

Fresno LC Study

Notice of Intent and proposed Application Information/Language

Contact Information of Applicant:

Sponsoring Agency Name: Fort Bend County, Precinct 2

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Password: GoFresno!77545

Proposed Livable Centers Study Name:

Fresno Livable Centers Study

Study Area Boundary

Noted in the attached exhibit

Area of Interest:

Emerging Centers or Corridors

Statement of Need:

The Fresno "community" is a classic example of the reality and consequences of leapfrog development. Fresno is a rural "community" of linear developments along area roadways bisected by a railway and located adjacent to a landfill and Houston Southwest Airport. New subdivisions surround the area, including Shadow Creek Ranch to the east and Winfield Lakes to the west. It is an area largely lacking basic infrastructure and community needs from connectivity and accessibility to amenities. Rural style roadways generally lack sidewalks and regularly dead end. Many areas lack water and wastewater service. Mustang Bayou poses a flood risk. A single park, accessible only by car, is located in the southeast section of the community.

The Fresno area deserves the opportunity to become a true community. Fort Bend County Precinct 2 is committed to improvement of the area in a manner that allows Fresno to become an attractive, desirable “place” for both existing and future residents. The county is prepared to make capital investments in the area and has recently created a tax increment reinvestment zone to finance improvements and increase local quality of life. What is missing is a detailed and implementable plan for action. A Livable Centers study is the perfect tool to provide a path forward in a manner that allows local voices to be heard while meeting all four goals of the Livable Centers program and setting a national example of solutions to issues resulting from leapfrog development. Additionally, Texas counties have commonly been considered hindered in steering growth due to their lack of regulatory powers. The Fresno Livable Centers study provides an opportunity to showcase how any county throughout Texas can spur redevelopment through the right mix of improvements/investments, incentives, partnership and regulation.

Proposed Cost of Study:

\$300,000 Cost of Study

\$60,000 Ft. Bend County Matching Fund Commitment

LCNI: 22.7

Information Only Questions:

- 1. Please describe the community engagement process utilized in your city or organization? What obstacles have you encountered during this process, and what strategies have you employed to overcome them?*

Fort Bend County elected officials take tremendous pride in maintaining an “open door” policy for all constituents whether speaking directly to their precinct commissioner or at Commissioner’s Court. The Fort Bend County Judge, Commissioners and county staff regularly attend events and meetings throughout the area to stay attuned and to be responsive to constituents. Precinct 2 County Commissioner, staff, and project consultants also host community or project-specific meetings to hear concerns, present solutions and simply gain feedback. The most substantial obstacles are those faced in most communities - gaining feedback from harder to reach populations including those that work multiple jobs, have language barriers, are limited income, or are relatively transient such as renters, among others. Fort Bend County elected officials and staff address this by remaining engaged, showing flexibility, and building trust.

2. *How does your leadership approach and handle adversity or resistance to change within the community?*

Fort Bend County is a fast growing and quickly diversifying county. From dealing with a rural populace resisting the disappearance of their lifestyle to the clash that comes with a mix of cultures and characters Fort Bend County officials have become adept at anticipating and addressing adversity. Most important, Fort Bend County leadership addresses issues by listening with calm and an open mind and, when feasible, responding with a solution. This Livable Centers Study application is one example of listening to the needs of constituents and acting in the most responsible and educational way possible.

3. *If your study encounters resistance, what strategies do you anticipate employing to address these challenges?*

Fresno is a community that has long lacked certain resources but enjoyed a semi-rural lifestyle. However, adjacent areas of the community are evolving and bringing new demands on local infrastructure - while leapfrogging and leaving the community behind in the process. That is why this study and planning process are so critical. We anticipate five strategies. Strategy One: Listen to the residents and property owners in ways both new and old to communicate and collaborate with everyone, including those that have been hardest to historically reach. Strategy Two: Engage actively and regularly so that all constituents see that they have been heard and how their input is being considered alongside other thoughts, facts and more. Strategy Three: Explain decisions and recommendations made throughout the process in a manner that is understandable and shows that decisions make the most sense for the community. Strategy Four: Implement solutions that result from the plan and planning process. In some cases, it may even be possible to act while the process is ongoing. Responsiveness is key. Finally, Strategy Five: Follow up will be important to keep lines of communication and trust open.

Requested Meeting Date:

Meeting complete

Round Two Questions

Definition/Scope (20%)

The potential impact of the proposed Livable Centers Study will be determined based on the study description. The study description should include the goals and vision of the study and how these goals relate to local/regional planning efforts. The project description should describe the:

- *Need and purpose of the study and the desired outcomes.*
- *Impact on vulnerable populations including but not limited to minority and low-income populations, populations with limited English proficiency, senior citizens, limited educational attainment, carless households, and female headed households, etc.*
- *How study sponsor envisions vulnerable populations and community-based organizations (CBOs) being involved in study throughout the project's lifecycle, encompassing the study period, the advancement of study recommendations, and the ongoing progress of implementation.*
- *Proposed study area location and street name boundaries that complements the submitted map. Scale or size of study area should be appropriate and fit the scope and study impact description.*
- *Local significance and potential for the study to serve as a model for others in the region. This includes connection between proposed study area as it relates to other local and other regional planning efforts.*

Question 1: Please define the desired study impacts of local significance and as well as the potential for the study to serve as a model for others in the region. (900 words max - below is currently 899)

Answer 1:

The purpose of the Fresno Livable Centers study is to spur private and public investment in a sustainable, highly connected manner in an area of Fort Bend County suffering the consequences of "leapfrog development." The Fresno "community" is a classic example of the realities and consequences associated with areas considered "too complicated to develop" and subsequently passed over by the private sector. At the same time, Fresno poses an incredible opportunity to be a truly Livable Center if addressed proactively and creatively. Fort Bend County is committed to resolving issues in the area and has assembled a number of tools and partners to make it possible - what it lacks is the plan of action to move forward in a way that is transformative, sustainable and inclusive of current residents.

Fresno faces a variety of issues. It is a rural "community" of linear developments along area roadways bisected by a railway and located adjacent to a landfill and Houston Southwest Airport. New subdivisions surround the area, including Shadow Creek Ranch to the east and Winfield Lakes to the west. It is an area largely lacking basic infrastructure and community needs from connectivity and accessibility to amenities. Rural style roadways lack sidewalks and regularly dead end. Many areas lack water and wastewater service. Mustang Bayou poses a flood risk. A single park, accessible only by car, is located in the southeast section of the community. Poor previous lot and parcel layout complicates the ability to assemble property for large scale redevelopment.

The Livable Centers Need Index appears relatively low for this area, but it is not fully reflective of conditions in the area. An existing conditions summary completed as part of creation of Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 2 provides a glimpse into current conditions. The State of Texas requires that one of several criteria must be met to create a TIRZ. Fresno is one of very few communities that meets EVERY criteria for need. In addition to (or as a result of) physical issues the area is also home to a higher proportion of traditionally at-risk populations. Over forty percent of adults have a high school diploma or less and a similar percentage work blue collar or service jobs. Per capita income (\$29,015) in the area is roughly 63 percent of the county equivalent. The average owner-occupied home value is similarly 65 percent of the value countywide with nearly 10 percent in homes valued at less than \$100,000. The diversity index is relatively high (81.1) with the majority of the population Black, Other or Multiracial (87%). Approximately 37 percent are persons of Hispanic Origin.

Fort Bend County is fully committed to improving the Fresno area in a manner that involves and elevates the existing area residents as part of the planning and implementation process, but also as long term beneficiaries. Fort Bend County Precinct 2 Commissioner Grady Prestage served as commissioner in this area during the early 1990s and built a track record of close coordination with the community to address issues, including creation of a Fresh Water Supply District that has slowly but steadily made water and sewer service improvements in the area. However, as a result of redistricting, Fresno was removed from Precinct 2. Two decades later, Fresno is back within the precinct and the Commissioner is focused on rebuilding his relationship with the community through community meetings, digitally and other methods. He

identified a series of immediate needs and has set out to address those to rebuild community trust and involvement and in advance of a true plan for advancement of the area. The Livable Centers study provides that plan but equally important, serves as that next step in close and active collaboration with residents and organizations in the area while also inviting a new series of private, public and nonprofit entities to the table.

The proposed area to be covered by the Fresno Livable Centers study is bounded by what would be a connection between unfinished Lake Olympia Parkway and W. Broadway Streets to the north, Pearland and Fort Bend County limits to the east, SH 6 to the south, and Long Point Creek and Teal Bend Boulevard to the west. The area includes some of what is considered "New Fresno" - subdivisions such as Teal Run and Andover Farms but is largely comprised of what is considered "Old Fresno" - the series of older linear developments, vacant tracts and limited commercial/industrial activity.

The importance of this study cannot be understated - to the local community, the prosperity and quality of life in the region, and to other areas facing similarly difficult circumstances. This Livable Centers study serves as a model in three ways. First, it can provide creative solutions that overcome major issues and spur reinvestment in a manner that is both sustainable but also reflective and considerate of the character of the area. Second, many areas throughout Texas and the United States are victims of "leapfrog development" and this plan can serve as a model for not only addressing that, but doing so in a way that positively impacts both the immediate and surrounding area. Last, but equally important, Texas counties have commonly been considered hindered in steering growth due to their lack of regulatory powers. The Fresno Livable Centers study provides an opportunity to showcase how any county throughout Texas can spur redevelopment by using the right mix of improvements/investments, incentives, partnership, regulation and tenacity.

Fulfilling Program Goals - Create Multi-Modal Travel Choices by Facilitating a Range of Transportation Mode Opportunities (30%)

Please describe how the proposed Livable Centers Study aims to:

- *Make air quality improvements from mode shift.*
- *Improve multimodal connectivity with existing neighborhoods and developments.*
- *Improve pedestrian/bicyclist safety.*

- *Strengthen accessibility to transit.*

Question 2: Create Multi-Modal Travel Choices. (300 words max – below is currently 297)

Answer 2:

Movement through the Fresno community is currently dominated near exclusively by automobile traffic on a network that is disconnected internally and regionally, unplanned (with small exception to the limited number of subdivisions in “New Fresno”), and in poor design and condition. Movement is impeded by freight rail traffic that successfully separates sections of the community. Sidewalks are nearly nonexistent outside of newer subdivisions. Bicycles and pedestrians are expected to share most local roads with vehicles in high-risk conditions, including rural open ditches and limited roadway width. Existing transit activity is limited to demand-response service through Fort Bend Transit that is charged with service to the entirety of the county.

FM 521 – the major arterial connecting Fresno to Pearland and the greater region, is currently undergoing improvement to enhance conditions for commuter automobile traffic and truck activity (including service to the landfill). Fort Bend County is currently designing improvements to a series of local roadways that have long been neglected (several of which were initially designed as private, minimally improved roadways). Improvements are proposed to include sidewalks where possible simply to initiate kernels of a pedestrian network.

The Fresno Livable Centers study would represent the first holistic effort at both improving connectivity and conditions as well as moving the area toward multimodal solutions. It will look at mobility in the area from a different lens and reinterpret the many modes accommodated within local rights-of-way. It can “connect the dots” to make it possible and desirable to travel to existing and future areas of Fresno. It will propose and prioritize improvements for a bike/ped network, including connection to neighborhoods as well as future amenities, commercial areas, and services and amenities. Last, it provides an opportunity to creatively but realistically expand the use of transit for local and regional connectivity.

Fulfilling Program Goals - Create Resilient Quality Places (10%)

Please describe how the proposed Livable Centers Study aims to:

- *Positively transform a study area.*
- *Promote better utilization of existing and/or planned community infrastructure (i.e., infill development).*
- *Integrate green space and preserve natural resources.*
- *Incorporate flood recovery, mitigation, and other resiliency elements.*

Question 3: Create Resilient Quality Places. (300 words max - currently 293 words)

Answer 3:

Fresno currently has an extraordinarily limited number of places to play, shop, dine, gather, relax or simply socialize. Mustang Park, in the far southeast section of the area, is currently the only amenity that could potentially be considered a “place”. All other activities and spaces of note require a trip to other communities throughout the area. Fort Bend Precinct 2 Commissioner Prestage is currently taking steps to add recreation opportunities to the community. An enhanced community center is proposed at Mustang Park, including the possibility of an indoor swimming pool. A second park - Sundial Park - is in the works, as is a proposed Boys and Girls Club with proximity to local elementary schools.

The Livable Centers study offers an opportunity to consider the specific types of places needed in Fresno and to provide them in a manner that increases equity throughout the community and integrates and connects them to existing and proposed neighborhoods. It will allow for recognition and creative solutions to overcome barriers facing placemaking, including the current lack of infrastructure, difficulties in acquiring and assembling land, overall lack of connectivity, and the current dearth of commercial or social spaces. Fresno may not be conducive to high-density, mixed-use placemaking; however, it could potentially support a network of strategic and highly connected, limited scale commercial/mixed use and public places. More, creative placemaking could also allow Fresno to take stronger advantage of its assets such as green spaces along Mustang Bayou, as well as any other “green infrastructure” that results from flood reduction projects in the area.

While lack of infrastructure has hindered growth in the community, it also provides the opportunity for the Livable Centers study to consider a future that strategically places infrastructure to promote infill as well as maximize resources.

Fulfilling Program Goals - Promote Safe and Equitable Infrastructure (10%)

Please describe how the proposed Livable Centers Study aims to:

- *Create or improve connectivity, “last mile” infrastructure and amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists*
- *Reduce negative impacts of defined barriers to pedestrian and bicyclists (e.g., intersections, highways, railroads, bayous, network gaps, etc.)*
- *Promote access between public right of way and adjacent land use for non-vehicular traffic*
- *Explore strategies for vehicular parking that complement a high-quality pedestrian-bicyclist environment.*

Question 4: Promote Equitable and Resilient Infrastructure. (300 words max - currently 254 words)

Answer 4:

Rural development patterns, by nature, are typically not conducive to promoting an equitable (or even available) system of mode choice and that has been exacerbated in Fresno as a result of “leapfrog development and a highly disconnected mobility network. The exception, to an extent, can be found in the subdivisions that represent “New Fresno” which include sidewalks and opportunities for on-street cycling. However, even there, mode choice largely ends upon departure from a subdivision. The situation is compounded by the presence of major roadways such as FM-521 and the rail line that successfully bisect the community with little to no consideration for mode choice.

The Livable Centers study will allow for consideration of a more robust multi-modal system that overcomes major obstacles such as poor condition and design of rural corridors, the high-speed corridors such as FM-521, and the absence of destinations (along with the ability to reach them without a vehicle). Equally important, it provides an opportunity to strategically build a multi-modal system that is worth using by offering the level of safety, convenience and enjoyment needed to choose walking, cycling or transit over travel by car. By considering and creatively incorporating the necessary details from “first mile” to “last mile” the Livable Centers study will increase the likelihood that residents will choose an alternative to vehicular travel. This can include immediate access to a sidewalk, bike lane, shared use path, or trail upon departing a home as well as consideration for safe and enjoyable travel through parking areas to reach a park, business or similar place.

Fulfilling Program Goals - Promote Economic Development and Housing Diversity (10%)

Please describe how the proposed Livable Centers Study aims to:

- *Connect to existing infrastructure and/or serve as a catalyst for investment/development.*
- *Incentivize an improvement in the range of housing options.*
- *Increase walkability/bikeability of a ½-mile radius of job and/or activity centers within the proposed study area.*
- *Promote the development practices which emphasize design considerations for pedestrian, transit, and non-vehicular access and connectivity (e.g., transit-oriented development)*

Question 5: Promote Economic Development and Housing. (300 words max - currently 300 words)

Answer 5:

The Fresno Livable Centers study is intended to spur private investment that can range from a homeowner deciding to improve an existing home to new commercial and residential development and to do so in a way that is highly sustainable and valuable to not only the Fresno community but also interesting to the surrounding area. It is intended to make Fresno a place worth staying and worth visiting. Doing so will require substantial improvements related to housing and economic development.

The Fresno community offers a housing stock that is largely owner-occupied and consists of two options - rural and subdivision single family homes. Density is equally limited and "missing middle" options for housing are nonexistent. The area is equally deficient in commercial activity for dining, shopping, services or employment. To find a greater variety of housing options or commercial opportunities the residents of Fresno must travel outside of the community.

The Fresno Livable Centers study provides the opportunity to bring increased diversity to housing options and do so in a manner that is high quality, available to a range of income levels, and uniquely Fresno. The study should consider a range of housing options in patterns and a range of designs and densities, including the possibility of limited scale higher density and mixed use activity. Solutions such as accessory dwelling units can offer existing residents the benefit of added income and investment. Incorporation of well designed duplexes, triplexes, courtyard designs and more can also help to inject new housing that is affordable and provide options for households of all varieties.

Similarly, strategically placed commercial centers can result in shopping and socializing spaces that are connected to the community regardless of mode choice while offering the added benefits of locally generated employment and sales tax that supports area county assistance districts.

Capacity to Implement (20%)

The capacity to implement will be assessed based on the level of commitment demonstrated, including the sponsor's ability to successfully complete the proposed Livable Centers Study in the allocated time, stakeholder involvement, and the ability of the sponsor to track the implementation of study recommendations by type and funding amount after the completion of the study. The commitment statement should describe the:

- *Staff and/or departments of the sponsoring agency that will be involved in coordinating of the study effort.*
- *Level of support from key sponsor officials (such as city council, management district board, agency head, etc.). Please include a list of names, titles, and entities. Sponsor's commitment to be an active sponsor throughout the study. This includes sponsor's commitment to advancing study recommendations and to ongoing implementation progress (sponsor commits to providing a progress update every two years with Livable Centers staff)*
- *Sponsor's high-level plan for implementation of recommendations after the completion of study. This could include how the sponsor will integrate the study into other plans (e.g., comprehensive plan).*
- *Level of support from the local community and potential project partners. Demonstration of local/community support may include but is not limited to:*
 - *Letters of support from community or neighborhood groups, partner agencies, local businesses, or other stakeholders (please include in Attachments).*
 - *Local plans or other studies that have identified Livable Centers Program goals as a community or neighborhood priority (i.e., visioning exercise, comprehensive plan, or other study).*

Question 6: Capacity to Implement. (500 words max - below is currently 465))

Answer 6:

Fort Bend County leadership and particularly Precinct 2 Commissioner Prestage have done the hard but necessary work of laying the foundation for implementation of improvements resulting from the Fresno Livable Centers Study. Fresh Water Supply District (FWSD) No. 1 was created to address water and sewer service. Fort Bend County negotiated an agreement with the owners of the Blue Ridge Landfill for a "tipping fee" to be used to fund local projects, including improvements to local corridors, infrastructure and services. The county has created two County Assistance Districts in the area funded through sales tax (including e-commerce). Most recently, the county established Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) No. 2 in the area. Additionally, Fort Bend County has proven creative in use of existing funds to solve problems, including use of HUD Section 108 loans and bonds supported through the tipping fee. All of these tools, alongside tools such as Chapter 381 incentives and use of local CDBG funds are available for implementation of improvements resulting from the Fresno Livable Centers study. Results of the study can be directly integrated into existing plans and programs such as the Fort Bend County Consolidated Plan and local capital improvement programs while plans for others such as the Project Plan and Reinvestment Zone Financing Plan for TIRZ No. 2 were designed in advance to integrate and act upon the results of the Livable Centers study.

In advance of this study and in an effort to address immediate needs, Commissioner Prestage established a ten point "Fresno Plan". The effort is designed to quickly make improvements and build community trust by showing both responsiveness and an ability to implement solutions. The Fresno Plan addresses issues such as improving streets that were initially designed as private, unsupported roads to improved public safety in the area. The Fresno Plan focuses on stabilizing the community and provides an initial foundation upon which to build the more holistic and forward thinking Fresno Livable Centers study.

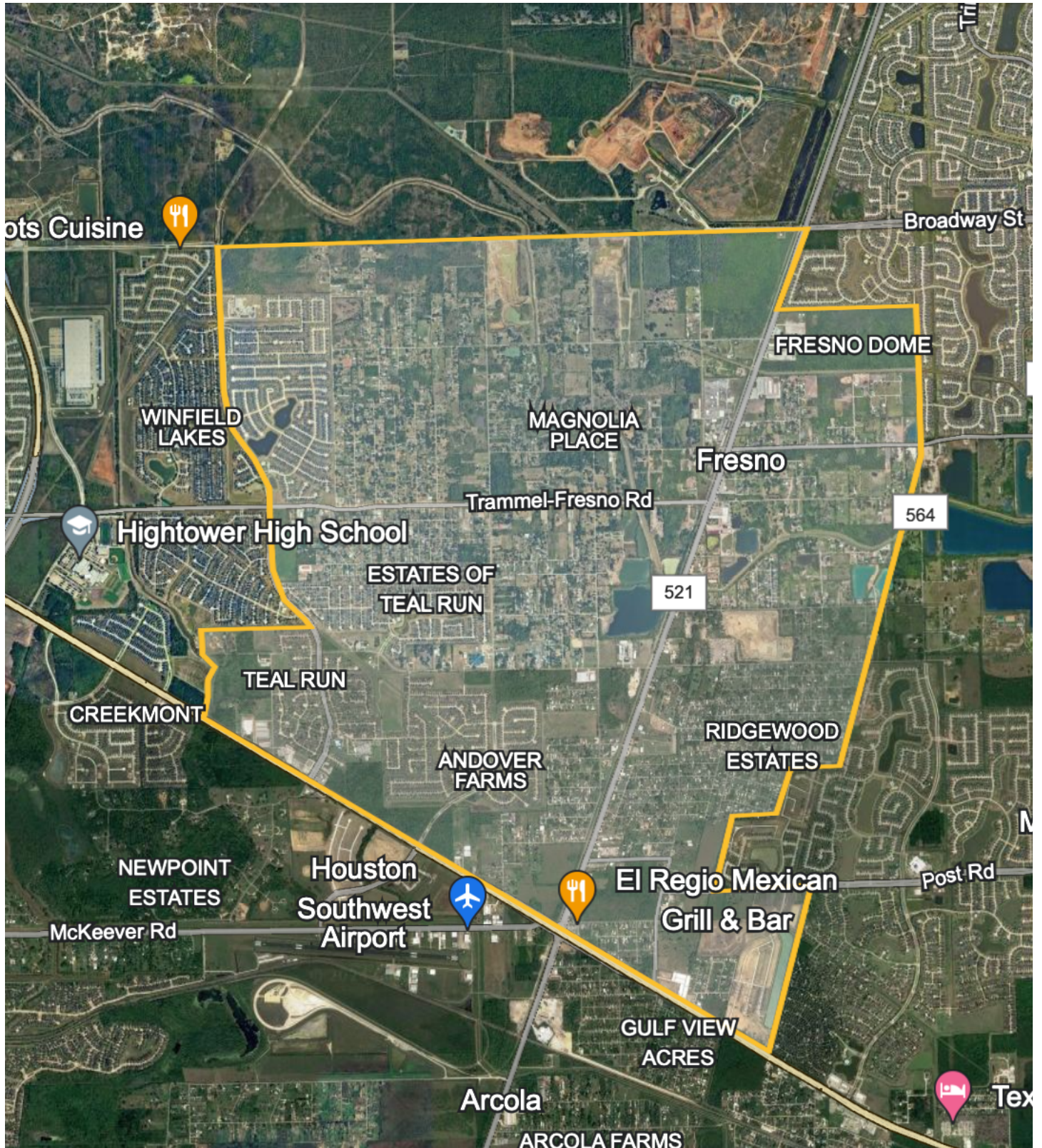
Fort Bend County staff and leadership, as well as those from partner entities are poised to play an active role in both the planning process and implementation of solutions. This includes a number of staff and departments of Fort Bend County, particularly the office of County Commissioner Precinct 2, as well as the departments of Community Development (Carol Borrego, Director), Economic Opportunity & Development (Carlos Guzman, Director), Engineering, and Health and Human Services. Commissioner Prestage will be actively engaged alongside department leadership such as Mr. Guzman and

Ms. Borrego, but also with board members and directors of a number of the partner organizations that will aid in active implementation of the plan.

Fort Bend County enjoys broad support for this effort from federally and state elected officials to local organizations with an interest in the long-term success of Fresno.

Proposed Fresno Livable Centers Study Area

Fort Bend County, Precinct 2



Texas House of Representatives



RON REYNOLDS
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

June 5, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027

Ms. Mergo,

I am pleased to support Fort Bend County in their effort to conduct a Livable Centers study for the community of Fresno. I have had the privilege to serve as the State Representative for this area since 2011. On behalf of my constituents and friends in Fresno I can assure you that the Livable Centers study would be both beneficial and implemented.

The Fresno community faces a number of challenges. It is a community with rural roots and rural improvements. Development has chosen to leapfrog the community rather than attempt to invest in upgrading local infrastructure. Roadways are in varying degrees of repair with very limited sidewalks and almost no sense of connectivity. The area is constrained due to limited water and wastewater improvements and the stormwater management depends upon an antiquated network of ditches and the capacity of Mustang Bayou. Amenities for the area consist of a single park that is separated from the majority of the community by a rail line. The rural development pattern complicates redevelopment. More, the community is located between an airport and a dump site.

Fort Bend County is committed to improvement of the Fresno community. The county has recently put a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone in place to assist in redevelopment efforts. What is needed is a plan that can prioritize improvements and promote a sustainable, well-connected Fresno – one with the infrastructure and amenities to support walkability, access to nearby employment and shopping, and high quality of life.

I am very excited about the future for Fresno and I feel that with this study Fort Bend County and other partners can make improvements that will allow the area to become the emerging center that it deserves to be. Please consider this letter as my consent and solid support for a Livable Centers application for the area. I strongly urge the Houston-Galveston Area Council to award Fort Bend County the requested \$300,000 grant needed to not only complete the plan, but to do so in a truly comprehensive, action-focused manner.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Reynolds".

State Representative Ron Reynolds, District 27

Capitol Office:

P.O. Box 2910
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(512) 463-0494
(512) 463-1403 Fax



Fort Bend County • District 27
RON.REYNOLDS@HOUSE.STATE.TX.US

District Office:

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COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 2

Fort Bend County, Texas

Grady Prestage

Commissioner

May 31, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027
Phone: (713) 993-4520

Ms. Mergo,

As Fort Bend County Commissioner for Precinct 2 it is my esteemed honor to provide this Sponsor Support Letter that accompanies our request for an award of \$300,000 to complete a Livable Centers study for the community of Fresno. I have had the privilege of serving all of the fine residents of Precinct 2 since taking office in 1990. During my many years in office I have come to know our communities very well. I can tell you in all sincerity that no area deserves this opportunity more than Fresno.

Fresno is not a city, town or village. It has no municipal status, no property taxes or governance system to directly address needed improvements. It is a remnant community from a different time when Fort Bend County was largely rural. Today much of our county has developed into bustling urban and suburban areas, but development has bypassed Fresno. Many of the area's roadways are still rural – some still "paved" in gravel or dirt. Ditches run alongside roadways instead of sidewalks. It is a place where major roadways pass through, not "to" and that shows by the limited options for shopping, eating or even working locally. It is a community divided by a major rail line with a single park that is impossible to reach other than by car. It is a place where amenities are hard to find and the future even harder to consider.

True, this community has its issues. However, where others see challenge, I see opportunity. I see a bayou that can become both a more effective stormwater drainage channel and a green space that connects the community. I see places and destinations for shopping, dining, entertainment, and employment but done in a creative and sustainable way. I see neighborhoods instead of subdivisions that are amenitized and walkable and bikeable, but built in a way that respects the culture and history of the community. Most important, I still see the residents of current Fresno in future Fresno, all thanks to a Livable Centers study that considered their prosperity and ability to remain in their community a priority.

As redevelopment and revitalization partners we can make this a reality, but doing so requires your help. We need a plan. We have seen the impact on other communities that have participated in the Livable Centers program. We want Fresno to be your next Livable Centers success story. We want Fresno to be your BEST success story. At Fort Bend County, and particularly here in Precinct 2, we are ready to do our part. In fact, we've already started. I am proud to have recently created a tax increment reinvestment zone that overlays this area in preparation for funding a portion of the capital improvements needed in Fresno.

On behalf of our friends and constituents that call this county and this community "home" I strongly urge you to award our county the full \$300,000 necessary to complete the Fresno Livable Centers study. I look forward to our partnership and the progress we can all make together.

Regards,

Grady Prestage
Fort Bend County Commissioner, Precinct 2



COUNTY JUDGE
Fort Bend County, Texas

The Honorable KP George
County Judge

(281) 341-8608
Fax (281) 341-8609

June 21, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027
Phone: [\(713\) 993-4520](tel:7139934520)

Ms. Mergo,

As Chief Elected Official of Fort Bend County, it is my honor to advocate for a Livable Centers study for the community of Fresno and to also pledge a matching fund commitment in the event that our request for a Livable Centers study is granted. We are requesting a grant award of \$300,000 to complete the Livable Centers study for Fresno. With a Livable Centers Need Index Score of 22.7, we estimate a required matching fund commitment of \$60,000. As County Judge I am authorized to place an item on the Commissioners Court agenda for the necessary amount and will be pleased to do so upon notification of a grant award.

In Fort Bend County we take tremendous pride in all of our communities. We recognize the challenges facing Fresno and are prepared to help bring positive change to the area. We strongly believe that a Livable Centers Study will help us to define needs and opportunities in the community and provide a set of actionable strategies to build upon.

On behalf of all of Commissioners Court I thank you for this opportunity. I urge your organization to award our request for \$300,000 to complete a Livable Centers study for Fresno and stand ready to honor our matching fund commitment when it is appropriate to do so.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "KP George". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

KP George
County Judge, Fort Bend County

AL GREEN
9 TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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**COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES**

RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT & INVESTIGATIONS

MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS &
MONETARY POLICY

MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
DIGITAL ASSETS, FINANCIAL
TECHNOLOGY, AND INCLUSION

June 11, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027

Re: Fort Bend County's Application for the Houston-Galveston Area Council Livable Centers Study Program

Dear Ms. Mergo:

I write to request that the Houston-Galveston Area Council give full and fair consideration to Fort Bend County in their application for the Livable Centers Study program.

According to information provided to my office by the requestor, as a rural community, Fresno has faced challenges in efforts to develop and upgrade local infrastructure. Roadways are still rural in character with minimal sidewalks and little to no connectivity. There has been limited water and wastewater improvements in the area, while stormwater management depends upon an outdated network of ditches and the capacity of Mustang Bayou. Additionally, a rail line runs through the Fresno community, and for many the only park in the area is difficult to access. The community is surrounded by subdivisions, an airport, and a landfill.

Fort Bend County is requesting a Livable Centers study for Fresno as a step toward improvement of the community that can also serve as an example for other counties and communities that struggle with development efforts. Improvements that promote a sustainable, well-connected Fresno are prioritized, including the infrastructure and amenities that support walkability, access to nearby employment and shopping, and high quality of life.

As such, I ask that that the Houston-Galveston Area Council give full and fair consideration of the Fort Bend County's application to the Livable Centers Study program. Should you require additional information, please contact my Chief of Staff, Scott Bell, by email at Scott.Bell@mail.house.gov or phone at 202-225-7508.

Sincerely,



Al Green
Member of Congress

***Progenitor of Aug. 20th as
Slavery Remembrance Day***

***Scion of the Enslaved Africans –
Sacrificed to Make America Great***



BORRIS L. MILES

STATE SENATOR • DISTRICT 13

COMMITTEES: CRIMINAL JUSTICE • HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES • NATURAL RESOURCES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • NOMINATIONS • TRANSPORTATION

June 21, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027
Phone: (713) 993-4520

Ms. Mergo,

As State Senator for District 13, it is my pleasure to provide my strong support for Fort Bend County in their application to the Houston-Galveston Area Council to conduct a Livable Centers study for the community of Fresno.

The Fresno community faces a variety of challenges. New development has occurred around the community, but largely avoided Fresno. Roadways, some of which are still dirt or gravel, are in varying degrees of repair. Connectivity is limited. Sidewalks are almost nonexistent. The area has limited water and wastewater improvements. The stormwater management system consists of rural ditches and the limited capacity of Mustang Bayou. Amenities for the area consist of a single park that is separated from the majority of the community by a rail line. The rural development pattern makes redevelopment difficult. More, the community is located between an airport and a dump site.

I am confident that Fort Bend County is committed to improvement of the Fresno community. The Livable Centers study will provide a much needed plan that can engage the community, prioritize improvements and promote a sustainable, well-connected Fresno – one with the infrastructure and amenities to support walkability, access to nearby employment and shopping, and high quality of life. That plan can be used to rally a variety of partners, resources and neighbors to make improvements with a common vision for a bright, sustainable future for Fresno.

I strongly urge the Houston-Galveston Area Council to award Fort Bend County the requested \$300,000 grant needed to not only complete the plan, but to do so in a truly comprehensive, action-focused manner.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Borris L. Miles", with a long, sweeping underline.

Borris L. Miles
Senator, District 13

CAPITOL OFFICE:
P.O. Box 12068
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
(512) 463-0113
FAX: (512) 463-0006
DIAL 711 FOR RELAY CALLS

CENTRAL HOUSTON OFFICE:
5302 ALMEDA ROAD, SUITE A
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004
(713) 665-8322
FAX: (713) 665-0009

NORTHEAST OFFICE:
3300 LYONS AVENUE, SUITE 301
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77020
(713) 223-0387
FAX: (713) 223-0524

FORT BEND OFFICE:
2440 TEXAS PARKWAY, SUITE 110
MISSOURI CITY, TEXAS 77489
(281) 261-2360
FAX: (281) 261-4726

FORT  BEND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
CONVENTION AND VISITORS SERVICES



June 4, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027

Ms. Mergo,

I am writing to convey my support for Fort Bend County in their application to the Houston-Galveston Area Council to conduct a Livable Centers study for the community of Fresno. The Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce (FBCC) is committed to be the advocate for business excellence and recognizes its role in identifying and establishing positions on critical issues, local, state, and federal, affecting job creation, economic development, and the overall vitality of the region.

The Fresno community faces a variety of challenges. New development has occurred around the community, but largely avoided Fresno. Roadways, some of which are still dirt or gravel, are in varying degrees of repair. Connectivity is limited. Sidewalks are almost nonexistent. The area has limited water and wastewater improvements. The stormwater management system consists of rural ditches and the limited capacity of Mustang Bayou. Amenities for the area consist of a single park that is separated from most of the community by a rail line. The rural development pattern makes redevelopment difficult. More, the community is located between an airport and a dump site.

I am confident that Fort Bend County is committed to improvement of the Fresno community. The Livable Centers study will provide a much-needed plan that can engage the community, prioritize improvements, and promote a sustainable, well-connected Fresno - one with the infrastructure and amenities to support walkability, access to nearby employment and shopping, and high quality of life. That plan can be used to rally a variety of partners, resources, and neighbors to make improvements with a common vision for a bright, sustainable future for Fresno.

I strongly urge the Houston-Galveston Area Council to award Fort Bend County the requested \$300,000 grant needed to not only complete the plan, but to do so in a truly comprehensive, action-focused manner.

Sincerely,



Keri Schmidt
President & CEO

June 16, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027

Ms. Mergo,

I am writing to indicate my support for Fort Bend County in their application to the Houston-Galveston Area Council to conduct a Livable Centers study for the community of Fresno.

The Fresno community faces a variety of challenges. New development has occurred around the community, but largely avoided Fresno. Roadways, some of which are still dirt or gravel, are in varying degrees of repair. Connectivity is limited. Sidewalks are almost nonexistent. The area has limited water and wastewater improvements. The stormwater management system consists of rural ditches and the limited capacity of Mustang Bayou. Amenities for the area consist of a single park that is separated from the majority of the community by a rail line. The rural development pattern makes redevelopment difficult. Moreover, the community is located between an airport and a dump site.

I am confident that Fort Bend County is committed to the improvement of the Fresno community. The Livable Centers study will provide a much-needed plan that can engage the community, prioritize improvements and promote a sustainable, well-connected Fresno – one with the infrastructure and amenities to support walkability, access to nearby employment and shopping, and high quality of life. That plan can be used to rally a variety of partners, resources and neighbors to make improvements with a common vision for a bright, sustainable future for Fresno.

I strongly urge the Houston-Galveston Area Council to award Fort Bend County the requested \$300,000 grant needed to not only complete the plan, but to do so in a truly comprehensive, action-focused manner.

Regards,



Roger Adamson
Chief Executive Officer
The George Foundation



Edison
Arts Foundation
A 501(c) 3 non-profit fine arts organization

Family. Community. Arts
Strengthening the Family. Bridging the Community. Developing the Arts

June 20, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Mergo
Program Manager
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027
Phone: (713) 993-4520

Ms. Mergo,

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I strongly urge the Houston-Galveston Area Council to award Fort Bend County the requested \$300,000 grant needed to not only complete the plan, but to do so in a truly comprehensive, action-focused manner.

Regards,

Charity Carter
President
Edison Arts Foundation