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Planning and Development Department
Jennifer Clark, AICP, Director

TO: Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission

FROM: Adrienne Asadoorian-Gilbert, Supervising Planner, Planning and Development Department

DATE: August 5th, 2024

RE: **Text Amendment:** The City of Fresno, Planning and Development Department (Applicant) proposes Development Code Text Amendment No. P24-00794 that would amend the Fresno Municipal Code (FMC) to:

- 1) Allow ministerial approval of the proposed “office-to-dwelling conversion” residential use classification in the O zone district (“Office-to-Dwelling Conversions”) within existing buildings;
- 2) Allow ministerial approval of multi-unit residential development in the RM-1, RM-2, and RM-3 zone districts on parcels that are within ½ mile of an existing bus stop (“Housing Near Bus Stops”);
- 3) Allow ministerial approval for “multi-unit residential” uses in NMX, CMX, RMX, CMS, and CR zone districts on parcels within the City’s Infill Priority Area (“Infill Residential Development in Mixed Use Zones”);
- 4) Allow ministerial approval of new standalone multi-unit residential development in the O zone district (“New Residential Development on Office Parcels”).

No development is currently proposed with this Text Amendment.

Applicant: City of Fresno

Attachments: Project Description, Project Location Map

Instructions: Provide comments at upcoming meeting.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
CITY OF FRESNO DEVELOPMENT CODE TEXT AMENDMENT NO. P24-00794
MINISTERIAL APPROVAL FOR OFFICE-TO-DWELLING CONVERSIONS IN THE OFFICE ZONE, HOUSING NEAR BUS STOPS IN MULTI-FAMILY ZONES, INFILL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIXED USE ZONES AND NEW RESIDENTIAL IN OFFICE ZONES

1. Project Title

City of Fresno Development Code Text Amendment Application No. P24-00794

2. Project Location

The Project is in the jurisdiction of the City of Fresno, Fresno County, California and contains approximately 13,560 parcels that altogether total approximately 6,440 acres (“Project Area”) in the RM-1, RM-2, RM-3, O, NMX, CMX, RMX, CMS, and CR zoned parcels through the city of Fresno (**Figure 1**).

3. Project Description

The City of Fresno, Planning and Development Department (Applicant) proposes Development Code Text Amendment No. P24-00794 that would amend the Fresno Municipal Code (FMC) to:

- 1) Allow ministerial approval of the proposed “office-to-dwelling conversion” residential use classification in the O zone district within existing buildings (“Office-to-Dwelling Conversions”);
- 2) Allow ministerial approval of multi-unit residential development in the RM-1, RM-2, and RM-3 zone districts on parcels that are within ½ mile of an existing bus stop (“Housing Near Bus Stops”);
- 3) Allow ministerial approval for “multi-unit residential” uses in NMX, CMX, RMX, CMS, and CR zone districts on parcels within the City’s Infill Priority Area (“Infill Residential Development in Mixed Use Zones”); and
- 4) Allow ministerial approval of new standalone multi-unit residential development in the O zone district (“New Residential Development on Office Parcels”).

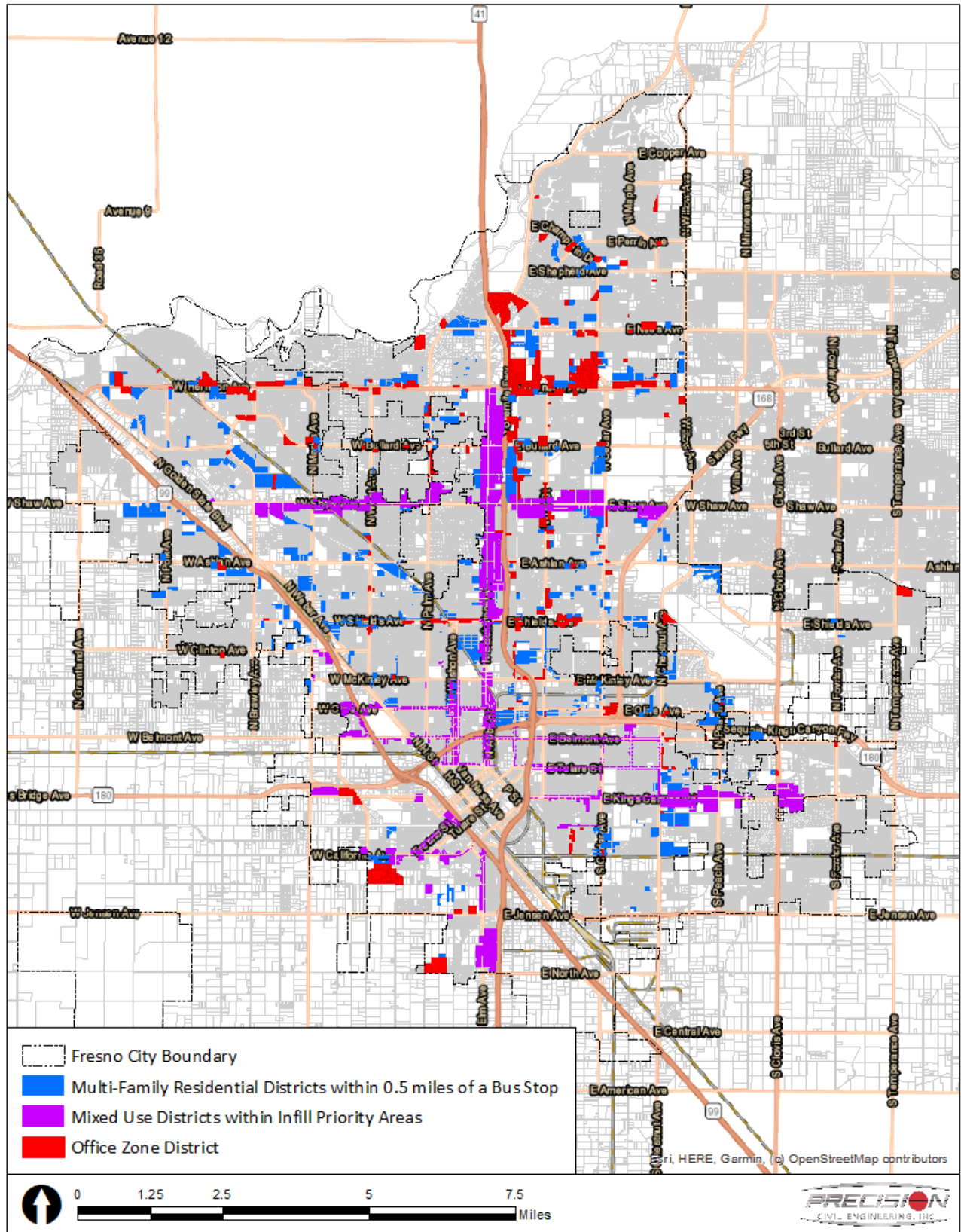
No development is currently proposed with this Text Amendment.

4. General Plan Designations

The Project Area is within four (4) land use classifications, Residential, Commercial, Employment, and Mixed-Use, and nine (9) land use designations within these classifications: Residential – Medium High Density, Residential – Urban Neighborhood, Residential – High Density, Commercial – Main Street, Commercial – Regional, Employment – Office, Mixed-Use – Neighborhood, Mixed-Use – Corridor/Center, and Mixed-Use – Regional.

5. Zoning

The Project Area is within four (4) district types, Residential Multi-Family Districts (RM), Commercial Districts (C), Mixed-Use Districts (MX), and Employment Districts (E), and nine (9) zone districts within the base districts: RM-1 (Residential Multi-Family, Medium High Density), RM-2 (Residential Multi-Family, Urban Neighborhood), RM-3 (Residential Multi-Family, High Density), CMS (Commercial – Main Street), CR (Commercial – Regional), NMX (Neighborhood Mixed-Use), CMX (Corridor/Center Mixed-Use), RMX (Regional Mixed-Use), and O (Office) (**Table 1**).



CITY OF FRESNO - RESIDENTIAL MINISTERIAL APPROVAL TEXT AMENDMENT

CREATED: 3/21/2024

Figure 1: Project Location

Table 1: Zone Districts and Project Area

Zone District	Parcels	Acres
RM-1	8,454	3,109.2
RM-2	713	609.6
RM-3	94	129.2
CMS	585	137.2
CR	178	589.2
NMX	1,924	817.4
CMX	2,561	1,498.7
RMX	488	827.0
O	1,368	1,373.0
Total	13,560	6,440

6. Environmental Analysis Assumptions

For the purpose of the environmental analysis, this Initial Study analyzes impacts from reasonably foreseeable build out that would result from this text amendment. According to the assumptions listed below, the development capacity analyzed includes:

- A reasonable build out of 2,692 units resulting from the conversion of gross floor area of office uses to residential uses in the O zone district over the next 30 years (Office-to-Dwelling Conversions).
- A reasonable build out of 5,525 units in RM-1, RM-2, and RM-3 zone districts within a ½ mile of an existing bus stop over the next 30 years (Housing Near Bus Stops).
- A reasonable build out of 12,032 units in CMS, CR, NMX, CMX, and RMX zone districts in the Infill Priority Area over the next 30 years (Infill Residential Development in Mixed Use Zones).
- A reasonable build out of 2,176 units in the O zone district (New Residential Development on Office Parcels).

Cumulatively, these text amendments could result in a reasonably foreseeable buildout of 22,425 units over the next 30 years, or approximately 748 units per year.

Office-to-Dwelling Conversions

This text amendment would allow ministerial approval of the proposed “office-to-dwelling conversion” residential use classification on parcels in the O zone district that have an existing office use (“Project”). There are approximately 1,373 acres (1,368 parcels) zoned O in the City of Fresno. Approximately 45% (618 acres or 735 parcels) of parcels in the O zone district are developed with an existing office use (“Project Area”). These parcels are shown in **Figure 2**.

Although no physical development is proposed by the Project, this Initial Study analyzes the potential buildout of the Project Area at a programmatic level, using reasonable assumptions so that future ministerial projects resulting from implementation of the Project may tier from this Initial Study pursuant to CEQA Guidelines *Section 15168(c)(1)* and *15168(d)* for evaluations of environmental issues associated with later activities/subsequent projects. However, depending on the final design of future physical development, additional project specific CEQA review may be required as determined by the City through the entitlement review and approval process.

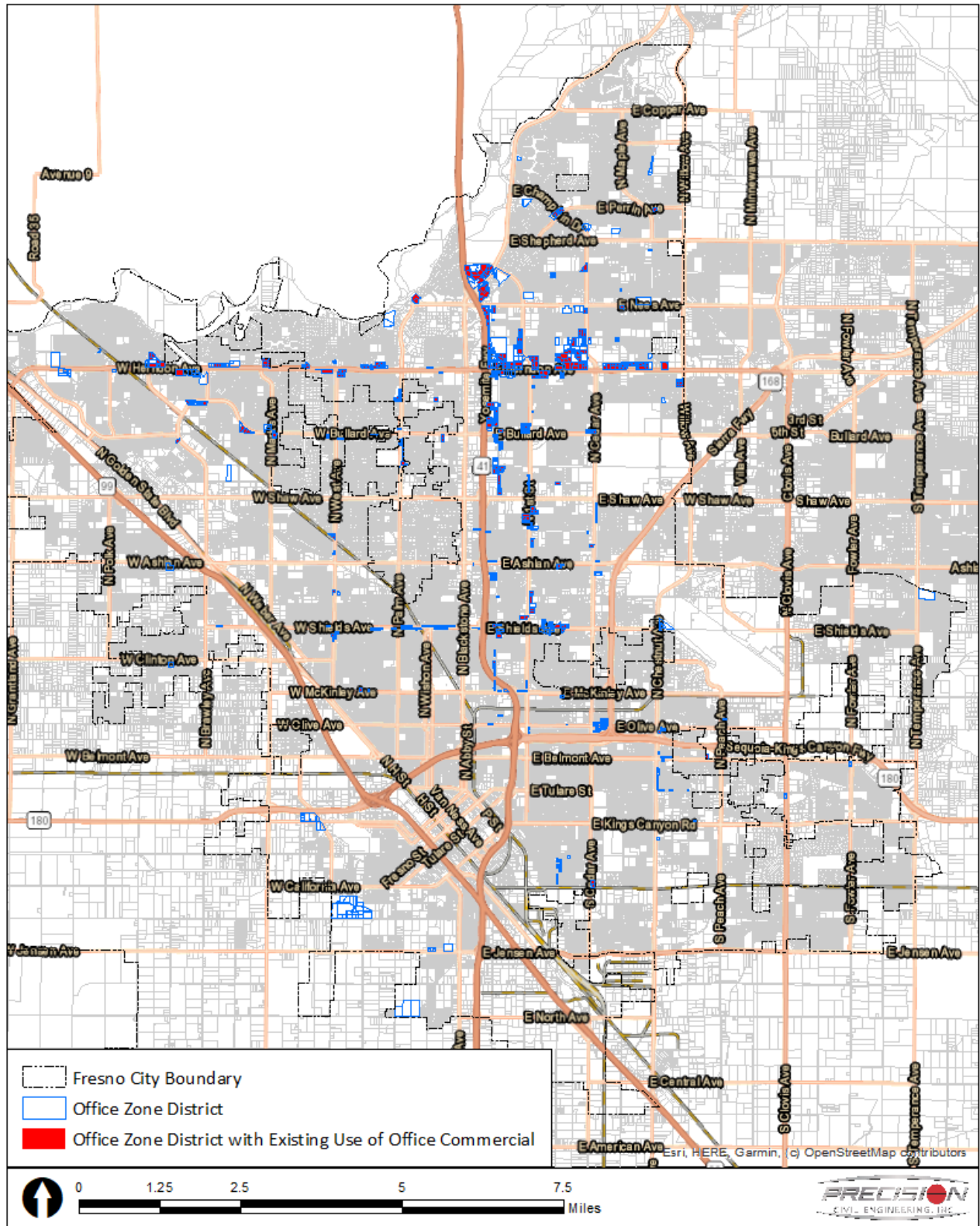


Figure 2: Existing Office Uses on Office-zoned Parcels

For the purposes of the environmental analysis, “office-to-dwelling conversion” means the conversion of existing offices from commercial office use to a residential use. As defined by FMC Section 15-6704 (Commercial Use Classifications), an “office” use means offices of firms or organizations providing professional, executive, management, administrative or design services such as accounting, architectural, computer software design, engineering, graphic design, interior design, investment, insurance, and legal offices, excluding banks and savings and loan associations. This classification also includes offices where medical and dental services are provided by physicians, dentists, chiropractors, acupuncturists, optometrists, and similar medical professionals, including medical/dental laboratories within medical office buildings but excluding clinics or independent research laboratory facilities and hospitals. Further classifications of “office” use includes business and professional, medical, dental, and walk-in clientele.

The environmental analysis assumes that a reasonable percentage of existing gross floor area of office commercial use would be converted to residential use over the next 30 years within a reasonable density range per the City of Fresno “Reasonable Dwelling Unit Per Acre and FAR by Land Use” calculation prepared for the General Plan Build Out assumptions. There are approximately 618 acres in the O zone district that are developed with existing office use, which equates to approximately 26,920,080 square feet of total area. The Reasonable Dwelling Unit Per Acre and Floor Area Ratio by Land Use calculation identifies a 0.5 FAR for the Office land use designation. Using a 0.5 FAR, it can be assumed that there are approximately 13,460,040 square feet of existing gross floor area (26,920,080 square feet multiplied by 0.5 FAR equals 13,460,040 square feet).

To determine a reasonable percentage of development, the City of Fresno utilized the Housing Element Annual Progress Reports to determine the typical proportion of multi-family residential development to all residential development, finding that multi-family residential development generally accounts for approximately 20% of all residential development. Twenty percent (20%) of the existing gross floor area is approximately 2,692,008 square feet (20% of 13,460,040 square feet equals 2,692,008 square feet). If unit size is estimated at 1,000 square feet per unit, 2,692,008 square feet of residential uses would account for 2,692 units. Therefore, the environmental analysis reasonably assumes that approximately 20% of existing gross floor area of office commercial use would be converted to residential use, with a reasonable build out of 2,692 units over the next 30 years.

Based on the City of Fresno’s average household size of 2.79 for renter-occupied units¹, the 2,692 units could generate approximately 7,510 new residents, thereby increasing the population from 545,564² to 553,074, which would account for an approximately one (1) percent increase in population and would still be within the projections for the region and the City.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. "Selected Housing Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP04, 2022. Accessed on March 4, 2024, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP1Y2022.DP04?q=household_size&g=160XX00US0627000

² U.S. Census Bureau. "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP05, 2022. Accessed on March 4, 2024, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP1Y2022.DP05?q=household_size&g=160XX00US0627000

Housing Near Bus Stops

This text amendment would allow ministerial approval of “multi-unit residential development” in multi-family zone districts, RM-1, RM-2, and RM-3, on parcels that are within ½ mile of an existing bus stop (“Project”). There are approximately 3,848 acres (9,261 parcels) zoned RM-1, RM-2, or RM-3 in the City of Fresno. Approximately 77% (2,978 acres or 7,537 parcels) of multi-family zone parcels are within a ½ mile of an existing bus stop (“Project Area”). These parcels are shown in **Figure 2**.

Although no physical development is proposed by the Project, this Initial Study analyzes the potential buildout of the Project Area at a programmatic level, using reasonable assumptions so that future ministerial projects resulting from implementation of the Project may tier from this Initial Study pursuant to CEQA Guidelines *Section 15168(c)(1)* and *15168(d)* for evaluations of environmental issues associated with later activities/subsequent projects. However, depending on the final design of future physical development, additional project specific CEQA review may be required as determined by the City through the entitlement review and approval process.

For the purposes of the environmental analysis, “multi-unit residential development” means three (3) or more dwelling units on a site or lot as defined by FMC Section 15-6702 (Residential Use Classifications). Types of multiple unit dwellings include townhouses, garden apartments, senior housing developments, and multi-story apartment buildings. This use also includes multi-unit development in which individual units are occupied exclusively by one or more persons 62 years of age or older.

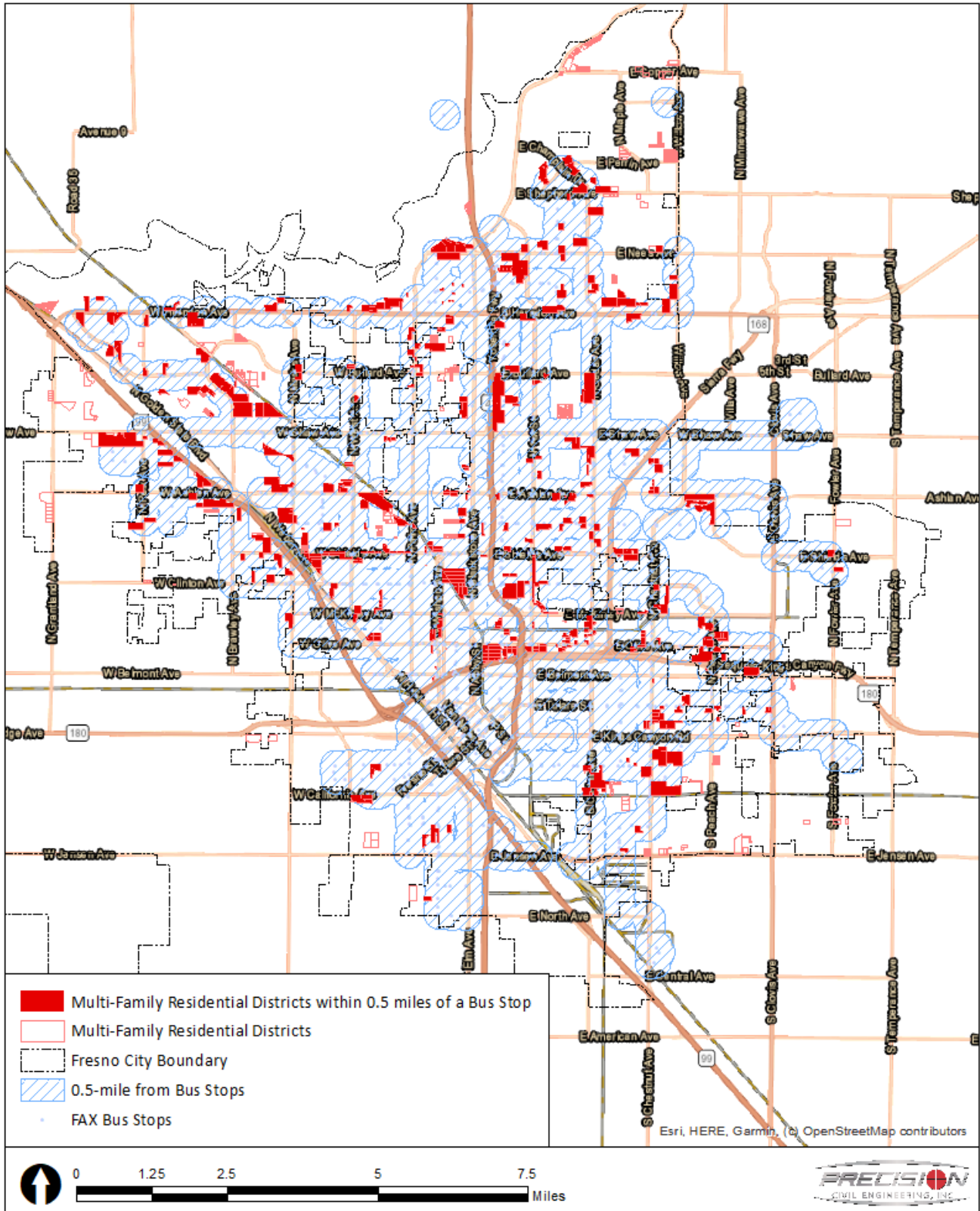
The environmental analysis assumes that vacant and/or underutilized land³ zoned RM-1, RM-2, or RM-3 within ½ mile of an existing bus stop would be developed with a multi-unit residential development over the next 30 years within a reasonable density range per the City of Fresno “Reasonable Dwelling Unit Per Acre and FAR by Land Use” calculation prepared for the General Plan Build Out assumptions. There are approximately 327.4 acres (216 parcels) of vacant and/or underutilized land within the RM-1, RM-2, and RM-3 zone districts within ½ mile of an existing bus stop (**Figure 3**), which could result in a reasonable build out of 5,525 units as shown in **Table 2**. Because the Project would not result in changes to the land use designation or zone district, the assumed build out would not result in new or additional residential units, and therefore population, would not increase beyond what was previously analyzed under the City of Fresno General Plan build out assumptions.

Table 2: Units on Vacant/Underutilized RM Sites for Ministerial Approval

Zone Districts	Acres	Reasonable Density (du/ac)	Reasonable Units *
RM-1	179.2	14	2,477
RM-2	140.5	20	2,790
RM-3	7.7	34	258
Total	327.4	-	5,525

Note: Each parcel was calculated separately and rounded down to not exceed the density limit.

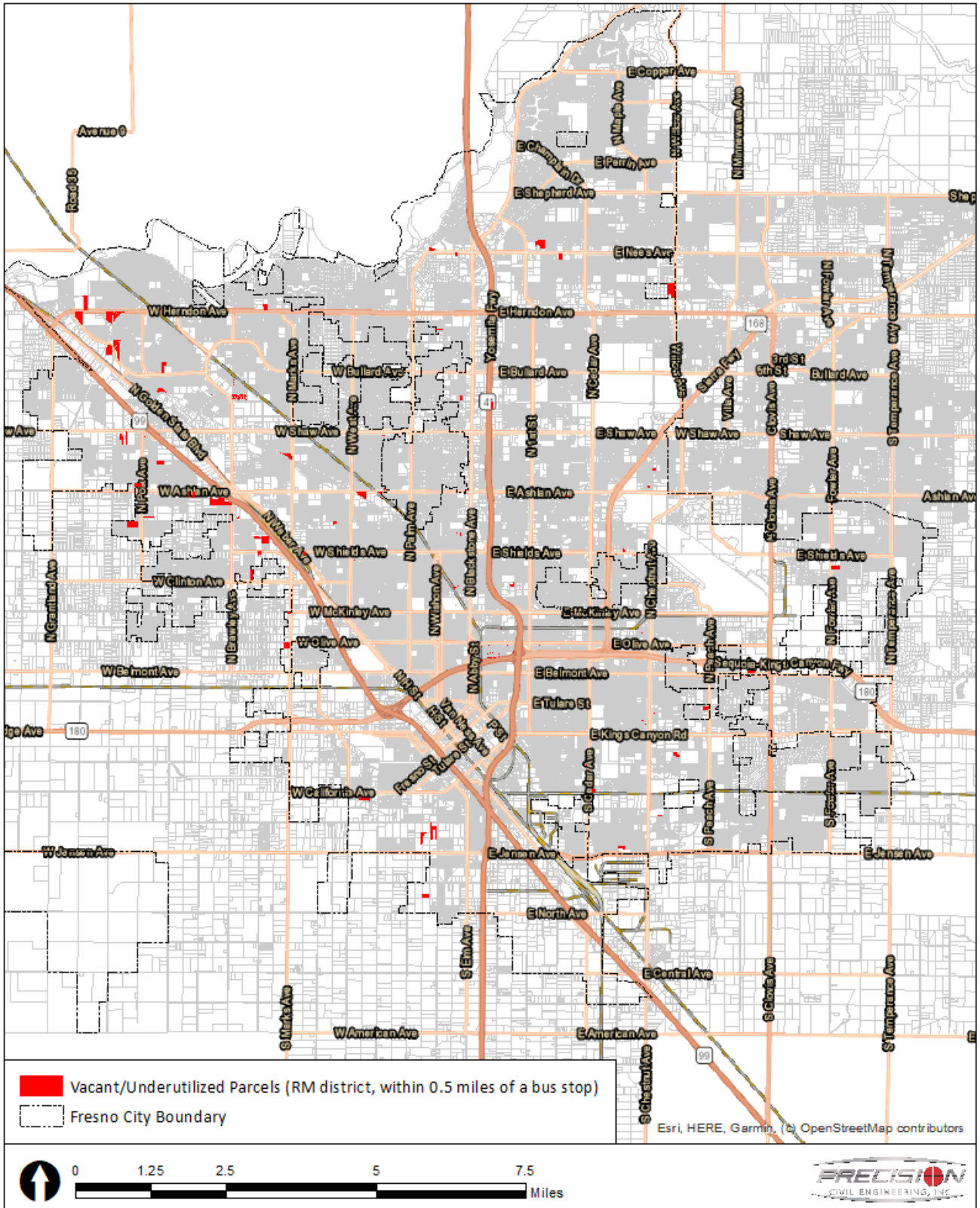
³ “Vacant and/or underutilized lands” mean parcels within the City Limits of Fresno that have an existing land use of “vacant parcel,” “parking,” or “open space/ag” per the City of Fresno’s GIS Viewer.



CITY OF FRESNO - RESIDENTIAL MINISTERIAL APPROVAL TEXT AMENDMENT

CREATED: 12/28/2023

Figure 3: Multi-Family Residential Districts within 1/2 miles of an existing Bus Stop



CITY OF FRESNO - RESIDENTIAL MINISTERIAL APPROVAL TEXT AMENDMENT

CREATED: 12/28/2023

Figure 4: Vacant/Underutilized Parcels (Multi-Family Residential Districts within 0.5 miles of a Bus Stop)

Infill Residential Development in Mixed-Use Zones

This text amendment would allow ministerial approval of “multi-unit residential development” in zone districts that allow mixed uses, NMX, CMX, RMX, CMS, CR, on parcels that are within the City’s Infill Priority Area as identified on Figure IM-1 of the City of Fresno General Plan (“Project”). There are approximately 3,867 acres (5,736 parcels) zoned NMX, CMX, RMX, CMS, and CR in the City. Approximately 74% (2,844 acres or 5,288 parcels) of parcels in zone districts that allow mixed uses are within the Infill Priority Area (“Project Area”) as shown in **Figure 5**.

Although no physical development is proposed by the Project, this Initial Study analyzes the potential buildout of the Project Area at a programmatic level, using reasonable assumptions so that future ministerial projects resulting from implementation of the Project may tier from this Initial Study pursuant to CEQA Guidelines *Section 15168(c)(1)* and *15168(d)* for evaluations of environmental issues associated with later activities/subsequent projects. However, depending on the final design of future physical development, additional project specific CEQA review may be required as determined by the City through the entitlement review and approval process.

For the purposes of the environmental analysis, “multi-unit residential development” means three (3) or more dwelling units on a site or lot as defined by FMC Section 15-6702 (Residential Use Classifications). Types of multiple unit dwellings include townhouses, garden apartments, senior housing developments, and multi-story apartment buildings. This use also includes multi-unit development in which individual units are occupied exclusively by one or more persons 62 years of age or older.

The environmental analysis assumes that vacant and/or underutilized land⁴ zoned CMS, CR, NMX, CMX, or RMX in the Infill Priority Area would be developed with residential uses over the next 30 years within a reasonable density range per the City of Fresno “Reasonable Dwelling Unit Per Acre and FAR by Land Use” calculation prepared for the General Plan Build Out assumptions. There are approximately 242.6 acres (363 parcels) of vacant and/or underutilized land zoned CMS, CR, NMX, CMX, and RMX in the City of Fresno Infill Priority Area (**Figure 6**), which could result in a reasonable build out of 12,032 units as shown in **Table 3**.

Because the Project would not result in changes to the land use designation or zone district, the assumed build out would not result in new or additional residential units, and therefore population, beyond what was previously analyzed under the City of Fresno General Plan build out assumptions, in addition to assumptions from other related environmental documents such as the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the General Plan Amendment/Development Code Text Amendment Application No. P22-02413 (SCH 2022070081).

Table 3: Units on Vacant/Underutilized MX Sites for Ministerial Approval

Zone Districts	Acres	Reasonable Density (du/ac)	Reasonable Units *
CMS	9.5	24	208
CMX	93.2	50	4,620
CR	21.0	20	416
NMX	98.5	56	5,408
RMX	20.4	68	1,380
Total	242.6	-	12,032

Note: Each parcel was calculated separately and rounded down to not exceed the reasonable density.

⁴ “Vacant and/or underutilized lands” mean parcels within the City Limits of Fresno that have an existing land use of “vacant parcel,” “parking,” or “open space/ag” per the City of Fresno’s GIS Viewer, and sites along the City of Fresno’s BRT Corridors that are over five (5) acres in size and are currently operated as surface parking lots.

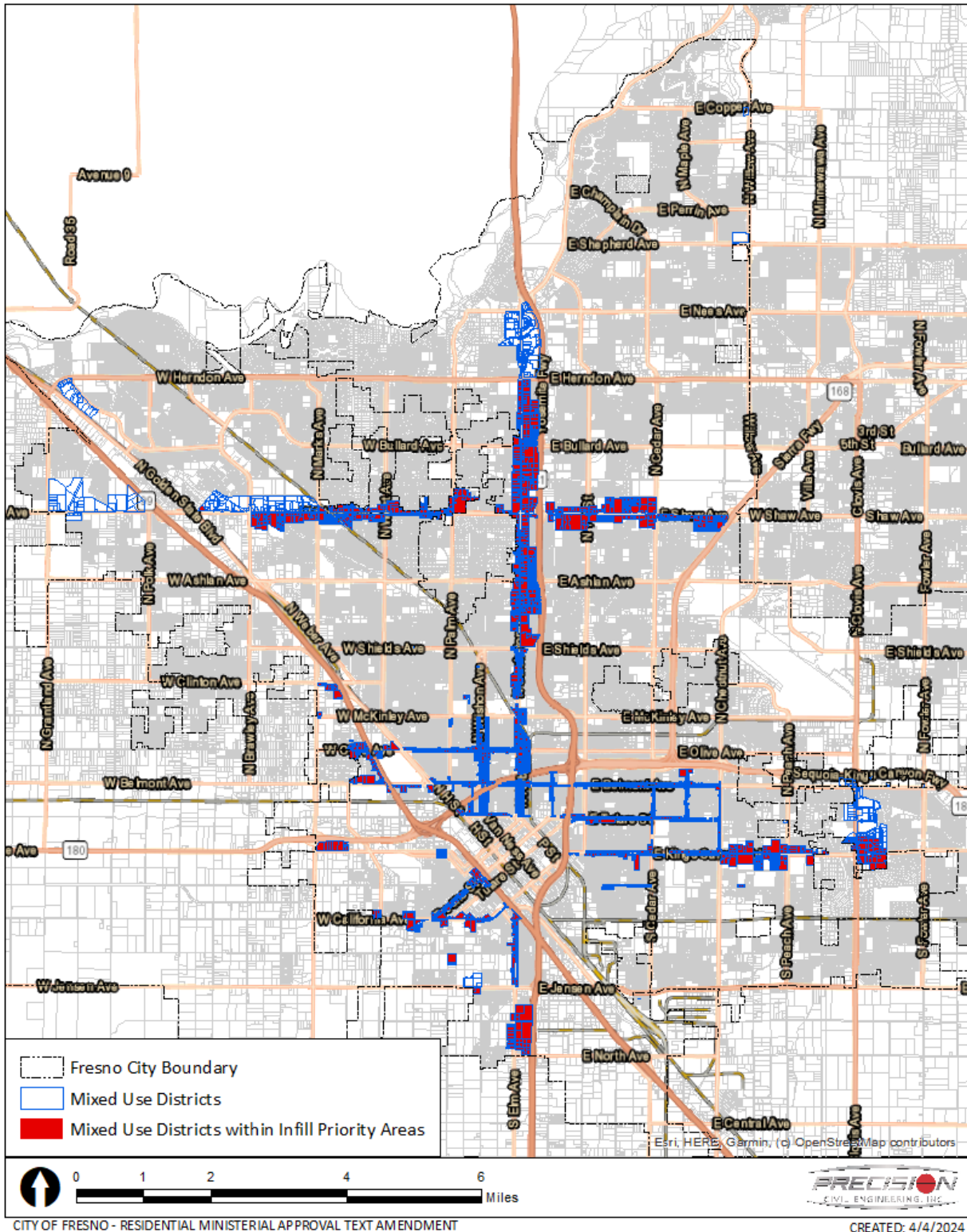


Figure 5: Mixed Use Zoned Sites within Infill Priority Area

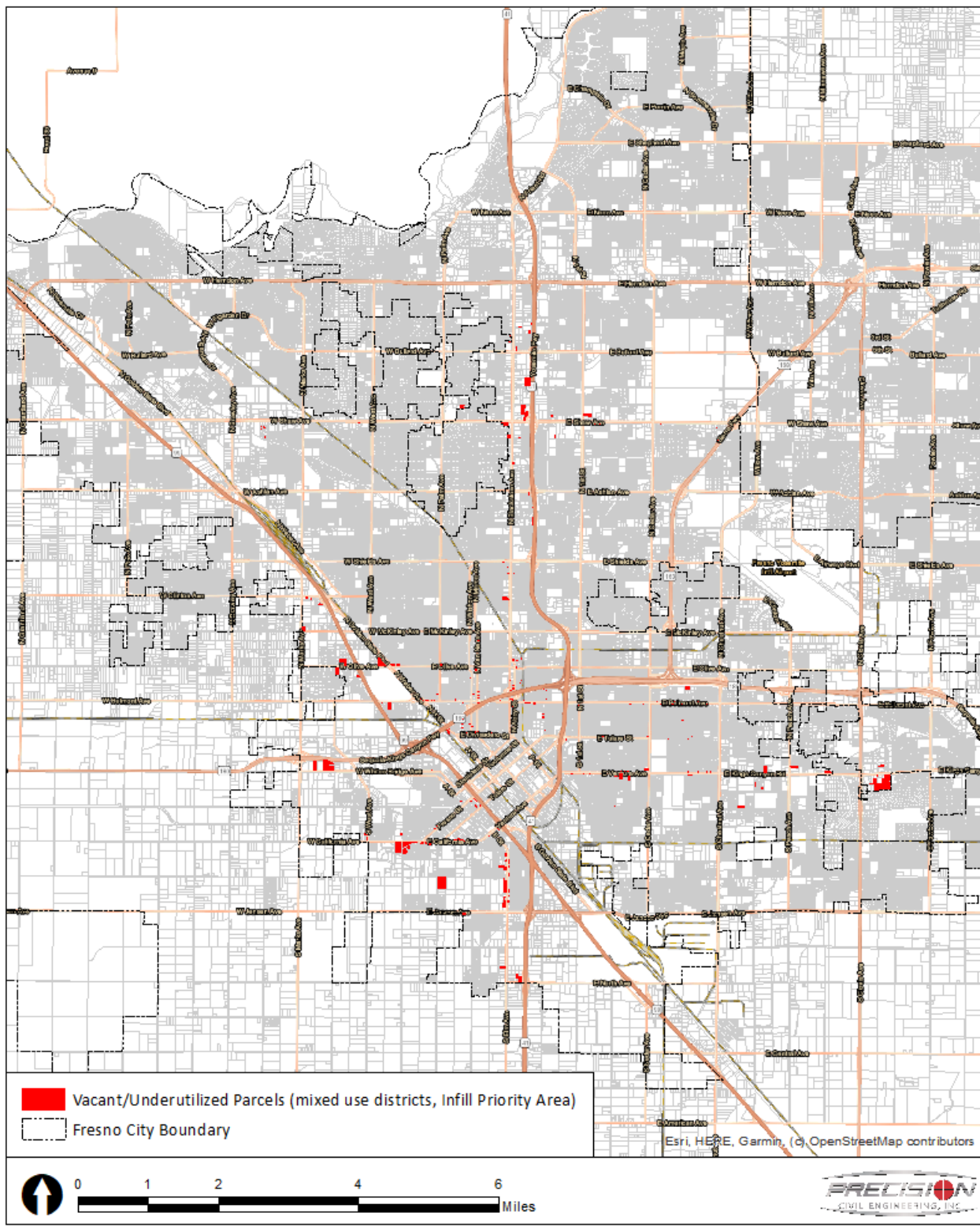


Figure 6: Vacant/Underutilized Parcels (Mixed Use Zoned Sites within Infill Priority Area)

New Residential Development on Office Parcels

This text amendment would allow ministerial approval of new standalone multi-unit residential development on parcels in the O zone district (“Project”). There are approximately 1,373 acres (1,368 parcels) zoned O in the City of Fresno as shown in **Figure 1** (“Project Area”).

For the purposes of the environmental analysis, “multi-unit residential development” means three (3) or more dwelling units on a site or lot as defined by FMC Section 15-6702 (Residential Use Classifications). Types of multiple unit dwellings include townhouses, garden apartments, senior housing developments, and multi-story apartment buildings. This use also includes multi-unit development in which individual units are occupied exclusively by one or more persons 62 years of age or older.

The environmental analysis assumes that a reasonable percentage of vacant and/or underutilized land⁵ zoned O would be developed with residential uses over the next 30 years within a reasonable density range per the City of Fresno “Reasonable Dwelling Unit Per Acre and FAR by Land Use” calculation prepared for the General Plan Build Out assumptions. Approximately 22% (324 acres or 144 parcels) of parcels in the O zone district are vacant or underutilized. These parcels are shown in **Figure 7**.

To determine a reasonable percentage of development, the City of Fresno utilized the Housing Element Annual Progress Reports to determine the typical proportion of multi-family residential development to all residential development, finding that multi-family residential development generally accounts for approximately 20% of all residential development. Since no density is assigned to the Office land use designation or zone district, the environmental analysis applies the reasonable density assumed for the High-Density Residential land use designation/RM-3 zone district which is 34 dwelling units per acre. Therefore, the environmental analysis reasonably assumes that approximately 20% of vacant parcels in the O zone district, or 64 acres out of 324 acres, could be developed with a reasonable build out of 2,176 units over the next 30 years (34 dwelling units multiplied by 64 acres equals 2,176 units).

Based on the City of Fresno’s average household size of 2.79 for renter-occupied units, the 2,176 units could generate approximately 6,071 new residents, thereby increasing the population from 545,564 to 552,635, which would account for an approximately one (1) percent increase in population and would still be within the projections for the region and the City.

⁵ “Vacant and/or underutilized lands” mean parcels within the City Limits of Fresno that have an existing land use of “vacant parcel,” “parking,” or “open space/ag” per the City of Fresno’s GIS Viewer.

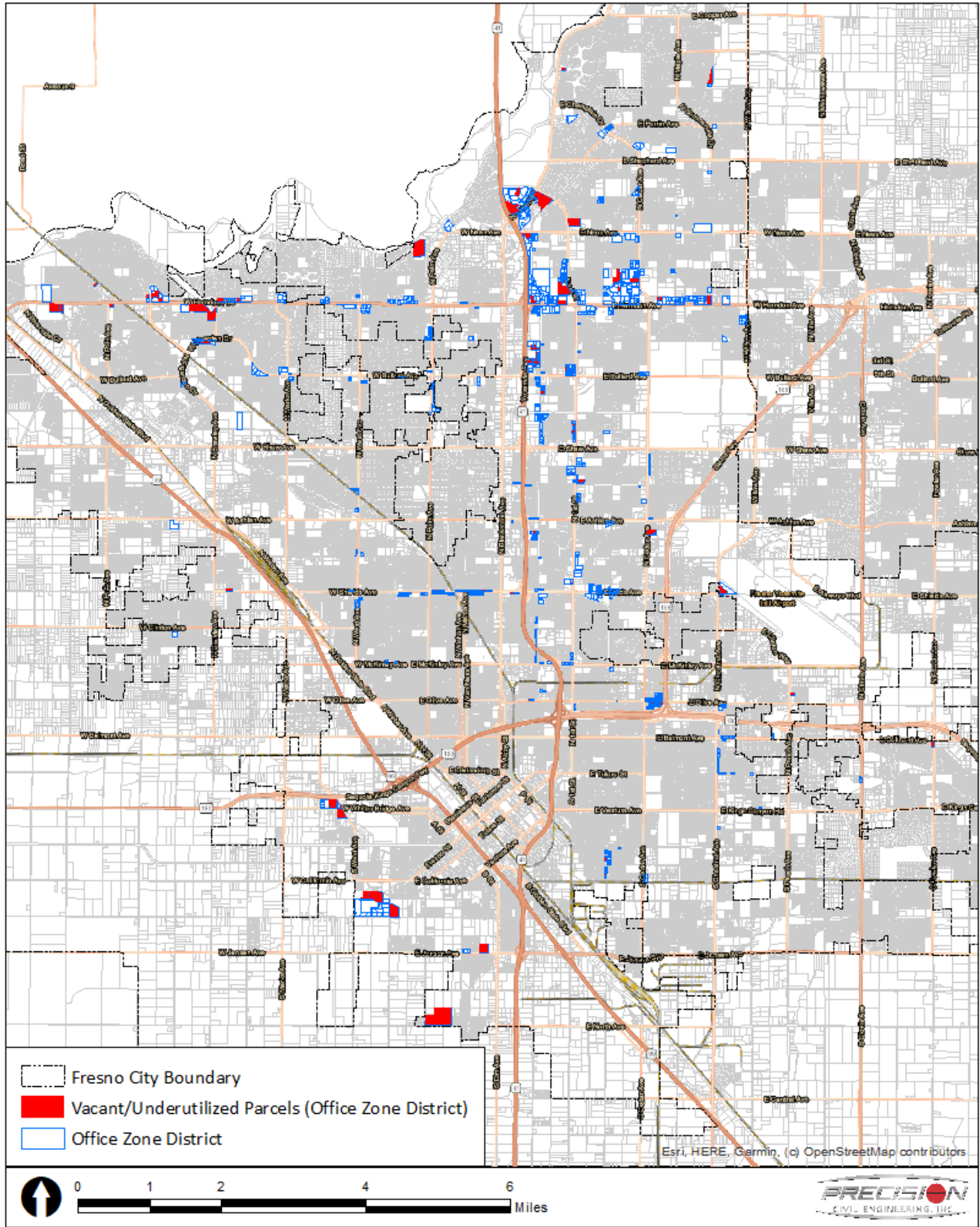


Figure 7: Vacant/Underutilized Parcels (Office Zoned Sites)