- High School
- Church
- Fire Station

BOUNDARIES
- Fresno City Limts
- Specific Plan of the West Area
- Sphere Of Influence



Source: City of Fresno

FIGURE 2-3 Parcels Proposed for Change General Plan Land Use Map

RESIDENTIAL
- Low Density (1-3.5 D.U./acre)
- Medium Low Density (3.5-6 D.U./acre)
- Medium Density (5.0-12 D.U./acre)
- Medium High Density (12-16 D.U./acre)
- Urban Neighborhood (16-30 D.U./acre)
- High Density (30-45 D.U./acre)

COMMERCIAL
- Community
- General

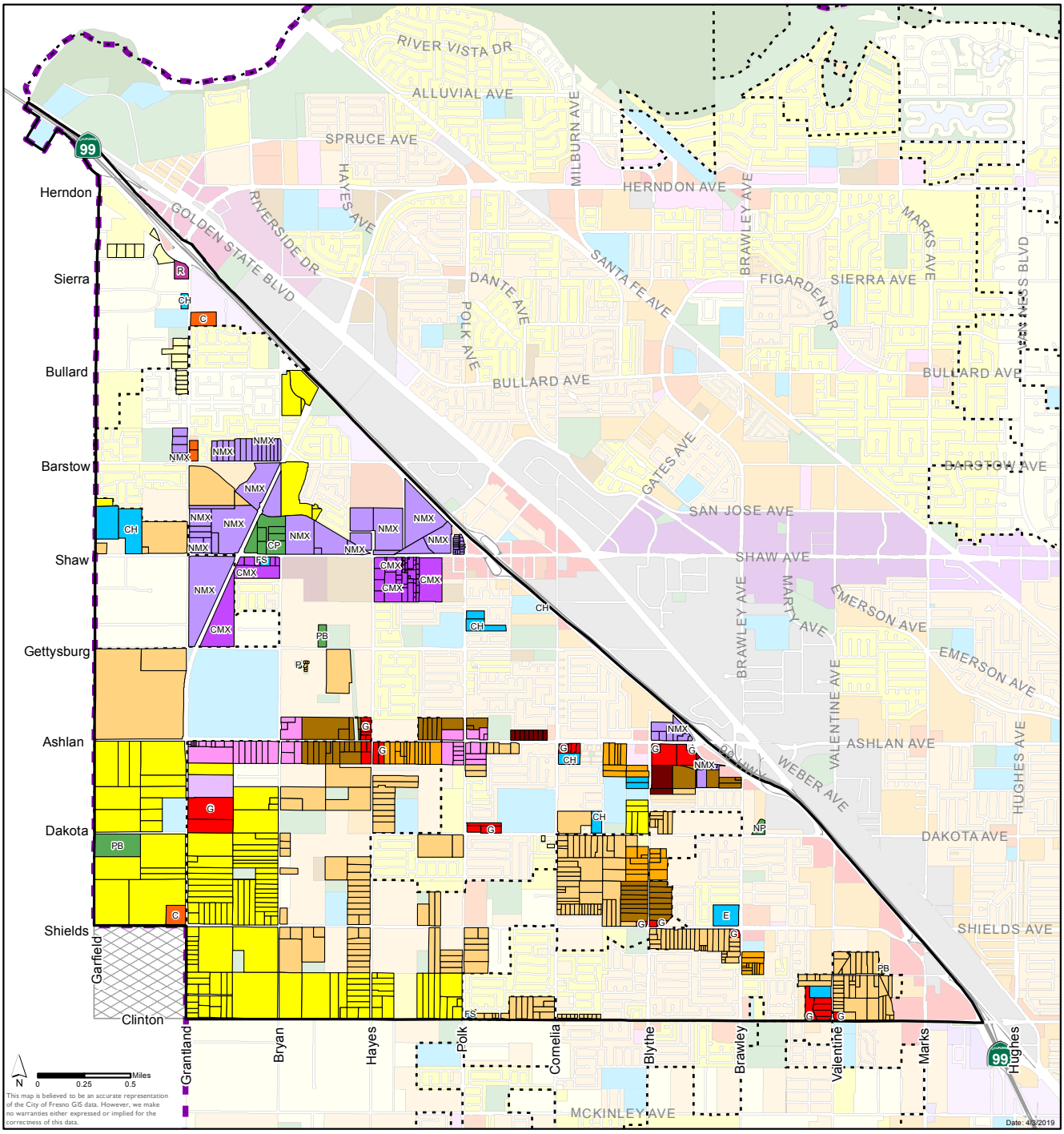
EMPLOYMENT
- BP Business Park
- Light Industrial

MIXED USE
- CMX Corridor/Center Mixed Use
- RMX Regional Mixed Use

OPEN SPACE
- Community Park
- P Park
- PB Ponding Basin

PUBLIC FACILITIES
- Public/Quasi-public Facility
- Fire Station

BOUNDARIES
- West Area Specific Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Sphere Of Influence



Source: City of Fresno

FIGURE 2-4 Parcels Proposed for Change Proposed Land Use Change Map

RESIDENTIAL
- Low Density (1-3.5 D.U./acre)
- Medium Low Density (3.5-6 D.U./acre)
- Medium Density (5.0-12 D.U./acre)
- Medium High Density (12-16 D.U./acre)
- Urban Neighborhood (16-30 D.U./acre)
- High Density (30-45 D.U./acre)

COMMERCIAL
- Community
- General
- Regional

EMPLOYMENT
- Office
- Business Park

MIXED USE
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Corridor/Center Mixed Use

OPEN SPACE
- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Park
- Ponding Basin

PUBLIC FACILITIES
- Public/Quasi-public Facility
- Elementary School
- Church
- Fire Station

BOUNDARIES
- Specific Plan of the West Area
- Fresno City Limits
- Sphere Of Influence

2.1 Draft Land Use Map & Guiding Principles

Draft Land Use Map

The Steering Committee recommends refining the General Plan's land use vision for the West Area. The draft land use map proposes the relocation of higher density land uses away from the most western and southwestern portions of the Plan Area where they are distant from public transit and community amenities and transfers those higher density land use designations to major corridors. The following are revisions to the core goals provided in the General Plan:

- **West Shaw Avenue Town Center.** The West Shaw Avenue Town Center (the Town Center) will extend from Highway 99 to the east side of Grantland Avenue and is envisioned to be comprised of mixed-use development supported by enhanced transit service. Land on the south side of West Shaw Avenue will provide additional neighborhood and commercial mixed use opportunities.

- **Catalytic Corridors.** This Plan proposes the designation of higher density land uses along corridors for the purpose of providing easy access to major arterials and streets, retail centers, and community amenities. Catalytic corridors will include transit services. The corridors are designed to include neighborhood and pocket parks, commercial and retail uses, educational facilities, multi-family dwelling units, and professional offices. The corridors are located on the following streets:

1. West Shaw Avenue, from Highway 99 to the east side of Grantland Avenue
2. West Ashlan Avenue, from Highway 99 to the commercial nodes located on the west side of Grantland Avenue
3. North Blythe Avenue, from West Shields to West Ashlan Avenue
4. West Clinton Avenue from Highway 99 to North Brawley Avenue
5. Veterans Boulevard, from West Gettysburg Avenue to West Barstow Avenue

Draft Guiding Principles

Outreach to the West Area community started in early 2018 with individual meetings between City staff and community stakeholders, including residents, city agencies, institutional partners, elected officials, land owners, and developers. Outreach then transitioned to a kick-off survey that was released in the spring of 2018, and the results helped frame discussion at subsequent meetings.

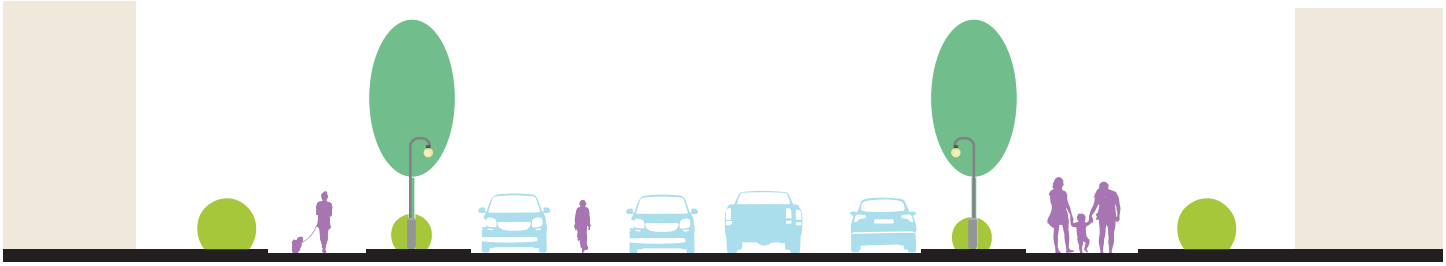
City Council established an 11-member Steering Committee which held regular public meetings to provide recommendations to the draft land use map and guiding principles based on input received from community members. The purpose of the draft guiding principles is to serve as a foundation for the Plan. The topic of transportation, and parks and trails has been a predominant theme at community meetings and are reflected in the draft guiding principles.

Transportation

- Accommodate and improve roadway access, connectivity and mobility among all modes of transportation, and prioritize roadway widening where bottlenecking exists.
- Accommodate planned transit services in the West Area by locating routes near or adjacent to the community centers, schools, parks, and retail centers.
- Provide a complete, safe, and well-maintained sidewalk network from residential neighborhoods to commercial centers, schools, parks, and community centers.
- Provide a complete, safe, and well-maintained roadway network that allows for efficient and smooth access from the West Area to other sections of the city and region.

Off ramp to Clinton Ave from Highway 99.

FAX bus stop on Shields Ave and Brawley Ave.



Graphic of a Complete Street

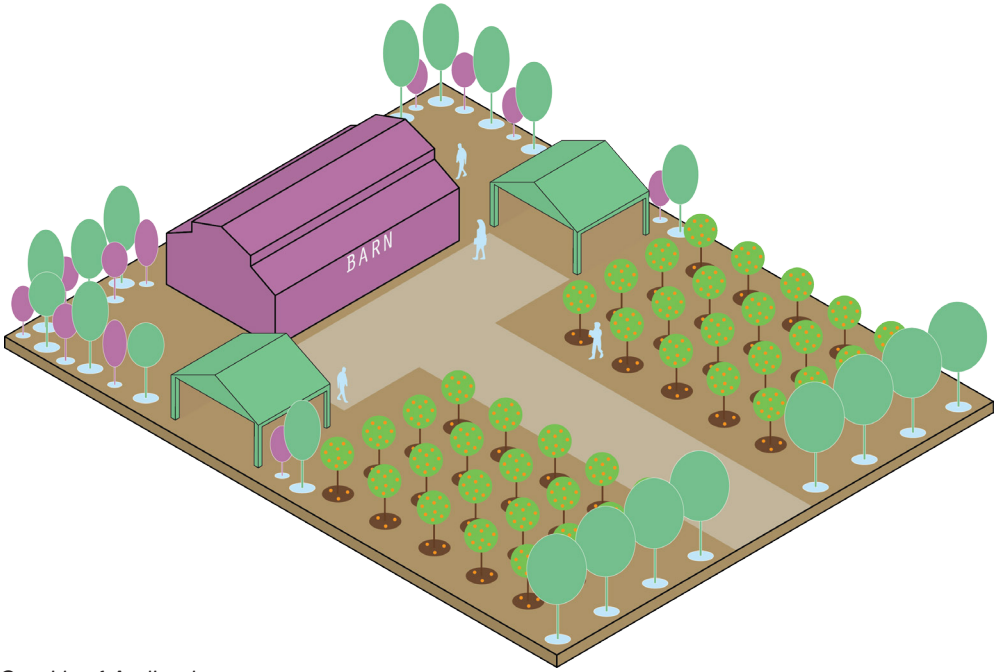
Parks & Trails

- Create parks that are within existing and planned neighborhoods that are easily accessed by community members using pedestrian and bicycle pathways, transit services, or motor vehicles, consistent with the City of Fresno's Parks Master Plan.
- Provide for the location of a flagship Regional Park in the Plan Area that has components of the Plan Area's agricultural history through the planting of drought-resistant vegetation or trees, and the creation of public art that exhibits the Plan Area's contribution to the agricultural industry.

Agriculture

- Incorporate elements of agriculture in future parks by planting a mixture of native drought tolerant vegetation, shrubs, and trees that can serve to provide shade and enhance the streetscape.
- Encourage and provide land use opportunities for agri-tourism ventures to occur in the West Area.
- Encourage the development of harvest – producing community gardens.

Image taken by City staff, Inspiration Park.



Graphic of Agritourism

Retail

- Attract desired and needed local retail establishments to serve the needs of the West Area community. Such establishments include grocery stores, bakeries, restaurants other than fast food places, and boutiques.
- Discourage the expansion of undesirable retail establishments such as liquor stores, tobacco and vapor stores, short-term loan and pawn shops, and adult stores.
- Encourage the development of retail establishments along commercial corridors

Image taken by City staff, Fresh Food Center

Housing

- Encourage a variety of housing types and styles.
- Encourage the development of housing to accommodate an aging population including, multi-generational houses and other elder housing options.
- Reaffirm the City's commitment and obligation to affirmatively furthering access to fair and affordable housing opportunities by strongly encouraging equitable and fair housing opportunities to be located in strategic proximity to employment, recreational facilities, schools, neighborhood commercial areas, and transportation routes.

Image taken by City staff, West Area Neighborhood.

Catalytic Corridors

- Encourage the orderly and consistent development of civic, parkland, retail and commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family uses along West Shaw Avenue, West Ashlan Avenue, Veterans Boulevard, West Shields Avenue, West Clinton Avenue, and Blythe Avenue.

Fresno City College's $89 million southwest campus has a 2023 completion date. (Artist Rendering/SCCCD)

Education

- Attract much needed educational opportunities for the residents of the West Area, especially for post-secondary education, and access to programs for life-long learners.

Public Safety

- Provide for safe routes to schools for children, with the City and County working together with residents, to provide sidewalks in neighborhood that have sporadic access.
- Work to promote Neighborhood Watch in all neighborhoods, and further assess the need for the location of emergency response facilities west of Highway 99.

Pedestrian walking down street with no sidewalk in Plan Area.

Safe Routes to School Program, State of California, CA.gov

3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Image taken by City staff, West Area Commuity Conversation.

3.1 Stakeholder Input

Meetings with community stakeholders provided key information to City staff about the Plan Area during the early portion of the outreach process. City staff learned about the immigrant history that dates back to the early 20th century. Stakeholders shared their concerns for the West Area including limited amenities, limited housing stock, and poor infrastructure. The concept of agri-tourism was received positively. Stakeholders discussed the lack of identity for the Plan Area and how the identity would need to be created and supported by the community.

Positive Impressions

All of the community stakeholders interviewed shared positive perspectives of the West Area, and link the area to having a sense of place and community, in spite of its overall lack of identity. The common positive theme was that the West Area has the potential to preserve and enhance neighborhood cohesiveness as it continues to grow. Many of the residents interviewed reported feeling the connection to neighbors through events and activities hosted by the Central Unified School District or local religious facilities. Based on the feedback provided to City staff, the West Area community mainly relies upon these two institutions as the primary channel for people to develop close-knit relationships with their neighbors.

Historic Discussion

Several stakeholders mentioned that the West Area is home to many first-generation families relocating from foreign countries, principally Italy and India. Italian immigrant families that settled in the West Area were principally from Tuscany. The Sikh Institute that is located within the Plan Area provides essential immigration services to Indian immigrants looking to permanently settle in the United States. The first thing many new immigrants did when they arrived in Fresno was acquire land to farm and raise a family. Some community stakeholders interviewed mentioned longstanding farmland heritage and tradition in their family that dates back to the 1902's.

Principal Concerns

Stakeholders shared that commercial amenities are lacking in the Plan Area, residents are forced to cross Highway 99 to access retail stores, grocery stores, quality restaurants, postal service, medical facilities, and fitness facilities. Stakeholders that were interviewed felt that good parks, trails and bike paths were limited in the Plan Area. An excess of starter homes was also a concern for stakeholders; many felt that starter homers created a transient environment thereby limiting the sense of neighborhood cohesion. Those interviewed desired quality housing stock that would serve the needs of diverse household types and sizes, including multigenerational families wishing to locate or remain in the West Area. Besides housing, stakeholders voiced concerns about the limited crossing opportunities over Highway 99 and the fragmented roadway system.

Agri-tourism

Agri-tourism is a mixture of two industries – agriculture and tourism. Agri-tourism has gained popularity in recent years. Activities may include wagon rides, farm tours, bed-and-breakfast inns, wineries/breweries, farmers markets, wedding and special event venues, and much more. Stakeholders were supportive of this concept being incorporated into the Specific Plan of the West Area as this venture could make the West Area a destination.

Plan Area Identity

Community stakeholders were just as perplexed as longstanding residents were concerning the identity of the Plan Area. Some identified the area as West Fresno or West Area. Another common theme to describe the Plan Area other than West Fresno or West Area did not emerge in the discussion with community stakeholders. Community members – at large identified the Plan Area based on the recently developed or planned housing communities. The identity of the West Area will need to be authentically created and supported by the West Area community.

3.2 Community Conversations

The Development and Resource Management Department held two Community Conversations at the Central High School – East Campus. The first Community Conversation was held on May 3, 2018. City staff provided a presentation followed by community members being able to provide input on various subjects within the Ideas Station. The Ideas Station consisted of six locations around the perimeter of the room that sought input from the public on desired amenities, identity of the neighborhood where they lived, what they liked and disliked about the West Area, and identity of the West Area. In addition, a space was provided for community members to share their general comments and concerns about the West Area.

Community Conversation No. 1

The input from community members at the May 3, 2018 Community Conversation has formed the basis for this Plan's guiding principles which will be discussed later in this chapter. Community members voiced frustration with having to cross Highway 99 for commercial amenities such as quality grocery produce, retail shopping stores, quality eateries, fitness centers, medical facilities, and developed park space. Highway 99 has four crossing points located at West Clinton Avenue, West Ashlan Avenue, West Shaw Avenue, and West Herndon Avenue. Lacking amenities paired with only four crossing points has created a bottlenecking situation for West Area residents. Community members voiced support for the availability of commercial amenities needed to make the Plan Area a complete neighborhood.

Image taken by City staff, West Area Commuity Conversation.

Image taken by City staff, West Area Commuity Conversation.

Image taken by City staff, West Area Commuity Conversation.

Image taken by City staff, West Area Commuity Conversation.

Community members, like the stakeholders interviewed, were unsure about the identity of the Plan Area. Community members were able to participate in a dot-voting exercise whereby they were able to vote on potential names to identity the West Area. The results did not show a clear choice. The results showed clear opposition to certain names such as Almond Villa and Westfield. Community members were able to write in other names that also did not gain any traction among other attendees. Staff collected all of the responses from the community members and compiled them for review by the Steering Committee.

Community Conversation No. 2

The 2nd Community Conversation was held on June 14, 2018 to allow community members to provide input on the location of certain land uses within the Plan Area. Community members were asked to place a green dot on a blank map to indicate support for or a red dot to indicate opposition to the location of various land use types, such as housing, retail and commercial development, higher education, and parks. At land use stations, community members were given the chance to weigh in with comments explaining the reason for the location of the red or green dot. Participants also indicated land uses that they wanted to avoid in the West Area.

The input received from the 2nd Community Conversation informed the development of conceptual land use maps that were subsequently released to the public and Steering Committee. Community members wanted to trade off existing higher density planned land uses on the western and southwestern edge of the Plan Area with lower density residential land uses. Many of the higher land uses were placed along busy corridors;

Image taken by City staff, West Area Commuity Conversation.

community members expressed support for removing higher density land uses from the center of the quarter sections as it currently appears in the General Plan. It was at this meeting where residents began to express support for the location of Regional Park within the Plan Area; this desire has been translated into a formal recommendation from the Steering Committee. Community expressed support for land use changes that provided opportunities for higher education facilities, retail, and agri-tourism to be principally located within the Plan Area, predominantly situated on and south of West Shaw Avenue.

Coffee with the Clergy

City staff held a meeting with local church leaders in the West Area called "Coffee with the Clergy" that shared the progress of the project, and encouraged them to be a part of the plan process. This meeting, coordinated by the Mayor's Office, provided a safe forum for church leaders to discuss concerns they have received by their church members. Many of the concerns were echoed by community stakeholders during individual interviews and community members during the Community Conversations. However, pastoral staff members that work directly with youth and their families shared an interest for the location of organizations that support positive recreation and after-school programs such as a Boys and Girls Club or YMCA be planned for within the West Area.

3.3 Community Survey

A ten-question community survey was made available as a paper copy and online for community members to complete. The survey served as an additional channel for community members to provide input on visioning in the West Area. The survey collected 373 responses over the course of two months. Below are the results:

What are your reasons for choosing to live and/or work in the Plan Area?

The majority of survey respondents indicated that affordable cost of living, quality of education provided by CUSD, and the rural atmosphere were the reasons for the choosing to live in the Plan Area.

What aspects would discourage you from remaining in the West Area?

Nearly 75% of the respondents indicated that an increase in crime would be the primary aspect that would discourage someone from remaining in the Plan Area. Lack of housing options, incomplete transportation infrastructure, and lacking recreational and commercial amenities would also serve as a factor to discourage West Area residents from remaining in the Plan Area.

How satisfied are you with the quality of life within the West Area?

Out of 373 respondents, over 67% of them are either satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of life in the West Area.

What improvements do you believe need to occur within the West Area?

Responses to this question were largely related to the desire to provide for additional or new commercial establishments within the West Area, and the installation of transportation infrastructure to improve traffic flow.

The year is 2035, and the Fresno Bee is preparing an article on the improvements that have occurred within the West Area. What should the highlight of the article be?

Nearly 50% of the respondents want the highlight of the article to be improved traffic flow across Highway 99. Respondents specifically targeted the Shaw Avenue interchange as one of the main sources of congestion to gain access to Highway 99 and or the east side of highway.

What do you think about housing options within the West Area?

A plurality of the respondents believes there are too many apartments, townhouses, or condominiums in the Plan Area. Respondents also believe there are not enough luxury or custom housing options, and not enough housing to accommodate multi-generational households.

What kinds of commercial development would you like to see within the West Area?

Respondents were permitted to select as many options that were applicable to their desired choice for commercial development. Twenty-four options were presented for respondents to select; the leading choices selected by survey respondents included supermarkets, movie theaters, bakeries, and restaurants other than fast food establishments.

Do you agree with the idea that West Shaw Avenue, from Highway 99 to Grantland Avenue, should serve as the town center for the West Area?

Nearly 70% agreed with the idea that West Shaw Avenue should serve as the town center or main commercial hub for the Plan Area.

Agri-tourism is a mix of two industries – agriculture and tourism. Agri-tourism has gained popularity in recent years. Activities can include wagon rides, farm tours, bed-and-breakfasts, wineries/breweries, farmers markets, wedding and special events venue, festivals, and much more. Do you believe the concept of agri-tourism should be incorporated into the Specific Plan of the West Area?

Close to 80% of respondents support the concept of agri-tourism being incorporated into this Plan.

What name do you think should be used to identify the West Area?

The leading choice by a plurality result is River West with only 35% supporting the name. Community members did not seem to settle on the name River West as the identity for the West Area. The result of this portion of the survey pairs with the response from community stakeholders and other community members.

A section of Sendero Farm where 63 households from the Rancho Mission Viejo development participate in farming and learn about agriculture, Image by The Orane County Register.