

## APPENDIX W / WEST AREA COMMUNITY PLAN

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**GOAL:** Develop the West Area as a planned community with a complete range of services and facilities for the needs of community residents, in adherence to a set of specific standards for residential, commercial, industrial, and public infrastructure development, with special emphasis on minimization of land use conflict between agriculture and urban uses.

**W-1. OBJECTIVE:** Promote compatibility between areas planned for, or committed to, active farming operations and areas planned for urban development.

The status of Agricultural Land Conservation Contracts (ALCCs, or Williamson Act contracts) will be considered a qualifying factor for imposition of agricultural/urban interface standards. Policies W-1-a and W-1-e, below, would not be mandatory for planned urban development adjacent to agricultural parcels whose owners have filed a cancellation request or notice of nonrenewal for the ALCC.

**W-1-a. Policy:** Boundaries of planned urban uses should be drawn in order to prevent "peninsular effects" (i.e., intrusions of farmland into urban areas, or vice-versa).

**W-1-b. Policy:** Develop a program to encourage project development proposals which result in the in-filling of existing urban areas, including small parcels of farmland which have become surrounded by urban uses.

**W-1-c. Policy:** The City of Fresno shall continue to implement its Urban Growth Management (UGM) policies, which encourage orderly development and discourage premature development of land near the planned urban fringe.

**W-1-d. Policy:** The City of Fresno shall continue to recognize existing Agricultural Land Conservation Contracts (i.e., Williamson Act contracts) and shall promote the enrollment of all prime farmland outside of the planned anticipated urban growth area.

**W-1-e. Policy:** When land proposed for urban development abuts actively farmed land that is (1) in an agricultural land conservation contract (including land that is outside the city's sphere of influence boundary); and/or (2) designated in the city's General Plan for continued agricultural use, the development project shall include design features which provide an agricultural/urban buffer as follows:

- building setbacks with fencing.

- designated open space (including, but not limited to, densely landscaped strips, full-width multi-use trails or bikeways, and permanent on-site flood control/drainage facilities).
- boundary streets.

**W-1-f. Policy:** County Zoning Ordinance requirements regarding uses permitted in County AE and AL zone districts shall remain in effect upon annexation to the city. Permitted uses in these county zone districts can be continued until a subsequent subdivision, rezoning, or special permit is approved for the agricultural property. Upon application for such a subsequent entitlement, permitted uses will be reconsidered for conformance to city zoning standards.

**W-2. OBJECTIVE:** Provide comprehensive mechanisms for funding and timely construction of needed public facilities including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalks, drainage facilities (including curbs and gutters), sewer and water utilities, schools, fire stations, law enforcement substations, and parks.

**W-2-a. Policy:** The design of public services shall be based on planned development intensity. Appropriate sizing criteria shall be determined for public facilities, based on population and land use designations with sufficient additional reserve capacity to provide a reasonable margin of safety for potential variations in population growth and intensity of use.

**W-2-b. Policy:** Public facilities shall be sited for greatest efficiency and economy. For instance, the geographic size of the West Area and the population of this area at buildout will require at least two police department substations to provide adequate response capability. Law enforcement substations (Police Department dressing stations) should be co-located with fire stations, parks, or other public facilities, as may be appropriate.

**W-2-c. Policy:** Pursue the formation of a comprehensive city-managed funding program in the West Community Plan Area to provide needed public facilities (including, but not limited to streets, sidewalks, sewer and water infrastructure, law enforcement substations, and parks) in the incorporated and unincorporated portions of the plan area.

The County of Fresno, Central Unified School District, North Central Fire Protection District, and Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District shall be contacted to discuss participation in this funding program.

This funding program may include one or more of the following:

- capital improvement assessment district(s), preferably comprehensive and multi-purpose.
- a modified Urban Growth Management (UGM) Ordinance.

- one or more Mello-Roos Districts, which could include funding for ongoing operation of services such as fire protection and law enforcement.
- construction of self-limiting toll roads and/or bridges (where collection of tolls shall cease when construction debt is satisfied).
- pursuit of gas tax revenues, grants, and other funding sources for use in both incorporated and unincorporated areas where urban development is planned by the city.

Elements of the above funding program would be applied, as appropriate, to areas with existing and planned urban development and densities as shown in city plans.

The funding program would not include areas shown on city plans for rural residential development, until such time as city plan amendments and/or entitlements are approved for more intensive development, or until such time as council approves a request by rural residential property owners to be fully or partially included in the funding program.

Owners of agricultural or rural residential property--incorporated or unincorporated--who are interested in participating in an assessment district shall be afforded this opportunity on an equitable pro rata basis.

Owners of agricultural or rural residential property who are not presently interested in pursuing more intensive development may opt out of an assessment district by deferring their assessments until such time as they opt in pursuant to obtaining approval of a subsequent plan amendment, rezoning, subdivision, or special permit. Any revenues received as a result of these later opt-in actions shall reduce the term of the obligation for assessed properties with regard to repayment of debt for capital improvements. If no change in use or subdivision is sought by owners of the subject rural residential or agricultural property during the repayment period for capital improvement, and if the capital improvement debt that would have been applicable has been subsequently fully retired, that portion of the non-participating rural residential or agricultural property's obligation shall have expired and no repayment shall be due.

**W-2-d. Policy:** Consider modifying Urban Growth Management policies to increase obligations for off-site improvements and to establish fees for additional needed public improvements. The following are possible additions to UGM requirements and fees:

- provision of law enforcement substations.
- funding to purchase and improve community level parks.
- provision of pedestrian walkways to allow access along major streets between new subdivisions and neighborhood schools.

- provision of additional major street travel lanes (beyond the currently required two center lanes) when projected traffic volumes or safety conditions warrant.
- establishment of a service area and UGM fee for design and construction of planned overcrossings of Freeway 99 and for north-south traffic flow improvements within the West Area, including the Grantland Diagonal.

**W-2-e. Policy:** In order to provide neighborhood park facilities in a timely manner, the city shall commit to developing every UGM-funded park within two years of the time that 95 percent of the UGM fees are collected within that park's UGM service area.

**W-3. OBJECTIVE:** Provide streetscapes which create a positive image of the West Area and contribute to the West Area Community's quality of life.

**W-3-a. Policy:** Designate Grantland Avenue and the Grantland Diagonal between Shields Avenue and its intersection with the right-of-way of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks as a boulevard area, with a 30-foot landscaped setback required. Planned elements of the city's master trail system may be located partially within this setback.

**W-3-b. Policy:** Provide a 20-foot landscaped setback along all designated arterial streets. Planned elements of the city's master trail system may be located partially within this setback.

**W-3-c. Policy:** Provide a 15-foot landscaped setback, or the setback required by the Fresno Municipal Code, whichever is greater, along all collector streets and along the Gettysburg alignment transportation corridor. Planned elements of the city's master trail system may be located partially within this setback.

**W-3-d. Policy:** When fees are paid for median island landscaping in the West Area, the funds collected shall not be transferred for use in other community or specific plan areas. A prioritized list of median island landscaping projects in the West Area shall be developed annually and presented to the West Area Plan Implementation Committee for review.

**W-4. OBJECTIVE:** Provide acceptable design standards for single-family residential development, to establish and maintain safe, attractive, and stable residential neighborhoods; to preserve the long-term integrity of the community.

**W-4-a. Policy:** Apply the following standards to all development proposed within areas designated for medium-low and medium density residential uses:

- in areas planned for medium-low density residential use, minimum lot size shall be 6,000 square feet or larger, except when approved as a clustered planned development pursuant to a special permit.
- in areas planned for medium density residential use, clustered and nonclustered planned development tracts shall require a special permit. In such nonclustered planned developments:
  - lots under 6,000 square feet (reduced-size lots) shall not comprise over 25 percent of all the lots in a final tract map.
  - reduced size lots shall be at least 5,400 square feet in area and, except for cul-de-sac and corner lots, shall have a minimum width of 60 feet.
  - reduced size lots shall be distributed throughout a tract.

**W-4-b. Policy:** The following policies shall apply when a remainder parcel is within the boundaries of a residential subdivision.

- The remainder parcel shall be rezoned to a zone district which is consistent with the planned land use designation.
- Access to the remainder parcel shall be reoriented to a local street whenever feasible.
- When the remainder parcel abuts a major street and is not a corner lot, right of way dedications and installation of improvements (including back-up landscaping treatment and, where feasible, fencing) shall be required along the major street.
- When the remainder parcel is a corner lot abutting one or more major streets, right of way dedications and installation of improvements (including back-up landscaping and, where feasible, fencing) shall be required along any major street frontage of the parcel that is less than 330 feet.

**W-4-c. Policy:** The following design standards shall be required for development of homes and garages in nonclustered residential subdivisions, including planned developments:

- single-family residential lots shall not be allowed to front on a designated major street unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that no feasible alternative means of access can be provided. Evaluation of alternative means of access shall include the consideration of frontage roads, backup treatment, and substantial redesign of the subdivision proposal.
- roofing material shall consist of one of the following, except for roofing used over rear yard patios:
  - architectural grade composition roofing guaranteed by the manufacturer for at least 20 years.
  - cement or clay tile.
  - treated wood shakes.
  - architectural-grade metal and coated non-glare decorative metal

roofing products.

- full front yard landscaping and irrigation shall be installed prior to occupancy.
- city sidewalk standards adopted in 1993 shall be applied (sidewalks with park strips wide enough to accommodate street trees on both sides of all residential and major streets). If the general plan is amended in the future to change this standard, alternative sidewalk patterns with unitary curb/sidewalk and landscape strips in the right-of-way inside the sidewalk may be considered, subject to the design and implementation of an acceptable street landscape plan.

**W-5. OBJECTIVE:** Provide for the appropriate distribution and design of multiple-family and clustered residential uses, to establish and maintain safe, attractive, and stable residential neighborhoods and to preserve long-term integrity of the West Area Community.

**W-5-a. Policy:** In order to provide a desirable range and distribution of housing opportunities, the designation of additional medium-high density residential uses (by plan amendment) may be considered for sites which comply with the following criteria:

- new medium-high density residential uses shall be distributed to avoid excessive demands upon limited public facilities and services, yet provide adequate housing opportunities with immediate access to employment, shopping, services, public schools, and transportation.
- for each proposed medium-high density site, the city shall provide assurance that, at occupancy, public facilities and services will accommodate demand increases or characteristics (peak daily traffic volumes, sewer flows, and water usage; fire suppression water requirements; prevention of disruptive traffic movements; et al.) in a manner that will maintain acceptable levels of service to the proposed use and to the surrounding community in accordance with adopted plans, policies, standards of service, and development standards.
- the medium-high density site shall either have direct access to a major street or to a local street of sufficient vehicular capacity which does not pass through an existing or planned single-family residential street prior to intersecting a major street.
- development of the medium-high density site shall not prevent completion of a local street identified as necessary to serve a single-family neighborhood.

- the proposed medium-high density use shall be amenable to compliance with the policies and development standards of the West Area Policies which promote compatible interfaces with other planned uses.

**W-5-b. Policy:** The following density criteria shall be applied to special permits for multiple-family apartments, condominiums, and cluster planned residential developments (net site area determined per the Fresno Municipal Code):

- the minimum parcel size necessary to develop more than one dwelling unit on a site is 7,500 square feet.
- for sites not more than one acre in size, the minimum site area per dwelling unit shall be not less than 3,500 square feet.
- for sites greater than one acre, but not more than two acres in size, the minimum site area per dwelling unit shall not be less than 3,200 square feet.
- for sites greater than two acres, but not more than four acres in size, the minimum site area per dwelling unit shall not be less than 3,000 square feet.
- for sites greater than four acres, the minimum site area per dwelling unit shall not be less than 2,700 square feet.

**W-5-c. Policy:** The cluster planned development criteria and standards of the Fresno Municipal Code and the following design principles shall be applied to new (and, where feasible, to expanded) multiple-family and cluster single-family residential developments through the special permit issuance and appeal process specified in the Fresno Municipal Code.

- The size of the proposed dwelling units, number of bedrooms, anticipated number of occupants, the site's proximity to public recreational facilities, and active recreational facilities should be considered, and active recreational facilities provided on site (such as garden areas, turf play fields, hard-surfaced game courts, recreation rooms, and swimming pools), as determined appropriate.
- In order to promote attractive external appearances and appealing living environments, design measures should be utilized to avoid large scale, massive, monolithic, and repetitive "institutional" visual appearances; instead, projects should provide a more varied, small scale appearance suggestive of single family residential development. The design measures should include:
  - internally compatible and visually enhancing architectural features and building materials applied throughout the development, particularly where visible to street frontages and adjacent properties.

- variations of the building footprints with indentations, projections, and offsets.
- variations in the exterior walls by use of a variety of materials and features such as wainscoting, decorative trim, balconies, bay windows, verandas and entryways.
- varied roof forms with slopes, ridges and valleys.
- fences and walls that are architecturally compatible with the project, aesthetically pleasing, and durable.
- The following design measures, as well as any measures identified by the Police Department and Development Department, to promote controlled access and community surveillance of all common areas and facilities:
  - pedestrian and vehicular entrances, walkways, parking areas, open spaces, common facilities, structures, and fencing shall be designed to inhibit uncontrolled access by nonresidents and facilitate surveillance by residents, property managers and law enforcement/security personnel.
  - in projects with five or more dwelling units, fencing or walls shall have a 6-foot minimum height, with gated pedestrian entrances to control pedestrian access. These access control structures shall be sited and designed in consultation with the Fire and Police Departments, and, in the case of sound control walls, with the Public Works Department. When feasible and safe, pedestrian access through sound or security walls should be provided near transit stops, schools, parks, shopping center, and other activity centers.
  - fully enclosed garages should be provided for the required covered parking spaces on sites of one acre or less in size, unless alternative design measures are approved to restrict access to parking areas by unauthorized persons. Vehicular access gates may be required for project sites larger than one acre in net size, unless fully enclosed garage spaces are provided.

**W-6. OBJECTIVE:** Establish compatible relationships between housing types and densities, and provide standards for interfaces between urban and rural residential land uses and between single-family and multiple-family residential projects.

**W-6-a. Policy:** The following interface standards shall be mandatory when proposed single-family subdivisions with lots averaging less than 12,500 square feet in size abut one or more rural residential parcel(s) that is/are (1) between one-half and two acres in size and (2) developed with at least one dwelling unit.

- There shall be a minimum rear yard building setback according to the following standards:
  - for single-story structures, the rear yard setback shall be 30 feet.



Rear-yard encroachments may be permitted for single-story structures per the provisions of the Fresno Municipal Code. However, in no case shall the rear yard setback be reduced to less than 20 feet by means of these encroachments.

- for two-story structures, the minimum building setback shall be 40 feet. For those two-story structures with no rear-facing windows above the first floor, or for those portions of two-story structures which have no rear-facing windows above the first floor, rear yard encroachments may be permitted per the provisions of the Fresno Municipal Code. However, in no case shall the rear-yard setback be reduced to less than 20 feet by means of these encroachments.
- There shall be a 6-foot high solid wall or approved architecturally-designed solid fence (meeting requirements of the Fresno Municipal Code) provided along the side and rear property lines between new single-family uses and the above-defined rural parcels.

**W-6-b. Policy:** The following interface standards shall be mandatory when proposed multiple-family or clustered residential uses abut one or more rural residential parcel(s) that are (1) between one-half and two acres in size and (2) developed with at least one dwelling unit.

- There shall be a minimum rear yard building setback according to the following standards:
  - for single-story structures, the rear yard setback shall be 30 feet. Encroachments into this rear yard setback may be approved in the initial special permit (site plan or conditional use permit), or may be subsequently approved in an amended special permit, provided that the special permit approval or amendment process includes the public noticing, appeal, and hearing provisions of the Fresno Municipal Code. However, in no case shall the rear yard setback be reduced to less than 20 feet by means of these encroachments.
  - for two-story structures, the minimum building setback shall be 40 feet. EXCEPTIONS: For those two-story structures with no rear-facing windows above the first floor, or for those portions of two-story structures which have no rear-facing windows above the first floor, rear yard encroachments into this building setback may be permitted. Such encroachments may be approved in the initial special permit or subsequently approved in an amended special permit, provided that the special permit approval or amendment process includes the public noticing, appeal, and hearing provisions of the Fresno Municipal Code. However, in no case shall the rear-yard setback be reduced to less than 20 feet by means of these encroachments.
- Multiple-family residential projects shall provide a solid masonry wall, at least 6 feet in height, along the property line between abutting

multiple-family residential uses and above-defined rural parcels.

**W-6-c. Policy:** Lot patterns and sizes shall be arranged to interface appropriately, to maintain compatibility with surrounding uses and improvements (existing and planned), and to facilitate the development of adjacent parcels with similar lotting patterns.

**W-6-d. Policy:** The following design guidelines shall be considered for application to all multiple-family residential development entitlements adjacent to land that is planned for single-family and/or rural residential use. These measures are to be applied as considered appropriate by the City of Fresno in order to best protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and pursuant to the city's special permit issuance and appeals process. These measures may also be waived where the adjacent planned single-family residential land is developed with, or approved for, a nonresidential use; or where the multiple-family units are being fully integrated into a single-family development by means of density transfer, inclusionary zoning, or a planned development entitlement.

- Locate common use outdoor recreational areas, game courts, swimming pools, and solid waste collection areas on portions of the development site away from existing or planned single-family and rural residential uses.
- Separate parking areas, carports, garages, and access drives other than main access drives from abutting properties zoned or planned for single-family or rural residential use with a protected landscape setback at least 5 feet wide, and with a solid masonry wall 6 feet high, along the property line.
- Separate main access drives from abutting properties zoned or planned for single-family or rural residential use with a protected landscape setback at least 15 feet wide and with a solid masonry wall 6 feet long, along the property line.
- Provide a 40-foot separation between multiple-family buildings greater than one story in height and property zoned or planned for single-family or rural residential use.
- Direct the orientation of second-story multiple-family windows away from adjacent single-family uses, or provide adequate setbacks and/or open space landscape screens.

**W-7. OBJECTIVE:** Ensure that new industrial, commercial, office, public facility, and other nonresidential development is compatible with surrounding areas and provides an attractive appearance.

The following implementation measures (property design standards) will be applied to all nonresidential development entitlements. The standards may be waived or modified where adjacent land is developed with a

nonresidential use or is approved for nonresidential development (by an entitlement such as rezoning or special permit).

These standards are to be applied through the city's special permit issuance and appeal process and may be modified or waived through that process in order to best serve the community's health, safety, and welfare, if the Development Department director, the planning commission, or the city council find that appropriate architectural design, screening, noise attenuation, and/or operational measures have been provided to adequately protect adjoining residential property.

**W-7-a. Policy:** No nonresidential structure taller than two stories or 35 feet shall be constructed or enlarged within 40 feet of the property line of abutting properties that are zoned, planned, or otherwise approved for residential uses.

**W-7-b. Policy:** Nonresidential structures that are less than two stories or 35 feet in height may be constructed within 20 feet of the property line of abutting properties that are zoned, planned, or otherwise approved for residential uses.

**W-7-c. Policy:** A landscaped buffer strip, containing deciduous and evergreen trees, is to be planted and maintained along local streets abutting nonresidential uses, and along all the property lines that lie between nonresidential uses and abutting properties that are zoned, planned, or otherwise approved for residential uses. The landscaped buffer shall be at least 10 feet wide (or wider, as may be required by the Fresno Municipal Code or through the special permit issuance and appeals process).

**W-7-d. Policy:** Provide wall and/or earth berm separation to protect the integrity of residential areas adjacent to nonresidential development.

- A masonry wall, or combination masonry wall and earth berm, providing a continuous barrier three and one-half feet to six and one-half feet in height, shall be erected on, or along, the setback line ten to twenty feet from, and parallel with, the right-of-way line of abutting local streets.
- Earth berms shall be planted with grass or ground cover and maintained by the property owner.

**W-7-e. Policy:** All loading spaces shall be located not less than 150 feet from the boundary of any residential property; however, the proximity of loading areas may be reduced when adequate design and operational measures (such as restricted hours for loading activities) are approved to mitigate noise, lights, and other nuisances associated with loading areas, in order to protect adjacent residential uses. In all cases, loading areas shall be screened from view of adjoining property zoned, planned, or approved for residential uses. This screening shall be accomplished by either placing

loading docks and areas on the sides of buildings that face away from residential property, or by a combination of landscape planting and a solid masonry wall. Where possible, loading areas should not be visible from, nor take access from, local streets with residential frontage.

- W-7-f. Policy:** Roof-mounted and detached mechanical equipment for commercial and office uses should be screened from view of adjacent residential areas, and acoustically baffled to prevent the noise level rating for the equipment from exceeding the applicable city standard for ambient noise at residential property lines.
- W-7-g. Policy:** Within an area 100 feet wide abutting property zoned, planned, or otherwise approved for residential use, nonresidential developments' exterior lighting for parking, access drives, and loading areas shall be shielded and directed so as to prevent the residential properties from having line-of-sight visibility of the light source.
- W-7-h. Policy:** The design of exterior trash pad recyclable storage areas, and similar accessory site elements shall be compatible with the architectural style of the main nonresidential building and shall use complementary materials and colors. Whenever possible, trash and recyclable material enclosures and containers should meet the 150-foot setback requirement for separation of loading zones from property planned, zoned, or otherwise approved for residential uses.
- W-7-i. Policy:** Buildings shall have an attractive appearance on all sides, not just on their front elevations. No monolithic walls shall be permitted. Design features such as the extension of roof treatments and mansards to the sides and backs of buildings; provision of pedestrian overhangs; and use of texture, relief, and/or color can be utilized to add interest to otherwise blank walls.
- W-7-j. Policy:** Front facade pedestrian walkways and adequate protective overhangs shall be incorporated into site plans and building designs.
- W-7-k. Policy:** The following policies shall ensure that new commercial development is compatible with adjacent land uses and is not aesthetically detrimental.
- On commercial property (including wholesale uses), all storage, merchandise, and displays shall be within an enclosed structure, excepting that:
    - horticultural and landscaping materials may utilize outdoor enclosures and open display areas if they are so designated on the site plan/conditional use permit exhibits and do not encroach onto sidewalks, fire lanes, access drives, or designated parking; and,
    - parking lot sales and sidewalk sales may be allowed on a

temporary basis, pursuant to policies of the City's Fire Department, Planning and Development Department, and Public Works Traffic Engineering.

**W-7-1. Policy:** The following policies shall ensure that new industrial development is compatible with adjacent land uses and is not aesthetically or environmentally detrimental.

- Industrial areas shall be located and designed such that industrial truck and vehicular traffic will not route through local residential streets.
- Apply city M-1-P zone district requirements and property development standards to industrial development entitlements adjacent to properties zoned, planned, or otherwise approved for residential uses.