



County of Fresno

Public Review Draft **Biola Community Plan**

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Prepared For:

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1. Purpose and Background

Purpose of the Community Plan

The Fresno County General Plan states “The fundamental policy directive of this General Plan is to direct intensive development to cities, unincorporated communities, and other areas where public facilities and infrastructure are available or can be provided consistent with the adopted General Plan or Community Plan.”¹

This Community Plan will be used to foster and identify opportunities for development. Throughout the public outreach process, fundamental issues such as economic development, agriculture and land use, transportation and circulation, public facilities and services, open space and conservation, health and safety, environmental justice, and housing were discussed with the community. These discussions are reflected in the goals, policies, and implementation programs. In addition, this Community Plan will help guide Biola’s future development and identify opportunities and needs for infrastructure improvements.

The Biola Community Plan is consistent with the General Plan Policy Document adopted by the Fresno County Board of Supervisors on February 20, 2024, and is designed to implement the 2024 Fresno County General Plan at a community level. The content in this Community Plan has been identified to refine the intent of the General Plan as it applies to the Biola community to address issues of local importance. While the General Plan contains policies that apply to the whole County, Biola included, this Community Plan outlines goals, policies, and implementation programs specific to Biola. These Biola-specific criteria do not apply to the rest of the County. Where the Biola Community Plan is silent on a matter, the General Plan controls.

What is a Community Plan?

A community plan is a segment of the General Plan that provides a geographic focus. Accordingly, a community plan serves the same purpose as the General Plan except that community plans function at the community level while the General Plan functions at the County level.

Community plans are internally consistent with the General Plan but provide for more community-specific planning addressing the same elements as the General Plan. While community plans can be used to guide community development, they do not guarantee any development will occur nor are they a requirement for development.

¹ Fresno County. 2024. "Fresno County General Plan Policy Document." 2-52
https://www.fresnocountyca.gov/files/sharedassets/county/v/3/public-works-and-planning/development-services/planning-and-land-use/environmental-impact-reports/general-plan-review/fcgpr_general-plan_prd-county_01-12_24-clean.pdf.

Community Plan Organization

The chapters of the Biola Community Plan are as follows.

Chapter 1: Purpose and Background provides an overview of the purpose, intent, and organization of the Community Plan. This chapter also provides an outline for navigating the Community Plan and additional information about the community of Biola, including demographic information.

Chapter 2: Biola Community Vision provides a brief overview of the Community Plan update engagement process that led to the development of a vision statement, also included in this chapter. The statement represents the guiding vision that was used to develop the goals and policies of the Community Plan.

Chapter 3: Community Plan Elements outlines the community's goals, policies, and implementation programs related to the development, expansion, and preservation of the Biola Community Plan boundary. The Community Plan elements include Economic Development, Agriculture and Land Use, Transportation and Circulation, Public Facilities and Services, Open Space and Conservation, Health and Safety, Environmental Justice, and Housing. This chapter also contains key diagrams, including the Land Use Diagram and Circulation Diagram.

Community Profile

Location

The community of Biola is an unincorporated community within Fresno County. Biola was founded in 1912 by William Kerchoff.²

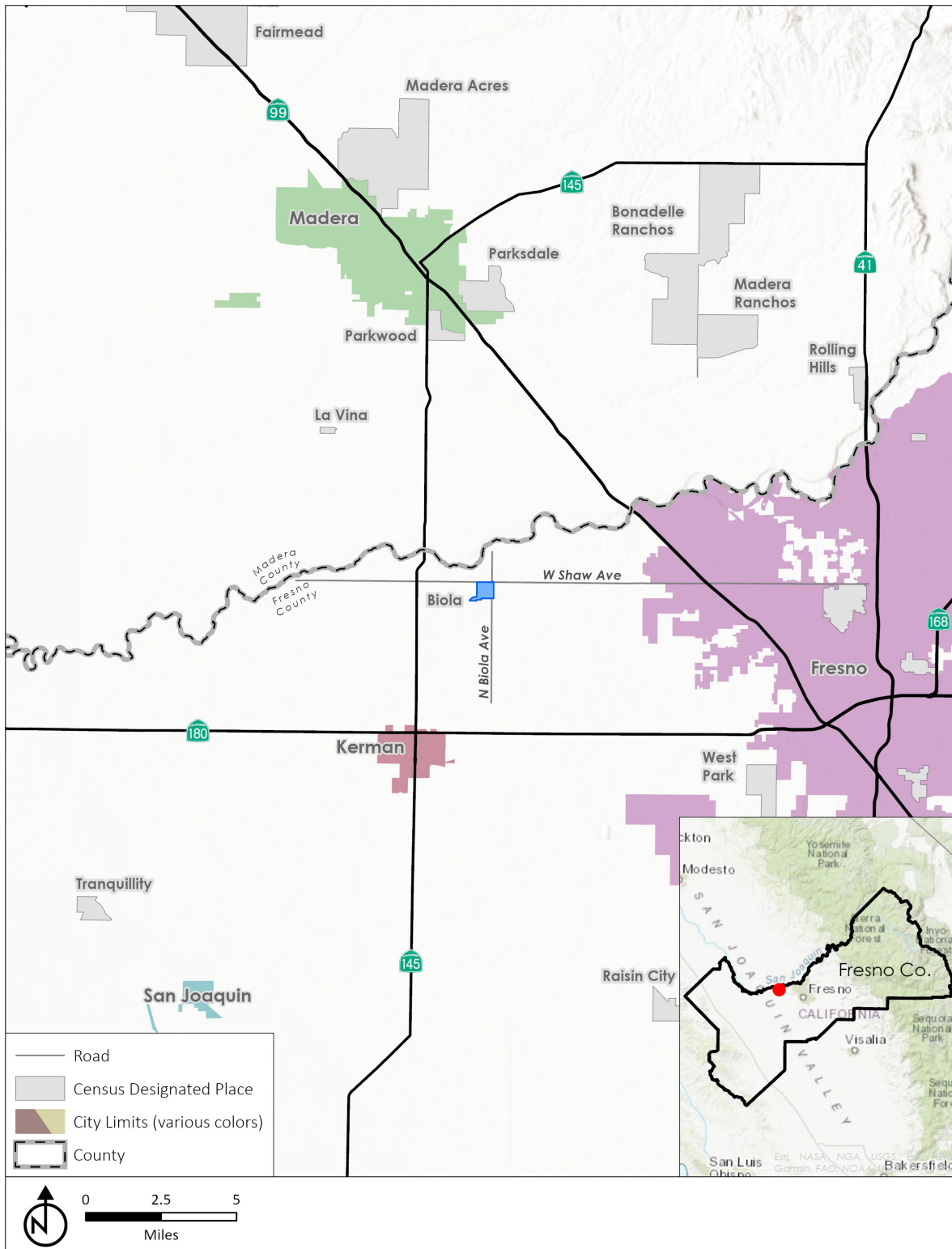
Like most other communities and cities throughout Fresno County, Biola is an agriculturally-oriented community surrounded by farmland. Biola is bounded generally by Shaw Avenue on the north, Gettysburg Avenue on the south, Howard Avenue on the west, and 7th Street on the east. Additionally, the San Joaquin River is located approximately 0.5 miles north of Biola. The City of Fresno, the largest city in Fresno County, is located approximately five miles east of Biola (see *Figure 1 – Vicinity Map*). Biola is a census-designated place (CDP). A CDP is a statistical equivalent of an incorporated community, such as a city, but does not have a legally defined boundary or an active, functioning governmental structure.³ The Biola Community Plan covers 213 acres, or approximately 0.33 square miles, and contains 361 parcels as shown in *Figure 2 – Land Use Diagram*.⁴

² Bennett, Abbey. 2010. "Fresno Names Tiny Town after Biola." The Biola University Chimes, September 29. Accessed January 30, 2024. <https://chimesnewspaper.com/13052/archives/features/biola-town/>.

³ United States Census Bureau. 2023. Census Designated Places. Accessed January 29, 2024. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/bas/information/cdp.html>.

⁴ County of Fresno. 2023. "Fresno County General Plan Background Report Public Review Draft." <https://www.fresnocountyca.gov/files/sharedassets/county/v/2/public-works-and-planning/development-services/planning-and-land-use/general-plan/fcgr-background-report-2023-05-10.pdf>.

Figure 1 – Vicinity Map



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Demographics

Over the past 20 years Biola’s population has fluctuated. In 2000, Biola had a population of 1,037 and approximately 241 housing units.⁵ In 2010, Biola had seen a 36% increase in population with a total of 1,623 people. At this time, the number of housing units increased to 351. As of the 2020 Decennial Census, the community of Biola has seen their population trend downward to a total population of 1,428 people. The total number of housing units saw a slight decrease of seven units resulting in 344 total housing units. Biola has an average household size of 4.24 people.⁶

In contrast, Fresno County has seen a steady increase in population since 2000. In 2000, Fresno County’s population was 799,407. By 2010, its population had grown to 930,450.⁷ As of the 2020 Census, Fresno County had a population of 1,008,654.⁸ Between 2000 and 2020, Fresno County saw a 20.7% increase in population.

Biola is predominantly Hispanic, with Hispanics and Latinos accounting for 87.0% of the total population. Asian people comprise the next largest ethnic group, representing 8.4% of Biola’s population. A more detailed breakdown is provided in *Table 1*.

Table 1 – Biola Ethnic Population as of 2020

Ethnicity	Number	Percent*
Hispanic or Latino	1,243	87.0%
Asian	120	8.4%
Not Hispanic or Latino (White)	59	4.1
American Indian and Other Pacific Islander	3	0.2%
Black or African American	3	0.2%
Total	1,428	100%
<small>Source: United States Census Bureau. 2020. Biola, CDP, California. https://data.census.gov/profile/Biola_CDP,_California?q=160XX00US0606728. *Total may not equal 100% due to rounding.</small>		

Of the 1,428 people that reside in the community, approximately 894 are over the age of 16 and are considered a part of the eligible labor force. Of those 894 residents, 476, or 53.2%, of the eligible labor force are employed, whereas 46.8% are not employed.⁹ 97.2% of Biola’s employed labor force commutes to work with an average commute time of 22.9 minutes.¹⁰ Approximately 17.1% of the population has a bachelor’s degree or higher in Biola compared to Fresno County, which is at 24.2% of its total population.¹¹

⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce. 2012. "California: 2010 Population and Housing Counts." Accessed January 29, 2024.
<https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/2010/cph-2/cph-2-6.pdf>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ United States Census Bureau. 2023. Quick Facts Fresno County, CA. Accessed January 30, 2024.
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/fresnocountycalifornia/PST045222>.

⁹ 46.8% represents the total percent of Biola residents over the age of 16 who are not employed. This is *not* a representation of unemployment in Biola and does not take into account students, retirees, and other community members who are not actively searching for employment.

¹⁰ United States Census Bureau. 2022. Employment Status. Accessed January 31, 2024.

<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?q=160XX00US0606728>.

¹¹ United States Census Bureau. 2020. Biola, CDP, California. [https://data.census.gov/profile/Biola_CDP,_California?q=160XX00US0606728](https://data.census.gov/profile/Biola_CDP,_California?q=160XX00US0606728;);

United States Census Bureau. 2022. Fresno County, CA. https://data.census.gov/profile/Fresno_County,_California?q=050XX00US06019.

In Biola, 7.1% do not have health care coverage, whereas 6.1% are lacking health care coverage in Fresno County.¹²

The median household income (MHI) in Biola is estimated to be \$38,986, while the MHI in Fresno County is estimated to be \$69,571. Biola is considered a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC) since the median household income in the community is less than 80% of the statewide average, as defined in Senate Bill 244.

¹²United States Census Bureau. 2020. Biola, CDP, California. https://data.census.gov/profile/Biola_CDP_California?g=160XX00US0606728;
United States Census Bureau. 2022. Fresno County, CA. https://data.census.gov/profile/Fresno_County_California?g=050XX00US06019.

2. Biola Community Vision

The vision statement provides the framework for understanding the intent and long-term vision for Biola and establishes the basis for the Community Plan goals and policies. It identifies key characteristics necessary for sustaining what is important to the community and for Biola to achieve its potential.

The Biola Community Plan was originally adopted in 1976. As conditions in Biola have changed over time, it is important for the community vision to be confirmed to ensure that the goals and policies of the Community Plan continue to reflect the conditions and aspirations of the community. The following vision statement was developed with the community through feedback received during a series of meetings as part of the community plan update effort.

Create a small community that offers a variety of amenities for residents, including a community center, retail options, parks, and trails, with a cohesive sense of design that fosters development to ensure a variety of housing and job opportunities for residents. Create a place where residents feel safe living in and moving throughout the community.

Public Engagement

As part of the process of developing the Biola Community Plan, six community meetings were held from December 2023 to April 2024. The goal of these community meetings was to gather input from residents and stakeholders to ensure the plan reflects the needs, desires, and concerns of the community. Additional technical meetings were held with key stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Meeting 1: Kickoff – December 2023. The Community Plan update process began in December of 2023 with project initiation. The kickoff meeting discussed what a Community Plan is and the upcoming update process.

Meeting 2: Planning Priorities – January 2024. The community provided input on what planning topics should be addressed in the Community Plan update. The community discussed topics such as economic growth and job opportunities; residential development and housing type variety; community boundary growth and expansion; parks, community centers, and recreation programs; transportation and community safety; and other related topics.

Meeting 3: Vision Confirmation – January 2024. The community provided input on what the community vision should consist of, such as addressing parks and community amenities, additional development, economic growth, transportation safety, and community expansion.

Meeting 4: Transportation – February 2024. The community provided input about the existing circulation system and how it could be improved. Community members identified areas prone to flooding, lacking proper lighting, and areas most used for walking and biking.

Meeting 5: Land Use – February 2024. The existing and proposed land use diagrams were discussed. Community members identified properties within the community that could be improved. Community members also identified preferred locations for a community center and park space.

Meeting 6: Expansion Areas – April 2024. The proposed land use changes were identified and discussed.

Public comments from these meetings are summarized in more detail in *Appendix A*. Generally, the community expressed a desire for park and open space as well as additional development in Biola. Concerns over speeding vehicles, access to recreational space, and additional public safety and code enforcement issues were also raised.



A group of Biola community members attending a meeting held during the public engagement process.

3. Community Plan Elements

The Biola Community Plan is composed of the following elements, which align with the 2024 Fresno County General Plan elements.

- Economic Development,
- Agriculture and Land Use,
- Transportation and Circulation,
- Public Facilities and Services,
- Open Space and Conservation,
- Health and Safety,
- Environmental Justice, and
- Housing.

These elements may consist of new or refined policies specific to the Biola Community Plan area, as well as implementation programs to implement the policies. The goals, policies, and implementation programs contained in this Community Plan recognize that partnerships with Biola organizations are critical for successful implementation. While this Community Plan cannot direct or obligate actions of other organizations, collaboration with the County of Fresno in the implementation of this Plan is encouraged.

All goals, policies, and implementation programs of this Community Plan are in addition to the applicable 2024 Fresno County General Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs.

Table 2 summarizes the acreage within the Biola Community Plan area by land use designation.

Table 2 - Biola Community Plan, Total Acres by Land Use

Planned Land Use		Acres ¹	% of Total ¹
	Residential: Medium Density	72.8	34.1%
	Residential: Medium High Density	9.5	4.4%
	Commercial: Central Business	5.4	2.5%
	Commercial: Service Commercial	8.8	4.1%
	Industrial: Limited	29.4	13.8%
	Industrial: General	11.0	5.2%
	Public Facilities ²	37.8	17.7%
	Reserve Overlay ³	34.9	-
	Right of Way	38.3	18.1%
Total		213.2	100%

¹ Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

² Public Facilities includes 5 acres of park space.

³ The Reserve Overlay areas in Biola permit a mix of Medium Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential, Public Facilities (Park), and Service Commercial land uses based on the mapping and policies included in the Agriculture and Land Use Element. The acreages in the table reflect assumptions about how those land uses will develop in accordance with this Community Plan, so a percent of total calculation is not provided for the overlay itself.

Economic Development Element

The following goals, policies, and implementation programs apply to the Biola Community Plan area and are in addition to any applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Economic Development Element.

Goals

- G-ED-1** To clearly communicate Biola’s economic development goals to the community and potential businesses.
- G-ED-2** To diversify businesses in Biola to meet the needs of the community.

Policies and Implementation Programs

- P-ED-1** Encourage the establishment and expansion of businesses that provide for the needs of community members, including retail, personal, and business services.

- P-ED-1a** Work with community partners to identify barriers to providing expanded business resources within Biola.

*Barriers to the establishment of new businesses or the expansion of existing businesses may include: **availability and adequacy of community infrastructure**, such as water and sewer service, storm drainage facilities, or safe access for consumers and business transport; **capacity and commitment of the community**, such as the presence of business organizations to drive implementation of community economic development goals, or the active participation and support of the Biola community members in supporting local businesses.*

- P-ED-2** Encourage the Biola Chamber of Commerce to strengthen participation, expand resources available to local Biola businesses, and to identify strategies for economic development in the community.

- P-ED-3** Increase the presence and success of locally-owned businesses within the community by fostering an environment that encourages entrepreneurship, innovation, and community engagement.

- P-ED-3a** Consider launching a marketing campaign in coordination with the Biola Chamber of Commerce or other local business organizations to promote the benefits of supporting local businesses and encourage residents to prioritize shopping at locally-owned establishments.

- P-ED-3b** Coordinate with local business associations, such as the Biola Chamber of Commerce, Fresno County Economic Development Corporation, or Valley Community Small Business Development Center, to offer workshops and/or

training sessions tailored to the needs of local entrepreneurs and small business owners.

P-ED-4 Establish regular communication channels between community leaders and community members.

P-ED-4a Partner with Biola Community Services District, the Biola Chamber of Commerce, and other community-specific groups where residents can voice their concerns and provide feedback on various items related to the ongoing business development activities within the community.

P-ED-4b Discuss economic development at other regular community events.

Agriculture and Land Use Element

The following goals, policies, and implementation programs apply to the Biola Community Plan area and are in addition to any applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Agriculture and Land Use Element.

Goals

G-LU-1 To accommodate a wide range of land uses to meet the needs of the community.

Policies and Implementation Programs

P-LU-1 Development shall occur in accordance with the land use designations described in *Table 3 – Land Use Designation Descriptions* and shown on *Figure 2 – Land Use Diagram*.

Table 3 – Land Use Designation Descriptions

Land Use Designation	Designation Description	Residential Intensity (in gross acres) ¹		Non-residential Intensity (FAR) ²
		Minimum Density	Maximum Density	
Residential: Medium Density	This designation provides for single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and accessory structures.	2.8 DU/acre	5.8 DU/acre	0.40
Residential: Medium High Density	This designation provides for single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, accessory structures, churches, schools, and libraries. Maximum density shall be determined based on adequate infrastructure (community water and sewer, adequate roads/access and parking area).	5.8 DU/acre	23 DU/acre (29 net)	0.50

Land Use Designation	Designation Description	Residential Intensity (in gross acres) ¹		Non-residential Intensity (FAR) ²
		Minimum Density	Maximum Density	
Commercial: Central Business	This designation provides for development of commercial centers where the full range of retail services and professional and governmental offices are concentrated in a location that is central to most community residents. Typical uses include specialty shops, retail, entertainment uses, apparel stores, restaurants, hotels/motels, and financial, medical, professional offices, and mixed-use developments.	5.85 DU/acre	16 DU/ acre (net)	1.00
Commercial: Service Commercial	This designation provides for general commercial uses which, due to space requirements or the distinctive nature of the operation, are not usually located in commercial centers. Typical uses include repair, rental, sales, storage, and overnight lodging.	5.8 DU/acre	14.5 DU/acre	1.00
Industrial: Limited	This designation provides for restricted non-intensive manufacturing and storage activities that do not have detrimental impacts on surrounding properties.	n/a	n/a	1.50
Industrial: General	This designation provides for the full range of manufacturing, processing, fabrication, and storage activities. Land designated General Industrial may be developed to a less intense industrial use when in a transitional area adjacent to land designated for non-industrial urban uses.	n/a	n/a	1.50
Public Facilities	This designation provides for the location of services and facilities that are necessary to the welfare of the community. Typical uses include liquid and solid waste disposal, ponding basins, parks, schools, civic centers, hospitals, libraries,	n/a	n/a	0.5

Land Use Designation	Designation Description	Residential Intensity (in gross acres) ¹		Non-residential Intensity (FAR) ²
		Minimum Density	Maximum Density	
	penal institutions, and cemeteries.			
Reserve Overlay	This overlay is intended to reserve certain lands for future more intensive development by permitting only limited agricultural uses on an interim basis. Typical uses include livestock raising; tree, vine, and field crops; single-family dwellings; and accessory buildings. Where such lands are peripheral to an unincorporated community, development shall be subject to the provision of public facilities and phasing.	0 DU/acre	1.0 DU/20 acres	0.10 ³

¹Maximum allowable residential intensity or allowable range of residential intensity. Gross acreage includes roadways and other rights-of-way. Net acreage is about 80 percent of gross acreage.

²Maximum allowable intensity for non-residential uses allowed as a matter of right in the compatible zone district where parcel size meets or exceeds minimum area requirements of applicable districts.

³Does not apply to facilities necessary for resource production.

P-LU-2 The Medium Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential, Service Commercial, and Public Facilities land uses are permitted within the identified Northwest Reserve Overlay Site (overlay shown in **Figure 2 – Land Use Diagram**). Land uses may be adjusted within the boundary of the Northwest Reserve Overlay Site and shall meet the following criteria:

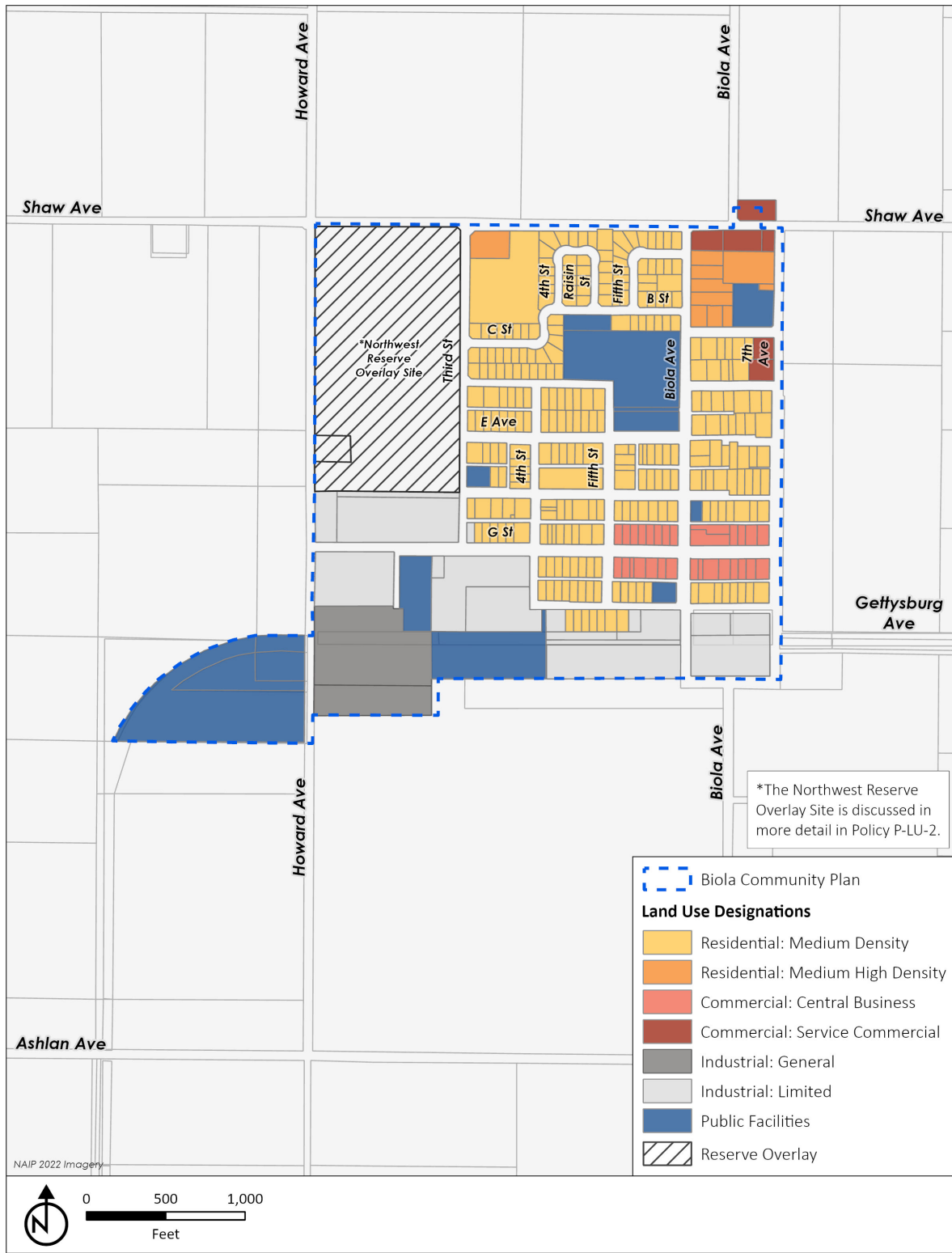
- Commercial development shall include additional signage directing traffic to the central business district on G Street.
- Primary access to the Service Commercial designation shall be provided directly from Shaw Avenue.
- Development between residential and non-residential designations shall incorporate buffers in accordance with the Fresno County Zoning Ordinance.
- No more than 25%, or approximately 8.5 acres, of the Northwest Reserve Overlay Site may be developed with Service Commercial land uses.

- A minimum of 1 acre of the Northwest Reserve Overlay Site must be developed as park space (Public Facilities).

The Fresno County General Plan Reserve Overlay acknowledges the site will be developed with urban uses while facilitating ongoing agricultural uses on-site until such development occurs. No amendment to the General Plan is required to remove the Reserve Overlay designation prior to development of the site; however, a rezone would be necessary.

- P-LU-3** Encourage a mix of housing at varying densities within projects. Blended densities shall be allowed if they remain within the minimum and maximum densities, as calculated across the entire project site.
- P-LU-4** Facilitate the development of duplex, triplex, and fourplex units, where appropriate, to further support the increase of housing variety in Biola.
- P-LU-5** Future updates to the community plan should consider prioritizing growth southwest of the existing community limits generally west of Howard Avenue.
- P-LU-5a** Conduct comprehensive assessments of the future expansion areas to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and development needs. Consider site suitability factors such as terrain, accessibility, environmental impact, infrastructure needs and feasibility.
- P-LU-6** Pursuant to the Fresno County Zoning Ordinance, adequate buffering and screening between residential and non-residential areas shall be installed and maintained.
- P-LU-7** Require screening, such as fencing or vegetation, of public utility facilities when interfacing with residential areas.

Figure 2 – Land Use Diagram



Transportation and Circulation Element

The following goals, policies, and implementation programs apply to the Biola Community Plan area and are in addition to any applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Transportation and Circulation Element.

Goals

- G-TC-1** To minimize conflicts among different modes of traffic.
- G-TC-2** To avoid routing industrial traffic through the community on local streets.

Policies and Implementation Programs

P-TC-1 Establish dedicated pathways, sidewalks, and bike lanes separated from vehicular traffic to reduce conflicts and enhance safety for non-motorized users. Prioritize improvements that provide safe routes to work, schools, parks, and commercial areas to improve safety, efficiency, and connectivity.

P-TC-1a Identify sidewalk and bike lane segments that should be prioritized for improvement in the near-term based on community feedback.

P-TC-1b Consider partnering with organizations or agencies to conduct walking audits that evaluate pedestrian infrastructure, safety measures, and accessibility in order to identify long-term improvements.

Potential safety improvements may include crosswalks, additional lighting, and providing physical separation from vehicular traffic such as installing bollards or street trees.

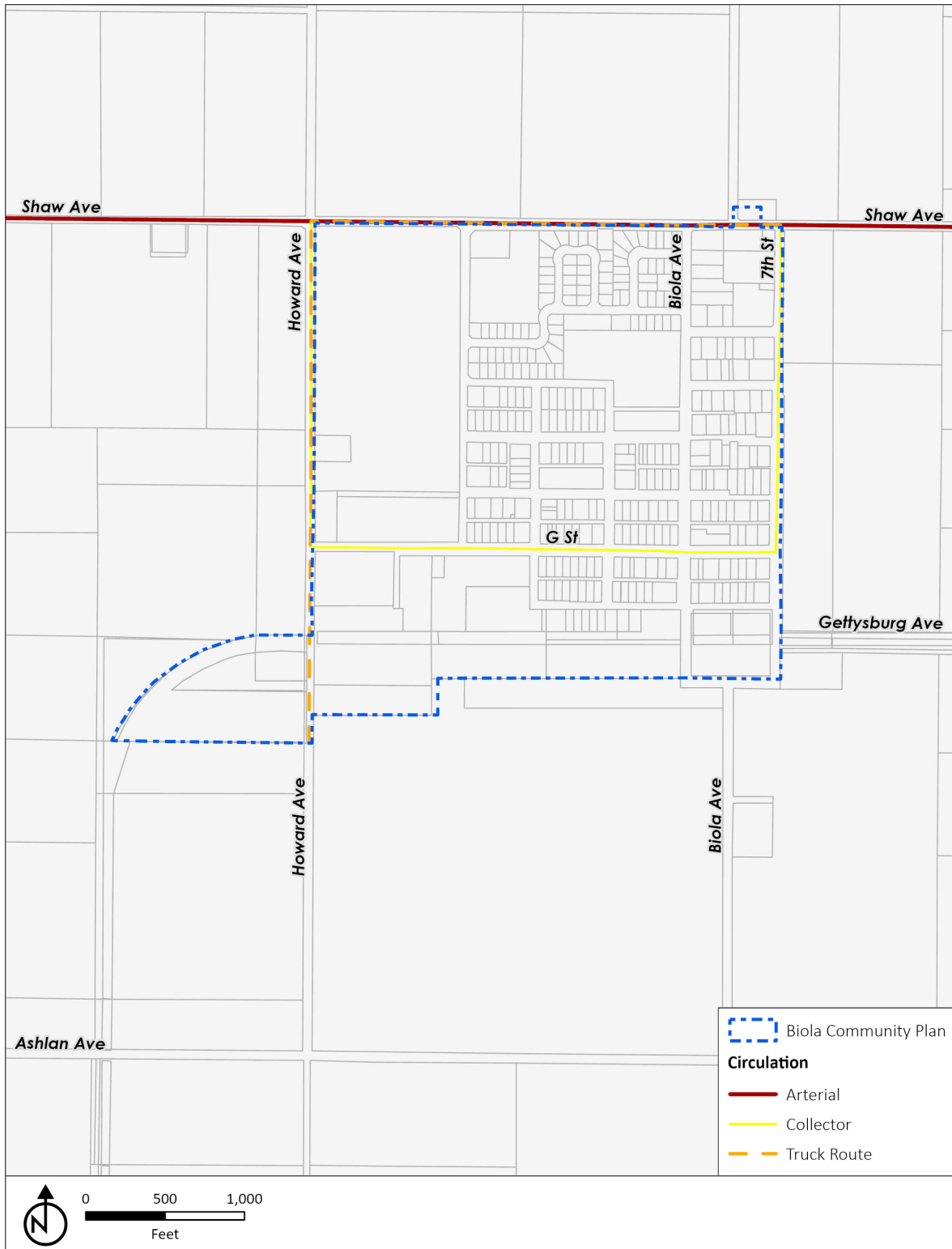
P-TC-2 Periodically update, as needed, County's active transportation plan to ensure the safety and accessibility of pedestrians and bicyclists.

P-TC-2a Pursue funding opportunities for the development of a Safe Routes to School Plan or similar active transportation plan.

P-TC-3 Discourage industrial truck traffic from routing through residential areas.

P-TC-3a Evaluate as necessary, installation of potential traffic calming measures on local streets to discourage industrial vehicle traffic.

Figure 3 – Circulation Diagram



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Public Facilities and Services Element

The following goals, policies, and implementation programs apply to the Biola Community Plan area and are in addition to any applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs as of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Public Facilities and Services Element.

Goals

- G-PFS-1** To provide public facilities, utilities, and community services that reliably meet the needs of the existing community and planned growth.

Policies and Implementation Programs

- P-PFS-1** Coordinate with the Biola Community Services District to align its boundaries with the Biola Community Plan boundary to accommodate planned growth.
- P-PFS-1a** Encourage Biola Community Services District to prepare infrastructure master plans for water, wastewater, and storm drainage infrastructure and service to support future community growth.
- P-PFS-2** Support the Biola Community Services District in pursuing funding for the construction of public facilities to adequately serve the existing community and planned growth.
- P-PFS-2a** Work with the Biola Community Services District to identify priority water and sewer capacity improvement projects that would facilitate residential and non-residential growth opportunities.
- P-PFS-2b** Conduct an annual survey with Biola Community Services District to identify the number of connections and available capacity for water and sewer service.
- P-PFS-3** Reduce and/or prevent flood risk in the community to protect public safety, preserve property, and enhance environmental sustainability.
- P-PFS-3a** Support the development of additional stormwater basins and public facilities improvements to address identified capacity and flooding concerns.
- P-PFS-3b** As part of its master infrastructure planning process, encourage the Biola Community Services District to conduct a stormwater flooding analysis for the entire community to determine flood-prone areas, evaluate infrastructure vulnerabilities, and develop flood mitigation strategies.
- P-PFS-4** Coordinate with the Biola Community Services District to ensure all existing industrial uses are connected to the public water and sewer systems.

Open Space and Conservation Element

The following goals, policies, and implementation programs apply to the Biola Community Plan area and are in addition to any applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element.

Goals

- G-OSC-1** To provide and maintain open space areas that enhance community livability and provide opportunities for improved public health.

Policies and Implementation Programs

- P-OSC-1** Coordinate with the Central Unified School District to request permission for the community use of outdoor school facilities, such as playgrounds, blacktop areas, and playing fields, during non-school hours.
- P-OSC-2** Coordinate with community partners to encourage recreational programs.
- P-OSC-3** Ensure that park space is accessible and connected to the community.
- P-OSC-3a** Work with community partners and the Biola Community Services District to secure funding for the acquisition and construction of park space.
- P-OSC-3b** Work with community partners and the Biola Community Services District to maintain and improve open space, including drafting a maintenance plan and retaining sufficient open space for community events such as a carnival or fair.
- P-OSC-4** Within single family residential projects, whether attached or detached, a minimum of 5% of the project site, not inclusive of existing or future major road rights-of-way, shall be developed with usable open space. Such open space shall be maintained by an assessment district, landscape/lighting district, homeowners' association, or other appropriate maintenance entity.
- P-OSC-4a** Adopt standards that establish minimum requirements for open space areas to qualify as usable for purposes of meeting the 5% usable open space requirement.
- P-OSC-5** Within multifamily residential projects, including mobile home parks, a minimum of 10% of the project site shall be developed with usable open space which could include swimming pools, green space, recreational trails, or parks.
- P-OSC-6** Consider opportunities to provide new parks and open space areas, as well as community center development or improvements, and plan for their long-term maintenance.
- P-OSC-6a** Coordinate with the Biola Community Services District on the development and maintenance of park space and the community center.

Health and Safety Element

The following goals, policies, and implementation programs apply to the Biola Community Plan area and are in addition to any applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Health and Safety Element.

Goals

- G-HS-1** To create a safe and well-lit environment for the community.
- G-HS-2** To limit impacts to the community from natural environmental factors.

Policies and Implementation Programs

- P-HS-1** Enforce code violations, including but not limited to, loitering, unsafe structures, and illegal use of property.
 - P-HS-1a** Coordinate with code enforcement and law enforcement to address complaints in a timely manner.
- P-HS-2** Encourage and support the installation of street lighting and shade coverage throughout Biola. Prioritize installations along key pedestrian and bicycle routes and near transit stops.
 - P-HS-2a** Support the Biola Community Services District in pursuing funding for street lighting and shade coverage improvements.
- P-HS-3** Coordinate with Central Unified School District to bring health facilities and/or programs to the community.

Environmental Justice Element

The Biola Community Plan area is subject to the applicable goals, policies, and implementation programs of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Environmental Justice Element.

Housing Element

The Biola Community Plan area is subject to the applicable goals and programs of the Fresno County Housing Element. The Housing Element is subject to review and certification by the California Department of Housing and Community Development per Government Code section 65580 et seq. and updates are required on a prescribed schedule.

Appendix A:
Biola Community Plan Update
Community Meetings Summary

Biola Community Plan Update Community Meetings Summary

Meeting 1: Kickoff (12/6/23)

Overview

On December 6, 2023, the Fresno County Public Works Department hosted a public workshop in Biola. The session primarily consisted of a question-and-answer format, where community members had the opportunity to discuss housing and zoning codes. This meeting also served as the community kickoff of the Community Plan Update project. Participants could attend in person or online.

Housing Q&A

Summary of Public Comments

During the public comment session, several key questions and points were raised, including:

- How long will the public outreach process take?
 - With a consultant on board, the goal is to complete the meetings within 4-5 months.
- Regarding infrastructure, the community wants to see the following:
 - Improvements to streetlights and installation of speed bumps,
 - Establishment of a gallon water refill station,
 - Development of green spaces and sidewalks,
 - Improvements to library facilities.
 - Development of parks and recreational areas to encourage community interaction, and
 - Improvements to sidewalks and roads.
- Regarding community safety and services, the community wants to see the following:
 - Increased sheriff patrolling to enhance safety,
 - Addressing animal dumping through improved animal control services,
 - Installation of additional stop signs for traffic safety,
 - Accessible transit options,
 - Single-family development,

- Additional amenities such as laundromats and substations, and
 - Mental health resources.
- Regarding economic development, a community member expressed the desire to put business development before housing or industrial development.

Meeting 2: Planning Priorities (1/17/24)

Overview

A meeting was held in Biola covering what the Fresno Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan will cover and to gather community input for the Community Plan on January 17, 2024. Participants could attend in person or online.

Topic 1: Hazard Mitigation Plan

A consultant from Witt O'Brien's gave a presentation about the Fresno County Hazard Mitigation Plan update.

Summary of Public Comment:

Biola community members identified the following concerns related to the hazard mitigation plan:

- Several areas in Biola are prone to flooding, especially in winter.
 - The south side of the school on E street floods, which forces students to walk into the street during winter.
 - The stop sign at Biola Avenue by the market also floods.
 - The intersection of E Street and Biola Avenue floods and does not have warning signs for flooding.

Topic 2: Community Plan

The Fresno County Public Works Department staff attended to gather input from the Biola community on their vision for the town's development over the next 30 years. This initiative sought to address current concerns and priorities within the community, reflecting on what residents value most in Biola. The goal was to understand both the major concerns of the community and the aspects of Biola that people appreciate, ensuring that the Community Plans align with the needs and preferences of its residents. The County received the general comments from the community and then completed several poster activities intended to help guide the discussion about planning priorities and community vision.

Summary of Public Comments

The County received the following general comments about Biola:

- Local business owners and residents are interested in the community’s future plans and have expressed a desire for improvements such as a walking trail and outdoor recreational facilities.
- Residents would like to see the town develop a more vibrant downtown area similar to Kerman or Fowler.
- During school closures children lose access to recreational resources, highlighting the need for additional facilities.
- The community seeks to be self-sustainable, with better transportation, more stores, sidewalks, and a focus on education.
- The Principal of Biola Elementary emphasizes child advocacy and the importance of educational resources.

Summary of Posters

Staff prepared four posters for residents to provide input on planning priorities and vision for Biola. The first three posters asked open-ended questions about the community and had residents provide input on sticky notes. The fourth poster outlined potential planning priorities and asked residents to vote for the planning priority they thought was the most important for Biola. The results of these poster activities are summarized below. Italicized comments were translated from Spanish.

What do you like most about the community?

- How we take care of one another like family
- Family-like community
- Quiet town
- Always united as one
- It’s always calm/peaceful
- The fact that it’s a small town & everyone is like family
- It’s like family
- The stores and quiet town
- We get to know everyone at Biola
- Small community. I know most families.
- Family feel & peace & quiet
- The.community.is.like.a.family
- It’s a quiet small town
- Laid back country-feel, quiet (except for the dogs)
- How we all work together
- Everyone.helps.each.other.like.a.family.would

- I love my friends and teachers
- Having the best neighbors
- Close family-ness, togetherness
- Small town population
- Knowing more people from different backgrounds
- Assistance for low-income residents like Wi-Fi, rides, etc.
- We are able to open up and talk to each other like family.

What would you change about the community?

- Provide youth with groups, activities, sports and help homeless with a program
- Flooding
- Youth Sports
- Make it look prettier and more welcoming
- More stores/businesses
- Summer recreation for youth
- Recreation in Community Center
- The visual appearance of our downtown
- I would love to see more walking trails and opportunities to be active outside.
- Have cars not speed on the streets
- The run-down buildings
- The ability to have services (laundromat, store, restaurants, car wash, etc.)
- Transportation, NEED Transportation to Fresno State. City bus?
- More sports for kids to stay active out of school.
- More youth sports that are out of school
- Abandoned buildings; Abandoned houses
- Empty lots. Beat down buildings. Drug houses.
- Boys & Girls Club. Clinics.
- We need to provide animal control for any stray pets who are hurt and need a home
- Increase of law enforcement
- A new park in the grass please
- Stop street racing
- Help elders who need help. Need recreation
- More security and more jobs
- Provide youth with activities sports, etc. to keep them away from drugs, increase law enforcement and programs for homeless families
- To have a laundromat
- Have someone patrol the streets and enforce the rules in the community

What are your top two concerns about the community?

- Drugs
- Homeless, Drugs
- Vehicles speeding. In cases of emergencies officers could take too long to arrive sometimes
- Crime and homeless/Drugs
- Gas station
- Family park and grocery stores (with produce)
- Transportation & usage of our “downtown”
- Gas Station. Grocery
- Homeless people, flooding close to elementary/Shaw Market
- Drugs, homeless
- Speeding cars. Need cops on site
- Sheriff substation, more lighting
- No law enforcement station. No safe place for children to play
- A convenient clinic? store
- No outdoor facilities for children. Lack of police
- We have seen the most caring people change into going on the streets on drugs or selling drugs. Pets’ mental health are getting worse every day.
- Have more stores open and need more clinics
- No outside area for kids to play (school is locked & closed). Lack of funding to grow our community.
- Stray dogs & cats
- All the stray cats and dogs that are out in the street risking their safety.

What should be prioritized in the Community Plan?

1. Parks, Community Centers, and Recreation Programs (27 votes)
2. Transportation and Community Safety (16 votes)
3. Residential Development and Housing Type Variety (9 votes)
4. Economic Growth and Job Opportunities (8 votes)
5. Community Boundary Growth and Expansion (6 votes)

Meeting 3: Vision Confirmation (1/31/2024)

Overview

On January 31, 2024, the Fresno County Public Works and Planning Department hosted a public workshop to provide an overview of the previous meeting and approve the vision statement. The Biola Community Service District also gave a presentation. Participants had the option to attend in person or join online.

Vision Statement & Public Facilities/Services

Summary of Public Comment

Staff shared the results of the previous meeting's poster activities and gave attendees the opportunity to add additional comments. Staff received the following additions:

- What would you change about your community?
 - Reduce the number of broken-down cars
 - Have more affordable housing
- What are your top concerns about your community?
 - Flooding

Staff also asked participants to vote for their top two planning priorities which were also shared at the previous meeting. The following votes were received:

1. Transportation and Community Safety (11 votes)
2. Parks, Community Centers, and Recreation Programs (10 votes)
3. Economic Growth and Job Opportunities (9 votes)
4. Residential Development and Housing Type Variety (6 votes)
5. Community Boundary Growth and Expansion (0 votes)

Although the results varied slightly from the previous meeting, the same top two priorities were identified. Staff recognized that the previous meeting had larger attendance and kept Parks, Community Centers, and Recreation Programs as the top planning priority. Transportation and Community Safety was identified as the second highest priority.

Staff shared the vision statement prepared based on the input from the previous meeting. The majority of attendees approved of and agreed with the vision statement.

Biola CSD Presentation

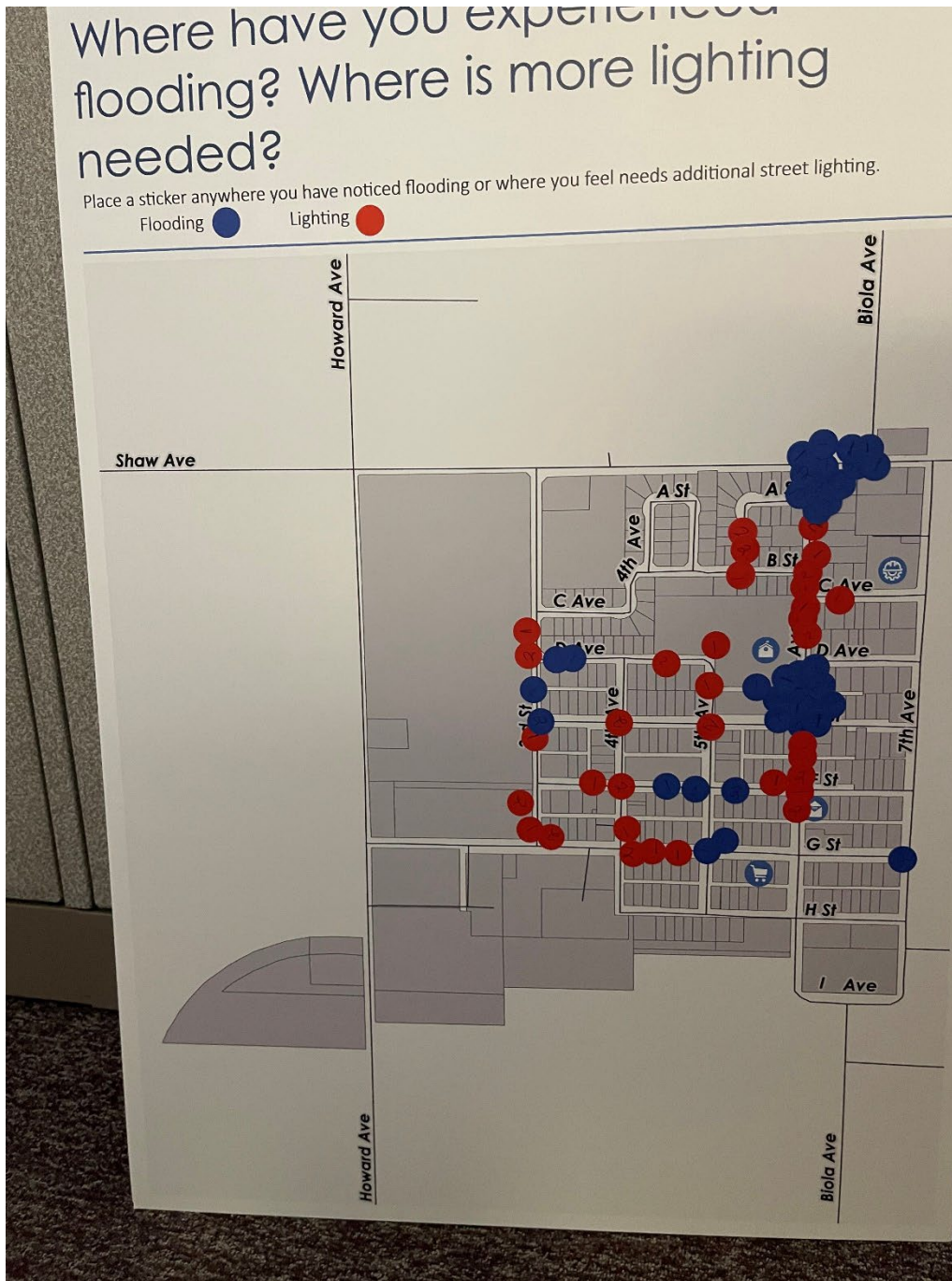
Summary of Public Comments

Residents had an opportunity to ask questions and share concerns with Fresno County and Biola Community Service District staff. One resident was concerned that a developer could potentially build a large residential development with no oversight. The County identified procedures in place to ensure quality development. Another resident asked about the motivations for pushing for housing development. The County highlighted the benefits of housing development for community stability.

Poster Activities

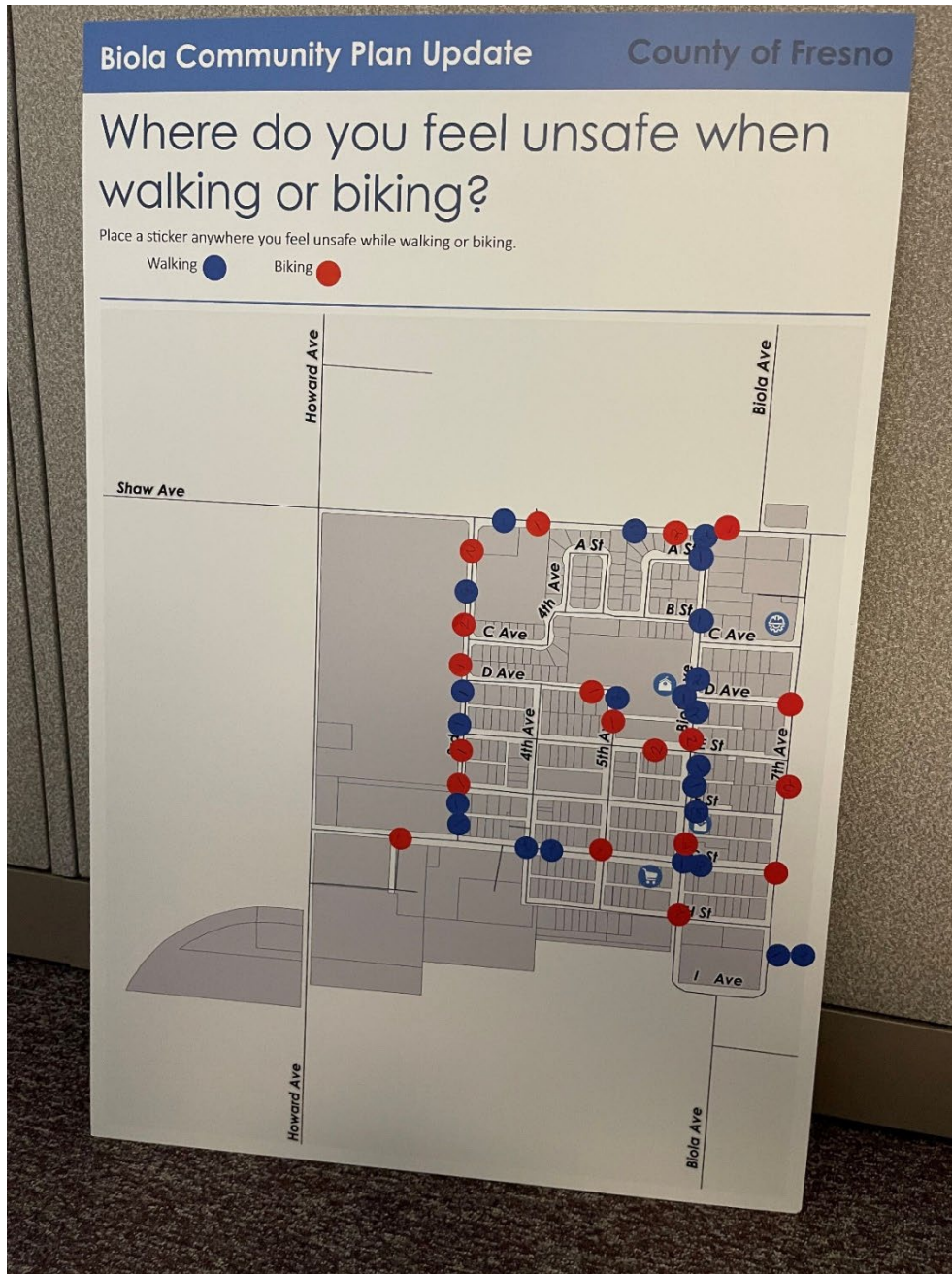
The first poster asked participants to mark on a map where they have experienced flooding and where more lighting is needed in Biola. The two areas of greatest concern regarding flooding are the intersection of Biola Avenue and A Street, as well as the intersection of Biola Avenue and E Street. Additionally, the greatest area of concern for lighting is along Biola Ave.

Figure 1: Flooding and Lighting Poster Activity Results



Participants were also asked to place a blue dot on a map in the areas they feel unsafe walking in Biola and a red dot in areas where they feel unsafe biking. The most notable streets were Biola Avenue with 13 dots, 3rd Street with 10 dots, G Street with 7 dots, and Shaw Ave with 6 dots.

Figure 2: Walking and Biking Map Activity Results



Meeting 4: Transportation (2/22/24)

Overview

A meeting was held in Biola on February 22, 2024. There were several presenters including the County Sheriff, Central Unified Facilities manager, and Fresno County Public Works Department. Participants had the option to attend in person or online.

County Sheriff Informational Presentation

The Fresno County Sheriff provided information about police services in the area, including the four deputies that patrol Area 1 and the procedures for responding to incidents of varying priorities. Residents raised concerns about street racing, speeding, and the high number of stray dogs in Biola, as well as reported incidents of public urination. The Sheriff identified some potential actions to address these concerns, as well as the other agencies, including California Highway Patrol and Fresno Humane Society, that would be involved.

Central Unified Facilities Manager Presentation on the Biola Community Center

The Central Unified Facilities Manager gave a presentation on the Biola Community Center, including upcoming developments such as a modular classroom unit, fencing, parking availability, and tree removal. Flooding during rainy weather and the lack of walkable space along the fence line were acknowledged, with a commitment to address these issues with any developers involved. Additionally, the Fresno County Public Works Department discussed plans for sidewalks, which will be five feet wide to accommodate wheelchairs, funded by the Active Transportation Program and Measure C funds. Staff also clarified that while there are plans for toolboxes or conduits for future lighting, the budget constraints mean that lighting cannot be funded at this time. The Community Services District is interested in financing the lighting, contingent on available budget resources.

Overview of Previous Meeting Poster Activities

Community members were asked whether they agreed with the biking and walking priorities from the previous meeting. The consensus was to remove the second-place walking priority, 7th St, and replace it with G St.

Participants were also asked to identify their top priority among sidewalks, lighting, flooding, and biking. The results were as follows:

1. Sidewalks
2. Lighting
3. Flooding
4. Biking

When talking about rural transit opportunities, a participant commented on ridership in Biola, noting that residents have their own vehicles and know how to get around, which is why ridership is low. In response, it was clarified that the focus is on providing options for those who cannot drive, emphasizing that this initiative is aimed at necessity rather than convenience.

Meeting 5: Land Use (2/28/2024)

Overview

A meeting was held in Biola on February 28, 2024. Community members were seated at tables for small group discussions about potential sites for development and redevelopment, as well as potential sites for a community center and a park. Participants could attend in person or online.

Land Use Discussions

Community members at table 1 voted on developing a community center at the Community Service District site or to the east of the existing downtown area on G Street. The G Street location and the basin south of the elementary school were also identified as potential sites for a park. Development and redevelopment sites are annotated on the map below, while potential park sites are shown with blue dots and community center sites are shown with red dots.

Figure 3: Table 1 Notes

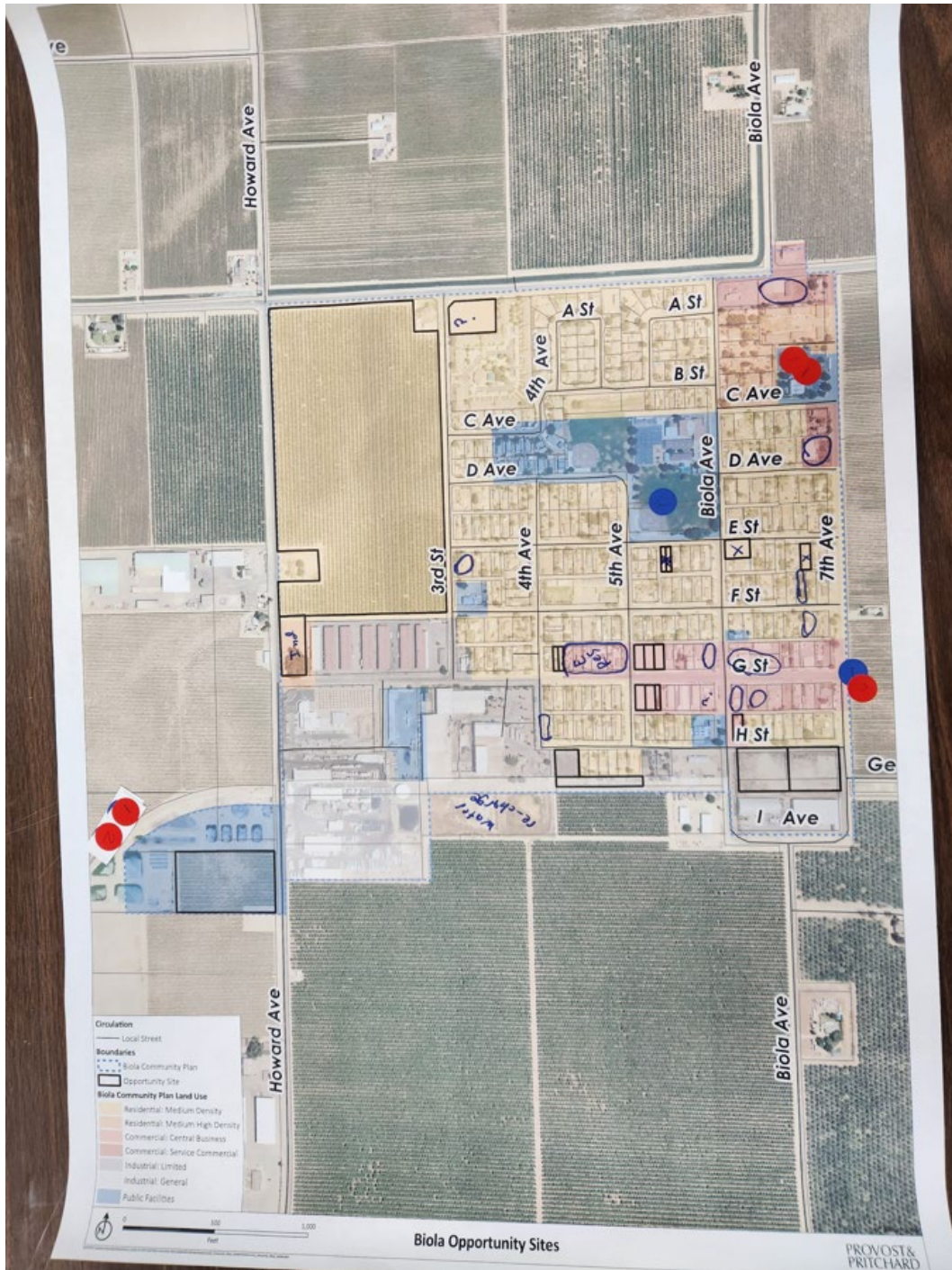


Table 2 identified the Reserve Site on the western side of Biola, as well as at and across the street from the Community Service District site as potential locations for a community center. The Reserve Site, as well as the site to the west of the elementary school and vacant parcels on G Street near the downtown were identified as potential park locations. Development and redevelopment sites are annotated on the map below, while potential park sites are shown with blue dots and community center sites are shown with red dots.

Figure 4: Table 2 Notes

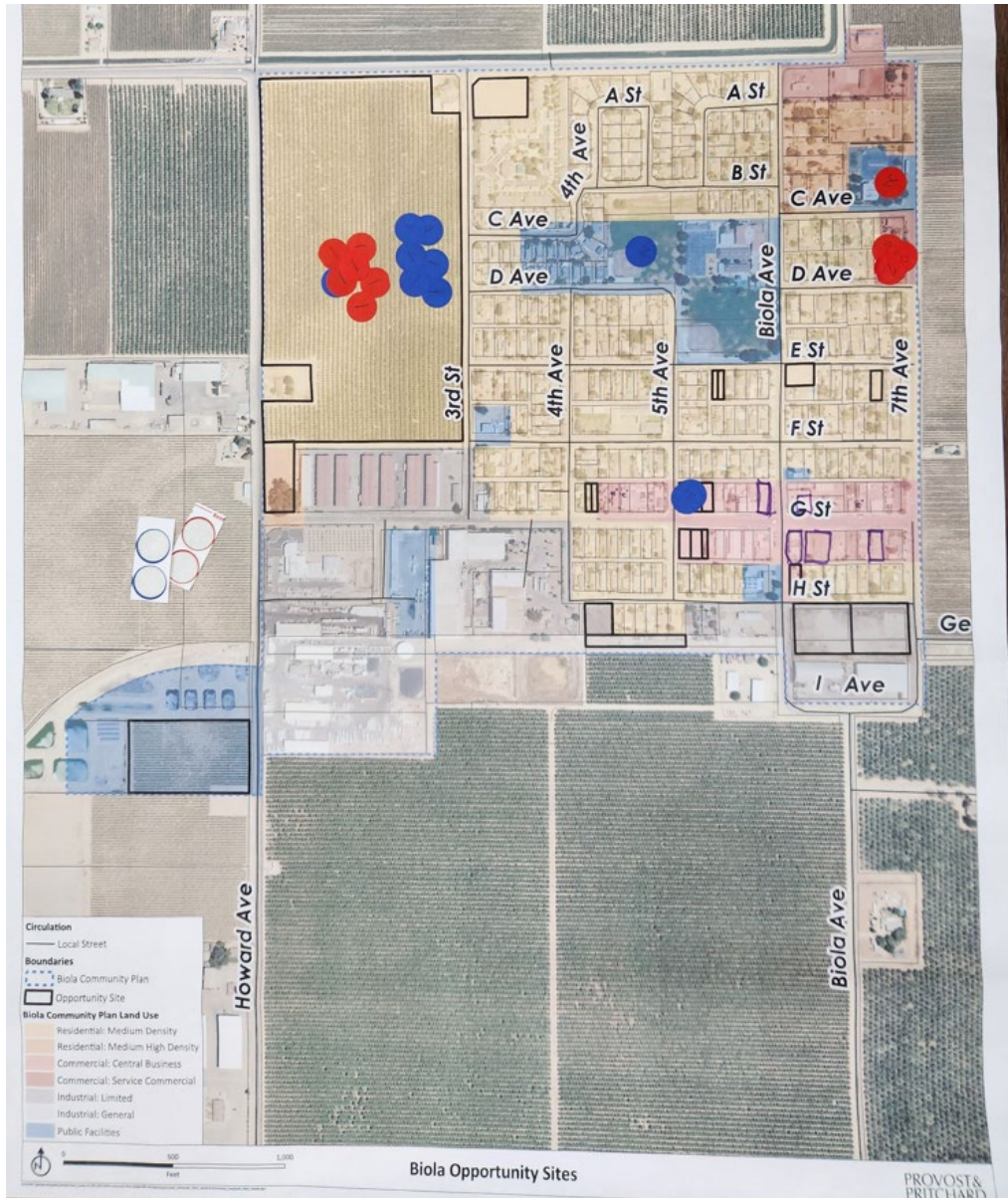
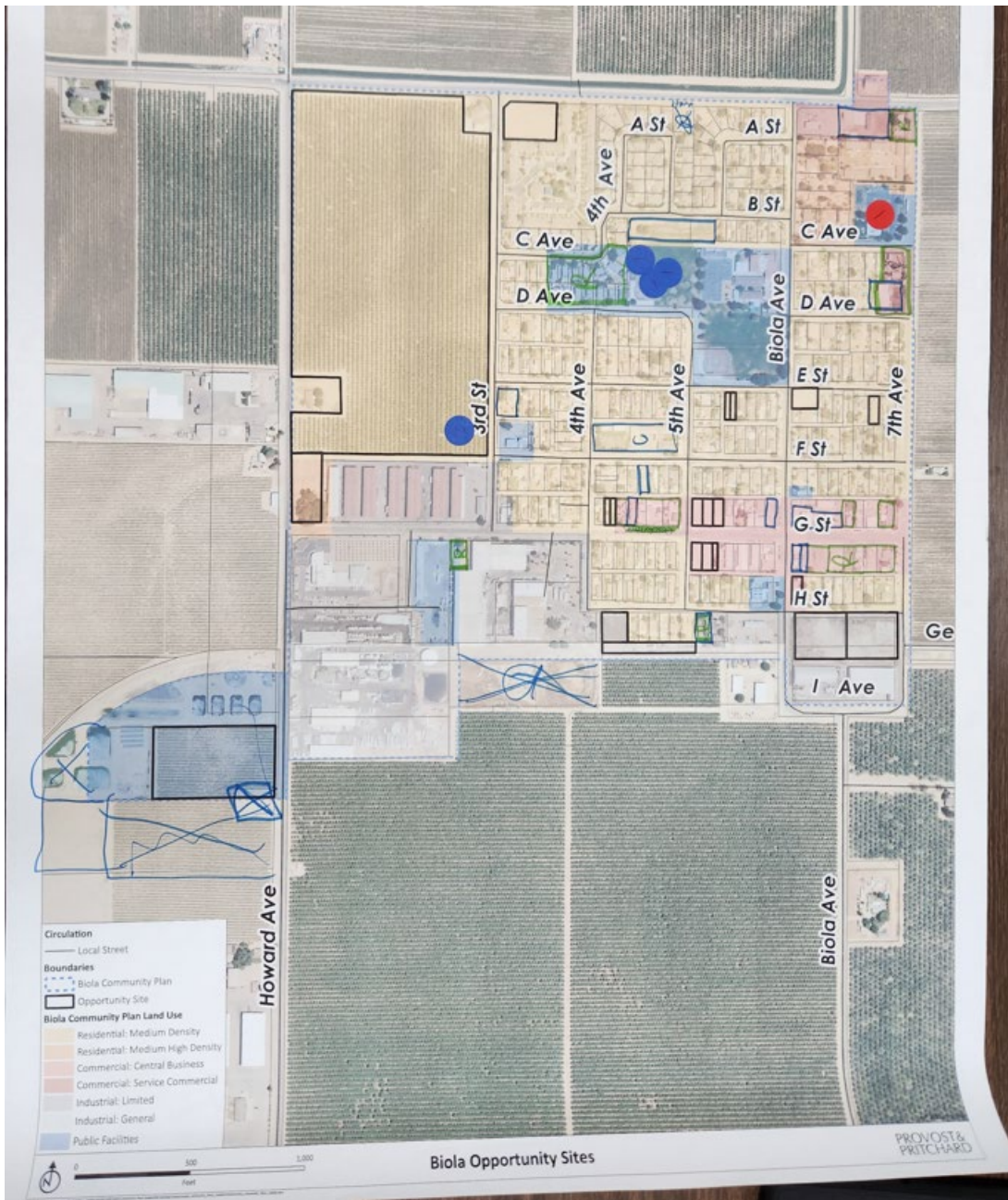


Table 3 identified the Community Service District site as a potential location for a community center. The Reserve Site and site to the west of the elementary school were identified as potential locations for a park. Development and redevelopment sites are annotated on the map below, while potential park sites are shown with blue dots and community center sites are shown with red dots.

Figure 5: Table 3 Notes



Meeting 6: Expansion Areas (4/4/24)

Overview

A public workshop was held on April 4, 2024, a community meeting was conducted by Fresno County Public Works Department. Additional project staff were also in attendance. The meeting focused on proposed land expansions and involved sharing details about the suggested changes. Attendees had the opportunity to provide additional feedback through voting. The primary discussion centered around the land use diagram, which included an examination of nine specific sites. The meeting could be attended in person or online.

Expansion Areas

Summary of Public Comment

The County shared proposed land use changes for the Community Plan Land Use Diagram. Nine sites were presented to the community. The first four sites were changes to reflect existing conditions and were not voted on by the community. Site five redesignated a site from Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) to Limited Industrial to better match the surrounding land uses. Site six added a Limited Industrial site to the Community Plan boundary. Sites seven and eight redesignated sites from Central Business Commercial to Medium Density Residential (MDR) to reflect existing land uses. Site nine redesignated a site from MDR to 5 acres of Medium High Density Residential (MHDR), 5 acres of park, 20 acres of MDR, and 4 acres of commercial as part of the Reserve Site in Biola. Participants were asked to vote on sites five through nine and all sites were approved by the community.

Following the voting, there was general discussion about development potential in Biola. Specifically, a property for sale north of Biola, near the San Joaquin River, and the River Ranch industrial site south of Biola were discussed. Fresno County staff noted that these sites could potentially be added to the Community Plan at a later date, depending on development and Community Service District capacity, but would not be added as part of the ongoing Community Plan Update.

Figure 6: Biola Opportunity Sites Map

