

FAIRMEAD NEIGHBORHOOD
Mobility and Revitalization Strategy

January 6, 2011



Prepared By:



**Local
Government
Commission**

Local Government Commission
Sacramento, California



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Fairmead Neighborhood Mobility and Revitalization Strategy

A Report to the Unincorporated Community of Fairmead,
located in Madera County

January 6, 2011

*Dedicated to Sally Lovelady, whose tireless and
tenacious efforts were instrumental in
realizing this plan.*

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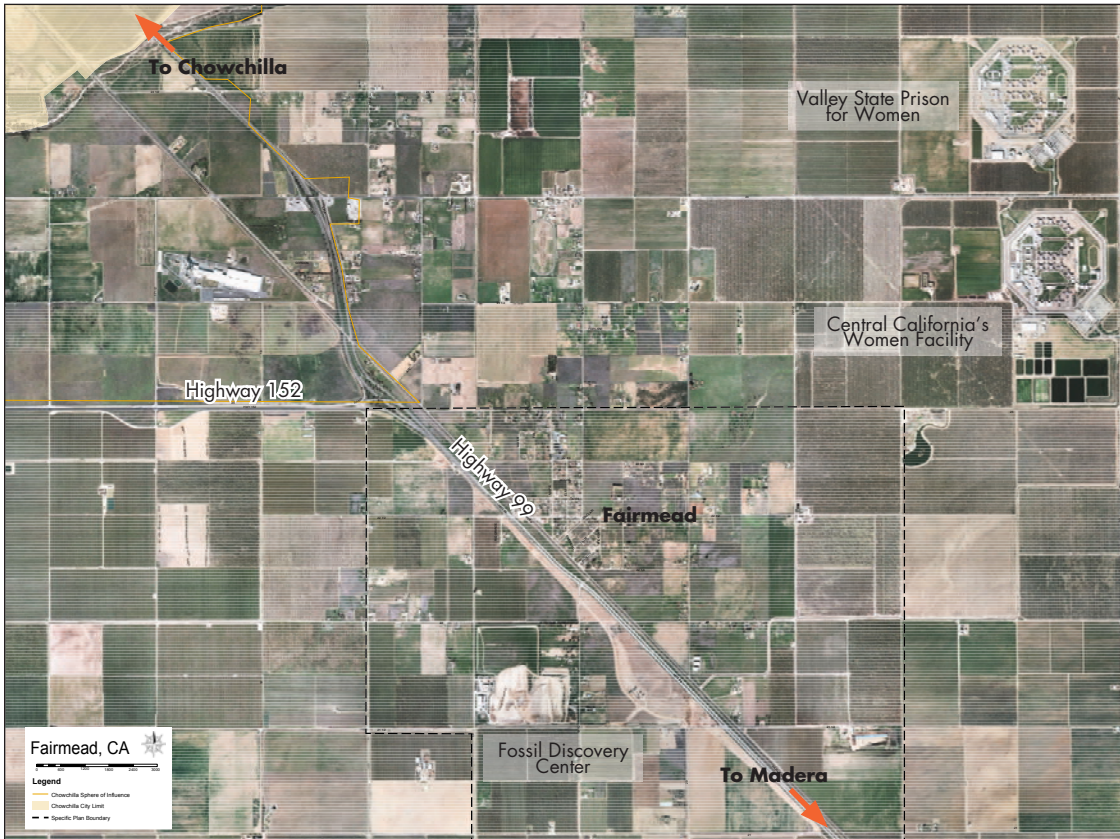
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Introduction

This document is the outcome of an intensive community-based planning process in Fairmead, an unincorporated community of approximately 1,500 residents in Madera County, located 3 miles southeast of the City of Chowchilla. The purpose of this plan is to improve safety and mobility choices for residents of all ages and abilities, encourage and guide new investment in properties and infrastructure within the community, and provide overall visioning for the future of Fairmead.

This planning effort was made possible through a California Department of Transportation Environmental Justice: Context-sensitive Design Planning Grant received by the County of Madera in partnership with the Local Government Commission (LGC). The LGC is a Sacramento-based nonprofit organization that works with local governments and communities to build healthy, livable places. LGC assembled a multi-disciplinary professional team to develop the plan. Dan Burden of Walkable and Livable Communities Institute facilitated the public visioning process. Opticos Design, Inc. provided community planning and design expertise and prepared the plan document, with civil and environmental engineering support from Sherwood Design Engineers.

Public Design Charrette

A multi-day design effort, known as a charrette, was conducted November 11 – November 13 and December 7 – December 10, 2009. County staff, local school officials, other agencies, community organizations and residents participated in a series of events to identify concerns, priorities and potential transportation improvements and neighborhood revitalization strategies. Small group focus meetings were held near the beginning of the charrette with the District Supervisor, County agency staff, community service organizations and local school district representatives for initial input regarding the challenges, hopes and needs of the community.

The public events kicked off Thursday afternoon, November 12th. Approximately 30 people gathered at Galilee Missionary Baptist Church and walked the Fairmead area, observing together streets and surrounding properties, discussing walking and safety challenges, and considering ideas for improvements. A community meeting attended by over 75 people at the church followed the walk. Participants shared their visions and identified key values held in common for Fairmead. Walkable communities expert Dan Burden followed with a presentation highlighting current conditions and potential solutions used in other communities facing similar challenges. Participants then broke into small groups and placed dots on aerial maps to identify the most important physical assets to preserve or build upon, key locations that need attention, and the three most promising opportunity sites for new investment and development. The workshop concluded with each group presenting and explaining their maps to all the participants.

In the weeks that followed, the consultant team reviewed the input from the meetings, activities and field observations, and studied planning documents and resources. The County Resource Management Agency provided a workspace December 7 – 10, where the team worked daily to translate the input into design concepts and recommendations. Staff and community members were encouraged to drop in for impromptu interaction during the production period. Thursday evening, December 10, Team members presented the results in a closing public meeting at Grace Tabernacle Church in Fairmead that was attended by about 45 people.

Charrette activity responses, participant lists, and notes from the focus group meetings are included in the Appendix.

In the months following the charrette, the consultant team refined the concepts, completed drawings and prepared recommendations for near-term improvements and long-range, visionary changes. The resulting plan is presented in the next chapter.



Above from top to bottom: Members of County Staff and Fairmead Community and Friends meet with the design team; Stakeholders and County staff discuss goals and concerns for Fairmead; Community members at the Opening Presentation.



Above, clockwise from top left: The Fairmead “walking audit” group meets at Galilee Missionary Baptist Church; Members of the Fairmead area assess their community with the design team on Thursday’s “walking audit”; Public safety official points out an area in need of improved pedestrian safety; Community members share their vision on note cards during Thursday’s workshop; Fairmead resident’s discuss potential improvements on the “walking audit” tour.



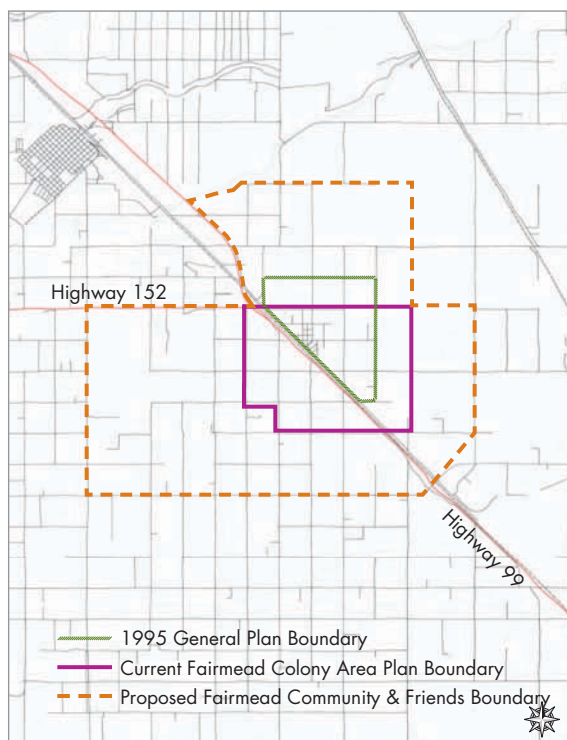
Above, clockwise from Top Left: Image from November's table map exercise; Community members discuss ideas around a table and map; Children express their ideas for the community; A community member presents her group's table map; stakeholders listen during the December final presentation.



Left and Above Left: Composite Table Maps from November workshop exercise illustrate community assets (green), problem areas (red), and opportunity sites (blue). Key community institutions, such as churches and schools, are clearly visible as assets, while residents and stakeholders identified blight, areas of poor drainage, hotspots for crime, and physical barriers as key problem areas.

Above: Community member presents his group's concerns and ideas over a table map.

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Project Area and the Community

The unincorporated area of Fairmead is a small, rural community located along State Highway 99 just south of State Highway 152. Fairmead lies between the larger cities of Chowchilla, approximately 3 miles to the northwest, and Madera, approximately 8 miles to the southeast.

The community includes a small core of compact streets and blocks located east of Highway 99 and the Union Pacific (formerly Southern Pacific) railroad along Fairmead Boulevard. Like many rural places, many residents that live well outside this core also associate with Fairmead. In fact, the community's actual boundary is often disputed. The 1995 General Plan applied boundaries that primarily only considered the core of Fairmead, from Highway 99 to Road 20 to the east and between Avenue 23 ½ and Avenue 22 to the north and south, respectively. Madera County's current planning effort incorporates a larger area that extends further to include areas to the east (to Road 21) and west (to Road 17 ½), but does not extend to the north beyond Highway 152. The Fairmead community has expressed the desire to include a much larger scope of land within their boundary that extends beyond 152 and north to Chowchilla's Sphere of Influence line (at Avenue 25), and between Road 22 and Road 16 to the east and west, respectively.

The community of Fairmead is home to approximately 1,500 residents, the majority Hispanic and African American. The 1999 census shows a lower household income level compared to the rest of Madera County with nearly 34 percent of Fairmead's population at or below the poverty level. While some growth potential does exist for Fairmead, recent observations show a declining population. A high percentage of the population is elderly that are in need of services like transit and medical care.

Above left: Location Map showing the community of Fairmead in relationship to Chowchilla and Madera along Highway 99.

Above right: Planning Area Map outlining the three planning areas for the community of Fairmead.

Fairmead suffers from poor connectivity, with limited access from Highway 99 and no safe railroad crossings. Until recently, access to and from Highway 99 was limited to the Fairmead Boulevard exit at Berenda (3.6 miles to the south) and the Avenue 24 exit at the edge of Chowchilla (2.2 miles to the north). In 2009 Caltrans opened a new interchange at Avenue 21 ½ and Road 20, less than 1 mile from the center of the community.

At the time of writing, the Fossil Discovery Center was under construction at the intersection of Avenue 21 ½ and Road 19 ½, accessible via the new interchange. Made possible by Madera County and the San Joaquin Valley Paleontology Foundation, the museum is located on the site of the landfill where fossils were first discovered in 1993. It will be one of the largest Middle Pleistocene fossil excavations in North America, covering more than 25 acres. It holds great potential as a regional attraction that will likely bring many visitors to the area.

Fairmead has no commercial services and few public amenities. Until recently a small mini-mart and one of the last remaining Mammoth Orange Hamburger Stands (an iconic travel stop along Highway 99 in the 1940's and 50s), operated along Avenue 22 ½ between Fairmead Boulevard and the railroad but they have since closed. Two churches, the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church on Fairmead Boulevard and the Grace Tabernacle Church along Avenue 22 ¾, provide the only meeting spaces for residents, and a small tot lot on Arnott Drive provides the only dedicated place for children to play.

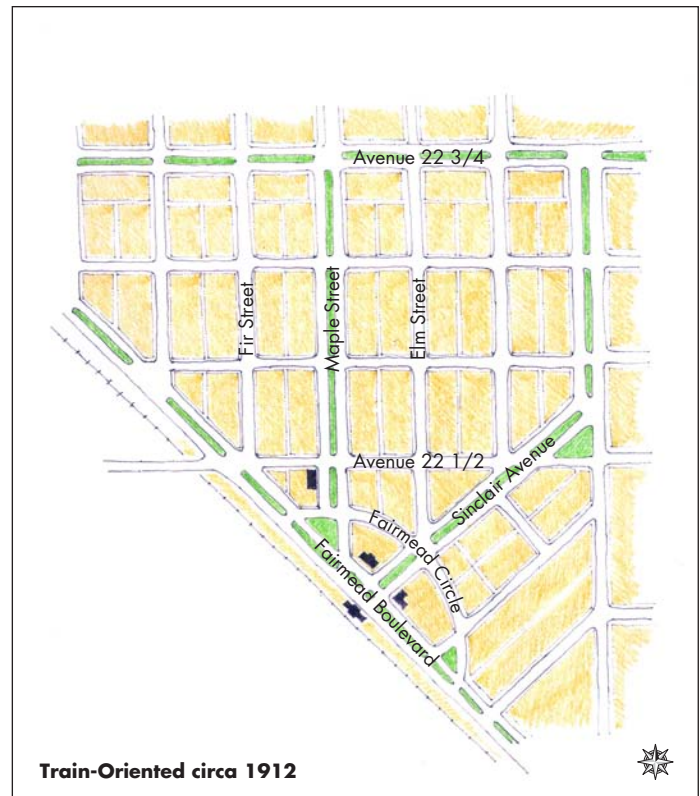
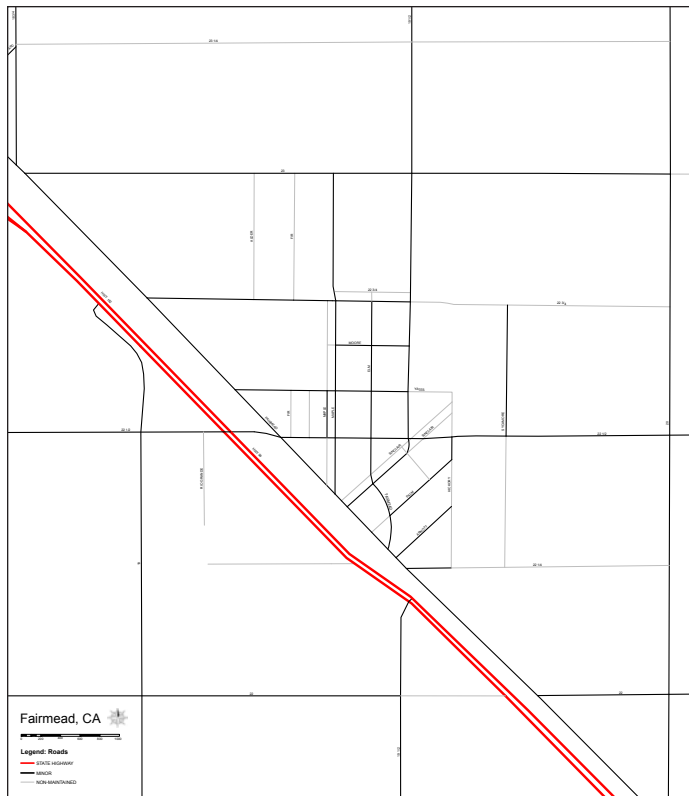
Fairmead Elementary School is located on Avenue 22 ¾ at Maple Street. The school is part of the Chowchilla Elementary School District and serves only 5th and 6th graders. While some Fairmead children do attend the school, the majority of students are bussed in from surrounding areas.

Despite the apparent hardships due to lack of services and infrastructure, Fairmead residents are passionate about their community and its strong roots. Recent years have seen collaboration between the neighborhood group Fairmead Community and Friends and the Madera County Resource Management Agency to bring necessary improvements to Fairmead. In recent years they have been instrumental in working with the County to begin to address several problems, including inadequate infrastructure and code enforcement.

The Madera County Planning Department has also been active in planning for Fairmead. At the time of writing, they had produced a draft Fairmead Colony Area Plan that sought to address community-wide land use, transportation, and infrastructure issues within the larger planning area. The County plan considers a longer-term strategy that would utilize new growth and development in the area to provide much-needed infrastructure improvements and an opportunity for the community to be more self-sustaining. While this plan remains valid and valuable, the recent downturn in the California economy has underscored the potential roadblocks that this strategy might hit, particularly in the short-term. This plan seeks to work within the long-term framework of the County plan, identifying short-term improvements and modest community development projects that can be implemented prior to the return of significant development opportunities. In many cases, this plan envisions that concerted efforts by the community stakeholders, participating County Agencies, and the development community can work to stimulate revitalization and ultimately, catalyze future development.



Above (from top to bottom): Vacant shell of the old Mammoth Orange Hamburger Stand along Highway 99; A well-maintained house and yard along Arnott Drive.



Train-Oriented circa 1912

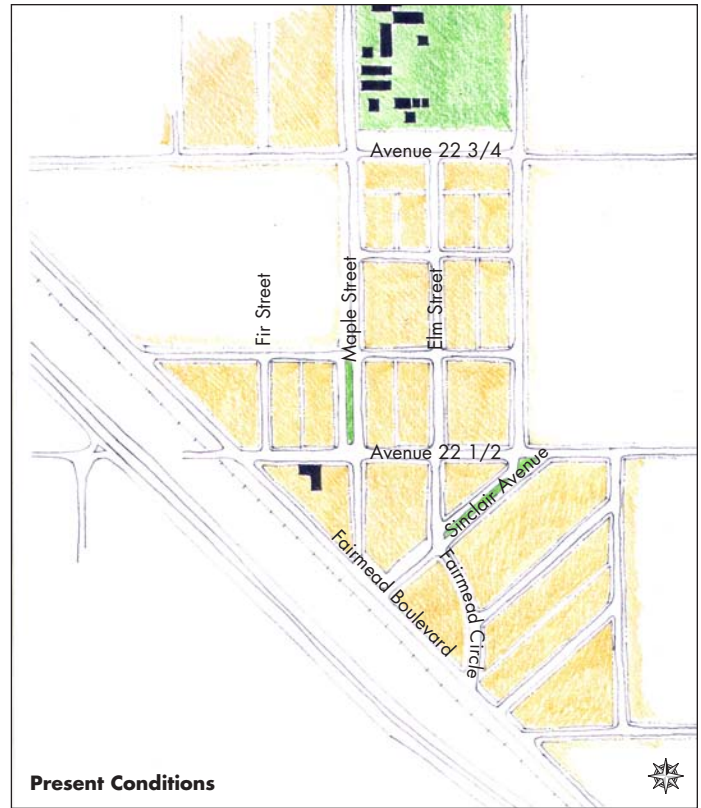
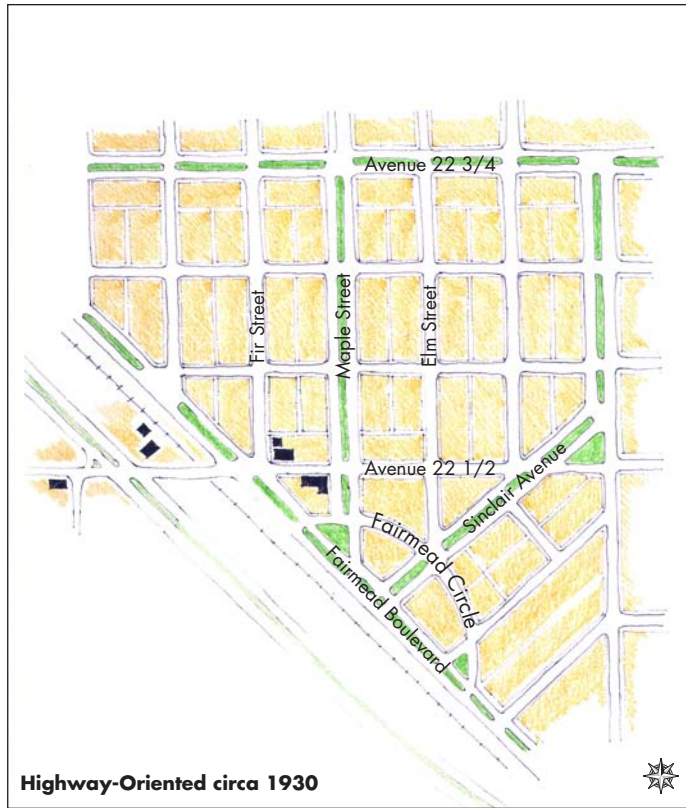
Historical Background

While the full details of Fairmead's history are somewhat hazy, the *Madera County Historian* published an article on the "Fairmead Colony" in April of 1968 that sheds considerable light on the founding and early years of the community. Following this and subsequent records made available, three conceptual maps of central Fairmead were produced. These maps help to communicate how the physical form of Fairmead has evolved over the years and how physical improvements might ultimately be tied to its revitalization.

Fairmead was founded in 1912 as an agricultural "colony" by the Co-operative Land & Trust Company. While no map from this era has been located, the Fairmead Colony likely incorporated a compact core of interconnected streets of blocks and larger, agricultural lands surrounding this core. Primarily accessible by train, the community was, by necessity, a pedestrian-oriented place, with primary services, destinations, and residences clustering within a 5-minute walk - about 1/4 mile - of the station. A series of principal roads, Fairmead's famous planted medians, connected the core to the agricultural lands beyond, and Fairmead Boulevard - also a planted median as it passed through the core of the community - connected to the old, north-south rural highway that existed prior to the modern Highway 99.

By the 1920s Fairmead had entered into a period of economic decline that was likely exacerbated by the moving of the highway to the western side of the railroad and away from the core of the community in 1930. At that time, however, Highway 99 was likely still a rural highway, with at-grade intersections in most places. Avenue 22 1/2 provided access into Fairmead across the railroad tracks, providing a vital connection to Chowchilla and lands to the west. The walkable core of Fairmead's activity moved here, and was sustained for many years, visible in the former Mammoth Orange, nearby convenience store, and Post Office.

Above left: Diagram of central Fairmead's street network illustrates a lack of connectivity within the core of the community. *Above right:* Conceptual illustration of Fairmead circa 1912. The community was likely subdivided into a series of interconnected streets and blocks in close proximity to the railroad. Fairmead's medians would have provided primary paths of travel between the center and the agricultural edge. The highway runs along the east side of the railroad, becoming Fairmead Boulevard as it passed through town.



Over the years, access to central Fairmead has steadily decreased, first with the removal of access across Highway 99 at Avenue 22 1/2, and more recently by removal of access across the railroad tracks. This has greatly reduced economic viability for the core of the community, and invariably contributed to the current lack of commercial services for local residents.

Fairmead Today

Today many of the planted medians have disappeared, either behind private fences, in agricultural fields, or covered by trash and years of debris. Little of the historic core is visible. The historic development pattern is still apparent, however, with the remnants of a uniform grid of streets and blocks oriented to the railroad tracks. The new interchange at Avenue 21 1/2 and Road 20 and the Fossil Discovery Center bring new access and visibility to Fairmead. Many residents hope that these new amenities can act as catalysts for revitalization within the community that might reclaim some of Fairmead’s past successes.

The physical conditions in the Fairmead area consist of generally flat to gently sloping topography with no significant topographical landmarks. Soils in the area are moderately well drained, demonstrating the limited presence of historic wetlands. Eastern and southern portions of Fairmead are subject to flooding and overlie a FEMA designated flood plain. The extents of this flood plain represent areas that are affected by a 100-year or greater flood event and may require additional flood insurance if new structures or utilities are to be constructed in these areas (refer to images on page 2-6).

Above left: Conceptual illustration of Fairmead after the moving of the highway in 1930. The core of the community shifted away from the train and became auto-oriented, apparent in the location of the former Mammoth Orange, nearby convenience store, and Post Office. Above right: Conceptual illustration of Fairmead today.

Primary Challenges

While neighboring communities have planned for substantial new growth and improvement, Fairmead has struggled to maintain its own identity. The recent economic downturn, combined with ongoing changes to the agricultural industry, has produced increasingly limited economic opportunities for local employment. There is an increasing need for housing that is livable and affordable. While many lots sit vacant, the majority of the current housing stock is older than the county average, with nearly 39% built before 1960. The dwellings that do exist are often deteriorating or overcrowded.

Decaying and Inadequate Infrastructure

Infrastructure throughout Fairmead is perhaps the greatest challenge facing the community. Much of it has deteriorated over several decades. While the County has responded with planning efforts, code enforcement, and some implementation, the overall situation remains daunting.

Streets and Roads

Road surfaces and sidewalks, where they exist, are in substandard condition. Despite high pedestrian activity, most streets lack pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks, shoulders, bike lanes, crosswalks and lighting. The majority of streets are also lacking curbs and provide no system for drainage.

At the time of writing, funding had been secured to pave one block of Hickory Street between Palm Street and Avenue 22 ¼, however funding was sufficient only for paving and did not include pedestrian infrastructure or lighting.

Water

The community of Fairmead is served by both decentralized and centralized utilities and infrastructure. Potable water for domestic use and fire suppression is provided by a water network operated by Special Maintenance District 33 of Madera County. The system includes two wells, a small treatment system, and a storage tank. The current water system serves 166 homes, Fairmead Elementary School, and 71 vacant parcels.

The existing potable water network is currently able to provide adequate fire suppression to all parts of the community. Domestic water supply reliability has been an issue in the past, particularly if one or multiple components of the system has failed. This last occurred in the summer of 2007, prompting the County to transport water to the community by truck for an extended period of time.

Recently, the County was awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for \$900,000-\$1M to improve the reliability and overall function of the community's potable water system. Upgrades include the installation of a 212,000 gallon tank, a new pump and all appurtenances. Fire hydrants have also been provided with adequate water for fire suppression. The County has also recently completed the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, which provides a comprehensive assessment of County-wide water conditions. These improvements should assist in alleviating future problems.



***Above:** The train passes through Fairmead often and with no at grade crossings it creates a significant barrier between east and west Fairmead. **Below:** A new water tank under construction is to be located within a larger proposed park at Road 19-1/2 and Avenue 22-1/2.*

Sewer & Septic

Properties within Fairmead rely on individual septic systems. Wastewater in the community is disposed through the use of onsite septic tanks and leach fields, as there is no sanitary sewer collection network or wastewater treatment facility in the community or nearby.

This wastewater system presents a difficult “catch-22” situation for residents. The wastewater strategy of septic tanks and leach fields not only inhibits growth in Fairmead, but also can provoke long-term and costly regulatory issues for the existing residents and the County. Growth becomes a challenge because additional septic systems do not allow for outward expansion, increases in residential density or changes to more intense land use, such as retail or commercial services. New systems are becoming more difficult to permit, even when designed properly, because of regional water quality concerns related to groundwater in the Central Valley.

Aging leach fields and septic tanks can also fail and contaminate groundwater. Similar scenarios of small unincorporated communities and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board’s (RWQCB) penalties have occurred elsewhere in the State and can become a serious economic and environmental burden on both residents and the County the longer they are not resolved.

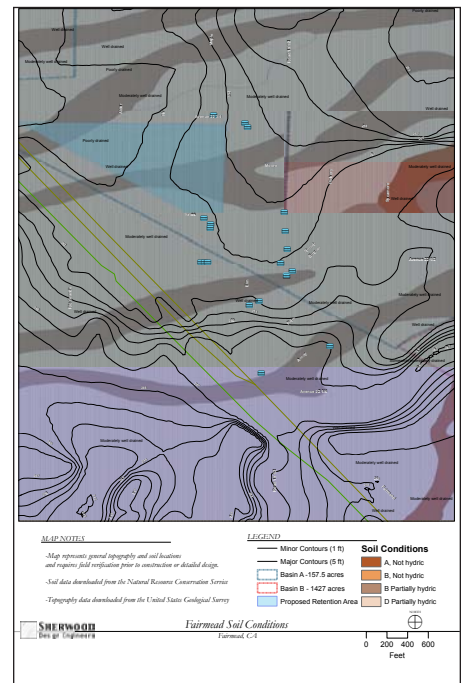
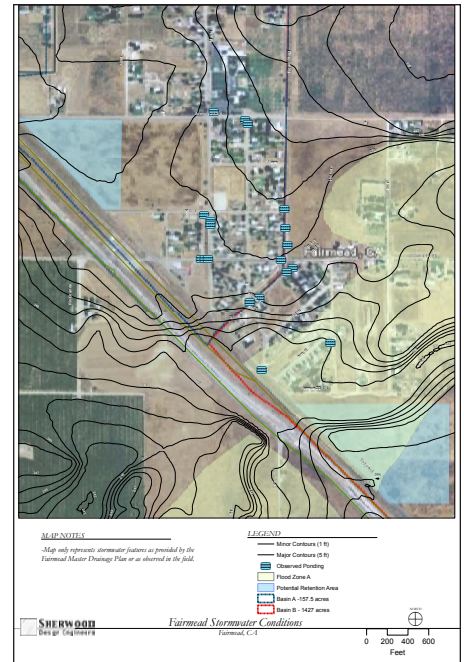
Stormwater and Drainage

Nearly half of the existing community to the east of Highway 99 is located in a flood zone. Without a drainage system in place there is frequent flooding or ponding in streets and localized areas. Many homes are built within these flood zones and threatened by periodic flooding.

Stormwater runoff from houses and streets generally follows the topography through the community with no formalized drainage system except for a few curb and gutter installations that do not connect to a larger drainage network. Regional drainage patterns generally flow from the northeast to southwest as part of the larger San Joaquin River watershed and evidence of regional drainage channels are present in Fairmead.

Stormwater runoff from houses and streets generally follows the surface topography through the community except for a few curb and gutter installations that do not connect to a larger drainage network. State and federal regulations for the discharge of stormwater are becoming more stringent. These regulations are often focused on the quality of stormwater runoff and aim to improve the overall ecological health of waterways and quality of groundwater resources. As a result, a revised drainage strategy for Fairmead should focus on improving the quality of stormwater runoff in addition to flood control and property damage.

The county has drafted a Preliminary Drainage Master Plan for Fairmead through the Area Plan process. However, it represents a significant and costly undertaking.



Above, from top to bottom: Existing stormwater analysis indicates key areas of ponding after rainfall based on field observations and the Fairmead Master Drainage Plan; Overlaying existing soil conditions can suggest different drainage strategies within the community.



Streetlights

The streetlight network in Fairmead is incomplete and does not provide adequate public safety. The streetlight network currently consists of 23 streetlights that are powered by the County via PG&E that fall short of providing a safe nighttime environment for the community.

Lack of Connectivity

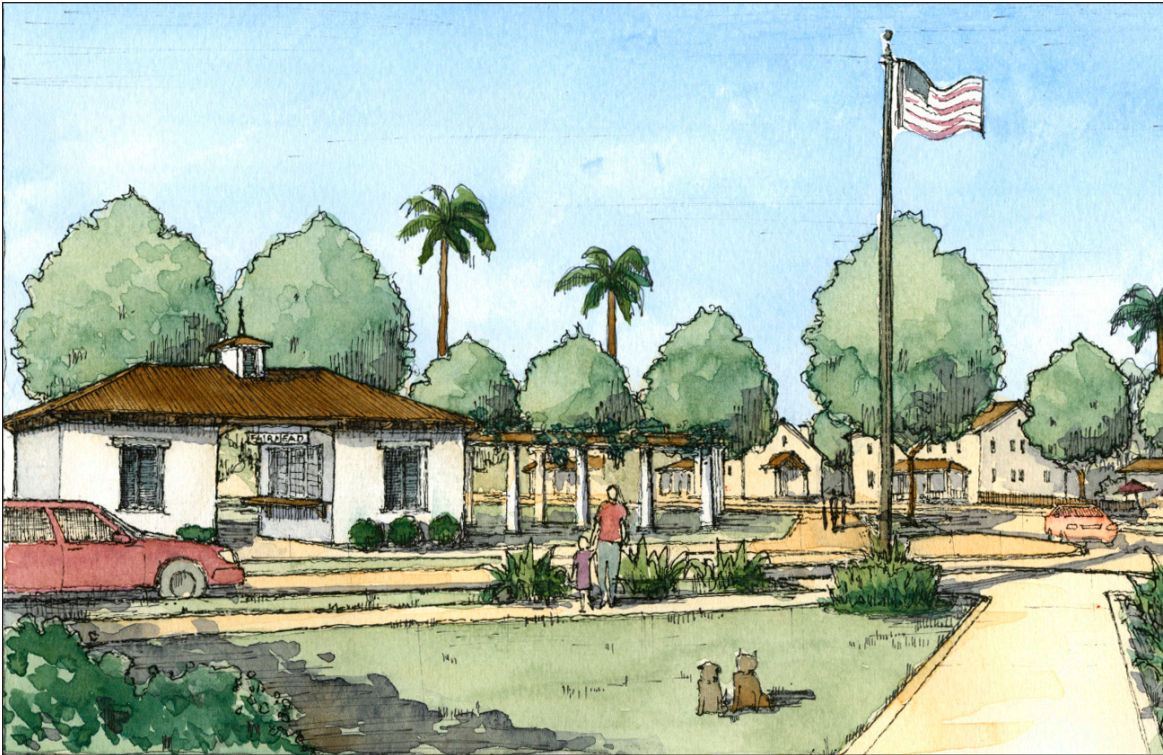
Fairmead's connectivity has eroded over the years largely due to changes in State Highway 99's alignment and its gradual evolution from an at-grade rural highway to a grade-separated freeway. Despite the community's location adjacent to 99 there are few easy connections in and out of the heart of Fairmead, and the highway and the Union Pacific Railroad together create a formidable barrier between the eastern and western portions of the community. The extension of Highway 152 east of 99 (a move that has been discussed for many years) would provide new access from the north, but such an extension is costly and long term. Local connectivity throughout the community is also inefficient as many streets are abandoned or unimproved, and no designated bike routes exist within Fairmead despite an apparent interest and need for bicycling as a viable transportation option.

This general lack of connectivity and visibility contributes to difficult conditions for establishing businesses and services.



Above, clockwise from Top Left: A lack of stormwater management results in ponding in streets and yards; After a small rainfall, ponding and minor flooding is present in most parts to the community including the parking lot of Fairmead Elementary School; Flooding causes public health hazards and damage to roads and driveways.

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Guiding Design Principles for Revitalization

Despite significant challenges, the charrette generated many viable ideas regarding how the community of Fairmead can become a pedestrian-oriented place, with improved commercial services and access to high-quality open space.

The primary challenges that face the community are extensive, and require a realistic and graduated approach. For this purpose, the design recommendations in this chapter are guided by two basic principles:

1. Focus on Low Impact, Low Cost, Incremental Strategies.

The Fairmead Area Plan focuses on much-needed improvements to the overall community that can occur within the framework of overall growth and revitalization. With the recent downturn in the California economy, however, it may be several years before significant growth prospects return to the area. This plan thus largely focuses on strategies that could be identified, designed, and implemented in the short term that could ultimately contribute to the community's longer-term goals, stimulating revitalization and even catalyzing future development and growth.

2. Build Quality Community Focal Points Through a Concentrated Mix of Small Scale, Coordinated Physical Improvements.

Due to the limited availability of resources, an incremental, small-scale approach to revitalization is appropriate. However, without a targeted strategy, the impact of small improvements can be diluted in a way that makes it difficult to even realize that revitalization is occurring. The plan thus envisions that the County can work closely with

neighborhood stakeholders, participating agencies, and outside investors to coordinate their efforts toward the complete revitalization of key locations in Fairmead. Such efforts would likely include:

- Targeted Code Enforcement and Cleanup (In Process)
- Improved Pedestrian Amenities
- Improved Drainage and Infiltration
- Opportunities for Community Development
- Opportunities for Incremental Infill Development

The design proposals focus on a variety of ways the community can be strengthened through both short-term and long-term improvements including the creation of new community assets, improved linkages, and low-impact drainage techniques. They are presented in this chapter and organized by their location within the community.

The Big Picture

During the design process a number of “nodes” emerged through discussions with community stakeholders that represent potential areas appropriate for targeted, coordinated improvements. These nodes seek to recognize Fairmead’s potential to build upon its history as well as its ability to capture energy and investment at new, pedestrian-oriented centers of activity. Within central Fairmead they include:

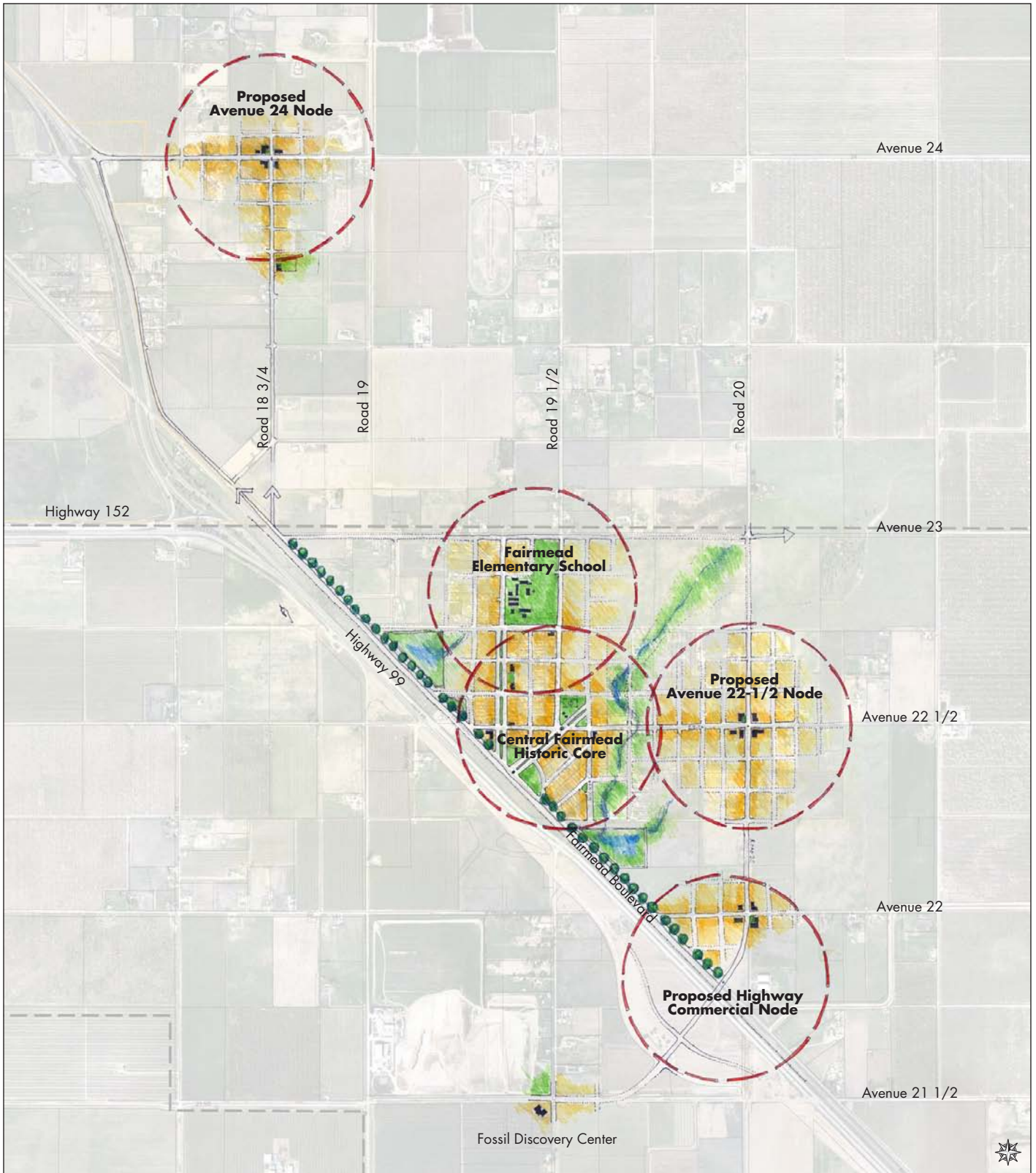
- The Historic Core of Fairmead, centered around a new focus of activity at the intersection of Sinclair Avenue and Avenue 22 ½
- Fairmead Elementary School and improvements to the Maple Street corridor

Just outside of the historic core, they include:

- A new “gateway,” neighborhood-serving node at the intersection of Avenue 22 ½ and Road 20
- A potential highway-oriented node at Road 20 and Avenue 24 and coordinated connections to the Fossil Discovery Center

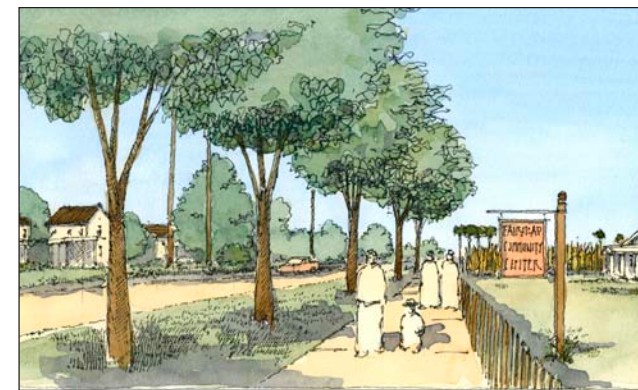
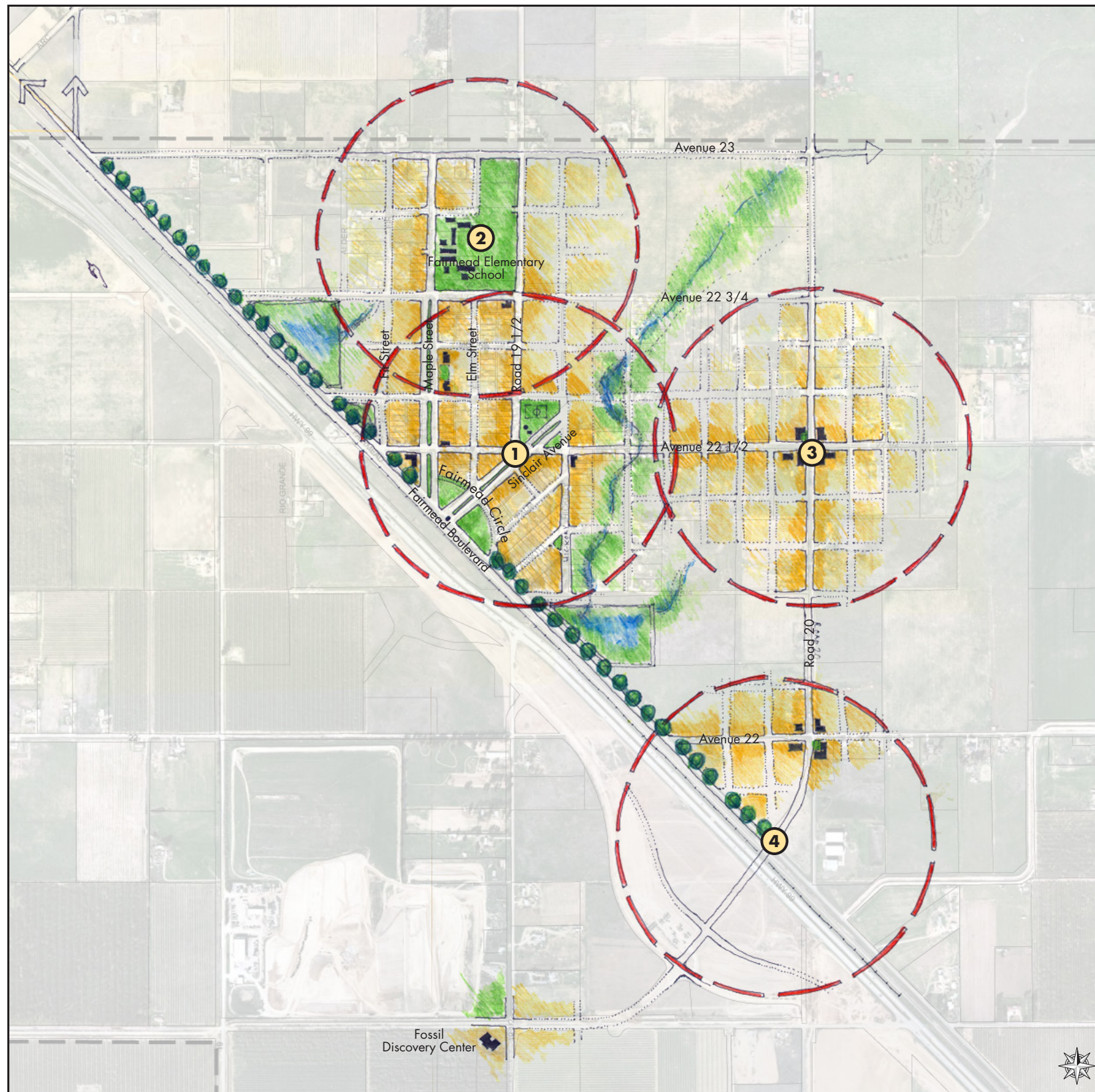
During the workshop community members also expressed consideration for an additional node centered at the intersection of Avenue 24 and Road 18 ¾, near an existing small cluster of service retail located along Avenue 24 west of highway 99. Over time, and in the context of substantial new growth in Fairmead, this area does hold potential and would be an appropriate location for neighborhood services. However, in the short term, this area is substantially distant from Fairmead’s historic core and not easily reachable for pedestrians and bicyclists. After further discussion with community stakeholders, detailed designs for this node were not pursued.

***Opposite Page:** Existing, improved, and proposed nodes plan for the Fairmead community. Ongoing discussions were held at the workshop presenting pros and cons for the viability of an active northern address at Avenue 24. Fairmead’s historic street grid is extended to the boundary of each node in order to maximize connectivity and walkability.*



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A Community Vision Framework for Fairmead



Left: Community Vision Framework Plan showing 1/4-mile walking radii around potential nodes within Fairmead. Specific improvements within these nodes are proposed for more focused investment as described to the right.

Above (from top to bottom): Illustrative image of Maple Street with new residential development and proposed community center; Illustrative image of Fairmead Boulevard with visual landmark; Illustrative image of Sinclair Boulevard address with pavilion, park and retail.

Central Fairmead

1 Fairmead Historic Core

- Street improvements to Maple Street right-of-way between Avenue 22 ¾ and Fairmead Boulevard, including restoration and beautification of median
- New community center at Maple Street & Yates Avenue
- Incremental infill, including development of new homes on west side of Maple Street between Avenue 22 ¾ and Yates Avenue
- Consistent trees, landscaping, and street improvements along Fairmead Boulevard between Avenue 23 and Road 20
- New visual landmark at Fairmead Boulevard and Sinclair Avenue
- Potential restoration of Fairmead Circle between Sinclair Avenue and Maple Street
- Street improvements to Sinclair Avenue including restoration and beautification of median
- Proposed activity node at Sinclair Boulevard and Avenue 22 ½ incorporating community retail, post office drop pavilion, and park around existing plans for a new water tank

2 Fairmead Elementary School

- Fairmead Elementary School drop-off improvements at intersection of Maple Street and Avenue 22 ¾
- Open existing school facilities to provide shared community playfields at Fairmead Elementary
- Street improvements to Avenue 22 ¾

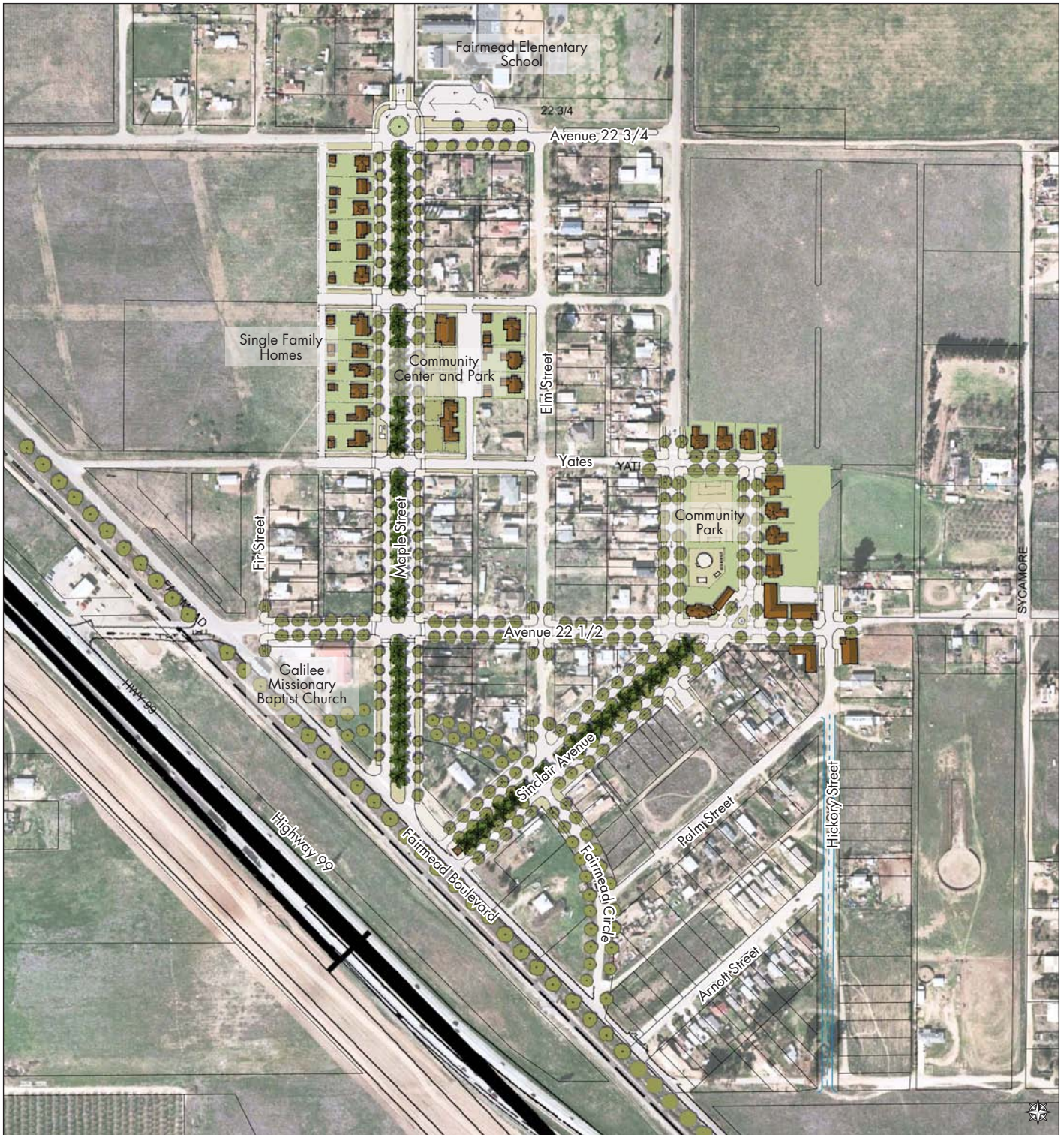
3 Road 20 at Avenue 22-1/2

- Proposed activity node focusing on neighborhood services, multi-family residential opportunities, and a small park
- Signage to direct visitors towards central Fairmead
- Street improvements to Road 20

4 Road 20 at Avenue 22

- Proposed commercial node with freeway-oriented retail, mixed use opportunities, and open space
- Street improvements to Road 20 and Avenue 20
- Signage to direct visitors towards central Fairmead and the Fossil Discovery Center

Central Fairmead - Historic Core



Above: Historic Core Illustrative Plan showing proposed improvements within central Fairmead highlighting new infill buildings and intersection and street improvements.

Maple Street



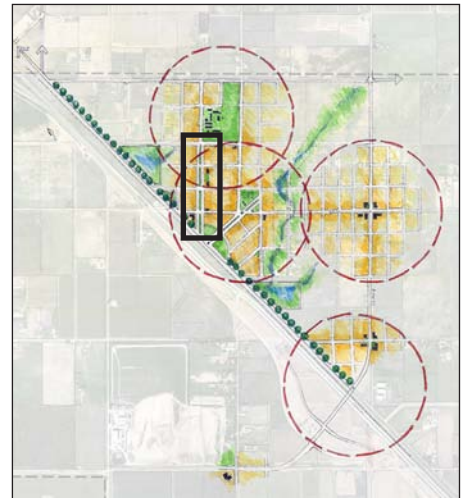
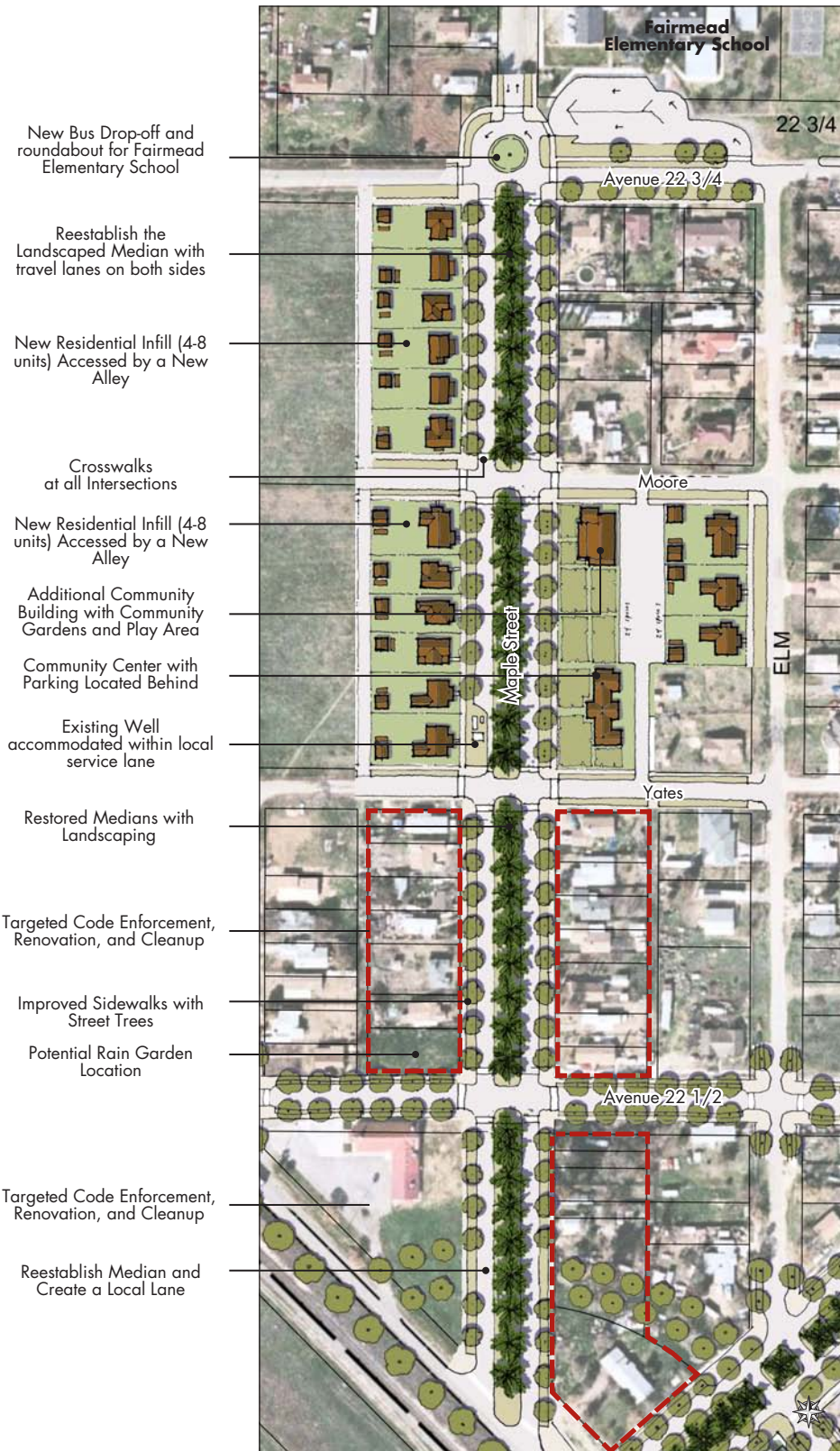
Maple Street Address

Maple Street serves as a primary north-south connection within Fairmead, connecting Fairmead Boulevard, Galilee Missionary Baptist Church, and Fairmead Elementary School. There are currently only a few homes fronting onto Maple Street with several vacant lots. The original median within the large 140' right-of-way has been severely degraded; north of Yates Street it is actually buried under agricultural fields. Only one block of Maple Street, between Avenue 22 ½ and Yates Avenue is open on both sides of the median. While the eastern side of this section serves two-way traffic, the western section accesses driveways. Although recent cleanup efforts have improved the area, in the past it has accumulated trash and debris.

Above: Maple Street today looking north at Avenue 22 ½.

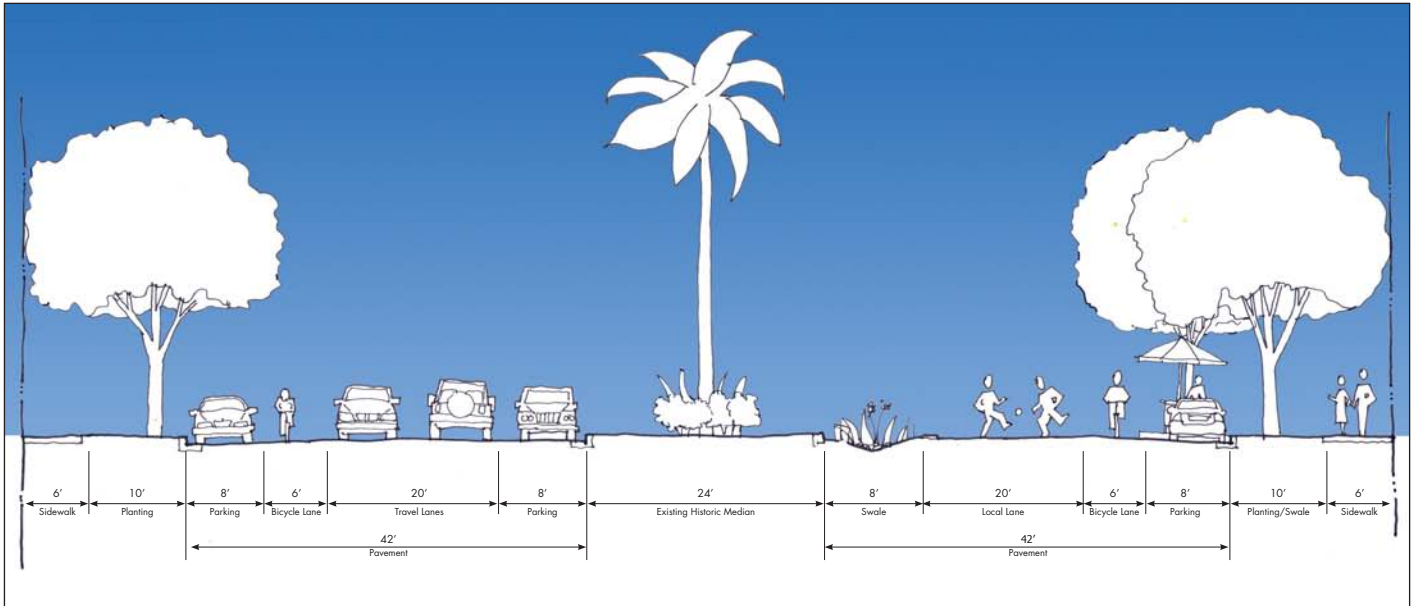
Throughout the charrette, community members frequently identified this area as a key location for continued code enforcement and clean up but with high potential. The large vacant house at Maple and Yates was also discussed as an ideal location for a community center within easy walking distance of most of the community's historic core. With focused street improvements including restoration of the central median, cleanup of existing frontages, and targeted new investment it could provide an inviting location.

The design team developed two possible alternatives for Maple Street, both of which help make the area safer for pedestrians and provide opportunities for stormwater management that can mitigate some of the current localized flooding issues. East-west streets in the vicinity of Maple - including Avenue 22 ¾, Moore, Yates, and Avenue 22 1/2, typically measure 60' in width. They are also ideal to incorporate swales and sidewalks.

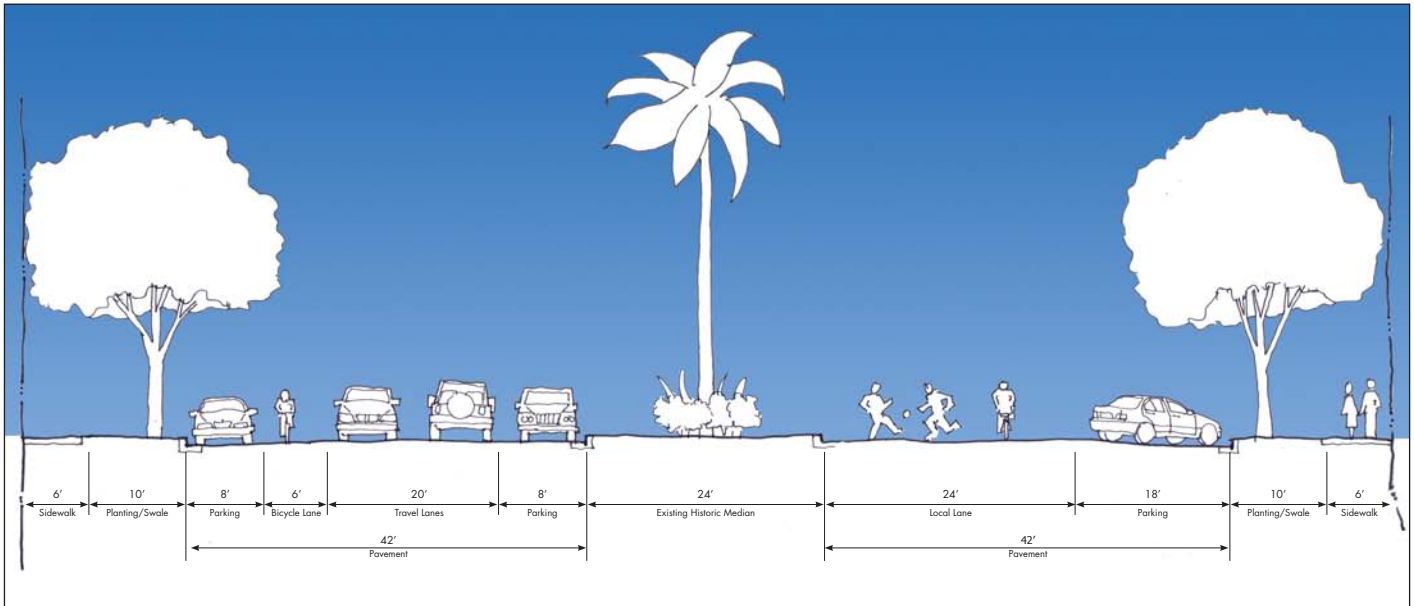


Left: Maple Street Illustrative Plan between Fairmead Elementary School and Fairmead Boulevard showing improved medians and streetscape, limited new development and a community center. Above: Key map locating the Maple Street node within the greater Fairmead community.

Maple Street



Proposed Swale Option: Maple Avenue could be reconfigured with two rows of parallel parking, a travel lane in each direction and a bike lane along the east side of the median. The west side could be used for local traffic and access to homes while providing a swale for drainage, a bike lane, and additional parallel parking. Slow speeds would allow this side of the median to be used for additional play areas.



Proposed Woonerf (Shared Street) Option: Another option for the west side of Maple Avenue would include a larger lane used by local traffic, residents and bicyclists while accommodating angled, rather than parallel parking to facilitate slower speeds and more parking.

Sidewalks are currently present, although in a degraded condition, between Fairmead Boulevard and Yates Avenue. These sidewalks can be repaired or improved in coordination with the above cross sections.

Low Impact Development Techniques

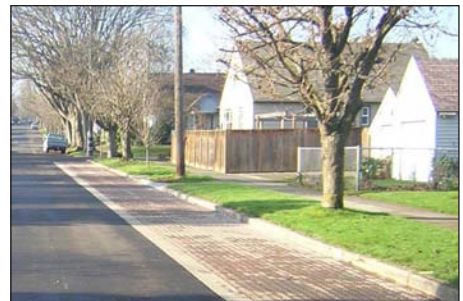
Maple Street can contain a vegetated central median as well as vegetated *swales* incorporated into the edges. The current roadway is crowned, so the central median does not receive runoff from the roadway, but it can be a self-treating feature in terms of stormwater management. In many locations, the existing median is currently elevated above the roadway without a formal border such as a curb. Consequently, barren areas of exposed sandy soils are readily blown and washed onto the pavement. The median should thus be lowered relative to the roadway in order to contain all runoff during storm events. New vegetation and permeable groundcover (such as mulch) can further protect the soil from wind and water erosion.

A *swale* is a form of bioretention used to partially treat water quality, manage potential flooding, and convey stormwater away from critical infrastructure. Vegetated swales adjacent to the roadway can perform the service of managing stormwater runoff from the entire right-of-way excluding the self-treating center median. The border between the road and swale should be flush so that stormwater can evenly sheetflow into the swale. The swale will remove sediment and automobile-associated pollutants as it conveys stormwater southerly to a rain garden that can be located at the intersection of Avenue 22 ½ and Maple. Runoff will also infiltrate to some degree, dependent on the slope of the channel and soil infiltration capacity.

Such a rain garden can provide a second layer of treatment and infiltration before discharging into the main drainage way along Avenue 22 ½. The garden can also facilitate a visual transition from blocks north of 22 ½ that are more residential in nature to street corridor to a slightly more urban condition to the south.

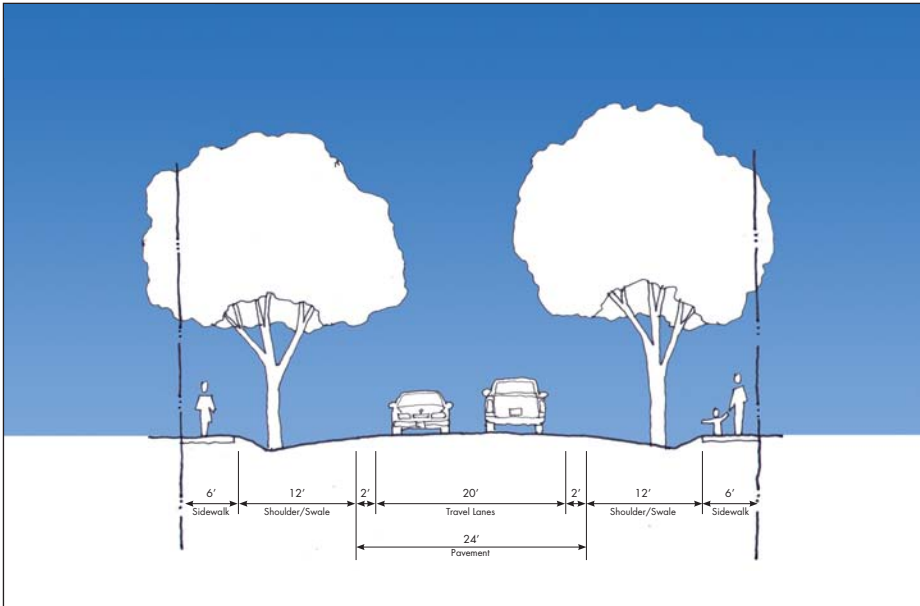
The lowered center median, vegetated swales, and rain garden should cost no more than normal landscaping, and the flush curbless condition actually offers cost savings compared to a conventional curb and gutter configuration.

Permeable paving systems in the parking and bike lanes are also a possibility, but are less cost effective solutions than their vegetated counterparts. Pervious asphalt or concrete bike lanes require experienced contractors who are familiar with the intricacies of installing that form of pavement. A permeable paver parking lane can offer great visual amenity when materials appropriate to the environment are selected.

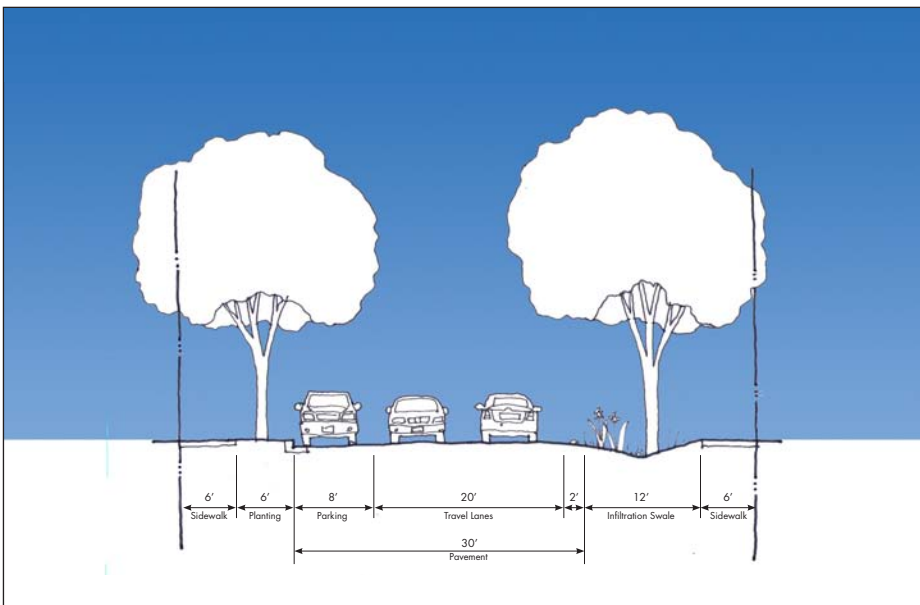


Above (top to bottom): A vegetated swale creates a visual transition between the street and the sidewalk; A rain garden with native landscaping facilitates infiltration; Example of pervious parking to designate parallel parking.

Typical 60' Right-of-Way



Proposed Option 1: One option for the 60' ROW (including Avenue 22 ¾, Moore, Yates, and Avenue 22 ½) is to create two 10' travel lanes with a large 12' swale on each side with landscaping that provides both shade and infiltration, and two 6' sidewalks on each side of the street.



Proposed Option 2: The typical 60' ROW could also be reconfigured to include two 10' travel lanes with an 8' parking lane, 6' planting strip and 6' sidewalk on one side and a 12' infiltration swale on the other with a 6' sidewalk on the other.



Above (top to bottom): Existing view of a typical 60' ROW in central Fairmead with 18'-24' of pavement and no curbs, landscaping or sidewalks; A man navigates Fairmead roads on his bicycle followed by stray dogs; The existing infrastructure provides no facilities for wheelchairs or residents with disabilities to travel safely outside the roadway.

Community Center



Community stakeholders identified a need for improved community facilities and discussed the potential for a new community center that could provide a venue for local events and meetings and house services for children, teenagers, and seniors. Playfields were also seen as an important component. Such a structure could also provide a local address for the county sheriff or other public services. Several locations were identified and considered during the charrette as potential sites for this program, including a parcel on Road 18 ¾ between Avenue 23 ½ and Avenue 24 which, at the time of writing, could have the support of a grant from the Chukchansi tribe.

While there are many good options, the block of land along Maple Street between Yates and Moore was determined especially promising due to its central location and substantial existing infrastructure. The design exploration above illustrates how an existing vacant house on this lot might provide a shell for the new center. With renovations and a modest addition, it might provide a community kitchen, library, classroom space, and a small meeting room. The rest of the block, currently vacant except for one dilapidated structure, could also be redeveloped in a few different ways.

An initial option (Option 1 above) illustrated a modest approach with space along Maple Street being used for a community garden or basketball courts. Another community structure could be built at the north end of the site (even as a later phase) to provide additional meeting spaces. This layout would provide the opportunity for the eastern side of the block to be developed with new single family homes separated by an alley; such homes could potentially help offset the construction costs of the center.

A second option (Option 2 above) illustrated a larger playfield to the north of the community center, providing just under the space needed for a regulation soccer field,

Above, clockwise from Top Left: Proposed Community Center Option 1 Plan for includes renovation of present structure, a new alley with parking, a secondary structure to the north with a community garden or basketball courts between; and new homes on the east side of the block; Community Center Option 2 Plan includes the renovation of the existing structure on the southwest corner with a parking lot behind and a full playfield to the north; Existing aerial image of the proposed location for a new community center shows the two existing structures and large vacant parcel to the north.





and parking for the center provided in a lot internal to the block. This land can provide another option for playfields in the event that a use agreement with the School District for the Fairmead Elementary playfields cannot be arranged.

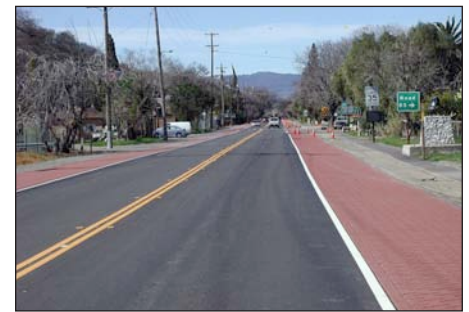
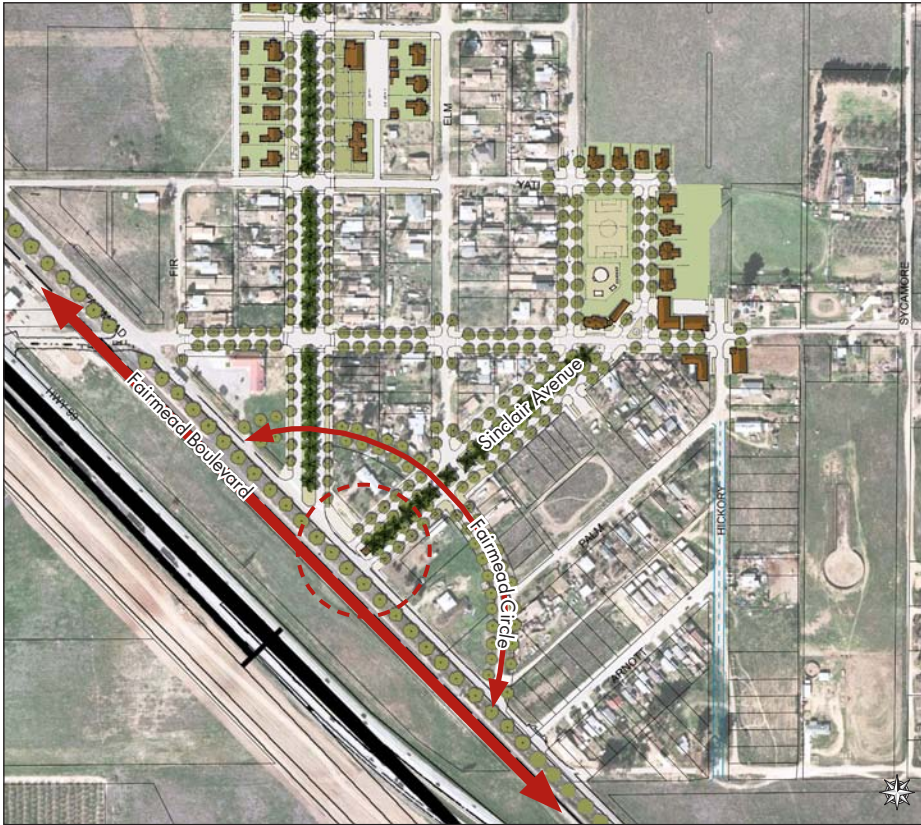
While a community center would be a wonderful asset for Fairmead ongoing costs tied to operations and management are challenging. At the time of writing, Fairmead Community & Friends was pursuing a grant made available through Proposition 84 to acquire the block properties and fund construction. Other possibilities, such as a fundraising campaign, were also discussed, and Fairmead Community and Friends have opened a dialogue with county agencies that may be interested in renting space in the center.

Above Left: The “Library Commons” project in Covelo, California provides an interesting model for Fairmead. Local residents formed the nonprofit “Friends of the Round Valley Library” and started a fundraising campaign to renovate a former commercial building for library and community use. The project combines library resources with community meeting space and a community-supported kitchen (CSK). The project relied heavily on donated services (such as graphic design for the campaign) and materials (such as furnishings), and was under construction at the time of writing. **Above Right:** Examples of a community garden. A community garden located near the new center could provide fresh produce and educational opportunities to residents.



Proposed: View of new community center with Maple Street improvements and new homes lining the west side of the street, creating a pedestrian friendly address for the community. **Existing:** A view of the existing conditions along Maple Street with vacant properties, the existing well, and vacant home sitting vacant and vandalized.

Fairmead Boulevard



Prior to the reconstruction of Highway 99 Fairmead Boulevard provided principal access in and out of Fairmead. Today it is highly visible from Highway 99 and continues to provide an important “front door” for passing motorists. As a long, straight street it is also subject to high traffic speeds and can be a dangerous environment for pedestrians and residents that live nearby.

Fairmead Boulevard should be improved with new pedestrian amenities and a consistent line of landscaping that can provide visual continuity as well as a buffer from passing cars and trains. It also provides an opportunity to locate a strong visual marker that can notify passing motorists in either direction of oncoming entry points and create a terminating vista at the end of Sinclair Avenue.

Nearby Fairmead Circle also plays an important role in presenting a good first impression to visitors entering the community. However, the portion west of Sinclair Avenue has been abandoned and is cluttered with temporary structures. This right-of-way should be reclaimed. At a minimum, a consistent row of trees should be planted for the full length of Fairmead Circle.

Low Impact Development Techniques

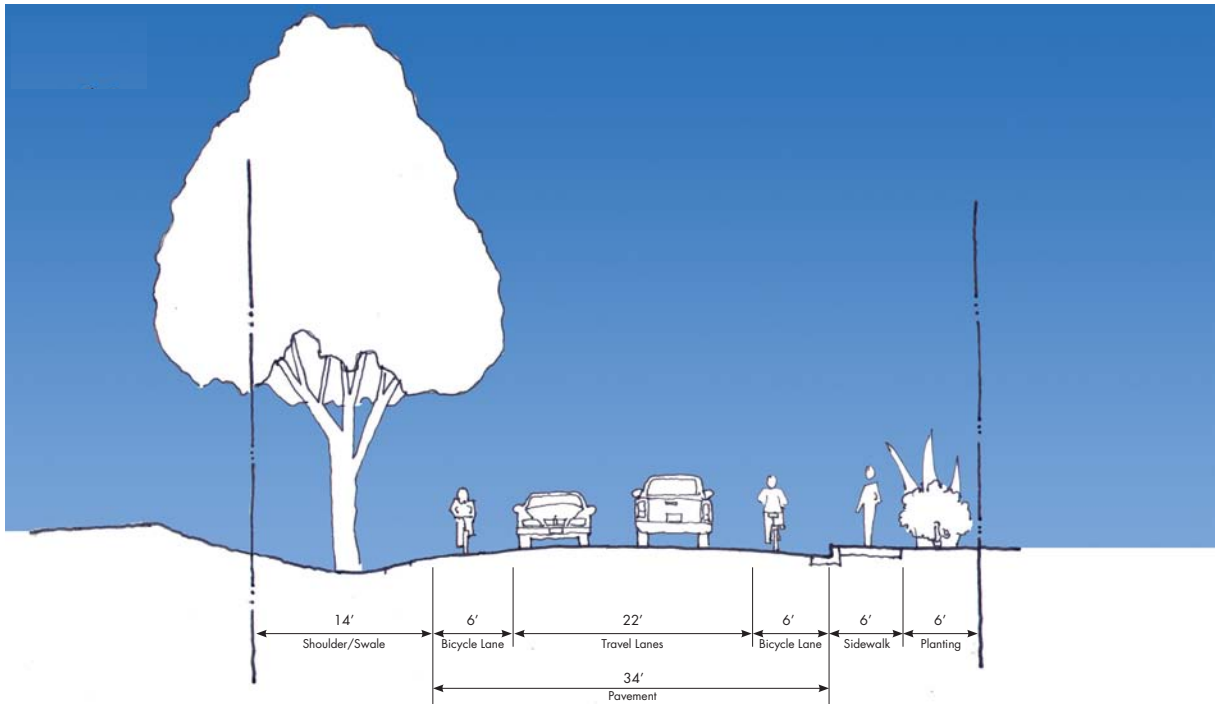
The proposed cross section for Fairmead Boulevard (opposite) contains vegetated swales and/or planting strips on both sides of the street. Because there is limited pavement in the right-of-way, well-designed swales can meet the stormwater management needs of this roadway without the need for any complementary strategies.

Left: Improvements along Fairmead Boulevard can help develop a beautiful “front door” for the community as it is seen from Highway 99. Top: Key map locating Fairmead Boulevard within the greater Fairmead community. Middle: An example of a landscaped swale providing infiltration and a buffer from the street. Below: A contrasting color and material for bike lanes makes the roadway appear more narrow and help slow speeds.

Fairmead Boulevard



Existing: Fairmead Boulevard currently has no pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks or streetlights. The long, straight, uninterrupted roadway encourages fast speeds and creates a hostile environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

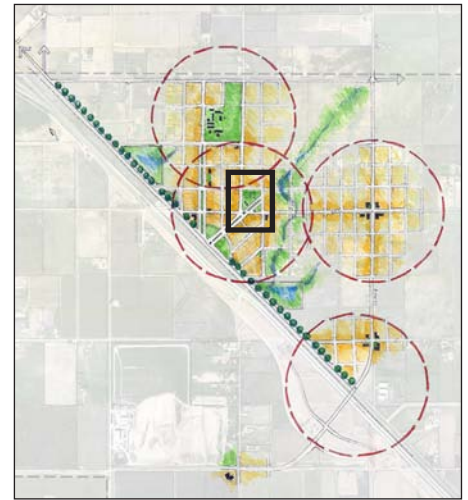


Proposed: The proposed right-of-way (ROW) of Fairmead Boulevard showing two 11' travel lanes, bike lanes, a sidewalk and planting along the east edge, and a swale with street trees buffering the western edge from the railroad and highway.



Proposed: Street improvements for Fairmead Boulevard including bike lanes, a sidewalk, street trees along the west side, and a new landmark tower visible from highway marking the historic center of Fairmead. **Existing:** A view of the current conditions along Fairmead Boulevard with no pedestrian amenities.

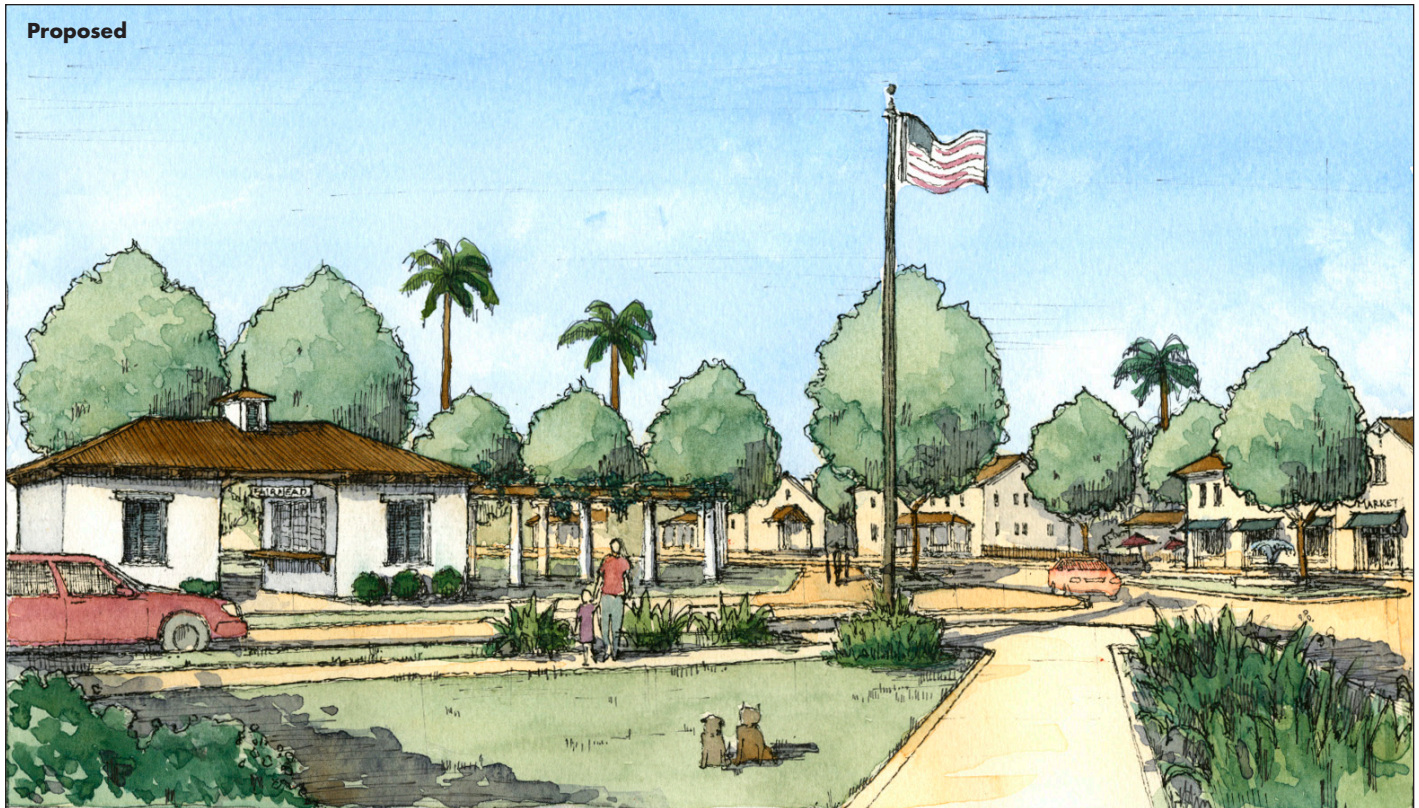
Sinclair Avenue



The eastern side of Fairmead Boulevard has become more accessible with the opening of the new on-ramp at Highway 99 and Road 20, which, over time, should provide an opportunity for new commercial development along Road 20 as the community grows. Road 20 remains at the edge of central Fairmead, however, and not within easy walking distance for most residents. The intersection of Avenue 22 ½ and Sinclair Avenue provides an ideal location for the development of an activity node for the community, particularly given the County's recent investment in new water facilities in this location.

Sinclair Avenue should be restored as a tree-lined street between Fairmead Boulevard and Avenue 22 ½ with a renovated central green as illustrated. Targeted efforts should be made to renovate and clean up dilapidated properties. At Avenue 22 ½, Sinclair terminates in a large open space defined by Road 19 ½ and a new, north-south street. Such a park can accommodate a full-size soccer field, and provide a high-quality address for new houses that can be built facing the park. Given the large amount of right-of-way available (Avenue 22 ½ is currently 80' wide), with coordinated street improvements, a small public building can also be incorporated to the south of the water tank and fronting Avenue 22 ½. This building could serve as a central location for mail delivery and provide an appropriate place for residents to interact on a daily basis.

***Above Left:** Sinclair Avenue Illustrative Plan of node showing a new park and small structure terminating Sinclair Avenue. New commercial buildings front Avenue 22 ½ and residential front onto the park. **Above Right:** Key map locating the proposed Sinclair Avenue address within the greater Fairmead community. **Below Right:** County's conceptual water tank and potential park design for the site.*



Proposed: A new node for Fairmead with new post office pavilion, park and streetscape showing a corner store and new homes beyond. **Existing:** A view of the existing conditions at the end of Sinclair Avenue showing the vacant property in the distance, ponding with the street right-of-way and poor condition of median and existing frontages.



Over time, new, mixed-use development should be viable along Avenue 22 ½ as it will provide connectivity to Road 20 and Highway 99. These buildings should also front the street with pedestrian-scaled frontage at or near the front property line in order to ensure a walkable environment.

Low Impact Development Techniques

Sinclair Avenue is similar to Maple street in that it can accommodate a vegetated center median and vegetated swales along both edges. The wide center median can be a multi-functional space that provides a tremendous aesthetic amenity, a pedestrian refuge and passive recreational opportunities, and a traffic calming buffer between lanes of traffic. It also is large enough to be self-treating in terms of stormwater management. The median can be lowered relative to the roadway so that it functions as a self-contained stormwater facility. Vegetation and mulch can protect the soil from wind and water erosion.

Permeable paving systems in the parking and bike lanes are also a possibility, but are less cost effective solutions than their vegetated counterparts. Pervious asphalt or concrete bike lanes require experienced contractors who are familiar with the intricacies of installing that form of pavement. A permeable paver parking lane can offer a great visual amenity when materials appropriate to the environment are selected.

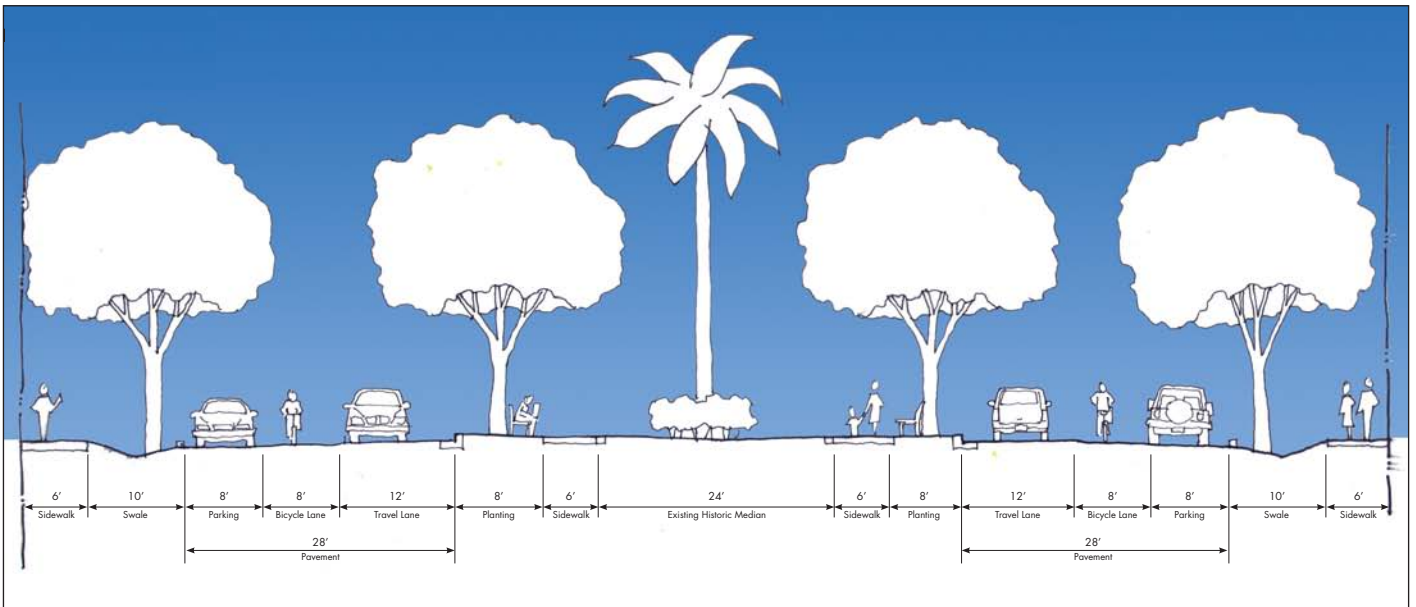
North/south streets in the vicinity of Sinclair Avenue - typically 60' right-of-ways - are also ideal to incorporate swales and sidewalks. Streets running east/west adjacent to Sinclair - typically 80' right-of-ways - provide more room to accommodate similar stormwater facilities as well as bike lanes and sidewalks.



Above, clockwise from top left: Example of a landscape swale providing attractive landscaping and infiltration; A colored bike lane and planted median provide traffic-calming and a safer pedestrian environment; Example of a residential street with a lush median and planting strip.

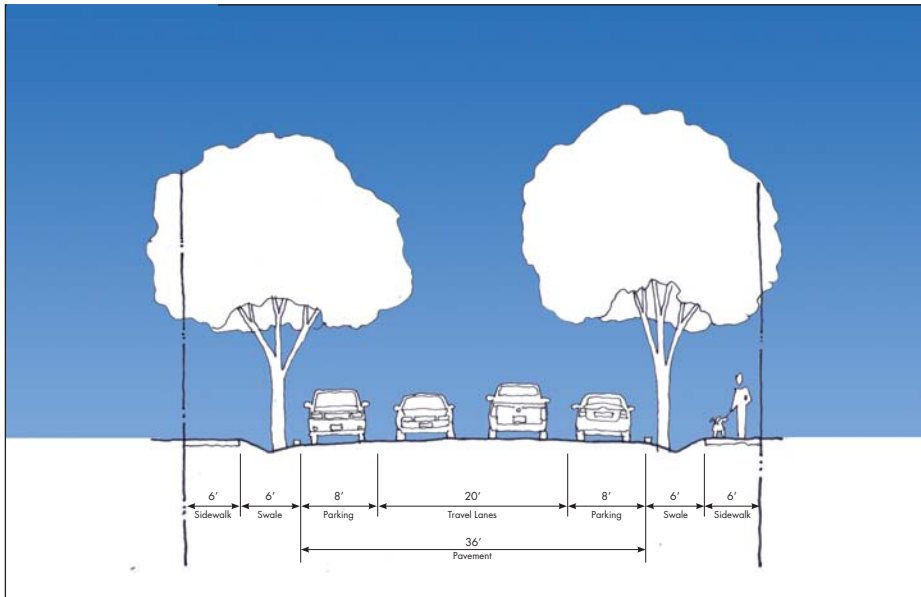


Existing: Sinclair Avenue currently consists of an unmaintained 24' curbed median with two travel lanes carrying through traffic on the east side of the median. Houses on the west side of the median are accessed by a dirt road.



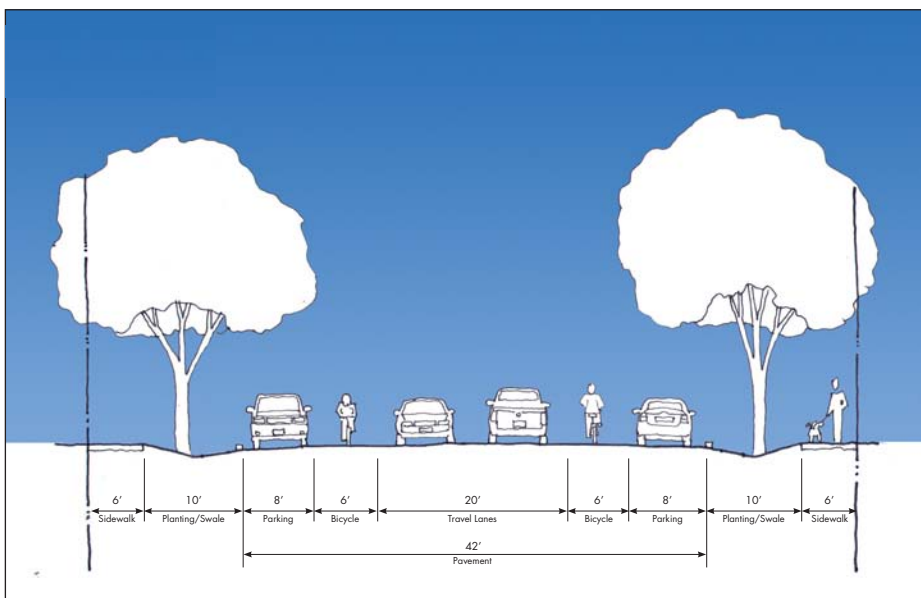
Proposed: The Sinclair Avenue ROW could be reestablished as a public space by providing two 6' sidewalks and 8' planting strips within the 24' median. On each side of the median, the street could be reconfigured and paved to include a one-way 12' travel lane, 8' bicycle lane, 8' parallel parking lane, 10' swale with landscaping for shade and drainage, and a 6' sidewalk.

Typical Right-of-Ways



Above: An existing view down Elm Street looking south at a typical 60' ROW in Fairmead. Similar conditions exist on many north/south right-of-ways in the vicinity of Sinclair and should be incrementally improved with new or completed sidewalks, paving, and vegetated swales as illustrated.

Proposed: The typical 60' Right-of-Way (ROW) could be reconfigured to include two 10' travel lanes with 8' parallel parking lanes on both sides of the street. A 6' swale could provide drainage in between the 6' sidewalk and the curb.



Above: An existing view down Avenue 22 1/2 looking east at a typical 80' ROW in Fairmead. Similar conditions exist on many east/west right-of-ways in the vicinity of Sinclair and should be incrementally improved with new or completed sidewalks, paving, and vegetated swales as illustrated.

Proposed: The typical 80' Right-of-Way (ROW) could be reconfigured to include 42' of pavement that would include 10' travel lanes, 6' bicycle lanes, 8' parallel parking, a larger swale and the 6' sidewalks.

Fairmead Elementary School



During the workshop many residents expressed the desire to have the Elementary School playfields more accessible to residents, as they are not currently open for children’s play outside regular school hours. One way this could occur is if the neighborhood was able to work out a maintenance and supervision agreement with the School District. Such an agreement could begin with a “pilot program” that might open the facility on limited days and hours that could be extended after initial success. Similar agreements have allowed School District space to be opened to community members in other areas.

The existing parking lot and dropoff area was also identified as problematic, as buses and other traffic traveling down Avenue 22 3/4 during pickup and dropoff hours tend to conflict with children walking or bicycling to school.

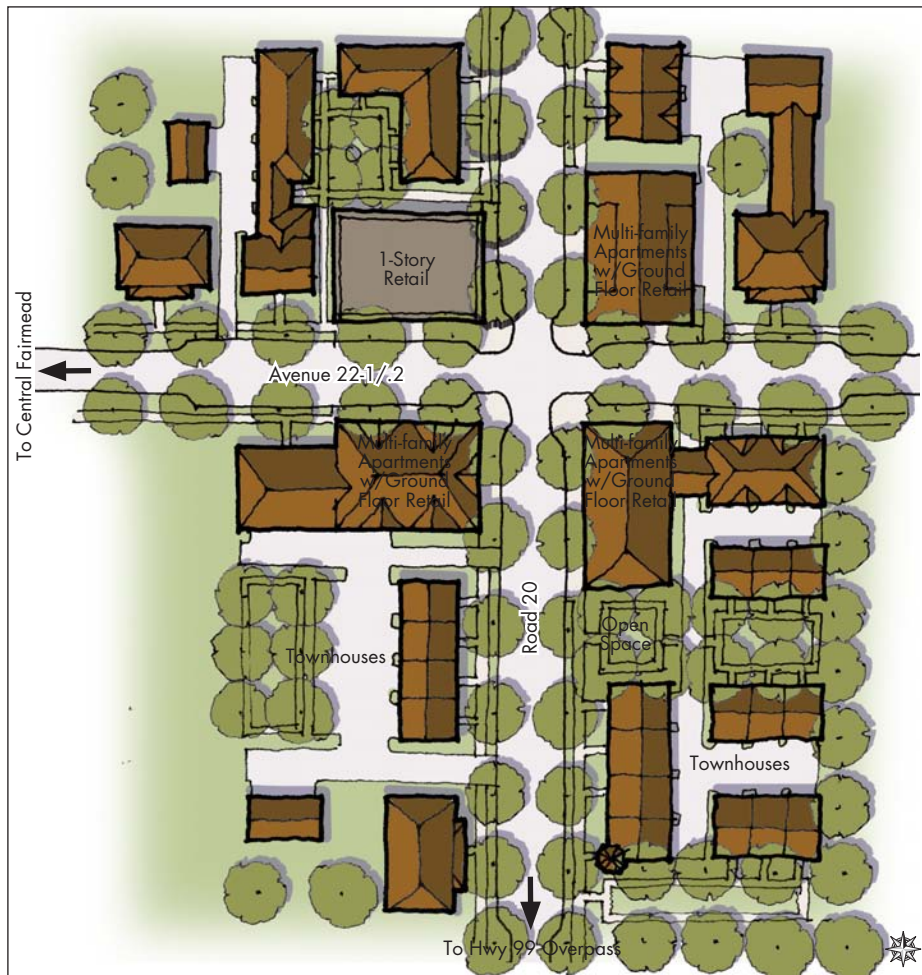
The dropoff could be improved if circulation in the school parking lot were limited to the westbound direction. The proposed solution illustrates traffic entering at the easternmost curb cut along Avenue 22 3/4 and exiting into a mini-circle at the northern terminus of the Maple Street median. The mini-circle appears to be possible based on the wide right-of-way available along Maple just north of Avenue 22 3/4.

These improvements, along with other recommended streetscape, pedestrian and bicycle improvements for Maple Street and other intersecting streets will provide safe routes to school for Fairmead residents and other students that attend the elementary school.



Above, clockwise from Top Left: Proposed Bus Dropoff at Avenue 22 3/4 and Maple Street; existing conditions illustrating playfields area that could potentially be opened up for residents during non-school hours; one example of a neighborhood park on School District property that is shared with the adjacent elementary school in Salinas, CA; buses gather along Maple Street during morning dropoff.

Road 20 at Avenue 22-1/2

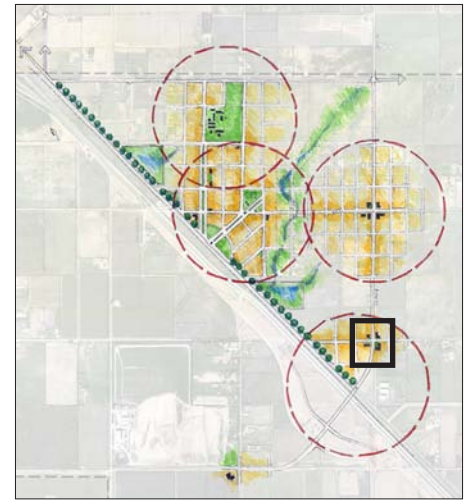
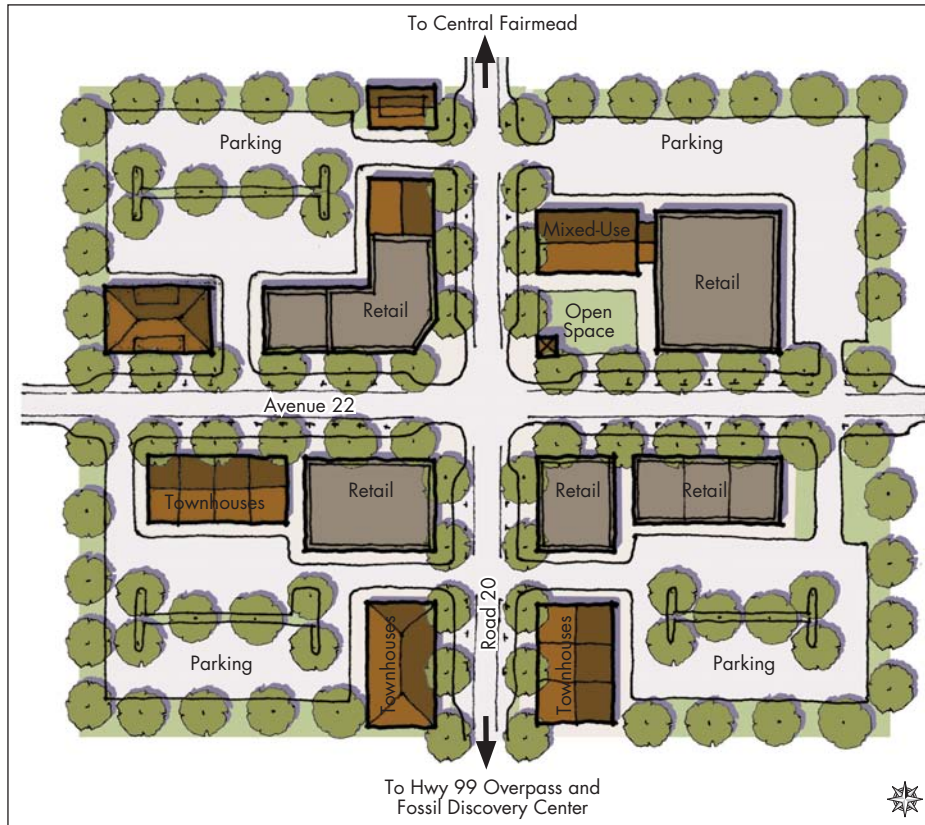


Left: New Node at Road 20 and Avenue 22 ½ Illustrative Plan showing a small public space, new multi-family buildings and one neighborhood commercial building. Above: Key map locating the proposed multi-family node within the greater Fairmead community.

The intersection of Road 20 and Avenue 22 ½ will ultimately provide the best opportunity for the development of a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood center that can combine multi-family residential and modest commercial activities. Accessibility and visibility via the Highway 99 on-ramp at Road 20 can enable small commercial services to locate that can help serve the day-to-day needs of residents. A small concentration of medium-density, multi-family housing can also help to ensure the viability of commercial services and provide additional housing opportunities for existing and future residents.

The plan illustrates 4 mixed-use buildings at the intersection of Avenue 22 ½ and Road 20 that could incorporate ground-floor retail, many with 1 or 2 floors of residential above, surrounded by a series of 2-story townhouse, duplex, and courtyard housing types. The commercial buildings are of a size (up to 5,000 sf) that can be successful with limited off-street parking, contributing to the walkable and compact nature of the area.

Road 20 at Avenue 22



Left: New Node at Road 20 and Avenue 22 Illustrative Plan that shows highway-oriented commercial buildings with parking lots behind and a small public space. Above: Key map locating the proposed highway-oriented commercial address within the greater Fairmead community.

This area also provides a good opportunity to provide new services for local residents. The Fossil Discovery Center should generate some commercial activity as travelers arrive and depart from the Center. With good visibility from Highway 99, retail chains could likely be encouraged to locate here.

The proposed plan illustrates one way that such a node could be organized in manner that does not compromise pedestrian connectivity and walkability. Rather than set commercial buildings along wide streets behind large parking lots, the buildings are organized to hold the important corner of Road 20 and Avenue 22, with parking lots organized to the rear. When combined with the coordinated street design of Road 20, the corner would announce to travelers that they have entered the community and help to encourage safe and slow driving behavior.

Low Impact Development Techniques

The large open space at the northeast corner of this intersection offers a prime opportunity for both a park and neighborhood-scale stormwater detention. Grass and other formal landscaped areas that offer active and passive recreational opportunities can be gently lowered to below surrounding grade in order to serve the additional function of extended detention basins (aka “dry ponds”). Smaller, distributed facilities such as swales and rain gardens would provide extensive water quality function throughout the service area, but larger, more centralized facilities also play a critical role in providing detention and flood protection during larger storm events.

Infrastructure



The community suffers from infrastructure deficiencies that range from general nuisance to serious safety and public health concerns. Multiple long-range and short-range infrastructure plans have been developed in the County that include considerations for Fairmead. These plans range from regional drainage planning efforts to upgrades to the water system.

In keeping with the focused, incremental approach to revitalization, the design team looked at ways that infrastructure might also be improved in an incremental manner while contributing to the overall goals of the County's long-range plans.

Drainage Strategies

A significant amount of drainage improvements are needed in Fairmead due to the lack of stormwater management infrastructure and flooding issues. The community is a good candidate for the implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques. LID techniques provide a more environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional, centralized stormwater treatment systems. Instead of relying on a system of area drains and big pipes that feed a large detention pond, LID measures focus on a decentralized system of structures that capture and treat precipitation where it falls, more closely mimicking natural systems. A comprehensive network of naturally vegetated, small-scale treatment systems treat and infiltrate stormwater runoff near its source, thereby reducing or eliminating the need for conveyance. This plan proposes a decentralized system of points to drain and clean stormwater runoff and to meet the potential future regulatory requirements applicable to Fairmead.



Above, clockwise from top left: Draft Master Drainage Plan; Fairmead's current water system includes two wells, a small treatment system and a storage tank; A filled in culvert that used to provide drainage underneath Fairmead Boulevard and the railroad tracks.

Implementation

Addressing major drainage deficiencies in Fairmead is a step-wise process. The first step is to introduce runoff reduction strategies in order to decrease the amount of stormwater runoff at its source. The second step is to establish areas that capture surface runoff and reduce peak flow rates and volumes. The final step is to enhance the storm drain network as necessary to adequately convey off-site runoff from larger storms into detention facilities.

Runoff Reduction

Runoff reduction focuses on minimizing impervious surfaces and maximizing vegetation, especially mature tree canopy. A full canopy can intercept and absorb up to the first half inch of rainfall. All vegetation works to stabilize the soil, absorb and cleanse stormwater runoff, and provide a multitude of other environmental benefits.

Impervious surfaces should be reduced or replaced with pervious alternatives wherever feasible. For example, Fairmead has an abundance of informal parking and paved surfaces found throughout the community. These areas include parallel parking on the street and additional paving within roadsides and various parking lots. Much of the parking capacity appeared to be underutilized, making excess parking areas good candidates for conversion from impervious to pervious surfaces.

Stormwater Management Facilities

Two ideal facilities for Fairmead are rain gardens and swales, which are landscape-based stormwater management facilities that, properly installed, could rehabilitate the current drainage conditions. These facilities reduce stormwater runoff volume and rates, while increasing the aesthetic quality of their surroundings. Installation is inexpensive and causes minimal disturbance. Opportunities to locate these facilities exist within the landscaped public areas located along the right-of-way, sidewalk and roadway edges, and interior public open space.

Rain Gardens are flat-bottomed landscaped depressions, usually large with irregular shapes and natural side slopes. Also known as ‘bioretention cells’, they are designed to allow water to pond up to a certain depth (around 3”) so that it has a chance to settle and infiltrate into the soil. They reduce the peak discharge rate from a site via detention, which provides flood control benefits, but will not significantly decrease total runoff volume due to poor soil conditions. In addition to drainage benefits, water quality improvements are achieved through particle settling, nutrient uptake, and biofiltration. Rain gardens offer a versatile solution for amorphous spaces because they can be built to any size or shape. The intersections of diagonal streets with the north-south grid within Fairmead are good candidate locations for rain gardens.

Swales are shallow, formalized drainage ways that employ landscaping to stabilize the soil while providing water quality treatment via biofiltration. Also known as ‘bioswales’, they are designed to provide conveyance function while removing silt and sediment-associated pollutants. Swales are relatively inexpensive, easy to construct, and widely used. They can be planted with a variety of grasses, sedges, rushes, and shrubs. Swales are linear in shape and could be widely employed as surrogates to the curb and gutter drainage system currently on-site.



Above, from top to bottom: Example of pervious pavement being used to designate parallel parking lanes; An example of a parking lot utilizing pervious surfaces; An example of a rain garden being used for stormwater management.



Storm Drain System Enhancement

Centralized Detention in Fairmead may still be required even with the implementation of LID strategies, especially during larger, less frequent storm events. These detention areas are shown in the Conceptual Stormwater Master Plan (next page) along with how the LID approach can be implemented and linked within the existing topography and street network. The detention areas can have multiple functions, such as also serving as a playfields. During large storm events, excess water can fill these detention areas, reducing flooding risks for nearby residential properties. The emergency detention facility would also function to improve water quality through sedimentation and pollutant removal. The park would remain dry between storm events to allow for ongoing recreational use. Other areas, such as the larger proposed detention area in the southern portion of the community, can have an aesthetic quality yet be solely purposed for stormwater retention.

In addition to incorporating LID techniques within the public right-of-way, minor drainage deficiencies, which result in ponding in local depressions, can be addressed by small-scale regrading efforts to ensure positive drainage away from structures and facilities into curb and gutter drainage when present or into naturalized swales or other Best Management Practice (BMP) structures. The use of BMPs for stormwater quality control reduce pollutant content of storm water discharge. These simple improvements should be made on a lot-by-lot basis.



Above, clockwise from top left: A well-designed detention area can be an attractive and provide stormwater retention; A linear swale is planted between the neighborhood street and sidewalk; A variety of grasses and shrubs planted in this swale provide an inexpensive drainage system; Children play and rest in this shaded detention area that serves both as a public space and for improving water quality.

Conceptual Stormwater Master Plan



Above: Conceptual Stormwater Master Plan showing appropriate LID techniques based on the existing topography, street network, field observations and the County's proposed Drainage Master Plan. As streets in central Fairmead are incrementally improved, they should incorporate runoff reduction and stormwater management techniques to contribute to this overall strategy. The resulting size and capacity of the large detention basins shown in the Community Plan may ultimately be reduced in this way.

Wastewater Strategies

As Fairmead is currently served by individual septic tanks and leach fields, the implementation and construction of a wastewater collection network and treatment facility would be necessary for new development to occur in the community. Because the construction of a conventional wastewater collection and treatment systems will be expensive and could develop other regulatory challenges, an interim solution known as the Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) or Septic Tank Effluent Gravity (STEG) system might serve as a viable option. In a STEP/STEG system, existing septic tanks would be used as they function currently. However, instead of discharging liquid waste to leach fields, the tanks would discharge to a gravity line in the street or would be retrofitted with small, high-pressure pumps. The liquid waste would then be pumped through a small pressure line into sewer lines leading to a wastewater treatment facility. The facility will not be required to process solids and therefore can be smaller, more affordable and easier to maintain. Additionally, a scalable “package” treatment plant could be installed to accommodate the community’s existing need, but allow for relatively easy upgrades and incremental increases in capacity.

The STEP/STEG system in conjunction with a package wastewater treatment plant offers an alternative to conventional wastewater treatment systems, a solution to the existing treatment strategy and can function well in this rural setting. Some of the benefits for Fairmead may include:

- The use of existing septic tank infrastructure (residents do not need to pay for the trenching of sewer laterals)
- Ability to abandon existing leach fields, which improves overall health of the aquifer systems
- Allow for measured growth in the community
- Cost savings for the County and residents
- Provides an interim strategy that can also potentially function as a long-term solution depending on future growth patterns in Fairmead
- Reduces regulatory issues
- Wastewater can be treated to a suitable level for use by irrigation



Above, from top to bottom: A STEP/STEG system discharges liquid waste from homes through a gravity line in the street or high-pressure pump to a wastewater treatment facility; An example of a “package” wastewater treatment plant that can accommodate the community’s existing needs and allow for easy upgrades to increase capacity as the community grows.

Street Lights

The existing streetlight network in Fairmead is inadequate to provide a safe environment at night for residents. A permanent, yet incrementally implemented solution might be the incorporation of solar street lights into street improvements. These lights do not need to be connected to the existing electrical grid and do not require extensive trenching. There are various styles, sizes and intensities available and the installed cost can range from \$5,500 – \$8,000 per pole. This cost can be competitive to the cost of conventional street lights, trenching and installation costs. Some of the benefits of implementing a solar powered streetlight program in Fairmead may include:

- Incremental implementation with other specific street improvements
- Stand alone, “off the grid” solution
- Cost competitive compared to conventional street lights
- Zero energy use smaller carbon footprint
- Sustainable example for the community

Streetlights should be provided in close coordination with street improvements in the community.



Above: An example of a solar street lights that could provide a safer environment for pedestrians without putting stress on the existing electrical grid.

Transportation Recommendations



It was learned during the course of the charrette that few transit options exist for the residents of Fairmead. The 2000 Census revealed that approximately 60 percent of people in the Fairmead area travel more than fifteen minutes to their workplace. Further, with no services, commercial or schools, residents must also travel to Chowchilla or Madera for the majority of their daily needs and activities.

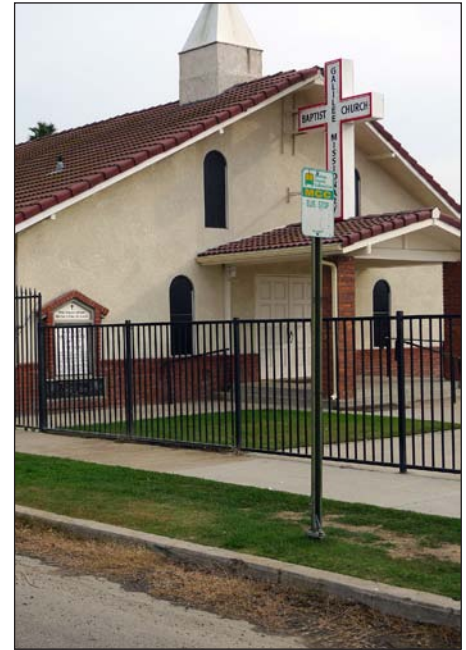
Transit Service

There are two bus services currently serving Fairmead. The Madera County Connection provides the only fixed-route transit service to the Fairmead community (a \$2.00 fare) with the Madera-Chowchilla/Fairmead-Madera route. However, frequency of pickup and drop-offs are low (3 times per day) and stops are widely spaced. The lone bus stop at the Missionary Baptist Church does not provide adequate protection from the elements nor seating for waiting riders. In addition, the Chowchilla Area Transit Express (CATX) provides on-demand service to the City of Chowchilla and contiguous unincorporated areas, including Fairmead, with 24-hour advanced notice. It runs two vehicles Monday through Friday from 8am to 3pm (also a \$2.00 fare).

Madera County also recently entered into the CalVANS Joint Powers Authority (JPA) which provides vanpool services (largely for agricultural workers) through the Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KAPTA). At the time of writing, CalVANS was scheduled to start service in Madera County in July 2011.

Preliminary discussions have also taken place to provide transit connections between the Fossil Discovery Center and the Madera Amtrak Station.

In the future, new development in and around Fairmead may facilitate increased transit service to the community. Ideally, additional fixed-route service should be provided with new stops at the four proposed addresses within Fairmead along with an additional stop at the Fossil Discovery Center. A proposed bus route could loop



Above left: Proposed Bus Route provides a loop through Fairmead that would stop at several key locations and provide service into Madera and Chowchilla. *Above right:* The only fixed-route transit stop in Fairmead located in front of the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church provides no shade or seating for riders.

through Fairmead utilizing the new ramp south of town and first stopping at the corner of Road 20 and Avenue 22 at the proposed highway-oriented commercial address.

Continuing north on Road 20 a second stop should be provided at the corner of Road 20 and Avenue 22 ½ accessing the proposed mixed-use neighborhood center. The bus would then travel west onto Avenue 22 ½ and stop at the Sinclair Avenue address near the corner of Avenue 22 ½ and Road 19 ½. A fourth stop could remain in front of the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church along Avenue 22 ½, providing access to Fairmead Circle, Maple Street and the proposed community center located 2 blocks to the north. The bus could turn left onto Fairmead Boulevard and make a final turn onto Avenue 22 stopping at the highway commercial node before getting back on to Highway 99 and completing its routes into Chowchilla and Madera. An additional stop could be provided for the Fossil Discovery Center. The Fossil Discovery Center and proposed casino in Madera could also provide daily shuttle services from Fairmead to the new facilities nearby.

Other options for improving transit service with the Fairmead Community include:

- A new/expanded rideshare program that matches and screens drivers and passengers with similar origins and destinations.
- Migrant farmworker trips: A special type of commuter trip is “home to field” transportation for farmworkers. This is typically an employer-subsidized transportation service, but public agencies can be involved in supporting these services (especially in providing initial start-up funds or in-kind services to get these services going). An example is the cutting edge migrant farmworker vanpool program in Kings County sponsored by Kings Area Rural Transit (KART). At the time of writing, KART operated 31 vanpools in Madera County.
- Medical trips: social service transportation, sponsored by either a public agency or community organization, and perhaps including volunteer drivers to keep costs low.
- Dial-a-ride: Because of the high cost of demand-responsive dial-a-ride service, the Merced County Joint Powers Transit Authority (which operates both fixed route and dial-a-ride service in Merced County) has recently proposed a fare increase for dial-a-ride services for all non-senior/non-disabled users in order to discourage utilization of this service by persons who are able to utilize fixed-route services. Expansion of dial-a-ride could be implemented if demand for non-senior/non-disabled users merits such a service expansion at a higher farebox recovery than for seniors/disabled users. A similar approach could be considered in Madera County.
- Taxi vouchers: While the County already has a taxi voucher program, it could be expanded as taxi vouchers are cheaper on a per-rider basis than dial-a-ride (but still more expensive than fixed route).
- Conduct outreach to residents of Fairmead through existing city communication channels (e.g. water bills) or social service providers (e.g. Community Center) to help residents become aware of transportation options (e.g. seniors and youth ride ½ price, kids ride free, on-board pass purchase, medi-cab program, etc.), bus routes, schedules, and stop locations, and transfer opportunities (Amtrak, Greyhound, etc.).



Above, from top to bottom: A mother and her children walk along the edge of the road showing the need for sidewalks; An on demand service is one of the few transit options for residents.



Street Design

The County's existing street design standards are fairly conventional and have resulted in street widths that encourage speeding and do not support pedestrian and bicycle travel. For example, for local road improvement, such as the 60' ROW along Hickory Street, the current standards prescribe paving two 12' travel lanes with no pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks, landscaping or lighting.

Street design standards should be revised in order to implement the improvements proposed as part of this charrette planning process. The Zoning code requires "any new building or structure erected on a developed lot or subdivided lot shall have full off-site public improvements" including but not limited to sidewalks, street trees, and street lighting.

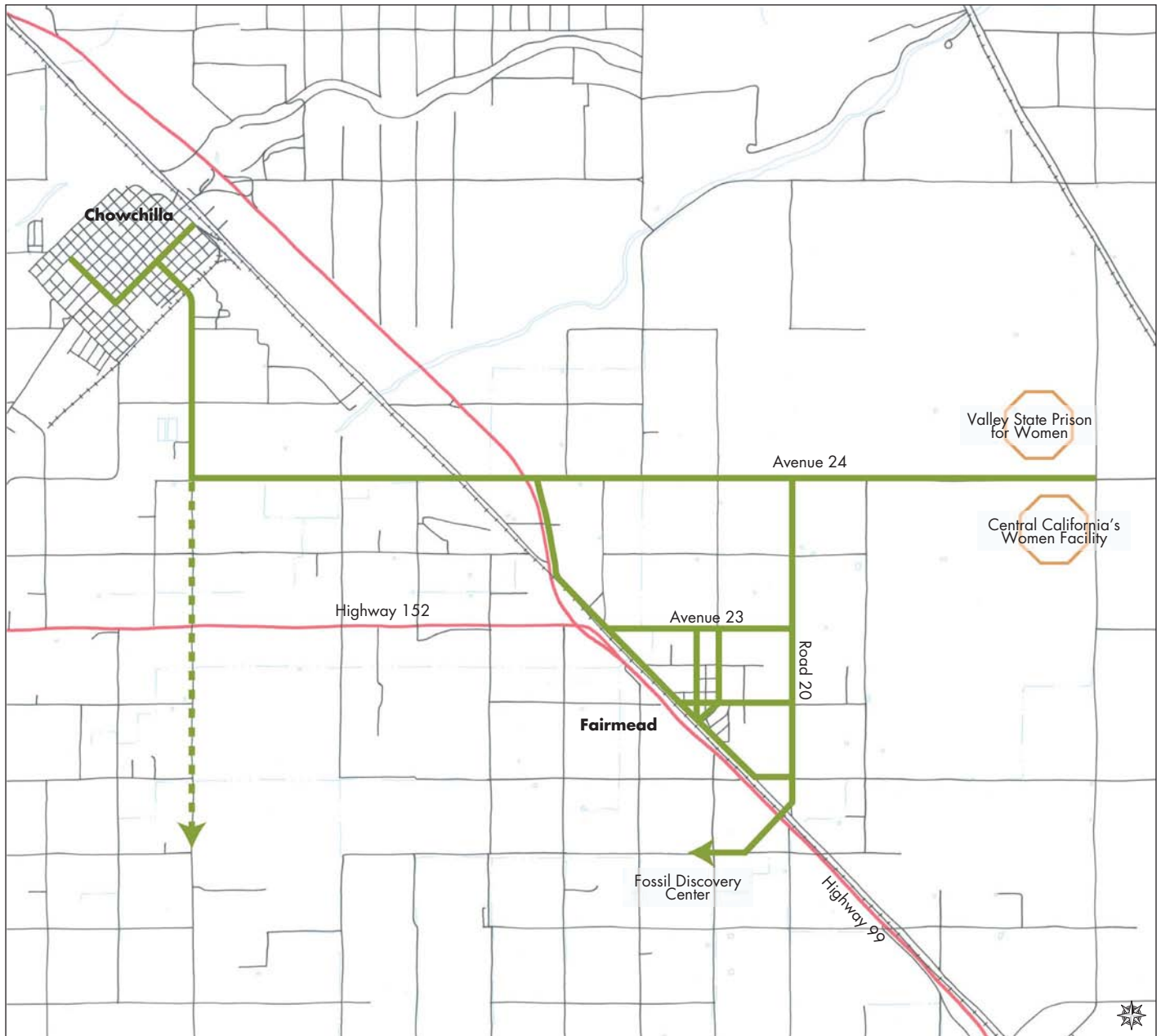
Bike Routes

There are no designated bike routes within Fairmead and the deteriorating infrastructure makes it difficult for pedestrians to walk or ride bikes safely. High traffic speeds on major thoroughfares further discourage residents from bicycling. New bicycle routes, either with painted lanes, sharrows (lanes shared by both cars and bicycles that are designated with special arrow markings painted on the roadway), or maintained separated multi-use paths, will be important to identify as new development comes to Fairmead and before road improvements are made. Bicycling is an important and reasonable option for people to get from schools, shopping areas and community spaces, especially for low income groups and children. The Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP) has encouraged bicycling within Fairmead as part of their active lifestyle programs.

As part of this plan, new on-street bike lanes and paved shoulder pedestrian paths are proposed for implementation via simple striping (e.g. using painted stripes to demarcate dedicated pedestrian and bicycle travel paths). This is proposed because it is an inexpensive method of upgrading pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that does not require regrading or curbing the existing street and because it fits well within the rural/small town context.

Above left: More road conditions and a lack of connected streets make it difficult for people to ride comfortable. Above right: Bicycling provides children with a good transportation option to get to school and parks, along with providing exercise and healthy recreation.

Bicycle Circulation



Above: Proposed Bike Route Plan for the Fairmead community showing new routes into Chowchilla and to the Fossil Discovery Center. Existing right-of-ways can accommodate Class II bicycle lanes in all locations through simple striping.

Key

- Proposed Bike Route
- - - Future Bike Connection



A Phased Approach

Improvements to and revitalization of Fairmead will require coordination between the community and Madera County to create and manage a phased approach for potential projects over time. In order to move forward with effective implementation, it is recommended that community groups and county officials work together to identify, fund, and implement short-term opportunities while setting the stage for longer-term improvements. This implementation plan should expand upon the design ideas provided during the community charrette process and could include programming and design development of potential catalyst projects, further development of urban design improvements, and financial feasibility studies.

This chapter includes a discussion of potential regulatory strategies for the community, a list of potential physical design improvement projects within central Fairmead and at locations just outside the historic core of the community, and a summary of potential funding sources that can help implement these projects. Projects have been identified as either Near-Term (0-6 months), Mid-Term (6 months-2 years), and Long-Term (2-5 years).

Form-Based Codes

As County staff move forward with the Community Plan process, they should work with the Fairmead community to ensure that the future land use vision is supportive of the design principles and concepts discussed in this document. This may require minor refinements to the draft Community Plan’s Circulation and Land Use components that reflect community desires and a more detailed sense of vision for the heart of the community.

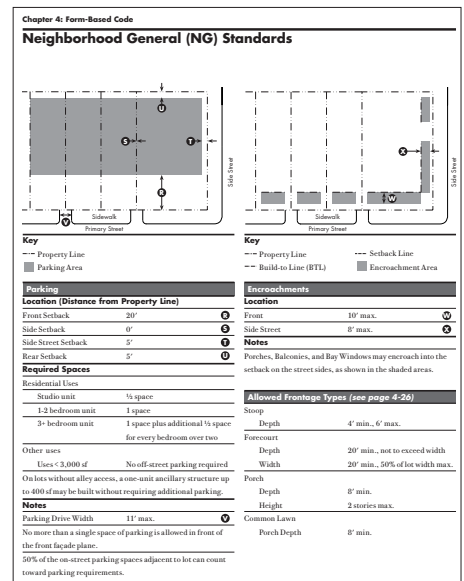
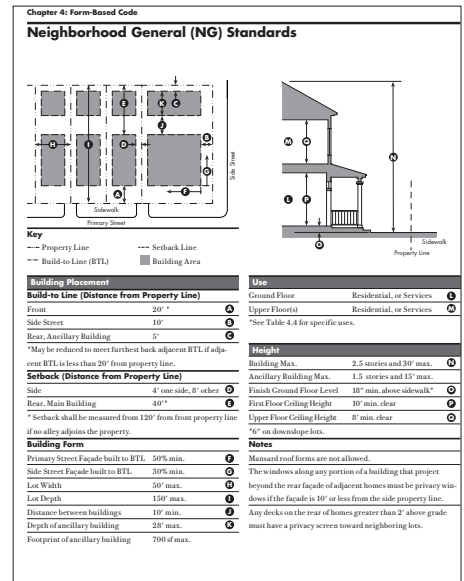
The County should also consider changes to the existing regulatory environment that can encourage improvements in central Fairmead. Fairmead, like other historic rural communities within Madera County and elsewhere in California, has an existing physical form that does not adhere well to the County’s existing zoning and coding standards, which have typically addressed only rural and suburban development. The historic core of Fairmead provides more urban conditions with an interconnected network of streets and blocks, moderate setbacks, small lots, and a mix of uses. Much of the existing community of Fairmead would simply not be possible if built to current County standards. Moreover, the community’s remoteness may create an opportunity for innovative economic strategies, such as CSA organic farming. Such artisanal opportunities could be expanded if live-work and other home-occupation activities could be encouraged.

Site-specific coding and zoning tools can provide a strategy for Fairmead’s unique character to be maintained. Although conventional design guidelines can also contribute, regulatory solutions will ultimately be needed.

The County should consider Form-based Codes as an effective tool for Fairmead to promote both appropriate and effective infill within the existing community, continued economic viability, and walkable and highly-connected areas at its periphery. The non-profit Form-Based Codes Institute offers the following definition for Form-Based Codes:

- Form-based codes address the relationship between building façades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. The regulations and standards in form-based codes, presented in both diagrams and words, are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development rather than only distinctions in land-use types. This is in contrast to conventional zoning’s focus on the segregation of land-use types, permissible property uses, and the control of development intensity through simple numerical parameters (e.g., FAR, dwellings per acre, height limits, setbacks, parking ratios).

Form-based codes are often based on the concept of the transect, which suggests that places can be organized in varying degrees of intensity, from least urban at the rural edge, to most urban at the center. In the case of Fairmead, the transect is very apparent and visible in a very short distance moving from the edge of town to the historic core. The transect could be used as a tool for determining what new development should be like in order to ensure that it is both appropriate for its location and compatible with the existing community.



Above: Sample pages from a Form-Based Code prepared for the City of Benicia, California by Opticos Design. Building Form Standards typically address building placement, land use, height, parking, encroachments, and frontage.

Form Based Codes are typically organized into a series of common sections, including a Regulating Plan (which indicates where different standards may apply), Public Space Standards (that regulate streets and other public space types) Building Form Standards (that regulate the configuration, features, and buildings as they address the public realm), Administration (that defines the application and review process), and Definitions. FBCs may also commonly include Architectural Standards, Landscaping Standards, Signage Standards, and Environmental Resource Standards.

Form-Based Codes could be implemented in a variety of ways, including the following:

1. The County could consider a Development Code Update or series of Zoning Amendments of their existing zoning standards as they would be applied to Fairmead. Such a code update could include form-based traditional neighborhood standards organized along a transect or other regulating tool, and create a basis for appropriate land uses.
2. The County could consider using a coding template such as the Smart Code. Such an “off-the-shelf” template could be calibrated to follow Fairmead’s unique physical form and could be adopted as either a mandatory or optional code. An optional format would allow developers to choose between a fast-tracked process (if they adhere to the code), or a conventional process (if they follow existing county standards).

For additional information on form-based codes, please consult the following resources:

- The Form-Based Codes Institute’s web site at www.formbasedcodes.org
- The Smart Code web site at www.smartcodecentral.org
- The book “Form Based Codes: A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers” by Daniel Parolek, Karen Parolek, and Paul Crawford, available from Wiley Press

Potential Projects Summary

Catalyst Projects

Priority

Central Fairmead

Fairmead Historic Core

Code enforcement and clean up of existing frontages along Maple Street.	Near-term
Renovation and modest addition to existing bank-owned house on lot at the northeast corner of Maple Street and Yates Avenue.	Near-term
Consistent line of landscaping (i.e. palm trees) along west side of Fairmead Boulevard between Avenue 24 and Avenue 22 to provide visual continuity and a buffer from the railroad and highway.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Avenue 22-1/2 between Fairmead Boulevard and Road 20.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Avenue 19-1/2 between Avenue 23 and Avenue 22-1/2.	Near-term
Street improvements to Maple Street between Avenue 22-3/4 and Fairmead Boulevard including restoration and lowering of (curbless) median, paving, infrastructure, class II bike lanes, vegetated swales, rain garden at northwest corner of Maple and Avenue 22-1/2, sidewalks, and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Redevelopment of the block of land along Maple Street between Yates Avenue and Moore Avenue to provide additional community facilities including either basketball courts/community garden or larger soccer field.	Mid-term
Street improvements to Fairmead Boulevard right-of-way between Avenue 24 and Avenue 22 including paving, infrastructure, class II bike lanes, vegetated swales and/or planting strips, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
New visual landmark (i.e. bell tower or tall sign) located at Fairmead Boulevard and Sinclair Avenue.	Mid-term
Reclaiming and restoration of Fairmead Circle right-of-way between Sinclair Avenue and Maple Street planted with a consistent row of trees and possible pedestrian path.	Mid-term
Street improvements to Sinclair Avenue between Fairmead Boulevard and Avenue 22-1/2 including restoration of median, paving, infrastructure, class II bike lanes, vegetated swales, planting strips, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Proposed activity node at Sinclair Boulevard and Avenue 22-1/2 incorporating community retail, post office drop pavilion, and park around existing plans for a new water tank and soccerfield.	Mid-term
Street improvements to 60' right-of-ways in the vicinity of Sinclair Avenue including paving, infrastructure, vegetated swales, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Street improvements to 80' right-of-ways in the vicinity of Sinclair Avenue including paving, infrastructure, bike lanes, vegetated swales, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Incremental infill, including development of new single family homes on west side of Maple Street between Avenue 22-3/4 and Yates Avenue.	Long-term
Street improvements to 60' right-of-ways in the vicinity of Maple Street including paving, infrastructure, vegetated swales, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Long-term
Incremental infill of remaining eastern portion of block along Maple Street between Yates Avenue and Moore Avenue (only applicable if more modest site development is chosen in first phase), including development of new single family homes and alley.	Long-term
Secondary community structure with additional meeting space at the north end of block near intersection of Maple Street and Moore Avenue (only applicable if more modest site development is chosen in first phase).	Long-term
Incremental infill, including development of new single family homes lining the north and east edge (along Yates Avenue and new street) of proposed activity node at Sinclair Boulevard and Avenue 22-1/2.	Long-term
Mixed-use development along Avenue 22-1/2 between new street and Hickory Street with modest buildings fronting the street.	Long-term

Fairmead Elementary School

Open existing school facilities to provide shared community playfields at Fairmead Elementary.	Near-term
Fairmead Elementary School drop-off improvements at intersection of Maple Street and Avenue 22-3/4.	Mid-term

Road 20 at Avenue 22-1/2

Signage to direct visitors towards central Fairmead via Avenue 22-1/2 and to the Highway 99 on-ramp via Road 20.	Near-term
Street improvements to Road 20 between Avenue 22-1/2 and Avenue 20 including paving, infrastructure, class II bike lanes, street trees/planting strips, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Proposed activity node focusing on neighborhood services, multi-family residential opportunities, and a small park.	Long-term

Road 20 at Avenue 20

Signage to direct visitors towards central Fairmead via Road 20, to the Highway 99 and the Fossil Discovery Center.	Near-term
Proposed commercial node with freeway-oriented retail, mixed use opportunities, open space, and parking.	Mid-term
Street improvements to Avenue 22 between Fairmead Boulevard and Road 20 including paving, infrastructure, bike lanes, street trees/planting strips, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Street improvements to Road 20 between Avenue 22-1/2 and Highway 99 on-ramp including paving, infrastructure, class II bike lanes, swales/planting strips, sidewalks and solar street lights.	Mid-term
Large open space located at the northeast corner of Road 20 and Avenue 20 to function as a park and neighborhood-scale stormwater detention.	Long-term

Project-Area Wide

Introduce runoff reduction strategies including conversion of impervious to pervious surfaces (i.e. parking lots and parallel parking)	Near-term
Identify and implement additional locations for rain gardens and swales for stormwater management within landscaped public areas located along the right-of-way, sidewalk and roadway edges, and interior public open space coordinated with ongoing street and public realm improvements.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along 11th Street between Monterey Avenue and Orange Avenue.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Orange Avenue between 11th Street and Front Street.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along 5th Street between Orange Avenue and Road 16.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Road 16 between 5th Street and Avenue 24.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Avenue 24 between Road 16 and Road 22.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Avenue 23 between Fairmead Boulevard and Road 20.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Avenue 22 between Fairmead Boulevard and Road 20.	Near-term
Stripe a class II bike lane along Highway 99 overpass between Road 20 and Fossil Discovery Center.	Near-term
Implement Zoning Amendments or Form-Based Coding	Near-term
Identify and implement centralized detention areas that can serve as both community parks/playfields and stormwater retention.	Mid-term
Implement and construct of a wastewater collection network and treatment facility.	Mid-term
Expand fixed-route bus service within Fairmead with new bus stops at or near: the intersection of Sinclair Avenue and Avenue 22 1/2, Maple Street and Avenue 22 3/4, Avenue 22 1/2 and Road 20, Avenue 22 and Road 20, and the Fossil Discovery Center.	Mid-term

Near-term=start now (0 to 6 months)

Mid-term=start soon (6 months to 2 years)

Long-term=start later (2 to 5 years)

Potential Funding Sources

A number of funding sources could help implement report recommendations. They offer alternatives for street design, community facilities, and other infrastructure. Each of these funding sources is subject to changes in state and federal law, budget levels, and target project priorities. A summary of the situation for each as it existed at the time of this writing is below.

Federal, State and Regional Transportation Funding Resources

Major federal, state and local transportation funding resources are outlined below. For more information on many of these programs, visit the Caltrans Division of Local Assistance website: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms

Hazard Elimination Safety Program (HES)

The HES Program is a federal safety program but administered by the State. It provides funds for safety improvements on all public roads and highways. These funds serve to eliminate or reduce the number and severity of traffic accidents at locations selected for improvement. Some of the street design elements recommended may be eligible for funding if the site selected is considered a high hazard location. Caltrans solicits applications for projects. Any local agency may apply for these safety funds.

For more information, visit: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/hesp/hesp.htm>
Or contact the Caltrans District 6 Local Assistance Office: www.dot.ca.gov/dist6/

State and Federal Safe Routes to School Programs (SR2S and SRTS)

Caltrans administers state and federally funded programs to improve walking and bicycling conditions in and around schools. They seek to fund projects that incorporate engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation components. Infrastructure projects can be funded under the state program and either infrastructure (capital) or non-infrastructure (education and encouragement) projects are eligible under the federal program.

For more information, visit: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

This program represents the lion's share of California's state and federal transportation dollars. The majority of the program's funds are earmarked for improvements determined by locally adopted priorities contained in Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP). RTIPs are submitted by regional transportation planning agencies from around the state.

STIP funds can be used for a wide variety of projects, including road rehabilitation, road capacity, intersections, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public transit, passenger rail and other projects that enhance the region's transportation infrastructure. Madera County should work with the Madera County Transportation Commission to nominate projects in Fairmead to be included in the STIP. Funding for this program usually occurs every two years.

For more information, visit: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/STIP.htm and www.maderactc.org/

Transportation Enhancement (TE) Activities

Federal Transportation Enhancement funds are for construction projects that are “over and above” normal types of transportation projects. These projects may include street trees and landscaping along roadways, pedestrian and bicycle access improvements, acquisition of scenic easements, preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use of the corridors for pedestrian or bicycle trails), and other scenic beautification.

For more information, visit: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/TransEnhAct/TransEnact.htm. Or contact TE Project Coordinator Jim Perrault at (559) 445-5417, James_Perrault@dot.ca.gov

Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP)

The program offers a total of \$10 million each year for grants to local, state, and federal governmental agencies and to nonprofit organizations for projects to mitigate the environmental impacts caused by new or modified public transportation facilities. Eligible projects must be directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of the modification of an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility. Grants are awarded in three categories: 1. Highway Landscaping and Urban Forestry Projects that offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide; 2. Resource Lands Projects to acquire or enhance resource lands to mitigate the loss or degradation of resource lands lying within or near the right-of-way acquired for transportation improvements; 3. Roadside Recreation Projects to acquire or develop roadside recreational opportunities.

The Guidelines and Application are published by the Natural Resources Agency each year. The Natural Resources Agency evaluates project proposals and provides a list of recommended projects to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for consideration. The Department of Transportation administers the approved grants.

For more information, visit: www.resources.ca.gov/eem/

Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA)

Administered by Caltrans, this state fund can be used for city and county projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters. Eligible projects include improving and maintaining existing bikeways, building new bikeways, constructing median crossings, installing bicycle/pedestrian signals, and planning. Annual BTA funding is in the range of \$5 million a year. To be eligible for BTA funds, a city or county must prepare and adopt a Bicycle Transportation Plan. Adoption of a plan establishes eligibility for five consecutive funding cycles.

For more information, visit: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/bta/btawebPage.htm

Transportation Development Act (TDA)

TDA provides for two sources of funding: Local Transportation Funds (LTF) and State Transit Assistance (STA). The TDA funds a wide variety of transportation programs, including planning and program activities, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, community transit services, public transportation, and bus and rail projects.

For more information, visit: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/State-TDA.html

Office of Traffic Safety Grants

The Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) effectively and efficiently administers traffic safety grant funds to reduce traffic deaths, injuries and economic losses. OTS distributes funds statewide in the form of traffic safety grants that are awarded to political subdivisions of the state based upon certain criteria. OTS develops a yearly HSP that identifies the primary highway safety problems in the State and provides potential solutions. Identified in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, OTS has several priority areas for grant funding, including Police Traffic Services, Emergency Medical Services, Roadway Safety, and Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety. Political subdivisions of the state are eligible to apply for and receive OTS grant funding. In addition to state governmental agencies, state colleges, and state universities, subdivisions of the state include local city and county government agencies, school districts, fire departments, and public emergency services providers. Non-profit, community-based organizations (CBOs) are eligible to apply for funding through a political subdivision of the state. For example, a county department may submit a proposal that includes funding for CBO participation. The CBO funding would be included under contractual services in the proposal budget.

For more information, visit: www.ots.ca.gov/Grants/Apply/GME_2011.asp

REMOVE II Program

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District REMOVE II Program provides funding to help construct on and off street bicycle paths. For more information, visit: www.valleyair.org/transportation/removeII/BI.htm

Measure “T” Sales Tax

The Madera County Transportation Authority (MCTA) administers the proceeds of Measure “T”, a ½ cent sales tax for local transportation projects. Measure “T” is a twenty-year program that funds highway and road capital projects that improve traffic safety, relieve traffic congestion, and leverage other state and federal funds. The measure is projected to yield approximately \$213 million for transportation projects in Madera County through 2027. The MCTA administers the revenues through a planning and programming process, which includes an Expenditure Plan and Annual Work Program.

For more information, visit www.maderactc.org/mcta.html

Federal and State Economic Development Agencies and Programs

There are numerous state and federal programs that finance economic development. Some of these could provide potential funding resources for improvements in Fairmead.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD offers a host of programs to foster community and economic development. These include:

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)
- Brownfield Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)
- Rural Housing and Economic Development (RHED)

CDBG funding that would be potentially applicable to Fairmead is distributed through the State Housing and Community Development Department, which is discussed below. BEDI provides competitive grants to spur redevelopment of under-utilized industrial and commercial sites. RHED provides grants that address the housing and economic development needs of rural communities, with funds available in two categories: 1. Capacity building and support for innovative housing and economic development activities. Awards up to \$150,000 are given for hiring and training staff, purchasing software and other tools, obtaining technical assistance, and acquiring office space; 2. Support for innovative housing and economic development activities. Awards up to \$400,000 can be used for preparation of plans and architectural drawings, land and building acquisition, demolition, infrastructure development, the purchase of materials, and construction costs. For more information, visit: www.hud.gov

California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Loans, Grants and Enterprise Zone Programs

HCD administers more than 20 programs that award loans and grants for the construction, acquisition, rehabilitation and preservation of affordable rental and ownership housing, homeless shelters and transitional housing, public facilities and infrastructure, and the development of jobs for lower income workers. The loans and grants are generally made to local public agencies, nonprofit and for-profit housing developers, and service providers. For more information, visit: www.hcd.ca.gov/fa/. A comprehensive Loan and Grant Program Directory can be downloaded from this site.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA Rural Development California State Office lists a comprehensive set of loan, incentive and grant programs that support a wide array of community and economic development activities. Program areas include:

- Business and Cooperative Program – grants, loans and incentives programs to create, support and preserve jobs and businesses in rural areas.
- Housing and Community Facilities – loans and grants for repairs, purchasing, and construction of single family homes, rental assistance for low-income tenants, and funding and technical assistance for water and wastewater projects and community facilities projects.

- Rural Utilities Program - loans and grants for electric energy, telecommunications and water and wastewater disposal projects.
- Community Development/Empowerment Program - The Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) program is an initiative to provide economically depressed rural areas and communities with opportunities for growth and revitalization.

For more information on these programs, visit: www.rurdev.usda.gov/ca/bi/index.htm
See also the web link for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at USDA: www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s_7_0_A/7_0_CJ?navid=FBCI and the web link for 5-Star Commitment to Expand Rural Minority Homeownership at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/Admin/2002%20Five%20Star/5_star.htm

Infrastructure State Revolving Fund (ISRF) Program

Subdivisions of a local government, which includes cities and counties and joint power authorities, can apply for low-cost financing ranging from \$250,000 to \$10,000,000 with terms of up to 30 years through the ISRF program for a wide variety of infrastructure projects. Eligible project categories include city streets, county highways, state highways, drainage, water supply and flood control, educational facilities, environmental mitigation measures, parks and recreational facilities, port facilities, public transit, sewage collection and treatment, solid waste collection and disposal, water treatment and distribution, defense conversion, public safety facilities, and power and communications facilities.

For more information, visit: www.ibank.ca.gov/Programs/infrastructure.html Or contact program manger Diane Cummings at (916) 324-4805, dcummings@ibank.ca.gov

State Water Resources Control Board (SCWG)

The Small Community Wastewater Grant (SCWG) Program, most recently funded by Proposition 40 and Proposition 50, provides grant assistance for the planning, design, and construction of publicly-owned wastewater treatment and collection facilities. Grants are available for small communities (i.e., with a population of 20,000 persons, or less) with financial hardship (i.e., annual median household income [MHI] is 80 percent of the Statewide MHI, or less). Based on feedback from the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, Environmental Justice and Small Community Assistance Groups, and individual local agency inquiries, the Division of Financial Assistance (Division) compiled a list of potentially eligible small, disadvantaged community wastewater projects, which can be downloaded from the SCWG web site. The State Water Board also has a Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program that provides low-interest financing for construction of publicly-owned wastewater treatment facilities, local sewers, sewer interceptors, and water recycling facilities, as well as, expanded use projects. For more information, visit:

www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/small_community_wastewater_grant/index.shtml

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

CDPH implements a number of programs that provide funding opportunities to public water systems. For more information, visit: www.cdph.ca.gov//certlic/drinkingwater/Pages/DWPFunding.aspx

Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program of 2008 (Statewide Park Program)

This competitive grant program includes two rounds of funding awarding \$368,000,000 to critically underserved communities throughout California. As of July 1, 2009, the 2009/10 Budget Act appropriated \$184,000,000 for the first competitive round. The funding is for the creation and development of new parks and new recreation opportunities in underserved communities in California. Projects include athletic fields and courts, community centers, community gardens, non-motorized neighborhood and regional recreational trails, open space, picnic areas, play grounds, skate parks, restroom buildings, parking lots, and additions that enhance the park use and appearance (i.e. landscaping). Cities, counties, districts, non-profits and joint powers authorities can apply and partnerships are encouraged. The first round of applications deadline was March 1, 2010. The application deadline for the second competitive round has not yet been established, but will be no earlier than March, 2011.

For more information, visit: www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=26025

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Administered by CA State Parks, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is offered annually to cities, counties and districts. Funds can be used to acquire or develop outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Communities can use these funds to build trails, picnic areas, and preserve natural and cultural areas.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is the state agency that is responsible for administering the federal Recreational Trails Program, which provides funding for recreational trails and trails-related projects. The program provides funding for acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails, development of trailside and trailhead facilities, and construction of trails. RTP funding made available nationwide has steadily increased over the years, with \$85 million authorized for the Federal Fiscal Year 2009.

Local Funding Resources

City and County Public Works Funds

The County can add striping, traffic calming, sidewalks, curbs and similar elements to other projects that already involve digging up or rebuilding street sections. For example, drainage and sewer improvements, utility under-grounding projects, and routine street resurfacing are all possibilities. The greater the extent of the reconstruction, the greater the opportunity for adding elements such as curb extensions and medians at a lower cost than if implemented as stand-alone projects.

Public and Private Cost Sharing

Some jurisdictions require developers and property owners to install or help pay for infrastructure improvements (streets, sidewalks, trails, landscaping, etc.) through individual development agreements. On a larger scale, Madera County could explore using development fees with a capital improvements program to help fund recommendations. To avoid legal challenge of the County's right to levy these fees, care must be taken to apply this strategy only where there is a clear link establishing that travel generated by the private project will use the facility to be funded with the fees.

Special Assessment Districts Financing

A special assessment district could be explored for Fairmead as a financing tool for community improvements. According to the Council of Development Finance Agencies, there are two predominant methods for structuring this type of approach. One method would be the assembly of a neighborhood group into a district to generate funding for projects and programs. A local nonprofit or development agency would manage the district. A second would be a targeted assessment program organized and managed by the County upon voter approval by Fairmead residents. Both approaches are outlined below.

- **Business and Neighborhood Districts.** These types of districts are typically run by property owners in the district. A neighborhood or business district in Fairmead would use self-imposed taxes to generate funds for physical improvements or other amenities. The assessed tax would be paid to the County and returned to the district's management entity, most likely a nonprofit, to finance services and programs, such as safety patrols, graffiti removal, signage, beautification and neighborhood cleanup projects.
- **Government Districts.** A government-focused district in Fairmead would direct the work of the district and be established to provide more capital-intensive improvements and maintenance programs such as roads, sidewalks, drainage, lighting, sewer and water. Special districts generally assess a charge levied upon parcels of real property within the district's boundaries to pay for local improvements. Under California law, a ballot approval process is necessary in order to establish an assessment district.

Volunteer Initiatives and Private Donations

In addition to funding sources, programs can be created for volunteer initiatives such as "Adopt-a" programs where individuals or groups engage in beautification projects such as tree plantings. A program can also fund some projects, such as public art, by enlisting private donors to sponsor downtown enhancement activities. These programs can be administered by the City or by other community organizations.

Other Resources

Several excellent information resources for funding strategies and technical assistance are listed below.

California Community Economic Development Association
<http://www.cceda.com/Home.html>

Rural Community Assistance Corporation.
www.rcac.org

PolicyLink
<http://www.policylink.org>

California Coalition for Rural Housing
www.calruralhousing.org/

Self-Help Enterprises
www.selfhelpenterprises.org/

Appendix

chapter **5**

Charrette Flyers

PLAN THE FUTURE OF FAIRMEAD!

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP



Organized by Madera County in partnership with the Local Government Commission & Fairmead Community & Friends.

For more information:

Scott Harmstead
(559) 675-7821, ext. 217
scott.harmstead@madera-county.com

Nettie Amey
(559) 673-7909
nettieamey@netzero.net

Primo Nuño
(559) 673-3242
primo@primo-realty.com



Funded by a Caltrans Environmental Justice: Context Sensitive Planning Grant

Please Join Us!
Thursday, November 12
NEIGHBORHOOD WALKABOUT
4:00 - 5:00 P.M.
DESIGN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

All Events will take place at:
Galilee Missionary Baptist Church
22491 Fairmead Blvd., Fairmead, CA

Join friends and neighbors to share your ideas and discuss strategies to enhance the community.

Nationally-known Walkable Communities expert Dan Burden and professional designers will turn your ideas into a plan for creating a safe, vibrant and appealing place for residents and to attract future investment.

Food, Refreshments & Child Care provided!

AYUDENOS A PLANEAR EL FUTURO DE FAIRMEAD

TALLER DE LA COMUNIDAD



Organizado por el Condado de Madera en colaboración con la Comisión de Gobiernos Locales y Comunidad y Amigos de Fairmead.

Para más información:

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scott.harmstead@madera-county.com

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primo@primo-realty.com



Funded by a Caltrans Environmental Justice: Context Sensitive Planning Grant

¡Por favor participe!

Jueves, 12 de noviembre
CAMINATA DE INVESTIGACIÓN
4:00 a 5:00 de la tarde
DISEÑO SU VECINDARIO
5:30 a 8:30 de la tarde

Ambos eventos se celebrarán en la Iglesia Misionaria Bautista Galilee, 22491 Fairmead Boulevard, Fairmead, CA

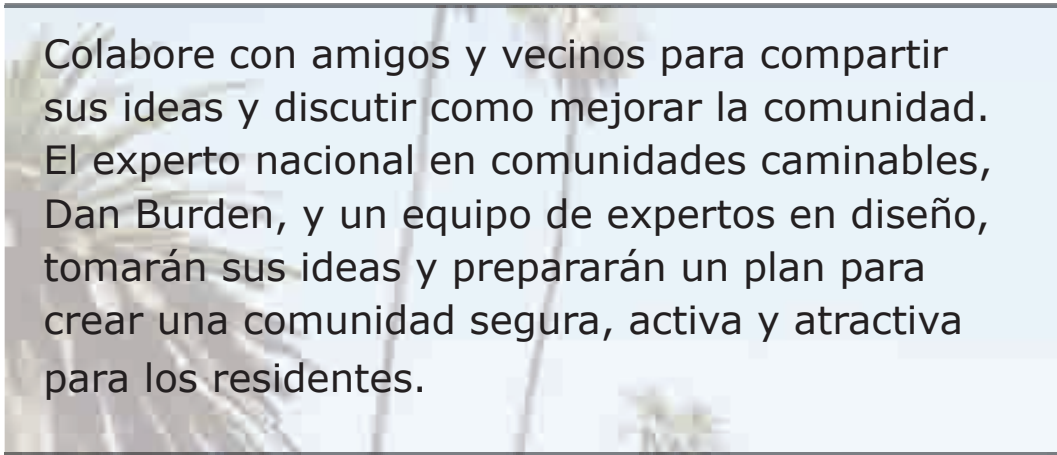
Colabore con amigos y vecinos para compartir sus ideas y discutir como mejorar la comunidad.

El experto nacional en comunidades caminables, Dan Burden, y un equipo de expertos en diseño, tomarán sus ideas y prepararán un plan para crear una comunidad segura, activa y atractiva para los residentes.

Habrà comida, refrescos y guarderìa para los niños.

PLAN THE FUTURE OF FAIRMEAD

Join neighbors and friends to share ideas and discuss strategies to enhance the community. Nationally-known Walkable Communities expert Dan Burden and professional designers will turn your ideas into a plan for creating a safe, vibrant and appealing place for residents and to attract future investment.



Colabore con amigos y vecinos para compartir sus ideas y discutir como mejorar la comunidad. El experto nacional en comunidades caminables, Dan Burden, y un equipo de expertos en diseño, tomarán sus ideas y prepararán un plan para crear una comunidad segura, activa y atractiva para los residentes.

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PLAN THE FUTURE OF FAIRMEAD!

COMMUNITY MEETING



Please Join Us!

Thursday, December 10

PRESENTATION OF THE PLAN
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Grace Tabernacle Church
19492 Avenue 22 3/4 in Fairmead

See the plan for revitalizing Fairmead!
This meeting is the follow-up to the November 12th community workshop in Fairmead where residents and stakeholders discussed problems and ideas to enhance the community. A professional design team has turned this input into concepts for creating a safe and attractive place for residents of all ages and to stimulate new investment. Come see the presentation and give us your feedback.

Organized by Madera County in partnership with the Local Government Commission & Fairmead Community & Friends.

For more information:

Scott Harmstead
(559) 675-7821, ext. 217
scott.harmstead@madera-county.com

Nettie Amey
(559) 673-7909
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Funded by a Caltrans Environmental Justice: Current Sensible Planning Grant

AYUDENOS A PLANEAR EL FUTURO DE FAIRMEAD

REUNIONE DE LA COMUNIDAD



¡Por favor participe!

jueves 10 de diciembre

PRESENTACIÓN DEL PLAN
5:30 A 7:00 DE LA NOCHE
Iglesia Grace Tabernacle
19492 Avenida 22 3/4 en Fairmead

Vea el plan para mejorar las condiciones en Fairmead.

Esta reunión es continuación del taller que se celebró en Fairmead el 12 de noviembre. En ese taller los residentes de Fairmead discutieron los problemas en esta comunidad y nos dieron sus ideas para mejorar las condiciones. En base a esas ideas el equipo de diseño presentará un plan para crear una comunidad segura y atractiva que ayudará a atraer nueva inversión.

Venga a ver la presentación y díganos si le gusta el plan.

Organizado por el Condado de Madera en colaboración con la Comisión de Gobiernos Locales y Comunidad y Amigos de Fairmead.

Para más información:

Scott Harmstead
(559) 675-7821, ext. 217
scott.harmstead@madera-county.com

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Financiado con una subvención para Justicia Ambiental del Departamento de Transporte de California (Caltrans).

Focus Group Meetings

Agencies Meeting

8:30 am, November 12, 2009

Madera County Planning Department

2037 West Cleveland Avenue, Madera, CA 93637

Attendees:

Scott Harmstead Madera County RMA

Nettie Amey, Fairmead Community & Friends (FC&F)

Barbra Nelson, (FC&F)

Eric Yancy, Madera County RMA

Julio Padilla

Jared Carter, Madera County Roads Dept.

Lori Gardner, Madera County RMA Admin

Deborah Keenan, RMA- Fire Marshal

Van Do-Reynoso, Madera County Public Health Dept.

Natalie Stein, Madera County Public Health Dept.

S. Greg Farley, Madera County Engineering

Josh Meyer, Local Government Commission (LGC)

Dan Burden, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute

Stefan Pellegrini, Opticos Design, Inc.

Jennifer Block, Opticos Design, Inc.

Paul Zykofsky, LGC

Eric Zickler, Sherwood Design Engineers

Notes:

Regarding roads, many are below standard. There is a problem with ROW issues. The initially wide streets have been changed and reconfigured. So the alignment and established ROW will be a challenge for determining street improvements. For example, do the big medians still make sense? The road setup may not be conducive to businesses and residences.

Have any medians been formally deeded over?

Some have, but not all. We need to have clarification about where ROW's will occur or be changed, so we know where to establish sidewalks, walking paths, and drainage. There is a 140' ROW where there are medians. We have done some pavement overlays. We have a CMAQ-funded project to pave Hickory Street.

The County does have a drainage master plan.

Regarding community needs, Fairmead would like to see a community center in the school area and ball fields. The community also needs another place beside tot lots for 5 years old. I envision a community center with a library, computers, etc.

The school is willing to open their field, but their insurance is not. Also, opening up to the community is perceived to cause wear and tear on the grounds. But the kids jump the fence anyway.

The kids don't have anything to occupy their time. I would like to see another park.

Prop 84 funds are coming up, but there could be density level issues in order to qualify for money for parks.

Regarding emergency response, there is not enough water pressure to put out fires. We lack enough staff to place the water. The water system regulates what kind of construction is allowed. With more water, then more development, there would be money to pay for improvements. We need tanks, hydrants, etc. for suppression.

We have a 12-minute response time. With more water, a fire station within 5 road miles will bring fire insurance costs down.

25 years ago we had a paid-staff station, but it moved to Madera Acres.

Regarding public health, there is a lack of information about health statistics. County Health is embarking on a community health needs assessment. We are relying on Fresno and interns from graduate schools. We have grants to start serving the community. Initiatives include the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program and the Public Health Law and Policy PHLP project. We are looking to increase access to healthy food, safe places to play, and opportunities for community gardens.

Regarding access to healthy foods, is there any program anywhere that will truck in food?

We are exploring a mobile or school-based farmers market.

There is only one bus route – one in the morning, one in the evening. So it is difficult for some residents to get access to

healthy food on a daily basis. Chowchilla Express, a demand response transit system, might service Fairmead.

The County has a preliminary master plan for water, drainage, and flooding.

There is discussion of piping methane gas from the landfill for energy.

There are 8 streetlights in Fairmead. The whole area should be built to Chowchilla City standards. There is a shelf-ready sewer project, with treatment out by the landfill and tertiary treatment plant on the east side of highway.

It is important for Fairmead residents to take ownership. More people need to maintain their properties. The County will be demolishing some buildings using a receivership program. There is a problem trying to get people to change their mindset. Trying education first, but will use sanctions if necessary. It would be good to get some residents to join citizens on patrol through the sheriff's department. Jail inmates are being used to help with neighborhood cleanup. The younger generation are not taking care of their properties. The older residents are. There are programs to help remove debris, tire cleanup, etc.

County sentenced Juvenile offenders sentenced to community service are sent out for graffiti abatement. Could also use volunteer high school students.

By June, the new water tank will be on-line.

The Hickory CMAQ project is designed and ready for construction.

A small project with a restaurant has been proposed in the community.

There are concerns about Maple Street as a central street to the elementary school. The street needs clean-up, repair, landscaping and traffic calming. The community has expressed interest in taking over the median island, but the County is concerned about non-professionals working on the median.

Community Assistance Meeting

11:30 am, November 12, 2009

Madera County Planning Department

2037 West Cleveland Avenue, Madera, CA 93637

Attendees:

Phoebe Seaton, California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA)
 Baldwin Moy, CRLA
 Cristina Gomez-Vidal, California Regional Obesity Prevention Program/Fresno State Foundation
 Toulou Thao, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 Sandra Flores, Fresno Regional Foundation
 Barbara Nelson, Fairmead Community and Friends
 Nettie Amey, Fairmead Community and Friends
 Scott Harmstead, Madera County RMA

Josh Meyer, LGC

Dan Burden, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute

Stefan Pellegrini, Opticos Design, Inc.

Jennifer Block, Opticos Design, Inc.

Paul Zykofsky, LGC

Eric Zickler, Sherwood Engineers

Notes:

Fairmead needs more vibrant, clean, friendly, safe, and complete streets. The community also needs a park and community center for young and old. A place for kids beside the street. Also the neighborhood has no store.

Need to involve residents in changes so they can be their own community. With strip malls coming to the south and a casino, residents could get pushed out as changes occur. Plans are occurring that exclude them.

There is concern about the impact of Chowchilla land incorporation. Oakhurst received some revenue from the prison, but not Fairmead. The same occurred with Green Hills.

Is there a strong sense of community?

There used to be, but not so much anymore.

The County needs to make Fairmead more of a priority. So when a strip mall or casino is proposed, Fairmead constituents are consulted.

It is important to make sure people are involved in decisions about the community. Input is needed every step of the way. Need to develop community leaders that can represent the community. For example, First 5 Madera developed a parent advisory committee. Representatives should start sitting in at County Board meetings.

Are there any community leaders?

Fairmead Community and Friends has a Board of 20 and has been organized for 20 years. FC&F goes to Board meetings, etc.

Healthy Kids Healthy Communities initiative selected Fairmead for support. Working with Spanish-speakers to develop leadership confidence. The community needs a park, school, or community center, a place to organize from. Need a sense of place. Need better understanding of how decisions will affect residents. People are getting information second-hand. The community also needs a grocery store.

Community reinvestment departments at banks should be approached as a potential resource for revitalization efforts.

Rudy Medina of Bank of America and Tim Rios of Wells Fargo may have suggestions for financial help.

California Rural Legal Assistance is help Fairmead and other unincorporated central valley communities: Drummond and Jenson and Layton, Tuleville, Hatch-Midway.

Community University Research and Action for Justice (CURAJ) is assisting Fairmead and South Dos Palos with organizing and networking development.

Unincorporated communities like Fairmead need more sophisticated local organizations/nonprofits so that they can compete for funding. They need a vehicle for foundation money to run funding through.

Public Events Attendees

Norman Allinder
 Charles Adams
 Dr. Charles Alaitui
 Charles Altekruise
 Robin Amey
 Nettie Amey
 Lisa Anderson
 George Baleslteri
 Nora Baleslteri
 Tey Baus
 Jose Benlo
 Jacinta Benlo
 Alnera Biolsi
 Michael Burns
 Kaila Burris
 Delores Bush
 Adalph Bush
 Allen Bushmin
 Norma Bustillos
 Evangelina Casas
 Lazaro Castaneda
 Blanca Castaneda
 Francisco Castaneda
 Nick Cavalletto
 Tomas Chairez
 Lawyer Cooper
 Annie Cooper
 Annie Cooper
 Lois Lee Davidson
 Velda Davis
 Joanne deFretas
 Silvio deFretas
 Maria Delgado
 Marisal Delgado
 Pablo Deljeldo
 Robin DeLugan
 Martin Diaz
 Fred Dory
 Greg Farley
 Bob Fato
 Antomilk Gani
 Veronica Garibay
 Uallie Garland
 Jugdev Gill
 Birdie Hughes
 Manuel Izucobo
 Eruka Landeros
 Sally Lovelady

Maria Madrigal
 Patricia Magona
 Randelin Mat
 Michael Miller
 Daniel Moore
 Elaine Moore
 Gary Moran
 Clyde Nelson
 Bonlar Nelson
 Barbara Nelson
 Yolanda Nevino
 Genovie Nuno
 Primitivo Nuno
 Julio Padilla
 Patricia Perez
 David Rivera
 Delois Rorabaugh
 Jim Rorabaugh
 David Ross
 Manuel Rucobo
 Socorro Ruiz
 Sohan Sahota
 Bhupinder Sahota
 G. Santana
 Silvestre Santana
 Marqie Schustu
 Phoebe Seaton
 Ron Seals
 John Silva
 Janis Thompson
 Miriah Thompson
 Daniel Trevino
 Andres Trinidad
 Jose Trinidad
 Duresa Valencia
 Girtha Wilkins
 Annie Williams
 John Williams
 Dorothy Williams
 Fred Williams
 Ella Mae Williams
 Richard Williams
 Caroline Williams
 Eric Yancy