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INTRODUCTION

2.1) Specific Plan Purpose

Located in California's Central San Joaquin Valley, the City of Madera is well suited to accommodate expected population growth. According to the City of Madera Housing Element, a 60,836 person increase by 2035 is expected, increasing Madera's population 79% over the 2010 population. The Villages at Almond Grove Specific Plan prepares for the projected growth with the creation of attractive, energy efficient, and pedestrian friendly neighborhoods. Consistent with the Madera General Plan, the Specific Plan places high importance upon the General Plan's building blocks approach, implementing a balanced growth approach towards development and keeping quality of life in mind.

The Specific Plan (herein onward also referred to as the Plan) ensures an orderly transition from farmland to urban development. To provide a framework for quality development that assures consistency with other developments in the City of Madera, the Plan includes development standards and design guidelines whose execution delivers an interconnected, pedestrian-friendly community. Ample open space and parks have been integrated into the Plan.

The Plan Area consists of three neighborhoods: Northwest Neighborhood; Southwest Neighborhood; and the Southeast Neighborhood. The Plan establishes the review and approval process of subsequent development proposals such as subdivision maps, site plans, and improvement plans.

2.2) Authority

California Government Code, Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8, Sections 65450 through 65457 et seq grants local planning agencies the authority to prepare Specific Plans for any area covered by a General Plan for the purpose of establishing systematic methods of implementation of the General Plan.

A Specific Plan is designed to address site specific issues such as existing on-site conditions relative to topography and existing environmental concerns, site design and layout, including setbacks and visual appearance, as well as circulation, utility provisions and infrastructure financing alternatives.

The California Government Code establishes the authority and procedures to adopt a specific plan; identifies the required contents of a specific plan; mandates consistency with the General Plan; and also mandates consistency of any future projects or zoning ordinance amendments with a specific plan.

Section 10-2.102 of Title 10 of the City of Madera’s Municipal Code states the purpose and intent of the Subdivision Map Act.

The City’s Municipal Code and other applicable adopted standards will act as a supplement for those areas and issues not specifically addressed by this Specific Plan. *Table 8.1, Planning Permits and Actions*, outlines the regulatory source and processing direction for all future land use related permits proposed as part of the Plan.

2.3) State Requirements

The State of California grants the authority to prepare and adopt specific plans. This Specific Plan was prepared to address development patterns in the Plan Area. Under California Government Code Sections 65450 through 65457, a specific plan may be used to implement a general plan and its policies and programs.

Specific plans must be consistent with the elements of the jurisdiction’s general plan. The Government Code stipulates that a specific plan can only be adopted or amended if it is consistent with the jurisdiction adopted general plan.

California Government Code Section 65451 (a) defines content requirements for specific plans, as follows:

(a) A specific plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:

1. The distribution, location, and extent of the land uses, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
2. The proposed distribution, location, extent, and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
3. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
4. A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).(b)

(b) The specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

California Government Code Section 65454 also states that no specific plan may be adopted or amended unless the proposed plan or amendment is consistent with the general plan. The Villages at Almond Grove Specific Plan was prepared pursuant to State Law and complies with all the above requirements.

2.4) Severability

In the event that any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of the Specific Plan, or any future amendment(s) or addition(s) hereto, is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision

of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Specific Plan, or any future amendments or additions hereto.

2.5) Specific Plan Objectives

The Specific Plan is designed to implement a series of objectives that have been carefully crafted to ensure the Plan Area develops with quality residential and retail development. These objectives have been refined throughout the planning and design process for The Villages at Almond Grove Specific Plan. They are identified below:

- » Address the City of Madera’s current and projected housing needs for all segments of the community by providing a range of single- and multi-family homes.
- » Promote high quality retail and mixed-use development to attract an array of businesses and employment opportunities.
- » Establish a mix of land uses and local-serving activities that meet the General Plan’s objectives concerning community character and pedestrian-friendly design.
- » Implement the City’s General Plan Land Use Element goal to facilitate annexation of large areas of land that are governed by a specific plan, which provides for compatibility of land uses, fiscal balance, recreation, and resource protection.
- » Establish a transportation network that will fulfill the policies of the Madera General Plan’s Circulation Element by allowing residents to live within proximity to schools, recreational opportunities, retail centers, and commercial development, and minimize vehicle trips through utilizing access to a variety of transportation opportunities, including pedestrian pathways, bikeways, regional arterials, and transit.
- » Promote opportunities for water efficiency in Plan Area architecture and landscaping to promote water conservation.
- » Incorporate green and sustainable practices, as practicable, in developing buildings and infrastructure.
- » Undertake development of the Plan Area in a manner that is economically feasible and balanced to address the City’s economic interests.

2.6) Specific Plan Summary

The Specific Plan creates three distinct neighborhoods as follows:

- » Northwest Neighborhood (+/- 650 gross acres)
- » Southwest Neighborhood (+/- 589 gross acres)
- » Southeast Neighborhood (+/- 645 gross acres)

Current Madera County Assessor's parcel numbers within the Specific Plan are listed below and depicted on *Exhibit 2.1, Current Assessor Parcels*:

- » 0330-700-05
- » 0330-700-04
- » 0330-700-02
- » 0330-700-03
- » 0331-700-01
- » 0331-700-02
- » 0331-700-09
- » 0331-700-05
- » 0331-700-10
- » 0331-700-11
- » 0331-800-02
- » 0331-800-03

2.7) Associated Actions and Approvals

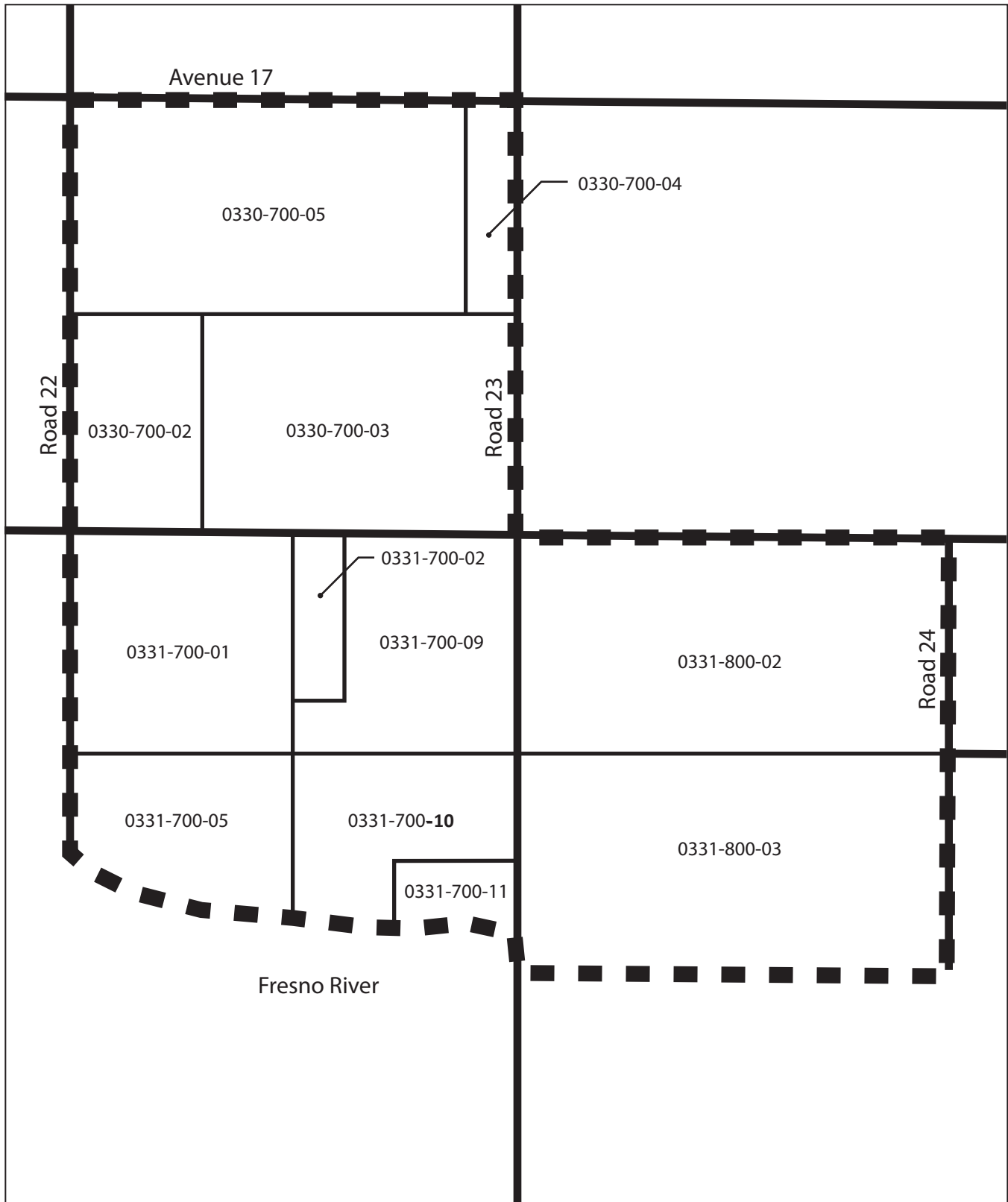
Subdivision of the Southeast and Northwest Neighborhoods is being process concurrently with adoption of the Specific Plan to ensure implementation of the Plan Area as envisioned. The following actions and approvals will occur concurrent with or immediately following adoption of the Specific Plan to ensure implementation of the Plan Area as envisioned. See Chapter 8: Implementation for additional details.

- » Tentative Map Approvals. Implementing Tentative Maps will be prepared and processed through the City of Madera in accordance with the requirements of Title 10, Chapter 2, Section 10-2.12, Vesting Tentative Maps and in accordance with the Subdivision Map Act. The requirement of a precise plan as specified in Section 10-2.1208(B) will be satisfied by this Specific Plan.
- » Approval of Grading and Improvement Plans: After approval of the Tentative Map, the City of Madera will process the corresponding Grading and Improvement Plans (e.g., water plans, wastewater plans, drainage plans, grading plans, street improvement plans, final maps, etc.).

2.8) Airport Land Use Compatibility Planning Consistency

Development within the Specific Plan Area will be required to be consistent with the California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook published by Caltrans Division of Aeronautics and the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans of Madera Municipal Airport.

Exhibit 2.1, Current Assessor Parcels



Source: KTG Group



2.9) General Plan Consistency

California Government Code (Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8, Section 65450-65457) permits the adoption and administration of specific plans as an implementation tool for elements contained in the local general plan. Policy plans must demonstrate consistency in regulations, guidelines, and programs with the goals and policies set forth in the general plan.

The Specific Plan has been prepared in conformance with the goals and policies of the City of Madera General Plan. The Specific Plan is consistent with the General Plan land use designation of “Specific Plan Area,” which allows the Plan to develop land use standards and regulations tailored to the Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area land use designation is applied to areas where a Specific Plan is adopted by the City.