



# APPENDIX 1D: CITY OF FOWLER

## Fresno Multi-Jurisdictional 2023-2031 Housing Element

*March 2024*



### *A Regional Plan for Addressing Housing Needs*

*Fresno County • Coalinga • Firebaugh • Fowler • Fresno City • Huron • Kerman  
Kingsburg • Mendota • Orange Cove • Parlier • Reedley • San Joaquin • Sanger • Selma*

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# APPENDIX 1D: CITY OF FOWLER

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## SECTION 1D-0: SUMMARY OF NEEDS AND CONDITIONS

### Housing Needs Assessment

As part of the Housing Element, the City prepared a detailed Needs Assessment (Section 2) analyzing Fowler's demographics.

### Key Findings

The Regional Needs Assessment identified a number of trends that informed the goals and policies of the updated Housing Element, including:

- The City's population increased by 3.4 percent on average between 2000 and 2022, which was higher than the countywide average annual growth rate of 2.0 percent. Similarly, the number of households in Fowler increased by 1.8 percent between 2010 and 2020, a higher rate of growth than the rate countywide.
- The largest group of residents in Fowler by age were school-age students (5 to 17 years, 28.9 percent of residents), and there were equally sized populations of young adults (25 to 44 years, 24.1 percent of residents) and middle-aged adults (45 to 64 years, 24.1 percent of residents).
- Over half residents of Fowler, 66.4 percent, identified as Hispanic or Latino of any race.
- The median household income in Fowler in 2020 was \$59,663, slightly higher than the countywide median income of \$57,109.
- In 2020, the most common industry for employment in Fowler was educational services, and health care and social assistance, with 30.1 percent of employed residents working in this field.
- In 2022, 3.6 percent of Fowler residents were unemployed, among the lowest rates of unemployment in the county.
- Over half of all households in Fowler (53.4 percent) were renters as of 2020.
- Fowler's vacancy rate in 2022 was 4.5 percent across all housing units, regardless of tenure. This was a notable decrease from its 2010 vacancy rate of 6.5 percent.
- Over half of all housing units in Fowler (51.7 percent) were built more than 30 years ago, and 31.3 percent were built more than 50 years ago. This is lower than the rate of older housing stock countywide.
- Fowler had a lower rate of households overpaying for housing than the county as a whole in 2018, with 35.1 percent of all households in the city overpaying for housing compared to 37.8 percent across the county. Similarly, the number of lower-income households overpaying for housing was lower in Fowler (69.7 percent in Fowler compared to 70.6 percent countywide).
- In 2020, the city had the same rate of household overcrowding as the countywide rate (6.1 percent of households in both jurisdictions). There was a higher rate of severe overcrowding within Fowler (4.6 percent of households) than in the county as a whole (3.6 percent)

- Fowler had a lower rate of large households, those with five or more members, compared to the county as a whole (13.7 percent of households in Fowler compared to 18.1 percent countywide).
- Between 2021 and 2022, the average sale price of a home in Fowler increased by 12.4 percent. Average sale prices rose 15.4 percent in the county as a whole during the same period.
- In 2020, the percentage of Fowler’s population that was aged 65 or older was higher than the percentage of seniors in the county as a whole (14.1 percent in Fowler compared to 12.0 percent of the county). Over half (57.2 percent) of Fowler’s senior households were homeowner households.
- Of the total number of seniors living in the city, 51.3 percent had a disability.
- The percentage of Fowler households with single female heads of household was lower than the countywide rate (6.3 percent in the city compared to 7.3 percent in the county). However, 42.0 percent of single-female-headed households in Fowler were living under the poverty level, which is disproportionate to the total number of households in poverty in the city (13.8 percent).
- Fowler had a higher rate of residents with disabilities than the county as a whole (17.3 percent compared to 12.9 percent across the county). Ambulatory difficulties were the most commonly reported disability.
- Estimates from the 2022 Point-in-Time count suggest that 3 persons in Fowler may have been experiencing homelessness at that time.
- Of the 58,762 year-round and seasonal farmworkers across the county in 2017, 37,819 (64.3 percent) worked 150 days or more each year, and 35.7 percent worked less than 150 days per year. An estimated 7.5 percent of Fowler’s employed population worked in agriculture, which is lower than the countywide rate (8.8 percent).
- Extremely low-income residents (those earning 30 percent or less of median income) made up 15.5 percent of the total households in Fowler. Of those, 84.7 percent were renter households.

### **Summary of Findings**

Fowler’s population has seen an increase of 3,189 persons from 2000 to 2022. The population of Fowler is predominately made up of Hispanic residents (66.4 percent) with a high presence of school-age, young adults, and middle-aged adults (77.1 percent). Typically, younger residents need multifamily options, homes with three or more-bedroom units, and ownership opportunities. Lower-income households typically require assistance through City, County, State, or federal homebuyers’ programs to purchase a home. For example, a down payment assistance loan program can help a household that can afford monthly mortgage payments and other housing-related costs but due to their limited income, has difficulty saving enough money for a down payment. In response to this need, the City has included the following programs to increase housing mobility for lower-income households: **Program 22** to connect 20 prospective homebuyers with the County’s Homebuyer Assistance Program and **Program 13**, which will explore the use of land trusts, tiny homes, and other alternative housing types to diversify the housing stock in areas with predominantly single-family homes.



In 2018, 10.4 percent of households were extremely low income in Fowler compared to 11.6 percent countywide. Of the 10.6 percent of households, 7.8 percent were renter households and 2.6 percent were owner households. This indicates a greater need for rental housing to support extremely low-income households. Furthermore, very low-income households (88.1 percent) are overpaying for housing, a higher rate than 69.0 percent of all extremely low-income households and low-income households (59.7 percent) (2018). Overall, 35.5 percent of households in Fowler are overpaying for housing (2018). Given the significantly higher rates of overpayment among extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households, there is a great need for financial support and affordable units to meet the needs of this population. In response to these needs, the City has included **Program 6** to incentivize and support construction of affordable units, **Program 9** to incentivize and encourage construction of units specifically targeting extremely low-income households, **Program 17** to incentivize and support construction of 40 multifamily units, and **Program 24** to increase the availability of information and access to Section 8 rental assistance and units. Additional resources to fund affordable housing activities are described in the Multijurisdictional Housing Element in Section 4, Opportunities for Residential Development, in the subsection called Financial and Administrative Resources.

It is estimated that approximately three residents in Fowler were unsheltered in 2022, representing 1.5 percent of the total homeless population in Fowler. This was a decrease of three individuals from the 2013 Point-in-Time (PIT) count where six individuals were identified. Several services are available to homeless residents locally and in the region, including those provided by Catholic Social Services, Emergency Housing Center (Plaza Terrace), Evangel Home, Inc., United Way, Fresno Rescue Mission, and Marjaree Mason Center. A comprehensive list and description of resources is included in the Regional Multijurisdictional Housing Element in Section 2, Regional Housing Needs Assessment, in the subsection called Homeless. The City has included **Program 3** to cooperate with neighboring cities, the County, and other agencies in the development of programs aimed at providing homeless shelters and related services.

Given the small size of the farmworker population in Fowler, the housing needs for this group can be met through **Program 6**, **Program 9**, and programs identified to serve extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households, as well as other special-needs groups. In 2020, 7.5 percent of the population was employed in agriculture, which has decreased since 2012 by 5.5 percent. Looking at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Census of Farmworkers, the number of permanent farmworkers in Fresno County overall has decreased slightly from 2002 to 2017, decreasing from 18,751 to 16,876 farmworkers. However, there was a slight increase from 2007 to 2012, showing an increase from 14,873 to 17,751 farmworkers. Therefore, to prioritize housing for farmworkers, the City has included **Program 7** to support funding for farmworker housing through technical support and incentives to housing developers, including the Fresno Housing Authority and Self-Help Enterprises, in the application of funds for farmworker housing, for the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and USDA Rural Development loans, and **Program 8** to require developers to give qualified farmworker households a preference for 15.0 percent of the new units. Additional resources to assist farmworkers are listed in the Regional Multijurisdictional Housing Element in Table 2-45, Resources for Farmworkers.

Looking closer at special-needs groups within Fowler, large households saw a significant decrease from 2010, decreasing from 27.4 to 13.7 percent in 2020. Similarly, female-headed households have decreased from 9.3 to 6.3 percent. Overall, seniors and persons with disabilities all saw increases anywhere from 4.3 to 7.3 percent. While the need for housing for special-needs groups may not be as high as it was in previous years, the need is still there. To address the needs of special-needs groups in Fowler, the City has included **Program 6: Affordable Housing Incentives**, **Program 7: Support Funding for Farmworker Housing**, **Program 9: Extremely Low-Income Households**, **Program 13: Housing for a Variety of Needs**, and **Program 17: Monitoring of Planning and Development Fees**, to facilitate construction of 40 multifamily units during the planning period and remove any potential constraints for the construction of affordable multifamily units.

Fowler residents were primarily employed in health and educational services (30.1 percent of jobs), arts and entertainment (8.6 percent of jobs), and retail trade (12.9 percent of jobs), which is consistent with data from 2011. This shows a consistent trend within the employment industry for over 10 years. Unemployment in Fowler has decreased slightly from 12.6 percent in 2014 to 3.6 percent in 2022.

The unit composition of Fowler’s housing stock has remained relatively consistent since 2010, with the predominant housing type being single-family detached units comprising 73.2 percent of the housing stock in 2010 and 75.3 percent in 2020. Multifamily units represent 19.2 percent of the housing stock, which has only seen a 0.9 percent decrease from 2010 to 2020. As stated previously, owner-occupied households account for 53.4 percent of households in Fowler and renter-occupied households account for 46.6 percent. As discussed in the Fair Housing section, it is estimated that zero owner-occupied and 60 renter-occupied units in Fowler lack a complete kitchen or plumbing. In 2010, it was estimated that 33 renter-occupied households lack a complete kitchen or plumbing. The decrease in complete plumbing facilities is a measure of substandard housing conditions. In response to the existing substandard units, the City has included **Program 20: Housing and Rental Rehabilitation Programs**. Additional resources to assist with home rehabilitation are listed in the Regional Multijurisdictional Housing Element in Section 4, Opportunities for Residential Development, in the subsection called Financial and Administrative Resources.

Overcrowding rates are significant in Fowler, with only 9.8 percent of renters experiencing overcrowding and 2.7 percent of homeowners experiencing overcrowding. However, overpayment rates for renters and owners have decreased quite significantly since 2011. Overpayment for owner-occupied households decreased from 31.5 percent in 2011 to 18.2 percent in 2018, while overpayment for renter-occupied households increased from 50.7 percent in 2011 to 54 percent in 2018. When considering overpayment rates, overcrowding, and recent development trends, renters appear to have a housing need for adequately sized and priced housing opportunities in Fowler. This shows a need for affordable housing programs. For example, a down payment assistance loan program can help a renter household achieve homeownership that might not otherwise be able to, with a loan that enables them to afford monthly mortgage payments and other housing-related costs. In response to this need, the City has included **Program 11** to encourage construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a potential affordable housing option, **Program 24** improve access to Section 8 housing opportunities for renters, **Program 22** to promote all available homebuyer resources on the City’s website, and **Program 6** to promote the use of density bonuses to expand the affordable housing supply.

### **Housing Constraints**

While the City has made extensive efforts to encourage development of affordable and market-rate housing, there are many governmental and nongovernmental constraints that can make housing development more difficult. Governmental constraints are typically rules that apply to all development and are intended to meet other community interests.

- The City continues to encourage and facilitate the development of ADUs.
- The City’s Zoning Ordinance provides for a range of housing options. Updates to the ordinance are underway to bring it in line with State law, including changes to the zones that permit ADUs, emergency shelters, low-barrier navigation centers, residential care facilities, farmworker and employee housing, single-room occupancy units, transitional and supportive housing, and mobile and manufactured homes.
- The City’s Affordable Housing Density Bonus will need to be updated to be consistent with State law.
- Fees charged by the City as part of the development process, along with fees charged by regional agencies, are not considered a constraint to development but will be monitored by the City.
- Current standards for on-site and off-site improvements are not considered a barrier to housing production.
- The City will review its design standards to ensure objectivity.
- The City will establish formal procedures for permit processing consistent with the requirements of SB 330 and will establish an application process related to SB 35.
- The City does not currently have a formal process to grant reasonable accommodation requests. The zoning ordinance will be amended to establish a formal reasonable accommodations process.



- The City will amend its Zoning Ordinance to update the definition of “family.”
- Nongovernmental constraints include challenges such as water access, availability of financing, and the high cost of land in the City and across the region. A number of the goals and policies in the Housing Element are aimed at eliminating or lessening constraints to the development of housing.

### **Housing Resources**

A major component of the Housing Element is an analysis of sites that are available for the development of housing to meet the City’s RHNA. The Housing Element identifies sites in Fowler where zoning is in place to allow for housing development, including higher-density housing (20+ units per acre) that is suitable for affordable housing development.

- The City has identified sufficient housing sites to meet its lower-, moderate- and above-moderate housing allocation.
- The City partners with Fresno County to provide several programs designed to help residents find affordable housing. These programs include the Fresno County Housing Assistance Rehabilitation Program (HARP), the Fresno County Rental Rehabilitation Program (RRP), and the Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program (HAP).
- The City was awarded a Permanent Local Housing Assistance (PLHA) Grant which will be used for first time homebuyer downpayment assistance.
- The City will encourage the development of ADUs by educating the public about this housing type and providing informational materials to all discretionary land use applicants.

## **SECTION 1D-1: ACTION PLAN**

### **Summary of Needs and Conditions**

#### **Housing Needs Assessment**

As part of the Housing Element, the City prepared a detailed Needs Assessment (Section 2) analyzing Fowler’s demographics. The Needs Assessment identified a number of trends that informed the goals and policies of the updated Housing Element, including:

- The City’s population increased by 3.4 percent on average between 2000 and 2022, which was higher than the countywide average annual growth rate of 2.0 percent. Similarly, the number of households in Fowler increased by 1.8 percent between 2010 and 2020, a higher rate of growth than the rate countywide.
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- ~~Extremely low-income residents (those earning 30 percent or less of median income) made up 15.5 percent of the total households in Fowler. Of those, 84.7 percent were renter households.~~

## ***Housing Constraints***

~~While the City has made extensive efforts to encourage development of affordable and market-rate housing, there are many governmental and nongovernmental constraints that can make housing development more difficult. Governmental constraints are typically rules that apply to all development and are intended to meet other community interests.~~

- ~~The City continues to encourage and facilitate the development of ADUs.~~
- ~~The City's Zoning Ordinance provides for a range of housing options. Updates to the ordinance are underway to bring it in line with State law, including changes to the zones that permit ADUs, emergency shelters, low-barrier navigation centers, residential care facilities, farmworker and employee housing, single-room occupancy units, transitional and supportive housing, and mobile and manufactured homes.~~
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~~Rehabilitation Program (HARP), the Fresno County Rental Rehabilitation Program (RRP), and the Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program (HAP).~~

- ~~• The City was awarded a Permanent Local Housing Assistance (PLHA) Grant which will be used for first time homebuyer downpayment assistance.~~
- ~~• The City will encourage the development of ADUs by educating the public about this housing type and providing informational materials to all discretionary land use applicants.~~

## Regional Collaboration

### Program 1: Regional Collaboration on Housing Opportunities

The Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element provides an opportunity for countywide housing issues and needs to be more effectively addressed at the regional level rather than just at the local level, and the 15 participating jurisdictions are committed to continuing the regional collaboration in the implementation of the Housing Element. By working together, the jurisdictions can share best practices, explore opportunities for further collaboration, and make the best use of limited resources. The following efforts will be made to further regional collaboration:

- The County of Fresno Public Works and Planning Department, with assistance of the Fresno COG, will take the lead in coordinating the Countywide Sixth Cycle Housing Element Committee meetings.
- Continue to participate in the Countywide Housing Element Technical Committee to collaborate on housing program implementation and regional issues including, disadvantaged unincorporated communities (SB 244), infrastructure challenges, farmworker housing, homelessness, and fair housing.
- The Committee will meet at least biannually to evaluate successes in implementation of programs and to identify gaps and additional needs.
- The Committee will meet annually with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to discuss funding opportunities and challenges in implementation of programs and seek technical assistance from HCD and other State agencies in the implementation of housing programs and the pursuit of grant funding.
- The Committee will meet periodically with Fair Housing of Central California to discuss fair housing issues and opportunities for education.
- The Committee will advocate on behalf of the Fresno County region for more grant funding for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements.
- Continue to seek partnerships with other jurisdictions in the region and other agencies (such as the Housing Authority), housing developers, community stakeholders, and agricultural employers/employees to explore viable options for increasing the availability of farmworker housing in suitable locations in the region.
- Develop a directory of services and resources for lower-income households available in the region, and review and update it annually. Make the directory available on City/County websites and at City/County offices.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame	Continue to meet with the Housing Element Technical Committee twice per year, meet with HCD annually. Develop a directory of services and resources by December 2025, update annually as needed.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.3, Policy 1.4, Policy 2.1, Policy 4.2

**Program 2: Review Annexation Standards in Memorandum of Understanding**

All jurisdictions in Fresno County are subject to a City-County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which establishes procedures for annexation of land to cities. The City/County MOU encourages urban development to take place within cities and unincorporated communities in an effort to preserve agricultural land. The MOU standards for annexation require that development be imminent and a minimum of 25 percent of annexation areas have an approved tentative subdivision map or site plan, with the exception of annexations necessary to accommodate a City RHNA. While cities can take certain steps to “prezone” land in advance of annexation, the annexation of the land into the city limits is dependent upon private developers to request an annexation.

During the Housing Element planning period, the County of Fresno and the cities within the County shall work together to review and revise, as deemed appropriate by all parties, the standards for annexation contained in the Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the cities.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Meet with the County by December 2026 to review the MOU standards, and update within a year if changes are needed
Implementation Responsibility:	City Manager
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.3, Policy 1.4



**Program 3: Homeless/Unhoused Needs**

The City will cooperate with neighboring cities, the County, and other agencies in the development of programs aimed at providing homeless shelters and related services. During this coordination, the City will monitor the demographic composition of the unhoused population to identify needs for targeted resources and determine what efforts to take, such as providing education on financial assistance and programs available. [The City has also recently entered into the County of Fresno’s Joint Powers Authority \(JPA\) to participate in the County’s Emergency Solutions Grants \(ESG\) program for homeless services and other eligible activities through the County Department of Social Services in partnership with the Fresno-Madera Continuum of Care.](#) The City will also support local homeless service providers, agencies, and other community organizations to pursue funding from [other](#) available sources for homeless services.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Continue to engage with the County and other agencies regularly to assist homeless persons.
Quantified Objective	Assist with program development and funding identification that will assist at least three homeless persons.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 4.6

**Adequate Sites**

**Program 4: Provision of Adequate Sites**

The City of Fowler will provide for a variety of housing types and ensure that adequate sites are available to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 339 units. As part of this Housing Element update, the City has developed a parcel-specific inventory of sites suitable for future residential development. The suitability of these sites has been determined based on the development standards in place and their ability to facilitate the development of housing to meet the needs of the City’s current and future residents, pursuant to State laws. The City will:

- Maintain and annually update the inventory of residential land resources.
- Provide the updated inventory on City website and make copies available upon request.
- Monitor the availability of sites appropriate for lower-income housing in keeping with state “no net loss” provisions (Government Code Section 65863), if development projects are approved at densities lower than anticipated in the sites inventory, and, if necessary, rezone sufficient sites to accommodate the RHNA within 180 days, ensuring that there is sufficient higher-density residential land available in areas throughout the city to deconcentrate poverty.

- Monitor and report residential development through the HCD annual report process.
- Actively participate in the development of the next RHNA Plan to better ensure that the allocations are reflective of the regional and local land use goals and policies.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Annually monitor as projects are processed.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.3, Policy 1.4, Policy 1.5, Policy 1.6, Policy 1.7, Policy 1.8, Policy 1.9

**Program 5: Water and Wastewater Service**

The development viability of the vacant sites in the inventory is directly linked to the availability and capacity of public facilities and services. The City continues to work to address water supply issues and infrastructure capacity limitations.

Additionally, California Government Code Section 65589.7 requires water and sewer providers to establish specific procedures and grant priority water and sewer service to developments with units affordable to lower-income households. The statute also requires local governments to immediately deliver the housing element to water and sewer providers. The City of Fowler is the water service provider; the Selma-Kingsburg-Fowler County Sanitation District (SKF) provides sewer service in the City.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	By 2025, adopt procedures to allocate priority water and sewer service in compliance with Government Code Section 65589.7.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department, Public Works Department, and SKF
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.7

## Affordable Housing Development and Preservation

### Program 6: Affordable Housing Incentives

The City continues to have needs for affordable housing for lower-income households, especially for seniors, people with disabilities (including persons with developmental disabilities), farmworkers, female-headed and single-parent households, persons experiencing homelessness, and extremely low-income households. The City will continue to work with housing developers to expand affordable housing opportunities by doing the following:

- Continue to seek partnerships and meet at least every other year with other agencies (such as the Housing Authority), housing developers, community stakeholders, and employers to discuss and pursue viable opportunities for providing affordable housing, with an emphasis on housing opportunities for very low- and extremely low-income households, as well as special-needs populations, such as seniors, persons with disabilities (including developmental disabilities), farmworkers, female-headed and single-parent households, persons experiencing homelessness, and extremely low-income households. Meet more frequently if development rates increase. [The City will identify development opportunities for affordable housing on an annual basis and provide this information to city partners.](#)
- Work with public or private sponsors to identify candidate sites for new construction of housing for special needs and take all actions necessary to expedite processing of such projects.
- Continue to offer fee reductions and deferral of development impact fee payments to facilitate affordable housing development and special-needs projects, particularly those on infill sites.
- Continue to promote the State density bonus and provide streamlined processing to facilitate affordable housing development and provide for additional flexibility for affordable housing and special-needs housing through the minor deviation process. The City will promote this program by publicizing the incentives on the City website and by conducting pre-application consultation with developers regarding available incentives. Examples of flexible development standards include reduced parking requirements; reduced requirements for curb, gutter, and sidewalk construction; common trenching for utilities; and reduced water and wastewater connection fees.
- Consider incentives for builders to provide housing with multiple bedrooms affordable to lower- and moderate-income households to meet the needs of female-headed, single-parent, and large-family households of all income levels. Possible incentives may include reduced setbacks, reduced parking requirements, and technical assistance with applications for funding.
- Continue to streamline the environmental review process for housing developments to the extent possible, using available State categorical exemptions and federal categorical exclusions, when applicable.

- Monitor HCD’s website annually for Notices of Funding Ability (NOFA) and, where appropriate, prepare or support applications for funding for affordable housing for lower-income households (including extremely low-income households), such as seniors, disabled (including persons with developmental disabilities), the homeless, and those at risk of homelessness.
- Facilitate the approval process for land divisions, lot line adjustments, and/or specific plans or master plans resulting in parcel sizes that enable affordable housing development and process fee deferrals related to the subdivision for projects affordable to lower-income households.
- Work with developers of multifamily and affordable housing projects on an annual basis to identify site opportunities in higher-resource areas and areas with higher median incomes to reduce concentrations of poverty and improve access to resources.

Financing:	HOME, CDBG, Successor Agency funds, LIHTC, Multi-Family Housing Revenue Bond, and other funding sources as available
Time Frame:	Ongoing, as projects are processed by the City. Annually apply for funding. <u>Identify site opportunities and communicate those opportunities to affordable housing development opportunities developers on an annual basis.</u>
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Expand the City’s affordable housing inventory by <del>13-26</del> units over the next eight years — <del>1-2</del> extremely low-income, <del>1-2</del> very low-income, <del>3-6</del> low-income, and <del>8-16</del> moderate-income units. <u>At least 50 percent of this objective will be located in relatively higher-income areas.</u>
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.2, Policy 2.1, Policy 2.2, Policy 2.3, Policy 2.4, Policy 2.5, Policy 2.6, Policy 2.7, Policy 4.3, Policy 4.4, Policy 5.2

**Program 7: Support Funding for Farmworker Housing**

The farming industry is the foundation of the County’s economy base. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2017 Census of Agriculture, about 37,819 workers were employed in farm labor throughout the county, indicating a significant need to provide housing for farmworkers and their families, particularly during peak harvest seasons.

The City will engage with housing developers in the application of funds for farmworker housing, including HCD and USDA Rural Development loans and grants and other funding sources that may become available. The City will also continue to offer incentives such as density bonuses, streamlined processing, and the minor deviation process to facilitate development of farmworker housing.

The City will annually monitor the status of farmworker housing as part of their annual report to HCD on Housing Element progress and evaluate if City efforts are effective in facilitating the provision of farmworker housing. If appropriate, the City will make necessary changes to enhance opportunities and incentives for farmworker housing development.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Continue to engage with farmworker housing developers and advocates on a biannual basis to discuss their needs and offer assistance in the form of letters of recommendation for grant applications, assistance with site identification and grant opportunities, and discuss incentives for constructing farmworker housing. <a href="#">Identify development opportunities to support the development of housing for farmworkers at least twice in the planning period and communicate these opportunities to the farmworker housing developers.</a>
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	10 lower-income units set aside for farmworkers and their families to reduce displacement risk for this population.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.2, Policy 2.1, Policy 2.2, Policy 2.4, Policy 2.5, Policy 4.2, Policy 4.3

**Program 8: Farmworker Preference in New Affordable Housing**

For new affordable housing projects developed with City assistance, incentives, and/or subject to City requirements, the City will require that the developer give qualified farmworker households a preference for 15 percent of the new units. Should demand from farmworker households be insufficient to fill the set-aside units, then the units will be made available to other qualified households. The City will annually reach out to affordable housing developers to gather interest and input on how to best implement this program and will provide information on available funding.

Financing:	General Fund, CDBG, HOME, USDA Rural Development
Time Frame:	Ongoing, as projects are processed; annually reach out to developers and determine next steps within six months.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department



Quantified Objective:	20 lower-income units set aside for farmworkers or other qualified households to reduce displacement risk.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.2, Policy 2.1, Policy 4.2, Policy 4.3

**Program 9: Extremely Low-Income Households**

Assembly Bill (AB) 2634 requires the quantification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs of extremely low-income households. To support the development or rehabilitation of single-room occupancy (SR) units and/or other units affordable to extremely low-income households, such as supportive and multifamily units, the City will continue to seek and pursue state and federal funds to offer a variety of incentives or concessions, such as:

- Provide financial support annually, as available, to organizations that provide counseling, information, education, support, housing services/referrals, and/or legal advice to extremely low-income households, to mitigate risk of displacement and support housing stability for extremely low-income households, persons with disabilities, farmworkers, and persons experiencing homelessness.
- Expand regulatory incentives for the development of units affordable to extremely low-income households and housing for special-needs groups, including persons with disabilities (including developmental disabilities), and individuals and families in need of emergency/transitional housing.
- Encourage the provision of affordable housing for young adults, particularly former foster youth and young mothers, through planning consultations, streamlined permit processing, and funding assistance. Establish provisions to permit SRO facilities, transitional and supportive housing, and other special housing arrangements.

Financing:	General Fund, CDBG, HOME
Time Frame:	Ongoing, as projects are processed. By December 2024, conduct outreach to organizations that support extremely low-income residents to understand funding needs, and review and prioritize local funding at least twice in the planning period, and support expediting applications on an ongoing basis.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	151 lower-income units, including 15 units for extremely low-income households to prevent displacement and provide housing mobility opportunities.

Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.2, Policy 2.1, Policy 4.2, Policy 4.6
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**Program 10: Preservation of At-Risk Housing Units**

Preserving the existing affordable housing stock is a cost-effective approach to providing affordable housing in Fowler. The City must guard against the loss of housing units available to lower-income households. As of October 2022, there are no affordable units considered at risk of conversion to market rate in the next 10 years. The City has a total of 143 publicly assisted rental units in three projects. No publicly assisted rental housing units are considered at risk of converting to market-rate housing before December 31, 2031. For complexes at risk of converting to market rate, the City shall:

- Contact property owners of units at risk of converting to market-rate housing within one year of affordability expiration to discuss the City’s desire to preserve complexes as affordable housing.
- Coordinate with owners of expiring subsidies to ensure the required notices to tenants are sent out at 3 years, 12 months, and 6 months.
- Reach out to agencies interested in purchasing and/or managing at-risk units.
- Work with tenants to provide education regarding tenant rights and conversion procedures pursuant to California law.

Financing:	General Fund, LIHTC, Multifamily Housing Revenue Bond, and other funding sources as available.
Time Frame:	Annually monitor units at risk of converting; coordinate noticing as required per California law.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 3.6

**Program 11: Encourage and Facilitate Accessory Units**

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU), sometimes called a “granny flat,” is an additional self-contained living unit either attached to or detached from the primary residential unit on a single lot. It has cooking, eating, sleeping, and full sanitation facilities. ADUs can be an important source of affordable housing given that they typically are smaller and have no associated land costs. The City will encourage the construction of ADUs, particularly in predominantly single-family neighborhoods with higher median incomes. The City will:

- By 2024, implement a public education program advertising the opportunity for ADUs by updating informational handouts and brochures about ADUs that are available on the City’s website and at the public counter annually, or as needed to reflect changes in State law. [Reach out directly with the information materials to homeowners participating in predominantly single-family neighborhoods with higher median incomes.](#)
- Provide informational materials on ADU opportunities to all discretionary land use applicants.
- At least annually, publish informational materials pertaining to ADUs through a combination of media, including the City’s social media accounts and direct mailing.
- By December 2025, provide resources for ADU standard plans to developers for their use in the City.
- By December 2024, identify [and implement](#) incentives for construction of ADUs with new development, which may include differing collection times for impact fees for the square footage associated with the ADU.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Update ADU materials annually, or as needed to reflect changes in State law, and identify <a href="#">and implement</a> incentives for construction by December 2024.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	<a href="#">2-3</a> ADUs for lower-income households, <a href="#">3-4</a> for moderate-income households, and <a href="#">2-3</a> for above moderate-income households to improve housing mobility opportunities and reduce displacement risk.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.3, Policy 2.1, Policy 2.6

**Program 12: Replacement Units**

To reduce displacement risk and in accordance with California Government Code Section 65583.2(g), the City will require replacement housing units subject to the requirements of California Government Code Section 65915(c)(3) on sites identified in the sites inventory when any new development (residential, mixed-use, or nonresidential) occurs on a site that has been occupied by or restricted for the use of lower-income households at any time during the previous five years.

This requirement applies to:

- Non-vacant sites;
- Vacant sites with previous residential uses that have been vacated or demolished.

Financing:	General Fund, HOME, CDBG
Time Frame:	Ongoing, the replacement requirement will be implemented immediately and applied as applications on identified sites are received and processed.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6

**Program 13: Housing for a Variety of Needs**

The City will encourage a variety of housing types to address the housing needs of a variety of household types, sizes, and incomes. This could include duplexes, townhomes, apartment buildings, and condominiums in neighborhoods and new subdivisions and will identify innovative and alternative housing options that provide greater flexibility and affordability in the housing stock while promoting mixed-income development. This may include consideration for further reduction in regulatory barriers for community land trusts, tiny houses, microhomes, cottage homes, small lot subdivisions, and other alternative housing types, as well as exploration of a variety of densities and housing types in all zoning districts.

The City will use the findings of this program to target development of a variety of housing types in areas of predominantly single-family development and of concentrated overpayment to reduce displacement risk, promote inclusion, and support integration of housing types based on income.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Identify innovative and alternative housing options to help further housing production by December 2025; amend the Zoning Ordinance as needed.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	8 lower-income units, 8 moderate-income units, and 3 above moderate-income units to reduce displacement risk for all residents and facilities in income-integrated neighborhoods.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.2, Policy 2.1, Policy 4.4

## Removal of Governmental Constraints

### Program 14: Zoning Ordinance Amendments

- In compliance with State laws, the City will amend its Zoning Ordinance to address the provision of a variety of housing options, especially housing for special needs groups. Specifically, the City will amend the Zoning Ordinance to address the following:
  - **Density Bonus:** Consistent with Government Code, a density bonus up to 100 percent over the otherwise maximum allowable residential density under the applicable zoning district will be available to developers who provide affordable housing as part of their projects. Developers of affordable housing will also be entitled to receive incentives on a sliding scale to a maximum of three, where the amount of density bonus and number of incentives vary according to the amount of affordable housing units provided.
  - **Emergency Shelters:** Develop managerial standards for emergency shelters and allow sufficient parking to accommodate all staff working in the emergency shelter, provided that the standards do not require more parking for emergency shelters than other residential or commercial uses within the same zone, in compliance with Government Code Section 65583(a)(4)(A)(ii). Emergency shelters will also be added as a by-right use to the C-2 zone district and the definition of emergency shelters will be amended to include interim interventions. ~~Additionally, allow residential uses by right in zones that allow emergency shelters without a conditional use permit or other discretionary permit pursuant to Government Code Section 65583(a)(4).~~
  - **Low-Barrier Navigation Centers:** Permit low-barrier navigation centers, defined as low-barrier, temporary service-enriched shelters to help homeless individuals and families to quickly obtain permanent housing by-right in zones where mixed uses are allowed or in nonresidential zones that permit multifamily housing (Government Code Section 65662; AB 101).
  - **Residential Care Facilities/Group Homes:** Update the Zoning Ordinance to comply with the Lanterman Act and allow group homes for six or fewer persons by-right in all residential zones. The Zoning Ordinance also needs to make provisions for large residential care facilities for more than six persons to be permitted similar to other residential uses, including the standards applied.
  - **Farmworker/Employee Housing:** Comply with the Employee Housing Act which requires farmworker housing up to 12 units or 36 beds be considered an agricultural use and permitted in any zone that permits agricultural uses, and employee housing for six or fewer employees to be treated as a single family structure and permitted in the same manner as other dwellings of the same type in the same zone.
  - **Reasonable Accommodation:** Establish a reasonable accommodation procedure to provide flexibility in policies, rules, and regulations in order to allow persons with disabilities access to housing.



- **Definition of Family:** Remove the definition of family in the Zoning Ordinance, or amend the definition to ensure it does not differentiate between related and unrelated individuals, or impose a numerical limit on the number of persons in a family.
- **Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing:** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to address the provision of SRO housing.
- **Transitional and Supportive Housing:** Permit transitional housing and supportive housing as residential uses only subject to those restrictions that apply to other residential dwellings of the same type in the same zone (Government Code Section 65583(a)(5)). Additionally, allow supportive housing in multifamily and mixed-use zones (Government Code Section 65651).
- **Manufactured Housing:** Update the Zoning Ordinance to permit manufactured homes in a manner consistent with single family housing.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Complete remaining Zoning Ordinance amendments by December 2024. Annually review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Zoning Ordinance and process any necessary amendments to remove or mitigate potential constraints to the development of housing.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.1, Policy 2.7, Policy 5.2

**Program 15: Reasonable Accommodations and Universal Design**

The City will develop and formalize a general process that a person with physical and developmental disabilities can use to make a reasonable accommodation request to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities and streamline the permit review process. The City will provide information to individuals with disabilities regarding reasonable accommodation policies, practices, and procedures based on the guidelines from HCD. This information will be available through postings and pamphlets at the public counter and on the City’s website.

The City will also implement State requirements (Sections 4450 to 4460 of the California Government Code and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) to include accessibility in housing and public facilities for persons with disabilities:

- Encourage housing developers to include mobility-impaired accessibility in their project designs and prioritize these types of projects to increase housing mobility opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Review regulations and procedures for City-funded or operated housing programs to ensure that they do not exclude participation by persons with disabilities.

- Include accessibility considerations in the preparation of the City’s capital improvement plan and the allocation of funding for capital improvements in support of housing and residential neighborhoods for persons with physical or developmental disabilities.

Financing:	General Fund, SB 2 Grant Funding, LEAP Grant Funding
Time Frame:	Develop and adopt a reasonable accommodations ordinance by December 2024; create brochures on universal design and the reasonable accommodations ordinance by July 2025 and update biannually, or as needed.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Assist two residents with reasonable accommodation requests to reduce displacement risk and encourage one accessible unit to improve housing mobility.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 4.1, Policy 4.5

**Program 16: ~~Lot Consolidation~~ Lot Development Feasibility**

To create additional opportunities for infill development and affordable housing, the City will help to facilitate [development on both large and small lots](#). ~~Lot~~ consolidations to combine small lots identified as part of a larger site in the [Housing Element site inventory](#) into larger developable lots for housing [will be expedited](#)~~encouraged~~. [The City will also expedite processing of and consider deferral of development impact fees for subdivisions, lot splits, and lot line adjustments that will facilitate the creation of new developable parcels on sites greater than 10 acres that are included in the lower income category site inventory. The City will also pursue funding to complete off-site improvements for sites greater than 10 acres for the lower income category to further incentivize development.](#) The City will meet with local developers and property owners to discuss development opportunities and incentives ~~for lot consolidation~~ to accommodate affordable housing units and consider additional incentives brought forth by developers. By 2026, the City will review the effectiveness of this program and revise as appropriate. The City will also evaluate grant funding for parcel assemblage land banking when it is available.

Financing:	General Fund (legislative efforts); Grant funding (implementation)
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Timeframe:	Meet with developers and property owners starting in 2024 and annually thereafter. Based on the meetings with developers and property owners, add incentives as appropriate. Provide ongoing support for lot consolidations <a href="#">and subdivisions</a> as applicable housing applications are received. Pursue grant funding during planning period if California legislation and/or programs enable a tax-increment or similar program that leads to funding for site <a href="#">assembly preparation, including off-site improvements for inventory sites greater than 10 acres</a> .
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.4, Policy 1.5, Policy 2.4
Quantified Objective:	By December 2025 staff will have conducted an inventory of possible sites that could be merged <a href="#">or subdivided</a> and reached out to those property owners.

**Program 17: Monitoring of Planning and Development Fees**

The City charges various fees to review and process development applications. Such fees may add to the cost of housing development. The City will analyze housing-related development fees, particularly for multifamily housing, on an annual basis to ensure they do not unduly constrain development. As part of the analysis process, meet with multifamily developers at least once by December 2024 to request input regarding constraints associated with fees. Based on feedback received, reduce fees if found to be a constraint. Further, the City will offer deferred or reduced fees to facilitate affordable housing development, as appropriate.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Meet with multifamily developers by December 2024 and revise fees, if necessary, by December 2025. Review fees annually.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Facilitate construction of 40 multifamily units during the planning period, targeting missing-middle development in higher-resource areas and encouraging at least 15 of the units to be affordable to lower-income households.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.2, Policy 1.4

**Program 18: Preliminary Applications (SB 330) and Streamlined Approval (SB 35)**

The City will develop a preliminary application form and procedure or will adopt the Preliminary Application Form developed by HCD, pursuant to SB 330. The City will also establish a written policy and/or procedure, and other guidance as appropriate, to specify the SB 35 streamlining approval process and standards for eligible projects under Government Code Section 65913.4. The applications will be available on the City’s website for developers interested in pursuing the streamlined process or vesting rights.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Develop or adopt HCD’s SB 330 preliminary application form by December 2024. Develop an SB 35 streamlined approval process by June 2025 and implement as applications are received.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Facilitate construction of 3 very low-income units and 3 low-income units to increase housing mobility opportunities, prioritizing new opportunities in higher-resource areas.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.4, Policy 2.3, Policy 2.4

**Program 19: Objective Design Standards**

The City will develop objective design guidelines and standards to provide clear and objective standards related to single-family, multifamily, and mixed-use residential developments.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Adopt objective design standards by December 2025 and implement thereafter.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Relevant Policies:	Policy 1.8, Policy 2.7

## Housing Quality

### Program 20: Housing and Rental Rehabilitation Programs

The City of Fowler does not currently participate in either of Fresno County’s rehabilitation programs, including the ~~(Fresno County Housing Assistance Rehabilitation Program (HARP) and the Fresno County Rental Rehabilitation Program (RRP)).~~ However, the City has recently entered into the County of Fresno’s Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to participate in the County’s HOME and CDBG programs, which include the HARP and the RRP programs. These programs provide funding for eligible improvements, including energy-efficiency upgrades and installations, health and safety and hazard corrections, and accessibility modifications to reduce displacement risk and facilitate place-based revitalization. ~~The City will identify opportunities to facilitate unit rehabilitation in Fowler through participation in regional programs or the establishment of local programs that provide similar benefits.~~

Financing:	CDBG and HOME funds
Time Frame:	Identify opportunities for rehabilitation programs by 2025.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
<u>Quantified Objective:</u>	<u>Participate in the HARP, RRP, and other rehabilitation programs offered through the County JPA with the goal of assisting 8 households over the planning period (2 very low-income, 3 low-income, and 3 moderate-income households). Such efforts should be targeted in relatively lower-income areas.</u>
Relevant Policies:	Policy 3.2, Policy 4.1

### Program 21: Code Enforcement

The City’s Community & Economic Development Department is in charge of enforcing the City’s building codes with the objective of protecting the health and safety of residents. Code Enforcement officials perform routine inspections of housing in the city, including targeted surveys for health and safety violations under the Health and Safety Section 17910. The City will continue to utilize code enforcement and substandard abatement processes to bring substandard housing units and residential properties into compliance with City codes.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Make informational materials on rehabilitation assistance programs available by January 2025, to be provided on an ongoing basis when violations are confirmed, conduct code enforcement as complaints are received.

Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective	<a href="#">Participate in the HARP, RRP, and other rehabilitation programs offered through the County JPA</a> with the goal of assisting <del>5</del> <sup>8</sup> households over the planning period ( <del>1</del> <sup>2</sup> very low-income, <del>1</del> <sup>3</sup> low-income, and 3 moderate-income households). <a href="#">Such efforts should be targeted in relatively lower-income areas.</a>
Relevant Policies:	Policy 3.1, Policy 3.3

## Housing Assistance

### Program 22: First-Time Homebuyer Resources

Fowler residents have access to a number of homebuyer assistance programs offered by the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA):

- **Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC):** The MCC Tax Credit is a federal credit which can reduce potential federal income tax liability, creating additional net spendable income which borrowers may use toward their monthly mortgage payment. This MCC Tax Credit program may enable first-time homebuyers to convert a portion of their annual mortgage interest into a direct dollar for dollar tax credit on their U.S. individual income tax returns.
- **CalPLUS Conventional Program:** This is a first mortgage loan insured through private mortgage insurance on the conventional market. The interest rate on the CalPLUS Conventional is fixed throughout the 30-year term. The CalPLUS Conventional is combined with a CalHFA Zero Interest Program (ZIP), which is a deferred-payment junior loan of three percent of the first mortgage loan amount, for down payment assistance.
- **CalHFA Conventional Program:** This is a first mortgage loan insured through private mortgage insurance on the conventional market. The interest rate on the CalHFA Conventional is fixed throughout the 30-year term.

CalHFA loans are offered through local loan officers approved and trained by CalHFA. [The City also recently executed a funding agreement through the Permanent Local Housing Allocation \(PLHA\) grant to offer downpayment assistance for low-income first time homebuyers.](#)

The City will promote all available homebuyer resources on the City’s website and at public counters and will annually review funding resources available at the state and federal levels and pursue as appropriate to provide homebuyer assistance.

Financing:	CalHFA
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Time Frame:	Ensure informational materials on all homebuyer resources are on the City’s website and available at public counters by June 2024. Update materials annually, or as new information is provided by the County, and send out targeted promotion at least every other year.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Connect 20 prospective homebuyers with the County program to facilitate housing mobility opportunities in the city.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 2.1, Policy, 2.4, Policy 2.5, Policy 2.8

**Program 23: Energy Conservation**

The City promotes energy conservation in housing development and rehabilitation. The City will continue to promote and support Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) programs that provide energy efficiency rebates for qualifying energy-efficient upgrades by providing a link to PG&E programs on City website and make available brochures about PG&E programs at City counters. Additionally, the City will expedite review and approval of alternative energy devices, such as solar panels.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Make information easily available on the City’s website and at public facilities by June 2025.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Assist five low-income residents annually in need of assistance with energy-efficiency improvements to reduce displacement risk due to housing costs.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 6.1, Policy 6.2, Policy 6.3

**Program 24: Housing Choice Vouchers**

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program extends rental subsidies to extremely low- and very low-income households, including families, seniors, and the disabled. The program offers a voucher that pays the difference between the current fair market rent (FMR) as established by the HUD and what a tenant can afford to pay (i.e. 30 percent of household income). The Fresno Housing Authority administers the housing choice voucher program in Fresno County. The City will:

- Provide information on the HCV program on City website and public counters.



- Refer interested households to the Fresno Housing Authority and encourage landlords to register their properties with the Housing Authority for accepting HCVs.
- Work with the Housing Authority to disseminate information on incentives for participating in the HCV program throughout the City neighborhoods with varying income levels to promote housing opportunities for all residents.
- Meet with the Fresno Housing Authority by June 2024 to discuss the process of developing printed informational materials, with the goal of making materials available at public counters by June 2025.

Financing:	HUD Section 8
Time Frame:	Provide information on the City’s website by February 2024. Meet with the Housing Authority by June 2024 and develop informational materials by June 2025. Target outreach to property owners and landlords at least annually.
Implementation Responsibility:	Fresno Housing Authority and Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	25 lower-income units in high-opportunity areas to promote access to resources and mobility for target households.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 2.2

**Program 25: Housing Discrimination Monitoring and Referral**

The Fresno Housing Authority publicizes all information related to housing opportunities, programs fair-housing information and assistance in English, Spanish, Hmong, French, German, Chinese, Arabic, Dutch, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, and Russian. However, while all public notices and information on the Housing Authority website are translated to all of the previously mentioned languages, general circulation of information and secondary links, such as applications, are available only in English. The City will coordinate with the Housing Authority, Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG), and other Fresno County jurisdictions to encourage the development of Spanish-language printed materials to improve accessibility to fair housing resources for residents. If additional languages become more prevalent in the county, materials will be translated into those languages as needed.

The City will also:

- Establish a procedure to refer residents with fair housing questions or issues to the Fair Housing Council of Central Valley (FHC-CC), California Rural Legal Aid (CLRA), and other fair housing organizations.
- Provide fair housing information on the City’s website and in printed materials available in public buildings in both English and Spanish.

- Coordinate with Fresno Housing Authority to encourage the production of promotional materials in Punjabi.
- Encourage local fair housing service providers to conduct biannual trainings for landlords and tenants on fair housing laws, rights, and responsibilities and ongoing access to legal counseling.

Financing:	General Fund, grant funding
Time Frame:	Either individually or as part of the Countywide Housing Element Technical Committee (Program 1), meet annually with FHC-CC to discuss fair housing issues and opportunities for education. Make fair housing information available on the City’s website and in public buildings by June 2025.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department, Fresno Housing Authority
Quantified Objective:	Reduce displacement risk for 5 individuals or families resulting from language barriers and 3 from discrimination by landlords or property owners.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 5.1

**Program 26: Improve Access to Resources**

The City shall take the following actions to improve access to resources and opportunities citywide, but with a particular emphasis on neighborhoods with a concentration of lower-income residents who often face additional barriers in accessing resources:

- Work with Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) and other jurisdictions in the county to develop a fact sheet, or similar informational materials, of FCTA programs to be posted on the City’s website, social media, and in public buildings by January 2026, and advertised annually in the City’s newsletter to help connect seniors and other residents to services in the city and throughout the county.
- Prioritize projects that facilitate place-based revitalization through the City’s Capital Improvement Plan, such as projects that improve public infrastructure in deteriorating or underserved areas.
- Post information about flood-related resources on the City's website.
- Ensure program availability and funding announcements are made available in Spanish and translation is available at public meetings.
- Facilitate place-based revitalization and promote healthy environments for new housing by evaluating transitional buffers between residential and agricultural uses and highways and working with developers as projects are proposed to mitigate impacts associated with emissions from agricultural industries and traffic and facilitate access to healthy outdoor spaces.

- Meet with school district representatives by June 2025 to analyze whether housing security poses a barrier. Work with the school district to assist in securing grant funding for teacher recruitment and retention bonuses, classroom materials, and other incentives for teachers to facilitate positive learning environments citywide.

Financing:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Refer to each bulleted action for specific timeframes.
Implementation Responsibility:	Community & Economic Development Department
Quantified Objective:	Improve access to resources and reduce displacement risk resulting from a variety of factors for at least 8 residents.
Relevant Policies:	Policy 3.1, Policy 3.5, Policy 5.1, Policy 5.2

### Quantified Objectives

The Housing Element must contain quantified objectives for the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing. The quantified objectives set a target goal to achieve based on needs, resources, and constraints. **Table 1D-1** shows the quantified objectives for the 2023-2031 Housing Element planning period. These quantified objectives represent targets. They are not designed to be minimum requirements. They are estimates based on past experience, anticipated funding levels, and expected housing market conditions.

**Table 1D-1 Summary of Quantified Objectives**

Program	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate
RHNA	15	94	57	47	141
<b>New Construction</b>					
Program 6 – Affordable Housing Incentives	42	42	36	816	
Program 9 – Extremely Low-Income Households	15	94	57		
Program 11 – Encourage and Facilitate Accessory Units			23	34	23
Program 13 – Housing for a Variety of Needs			8	8	3
Program 17 – Monitoring of Planning and Development Fees			15	25	

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Program	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate
Program 18 – Preliminary Applications ( <a href="#">SB3 330</a> ) and Streamlined Approval ( <a href="#">SB 35</a> )		3	3		
<b>Rehabilitation</b>					
<a href="#">Program 20 – Housing and Rental Rehabilitation</a>		<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	
Program 21 – Code Enforcement		<del>2</del>	<del>3</del>	3	
<b>Conservation</b>					
Program 23 – Energy Conservation			5		
Program 24 – Housing Choice Voucher			25		

Note: In some cases, quantified objectives overlap and therefore identify multiple strategies to achieve the RHNA.

## SECTION 1D-2: SITES INVENTORY

### Fifth Cycle Housing Element - AB 1233 RHNA Carryover Analysis

AB 1233 was signed into law on October 5, 2005, and applies to housing elements due on or after January 1, 2006. Specifically, the law states that if a jurisdiction fails to provide adequate sites in the prior planning period, within one year of the new cycle, the jurisdiction must rezone/upzone adequate sites to accommodate the shortfall. This requirement is in addition to rezoning/upzoning that may be needed to address the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the new cycle.

This law affects the City of Fowler's 2023-2031 Housing Element, requiring the City to address its deficit in sites, if any, for the previous housing element cycle (2015-2023).

The potential AB 1233 penalty will be equal to the portion of RHNA not accommodated either through actual housing production or land made available for residential development within each income category. To determine any potential penalty, the analysis in this Housing Element uses the following approach outlined by HCD:

- Step 1: Subtracting the number of housing units constructed, under construction, permitted, or approved since January 1, 2015 by income/affordability level; and
- Step 2: Subtracting the number of units that could be accommodated on any appropriately zoned sites available in the city during the RHNA cycle.

In the previous planning period (fifth cycle), the RHNA assigned to the City of Fowler was 524 units (206 low-income, 75 moderate-income, and 243 above moderate-income units). The 2015-2023 Fowler Housing Element identified a surplus capacity of 849 units. The City of Fowler provided enough adequate sites within the City's 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element. As a result, the City is not required to complete a carry-over analysis for its 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element.

## Sixth Cycle Housing Element RHNA Analysis

For the sixth cycle Housing Element update, Fowler has been assigned a RHNA of 339 units, including 94 very low-income units, 57 low-income units, 47 moderate-income units, and 141 above moderate-income units.

The sites inventory uses the following assumptions:

- ***Relation of density to income categories.*** The following assumptions were used to determine the income categories according to the allowed densities for each site:

**Lower-income Sites.** Sites that allow at least 16 units per acre were inventoried as feasible for lower-income (low- and very low-income) residential development in accordance with the market-based analysis included in this housing element. This includes sites with the following zoning:

- Sites that are Multi-Family Residential (RM-3, RM-3-A) (up to 21.8 units per acre);
- Sites that are zoned Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) and Community Commercial (C-2) (up to 21.8 units per acre); and
- Sites that are zoned Form Based Code Area (FBC) (up to 21.8 units per acre).

**Moderate-Income Sites.** Sites that are zoned Residential Medium (RM-2) allow for a density range of 5.6 to 13.5 dwelling units per net acre. Typical dwelling units include small apartments and other attached units. These areas were inventoried as feasible for moderate-income residential development.

**Above Moderate-Income Sites.** All other sites, which allow only single-family homes at lower densities, were inventoried as above moderate-income units (R-1 zones).

- ***Realistic Development Potential.*** The inventory assumes buildout of 80 percent of the maximum permitted density for all [residential](#) sites. This estimate is fairly consistent with suburban development and the City’s development standards are not considered excessive. Furthermore, the City’s FBC zone is specifically designed to provide flexibility and facilitate the efficient use of land by offering incentives such as off-site and shared parking options. Multi-family development in the RM and FBC zones can also exceed 21.8 units per acre with the approval of a CUP. [See the “Realistic Development Potential” section below for additional information regarding the appropriateness of the assumed densities used for buildout.](#) ~~Using an average density at 80 percent of maximum allowable density actually represents less than the mid-range density of each zone.~~

## RHNA Summary

**Table 1D-2** provides a summary of Fowler’s ability to meet the 2023-2031 RHNA. The total RHNA for the 2023-2031 RHNA is 339 units, including 94 very-low-income units, 57 low-income units, 47 moderate-income units, and 141 above moderate-income units. After accounting for units built or under construction, planned and approved projects, and capacity on vacant sites, Fowler has a surplus capacity of 25 units. Residential potential on vacant RM, Commercial, and FBC properties is sufficient to meet the City’s lower-income RHNA. Therefore, the City’s sites inventory is more than adequate to accommodate the City’s RHNA for this Housing Element planning period without including units built or under construction or planned and approved projects.

Table 1D-2 RHNA Summary, Fowler, December 2023

	Units by Income Level				Total Units
	ELI/VLI	LI	M	AM	
2023-2031 RHNA	94	57	47	141	339
Units Built or Under Construction	--	--	--	--	--
Planned or Approved Projects (Table 2D-4)	--	--	--	--	--
Capacity on Vacant Sites (Table 2D-2)	162		57	145	364
Surplus Capacity <sup>1</sup>	11		10	4	25

<sup>1</sup> Surplus Capacity is calculated by subtracting capacity on vacant sites and capacity on prezoned sites from the total RHNA.

Source: City of Fowler



Table 1D-3 Fowler 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Vacant and Underutilized Sites, Fowler, December 31, 2023—December 31, 2031

Site Number	APN	Size (acres)	GP Land Use <sup>1</sup>	Zoning/ Pre-zoning	Existing Use	Density Range (per acre)	Units by Income Level			Total Realistic Development Potential <sup>2</sup>	Environmental Constraints	Zoning in Place for 5 <sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA <sup>3</sup>
							LI	MI	AMI			
1	343-143-10	0.17	HDR	<a href="#">R-1-7FBC</a>	Vacant	21.8	2			2	None	<a href="#">YesNA</a>
1	343-143-11	0.34	HDR	<a href="#">FBCRM-2</a>	Vacant	21.8	5			5	None	<a href="#">YesNA</a>
2	343-142-14T	0.27	<a href="#">Community Commercial C</a>	FBC	Partially Vacant	21.8	4			4	None	<a href="#">NAYes</a>
2	343-142-13	0.26	<a href="#">CCCommunity Commercial</a>	FBC	Vacant	21.8	4			4	None	<a href="#">NAYes</a>
3	343-020-09	0.69	<a href="#">CCCommunity Commercial</a>	C-2	Vacant	21.8	4			4	None	Yes
3	343-020-18	15.65	<a href="#">CCCommunity Commercial</a>	C-2	Vacant	21.8	95			95	None	Yes
4	343-360-40	5.66	<a href="#">Neighborhood Commercial NC</a>	C-1	Vacant	21.8	34			34	None	Yes
5	343-233-02ST	0.44	<a href="#">CCCommunity Commercial</a>	FBC	Vacant	21.8	7			7	None	<a href="#">NAYes</a>
5	343-233-03ST	0.41	<a href="#">CCCommunity Commercial</a>	FBC	Vacant	21.8	7			7	None	<a href="#">NAYes</a>
6	343-270-13	5.70	MDR	RM-2	Vacant	13.5		57		57	None	Yes
7	345-10-007	29.05	<a href="#">HDRMLDR</a>	R-1-7	Vacant	5.5			145	145	None	<a href="#">NAYes</a>
Total Capacity Counted Towards Sixth Cycle RHNA (2023-2031)							162	57	145	364		

Source: City of Fowler, 2023.

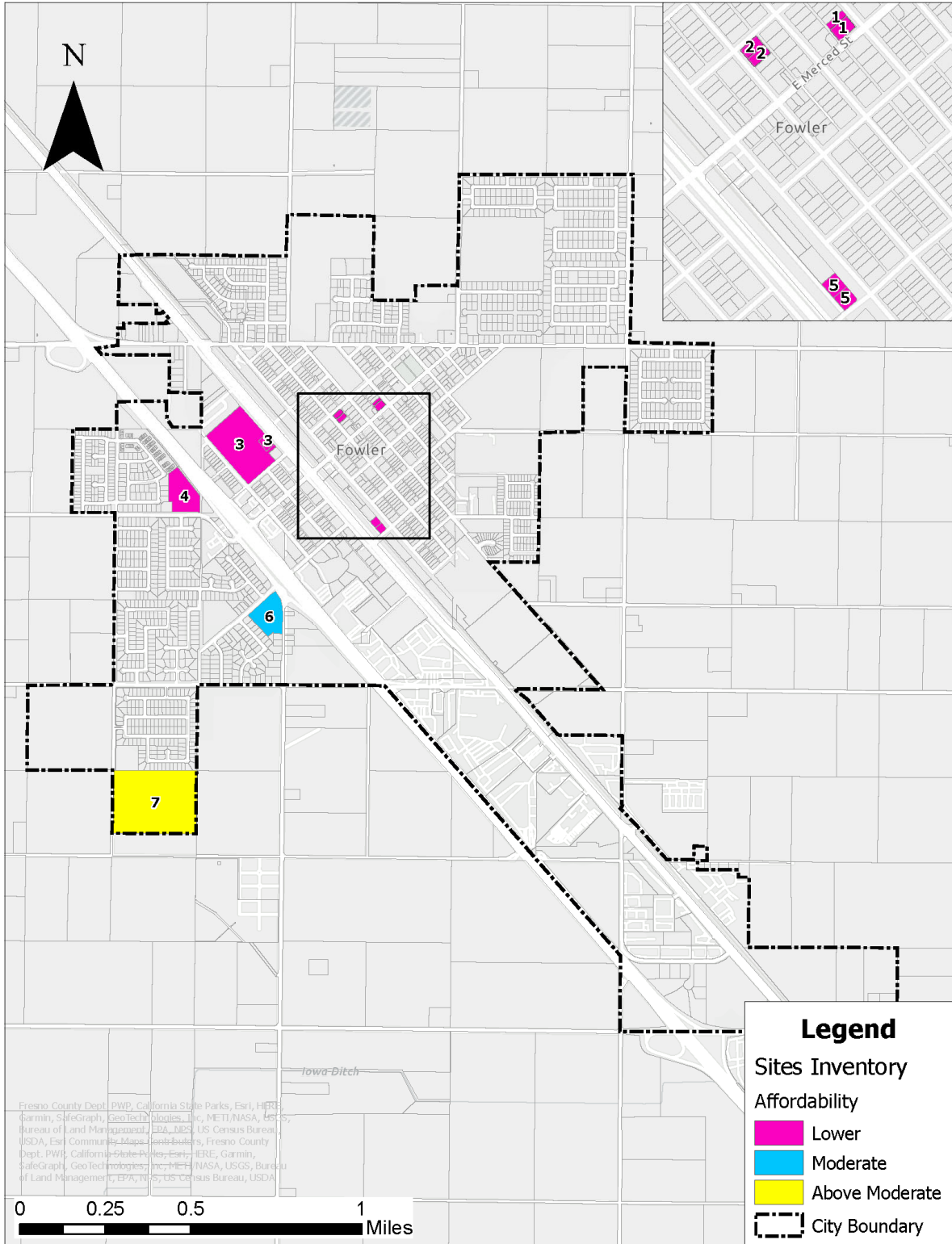
- [HDR = High Density Residential; CC = Community Commercial; NC = Neighborhood Commercial; MDR = Medium Density Residential; MLDR = Medium Low Density Residential.](#)
- [Buildout of sites identified in residential zone districts is assumed to be at 80 percent of maximum site-density, rounded down to the nearest whole unit; -](#)
- [Buildout of sites identified within commercial zone districts is assumed to be at buildout 80 percent of maximum density for 35 percent of the total site area, which is an effective 28 percent assumption for the total site, rounded down to the nearest whole unit, at to 35 percent of the 80 percent maximum density.](#)
- [‘NA’ denotes that the site was not included in the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element as an inventory site.](#)



**APPENDIX 1D: CITY OF FOWLER**

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Figure 1D-1 Fowler Sites Inventory



**APPENDIX 1D: CITY OF FOWLER**

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## Availability of Infrastructure and Services

The City of Fowler provides water services to residents and businesses in the City. Fowler is served by six groundwater wells for its domestic water supply and is equipped with a network of mains, pipelines, and laterals that help to distribute water throughout the service area. An additional well is currently offline and another well is ~~currently under construction~~planned to open on the approximately 0.45 miles west side of State Route (SR) 99 at the northeast corner of East South Avenue and Stanford Avenue, which is designed to produce the minimum desired 1,200 gallons per minute (gpm) that is consistent with the existing City production well yields in the area. The City has planned for a two percent increase in water supplies, which aligns with historical growth trends within the City. Although the projected water supply is sufficient to meet this two percent growth in demand, it is not sufficient for the full buildout of the General Plan by its planning horizon in 2040. To address this, goals, policies, and action items included in the General Plan ensure the necessary improvements to infrastructure. However, with the addition of the new well west of SR 99, the City will increase its potable water supply to have sufficient capacity to accommodate development projected in the current City limits, including to meet the demands of development required to meet RHNA. The City has infrastructure and planning procedures in place to ensure the service levels needed for future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years are sufficient. ~~The City has dry utilities, including cable, electricity, and telephone service, available to all areas in the City.~~

The Selma-Kingsburg-Fowler County Sanitation District (SKF), a Joint Power Authority, provides sewer service to the City of Fowler as well as to the Cities of Kingsburg and Selma. According to the District Engineer, the SKF treatment plant has a capacity of 8.0 (mgd) with existing flows of 4.2 mgd (52.5 percent of capacity). By 2026, the SKF Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects total flow at 5.71 mgd (71 percent of capacity). Fowler has 2,061 residential units as of January 1, 2019. In 2025, if flow ratios from the three cities remain constant, SKF will have capacity for approximately 2,725 residential units in Fowler, significantly higher than the RHNA allocations for Fowler (339 units) during the Housing Element period. At full capacity to 8.0 mgd, SKF can service 7,702 units. SKF would have capacity for an estimated 3,840 residential units in Fowler which is sufficient to meet the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA. The total RHNA allocation for Kingsburg, Fowler, and Selma is 2,731 units. At full capacity, ~~SKF can service 7,702 units in Kingsburg taking the difference of the combined RHNA allocation~~ SKF will have capacity to accommodate the combined RHNA for all three member jurisdictions during the Housing Element period. There is sufficient wastewater capacity to meet the RHNA needs.

Expansion plans for a wastewater treatment plant are generally required by the Regional Water Quality Control Board when 70 percent of design capacity is reached. This threshold is not expected at the SKF plant until after 2025. The District, however, is updating its Master Plan to include provisions for long-term expansion and will make interim improvements (refurbishing aerators, basin improvements, fleet replacements, etc.) in conformance with the 10-year CIP.

The City also has dry utilities, including cable, electricity, and telephone service, available to all areas in the City with sufficient capacity to accommodate the projected growth.

## Realistic Development Potential

In determining the realistic capacity for the City’s inventory of sites, the City considered land use controls and site improvements and assumed an 80 percent adjustment to the maximum number of units on the site to reflect developable acreage due to on-site improvements, including sidewalks, utility easements, and infrastructure improvements (roadway access, water, sewer, and stormwater). All sites are served by or are planned to be served by infrastructure, with no constraints identified that would reduce capacity beyond the 80 percent adjustment. To confirm this realistic capacity assumption, the City also considered and evaluated the implementation of its current multifamily development standards (e.g., setbacks, building height, parking, density requirements, land use controls, water and wastewater access, and open space requirements), as well as project examples from nearby cities with similar development standards to determine approximate density and unit capacity so as to not over-project unit potential. Examples of recent multifamily projects, including projects in mixed-use and commercial zones, both in Fowler as well as projects in Kerman, Sanger, Reedley, Riverdale, and Firebaugh are identified in **Table 1D-4 Realistic Capacity Project Examples**.

The average buildout capacity of all multifamily residential projects included in **Table 1D-4**, not including mixed-use projects, is 84 percent. When considering only the multifamily residential projects in the City of Fowler, the average buildout capacity is 89 percent. While these recent projects show that the average development capacity of multifamily projects exceeds the assumed 80 percent buildout capacity, the City has chosen to keep the more conservative buildout assumption of 80 percent in projecting anticipated units for inventory sites identified above in **Table 1D-3 Fowler 6th Cycle Vacant and Underutilized Sites**. However, the total realistic development potential listed in Table 1D-3 has been rounded down to the nearest whole unit, which has reduced the assumed development capacity for each site further, resulting in realistic development capacities of 61 percent to 71 percent for residential districts. The following inventory sites are zoned for multifamily uses:

- Sites 1, 2, and 5 are zoned FBC, which allows for 100 percent residential development at densities of up to 21.8 dwelling units per acre. Each of these sites include two adjacent parcels that are owned or optioned by the same entity and equal over 0.5 acres in size to facilitate development. Site 1, as an example, has recently been approved for the 10-unit Casa Blanca Apartments project (19.5 dwelling units per acre), facilitated by the common ownership of the two smaller, adjacent parcels that Site 1 was comprised of.
- Site 2 is identified as partially vacant. APN 343-142-14T contains a vacant building that was previously used as a church; however, there is a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) for the property, executed in January 2023, requiring demolition of the building to facilitate development in conjunction with the adjacent vacant parcel (APN 343-142-13).
- Site 6 is 5.7 acres in size and is zoned RM-2, which allows for development at densities of up to 14.5 dwelling units per acre.



In Fowler, residential development is allowed in commercial districts, including the C-1 and C-2 districts as part of a mixed-use project. Residential units may be integrated into the project either as vertical mixed-use or as horizontal mixed-use. While residential uses are not permitted to be 100 percent of the uses on the site, there is no minimum requirement for non-residential uses. Therefore, residential uses are permitted to make up a majority of the project site in these commercial districts. For purposes of estimating the realistic capacity of these sites, the City considered mixed-use projects developed in surrounding jurisdictions, including Reedley and Kingsburg. The average development capacity of these projects was 124 percent. However, recognizing that project examples are limited and to ensure not to over-project capacity, the City has taken a conservative approach and assumed a 28 percent capacity on sites in commercial zones that allow residential uses. This assumption was derived from assuming that only 35 percent of the total acres would develop with residential uses and that the residential uses would build out at 80 percent of the maximum density allowed for residential portion of the site. However, the total realistic development potential listed in Table 1D-3 has been rounded down to the nearest whole unit, which has reduced the assumed development capacity for each site further, resulting in realistic development capacities of approximately 27 percent for commercial districts. The following inventory sites are in commercial districts:

- Site 3 is zoned C-2, which allows for residential development at densities of up to 21.8 dwelling units per acre, which would accommodate units in the lower income category. This site is over 10 acres in size and such sites are deemed to be inadequate for accommodating lower income housing need (Government Code Section 65583.2(c)(2)(B)). However, the City has taken specific actions to facilitate development of this site, including holding pre-application discussions with an interested party to develop the site with a mix of uses, including residential. The City has also included Program 16: Lot Development Feasibility that directs the City to pursue funding for the completion of off-site improvements for lower income inventory sites of over 10 acres in size to offset development costs. Program 16 further commits the City to expediting the processing of subdivisions, lot splits, and lot line adjustments that will facilitate the creation of new developable parcels on this site as well as consider the deferral of development impact fees. The City regularly processes subdivisions of land, including approval of five residential subdivisions of parcels larger than 10 acres since 2019, facilitating over 511 residential units.
- Site 4 is 5.66 acres and is zoned C-1, which allows for residential development at densities of up to 21.8 dwelling units per acre.

**Table 1D-4 -Realistic Capacity Project Examples**

<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Affordability</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Project Status</u>	<u>General Plan / Zoning</u>	<u>Max. Allowable Density (du/ac)</u>	<u>Total Project Units</u>	<u>Max. Allowable Units</u>	<u>Realistic Capacity</u>
<b>City of Fowler</b>								
<u>Casa Blanca Apartments</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>0.52</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>CC / FBC</u>	<u>21.8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>91%</u>

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<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Affordability</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Project Status</u>	<u>General Plan / Zoning</u>	<u>Max. Allowable Density (du/ac)</u>	<u>Total Project Units</u>	<u>Max. Allowable Units</u>	<u>Realistic Capacity</u>
<u>Sumner Village</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>5.68</u>	<u>In process</u>	<u>NC / C-1</u>	<u>21.8</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>87%</u>
<b><u>City of Kerman</u></b>								
<u>Gateway Villas</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>4.43</u>	<u>Completed - 2016</u>	<u>HDR / R-3</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>69%</u>
<u>Hacienda Heights</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>5.37</u>	<u>Completed - 2010</u>	<u>HDR / SD-R-2.5</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>64%</u>
<u>Paseo 55 Mixed-Use</u>	<u>100% AMI</u>	<u>1.76</u>	<u>Constructed 2016</u>	<u>CC / CC</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>108%</u>
<u>Reedley I Mixed-Use</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>4.25</u>	<u>Approved 2022</u>	<u>LI / ML</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>127%</u>
<u>Kashian Mixed-Use: Workforce Housing</u>	<u>Extremely Low</u>	<u>2.11</u>	<u>Approved 2022</u>	<u>CC / CC</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>115%</u>
<b><u>City of Kingsburg</u></b>								
<u>Stone Plaza Mixed Use Project</u>	<u>Market Rate</u>	<u>0.28</u>	<u>Under Construction 2023</u>	<u>CC / CC</u>	<u>21.4</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>145%</u>
<b><u>City of Sanger</u></b>								
<u>Sanger Crossing 1 and 2</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>4.96</u>	<u>Constructed 2021</u>	<u>MDR / RM-2.5</u>	<u>17.4</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>94%</u>
<b><u>City of Reedley</u></b>								
<u>Reedley Family Apartments</u>	<u>100% AMI</u>	<u>3.66</u>	<u>Phase 1 Constructed 2014</u> <u>Phase 2 Constructed 2021</u>	<u>HDR / RM-2</u>	<u>21.78</u>	<u>7980</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>101%</u>
<b><u>City of Firebaugh</u></b>								
<u>Del Rio Place</u>	<u>Market Rate</u>	<u>3.8</u>	<u>Under Construction - 2023</u>	<u>HCD / R-3</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>51%</u>
<u>2020 S. Landucci</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>0.56</u>	<u>Constructed - 2019</u>	<u>MDR / R-2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>114%</u>
<b><u>Average Multifamily Projects</u></b>								<b><u>84%</u></b>
<b><u>Average Mixed-Use Projects</u></b>								<b><u>124%</u></b>
<b><u>Average Total Projects</u></b>								<b><u>97%</u></b>

*Source: Cities of Fowler, Kerman, Kingsburg, Sanger, Reedley, and Firebaugh, 20234.*

## SECTION 1D-3: LOCAL ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING

### Introduction

Assembly Bill (AB) 686 requires that all housing elements due on or after January 1, 2021, contain an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) consistent with the core elements of the analysis required by the federal Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Final Rule of July 16, 2015. Under California law, AFFH means “taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics.”<sup>1</sup>

California Government Code Section 65583 (10)(A)(ii) requires local jurisdictions to analyze racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (R/ECAP), disparities in access to opportunity, and disproportionate housing needs, including displacement risk. Although this is the Housing Element for the City of Fowler, Government Code Section 65583(c)(10) requires all local jurisdictions to address patterns locally and regionally to compare conditions at the local level to the rest of the region. To that end, a Multijurisdictional Housing Element was completed for the cities of Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger, Selma, and the County of Fresno, including a regional AFH and each participating jurisdiction prepared a local AFH.

This section is organized by fair housing topics. For each topic, the regional assessment is first, followed by the local assessment. Strategies to address the identified issues are included throughout the section. Through discussions with housing service providers, fair housing advocates, and preparation of this AFH, the City of Fowler identified factors that contribute to fair housing issues. These contributing factors are included in **Table 1D-12 Factors Contributing to Fair Housing Issues**, with associated actions to meaningfully affirmatively further fair housing related to these factors. Additional programs to affirmatively further fair housing are included in **Section 2D-1, Action Plan**.

This section also includes an analysis of the Housing Element’s sites inventory as compared with fair housing factors. The location of housing in relation to resources and opportunities is integral to addressing disparities in housing needs and opportunity and to fostering inclusive communities where all residents have access to opportunity. This is particularly important for lower-income households. AB 686 added a new requirement for housing elements to analyze the distribution of projected units by income category and access to high-resource areas and other fair housing indicators compared to citywide patterns to understand how the projected locations of units will affirmatively further fair housing.

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<sup>1</sup>California Department of Housing and Community Development, *Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: Guidance for All Public Entities and for Housing Elements (April 2021 Update)*, April 27, 2021, preface page, [https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/affh/docs/affh\\_document\\_final\\_4-27-2021.pdf](https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/affh/docs/affh_document_final_4-27-2021.pdf)

## **Outreach**

The City of Fowler completed a public outreach effort at the local and regional level as part of the regional Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element effort. Public outreach activities are discussed in more detail in 1D-6: Public Outreach and Engagement, but generally efforts included:

- Maintaining a regional project website;
- Conducting stakeholder consultations and focus groups;
- Hosting study sessions with Planning Commission, City Council, and the County Board of Supervisors; and
- Organizing community workshops.

## ***Community Events***

On August 24, 2022, the City had a booth at the regular Wednesday Nights at the Park event held at Panzak Park in Fowler. The City promoted the community event through social media pages, emails to stakeholders, and distribution of information through the FCOG email listserv and the Fresno Housing Authority to residents of affordable housing. The Fowler Unified School District also promoted the event to increase attendance.

At the event, the City met with residents to share information about the initial results of the FCOG Transportation Survey and future events related to the Housing Element update for residents to share their input. Residents were able to sign up for future updates on the housing element update using the sign in sheet provided. Five residents signed in, three of which were interested in receiving additional information. Due to the number of vendors and booths at the event, visitors to the City booth were limited.

## ***Study Session***

A City Council study session was held virtually on August 2, 2022, to discuss the Housing Element Update and process. The study session was open to the public and held in person. Few comments were provided and no public comment related to fair housing was received at the meeting, instead focusing on the implications of SB 9 and Zoning Ordinance updates to address new legislation.

## **Fair Housing Issues**

Since 2017, the Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) have developed annual maps of access to resources such as high-paying job opportunities; proficient schools; safe and clean neighborhoods; and other healthy economic, social, and environmental indicators to provide evidence-based research for policy recommendations. This effort has been dubbed “opportunity mapping” and is available to all jurisdictions to assess access to opportunities within their community.

The TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps can help to identify areas within the community that provide strong access to opportunity for residents or, conversely, provide low access to opportunity. The information from the opportunity mapping can help to highlight the need for housing element policies and programs that would help to remediate conditions in low-resource areas and areas of high segregation and poverty and to encourage better access for lower-income households and communities of color to housing in high-resource areas. TCAC/HCD categorized census tracts into high-, moderate-, or low-resource areas based on a composite score of economic, educational, and environmental factors that can perpetuate poverty and segregation, such as school proficiency, median income, and median housing prices. The TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps use a regional index score to determine categorization as high, moderate, and low resource.

Areas designated as “highest resource” are the top 20.0 percent highest-scoring census tracts in the region. It is expected that residents in these census tracts have access to the best outcomes in terms of health, economic opportunities, and education attainment. Census tracts designated “high resource” score in the 21st to 40th percentile compared to the region. Residents of these census tracts have access to highly positive outcomes for health, economic, and education attainment. “Moderate resource” areas are in the top 30.0 percent of the remaining census tracts in the region and those designated as “moderate resource (rapidly changing)” have experienced rapid increases in key indicators of opportunity, such as increasing median income, home values, and an increase in job opportunities. Residents in these census tracts have access to either somewhat positive outcomes in terms of health, economic attainment, and education; or positive outcomes in a certain area (e.g., score high for health, education) but not all areas (e.g., may score poorly for economic attainment). Low-resource areas are those that score in the bottom 30.0 percent of census tracts and indicate a lack of access to positive outcomes and poor access to opportunities. The final designation are those areas identified as having “high segregation and poverty;” these are census tracts that have an overrepresentation of people of color compared to the county as a whole, and at least 30.0 percent of the population in these areas is below the federal poverty line (\$27,750 annually for a family of four in 2022).

At the time of this writing (Summer 2022), HCD’s AFFH Data Viewer included the 2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map. Therefore, the following assessment of fair housing is based on data from 2021. However, since the time of writing, the AFFH Data Viewer was updated with the 2022 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map followed by the subsequent 2022 COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, which is based on a similar formula but compares each tract to those within the COG region rather than regions defined by TCAC. In the case of Fresno County, the comparison region changed from the Central Valley Region to the boundaries of Fresno COG, resulting in internal comparisons of Fresno County cities and communities.

At the COG level, the data for Fresno County presents a potentially skewed perspective as most cities in the county have small populations, housing stocks, and employment centers compared to the cities of Fresno and Clovis. Fresno and Clovis, as the two largest cities in the county and among the largest in the region, provide access to educational and economic opportunities that are not typically found outside of large cities. Further, both, though particularly Clovis, include affluent neighborhoods that influence TCAC scores.

Therefore, access to resources using this methodology appears to weigh proximity to Fresno and Clovis more heavily than local resources. For example, in the 2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, the community of Biola and the City of Kingsburg are both designated as moderate to highest resource areas based on local context. However, in the 2022 COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, both are designated as low resource areas. The number of jobs, school performance, environmental conditions, median incomes, and other factors that are included in the Opportunity Map methodology did not change significantly between 2021 and 2022 in these communities. The primary driver of the change in resource area designation is likely based on proximity to resources and opportunities in the major cities of Fresno County. As many communities in the county are largely rural and agricultural in nature, most local resources have more limited capacity, but do serve the local population.

Given the potential limitations of an internal comparison, FCOG opted to maintain the analysis based on a larger geographic comparison to other jurisdictions in the Central Valley Region to reflect the interconnectedness of economies in this region, and similarities between the size and nature of many communities. However, where HCD has determined significant changes in resource area designation between the 2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map and 2022 COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map (i.e., high resource to low resource, or vice versa), the analysis notes the differences, potential causes, and strategies to address local discrepancies in access to opportunities.

The 2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map designates the city as high resource south of East Adams Avenue and highest resource designation north of East Adams Avenue. In comparison, the 2022 COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map designates the entire city as low resource. However, as is discussed in this analysis, many neighborhoods within the two census tracts in Fowler reflect positive economic, environmental, and educational characteristics that are more consistent with a moderate or high resource designation when compared to other jurisdictions in the region. In contrast, when taken only in the smaller context of the Fresno COG in the 2022 methodology, the quality of life indicators may not reflect as positive outcomes when compared against the higher scoring conditions in Clovis and Fresno.

For example, in the Sumner and Sunnyside, RJ Hill, and Aspire Avenue southwestern neighborhoods west of SR 99, positive indicators of quality of life include a moderate median income, moderately high ownership rates, moderate expected educational attainment scores, high anticipated economic outcome scores and more. Based on these characteristics, this neighborhood likely reflects moderate to high access to resources for residents in the regional context. However, according to the 2022 methodology, in comparison with the more skewed positive quality of life indicators at the COG layer from Clovis and Fresno, the less positive educational attainment scores, less positive environmental scores, and other factors yields a 2022 low resource designation. Similarly, the census tract east of SR 99 includes several neighborhoods with positive quality of life indicators of moderate to high educational attainment scores, moderately high anticipated economic outcome, relatively high homeownership rates, and others; although the small triangular shaped downtown neighborhood has a low economic percentile and a fairly equivalent distribution of occupancy tenure. In contrast, when taken in the context of the COG, economic domain and educational attainment scores are in the lower percentiles, as well as the environmental conditions, reflected in a 2022 TCAC/HCD Opportunity designation of Low Resource.

However, it is worth noting that the use of the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps are just the basis of the Assessment of Fair Housing, and a more detailed analysis of specific conditions within the jurisdiction provides a more comprehensive understanding of current patterns. The Opportunity Maps, and the full Assessment, inform programs to improve access to resources throughout the city. As seen in Figure 3-6, Regional TCAC/HCD Opportunity Areas, in Section 3: Regional Assessment of Fair Housing, most of Fresno County, particularly in the incorporated cities, is primarily a mix of low-resource or moderate-resource areas and areas of high segregation and poverty, with pockets of high-resource designations. Kingsburg and Fowler are the only two cities along State Route 99 (SR 99) designated as high resource areas and do not have any housing segregation and poverty within their Cities with the data present in the figures below.

## ***Patterns of Integration and Segregation***

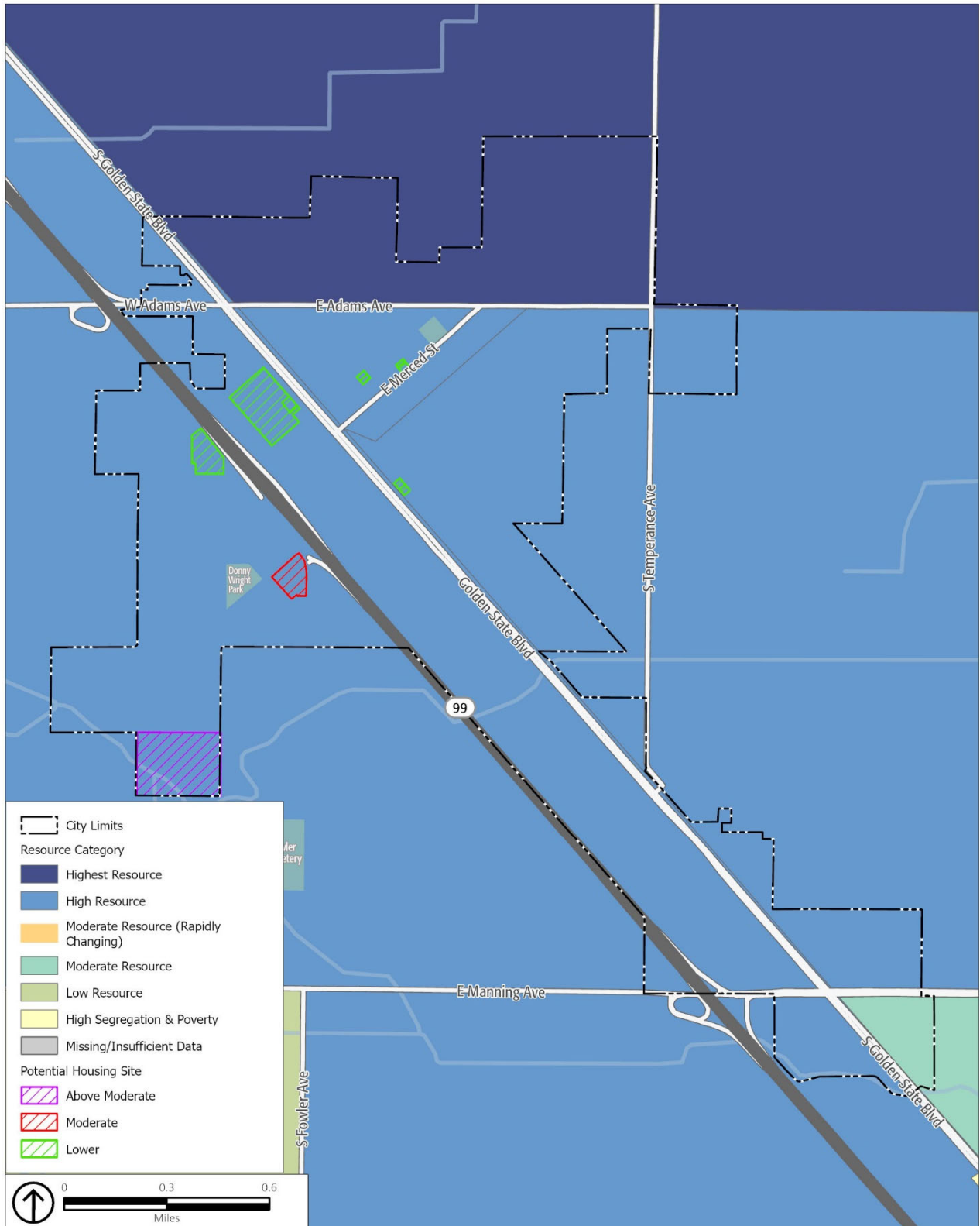
### ***Income Distribution***

The City of Fowler consists of two census tracts, both of which include unincorporated county land outside of city boundaries, and four block groups, two of which include adjacent unincorporated county areas. TCAC/HCD Opportunity Area maps designate the entire city as High or Highest Resource (**Figure 1D-2 Local Tcac/Hcd Opportunity Areas**). According to 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) data, the citywide median household income is \$59,663, which is below the statewide median of \$78,672, yet above the 2020 Fresno County median of \$57,109. Only the jurisdictions of Kerman, Kingsburg, Clovis, and the unincorporated county have median incomes higher than the City of Fowler.

The area with the lowest median household income in Fowler, \$25,781, is reported in the central block group east of South Golden State Boulevard, bound by East Adams Avenue to the north and East Main Street to the south (**Figure 1D-3 Local Median Income**). This area includes the downtown commercial area and businesses, city buildings, Panzak Park and the Edward Blaney Senior Center, Fremont Elementary School, Fowler Veterans Park, older residential housing, and industrial/agricultural processing. The adjacent block group to the north, which is predominantly unincorporated area, includes the East Adams Avenue neighborhood, affordable Fowler Apartments, and the Marshall School; this area has a median income of \$46,731. New market-rate residential subdivisions are currently under construction in this area, which suggests that the median income may increase in this area. The western and southeastern portions of the city have slightly higher median incomes. The southeastern block group, which includes the Fowler California neighborhood, has a median income of \$58,566, just above the county median, and includes business and commercial adjacent to the city core area, and two affordable housing complexes. The western block group, which encompasses the Sumner and Sunnyside, Aspire Avenue, and RJ Hill neighborhoods, has the highest median income of \$61,318. Residents in this neighborhood are in close proximity to a commercial corridor and have access to the Valley Mobile Home Park and Donny Wright Park.

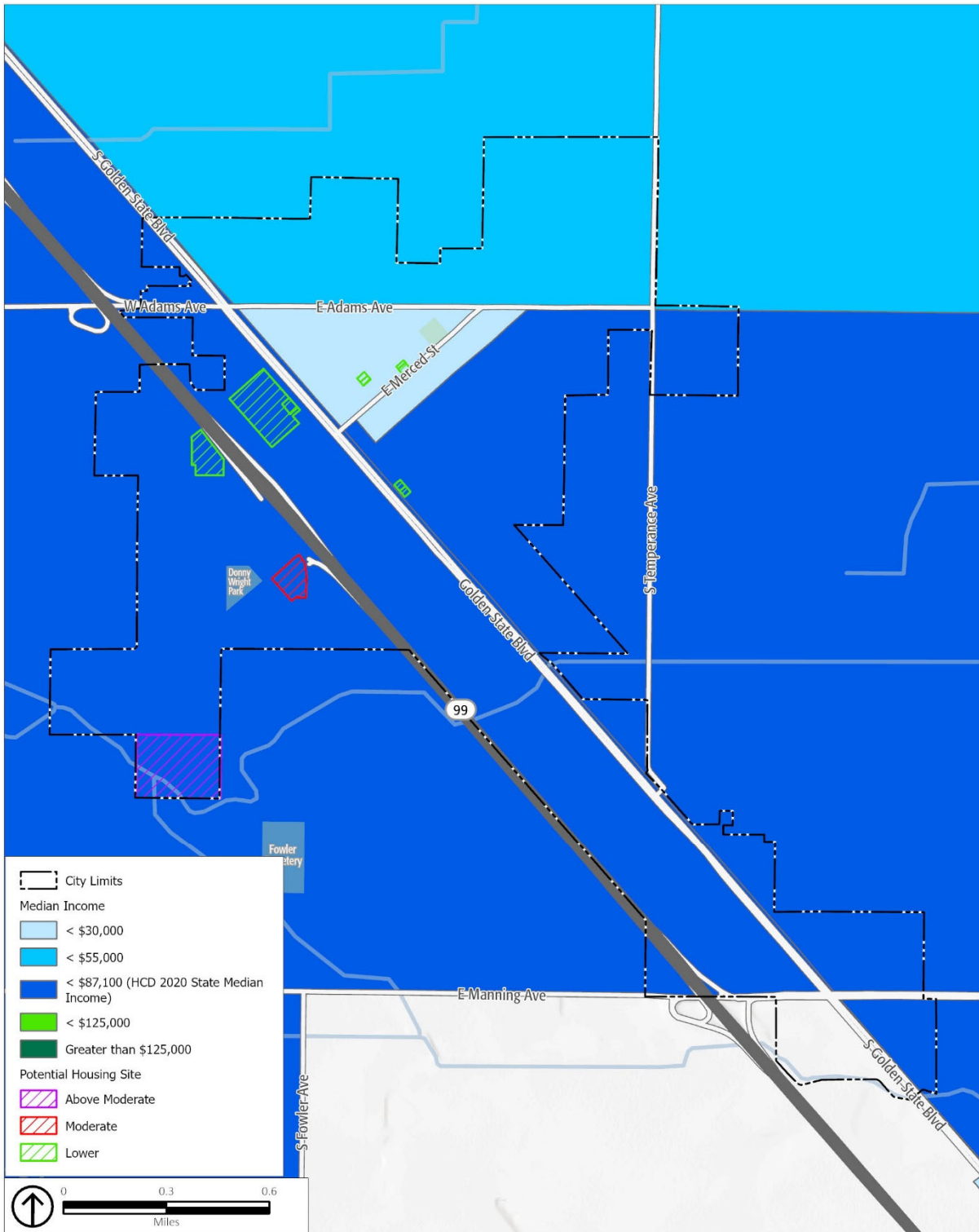


Figure 1D-2 Local Tcac/Hcd Opportunity Areas



Source: California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, 2021; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

Figure 1D-3 Local Median Income



Source: US Census (American Communities Survey 2015-2019); City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

The ACS estimates that, in the City of Fowler, 13.8 percent of households have incomes less than 30.0 percent AMI, which is considered extremely low income and corresponds to the poverty threshold, as compared to 16.7 percent in Fresno County and 9.0 percent statewide. Overall, the rate of households in poverty has decreased from 20.2 percent in 2010. When looking at the total population in poverty, the proportion of the total population in poverty in the portion of the city east of South Golden State Boulevard, is 20.8 percent, a decrease from the 2014 rate of 23.6 percent (**Figure 1D-4 Local Poverty Rate**). Similarly, on the west side of the rail line, the rate of population with a median income below the poverty threshold has declined from 24.4 percent in 2014 to 19.7 percent in 2020. Overall, 82.5 percent of households in poverty identify as Hispanic. These rates suggest there is a higher concentration of persons in poverty in the east side of the city where four affordable housing complexes and older housing stock are located. However, although data is not available at the block group level, 2016-2020 ACS data indicates that renters comprise 46.6 percent of the households in the city, and 95.1 percent of families in poverty are renters. Therefore, a higher number of persons in poverty may be present in the vicinity of the affordable rental housing developments throughout the city.

The median household income in Fowler has increased between 2014 and 2020. Citywide median household income in 2014 was \$44,539, while in 2020, citywide median household income was \$59,663. In 2020, the median household income had increased in the eastern census tract from \$35,017 in 2014, although this is a composite of three block groups that range from a median income below the poverty level to above the county median income. The western census tract had a median income of \$49,877, although both census tracts include a large area outside of the city boundary and so may not be reflective of conditions specifically for Fowler residents. However, the upward trend in income in Fowler suggests growing economic opportunities for residents, as several affordable housing options exist to reduce displacement risk.

### ***Racial and Ethnic Characteristics***

The City of Fowler's largest demographic group is Hispanic, comprising 66.4 percent of the city's population, placing the city among Fresno County jurisdictions with a lower proportion of Hispanic residents. Overall, non-White residents, including Hispanic, comprise 83.1 percent of the city's population. White non-Hispanic residents comprise 16.9 percent, followed by Asian at 13.1 percent, the second highest representation of Asian population in the county after the City of Fresno. Black and African-American residents comprise 1.4 percent of the population, and Other/Multiple Race at 1.8 percent, with all other racial and ethnic groups represented by smaller populations, each comprising less than 1.0 percent of the city's population.

There appears to be a pattern indicating a slightly uneven spatial distribution of demographic groups within the City of Fowler (**Figure 1D-5 Local Racial Demographics**), with the distribution of populations of color predominantly located in the southeastern (89.9 percent) and central (83.2 percent) portions of the city. Non-White residents in the northern East Adams and Marshall Estates neighborhoods represent 73.7 percent of the total population. In the western census tract, 61.3 percent of the population identifies as Hispanic, and 20.9 percent identifies as White, non-Hispanic. The Asian population is also more highly

represented in the western (14.0 percent) and southeast (12.2 percent) neighborhoods than in other areas of the city.

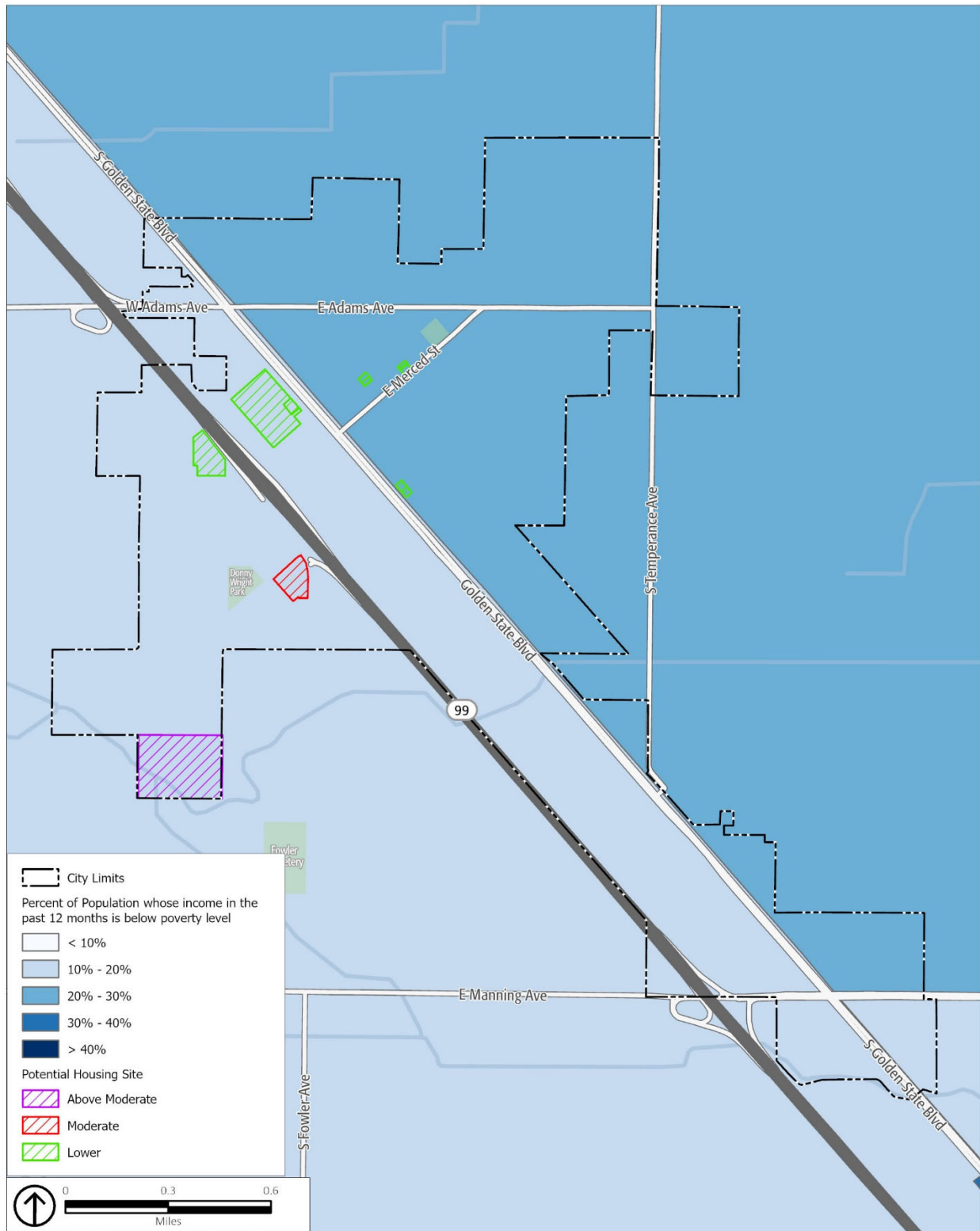
Within the central city area, where the median income is below \$30,000, the Hispanic population represents 86.0 percent of the population. In the eastern block group, the median income is just over the county median of \$57,100, but the proportion of the population that identifies as Hispanic decreases to 77.4 percent. Similarly, the western block group has relatively high median incomes, between \$55,000 and \$87,100, and has the lowest proportion of Hispanic residents, but the highest representation of Asian residents, while the proportion of White, Non-Hispanic is 20.9 percent. However, the correlation between non-White residents and income found in these areas is not found consistently throughout the city. The northern block group, in contrast, does not emulate this pattern. In this area, the median income is between \$30,000 and \$55,000, while the proportion of White, non-Hispanic residents is 26.3 percent, and the Hispanic population is 62.0 percent, suggesting that this pattern may be partially attributed to the racial and ethnic composition within the unincorporated area, which comprises almost the entirety of the block group.

The proportion of non-White residents in Fowler has increased between 2010 and 2020, becoming more diverse over time, mostly attributed to the increase in residents that identify as Other and Two or More Race classifications, increasing from 1.3 percent in 2010 to 4.4 percent in 2020. While the proportion of White non-Hispanic residents dropped slightly from 20.0 to 19.8 percent, the Hispanic population also dropped from 66.2 to 65.2 percent, as well as slight drops in the proportion of Asian and Black and African-American populations.

There are no areas identified as a R/ECAP, as defined by HUD, in the city, and no TCAC/HCD designations of an Area of High Segregation and Poverty. Further, the City of Fowler does not contain any racially concentrated areas of affluence (RCAAs). As the proportions of White-identifying and Hispanic residents has decreased slightly, household income has risen (see Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment, “Income Distribution” section). Relatedly, the incidence of poverty has decreased, in combination with lower diversity rates than in many other jurisdictions within the county, suggests that there is income integration within the communities of color and opportunities for housing mobility.

Program 4: Provision of Adequate Sites ensures there is sufficient land inventory to develop the variety of housing types necessary to meet the identified Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The RHNA promotes the development of mixed-income neighborhoods by ensuring sites for a variety of housing choices. Additionally, several programs specifically support the development of housing types that may otherwise be underrepresented, such as Program 6: Affordable Housing Incentives, Program 7: Support Funding for Farmworker Housing, and Program 11: Encourage and Facilitate Accessory Units. Program 13: Housing for a Variety of Needs promotes the development of products to support the needs of households of various types, sizes, and incomes.

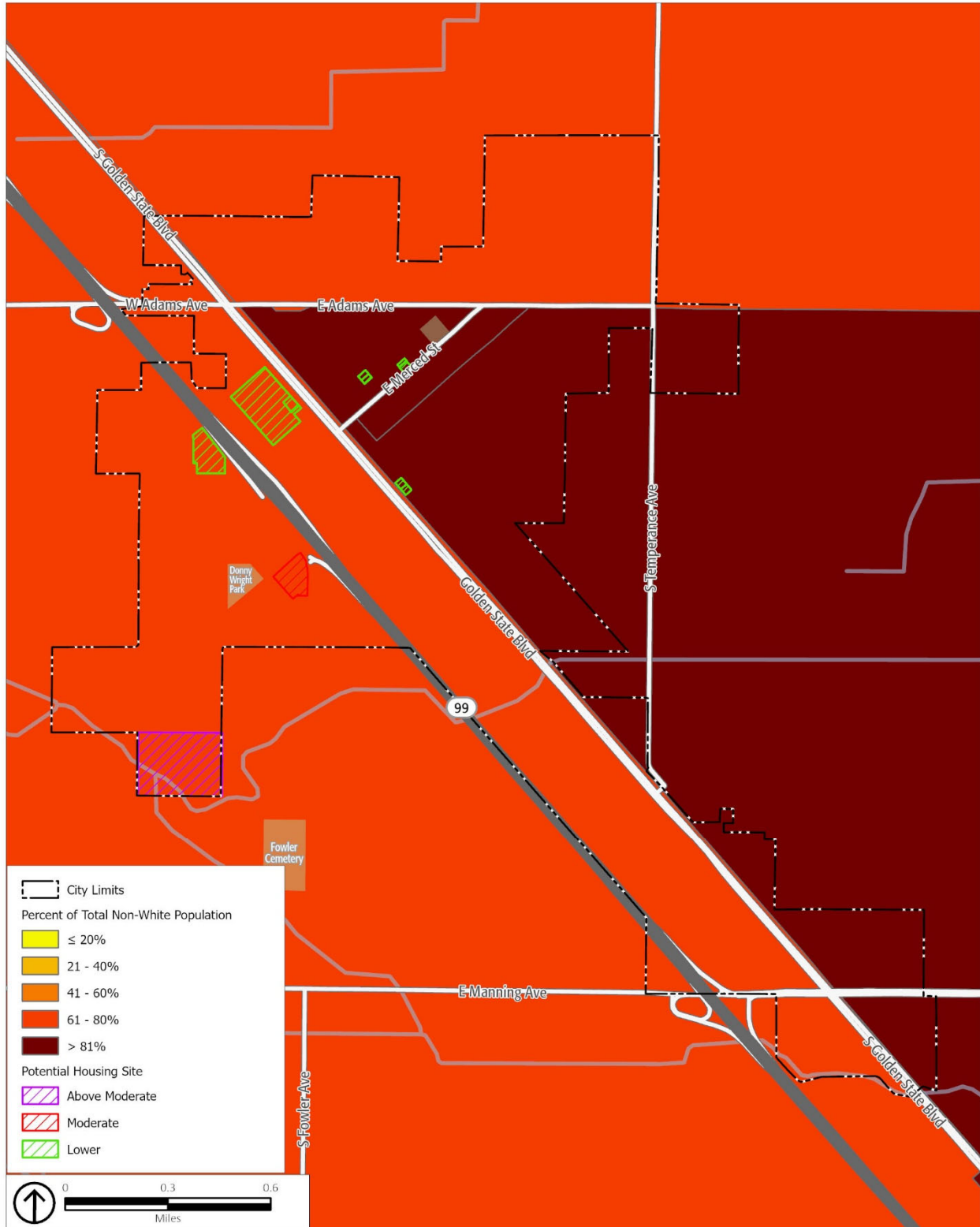
Figure 1D-4 Local Poverty Rate



Source: US Census (American Communities Survey 2015-2019); City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023



Figure 1D-5 Local Racial Demographics



Source: Esri, 2018; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

*Familial Status*

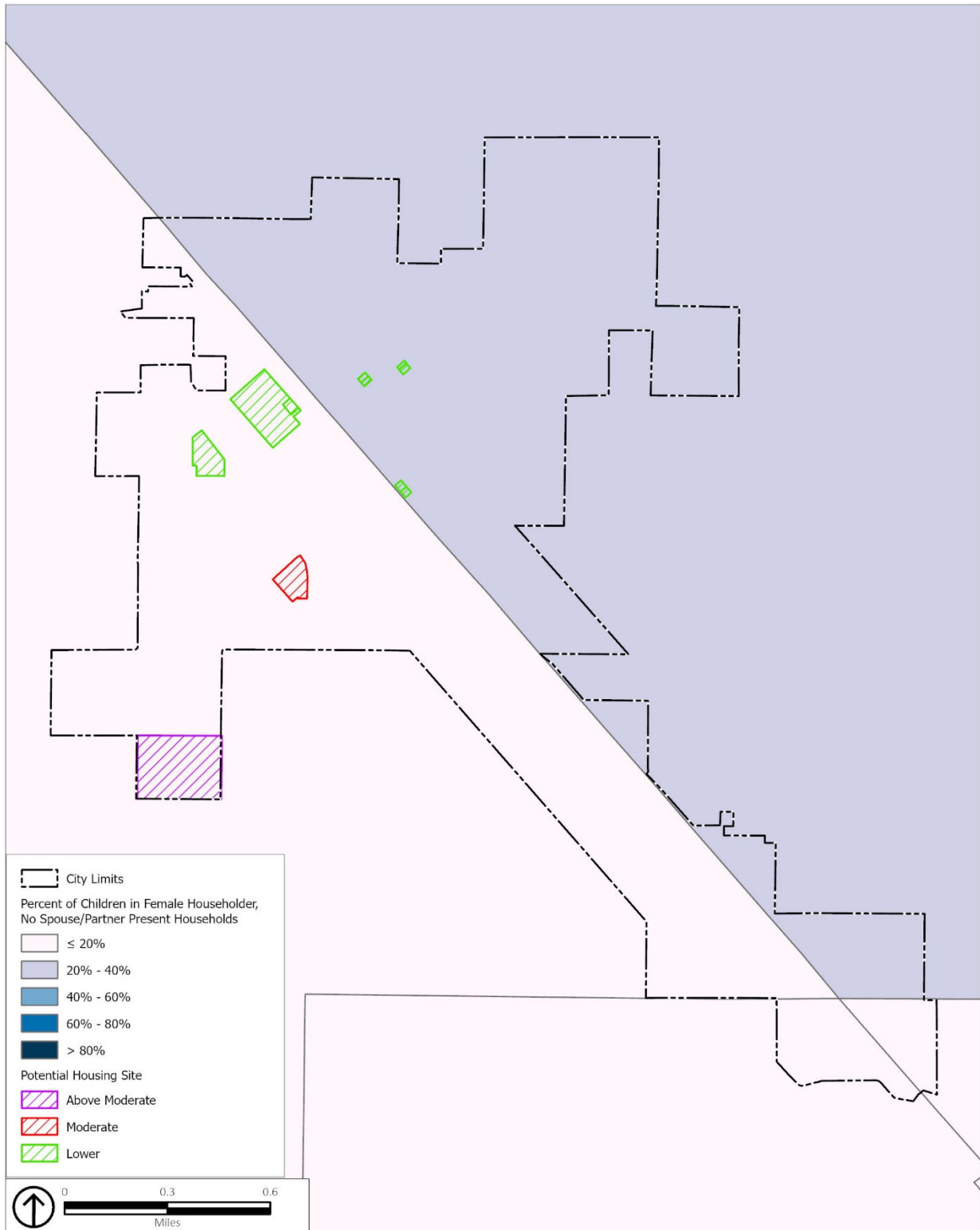
Like several other jurisdictions in Fresno County, the majority of households in the City of Fowler are family households (78.3 percent). Family households are defined by California law as a household of two or more persons, regardless of relationship status. The City of Fowler's rate of married-couple households is 53.8 percent, and an additional 7.9 percent of households are unmarried couples. The western side of the city sees 43.0 percent of the population over age 18 (note: not households) living with a spouse and 5.7 percent living with an unmarried partner; fairly comparable to 46.1 percent and 9.1 percent in the eastern side of the city, respectively.

Approximately 16.6 percent of the City of Fowler households are family households headed by single adults, lower than both the Fresno County rate of 22.2 percent and 21.0 percent in California. The east side of the city sees a higher proportion of single-headed family households, at 23.2 percent of the population over age 18, compared to 13.1 percent in the western portion; similarly, a higher proportion of persons over the age of 18 live alone within the eastern side as compared to the west, at 9.9 percent compared to 6.0 percent.

The City of Fowler's proportion of single, female-headed households is 24.7 percent of total households, of which, 47.0 percent live alone, 25.7 percent have their own children, and 27.3 percent live with other related children, relatives, or roommates. Single, male-headed householders comprise 13.6 percent of total households, of which, 74.4 percent live alone and only 13.7 percent have their own children. While there is a higher representation of married- and unmarried-couple households in the eastern portion of the city, the rate of single householders is also higher in the eastern side of the city: as well, between 20.0 and 40.0 percent of children in the eastern tract reside with single female-headed households. It is possible that the rate of children residing in single female-headed households is higher in the east side of the city where all of the affordable rental complexes, the Magnolia public housing property, and all of the public schools are located (**Figure 1D-6 Single-Parent, Female-Headed Households With Children In Fowler**). Fewer than 20.0 percent of the female-headed households with children live on the west side of South Golden State Boulevard, within the portion of the city with no affordable housing complexes. and a lower proportion of single-person households

The rate of female-headed households with household incomes below the poverty line, at 42.0 percent, is higher than both the Fresno County rate and the statewide rate of 21.5 percent. In the eastern portion of the city, there are both higher rates of poverty and female-headed households, suggesting a possible concentration in proximity to commercial, agricultural, industrial, and other nonresidential uses. The slightly lower presence of single, female-headed households with children in the City of Fowler at 6.3 percent of total households as compared to 7.3 percent of households in Fresno County, may indicate barriers to housing for single-parent, female-headed households in high-opportunity areas within the City of Fowler. However, lower-income neighborhoods have TCAC/HCD high-resource designations, and proximity to these opportunities may offer benefits to single female householders with children, indicating that additional housing mobility opportunities for single-parent households, particularly those in poverty, should be provided.

Figure 1D-6 Single-Parent, Female-Headed Households With Children In Fowler



Source: U.S. Census (American Communities Survey 2015-2019); City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023



Single-person households constitute 21.7 percent of total households, compared to 29.1 percent of households in Fresno County overall, and 23.7 percent of households statewide. Seniors living alone, comprising 9.6 percent of households both county- and statewide, constitute 6.5 percent of the City of Fowler's households. Of the seniors living alone, 65.2 percent are homeowners, and the remaining 34.8 percent are renters. This may suggest that the City of Fowler may be an attractive place for senior couples to retire, or that senior couples have aged in place and remain in their homes to access services and amenities in the city catering to senior needs.

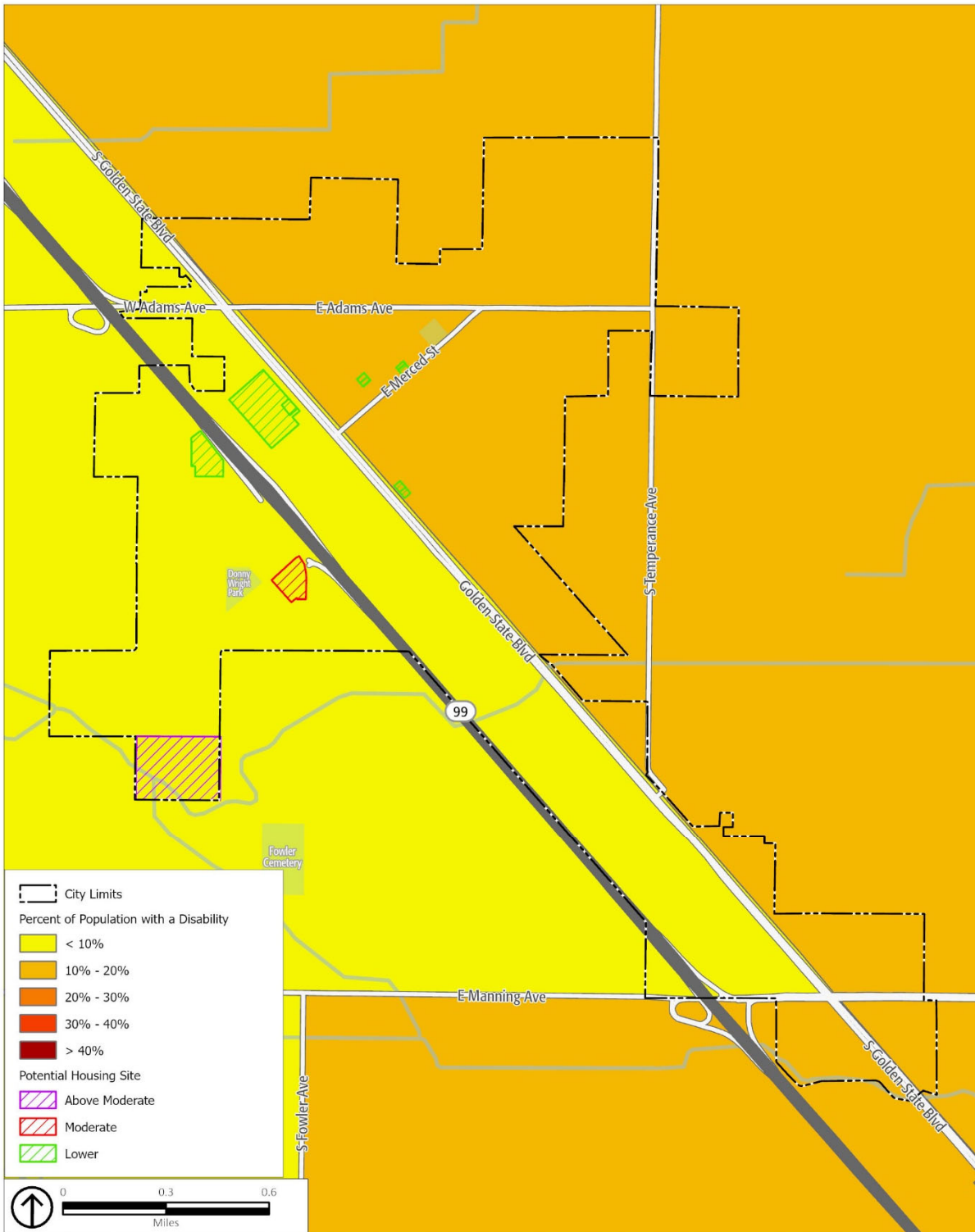
Program 15: Reasonable Accommodations and Universal Design outlines a process for the City to ensure reasonable accommodations requests can accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities. Additionally, several programs specifically support the development of housing types that may otherwise be underrepresented, such as Program 6: Affordable Housing Incentives, Program 7: Support Funding for Farmworker Housing, Program 11: Encourage and Facilitate Accessory Units, and Program 13: Housing for a Variety of Needs.

### ***Disability Rates and Services***

Persons with disabilities typically have special housing needs due to physical or developmental capabilities, fixed or limited incomes, and higher health costs. Seniors typically experience disabilities at higher rates. Approximately 17.3 percent of the City of Fowler's population lives with one or more types of disabilities (Table 2-28, Seniors with Disabilities [2020], in Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment), greater than both the Fresno County rate of 12.9 percent and the state rate of 10.7 percent. Although there is a slightly lower population of older residents (15.0 percent) in the city compared to Fresno County at 19.5 percent, 51.3 percent of the senior population in the City of Fowler experiences one or more disabilities, the highest rate in the county.

Residents living with disabilities in the eastern side of the city, inclusive of the adjacent unincorporated area within the census tract, comprise 15.8 percent of the population, of whom, 40.7 percent are seniors (**Figure 1D-7 Percentage Of The Population With A Disability In Fowler**). While seniors comprise 18.7 percent of the eastern portion of the city, 34.3 percent report a disability. In the western side of the city, the overall rate of disability is 9.7 percent. While seniors comprise only 11.7 percent of the population in this tract, 40.7 percent of this age cohort experiences one or more disabilities, representing 49.0 percent of total persons with disabilities in this tract.

Figure 1D-7 Percentage Of The Population With A Disability In Fowler



Source: U.S. Census (American Communities Survey 2015-2019); City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

The spatial distribution of City of Fowler residents living with disabilities has shifted between 2014 and 2020, decreasing within the western tract and increasing in the eastern tract. In 2014, the eastern side of the city had a disability rate of 9.5 percent, compared to 15.8 percent in 2020, with seniors comprising 53.0 percent of total disabilities in this tract, which is 51.2 percent of the total senior population, although seniors made up just 9.9 percent of the population within this tract. In comparison, the western side had a rate of 10.9 percent in 2014 compared to 9.7 percent in 2020, with seniors comprising 44.7 percent of total persons with disabilities in this tract, although the proportion of seniors residing in the western side of the city in 2014 was comparable to the 2020 rate, at 11.4 percent. The shift in representation of persons with disabilities over the years may reflect increased accessibility of services, amenities, and housing opportunities catering to persons with disabilities available within the eastern side of the city.

As shown in Table 2-32, Disability by Type (2020), in Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment, ambulatory disabilities were the most prevalent disability type, reported by 52.6 percent of the population with a disability, followed by independent living problems at 37.1 percent, hearing difficulties at 32.7 percent, and vision difficulties at 22.5 percent. Cognitive difficulties and self-care problems were reported by 21.1 and 13.7 percent of the population with a disability, respectively. The City of Fowler has a small population of residents with developmental disabilities (less than 1.0 percent of the total population), of which, approximately 46.7 percent are under 18 years of age and live at home, with parents or a caregiver.

Residents with disabilities in the City of Fowler are served by the Fresno County Senior Resource Center, which operates an Adult Protective Services program, assisting both disabled adults and seniors with all requests for assistance. Fowler residents also have access to the Dial-A-Ride program, operated by the local Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) subsystem, which offers transportation services to the elderly (age 65 and older), disabled, low-income, and general public. Dial-A-Ride services are wheelchair equipped and operate Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., with fares priced at \$1.00 one-way or \$2.00 round trip. The Fresno County Human Services System, Department of Adult Services, also provides housing and basic needs assistance to elderly persons. The Fresno/Madera Area Agency on Aging (FMAAA) provides connections to programs, services, and resources elderly residents can use to maintain and improve their quality of life as they age.

For seniors and other persons requiring a supportive housing setting, there are 210 licensed care facilities in Fresno County with 4,953 beds. While the majority of these facilities are in the Cities of Fresno and Clovis, The Harvest at Fowler is a senior residential care facility with 36 beds to serve aging residents of Fowler.

## ***Access to Opportunity***

### ***Transit Mobility***

Transit mobility refers to an individual's ability to navigate the city and region on a daily basis to access services, employment, schools, and other resources. Indicators of transit mobility include the extent of transit routes, proximity of transit stops to affordable housing, and frequency of transit.

Fowler residents are served by FCRTA, providing fixed-route service on the Southeast, Kingsburg-Reedley, and Kings Area Regional Transit (KART) lines (see Figure 3-24, Fresno County Rural Transit Agency Intercounty Routes, in Section 3: Regional Assessment of Fair Housing). Access to transit is displayed based on one-half mile buffer to potential housing sites in the City of Fowler (see **Figure 11-9**)

Southeast Transit provides three round trips on weekdays between Fowler and Fresno, stopping in Fowler at the bus shelter on the west side of East Merced and North 7th Street, and at Children’s Hospital. Buses originating in Kingsburg arrive in Fowler at 7:28 a.m., 10:23 a.m., and 3:28 p.m. before traveling on to Fresno. Return service departs from Fresno at 8:45 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 4:45 p.m., arriving in Fowler after approximately 20 to 30 minutes, continuing to Selma before terminating in Kingsburg. Service is provided on 30-passenger, Americans with Disability Act (ADA) wheelchair-accessible buses. Monthly passes for general service between Fowler and Fresno are priced at \$45.00, with discounted fares available for senior, youth, and disabled residents at \$35.00 monthly.

The Kingsburg-Reedley Transit line provides three daily round trips between Reedley College and Fowler on weekdays. Buses to Reedley originate in Kingsburg, stop in Selma, and stop in Fowler at approximately 7:22 a.m., 11:23 a.m., and 2:53 p.m., then continue to Parlier before arriving at Reedley College. Return service departs from Reedley College at 9:15 a.m., 12:20 p.m., and 3:45 p.m., stopping again in Parlier, then in Fowler at approximately 9:45 a.m., 12:50 p.m., and 4:15 p.m. before continuing to Selma and Kingsburg. Service is provided on 30-passenger, ADA wheelchair-accessible buses. Monthly passes for general service between Fowler and Reedley are priced at \$94.00, with discounted monthly student bus passes available for purchase through Reedley College at a rate of \$35.00.

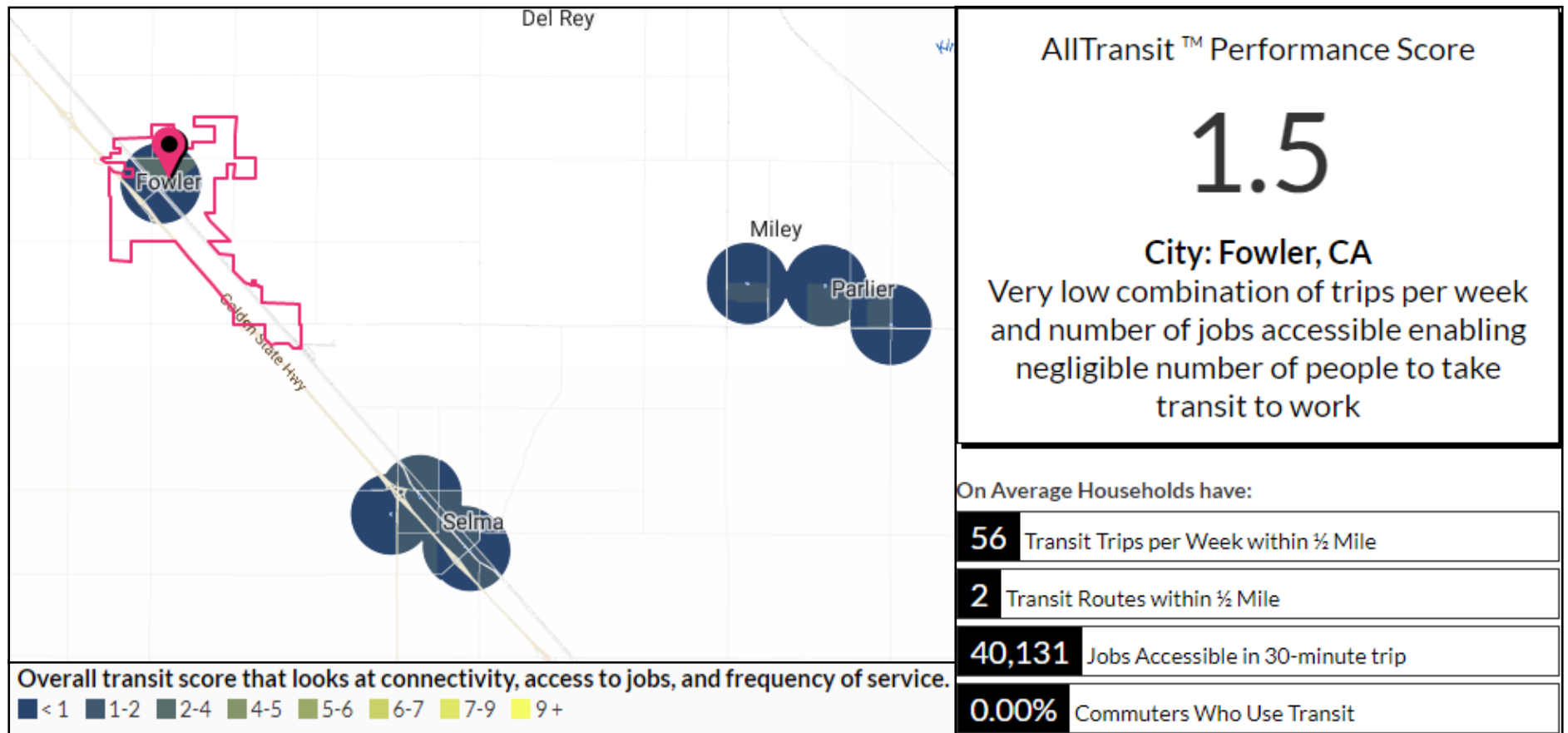
Kings Area Regional Transit (KART) is Kings County’s public transportation provider. KART provides regular, out-of-town transportation services to Fresno on weekdays. KART Transit Route 17 – Fresno provides service to Fresno originating in Hanford and stopping in Fowler at Valley Children’s Hospital before continuing on to Fresno, with return service from Fresno to Hanford stopping again at Valley Children’s Hospital. Monthly passes for general service between Fowler and Fresno are priced at \$60.00, with discounted rates for eligible groups available for \$50.00. Children 11 years of age and younger ride for free.

With daily access to the Cities of Fresno and Reedley, the FCRTA also provides Fowler residents with access to employment opportunities and connections to regional transit services, including Amtrak, Greyhound, and Fresno Area Express (FAX), which in turn provide connections within the metropolitan Fresno area and between Stockton, Bakersfield, and other regional hubs.

AllTransit is a transit and connectivity analytic tool developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology for the advancement of equitable communities and urban sustainability. The tool analyzes the transit frequency, routes, and access to determine an overall transit score at the city, county, and regional levels. AllTransit scores geographic regions (e.g., cities, counties, Metropolitan Statistical Areas [MSAs]) on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being complete transit connectivity. **Figure 1D-8 Fowler Alltransit Performance Score**, shows Fowler’s AllTransit Performance score, including metrics representing average household

transit access. Fowler’s score is 1.5, demonstrating “very low” connectivity. **Table 1D-5 Fresno County Jurisdictions AllTransit Performance Scores**, shows transit accessibility in Fowler in relation to other Fresno County jurisdictions. Fowler’s score is consistent with other comparable Fresno County jurisdictions, which are typified by smaller rural and semi-rural communities. However, as described in Section 3: Regional Assessment of Fair Housing, the AllTransit methodology does not appear to fully capture FCRTA and KART services. Therefore, AllTransit scores identified at the jurisdictional level may not accurately reflect the complete range of transit opportunities available through private and public service providers. Among Fresno County jurisdictions, the City of Fresno represents an outlier both in terms of population size, degree of urbanization, and transit accessibility.

Figure 1D-8 Fowler Alltransit Performance Score



Source: AllTransit.cnt.org, 2022

Table 1D-5 Fresno County Jurisdictions AllTransit Performance Scores

Jurisdiction	Score
City of Fresno	5.0
Fresno County	3.2
Reedley	2.2
<b>Fowler</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Huron	1.2
Clovis	1.1
Coalinga	1.1
Parlier	1.0
Firebaugh	1.0
Mendota	0.9
Sanger	0.9
Selma	0.7
Kingsburg	0.7
Kerman	0.1
San Joaquin	0.0

Source: AllTransit.cnt.org, 2022

***Housing Mobility***

Approximately 46.6 percent of occupied households in Fowler are renter-occupied. Rates of renter occupancy are evenly distributed in Fowler. As shown in Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment, Table 2-18, for 2022, the California Department of Finance (DOF) reported an overall vacancy rate of 4.5 percent in Fowler. Vacancy data is not available by tenure through the DOF; however, the 2020 ACS 5-year estimate indicates a rental vacancy rate of 0.0 percent and an ownership unit vacancy rate of 2.2 percent, with an overall vacancy rate of 3.2 percent. A healthy housing market is generally considered to have a 5.0 percent vacancy rate. ACS 5-year estimate vacancy rates draw on large sample sizes and may not precisely represent vacancy on the ground. Instead, these rates are presented as general estimates indicating approximate conditions in the local housing market.

In Fowler, a substantial proportion of vacant properties were categorized as “other vacant,” a category of properties that are vacant but not available for rent or purchase. Properties may be categorized as “other vacant” due to one or more factors, which may include ongoing legal proceedings, active renovation or repair, abandonment, or an owner’s preference for vacancy, among other potential factors. These categories of vacancy are accounted for in the overall vacancy rate estimate but are not included in the rental and ownership vacancy rate estimates, which only consider those units immediately available for rent or purchase.



Fowler’s very low rental vacancy rate indicates a tight rental market with few housing mobility opportunities for current and prospective renters. Similarly, the low ownership unit vacancy rate indicates an absence of available homes for sale in Fowler for prospective homebuyers.

The 2020 ACS 5-year estimate indicates that median gross rent is \$1,084 in Fowler, slightly higher than \$1,029 reported for Fresno County (see Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment). Fowler’s vacancy rates are among the lowest in Fresno County, and median rents are higher than most other comparable Fresno County jurisdictions (see Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment).

Median rent in Fowler rose from \$723 in 2010 to \$1,084 in 2020, reflecting an increase of 49.9 percent over the 10-year period and indicating that renting costs have risen in recent years. Similarly, as found in Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment, Table 2-22, Home Sales Recorded in 2021-22, home prices in Fowler increased by 12.4 percent between 2021 and 2022. While rent is relatively affordable in Fowler compared to the state, rental costs have risen over the last 10 years. Additionally, a shortage of available housing units for rent and for sale may indicate limited mobility options for prospective and existing Fowler residents seeking ownership opportunities. In Fowler, affordable housing and denser housing options like the Ruby Court Apartments and Magnolia Commons are primarily found on the north side of the railroad, while residential housing on the south side of the railroad almost exclusively consists of single-unit homes. No Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) use is reported in the census tract south of the railroad, and approximately 5.1 percent of renters in the census tract north of the railroad use HCVs.

Program 22: Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program, Program 24: Housing Choice Vouchers, and Program 26: Improve Access to Resources all promote housing mobility by providing access to first-time homebuyer programs, housing choice vouchers, and similar programs. Additionally, Program 13: Housing for a Variety of Needs promotes the development of housing types to support households of various types, sizes, and incomes.

### ***Employment Opportunities***

The HUD jobs proximity index measures employment accessibility in residential neighborhoods by calculating distances to potential job locations within the area, with larger employment centers weighted more heavily, and factoring in the population size of the local workforce. According to this index, most primarily residential areas in Fowler score between the 56th and 89th percentiles, indicating close proximity to employment opportunities (**Figure 1D-10 Jobs Proximity Index**). The section of the city north of East Adams Avenue scores the lowest, while areas southwest of South Golden State Boulevard score the highest. Fowler is close to the City of Fresno, the region’s primary employment center, located approximately 10 miles northwest of Fowler, likely contributing to Fowler’s relatively high index scores among Fresno County jurisdictions.

Fowler’s primary industry is agriculture and agribusiness, with several businesses headquartered in the city, including Boghosian Raisin, Bee Sweet Citrus, and National Raisin Company. Approximately 91.3 percent of Fowler residents commute outside of the city for work, with 8.7 percent of residents both living and working within city limits. This figure has remained consistent over time – in 2010, 89.1 percent of Fowler



residents commuted outside of the city for work.<sup>2</sup> Fowler residents primarily work in the industries of Health Care and Social Assistance (14.2 percent); Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (12.0 percent); and Educational Services (11.5 percent).<sup>3</sup> In total, 73.3 percent of residents live within 24 miles of their workplace, an area that includes the Cities of Fresno, Reedley, Parlier, Sanger, Selma, and Bowles, each of which employ Fowler residents. This includes approximately 40.4 percent of Fowler residents who live within 10 miles of their place of employment. In contrast, 19.2 percent of Fowler residents travel more than 50 miles to work. Fowler is in a central location relative to several other jurisdictions. According to the ACS, the jobs-housing ratio in Fowler is 1.25, decreasing from a ratio of 1.63 in 2010, indicating an improved balance between employment and housing opportunities. A high jobs-housing ratio may indicate that adequate housing is less affordable or available to local workers, but a shortage of jobs for people that live in Fowler to work in Fowler.

Commercial activity within Fowler is focused in the historical core, generally in the vicinity of South Golden State Boulevard, 6th Street, 7th Street, and East Merced Street. Given the nature of the city's main industries, many Fowler residents will likely continue to work outside of the city. The City's zoning map (**Figure 1D-11 Zoning In Fowler**) shows that the majority of land in the city is designated for residential uses. The prevalence of residential uses with strong access to Fresno's job market reflects the City's relatively high scores for HUD's jobs proximity index.

The City of Fowler's 2040 General Plan includes an economic development element which outlines access to economic opportunities within the City.

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2022, Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Statistics (2002-2019). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program, accessed September 2022.

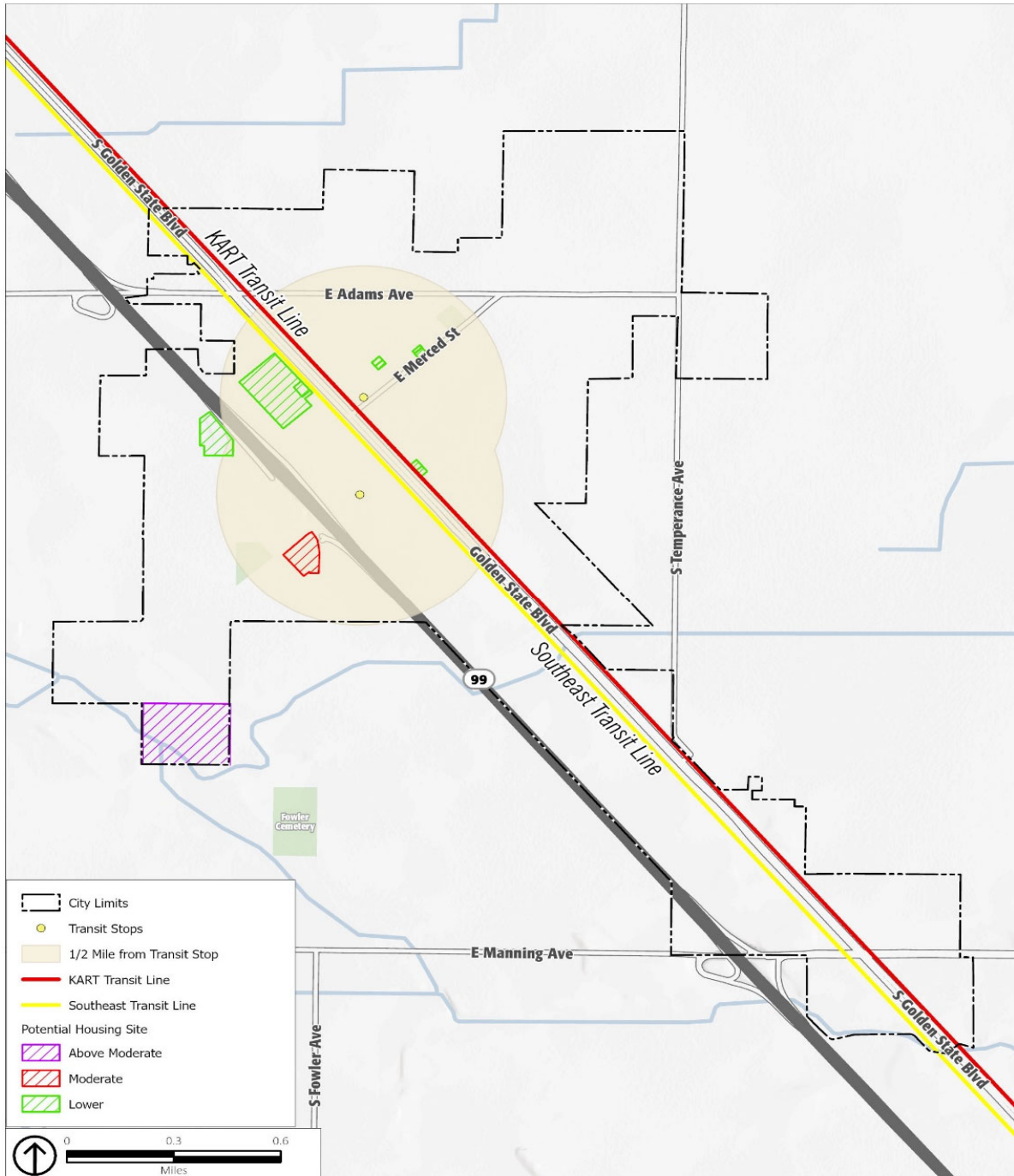
<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2022, Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Statistics (2002-2019). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program, accessed September 2022.

Figure 1D-9 Transit Access

FRESNO MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HOUSING ELEMENT (2023-2031)  
CITY OF FOWLER



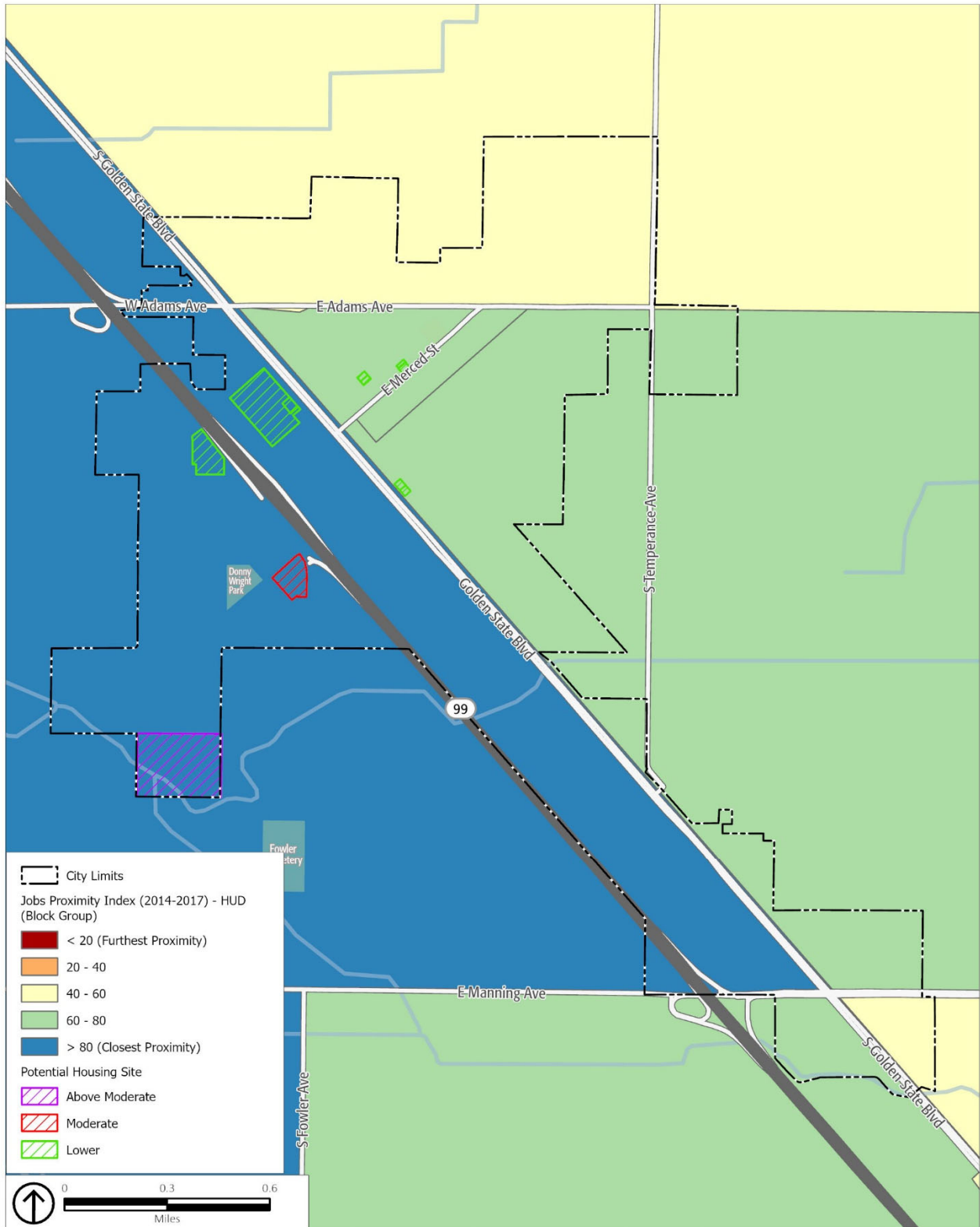
ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING



Source: U.S. Census; FCRTA 2019; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

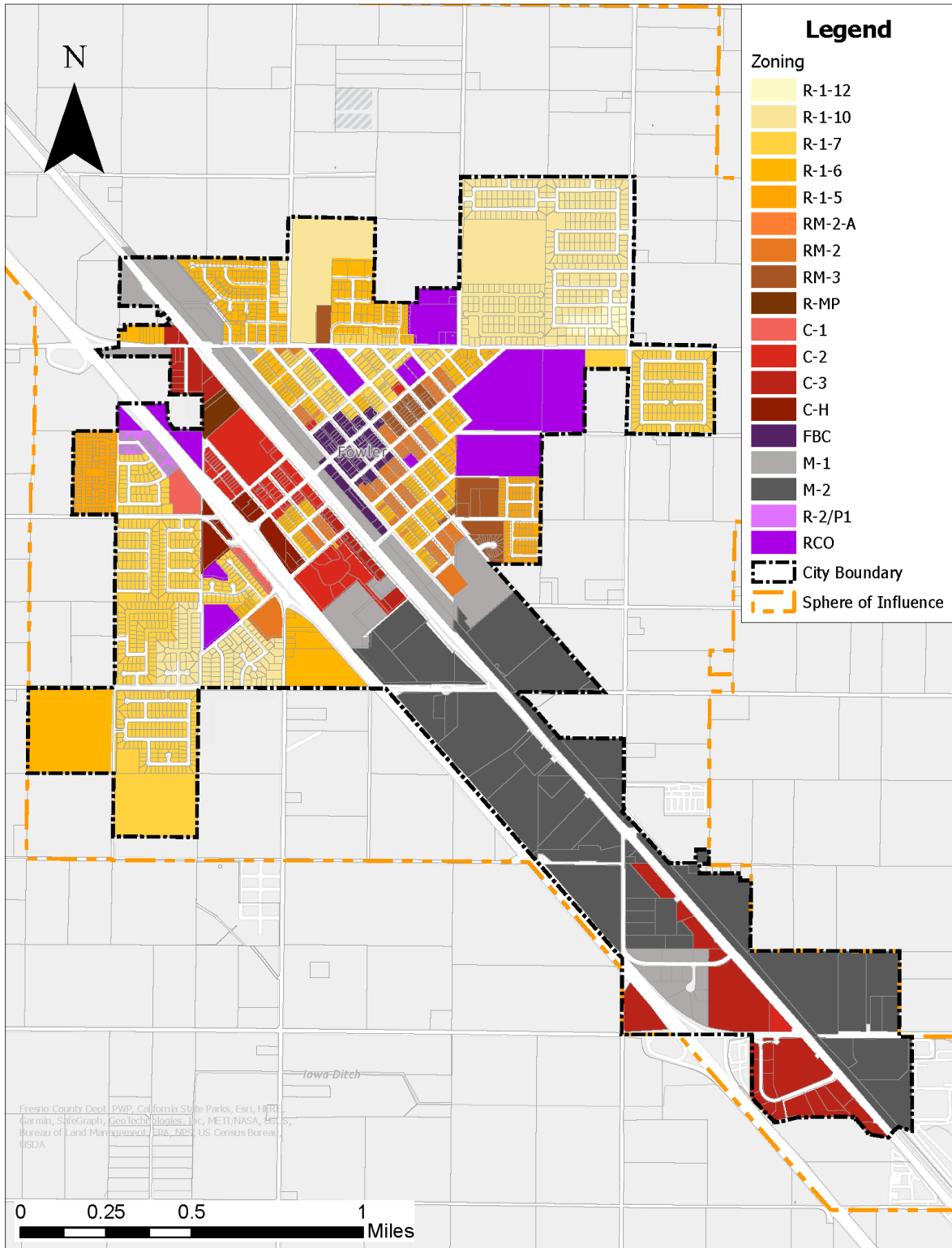
Transit Access

Figure 1D-10 Jobs Proximity Index



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics 2014-2017); City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

Figure 1D-11 Zoning In Fowler



Source: City of Fowler, Accessed October 2022

### *Educational Opportunities*

Fowler students are served by the Fowler Unified School District (FUSD), which has eight public schools reported on by the California Department of Education (CDE), including three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and several alternative programs. One of these schools, Malaga Elementary, is outside of the City of Fowler. The alternative programs, including Fowler Academy Community Day, Fowler Academy Continuation, and Fowler Academy Independent Study, typically serve students who have experienced challenges in traditional school environments. While these schools have limited data on performance scores for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, they offer a valuable resource for students to continue their education in a supportive environment.

Of the five schools for which ELA and mathematics performance scores were available in 2019, CDE reported that Fowler High, Fremont Elementary, and Marshall Elementary scored above state grade-level standards for ELA, with Marshall Elementary also scoring above the state grade-level standard for mathematics. All other scores for schools in the FUSD were below the state-grade level standards for ELA, mathematics, or both (see **Table 1D-6 School Performance Scores in Fowler, 2019**).

The proportion of each non-alternative school's population that was considered socioeconomically disadvantaged in 2019 ranged from 68.6 percent at Marshall Elementary to 75.9 percent at John Sutter Middle. For alternative and continuation programs, rates were substantially higher, ranging between 80.0 and 100.0 percent. Marshall Elementary is in an area with a median household income of \$46,731 and a TCAC/HCD Education Domain Score in the 24th percentile. John Sutter Middle is in an area where median household income is \$58,566 and the TCAC/HCD Educational Domain Score is also in the 24th percentile. Within the City of Fowler, TCAC/HCD Educational Domain Scores range between the 10th and 24th percentiles (**Figure 1D-12 Local TCAC/HCD Educational Domain Score**). This data indicates that students living in different parts of Fowler generally have similar levels of access to educational opportunities, regardless of median household income in the immediate vicinity of the schools.

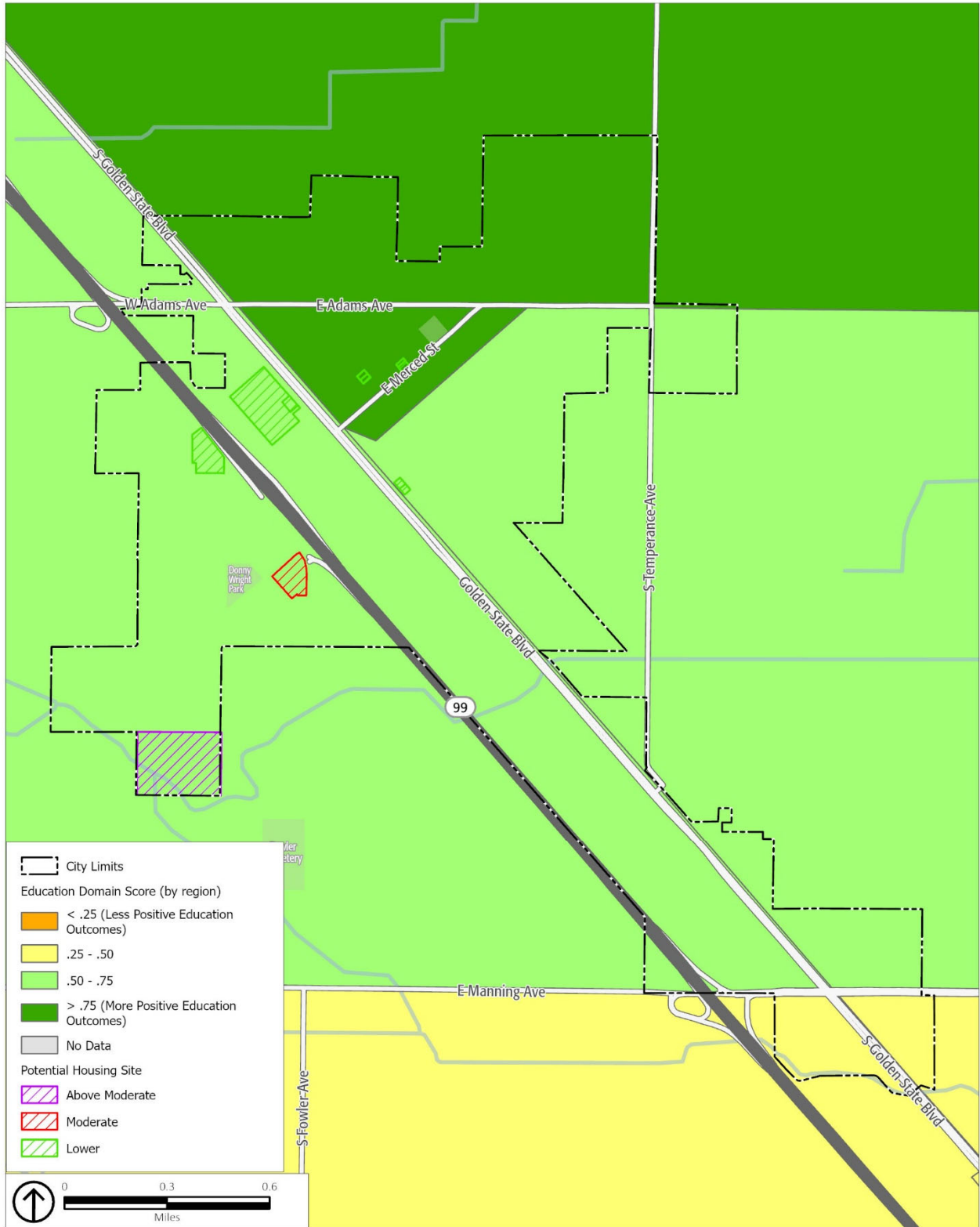
Table 1D-6 School Performance Scores in Fowler, 2019

School Name	ELA Score	Math Score	Chronic Absenteeism Rate	Suspension Rate	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Foster Youth	English Learners
Fowler Academy Community Day (9-12)	-	-	-	8.6%	100.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Fowler Academy Continuation	-	-	-	0.0%	93.8%	0.0%	12.5%
Fowler Academy Independent Study	-	-	-	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	60.0%
Fowler High	+17.4	-83.7	-	1.6%	70.5%	0.0%	10.2%
Fremont Elementary	+6.1	-10.5	4.1%	0.6%	70.7%	1.1%	26.1%
John Sutter Middle	-6.4	-43.2	7.4%	3.0%	75.9%	1.0%	16.9%
Marshall Elementary	+4.1	+10.0	8.5%	0.2%	68.6%	0.9%	25.3%

Source: California Department of Education, 2019



Figure 1D-12 Local TCAC/HCD Educational Domain Score



Source: California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, 2021; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

### ***Environmental Health***

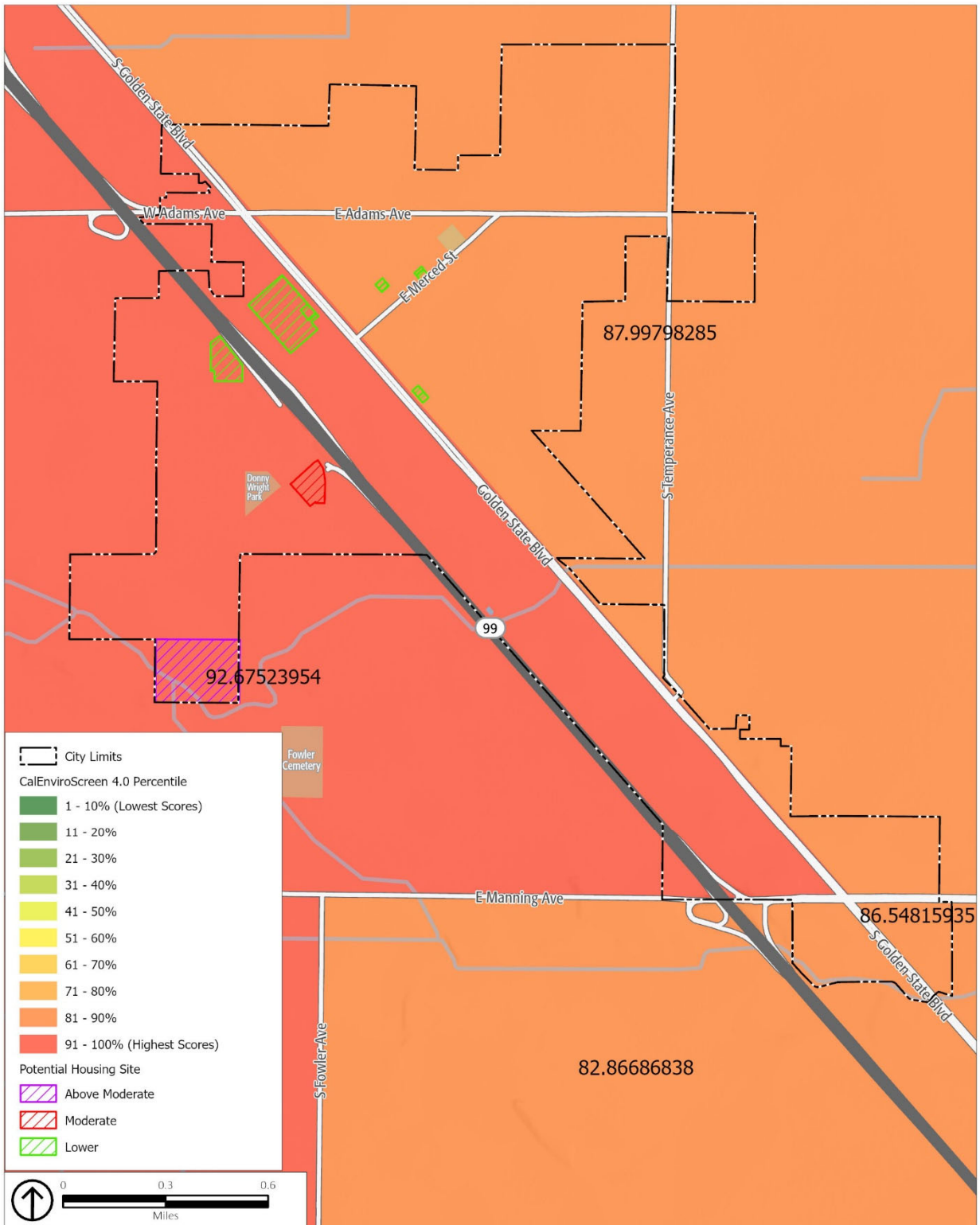
The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) reports CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores for Fowler demonstrating relatively adverse environmental conditions, with census tracts in and around Fowler scoring between the 86th and 96th percentiles (**Figure 1D-13 Calenviroscreen Scores**). In Fowler, residents in different parts of the jurisdiction experience the same scores, indicating that residents across the city do not have different access to environmental outcomes.

The primary pollution indicators leading to high scores as reported by OEHHA's CalEnviroScreen, are, in order of significance, ozone, fine inhalable particles less than 2.5 micrometers (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), diesel particulate matter (PM), pesticides, drinking water contaminants, groundwater threats, and solid waste. Fowler is in a sparsely populated area, with few industrial uses and relatively low pollution from vehicular emissions. However, commercial agriculture and natural resource extraction occurring close to Fowler may contribute to adverse environmental conditions. Population characteristics contributing to the high scores include asthma, low birth weight, education, unemployment, and poverty. The entirety of Fowler falls within the boundaries of an area considered to be a Senate Bill (SB) 535-qualifying disadvantaged community, representing the 25.0 percent of highest-scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 4.0, census tracts previously identified in the top 25.0 percent in CalEnviroScreen 3.0, and census tracts with high amounts of pollution and low populations. This indicates that, as compared with statewide averages, Fowler represents an area of potential concern regarding fair housing and disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards and a concentration of vulnerable populations.

The City of Fowler's 2040 General Plan includes Community Health and Equity and Open Space elements, both of which includes policies and programs designed to increase access to healthy outdoor spaces and reduce exposure to pollutants.



Figure 1D-13 Calenviroscreen Scores



Source: CalEnviroScreen 4.0; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

Source: OEHA, 2021

## ***Disproportionate Housing Need and Displacement Risk***

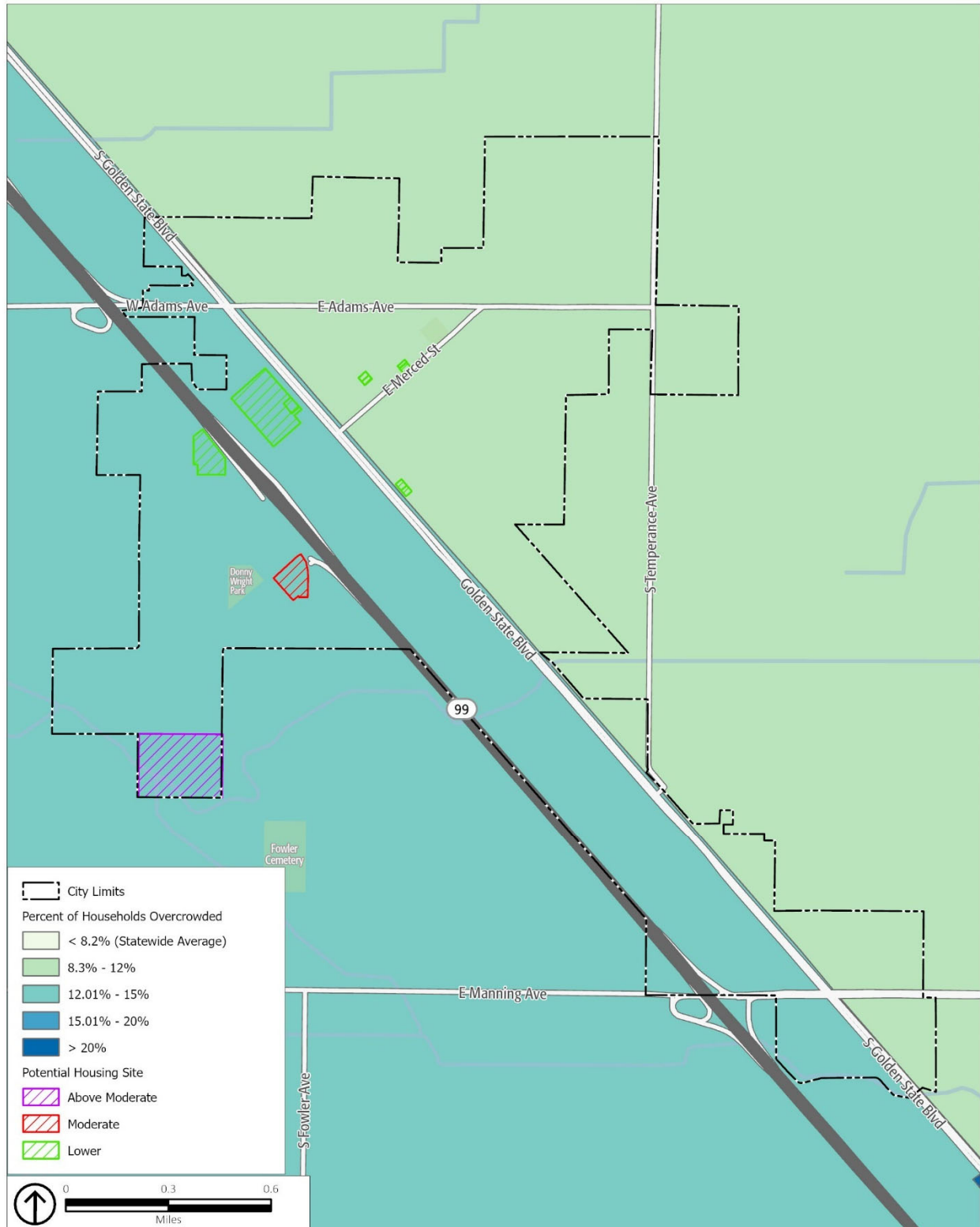
### ***Overcrowding***

Overall, approximately 6.0 percent of households in Fowler are considered overcrowded, nearly identical to the percentage of overcrowding in Fresno County as a whole (6.1 percent). In addition, approximately 2.3 percent of households in Fowler report being severely overcrowded, compared to 3.6 percent of households in Fresno County. However, overcrowding is significantly higher among renters in Fowler, of whom, 9.8 percent are overcrowded, than among homeowners, of whom, 2.7 percent are overcrowded.

As shown in **Figure 1D-14 Overcrowding In Fowler**, the ACS estimates that overcrowding occurs at a slightly higher rate west of Golden State Boulevard (14.6 percent of households) than to the east (10.3 percent). Fowler has the second-lowest rate of overcrowding for all households among all jurisdictions in Fresno County, which may represent a balance of housing type with demand and need. According to the 2016-2020 ACS, approximately 69.7 percent of housing units in Fowler have three or more bedrooms, which typically reduce the need for occupants to share rooms.

Despite the relatively low rates of overcrowding currently, it has increased over the last decade. In 2010, approximately 5.3 percent of all households in Fowler experienced overcrowding, compared to 6.0 percent in 2020. This increase has been experienced exclusively by renters, who experienced overcrowding at a rate of 3.3 percent in 2010 compared to 9.8 percent in 2020. In contrast, homeowner overcrowding decreased from 5.6 to 2.7 percent. However, both renters and homeowners have experienced an increase in severe overcrowding, with renter severe overcrowding increasing from 1.4 to 3.0 percent and homeowner severe overcrowding from 3.0 to 4.4 percent. The increasing rate of overcrowding, particularly in light of the high proportion of larger housing units, may indicate a growing lack of affordability resulting in households needing to share costs, or may indicate that demand for housing exceeds supply.

Figure 1D-14 Overcrowding In Fowler



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2020; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

**Overpayment**

In Fowler, 22.6 percent of households are cost burdened, and 12.9 percent are severely cost-burdened, for a total of 35.5 percent of all households (**Table 1D-7 Cost Burden in Fowler, 2010-2018**). Of these households, approximately 71.5 percent are renters, though renters comprise only 46.6 percent of households in the city. In total, 35.2 percent of renters are cost burdened, and 18.8 percent are severely cost burdened, compared to 10.5 percent and 7.7 percent of homeowners, respectively. As shown in **Figure 1D-15 Percentage Of Homeowners Overpaying**, Fowler has one of the lowest rates of homeowner overpayment in the area east of Golden State Boulevard, when compared to the surrounding region. In this portion of the city, just 16.9 percent of homeowners are overpaying for housing. In comparison, west of Golden State Boulevard, 36.6 percent of homeowners are estimated to be overpaying for housing. While this rate is more reflective of patterns found in neighboring jurisdictions, the stark difference within the city may be as a result of the new construction that has occurred in the western portion of the city. In this area, Somerset Crossing and Aspire at Sunnyside are new homes that are priced from approximately \$400,000 to \$550,000, which has likely contributed to the significant rise in the median home value in Fowler in recent years, as described herein. In contrast to geographic discrepancies in homeowner overpayment, renter home value is relatively constant throughout the city (**Figure 1D-15 Percentage Of Homeowners Overpaying**). However, overall, the ACS estimates lower rates of renter overpayment in Fowler compared to neighboring cities and census tracts, including Sanger, Parlier, and Selma.

**Table 1D-7 Cost Burden in Fowler, 2010-2018**

Household Type	Cost Burdened			Severely Cost Burdened		
	2010	2018	Percent Change	2010	2018	Percent Change
All Households	14.4%	22.6%	8.2%	17.1%	12.9%	-4.1%
Renters	16.7%	35.2%	18.6%	25.4%	18.8%	-6.6%
Homeowners	12.9%	10.5%	-2.4%	11.4%	7.7%	-3.6%
Lower-Income Households	22.5%	38.9%	16.4%	46.7%	31.8%	-14.8%
Renters	28.8%	48.9%	20.2%	43.8%	30.9%	-12.8%
Homeowners	10.0%	14.0%	4.0%	52.5%	31.9%	-20.6%
Moderate-Income Households	8.3%	19.4%	11.0%	5.6%	2.6%	-3.0%
Renters	0.0%	27.8%	27.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Homeowners	13.0%	6.2%	-6.9%	8.7%	6.2%	-2.5%
Above Moderate-Income Households	10.3%	9.6%	-0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Renters	0.0%	9.4%	9.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Homeowners	13.7%	9.7%	-3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Sources: CHAS 2006-2010 and 2014-2018

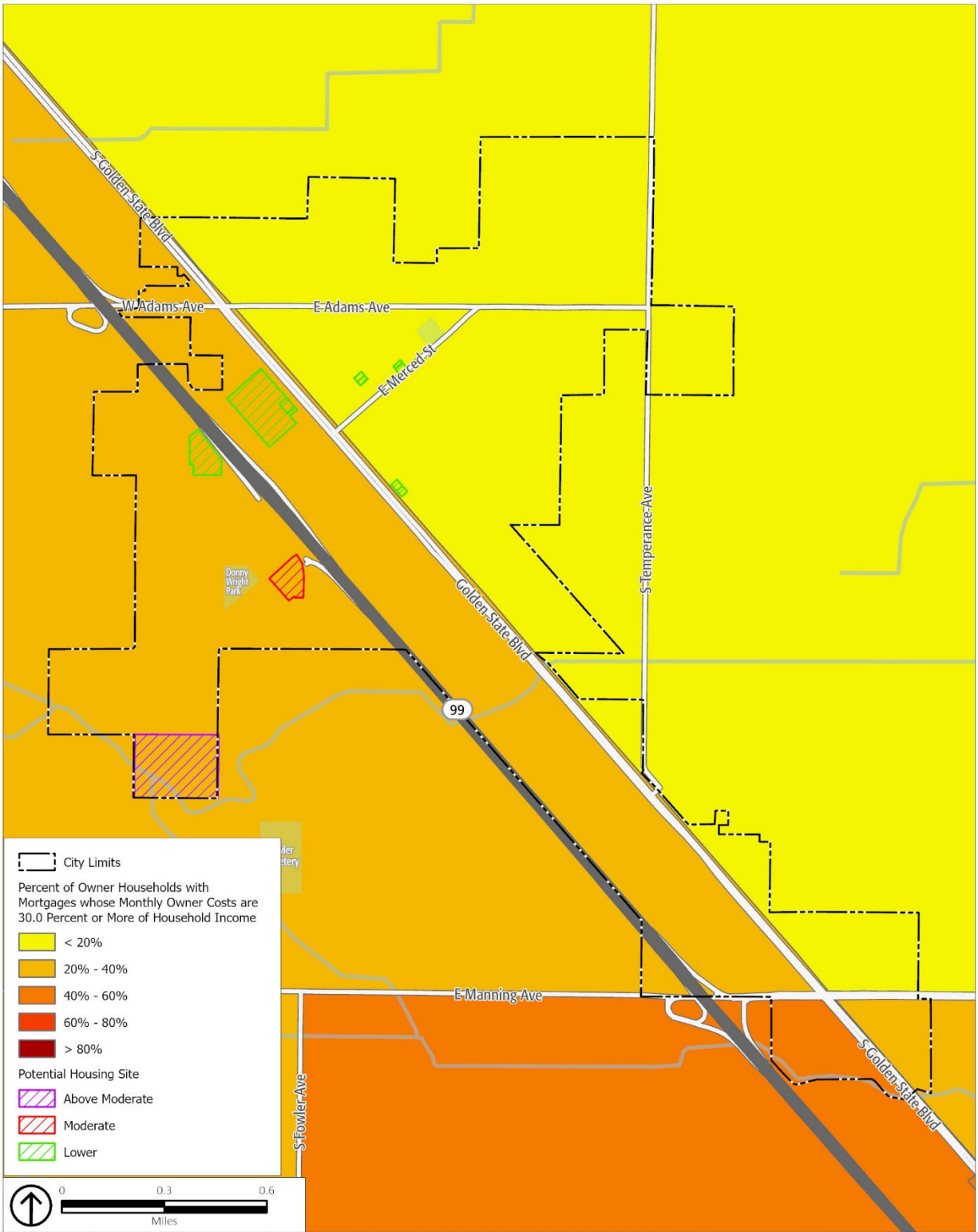
As discussed in the Overpayment section of Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment, overpayment often impacts lower-income households at a higher rate due to financial constraints. As such, these households are most at risk of displacement due to overpayment resulting from more limited flexibility in responding to changes in income or rent. In Fowler, 38.9 percent of all lower-income households are cost burdened and 31.8 percent are severely cost burdened, for a total of 70.7 percent of all lower-income households experiencing some degree of cost burden (**Table 1D-7 Cost Burden in Fowler, 2010-2018**). Lower-income renters experience overpayment at a significantly higher rate than homeowners, with 48.9 percent of renters overpaying, compared to just 14.0 percent of homeowners. This may suggest that lower-income homeowners live in the northern portion of the city, where homes tend to be older, are slightly smaller, and tend to be more affordable. Overpayment rates drop to 19.4 percent of moderate-income households, and 9.6 percent of above moderate-income households. The rate of above moderate-income households overpaying, particularly among homeowners, is relatively high compared to other jurisdictions in Fresno County, likely due to the availability of new construction units, which tend to be larger and therefore priced higher.

Since 2010, the rate of overpayment among lower-income households has increased significantly, which has primarily been as a result of increased overpayment among lower-income renters (**Table 1D-7 Cost Burden in Fowler, 2010-2018**). Moderate- and above moderate-income renters have also experienced moderate-to-large increases in overpayment as well. All income groups, across tenures, have experienced a decrease in severe overpayment since 2010, indicating that while households are still overpaying at a significant rate, the amount over 30.0 percent of their income they have to spend on housing has decreased. The greatest decrease in severe overpayment benefited lower-income homeowners. The changes in overpayment between 2010 and 2018 suggest growing unaffordability of the rental market for all households in Fowler.

While home value data from 2010 is not available, in May 2014, the median home value in Fowler was \$215,708, which had increased by 85.2 percent to \$399,394 in 2022 for an average annual increase of 10.6 percent, according to Zillow. Data on rental prices is more limited in Fowler, but it can be assumed that housing price increases have impacted rental units as well, particularly given the rising rates of overpayment among renters. The ACS estimates that the median gross rent increased from \$803 in 2015 to \$1,084 in 2020, for an average annual increase of 7.0 percent. While the median value of ownership units has increased more rapidly, lower- and moderate-income renters have been disproportionately impacted by rising housing costs in Fowler.

Program 22: Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program and Program 24: Housing Choice Vouchers outline the City's activities to increase access to homebuyer and housing choice programs that help promote housing mobility.

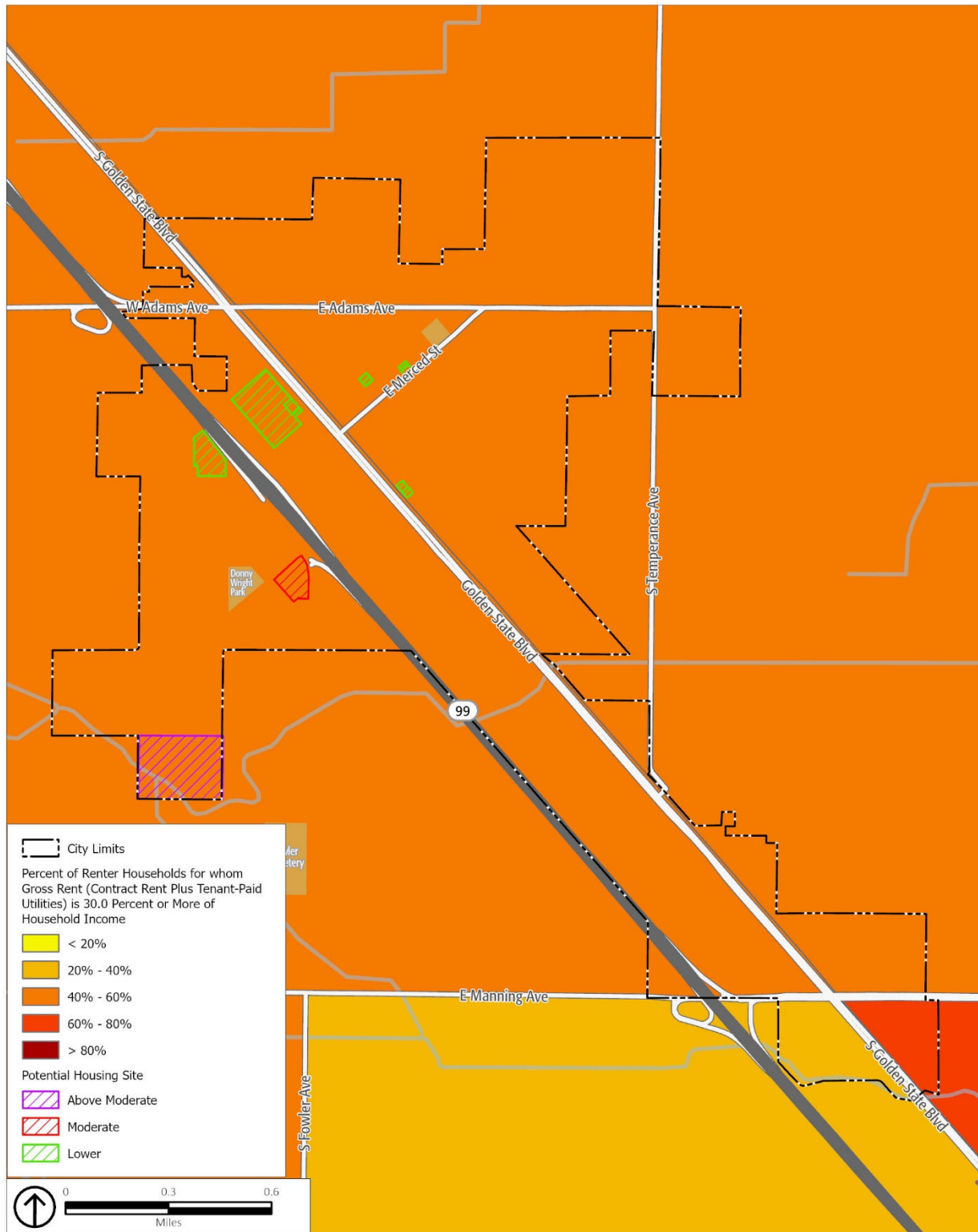
Figure 1D-15 Percentage Of Homeowners Overpaying



Source: U.S. Census (American Communities Survey 2015-2019); City of Fowler, 2023; Placemarks, 2023



Figure 1D-16 Percentage Of Renters Overpaying



Source: U.S. Census (American Communities Survey 2015-2019); City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

### ***Substandard Housing Conditions***

Approximately 51.7 percent of Fowler’s housing units are over 30 years old, and 31.3 percent of units are over 50 years old (Table 2-19 Age of Housing Stock (2020), in Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment). Older units are generally more frequently subject to maintenance issues than newer housing stock. Even units that are not urgently in need of repair may benefit from energy-efficiency improvements to reduce energy usage and related climate impacts. The oldest housing units in Fowler are largely concentrated in the center of the city, east of Golden State Boulevard, south of E. Adams Avenue, and west of S. Temperance Avenue. This area is closest to the original, and current, commercial district and the railway that brought early growth to the area. While considered a high-resource area, this portion of the city, and others, have a median income well below the state median. Therefore, it is possible that many households may not have the financial capacity to complete needed repairs on aging homes.

Another measure of substandard housing conditions is the presence of kitchen and plumbing facilities. The 2015–2019 ACS estimated that there are no owner-occupied units in Fowler that lack a complete kitchen or plumbing, but 60 renter-occupied units meet these criteria, all of which are occupied by lower-income residents. These units account for approximately 2.9 percent of Fowler’s total housing stock and 6.3 percent of renter-occupied units, indicating that renters, particularly lower-income renters, are disproportionately burdened by housing conditions.

Program 20: Housing and Rental Rehabilitation Programs seeks funding for targeted assistance for property owners and landlords of rental properties, code enforcement, and to market availability of rehabilitation assistance.

### ***Homelessness***

In January 2022, the Fresno-Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC) published its Homeless Census and Survey Report (Point-in-Time [PIT]) count, which estimated 3,938 persons experiencing homelessness in Fresno County. Of that number, 1,728 persons were sheltered homeless and 2,210 were unsheltered homeless (Table 2-35, Total Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Count: Fresno County [2022], in Section 2: Housing Needs Assessment). Of this population, 3,397 individuals were counted in the City of Fresno and the remaining 541 were in the remainder of the county.

Throughout the FMCoC area, which includes Madera County, approximately 60.0 percent of the homeless population identified as male, 29.0 percent as female, and 1.0 percent as transgender. Approximately half of the population identified as Hispanic, 6.0 percent identified as Native American or Alaska Native, 3.7 percent as Asian, 15.6 percent as Black or African American, 0.8 percent as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 60.6 percent as White, and 12.8 percent as multi-racial or belonging to another race. Additionally, 205 people, or 4.9 percent of the homeless population, were veterans; 15.0 percent were survivors of domestic violence; and 19.0 percent had a serious mental illness. While the age of homeless persons was reported generally, it did not identify the senior population. The PIT report does not distinguish the characteristics of the homeless population in Fresno County, so it is assumed that these statistics generally represent the Fresno County population. Further, the 2022 PIT does not identify the locations of those individuals in the remainder of the county. However, in 2021, the County of Fresno released a



Homelessness Update that identified 196 homeless persons in the “rural informal county,” which includes the cities of Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, Sanger, and Selma, and the unincorporated communities of Raisin City and West Park. No homeless residents were counted in Fowler.

**Table 1D-8 Demographic Characteristics of the Homeless Population, 2022**, identifies the proportion of each of the protected characteristics identified in the 2022 PIT compared to the proportion of each Fresno County jurisdictions’ population, to identify whether any protected classes are disproportionately represented as part of the homeless population. The percentages for a protected characteristic population in **bold** are overrepresented in the homeless population compared to that jurisdiction’s total population. As there are no known homeless persons in the City of Fowler, **Table 1D-8** compares the regional homeless population to the City’s population to identify discrepancies on a larger scale.

Table 1D-8 Demographic Characteristics of the Homeless Population, 2022

Jurisdiction	Veteran	Mental Disability	Hispanic	Native American/Alaska Native	Asian	Black/African American	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White	Other/Multiple Races
Total Homeless	4.9%	19.0%	50.0%	6.0%	3.7%	15.6%	0.8%	60.6%	12.8%
Clovis	7.0%	4.7%	32.7%	0.2%	10.7%	2.6%	0.2%	49.5%	4.0%
Coalinga	4.4%	5.1%	62.0%	2.0%	1.9%	2.9%	0.5%	28.2%	2.6%
Firebaugh	1.3%	2.2%	94.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	5.8%	0.1%
Fowler	6.4%	3.9%	65.2%	0.3%	9.9%	0.4%	0.0%	19.8%	4.4%
Fresno	5.1%	6.3%	49.7%	0.5%	14.0%	6.9%	0.1%	26.1%	2.7%
Huron	1.1%	1.8%	94.5%	1.8%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%
Kerman	3.9%	5.7%	81.7%	0.0%	4.4%	0.3%	0.0%	12.0%	1.4%
Kingsburg	7.0%	4.0%	47.7%	0.0%	7.9%	0.3%	0.0%	41.0%	2.7%
Mendota	0.5%	2.2%	96.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	0.3%
Orange Cove	7.0%	2.6%	95.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.3%	3.0%	0.1%
Parlier	1.1%	2.4%	97.7%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.2%
Reedley	4.1%	4.0%	79.3%	0.2%	2.3%	1.5%	0.1%	14.2%	2.4%
Sanger	3.6%	3.6%	80.5%	0.5%	3.0%	0.0%	0.3%	15.0%	0.7%
San Joaquin	0.8%	1.5%	97.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%

APPENDIX 1D: CITY OF FOWLER

Jurisdiction	Veteran	Mental Disability	Hispanic	Native American/Alaska Native	Asian	Black/African American	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White	Other/Multiple Races
Selma	3.6%	3.5%	85.0%	0.1%	1.8%	0.9%	0.0%	10.7%	1.6%
Unincorporated County	5.7%	4.8%	47.7%	0.6%	7.5%	2.0%	0.1%	39.6%	2.5%

Sources: FCOG Data Packet, 2022; Fresno/Madera Continuum of Care, 2022; 2016-2020 ACS

As seen in **Table 1D-8 Demographic Characteristics of the Homeless Population, 2022**, all protected characteristics are overrepresented in the majority of Fresno County jurisdictions, with individuals with mental disabilities and residents that identify as Native American, Alaska Native, Black, African American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, White, or Other/Multiple Races being overrepresented in all Fresno County jurisdictions. Homelessness is often a cross-jurisdictional issue; therefore, the City participates in, and offers, several homelessness resources and programs that are available regionally, identified in **Table 1D-9 Services to Address Homelessness**.

**Table 1D-9 Services to Address Homelessness**

Service/Resource	Description	Operator	Location
Multi-Agency Access Program (MAP Point)	Traveling food truck and fixed locations that provide linkage to government resources and services (housing, behavioral health, physical health, food linkages, and transportation) at no cost to all residents of Fresno County	Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health (funding)/ Kings View Corporation (operation)	Countywide  Physical locations: Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno, Huron, Kerman, Mendota, Parlier, and Reedley
Fresno County Behavioral Health WARM Line	Available during weekday business hours for non-emergency emotional and coping support for residents throughout the county	Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health	Countywide
Multi-Agency Response to Community Homelessness (MARCH)	Countywide collaboration to address homelessness through coordination of resources regionally and cross-jurisdictionally, engagement of the community, attracting private funding to support community-specific programs, and inclusion of rural representatives selected by FCOG	FCOG/Jurisdictions	Countywide
Turning Point of Central California	Mental health services including a full-service partnership program	Contracted by Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health	Countywide
Fresno County Department of Social Services Homeless Assistance	Temporary housing, permanent housing, or arrears payments for families eligible for CalWorks once during a 12-month period	Fresno County Department of Social Services	Countywide
Catholic Charities	Clothing, shelter, diapers, a food pantry, rent and mortgage assistance, DMV ID vouchers, application assistance for CalFresh	Catholic Charities	Countywide

APPENDIX 1D: CITY OF FOWLER

Service/Resource	Description	Operator	Location
	and food stamps, application assistance for PG&E discounts, assistance with immigration services, and senior companionship assistance. Also has a Rural Outreach Program to serve residents throughout the region and work with migrant farmworkers.		Physical location: City of Fresno
Emergency Housing Voucher	Assist persons experiencing, at-risk of becoming, or recently homeless and those fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking	Fresno Housing and FMCoC	Countywide
United Way	Emergency informational services to connect persons in need with Homeless Prevention Programs, food and shelter assistance, help with landlord-tenant issues, legal services referrals, and more	United Way	Countywide
Groceries2Go	Provides grocery boxes of shelf-stable food items through an appointment-based system.	Central California Food Bank	Countywide
CalFresh Enrollment Assistance	Application assistance and assistance navigating the CalFresh process.	Central California Food Bank	Countywide
Fresh Produce Distribution	Mobile Pantry Program and Neighborhood Markets operating out of self-contained vehicles that travel to rural and remote areas throughout the county. A schedule of distribution locations is available online.	Central California Food Bank	Countywide
Senior Hunger Program	Food boxes to senior-serving partners tailored to the dietary needs of seniors.	Central California Food Bank	Countywide
Partner Feeding Sites	Provides food to over 220 sites including churches, community centers, and other organizations to feed hungry residents in local neighborhoods	Central California Food Bank	Countywide
USDA Partnership	Distribute food acquired by the USDA to 47 organizations in Fresno County.	Central California Food Bank	Countywide

Service/Resource	Description	Operator	Location
Fresno County Food Map	Online service mapping locations of feeding sites, food banks, etc.	Fresno County	Countywide
Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)	Street outreach for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and referrals to housing resources, medical care, mental health counseling, and social services.	Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health (funding)/ Kings View Corporation (operation)	Countywide

Emergency shelters also include Marjaree Mason Center, Fresno Rescue Mission, Evangel Home Inc., and Plaza Terrace.

Program 3: Homeless/Unhoused Needs outlines activities to address homelessness concerns in the City of Fowler.

***Farmworkers***

As discussed in the Regional Assessment of Fair Housing, farmworkers are considered a special needs group because they traditionally earn low wages and often migrate between farms, resulting in many farmworkers living in overcrowded and substandard housing conditions. Although Fresno County’s overall economy has historically been largely based on agricultural operations, the number of farmworkers living in each of the jurisdictions in the county in more recent years varies depending on location, size, and diversification of their individual economic base. Further, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry started shifting toward recruiting and employing H-2A visa workers, many of whom are from Mexico and Central America. However, farmworkers are essential to Fresno County’s and Fowler’s economies as well as to local and national food supplies, and their needs for safe and affordable housing resources must be addressed.

The 2017 Census of Agriculture identified 150 farm operations within the 93625 zip code, which includes the City of Fowler and land in unincorporated Fresno County around the city. Additionally, there are 300 farm operations in the adjacent 93725 zip code, to the west of Fowler, and 48 farm operations in the 93616 zip code, northeast of Fowler. It is likely that some portion of the farm operations in these zip codes, particularly in the areas closest to Fowler, employ farmworkers that reside or use resources in the city.

Despite its location within an active agricultural region of the county, only 7.5 percent of Fowler’s labor force is employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, or mining, according to the 2016-2020 ACS. Other jurisdictions in the county (including unincorporated county) have higher rates of the labor force in these industries (see Table 2-39 Estimated Farmworkers (2020)). Though it is possible that not all these workers are engaged in farm labor, the data allow comparisons between jurisdictions and to gauge segments of the population at risk of overpayment, overcrowding, substandard housing conditions, or displacement.

Based on the most recent (2022) farmworker employment figures collected by the California Employment Development Department (EDD), there are 96,300 farmworkers employed throughout the county, yet

farmworker housing facilities for only 2,540 occupants were contracted by H2-A employers and farm operators, according to the HCD Employee Housing Facilities Permit Services database. Although this is equivalent to only about 2.6 percent of the farmworker employment countywide, it is important because H-2A workers must be provided with housing accommodations. The seasonal and often migrant nature of farm labor, and accounting for undocumented workers, suggest that this data likely underrepresents the actual farmworker population, because undocumented residents do not often participate in traditional data collection.

The Phase 1 COVID Farmworker Survey Report, completed by the California Institute for Rural Studies and published in February 2021, estimates that undocumented workers comprise approximately 50 percent of workers statewide. They are predominantly Mexican, and the majority are Mixteco and Trique indigenous non-Spanish-speaking people. According to the article “In the Valley of Fear,” published in December 2018 on workingimmigrants.com, most of the farmworkers in the San Joaquin Valley have been working the fields for at least a decade and have established families in the vicinity of their workplace.

Between September 2021 and January 2022, Fresno County conducted a Farmworker Survey and a Farmworker Employer Survey. A second round of each survey was conducted between February 2022 and July 2022. In total, the County surveyed 240 farmworkers and 170 farm employers. Only one respondent to the Farmworkers Survey reported residing in Fowler, though an additional four respondents lived in the nearby unincorporated community of Easton. Of this sample, all of the respondents disclosed their status as either permanent residents or citizens having lived in the U.S. for a minimum of 28 years. None of the respondents were H-2A visa workers. According to the countywide survey effort, 37.0 percent of the respondents reported being citizens, 38.2 percent reported being permanent residents, 16.0 percent identified their status as undocumented workers, 6.3 percent did not respond, and 1.3 percent had H-2A visa status. Due to the small representation of respondents residing in or near Fowler, a definitive determination of the proportion of undocumented workers cannot be made; therefore, the representation of undocumented workers throughout Fresno County as found by the survey may be applicable to the farmworker population in Fowler and surrounding communities.

According to the EDD, the most recent data from 2014 measured median wage for farmworkers at \$13.44 per hour, or approximately \$25,804 per year for full-time work, which is considered extremely low income, correlating with the 2019 poverty threshold of \$25,750. Seasonal workers without a year-round income could have lower incomes. The median income in the city is \$59,663, and 13.8 percent of the population lives below the poverty threshold. While 66.4 percent of the households in the city are Hispanic, 82.5 percent of the total households in poverty are Hispanic households. The findings from the Fresno County Farmworker Survey indicate that 99.6 percent of farmworkers surveyed countywide are Hispanic. When the ACS 2016-2020 data that 7.5 percent of the labor force in Fowler is employed in agriculture are combined with and the above poverty and EDD wage data, it suggests that a majority of the labor force employed in agricultural industries are Hispanic (HNA Table 2-10, Employment by Industry), and it is likely that many of these workers have incomes below the poverty threshold.



To meet the housing needs of the farmworker population in Fowler, as shown by **Table 1D-10 Farmworker Housing Facilities in Fowler**, the HCD Employee Housing Facilities Permit Services database identifies one H-2A visa housing facility within the vicinity of the city with capacity for 15 occupants. Even though there is a low proportion of persons is engaged in the agricultural industries in Fowler, the lack of farmworker housing facilities, paired with the high proportion of Hispanic households in poverty, suggests that the farmworkers in the city may have difficulty finding affordable, appropriately sized housing.

**Table 1D-10 Farmworker Housing Facilities in Fowler**

Name of Facility	Location	# of Rooms	Maximum Occupancy
<b>On-Site Farmworker Housing Facilities</b>			
N/A			
<b>H-2A Visa Farmworker Housing Facilities</b>			
Berberian 20 Dorm	4343 S. Fowler Ave. – Fowler	1	15

Source: HCD Employee Housing Facilities Permit Services database, January 2023.

Note: Facilities reported in operation as of 12/31/2022.

Given the shortage of farmworker housing units, many farmworkers are likely forced to pay market rate for their housing or find other options, such as sleeping in vehicles or garages. In Fowler, the H-2A farmworker facility is not suitable for families, based on unit size. Farmworkers that are citizens and permanent residents may have access to 170 HUD, USDA, or locally assisted affordable housing opportunities in Fowler, although they must compete with other lower-income households for the limited number of units. For undocumented workers, options are more limited, and a large number of farmworkers may live in spaces not intended for human habitation, such as shacks, outbuildings and sheds, and converted garages, often in severely overcrowded conditions.

Permanent resident farmworker households are included in ACS estimates and therefore part of CHAS housing need estimates. Consequently, the housing needs of lower-income farmworker households are not differentiated from other lower-income households experiencing overpayment, overcrowding, and substandard housing. Because about 7.5 percent of the labor force in Fowler are employed in agricultural operations and similar fields, farmworkers may comprise a portion of extremely low- and very low-income households that experience one or more housing problems in the city. Based on the Fresno County Farmworker Survey, 81.7 percent of respondents countywide reported incomes below \$2,500 per month, which corresponds to an extremely low-income household of four. However, the respondent from Fowler reported a household income of approximately \$2,900 per month, and of the four respondents residing in Easton, 50.0 percent had incomes above \$2,500 monthly. Despite these slightly higher-than-average incomes for farmworkers in the county, farmworkers in Fowler still likely face challenges finding affordable housing; or conversely, based on the difficulty of finding affordable housing in Fowler, lower-income farmworkers may choose to live elsewhere, which could be a reason for the low proportion of farmworkers in the city.

Based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics indicators of the farmworker community in the San Joaquin Valley, it is likely that a portion of farmworker households that reside in the city, particularly those with lower incomes, have located housing opportunities in the central downtown neighborhood, where the median income is \$25,781 and 43.3 percent of residents are below the poverty line, conditions that reflect the regional farmworker population. While roughly 66.4 percent of the households in the city are Hispanic, the highest representation of Hispanic households (between 83.2 and 89.2 percent) is in the older central downtown and southeast portion of the city, adjacent to major transportation corridors, industrial, and other nonresidential uses. Though this area includes two of the three affordable housing complexes in the city, affordable housing opportunities not associated with assisted housing resources may also be found in the older residential stock. The higher proportion of Hispanic households in these areas aligns with the findings of the Farmworker Survey and statewide statistics that farmworkers are overwhelmingly Hispanic.

Citizens, noncitizens with permanent status, and H-2A visa workers are eligible for public housing, HCVs, USDA rural rental assistance, and Section 8 project-based rental assistance. Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980, as amended, makes certain categories of noncitizens eligible for assistance, including most categories of immigrants, but excludes unauthorized immigrants (e.g., undocumented) and those in temporary status (e.g., tourists and students). Section 214 applies to specific programs, primarily federal rental assistance programs administered by HUD and the USDA, including Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Section 8 project-based rental assistance programs, and rural rental assistance. Undocumented residents are subject to eligibility requirements based on whether Section 214-covered programs are administered by HUD or USDA, which implement different regulatory treatment for mixed-status households depending on householder status. For HUD Section 214 projects, an ineligible noncitizen may reside with family members who are eligible to qualify for affordable housing (such as an undocumented single parent with U.S. citizen children or an undocumented worker married to an eligible householder), although Section 8 benefits are prorated depending on the number of undocumented household members. For USDA Section 214 projects, a undocumented householder would not be eligible to participate in the HCV program, and therefore would not qualify to live in any USDA-assisted affordable multifamily housing complexes (i.e., Fowler Apartments, Ruby Court Senior Apartments, and Walnut Grove Villas). However, a family with an eligible householder that includes undocumented household members (such as a U.S. citizen householder married to an undocumented worker) would qualify to reside in these properties and receive full HCV benefits. This assistance-ineligible population is considered underserved and at higher risk of overpayment, overcrowding, and displacement compounded by the legal complexities of eligibility and language barriers.

Similar to most jurisdictions in Fresno County, the majority of the residential opportunities in Fowler are single family detached and attached units, which comprise 75.5 percent of the housing stock. Multifamily units comprise 22.5 percent of the housing stock, of which 36.0 percent are affordable. Fowler has a small proportion of mobile homes (2.0 percent of the stock), which are naturally more affordable than single-family residential units and may serve as a valuable housing resource for workers unable to qualify for market rate or affordable rental housing, or other accommodations.

The high renter rate in the older single-family, lower-income central neighborhood, which does not have any affordable housing complexes, may support findings of the Farmworker Survey, where respondents countywide indicated that their preference for dwelling unit type are single-family units regardless of owner or renter status. Additionally, although the southwest portion of the city has a higher homeowner rate, it is likely that this distribution can be attributed to a newer single-family subdivision at the eastern edge of the city, because housing conditions and neighborhood characteristics in the remainder of this block group are similar to the older downtown housing stock and may have been converted to rentals. Of the farmworkers surveyed who live in Fowler and Easton, 60.0 percent are renters, and 58.2 percent of all survey respondents identified as renters, compared to the Fowler citywide rate of 46.6 percent. According to the Fresno County Farmworkers Survey, 95.6 percent of the renters responded that they desired to be homeowners. Further, 78.4 percent of the farmworker renter households consisted of three or more persons, of which 93.6 percent had resided in the U.S. for 10 or more years, 3.7 percent less than 10 years, and 2.7 percent did not respond. The prevalence of households with three or more persons, coupled with the longevity in the U.S. of the majority of the renters, and the preference for single-family unit type further substantiate the need for housing to accommodate families.

Conversely, the lower proportion of owner-occupied housing units corresponding to neighborhoods with lower incomes, higher representation of non-White population, and higher rates of poverty suggests that the cost of homeownership in one of the highest priced jurisdictions in the county, with a median priced home at \$455,000 (see Table 2-22 Home Sales Recorded in 2021-22, in the HNA) is more than the majority of households in the city, and likely farmworkers, are able to pay. For this reason, the low proportion of farmworkers residing in the city may reflect that farmworkers seeking homeowner opportunities choose to live in communities where the cost of housing for purchase is lower.

The Farmworker Survey found that the average household size of respondents was 3.9 persons, larger than average household size citywide (3.1 persons). In Fowler, the rate of overcrowding ranges from 10.3 percent to 14.6 percent, suggesting that farmworker households and other large households may face challenges finding adequately sized units, resulting in households sharing a dwelling or multiple family members sharing rooms. Survey results indicated that 58.4 percent of the farmworkers countywide were living in overcrowded conditions, with renter households finding units large enough to accommodate household size more of a challenge. Based on this, it is likely that larger lower-income farmworker renter households would have difficulty finding appropriately sized affordable housing in Fowler and might find more suitable housing elsewhere in the county or experience overcrowding and/or overpayment.

In response to the observed need for continued support and housing resources for local farmworkers, the City includes Program 8 to reach out to local farm employers to identify housing needs, seek funding to support development of farmworker housing, and provide materials on available resources and financial assistance on the City website.

### *Displacement Risk*

The Urban Displacement Project, a joint research and action initiative of the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Toronto, analyzes income patterns and housing availability to determine the level of displacement risk at the census-tract level. Levels of displacement risk range from “probable displacement” to “extreme displacement,” with four total levels of displacement risk, if displacement risk is present. The Urban Displacement Project has not identified any areas of elevated risk in Fowler, though the area north of S. Golden State Boulevard has been identified as a “vulnerable community” (**Figure 1D-17 Vulnerable Community Designation**). Vulnerability is defined as areas in which the share of very low-income residents is above 20.0 percent, and the tract meets at least two of the following criteria:

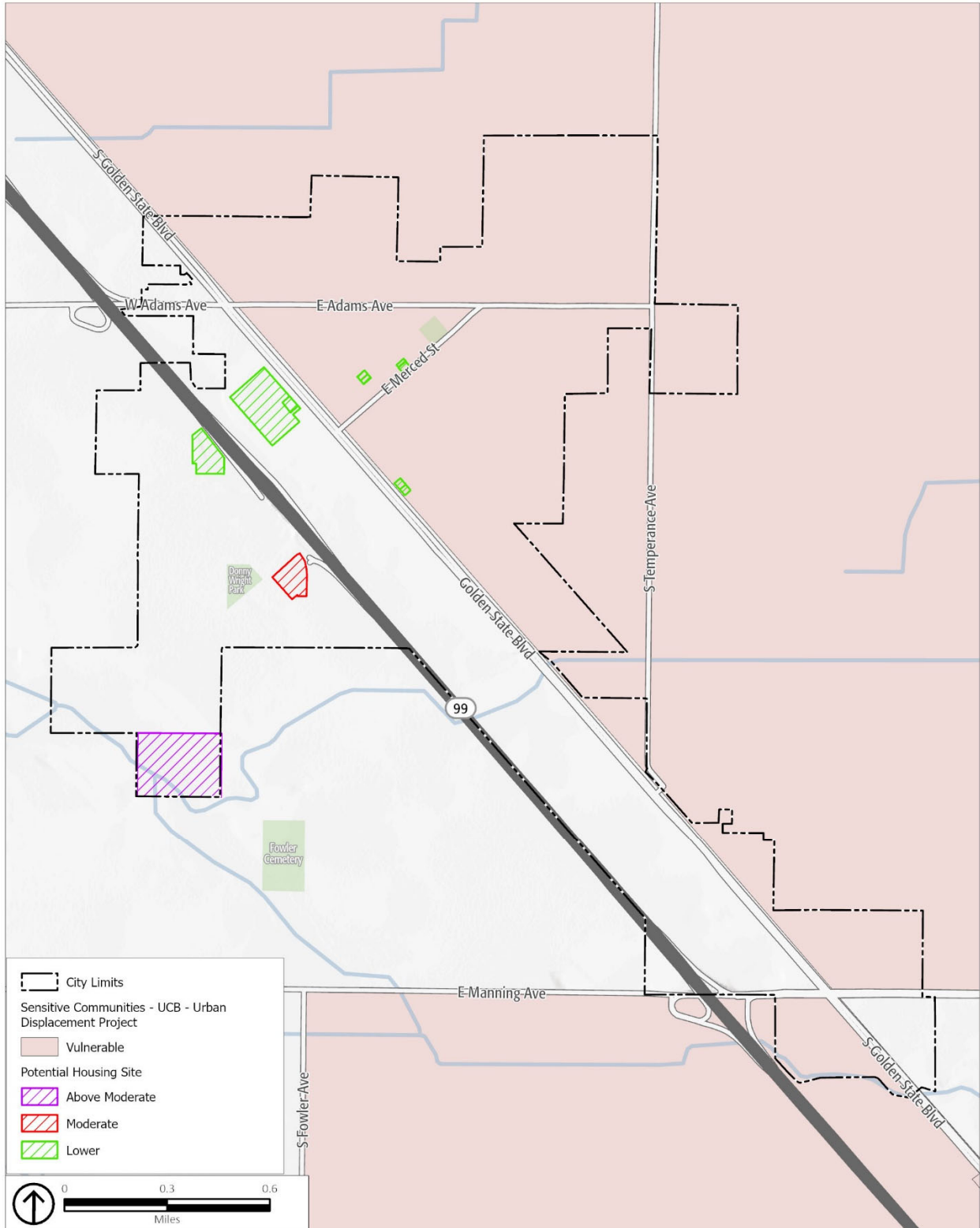
- Share of renters is above 40.0 percent,
- Share of people of color is above 50.0 percent,
- Share of very low-income households that are severely rent burdened households is above the county median, or
- They or areas in close proximity have been experiencing displacement pressures.

The Urban Displacement Project defines displacement pressures as a percentage change in rent greater than the county median for rent increases. While the Urban Displacement Project does not specify the conditions that led to the vulnerability determination for Fowler, it can be assumed that residents in northern Fowler experience heightened displacement risk compared to residents in the southern area and elsewhere in the county due to a combination of incomes and housing prices.

As found in the analysis of overpayment, for-sale home costs have increased by an average of 10.6 percent annually since 2014, and rental costs have increased by an average of 7.0 percent annually since 2015. In contrast, the ACS estimates that, since 2014, the median income in Fowler has increased by an average of 4.2 percent annually. When comparing change in median income to change in home prices, it is clear that the increase in housing costs outpaces increases in wages, indicating increasing displacement risk for residents of Fowler. Given the rapid increase in home values, current and prospective homeowners are likely impacted the greatest by changes in housing cost. In comparison, countywide, median incomes have increased by approximately 4.4 percent annually and rents have increased by 3.2 percent on average. While Zillow does not report countywide home values, the ACS estimates that these have increased by 3.9 percent annually, on average. Therefore, in contrast to conditions in Fowler, there may be a moderate decrease in displacement risk countywide due to home costs. The inflated displacement risk resulting from discrepancies in wages and housing costs in Fowler reflects a disproportionate need for affordable options in the city.

Program 22: Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program and Program 24: Housing Choice Vouchers outline the City’s activities to increase access to homebuyer and housing choice programs that help promote housing mobility, among other programs established in the housing element.

Figure 1D-17 Vulnerable Community Designation



Source: UC Berkeley Urban Displacement Project; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

## ***Other Relevant Factors***

In addition to the indicators analyzed previously, there are several other factors that can influence housing mobility and access to opportunity in a jurisdiction. For example, historical development patterns may have resulted in neighborhoods that are largely or exclusively made up of single-family homes, or historical discrimination may have influenced a city's racial and ethnic composition. Further, given current market trends, newer market-rate neighborhoods may not be financially accessible to lower-income households without overpayment or overcrowding. Other factors may include public and private investment, local regulatory or economic development plans, and historical policies. Those factors that are considered relevant vary between jurisdictions and are described at the local level herein.

## ***Land Use and Zoning Patterns***

According to the 2016-2020 ACS, 75.5 percent of the housing stock in Fowler is single-family units, inclusive of single-family attached units, indicating a higher proportion of single-family units relative to other Fresno County jurisdictions. Duplex, triplex, and fourplex unit types make up approximately 7.0 percent of housing units. Approximately 9.3 percent of the housing stock consists of multifamily units in structures of five to nine units, which is a significantly higher proportion than Fresno County overall. The remainder of multifamily units (6.2 percent of total housing stock) are in structures with 10 or more units. Mobile homes, a housing type that is often naturally more affordable, comprise 2.0 percent of the housing stock, a slightly smaller proportion than other Fresno County jurisdictions, with the majority of the units in the Valley Mobile Home Park. Although the majority of the housing stock in the City of Fowler is made up of single-family detached and attached unit types, approximately 30.6 percent of the single-family detached and attached housing stock is renter occupied, indicating that a significant portion of the single-family housing stock has been converted to rental property, in addition to other unit types available for rent.

While in most communities single-family zoning can create desirable places to live, higher entry costs associated with this housing type can also pose a barrier to access for lower- and even moderate-income households, restricting access to economic, educational, and other opportunities that may be available in single-family neighborhoods. In the City of Fowler, all of the single-family residential neighborhoods are in areas designated as high resource by TCAC and HCD. Therefore, housing type does not necessarily indicate more positive access to educational, services, employment, and business resources. However, the price of available single-family units listed for purchase on Zillow.com in October 2022 generally exceeded the price threshold of moderate-income households, including the single-family residential areas in the vicinity of the downtown on the east side of the rail line, where the concentration of households with the lowest median income are found.

Affordable housing development in the current market typically requires higher-density zones to support construction; therefore, zones limited to single dwelling units on each lot generally do not support affordable development. As shown in **Figure 1D-11 Zoning In Fowler**, there are two base zones for higher-density multifamily housing. The RM-2 district is intended to accommodate a variety of housing types, such as small-lot single-family homes, detached zero lot line developments, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and garden apartments. The RM-3 district is intended for high-density



residential development and accommodates attached homes, duplexes to fourplexes, apartment buildings, and condominiums. Mixed-uses with residential are permitted subject to a PUD within any C-1 or C-2 district, and higher-density residential is also accommodated in the Form-Based Code zone applied to the town center area.

The RM-2 and RM-3 zones in the City of Fowler are spread throughout the city, as seen in **Figure 1D-11**. However, a higher concentration of RM-3 parcels are found southeast of South 5th Street where the affordable Magill Terrace, Walnut Grove Villas, and Ruby Court age-restricted multifamily complexes are located; and four blocks within the downtown core area between Merced and Main Streets on the east side of South Golden State Boulevard. Additionally, the affordable Fowler Apartments are on an RM-3 parcel on East Adams Avenue surrounded by single-family residential zoning in the northern section of the city. RM-2 parcels are within the eastern community core area along East Main, Merced, Fresno, Vine, and Tulare Streets; as well as a large vacant parcel west of SR 99 at the corner of West Fresno Street and Fowler Avenue. The potential for mixed-use residential development in the C-2 zones as part of a PUD expands the opportunities for higher-density units within the high-resource designated corridor between SR 99 and Golden State Boulevard, fostering access to business, services, and employment opportunities, as well as direct access to the regional SR 99 throughfare. Although limited, there also are opportunities for integration of residential uses in the C-1 zones to the west of SR 99, providing a transition between the commercial uses adjacent to the freeway and lower-income residential neighborhoods to the west.

The location of RM-2 and RM-3 parcels in the city suggests some opportunities for income-integrated neighborhoods and improved access to services and amenities given proximity to the downtown business district, where mixed-use residential infill and redevelopment opportunities exist, and near parks and recreation opportunities. Many of the parcels zoned for multifamily and residential mixed-use are near the rail line and adjacent to industrial uses, which is consistent with a countywide pattern for multifamily housing, particularly affordable complexes, although in the City of Fowler, the potential for higher-density residential is in high-resource areas, regardless of proximity to nonresidential uses and major transportation thoroughfares.

### ***Historical Development Patterns***

According to Fresno County Sesquicentennial, the community of Fowler was established in 1872 when State Senator Thomas Fowler implemented the “Fowler Switch” along the southern extension of the Central Pacific Railway. In its early years, the community was a center for the cattle ranching industry, and activity surrounded the railroad tracks within the historical core. The Sanborn Company produced Fire Insurance maps in the early years of Fowler’s development, which provide insight on how the community grew and changed. In 1896, the City of Fowler was contained largely within a 16-block area bordered by Mariposa Street to the north, the Southern Pacific railway tracks to the west, Fifth Street to the east, and Fresno Street to the south. Blocks were laid out in a uniform grid and included north to south alleys. Despite the small size of the community, Merced Street east of the railroad had already become a center of commercial activity, with several buildings lining the public right-of-way. The city incorporated in 1908 and by 1945 had expanded north to Adams Avenue, remaining compact and walkable in form. Merced Street, east of the railway tracks, continued as a commercial center, adding new businesses and institutions along its route.



The railroad experienced reduced significance with the construction of the original SR 99 (now Golden State Boulevard). Later, construction of the new SR 99 and the removal of the train depot impacted the central functionality of the downtown. The vitality of the city's downtown core diminished as the freeway enhanced access to employment, commercial, and shopping resources in surrounding communities, while effectively bypassing the historical commercial core, resulting in residential development flourishing at the perimeter of the city. The city has since implemented a number of planning, design, revitalization, and economic development programs to support renewed interest and attention to the historical downtown, which promotes opportunities for mixed-income residential uses in the Form-Based Code zone, and place-based revitalization, as well as potential for residential uses at all income levels in the C-1 and C-2 zones between the central downtown and SR 99.

Limited new market-rate small multifamily infill projects are being completed in the older residential fabric within and surrounding the downtown, fostering higher-income housing integration and housing mobility options. Residential development has extended to the southeast with construction of three affordable multifamily complexes: Ruby Court Villas, an age-restricted senior complex; Walnut Grove Villas; and Magill Terrace, as well as a number of market-rate single-family residential subdivisions south of East South Avenue. Residential development has also expanded north of East Adams Avenue with construction of the affordable Fowler Apartments, and new single-family residential subdivisions in the northeastern and northwestern corners of the city.

### ***Public Investment Patterns***

Public and private investment typically includes construction, maintenance, and improvements to public facilities, including infrastructure, acquisition of land, and major equipment. Historically, investment in the City of Fowler has been influenced by the role of SR 99 through the city, which improved access to commercial and employment opportunities in surrounding jurisdictions, supporting expansion of residential development. Despite the highway facilitating access to other commercial cores, new development on West Merced Street after 2000 brought new economic development opportunities and services to the community primarily oriented toward SR 99. As a result, many properties adjacent to and west of Golden State Boulevard saw diminished activity or were vacated and many historical structures east of Golden State Boulevard deteriorated despite the addition of new commercial tenants. The disinvestment in the downtown led to fragmentation of downtown land uses and limited activity on street corridors. In December 2007, the Central Fowler Revitalization Plan was adopted, and the city's Zoning Code was subsequently amended in 2013 to adopt Form-Based Code regulations and standards to guide investment in the revitalization of the city core.

The City has taken significant action to promote place-based revitalization of the downtown, increase affordable housing mobility opportunities in the central core accessible to local commercial businesses and services resources, and provide mixed-income residential opportunities throughout the city, and any infrastructure or facilities in need of improvement citywide are identified for investment in the City's annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is funded from a variety of sources that can each be used for specific purposes. These funds are allocated to improve roadways and other transportation infrastructure, implement the 2007 Downtown Revitalization Plan, and other projects, including:

- **Pedestrian Connectivity.** The City aims to improve accessibility and pedestrian mobility through installation and maintenance of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramps, reconstruction of deteriorating sidewalks, improved signalization at Manning Avenue, and maintenance of the Golden State Boulevard Bike Path.
- **Water and Sewer Infrastructure.** The City has allocated funding to improve water and sewer service capacity through the Annual Well Maintenance Program among other ongoing maintenance to infrastructure to support current and future development needs.
- **Public Facility Improvements.** The City aims to promote community activities and access to resources by funding improvements to the Fowler Public Library, Job Training Center, and Senior Center.
- **Parks and Recreation Facilities.** To promote safe and healthy spaces and outdoor recreation, the City allocates funding for improvements to local parks, including the Donny Wright Park and Panzak Park among others, as well as acquisition of new park land and construction of the new Harris Park.

Priority is based on projects that will result in the greatest community benefit, mitigate existing issues, and address public demand and need, particularly place-based revitalization within the Downtown Revitalization plan area. The City has secured funding for the restoration and improvement of storefronts along Merced Street, and new construction along West Merced has encouraged a continuous pedestrian environment across Merced Street. Additional investment, such as the fire station completed in 2020 and the new library along Seventh Street, has encouraged downtown's centrality.

In response to historical disinvestment downtown and based on the recommendations of the Central Fowler Revitalization Plan, the City is investing significant funds in continued downtown revitalization. Capital improvement projects focus on creating more public facilities, public safety, and recreational amenities for residents of the city, expanding the capacity of the water, sewer, and roadway infrastructure network, and preparing for expansion of the city's development within, and at the perimeter of the city for industrial, commercial, and residential development, including general maintenance and infrastructure rehabilitation throughout the city.

### ***Local Knowledge***

The Downtown Revitalization Plan includes Fowler's central commercial area and immediate neighborhoods, bounded by Adams Avenue along the northeast, Golden State Boulevard to the west, Tuolumne Street to the northwest, and Main Street to the south, including Merced Street west of Golden State Boulevard to SR 99. The area also includes the approximately one-mile section of the Golden State Boulevard Corridor between Adams Avenue to the north and West Peach Street to the south, and selected areas observed as important opportunities to connect existing neighborhoods and future development to the downtown and schools.

Adoption of a Form-Based Code for this area is intended to stimulate cohesive place-based revitalization to foster a vibrant town center through a mix of uses with shop fronts and commercial uses at street level, overlooked by canopy shade trees, upper-story residences, and offices. The inclusion of upper-story residences provides housing mobility opportunities for households of all incomes, potential for higher-income household integration into a portion of the city experiencing low median incomes and high rates of Non-White populations, as well as increased access to commercial, services, linkage to the multi-use pedestrian/bike path system and public facilities resources, as well as employment opportunities.

The “Highway Business” Overlay District is intended to promote attractive development along SR 99 through the City of Fowler and establish consistent standards with other jurisdictions in Fresno County. The regulations of this district seek to balance the economic health of the community with a visually improved corridor.

The Golden State Corridor Economic Development Infrastructure Improvements Project, financed by Measure C, will provide improved access to the community, including pavement, signalization, and bike trail improvements. The project includes a realignment of Golden State Boulevard through the city, which will provide new commercial parcels and increase demand for commercial development, increasing access to commercial resources and employment opportunities for existing and future residents. In the southern extension of the city between SR 99 and Golden State Boulevard, the Temperance/Valley Drive loop has been completed and 70.0 percent of the industrial property has been developed, including the Three Crowns industrial project, thus increasing demand for local affordable housing for the additional workforce, and conversely, expanding employment opportunities for existing residents.

## ***Enforcement and Outreach Capacity***

### ***Compliance with Fair Housing Laws***

In addition to assessing demographic characteristics as indicators of fair housing, jurisdictions must identify how they currently comply with fair housing laws or identify programs to become in compliance. The City of Fowler enforces fair housing and complies with fair housing laws and regulations through a twofold process: review of local policies and codes for compliance with state law, and referral of fair housing complaints to appropriate agencies. The following identifies how the City complies with fair housing laws:

- **Density Bonus Law (Government Code Section 65915).** The City has included **Program 14: Zoning Ordinance Amendments** to amend the density bonus ordinance to allow up to a 50.0 percent increase in project density depending on the proportion of units that are dedicated as affordable, and up to 80.0 percent for projects that are completely affordable, in compliance with state law.
- **No-Net-Loss (Government Code Section 65863).** The City has identified a surplus of sites available to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation. In total, the City’s surplus unit capacity is 339 units, composed of 151 lower-income units, 47 moderate-income units, and 141 above moderate-income units.

- **Housing Accountability Act (HAA) (Government Code Section 65589.5).** The City does not condition the approval of housing development projects for very low-, low-, or moderate-income households or emergency shelters, unless specific written findings are made. Further, the City currently allows emergency shelters by-right, without limitations, in the M-1 zoning district.
- **Senate Bill 35 (Government Code Section 65913.4).** The City will comply with SB 35 by establishing a written policy or procedure, as well as other guidance as appropriate, to streamline the approval process and standards for eligible projects by September 2023 (**Program 18: Preliminary Applications (SB 330) and Streamlined Applications (SB 35)**).
- **Senate Bill 330 (Government Code Section 65589.5).** The City complies with SB 330, relying on regulations set forth in the law for processing preliminary applications for housing development projects, conducting no more than five hearings for housing projects that comply with objective general plan and development standards, and making a decision on a residential project within 90 days after certification of an environmental impact report or 60 days after adoption of a mitigated negative declaration or an environmental report for an affordable housing project. The City has included **Program 18: Preliminary Applications (SB 330) and Streamlined Applications (SB 35)** to formalize this process by establishing a written procedure to be made available on the City’s website and at public counters.
- **California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) and Federal Fair Housing Act.** The City provides protections to residents through referrals to legal assistance organizations, such as California Rural Legal Assistance, to increase access to these organizations which may be able to provide assistance.
- **Review Processes (Government Code Section 65008).** The City reviews affordable development projects in the same manner as market-rate developments, except in cases where affordable housing projects are eligible for preferential treatment, including, but not limited to, on residential sites subject to AB 1397.
- **Assembly Bill 686 (Government Code Section 8899.50).** The City has completed this AFH and identified programs to address identified fair housing issues in Table 2D-6, Contributing Factors to Fair Housing Issues.
- **Equal Access (Government Code Section 11135 et seq.).** Upon request, the City provides translation services for all public meetings and materials and offers accessibility accommodations to ensure equal access to all programs and activities operated, administered, or funded with financial assistance from the state, regardless of membership or perceived membership in a protected class.

### ***Fair Housing Outreach***

Regional outreach efforts for the Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element included interviewing Fair Housing of Central California (FHCC) for feedback on housing need, fair housing concerns, and opportunities to affirmatively further fair housing throughout the county. FHCC is a non-profit, civil rights organization dedicated to the elimination of discrimination in housing and the expansion of housing opportunities for all persons. They accomplish this through advocacy, assistance for victims of discrimination, and enforcement of fair housing laws.

In response to the request for input, FHCC noted that the most common fair housing issues reported throughout Fresno County are discrimination on the bases of disability and race. Further, they expressed concern about the aging multifamily housing stock becoming uninhabitable due to physical conditions. However, given the shortage of affordable housing in the region, FHCC noted that many units that have already physically deteriorated are still occupied, posing a risk to occupants. Discrimination by landlords or agents as well as deliberate segregation has resulted in fair housing concerns, particularly for protected and special needs populations, such as persons with disabilities and lower-income households.

FHCC emphasized a need for more government involvement in enforcement of fair housing laws. Currently, affordable housing options are often concentrated in specific neighborhoods. When developers are encouraged to continue to build affordable units in these areas as a result of zoning or other government regulations, this results in either intentional or unintentional segregation based on income. When asked about opportunities for local governments to actively improve outreach regarding fair housing and to combat existing issues, FHCC identified several opportunities including local rent controls to manage affordability and reduce displacement risk, code enforcement to ensure a safe and habitable housing stock, funding fair housing groups such as FHCC to enforce fair housing laws, and adjusting regulations or encouraging development of a variety of unit types and sizes throughout the jurisdiction to promote mobility and integration.

In response to the feedback received, the City has included Program 26: Improve Access to Resources to improve fair housing outreach capacity and multilingual accessibility to all public resources, information, and meetings, including fair housing resources. Steps to establish a procedure to connect residents with fair housing organizations, make information readily available and accessible on the City's website and in public buildings, and conduct biannual trainings for landlords on fair housing laws, rights, and responsibilities, are also covered by the programs identified in the Action Plan.

### ***Discrimination Cases***

In its 2020 Annual Report, the California Civil Rights Department (previously Department of Fair Employment and Housing) reported that it received nine housing complaints from residents of Fresno County, approximately 1.0 percent of the total number of housing cases in the state that year (880). As part of the Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP), the Civil Rights Department also dual-files fair housing cases with HUD's Region IX Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO), reporting them by the origin of the issue.

HUD FHEO reported that there were no cases filed, or inquires made, by residents of the City of Fowler between January 2013 and April 2021. However, a lack of formal cases does not necessarily mean that there is no discrimination in Fowler. In some cases, residents may be hesitant to report discrimination, such as in the case of undocumented residents that fear retaliation or may not be aware of fair housing legal assistance available to them.

Program 22: Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program and Program 24: Housing Choice Vouchers outline the City’s activities to increase access to homebuyer and housing choice programs that help promote housing mobility, among other programs established in the housing element.

## Sites Analysis

The location of housing in relation to resources and opportunities is integral to addressing disparities in housing needs and opportunity and to fostering inclusive communities where all residents have access to opportunity. This is particularly important for lower-income households. AB 686 added a new requirement for housing elements to analyze the location of lower-income sites in relation to areas of high opportunity.

**Table 1D-11 RHNA Capacity by Census Tracts in Fowler**, presents the RHNA capacity by census tracts in the city, and the existing conditions of each tract as they relate to indicators of fair housing. **Figure 1D-18 Census Tracts In Fowler**, shows the location of each census tract within the city. Tract 16 includes land within the city as well as land within the adjacent unincorporated county to the north, south, and east. Tract 17 also includes land within the city as well as land within the adjacent unincorporated county to the north, south, and west. As shown, sites with stand-alone unit capacity for lower-, moderate-, and above moderate-income levels have been identified within census Tract 17, although there are no sites that collocate unit capacity with potential for mixed-income development; while Tract 16 identifies only lower-income unit capacity.

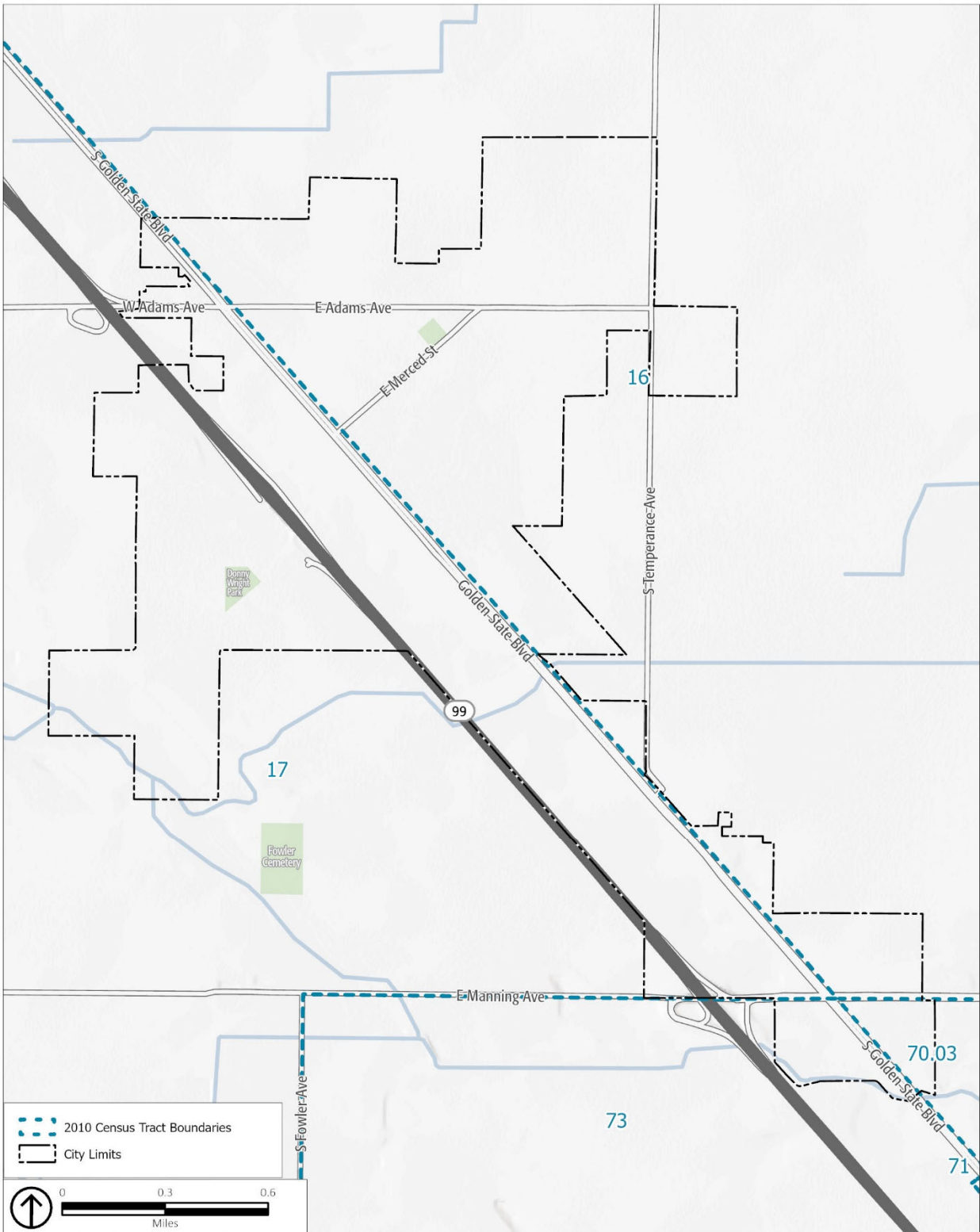
Table 1D-11 RHNA Capacity by Census Tracts in Fowler

Census Tract	Existing Households	RHNA Capacity			AFFH Indicators												
					Integration and Segregation						Access to Opportunity			Displacement Risk			
		Low	Mod.	Above Mod.	Median Income	Poverty Rate	Low- to Moderate-Income Population	Non-White Population	Disability Rate	R/ECAP Status	Resource Designation	Jobs Proximity Index	CalEnviro Screen Percentile	Over-crowding Rate	Renter Over-payment Rate	Homeowner Over-payment Rate	% Renter Households
16	1,630	29	0	0	\$25,781 - \$58,566	20.8%	36.6% - 71.0%	73.7% - 89.2%	15.8%	No	High and Highest Resource	56 - 73	86th	10.3%	59.2%	16.9%	49.4%
17	1,475	133	57	145	\$61,318	19.7%	46.5%	79.1%	9.7%	No	High Resource	89	96th	14.6%	41.3%	36.6%	44.1%



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Figure 1D-18 Census Tracts In Fowler



Source: U.S. Census; City of Fowler, 2023; Placeworks, 2023

As identified in the analysis of Patterns of Integration and Segregation, there are no census tracts that meet the criteria of being considered a R/ECAP in Fowler. In the regional context, as previously discussed, both census tracts in the city are designated High and Highest Resource. However, within Tract 16, the central downtown neighborhood has a population with socioeconomic indicators that reflect increased risk of displacement for segments of the community. This concentration of poverty and non-White population includes the triangular block group that includes the downtown area and older portions of the city, east of Golden State Boulevard, south of East Adams Avenue, and northwest of Main Street. This area has a median income of \$25,781 and 71.0 percent of the population falls within low/moderate-income categories, 43.3 percent of households with incomes below \$25,000 (correlating to poverty level), and a non-White population of 89.2 percent. Additionally, approximately 50.0 percent of households are renters, of which, 59.2 percent are cost burdened in this area.

The southeastern neighborhood in Tract 16 (south of Main Street) also has indicators that reflect a segment of the population at risk of displacement. While the median income is \$58,566, the rate of non-White population is 89.2 percent, 20.8 percent of households have incomes below \$25,000, the proportion of low/moderate-income households is 56.0 percent, and there is a high rate of renter households at 46.2 percent, of which, almost 60.0 percent overpay for housing. This neighborhood also has two multifamily complexes with 98 deed-restricted units, and housing stock consists of generally older, single- and small multifamily structures, as well as larger apartment complexes.

In addition, the neighborhoods in Tract 16 north of East Adams Avenue have a median income of \$46,731, a non-White population of 73.7 percent, 28.0 percent of the households have incomes below \$25,000, and 42.0 percent of the population falls within low/moderate-income categories. However, the majority of this portion of Tract 16 consists of new residential subdivisions and unincorporated area. The entire Tract 16 has a high CalEnviroScreen score, in the 87th percentile, ranking the tract as a disadvantaged community. A total of 8.0 percent of the RHNA unit capacity is identified in this tract to reduce the displacement risk for lower-income households. Only lower-income unit capacity (17.9 percent of lower-income unit capacity) is identified in Tract 16, with sites in the downtown neighborhood totaling 51.7 percent of Tract 16-unit capacity. The remainder of Tract 16-unit capacity is identified on sites adjacent to the Fowler Public Library south of the downtown, to increase affordable housing opportunities to facilitate housing mobility while allowing lower-income residents to remain in their neighborhood.

Tract 17, which includes the portion of the city west of Golden State Boulevard and encompasses the Sumner and Sunnyside, Aspire, and RJ Hill neighborhoods, has the highest percentage of RHNA unit capacity (64.8 percent), including all of the moderate- and above moderate-income sites and 82.1 percent of lower-income unit capacity. In this tract, 46.5 percent of the population are lower- and moderate-income households, with a slightly higher median income and a slightly lower poverty rate than tract 16, and a non-White population rate of 79.1 percent. While homeowners are the predominant tenure, 44.1 percent of households are renters; 41.3 percent of renters are cost burdened and 36.6 percent of homeowners are cost burdened, and overall 14.6 percent of households are overcrowded. Compounded by a high CalEnviroScreen score, this tract shows characteristics of vulnerability to displacement and

disproportionate housing need. Identified sites will include multifamily and single-family residential development. The inclusion of lower-income unit capacity will foster improved housing mobility for lower-income residents, facilitate mixed-income and more integrated, diverse neighborhoods, combat patterns of concentrated poverty in the downtown and older southeastern portions of the city, while additional moderate- and above moderate-income unit capacity housing stock provides mobility options for existing and future moderate- and higher-income households in a high-resource designated area.

The City has included **Program 13: Housing for a Variety of Needs** to support construction of higher-density housing in areas with better access to opportunities and encourage integration of a variety of unit types to facilitate mixed-income neighborhoods, combat patterns of income segregation, and provide housing mobility opportunities for a range of households. The distribution of sites identified in **Table 1D-11** is based on the availability of sites and potential for development during the planning period.

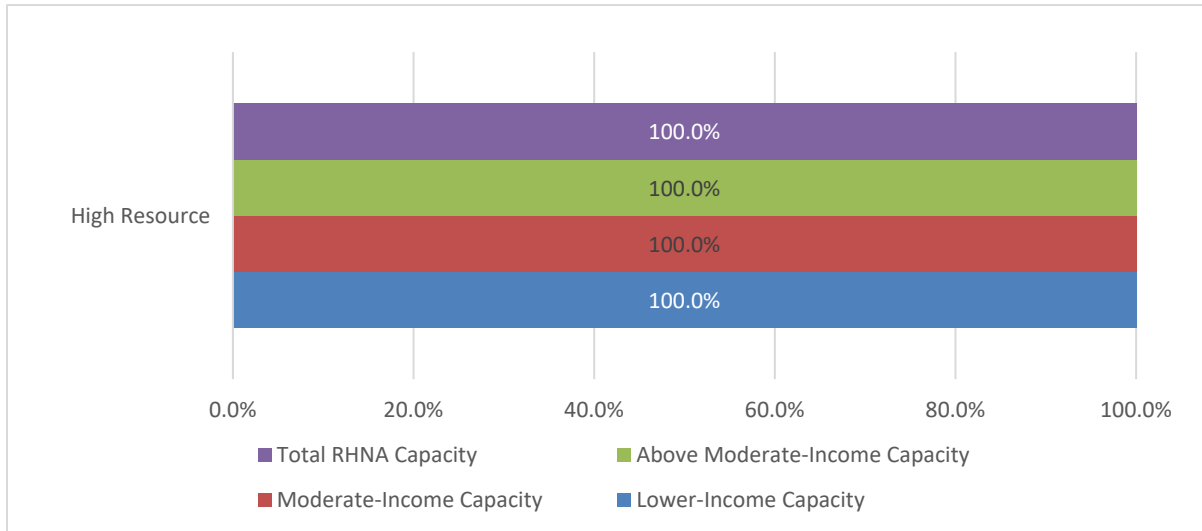
**Figure 1D-19** through **Figure 1D-28** compare the distribution of projected units by income category of the following indicators compared to citywide patterns to understand how the projected locations of units will affirmatively further fair housing: TCAC opportunity areas, median income, predominant population, disability rates, educational score, environmental health, and overpayment. The following sites inventory discussion includes an analysis of the number of projected units by income category, and total RHNA capacity by income category to further assess the potential impacts of the sites inventory to affirmatively further fair housing.

## ***Potential Effect on Patterns of Integration and Segregation***

### ***TCAC Resource Category***

The entire city and surrounding unincorporated areas south of East Adams Avenue are designated as TCAC/HCD High Resource, and Highest Resource north of East Adams Avenue. All of the unit capacity identified to meet the RHNA is in High Resource opportunity areas, with none of the identified unit capacity in the Highest Resource designation north of East Adams Avenue. However, while the sites are identified in a census tract determined as High Resource, it should be considered in the context of comparison to opportunities and potential outcomes within other jurisdictions within the San Joaquin Valley region.

Figure 1D-19 Percent Unit Capacity By TCAC/HCD Resource Designation



Source: City of Flower 2023, AFFH Dataviewer 1.0, 2016-2020 ACS

In the High Resource areas, opportunity for 100.0 percent of lower-income unit capacity has been identified on vacant parcels, therefore not risking displacement of existing residents. There are four sites with 9.3 percent of the lower-income unit capacity within the downtown core, and two lower-income sites with capacity for 8.6 percent of lower-income units in the vicinity of the intersection of Vine Street and Golden State Boulevard near the Fowler Public Library, all of which have access to commercial, light industrial, services, and transit amenities east of Golden State Boulevard. The majority of lower-income unit capacity (82.1 percent) is identified on sites in areas west of Golden State Boulevard that have slightly more positive quality of life indicators than the eastern portion of the city south of East Adams Avenue. Two sites totaling 61.1 percent of total lower-income unit capacity (29.6 percent of the total unit capacity west of Golden State Boulevard in Tract 17) are identified along N. 8th Street between West Tuolumne Street and the Valley Mobile Home Park in the vicinity of the downtown. An additional site has been identified adjacent to SR 99 off East Sumner Avenue and south of the Estrella Apartment complex, providing 21.0 percent of total lower-income unit capacity (and 10.1 percent of the total unit capacity on the west side). The lower-income units counter potential displacement of existing residents throughout the city by increasing the stock of affordable housing opportunities and provide opportunities for more income-integrated neighborhoods adjacent to newer single-family residential subdivisions.

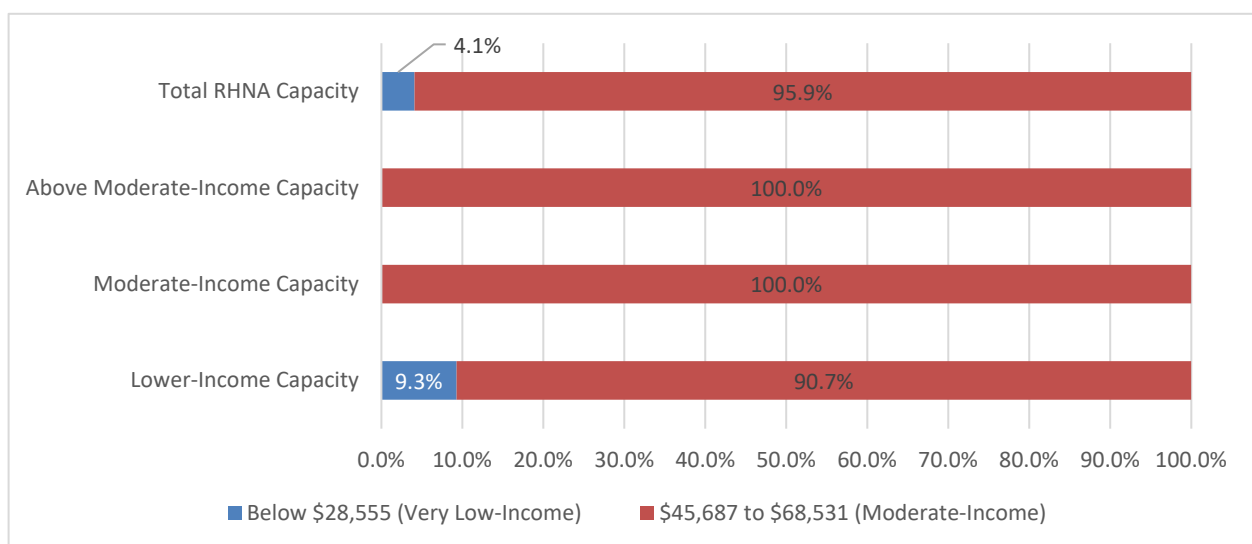
Approximately 15.7 percent of the site inventory to meet the RHNA is identified as moderate-income, located on a vacant property within the western side of the city in the Aspire Avenue neighborhood near Donny Wright Park, with direct southbound access to SR 99. The moderate-income site contributes 17.0 percent of the unit capacity in the tract west of Golden State Boulevard. All of the above moderate-income unit site capacity, comprising 40.0 percent of the total unit capacity and 43.3 percent of the unit capacity west of Golden State Boulevard, is identified on a large High Resource-designated site south of the RJ Hill neighborhood, which helps to facilitate mixed-income neighborhoods and above moderate-income housing mobility.

**Income**

As previously discussed, Fowler is a low- to moderate-income community with a 2020 median income of \$59,663, slightly above the county median income of \$57,100, although household income levels vary between different areas of the city. While the household median income falls below the statewide median in all census tracts within the city, it is also below the county median in the downtown and East Adams Avenue neighborhoods, regardless of TCAC/HCD resource designations. However, there is no unit capacity identified in the East Adams Avenue neighborhood (north of East Adams Avenue), and only 4.1 percent of total unit capacity, all for lower-income households, identified in the downtown.

As shown in **Figure 1D-20 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Median Income**, a larger percentage of the unit capacity (95.9 percent) has been identified on sites within areas that have median incomes correlating to the 2020 moderate-income category (80.0 -120.0 percent of 2020 AMI) west of Golden State Boulevard with a median income of \$61,318, and in the southeast Fowler California neighborhood east of Golden State Boulevard, which has a median income of \$58,566. Capacity for 9.3 percent of lower-income unit capacity is identified on sites at or below the 2020 Fresno County median income, which expands the more affordable housing stock resources and provides mobility opportunities for residents who want to move yet remain within their existing neighborhoods, thereby preventing displacement. In contrast, 90.7 percent of lower-income unit potential is distributed within the moderate-income neighborhoods, which facilitates de-concentration of lower-income households from the central downtown portion of the city, which has a median income corresponding closely to the 2020 HUD poverty threshold, to higher-income portions of the city. Further, future construction potential of lower-income units in higher-income neighborhoods not only integrates income mix in higher-income neighborhoods and facilitates housing mobility for lower-income households, it also aims to reduce existing income patterns and pressure on housing shortages in areas of concentrated need.

**Figure 1D-20 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Median Income**

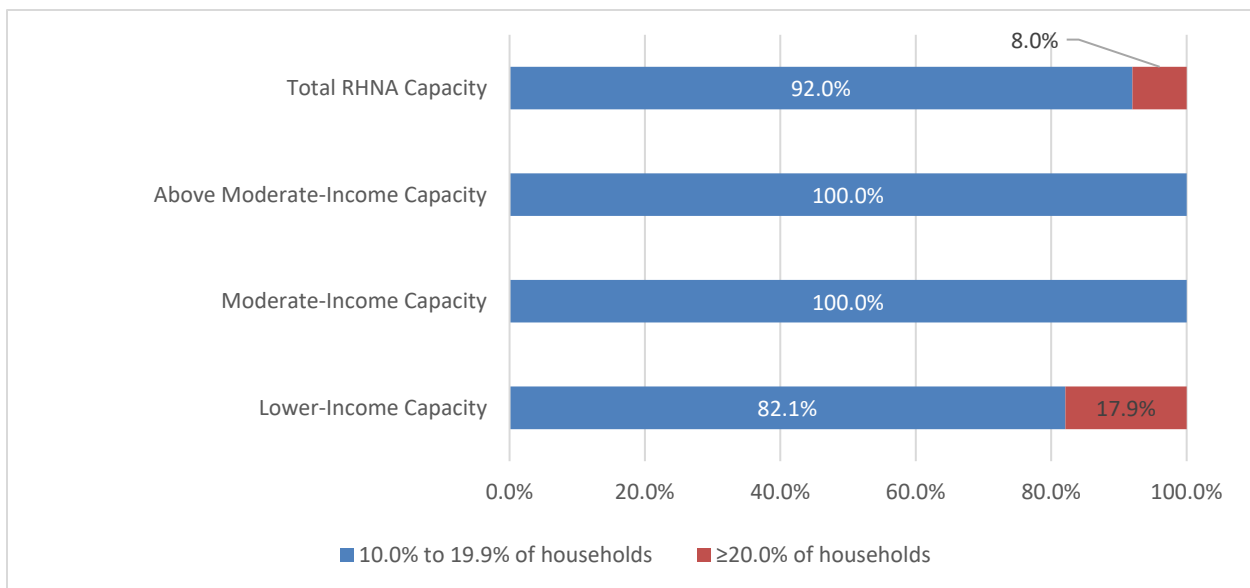


Source: City of Fowler, 2023, 2016-2020 ACS, and 2020 HCD State Income Limits for Fresno County

The inclusion of 100.0 percent of the moderate- and above moderate-income unit potential on vacant sites on the west side of the city will help to facilitate mixed-income neighborhoods and encourage future income integration in moderate-income neighborhoods and provides housing mobility opportunities for moderate- and above moderate-income households.

As presented in **Figure 1D-21 Percentage Unit Capacity By Poverty Rate**, approximately 92.0 percent of RHNA unit capacity is identified west of Golden State Boulevard where poverty rates are between 10.0 and 19.9 percent, with 8.0 percent of unit capacity identified east of Golden State Boulevard. While at the tract level the poverty rate is fairly equivalent between the eastern (20.8 percent) and western (19.7 percent) sides of the city, at the block group level, the poverty rate within the downtown is 43.3 percent. Approximately 82.1 percent of lower-income unit capacity is identified on sites in the western tract to encourage the development of housing mobility opportunities for lower-income households in potentially more stable, higher-income neighborhoods while reducing the concentration of households in poverty in the downtown. The remainder of the lower-income site capacity (17.9 percent) is projected in areas with an existing need for an increased supply of affordable housing for households in poverty, lower-income, and overcrowded households to remain in their neighborhoods and reduce the risk of displacement; of which, 39.1 percent are identified on sites within the downtown. Development of these lower-income units in these areas will help to alleviate existing patterns of overpayment and overcrowding and encourage place-based revitalization through development of vacant, often unsightly parcels, providing new, safe housing in areas of more concentrated poverty.

**Figure 1D-21 Percentage Unit Capacity By Poverty Rate**



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS



In addition to 82.1 percent of lower-income units, all moderate- and above moderate-income units are projected in the slightly lower poverty neighborhoods to affirmatively further fair housing through mixed-income neighborhoods. In addition, the City has included **Program 11: Encourage and Facilitate Accessory Units** to actively promote construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in higher median-income areas and monitor affordability of new ADUs to lower- and moderate-income households.

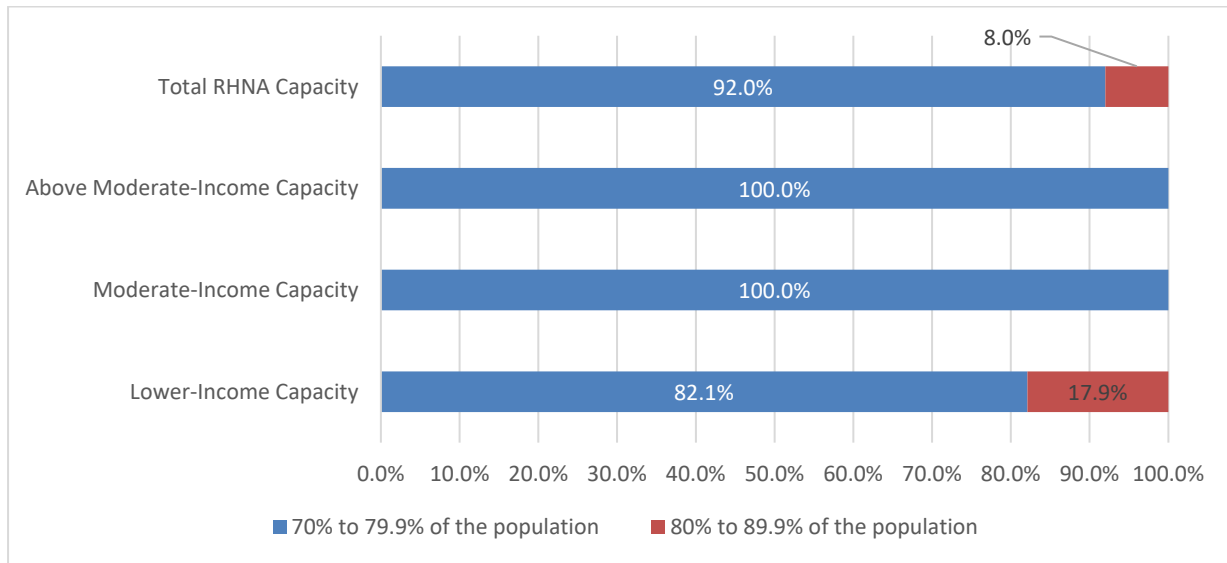
The combination of this program and facilitating the development of additional high-density housing in a community that has historically been dominated by single-family units will help ameliorate patterns of segregation, particularly in the downtown. The development of these sites will make Fowler more accessible to households with a wider range of incomes, while simultaneously increasing housing mobility opportunities and de-concentrating areas of poverty and low-income households.

### ***Race and Ethnicity***

As discussed previously, Fowler is among Fresno County's more diverse jurisdictions, which, while communities of color comprise 83.1 percent of the population, 66.4 percent identify as Hispanic, 13.1 percent identify as Asian, and 3.4 percent identify as Other (Black, Other, and American Indian). Only Clovis, Coalinga, Fresno, Kingsburg, and the unincorporated area have lower rates of Hispanic residents. As shown in **Figure 1D-5 Local Racial Demographics**, there is a pattern of a higher concentration of non-White households within the eastern tract of the city south of East Adams Avenue, predominantly Hispanic (between 77.2 and 80.0 percent) coinciding with older portions of the city, neighborhoods with relatively lower incomes and higher rates of poverty in the downtown; while the western tract and newer neighborhoods north of East Adams Avenue have Hispanic populations just over 61.0 percent and higher proportions of White non-Hispanic residents as well as a representation of Asian residents between 14.0 and 8.6 percent, respectively.

As shown in **Figure 1D-22 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Percentage Non-White Population**, 8.0 percent of the capacity to meet the RHNA is in areas where more than 80.0 percent of the population identifies as non-White. Of the lower-income unit capacity, 82.1 percent is identified on sites in areas in which 70.0 to 79.9 percent of the population identifies as non-White. This offers an opportunity for lower-income, non-White households that may have been priced out and excluded from housing mobility opportunities to access resources in higher-income neighborhoods while facilitating income integration and reducing concentrations of non-White populations in the central downtown and southeast areas of the city. The remaining 17.9 percent of lower-income sites are within the tract with higher concentrations of non-White households to increase housing resources for residents who may otherwise be priced out and are vulnerable to displacement in their own neighborhoods.

**Figure 1D-22 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Percentage Non-White Population**



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

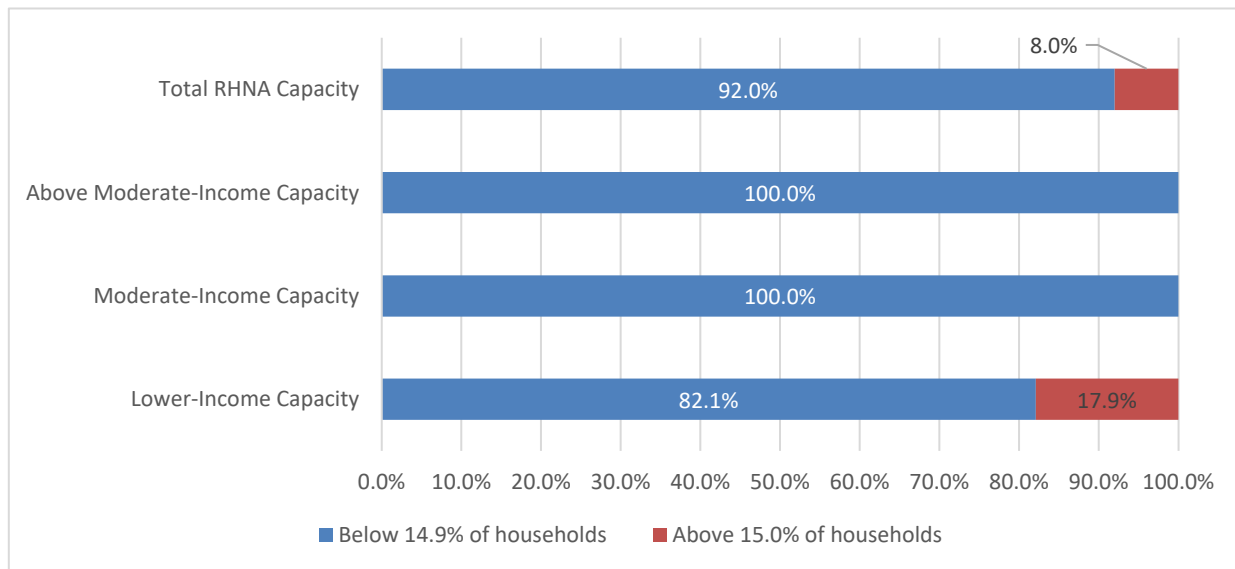
As shown in **Figure 1D-22**, all of the moderate- and above moderate-income unit capacity is identified on sites in areas that have non-White populations between 70.0 and 79.9 percent, which will facilitate income integration and housing mobility opportunities for higher-income households through a more diverse range of housing types.

**Disability**

Approximately 12.9 percent of Fowler’s population lives with one or more types of disability, as shown on Figure 2-32, Percentage of Population with a Disability, in the Housing Needs Assessment. As discussed previously, data indicates that a smaller proportion of residents in Fowler’s higher-income areas on the east side of the city are living with disabilities (9.7 percent) compared to lower-income areas in the downtown and southeast neighborhoods, and that those residents who are living with a disability are found at higher rates (15.8 percent) in lower-income areas.

As illustrated by **Figure 1D-23 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Disability Rate**, approximately 92.0 percent of the total RHNA capacity identified in the sites inventory is in areas in which fewer than 10.0 percent of residents have a disability in the western tract of the city, and 8.0 percent in the eastern tract in which more than 15.0 percent of residents have a disability. As stakeholders identified, high housing costs and a shortage of permanently supportive housing in the county has generally increased displacement risk for residents with disabilities and presents a barrier to persons with disabilities.

Figure 1D-23 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Disability Rate



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

Approximately 82.1 percent of the lower-income unit capacity and all of the moderate- and above moderate-income unit capacity is identified in the western side of the city where the rate of disability is below 14.9 percent, although seniors comprise a larger portion of the persons with disabilities on the west side than the east. Locating units affordable to lower- and moderate-income residents in proximity to the Adventist Medical Center, the downtown commercial hub, and both SR 99 and Golden State Boulevard will help to improve access for and accommodate the needs of persons living with disabilities, who benefit from close access to services and amenities as well as proximity to transit.

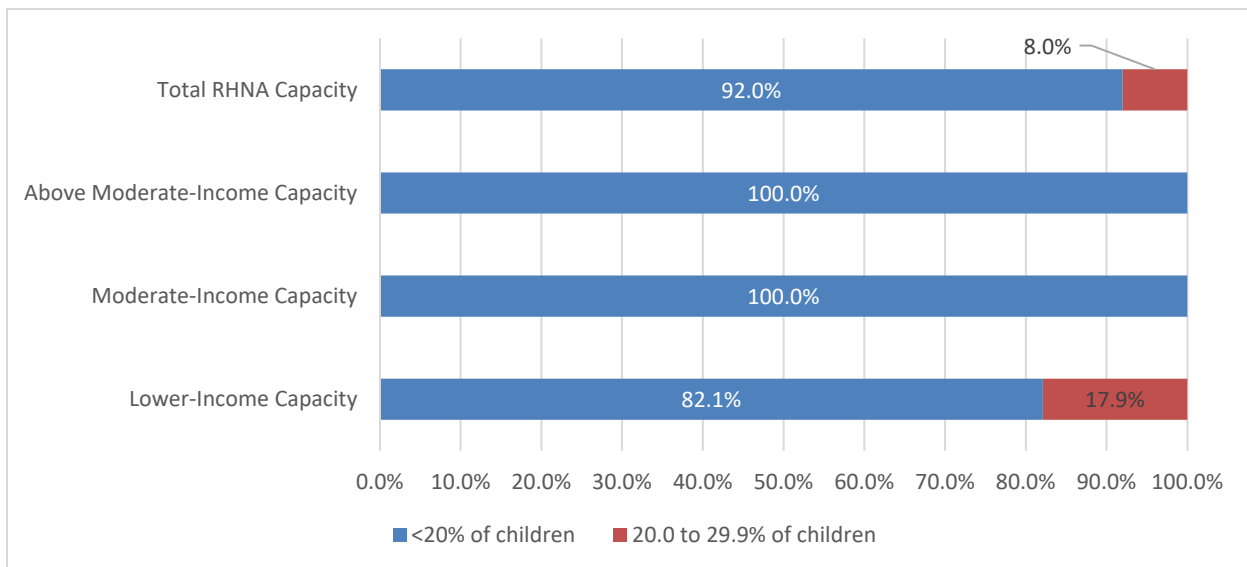
An additional 17.9 percent of the lower-income unit capacity has been identified on sites where the rate of disabilities are above 15.0 percent of the population, providing housing mobility and additional affordable housing supply opportunities in the vicinity of the downtown to access resources.

**Familial Status**

As previously discussed, 6.3 percent of the households in the city are single, female-headed households with children, of whom, 42.0 percent had incomes below the poverty level, which suggests that single-parent, female-headed households may have more challenges securing housing. The spatial distribution of single-parent, female-headed households with children as a percentage of total households is generally consistent with median household incomes, as well as availability of affordable housing (all of the deed-restricted units and a greater amount of older housing stock in the city is on the east side of Fowler), and location of school facilities. As such, between 20.0 and 40.0 percent of children in the eastern tract reside in a single female-headed household, corresponding to most of the city’s affordable housing resources, compared to below 20.0 percent of children residing in single female-headed households within the western side of the city.

As presented in **Figure 1D-24 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Percentage Of Children In Female-Headed Households**, approximately 8.0 percent of total unit capacity distributed on sites identified on 5th, 6th, and 7th Streets, providing the potential for 17.9 percent of the lower-income unit capacity in areas with the highest rate of children in female-headed households on the east side of the city. Housing unit potential on these sites increases the opportunities for female-headed households currently experiencing overpayment and/or overcrowding to acquire affordable and adequately sized housing with access to downtown businesses, medical facilities, and services; as well as Fremont Elementary School, Marshall Elementary School, Sutter Middle School, and Fowler High School. Additionally, 82.1 percent of the lower-income, and 100.0 percent of moderate- and above moderate-income anticipated units have been identified in areas with higher incomes yet lower representations of children in single, female-headed households, which will increase housing mobility opportunities for single, female-headed households at all income levels, as well as all other household types, to find appropriate units within Fowler, while contributing toward de-concentration of higher rates of poverty on the east side. Overall, female-headed households of any economic status will have access to new housing opportunities, as well as other single-parent households, persons living alone, seniors, lower-income families, and other households.

**Figure 1D-24 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Percentage Of Children In Female-Headed Households**



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

## Potential Effect on Access to Opportunity

### Job and Transit Proximity

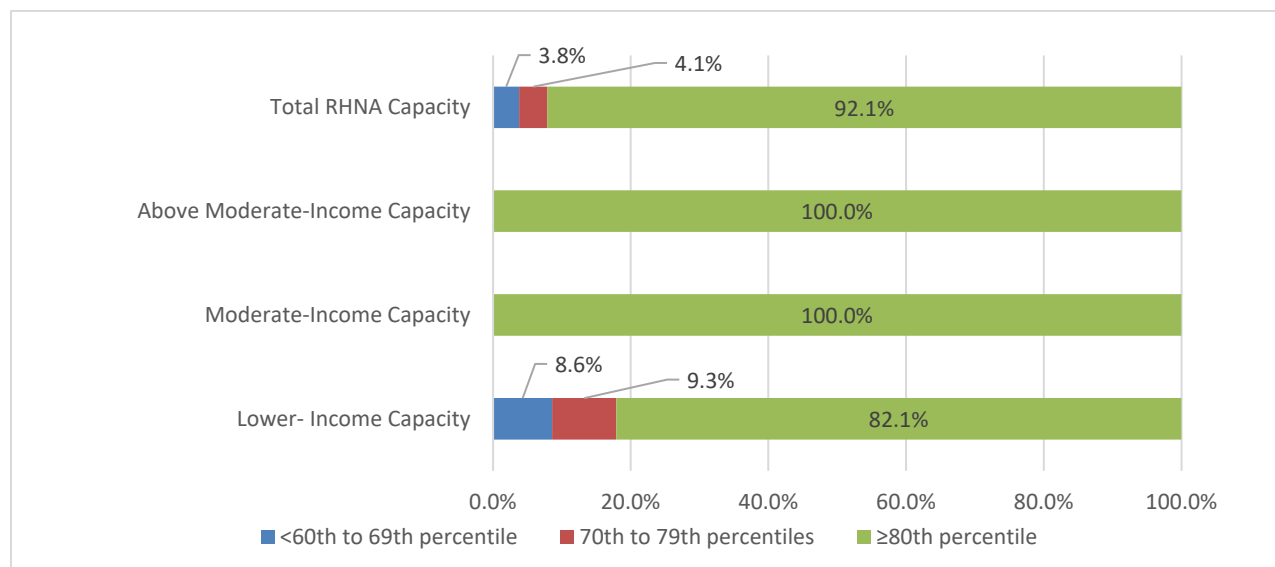
Fowler residents are served by FCRTA, providing fixed-route service on the Southeast, Kingsburg-Reedley, and Kings Area Regional Transit (KART) lines (see Figure 3-34, Fresno County Rural Transit Agency Intercounty Routes, in Section 3: Regional Assessment of Fair Housing). Southeast Transit provides three round trips on weekdays between Fowler and Fresno, stopping in Fowler at the bus shelter on the west side of East Merced and North 7th Street, and at Valley Children’s Healthcare off West Fresno

Street to the west of Golden State Boulevard. The single KART stop in Fowler is at Valley Children’s Healthcare.

While there is a prevalence of residential uses with strong access to Fresno’s job market, much of the employment in Fowler is provided by local fruit packing and distribution facilities, including Bee Sweet Citrus, National Raisin, Lion Raisins, Pacific Packaging, and more; as well as a strong presence of other manufacturing and packaging/distribution facilities. These local employment opportunities, as well as close proximity to employment in nearby Fresno and Clovis, is reflected in jobs proximity index scores between the 56th and 89th percentiles throughout the city, with higher ranking scores in the higher-income and high-resource western portions of the city.

As shown in **Figure 1D-25 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Jobs Proximity Index Scores**, 92.1 percent of the RHNA unit capacity is sited in areas with the highest jobs proximity index score within the western side of the city, including 82.1 percent of lower-income and 100.0 percent of moderate- and above moderate-income unit capacity, thus improving access to employment opportunities within the industrial area in the southern portion of the city and north towards Fresno. As the city is predominantly residential, siting of unit capacity at all income levels in the higher-proximity areas will aid in improving access to employment opportunities both inside and outside of the city.

**Figure 1D-25 Percentage Of Unit Capacity By Jobs Proximity Index Scores**



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

The remaining 19.7 percent of lower-income unit capacity is on the east side, with 8.6 percent of lower-income unit capacity in the downtown area, and 9.3 percent of the unit capacity in close proximity to both the downtown and Valley Children’s Healthcare that are currently serviced by inter-city transit providers, providing close proximity to transit for occupants of these units.

When considering where to locate future housing for all income levels, and particularly lower-income units, sites with access to West Merced Avenue to connect with SR 99 towards Fresno and jurisdictions to the south offers the most convenient access to jobs available within the city and transit to other parts in the region. Further, construction of these sites will help to further improve the jobs-housing ratio with residential development in and near Golden State Boulevard commercial and SR 99 transit corridors, thus improving jobs proximity for current and future residents of Fowler.

### ***Environmental Health***

As previously discussed, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) reports CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores for Fowler demonstrating relatively adverse environmental conditions, with census tracts in and around Fowler scoring between the 86th and 96th percentiles (**Figure 1D-13 Calenviroscreen Scores**). In Fowler, residents in different parts of the jurisdiction experience the same scores, indicating that residents across the city do not have different access to environmental outcomes. The entire city falls within the boundaries of areas considered SB 535-qualifying disadvantaged communities, the 25.0 percent highest-scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 4.0. This indicates that, compared with statewide averages, portions of Fowler represent an area of potential concern regarding fair housing and disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards and a concentration of vulnerable populations.

All of the sites inventory capacity has been identified in neighborhoods scoring in the 87th to 92nd percentiles. Many of the lower-income sites are in areas with close proximity to the Golden State Boulevard commercial corridor and SR 99, while the moderate- and above-moderate sites are closer to agricultural uses. Development potential in the disadvantaged community is envisioned to improve environmental conditions through incorporation of outdoor spaces, transitional buffers and screening between residential and nonresidential uses, and promotion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, thus promoting environmental sustainability. Investment through development of vacant sites with capacity for lower-income levels will help facilitate place-based revitalization in the downtown and older southeast neighborhoods and will increase the supply of affordable housing in an area susceptible to displacement due to housing costs, while also encouraging income integration in new development.

Further, all of the moderate- and above moderate-income capacity is identified in the western side of the city where scores are the highest, in the 92nd percentile, providing above higher-income housing mobility opportunities. The distribution of 82.0 percent of the lower-income unit capacity west of Golden State Boulevard facilitates housing mobility opportunities in higher-income neighborhoods, designed to promote environmental sustainability, and promotes a reduction of concentration of poverty and lower-income households in the downtown and southeastern neighborhoods.

## ***Potential Effect on Displacement Risk***

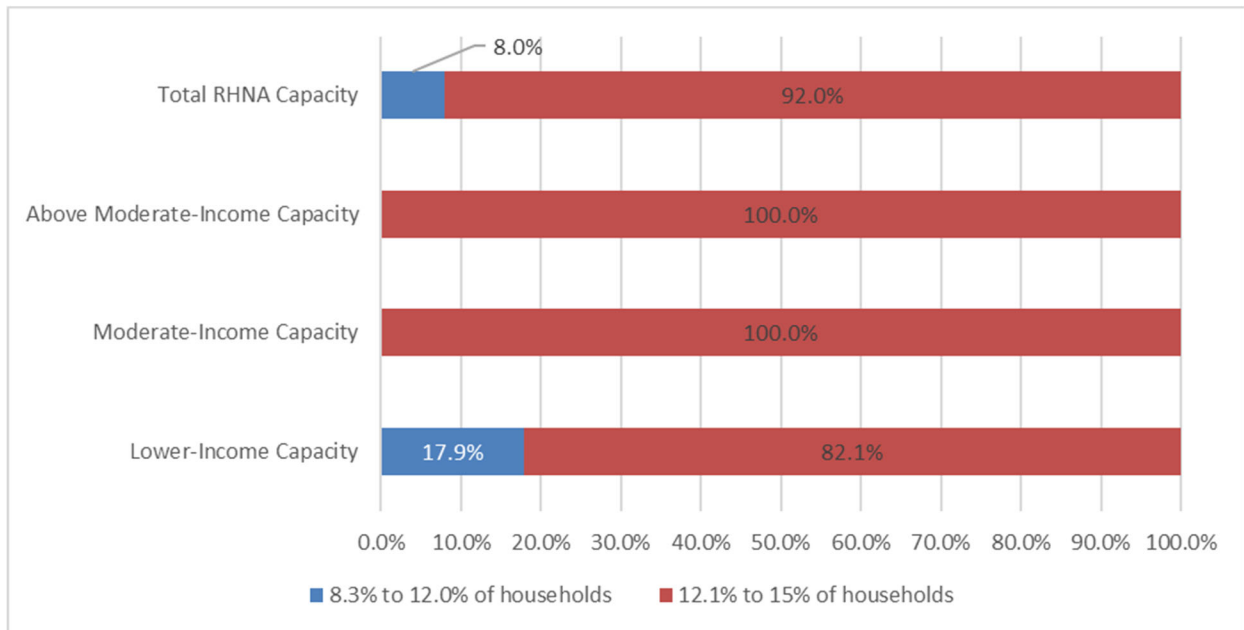
### ***Overcrowding***

Overcrowding in Fowler is relatively low in comparison to other jurisdictions in the county, which may represent a greater balance of housing type with demand and need. This may be partially attributed to 69.7 percent of housing units having three or more bedrooms, which typically reduces the need for occupants to share rooms, although these are predominantly single-family units, which have higher rates of homeownership. Overcrowding is significantly higher among renters (12.8 percent) compared to homeowners (4.4 percent), which, although slightly more households east of Golden State Boulevard are renters, indicates that overcrowding occurs at a higher rate west of Golden State Boulevard (14.6 percent of households) than to the east (10.3 percent) (**Figure 1D-14 Overcrowding In Fowler**). However, the incidence of overcrowding has been increasing in Fowler, which, particularly in light of the high proportion of larger housing units, may indicate a growing lack of affordability resulting in households needing to share costs, or may indicate that demand for housing exceeds supply, particularly in the west side.

As presented in **Figure 1D-26 Percentage Unit Capacity By Overcrowding**, the largest proportion of the unit capacity, 92.0 percent, is identified in areas of the city with higher overcrowding rates (above 12.0 percent) in the western tract, including 100.0 percent of moderate-income units and 82.1 percent of lower-income units to help to alleviate this issue by increasing the affordable housing supply. The remainder of the lower-income capacity will facilitate housing mobility opportunities near services and resources in the downtown commercial area east of Golden State Boulevard. Additionally, the inclusion of 100.0 percent of above moderate-income sites in the portions of the city with rates of overcrowding above 12.0 percent will ease pressure on the housing stock, thus potentially reducing displacement risk and overcrowding for these households as well as more units become available.



Figure 1D-26 Percentage Unit Capacity By Overcrowding



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

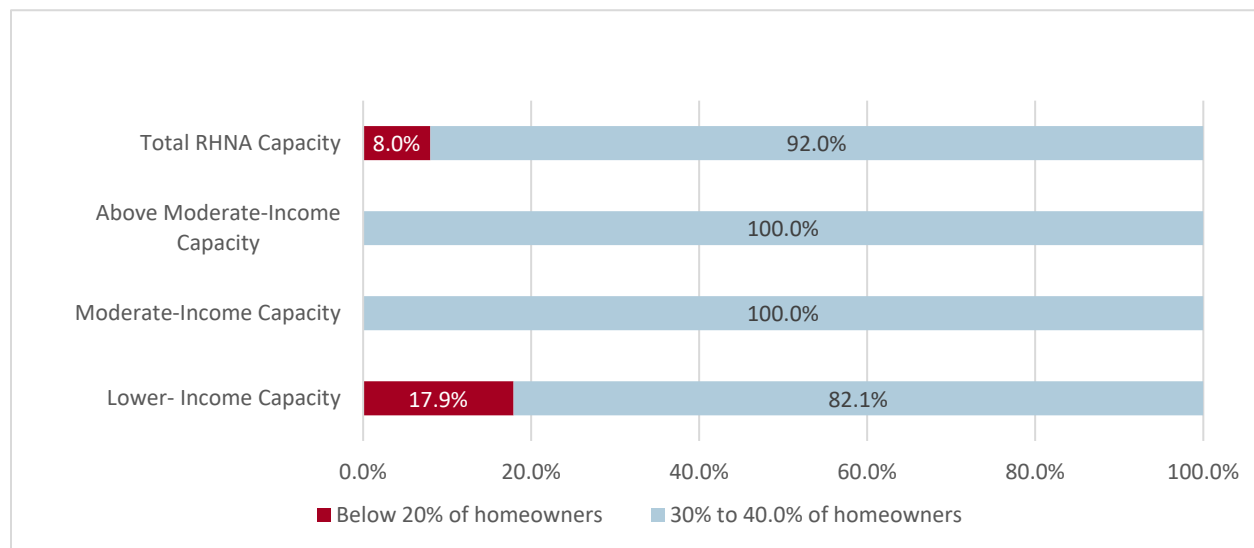
**Overpayment**

Similar to conditions throughout the state, owners and renters throughout Fowler are overpaying for housing, likely due to increases in housing costs that have outpaced wage increases, with 35.5 percent of households experiencing some level of overpayment, as shown by **Table 1D-7 Cost Burden in Fowler, 2010-2018**, **Figure 1D-15 Percentage Of Homeowners Overpaying**, and **Figure 1D-16 Percentage Of Renters Overpaying**. Of these cost burdened households, approximately 71.5 percent are renters, though renters comprise only 46.6 percent of households in the city. Lower- and moderate-income households are most at risk of displacement due to overpayment. Moderate-income renters are often more impacted by rising rental costs, as they are outside of eligibility for Section 8 and other affordable unit types, while the increase in median home value has primarily impacted lower-income households. Additionally, special-needs populations, including female-headed households, large families, persons with disabilities, and seniors, often fall into the lower-income category and may be particularly at risk of displacement when housing opportunities at affordable costs, sizes, or access to resources are not available.

East of Golden State Boulevard, just 16.9 percent of homeowners are overpaying for housing. In comparison, west of Golden State Boulevard, 36.6 percent of homeowners are estimated to be overpaying for housing, although poverty rates are lower and incomes higher than in the eastern side of Fowler. This may be partially attributed to the new market rate construction that has occurred in the western portion of the city, which is affordable only to above moderate-income households. In contrast to geographic discrepancies in homeowner overpayment, rental home value is relatively constant throughout the city.

As presented in **Figure 1D-27 Percentage Unit Capacity By Rate Of Homeowner Overpayment**, in the western tract where homeowner overpayment rates are between 30.0 and 40.0 percent of homeowners, the majority of total unit capacity (92.0 percent) is identified, including all of moderate- and above moderate-income unit potential, and 82.1 percent of lower-income unit potential. Typically, above moderate-income units are unaffordable to cost-burdened households yet will provide housing mobility opportunities for higher-income households that may be overpaying due to limited availability of housing stock, while lower- and moderate-income housing units can help alleviate overpayment by providing additional housing stock to reduce competition for limited affordable housing mobility opportunities. On the east side, sites for 17.9 percent of new lower-income units have been identified with the intent of increasing the supply of affordable housing, thus reducing risk of displacement due to overpayment.

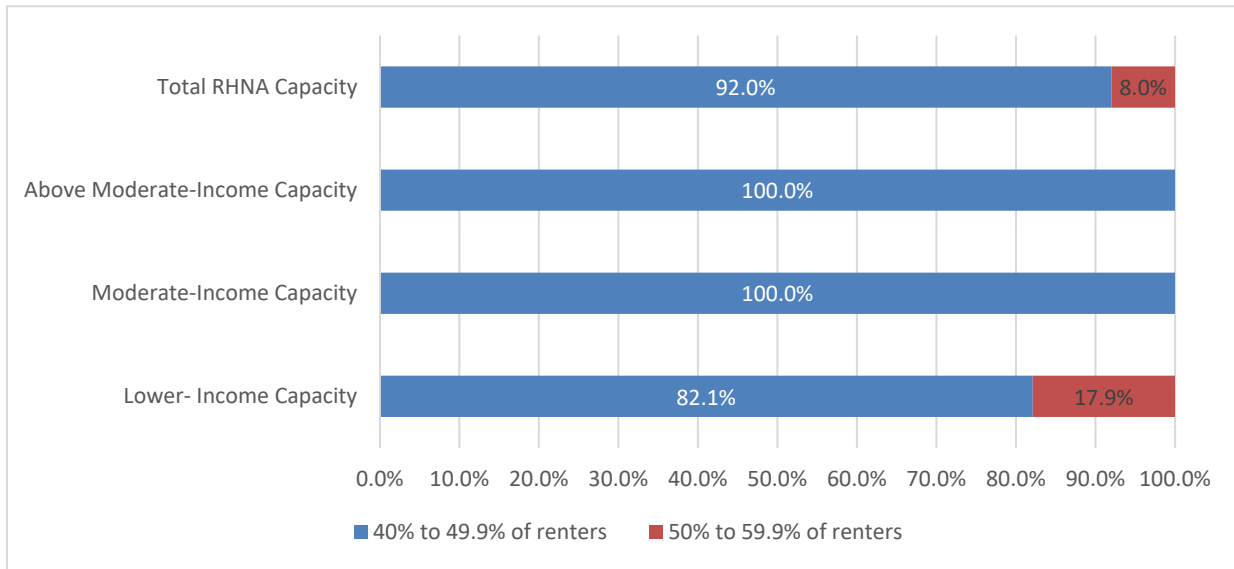
**Figure 1D-27 Percentage Unit Capacity By Rate Of Homeowner Overpayment**



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

As shown in **Figure 1D-28 Percentage Unit Capacity By Rate Of Renter Overpayment**, the distribution of RHNA unit capacity identifies 17.9 percent of lower-income unit capacity in areas with the highest rates of renter overpayment (59.2 percent) in the downtown neighborhoods. An increase in the supply of lower-income rental units in this portion of the city, particularly those near commercial and services in the downtown, will help to alleviate conditions that contribute to overpayment by reducing the gap between supply and demand for this type of housing. The identification of 82.1 percent of lower-income unit capacity in the western neighborhoods also facilitates lower-income integration in higher-income neighborhoods.

**Figure 1D-28 Percentage Unit Capacity By Rate Of Renter Overpayment**



Source: City of Fowler, 2023, and 2016-2020 ACS

Special-needs groups that may be disproportionately affected by high housing costs include large families, single-parent households, and seniors. As discussed in the Overcrowding analysis, large family households often face housing challenges due to a lack of adequately sized affordable housing available. The higher costs of homes with multiple bedrooms can result in larger families experiencing a disproportionate cost burden and increase the risk of housing insecurity. The ACS also reports that single-parent households comprise 16.6 percent of the total households in Fowler, the majority of which are female single parents. Of female-headed, single-parent households, 42.0 percent are below the poverty threshold, indicating that these households may have to spend a greater percentage of their income on housing and are at risk for displacement without assistance. However, the identification of 82.1 percent of lower-income unit capacity in the tract with higher incomes provides additional housing supply to alleviate overpayment, and suggests that single female householders with children may be able to obtain housing in areas with lower rates of poverty, segregation, and renter overpayment.

Seniors, comprising 26.8 percent of Fowler’s households, often face increased displacement risk due to overpayment as this population more frequently relies on fixed incomes, such as retirement savings or social security, with approximately 36.9 percent of seniors falling in the extremely low-income category. Additionally, 57.2 percent of all seniors are homeowners, a portion of which are likely to be lower income, indicating a need for affordable ownership units that accommodate the needs of seniors, as well as other persons with disabilities or special needs. Therefore, the addition of these units will help to alleviate existing overpayment by offering lower- and moderate-income units to current and future residents where there is need and increasing the housing stock overall to alleviate the demand on an existing shortage of housing at affordable price points, as well as responding to demands of special-needs populations. Further, the site capacity and distribution of units by income category will facilitate mobility opportunities for all households.

## Contributing Factors

Through discussions with stakeholders, fair housing advocates, and this assessment of fair housing issues, the City identified factors that contribute to fair housing issues, as shown in **Table 1D-12 Factors Contributing to Fair Housing Issues**. While there are several strategies identified to address the fair housing issues, the most pressing issues are the concentration of lower-income households in the southeastern portion of the city where most multifamily uses are and barriers to strong educational, economic, and environmental conditions and opportunities. The combination of these factors present challenges to housing and economic mobility in the short and near term for many households, particularly lower-income households. Prioritized contributing factors are **bolded** in **Table 1D-12** and associated actions to meaningfully affirmatively further fair housing related to these factors are *bold and italicized*. Additional programs to affirmatively further fair housing are included in **Section 1D-1, Action Plan**.

**Table 1D-12 Factors Contributing to Fair Housing Issues**

AFH Identified Fair Housing Issue	Contributing Factor	Meaningful Actions
Disparities in access to services and resources	High jobs-housing ratio, indicating insufficient housing availability <b>Low housing vacancy rates</b> Limited transit connectivity Low-scoring school performance Exposure to commercial agricultural and natural resource extraction	<i>Programs 3, 9, 10, 11 and 25 promote access to educational opportunities, while Programs 20, 22, and 24 promote economic opportunities within the community.</i>
Displacement risk for lower- and moderate-income renters	<b>Concentration of multifamily options in the southeastern portion of the city</b> Rapid increases in rent costs	<i>Programs 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, and 26 are aimed at reducing displacement risk in the community.</i>
Housing mobility barriers for current and prospective homeowners	<b>Cost of new construction in the southern portion of the city</b> Cost of rehabilitation or repairs to older units	<i>Programs 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, and 26 are aimed at reducing displacement risk in the community.</i>

## SECTION 1D-4: CONSTRAINTS

### Land Use Controls

#### General Plan

##### Analysis

The City of Fowler General Plan contains the following residential land use designations:

**Low Density:** 0.0-3.6 dwelling units per gross acre

**Medium-Low Density:** 3.7-5.5 dwelling units per gross acre

**Medium Density:** 5.6-13.5 dwelling units per gross acre

**Medium-High Density:** 8.0-13.5 dwelling units per gross acre

**High Density:** 13.6-21.8 dwelling units per gross acre

**Community Commercial:** 13.6-21.8 dwelling units per gross acre

### **Conclusion**

The City offers a range of housing densities in the community. The densities are sufficiently high to allow the development of affordable housing for all income levels.

### **Recommended Action**

None required.

## **Zoning Ordinance**

### **Analysis**

The City's Zoning Ordinance provides for the following residential districts:

**One Family Residential (R-1-12, R-1-10, R-1-8.5, R-1-7, R-1-6, R-1-5):** The R Districts are intended primarily to provide living areas at locations designated by the General Plan for Low, Medium Low, and Medium Density, involving single family dwellings.

**Multi-Family Residential (RM-2-A, RM-2, RM-3-A, RM-3):** The RM Multi-Family Residential Districts are intended primarily for the development of multifamily residential structures at densities consistent with policies of the General Plan. Multi-family housing is permitted by right in the RM zones. Multi-family housing exceeding 21.8 units per acre is conditionally permitted in the RM-3 zone.

In addition, the City's Zoning Ordinance allows residential uses in the following nonresidential zones:

**Neighborhood Commercial (C-1):** This district is intended primarily for the provision of retail and personal service facilities to satisfy the convenience-goods needs of the consumer relatively close to residential neighborhoods. Horizontal or vertical mixed-use development subject to the development standards of the RM-3 district is conditionally permitted.

**Community Commercial (C-2):** The Community Commercial District is to be applied to the community commercial areas of the City, as may be designated by the General Plan. These areas provide a wide range of retail, financial, governmental, professional, business service, and entertainment activities. Horizontal or vertical mixed-use development subject to the development standards of the RM-3 district is conditionally permitted.

**Form-Based Code Area (FBC):** The Form-Based Code Area is intended to foster a vibrant town center through a mix of uses with shop fronts and commercial uses at street level, overlooked by canopy shade trees, upper story residences, and offices. The code regulates land development by setting controls on building form in order to achieve the vision for the community set forth in the Fowler General Plan. Mixed-

use development and stand-alone residential development (subject to the RM-3 standards) are conditionally permitted, including developments that exceed 21.8 units per acre.

***Urban Reserve District (UR):*** This district is intended to protect lands designated for eventual urban development to ensure the orderly conversion of these lands to nonagricultural use; to preserve lands best suited for agriculture from the encroachment of incompatible uses; and to provide appropriate areas for certain open uses of land that are not injurious to agriculture but that may not be harmonious with urban uses. The district allows one-family and farm employee housing that are incidental to permitted or conditionally permitted uses, including crops and the raising of animals or fowl.

### ***Conclusion***

The City’s Zoning Ordinance provides for a range of housing options.

### ***Recommended Action***

None required.

## ***Residential Development Standards***

### ***Analysis***

**Table 1D-13** lists and describes the residential zoning districts in the City of Fowler Zoning Ordinance that allow residential development. [The table indicates the minimum lot size requirements, minimum site area per unit, setbacks, height restrictions, and open space requirements that apply in each of the city’s residential zoning districts.](#) **Table 1D-14** lists the parking requirements for residential developments. [Consistent with Government Code Section 65940.1\(a\)\(1\) related to transparency requirements, the zoning and development standards for all parcels in the city are available on the City’s website.](#) These development standards are typical and consistent with standards established in surrounding communities.

Table 1D-13 Residential Development Standards

Characteristics of Lot, Location, and Height	R-1-5	R-1-6	R-1-7	R-1-8.5	R-1-10	R-1-12	RM-2-A	RM-2	RM-3-A	RM-3
Minimum Lot Area (SF)	5,000 sf	6,000 sf	7,000 sf	8,500 sf	10,000 sf	12,000 sf	7,000 sf	7,000 sf	7,000 sf	7,000 sf
Minimum Lot Dimensions (Interior Lots)										
Width	50'	60'	65'	70'	80'	90'	50'	50'	50'	50'
Depth	90'	95'	100'	110'	110'	120'	100'	100'	100'	100'
Maximum Lot Coverage	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	55%	55%	55%	55%
Minimum Setbacks										
Front	20'	20'	20'	20'	25'	35'	15'	15'	15'	15'
Rear	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'
Side	5'	5'	5'	7'	7'	10'	5'	5'	5'	5'
Maximum Height	2 Stories 35'	2 Stories 35'	2 Stories 35'	2 Stories 35'	2 Stories 35'	2 Stories 35'	35'	35'	35'	35'
Private Open Space (SF/DU)	--	--	--	--	--	--	100	100	100	100

Source: City of Fowler Zoning Ordinance, 2022

Note: Multifamily housing is conditionally permitted in the Neighborhood Commercial and Community Commercial zones, as well as the Form-Based Code Area at RM-3 standards.



**Parking**

Table 1D-14 shows residential parking requirements in Fowler, which vary by housing type.

**Table 1D-14 Residential Parking Requirements**

Residential Use		Required Parking Spaces	
Single-family		2 spaces per unit, including 1 garaged space	
Multi-family	Studio	1.5 spaces	1/2 of required spaces shall be covered; plus 1 guest space per each 5 units
	1 BR	1.5 spaces	
	2 BR	1.5 spaces	
	3 or more BR	2 spaces	
Secondary Dwelling Units		1 space	

Source: City of Fowler Zoning Ordinance, 2022

Specifically, the City of Fowler Zoning Ordinance provides reduced parking and encourages shared parking to “provide flexibility for the development or redevelopment of small sites” and “promote projects that use flexible and creative incentives to reduce parking needs.” Flexibilities offered by the Form Based Code include the following:

- 1.5 parking space per unit regardless of unit size;
- Parking requirement can be met on-site or within 350 feet of the site;
- Shared parking is encouraged; and
- Off-street parking is not required for properties fronting Merced Street between Seventh Street and the alley between Fourth and Fifth Streets; and
- Off-street parking can be reduced by 50 percent within other specified areas in the Form Based Code Area.

**Building Height**

Buildings or structures in the R-1 zones cannot exceed a maximum height of 35 feet or two stories. Building height in the R-2 and R-3 zones is subject to the same 35-foot limit but with no limitation on the number of stories.

**Open Space and Park Requirements**

For multifamily development, the City requires setting aside 10 percent of the space as usable open space (which include swimming pools, green space, landscaping, and recreation room). For a single-family development, 5 percent of the space is required to be set aside for usable open space. These requirements are in addition to the park development fees (discussed later). Overall, the park dedication requirement, the park improvement fees, and the open space requirements do not represent excessive constraints on residential development.

### *Cumulative Impact of Development Standards*

The City evaluated the cumulative impact of its land use controls on the cost and supply of housing, including development standards that limit the building envelope (setbacks, private open space, and parking) and lot coverage restrictions. Based on this evaluation, none of the land use controls in conventional residential zoning districts would prevent an applicant from reaching the maximum density allowed for single-family developments in single-family zones and multifamily developments in all zones where multifamily is allowed, or otherwise constrain housing development.

Current development standards for the residential zones that permit multifamily housing were applied to theoretical sites of varying size. The results confirmed the above conclusion, and each scenario achieved the respective zone's maximum allowable density. On sites from one-quarter acre to one-half acre, a multifamily housing development in the highest density zone, RM-3, could achieve maximum density with two-bedroom units served by on-site covered and uncovered parking. Sites larger than one-half acre were not evaluated, as development standards do not become more restrictive as parcel sizes increase. The City also analyzed theoretical development capacity on minimum lot size parcels in the RM-3 zone. Even on the smallest sites, maximum density could be achieved with a mix of studio and one-bedroom units served by a combination of covered and uncovered parking. Covered parking is counted toward the maximum building footprint, and uncovered parking is not. Density bonus units are not factored into the calculations. The RM-2 zone was not analyzed because it possesses the same development standards as the RM-3 zone, but at a lower density. The FBC zones was not analyzed because they contain the same or more favorable development standards (i.e. reduced parking ratios). The C-1 and C-2 zones were "derated" to 35% as part of the Realistic Development Potential analysis described in Section 1D-2 because these zones require multifamily uses to be located at the rear or above a permitted use (horizontal or vertical mixed use).

The RM-3 zone was evaluated with hypothetical sites in the manner described herein. Interior lots with three-story products were evaluated, as this condition enforces the most restrictive setback requirements. The City currently requires 2 parking spaces for each single-family dwelling and 1.5 to 2 parking spaces for each multifamily dwelling.

The maximum allowed densities in the RM-3 zone is 21.78 units per acre. Comparing two hypothetical site sizes (one half acre and 6,000 sq. ft.), maximum allowed densities are achievable on sites in both zones, as demonstrated below. The first step in the analysis was to determine the allowable building footprint given the site size and the maximum lot coverage. The next step was to determine the maximum allowed building envelope given the site area minus the required setbacks, open space, and parking. Since the RM-3 zone allows buildings up to 35 feet (three stories), the building envelope was multiplied by three to determine the maximum building square footage.

**Table 1D-15 Hypothetical Site Analysis**

	<u>Hypothetical RM-3 Site 1</u>	<u>Hypothetical RM-3 Site 2</u>
<u>Lot Area</u>	<u>22,000 square feet</u>	<u>6,000 square feet</u>
<u>Length</u>	<u>200 feet</u>	<u>100 feet</u>
<u>Width</u>	<u>110 feet</u>	<u>60 feet</u>
<u>Maximum Allowed Lot Coverage</u>	<u>55%</u>	<u>55%</u>
<u>Maximum Building Footprint, given Lot Coverage</u>	<u>12,100 sqft</u>	<u>3,300 sqft</u>
<u>Maximum Building Envelope, given Setbacks<sup>1</sup>:</u>  <u>Front – 15 feet</u> <u>Rear – 16 feet</u> <u>Side – 11 feet</u>  <u>Private Open Space 10%</u>  <u>Parking Requirements – 2 per unit and 1 guest for every 5 units, at 200 sqft each</u>	<u>8,585 sqft</u>	<u>960 sqft</u>
<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Average Unit Square Footage</u>	<u>2,341</u>	<u>960</u>
<u>Maximum Density Achieved</u>	<u>21.8</u>	<u>21.8</u>
<u>Maximum Allowable Density</u>	<u>21.8</u>	<u>21.8</u>

<sup>1</sup> Rear and side setbacks are the average between the minimum and required “step back” setbacks.

***Conclusion***

The City's development standards are reasonable and typical, and do not serve to constrain housing development and would not preclude the development of multi-family housing at the upper end of the allowable density range. The Form Based Code offers flexible parking standards with the expressed intent to encourage the efficient use of land and facilitate development/redevelopment of small infill sites. The Form Based Code Area (FBC) and RM 3 zones also allow for residential development to exceed 21.8 units per acre subject to approval of a CUP.

***Recommended Action***

None required.

***Growth Management******Analysis***

The Fowler General Plan contains a policy on growth management. Specifically, the policy establishes urban growth boundaries and associated thresholds which are used determine when development may continue into the next growth tier. Development thresholds do not require all land within previous tiers to be developed before moving into the next tier. However, the policy does require a minimum number of units at Medium High and High Density, which most closely translates to multi-family building typologies, be constructed before development continues into the next tier in order to encourage the construction of more affordable units. Additionally, the City permits deed-restricted affordable housing units be constructed in the next growth tier before development thresholds are met.

***Conclusion***

Fowler's growth management policy does not place a restriction on how many units may be built within the City, only restricting where units may be built to maintain orderly development patterns and adequate provision of services. Furthermore, the development thresholds provide some flexibility by not requiring 100 percent fill of a previous growth tier and by maintaining exceptions for affordable housing and some master planned developments. Therefore, the growth management policy would not unduly constrain the City's ability to accommodate its RHNA.

***Recommended Action***

None required.

***Density Bonus******Analysis***

The City's density bonus ordinance does not currently include provisions for moderate-income housing units, childcare facilities, land banking, or condominium conversions. Furthermore, the City's ordinance does not vary the density bonus granted based on the proportion of affordable units provided. The City will

need to amend the density bonus ordinance to meet all requirements of SB 1818 and AB 2222, among other related and minor amendments.

***Conclusion***

The City’s density bonus provisions do not meet current State law requirements.

***Recommended Action***

Amend the Zoning Ordinance within one year of Housing Element adoption.

***Zoning for a Variety of Housing Types***

***Analysis***

Title 9 of the City of Fowler Municipal Code describes the City’s regulations for residential development. **Table 1D-16** summarizes the housing types permitted and conditionally permitted under the Zoning Ordinance.

Table 1D-16 Variety of Housing Types

	R-1-5	R-1-6	R-1-7	R-1-8.5	R-1-10	R-1-12	RM-2-A	RM-2	RM-3-A	RM-3	UR
Single Family	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Multifamily	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	NP
Manufactured/Mobilehomes	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	NP
Mobilehome Park	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	NP
Farmworker / Employee Housing	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P
SRO	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Foster Homes (six or fewer)	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	P/A	NP
Group Homes and Residential Care Facilities (six or fewer)	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	NP
Group Homes and Residential Care Facilities (seven or more)	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Second Dwelling Units	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P = Permitted; P/A = Permitted with Administrative Approval; CUP = Conditional Use Permit; NP = Not Permitted

Source: City of Fowler Zoning Ordinance, 2022

The following is a description of the City’s requirements for various housing types:

**Multifamily**

Multiple family dwellings are permitted by right in the RM zone, and conditionally permitted in the commercial and Form Based Code zones.

**Manufactured Housing**

The City requires Administrative Approval for manufactured housing in the R and RM districts while single family dwellings are permitted by right.

**Farmworker/Employee Housing**

The Fowler Zoning Ordinance defines farm employee housing as “living quarters, including dwellings with sleeping accommodations and dining facilities, maintained for occupancy by persons employed principally in farming and related pursuits on land owned, leased or rented by the owner, lessee, or tenant of the site on which the farm employee housing is located; excepting a labor camp or trailer park.” While the City permits farm employee housing in the Urban Reserve zone district, the City’s definition of farmworker housing in the Zoning Ordinance is not consistent with State law, which specifically states that the housing needs not be occupied by persons employed by the farm operations on site.

**Emergency Shelters**

The City previously amended its Zoning Ordinances to comply with State law in place at that time and ~~has no provisions to permit emergency shelters by right or otherwise~~ currently permits emergency shelters in the M-1 zone district. Emergency shelters are currently defined as:

*Emergency shelter shall mean housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six (6) months or less by a homeless person. No individual or household may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay.*

However, recent state law (AB 2339) expands the definition of “emergency shelters” to include other interim interventions, including but not limited to, navigation centers, bridge housing, and respite or recuperative care. Emergency shelters are also now required by right in a zone district that allows residential uses. Program 14 (Zoning Ordinance Amendments) proposes to update the definition of emergency shelters to include interim interventions as well as add emergency shelters as a by-right use to the C-2 zone district, which allows residential uses.

Legislation also requires that the City demonstrate site capacity in the zone identified to be appropriate for the development of emergency shelters. Within the identified zone, only objective development and management standards may be applied, given they are designed to encourage and facilitate the development of or conversion to an emergency shelter. According to the Fresno/Madera Continuum of Care, the homeless population in Fowler is estimated at six persons. APN 343-40-019S is 2.53-acre vacant site that is zoned C-2 ~~that permits residential uses~~ and is located near transit, retail, and social and health services. The site would provide adequate capacity for the City’s ~~three-six~~ homeless residents, as a minimum of 200 square feet per person is required pursuant to Government Code Section 65583(a)(4)(I).



### ***Transitional and Supportive Housing***

The City amended the Zoning Ordinance on May 19, 2015 to address the provision of transitional and supportive housing as a residential use subject to the same development standards and regulations as similar uses in the same zones.

### ***Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Units***

The Zoning Ordinance does not currently contain provisions for SRO housing.

### ***Residential Care Facilities/Group Homes***

~~The Zoning Ordinance does not currently contain any provisions for residential care facilities/group homes. However, the Housing Element includes Program 14 (Zoning Code Amendments), which will add provisions to the zoning code for group homes for six persons or less and for seven or more persons in accordance with State law.~~

The [Zoning](#) Ordinance permits foster homes for six or fewer with an Administrative Approval in all residential zones. However, all other types of residential care facilities for six or fewer require a Conditional Use Permit. The Zoning Ordinance makes no provisions for large residential care facilities for more than six persons. [This Housing Element proposes Program 14 \(Zoning Code Amendments\), which will add provisions to the zoning code for group homes for six persons or less and for seven or more persons in accordance with State law.](#)

### ***Second Units***

The City permits secondary residential units in all of its residential zones, subject to additional development standards.

### ***Conclusion***

In summary, amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance are required to address the provision of a variety of housing types:

**Residential Care Facilities:** The Zoning Ordinance needs to be updated to comply with the Lanterman Act and allow group homes for six or fewer persons in all residential zones. The Zoning Ordinance also needs to make provisions for large residential care facilities for more than six persons.

**Manufactured Housing:** The Zoning Ordinance will need to be updated to permit manufactured homes in a manner consistent with single family housing.

**Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing:** The Zoning Ordinance does not currently contain provisions for SRO housing.

**[Emergency Shelters:](#)** [The Zoning Ordinance does not permit emergency shelters by-right in residential zones.](#)

**Farmworker/Employee Housing:** The Fowler Zoning Ordinance is not consistent with State law requirements for farmworker and employee housing.

### ***Recommended Action***

The Housing Element includes an action to amend the Zoning Ordinance to address residential care facilities, manufactured housing, [emergency shelters](#), SRO units, and farmworker and employee housing.

## ***On/Off-Site Improvements***

### ***Analysis***

Fowler has residential development requirements for residential streets, sidewalks, solar access, landscaping, walls, street lighting, and parking. Improvement requirements for new developments are regulated under the Subdivision Ordinance (Title 9, Chapter 4 of the Municipal Code). Major improvements required by the City include:

Local roads are improved to a 40-foot curb-to-curb width within an overall 60-foot right of way. Gutters and monolithic sidewalks in a 5-foot pattern are required on all local streets with a 5-foot landscape strip. Right-of-way may be reduced to 56 feet for cul-de-sacs and short streets.

Major streets are developed to 70, 80, and 100-foot rights-of-way, depending on their classification. The subdivider is responsible for dedicating sufficient right-of-way adjacent to the project to provide one-half of the major street with two travel lanes, including curb, gutter, parking lane, sidewalk, and a 10-foot landscape strip on one side.

Sewer, water, and drainage lines are located in streets or within easements within the project boundaries. Easements for underground electrical, natural gas, telephone, and cable facilities are provided as requested by the affected utilities.

A landscaped strip 10 feet in width is required adjacent to major streets between the sidewalk and wall to include street trees, ground cover, and an automatic irrigation system.

In order to adequately provide water supply for use and safety purposes, it may be necessary for individual projects to dedicate a well site, install a well in the subdivision vicinity, or retrofit existing wells to increase flows from the wells.

In areas lacking master drainage facilities, a temporary on-site ponding basin adequate to remove surface water and storm water from the project is required.

Streetlights and traffic signs are required in accordance with the City's Standard Specifications.

All utilities are placed underground, in accordance with the requirements of the utility concerned, in either City street easements or appropriate utility easements.

### ***Conclusion***

Development requirements of the City of Fowler are considered standard in the Central Valley and are comparable to surrounding cities. In order to reduce housing costs, the City does not require improvements other than those deemed necessary to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare.

### ***Recommended Action***

None required.

## Fees and Exactions

### Analysis

Some of the typical City fees are summarized in [Table 1D-17](#) and [Table 1D-18](#).

**Table 1D-17 Schedule of [Permit Processing](#) Fees for Residential Development**

Permit Processing Fees		Base and Deposit
Pre-Application Design Review		
Conditional Use Permit	Minor #%	\$1,173
	Major #%	\$2,340
Site Plan Review	Minor #%	\$1,140
	Major #%	\$2,801
Subdivisions	Tentative Map, Tentative Parcel Map (5-10 units) #%	\$ 10,342
	Tentative Map (>10 units) #%	\$12,303
	Final Subdivision Map Check (5-10 units)	\$3,434
	Final Subdivision Map Check (> 10 units)	\$5,295
Land Use / Zoning / <a href="#">Environmental Review</a>	General Plan Amendment (Minor) #%	\$2,554
	General Plan Amendment (Major) #%	\$5,109
	Zoning Amendment (Minor) #%	\$2,523
	Zoning Amendment (Major)	\$5,039
	Negative Declaration #%^	\$6,148
	Mitigated Negative Declaration #%^	\$7,684
	Environmental Impact Report #%^	\$13,931
<a href="#">Building Permit</a>		<a href="#">6.5 percent of construction value (average)</a>
<a href="#">Development Impact Fees</a>		

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Permit Processing Fees		Base and Deposit
<del>City Management and General Services</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$1,344/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$941/unit</del>
<del>Law Enforcement</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$947/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$663/unit</del>
<del>Fire Protection</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$1,121/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$785/unit</del>
<del>Parks</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$3,955/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$2,767/unit</del>
<del>Water Facilities</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$2,691/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$1,883/unit</del>
<del>Sewer Facilities</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$4,082,/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$2,856/unit</del>
<del>Traffic</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$532/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$561 /unit</del>
<del>Ground Water Recharge</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$891/unit</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$623/unit</del>
<del>Storm Drain</del>	<del>Single Family Residential</del>	<del>\$5,306/acre</del>
	<del>Multi Family Residential</del>	<del>\$8,697/acre</del>

Source: City of Fowler, 2023.

# More complex projects require a consultant proposal for estimated cost.

% Should a project require additional study, staff time, public hearings, or notification, then additional funds shall be deposited in an amount determined by the Director.

^ For Negative Declarations and EIRs prepared by qualified consultants under contract to the City, the fee shall be cost +

~~In addition to City fees, several regional fees are also charged for residential development: Regional Transportation Mitigation and Indirect Source Review. The Selma Kingsburg Fowler County Sanitation District also charges a one-time fee of \$5,154 per ESFR for connection. For school fees, the Fowler Unified School District has adopted the State Level I fee of \$4.79 per square foot of residential use.~~

**Table 1D-18 Schedule of Development Impact Fees for Residential Development**

<u>Development Impact Fee</u>	<u>MFR Fee per Unit</u>	<u>SFR Fee per Unit</u>	<u>ADU Fee<sup>5</sup></u>
<u>City Management and General Services</u>	<u>\$941</u>	<u>\$1,344</u>	<u>\$806</u>
<u>Law Enforcement</u>	<u>\$663</u>	<u>\$947</u>	<u>\$568</u>
<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>\$785</u>	<u>\$1,121</u>	<u>\$673</u>
<u>Parks</u>	<u>\$2,767</u>	<u>\$3,955</u>	<u>\$2,373</u>
<u>Water Facilities</u>	<u>\$1,883</u>	<u>\$2,691</u>	<u>\$1,615</u>
<u>Sewer Facilities</u>	<u>\$2,856</u>	<u>\$4,082</u>	<u>\$2,449</u>
<u>Traffic</u>	<u>\$561</u>	<u>\$532</u>	<u>\$319</u>
<u>Ground Water Recharge</u>	<u>\$623</u>	<u>\$891</u>	<u>\$535</u>
<u>Storm Drain<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>\$499</u>	<u>\$1,205</u>	<u>\$723</u>
<b><u>Total City Fees</u></b>	<b><u>\$11,578</u></b>	<b><u>\$16,768</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,061</u></b>
<u>Indirect Source Review<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>\$11</u>	<u>\$11</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>Fowler Unified School District<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>\$4,790</u>	<u>\$9,580</u>	<u>\$5,748</u>
<u>Selma-Kingsburg-Fowler County Sanitation District</u>	<u>\$3,866</u>	<u>\$5,154</u>	<u>\$3,092</u>
<u>Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee<sup>4</sup></u>	<u>\$1,642</u>	<u>\$2,118</u>	<u>-</u>
<b><u>All Applicable Fees</u></b>	<b><u>\$21,887</u></b>	<b><u>\$33,631</u></b>	<b><u>\$18,901</u></b>
<p>Source: City of Fowler, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Fowler Unified School District, Selma-Kingsburg-Fowler County Sanitation District, Fresno Council of Governments, 2023.</p> <p><sup>1</sup>Assuming 17.44 and 4.4 dwelling units per acre for MFR and SFR Fee, respectively.</p> <p><sup>2</sup>Assuming cost is spread amongst 50 units.</p> <p><sup>3</sup>Assuming 1,000, 2,000, and 1,200 square feet per MFR, SFR, and ADU dwelling unit, respectively.</p> <p><sup>4</sup>Fee assumes market rate units. Fee is halved for affordable developments.</p> <p><sup>5</sup>Assuming fee is proportional (1,200 sqft ADU / 2,000 sqft main residence) to SFR Fee.</p>			

**Table 1D-19** below depicts the cumulative construction costs for a prototypical single-family home and multifamily dwelling. Construction costs for a single-family residence are approximately \$144 per square foot. This is based on costs calculated for a 2,000-square-foot, wood-framed, single-story, four-cornered home of good quality construction and including a two-car garage and forced air heating/cooling in Fowler. Estimated total construction costs for such a home are \$289,732. Costs for prototypical multifamily construction are approximately \$137 per square foot, based on costs calculated for a 2-story building in Fowler with 20 units and an average unit size of 1,000 square feet. The multifamily calculation is for a wood or light steel frame structure, including forced air heating and cooling and constructed of good quality materials. The estimated total construction costs for each multifamily unit are \$131,207, with a total construction cost for the building of \$2,572,848. These construction costs, for both single-family and multifamily units, include labor, materials, and equipment but do not include the costs of buying land.

**Table 1D-19 Schedule of Contributing Costs to Residential Construction**

<u>Cost</u>	<u>MFR Unit</u>	<u>SFR Unit</u>
<u>Typical Building Construction Costs<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>\$131,207</u>	<u>\$289,732</u>
<u>Building Permit</u>	<u>\$853</u>	<u>\$1,883</u>
<u>Development Impact Fees</u>	<u>\$21,887</u>	<u>\$33,631</u>
<u>Total Development Fees</u>	<u>\$22,740</u>	<u>\$35,514</u>
<u>Total Housing Costs (not including cost of land)</u>	<u>\$153,947</u>	<u>\$325,246</u>
<u>Fees as a % of Total Housing Costs</u>	<u>14.8%</u>	<u>10.9%</u>
<u>Source: City of Fowler, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Fowler Unified School District, Selma-Kingsburg-Fowler County Sanitation District, Fresno Council of Governments, 2023. 2022 National Building Cost Manual, Craftsman Book Company.</u>		

***Conclusion***

In summary, ~~the fees for plan check, permits, and~~ development impact fees total approximately \$~~2023,000-~~2023,000-\$~~3035,000~~3035,000 per unit, or approximately 10.9 percent of the total development costs for single family development and 14.8 percent for multifamily development. This constitutes approximately 18 percent of the estimated construction cost. However, approximately one ~~third~~half of the fees are school and regional impact fees that are consistent throughout the County. The City’s development impact fees are generally below the statewide average of \$37,471 for single family and \$21,703 for multifamily per unit given inflation. Additionally, the City recently prepared a nexus study to substantiate its fees. In summary, development impact fees ~~and~~ would not serve to constrain housing development in Fowler. All update fees are posted on City of Fowler website at: <https://fowlerciry.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Master-Fee-Schedule-2023.pdf>.

***Recommended Action***

A program is included in the Housing Element to monitor the City’s fees and impacts on residential development.

***Processing and Permit Procedures***

***Analysis***

The City permits most types of residential development by right with a site plan review by the staff. Residential uses in commercial and Form Based Code districts do require the approval of a Conditional Use Permit. For the Conditional Use Permit, the conditions for approval are:

- That the site for the proposed use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate such use and all yards, spaces, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping and other features required;
- That the site for the proposed use relates to streets and highways adequate in width and pavement type to carry the quantity and kind of traffic generated by the proposed use;
- That the proposed use will have no adverse effect on abutting property or the permitted use;
- That the conditions are deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare. Such conditions may include:
  - Special yards, spaces, and buffers;
  - Fences and walls;

- Surfacing of parking areas subject to specifications;
- Requiring street dedications and improvements (or bonds) subject to the provisions of site plan review of this article, including service roads or alleys when practical;
- Regulation of points of vehicular ingress and egress;
- Regulation of signs;
- Requiring landscaping and the maintenance;
- Requiring the maintenance of the grounds;
- Regulation of noise, vibration and odors;
- Regulation of time for certain activities;
- A bond for the removal of such use within a specified period of time; and
- Such other conditions as will make possible development in an orderly and efficient manner.

For Site Plan Review, the conditions for approval relate strictly to site planning considerations such signage, fences, ingress/egress, noise/vibration levels, location of utilities and landscaping, and hours of operation, etc.

The City has no community plan or specific plan implementation areas, environmentally sensitive areas, or other procedures to delay project processing. Although the City does have a Highway Beautification Overlay zone, the increased landscaping requirements in this zone are also not likely to delay project processing. The City encourages concurrent processing of applications and considers all entitlement applications, including the environmental document, at single public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

**Table 1D-20 Approvals and Processing Times for Typical Developments**

	Single-Family	Single-Family (2–4 units)	Single-Family (5+ units)	Multi-Family (2–4 units)	Multi-Family (5+ units)	Mixed Use
Approvals Required	Director	Director	Planning Commission	Director	Director	Planning Commission
Processing Time	45 days	45-60 days	90 days	45-60 days	45-60 days	45-60 days

**Conclusion**

The City does not have a lengthy project review process and the fees and project review processing timelines are in line with surrounding cities within Fresno County. Under Program 14, Zoning Ordinance Amendment, the City will update the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that objective standards are considered during the application review process.

**Recommended Action**

None required.

**Building Codes and Enforcement**

**Analysis**



The City adopted the entirety of the 2022 California Building Code, including appendix chapters, amendments, supplements, and errata as promulgated by the California Building Standards Commission; the California Fire Code, current edition, including those sections and appendices as more specified in Chapter 14.35; and the National Fire Codes, current edition, as adopted by the National Fire Protection Association.

Code Enforcement officials perform routine inspections of housing in the city, including targeted surveys for health and safety violations under the Health and Safety Section 17910.

~~The City uses several uniform codes, including the current California Building Code (CBC), the current California Electrical Code (CEC), the current California Plumbing Code (CPC), the current California Mechanical Code (CMC), and the current California Fire Code, as the basis for its building standards and code enforcement procedures.~~

***Conclusion***

No major local amendments to the building codes, beyond adoption of the 2022 California Building Code and other applicable Fire Codes as noted above, have been made that would significantly increase the cost of housing.

***Recommended Action***

None required.

***Constraints on Housing for Persons with Disabilities***

***Analysis***

***California Building Code***

The City adopted the current California Building Code, including Title 24 regulations of the code concerning accessibility for persons with disabilities.

***Definition of Family***

The definition of “family” in Fowler’s Zoning Ordinance is as follows: “An individual, or two (2) or more persons related by blood or marriage, or a group of not more than six (6) persons not necessarily related by blood or marriage, living together in a dwelling unit; full-time domestic servants of any such persons may reside on the same premises, and shall not be counted with respect to the foregoing definition.” This definition exceeds the zoning power of a local jurisdiction and would be considered restrictive.

***Zoning and Land Use Policies***

The Ordinance permits foster homes for six or fewer with an Administrative Approval in all residential zones. However, all other types of residential care facilities for six or fewer require a Conditional Use Permit. The Zoning Ordinance makes no provisions for large residential care facilities for more than six persons.

***Reasonable Accommodation***

The City does not currently have a formal process to grant reasonable accommodation requests. The Zoning Ordinance must be amended to establish a formal reasonable accommodations process.

***Conclusion***

Amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance are required to address the definition of family, [allowances and procedures for](#) large residential care facilities (for more than six persons), and reasonable accommodation procedures.

***Recommended Action***

The Housing Element includes ~~an action~~ [Program 14](#) to amend the Zoning Ordinance to ~~address~~ [implement a barrier-free](#) the definition of family, [require ministerial approval process for](#) residential care facilities ~~(six or fewer) with objective approval standards~~, [address the allowance for residential care facilities \(seven or more\) and ensure they are being permitted consistent with other residential projects in the same zone,](#) and [formally adopt](#) reasonable accommodation procedures.

## At-Risk Analysis

### Analysis

As required by California Government Code Section 65583, the Housing Element must analyze the extent to which below-market rate units are at risk of converting to market-rate housing. If there are at-risk units, the element should include programs to encourage preservation of these units or to replace any that are converted to market rate. The units to be considered are any units that were constructed using federal assistance programs, state or local mortgage revenue bonds, redevelopment tax increments, in-lieu fees or an inclusionary housing ordinance, or density bonuses. Housing is considered to be “at risk” if it is eligible to be converted to non-low-income housing due to: (1) the termination of a rental subsidy contract, (2) mortgage prepayment, or (3) the expiration of affordability restrictions. The time period applicable in making this determination is the 10-year period following the last mandated update of the Housing Element, which, in the case of all Fresno County jurisdictions, is December 31, 2023. Table 1D-21 shows assisted housing units in Fowler. There are 186 assisted affordable units in Fowler and no units are at risk of expiring in the next 10 years.

**Table 1D-21 Assisted Housing Developments, Fowler**

Name	Address	Target Population	Funding Source	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Affordable Units Expiration	Risk Level
Ruby Court Apartments	1391 E Sumner Ave	Senior	USDA Section 515, Rural Development Rental Assistance; LIHTC	45	44	Perpetuity	Not at risk
Fowler Apartments	340 E Adams Ave	Family	USDA Section 515, Rural Development Rental Assistance	44	44	2042	Low
Walnut Grove Villa	1446 E Sumner Ave	Non-Targeted	USDA Section 515, Rural Development Rental Assistance	40	39	2073	Low
Magill Terrace	401 East Nelson Street	Family	HUD Public Housing	60	59	2071	Low
Total				189	186		
Total At Risk				--	0		

Sources: Fresno Council of Governments HCD Pre-Approved Data Package; www.affordablehousingonline.com, 2022.

**Conclusion**

As previously stated, there are three methods to preserve the at-risk units: acquisition and rehabilitation, replacement, or rent subsidy. As of October 2022, there are no affordable units at risk of conversion due to acquisition and rehabilitation, replacement, or rent and subsidy, thereby placing no constraint on preserving affordable housing units for lower-income households.

**Recommended Action**

None.

**SECTION 1D-5: REVIEW OF PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

This section reviews and evaluates the City's progress in implementing the 2015-2022<sup>5th</sup> Cycle Housing Element. It reviews the results and effectiveness of programs from the previous Housing Element planning period in order to make recommendations about the programs.

Per California Government Code Section 65588,

Each local government shall review its housing element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate all of the following: (1) The appropriateness of the housing goals, objectives, and policies in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal. (2) The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives. (3) The progress of the city, county, or city and county in implementation of the housing element. (4) The effectiveness of the housing element goals, policies, and related actions to meet the community's needs, pursuant to paragraph (7) of subdivision (a) of Section 65583.

**Progress Toward the RHNA**

Each jurisdiction in California is responsible for accommodating its share of the region's housing needs. The process of determining each jurisdiction's share of housing needs is called the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The RHNA projection period for the previous Housing Element was from December 31, 2015 to December 31, 2023. The City of Fowler was assigned a RHNA of 524 units, divided into four income categories:

Very Low-Income (less than 50 percent of the Area Median Income): 123 units

Low-Income (50 to 80 percent of the Area Median Income): 83 units

Moderate-Income (80 to 120 percent of the Area Median Income): 75 units

Above Moderate-Income (greater than 120 percent of the Area Median Income): 243 units

**Table 1D-22** summarizes the City's accomplishments in meeting the RHNA during the previous RHNA projection period. Since January 1~~December 31~~, 2015, 346-490 new single-family units have been constructed in the City. The City has met 100 percent of its moderate-income RHNA. However, due to limited development interests in multifamily housing and limited funding available, just under 5 percent of its low-income units were constructed~~no affordable housing units were constructed.~~

**Table 1D-22 Units Built during RHNA Projection Period, City of Fowler, 2006-2013**

	<b>Very Low Income Units</b>	<b>Low Income Units</b>	<b>Moderate Income Units</b>	<b>Above Moderate Income Units</b>	<b>Total Units</b>
2015-2022 RHNA	123	83	75	243	524
Units Built 2015-2022	0	<u>04</u>	<u>149230</u>	<u>197256</u>	<u>346490</u>
Percent of RHNA Met	0.0%	<u>0.04.8%</u>	<u>198.7306.6%</u>	<u>81.4105.3%</u>	<u>66.093.5%</u>

Source: City of Fowler, 20224.

The City is seeing renewed interest in residential development and is also beginning to receive inquiries about mixed use development. To facilitate residential development in the future, recognizing the challenges of the City’s sites inventory being comprised primarily of small sites and commercial properties, the 2015-2023<sup>6</sup>th Cycle Housing Element included ~~the following programs~~ Program 4: Provision of Adequate Sites and Program 16: Lot Development Feasibility; Sites Inventory Monitoring for “Not Net Loss”, and Lot Consolidation and Lot Splits. These programs have been modified and continued from previous programs included in the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element, as noted in **Table 1D-23** below, to more specifically facilitate development on identified sites during the 2023-2031 planning period.

### **Efforts to Address Special Housing Needs**

California Government Code Section 65588 requires that local governments review the effectiveness of the housing element goals, policies, and related actions to meet the community’s special housing needs. As shown in the Review of Previous 2015-2023 Housing Element Programs matrix (**Table 1D-23**), the City worked diligently to promote housing for special-needs groups in a variety of ways. Some of these accomplishments are:

- The City continued to offer incentives such as minor deviations, density bonuses, and a streamlined process to housing developers to help facilitate the development of farmworker and lower-income housing. The City recently adopted a Program EIR to facilitate the streamlining of environmental review for discretionary projects.
- The City approved the Magill Terrace (Magnolia Commons) affordable housing development, which facilitated construction of 60 low-income affordable family units by the Fresno Housing Authority (HA) including 20 replacement units and 40 new units. The City assisted the Fresno HA with the application for project funding through the Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC). The City also partnered with Fresno HA on the TCAC application for the Walnut Grove project, which rehabilitated 40 low-income affordable housing units.
- The City received Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) allocations in 2019, applied for distribution of funding during Round 2 of the PLHA program in 2021, and executed a funding agreement in 2023 for \$346,456. The PLHA funds will be used to provide down payment assistance to low-income first-time home buyers.

- The City continued to connect residents with the Fair Housing Council of Central California (FHCCC) upon request. FHCCC provided several services, including mediation, counseling, advocacy, research, and fair housing training and workshops for residents as well as housing providers. The City also provided references to the Fresno Housing Authority on the Housing Choice Voucher program, which can assist extremely low-income households

Table 1D-23 City of Fowler **5<sup>TH</sup> Cycle** Program Evaluation

Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<p><b>1: Regional Collaboration on Housing Opportunities</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>The County of Fresno Public Works and Planning Department, with assistance of the Fresno COG, will take the lead in coordinating the Countywide Fifth Cycle Housing Element Committee meetings.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Continue to participate in the Countywide Housing Element Technical Committee to collaborate on housing program implementation and regional issues including, disadvantaged unincorporated communities (SB 244), infrastructure challenges, farmworker housing, homelessness, and fair housing.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>The Committee will meet at least biannually to evaluate successes in implementation of programs and to identify gaps and additional needs.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>The Committee will meet annually with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to discuss funding opportunities and challenges in implementation of programs, and seek technical assistance from HCD and other State agencies in the implementation of housing programs and the pursuit of grant funding.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>The Committee will meet periodically with Fair Housing of Central California to discuss fair housing issues and opportunities for education.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>The Committee will advocate on behalf of the Fresno County region for more grant funding for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Continue to seek partnerships with other jurisdictions in the region and other agencies (such as the Housing Authority), housing developers, community stakeholders, and</u></li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p><u>Throughout the planning period, the City continued to attend quarterly meetings with the 13 participating jurisdictions in Fresno COG (Committee) to develop committee goals to address housing issues. As part of this collaboration, the City evaluated successes in the implementation of Housing Element programs and shared insights and guidance to other committee members as they implemented their programs. The Committee also identified gaps and additional needs, including a lack of grant funding for housing and competition between jurisdictions, shortage of staff time and resources, and a need for universal informational materials about funding resources available to all jurisdictions, from a variety of potential funding sources. One gap that was identified by the Committee was accurate, current information on preferred locations for the development of affordable housing, including farmworker housing. In response, the Committee supported the County’s effort to create a survey in 2021 to determine farmers’ need for housing on their farmland. Also in response to identified needs of jurisdictions, the Committee supported the County’s effort in 2023 to conduct a feasibility study on a regional housing trust for affordable housing.</u> The City of Fowler continues to participate in the Countywide Housing Element Technical Committee which collaborates on implementation including infrastructure challenges, homelessness, and fair housing.</p>	<p><u>Modify and continue as new <b>Program 1: Regional Collaboration on Housing Opportunities</b>.</u><del>Modify. New <b>Program 1.</b></del></p>

Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<p><a href="#">agricultural employers/employees to explore viable options for increasing the availability of farmworker housing in suitable locations in the region.</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Develop a directory of services and resources for lower-income households available in the region, and review and update it annually. Make the directory available on City/County websites and at City/County offices.</a></li> </ul>			
<p><b>2: Review Annexation Standards in Memorandum of Understanding</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">During the Housing Element planning period, the County of Fresno and the cities within the County shall work together to review and revise, as deemed appropriate by all parties, the standards for annexation contained in the Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the cities.</a></li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p><a href="#">The MOU between the City and the County is currently being renegotiated to streamline the annexation process by reducing the percentage of imminent development required for annexations from 50 percent to 25 percent and to allow annexations without any development if the annexation is necessary to accommodate the City’s RHNA. The City anticipates taking the negotiated MOU to City Council for approval in April 2024.</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify and continue as new <b>Program 2: Review Annexation Standards in Memorandum of Understanding</b>. Modify. New Program 2.</a></p>
<p><b>3: Provision of Adequate Sites</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Maintain and annually update the inventory of residential land resources.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Provide the updated inventory on City website and make copies available upon request.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">By 2018, develop specific development standards and incentives to facilitate residential and mixed-use development in commercial zones, particularly in the Downtown Form Based Code Area.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Monitor development and other changes in the inventory to ensure the City has remaining capacity consistent with its share of the regional housing need.</a></li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p><a href="#">The City maintained the inventory of land, made it available upon request, and ensured sufficient land to accommodate the City’s RHNA throughout the planning period. In 2021, the City prepared an interactive map as part of their General Plan Update and due to the benefit of making this information available to the public, the City has retained this map on their website as a resource. The City initiated an update and refinements to this map to retain it as an ongoing resource to the public and development community, along with additional mapping resources. The City created an inventory of undeveloped land resources in 2021.</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify and continue as new <b>Program 4: Provision of Adequate Sites</b>. Modify. New Program 4.</a></p>



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Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively participate in the development of the next RHNA Plan to better ensure that the allocations are reflective of the regional and local land use goals and policies.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>4: Monitoring of Residential Capacity (No Net Loss)</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a formal evaluation procedure pursuant to Government Code Section 65863.</li> <li>Monitor and report through the HCD annual report process.</li> <li>If rezoning/upzoning is required to replenish the sites inventory for meeting the RHNA shortfall, the sites shall be adequate in size to accommodate at least 16 units per site at a minimum density of 20 units per acre, and shall be rezoned within two years.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>The City completes its Annual Progress Reports as well as participates in the multi-jurisdictional housing effort to ensure that there is no net loss in land zoned for residential development. The City of Fowler continues to complete their Annual Progress Reports and participate in the RHNA allocation efforts to ensure there is no net loss in land zoned for residential development.</p>	<p>Modify and combine with and continue as new <b>Program 4: Provision of Adequate Sites</b>. Addressed through other programs.</p>
<p><b>5: Lot Consolidation and Lot Splits</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist interested developers/property owners in identifying opportunities for lot consolidation or lot splitting.</li> <li>Continue to process requests for lot consolidation and lot splitting concurrent with other development reviews.</li> <li>Annually monitor lot consolidation activities as part of the City annual report to HCD on Housing Element progress and evaluate if City efforts are effective in facilitating lot consolidation of small sites for residential development. If appropriate, make necessary changes to facilitate lot consolidation.</li> <li>Encourage the use of master plans/specific plans to provide a cohesive development strategy for large lots.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>As part of permit review process, the City supported lot consolidations and lot line adjustments to facilitate development of housing projects. Additionally, the City is currently updating the subdivision ordinance to further the inventory of residential land resources the City planned to identify opportunities for lot consolidation or lot splitting by the end of 2019. SB-2 funds are dedicated to updating the subdivision ordinance and making it more user friendly to further facilitate lot consolidations for residential development.</p>	<p>Modify and continue as new <b>Program 16: Lot Development Feasibility</b>. Modify. New Program 16.</p>

Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<p><b>6: Water and Wastewater Capacity</b></p> <p><u>Timeframe and Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Continue to monitor water and wastewater capacity and make improvements, as appropriate and feasible, to better serve existing development and strive to accommodate the RHNA.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Establish procedures by the end of 2016 for granting priority water and sewer service to developments with lower-income units in compliance with California Government Code Section 65589.7.</u></li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City continues to monitor and map water and wastewater concerns. <u>Through this monitoring, the City identified one well with elevated TCP levels. The City received funding to treat the well, which is currently in design.</u> A water model was <u>also completed in 2020 to identify areas of concern related to water capacity. Need for an additional water well was identified on the west side of the City, grant funding was received, and the new well is now under construction. Due to the ongoing monitoring and proactive pursuit of grant funding and project design and approvals for new infrastructure needs, the City has had sufficient capacity for both water and wastewater to serve new developments, including lower income projects.</u></p>	<p><u>Modify and continue as new Program 5: Water and Wastewater Service.</u> <del>Modify. New Program 5.</del></p>
<p><b>7: Affordable Housing Incentives</b></p> <p><u>Timeframe and Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Maintain a list of interested developers and annually contact developers to explore affordable housing opportunities.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Continue to promote the State density bonus, flexible development standards, and other incentives to facilitate affordable housing development by publicizing the incentives on City website and by conducting pre-application consultation with developers regarding incentives available.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Continue to streamline the environmental review process for housing developments to the extent possible, using available state categorical exemptions and federal categorical exclusions, when applicable.</u></li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>A comprehensive zoning ordinance update is underway which will update the City’s Density Bonus Ordinance. <u>The City regularly coordinates with Fresno Housing Authority and Self Help Enterprises to identify opportunities for new affordable housing projects. Additionally, the City regularly offers one on one meetings with prospective developers interested in affordable housing or the implementation of the density bonus ordinance. The City approved the construction of 234 low- and moderate-income units that satisfied the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle RHNA, including an additional 40 units of rehabilitated affordable units.</u></p>	<p><u>Modify and continue as new Program 6: Affordable Housing Incentives.</u> <del>Modify. New Program 6.</del></p>

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Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Annually pursue State, Federal and other funding opportunities to increase the supply of safe, decent, affordable housing in Fowler for lower-income households (including extremely low-income households), such as seniors, disabled (including persons with developmental disabilities), farmworkers, the homeless, and those at risk of homelessness.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Expand the City’s affordable housing inventory by 50 units over the next eight years – 5 extremely low-income, 5 very low-income, 10 low-income, and 30 moderate-income units.</a></li> </ul>			
<p><b>8: Farmworker Housing</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Continue to support and encourage other agencies and housing developers, such as the Fresno Housing Authority and Self-Help Enterprises, in the application of funds for farmworker housing, including State HCD and USDA Rural Development loans and grants and other funding sources that may become available.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Continue to offer incentives such as gap financing (as funding is available), density bonus, streamlined processing to facilitate the development of farmworker housing.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Annually monitor the status of farmworker housing as part of the City’s annual report to HCD on Housing Element progress and evaluate if City efforts are effective in facilitating the provision of farmworker housing. If appropriate, make necessary changes to enhance opportunities and incentives for farmworker housing development.</a></li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>The City continues to work with the Fresno Housing Authority and Self-Help Enterprises in seeking grant funding for farmworker housing. <a href="#">The Walnut Grove project was funded through the USDA Rural assistance program and more recently, the City supported the Fresno Housing Authority with their TCAC application to secure funding for the rehabilitation of 40 affordable units.</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify. And continue as new <b>Program 7: Support for Farmworker Housing</b> and new <b>Program 8: Farmworker Preference in New Affordable Housing.</b> Modify. New Programs 7 and 8.</a></p>
<p><b>9: Preserving Assisted Housing</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Continue to monitor status of affordable housing projects. If projects become at risk of converting to market-rate housing:</a></li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>The City assisted the Fresno Housing Authority in their efforts to obtain tax credit allocation for their <a href="#">40-unit Walnut Grove apartment complex</a>. The <a href="#">60-unit Magill Terrace (Magnolia Commons)</a> project was also <a href="#">constructed using funding received through the tax credit allocation in coordination with Fresno Housing</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify and Continue as new <b>Program 10: Preservation of At-Risk Housing Units.</b> Modify. New Program 10.</a></p>

Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Monitor the status of any Notice of Intent and Plan of Action filed by property owners to convert to market-rate units.</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Identify nonprofit organizations as potential purchasers/managers of at-risk housing units.</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Explore funding sources available to purchase affordability covenants on at-risk projects, transfer ownership of at-risk projects to public or nonprofit agencies, purchase existing buildings to replace at-risk units, or construct replacement units.</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Ensure the tenants are properly noticed and informed of their rights and eligibility to obtain special Housing Choice Vouchers reserved for tenants of converted HUD properties.</a></li> </ul>		<p><a href="#">Authority and was</a> completed in 2019. The City will continue to monitor their <del>progress</del><a href="#">status of these and other assisted housing projects.</a></p>	
<p><b>10: Accessory Units</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">By 2019, consider fee reductions for second units and implement a public education program advertising the opportunity for second units through the City website and at the planning counter.</a></li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>The City has amended their Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinances to be compliant with new state law and prepared an information brochure for distribution to the public and development community. The City has approved 13 ADUs since 2020. Development impact fees are waived for ADUs. <del>City staff has planned to conduct an ADU education program and makes information available through public channels.</del></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify and continue as new Program 11: Encourage and Facilitate Accessory Units.</a> <del>Modify. New Program 11.</del></p>
<p><b>11: Zoning Code Amendments</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Amend Zoning Code to address State law requirements within one year of Housing Element adoption.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Annually review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Zoning Code and process any necessary amendments to remove or mitigate potential constraints to the development of housing.</a></li> </ul>	Within one year of Housing Element adoption	<p>The City <del>of Fowler</del> is currently undergoing an comprehensive zoning ordinance update. <a href="#">Program requirements from the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle that have not already been addressed, will be included in the updated zoning ordinance.</a> <del>Density Bonus Ordinance updates will occur as part of this process.</del></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify and continue as new Program 14: Zoning Ordinance Amendment and new Program 19: Objective Design Standards.</a> <del>Modify. New Programs 14 and 19.</del></p>

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Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<p><b>12: Monitoring Planning and Development Fees</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to monitor the various fees charged by the City to ensure they do not unduly constrain housing development.</li> <li>As appropriate, consider incentives such as deferred or reduced fees to facilitate affordable housing development.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City monitors and evaluates their fees each January. A nexus study was adopted in 2022 in support of its current development impact fees. However, some exclusions apply from impact fees, including ADUs.</p>	<p>Modify and continue as new <b>Program 21: Code Enforcement</b>.  <del>Modify. New Program 17.</del></p>
<p><b>13: Code Enforcement</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to utilize code enforcement and substandard abatement processes to bring substandard housing units and residential properties into compliance with city codes.</li> <li>Pursue funding from state and federal programs to reinstate the City’s Home Improvement Grant program (suspended with the dissolution of the Redevelopment Agency) with the goal of assisting 20 households over the planning period (5 very low-income, 5 low-income, and 10 moderate-income households).</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City will continue to look for grant programs to assist property owners to bring their homes into compliance with City codes. The City reinstated the <del>code Code enforcement Enforcement division</del> <u>Enforcement Division</u> in 2019 and hired a dedicated Community Compliance Officer in 2022. In 2023, the City has entered into the County of Fresno’s Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to participate in the County’s HOME and CDBG programs, which include the HARP and the RRP programs. The City will continue to look for other grant programs to assist property owners to bring their homes into compliance with City codes.</p>	<p>Modify and continue as new <b>Program 21: Code Enforcement</b>.  <del>Modify. New Program 21.</del></p>
<p><b>14: First-Time Homebuyer Resources</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote available homebuyer resources on City website and public counters in 2016.</li> <li>Annually review funding resources available at the state and federal levels and pursue as appropriate to provide homebuyer assistance.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City was allocated funding through the Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) program beginning in 2019. The City applied to receive funds during the second round of funding distribution in 2021 and proposed to use the funding for a down payment assistance program for low-income recipients. The funding agreement was executed in 2023 and the City is now able to receive PLHA funding to provide low-income downpayment assistance for first-time homebuyers. The City will update their website with information on this program and include reference to resources for first-time homebuyers. <del>The City will update their website with references to additional resources for first-time homebuyers.</del></p>	<p>Modify and continue as new <b>Program 22: First-Time Homebuyer Resources</b>.  <del>Modify. New Program 22.</del></p>
<p><b>15: Energy Conservation</b></p> <p><i>Timeframe and Objectives:</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City continues to support PG&amp;E programs that provide energy efficiency rebates and implements the Building codes that support and encourage alternative</p>	<p>Modify and continue as new <b>Program 23: Energy</b></p>

Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Consider incentives to promote green building techniques and features in 2017, and as appropriate, adopt incentives in 2018.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Continue to promote and support Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&amp;E) programs that provide energy efficiency rebates for qualifying energy-efficient upgrades by providing a link to PG&amp;E programs on City website and make available brochures about PG&amp;E programs at City counters.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Expedite review and approval of alternative energy devices.</a></li> </ul>		<p>energy. <a href="#">The City has also established a streamlined approval process for solar panel systems.</a></p>	<p><del>Conservation.</del> <a href="#">Modify. New Program 23.</a></p>
<p><b>16: Housing Choice Vouchers</b></p> <p><i><a href="#">Timeframe and Objectives:</a></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Provide information on the HCV program on City website and public counters in 2016.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Refer interested households to the Fresno Housing Authority and encourage landlords to register their properties with the Housing Authority for accepting HCVs.</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Work with the Housing Authority to disseminate information on incentives for participating in the HCV program throughout the City neighborhoods with varying income levels to promote housing opportunities for all residents.</a></li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City <a href="#">continues to partner with Fresno HA and regularly communicates with interested parties to connect them to the HA for more information about the HCV program.</a> <del>updates community resources on their website, including information about housing choice vouchers.</del></p>	<p><a href="#">Modify and continue as new <b>Program 24: Housing Choice Vouchers.</b></a> <del>Modify. New Program 24.</del></p>

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Program	Status	Evaluation	Recommendation
<p><b>17: Fair Housing</b></p> <p><u>Timeframe and Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Work collaboratively with other jurisdictions in the region to provide education to lenders, real estate professionals, and the community at large.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Actively advertise fair housing resources at the public counter, community service agencies, public libraries, and City website.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Refer fair housing complaints to HUD, DEFH, Fair Housing Council of Central California, and other housing agencies, as appropriate.</u></li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The City <del>updates their website and works with the Fair Housing Council of Central Valley and works with</del> the Fresno Housing Authority to <u>connect interested developers with resources offered through the Housing Authority, including provide providing</u> education to lenders, real estate professionals, and the community at large to promote fair housing services available in the region, <u>including additional organizations such as the Fair Housing Council of Central Valley. The City also performs safety inspections and when warranted, refers cases to Central California Legal Services (CCLS).</u></p>	<p>Addressed through new <b><u>Programs 25: Housing Discrimination Monitoring and Referral</u></b> and <b><u>new Program 26: Improve Access to Resources.</u></b></p>

## Housing Rehabilitation

~~Prior to the dissolution of redevelopment, the City offered housing rehabilitation assistance to homeowners through the Home Improvement Grant Program. Between 2008 and 2012, the City assisted 58 households with Home Improvement Grants.~~

~~In 2008, Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) was used to acquire and substantially rehabilitate 45 units at 1391 E. Summer Avenue (Ruby Court Apartments). Upon rehabilitation, this project offers low income housing for seniors.~~

~~The City recognizes the importance of providing rehabilitation assistance to the City's lower income households. The City will continue to utilize Code Enforcement efforts to preserve and improve housing quality in the City. In addition, the 2015-2023 Housing Element includes the Affordable Housing Incentives program to expand affordable housing opportunities in the City, including the acquisition/rehabilitation of existing housing and deed restriction as affordable housing.~~

## Homebuyer Assistance

~~The City does not offer homebuyer assistance. Without redevelopment funds, homebuyer assistance is financially infeasible for a small community such as Fowler. However, the 2015-2023 Housing Element includes a program (First Time Homebuyer Resources) to direct residents to available resources. Additionally, the City received Permanent Local Housing Allocation funds to provide grants to first-time homebuyers in the community.~~

## SECTION 1D-6: PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

State law requires cities and counties to make a diligent effort to achieve participation from all segments of the community in preparing a Housing Element. Section 65583[c][6] of the California Government Code specifically requires that “[t]he local government shall make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the Housing Element, and the program shall describe this effort.”

The diligent effort required means that local jurisdictions must do more than issue the customary public notices and conduct standard public hearings prior to adopting a Housing Element. State law requires cities and counties to take active steps to inform, involve, and solicit input from the public, particularly low-income and racial and ethnic households that might otherwise not participate in the process. Spanish-language materials were available, and Spanish translation was made available by request.

To meet the requirements of State law, the City of Fowler completed the public outreach at both the local level and as part of the regional Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element effort to encourage community involvement. These efforts included:

- Regional Project Website
- Stakeholder Consultations and Focus Groups
- Study Sessions with Planning Commissions, City Councils, and the County Board of Supervisors
- Community Workshops



Regional efforts included three sets of community workshops, consultations, and a community survey, all of which are discussed in detail in Appendix 1: Regional Housing Element Public Outreach.

## **Joint Planning Commission/City Council Study Session**

On August 2, 2022, a Joint Planning Commission/City Council Study Session was held to introduce the 2023-2031 Housing Element update and to review new State laws. The public was also invited to attend and participate in this event. Staff presented an overview of the Housing Element update process and required contents of the element, discussed early strategies and possible sites to meet the City’s RHNA, reviewed new state laws, and solicited feedback from the City Council, Planning Commission, and community members on these strategies and other housing needs in Fowler. City Council expressed concerns about the tensions between State and local land use control, the impacts of State laws at the local level, and about cities’ abilities to implement the new laws. No public comments or questions were received during the study session.

## **Joint Planning Commission/Workshop Session**

On June 20, 2023, a Joint Planning Commission/City Council Workshop was held to present the 2023-2031 Housing Element update. The workshop was held during the 30-day public review period and the public was invited to attend and participate. Staff presented an overview of the Housing Element update process, outreach conducted as part of the process, and summarized the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA). Review of the fair housing assessment and the programs included for Fowler in the Housing Element were also presented and discussed.

## **Community Workshop**

California Coalition for Rural Housing (CCRH) staff attended a community event hosted by the City of Fowler. CCRH was able to support the City of Fowler in promoting the community event through social media updates, emails to stakeholders, distribution through the Fresno COG email list, and distribution through the Fresno Housing Authority to residents of affordable housing. The Fowler Unified School District also promoted the event with the community at a Fowler High School pep rally and an alumni event.

CCRH had a booth at the community event where the Coalition met with residents to share information about future events and workshops that residents could attend to provide their input on the housing element update process. Residents were able to sign up for future updates on the housing element update using the sign-in sheet provided. CCRH also shared information about the Central California Travel Survey which includes questions regarding the transportation and housing needs of Fresno County residents.

## **Local Stakeholder Consultations**

To ensure that the City solicits feedback from all segments of the community, consultations were conducted with service providers and other stakeholders who represent different socioeconomic groups. Throughout the summer and fall of 2022, several interviews were conducted with stakeholders who work in areas such as housing, homelessness, and other social services in Fowler and throughout the Fresno County area. Summaries of interviews from stakeholders working in Fowler or the County as a whole are included below.

## ***BIA of Fresno/Madera Counties***

The President of the Building Industry Association of Fresno/Madera Counties (BIA), Mike Prandini, was interviewed in November 2022. The BIA is an industry organization that represents builders, developers, subcontractors, and affiliated businesses in the residential, commercial, and industrial building industry throughout the region.

The current shortage of housing has created demand, which can be a positive for BIA's members. Most jurisdictions have sufficient available land to build new housing. Kingsburg was identified as an outlier in this, as they have a growth limitation ordinance, so the two builders that work in the area have been able to work but at a slower pace. The statewide move to require all-electric utilities rather than gas is a concern. For market-rate housing, the State's vehicle miles traveled (VMT) regulations are a large barrier, as transit isn't reliable, and a car is necessary to get around. Builders have to pay a fee to get around the cost of mitigating car miles unless city councils can make a finding of an unavoidable impact. For affordable housing, the prevailing wage requirements are a barrier to development due to the increased cost. Infrastructure costs also affect both types of projects. Streamlining tools help control costs, but not enough. A lack of local water access is also a barrier to development. He expressed concern that the State assigned the RHNA without this in mind. There may not be enough water access to support the housing development that the State is looking to see.

In his experience, single-family homes are in greatest demand. There is a lot of demand for low-income housing projects, but these aren't financially viable for developers without government subsidy. However, including government subsidy in projects increases the overall cost to build, as it triggers prevailing-wage requirements. A recent affordable development in the City of Fresno cost around \$400,000 per unit to build. Condo-style projects are also a possibility, but in his experience, they don't tend to be successful in this region. To keep prices within reach of local residents, recent projects have needed to be built at higher densities. A typical project is between 8 and 15 units per acre on small lots, with single-family homes built as two-story structures in order to reach 1,200 or 1,300 square feet. Developers need to build higher-density projects to spread out the cost of infrastructure among a larger number of units. Demand isn't as high in smaller communities as it is in the cities of Fresno and Clovis. These cities have better access to jobs, education, and medical centers. VMT mitigation costs increase in communities that are far from these economic centers, so it's less of an issue in closer communities like Sanger, Reedley, Kingsburg, Fowler, and Kerman. Reedley is too far away from the economic center of the region, which causes challenges. Many residents of Mendota and San Joaquin have incomes that are too low to afford development at its current costs. He indicated that more downpayment assistance and maintenance programs are needed throughout the region. Fresno Housing Authority has some, but they are limited.

### ***Fair Housing of Central California***

A representative from Fair Housing of Central California (FHCCC) was interviewed on September 27, 2022. The organization works to eliminate housing discrimination and expand housing opportunities to all persons. The FHCCC receives fair housing complaints and tracks these complaints by location, zip code, gender, race or ethnicity, and type of complaint. The most common fair housing issue that clients report is discrimination related to disability or race. She expressed concern that fair housing practices are not really embraced by local government, and that cities should avoid promoting the development of new housing in neighborhoods where segregation is deliberately continued by landlords and real estate agents. Her clients prefer decent, affordable, and accessible housing, but as the cost of purchasing a home increases, opportunities decline. She feels there is adequate rental housing in the community, including for seniors and persons with disabilities, but affordability and accessibility remain barriers.

### ***Fresno Madera Continuum of Care***

As a representative for the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (CoC), Laura Moreno was interviewed in October 2022. Ms. Moreno is a program manager for Fresno County’s Department of Social Services (DSS). The CoC does not provide direct services, but instead is a collaborative of agencies that work together to provide homeless services. At present, there is insufficient low-income housing for those who are homeless. Many people in the region are on a fixed income, including disability or social security, and cannot afford housing.

### ***Law Office of Patience Milrod***

Fresno-area civil rights attorney Patience Milrod was interviewed on October 31, 2022. While Ms. Milrod supports the continued attention to inclusionary housing, she has concerns about the passive language of “facilitate” and “encourage” that have been common in past Housing Elements. She identified code enforcement as a strategy for improving housing quality that could be strengthened. At present, rents are increasing while the quality of housing is decreasing, and there isn’t a lot of energy locally to correct that imbalance. This particularly hurts lower-income households. With more aggressive code enforcement in place, she suggested that some landlords may decide that the cost of maintaining their property isn’t worthwhile and may choose to sell to a community land trust or Habitat for Humanity rather than entering receivership. She would like to see that as a specific goal. The biggest barrier to finding affordable, decent housing in the region that she identified was that lower-cost housing tends to also be low quality or ill maintained. However, she cautioned that the supply problem won’t be solved with suburban or exurban single-family dwelling units. There’s also local disinclination to build lower-income housing in areas of opportunity. She suggested that cities should ask for affordability covenants in perpetuity and highlighted the land trust model as a way to enable that.

## ***Central Valley Urban Institute***

On September 7, 2022, Eric Payne, executive director of the Central Valley Urban Institute (CVUI), was interviewed. The CVUI is an advocacy organization working throughout the Fresno area. He indicated that there may be opportunities to increase affordable housing stock production, particularly within infill areas and brownfields as well as to increase homeownership through programs like the downpayment assistance program. However, he expressed concerns about high building costs, lack of financing, and poor leadership in the area. Community members would like to see intergenerational housing, middle-income housing, and “missing-middle” sized housing as well as housing to end homelessness, particularly among college-aged youth. At present, he does not believe that there are adequate opportunities for homeownership or adequate rental housing. The largest barriers are access to credit, lack of financial education, and existing housing cost burden. There is a lack of investment in programs that serve low to moderate-income communities.

## ***Resources for Independence Central Valley***

On November 1, 2022, a representative from the organization Resources for Independence Central Valley was interviewed. The representative expressed concern about laws in the City of Fresno that prevent homeless community members from camping or living in their cars. Homelessness is increasing, but the City is investing resources in enforcing these laws rather than providing assistance. There is funding to move homeless people around, but not to improve anyone’s living situation. Access to Section 8 can be a challenge, as the waiting list can be four or five years long. Additionally, rental housing can require incomes of two to three times the rent, which can be a barrier to some who need to access rental housing. For those who may be able to access housing, some landlords levy additional fees during the application process that can present a prohibitive cost. Credit checks are becoming a barrier for residents to get into housing. Community members with disabilities can experience additional challenges trying to find homes that have necessary accessibility features. Homeowners with disabilities end up needing to make expensive home improvements in order to make their homes accessible for themselves. For renters, these improvements may be more challenging to implement, and those who use service or support animals may experience discrimination against pets. There isn’t enough higher-density housing, housing near transit or major transportation corridors, or housing in good repair.

## ***Llaves de tu Casa Iniciativa***

As a follow-up to the regionwide stakeholder focus groups held in October and November 2022, a collection of members from the Llaves de tu Casa Iniciativa (LDTC) met on December 13, 2022, to respond to several stakeholder interview questions. The initiative is a financial education program open to all County of Fresno residents but with a focus on increasing Latino homeownership rates. Eight initiative members represented organizations and companies, including Envision Fresno (Mirna Garcia), Self Help Enterprises (Rick Gonzales, Alicia Bohigian), CORE Home Loans (Pablo Estrada), Union Bank (Reyes Ruiz), the California Association of Realtors (Sabrina Brown), and the National Association of Hispanic Realtors (Aldiva Rubalcava, Lucy Sandoval). The group collectively serves Fresno County, and members also serve other counties in the Central Valley.

The opportunities for future housing in the region that the initiative members identified included LTDC's ability to provide homeownership education virtually and in partnership with other local organizations. There has been a lack of financial literacy in the community along with challenges in using technology and language barriers.

The initiative members expressed concerns about affordability, including the location of affordable housing in undesirable areas. Upzoning single-family zoning would create more opportunities for the development of multifamily housing in more desirable locations. Some funding is only available in certain areas, which can exacerbate existing patterns of segregation and close proximity to industrial uses. They also expressed concern about investors displacing community members in order to establish short-term rentals while community members live in hotels. The State's mandate to install solar panels on new homes was also cited as an additional cost that will drive up the buyers' or renters' cost.

The gap between ownership housing affordability and program income limits was identified as a barrier to accessing housing. Moderate-income households earn too much to qualify for housing assistance, but those who qualify aren't able to afford the housing available. In addition to a lack of multifamily rental housing, there aren't many condo buildings in the region, which could present another affordable homeownership strategy. The establishment of land trusts was also identified as a potential strategy for increasing affordability, as well as donations of land from municipalities.

Self Help Enterprises has partnered with the City of Clovis on their recent accessory dwelling unit program and has partnered with Salt + Light to develop tiny homes for transitional housing.

### ***Fresno Housing Authority***

Two representatives from the Fresno Housing Authority, Doreen Eley and Michael Duarte, were interviewed on January 11, 2023. The Fresno Housing Authority currently has housing projects in every jurisdiction participating in the Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element except for Coalinga. The City of Fresno has a separate Housing Authority.

The representatives noted that there is tremendous demand for housing in all communities in Fresno County. The last time the Section 8 waiting list opened they received more than 50,000 applications. Recently, when a 60-unit development in Clovis opened, they received more than 10,000 applications. When a project in downtown Fresno opened, they received 4,000 applications within a two-week period. Rents are high, which is challenging for residents but good for developers. The region needs more housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.

In rural and unincorporated communities lack of water and sewer capacity are major concerns. The Housing Authority can't build housing in areas with no services.

For local developers, state funding and streamlining programs trigger skilled, trained, and prevailing wage requirements, which can be a barrier. Entitlement processing timelines are a barrier to development for the Housing Authority. The representatives gave the example of a recent project in San Joaquin where streamlined initiatives

were used, but the project still took a year to finish the project review process. Many communities don't have much staff capacity and have part-time consultants to complete the work.

There is also a lack of capacity among agencies that provide services in rural and unincorporated areas. This is especially challenging for special needs populations that need mental health services. There is a countywide Department of Behavioral Health, but no offices within smaller cities. The representatives gave the example of a Homekey project in Huron that the Housing Authority wanted to assist with, but there were no service providers available to serve the project.

While there is a lot of interest within the community for homeownership opportunities, more funding is available for multifamily rental projects. The Housing Authority is more focused on rental projects and arriving at deeper affordability levels.

The Housing Authority is following the State's lead in providing housing in high opportunity areas. There are lots of incentives to do this to compete for tax credits and other state funding programs. The representatives mentioned that they are trying to balance this need by also working to improve the lower-resource areas where folks are already living along with disadvantaged communities like Del Ray and Lenar.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges for many residents of Housing Authority projects. There were increases in domestic violence, and it was challenging for property managers to enforce rules.

## **Public Comments**

The City received no public comments during this public comment period from June 20, 2023, to July 20, 2023.

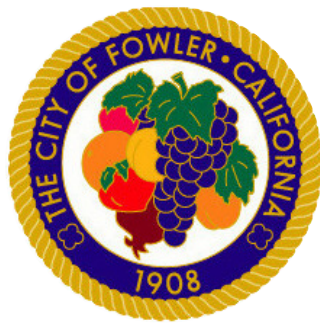
## **Noticing of Study Sessions and Community Workshops**

Notice of the Joint Study Session was made available as part of the City's standard meeting notice process for City Council and Planning Commission meetings.

The Community Workshop was advertised to members of the public through multiple information channels. Flyers in English and Spanish were distributed at local events in the community as well as at the Community Center. Current residents of the Riverland Apartments and prior applicants to that building received information through flyers and email, and residents in Fresno Housing Authority units received information about the workshops by email. The availability of Spanish translation was noted in outreach materials.

## **Noticing of the Draft Housing Element**

Per California Government Code Section 65585, the draft Housing Element was made available for public comment for 30 days, from June 20 to July 20, 2023. No, Public comment was received. The draft was made available on the City's website and was noticed to residents through the same methods as used for Planning Commission and City Council meetings. Additional direct noticing was sent to local housing advocate groups and other stakeholders.



## ***A Regional Plan for Addressing Housing Needs***

*Fresno County • Coalinga • Firebaugh • Fowler • Fresno City • Huron • Kerman  
Kingsburg • Mendota • Orange Cove • Parlier • Reedley • San Joaquin • Sanger • Selma*