

FRESNO COUNTY

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



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Fresno County Public Works & Development Department
Development Services Division
2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor
Fresno CA 93721

FRESNO COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Attention: Gina Francis

Ref: Fresno County General Plan Update


This District has previously provided information regarding the General Plan update. A copy of this information is included.

Additional comments are as follows:

1. The Fresno County Fire Protection District has been severely impacted by the property tax shifts by the State and the formation of the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF). The County of Fresno has been indirectly subsidized for this loss up to approximately 70%, while Special Districts have received no relief. As a result, it is critical that all development within the fire district recognize the need for fire protection and the probability of additional fees to pay for it. All specific plans for concentrated areas of development should contain provisions for funding on-going costs associated with fire protection. Options include Fire Protection assessments processes defined in the Government Code specifically for fire protection and those defined within the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act.
2. The capital needs of the Fresno County Fire Protection District exceeds current service demands. Future development activities must recognize the need for capital facilities and equipment. Impact fees are needed if the District is to maintain the capability of meeting future service demands. These fees have been proposed and submitted to the County, but have not been addressed or implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to further comment on the General Plan update. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Richards at 485-7500.

FRED H. BATCHELOR
CHIEF

By 
Bill G. Richards
Deputy Chief

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FRESNO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Fresno County Fire Protection District (FCFPD) was formed in 1993 by the consolidation of the Mid Valley and Westside Fire Protection Districts. As was the case with the preceding Districts, the Fresno County Fire Protection District contracts with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) for personnel and administration. This contractual relationship dates back to 1949 and has developed into a functionally consolidated Fire Protection Program between CDF and the District.

The FCFPD shares its headquarters with CDF at a complex located at 210 S. Academy, Sanger, CA 93657. The District now serves approximately 3800 square miles of Fresno County and also provides services to four cities and a variety of other entities.

It is currently estimated that the population of the area served by the FCFPD is approximately 175,000. The land use varies within the District from highly urbanized and industrial in the vicinity of Fresno and Clovis, to range and crop lands in the rural area. At the present time the District provides services from 24 fire stations. 15 of these stations are staffed by career personnel with the other 9 being volunteer firefighter stations. The District also relies on volunteers at most of the staffed stations as backup for the career employees.

At the present time, engine staffing standards within the District is two personnel. These engine companies provide a full realm of fire protection and first responder medical services throughout the District. All District career personnel are trained at the Emergency Medical Technician level.

The FCFPD directly funds 102 full time safety employees. This includes four Chief Officers, 2 Fire Captains assigned to Fire Prevention, 2 Fire captains assigned to Training, 3 Fire Captains and 7 Dispatchers assigned to the Regional CDF Communications center in Fresno. The FCFPD also equips and trains up to 250 paid-call firefighters (volunteers). These personnel carry pagers and either report directly to the scene of an emergency or to the fire station to operate back up fire equipment.

As a result of the functional consolidation with CDF, the Department (including District Resources) is organized into 3 divisions and a fire prevention bureau. The Western Operations Division consists of 4 Battalions and the Fleet Management function. The Eastern Division consists of 3 Battalions within the Eastern foothills of Fresno County, a CDF Conservation Camp and the CDF Air Tactical Program at the Fresno Airport. The third Division consists of the Department's Administrative functions. The three Divisions are directly supervised by a Deputy Chief and the Department Chief (both funded by CDF).

The FCFPD's response standard is 5 minutes in commercial and residential areas near Fresno and Clovis and 20 minutes in the rural areas. The District normally meets these standards unless multiple incidents are occurring or the incidents are located in a few areas that cannot be reached within the

referenced time standard.

ISO

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is an agency that evaluates fire protection features for all fire departments for the purpose of establishing rates for underwriters. ISO uses a rating system that is based on a scale of one to ten, with one being the best fire protection rating and 10 being the worst. In order to determine an area rating, the ISO uses a formula in which the primary factors are the availability of both water and fire protection services in the area. The FCFPD's ISO ratings are as follows:

- * West of SR99: Generally an ISO rating 6 applies except in areas with municipal water system (Mendota, Huron) where the rating of 5 has been assigned.
- * East of SR99: Generally within the residential and industrial areas around Fresno and Clovis an ISO rating of 5 has been assigned, based on water system availability. In other areas greater than 5 miles from a fire station ratings range from 6 to 8.
- * Eastern Foothill Area: An ISO rating of 9 has been assigned to these locations.

Revenue Status

The FCFPD has experienced several factors that has impacted its baseline as well as the ability to receive adequate yearly incremental increases in revenue. These include:

- * Annexations: Annexation to the Cities of Fresno and Clovis have impacted revenue generation to the District.
- * Tax Shifts: Severe reductions occurred as a result of the establishment of the ERAF. 3 Fire Stations were closed and staffing levels reduced within the residential and commercial areas around Fresno and Clovis, as a result of this revenue reduction.

The current revenue situation places the District in a position of concern on the ability to continue to meet the needs of the community. In addition, most other entities, including Clovis and Fresno, continue to look to the District for assistance when additional resources are needed for emergencies within these areas.

Fire Protection System Issues

The following planning issues are an immediate concern to the District:

- * **Reedley Area:** As a result of the referenced tax shifts, the District was forced to remove career staffing from the Reedley Station which was co-located with the Reedley City Volunteer Fire Department. This reduction not only affected the unincorporated areas north of Reedley, but also reduced the co-response to Reedley City incidents. As a result, the area generally north of Reedley and bounded approximately by the Kings River and Cove Road, experiences abnormally long emergency response times. The District has acquired property for a fire station at Frankwood and Livermore roads, north of the City of Reedley, but has not been financially capable of construction of a fire station or to provide staffing for it.

- * **Clovis:** District Station #85 located on the northern edge of the City of Clovis has been impacted by annexations. The City of Clovis has constructed a new fire station only a few miles away to serve these annexed areas. Regardless of the annexations, the District continues to have fire protection responsibilities within the unincorporated areas north of Clovis and Fresno, but does not have funds to relocate the existing facility. Regional planning is needed to develop future fire station sites north of Clovis and Fresno to eliminate duplication of expenditures, by assuring the proper location of the facilities. It is also necessary to identify funding sources for the facilities and transition plans, as the cities move north, for personnel funding.

- * **Impact/Mitigation Fees:**
 The District does not have the ability to respond to changing population growth with subsequent changes in the fire protection system. Development projects increase fire protection needs and, at times, could require relocation of current facilities. This need is not currently addressed by standard mitigation fees for new construction. The District has petitioned the County for enactment of these fees but has not been successful.

- * **Urban Staffing Standards:**
 As a result of the referenced tax shifts, the District was required to reduce staffing on the Engine Companies assigned to the residential and commercial areas around Fresno and Clovis. The present staffing level of 2 persons on these fire engines is marginal for the mission they are expected to perform. Staffing standards for the City's of Fresno and Clovis consists of a minimum 3 person engine company.

FRESNO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

<u>STA. NO.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EQUIPMENT</u>
80 - (Fig Garden FPD)	4537 N. Wishon, Fresno, CA 93704	1 Fire Engine 1 Reserve Engine
81 - Reedley	1060 D Street, Reedley, CA 93657	*1 Fire Engine
82 - Del Rey	9700 American Ave. Del Rey, CA 93616	1 Fire Engine
83 - Selma	11500 E. Mt. View, Selma, CA 93662	1 Fire Engine 1 Water Tender
84 - Sanger	210 S. Academy Ave., Sanger, CA 993657	1 Fire Engine *1 Water Tender
85 - Clovis	4955 E. Nees, Clovis, CA 93612	1 Fire Engine *1 Water Tender *1 Patrol
86 - Clovis Lakes	4925 N. Nelson, Clovis, CA 93612	1 Fire Engine 1 Reserve Engine
87 - South Fresno	4706 E. Drummond Ave., Fresno, CA 93727	1 Fire Engine
88 - East Fresno	5379 E. Tulare Street, Fresno, CA 93727	1 Fire Engine 1 Reserve Engine
89 - Easton	5810 So. Cherry Ave., Fresno, CA 93706	1 Fire Engine *1 Water Tender
90 - Caruthers	2701 W. Tahoe, Caruthers, CA 93609	1 Fire Engine *1 Water Tender
91 - Riverdale	10868 Malsbury, Riverdale, CA 93656	1 Fire Engine *1 Fire Engine
93 - Huron	36421 S. Lassen, Huron, CA 93234	1 Fire Engine 1 Reserve Engine *1 Water Tender

94 - Harris Ranch	24125 W. Dorris, Coalinga, CA 93210	† Fire Engine *1 Patrol
95 - Tranquillity	25101 Morton, Tranquillity, CA 93668	1 Fire Engine *1 Water Tender 1 Reserve Engine
96 - Mendota	100 McCabe, Mendota, CA 93640	1 Fire Engine *1 Fire Engine *1 Fire Engine
98 - Cantua Creek	29595 W. Lotta, CA Cantua Creek, CA 93608	*1 Fire Engine
99 - San Joaquin	21946 Railroad, San Joaquin, CA 93660	*1 Fire Engine
71 - Parlier	1300 E. Parlier, CA 93648	*1 Fire Engine *1 Fire Engine *1 Patrol
72 - Friant	4091 E. Millerton, Friant, CA 93626	*1 Fire Engine
73 - Hurley	25627 N. Auberry, Clovis, CA 93612	*1 Fire Engine *1 Water Tender
74 - Morgan Canyon	15339 Skylan Lane, Prather, CA 93651	*1 Fire Engine *1 Patrol
75 - Tollhouse	23087 E. Tollhouse, Clovis, CA 93612	*1 Fire Engine *1 Patrol
77 - Wonder Valley	6812 Piedra Road, Sanger, 93657	*1 Fire Engine

*Volunteer (PCF) Firefighter
Staffing Only

FIG GARDEN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Fig Garden Fire Protection District(FGFPD) serves an unincorporated area of Fresno County, generally within the limits of the City of Fresno. The District is generally bounded on the north by W. Shaw Ave between N. Maroa on the east and N. Palm on the west, on the west by N. Palm between W. Shaw to the north and the Herndon Canal to the south, on the south by the Herndon Canal between N. Palm to the west and N. Van Ness to the east, and also bounded on the south by E. Griffith between N. Van Ness and N. Maroa. The District is comprised 729 residential and commercial parcels within approximately 600 acres.

The Fig Garden Fire Protection District contracts with the Fresno County Fire Protection District, who in turn contracts with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, for personnel and administration. This contractual relationship allows the residents of the District to enjoy a full realm of fire protection services offered by the Fresno County Fire Protection District and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The FGFPD directly funds 6 full time safety employees who are all dedicated to engine staffing. It also funds one forth of a dispatcher position for the Regional CDF Communications Center in Fresno. The District operates one fire engine from its station located at 4537 N. Wishon, Fresno, CA 93704. This fire engine responds with 2-person staffing. The District equips and trains 6 paid-call firefighters(volunteers) who carry pagers and report directly to the scene of emergency incidents when needed.

The FGFPD's response standard is 5 minutes, with most incidents being answered within this standard. The District has entered reciprocal agreements with surrounding fire protection agencies to assure response times are minimized and that additional fire protection resources are available when needed.

ISO

The FGFPD ISO rating is 4.

Revenue Status

The District's revenue was impacted severely by the ERAF tax shifts. The District residents has supplemented this revenue with the enactment of a benefit assessment. Currently this assessment in undergoing revisions based on the requirements of Propostion 218.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection(CDF) is a State resource agency vested with fire protection responsibilities on wildlands that have been designated as State Responsibility Area(SRA). Within Fresno County, CDF is represented by the Fresno/Kings Ranger Unit which is headquartered at 210 S. Academy, Sanger, CA 93657. In addition to meeting the state goal of wildland protection, CDF contracts with a variety of other agencies within Fresno County for fire protection services. These range from full service, such as provided to the Fresno County Fire Protection District, to fire dispatch only agreements.

SRA in Fresno County consists of 916,303 acres or 1432 square miles of direct protection area. This SRA is divided into two widely separated geographical areas that generally encompass the eastern and western portions of Fresno County. Within a portion of the SRA and most of the remaining unincorporated area of Fresno County, CDF contracts to protect an additional 1,800,000 acres of local responsibility area.

CDF funded fire protection staffing varies depending on the time of the year. During the fire season period (June-Oct) CDF staffs 12 fire engines within Fresno County. These engines are staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel and are subject to statewide dispatch on a daily basis. CDF also funds 2 bulldozer and transport units, 4 fire crews(Miramonte Conservation Camp), one Air Tactical Unit and one Air Tanker(Fresno Air Attack Base).

During the non-fire season period CDF is not funded for fire protection staffing. As a result, the County of Fresno has contracted for winter time fire protection at various locations. These include CDF fire Stations located at Shaver Lake, Tollhouse, Hurley, Piedra and Squaw Valley. This contract provides a minimum level of fire protection at a significantly reduced cost to the County. However, staffing on the CDF fire engines under this contract is only 1 person.

Within Fresno County, CDF directly funds 65 full time safety employees and up to 80 seasonal employees. CDF's fire protection program is functionally consolidated with the Fresno County Fire Protection District and resources are shared, jointly funded, etc , creating efficiencies for both entities. This consolidated program is organized into 3 divisions and a Fire Prevention Bureau. The Western Operations Division consists of 4 Battalions and the fleet maintenance program, the Eastern Operations Division consists of 3 Battalions in the eastern foothills of Fresno County, the Miramonte Conservation Camp and the Fresno Air Tactical program. The Third division consists of the Departments administrative functions. The three divisions are supervised by the Deputy Chief and Department Chief(both funded by CDF).

During 1996, CDF Experienced a total of 304 wildland fires with SRA in Fresno County. A total of 36,974 acres were consumed in these fires. Major incidents included early spring fires on the west side of the county and the Trimmer fire in eastern Fresno County.

CDF manages a joint Fire Communications Facility at the Fresno Airport. This facility is co-located with the US Forest Service, Sierra National Forest. In addition, The Fresno County Fire Protection

District and the City of Fresno contract with CDF for fire dispatch services from this facility. Other fire protection entities also served from this center include the Bald Mountain Fire Protection District, Laton CSD, Riverdale PUD, City of Fowler, Orange Cove Fire Protection District, City of Parlier, City of Mendota, City of Huron, City of San Joaquin, CSA 31(Shaver Lake), Big Creek Volunteer fire company, Huntington Lake Volunteer fire Company, Mountain Valley Volunteer fire Company and the Auberry Volunteer fire Company. This Regional Communications Center answered 56,740 emergency calls in 1996.

CDF STATIONS AND STAFFING IN FRESNO COUNTY

<u>Station</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Equipment</u>
Millerton	4091 E. Millerton Rd, Friant, CA 93626	1 fire engine
Hurley	25627 N. Auberry Rd, Clovis, CA 93612	2 fire engines
Blasingame	23087 E. Tollhouse Rd, Clovis, CA 93611	2 fire engines
Shaver Lake	41640 Dinkley Creek Rd Shaver Lake, CA 93664	1 fire engine
Squaw Valley	32515 E. Kings Canyon, Squaw Valley, CA 93646	2 fire engines
Piedra	6186 Elwood Rd, Sanger, CA 93657	1 fire engine
Sand Creek	41998 Sand Creek Rd, Squaw Valley, CA 93646	1 fire engine
Coalinga	PO Box 896, Coalinga, CA 93210	2 fire engines 1 dozer unit
Sanger	210 S. Academy, Sanger, CA 93657	1 dozer unit
Miramonte Camp	49039 Orchard Dr, Miramonte, CA 93616	4 fire crews (18 personnel ea)
Fresno Air Base	2307 N. Clovis, CA 93727	1 air tanker 1 air tac

The above represents fire season staffing levels. Non fire season staffing would consist of one engine at Shaver Lake, Hurley, Blasingame, Piedra, and Squaw Valley as contracted by the county of Fresno.