

Introduction

The City of Fresno is currently preparing the South Central Specific Plan to facilitate opportunities for economic growth and job creation, while reducing impacts on the environment and improving quality of life. The City held three community workshops in January 2020 to receive public input on the plan area and to listen to the community's concerns. Based on the input received, the City developed initial land use concepts and a set of policy considerations. These preliminary land use concepts and policy considerations were presented to the community at a workshop held on February 12, 2020 at the Malaga Community Center.

In response to the feedback received from the community at the February 12 workshop as well as feedback received from the advisory committee, the City refined the preliminary land use concepts and policy considerations. On February 25, 2020 the City held a subsequent community workshop to receive further input and/or confirmation of the refined land use concepts and policy considerations. In addition, more detailed information on buffers and setbacks as well as good neighbor policies and community benefits were presented for public feedback. This summary provides an overview of the February 25 workshop as well as major findings and topics of discussion.



February 25, 2020 Community Workshop at Malaga Community Center (Ascent Environmental 2020)

Publicity Efforts

As part of the overall outreach process, the City prepared a publicity program to provide noticing to the community and encourage participation. The City provided the following noticing for the February 25 community workshop:

- ▶ Sent 3,793 Direct Mailer "Save-the-Date" Postcards and Direct Mail Flyers to landowners within the Specific Plan Area, as well as the communities of Calwa and Malaga.
- ▶ Posted flyers on available online distribution sources in partnership with Malaga Elementary and Calwa Elementary.
- ▶ Posted flyers at all City-owned community centers.
- ▶ Distributed flyers through Fresno Unified School District's Parent University Liason group.
- ▶ Emailed event announcement to all individuals included in the City's Listserv including those who have attended previous community meetings and workshops, and local governmental and community based agencies.

All noticing materials were prepared in both English and Spanish and included links for more information in Hmong and Punjabi.

Workshop Overview

The workshop consisted of a short presentation, four station exercises, and a reporting out session. The presentation summarized the specific plan process and presented a summary of the feedback received at the previous workshop on the preliminary vision statement, guiding principles, and policy considerations for the plan area. In addition, the presentation discussed the emerging land use concept and overlay zone, and explained how the overlay zone would work and what it would address.

After the presentation, workshop participants divided into groups and rotated between the following four station exercises:

- ▶ Station 1: Vision, Guiding Principles, and Policies;
- ▶ Station 2: Land Use Concepts;
- ▶ Station 3: Buffers; and
- ▶ Station 4: Being a Good Neighbor and Community Benefits

Translation services for Spanish, Hmong, and Punjabi were provided and all workshop materials, including all station exercises, were available in Spanish. A total of 28 participants attended the workshop.

Station 1: Vision, Guiding Principles, and Policies

The objective of this station was to present the refined vision statement, guiding principles, and policy considerations to the community to receive further feedback.

Participants generally agreed with the vision. The guiding principles had been refined based on feedback received at the February 12 workshop and the Advisory Committee meeting. Participants generally agreed with the refined guiding principles but some suggested that the principles should better represent the resident perspective by discussing quality of life and protections for residents. Participants also suggested that Guiding Principle #6, Highway 99 and 41 as a Gateway, be further refined to address trash clean up along the highway and moving the welcome arch.

Participants reviewed the refinements made to the policy considerations and provided several recommendations and comments. Generally, participants agreed with the transportation policies and acknowledged that major concerns such as safety and roadway conditions had been addressed. Suggestions included the construction of an overpass over the railroad to prevent idling and the use of zero emission busses. Participants also discussed the widening of highways and freeway interchanges in key areas to alleviate traffic and the importance of enforcing truck route policies (Policy Consideration T-1),.

Regarding employment and community development policies, participants voiced the importance of retaining a policy requiring community benefit agreements with new businesses and the importance of prioritizing hiring local residents and enforcing such policies. A recommendation was also made to include bus pass funding for residents as part of the community benefits fund. Participants supported public noticing requirements (Policy Consideration PN-1) and suggested that businesses be required to provide noticing of periods of disruptive industrial operations (i.e., heavier traffic periods and diesel loading days) to better prepare residents.

Air quality and environmental impacts policies were also discussed. Participants suggested that new industrial development pay for water and sewer connections for residences. Energy and green building policies were supported by participants and LEED certified building requirements were suggested. Suggestions were also made to require that developers add landscaping and ensure it is maintained. Some participants advised that the light and glare policy (Policy Consideration L-1) should take into consideration that dim lights may result in safety issues and may not deter thieves. Illegal dumping was also discussed, specifically the importance of raising awareness for trash pick up days, providing a task force for dumping and garbage issues, and ensuring code enforcement and a faster response to reports of illegal dumping. A suggestion was also made to develop affordable homes in another area or new community for existing residents to move to and to provide incentives for residents to relocate.

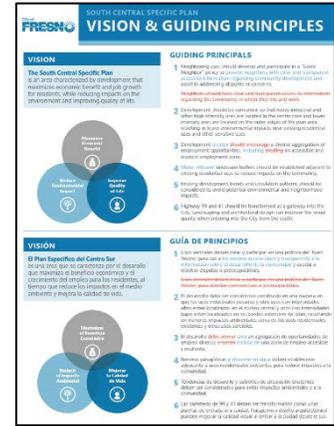


Figure 1: Vision and Guiding Principles Board (Station 1)



Figure 2: Review of Potential Policies Board (Station 1)

Station 2: Land Use Concepts

At this station, participants reviewed the existing planned land use compared to the proposed emerging land use concept for the plan area. In addition, existing and proposed protections for non-conforming uses were discussed. Feedback from participants was mixed, with some people supporting the proposed changes, others in favor of the existing land use plan, and other suggesting significant changes to the land use mix.

Some participants supported the land use changes to business park near residential uses and encouraged increased buffers between industrial and residential. Participants also advised that the reduction of heavy industrial would benefit public health. One participant suggested that the southeastern portion of the plan area, near Malaga should also be changed to business park.

One participant requested revising the emerging land use concept to provide more residential near Daleville and Orange Center Elementary School. Some participants also voiced the need for more access to services such as stores, clinics, and parks. Suggestions were also heard to provide more green space. One person suggested creating a green zone as a buffer for residential in place of the business park designation along Jensen Avenue and near other residential uses. Some participants also stated that the overlay zone should not allow existing industrial uses to expand in areas where heavy industrial will be changed to light industrial or business park. One participant also stated that meat rendering facilities or uses that emit strong odors should not be permitted in the area.

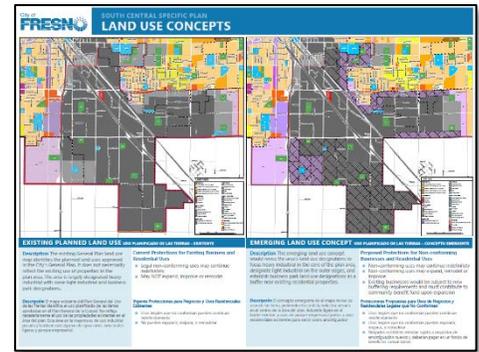


Figure 3: Land Use Concepts Board (Station 2)



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However, other participants voiced concerns regarding rezoning consequences and the impact on existing businesses in the area. Some preferred the existing plan over the proposed changes. Some participants indicated there should be no more residential allowed near industrial. Some mentioned that the regional business park land use designation in the southern portion of the plan area is not realistic, and that the proposed business park designation closest to Malaga was unnecessary since it was surrounded by industrial uses in the unincorporated county, not residential uses. There was also concern about removing the heavy industrial land use designation in the southern portion of the plan area.

Station 3: Buffer Techniques



Figure 4: Buffers Board (Station 3)

The Buffers station provided participants with potential site plans showing buffer and setback requirements for developments with street frontages as well as developments located adjacent to residential or civic uses. Participants reviewed the potential buffer and setback requirements and provided feedback.



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Most participants were in favor of requiring that loading be placed behind the building thereby increasing the distance to diesel exposure. Some participants recommended additional setbacks for buildings near sensitive uses such as residences or schools. Participants also recommended that green spaces be increased, maintained, and that landscaping be drought tolerant. Visual barriers and reductions in light spillage or glare were also recommended. Some participants voiced the importance of providing developers with options and the importance of encouraging development by not placing too many restrictions. Participants discussed how best to balance the needs of new development and the needs of residents. Participants stated the importance of being concious of space limitations and establishing setback distances based on analysis. Participants also mentioned the need for buffers along highways and high speed rail.

Station 4: Being a Good Neighbor and Community Benefits

At this station, participants discussed how businesses and residents can establish good neighbor relationships and the importance of good communication. Participants discussed potential communication platforms for facilitating such conversations and for providing notice of new developments or community events. Participants encouraged the use of a variety of communication methods, providing early notification of development projects, and the importance of knowing your audience. Some communication methods that were highlighted during the discussion included:

- ▶ the Malaga Water District Newsletter,
- ▶ town hall meetings,
- ▶ designated community contacts, and
- ▶ social networks such as Facebook groups.

Participants stressed the need to use a combination of communication methods to ensure that all community members are met, including those with no or limited internet access.

The idea of a community benefit fund was also discussed at this station. Participants brainstormed ideas of what items the community benefit fund could pay for and also how the fund would function. Participants shared the importance of ensuring that the fund pay for community prioritized projects and not require developer approval as well as the importance of prioritizing items that aren't already funded through other programs. Items proposed for funding included:

- ▶ street lighting,
- ▶ roadway maintenance,
- ▶ job fairs,
- ▶ charging and alternative fuel stations, and
- ▶ parks and recreation.

Participants also voiced the importance of a community benefit agreement to ensure local hire requirements.



Figure 5: Being a Good neighbor and Community Benefits Board (Station 4)



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