



REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

COMMISSION ITEM NO. VIII-C

COMMISSION MEETING: 7/06/11

APPROVED BY



(Executive Director)

DATE: July 6, 2011

FROM: Marlene Murphey, Executive Director

BY: David Martin, Project Manager

SUBJECT: Resolution approving an Amendment to the Preliminary Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution (Attachment "A") that approves and transmits an Amendment to the Preliminary Plan for the Redevelopment Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area to include the El Dorado Park Neighborhood.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 22, 2010 the Agency Board approved the contract between the Agency and the Rosenow Spevacek Group (RSG) authorizing them to assist the Agency with amending the Redevelopment Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area. Since then the consultant helped the Agency to process a plan amendment for the Airport Area, along with gathering data for the El Dorado Plan Amendment. According to California Redevelopment Law (CRL), to proceed with the inclusion of the El Dorado Park Neighborhood into the existing Airport Area Redevelopment Plan, a preliminary plan must first be approved.

The plan amendment process typically takes about a year to complete. Agency approval of the Amendment to the Preliminary Plan will initiate the plan amendment process, and form the basis of the Amendment. Agency staff and consultants have prepared the attached Amendment to the Preliminary Plan pursuant to the CRL, which requires it contain a brief and general discussion of the Added Area boundaries and land uses; the impacts redevelopment may have on the area; and consistency of the proposed redevelopment with the General Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Fresno Redevelopment Agency ("Agency") has proposed an amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area ("Redevelopment Plan") for the purposes of adding approximately 29 acres of land ("Amendment"). The proposed area to be added ("Added Area") is referred to as the El Dorado Park Neighborhood. The Added Area would constitute a fifth subarea within the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area"), which is currently comprised of four noncontiguous areas totaling approximately 1,119 acres in the vicinity of Fresno Yosemite International Airport.

The El Dorado Park Neighborhood is comprised primarily of multi-family housing complexes, and is located just west of Fresno State University. Originally developed as student housing for in the 1960's, the neighborhood has fallen into disrepair and experienced little investment since transitioning into housing largely populated by chronically poor families, refugees and

immigrants. In 2007, the City and Agency embarked on a process to engage residents of El Dorado Park, and discuss plans and ideas to eliminate blighting conditions in the area. In combination with Fresno State University, United Wesley Methodist Church, and the nonprofit Stone Soup, extensive community outreach was performed; and in 2009, the El Dorado Park Neighborhood Specific Plan was adopted.

The Neighborhood Specific Plan provides a road map for long-term redevelopment of El Dorado Park to eliminate the blighting conditions found there, including unsafe buildings and high crime levels. This Amendment will expand the existing Project Area to allow the Agency to do infrastructure and other projects in the Added Area, where it is generally prohibited from engaging in redevelopment activities today. Because the Added Area contains largely multi-family rental units, the Agency has a great opportunity to improve the supply of low and moderate income housing in Fresno by incorporating it into the Project Area.

On April 22, 2011 the Agency Board approved the contract between the Agency and the Rosenow Spevacek Group (RSG) authorizing them to assist the Agency with amending the Redevelopment Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area. Since then the consultant helped the Agency to process a plan amendment for the Airport Area, along with gathering data for the El Dorado Plan Amendment. According to California Redevelopment Law (CRL), the initial steps to amend an existing redevelopment project area include designating a survey area, adopting an Amended Preliminary Plan, and forming a Project Area Committee (PAC).

Section 12-606(B) of the Fresno Municipal Code provides that a redevelopment plan and amendments to redevelopment plans shall only be initiated by adoption of a resolution of initiation by the Council. Following the recommendation of HCDC, the Preliminary Plan will go before the Planning Commission on June 1, 2011, and before the Agency Board on June 9, 2011. On that same day (June 9, 2011), staff will also appear before Council to proceed with the PAC formation.

The plan amendment process typically takes about a year to complete. Agency approval of the Amendment to the Preliminary Plan will initiate the plan amendment process, and form the basis of the Amendment. Agency staff and consultants have prepared the attached Amendment to the Preliminary Plan pursuant to the CRL, which requires it contain a brief and general discussion of the Added Area boundaries and land uses; the impacts redevelopment may have on the area; and consistency of the proposed redevelopment with the General Plan.

As a part of this amendment process, a PAC will be formed pursuant to California Community Redevelopment Law (Health and Safety Code Section 33000 et seq., "CRL"). The PAC will consist of a mixture of residents, property owners, community groups, and if applicable, business owners within the El Dorado Park Neighborhood. After a PAC is formed, future actions in the plan amendment process will be determined after considering developments in legislation concerning redevelopment.

On June 8, 2011, at their regularly scheduled meeting, the Housing and Community

Development Commission recommended approval of this item.

Attachment: Resolution approving an Amendment to the Preliminary Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project

Exhibit: Preliminary Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY
OF FRESNO APPROVING AND TRANSMITTING THE
AMENDMENT TO THE PRELIMINARY PLAN FOR THE AIRPORT
AREA REVITALIZATION REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Community Redevelopment Law (Health and Safety Code Section 33300 et seq., "CRL"), on June 29, 1999, the City Council of the City of Fresno ("City Council") adopted the Redevelopment Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area") by Ordinance No. 99-44, which has subsequently been amended two times; and

WHEREAS, on June 30, 2011, the City Council adopted Resolution No. ____ amending the Redevelopment Survey Area ("Survey Area") to include certain territory generally known as the El Dorado Park Neighborhood for study purposes; and

WHEREAS, redevelopment staff and consultants have completed preliminary studies of the area added to the Survey Area and have proposed that the area ("Added Area") be added to the existing Project Area for redevelopment purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has considered the staff report, supporting documents, and public testimony in making its decision.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF
FRESNO RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The Planning Commission hereby selects boundaries for the proposed 3rd Amendment to the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Plan, as said boundaries are depicted within the Amendment to the Preliminary Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project.

Section 2. The Planning Commission hereby approves and transmits to the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fresno the Amendment to the Preliminary Plan for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area in the form attached herewith as Exhibit A.

Section 3. In the event that it is necessary for clarification purposes for staff to make minor, technical changes to the boundaries shown and described in the Amended Preliminary Plan, which changes do not add or subtract area, the Planning Commission hereby finds and determines that any such minor, technical changes for clarification purposes do not materially affect the boundaries designated by this resolution for the preparation of the Amendment.

Section 4. The Secretary shall certify to the adoption of this resolution.

SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF FRESNO)
CITY OF FRESNO)

I, Keith Bergthold, Secretary of the Fresno City Planning Commission, certify that the Planning Commission, at a regular meeting held _____, 2011, upon a motion by Commissioner _____, seconded by Commissioner _____, adopted the foregoing Resolution by the following vote:

Ayes:
Noes:
Absent:
Abstain:

Fresno City Planning Commission
Keith Bergthold, Secretary

[Signature]

Dated: _____

Resolution No. _____
Amendment to the Preliminary Plan for the
Airport Area Revitalization
Redevelopment Project

Planning Commission Resolution No. _____
Approving and Transmitting the Amendment to the Preliminary Plan
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Exhibit "A"

Amendment to the Preliminary Plan
for the
Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project

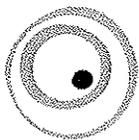


REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Amendment to the Preliminary Plan

Amendment No. 3 to the Redevelopment Plan for the Airport Area
Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area

July 21, 2011



RSG

INTELLIGENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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AMENDMENT TO THE PRELIMINARY PLAN

Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project
Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fresno

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INTRODUCTION

This is the Amendment to the Preliminary Plan ("Preliminary Plan") for the Airport Area Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area") of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fresno's ("Agency"). The Preliminary Plan has been prepared as part of the proposed amendment ("Amendment") to the Redevelopment Plan for the Project Area, as the Agency desires to initiate redevelopment plan amendment proceedings to add approximately 31 acres of territory known as the El Dorado Park Neighborhood ("Added Area") to the Project Area to ameliorate blighting conditions, and more specifically to improve the supply of affordable housing in the City of Fresno ("City"). California Community Redevelopment Law (California Health and Safety Code Section 33000, et seq., "CRL") permits amendments to adopted redevelopment plans. Specifically, Section 33450 states:

If at any time after the adoption of a redevelopment plan for a project area by the legislative body, it becomes necessary or desirable to amend or modify such plan, the legislative body may by ordinance amend such plan upon the recommendation of the agency. The agency recommendation to amend or modify a redevelopment plan may include a change in the boundaries of the project area to add land to or exclude land from the project area. Except as otherwise provided in Section 33378, the ordinance shall be subject to referendum as prescribed by law for the ordinances of the legislative body.

In accordance with Sections 33354.6 and 33322 of the CRL, the first step in this process is to prepare this Preliminary Plan. The purpose of this Preliminary Plan is to fulfill the requirements of the CRL and to provide general direction to the Agency in adoption of the Amendment. This Preliminary Plan includes the designation of the Added Area boundaries, and provides a general description of the proposed amendment to the Redevelopment Plan.

The Redevelopment Plan for the Project Area ("Redevelopment Plan") was adopted on July 19, 1999 by Ordinance No. 99-44, and has been amended two times. The first amendment was approved by the adoption of Ordinance No. 2008-9 on March 27, 2008 to extend certain time limits for the Project Area pursuant to Senate Bills 1045 and 1096. The second amendment to the Redevelopment Plan was approved by the adoption of Ordinance No. 2010-52 on December 9, 2010 to extend eminent domain authority over portions of the Project Area for 12 years.

This Preliminary Plan must be approved by the Planning Commission of the City of Fresno ("Planning Commission"), and then by the Agency to proceed with the Amendment. Following approval by the Agency, a Statement of Preparation, which is defined by CRL Section 33327 and generally includes the information contained in this Preliminary Plan, will be transmitted to affected taxing agencies, the County of Fresno, and the State Board of Equalization.

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 33324 of the CRL, which provides that the Plan does not need to be detailed and is sufficient if it:

- Describes the boundaries of Added Area;
- Contains a general statement of land uses and of the layout of principal streets, population densities, building intensities and standards proposed as the basis for the redevelopment of the project area;
- Shows how the purpose of the CRL would be attained by redevelopment;
- Shows that the proposed redevelopment is consistent with the community's general plan; and
- Describes, generally, the impact of the redevelopment project upon residents of the Added Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

This Preliminary Plan addresses each of the foregoing elements. The subsequent Preliminary Report and Report to the City Council that will be prepared in connection with the proposed Amendment will document the

conditions that qualify the Added Area for inclusion in the Project Area under the CRL, and will detail the activities proposed to be undertaken to eliminate blight and revitalize the area.

ADDED AREA NEIGHBORHOOD PARK LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Added Area is located west of Fresno State University. Originally constructed in the 1960's as affordable student housing, the location and street layout have rendered this neighborhood a somewhat isolated pocket of the community. It is rectangular in shape, and bound by East Barstow Avenue to the north, an unnamed alleyway east of North Sixth Street to the east, the alleyway just south of Bulldog Lane to the south, and North Fourth Street to the west. The Added Area is near to, but not contiguous with, the existing Project Area. The Project Area is currently composed of four non-contiguous subareas, thus the Added Area is proposed to become a fifth subarea.

This Preliminary Plan incorporates a map of the Added Area, and the entire proposed Project Area (see Exhibits 1 and 2). The Added Area boundaries were selected from within a redevelopment survey area established by the City Council on June 30, 2011 by Resolution No. _____.

The Added Area is primarily a high-density, multi-family neighborhood, with approximately 520 rental units spread amongst about 30 apartment developments. Two community organizations are located in the Added Area and are very active in the neighborhood. The Wesley United Methodist Church is located at the northern end of the Added Area, and Stone Soup, a non-profit dedicated to creating positive change for Southeast Asian refugee families, is located at the southern end. According to Stone Soup employees, the El Dorado Park neighborhood shifted long ago from housing students to housing low-income families, many of which are refugees and immigrants from Southeast Asia.

In 2008, the City and Agency initiated a visioning process for El Dorado Park that led to adoption of the El Dorado Park Neighborhood Plan ("Neighborhood Plan") in 2009. Community input generated by the Neighborhood Plan process revealed that many of the residents live in sub-standard conditions and experience a high level of crime. A great deal of investment is needed to rehabilitate or redevelop the residential buildings in the Added Area. The Neighborhood Plan provides a long term roadmap for potential redevelopment, on a building by building basis. The Agency, particularly through housing set-aside funds, has an opportunity to act as a catalyst for change in the Added Area.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF PROPOSED PLANNING ELEMENTS

The primary goals of adding El Dorado Park to the Project Area are to (1) eliminate the existing conditions of blight, and (2) increase, improve, and preserve the area's supply of affordable housing. Any new development or redevelopment that occurs in the Added Area will only be permitted in compliance with the City General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, the Neighborhood Plan, and all other state and local guidelines, as they may be amended from time to time.

Land Uses

The Amendment does not alter land use provisions of the existing Redevelopment Plan, which states that the land uses permitted shall be those permitted by the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance as they now exist or may hereafter be amended. Further, the Neighborhood Plan is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and proposes very few changes to existing land uses; those envisioned primarily provide for more open space. All new development and redevelopment in the Added Area will be comprised of uses consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, any applicable neighborhood plan(s), and all other state and local guidelines, as currently adopted or amended from time to time.

Proposed Layout of the Principal Streets of the Added Area

Exhibit 1 presents the principal streets within the Added Area. The principal north-south streets include Fourth and Sixth Streets. The principal east-west streets are Barstow, San Ramon, San Bruno Avenues, and Bulldog Lane.

The Neighborhood Plan contemplates extensions of the north-south streets and removal of some east-west streets to improve access and increase safety. The layout of principal streets and those that may be developed in the future shall conform to the General Plan including its Circulation Element as currently adopted or hereafter amended.

Proposed Population Densities

Permitted densities within the Added Area will conform to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and neighborhood plan(s), as currently adopted or as hereafter amended, and other applicable codes and ordinances. The Amendment does not propose any changes to allowed population densities.

Proposed Building Intensities

Building intensity may be controlled by limits on the:

- Percentage of the building site covered by the building (land coverage);
- Size and location of the buildable area on the building site; and
- Height of the building.

The limits on building intensity shall be established in accordance with the provisions of the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and applicable neighborhood plan(s) as they now exist or are hereafter amended. The Amendment does not propose any changes to allowed building intensities.

Proposed Building Standards

Building standards will conform to the building requirements of applicable State statutes and local codes and ordinances. Implementation of the proposed amended Redevelopment Plan may result in changes to existing buildings. All buildings will be constructed in accordance with General Plan policies (and other applicable codes and guidelines), as such policies exist or are hereafter amended.

ATTAINMENT OF THE PURPOSES OF THE LAW

It is the policy of the State of California to protect and promote the sound development and redevelopment of blighted areas, and the general welfare of the inhabitants of the communities in which they exist. It is found that communities containing blighted areas constitute physical and economic liabilities that threaten the health, safety, and general welfare of the people in these communities, and thus require redevelopment in order to reverse or alleviate blighting conditions. The purpose of the CRL is to provide the framework under which local jurisdictions operate and carry out the activities necessary to eliminate blight.

CRL describes physical conditions that cause blight as follows:

- Buildings in which it is unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work. These conditions may be caused by serious building code violations, serious dilapidation and deterioration, caused by long-term neglect, construction that is vulnerable to serious damage from seismic or geologic hazards, and faulty or inadequate water or sewer utilities.
- Conditions that prevent or substantially hinder the viable use or capacity of buildings or lots. These conditions may be caused by buildings of substandard, defective, or obsolete design, or construction given the present general plan, zoning, or other development standards.
- Adjacent or nearby incompatible land uses that prevent the development of those parcels or other portions of the project area.
- Subdivided lots that are in multiple ownership and whose physical development has been impaired by their irregular shapes and inadequate sizes, given present general plan and zoning standards and present market conditions.

One or more of these physical conditions that cause blight are found within the Added Area causing a serious physical and economic burden on the City which can not reasonably be expected to be reversed or alleviated by private enterprise acting alone. In addition to suffering from physical conditions that cause blight, the Added Area is also characterized by several economic conditions that cause blight. The CRL describes economic conditions that cause blight as follows:

- Depreciated or stagnant property values or property values impaired in significant part due to hazardous wastes.
- Abnormally high business vacancies, abnormally low lease rates or an abnormally high number of abandoned buildings.
- A serious lack of necessary commercial facilities that are normally found in neighborhoods, including grocery stores, drug stores, and banks and other lending institutions.
- Serious residential overcrowding, an excess of bars, liquor stores, or adult-oriented businesses that has resulted in significant public health or safety problems.
- A high crime rate that constitutes a serious threat to public safety and welfare.

The Amendment will achieve the purposes of the CRL by providing the tools to eliminate existing physical and economic blighting conditions that neither the private sector, or government, or both, can remedy. An effort will be made to eliminate blighting conditions in the Added Area by, among other things: (1) assembling land into parcels suitable for modern integrated development, (2) encouraging participation of property owners and tenants in the revitalization of properties exhibit serious dilapidation and deterioration, substandard design, serious building code violations, and substandard design; and (3) increasing the community's supply of safe, suitable housing that is affordable to persons and families of low and moderate income.

CONFORMANCE TO THE CITY'S GENERAL PLAN

This Preliminary Plan is consistent with the City's General Plan because the land uses, proposed layout of the principal streets, and other development standards incorporate existing General Plan policies. The Amendment will not institute land use or other planning policies not otherwise permitted by the General Plan.

GENERAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT UPON RESIDENTS OF THE ADDED AREA & SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

The impacts of the project will generally improve physical and economic conditions for residents within and adjacent to the Added Area, particularly by fostering a healthier, safer residential environment and increased and improved supply of affordable housing. Through the financing capacity and redevelopment powers authorized by the Amendment, redevelopment activities within the El Dorado Park Neighborhood will provide for the improvement, development, replanning, redesign, reconstruction and rehabilitation of the area and the provision of neighborhood-serving commercial, public uses, and open spaces in the interest of the general welfare of the community.

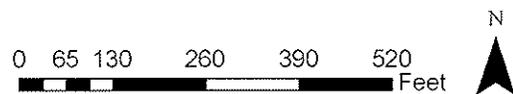
Project development and implementation will be subject to review and approval by the City Council, Agency, the Housing and Community Development Commission, the El Dorado Park Project Area Committee, and other public entities as part of the environmental review process. Further, the Agency will conduct a community outreach program during the plan amendment process and implementation phases to gain the continued insight and perspectives of affected property owners, residents, and other interested parties.

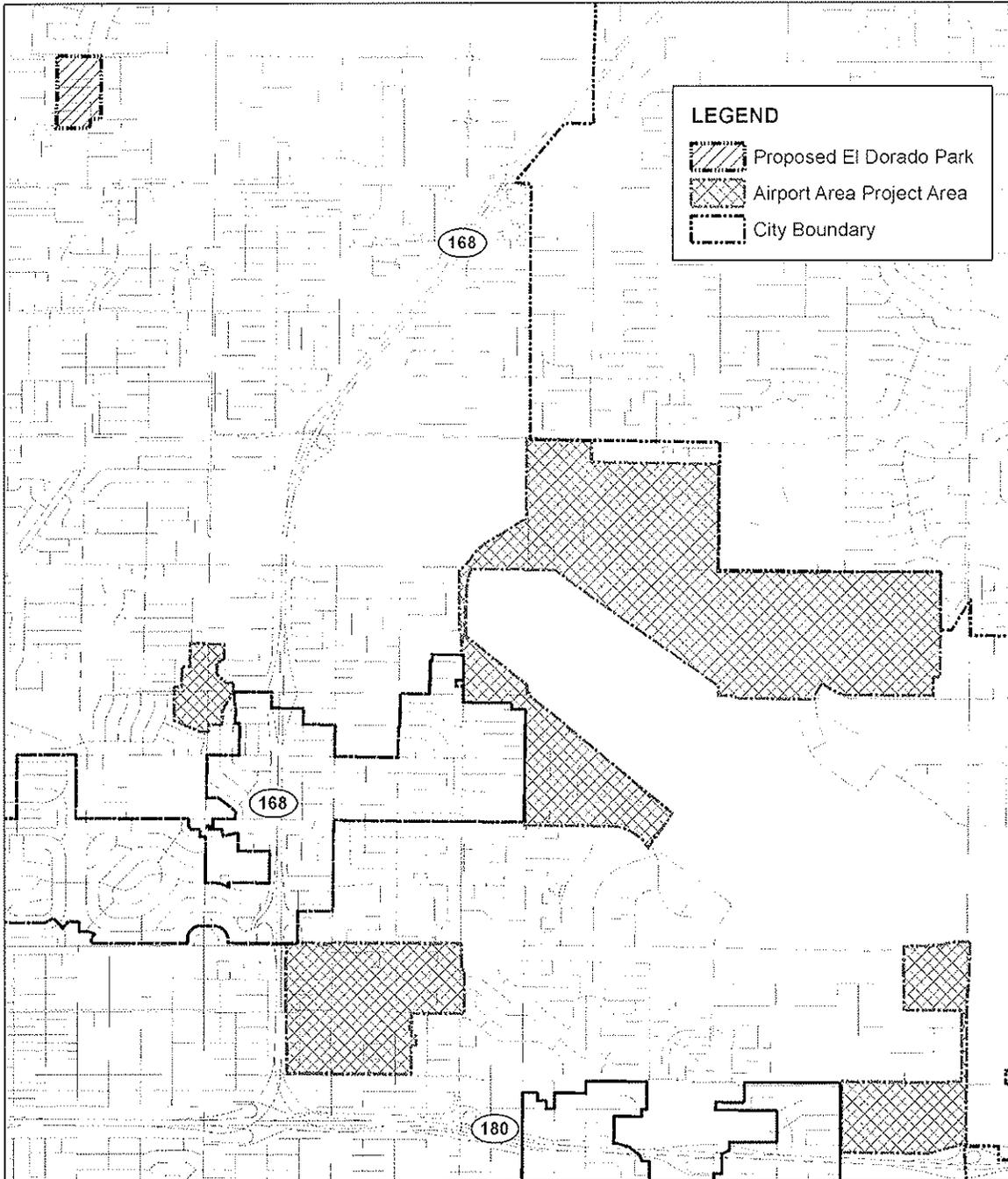
PROPOSED EL DORADO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD
AIRPORT AREA REVITALIZATION REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

EXHIBIT 1



Source: City of Fresno ISD-GIS, RSG





Source: City of Fresno ISD-GIS, RSG

This boundary description is to be used in conjunction with the boundary map of the El Dorado Park Neighborhood Proposed Added Area to the Airport Revitalization Redevelopment Project Area, for the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fresno. The course numbers shown on this description correspond with the course numbers of the boundary map. The description is for that portion of real property in the City of Fresno, of the County of Fresno, State of California described as follows:

P.O.B.

Beginning at a point on the centerline of the North Fourth Street, variable width, and the centerline of East Barstow Avenue, variable width; thence

- Course 1. Easterly along the said last described centerline of East Barstow Avenue, and its various courses, a distance of 920 feet, more or less, to its intersection with the Northerly prolongation of the Easterly line of Parcel 42, as shown on Book 418, Page 15, Block 1, of Fresno County Tax Assessor's Maps, last revision March 30, 2009; thence
- Course 2. Southerly along the said last described Northerly prolongation and Easterly line of said last described Parcel 42, and Easterly line of Parcel 29 and 28, as shown on Book 418, Page 15, Block 1, of Fresno County Tax Assessor's Maps, last revision March 30, 2009, and Easterly line of Parcel 1, 13, 14, 10, and 15, as shown on Book 418, Page 16, Block 3, of Fresno County Tax Assessor's Maps, last revision March 30, 2009, and Southerly prolongation of the Easterly line of Parcel said last described Parcel 15, a distance of 1327 feet, more or less, to its intersection with the centerline of Bulldog Lane, variable width; thence
- Course 3. Westerly along the said last described centerline, a distance of 215 feet, more or less, to its intersection with the centerline of North Sixth Street, variable width; thence
- Course 4. Southerly and Southwesterly along the said last described centerline, and its various courses, a distance of 186 feet, more or less, to its intersection with the Easterly prolongation of the Southerly line of Parcel 9, as shown on Book 418, Page 40, Block 1, of Fresno County Tax Assessor's Maps, last revision 1967; thence
- Course 5. Westerly along the said last described Easterly prolongation and Southerly line of said last described Parcel 9, and Southerly line of Parcel 10, as shown on Book 418, Page 40, Block 1, of Fresno County Tax Assessor's Maps, last revision 1967, and Westerly prolongation of the Southerly line of said last described Parcel 10, a distance of 680 feet, more or less, to its intersection with the centerline of North Fourth Street, variable width; thence
- Course 6. Northerly along the said last described centerline, a distance of 1506 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

Total approximate acres in project area = 31 Acres more or less

For assessment purposes only. The description of land is a geographic description as defined by the State Boards of Equalization and may not be used as a basis for an offer for sale of the land described. Bearing and distances derived from assessor's pages and base map provided by the City without the benefit of field survey.