




Community and Economic Development Planning Division

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PLANNING COMMISSION DATE: August 6, 2024

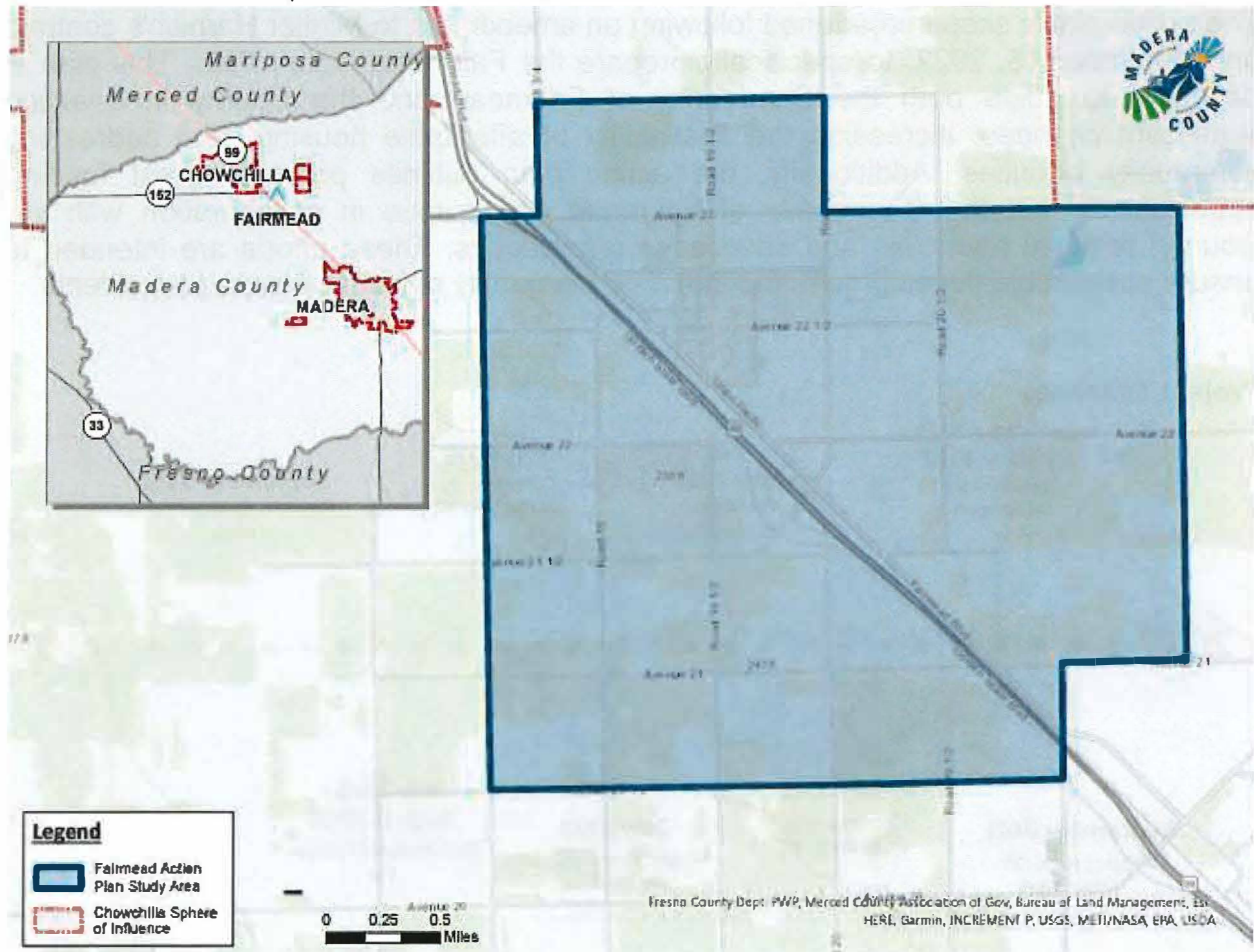
AGENDA ITEM: #2

Fairmead Action Plan	
CEQA Exempt	Notice of Exemption 15262 Feasibility and Planning Studies

REQUEST:

Hearing to consider adopting a Resolution recommending approval to the Board of Supervisors for the final Action Plan for the community of Fairmead as part of the 20-LEAP-15731 Grant.

LOCATION: Unincorporated area of Fairmead.



RECOMMENDATION: Adoption of a resolution recommending approval to the Board of Supervisors for the final Action Plan for the community of Fairmead and a CEQA Exemption.

ANALYSIS:

On March 9, 2021, the County initiated efforts to bolster housing production by applying for Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) funding. This funding aimed to support the preparation and adoption of planning documents and process improvements that would accelerate housing development. Concurrently, the County entered into an agreement with the Department of Housing and Community Development, securing a Planning Technical Assistance (PTA) grant. This PTA grant was earmarked for developing an action plan specifically for the Community of Fairmead, with the goal of achieving the community's housing production and future development objectives.

To advance these initiatives, the County enlisted the services of Mintier Harnish on August 17, 2021. Mintier Harnish was tasked with the development of the action plan and the coordination of comprehensive community outreach. This outreach was crucial for engaging with Fairmead residents, the Fairmead Family & Friends community group, and the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability. Through these engagements, the County sought to identify and prioritize the community's needs and objectives.

The action plan's scope broadened following an amendment to Mintier Harnish's contract on September 13, 2022, to specifically prepare the Fairmead Action Plan. This plan is designed to guide both the Community of Fairmead and the County in enacting significant changes, increasing the availability of affordable housing, and addressing community priorities. Additionally, the action plan outlines potential grant funding opportunities that the Community of Fairmead can pursue in collaboration with the County, regional agencies, and advocacy organizations. These efforts are intended to ensure sustainable development and enhance the quality of life for Fairmead residents.

Project Timeline



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The action plan's goals are divided into the following sections:

- Land Use
 - Create more opportunities for housing and commercial development in Fairmead by limiting regulatory barriers.
 - Improve community health by creating greater separation between intense agricultural uses and residential areas.
 - Actively seek partnerships and funding mechanisms to build new and rehabilitate existing affordable housing units.
- Water Service and Connection
 - Provide all residents of Fairmead with reliable and high-quality water service.
 - Secure consistent and reliable sources of funding for long-term water service improvements.
 - Achieve financial solvency for existing water infrastructure.
- Sewer Service
 - Provide all residents of Fairmead with centralized sewer service.
 - Secure consistent and reliable sources of funding for long-term sewer service improvements.
 - Achieve financial solvency for existing sewer infrastructure.
- Stormwater and Drainage
 - Create a cost-effective, environmentally appropriate storm drainage network for Fairmead.
 - Secure consistent and reliable sources of funding for long-term storm drainage improvements.
 - Use stormwater management systems as landscaping, open space, or recreational spaces where appropriate.
- Streets and Sidewalks
 - Rehabilitate and maintain the existing roadway network to enhance safety and provide more efficient mobility.
 - Create a safe, connected, and integrated active transportation system for bicyclists and pedestrians.
 - Provide transit stop amenities that provide a safe environment and promote transit usage.
 - Reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions by installing electrification infrastructure and providing park-and-ride facilities.
 - Increase physical activity and the safety of students and families from home to school.
- Public Safety
 - Increase law enforcement presence in Fairmead to aid in public safety.
 - Build trust between the community and law enforcement.

AK

- Promote public health and safety through increased code enforcement.
- Public Facilities
 - Build a new community center that can serve as a common area in the community to gather and access resources.
 - Increase access to broadband internet access.
 - Identify additional opportunities to increase recreational opportunities in Fairmead.
- Environmental
 - Improve the air quality of Fairmead by mitigating dust, pesticide drift, and noise pollution.
 - Create a more attractive community through environmentally appropriate landscaping.
 - Create and consistently enforce property maintenance codes and standards.

The initial draft action plan was shared with the community, and they provided feedback. Based on their comments, a revised version of the action plan was created. On July 25th, a meeting was held with the community to discuss the updated plan. The following are the comments received from the community:

- There is a need for a grocery store in Fairmead, and it is important to have commercial land use designations in the area
- There is a concern with the willingness of the California High-Speed Rail Authority to assist with Program LU-5 in the Land Use Goals of the Action Plan
- For Program WSC-3, the community recommended adding the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant as a possible funding source and changing the estimated time from 2026-2030.
- For Program WSC-4, The community feels it is important to include battery storage.
- The community strongly opposed any sewer treatment plants being built.
- For program SS-1, the community would like to add Measure T and TLC Funds for possible streetlights and speed bumps.
- For program PS-3, remove Fairmead Community and Friends as a responsible party and have them as a partner.
- For Program PS-5, the community is concerned with response time from the Sheriff's Department.

The Action Plan is designed to guide both the Fairmead community and the County in driving meaningful change and prioritizing local needs. It also acts as a roadmap for identifying and securing grant funding opportunities, enabling collaboration between the community, the County, regional agencies, and advocacy organizations.

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**STAFF REPORT
FAIRMEAD ACTION PLAN**

August 6, 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

The analysis provided in this report supports adoption of a resolution recommending approval to the Board of Supervisors for the final Action Plan for the community of Fairmead and a CEQA Exemption.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Draft Fairmead Community Action Plan

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BEFORE
THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE COUNTY OF MADERA
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of)	Resolution No.: <u>PCR 2024-</u>
)	
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY)	RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-)	APPROVAL TO THE BOARD OF
PLANNING DIVISION)	SUPERVISORS FOR THE FINAL
)	FAIRMEAD ACTION PLAN AS A
)	PART OF THE 20-LEAP-15731
)	GRANT
_____)	

WHEREAS, in January 2020, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Grant Funding for Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) Grants Program; and

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2020, the County of Madera, a political subdivision of the State of California, was authorized by the Board of Supervisors to apply for funding; and

WHEREAS, in February 2020, the County was awarded funding under the LEAP Planning Grants Program Grant, designated 20-LEAP-15731; and

WHEREAS, the funded activity under the grant was to perform a Planning and Technical Assistance (PTA) project; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Technical Assistance consisted of an Action Plan for the Community of Fairmead; and

WHEREAS, the Action Plan is meant to help guide the Community of Fairmead and the County in facilitating meaningful change, increasing affordable housing stock and prioritizing needs within the Community; and

WHEREAS, the Action Plan has provided potential grant funding opportunities on which the Community can capitalize in collaboration with the County, regional agencies, and advocacy organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Community of Fairmead was involved in the process through surveys and community meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has considered all public testimony and information presented during the public hearing regarding this item.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission finds as follows:

1. The Madera County Planning Commission recommends approval of the Action Plan to the Board of Supervisors.

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The foregoing Resolution was adopted on a motion by Commissioner _____ and seconded by Commissioner _____, at a regular meeting held before the Madera County Planning Commission on this _____ day of _____ 2024 by the following vote:

COMMISSIONER MILES-MATTINGLY VOTED: _____
COMMISSIONER DAL CERRO VOTED: _____
COMMISSIONER BURDETTE VOTED: _____
COMMISSIONER PALMER VOTED: _____
COMMISSIONER ESTRADA VOTED: _____

Tom Burdette, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Secretary of the Planning Commission

Approved as to Legal Form:
COUNTY COUNSEL

By: _____



2024
Fairmead Community
ACTION PLAN

Revised Public Review Draft - May 2024



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1. Introduction

Community Context

Fairmead is a rural, unincorporated community of Madera County, located along Highway 99 just south of Highway 152. The city of Chowchilla is approximately three miles northwest and the city of Madera is approximately nine miles southeast. The community core of Fairmead is located east of Highway 99 and the Union Pacific Railroad along Fairmead Boulevard. Like many rural places, residents that live outside the Fairmead core.

There is no official Fairmead boundary. The several unofficial boundaries are often disputed. This Action Plan uses the study area shown in Figure 1, which combines the 1995 General Plan Fairmead Boundary and the existing 2012 Fairmead Colony Area Plan Boundary, encompassing approximately 5,131 acres. The Study Area provides a focus area for implementation actions proposed in this document, however, the community of Fairmead may extend beyond this area.

A Sphere of Influence (SOI) is a defined area within which a city, town, or community is expected to provide services and can also accommodate projected growth, typically extending beyond the community's existing boundaries. Chowchilla is the closest incorporated city to Fairmead, with its city limits located about three miles north. Chowchilla's SOI extends south to Highway 152. Including Fairmead in Chowchilla's SOI is frequently considered and debated due to its proximity to the city as well as Fairmead's need for urban services, specifically water and sewer.

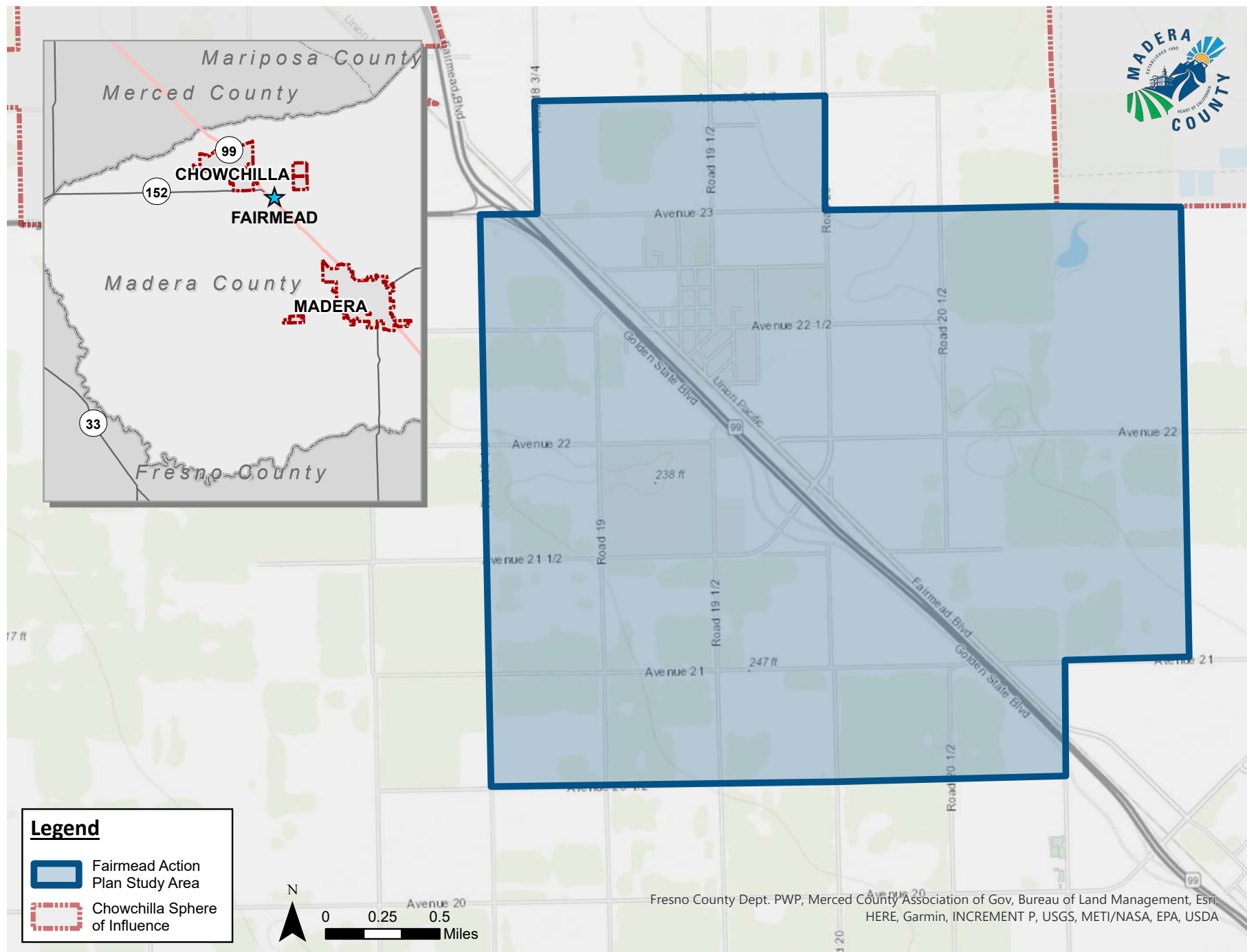
Community Action Plan

The original Fairmead Colony Community Plan work scope was approved by the County on August 17, 2021, with the intent of preparing a community area plan for Fairmead to serve as a long-term planning document for the community, including a community vision, goals, and policies.

The project was initiated in September 2021, with a project kick-off meeting and community tour with County staff and consultant team. The community tour in particular was very informative for the consultant team members, many of whom felt that a community area plan may not be the most useful and effective project outcome for the community since there was evidence that immediate services such as water supply and road maintenance needed to be addressed before a long-range visioning of the community took place. The consultant team recommended the County consider the potential for modifying the work scope and deliverables to better serve the community needs. County staff concurred and the shift was made to focus on an Action Plan in lieu of a Community Plan. The Action Plan will include the identification of required and necessary actions that will need to occur for future development to become feasible in Fairmead.

The Action Plan is meant to help guide not only the community of Fairmead, but also the County, in facilitating meaningful change in the community and assist in prioritizing needs within the community. In addition, the Action Plan serves as the guidebook for potential grant funding opportunities on which the community can capitalize in collaboration with the County, regional agencies, and advocacy organizations.

Figure 1: Fairmead Action Plan Study Area



Project Overview

Project Timeline

The Fairmead Community Action Plan spans a two-year planning process from late 2021 through the end of 2023. The Action Plan process includes several touchpoints for community engagement and community feedback including a series of stakeholder interviews, two community workshops in Fairmead, County Department working sessions, and hearings with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Below is a graphic representation of the overall project timeline including deliverables and engagement, both prior meetings as well as upcoming meetings. It is important to note that this process is fluid and may extend beyond the planned completion of the end of 2023, based on of the public hearing schedule.

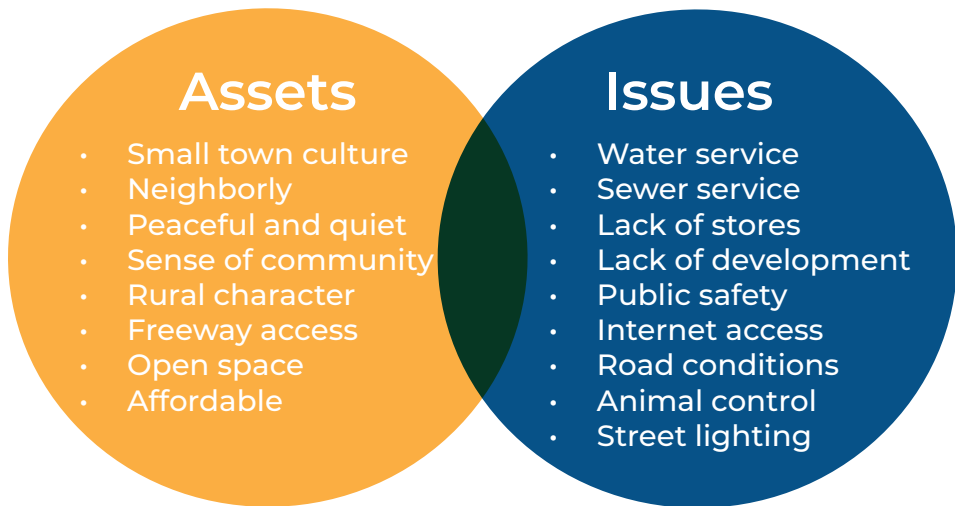


Community Engagement

Throughout the development of the Action Plan, two community workshops were held to gather feedback from residents and property owners about community issues and programs included in the Plan. See Appendix A for full summaries of responses received during each community workshop as well as comment letters received during the project.

Workshop #1

In March 2022, Madera County and Fairmead Community and Friends hosted a community workshop to gather feedback from residents and property owners about community issues, assets, and opportunities. Attendees participated in a survey and discussions about what they like and dislike about their community and their goals and vision for the future of Fairmead.



Issues the community identified as *essential* to an improved quality of life in Fairmead:

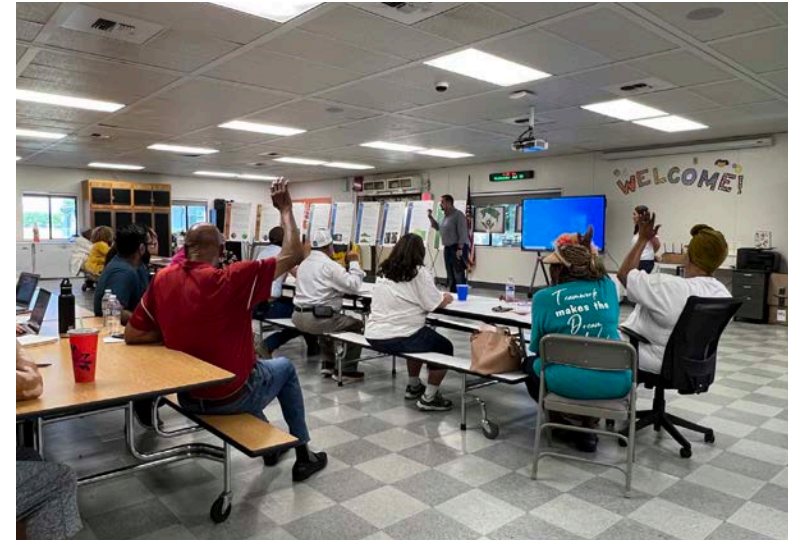
- 1
Water and sewer service
- 2
Improved streets and sidewalks
- 3
Local commercial activity

Workshop #2

On July 19, 2023, the County held a second community workshop to discuss the Draft Fairmead Community Action Plan that was released for public review on July 17, 2023. The purpose of the workshop was for community members to provide feedback about the Draft Action Plan and its proposed programs. The workshop included a brief presentation about the project and an activity for attendees to participate in. Hardcopies of the Draft Action Plan were available in both English and Spanish for attendees to review.

Attendees were given an activity packet that included all the Action Plan programs and a space to indicate if they like the program, think the program needs improvement, or they don't like the program. Next to each program there was space for the participant to provide written comments.

To advertise the workshop and release of the action plan for public review, a flyer was mailed to residents in the Fairmead community. A second flyer was mailed following the workshop to provide residents additional information on how to provide public comment and feedback on the Action Plan prior to public hearings.



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

JOIN US TO DISCUSS THE DRAFT FAIRMEAD COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Wednesday | 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
July 19, 2023

Fairmead Elementary School Cafeteria
19421 Avenue 22 3/4,
Chowchilla, CA 93610



Draft Community Action Plan

The Draft Fairmead Community Action Plan will be available for public review from July 10th through August 11th.

In March 2023, Madera County and Fairmead Community and Friends hosted a community workshop to gather feedback from residents and property owners about community issues, assets, and opportunities. From this feedback, the County has prepared a Fairmead Community Action Plan that outlines specific actions that address existing community needs that are essential to the improvement of quality of life in Fairmead.

We need your input! The workshop will include an overview of the draft Action Plan and an opportunity for the public to discuss action programs with the Project Team and provide comments. Scan the QR code or visit the Madera County Planning Division webpage (www.maderacounty.gov).

Questions? Contact:
Annette Kephart, annette.kephart@maderacounty.com, 559-675-7821
Jamie Bax, jamie.bax@maderacounty.com, 559-675-7821



FAIRMEAD COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

DRAFT AVAILABLE ONLINE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

On Wednesday, July 19, 2023, Madera County and Fairmead Community and Friends hosted a community workshop to gather feedback from residents and property owners about the draft Fairmead Community Action Plan that outlines specific actions that address existing community needs that are essential to the improvement of quality of life in Fairmead. The workshop included an overview of the draft Action Plan and an opportunity for the public to provide input on the proposed action programs. Scan the QR Code to view the Draft Fairmead Community Action Plan.

Send us your comments!
The Draft Fairmead Community Action Plan is available for public review and comment. Questions, comments, or concerns about the programs included in the Draft Action Plan can be sent to Madera County staff using one of the following options:

-  Email Annette Kephart at annette.kephart@maderacounty.com
-  Call Annette Kephart at 559-675-7821
-  Mail your responses to:
Madera County Planning Division
200 W. 4th Street, Suite 3100
Madera, CA, 93637



Scan the QR Code below or visit tinyurl.com/FairmeadActionPlan to view the Draft Fairmead Community Action Plan

Important Dates

- August 31**
End of public comment period
- September 20**
Revised Draft Action Plan
- October 10 (tentative)**
County Board of Supervisors Meeting (open to public)

Questions? Contact:
Annette Kephart, annette.kephart@maderacounty.com, 559-675-7821
Jamie Bax, jamie.bax@maderacounty.com, 559-675-7821



Project Goals

THE FAIRMEAD COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN INTENDS TO ESTABLISH SPECIFIC ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED OVER A 10-YEAR PERIOD TO ADDRESS EXISTING NEEDS THAT THE COMMUNITY HAS IDENTIFIED AS ESSENTIAL TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN FAIRMEAD.

THESE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS ARE BASED ON FOUR MAIN GOALS:

			
<p>Realistic</p>	<p>Achievable</p>	<p>Implementable</p>	<p>Action</p>
<p>Identify policies and programs that address real needs of current residents of Fairmead with available resources.</p>	<p>Actions that can reasonably be achieved in a ten-year period by considering availability of funding, projected project timelines, and project costs.</p>	<p>Identifying clear objectives, funding sources, timelines, and responsible parties to promote accountability and measure success.</p>	<p>Committing to real, short-term actions that have a meaningful impact on the community.</p>

Issues Addressed by this Action Plan

- 1 Land Use and Housing
- 2 Water Service and Connection
- 3 Sewer Service
- 4 Stormwater and Drainage
- 5 Streets and Sidewalks
- 6 Public Safety
- 7 Public Facilities and Services
- 8 Market and Economic Potential
- 9 Environmental

How to use this Document

A community action plan is a document that identifies the important needs and priorities of a community, sets achievable goals, and creates an outline for implementing solutions. The purpose of implementing a community action plan is to stimulate real community change by specifying what will be done, who will do it, and how it will be done.

There are two main sections to this document:

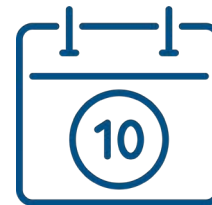


Existing Conditions

This section provides a brief description of the existing conditions of Fairmead in each topic area and identifies the key issues for the Action Plan to address.

Ten-Year Action Plan

This section takes the key issues identified in the Existing Conditions sections and turns them into overarching goals and implementation actions. Each topic area has an implementation program table with an action description, responsible agency/department, estimated cost, funding source, estimate timeline, and priority level. These programs provide a prioritized list of actions to be completed if and when funding sources become available.



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2. Community Background



Community History

Like many towns in the San Joaquin Valley, Fairmead was founded by the Co-Operative Land Trust Company of Palo Alto as a farming colony in 1912. Through the 1910s, Fairmead experienced significant economic growth with the agricultural production of alfalfa, fruits, and grains. The construction of Highway 99 in late 1912 brought in business from people traveling between the Bay Area and Southern California. During this time Fairmead developed into a thriving,

full-service community with homes, churches, schools, parks, and several businesses, including two newspapers, a blacksmith, and the Fairmead Inn.

However, by the 1920s, economic activity started to slow down and growth stagnated, mainly due to the rerouting of Highway 99 and increasing issues with the community's water supply. In this time of economic decline, Fairmead lost many visitors and residents to larger,

nearby cities like Madera and Chowchilla that continued to grow.

During the 1930s, following the Great Depression of 1929, the San Joaquin Valley attracted many Dust Bowl "Okies" who were escaping natural disasters in the Midwest tied to excessive drought and economic hardships. As in many communities in America at the time, it was difficult for people of color to purchase homes in the cities of Chowchilla and Madera;



1912

Fairmead is founded by Co-Operative Land Trust Company as a farming and agricultural colony.

U.S. Highway 99 is built along Fairmead Boulevard Southern Pacific Railroad through Fairmead.

1914

Fairmead Enterprise, the town's longest running newspaper, is established.

1945

World War II ends.

Galilee Missionary Baptist Church is founded.

1900

1913

Dixieland Elementary School and Fairmead Elementary School are established.

The Fairmead post office is created.

1921

Miller & Lux Inc. sues the Irrigation District over diverting water from the San Joaquin River, resulting in the development the Friant Dam and Millerton Lake.

1950

however, several Fairmead residents would sell properties to black families and help them finance their homes. As a result, Fairmead saw an increase in southern and eastern migrants from the African American and Hispanic communities. This trend continued after World War II when black migrants who worked in war shipyards flocked to the San Joaquin Valley looking for agricultural work, many landing in Fairmead. With this growth in diversity and integration, Fairmead also saw a growth in residents, schools, and small businesses.

In 1993, Fairmead made national headlines with the discovery of a giant mammoth tusk in the Fairmead Landfill. The area was determined to be one of the largest fossil beds in North America, producing thousands of specimens representing over 70 species. The site is now home to the Fossil Discovery Center of Madera County that serves as an education and research center and a visitor attraction.



1993

A giant mammoth tusk is discovered in the Fairmead Landfill, one of the largest fossil beds in North America.

2010

The Madera Fossil Discovery Center opens.

2020

California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) approves environmental document for central Valley Wye.

FCF issues an intent to sue letter regarding the EIR to CHSRA.

2000

1954

Mammoth Orange, a famous burger stand along Highway 99, moves to Fairmead from Chowchilla.

2007

Mammoth Orange closes.

Fairmead Community and Friends (FCF) is established as a local advocacy group.

2011

Fairmead adopts the Fairmead Neighborhood Mobility and Revitalization Strategy.

2021

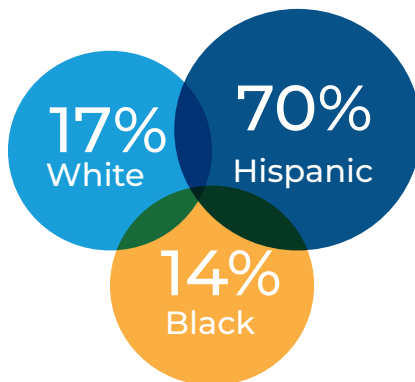
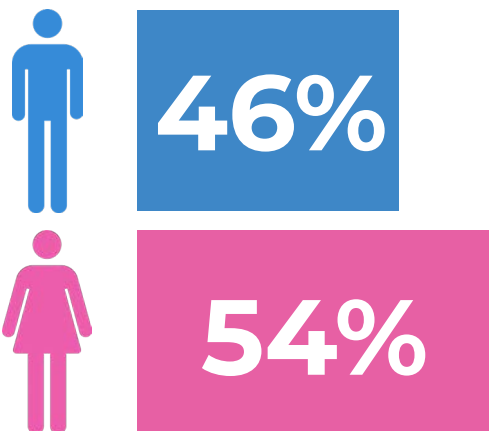
FCF enters into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with CHSRA

Community Snapshot

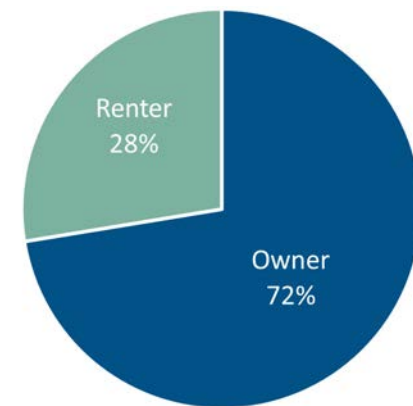
Fairmead is a diverse community located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley. It is a historically Black community, and its agricultural economy has attracted many different ethnic and religious groups. Today, Hispanic/Latino residents make up the majority of Fairmead's population. Most of the area is low-income and there are few non-residential properties in the community.

Total population of Fairmead: **1,382** persons

30% of Fairmead's population is below the Federal Poverty Line, which is significantly higher than California's poverty rate of 12 percent.

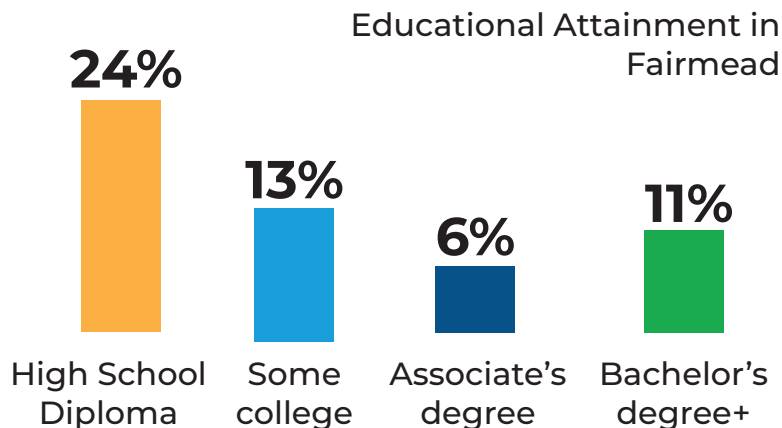


About 70 percent of Fairmead's population identifies as Hispanic/Latino. About 17 percent of the population identifies as White and about 14 percent identify as Black.



About 72 percent of residents in Fairmead own their home which is much higher than the State homeownership percentage of 56 percent. In 2021, there were a total of 374 housing units in Fairmead, with a seven percent vacancy rate.

About 54 percent of Fairmead's population identifies as female. This is an increase since 2010, when those who identify as female made up 42.8 percent of the population.



Community Advocacy

Fairmead Community & Friends

Fairmead Community and Friends (FCF) is a neighborhood non-profit grassroots organization that acts as the voice for the community and advocates for “health justice, safer environments, and community resources for a better quality of life” for Fairmead residents. Founded by Barbara Nelson, Nettie Amey, Laywer Cooper, and Annie Cooper in 2007, FCF has been actively involved in planning efforts to bring needed improvements to Fairmead. Most recently, FCF in partnership with the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability successfully came to an agreement in 2021 with the California High Speed Rail Authority that secured funding and commitments for community improvement and infrastructure projects. FCF also hosts community events (i.e., vaccine clinics, fundraisers, cultural events) and is regarded as a major asset to the community by residents.



Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability

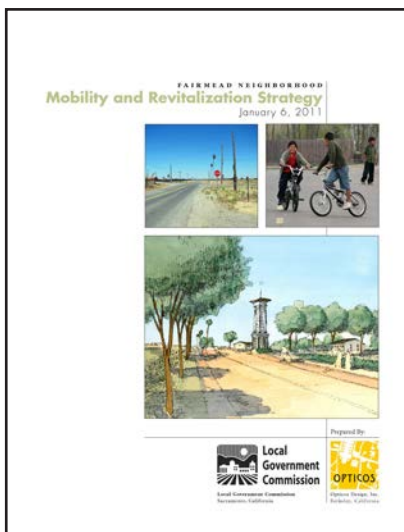
The Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Leadership Council) is a legal advocacy group based in the San Joaquin and Eastern Coachella Valleys, working alongside low income and rural communities for equitable policy and justice. The Leadership Council worked with FCF to negotiate an agreement with the California High Speed Rail Authority, the City of Chowchilla, and County of Madera to bring funding and improvements to Fairmead to mitigate the negative effects on the community from construction of the California high speed rail.

California High-Speed Rail

The California High-speed Rail Association (CHSRA) is in the process of developing the 800-mile California High-Speed Rail project. The 75-mile Merced to Fresno section of the project will pass through Madera County, which will impact the community of Fairmead. In 2021, FCF reached a community benefits agreement with the CHSRA as part of the environmental justice mitigation measures outlined in the project environmental impact report (EIR). The agreement includes commitments from CHSRA to investments and improvements in the Fairmead community and its residents. Commitments include:

- Funding to construct a new community center
- Funding and construction of sidewalk installations, streetlights, landscaping, and roadway improvements.
- Funding to extend Chowchilla’s sewer system to Fairmead
- Relocation assistance to residents displaced due to construction of the high-speed rail system
- Affordable housing assistance
- 10-year wastewater bill relief to Fairmead residents

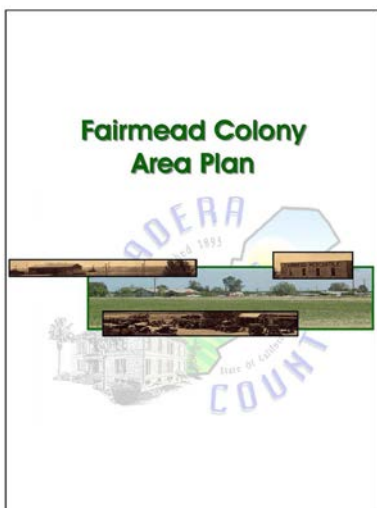
Previous Community Planning Efforts



Fairmead Mobilization and Revitalization Strategy

In 2009, Madera County was awarded the California Department of Transportation Environmental Justice Context-Sensitive Design Planning Grant received in partnership with the Local Government Commission (LGC) to create a Mobilization and Revitalization Strategy (Strategy). The purpose of the Strategy was to improve safety and mobility choices for residents of all ages and abilities, encourage and guide new investment in properties and infrastructure within the community, and provide overall visioning for the future of Fairmead. To make the process and plan effort truly community driven, the County facilitated a multi-day design workshop, known as a charrette. County staff, local school officials, other agencies, community organizations and residents participated in a series of events to identify concerns, priorities and potential transportation improvements and neighborhood revitalization strategies.

In the months following the charrette, the consultant team used community feedback to refine potential community design concepts, prepare drawings, and identify recommendations for short-term improvements and long-term changes. The resulting Strategy envisioned a thriving Fairmead of the future which include a revised circulation plan, updated corridors and gateways, inclusion of parks, trails, and outdoor community spaces, and revamped neighborhoods with commercial and retail components. In addition, the Strategy included an implementation section which outlined potential methods of achieving these desired results by the community.

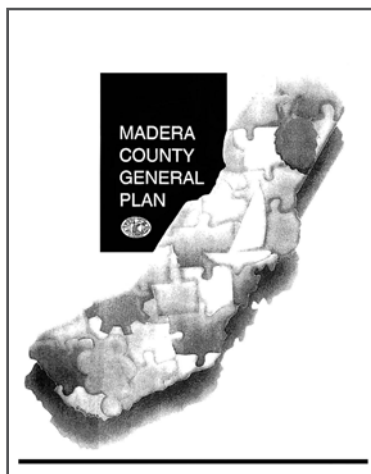


Fairmead Colony Area Plan

In 2012, Madera County initiated the Fairmead Colony Plan (Plan) effort which was the product of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) awarded to the County as an initial step in meeting the needs of a low-income community with a deficient infrastructure system. The grant application specifically called for the preparation and development of an infrastructure needs analysis, including assessment of the existing water system, sewage system, an assessment of the existing road system, and the development of an overall revitalization plan to address these issues in a comprehensive manner.

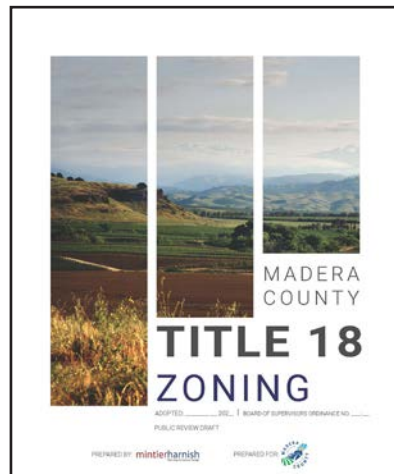
The Plan is essentially a refined land use constitution for the community of Fairmead that provides policies that address issues specific to Fairmead. The Plan was formed upon careful assumptions, analysis of existing characteristics, and vital public input. The Plan effort included two community workshops, the development of a community wide vision, and chapters including Fairmead specific goals, policies, and programs that are meant to create meaningful change in the community.

Other Notable Plans and Documents



Madera County General Plan

The Madera County General Plan is a long-range framework, goals, and vision for future growth and development in Madera County, including unincorporated communities such as Fairmead. The current General Plan was adopted in 1995.



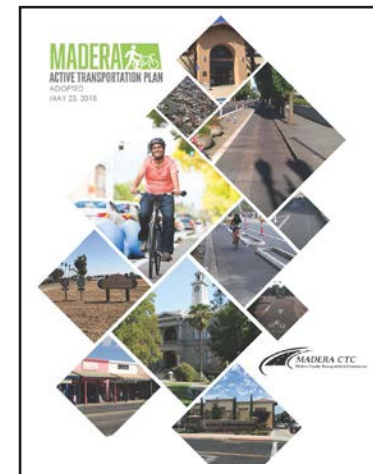
Madera County Zoning Ordinance

Zoning ordinances are rules that outline how land can be used throughout the county. Its purpose is to implement the policies and ideas outlined in the General Plan. This includes what type of uses and structures can be built, how the structures can be built, and where structures can be built.



Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The RTP is a regional planning document prepared by the Madera County Transportation Commission. The RTP describes the County's existing and future regional transportation system and ensures the transportation system will safely and efficiently accommodate growth envisioned in the local general plans.



Madera County Active Transportation Plan

The Madera County Active Transportation Plan (ATP) identifies projects that promote walking and biking as a means of transportation within the county, including Fairmead. The ATP guides pedestrian and bike infrastructure development in Madera County. The ATP outlines specific policies and programs to make active transportation safer and more accessible to people of all ages and abilities.



3. Existing Conditions



Land Use

Madera County General Plan

Land use in Fairmead is governed by the Madera County General Plan, which was adopted in 1995. The General Plan establishes land use designations that guide what type of uses are allowed on any given parcel (e.g., residential, commercial, agricultural) and the density and intensity of those uses. The Fairmead Study Area consists primarily of rural and agricultural designations, minimal commercial uses, and no industrial, mixed-use, medium- and high-density residential, or office uses.



Table 1: Fairmead Existing Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	Intended Uses
Agricultural Exclusive	Agricultural uses, timber production, mineral extraction, recreational uses, as well as limited single family residential, secondary residential units, and farmworker housing.
Agricultural Residential	Limited, small-scale agricultural uses, single family residential, and secondary residential units.
Rural Estate Residential	Single family residential, secondary residential units, limited agricultural uses, and public and quasi-public uses.
Rural Residential	Single family residential, secondary residential units, limited agricultural uses, and public/quasi-public uses.
Low-Density Residential	Single family residential (attached and detached), secondary residential units, limited agricultural uses, and public/quasi-public uses.
Community Commercial	Retail, wholesale, services, restaurants, professional and administrative offices, hotels and motels, and public/quasi-public uses.
Open Space	Low-intensity agricultural uses, grazing, forestry, recreational and equestrian uses, habitat protection, watershed management, and other environmentally sensitive uses that are not suitable for human occupation.
Public Institution	Institutional uses such as colleges, schools, hospitals, libraries, churches, meeting halls, community centers, public or institutional research facilities, or government offices.

Madera County Zoning Ordinance

The Madera County Zoning Ordinance establishes zoning districts that implement the policies of the General Plan and regulate the development of land by outlining specific uses permitted in each zone and a set of development standards (i.e., setbacks, lot size, height restrictions).

Below is a summary of the 14 zoning districts that can be found in the Fairmead Study Area as well as the corresponding General Plan land use designation(s), and types of uses for each zone. Figure 2 shows the existing zoning in Fairmead.

Agricultural, Rural, Five Acre Zone (AR-5)

Accommodates small scale agricultural operations and agricultural related uses on small parcels. Implements Rural Estate Residential land use designation

Density/Intensity: 2 du/parcel, minimum parcel size of 5 acres.

Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive Zones (ARE)

Accommodates large scale agricultural uses and support services on larger parcels (i.e., feed lots, dairies, by-product processing). Implements Agricultural Estate and Agricultural land use designations.

Density/Intensity: 2 du/parcel. Minimum parcel size of 20 acres for ARE-20 and 40 acres for ARE-40.

Commercial, Rural, General Zone (CRG)

Accommodates a variety of residential, retail, service, and vehicle-oriented uses. Implements the Heavy Commercial land use designation.

Density/Intensity: Maximum FAR is 0.20

Commercial, Rural, Highway Zone (CRH)

Accommodates retail and service uses primarily serving the traveling public along major arterials and highways (i.e., hotels, motels, and vehicle fueling stations). Implements Highway Service Commercial land use designation.

Density/Intensity: Maximum FAR is 0.20

Commercial, Urban, Median Zone (CUM)

Accommodates retail, service, office, and vehicle-oriented commercial uses and single-family residential uses. Implements Community Commercial general plan designation.

Density/Intensity: Maximum FAR is 0.30

Institutional Area Zone (IA)

Accommodates public and institutional uses (i.e., schools, hospitals, government buildings, institutional research facilities). Implements the Public Institution land use designation.

Density/Intensity: Maximum FAR is 0.90

Open Space (OS)

Accommodates low-intensity agricultural uses, recreational and educational opportunities, and utility and transportation uses. Implements the Open Space land use designation.

Density/Intensity: Maximum FAR is 0.10

Planned Development (PD)

Designed to allow for creative and innovative uses of land which may otherwise be limited or prohibited elsewhere in the County.

Density/Intensity: N/A

Residential, Rural, Single-Unit Dwelling Zones (RRS)

Accommodates single-unit dwellings and small-scale agricultural uses. Implements the Agricultural Residential, Rural Estate Residential, Rural Residential, Very Low Density Residential, and Low Density Residential land use designations.

Density/Intensity: 0.5-7.5 du/acre

Residential, Urban, Multi-Unit Dwelling Zone (RUM)

Accommodates multi-unit dwellings and implements the Low Density Residential land use designation.

Density/Intensity: 7.5 du/acre

Residential, Urban, Single-Unit Dwelling Zone (RUS)

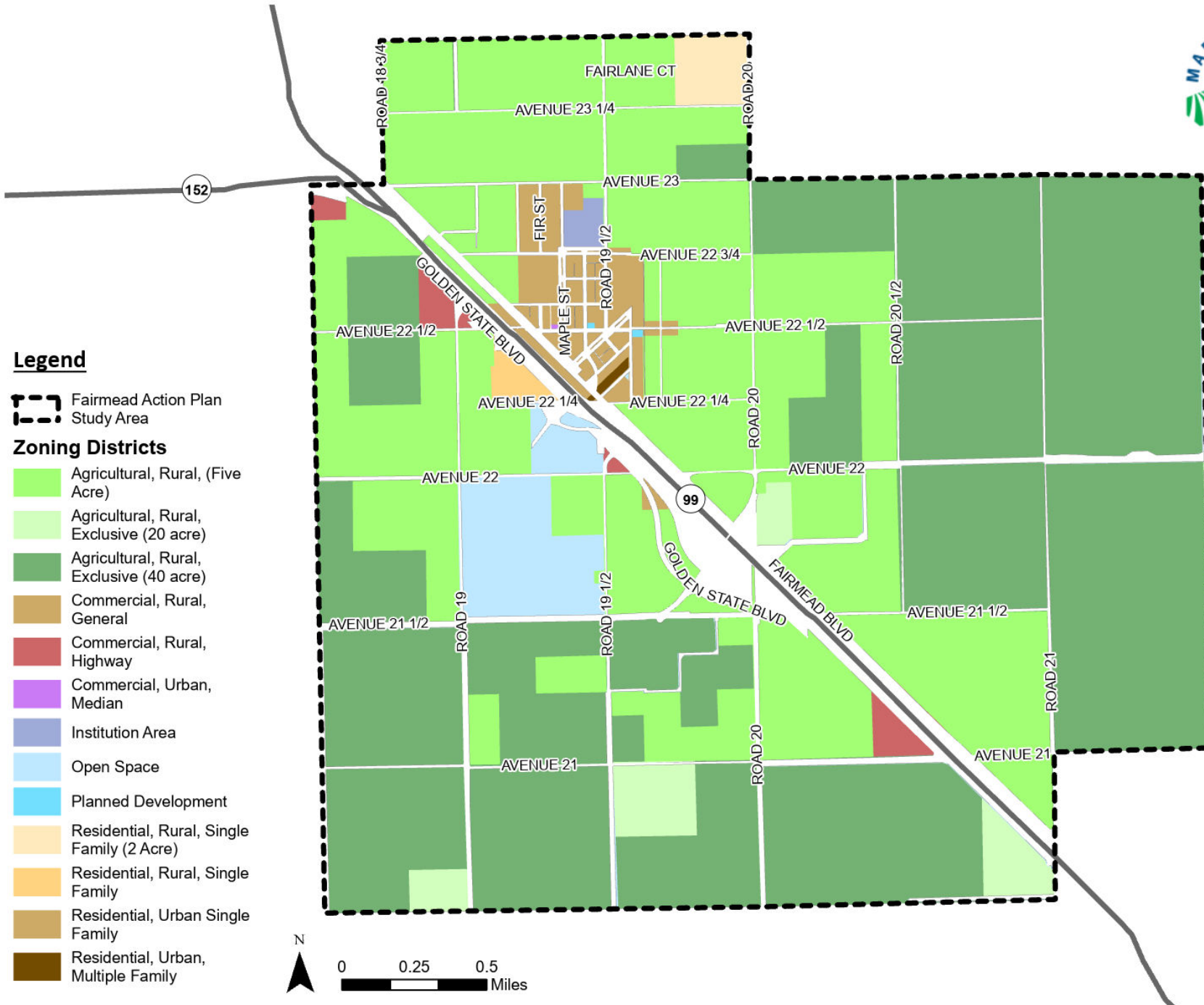
Accommodates for low density residential uses on parcels 4,500 square feet or more. Implements the Low Density Residential land use designation.

Density/Intensity: 12 du/acre

Table 2: Fairmead Existing Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Acreage	Percent
Agricultural, Rural, (Five Acre)	1,689	36.8%
Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (20 acre)	115	2.5%
Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (40 acre)	2,413	52.5%
Commercial, Rural, General	2	<0.1%
Commercial, Rural, Highway	37	0.8%
Commercial, Urban, Median	0	<0.1%
Institution Area	13	0.3%
Open Space	158	3.4%
Planned Development	1	<0.1%
Residential, Rural, Single Family (2 Acre)	38	0.8%
Residential, Rural, Single Family	16	0.4%
Residential, Urban Single Family	110	2.4%
Residential, Urban, Multiple Family	3	0.1%
Total	4596	100%

Figure 2: Fairmead Existing Zoning

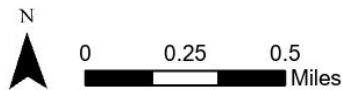


Legend

Fairmead Action Plan Study Area

Zoning Districts

- Agricultural, Rural, (Five Acre)
- Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (20 acre)
- Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (40 acre)
- Commercial, Rural, General
- Commercial, Rural, Highway
- Commercial, Urban, Median
- Institution Area
- Open Space
- Planned Development
- Residential, Rural, Single Family (2 Acre)
- Residential, Rural, Single Family
- Residential, Urban Single Family
- Residential, Urban, Multiple Family

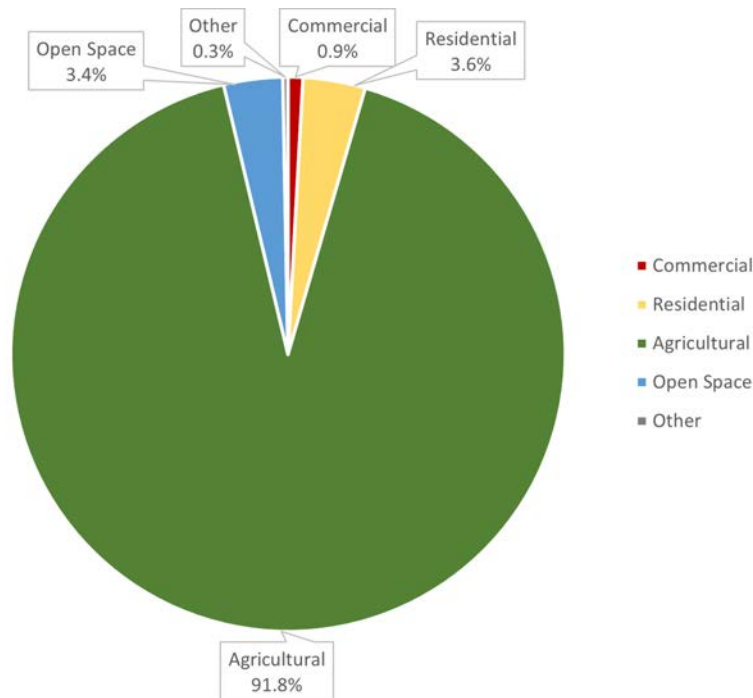


Housing

As shown in Figure 3, a majority of land in Fairmead is zoned for agricultural uses and low density residential, resulting in little opportunity for higher density housing or commercial development without obtaining additional planning permits, which add time and cost to development. Additionally, in 2019 Madera County updated its permit fee schedule that resulted in a substantial increase in development and permitting fees in the Valley Floor area of the county, specifically for single-family residential development.

High-quality, affordable housing was identified as a major challenge in Fairmead, with several existing homes needing major repairs or replacement. Although there are vacant sites in Fairmead for housing development, the lack of water and infrastructure is a major cost constraint to development.

Figure 3: Zoning Distribution in Fairmead



Key Issues

- 1 No buffer between intense agricultural uses and residential areas.
- 2 Surrounding agricultural uses limit area for housing or commercial development and do not make Fairmead conducive to growth and development.
- 3 Water intensive agricultural land uses contribute to water insecurity in the area.
- 4 Small lots and low-density residential zoning in Fairmead can make the community not as competitive in State and/or federal grant applications for affordable housing.
- 5 The high cost of infrastructure improvements and increased development fees makes development expensive.

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Water Service and Connection

Fairmead residents identified adequate water supply as one of the greatest challenges facing the community. Water has been a primary concern in Fairmead for decades and is a major reason for the lack of development and growth in the area. Fairmead depends on groundwater, supplied by community and private wells. Currently, two public wells serve the community. One is located at Yates Avenue and Maple Street and produces approximately 200 gallons per minute; the second well, which is coming online in 2023 and will produce 500 gallons per minute, is located at Road 19 ½ and Avenue 22 ½. These two wells serve 180 improved lots and are connected to an additional 63 standby lots. A project to install water meters at residences is ongoing and expected to conclude in 2024. Additionally, Fairmead Elementary School operates a well for irrigation of its on-site landscaping.

Adjacent agricultural lands and existing farming operations are straining the local potable groundwater supply for areas in and around Fairmead. Many of the surrounding farms grow water intensive crops, such as almonds and pistachios, making it difficult to ensure enough water is available for residential communities. Additionally, water pressure frequently drops when fields are irrigated, which can affect water flow for residential connections. Homes on the outskirts of the Fairmead community core are not connected to the existing water system and are instead serviced by private wells, which are vulnerable to these same variations in water table levels.

Fairmead's community wells are serviced by Madera County Maintenance District 33. In 2023 the State Water Resource Control Board's (SWRCB) Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) program conducted a risk assessment for public water systems throughout California



where each Maintenance District received a risk status. Only six of the 38 maintenance districts in Madera County received a “Not At-Risk” rating, one of which was Maintenance District 33. Despite the addition of the new community well, access to water is still a central issue in Fairmead due to increasing maintenance costs of facilities, affordability of water service, and competing needs between agricultural and residential uses. Since the construction of the new community well, the copper wiring at the well site has been stolen multiple times, causing the well to cease operating and requiring additional maintenance and costs.

Future development and improvements of the water system are limited by lack of funding as water rates are not keeping pace with inflation and therefore not sufficient to maintain or expand the existing system. A lump sum of California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) funds was used to pay off \$250,000 of cash flow loans issued to Maintenance District 33,

but additional debt is required to cover the remaining operational costs since the expenditure of CHSRA funds. Although there is State funding available to build water infrastructure projects, most funding programs require cities and counties to show there is a sustainable source of funding to maintain new infrastructure.

Agricultural Land Re-purposing

The Agricultural Land Re-Purposing project is funded by the California Resilience Challenge Grant and is led by California Water and Natural Resources Department and other project partners including Sustainable Conservation, Civic Well, and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability. There is also an opportunity for land re-purposing projects in Fairmead through the Multi-Benefit Land Re-purposing Program (MLRP) granted by the CA Department of Conservation.



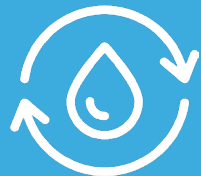
Key Issues

- 1 Lack of centralized water supply within Fairmead
- 2 Despite a new community well, a consistent and sustainable water supply is a persistent issue throughout the Central Valley due to hotter summers, longer droughts, and competing agricultural uses.
- 3 Water supply is not financially self-sustaining, which makes it difficult to maintain existing water infrastructure and invest in new infrastructure.
- 4 Private wells can make residents vulnerable to fluctuating water tables.
- 5 The copper wiring for the new community well has been stolen on multiple occasions, causing the well to cease operating and require additional maintenance.

Wastewater

A centralized community sewer system is necessary to future development within Fairmead. Without sufficient sewer infrastructure, future growth will be limited. Parcels within the community are currently serviced by individual septic systems which require multiple acres of land per residence to sufficiently discharge wastewater into drain fields. The community also lacks a wastewater treatment system, which can contribute to increased health risks as inadequately treated sewage can contaminate groundwater. In addition, aging septic systems are prone to leakage and failure, and can be costly to maintain, adding to the economic burden of residents and increasing the risk of environmental problems and health hazards. Generally, commercial and multi-family residential developments generate higher levels of sewage which cannot be adequately serviced by septic systems, limiting the range of housing and services that can be built in Fairmead without connection to a centralized sewer system.

Improving Fairmead's sewage treatment capabilities would not only improve the domestic service but would also improve local water supply for agriculture and irrigation by replenishing groundwater sources with treated, reclaimed water. Additionally, reclaimed graywater can be used for landscape irrigation and other regulated uses, contributing to increased water efficiency and reducing demand for groundwater.



Graywater is water that's been used by people and has not been in contact with human waste or certain kinds of detergents.

In 2019, the City of Chowchilla conducted a feasibility study to explore the possibility of connecting Fairmead to Chowchilla's sewage treatment system. The City applied for grant funding through the State Water Resources Control Board in collaboration with Fairmead Community and Friends, Self Help Enterprises, and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability. However, there is currently no certain timeline for approval of the grant. The 2011 Mobility and Revitalization Plan identified a Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP), or Septic Tank Effluent Gravity (STEG) system connected to a package wastewater treatment plant as an interim wastewater treatment system. This alternative is scalable to accommodate existing community needs while allowing for easy capacity upgrades to accommodate future development and population increases. A STEP or STEG system has not yet been implemented due to lack of funding and County capacity for project initiation but is still feasible interim solution.





Key Issues

- 1 Lack of centralized, reliable, and sanitary sewage system within Fairmead
- 2 Aging septic systems pose health risks and high maintenance costs
- 3 Lack of sewer service prevents construction of commercial services
- 4 Uncertain timeline for sewer service connection to Chowchilla

Stormwater and Drainage

Fairmead has very little infrastructure for storm drainage. Most streets lack curbs and provide no system for adequate drainage. The area's topography has very little elevation variation and consists of generally flat to gently sloping land with no significant geographic features. Generally, the community slopes downward from northeast to south, with its highest elevations of about 270 feet above sea level on its northeast side, and low of about 243 feet above sea level along the railroad at its southernmost point. Soils in the area are moderately well drained.

Eastern and southern portions of Fairmead, where many existing homes are located, are especially prone to flooding and overlie a FEMA designated flood plain. Lack of storm drainage in Fairmead results in frequent ponding in streets during heavy rain events. Stormwater runoff follows the topography through the community with no formal drainage system except for a few curb and gutter installations that do not connect to a larger drainage network.

The 2011 Mobility and Revitalization Plan included a conceptual stormwater management plan that implemented environmentally friendly and low-impact solutions for storm and floodwater management in Fairmead. The conceptual plan included a comprehensive network of naturally vegetated, small-scale retention sites, that could collect stormwater runoff through naturally landscaped bioretention cells located in landscaped rights-of-ways, sidewalk and roadway edges, and public open space.



Bioretention cells, also known as rain gardens, are vegetated shallow basins that collect and filter stormwater using engineered soil before it is released into the ground or stormwater system at a controlled rate.



Key Issues

- 1 Fairmead is prone to pooling in certain areas.
- 2 Lack of drainage infrastructure puts homes and people at risk
- 3 Lack of funding prevents construction of storm drainage

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Streets and Sidewalks

Fairmead's current street system was designed in the 1910s when the original (at-grade) alignment of Highway 99 was along Fairmead Boulevard. The Fairmead Crescent was intended as the entryway to the community from the Highway with a dual grid pattern and wide boulevards with landscaped medians, sidewalks, and gutters. Although right-of-way was dedicated for these roadway designs, they were never fully realized. By the 1980s, Highway 99 was developed as an expressway and relocated to its current alignment and Fairmead Boulevard became a frontage road.

Key Roadway Facilities

The Fairmead Study Area is bisected by Highway 99 (SR 99), although the more densely populated community core of Fairmead lies entirely on the east side of the highway. Nearly all residents need to travel outside of Fairmead for work, shopping, and personal business needs due to limited local opportunities. Some of the key facilities in the existing roadway network for residents to access goods and services include:

Highway 99: SR 99 provides the main access to communities north and south of Fairmead, including the cities of Chowchilla and Madera. SR 99 also provides access to SR 152, a major east-west facility connecting the central San Joaquin Valley to Interstate 5 and the Bay Area. Fairmead residents can access SR 99 via interchanges at Avenue 22 ½ to the south and Avenue 24 to the north; these two Avenues also cross SR 99 to connect portions of Fairmead west of the expressway.

Fairmead Boulevard: Fairmead Boulevard, a former alignment of SR 99, parallels SR 99 and the Union Pacific Railroad to the east and extends 5.51 miles from Berenda Boulevard to Avenue 24, with 2.83 miles extending through the Fairmead Study Area.

Road 19 ½: Road 19 ½, located on the eastern edge of the of community core, connects Fairmead to Avenue 24, which is a major road that provides access to areas northeast of Fairmead, including two nearby State prisons.



Existing Roadway Network

As shown in Figure 4, Fairmead's existing roadway system serving the community core is a dual grid network. North of Avenue 22 ½ the grid has a north-south orientation, aligned with Madera County's roads and avenues grid. South of Avenue 22½, three streets (Sinclair Drive, Palm Street and Arnott Drive) have a northeast orientation, perpendicular to Fairmead Boulevard and SR 99. Although the local grid system is efficiently designed, paved roads are generally in poor condition and several roads outside of the community core remain unpaved.

A majority of roads are two lane facilities, however, Maple Street (between Avenue 22 ¾ and Avenue 22 ½) and Sinclair Drive retain the right of way (ROW) for four-lane major boulevards with a large median, a legacy of the original plan for Fairmead described above. Although ROW is dedicated for these boulevards, only one side of the roadway on both facilities is paved and in service, with the other side being left unpaved or underutilized. On some sections of these boulevards a curb and gutter was built for the median with limited landscaping, however, the medians were left incomplete or have been ill-maintained.



Maple Street

The County owns about **4.7 acres** of underutilized right-of-way in Fairmead

Sinclair Drive has about 83,000 square feet of dedicated right of way, of which only about a third is currently improved.

Maple Street has about 123,000 square feet of dedicated right of way, of which less than 20 percent is currently improved.

Active Transportation System

Fairmead generally lacks sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and street lighting, except near Fairmead Elementary School and a few other short segments throughout the community. Fairmead does not currently have any designated bike routes; however, overall traffic volumes are low, which creates an environment conducive to bicycling and walking within the community core. There is minor congestion at the Fairmead School entry off of Avenue 22 ¾ in the morning, when school traffic peaks.

Public Transportation

Madera County Connection (MCC) has one bus route that services the Fairmead community and includes a \$2.00 one-way fare. The Chowchilla – Fairmead route provides five trips Monday through Friday from Downtown Madera to Chowchilla, with one stop in Fairmead at the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church on Avenue 22 ½. Although there is a bus shelter at Avenue 22 ½ and Fairmead Boulevard, no bus information was posted as of March 2023. MCC also provides an on-demand dial-ride service between Fairmead and Chowchilla for a fare of \$1.00 for seniors and persons with disabilities and \$3.00 for others.



Key Issues

- 1 Roads are mostly in poor condition with potholes, broken asphalt, and obscured lane markings.
- 2 There is a lack of street lighting throughout the community.
- 3 There is limited and under-maintained landscaping, especially along major roadways including Maple Street and Sinclair Drive.
- 4 There are limited locations throughout the community that have curb and sidewalk improvements.
- 5 No bike facilities currently exist in Fairmead.
- 6 The transit shelter on Avenue 22 ½ lacks service information.
- 7 There are currently no park-and-ride or electric charging facilities in the community.

Figure 4: Existing Roadway System in Fairmead



Public Safety

Law Enforcement

Although the Madera County Sheriff's Department services unincorporated communities throughout the County, the Chowchilla Police Department will sometimes respond to calls in Fairmead depending on the type of call and the location of County sheriffs and deputies when the call is made. The nearest police department is about six miles away in Chowchilla. While the Madera County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) has committed to having a deputy in the Fairmead patrol area 24 hours a day, issues of drug use have been identified by the community as a critical problem that has failed to be addressed by the MCSO.

The MCSO reports that the crime rate and types of calls in Fairmead have decreased in recent years and are now similar to other unincorporated areas in the county. Additionally, the Department has recently improved its allocation of resources, including more deputies on patrol on a more frequent basis. This is anticipated to improve law enforcement services in Fairmead.

52%

of community members who attended the public workshop expressed public safety as an essential improvement needed in Fairmead



Fire Department

The Madera County Fire Department was established in 1928 and is a full-service fire department providing emergency services to all unincorporated areas of the county, including Fairmead. Services include fire protection, medical assistance, hazard mitigation, and all other services that preserve life and property. Madera County Fire has 14 fire stations and a fleet of 56 engines and support vehicles.

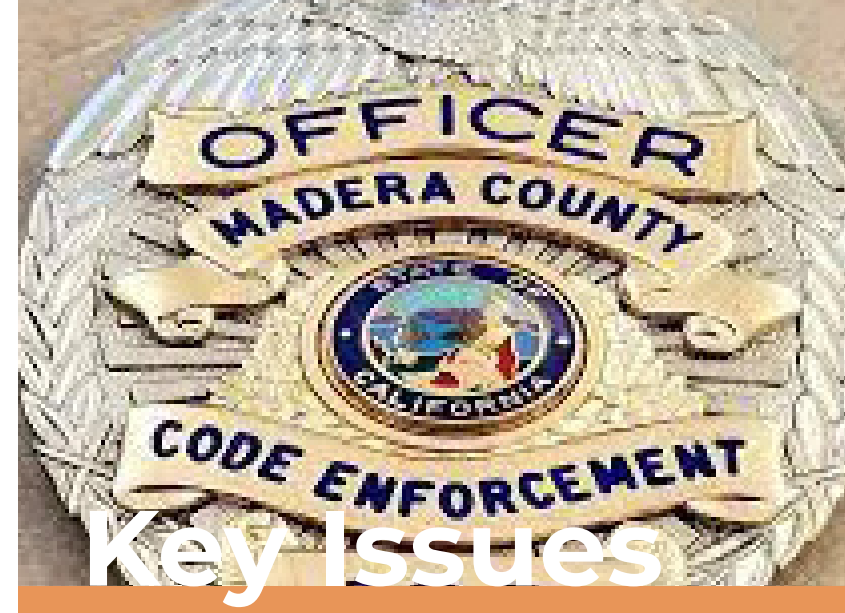
The Department is administered through a contract with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). To meet the fire protection needs of the county, the Department has agreements with the City of Madera, the City of Chowchilla, Merced County Fire, and the Central California Women's Facility.

The closest fire station to Fairmead is Station No. 5 located at the Central California Women's Correctional Facility, located

about four miles northeast from Fairmead’s residential core. Since the Correctional Facility is owned by the City of Chowchilla, Station No. 5 is operated through an agreement between the County of Madera and City of Chowchilla. The Madera County Fire Department provide the engines and equipment, while the City of Chowchilla provides inmate firefighters. In addition to Station No. 5, Fairmead also receives fire protection services from Station No. 2 , which is a volunteer fire department located about six miles northwest of Fairmead in Chowchilla.

A new fire station (Fire Station No. 3) is currently under construction and anticipated to open for service in August 2023. The new Station No. 3 will be located about 12 miles southeast of Fairmead on Road 26, just north of Avenue 21.

Fairmead lacks sufficient road access and fire hydrant system, which poses the biggest risk to public safety fire hazards. Fairmead’s current hydrant system includes a 250,000-gallon storage tank, which is not always sufficient for fire suppression. Future development in Fairmead will require an expansion of the existing fire hydrant system to support public safety and minimize fire hazards.



Key Issues

- 1 The existing fire hydrant system is limited and is not sufficient for future development.
- 2 Limited access to emergency services is a challenge for the relatively large elderly population in Fairmead.
- 3 A rising presence of drugs in the community has decreased the sense of public safety for residents.
- 4 Limited code enforcement efforts and proactive inspections from the County can create an environment that promotes crime and other illicit activity.
- 5 Residents of Fairmead often feel their community is an afterthought when it comes to public safety and emergency services.

Public Facilities and Services

Schools

Fairmead Elementary is the only school within the Fairmead Study Area and is part of the Chowchilla Elementary School District. The Chowchilla Elementary School District includes five schools where each school hosts two to three grades for the whole District. Fairmead Elementary serves as the District's 5th and 6th grade school with about 493 students, most of whom are from Chowchilla and other surrounding communities. Students in K-8 grades not offered at Fairmead Elementary are bused to schools in Chowchilla. High school students attend Chowchilla Union High School, located approximately six miles northwest in Chowchilla.

Chowchilla After School Program

Chowchilla Elementary School District also offers the Chowchilla After School Program, which is operated through the California Teaching Fellows Foundation. Students are provided snacks, homework help, and enrichment programs such as fitness, design, and robotics. The Chowchilla After School Program is open from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

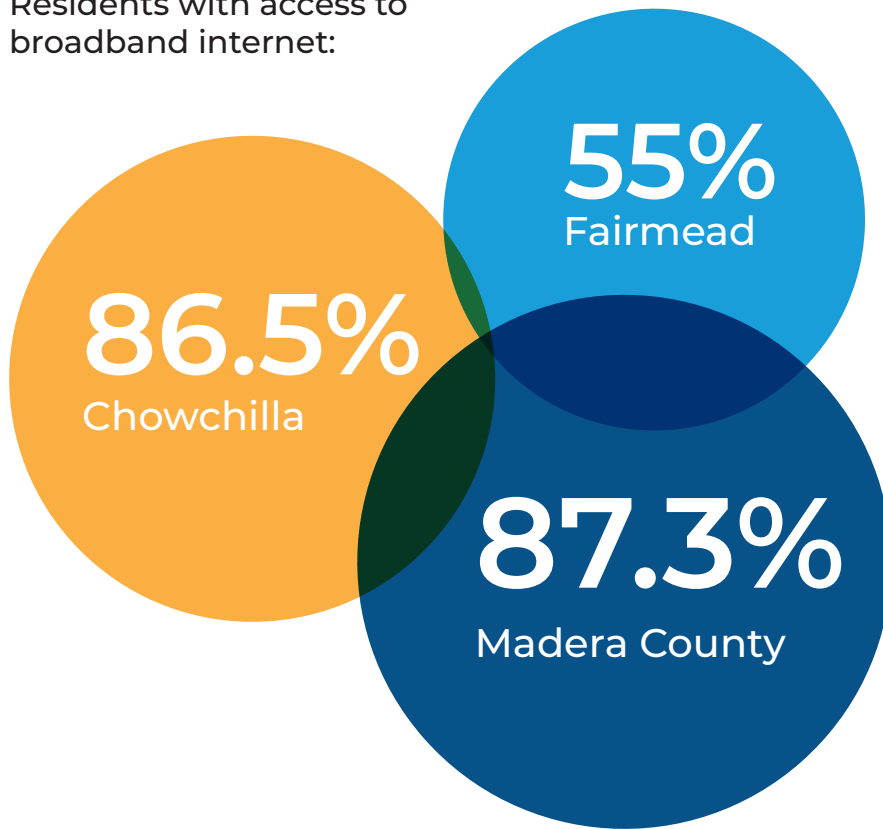
Fairmead Head Start

Fairmead Head Start is a non-profit school readiness program sponsored by Madera County, providing education, health, nutrition, parent involvement, and childcare services for low-income families. It is located next to the Fairmead Elementary School and serves as a daycare facility for the community.



Broadband Internet

Residents with access to broadband internet:



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 55 percent of Fairmead residents have a broadband Internet subscription. This is significantly lower than Chowchilla and Madera County, where 86.5 percent of Chowchilla residents and 87.3 percent of Madera County residents have a broadband Internet subscription. Fairmead residents have identified internet access as a major area for improvement in the community.

Medical Centers

In January 2023 the only hospital in Madera County, Madera Community Hospital, closed due to financial struggles. The hospital offered emergency care, child labor and delivery, and comprehensive medical services. The closure of the hospital has significantly limited health care access, particularly emergency health care, for residents of Madera County. The closest emergency room to Fairmead is located in Merced about 25 miles north of Fairmead. Other medical centers, including urgent care facilities, are available in Chowchilla.

Other Community Facilities

Other community facilities available in Fairmead include a quarter-acre “tot lot”, two churches, and the Fossil Discovery Center. The tot lot is the only park in Fairmead and includes a small playground, lawn, and seating areas. Galilee Missionary Baptist Church and Grace Tabernacle Church are located in the community core and serve as community meeting spaces. The Fossil Discovery Center is a paleontology museum located west of SR 99 on Avenue 21 ½ and serves as an educational and research center.



Fossil Discovery Center

The Fossil Discovery Center is a paleontology museum west of SR 99 on Avenue 21 ½. It was established after one of the largest fossil beds in North America was discovered underneath the Fairmead Landfill. The site is one of the few areas that have fossils from the Pleistocene period, with approximately 15,000 specimens found. The museum is now located next to Fairmead Landfill and features paleontology digs in the area.

Community Center

Fairmead Elementary's auditorium currently serves as Fairmead's main community center, where community meetings and events are held. A dedicated community center to serve as a central gathering location has long been a priority for residents and community groups.

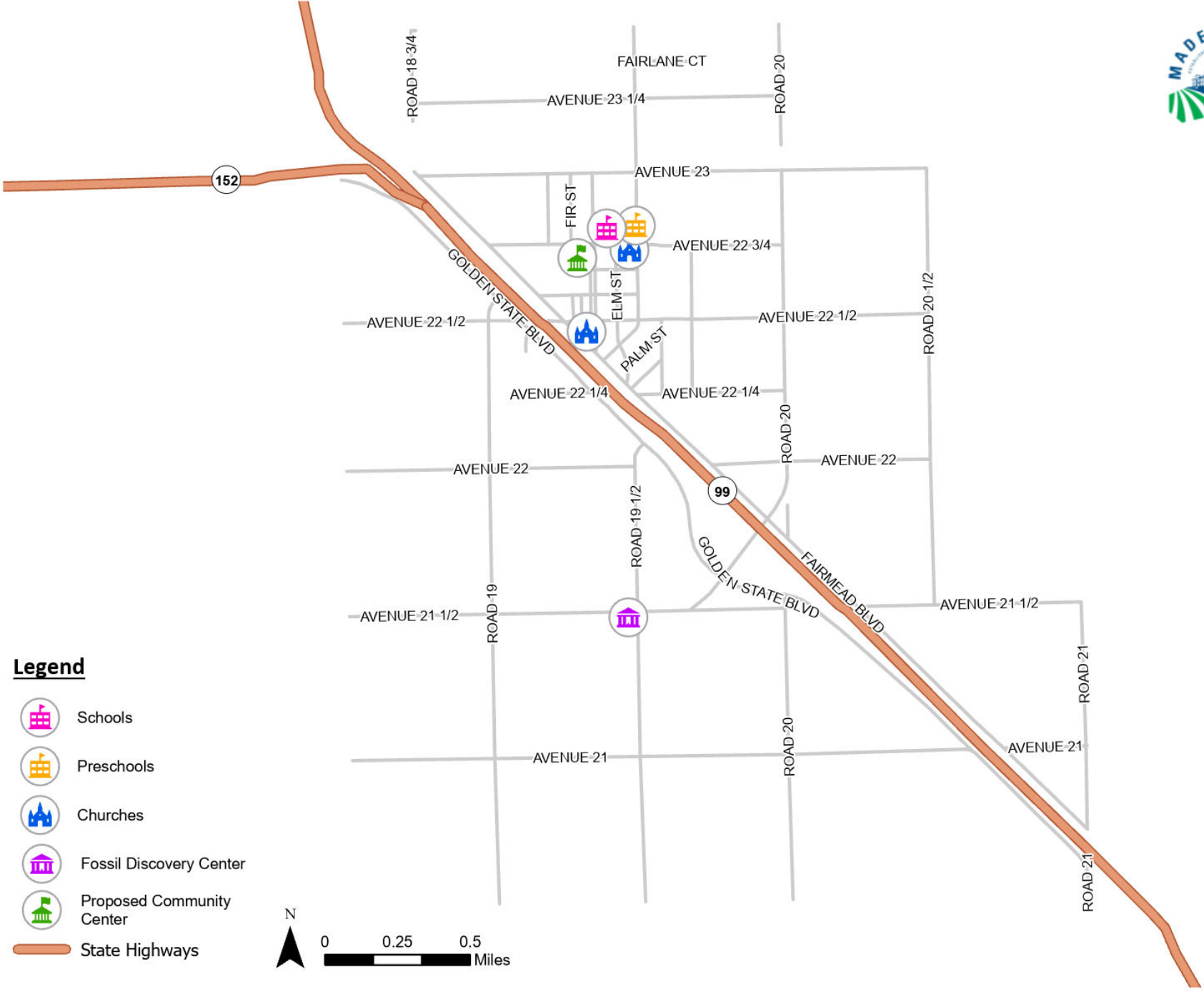
As part of the agreement with Fairmead Community and Friends, the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) has committed to funding the construction of a new community center in Fairmead. The community center will include a library, commercial kitchen, office spaces, outdoor gathering spaces with a play structure, and a multipurpose community room. The proposed location of the community center would replace the almond orchard on Avenue 22 ¾ and Maple Street near Fairmead Elementary. The County is currently in negotiations to purchase this land to build the community center.



Key Issues

- 1 Fairmead Elementary lacks adequate stormwater infrastructure, resulting in ponding and flooding of water in the school parking lot and other surrounding areas.
- 2 Safe and easy access to school is lacking, with no paved sidewalks or traffic stops around the school and no designated drop-off or pick-up locations.
- 3 The closure of Madera Community Hospital makes it more difficult for residents to obtain healthcare services.
- 4 Residents do not have a designated space for community gathering and lack recreational opportunities within the community.
- 5 Residents lack access to high-speed internet, which is critical for employment and educational opportunities.

Figure 5: Existing and Proposed Public Facilities in Fairmead



Market and Economic Potential

Background

During its early years, Fairmead was a successful agricultural community that produced grain, alfalfa, vegetables, fruit, berries, and flowers. The town’s early agricultural success paved the way for development and growth. Local businesses quickly multiplied providing necessary amenities to existing residents and attracting new residents. By the end of the 1910s, Fairmead had a variety of successful businesses including an inn, a blacksmith, a local newspaper, grocery stores, and a lumber company.

Development slowed in the 1920s, and by the 1930s Fairmead had entered a period of economic decline that persisted for several decades. The rerouting of Highway 99 in 1930, resulted in a decrease of visitors that the town’s local businesses had become dependent on.

Fairmead’s local economy has continued to struggle to keep up with neighboring cities such as Chowchilla and Madera that have continued to grow. Fairmead residents now rely on Chowchilla and Madera for employment and basic amenities.

50% of Fairmead residents commute more than 15 minutes to work

79% of community members ranked a grocery store is important or essential for improved quality of life

5.5 miles is how far the closest supermarket is to Fairmead, which is about a 10 minute drive or 15 minute bus ride. The closest convenience store is about 2.5 miles away.



Trends and Market Changes Affecting Development

Limited infrastructure in Fairmead is a crucial barrier to attracting new development and economic growth. The current absence of local revenue streams, however, means that updating the existing infrastructure will likely fall on developers or will need to be provided by the County and/or State.

While Fairmead’s economy continuously declined beginning in the 1920s until eventually reaching a prolonged period of economic stagnation, neighboring communities including Chowchilla and Madera have experienced steady economic growth. Fairmead and its residents have remained dependent on neighboring communities for goods, services, and jobs. This has forced Fairmead residents to either commute daily to nearby cities or relocate to areas with greater opportunity. This dependency contributes to Fairmead’s stagnant economy as nearly all economic activity is occurring outside of the community.

Demographics and Markets

There are two key areas in Fairmead that have the potential to function as vital commercial and industrial sites that could reestablish a local economy. Avenue 22 ½, currently zoned as Planned Commercial District and Commercial Urban Median, has the potential to support retail, commercial, and residential development that could stimulate the local economy and attract residents and travelers. Avenue 22 ½ could function as a central artery, easily accessible from the SR 99 on/off ramp along Fairmead Boulevard.

In the northwest area of Fairmead along the west side of SR 99 and north of SR 152 is a vacant industrial site. This area poses an opportunity for industrial development that is separated from the community center and easily accessible to residents. The establishment of a local industrial development has the potential to stimulate the local economy and provide jobs for current and future residents.

Construction and Rent Imbalance

The average household income in Fairmead is significantly lower than those of Madera County. In 2021, median household income in Fairmead was \$40,729, compared to \$60,709 in Madera County. About 45 percent of households in Fairmead were making below median income in 2021. This highlights the need for affordable housing and housing assistance programs for residents. While median home prices are notably lower in Fairmead than across the County and State, the area median income makes housing affordability a challenge for many residents.

Fairmead's housing stock is primarily built on small, narrow lots with several vacant lots throughout the community core. Roughly 40 percent of the existing housing stock was constructed before 1960 and many homes are in disrepair. These vacant lots provide opportunities for housing infill and rezoning.



Key Issues

- 1 Lack of infrastructure constrains development by raising construction costs, limiting economic growth potential.
- 2 The lack of local revenue streams forces Fairmead to rely solely on County and State funding for infrastructure and public facility projects.
- 3 Reliance on County and State funding is unreliable as funding is often allocated towards more profitable projects.
- 4 Reliance on nearby jurisdictions for goods, services, and employment has pulled nearly all economic activity from Fairmead.
- 5 Reliance on nearby jurisdictions for goods, services, and employment has pulled nearly all economic activity from Fairmead.

Environmental

Fairmead’s proximity to agricultural lands and SR 99 significantly impact the environmental quality and health of the community. This section covers the environmental impacts on air quality, noise, solid waste, and aesthetics in Fairmead.

Air Quality

One of Fairmead’s greatest environmental challenges is poor air quality due to dust and pesticide drift from adjacent agricultural fields. There is little to no buffer between residential areas and surrounding agricultural fields, making residents living in these areas more susceptible to being exposed to pesticides carried through the air. In addition to dust from adjacent agricultural fields, several of the roads in Fairmead are unpaved, resulting in increased levels of dust from vehicles driving through the community. Frequent exposure to poor air quality can have adverse health impacts including asthma, heart disease, and other illnesses. Previous planning efforts in Fairmead identified measures to mitigate impacts from poor air quality, such as landscaping and agricultural buffers to dampen the spread of dust and pesticides, improving walkability and micromobility infrastructure to reduce vehicle usage, and bringing more services to Fairmead to reduce trips to Chowchilla. Although these solutions were identified, little has been done to implement them throughout the community.

According to CalEnviroScreen 4.0...

Active hazardous and volatile pesticide ingredients used per square mile in Fairmead = **2,218 pounds**

This is higher than **94%** of other areas in California

Noise

Fairmead’s environmental quality is also impacted by noise pollution from SR 99 and the railroad just east of the highway. Residential areas have no buffer between the highway and railroad except for the northern part of the community core where orchards are located.



Solid Waste

The Fairmead Landfill is located on Road 19, about a half mile southwest of the community core . Solid waste facilities such as landfills can be a source of odors, noise, pollution, vermin, and increased volume of truck traffic. The presence of solid waste sites near a community can also affect the area’s perceived desirability to live and develop. The Fairmead Landfill is a Class III landfill where its operating permit only allows the facility to receive non-hazardous material or waste. According to CalRecycle, the Fairmead Landfill is inspected monthly to help ensure the landfill operates in compliance with state and local minimum standards for a solid waste facility and to minimize any potential negative impacts on the community and the environment. The Fairmead Landfill solid waste facility permit goes through a review process with CalRecycle, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the County Local Enforcement Agency every five-years.

Aesthetics

The aesthetic quality of Fairmead is degraded by the deterioration of its major roadways. Maple Street, which serves as a primary north-south connection within the community, originally consisted of two parallel two-lane roads separated by a large, landscaped median. The western thoroughfare has not been maintained, and the median collects trash and debris while the landscaping is inconsistently maintained. Residents have called for more consistent code enforcement to incentivize residents and the County to improve aesthetics of the community, particularly along the roadways, and for the demolition of abandoned buildings.



Key Issues

- 1 Poor air quality due primarily to dust and pesticide drift from surrounding agricultural fields.
- 2 Elevated health risks such as asthma and cardiovascular disease due to poor air quality
- 3 Noise pollution due to proximity to SR 99 and the railroad.
- 4 Littered roadways and poorly maintained landscapes negatively impact the aesthetics of the community.
- 5 Inconsistent code enforcement leading to blight and litter



4. Action Plan



Realistic Achievable Implementable Action

This chapter outlines the goals and specific action items to address the key issues identified in the Existing Conditions section of this document. The goal of these programs is to propose programs that are realistic, achievable, implementable, and will result in real action and change to improve quality of life in Fairmead. Each program includes a responsible party, cost estimates, possible funding sources, and a timeline for implementation.

This Action Plan should be used as a working document that can be adjusted to accommodate changes in community priorities and used by County staff as a priority list for community projects as funding becomes available.

Two factors that impact programs implementation are available **funding sources** and **timelines**.

Funding Sources

Programs outlined in this Action Plan are dependent on available funding and County staff capacity to apply for State and/or federal grant funding, which can vary year to year and is not guaranteed.

The funding sources listed for each program are *potential* funding sources that the County could use to fund action programs; they are not yet secured by the County for the actions listed. Therefore, some of these funding sources may vary in availability as grant requirements change or funds are depleted. The list of funding sources is also not comprehensive. Other funding sources may be available or become available in the future that could help fund action programs. Madera County and community partner organizations should regularly research and consider other funding opportunities to implement the actions in this Plan and adjust programs as needed.

Timelines

Action programs are categorized into four different timeline phases. These phases identify the year(s) a program should be completed by. Although this is a 10-year action plan, some programs may extend beyond 10 years due to the size and complexity of the project, or the dependence on the completion of another program.

Some programs span multiple phases. This means that the program actions may need to be completed in sections (i.e., planting landscaping along roadways) or that the program requires routine or continuous action (i.e., routine meetings).

Phase 1 | These programs should be initiated and completed in the first two years of Action Plan adoption.
2024-2025

Phase 2 | These programs should be initiated and completed in the first five to six years of Action Plan adoption.
2026-2030

Phase 3 | These programs may require significant preparation and funding sources or are dependent on the completion of other programs. These programs may take the full 10 years to initiate and complete.
2031-2034

Phase 4 | Some programs identified are large or complex enough that they may take more than 10 years to complete. Programs in this phase should be initiated within 10 years after Action Plan adoption but may not realistically be completed until several years after 2034 depending on feasibility and available funding.
2035-2045

Continued Dialogue and Community Engagement

Additional Studies and Plans

Some of the action programs outlined in this section will require additional studies, plans, or strategies that provide more detail and/or focus that is outside the scope of this document. Any future studies, plans, or strategies drafted as a result of this Action Plan will include community engagement and participation as part of its implementation.

Fairmead Community and Friends

Fairmead Community and Friends (FCF) plays a major role in community advocacy, hosting community events, and community engagement. FCF has played a significant role in the development of this Action Plan and will continue to play a major role as action programs are implemented. Although the action programs found in this section are designed for a public agency (i.e. Madera County, CHSRA) to be the responsible party for implementation, FCF will be integral in supporting community participation, coordination, and cooperation to ensure these actions programs are implemented effectively.

Ways in which FCF may be asked to participate or support in the implementation of this Action Plan:

- Participate in any committees formed as part of this Action Plan.
- Assist in hosting and/or promoting community outreach events in Fairmead to help solicit feedback from community members when needed as part of the implementation of this Action Plan.
- Participate and support the grant writing submittal process. Many grant programs require the support of local organizations/non-profits either to be the primary applicant or co-sponsor/applicant to be competitive or meet eligibility requirements. Although the County, or other responsible agency, would take the lead on writing the grant application, support and coordination from FCF may be needed.
- Host, facilitate, or oversee community beautification projects.
- Serve as a community point of contact for the County to communicate any updates, status reports, or actions related to this Action Plan to the Fairmead community.

Land Use

A majority of the land in Fairmead is zoned for agricultural use, with limited opportunity for residential or commercial development. The close proximity of intensive agricultural uses to residential areas has become an environmental justice concern given the limited water resources, pesticide drift, and dust. Additionally, limited water and sewer infrastructure and increased planning and development fees are major barriers to new development in Fairmead. The programs in this section aim to reduce regulatory barriers through zoning and land use to improve the health of existing residents and incentivize new development.

Goals

- 1 Create more opportunities for housing and commercial development in Fairmead by limiting regulatory barriers.
- 2 Improve community health by creating greater separation between intense agricultural uses and residential areas.
- 3 Actively seek partnerships and funding mechanisms to build new and rehabilitate existing affordable housing units.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
LU-1: Reevaluate areas in and around the community core to be rezoned to accommodate more multi-family residential and commercial development.	Fairmead currently has minimal areas zoned for commercial and multi-family residential development in the community core. The County Community Development Department shall reevaluate parcels in the Fairmead Study Area that can be rezoned to allow for more flexible development and reduce regulatory barriers.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	TBD	Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants Community Development Block Grant Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (RCDI) California Homekey Program	X				

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
				HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) Rural Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants (RCB) Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program Neighborhood Stabilization Program				
LU-2: Reduction of development impact fees for the Fairmead Study Area	Small lots and lack of established infrastructure in Fairmead make it extremely difficult to attract development in the community. Reducing development impact fees in the Fairmead Study Area can act as an incentive for developers to build. Reduction in impact fees in the Fairmead Study Area should remain in place, at minimum, until proposed sewer and water infrastructure projects are fully implemented, at which time the County can reassess the impact fee reduction.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	TBD	Community Development Block Grant California Homekey Program Rural Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants (RCB) Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program			X	

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2030	2031	2035	2045
LU-3: Conduct a feasibility study of the County purchasing land in Fairmead for the purposes of developing single-family and multi-family affordable housing.	Acquiring County-owned land can help reserve land for future partnerships with affordable housing developers. A feasibility study should assess potential parcels the County could purchase and include potential available funding sources from State and federal agencies to assist in land acquisition. This feasibility study would include two main parts 1) assess the current land inventory in Fairmead and create a shortlist of parcels that could readily be purchased for the purposes of developing affordable housing (e.g., land currently for sale, vacant land, underutilized land); 2) conduct a feasibility study of purchasing and developing parcels on the shortlist.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	\$500,000	USDA Rural Housing Site Loans Community Development Block Grant Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (RCDI) California Homekey Program HOME Investment Partnerships Program Rural Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants (RCB) Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program			X			

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
<p>LU-4: Conduct a study based on best practices that determines the size and type of community buffer that would best serve the Fairmead community core in creating a separation between agricultural and residential uses. The intent of the buffer is to reduce negative health impacts from pesticides and dust, and find opportunities to re-purpose, convert, or purchase land in this buffer zone.</p>	<p>Fairmead residents are at high risk of pesticide exposure from surrounding agricultural uses. Establishing a buffer zone around the community core where a majority of homes are located can reduce the negative health impacts of agricultural pesticide use and noxious land uses. The study resulting from this Action Program will include the health impacts of pesticide drift and best practices for the type, placement, and effectiveness of agricultural buffers in preventing/mitigating these health impacts. As part of this Action Program, the County would also pursue any necessary funding to implement the community buffer in accordance with the study's findings.</p>	<p>Madera County Community and Economic Development Department</p>	<p>\$300,000</p>	<p>California Department of Pesticide Regulation Alliance Grants Program</p> <p>Land and Water Conservation Fund</p> <p>Environmental Justice Small Grants Program</p> <p>USDA Urban and Community Forestry Programs</p> <p>Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program</p>			X		

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035
LU-5: Establish a schedule for a semi-annual report out from CHSRA about potential affordable housing funding opportunities that could apply to Fairmead.	Per the MOU between CHSRA and FCF, CHSRA committed to supporting FCF's affordable housing goals through grant writing assistance, letters of support, and sharing funding opportunities that could be applicable to FCF's affordable housing efforts. To follow through on these commitments, FCF, CHSRA, and Madera County Planning Staff should establish a semi-annual report out by CHSRA. This report out should include potential funding opportunities for Fairmead affordable housing efforts (including funding amounts, deadlines, and eligible projects) and grant writing tasks to be completed by CHSRA on behalf of FCF.	CHSRA	TBD	CHSRA CA Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (RCDI)	X					
LU-6: Create an Economic Development Strategy to promote commercial and residential development in Fairmead.	Land use, zoning, and cost of construction are major barriers to development in Fairmead that affects the community's ability to grow economically. Based on the changes made as part of Programs LU-1 and LU-2, the County can create an economic development strategy for Fairmead that encourages new and innovative development to boost economic activity in the area. As part of the Economic Development Strategy, Madera County will provide several opportunities for community engagement to discuss with community members the types of economic activity that is needed and wanted in the community.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	\$500,000	Community Development Block Grant Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program *partially loans, partially grants* Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (RCDI) Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants		X				

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline						
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035	2045
				Madera County Community Improvement Fund (See LU-7) The Wonderful Company Central Valley Community Grants							
LU-7: Create and fund a County Community Improvement Fund, specifically targeted for small projects in unincorporated communities in Madera County.	Unincorporated communities have a tendency to have less opportunity when it comes to beautification funding to improve neighborhoods compared to larger, incorporated jurisdictions. The County can create a Community Improvement Fund that provides funding on a rolling basis for beautification and clean-up projects in underserved, low-income, unincorporated rural communities. This would not be a competitive grant process, rather community members/ organizations would submit a request to the County for funding, materials, and/ or services including a description of the community improvement project to confirm alignment with the program.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	TBD	CA Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) Urban and Community Forestry Programs Clean California Local Grant Program Rural Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants (RCB) Keep America Beautiful Community Grants The Wonderful Company Central Valley Community Grants Urban and Community Forestry Programs			X				

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline						
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035	2045
LU-8: Provide dumpster bins and other necessary materials biannually for community clean-ups.	Fairmead Community and Friends administers a biannual community clean-up days that require dumpster bins and other materials. The County will commit to providing materials the community needs to administer these projects as part of the Madera County Community Improvement Fund.	Fairmead Community and Friends	TBD	Community Development Block Grant Madera County Community Improvement Fund Clean California Local Grant Program Keep America Beautiful Community Grants The Wonderful Company Central Valley Community Grants Urban and Community Forestry Programs Clean California Local Grant Program Rural Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants (RCB)				X			

Water Service and Connection

Residents of Fairmead identified lack of adequate water supply as one of the greatest challenges facing the community. Water has been a primary concern in Fairmead for decades and is a major reason for the lack of development and growth in the area. Fairmead depends on groundwater, supplied by community and personal wells.

Securing reliable and high-quality water service is crucial for ensuring Fairmead’s long-term success. Limited resources are available to achieve this goal, necessitating a creative approach to funding.

Goals

- 1 Provide all residents of Fairmead with reliable and high-quality water service
- 2 Secure consistent and reliable sources of funding for long-term water service improvements
- 3 Achieve financial solvency for existing water infrastructure.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035
WSC-1: Identify additional funding opportunities to install water meters in Fairmead	The installation of water meters is important to accurately monitoring and charging for water usage. Madera County will continue to pursue State funding opportunities for installing water meters, prioritizing Fairmead for future water installation projects and maintaining regular communication with residents regarding the status of installation projects in the community.	Madera County Special Maintenance District 33	TBD	WaterSMART Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)			X	X		

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2030	2031	2035	2045
WSC-2: Adjust water billing rates to cover operating costs more sufficiently	Income from water billing rates in Fairmead is insufficient to cover the cost of operation and maintenance. This causes the water district to operate in a state of insolvency. Over the course of five years, water rates should be gradually adjusted to a level where water service can be adequately maintained. The five-year incremental water rate increase should not begin until water meters have been installed and wells have been retrofitted with solar panels (see Action WSC-4).	Madera County Special Maintenance District 33	\$1,000 - \$20,000	Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households Grant				X		

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
WSC-3: Connect outlying homes to water service	Homes in outlying areas of Fairmead are not connected to existing community wells. Private wells are more prone to fluctuations in water table levels and represent missed revenue opportunities for Fairmead's existing water system. Expanding the user base could be a win-win situation if outlying residences are connected to existing water infrastructure, and Maintenance District 33 can increase its revenue from new customers.	Madera County Special Maintenance District 33	\$300,000-\$3,000,000	Technical Assistance and Construction for Innovative Regional Wastewater Treatment Solutions (TAC-RWTS) Grant Pilot Program Shared cost from existing homeowners: Maintenance District 33 Community Development Block Grant Household Water Well and Septic System Loan/Grant Program *low interest loan* Clean Drinking Water Well Replacement Program Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants Small Community Drought Relief County Drought Resilience Planning (Sub-program of Small Community Drought Relief)					X

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline						
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035	2045
				Small Community Emergency Grant (SCEG): CAA Urgent Drinking Water Need Projects							
WSC-4: Retrofit existing community wells in MD-33 with solar panels to increase energy efficiency and reduce operational costs.	Community wells can have high operating costs, partly to the increasing energy costs required to pump deeper into the aquifer. Retrofitting wells with solar panels can help offset operational costs to MD-33 while also promoting clean energy alternatives.	Madera County Public Works	TBD	Assistance to High Energy Cost Communities (USDA) Rural Energy for America Program Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) Fixed Award Grant Program			X				
WSC-4: Establish a ratepayer assistance program	Madera County will establish a ratepayer assistance program that will pursue Federal and State funding sources to provide ratepayer relief for overdue and/or future water bills. This ratepayer assistance program will also be a public information hub for other ratepayer assistance programs available to low-income residents as they become available.	Madera County Public Works	TBD	Assistance to High Energy Cost Communities (USDA) Small Community Emergency Grant (SCEG): CAA Urgent Drinking Water Need Projects Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants Community Development Block Grant			X				

Sewer Service

Fairmead’s development is limited by its lack of a centralized community sewer system.

Securing centralized and sanitary sewer service is crucial for ensuring Fairmead’s long-term success and development capacity. While there are currently actions being taken to secure funding to connect Fairmead to the Chowchilla sewer system, there is currently no set timeline for doing so.

Goals

- 1 Provide all residents of Fairmead with centralized sewer service
- 2 Secure consistent and reliable sources of funding for long-term sewer service improvements
- 3 Achieve financial solvency for existing sewer infrastructure

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035
SSW-1: Secure Funding for a Package Treatment Plant	A Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) or Septic Tank Effluent Gravity (STEG) system connected to a package wastewater treatment plant is a feasible and affordable interim alternative. A variety of grants are provided at the federal and state level that can be used to cover the cost of sewer infrastructure. Securing grants and other forms of financing will require time investment from County leaders and the local community.	Madera County Special Maintenance District 33	Less than \$1,000 per year	Initial funding to “stand up” the committee could be provided by Madera County. As the committee develops, it could aspire to non-profit status, at which point it could accept grants and private donations and become financially self-sustaining. SEARCH - Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households Small Community Funding Program (Sub-program of CWSRF)	X					

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035
				Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) (Current funding source for Water Recycling Funding Program (WRFP)) *Financing, not grant* Small Community Wastewater (SCWW) Funding Program Technical Assistance Funding Program (through Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER)) Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program *primarily loans, partial grant also available* Environmental Infrastructure Loan Program *loan only* Technical Assistance and Construction for Innovative Regional Wastewater Treatment Solutions (TAC-RWTS) Grant Pilot Program						

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
SSW-2: Install Package Treatment Plants	A Package Treatment Facility is a sewage treatment solution that consists of a premanufactured facility to treat wastewater for small communities. The cost of installation is much less than large sewage treatment plants and can treat wastewater to a level suitable for irrigation, reducing water pollution compared to septic systems for individual homes. Because they serve dozens of households, they can be cost-effective in small communities like Fairmead.	Madera County Special Maintenance District 33	\$150,000 to \$2 million	Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Technical Assistance and Construction for Innovative Regional Wastewater Treatment Solutions (TAC-RWTS) Grant Pilot Program			X	X	
SSW-3: Achieve a wastewater recycling rate of 10 percent for irrigation and aquifer restoration	With proper treatment, the recycling of a substantial amount of water used by Fairmead is possible. Different levels of treatment can re-purpose water for a wide range of suitable uses. At a minimum, reclaimed water is suitable for irrigation and many other industrial uses. More thorough purification can produce water suitable for human consumption but requires higher use of energy and a more specialized treatment process.	Madera County Special Maintenance District 33 City of Chowchilla	N/A	The Clean Water Act (CWA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Special Maintenance District 33 Technical Assistance and Construction for Innovative Regional Wastewater Treatment Solutions (TAC-RWTS) Grant Pilot Program					X

Stormwater and Drainage

The Fairmead area has very little infrastructure for flood control and storm drainage. Eastern and southern portions of Fairmead, where many existing homes are located, are especially prone to flooding and overlie a FEMA designated flood plain. Lack of storm drainage in Fairmead results in frequent ponding in streets during heavy rain.

Goals

- 1 Create a cost-effective, environmentally appropriate storm drainage network for Fairmead.
- 2 Secure consistent and reliable sources of funding for long-term storm drainage improvements
- 3 Use stormwater management systems as landscaping, open space, or recreational spaces where appropriate.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
SWD-1: Convert unused impervious surfaces to pervious surfaces or vegetation	Impervious Surfaces prevent rainwater from being absorbed into the ground, which increases flood risks for communities like Fairmead. A way to mitigate the risk for flooding is for the community to convert impervious surfaces to pervious surfaces, including swales, rain gardens, and retention areas. Doing so also reduces the impacts of erosion and increases restoration of aquifers. Parcels in the Fairmead to be converted as part of this Action Plan include County owned land including unused medians and rights-of-way.	Madera County Water and Natural Resources Department	\$2 to \$10 per square foot of concrete removal. Landscaping and grading costs can vary widely based on the project scope and design.	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Small Communities Flood Risk Reduction	X	X	X	

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	2045
SWD-2: Install a stormwater retention field	Stormwater retention fields serve both as a means of flood mitigation during wet seasons and as locations for sports and recreation during dry seasons. A retention field absorbs excess rainfall, helps restore aquifers, and minimizes flooding and erosion. Using it as a public greenspace will foster community and provide a safe place for residents to be active.	Madera County Water and Natural Resources Department	\$30,000 to \$500,000	Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Rural Recreation and Tourism Program (Prop 68) Small Communities Flood Risk Reduction Rural Community Development Initiative Grants County of Madera					X

Streets and Sidewalks

The streets and roads in Fairmead are in poor condition and require rehabilitation, maintenance, and improvements such as street lighting, curbs, landscaping, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Investing in these improvements throughout the community can have a positive impact on both the safety and appearance of the community as a whole. Additionally, improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities can help promote active transportation, especially to and from Fairmead Elementary.

Funds from the agreement with the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) are reserved for many of these improvements, however, additional funding sources should be considered for similar improvements and maintenance throughout the community.

Goals

- 1 Rehabilitate and maintain the existing roadway network to enhance safety and provide more efficient mobility.
- 2 Create a safe, connected, and integrated active transportation system for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- 3 Provide transit stop amenities that provide a safe environment and promote transit usage.
- 4 Reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions by installing electrification infrastructure and providing park and ride facilities.
- 5 Increase physical activity and the safety of students and families from home to school.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
SS-1: Street rehabilitation and maintenance throughout the community.	All streets and roads in the core area should be rehabilitated and adequately maintained in accordance with current standards. Approximately 24,922 linear feet of road improvements has been committed by CHSRA, an additional 11,308 linear feet of improvements should be improved by the County.	CHSRA Madera County Public Works Department	\$452,000	CHSRA Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program Local Partnership Program Formula Local Transportation Fund Local impact fees Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account (RMRA) Highway Users Trust Account	X	X	X	X

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2030	2031	2035	2045
				Technical Assistance Funding Program (through Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER)) Madera County Measure T funds (not a grant, but still a funding source)						
SS-2: Install landscaping along major roadways throughout the community.	Landscaping can improve aesthetics and provide a buffer between vehicles and active transportation users. In addition to the road and sidewalk repairs in Action Item SS-1, landscaping should be installed along major roadways in Fairmead. Suggested roadways for landscaping improvements include Yates, Fairmead Boulevard, CHSRA Corridor, and the medians on Maple Street and Sinclair Drive. CHSRA has committed to landscaping improvements along Maple Street, Sinclair Drive, Fairmead Boulevard, and the CHSRA Corridor. The County will provide additional landscaping improvements along Yates, totaling about 3,200 linear feet.	Madera County Public Works Department CHSRA	\$320,000	Measure T Funds CMAQ Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program. Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange RMRA Highway Users Trust Account (HUTA) Local Partnership Program (Competitive and Formulaic)			X	X	X	

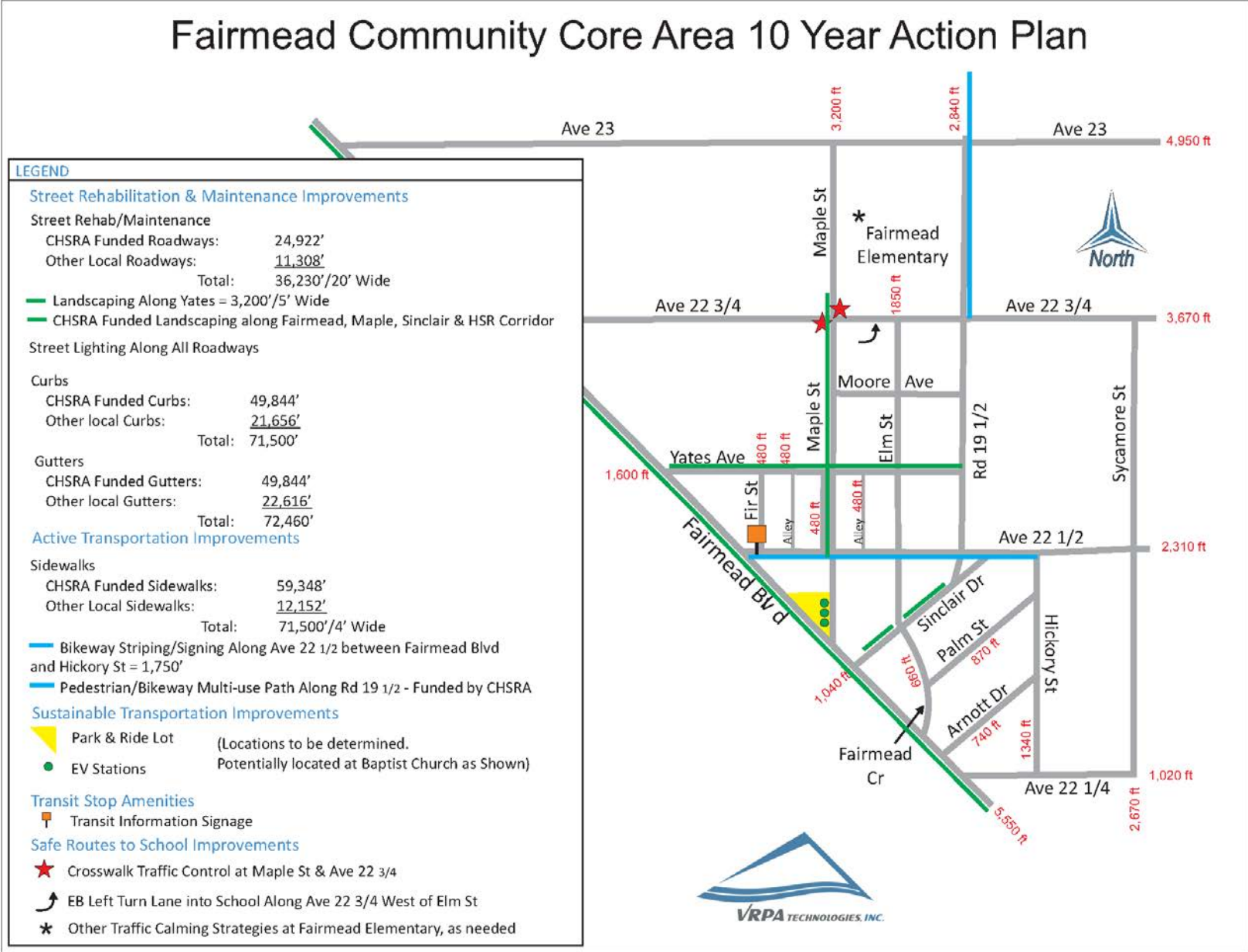
Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2031	2035
SS-3: Installation of street lighting along all roadways throughout the community.	CHSRA has agreed to install street lighting at the Avenue 22 1/2 transit stop however, the County will install additional street lighting along all roadways (about 250 units), prioritizing major roadways with increased traffic and roadways near Fairmead Elementary School (Avenue 22 3/4 and Maple Street)	Madera County Public Works Department CHSRA	\$1,250,000	Measure T Funds Active Transportation Program Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange Local Partnership Program Formula Local Transportation Fund RMRA HUTA CMAQ			X	X	X

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
SS-4: Installation of curbs and gutters along all roadways	In addition to the road and sidewalk repairs in Action Item SS-1, CHSRA has agreed to install curbs and gutters along 49,844 linear feet of roadways throughout the community. The County will identify remaining roadway segments in need of curb and gutter installation (estimated at about 21,656 linear feet).	Madera County Public Works Department CHSRA	\$442,000	CHRSA Measure T Funds Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange Prop 1 Stormwater Drainage funding Local Partnership Program Formula Local Transportation Fund RMRA HUTA			X	X	
SS-5: Improving bicycle facilities throughout the community	CHSRA has agreed to install a multi-use trail along Road 19 ½ between Avenue 22 ¾ to Avenue 24, totaling about 6,600 linear feet. In addition to these improvements, the County will install bike lane striping and signage along Avenue 22 ½ between Fairmead Boulevard and Hickory Street, totaling about 1,750 linear feet.	Madera County Public Works Department CHSRA	\$20,000	CHRSA Measure T Funds CMAQ Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange Local Transportation Fund RMRA HUTA				X	

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035
SS-6: Improving pedestrian facilities throughout the community	CHSRA has agreed to provide sidewalk improvements along 49,844 linear feet of roadways throughout the community. To create connectivity throughout the community, the County will identify remaining roadway segments in need of sidewalk improvements (estimated at about 21,656 linear feet).	Madera County Public Works Department CHSRA	\$434,000	CHRSA Measure T Funds CMAQ Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange Local Transportation Fund RMRA HUTA			X			
SS-7: Improve sustainable transportation infrastructure to reduce per capita GHG emissions	Currently, no Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations or Park and Ride Lots are located in Fairmead. To accommodate California EV requirements and reduce vehicular trips, a central location to accommodate a Park and Ride Lot and an EV Charging Station is recommended near the Baptist Church the lot would include 20 spaces and three EV charging stations.	Madera County Public Works Department	\$150,000 (20-space Park and Ride lot - \$120,000) (3 EV charging stations - \$30,000)	Measure T Funds CMAQ Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange National EV Infrastructure Program	X		X			
SS-8: Transit stop improvements at Galilee Baptist Church	Provide supportive transit stop amenities including information kiosks, covered seating, and a safe environment that promotes transit usage.	Madera County Public Works Department	\$15,000	Measure T Funds CMAQ	X					

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2030	2031	2035	2045
SS-9: Safe Routes to Schools Program	Establish a Safe Routes to Schools Program that provides traffic calming measures near Fairmead Elementary School. In addition, the intersection at Avenue 22 ¾ and the easternmost driveway entrance to the Fairmead Elementary School parking lot (just west of Elm Avenue) should be re-striped to include a left turn lane along eastbound Ave 22 ¾. Through discussion with Fairmead Elementary School, other traffic calming strategies should be considered to enhance pedestrian, vehicular and bicyclist safety.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department and Public Works Department	\$400,000 - \$450,000	Measure T Funds Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange Local Partnership Program Formula Local Transportation Fund RMRA			X	X		

Figure 6: Fairmead Community Action Plan Project Map



Public Safety

Public safety is a major concern for community members in Fairmead. The Madera County Sheriff’s Department has limited resources for the large coverage area of unincorporated Madera County, which can affect response times and regular patrolling of some areas. Action programs for public safety should focus on identifying additional financial resources the Sheriff’s Department can leverage to increase capacity to serve small, low-income communities such as Fairmead. Additionally, programs should encourage and support proactive actions by the County and community members to correct or prevent code violations that pose a threat to public safety and well-being.

Goals

- 1 Increase law enforcement presence in Fairmead to aid in public safety.
- 2 Build trust between the community and law enforcement.
- 3 Promote public health and safety through increased code enforcement.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
PS-1: Establish regular meetings between the Fairmead community and the Madera County Sheriff’s Department to discuss community concerns on crime and public safety.	To improve trust between law enforcement and the community regular meetings can create a space for community members to discuss concerns about public safety in their community and for the Madera County Sheriff’s Department to present information about staffing, service coverage, and crime rates in the Fairmead community.	Madera County Sheriff’s Department	TBD	U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Community Policing Development Microgrants Program Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program	X	X	X	X

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
PS-2: Increase staffing capacity in the Madera County Sheriff's Department to allow for more deputy coverage in Fairmead and surrounding areas.	Increasing the number of career officers or deputies would increase the Sheriff's Department's capacity for community policing in Fairmead and increase response times. Funding for increased staffing can be a significant barrier, so this action is contingent on the Sheriff's Department receiving grant funding or other funding to support additional career officers.	Madera County Sheriff's Department	\$64,000/year (salary), plus recruitment cost	U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program (CHP)			X	
PS-3: Establish a strategic code enforcement program for Fairmead to promote proactive intervention to code violations that affect public health and safety.	Proactive code enforcement can help improve public health and safety and decrease crime rates. A strategic code enforcement program should include semi-annual code enforcement inspections, community collaboration, and resources for community members to use to make needed repairs.	Fairmead Community and Friends Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	TBD	Community Development Block Grant Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Community Policing Development Microgrants Program U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program (CHP)	X			

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
PS-4: Establish a Fairmead Neighborhood Watch	The County of Madera Sheriff's Department provides assistance to Madera County communities interested in forming a neighborhood watch group. Neighborhood watch provides an opportunity for local residents to understand the type of crime that is happening in the community and help prevent risks of crime.	Madera County Sheriff's Department	TBD	U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Community Policing Development Microgrants Program Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program	X			
PS-5: Identify opportunities to incorporate new technology into Madera County's emergency response system to help reduce response times.	New technologies are beginning to be integrated into communication services for first responders to more efficiently monitor and respond to emergency calls. Integrating new technology into Madera County's system can help the Sheriff's Department better prioritize and respond to calls and maintain better communication with community members.	Madera County Sheriff's Department	TBD	U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Community Policing Development Microgrants Program Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program Emergency Management Performance Grant Program		X		

Public Facilities

Public facilities are physical spaces or structures owned and maintained by the County or community organizations that are intended for public use, such as parks, libraries, and schools. Fairmead is currently lacking high quality public facilities, most notably a community center, recreational opportunities, and broadband internet. The programs outlined in this section are meant to address these top two concerns and bolster projects already in progress in the community.

Goals

- 1 Build a new community center that can serve as a common area in the community to gather and access resources
- 2 Increase access to broadband internet access.
- 3 Identify additional opportunities to increase recreational opportunities in Fairmead.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline						
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035	2045
PF-1: Develop a specific project plan for the construction of the new community center and renegotiate funding committed by CHSRA	CHSRA has committed to providing up to \$5 million in funding for a new community center in Fairmead. A project plan for the community center should be created that includes the cost of construction including any infrastructure needed to support the community center, including a sewer/wastewater system. If costs exceed \$5 million the County shall renegotiate the funding amount designated in the MOU with CHSRA.	CHSRA	TBD	Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (RCDI)	X		X				

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
PF-2: Establish a broadband access program to increase publicly accessible internet connection	A public broadband access program would be based at either Fairmead Elementary School or the new community center (once constructed). The program would provide an area where members of the public could access computers with broadband internet connection.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department Chowchilla Unified School District (Responsible agency depends on where the program is based)	\$300,000	California Advanced Services Fund: Broadband Adoption Account Technical Assistance Funding Program (through Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER)) Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (RCDI)			X	X	
PF-3: Re-purpose underutilized land in Fairmead for recreational opportunities	The County currently owns land originally dedicated to large medians and boulevards on Maple and Sinclair. Portions of these medians could be re-purposed as park and recreational space for the community.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	\$500,000	Clean California Local Grant Program Community Development Block Grant Rural Recreation and Tourism Program (Prop 68) Land and Water Conservation Fund The Wonderful Company Central Valley Community Grants			X	X	

Environmental

Fairmead’s proximity to agricultural lands, SR 99, and the Fairmead Landfill significantly impacts the environmental quality and health of the community. Pesticide drift from agricultural lands, air and noise pollution from vehicles on SR 99, and dust from unpaved roads create health risks for Fairmead’s residents and reduces their quality of life.

Fairmead’s environment is also negatively impacted by poor maintenance of roadway medians, and inconsistent code enforcement resulting in poorly maintained properties and buildings. These issues negatively impact Fairmead’s health and quality of life.

Goals

- 1 Improve the air quality of Fairmead by mitigating dust, pesticide drift, and noise pollution
- 2 Create a more attractive community through environmentally appropriate landscaping
- 3 Create and consistently enforce property maintenance codes and standards

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
ENV-1: Create an action plan to consistently enforce codes	To address a lack of code enforcement related to litter, debris, landscaping, and building maintenance in the community, the County can develop a plan to consistently enforce codes, encouraging a safer and more aesthetically pleasing community.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	The program may be carried out by existing County staff and may not require additional spending.	Technical Assistance Funding Program (through Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER)) Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program’s Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program Healthy Soils Block Grant Pilot Program Keep America Beautiful Community Grants	X				

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline				
					2024	2025	2030	2035	
ENV-2: Install landscaping to reduce dust, pesticide drift, and traffic noise	Planting windbreaks or tree lines can improve community aesthetics and quality of life by reducing pesticide drift (See Action Program LU-4), the spread of dust, and the line-of-sight to traffic noise generators (SR 99 and railroad).	Madera County Public Works Department	\$10,000 to \$200,000	California Department of Pesticide Regulation Alliance Grants Program CalEPA Environmental Justice Small Grants Urban and Community Forestry Programs			X	X	
ENV-3: Install low-maintenance xeriscaping to improve community aesthetics and increase shade	While landscaping serves functions like reducing pollution, landscaping is also important for improving the aesthetics of a community by adding shade, encouraging walking and biking, and increasing mental health. Landscaping also helps to reduce ground and air temperatures, an important consideration in Fairmead’s hot summer climate.	Madera County Public Works Department	The cost of xeriscaping can vary widely and can adapt to many levels of funding.	Urban and Community Forestry ProgramsRural CHSRA (see Action Program SS-2)	X		X	X	X

Action Plan Maintenance

The effectiveness of the Action Plan ultimately depends on funding availability, County staff capacity, and the maintenance of progress on action programs over 10 years after the Action Plan’s adoption. This section is designed to ensure that the County provides for regular review and updating of this Action Plan to ensure that it reflects the community’s needs and realistic expectations for program implementation.

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
APM-1: Action Plan Implementation Program Monitoring Report	Maintain and annually review the Fairmead Community Action Plan Programs. As part of this process, the County shall update the prioritization of programs based on applicability, relevance, timing of initiation, and availability of funding. This report shall be, at minimum, sent to the Board of Supervisors and Fairmead Community and Friends (FCF) and posted on the Madera County website.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	TBD	Community Development Block Grant Madera County General Fund Technical Assistance Funding Program (through Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER))	X	X	X	X
APM-2: Action Plan 5-Year Review	Conduct a technical review of the Fairmead Community Action Plan five years after initial adoption and revise and update as necessary to assure responsiveness to current community needs.	Madera County Community and Economic Development Department	TBD	Community Development Block Grant Madera County General Fund		X		

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline			
					2024	2025	2030	2035
APM-3: Fairmead Action Grant Committee	<p>Immediately following the adoption of this Action Plan, the County will form an Fairmead Action Plan Grant Committee that will be responsible for identifying, researching, and preparing grant applications to implement action programs outlined in this Action Plan. The committee will include individuals from Madera County, CHSRA, and volunteers from the community.</p> <p>This committee will meet semi-annually (quarterly?) and maintain the list of potential funding sources created in conjunction with this Action Plan including adding and removing eligible funding programs, ensuring the appropriate County departments are aware of when grant funding is open for applications, and writing/preparing materials for grant applications.</p>	<p>Madera County Community and Economic Development Department</p> <p>CHSRA</p>	TBD	<p>Community Development Block Grant</p> <p>Madera County General Fund</p>	X	X	X	X

Program	Description	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Estimated Timeline					
					2024	2025	2026	2030	2031	2035
APM-4: Pursue grant funding for priority action items	<p>Immediately following the adoption of this Action Plan, the County will pursue grant funding for priority action items. Priority action items will be determined by the County staff and County Board of Supervisors based on community feedback and availability of potential funding programs following the adoption of the Action Plan.</p> <p>This program will be completed prior to or in conjunction with Program APM-3.</p>	<p>Madera County Community and Economic Development Department</p> <p>Contracted consultant</p>	\$100,000	SB 1	X					