



City of Visalia

Joint Meeting of City Council and Planning Commission

August 19, 2025

Agenda Item 3: Dwelling Units & Parcel Sizes

AGENDA ITEM #3

Consider updates to City regulations and Zoning Standards and provide comments / guidance as directed

Housing Element Program 2.7: Missing Middle Housing

- Consider Visalia's range of housing types to provide a more affordable alternative to the local workforce

Housing Element Program 3.17: Planning for Large Sites

- Consider removing constraints towards parceling sites exceeding 10 acres, including waiver of public hearings

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Definition:

- A range of low to medium density range housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes & cottage homes, located within residential neighborhoods and providing a more affordable alternative to the local workforce.
- In existing single-family neighborhoods, they could entail smaller detached dwelling units, including ADUs, or duplexes developed in a manner that maintains the neighborhood's existing character.

Permit Types Issued the Last 5½ years in Visalia:

Single-family Houses: 66% 5+ unit structures: 25%

Accessory Dwelling Units: 3% 2-4 unit structures: 9%

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING



Duplexes

Townhomes



MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING



Cottage / Courtyard Housing

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Duplex on Corner Lot



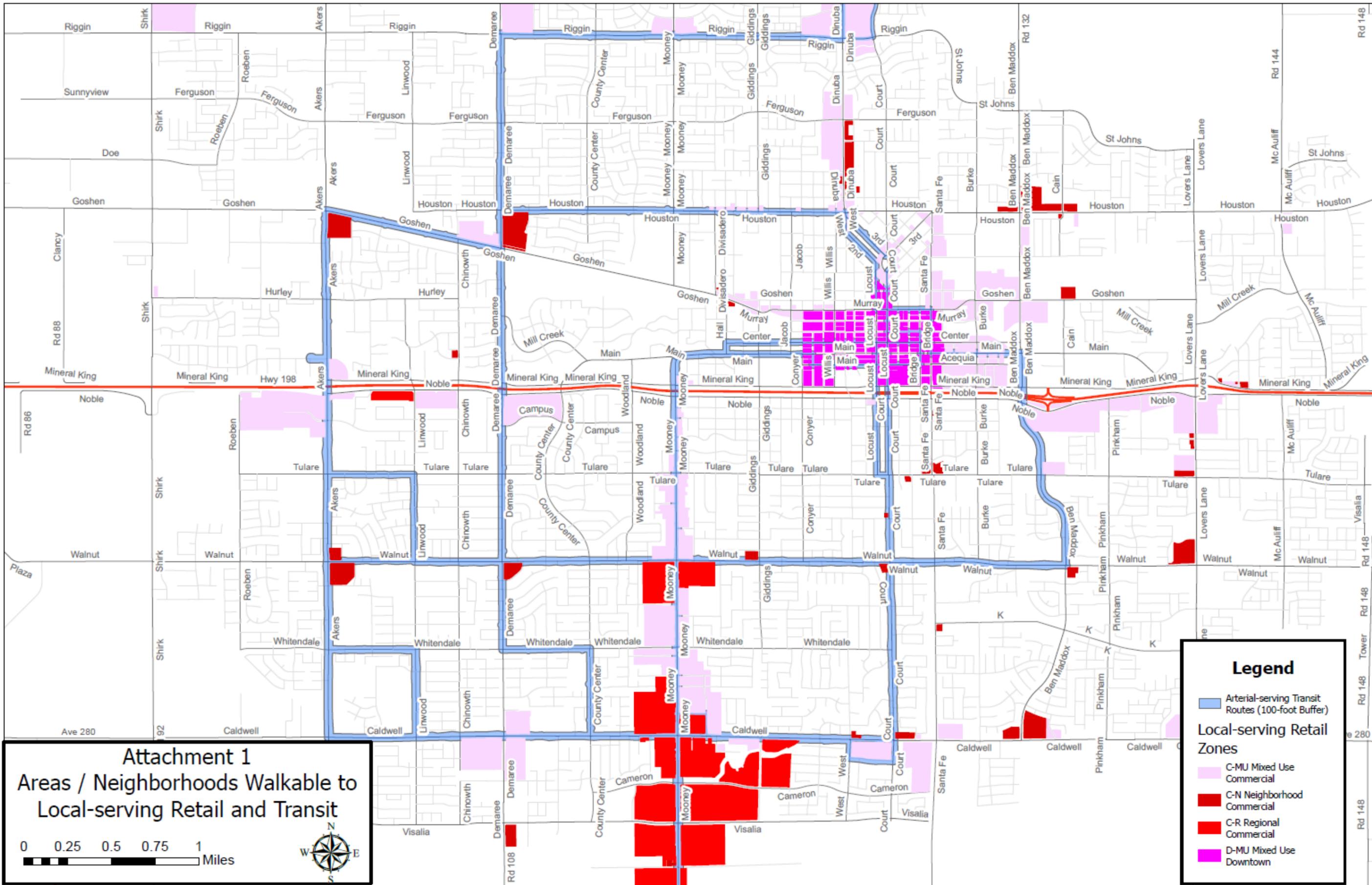
ADU facing Side Street of Corner Lot



MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Direction on Location

- Should Visalia consider expanding its range of building types in high resource, infill parts of the City?
 1. Housing along corridors in close proximity to transit and locally-serving retail?
 2. Infill areas with undeveloped or underdeveloped lots with R-5 zone and having larger lot sizes?



Attachment 1
Areas / Neighborhoods Walkable to
Local-serving Retail and Transit

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

Legend

- ▬ Arterial-serving Transit Routes (100-foot Buffer)
- C-MU Mixed Use Commercial
- C-N Neighborhood Commercial
- C-R Regional Commercial
- D-MU Mixed Use Downtown

Local-serving Retail Zones

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Alternative

- Pursue amendments to existing Zoning Ordinance sections to provide more clarity on allowed unit types and streamline the approval process



1. Rename R-1-5 Zone to R-1 Zone to reflect existing permitted use of lots below 5,000 sq. ft.

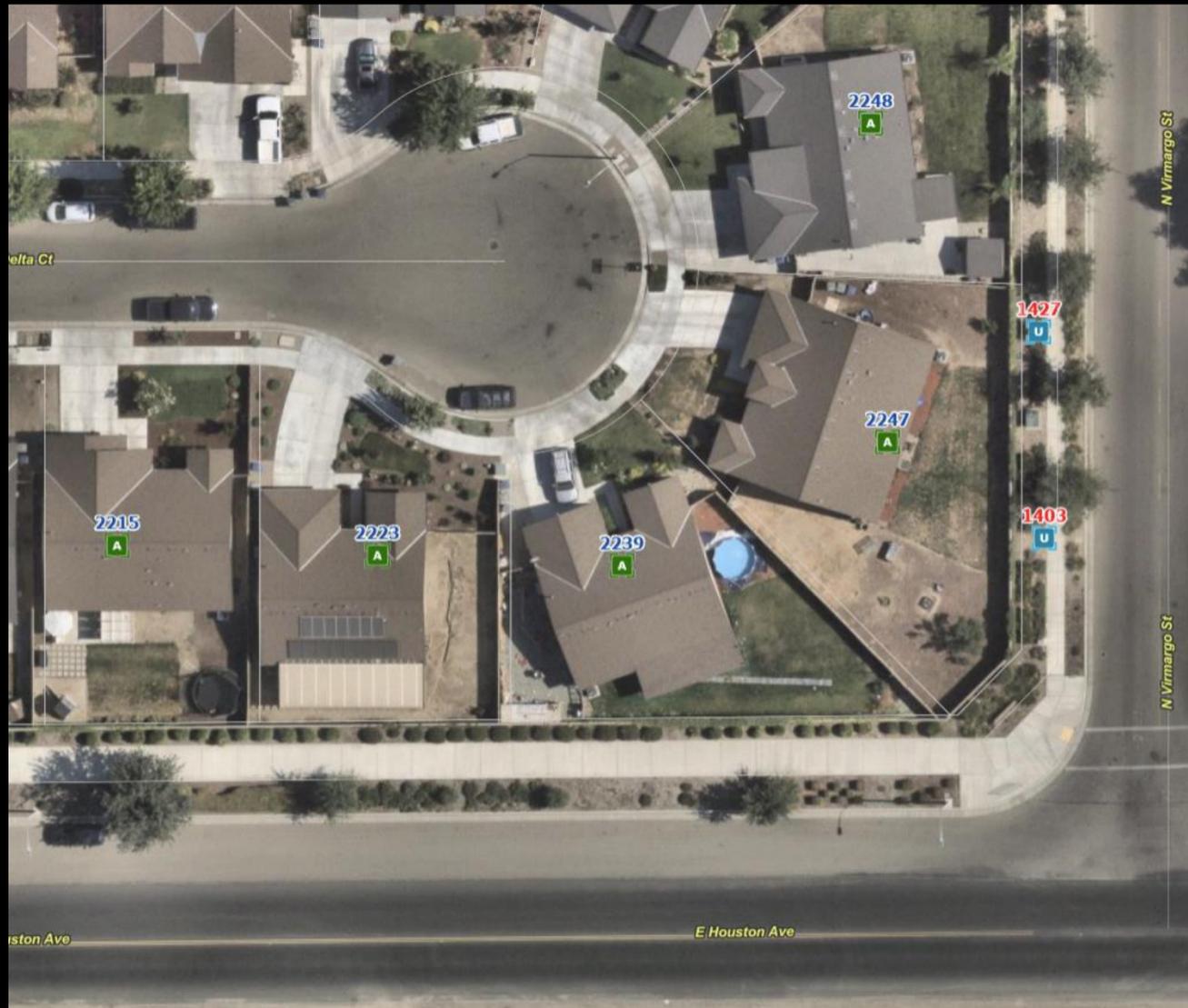
- Does not change minimum lot size to this zone; standards are already in place for lots under 5,000 sq ft
- The Zoning Ordinance's list of permitted / conditional uses would be updated to reflect allowed lot sizes
 - Permitted if between 3,600 to 4,999 sf. ft. and meets requirements in Section 17.12.135
 - Conditional / Planned Development Permit required if less than 3,600 sq. ft.

2. Eliminate PUD / CUP requirements for simple lot splits

- Responding to ample number of parcel maps processed for oversized properties
- Require Parcel Maps to complete Site Plan Review and proceed to Engineering Review
- Waive PUD / CUP process if only intended to establish an access easement for vehicular / pedestrian purposes



3. Reduce the City's 25-foot rear yard setback requirement



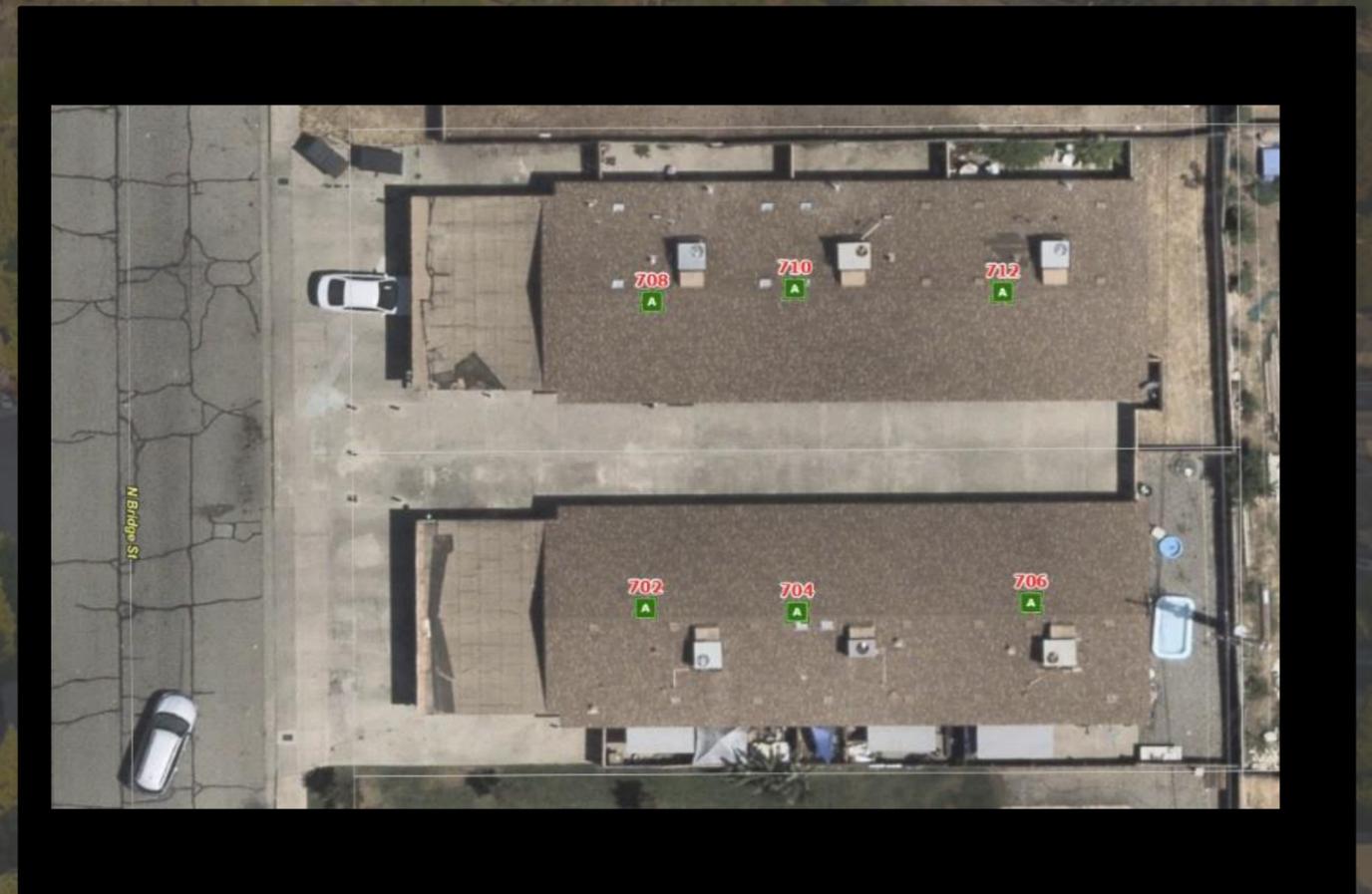
- Reduction responds to trend of smaller lot sizes and challenges fitting developers' production plans on lots
- Tulare, Fresno, and Clovis all have rear yards at 20' or less
- To lessen impact upon established residences, setbacks could apply to interior lots or backing to streets

4. Eliminate CUP requirement for multi-family lots less than 2 acres in size

- Standard may be considered as a constraint towards the development of multi-family residential units that would otherwise be permitted by-right
- Listed as a necessary Municipal Code Update in Housing Element Program 5.8

5. Remove Multi-Family Residential Zone's 10-foot side yard requirement for access to more than one dwelling unit

- Intended to apply when a pedestrian walkway adjacent to side property line provides access to 2+ units
- Standard side yard setback is 5 feet
- 10-foot setback may be seen as creating an unnecessary hardship toward smaller parcels

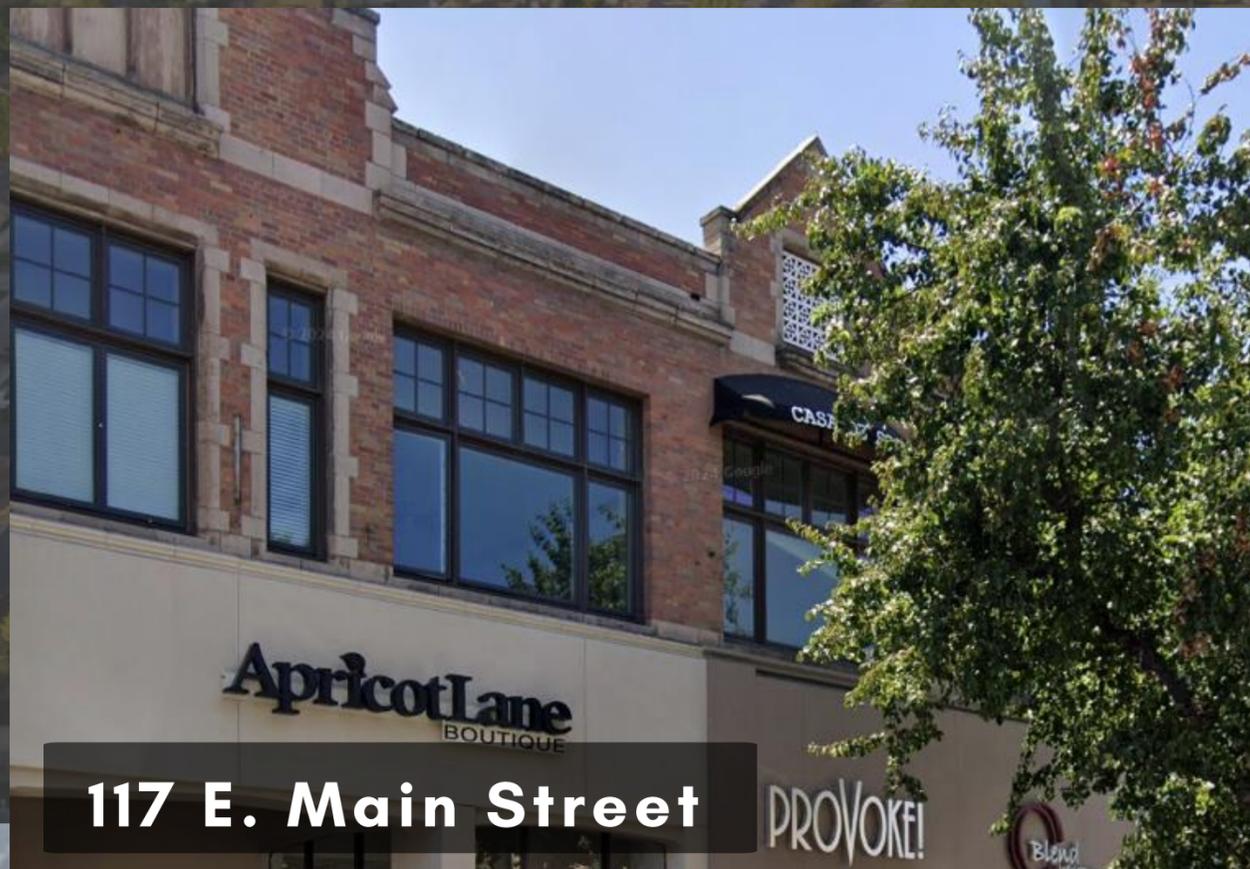


6. Consider reducing parking space requirements for residential uses meeting certain criteria

- Recommend adding language in Zoning Ordinance regarding applicability of approved AB 2097
- If Missing Middle Housing is considered in corridor areas or infill sites, consider allowing 1.5 spaces per unit to correspond with multi-family standard

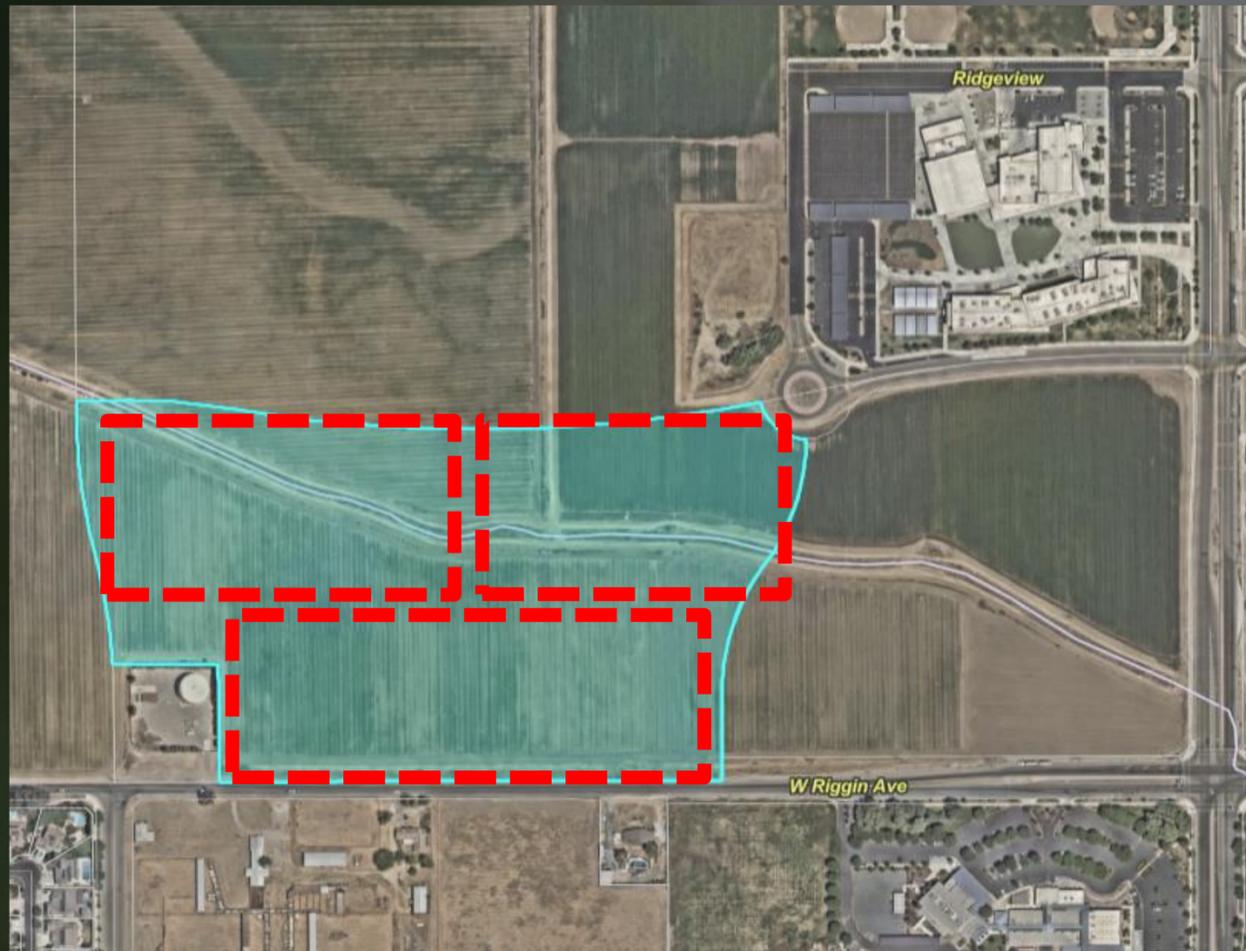
7. In Mixed Use Zones (D-MU and C-MU), remove CUP / public hearing requirement for adding to an existing number of units

- Eliminates redundancy when residential uses are already established on-site and surrounding uses are already conditioned to having existing residential uses



PLANNING FOR LARGE SITES

- Housing Element Program to facilitate sites that conform with State HCD's recommended parcel size of between 0.5 and 10 acres for lower-income households



"Pinnacle" project, Riggin / Roeben



Colegio Property, Dinuba / Glendale

PLANNING FOR LARGE SITES

- City must adopt incentives to encourage the development of large RHNA sites, such as:
 - expedited approval of lot splits
 - waiving public hearings for parcel maps
 - waiving public hearings for large multifamily uses (if affordable by deed-restriction)
 - additional density bonus, lot coverage, or height
 - fee waivers, reductions, or deferral



PLANNING FOR LARGE SITES

- City must adopt incentives to encourage the development of large RHNA sites, such as:
 - expedited approval of lot splits
 - waiving public hearings for parcel maps *IF PARCEL IS ZONED R-M-2 OR R-M-3 OR HAS RHNA SITE INVENTORY
 - waiving public hearings for large multifamily uses (if affordable by deed-restriction)
 - additional density bonus, lot coverage, or height
 - fee waivers, reductions, or deferral

Staff Recommendation

NEXT STEPS

Recommendations will be the basis for a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Public Hearings will be noticed and scheduled to Planning Commission by November / December





Thank you

City of Visalia – Planning Division