

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

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State Housing Element Law

The State of California housing law (enacted in 1969) requires localities to prepare and adopt a housing element as part of its General Plan. State Housing Element law requirements are found in California Government Code Sections 65580 and 65589, Chapter 1143, Article 10.6. The law also requires that the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) administer the law by reviewing local Housing Element documents for compliance with State law and by reporting its written findings to the local governing body.

City Housing Element History

The residential growth patterns of the Fresno County Metropolitan Area (FCMA) have been charted from 1872 through the mid-1960s. Conditions existing in the mid-1960s were discerned and a projection of future housing requirements was established. One of the earliest housing element documents was entitled the Residential Land Use and Housing Requirements of the FCMA. This document was completed in September of 1963 and later revised in March of 1964. During that time, and prior to 1970, the City and County of Fresno worked together to prepare housing-related planning documents for the entire FCMA. These joint documents contained a comprehensive history of residential development in the Fresno area.

By the early 1970s, the infusion of federal funding, State mandates related to city planning, and pressures from the real estate industry and development community, created an increased need for housing-related information. This need gave impetus to the gathering and analysis of more complete housing data and to the development of housing plans, studies, and programs related to urban renewal, neighborhood revitalization, and market area housing needs.

The first Housing Element for the City of Fresno was completed in October of 1971. Later, in 1972, the housing-related information was updated and developed into an interim policy plan. Then, in June of 1975, the Fresno City Council adopted the second Housing Element document for the City of Fresno. The third Housing Element was adopted in June of 1992. The fourth Housing Element was adopted in June of 2002 and included the City's first Housing Quality Survey that was completed in 2001. This fifth and current edition of the City's Housing Element is proposed for adoption in June of 2008.

Housing Element Intent

The document content is intended to provide residents, public officials, and the general public with an understanding of the City's housing needs and what goals, policies, and programs were developed to help meet those needs. The Housing Element is one of seven State-mandated elements of a local General Plan and must include: 1) an identification and analysis of existing and projected local housing needs, 2) an identification of resources and constraints, 3) goals, policies, and scheduled programs for the rehabilitation, maintenance, improvement, and development of housing for all economic segments of the population.

The Housing Element is developed by the City at a cost of approximately \$140,000, plus administrative and staff costs. Per AB 2634, cities are no longer reimbursed by the State for development of the document.

The City of Fresno's Housing Element specifically intends to:

- 1) Provide a comprehensive body of housing-related information through the compilation of data from numerous sources;
- 2) Provide an estimate of present and future housing needs and problems by examining population characteristics and growth trends, as well as the current condition of the housing stock;
- 3) Act as a tool for coordination between governmental bodies and the local building industry;
- 4) Provide direction for future planning programs to ensure that sufficient consideration is given to housing goals and policies;
- 5) Establish and portray community goals and policies relative to housing through the identification of existing, stated, and implicit goals, and the identification of housing needs and problems;
- 6) Establish and identify programs intended to implement and attain the community's goals and policies, taking into consideration the feasibility of those programs, and act as a meaningful guide to decision-makers considering housing-related issues.

Organization of the Housing Element

Chapter II of the Housing Element classifies population and housing stock data and includes a preliminary analysis, describes priority housing needs, and identifies the types of housing products required to meet those needs. Chapter III discusses land available for housing development. Chapter IV states market, governmental, and social constraints which may limit adequate housing development. Chapter V consists of a review of past accomplishments. Chapter VI identifies goals, policies, and programs relative to housing needs as identified in Chapter II, and identifies the agencies responsible for implementation of each program. Chapter VII summarizes actions that have been taken to ensure that the Housing Element process has: 1) sufficient public participation, 2) intergovernmental coordination, 3) consistency with other General Plan Elements, 4) environmental review, and 5) contains a provision for updates.

Research and Analysis

Data from the 2000 U.S. Census and Department of Finance (DOF) provided the most recent and complete data for this Housing Element. DOF estimates were used when 2000 U.S. Census data was not available for certain categories. Some of the updated population and housing stock information used in this Element was developed through extrapolation of 2000 U.S. Census data.

Two major classifications of data important to the research and analysis of housing needs are population and housing stock. The more important population data is related to changing household size, forecasted household formation and the income levels of various segments of the community. Housing stock information is of significance and includes a breakdown of housing units by various types, age and quality, owner/renter ratios, recent building activity, and housing cost trends. Future housing need indicators include: projected population growth, forecasted household formation and expected growth in employment opportunities.

The housing analysis in the Housing Element has been used to develop a plan of action to be carried out by the various public and quasi-public entities for the City over the next five years. This plan, summarized in Chapter VI, is intended to meet community needs based on existing priorities and constraints. A predominant portion of the housing programs identified in Chapter VI are geared toward neighborhood conservation and improvement efforts. These areas provide for the most cost-effective ways to meet the housing needs of the City's low- and very low-income populations. A significant part of the programs are also dedicated to housing rehabilitation activities, infill development, and homebuyer assistance programs. All are devoted toward improving the condition of the City's existing neighborhoods.

Local Housing Program Strategy

The City's housing strategy includes programs which will produce a significant amount of new residential affordable housing units and assist with the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock. The balance of the community's needs can be augmented through private housing development projects. The Mayor's 10 X 10 Blue Ribbon Affordable Housing Committee also has targeted the creation, planning, development, and delivering of approximately 10,000 additional affordable housing units by the year 2010.

The Housing Program Strategy consists of two primary components: a statement of goals, policies and priorities, and a plan for implementation. This housing program strategy must reflect the commitment of the locality to address a range of housing needs, including affordable housing. The objectives identified in Chapter VI are scheduled to correspond to the five-year Housing Element time frame.

Federal Housing Program Coordination

As a recipient of U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funds and Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program funds, the City of Fresno assumed reporting obligations to HUD. The reporting requirements include the preparation of a five-year Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plan, and an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. These reporting documents are referenced in this Housing Element. The City's 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan contains a summary of affordable housing needs based on the 2000 Census data and a strategy for addressing those housing needs and priorities. The annual Action Plan outlines the City's proposed projects and program expenditures for the various programs as set forth in the Summary of Needs stated in the City's five-year Consolidated Plan.

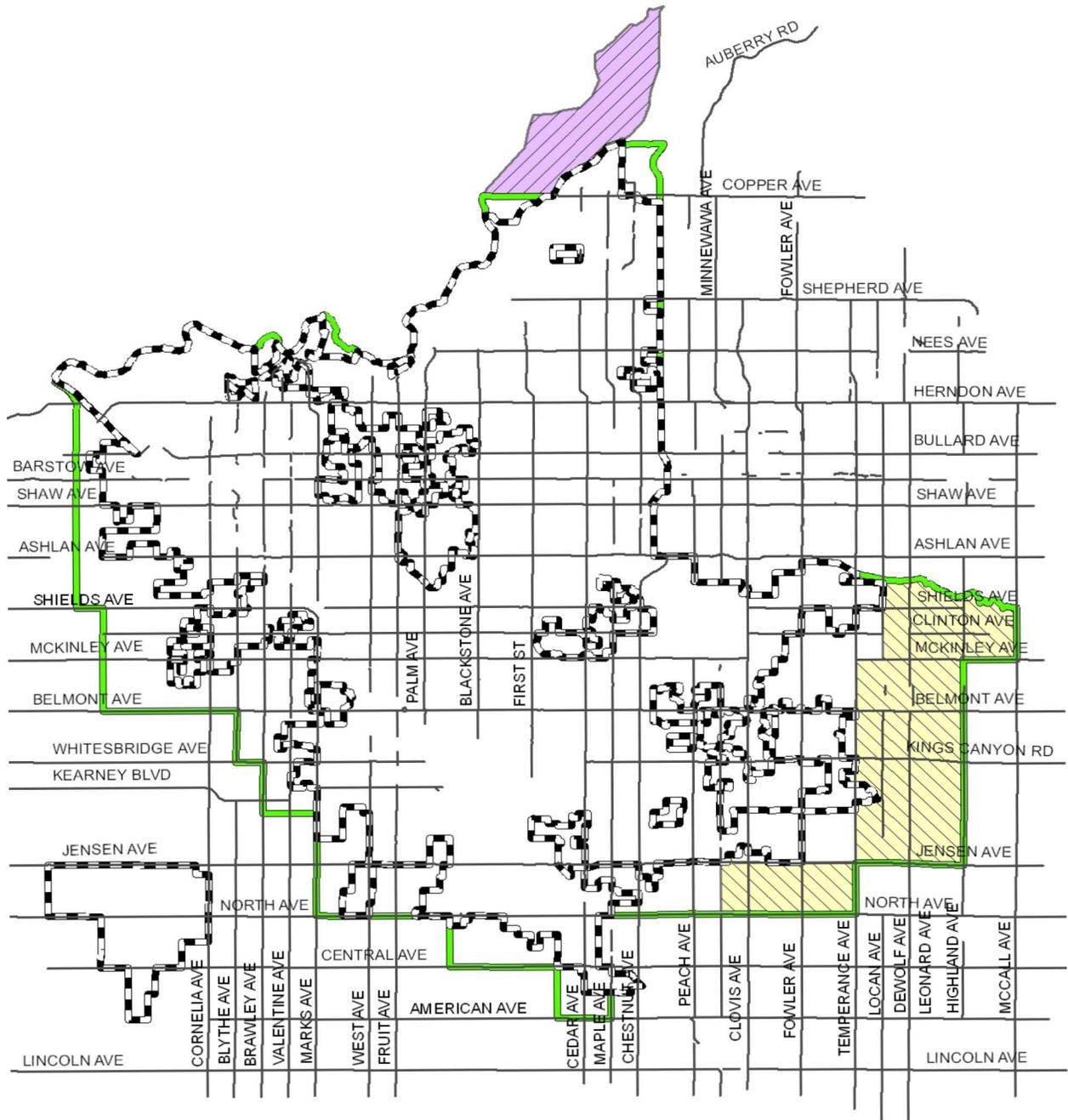
Geographic Areas

The geographic area covered by the Housing Element falls within the City of Fresno's Sphere of Influence or Fresno Urban Boundary line as identified in the 2025 General Plan. The adopted Sphere of Influence has the following boundaries:

- Southern boundaries – American Avenue, Malaga Avenue, Central Avenue, North Avenue, Jensen Avenue, California Avenue, Whites Bridge Road, Belmont Avenue, McKinley Avenue, and Shields Avenue
- Northern boundaries – the San Joaquin River, Little Dry Creek, Ashlan Avenue, Dakota Avenue, and the Gould Canal/Redbank Creek
- Eastern boundary – Maple Avenue, Willow Avenue, Winery Avenue, Peach Avenue, Temperance Avenue, Highland Avenue, and McCall Avenue
- Western boundary – Highway 99, Garfield Avenue, Grantland Avenue, Blythe Avenue, Brawley Avenue, Marks Avenue, Fig Avenue, and Orange Avenue

The City anticipates that it will expand its Sphere of Influence during the 2025 General Plan planning period through various annexation activities (see Figure 1-1, City Boundary Map) These expansion areas include the North Growth Area, bounded by Copper Avenue, Friant Road, Little Dry Creek, and the San Joaquin River, where development is anticipated to start within the Housing Element time period. Development of the Southeast Growth Area is anticipated to occur sometime subsequent to the 2013 horizon of the Element. This area, which is bounded by the Gould Canal/Redbank Creek, McCall, McKinley, Highland, Jensen, Temperance, North, Minnewawa, and Locan Avenues, will require approval of a detailed community or specific plan to accommodate a population of an additional 55,000 people, (City of Fresno, *Southeast Growth Area website*, October 2007).

Although the housing needs analysis and program review will cover the entire City of Fresno Sphere of Influence, and occasionally the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area (FCMA or regional market), the primary focus of the Housing Element goals, policies, and programs will be limited to the City of Fresno and the areas annexed into the city in the future. Other jurisdictions within the FCMA, City of Clovis, and County of Fresno will be responsible for housing program development and implementation within their respective jurisdictions.



Legend

-  City Limits
-  Sphere of Influence
-  North Growth Area
-  Southeast Growth Area



City Boundary Map

Figure
1 - 1