



Fresno County Regional Trails Plan

Final April 2021



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Information contained in this document is for planning purposes and should not be used for final design of any project. All results, recommendations, concept drawings, cost opinions, and commentary contained herein are based on limited data and information and on existing conditions that are subject to change. Further analysis and engineering design are necessary prior to implementing any of the recommendations contained herein.

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Photo source: VRPA Technologies

Executive Summary

It is an exciting time for Fresno County which is currently experiencing strong population growth and recently reached over one million residents. The Fresno Council of Governments (COG) and the County of Fresno are actively planning for the area’s growth and are committed to providing a high quality-of-life to their residents, including ample recreational opportunities for people to walk, hike, bike, and horseback ride. The creation and implementation of this 2021 Fresno County Regional Trails Plan underscores Fresno COG’s and County’s commitment to providing healthy, active, and safe ways for people to use the countywide trail system.

Fresno Council of Governments (COG) and the County of Fresno recognize that they must efficiently maintain their extensive trail system and wisely invest in system expansion to not only accommodate existing residents but also plan for the influx of new residents and visitors. The trail system provides residents and visitors with access to the county’s natural beauty – ranging from historic orchards in the San Joaquin Valley to the scenic Sierra Nevada Foothills – making Fresno County a desirable place to call home. Residents and visitors alike are interested in additional opportunities to access the outdoors on foot, bike, or horse – a desire which has been elevated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2021 Fresno County Regional Trails Plan (Plan) is the result of over a year of community engagement, detailed analyses of existing conditions, and trails system planning and project prioritization. This Plan builds upon the 2018 Fresno County Regional Active Transportation Plan which was focused on both on- and off-street walking and bicycling facilities throughout the county. Unlike its 2018 predecessor, this Plan is exclusively focused on off-street trails and trail connections in the unincorporated areas of Fresno County. This document will be combined with the County bicycle master plan to create a County active transportation master plan.

The Plan is centered around five major goals, including:



Livability: enhance livability by integrating trail systems into community activity



Connectivity: develop an accessible and well-connected system of trail routes in urban, rural, and open space areas



Mobility: create active transportation options for recreational and utilitarian trips



Collaboration: collaborate with local jurisdictions, organizations, and the community to plan, coordinate, implement, and maintain a countywide trail system



Economic Development: leverage economic development opportunities for local businesses and tourism by increasing the use of trails

The Plan provides a comprehensive vision for trails projects and priorities in both the near-term and long-term. Trail recommendations were informed by in-depth data analysis; input received from community members, stakeholders, and COG and County staff; and best practices in trail planning. In addition, three key principles guided trail project recommendations, including:



Increase access to recreational opportunities



Prioritize equity



Enhance regional connectivity

Finally, the Plan includes a detailed implementation strategy – including project prioritization, potential funding and partnership opportunities, and resources for trail construction and maintenance – to foster efficient, timely, and effective execution of Plan recommendations. By using this Plan as a blueprint, Fresno County will be well-equipped to carry out future expansions and ongoing maintenance of its already impressive trails system.



Chapter 1: Introduction

About the Plan

The Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG) and County of Fresno initiated The Fresno Regional Trails Master Plan (Plan) to boost the access to, convenience and safety of recreational trails across the County. The Plan focuses on unpaved recreational trails and paved shared-use paths in the unincorporated portions of Fresno County (outside of city boundaries), including county islands within incorporated cities. The Plan will allow Fresno County to capitalize on its natural beauty and mild climate and leverage its existing trail system to expand recreational trail opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, and horse-back riding in all areas of the county.

Setting and Planning Background

Fresno County features unpaved trails in the Sierra Nevada foothills to gravel levee routes along irrigation canals to paved sidepaths adjacent to streets in urbanized areas, owned by a variety of agencies. Recreational trail users traveling in the northeastern and southeastern quadrants of the County have

access to trails along the San Joaquin and Kings Rivers and in the Sierra Nevada mountains which includes the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Hikers in northwestern Fresno County can also access trails along the San Joaquin River and hikers in southwestern Fresno County can access trails in the Bureau of Land Management lands.

Other areas of the county, however, lack the same density or geographic distribution of trails. While the valley floor of Fresno County is generally flat and the area's temperate climate allows for recreational trail use for most of the year, long distances between incorporated cities and hot summers provide challenges to creating a favorable non-motorized transportation environment.

The original Fresno County Regional Bikeways Plan was released in 1981, and multiple large- and small-scale trail projects have been proposed and developed since then. The Fresno County Regional Active Transportation Plan (R-ATP) was completed by Fresno COG in February 2018 and identified Class I bikeways as multi-purpose recreational trails. The 2018 R-ATP programmed over \$551 million worth of bike and pedestrian projects. Along with increased and enhanced bicycle facilities, the focus of the R-ATP expanded to support recreational trail use in Fresno County. With bikeways being addressed in the R-ATP and the increase of trail plans over the years, it was recognized that it was time to create a standalone document that encompasses existing and planned rural recreational trails within Fresno County. This Plan will supplement the R-ATP, as well as the County of Fresno's forthcoming bike master plan, with a focus on the rural recreational trails in Fresno County, particularly those in areas not addressed by cities and towns in the County,

Paths and Trails

In this plan, the term *path* is used as shorthand for Class I shared use path, typically wide flat facilities that accommodate bikes and pedestrians. The term *trail* is used to indicate recreational trails, which may be intended for hikers, mountain-bikers, and equestrians. The Plan uses the term *trail* when referring to paths and trails collectively.

Purpose the Plan

The Fresno County Regional Trails Plan (Plan) inventories the existing trails system, recommends trail projects and system expansions, and provides a framework for implementing recommendations. It is important to note that the Plan is focused on shared-use paths and unpaved trails in the unincorporated areas of Fresno County.

Plan at a Glance

The Regional Trails Plan is organized into the following chapters and appendices (Table 1.1).

Table 1-1: Plan Chapters and Appendices

CHAPTER		FOCUS
Chapter 1	Introduction	Introduces the Plan, including an overview of the community engagement process and Plan goals
Chapter 2	The Trail System Today	Summarizes existing trail conditions in Fresno County
Chapter 3	The Future Trail System	Details a new trail classification system, trail design principles, and proposed trail system
Chapter 4	Prioritizing Future Trails	Details development of trail prioritization process and recommended network.
Chapter 5	Implementation Strategy	Describes Plan implementation and funding strategies
APPENDIX		FOCUS
Appendix A	Existing Conditions & Field Inventory	Inventory of existing trails and existing system conditions
Appendix B	Review of Existing Plans & Policies	Review of relevant plan documents and policies
Appendix C	Public Outreach Overview	Includes an overview of community engagement conducted over the course of the planning process
Appendix D	Design Standards, Trail Classification System, and Design Assumptions	Design guidance and assumptions for each trail type
Appendix E	Prioritization Scoring	Complete scoring for each project recommendation
Appendix F	Funding Sources	Potential project funding sources at federal, state, local levels
Appendix G	Cost Estimates	Itemized costs for each trail proposal and design assumptions behind the estimates

Who is this Plan serving?

The Fresno County Regional Trails Plan is intended to serve all people who walk or hike, bike, or ride horses on trails or shared-used paths in Fresno County. The Plan aims to serve a variety of trail users, including people using them for recreational and utilitarian purposes. It also serves to encourage potential new users. Appendix A provides additional detail on who the Plan intends to serve.

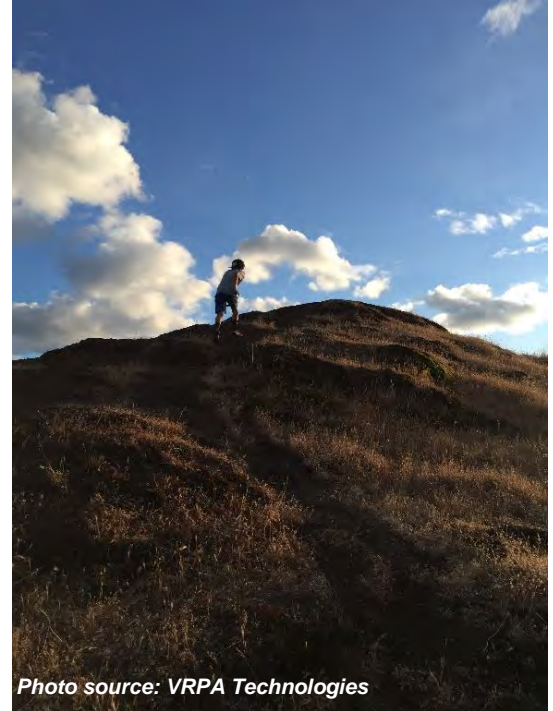


Figure 1-1: Clockwise from upper left: China Creek, Fresno County foothills, Millerton Lake

Recreational Trips

Fresno County offers many scenic experiences and recreational opportunities; people can hike, run, bike, horseback ride, nature watch, fish, and more. This Plan will serve people currently engaged in these activities and those who are potentially interested, including adventure tourists, events-based tourists, destination tourists, and educational tourists.

Utilitarian Trips

This Plan also serves people who may use the trails, and more specifically the shared-used paths, for utilitarian trips, such as commuting to work, running errands, or traveling to school. A connected system

of unpaved trails and paved Class I shared-use paths can help people comfortably and safely make their day-to-day trips with minimal interactions with motor vehicle traffic.

Potential Users






Additionally, this Plan serves people who may be interested in but are not currently engaged in outdoor activities. Access and use of trails and paths are different based on race, income, age, ability, gender, and education; it is important for this Plan to recognize disparities among the population and to create a trail system that is attractive and accessible to all.

Plan Goals

The goals of this Plan, as stated in Table 1.2, are reflective of the of the unique context of Fresno County and its residents. The goals were used to develop the Plan’s recommendations and can also be used to measure Fresno COG’s and the County’s progress towards implementation of the Plan over time.

The goals were developed collaboratively by community input, Fresno COG staff, and Fresno County staff. The goals also reflect the goals and policies in existing countywide and local transportation plans such as the *Fresno County Bike and Recreational Trails Master Plan (2013)* and the *Regional Active Transportation Plan (2018)*.

Table 1.2: Goals for the Fresno County Regional Trails Plan

	GOAL	DESCRIPTION
	Livability	Enhance livability by integrating trail systems into community activity.
	Connectivity	Develop an accessible and well-connected system of trail routes in urban, rural, and open space areas.
	Mobility	Create active transportation options for recreational and utilitarian trips.
	Collaboration	Collaborate with local jurisdictions, organizations, and the community to plan, coordinate, implement, and maintain a countywide trail system.
	Economic Development	Leverage economic development opportunities for local businesses and tourism by increasing the use of trails.

Engagement Process

The Regional Trails Master Plan is the culmination of over a year of community engagement. The Plan recommendations were informed by input from community members, County staff, and two advisory groups. There were three rounds of community engagement which corresponded to key milestones in the Plan's development. Due to COVID-19, the project team shifted all in-person engagement to respect physical distancing and honor state regulations. For more details about the community engagement process, see Appendix C: Public Outreach Overview.

Big Fresno Fair

The County held the first round of engagement in Fall 2019 at the Big Fresno Fair, which served as a project pop-up event. During this event, project staff set up a booth and solicited input from fair attendees about their experience using the trails in Fresno County. The project team spoke with over 130 people at the fair. During this event, the project team also received over 200 survey responses, in English and Spanish. Survey questions asked about the respondent's current use of trails, proximity to trails, and how to improve trails in Fresno County. This was the only in-person event prior to COVID-19.



Figure 1.2: Trail Plan outreach at the Big Fresno Fair, prior to COVID-19.

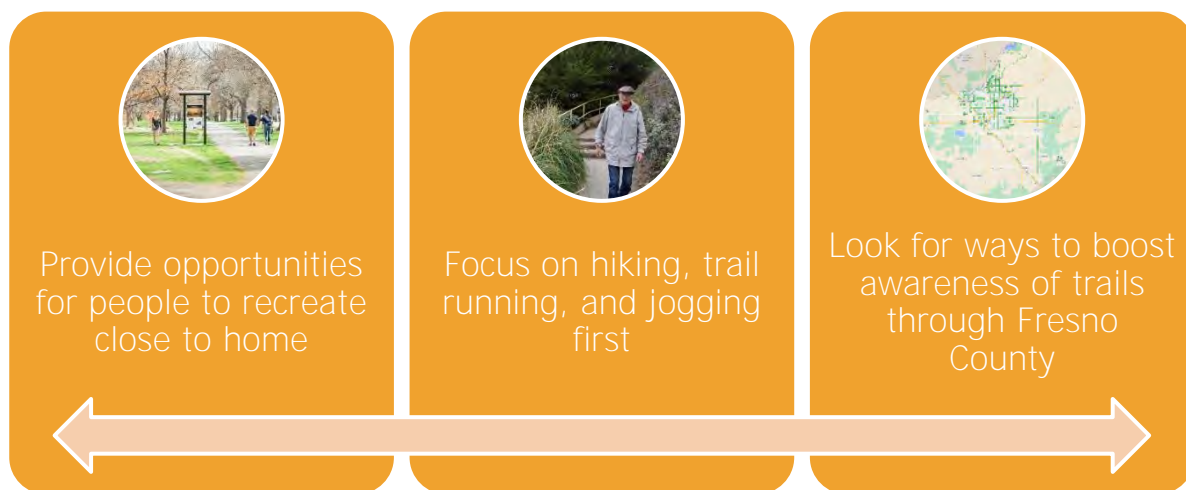
Common Themes from First Round of Outreach

There were several themes that emerged during the engagement process (Table 1.3). This input, paired with data-driven analysis of existing conditions and areas that may have the potential for high trail demand, formed the basis of Plan's Proposed Trail System and supporting plans and policies.

Table 1.3: Themes from the Plan’s four phases of community engagement

THEME	NOTES
<p>Knowledge of Existing Trails</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76 percent of survey respondents in October 2019 indicated they would like to see a map of existing trails. This would help users locate and access trails in the region. • When asked why they don’t use Fresno County trails in a web map survey, the most common response (30 percent) was “I don’t know where trails and paths are, or how to access them”.
<p>Trails as Nearby Recreational Spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many community members enjoy trails to recreate. The most popular uses of Fresno County trails were walking (75 percent) and road biking (59 percent). Many respondents also wrote in “Running” or “Jogging” as their preferred trail activity. • Off-street trails and paths were overwhelmingly preferred over protected bike lanes, with unpaved multi-use trails being the most popular type (75 percent). • Many survey respondents indicated they live 5 to 20 miles from the trail they use most (35 percent) or one to five miles away (33 percent). Only 19 percent live within one mile of their most-frequented trail.
<p>Connectivity to Destinations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail users indicated they enjoy access to natural areas in Fresno County. • Survey respondents also expressed interest in trails connecting to everyday destinations, such as the post office and a hospital, as well as to cities such as Mendota and Fresno.

Three main take-ways from this first phase of outreach informed the plan, as follows:



Advisory Groups

Community Advisory Group

In addition to input from community members, the development of the Plan was also guided by strategic input from two stakeholder groups. The Community Advisory Group (CAG) was comprised of representatives from various local organizations and residents from neighborhoods throughout Fresno County. The project team was intentional in its selection of advisory group members to ensure broad representation from multiple interests around trails. The CAG provided feedback to ensure that recommendations made as part of the Regional Trails Plan coincide with the differing needs of the County's diverse communities, businesses, and community groups. The CAG met several times over the course of the project, coinciding with the outreach events outlined previously.

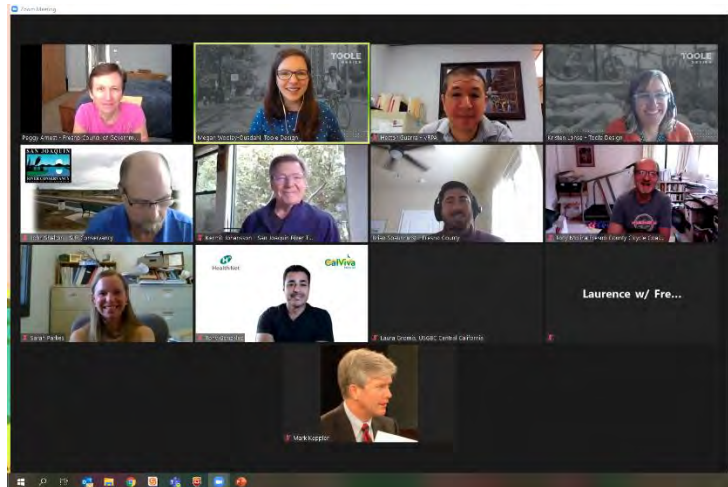


Figure 1-3: A screenshot showing members of the Community Advisory Group during a meeting

Agency Advisory Group

The Agency Advisory Group included key representatives from organizations and jurisdictions across the County and from other County departments, such as Public Works and Parks and Recreation. Members of the committee provided key input on project coordination between the County and jurisdictions. The group's feedback ensured that the Plan corresponds with and supports local City-led efforts and services. Like the CAG, the agency advisory group met several times throughout the project.

Online Outreach

In order to maximize the Plan's publicity, the project team developed online outreach elements. Primarily, the County hosted a project-specific page on the Fresno Council of Governments website. The project page provided an overview of the project purpose and schedule, informed community members of upcoming outreach events, and included a section for the public to sign up for email notifications and leave comments for project staff.

Interactive Online Maps

The consultant team developed two online interactive maps which were linked on the website during two major engagement phases of the project – first, initial input on existing trails (May – June 2020) and second, recommendations on the trail system expansion and improvements in the future (September – December 2020). A survey accompanied each of the web maps that gathered demographic data to assess the breadth of respondents and solicited community feedback on existing and future trail use. The first map received over 200 comments, and the second 500 comments.

Social Media Campaign

A bilingual social media campaign for Facebook and Twitter with posts and tweets translated into Spanish and posted online, back-to-back with English posts. The posts were published in October and December

2020 to align with the project engagement efforts for the online web map. These translated posts boosted awareness of the Plan with the Spanish-speaking community in the region.

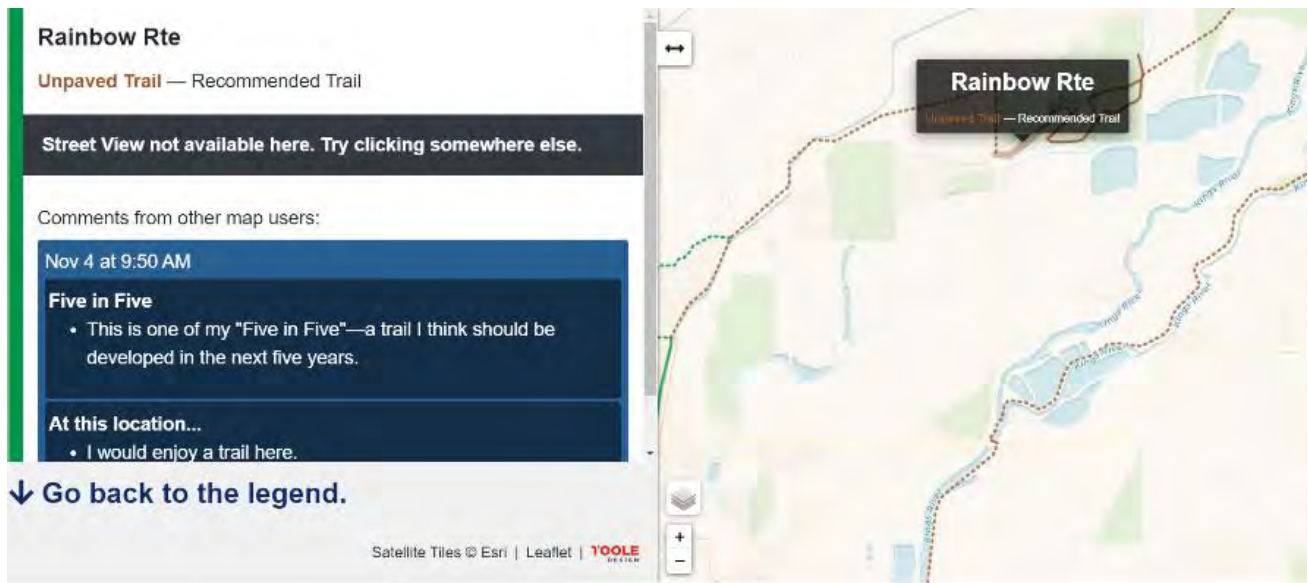


Figure 1-4: Sample comment on the interactive web map soliciting input on the recommended trails system in Fall 2020



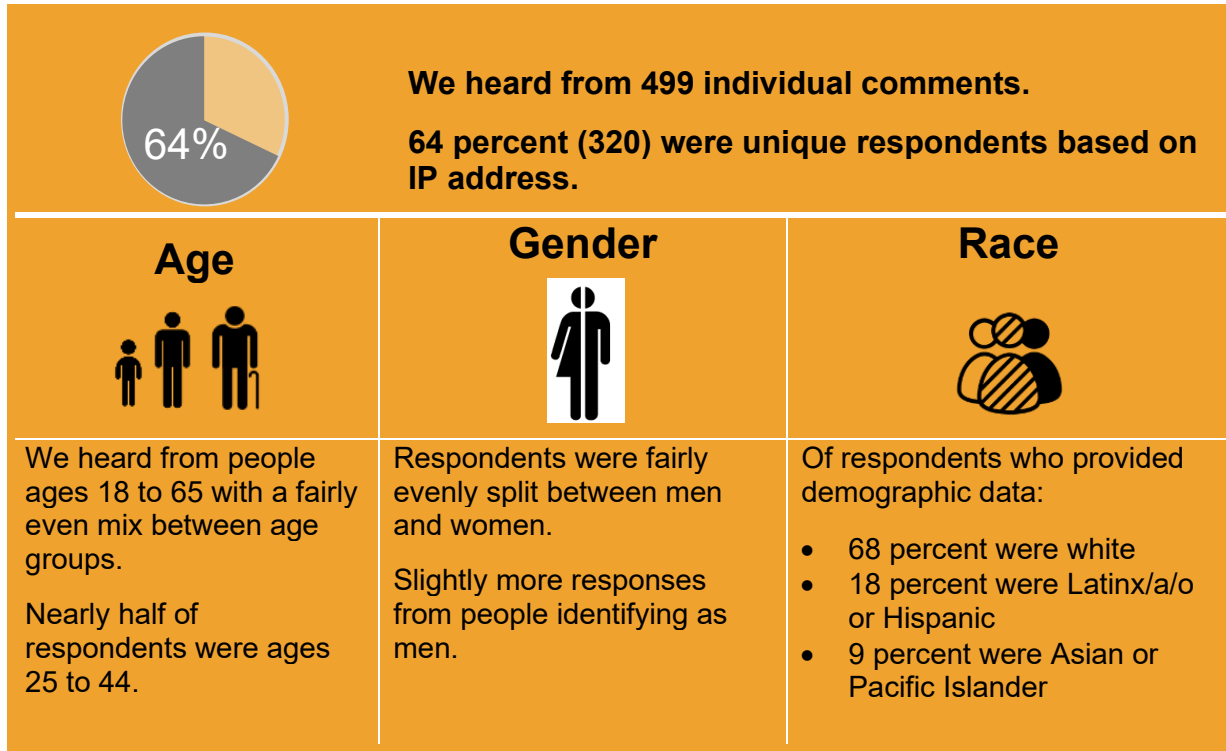
Figure 1.5 Trailhead signs. Photo source: Peggy Arnest

Trailhead/Community Signs

Trailhead signs were created and placed at key locations to spread awareness of the Trail Plan to community members enjoying the trails and drive traffic to the webpage, where a link to the interactive maps resided. Signs were placed at trailheads, trail parking lots, local businesses, picnic shelters, playground areas, dog parks, campsite restrooms, and visitor centers. Sign placement strategically coincided with the comment period for the web map, accessed via a QR code on the sign for trail users to scan. Trailhead signs provided a key connection between community members using the trails to the online web map.

Webmap and Survey and Demographics

Who did we hear from?





Chapter 2: The Trail System Today

An extensive inventory and analysis of the existing countywide trail system was conducted through maps and field assessments to obtain a thorough understanding of the current trail and path conditions in Fresno County. The existing conditions analyses included a review of existing and planned facilities and an analysis of how existing facilities meet the needs of communities in Fresno County today. The existing conditions analysis also discusses the broader context in which trail and path facilities function, including land uses, agency ownership and maintenance, planned projects, trail classifications, and a review of plans and policies. Conducting a thorough review of the existing trail system provides the necessary information to develop effective and strategic trails recommendations and prioritization.

Trail System Inventory

Types of Trails in Fresno County

The field assessment revealed a system of trails concentrated in urban and natural areas, as follows:

- Class I share used paths in and around urban centers—primarily Fresno and Clovis
- A vast network of natural surface trails in the Sierra Nevada foothills, along the San Joaquin River, large parks, and natural areas,
- A number of canal-side trails, some undeveloped (unpaved)
- A few short segments of natural or soft surfaces paths in the more rural parts of the county.

All told, there are nearly 1,200 miles of off-road trails throughout the County, owned and operated by a variety of jurisdictions, large and small (Figures 2-2 to 2-4). These include local municipalities such as Fresno and Clovis, regional government such as Fresno County, and non-local entities such as the State of California and the federal government.



Figure 2-1: A sampling of images of existing trails through the county

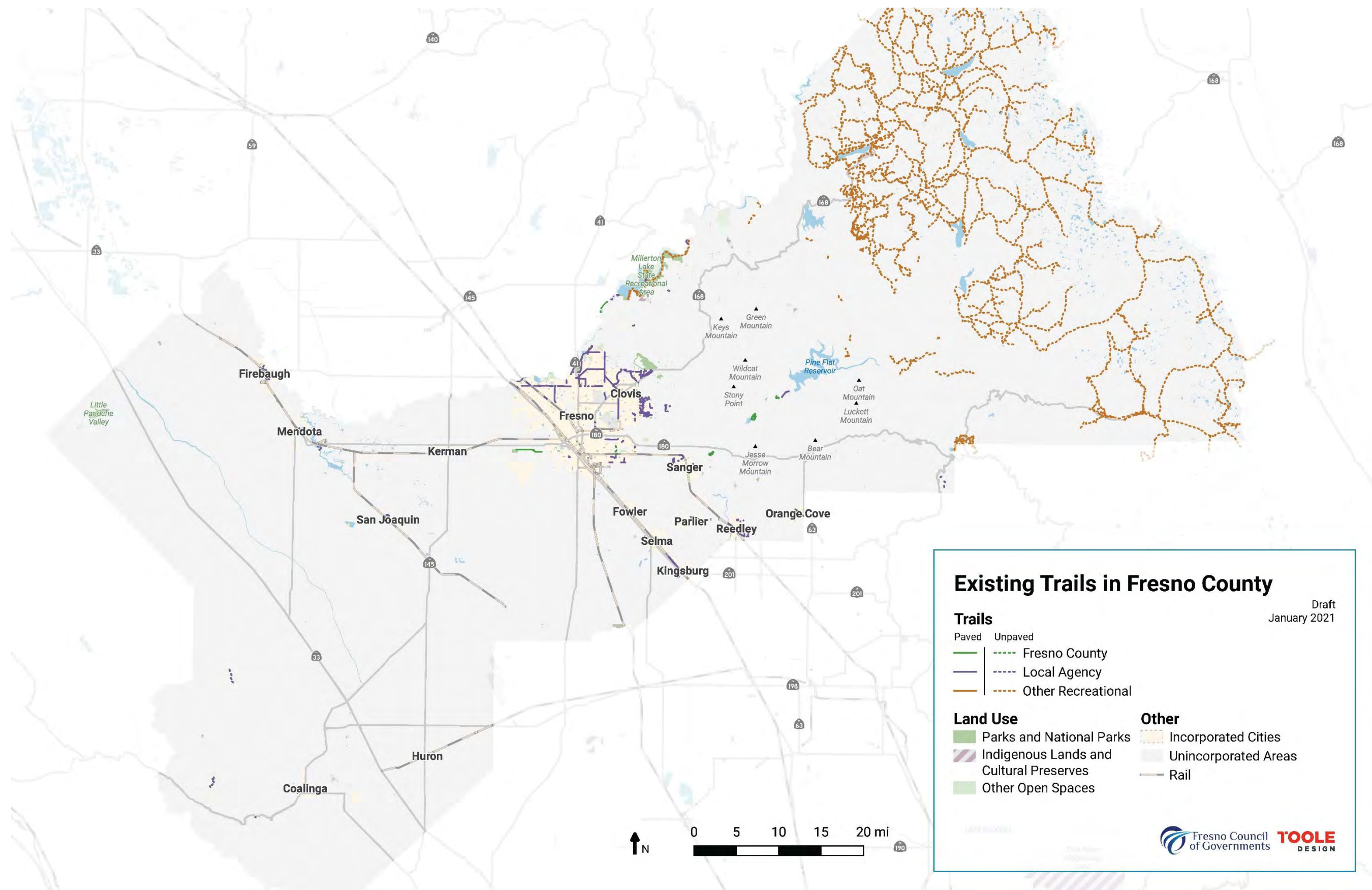
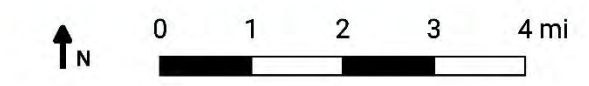
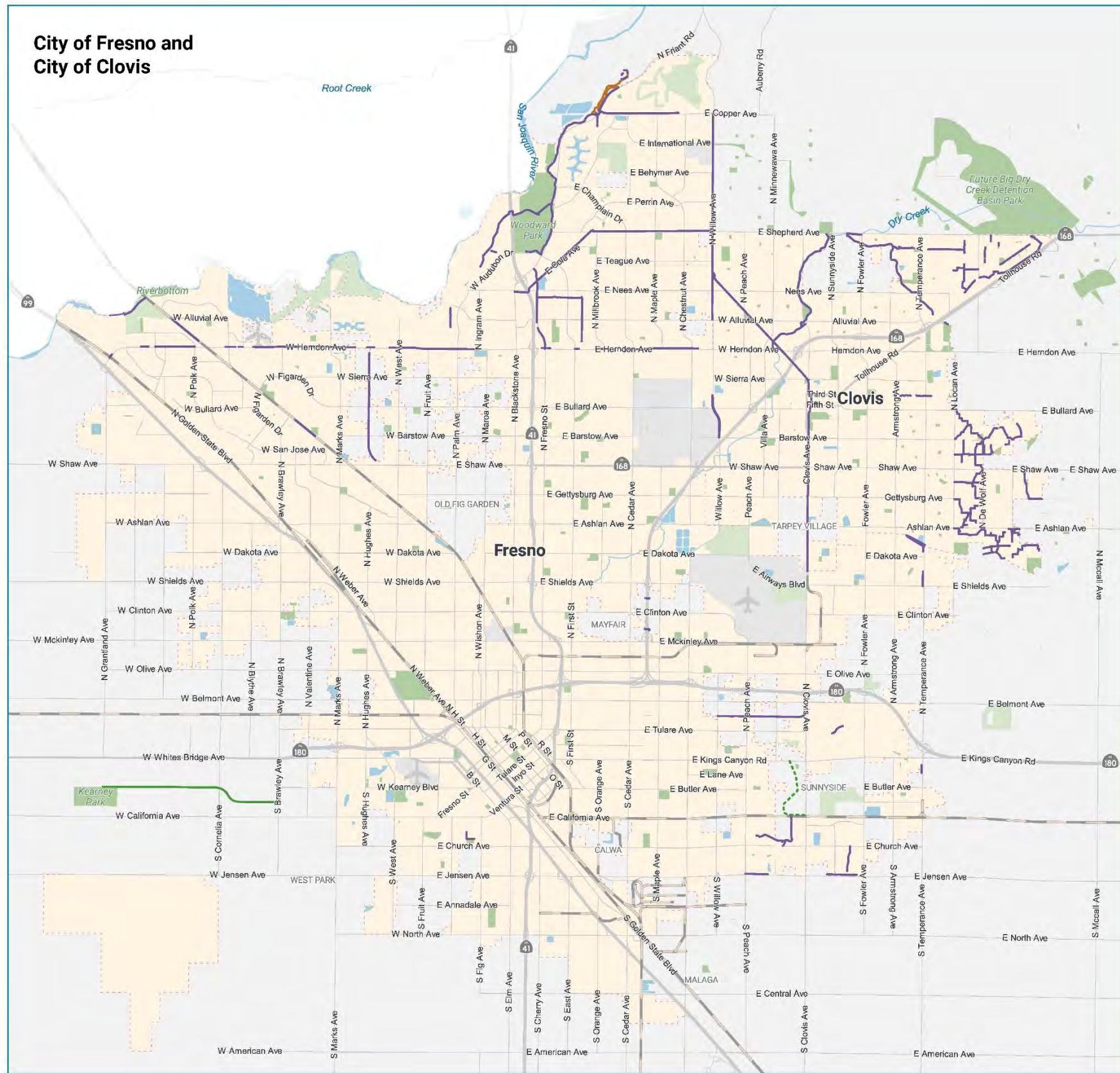


Figure 2.1: Existing Trails in Fresno County



Draft
January 2021

Existing Trails (Inset 1/3)

Trails

Paved	Unpaved

Fresno County
 Local Agency
 Other Recreational

Land Use

	Parks and National Parks
	Indigenous Lands and Cultural Preserves
	Other Open Spaces

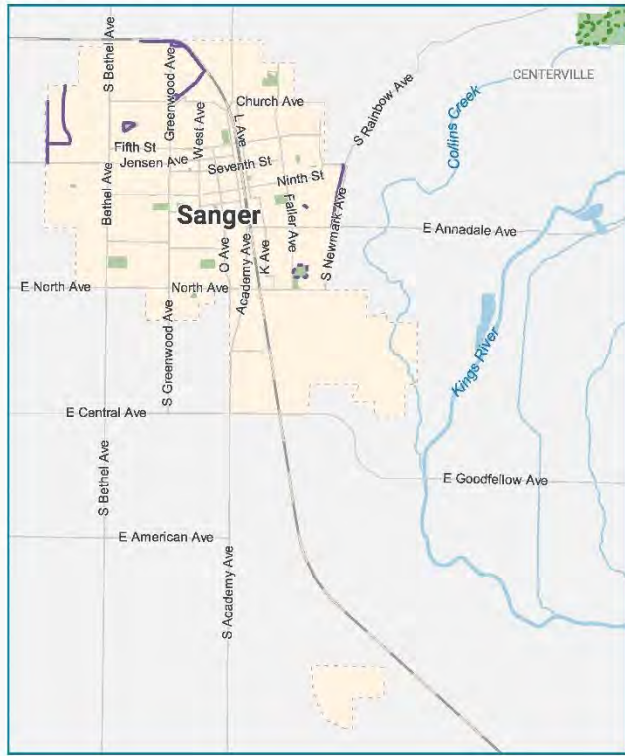
Other

	Incorporated Cities
	Unincorporated Areas
	Rail

Fresno Council of Governments **TOOLE DESIGN**

Figure 2.2: Existing Trails in Fresno and Clovis

City of Sanger



City of Parlier



City of Reedley



City of Orange Cove



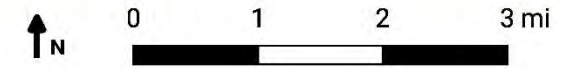
City of Fowler



City of Selma



City of Kingsburg



Existing Trails (Inset 2/3)

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January 2021

Trails

- Paved Unpaved
- - - - Fresno County
- - - - Local Agency
- - - - Other Recreational

Other

- Parks and National Parks
- Incorporated Cities
- Unincorporated Areas
- Rail



Figure 2.3: Existing Trails in Sanger, Parlier, Reedley, Orange Cove, Fowler, Selma, and Kingsburg

City of Firebaugh



City of Mendota



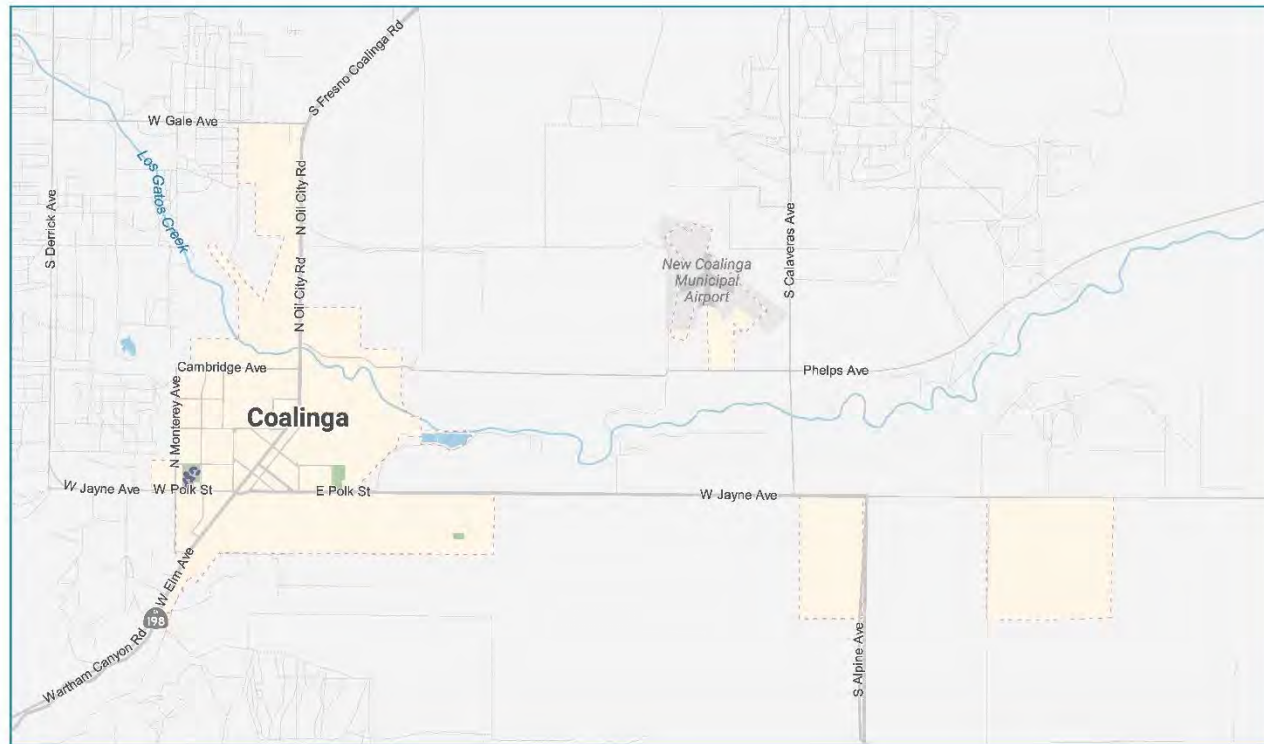
City of San Joaquin



City of Kerman



City of Coalinga



City of Huron



**Existing Trails
(Inset 3/3)**

Draft
January 2021

- Trails**
- Paved Unpaved
 - Fresno County
 - Local Agency
 - Other Recreational

- Other**
- Parks and National Parks
 - Incorporated Cities
 - Unincorporated Areas
 - Rail



Figure 2.4: Existing Trails in Firebaugh, Mendota, San Joaquin, Kerman, Coalinga, and Huron

County-owned trail mileage is limited compared to other agencies/jurisdictions (Table 2.1 and Figure 2.5). Fresno County owns and operates approximately 44 miles of trails and paths in both urban and rural areas, which accounts for approximately 4% of total trail mileage throughout the county.

TRAIL OWNERSHIP BY AGENCY

■ County ■ State ■ Cities & Towns ■ Federal Lands

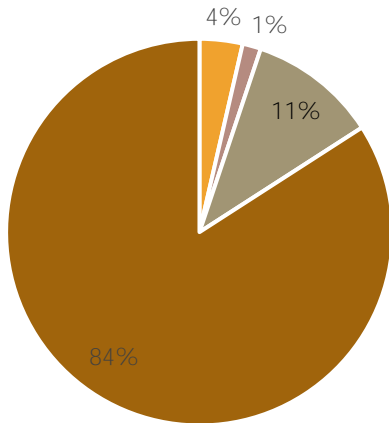


Figure 2.5: Percentage of trail ownership in Fresno by agency (in miles)

Table 2.1: Trail Ownership in Fresno County by Type and Jurisdiction (in miles)

AGENCY	UNPAVED	PAVED	TOTAL
County	1.4*	42.8	44.2
State	18.9	0	18.9
City of Fresno	0	41.8	41.8
City of Clovis	0	69.6	69.6
Other Local Jurisdictions	17.8	2.9	20.7
Federal Lands	1027.7	4.9	1032.6
Total	1065.8	162	1227.8

*County trails are also labeled as equestrian trails.

Trail Agencies

Table 2.2 provides an overview of the agencies within Fresno County and the major trails that they own and operate.

Table 2.2: Existing Major Trail Systems in Fresno County by Agency¹

AGENCY	TRAILS	NOTES
City of Fresno	Sugar Pine Trail	Clovis, Fresno, and various other jurisdiction own and operate trails within their boundaries. These are some of the major trails.
City of Clovis	Clovis Old Town Trail	
	Enterprise Canal Trail	
	Gould Canal Trail	
	Dry Creek Trail	
	Jefferson Trail	

¹ Sources: <http://www.gofresnocounty.com/trails>
<https://gisportal.co.fresno.ca.us/portal/home/>
<https://cityofclovis.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Clovis-Parks-and-Trails-Map.pdf>

AGENCY	TRAILS	NOTES
	Sierra Gateway Trail	
Cities of Fresno and Clovis	Fresno-Clovis Rail Trail	
Fresno County	China Creek Trail Kearney Trail Lost Lake Park Audubon Trail (in partnership with Fresno Audubon Society) McKenzie Trail	The County owns and operates approximately 44 miles of paved and unpaved trails.
San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust	Lewis S. Eaton Trail	This is a mainstem trail of the San Joaquin River Parkway will eventually run from Friant Dam to Highway 99. Currently, six miles of the trail are complete. Facilities include drinking fountains and restrooms.
San Joaquin River Conservancy (operated by City of Fresno)	Tom MacMichael Sr. Trail	A 3.4-mile loop trail adjacent to Woodward Park in the San Joaquin River Parkway. Trail amenities include restrooms, picnic tables.
California State Parks	Millerton Lake State Recreation Area	This is the only state park in Fresno County. Park has recreational hiking-only trails and multi-use trails for hiking, mountain bicycling, and equestrian use. Trails are unpaved and connect to park facilities, camping areas, and boating and swimming areas. Outside of the park, off-street connections to trails are limited and accessible only by car.
San Joaquin River Trail Council	San Joaquin River Trail	SJRT on BLM, SNF, & CA State Parks land.
Bureau of Land Management	Coalinga Mineral Springs National Recreation Trail	This trail located on the southern tip of the Diablo Mountains in Coast Range on the west side of Fresno County. It is accessible via trailhead at Coalinga Mineral Springs County Park. No facilities or running water at the County Park, and no facilities along the trail except for directional signs.
US National Park Service	Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Park Trails	Sequoia National Park and 400 miles of trails in Kings Canyon National Park feature approximately 690 miles of trails, primarily for hiking
US Forest Service	Sierra National Forest	Over 600 miles of unpaved trails.

Trail Connections & Key Destinations

Trails in Fresno County connect to a variety of destinations, such as local parks and outdoor recreation areas, lakes, schools and universities, national parks and forests, and commercial and employment centers.

Some cities, such as in Fresno, Clovis, Reedley, and Orange Cove, have converted irrigation canals and railroad corridors into paved paths, and many of these paths connect through downtown areas and provide connections to popular destinations. Two examples of these paths include the more urban Fresno-Clovis Rail Trail between Clovis North High School and downtown Clovis, and the Reedley Rail-Trail in Reedley.

Additionally, some jurisdictions, including the County of Fresno, have constructed paved paths parallel to waterways, and these trails provide regional connectivity and links to natural areas. For example, the Lewis S. Eaton Trail runs alongside the San Joaquin River on the county's northern boundary.

However, it should be noted that in general, County-owned trails lack connections to smaller communities, unincorporated areas, a recreational destinations that could provide more residents of rural county areas with opportunities for recreation. To create more connections, this Plan will build upon the existing assets of the trail system and recreational opportunities throughout the county. To broaden these opportunities, the Plan will aim to:

- provide connectivity to key destinations throughout the county, including recreational amenities and destinations.
- expand or link existing trails and paths to create a more comprehensive system.
- collaborate with partners across the county to coordinate a countywide trail system; and
- boost economic development and tourism potential through trail access and use.

Planned Trail Projects

Currently, Fresno County is planning the construction of two new trails:

- **The Lost Lake Park Trail**, a Class I shared-used path located in Lost Lake Park in northern Fresno County near the San Joaquin River, is currently under design. The trail is approximately one mile long, and the design includes a parking and picnic area.
- **The Fancher Creek Bridle Trail** is an equestrian trail in a county island surrounded by the city of Fresno. The trail will be located along a canal parallel to DeWitt Road.

Additional trails that are under development by other agencies (and therefore described in other planning documents) include the Heritage Grove Trail, segments along Golden State Boulevard, and the San Joaquin River Trail.



Chapter 3

The Future Trail System

This Plan presents a variety of trail recommendations to enhance and complement Fresno County's existing system of scenic and historic trails. Recommendations serve to:




- expand trail access to residents who do not currently have comfortable or convenient links to trails
- improve the existing user experience with additional connectivity and more options for utilitarian and recreational trips.

Trail recommendations were informed by Plan goals, feedback received during the engagement process, and the findings of the existing trails inventory and analysis. Recommendations for the future countywide trail system include trail design principles, newly proposed trail classifications, and prioritized trail projects.

Trail System Design Principles

Fresno County is a large area, and it would take a long-term commitment of staff resource and funding to create one single interconnected trail network. A more achievable goal is to focus on local/regional interconnectivity, closing gaps between existing trails, and expanding trail access to residents (especially rural residents) who do not currently have access to trails. The following principles, described in Table 3.1, were developed to guide the trail system recommendations, and ensure that trail recommendations aligned with the County's priorities and Plan goals:

Table 3.1: Trail System Design Principles

PRINCIPLE	PLANNING ACTIONS
 <p>Increase access to recreational opportunities</p>	<p>Focus only on unincorporated area of Fresno County</p> <p>Prioritize locations that are not currently well-served by local, regional, or federal trails</p> <p>Prioritize trail locations that serve as many community members as possible</p> <p>Prioritize proximity to residential areas, both urban and rural, to reduce the distance that Fresno County residents and visitors must travel to reach recreational opportunities</p> <p>Prioritize trails that provide connections to recreational opportunities (city, county, state, BLM)</p>
 <p>Prioritize equity</p>	<p>Select trail locations that will be safe and comfortable for all trail users</p> <p>Accommodate a variety of users</p> <p>Select trail locations where ADA standards can be met</p> <p>Recommend trails of a variety of lengths</p> <p>Identify projects that improve access to areas with vulnerable populations (e.g., low-income, or low car ownership rates)</p>
 <p>Enhance regional connectivity</p>	<p>Expand the regional trail system by serving new areas</p> <p>Develop trails that connect county islands</p>

System Development Approach

Once design principles were determined, the project team used the following approach to develop the trail system recommendations:

- (1) Review existing trails and identify opportunities to expand the trail system through the development of new trails and connections between existing trails.
- (2) Focus on identifying opportunities to develop unpaved, recreational trails.
- (3) Prioritize locations that serve residents who are currently underserved by the existing trail system.
- (4) Explore the feasibility of additional Rails to Trails opportunities.
- (5) Include Class I shared-use path recommendations from Fresno County's *Regional Active Transportation Plan (2018)* in areas where Class I shared-use paths can increase access to recreational trails or serve as high-quality recreational assets where unpaved trails are not feasible.



Proposed Trail Classification System

A new set of trail classifications is proposed in addition to trail project recommendations (Table 3.2). Distinct trail classifications serve to standardize the siting, design, and amenities of trails throughout the county so that each type of trail has a recognizable feel and experience by trail users. Trail classifications also help the County to determine what design treatments are and are not acceptable when retrofitting, upgrading, or extending existing trails and when designing new trails. Additional information on trails classifications can be found in Appendix D.

There are many different ways to classify trails. A review of recreational trail classification systems from other jurisdictions and agencies found that systems are typically somewhat localized. Most trail classification systems are based on type of user (e.g., bicyclists, pedestrians, or equestrians) or surfacing (e.g., paved or unpaved). This Plan recommends a trail classification system that includes four trail types: Sidepath, Class I Shared Use Path, Off-Road Multi-Use Path, and Off-Road Single-Use. The images below presents photo examples of each trail type and Table 3.2 presents a summary of design and user characteristics of each trail type.

Table 3.2: Trail Classifications

	TYPICAL WIDTH AND SURFACING	TREAD AND GRADE	TYPICAL USERS
SIDEPATH (Class I) Within roadway right-of-way	Paved 12-16 ft wide, with a buffer from the roadway that varies depending on roadway speed and vehicle volumes	Wide and smooth	Multi-use; recreational and active transportation for bicyclists, pedestrians, other wheeled users
SHARED USE PATH (Class I) Off-road/ independent right-of-way	Paved 12 ft wide (8 ft wide with 2 ft shoulder on each side)	Wide and smooth	Multi-use; recreational and active transportation for bicyclists, pedestrians, other wheeled users
MULTI-USE TRAIL Off-road/ independent right-of-way	Soft surface Minimum 3 ft wide Trail width will vary depending on terrain and other physical constraints.	Continuous and obvious Grade may vary from level to somewhat steep, average grade	Multi-use; recreational use for hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians
SINGLE-USE TRAIL Off-road/ independent right-of-way	Soft surface 3 - 8 ft wide	Continuous but narrow, with a rough tread Grade varies from level to somewhat steep	Single use; equestrians, hikers, mountain bikers.



Figure 3.1: Sidepath: a path within a road right-of-way; direct and convenient but potentially less scenic



Figure 3.2: Class I Shared-Use Path: a path in separate right-of-way; typically makes use of scenic resources



Figure 3.3: Off-Road Multi-Use: generally wider and more accommodating of multiple modes



Figure 3.4: Off-Road Single-Use: generally narrower and potential steeper; may be purpose-built for a single user group like hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers.

Path and Trail Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines should be followed when designing and implementing the trails recommended in the Plan so that they are consistent with federal, state, and local guidelines and policies. The recommendations within the Plan follow the basic guidelines set forth by Caltrans. As projects move toward design and implementation, the final engineered plans will need to demonstrate compliance with all applicable mandatory standards at federal, state, county, and local levels.

Path and Trail Accessibility

Accessibility guidelines are developed by the U.S. Access Board, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968. Guidelines must be adopted by another responsible agency to become enforceable standards. The current enforceable standard is the *2010 Standards for Accessible Design* (ADA). The Access Board amended the former guidelines in 2013 with new provisions for trails, among other outdoor recreational facilities, in a document called the *Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas* (2014). This document regulates accessibility on projects that are built, constructed, or leased on federal lands or constructed with federal funding. These standards have become the basis for the *California State Parks Accessibility Guidelines* as well.

In general, trail, Class I bikeways/shared-use paths, and multi-use trails must be designed to be accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability, because they are intended for both transportation and recreation purposes. Design guidelines for trails indicate standards for width, surfacing, slope, and other critical factors. The AASHTO design guidelines for shared-use paths meet accessibility requirements, so Class I bike paths and multi-use trails designs that meet AASHTO will be accessible.

However, design guidelines for trails are not as rigid as the guidelines for buildings, parking lots, and other public facilities and there are exceptions for not meeting ADA requirements. Trails are developed to different trail design criteria according to the intended type and mix of users, the intensity of use, the setting, and funding requirements. For example, a trail in an urbanized area of Fresno County, (e.g., near Fresno or Clovis), will have higher user demands and should thus be constructed to higher standards than a trail in rural Fresno County. Therefore, the intended users of a trail must first be identified to determine accessibility requirements.

A trail is defined as “a route that is designed, designated, or constructed for recreational pedestrian use or provided as a *pedestrian alternative* to vehicular routes within a transportation system. Accessibility guidelines apply to those trails that are designed and constructed for *pedestrian use*. These guidelines are not applicable to trails primarily designed and constructed for recreational use by equestrians, mountain bicyclists, snowmobile users, or off-highway vehicle users, even if pedestrians may occasionally use the same trails. However, a multi-use trail specifically designed and designated for hiking and bicycling would be considered a pedestrian trail.²

² ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Recreation Educational Services Division, Greenways and Trails Program. <https://www.americantrails.org/images/documents/TN-trail-ada.pdf>

Do the Standards Apply?

- Is the trail designed for hiker or pedestrian use?
- Is the trail connected to a trailhead or an existing trail that substantially meets the technical requirements for trails?

The ABA Standards for trails apply when the answer to both questions above is “yes.”

Figure 3.7: ABA/ADA Standards Applicability for New Trails. *Source: Accessibility Standards for Federal Outdoor Areas. U.S. Access Board*

Accessibility Exceptions

The guidelines acknowledge that building an accessible trail is not always feasible or practical in certain circumstances. Conditions where exceptions to accessibility compliance include:³

Terrain: “where a trail is constructed in a steeply sloped area, compliance with the running slope provision may not be practicable on parts of the trail where it would require extensive cuts or fills that are difficult to construct and maintain, cause drainage and erosion problems, significantly lengthen the trail, and create other adverse environmental impacts.”

Constructability: the trail cannot be built using prevailing construction practices.

Alternation of the function or purpose of the facility or the setting: “This condition recognizes that public lands provide a wide variety of recreational experiences, from highly developed areas to wilderness areas that appear unchanged from primeval times and provide opportunities for people to experience primitive and challenging conditions. The condition applies where compliance with specific provisions in the technical requirements would fundamentally alter the function or purpose of the facility or the setting.”

Impact or harm to archaeological, cultural, historic, or significant natural features or characteristics, as defined by the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Wilderness Act, or any other federal, state, or local law intended to protect such resources, features or characteristics.

California State Parks adds that “These standards only apply to pedestrian trails directly connected to a trailhead or an accessible trail that substantially meets the technical requirements for an accessible trail. New or existing pedestrian trails not connected to a trailhead or accessible trail are exempt from these standards.”⁴

³ Accessibility Standards for Federal Outdoor Developed Areas. U.S. Access Board: [//www.access-board.gov/files/aba/guides/outdoor/outdoor-guide.pdf](http://www.access-board.gov/files/aba/guides/outdoor/outdoor-guide.pdf)

⁴ California State Parks Trails Handbook, p. 8-1. <https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1324/files/Chapter%208%20-%20Accessible%20Trail%20Design.FINAL.04.04.19.pdf>

Future Trail System

The proposed trail system, along with its connections to the County’s existing trail system is shown in Figures 38 through 31, and Table 3.3.

In total, the Plan recommends approximately 413 miles of trails, including 187 miles of paved trails and 226 miles of unpaved trails. Trail recommendations range in length from less than half a mile to cross-county trails as long as 72 miles.

System Highlights

Taking Advantage of Existing Off-street Connections

The region’s canal system presents an opportunity for a network of safe and comfortable off-street trails. Canal trails can be ideal for creating trails for people of all ages and abilities because these facilities provide complete separation between drivers and trail users, except at crossings. Communities across California are increasingly working with irrigation districts to build canal trails. Several of the recommended trails, such as the Heritage Grove Canal Trail, present opportunities to take advantage of the region’s existing canal system.

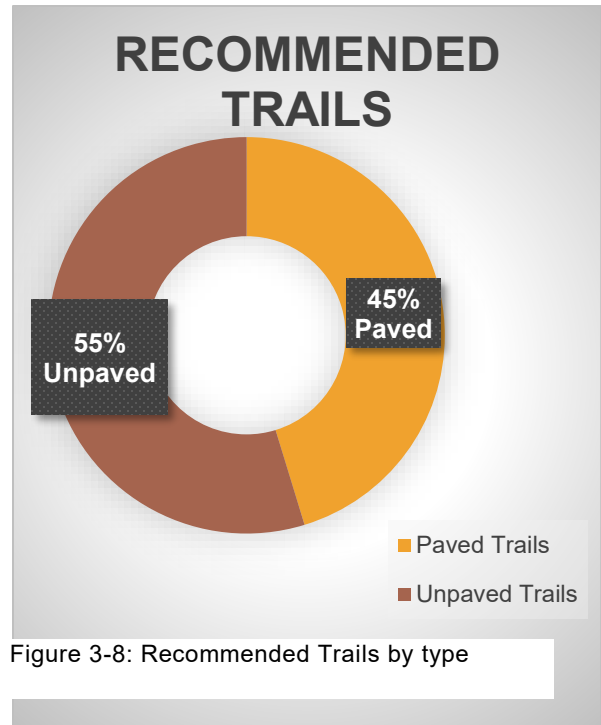


Figure 3-8: Recommended Trails by type

Extending Existing Trails

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Fresno region already has many trails. Many of trail projects recommended in this Plan extend existing trails that are already used by the community, such as the Enterprise Canal Trail. These trail extensions improve the trail system by providing opportunities for current trail users to use the trails for longer trips and increase the number people who have access to existing trails. The trail extensions also help provide connections between trails, helping to enhance the region’s trail system into more of a connected network.

Increased Access to Recreation Areas

The region’s recreation areas provide opportunities for community members and visitors to enjoy time outside, be physically active, and have fun. Several trail projects increase access to the region’s recreation areas, like the San Joaquin River Gorge, Millerton Lake State Recreation Area, and the parks located along the Kings River. These trail projects can be used either to access the recreation areas or as extensions of existing recreation areas.

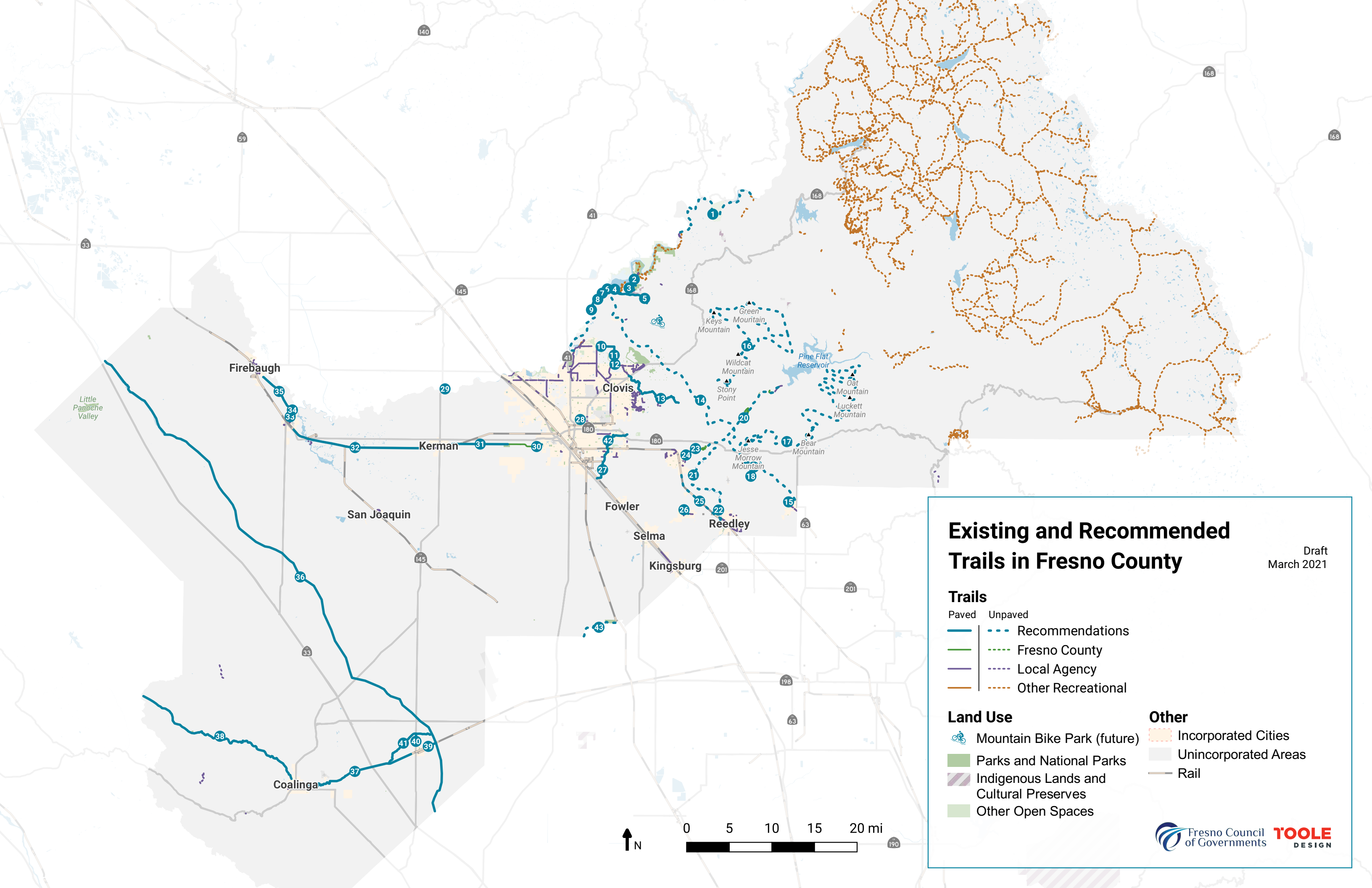
Connecting to Regional Trail Opportunities

Fresno is situated in the middle of the San Joaquin Valley and has neighboring jurisdictions on all sides. As such, the Fresno Region is well-positioned to support and take advantage of larger statewide and regional trail planning efforts. Several of the trail recommendations, such as the California Aqueduct Trail, Los Gatos Creek Trail, and San Joaquin River Trail present opportunities to connect to regional trail projects and provide connections across county lines, to neighboring towns and recreation areas.

Increasing Trail Access Connectors for Vulnerable Populations

One of the key aims of the recommended trail system is to enhance the regional trail system so that it better serves vulnerable populations. The project team used the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard

Assessment's CalEnviroScreen 3.0 tool to examine the overlap between vulnerable populations and recommended trail projects. For this analysis, Census Tracts that scored among the 75th to 100th percentile were considered vulnerable populations. Nearly 60 percent of the recommended trail projects fall within vulnerable populations.



Existing and Recommended Trails in Fresno County

Draft
March 2021

Trails

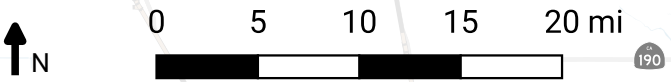
- | | |
|-------|--------------------|
| Paved | Unpaved |
| | |
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| | Recommendations |
| | Fresno County |
| | Local Agency |
| | Other Recreational |

Land Use

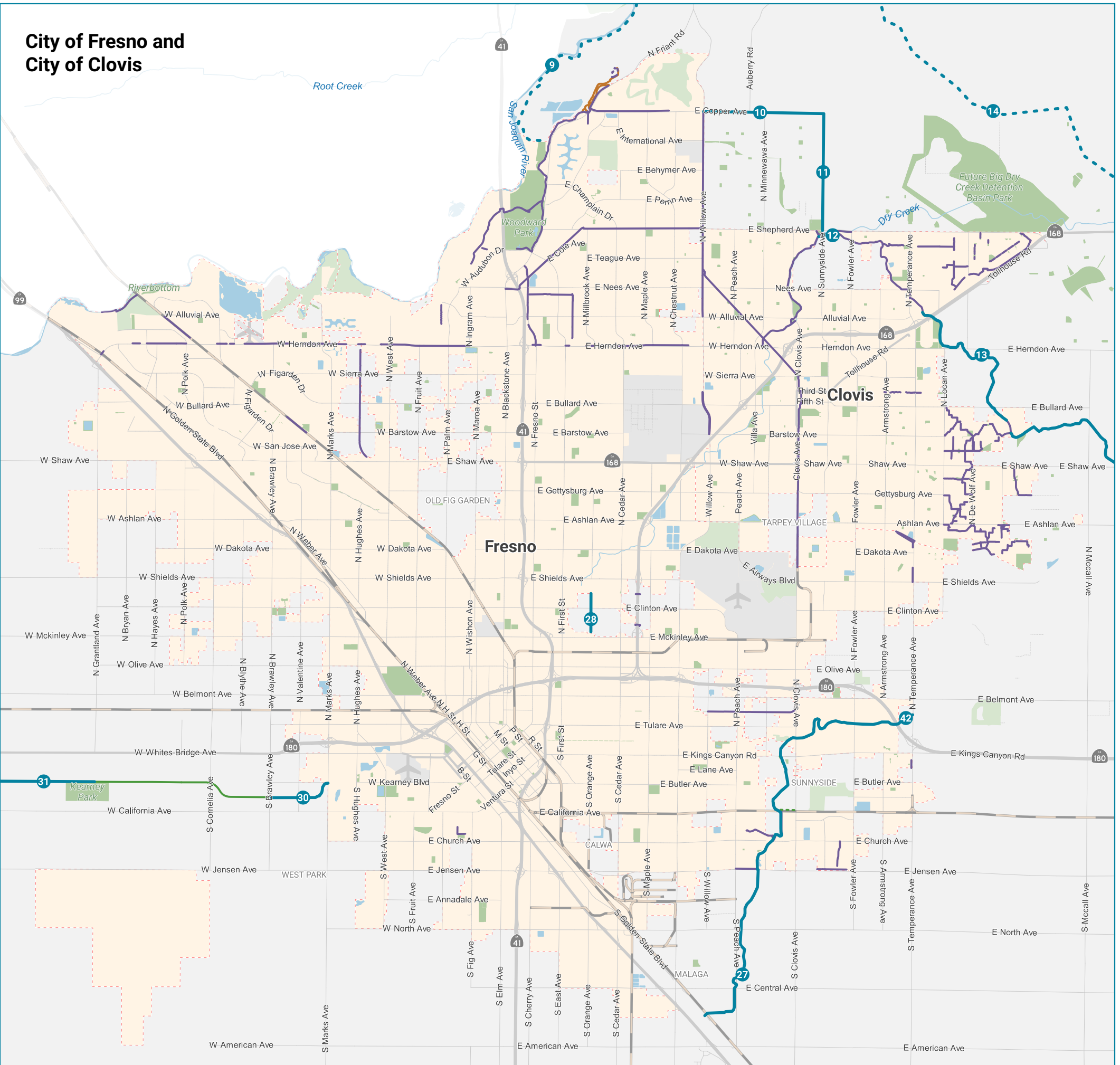
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- Parks and National Parks
- Indigenous Lands and Cultural Preserves
- Other Open Spaces

Other

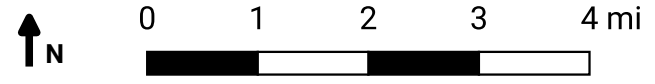
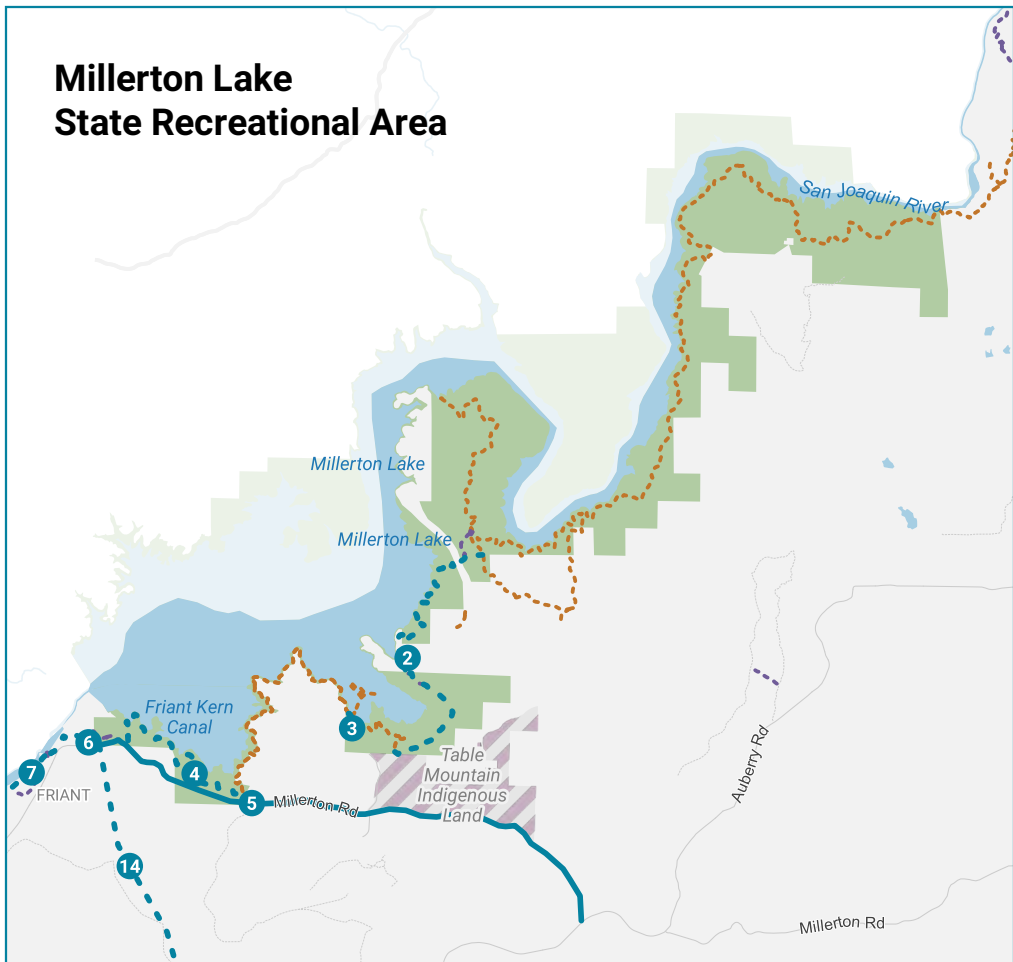
- Incorporated Cities
- Unincorporated Areas
- Rail



City of Fresno and City of Clovis



Millerton Lake State Recreational Area



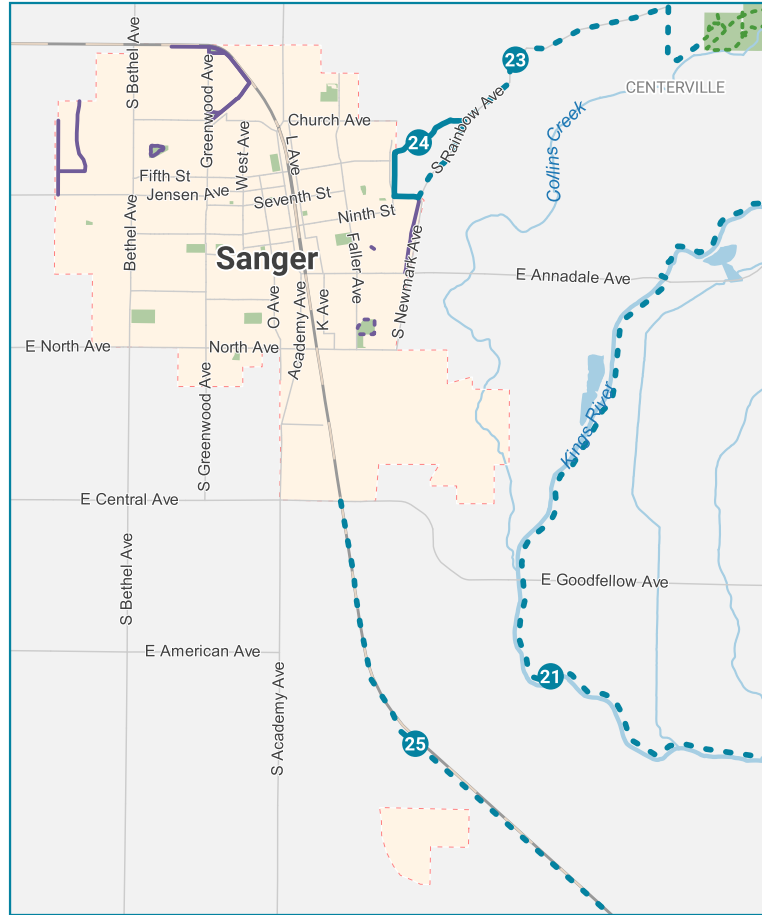
Existing and Recommended Trails (Inset 1/3)

Draft
March 2021

- Trails**
- | | |
|-------|---------|
| Paved | Unpaved |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
- Recommended
 - Fresno County
 - Local Agency
 - Other Recreational

- Land Use**
- Mountain Bike Park (future)
 - Parks and National Parks
 - Indigenous Lands and Cultural Preserves
 - Other Open Spaces
- Other**
- Incorporated Cities
 - Unincorporated Areas
 - Rail

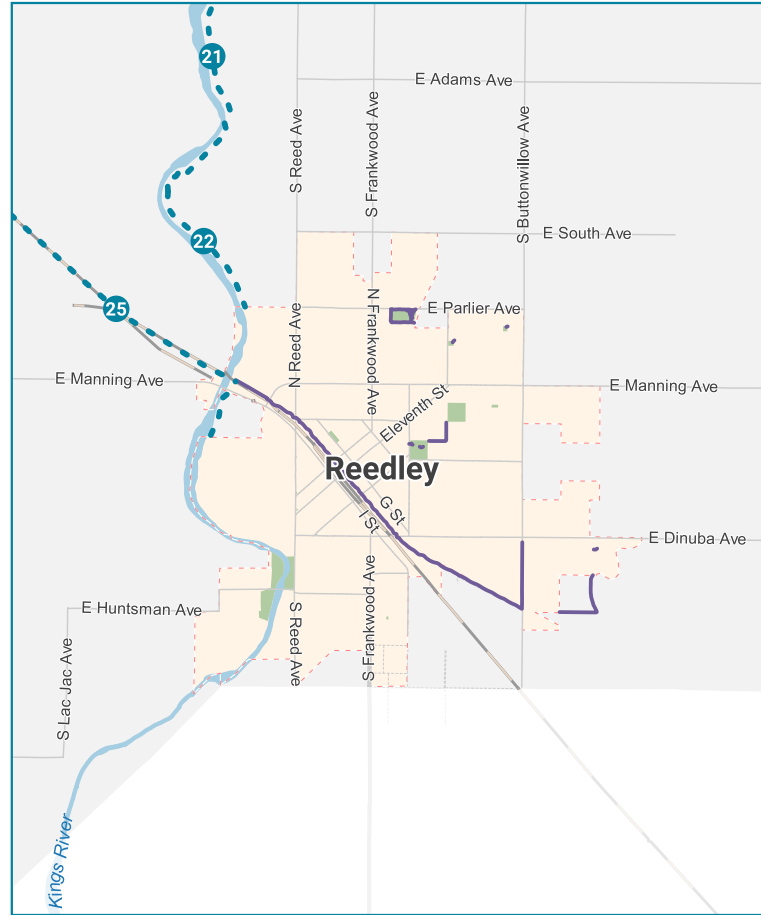
City of Sanger



City of Parlier



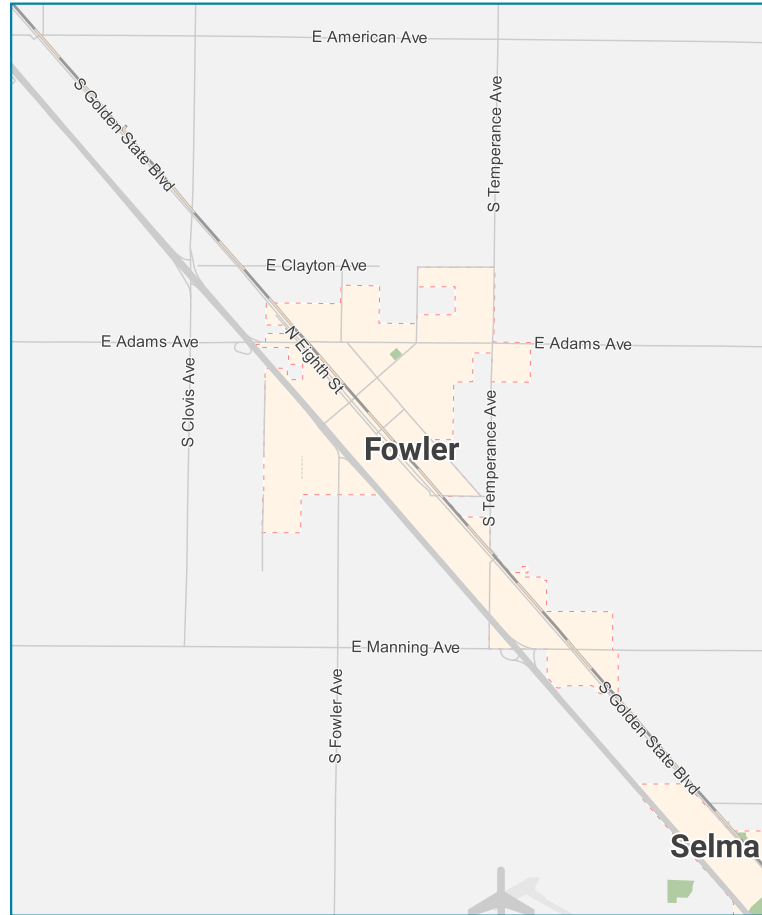
City of Reedley



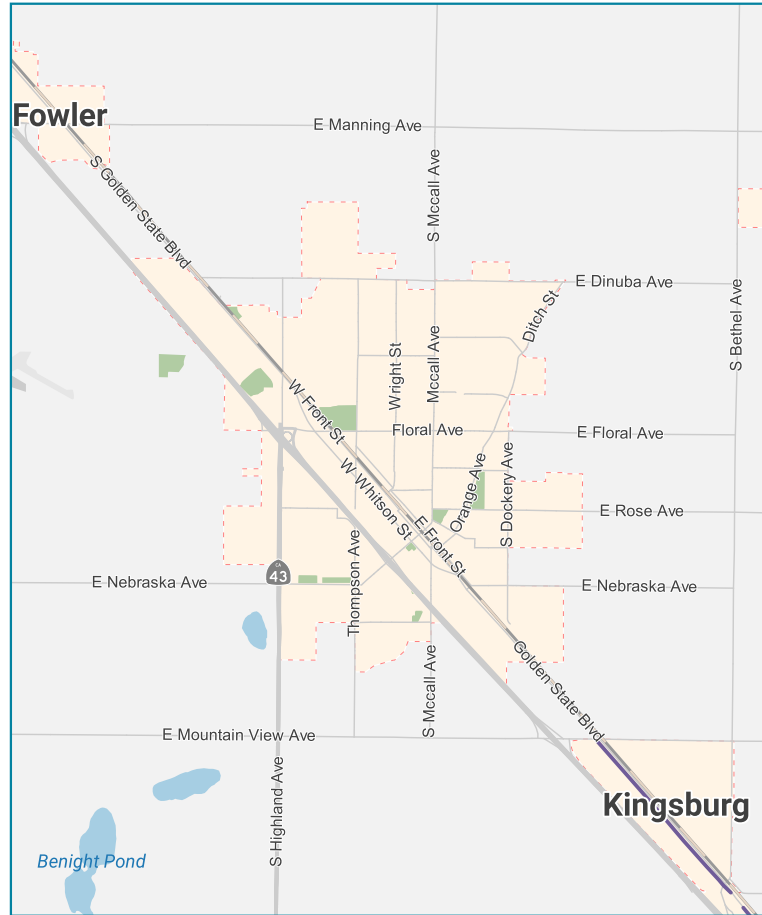
City of Orange Cove



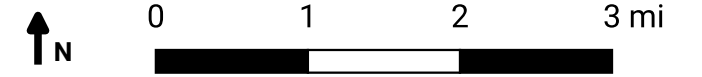
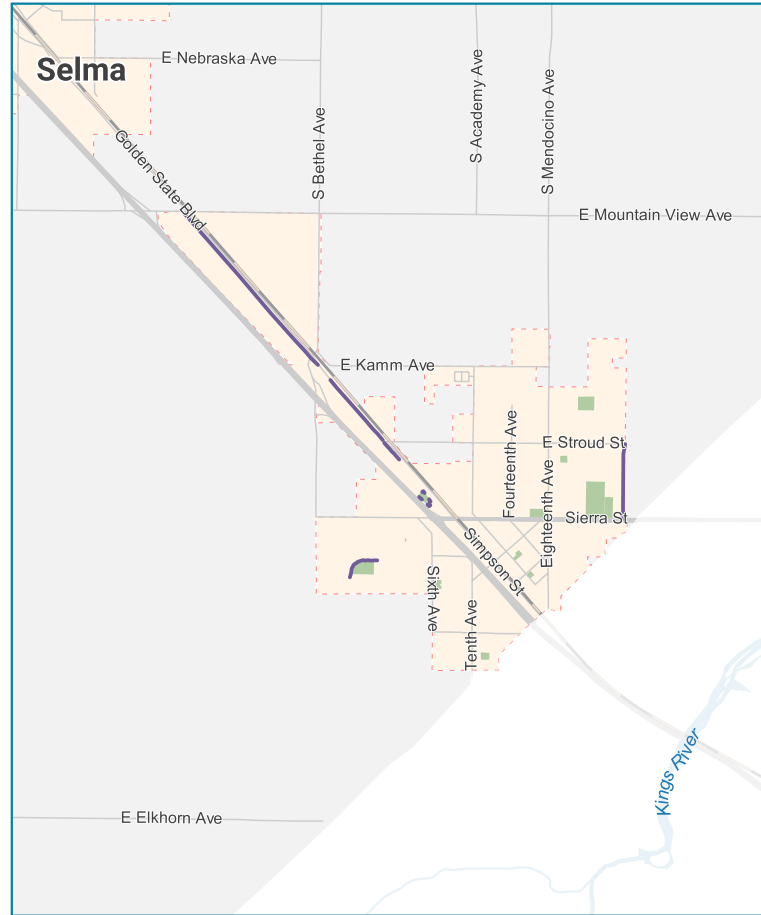
City of Fowler



City of Selma



City of Kingsburg



Existing and Recommended Trails (Inset 2/3)

Draft
March 2021

Trails

- | | |
|-------|---------|
| Paved | Unpaved |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Other

- Parks and National Parks
- Incorporated Cities
- Unincorporated Areas
- Rail

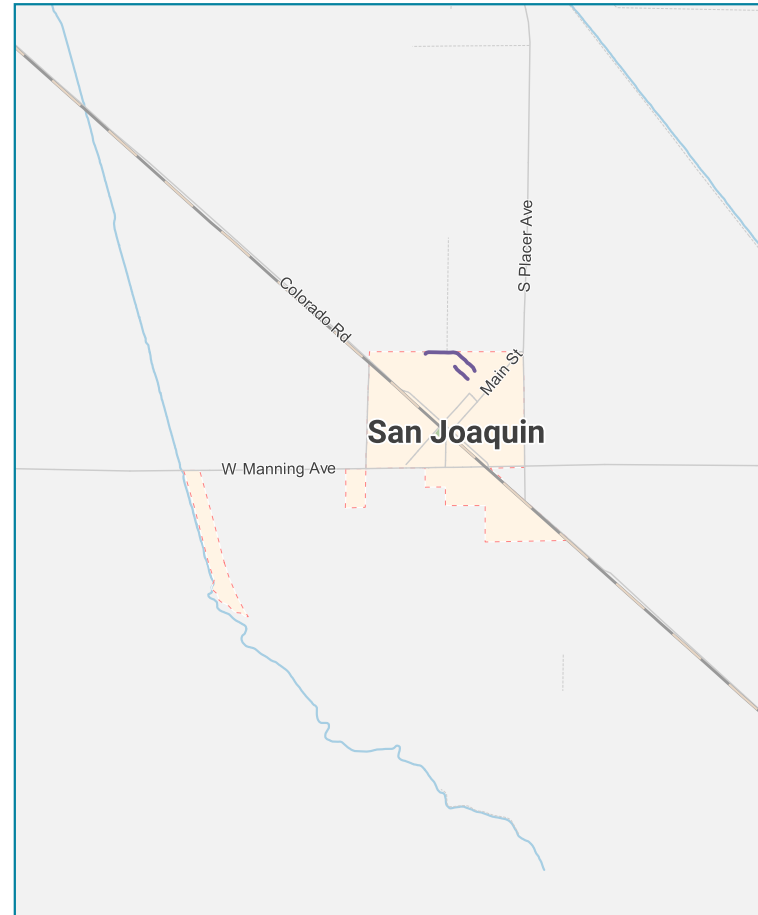
City of Firebaugh



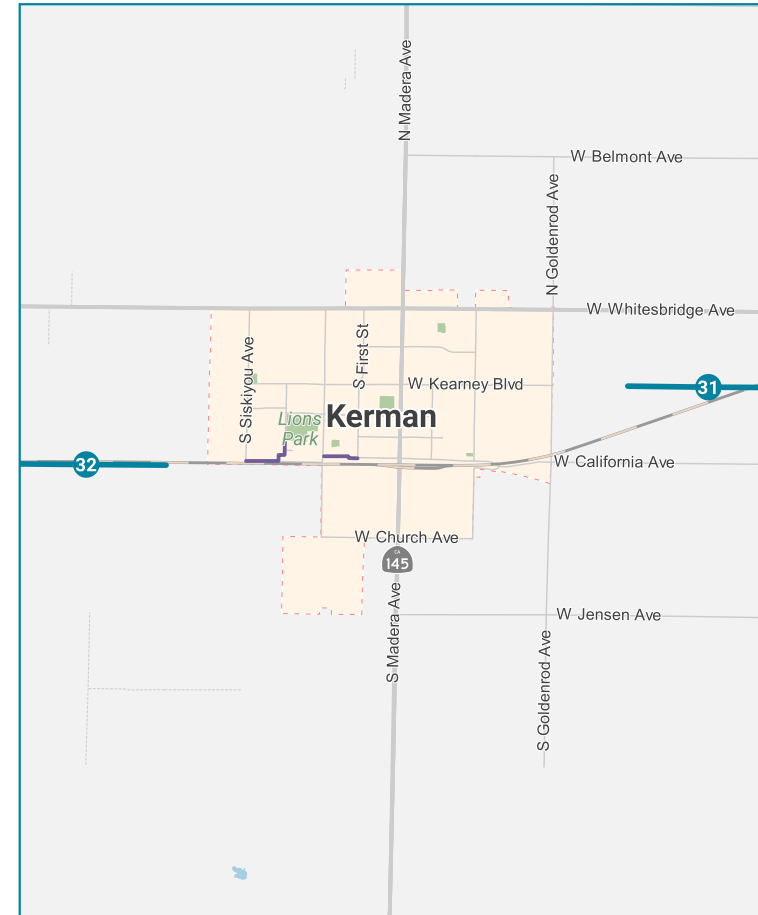
City of Mendota



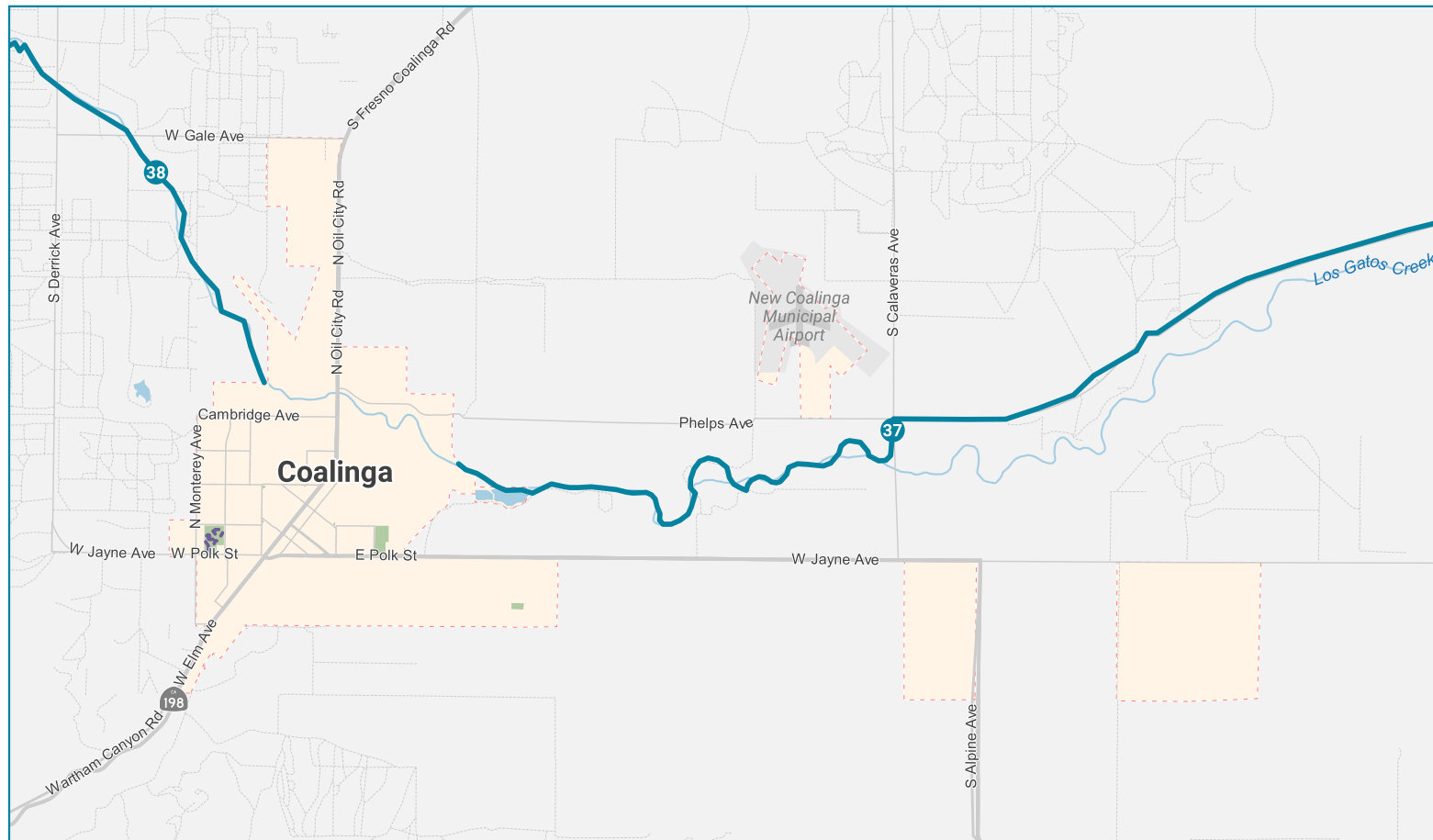
City of San Joaquin



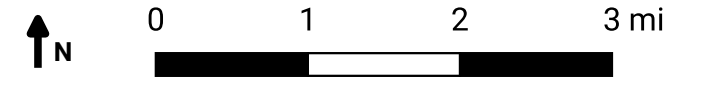
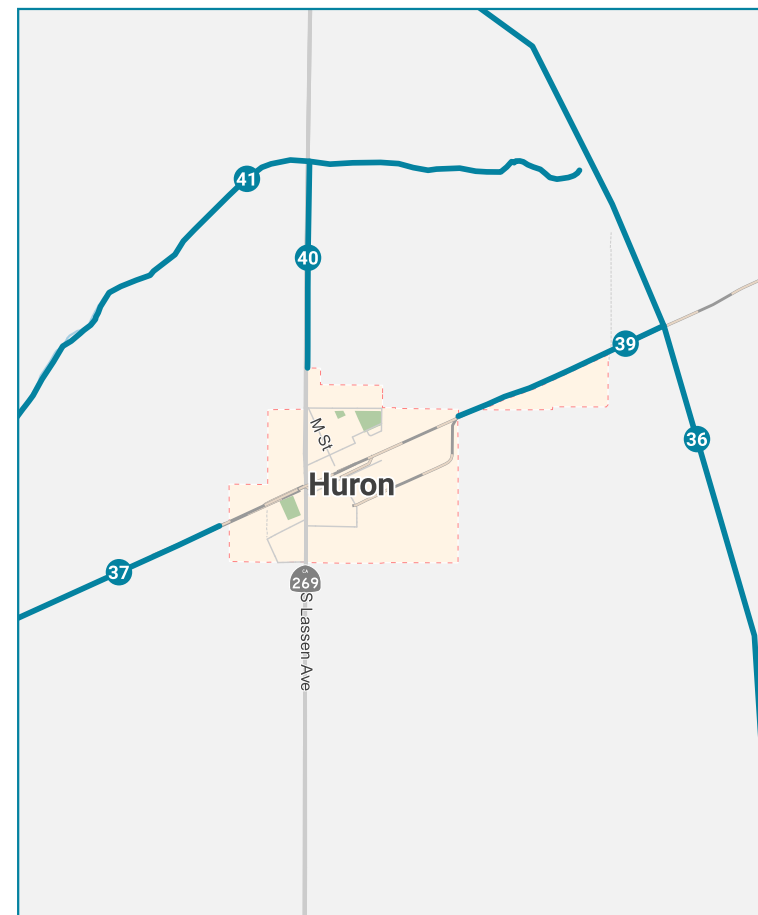
City of Kerman



City of Coalinga



City of Huron



Existing and Recommended Trails (Inset 3/3)

Draft
March 2021

Trails

- | | |
|-------|--------------------|
| Paved | Unpaved |
| | Recommended |
| | Fresno County |
| | Local Agency |
| | Other Recreational |

Other

- Parks and National Parks
- Incorporated Cities
- Unincorporated Areas
- Rail

Table 3-3. Project List

ID	NAME	FROM	TO	TYPE	LENGTH (MILES)
0	Mountain Bike Park	TBD	TBD	Trail	TBD
1	San Joaquin River Gorge	Northeastern most section, Small Valley Rd	North of Redlinger Lake	Trail	17.60
2	Kechaye Preserve	East of Winchell Cove Rd	Existing trail near Sky Harbour Rd	Trail	3.43
3	Millerton Marina Connector	-	-	Trail	0.22
4	Fort Miller Trail	Millerton Rd	East of N Friant Rd	Trail	2.26
5	Millerton Rd	Auberry Rd	N Friant Rd	Class I	5.66
6	Millerton Rd Connector	Millerton Rd	San Joaquin River	Trail	0.55
7	Lost Lake Park	North Fork Rd	Lost Lake	Trail	2.74
8	Lost Lake Connector	North Friant Rd	Proposed Lost Lake River Trail	Class I	0.42
9	San Joaquin River	North Lanes Rd	Lost Lake	Trail	8.10
10	Copper Ave	North Willow Ave	Sunnyside Ave	Class I	2.00
11	Sunnyside Ave	Copper Ave	East Shepherd Ave	Class I	2.00
12	Enterprise Canal Connector	Dry Creek Trail	Enterprise Trail near Glen Kippen Ln	Class I	0.61
13	Enterprise Canal	Alluvial Ave	North Academy Ave	Class I	9.67
14	Friant-Kern Canal	San Joaquin River (Millerton Rd)	Orange Cove City Limits (Auberry Rd)	Trail	42.60
15	Wooten Creek	Anchor Ave	Proposed Friant-Kern Canal	Trail	1.16
16	Green Mountain	-	-	Trail	54.31
17	Oat Mountain	Oat Mountain	Jesse Morrow Mountain	Trail	47.60
18	Wahtoke Lake	Muscat Ave	Central Ave	Trail	1.00
19	Campbell Mountain	Wahtoke Park	Campbell Mountain	Trail	5.69
20	Kings River, Segment 1	China Creek Park	Pine Flat Recreation Area/ Choinumni Park	Trail	12.60
21	Kings River, Segment 2	Rio Vista Park	Northwest of Reedley	Trail	12.50
22	Kings River, Segment 3	Reedley Northern City Limits	Northwest of Reedley (proposed project 23)	Trail	1.46
23	Rainbow Route	China Creek Park	South Rainbow Rte	Trail	2.76
24	Lonetree Channel	South Rainbow Rte	South Rainbow Ave	Class I	1.00
25	Sanger-Reedley Rail Trail	East Goodfellow Ave	Reedley western City Limits	Trail	7.00
26	Julian J. Miley Trail	East Parlier Ave	South Mendocino Ave	Trail	1.10
27	Washington Canal	East Jensen Ave	South Golden State Boulevard	Class I	3.08
28	Dry Creek Canal	North Millbrooke Ave	North of East McKinley Ave	Class I	0.72
29	Skaggs Bridge Park	N Madera Ave at San Joaquin River	-	Trail	0.76
30	Kearney Blvd	South Brawley Ave	South Marks Ave	Class I	1.02

ID	NAME	FROM	TO	TYPE	LENGTH (MILES)
31	W Kearney Blvd	South Grantland Ave	East of South Goldenrod Ave	Class I	6.02
32	Alkali Sink Rail Trail	Guillan Park Dr	South Modoc Ave	Class I	16.00
33	Bass Ave	Mendota Pool Park	Mendota City Limits	Class I	0.87
34	Mendota Pool Park	Mendota Pool Park (via Bass Ave)	Helm Canal Rd	Class I	0.56
35	Helm Canal	Helm Ditch Rd	Firebaugh southeastern City Limits	Class I	5.00
36	California Aqueduct	Fresno County northern County Limits	Fresno County Southern County Limits	Class I	72.01
37	Los Gatos Creek	Coalinga eastern City Limits	Huron western City Limits	Class I	14.70
38	Los Gatos Creek Rd	Southwest Fresno County Limits	Coalinga northwest City Limits	Class I	24.50
39	Huron Rail Trail	Siskiyou Ave	Proposed California Aqueduct Trail	Class I	1.41
40	Lassen Avenue	Huron northern City Limits	Proposed Los Gatos Creek 2	Class I	1.38
41	Los Gatos Creek 2	Proposed Huron Rail Trail	Proposed California Aqueduct Trail	Class I	7.10
42	Fancher Creek	E Jensen Ave	N Temperance Ave	Class I	5.35
43	Kings River, Laton Segment	Excelsior Ave	Fowler Ave	Trail	5.25



Photo source: VRPA Technologies

Chapter 4: Prioritizing Future Trails

Project prioritization provide multiples benefits. First, it is a practical, efficient way for public agencies to responsibly make decisions about spending public money. Second, identifying popular catalyst project(s) is a great way to build support and momentum for implementing the larger recommended network.

While all proposed trail projects play an important role in creating a comprehensive trail system, certain projects may provide greater benefits than others. Projects need to be prioritized given the County's limited resources and funding constraints. Certain projects may also be easier to implement because they cost less to install or may be higher priorities because they better reflect community and agency values.

To help make decisions around which projects take priority, this Plan has prioritized the proposed trail projects based on specific **prioritization criteria** (see Table 4.1). These criteria are based on:

- **The Plan's goals** of increasing livability, connectivity, mobility, collaboration, and economic development. For more information, see Chapter 2: Goals for the Trail System.
- **The Trail System Development Principles** of prioritizing equity; increasing access to recreational opportunities; public support; and enhancing regional connectivity. For more information, see Chapter 3: The Future Trail System.

Prioritization Criteria

The prioritization criteria were applied to each proposed trail project. This resulted in a score for each project, out of a possible 75 points.

Table 4.1: Prioritization Criteria

CATEGORY	METRIC	EVALUATION APPROACH	POINTS ⁵
Livability and Equity	Does the project serve an area that is designated as a “disadvantaged community” by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment’s CalEnviroScreen tool?	Project is located within a designated “disadvantaged community,” as defined by the 75 th – 100 th percentile of CalEnviroScreen 3.0	15
	Does the project provide connections to other trails and/or fill a system gap?	Project links to existing trails and/or Class I shared-use paths, thus creating a more comprehensive system	15
Connectivity and Mobility	Does the project provide a new connection to surrounding jurisdictions or recreation areas?	Project connects to nearby jurisdiction or designated recreation area, thereby increasing opportunities for activity	15
	Does the project provide opportunities to collaborate with any city, town, agency, or organization to further their goals and/or leverage project funding?	Project requires or would benefit from collaboration/coordination with any city, town, agency, or organization to further their goals and/or leverage project funding.	10
Public Support	Did the public indicate support for the project during the Plan’s engagement?	Project received above average votes for top 5 priority projects on the public web map (e.g., at least 7 votes)	20
Maximum Possible Points			75

⁵ The differences in the points indicates the value placed on the associated with each category. For example, the prioritization criteria matrix weights “Connectivity and Mobility” highly, as shown by the fact that a project can earn 30 points for “Connectivity and Mobility” and only 10 points for “Collaboration.” Prioritization categories are measured using a binary approach. If a project meets the metric criteria, the project receives the full points available for that metric, if the project does not meet the criteria, it receives zero points for that criteria.

Public Support for Recommended Trails

The recommended trails were shared with the public using an online web map in the Fall of 2020. Participants using the online map were able to indicate whether they liked or disliked a trail a project and whether they thought specific projects should be top priorities. The majority of viewers expressed support for the recommended trails and several trails emerged as high priorities among members of the public. The three trails ranked as top priorities among the public were the Enterprise Canal Trail, Heritage Grove Canal Trail, and the San Joaquin River Trail.

What did we hear?

	<p>Overwhelmingly positive support for recommended trail projects (over 90%)</p>
	<p>Trail recommendations with the most comments (and positive comments) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Joaquin River Trail • Enterprise Canal Trail and Enterprise Canal Connector Trail • Heritage Grove Canal
	<p>Trails ranked the highest in terms of priority include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Canal Trail • San Joaquin River Trail
	<p>Additional trails that received a relatively high number of positive comments include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kechaye Preserve Trail • Fort Miller Trail • Campbell Mountain Trail • Kings River Trail • Rainbow Route Trail • Julian J. Miley Trail • Golden State Blvd Trail • Helm Canal Trail • California Aqueduct Trail
	<p>No comments on equestrian trails</p>
	<p>No responses related to ADA accessibility issues</p>
	<p>Very few responses (under 5%) related to worries about crime or crash/near miss experiences</p>

Scoring

Projects with scores in the high-priority category should be prioritized for implementation and should be considered first when funding or grant opportunities are available. Projects with scores in the medium to low priority categories should be incorporated into plans for future funding cycles and/or grant opportunities and addressed as a part of other improvements. Low priority projects should be characterized as longer-term projects and assessed regularly to see if there are opportunities to complete these with partnerships. See Figures 4.1 through 4.4 for maps of the prioritized projects, and Table 4.2 for a list of the prioritized projects.

Even though these projects have been prioritized, Fresno COG and County of Fresno should remain nimble and opportunistic when implementing the recommendations. Opportunities may arise to implement lower-priority projects in the short-term while the implementation of some higher-priority projects may be delayed for various reasons, such as funding delays, environmental constraints, or the need to acquire additional land or develop property easements. While flexibility is key, this prioritization strategy offers a way for decisionmakers and COG and County staff to have a thoughtful and intentional path towards implementation.

As collaboration and partnership are a critical part of implementation given the county's trail funding, additional points will be awarded to projects for demonstrated commitments from partner agencies, either in the form of funding, or volunteer efforts. Projects may receive additional points toward prioritization according to the following opportunities: These additional points may be added as the county move toward implementation.

- If a partnering agency is contributing 20% of the responsibility
- If a partnering agency is contributing 50% of the responsibility
- If volunteer labor is available for maintenance/stewardship/etc.

Cost opinions

The Plan provides planning level cost estimates for the recommended routes of regional significance throughout the county. Due to the complex nature of each facility classification, as well as the varied location of these paths, cost assumptions were made to create estimates for each of the projects. A memo outlining the methodology and assumptions made for the planning level cost estimates that can be used in the development and implementation of these Plan facilities can be found in Appendix E.

An additional project, the mountain bike park, was estimated separately. A summary of the costs is included in Table 4.2, of the prioritized project list.

Prioritized Projects

Table 4.2 presents the recommended trail project list and associated prioritization scores and cost estimates, for more details about individual project prioritization scores, refer to Appendix F. Figures 4.1 through 4.4 present the trail projects by prioritization rank.

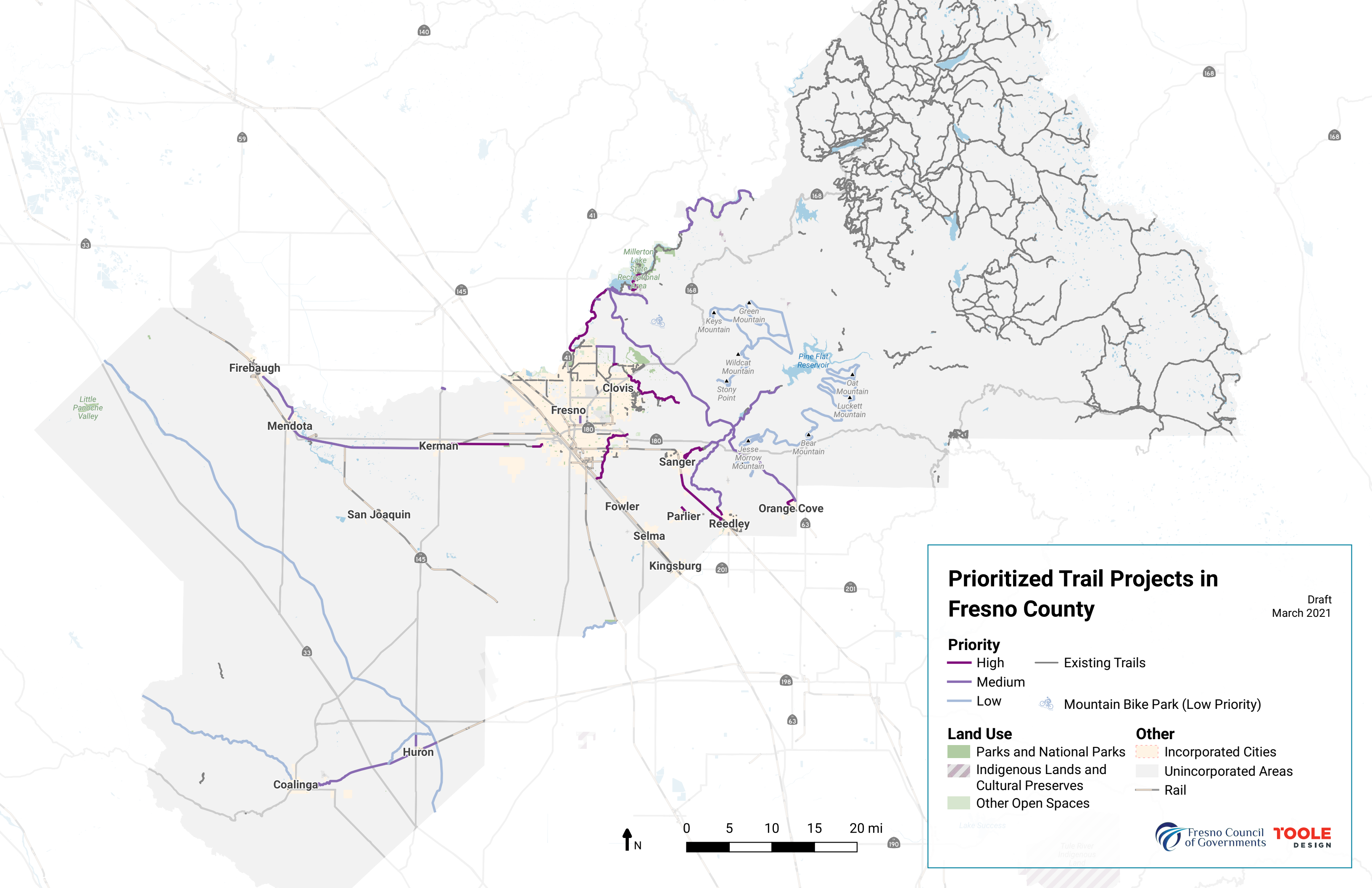
Table 4.2: Prioritized Regional Trail Project List

PROJECT ID	NAME	FROM	TO	TYPE	LENGTH (MI)	COST ESTIMATE	SCORE	PRIORITY RANK	COST RANK
12	Enterprise Canal Connector	Dry Creek Trail	Enterprise Trail near Glen Kippen Ln	Class I	0.61	\$820,000	60	high	low
3	Millerton Marina Connector	-	-	Trail	0.22	\$230,000	40	medium	low
6	Millerton Rd Connector	Millerton Rd	San Joaquin River	Trail	0.55	\$550,000	40	medium	low
8	Lost Lake Connector	North Friant Rd	Proposed Lost Lake River Trail	Class I	0.42	\$260,000	40	medium	low
28	Dry Creek Canal	North Millbrooke Ave	North of East McKinley Ave	Class I	0.72	\$940,000	25	medium	low
29	Skaggs Bridge Park	N Madera Ave at San Joaquin River	-	Trail	0.76	\$750,000	25	medium	low
0	Mountain Bike Park	TBD	TBD	Trail	TBD	\$810,000	0	low	low
2	Kechaye Preserve	East of Winchell Cove Rd	Existing trail near Sky Harbour Rd	Trail	3.43	\$3,430,000	60	high	medium
7	Lost Lake Park	North Fork Rd	Lost Lake	Trail	2.74	\$2,670,000	55	high	medium
15	Wooten Creek	Anchor Ave	Proposed Friant-Kern Canal	Trail	1.16	\$1,830,000	55	high	medium
22	Kings River, Segment 3	Reedley Northern City Limits	Northwest of Reedley (proposed project 23)	Trail	1.46	\$1,430,000	55	high	medium
23	Rainbow Route	China Creek Park	South Rainbow Rte	Trail	2.76	\$2,690,000	55	high	medium
24	Lonetree Channel	South Rainbow Rte	South Rainbow Ave	Class I	1.00	\$1,250,000	55	high	medium
26	Julian J. Miley Trail	East Parlier Ave	South Mendocino Ave	Trail	1.10	\$1,080,000	55	high	medium
27	Washington Canal	East Jensen Ave	South Golden State Boulevard	Class I	3.08	\$4,230,000	55	high	medium
30	Kearney Blvd	South Brawley Ave	South Marks Ave	Class I	1.02	\$1,150,000	55	high	medium
4	Fort Miller Trail	Millerton Rd	East of N Friant Rd	Trail	2.26	\$2,210,000	40	medium	medium
10	Copper Ave	North Willow Ave	Sunnyside Ave	Class I	2.00	\$2,340,000	40	medium	medium
11	Sunnyside Ave	Copper Ave	East Shepherd Ave	Class I	2.00	\$2,400,000	40	medium	medium
34	Mendota Pool Park	Mendota Pool Park (via Bass Ave)	Helm Canal Rd	Class I	0.56	\$4,280,000	25	medium	medium
39	Huron Rail Trail	Siskiyou Ave	Proposed California Aqueduct Trail	Class I	1.41	\$3,670,000	25	medium	medium

PROJECT ID	NAME	FROM	TO	TYPE	LENGTH (MI)	COST ESTIMATE	SCORE	PRIORITY RANK	COST RANK
40	Lassen Avenue	Huron northern City Limits	Proposed Los Gatos Creek 2	Class I	1.38	\$1,600,000	25	medium	medium
18	Wahtoke Lake	Muscat Ave	Central Ave	Trail	1.00	\$1,070,000	15	low	medium
41	Los Gatos Creek 2	Proposed Huron Rail Trail	Proposed California Aqueduct Trail	Class I	7.10	\$4,110,000	15	low	medium
43*	Kings River, Laton Segment	Excelsior Ave	Fowler Ave	Trail	5.32	\$2,574,000	15	low	medium
9	San Joaquin River	North Lanes Rd	Lost Lake	Trail	8.10	\$8,230,000	75	high	high
13	Enterprise Canal	Alluvial Ave	North Academy Ave	Class I	9.67	\$13,560,000	60	high	high
25	Sanger-Reedley Rail Trail	East Goodfellow Ave	Reedley western City Limits	Trail	7.00	\$6,800,000	55	high	high
31	W Kearney Blvd	South Grantland Ave	East of South Goldenrod Ave	Class I	6.02	\$7,650,000	65	high	high
42*	Fancher Creek	E Jensen Ave	N Temperance Ave	Class I	5.25	\$6,185,000	55	high	high
1	San Joaquin River Gorge	Northeastern most section, Small Valley Rd	North of Redlinger Lake	Trail	17.60	\$17,090,000	40	medium	high
5	Millerton Rd	Auberry Rd	N Friant Rd	Class I	5.66	\$24,200,000	30	medium	high
14	Friant-Kern Canal	San Joaquin River (Millerton Rd)	Orange Cove City Limits (Auberry Rd)	Trail	42.60	\$54,050,000	50	medium	high
20	Kings River, Segment 1	China Creek Park	Pine Flat Recreation Area/ Choinumni Park	Trail	12.60	\$23,760,000	45	medium	high
21	Kings River, Segment 2	Rio Vista Park	Northwest of Reedley	Trail	12.50	\$12,630,000	35	medium	high
32	Alkali Sink Rail Trail	Guillan Park Dr	South Modoc Ave	Class I	16.00	\$18,450,000	25	medium	high
33	Bass Ave	Mendota Pool Park	Mendota City Limits	Class I	0.87	\$5,240,000	25	medium	high
35	Helm Canal	Helm Ditch Rd	Firebaugh southeastern City Limits	Class I	5.00	\$5,440,000	25	medium	high
37	Los Gatos Creek	Coalinga eastern City Limits	Huron western City Limits	Class I	14.70	\$17,130,000	25	medium	high
16	Green Mountain	-	-	Trail	54.31	\$52,800,000	0	low	high
17	Oat Mountain	Oat Mountain	Jesse Morrow Mountain	Trail	47.60	\$46,290,000	0	low	high
19	Campbell Mountain	Wahtoke Park	Campbell Mountain	Trail	5.69	\$5,850,000	15	low	high

PROJECT ID	NAME	FROM	TO	TYPE	LENGTH (MI)	COST ESTIMATE	SCORE	PRIORITY RANK	COST RANK
36	California Aqueduct	Fresno County northern County Limits	Fresno County Southern County Limits	Class I	72.01	\$80,710,000	15	low	high
38	Los Gatos Creek Rd	Southwest Fresno County Limits	Coalinga northwest City Limits	Class I	24.50	\$222,640,000	10	low	high

*Projects 42 and 43 were added to the project list after the public outreach phase was completed. During the prioritization process, these projects automatically received a score of 0 for Public Support and a separate public outreach effort will be needed to gauge public support of these projects. In addition, the cost estimates for these two projects were derived using estimates of other, similar trail projects; a more detailed feasibility analysis of these projects is needed to determine more accurate cost estimates.

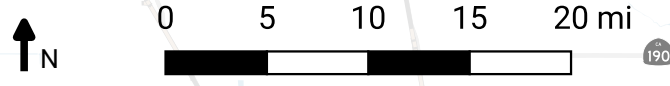


Prioritized Trail Projects in Fresno County

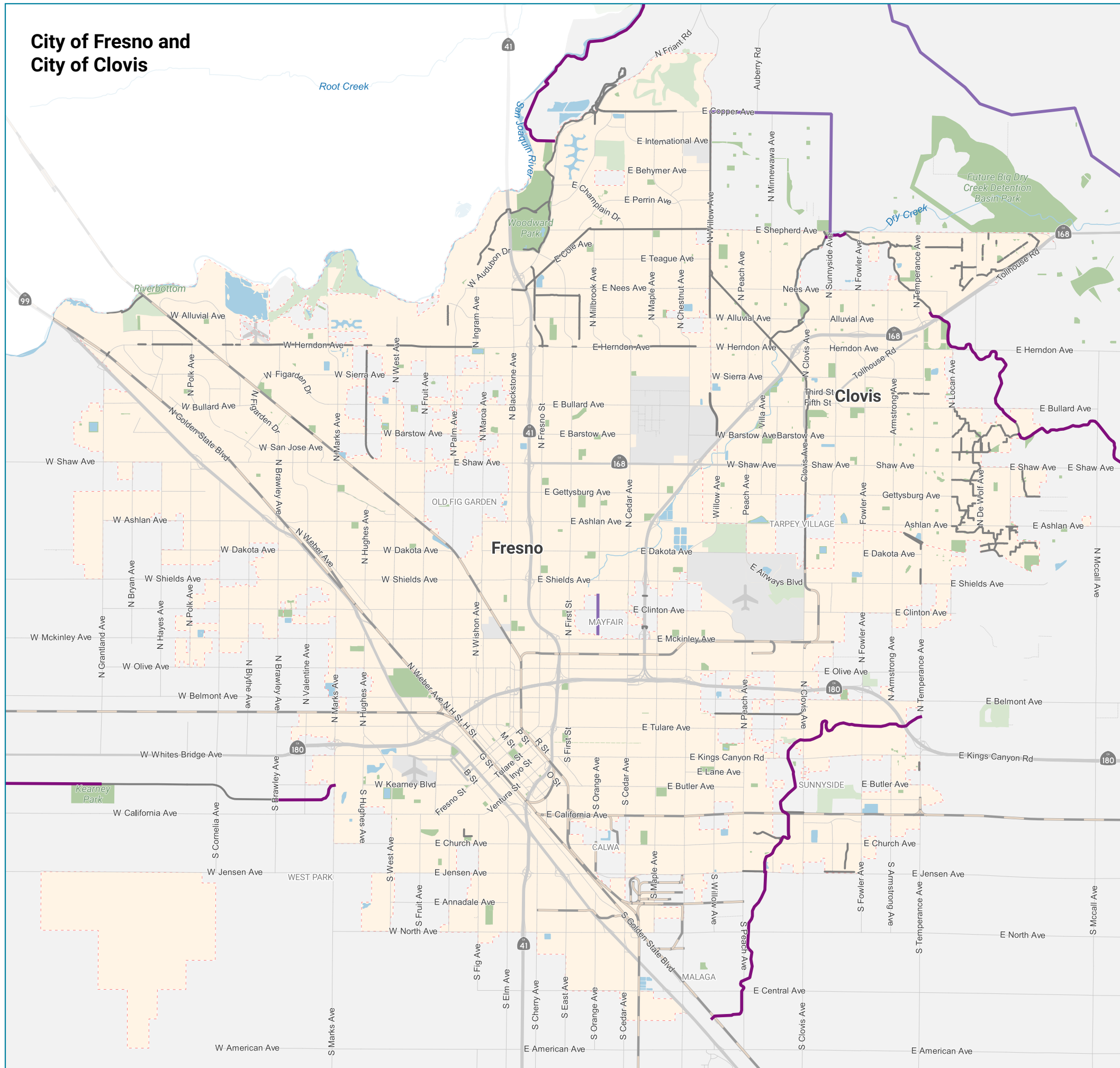
Draft
March 2021

- Priority**
- High
 - Medium
 - Low
 - Existing Trails
 - Mountain Bike Park (Low Priority)

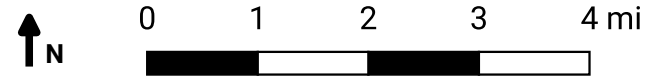
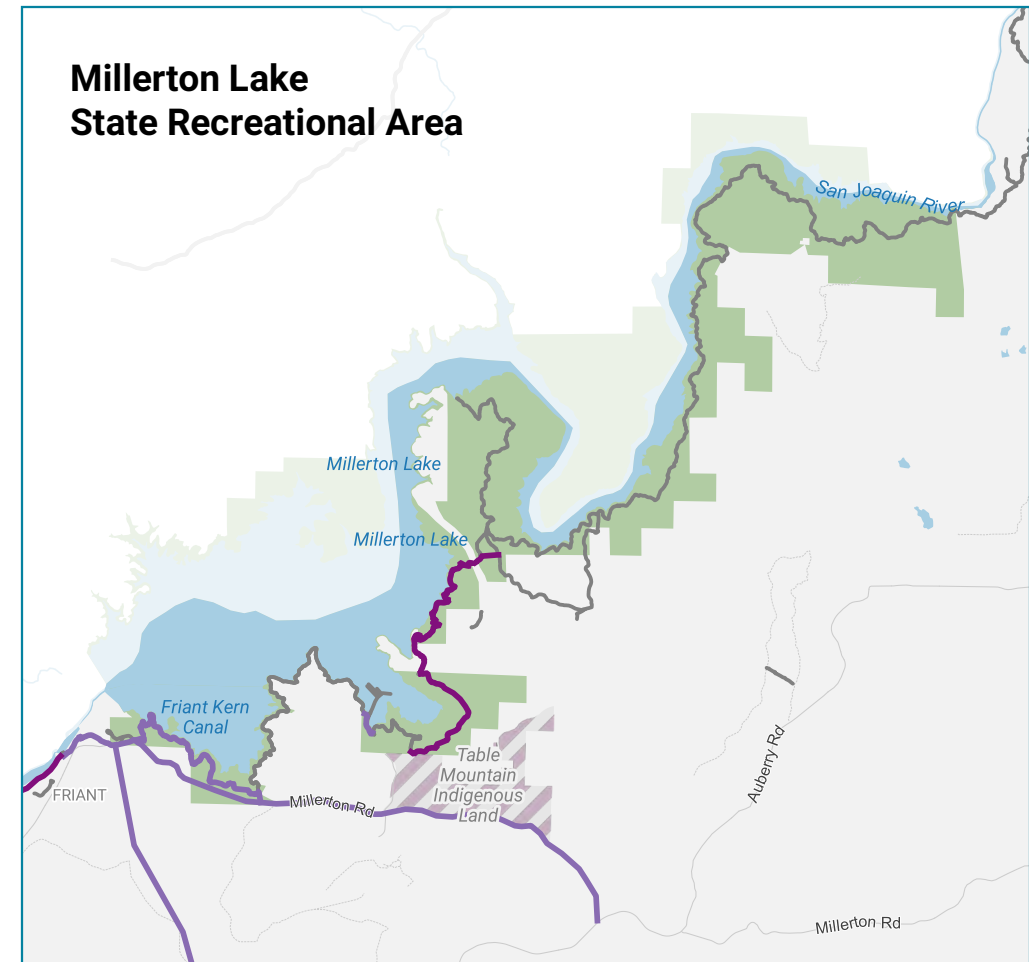
- Land Use**
- Parks and National Parks
 - ▨ Indigenous Lands and Cultural Preserves
 - Other Open Spaces
- Other**
- Incorporated Cities
 - Unincorporated Areas
 - Rail



City of Fresno and City of Clovis



Millerton Lake State Recreational Area



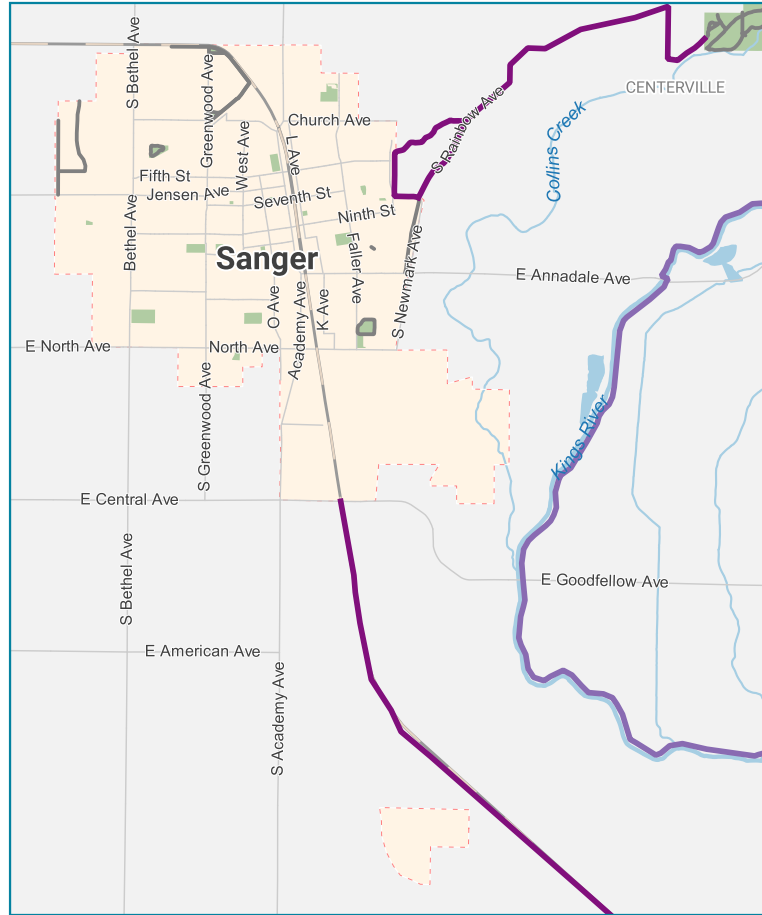
Prioritized Trail Projects (Inset 1/3)

Draft
March 2021

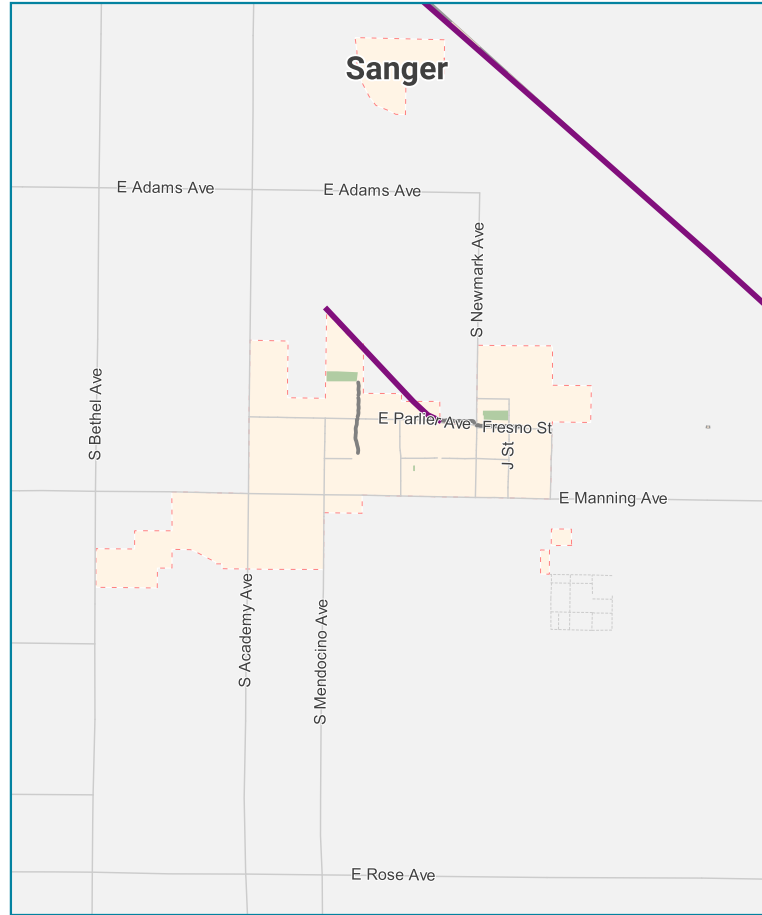
- Priority**
- High
 - Medium
 - Low
 - Existing Trails
 - Mountain Bike Park (Low Priority)

- Land Use**
- Parks and National Parks
 - Other Open Spaces
 - Incorporated Cities
 - Unincorporated Areas
 - Rail

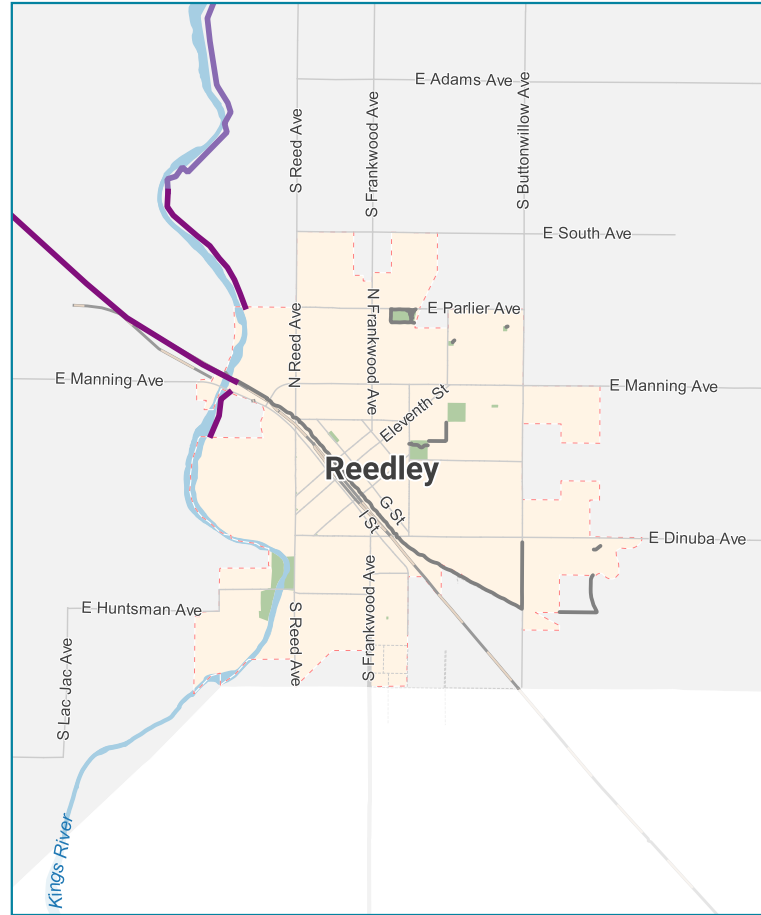
City of Sanger



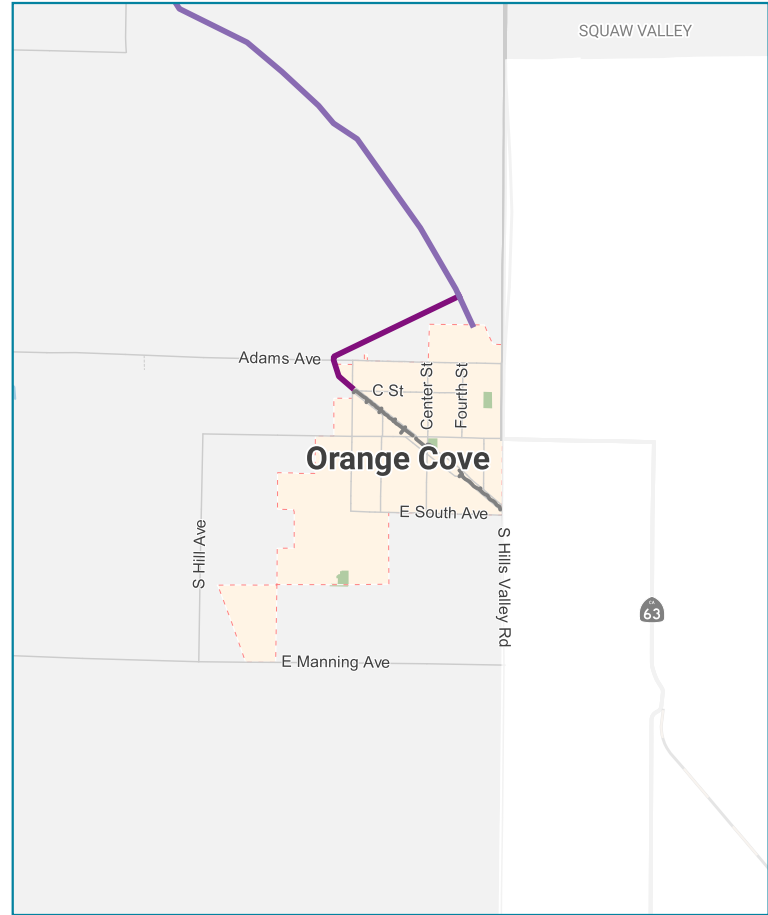
City of Parlier



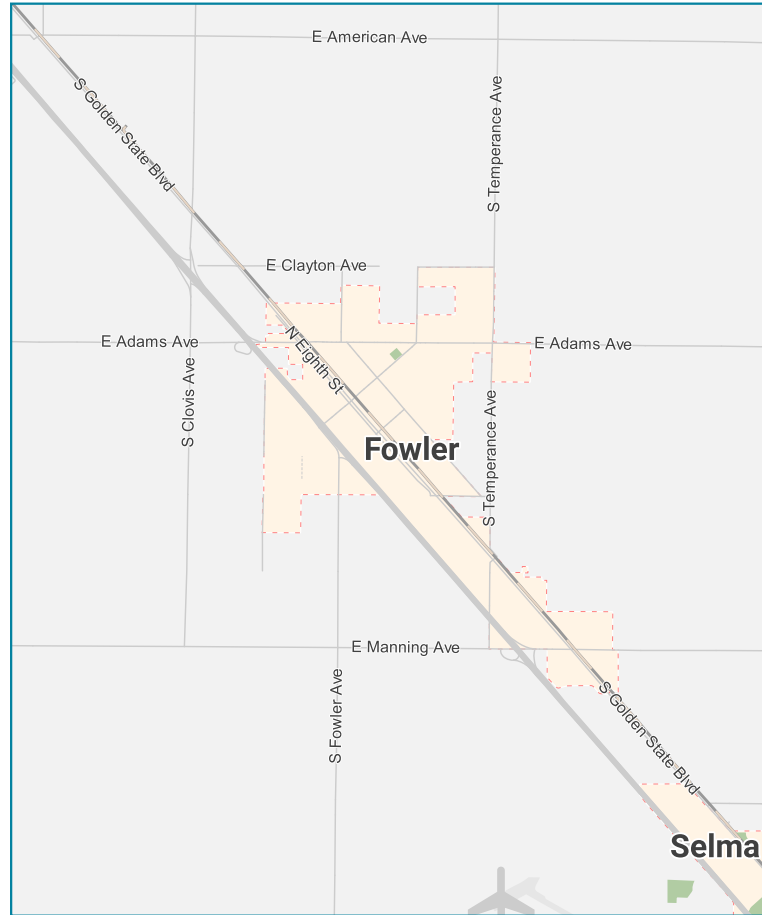
City of Reedley



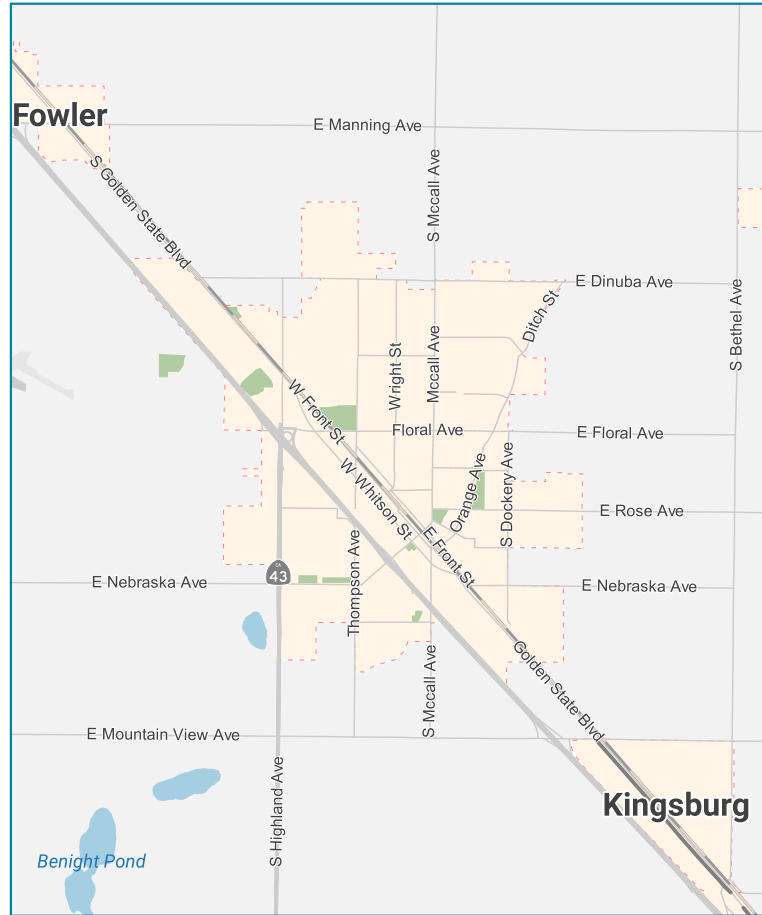
City of Orange Cove



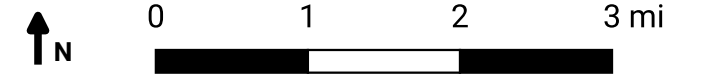
City of Fowler



City of Selma



City of Kingsburg



**Prioritized Trail Projects
(Inset 2/3)**

Draft
March 2021

Priority

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Existing Trails
- Mountain Bike Park (Low Priority)

Other

- Parks and National Parks
- Incorporated Cities
- Unincorporated Areas
- Rail

City of Firebaugh



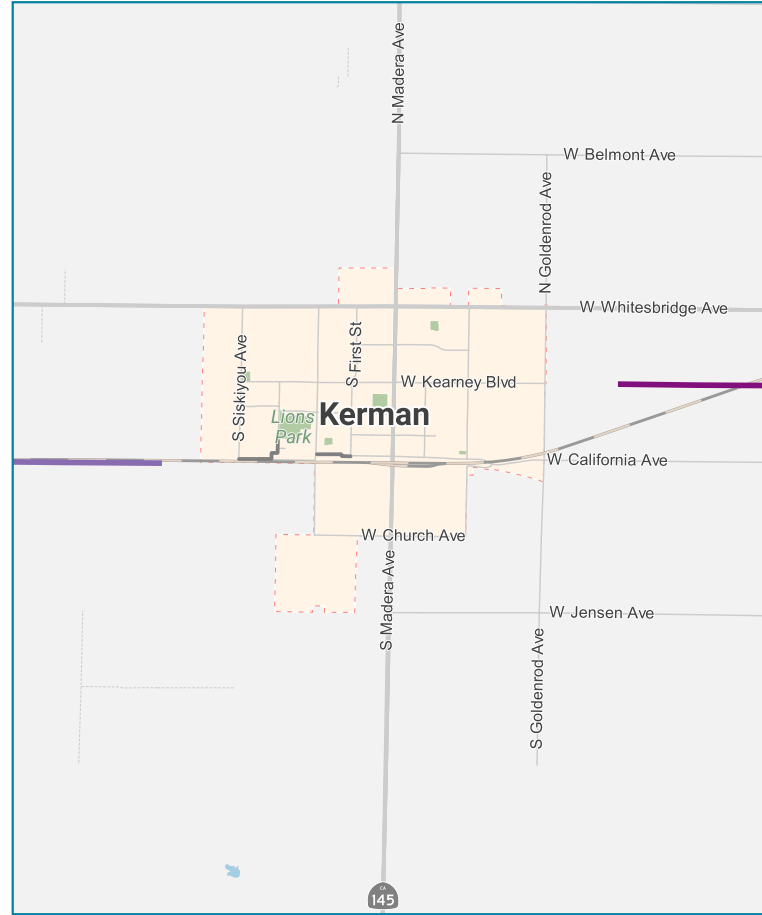
City of Mendota



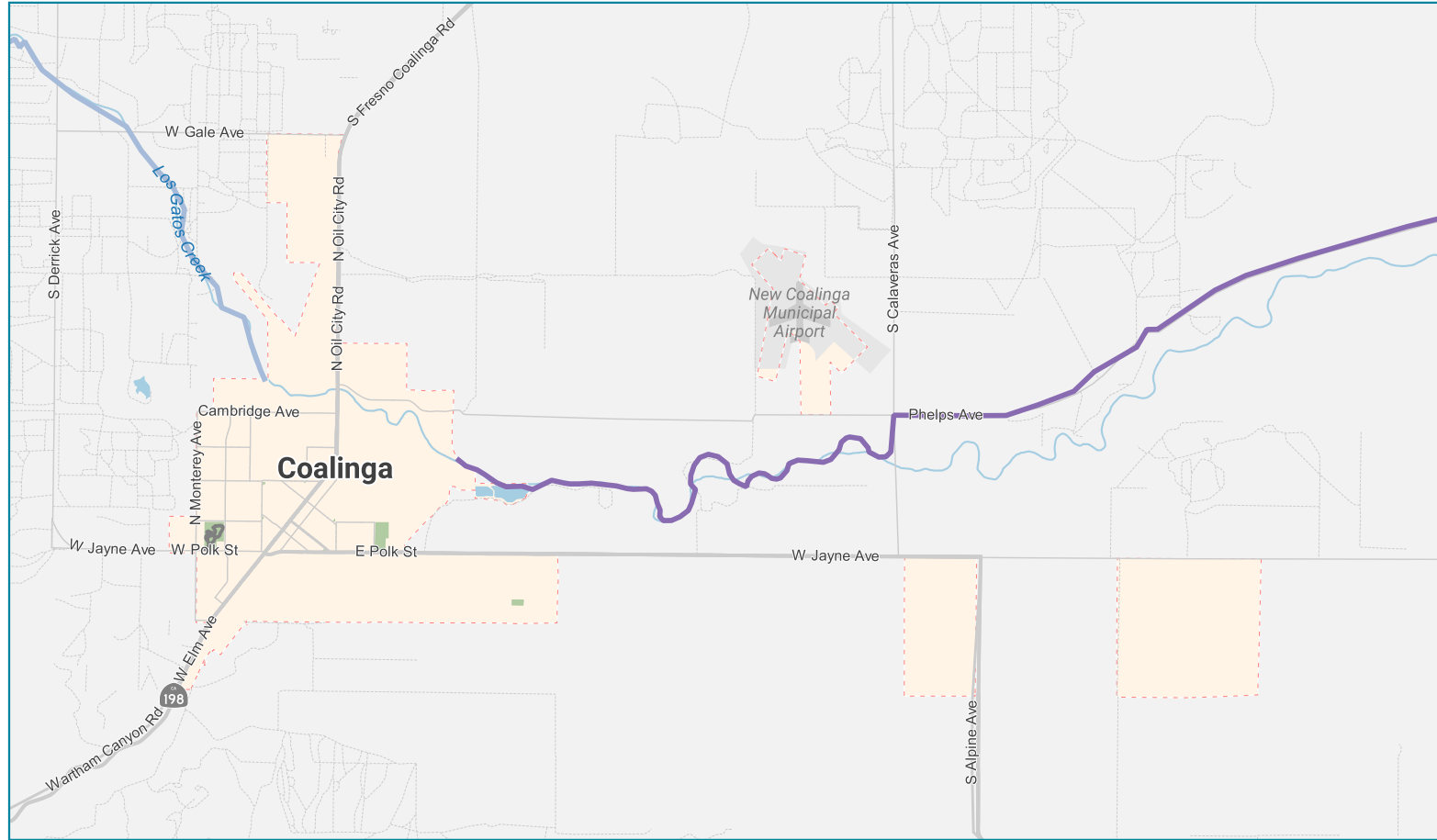
City of San Joaquin



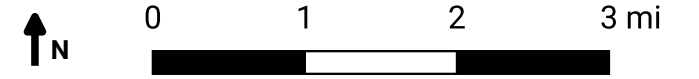
City of Kerman



City of Coalinga



City of Huron



Prioritized Trail Projects (Inset 3/3)

Draft
March 2021

- Priority**
- High
 - Medium
 - Low
- Existing Trails
- Mountain Bike Park (Low Priority)

- Other**
- Parks and National Parks
 - Incorporated Cities
 - Unincorporated Areas
 - Rail

Top 10 Priority Projects

The project prioritization scores, along with project costs and feasibility barriers (e.g., limited existing right of way or steep topography) were ranked to identify the highest priority and lowest cost projects to help the County and Fresno COG gain a more holistic perspective of how to prioritize and implement trail projects in the coming years. Projects that fell within the top 33% of prioritization scores were categorized as high priority and projects that fell within the lowest 33% of costs were categorized as low cost, projects that fell within the middle were ranked as medium. Costs were also divided into the following three categories:

- High cost: More than \$5 million
- Medium cost: Less than \$5 million and more than \$1 million
- Low cost: Less than \$1 million

The priority and cost categories were combined to classify all projects into nine categories, based on their relative cost and prioritization score:



This process identified the top 10 highest priority projects for the County and Fresno COG to focus on over the next few years. Each of the top 10 projects will cost less than \$5 million and has a prioritization score of at least 55 out of 75. These projects represent either high priority-low cost, or high priority-medium cost projects. Table 4.3 lists the top 10 priority trail projects. Figure 4.5 presents the results of this cost-priority analysis for all recommended trail projects.

Table 4.3: Top 10 Trail Project List

PROJECT ID	NAME	TYPE	LENGTH (MI)	COST ESTIMATE
12	Enterprise Canal Connector	Class I	0.61	\$820,000
2	Kechaye Preserve	Trail	3.43	\$3,430,000
7	Lost Lake Park	Trail	2.74	\$2,670,000
15	Wooten Creek	Trail	1.16	\$1,830,000
22	Kings River, Segment 3	Trail	1.46	\$1,430,000
23	Rainbow Route	Trail	2.76	\$2,690,000
24	Lonetree Channel	Class I	1	\$1,250,000
26	Julian J. Miley Trail	Trail	1.1	\$1,080,000
27	Washington Canal	Class I	3.08	\$4,230,000
30	Kearney Blvd	Class I	1.02	\$1,150,000

The project numbers in the brown circles represent the top 10 recommended trail projects

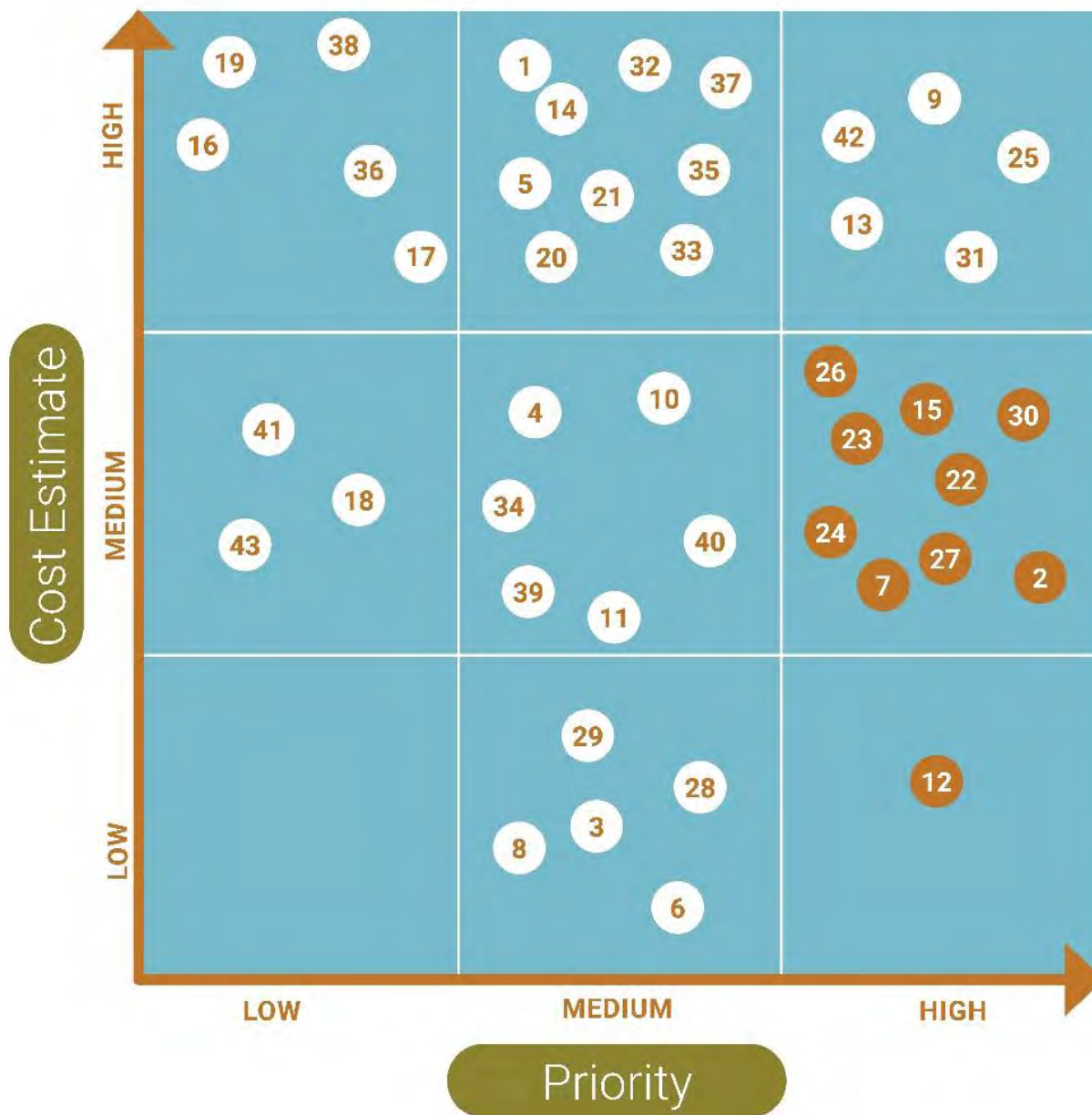


Figure 4.5 Cost Priority Analysis for Recommended Trail Projects



Chapter 5: Implementation Strategy

The key strategies for implementing the recommended trail system include project development, construction, maintenance, and promotion. Along with these strategies, this section provides additional details about the suggested approach or strategy, which agencies or other parties should take the lead, and whether the recommendation should be undertaken in the short, medium, or long term. Short term is one to two years after Plan acceptance, medium term is three to four years and long term is five to six years.

In addition to the elements discussed, each recommendation is also related to a purpose and need statement as well as a performance measure, as appropriate. The measures focus on quantifiable results related to the activity, such as the number of staff trained, or the number of projects completed.

Developing the Trail System

Strategies for developing the trail system focus on creating foundational baselines to prepare for constructing and managing the system. Strategies include coordination of partner agencies to plan trails as well as to use resources across departments to build trails. Developing good data management protocols in this stage will improve trail planning efficiency and provide a good benchmark for progress.

Table 5.1: Strategies for Developing the Trail System

RECOMMENDATION	APPROACH	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PURPOSE/NEED + TERM and MEASURE, if applicable
Maintain the GIS trail data inventory (with information from field assessments)	Finish populating data related to width, surface type, characteristics, and amenities (signage, trailheads, waysides), including trail classification	County of Fresno	Ensure effective plan implementation Short term
Adopt trail categories proposed in master plan	Accomplished when the Trails Plan is adopted.	County of Fresno	Establishes a framework within which all trail development can take place and assists in tracking long term progress. Helps distinguish amongst trails County of Fresno will be responsible for and trails that other agencies should be responsible for. Short term
Develop at 10-year plan of priority trail development program and activities	Establish and adopt prioritization system for trail planning and development activity.	County of Fresno and local partners	Creates greater predictability in trail design and construction activity. Short; Ten-year list of projects for a set amount per year set of investments.
Coordinate with irrigation district and other utilities, such as PG&E, to determine which trail projects they may be willing to fund along their corridors	Identify potential pilot projects.	County of Fresno Planning Dept., PG&E, Fresno Irrigation District, and other IDs.	Develop trails with no additional environmental impacts. The new utility company has community relations at the top of its priority list and may express openness to use of its ROW for trails. Short term: Five miles of canal or utility right of way trail constructed by 2028.
Coordinate with County of Fresno Public Works and Planning or local jurisdictions to determine how trails can be established with sewer line repair and replacement work	Follow up with coordination and mapping already conducted with public works and planning as a part of this planning process.	County of Fresno Resources and Parks Division	Develop trails along already-impacted natural areas where grading for natural surface access roads has already occurred. Short term: Fresno Solid Waste Department access roads mapped in GIS; 0.5 miles of access roads incorporated into trail system annually.

Educate staff throughout the County of Fresno about the Trails Plan and its recommendations and implications.	Provide copies of the Trails Plan, a presentation to various staff groupings, and plan components on an internal agency website.	County of Fresno Planning and Public Works	Ensure effective plan implementation. Short term
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Constructing the Trail System

Building the system requires a variety of strategies to get trails on the ground. These strategies center on incorporating trails into construction processes and engaging stakeholders to coordinate efforts and resources, while also implementing projects with pledged partnerships and continuing to fund and plan trails for future construction. Timeline for strategies range from short term to medium term to ongoing activities.

Table 5.2: Strategies for Trail Construction

RECOMMENDATION	APPROACH	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PURPOSE/NEED + TERM and MEASURE, if applicable
Communicate and coordinate Trail Plan components with respective stakeholders, prospective partners, and regional jurisdictions.	Provide copies of the Trails Plan, and a presentation to various staff groupings, and plan components on a website.	Fresno COG/ County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Ensure effective plan implementation and development of supporting partners. Short term
Elevate projects with local partnership opportunities	Adjust project prioritization for projects that partner with local agencies who pledge partnership	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Connect regional trails to local trails. Medium term
Engage developers and municipalities to educate them about the Trail Plan's new approaches to trail classifications, trail connectivity needs, and trail design guidelines.	Provide training for developers, and municipalities.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Ensure that future projects are developed based on trail best practices and lead to a trail system. Short term; Number of people attending the trainings.
Continue to develop planned and proposed trails.	Ensure that feasibility studies are conducted on a regular basis.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Keep the trail development process moving forward. Ongoing; Initiate one major feasibility study every two years

RECOMMENDATION	APPROACH	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PURPOSE/NEED + TERM and MEASURE, if applicable
Coordinate Planned/Proposed trails in the Trails Plan with countywide master plans and local planning activities undertaken by Fresno COG and municipal jurisdictions.	Ensure staff incorporates recommendations from the Trails Plan into local plans and, similarly, update the Trails Plan with refinements from local area and subregion plans.	Fresno COG/ County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Ongoing
Continue refining the capital budgeting process that supports trail development.	Provide two general trail budget line items: Trail Development Fund and Trail Repaving and Rehabilitation Fund; and continue showing project specific line items for major construction projects.	Fresno COG/ County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	More easily show how the budget is addressing needs and priorities. Short term
Establish secure funding source for trail construction	Adopt a budget policy that provides a minimum of \$1 million per year in the Fresno County CIP for trail development.	Board of Supervisors	Creates predictability in trail design and construction Short term
Seek additional funding for trail development	Develop a corporate partnership program to leverage additional trail funding from the private sector.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Increase funding levels Medium term
Engage youth and advocacy groups in trail development and maintenance	Reach out to the Student Conservation Association (and other conservation corps) to assess potential for trail building and maintenance support; establish a Youth Corps based in Fresno County.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning and County of Fresno Independent Living Program	Develop youth buy in to the Trails Program; provide employment training; get small projects on the trails system completed Medium term
Strategically prioritize grants applicable to trail construction and maintenance.	Maintain a database of grant programs relative to trails.	County of Fresno Planning and Public Works	Prioritize the projects to be developed based on project prioritization criteria, while strategizing which potential funding sources apply to trail projects Ongoing
Incorporate Trails into County Land Use Development Code	Integrate trails as a multimodal traffic mitigation strategy	County of Fresno Planning and Public Works	Leverage new subdivision developments on county land to construct new trails adjacent to residents to offset the increase of automobile trips. Medium term

Managing and Maintaining the Trail System

Managing and maintaining the system requires strategies that touch on users’ experiences while on the trail, as well as keeping data on trail assets and maintenance status. To manage the system, ensuring that trail use is intuitive and enjoyable for everyone is key to creating a great trail experience and ensure that users will incorporate trails into their transportation habits. When maintenance issues arise, ensuring that issues are addressed promptly by the responsible agencies is important. Strategies range from short term to medium-length actions.

Table 5.3: Strategies for Managing and Maintaining the Trail System

RECOMMENDATION	APPROACH	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PURPOSE/NEED + TERM and MEASURE, if applicable
Establish a wayfinding sign system to brand County trails and raise awareness of them	Develop a wayfinding sign protocol and design manual for application countywide.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Improve public visibility of the trails system and make it more useful for transportation; increase personal security. Short; Completion of a sign protocol and design manual.
Establish a trail-focused maintenance program through partnership with local jurisdictions	Establish protocols and priorities for routine and periodic maintenance activities; including asphalt disruption and repair standards and overhead utility repair and tree work standards.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Develop a trail-focused approach to maintenance that includes new standards and guidelines, new procedures, and the most efficient use of staff and equipment resources. Short term
Establish a database or use an asset management database system for data gathering, inspections and reporting	Incorporate trail specific features into the database.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Efficient management practices Medium term
Coordinate maintenance issues with outside agencies		County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Develop permitting standards, mitigation standards and repair standards for utilities and other entities that use the trails to access their infrastructure. Short term
Create crowdsourcing program to monitor maintenance issues Provide staff support for a program to allow volunteers to collaborate with nonprofits/agencies for trail maintenance	Create reporting mechanism for trail users to provide maintenance requests. Create an “Adopt a Trail,” organization so that community members or organizations can maintain or pay to maintain trails, potentially for a tax-deductible incentive	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Build capacity for maintenance procedures and monitoring across the regional trail system Short term

Promoting the Trail System

To ensure its establishment and continued success, promoting the regional trail system is key. Strategies include working with health-focused partners to encourage trail use for health and fitness, while also working with economic organizations to promote trails with a business focus. Establishing trails as a tourism attraction for a variety of visitors – from adventure travelers to casual explorers – can build economic support.

Table 5.4: Strategies for Promoting the Trail System

RECOMMENDATION	APPROACH	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PURPOSE/NEED + TERM and measure, if applicable
Establish and grow health partnerships	Work with identified partners to determine how trails might be incorporated into existing and future Health Impact Assessments. Reach out to health care providers to create awareness of park and trail resources and encourage Trail Use Prescriptions, Walk with the Doc and other trail programming.	Fresno COG/ County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Creates opportunity to leverage support and resources from public health and care providers that understand the value of trails to personal and community health. Short; At least 3 health partners identified and engaged through a trail programming committee.
Establish and grow industry, economic development, and tourism partners.	Partner with the Fresno Chamber of Commerce and Fresno County Economic Development Corporation to develop support for Trail Plan implementation. Reach out to county and state tourism agencies to ensure that trails are promoted as a top attraction in Fresno County.	County of Fresno Public Works and Planning	Creates opportunity to leverage support and funding from resource-rich private sector partners that can assist with many aspects of trail development, promotion, programming, and sustainability. Short
Create an online trail map that can be widely accessed and easily downloaded	Partner with local trail groups to produce a comprehensive map that shows recreation opportunities across the County	County of Fresno	Responds to need for more information about trails discovered in engagement Short

Resources

Fresno County will likely rely on a mix of funding sources and community and agency partnerships to fund, construct, and maintain the regional trail system. Fresno County should be opportunistic and nimble in seeking out funding sources and partnerships. Below are ideas for potential funding and partnership opportunities.

Potential Funding Sources

In the past, the County and local jurisdictions have received trail planning, design, and construction funding from a number of sources, such as federal, state, and regional funding. To implement the proposed trail projects recommended in this Plan, the County should continue to seek grant funds, require new development projects to implement nearby segments of the trail system and support facilities, and provide on-street connections to the

trails. County dollars can be used to match local, state, and federal funding. Repaving opportunities also present an opportunity to implement on-street trail connections in a cost-effective manner. The County can also budget for trail improvements through various programs, such as the County's annual work programs and its Capital Improvement Program.

These funding sources cover an array of trail-related implementation, including planning, construction, maintenance, and programming. Funding sources have been categorized at a high-level per governmental agency. For more information, including a full list of funding sources, administering agencies, funding availability, eligible improvements, and weblink, see the appendix.

Potential Partnerships

Fresno County has many organizations that could partner with the County to implement trail projects and initiatives. Partner organizations can provide a variety of assistance, such as funding assistance for trails or amenities, development and managing events and programs, community engagement, and expertise in the design and maintenance of trails.

An excellent starting point for potential partners is the stakeholders and organizations that participated in the planning process (see Table 5.6). The County can also partner with other community-based organizations, non-profits, and educational institutions that have a mission to promote active lifestyles and healthy communities.

Table 5.6: Potential Partner Organizations

ORGANIZATION	POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
California State University, Fresno, ASI	Skilled trail building, trail programming
Central California Off-Road Cyclists	Skilled trail building and maintenance
Central Sierra Nevada Horse Trails	Skilled trail building and maintenance
Central Valley Hiking and Backpacking Group	Skilled trail building and maintenance
Coalition for Community Trails	Skilled trail building and maintenance, fundraising
Fresno Audubon Society	Large volunteer base
Fresno County Bicycle Coalition	Volunteers; trail programming
Fresno Cycling Club	Large volunteer base
Fresno Pedal Junkies	Volunteers; trail programming
Fresno State Bulldog Cycling	Volunteers; trail programming
River Partners – Central Valley	Trail building and maintenance, fundraising
San Joaquin River Conservancy	Build long-distance rural trails and bridges as connectors
San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, Inc.	Trail building and maintenance, fundraising
San Joaquin River Trail Council	Trail building and maintenance, fundraising
San Joaquin Running	Trail programming
Sierra Challenge Express Running Club	Trail programming
Sierra Club, Tehipite Chapter	Fundraising
Sierra Foothill Conservancy	Trail programming
Tree Fresno	Increase number of trees in historically disadvantaged communities Build vegetative barriers along roadways
Yosemite South Gate Trail Cooperative	Large volunteer base, trail building & maintenance, and fundraising

