

EXHIBIT A

**The Ewell Group of Companies
735 W. Alluvial Avenue, Ste. 103
Fresno, Ca 93711**

May 6, 2021

Via U. S. Mail and Email

Fresno County Board of Supervisors
2281 Tulare St., #301
Fresno, CA 93721

Dear Board of Supervisors,

This letter is written on behalf of Harris Farms, Inc.

It was a pleasure meeting recently to introduce the exciting prospect of locating a new educational based community with related support housing, recreational and commercial services around a campus on the property owned by John Harris' Harris Farms, Inc. We are in the process of exploring potential implementation strategies for bringing an additional higher learning campus to Fresno and concurrently provide a balance of quality, well planned future employment, residential and public recreation land use areas.

The 7,000-acre Harris River Ranch property located in eastern Fresno County on Trimmer Springs Road at the base of the Sierra Foothills is depicted on the attached Vicinity and Conceptual Land Use maps and is large enough to accommodate ancillary uses associated with a new campus, such as student and faculty housing, and research centers. This is an opportunity to bring an additional outstanding higher education institution to the Fresno Region.

According to recent publications describing US Census Bureau information, educational attainment in the Central Valley including Fresno County is lower than much of the rest of California. We strongly believe an additional four year university providing students access to scholarships and aid in eastern Fresno County will help educational attainment in this area.

There are also constraints on revenue in this area needed for service providers such as fire and law enforcement that can be helped with this project and the fees that would be generated. While this project area has abundant natural resources, many of those are not accessible by those wishing to use them. This project will propose to incorporate passive uses such as walking trails along the river corridor while maintaining that corridor as a protected area.

Since the Fresno County General Plan is currently under review, we request that the project area be included in this process and designated in the Fresno County General Plan as a Special Study Area. We believe this would afford the opportunity for us to further refine our proposal

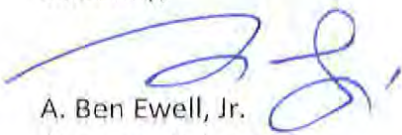
and allow the County the opportunity to further assess Fresno County's needs for a higher education campus, housing and agricultural tourism opportunities. We understand that designation of a Special Study Area does not obligate the County to take any future action and that our proposal will require changes to existing land use designations and rezoning as well as preparation of an environmental assessment that complies with the California Environmental Quality Act. We are in the process of determining the maximum number of faculty and student housing needs and square footage of educational buildings associated with the ultimate size of the proposed campus. Once we have refined our proposal, we plan to initiate the application review process.

It is our intent to have the Harris property eventually grow into a major resource for Fresno County offering many benefits. In addition to high quality employment and academic opportunities, the location of part of the property directly adjacent to the Kings River can offer exceptional recreational opportunities while protecting the River corridor. Public trails along the river corridor would bring forth new areas for hiking and picnicking that have previously never been open to the public. Other potential benefits include the establishment of a center for emergency services to expand the capacity of local police and fire protection, along with improvements to transportation infrastructure, providing additional accessways and upgrade of existing streets.

This project will adhere to the attached summary of Guiding Principles.

This is one strategy for beginning the process of the establishment of an educational based community within Fresno County. We look forward to continuing this conversation with you and the staff of Fresno County Public Works and Planning in person and working together to bring this exciting opportunity to fruition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A. Ben Ewell, Jr.", is positioned above the typed name.

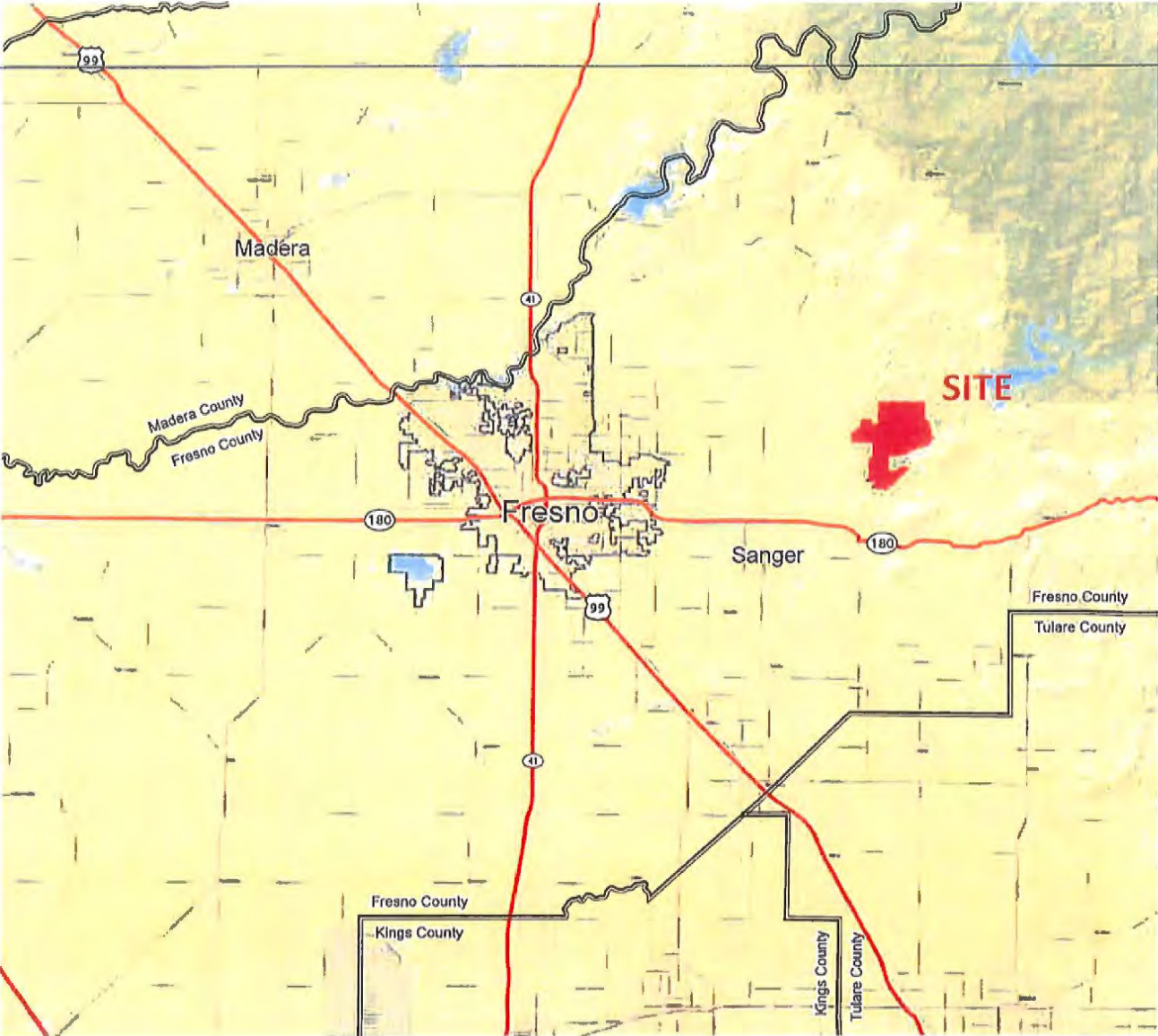
A. Ben Ewell, Jr.

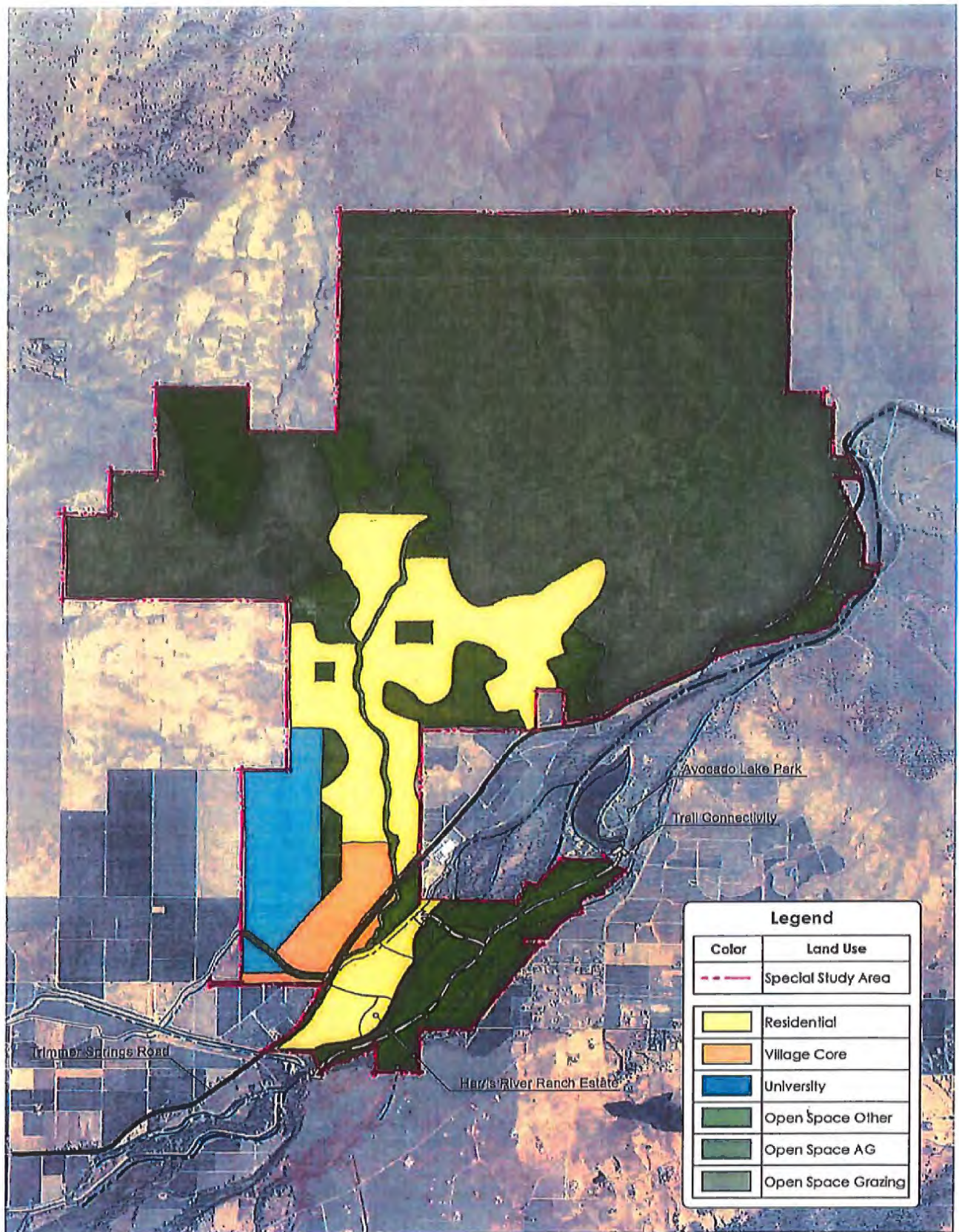
Attorney At Law

Chairman, The Ewell Group of Companies

CC: Bernard Jimenez, Fresno County Public Works and Planning
John C. Harris, Harris Farms, Inc.

VICINITY MAP





Special Study Area - Conceptual Land Use

HARRIS FARMS RIVER RANCH | FRESNO COUNTY, CA



0 1200' 2400' 4800'
1"=1200' Scale May 05, 2021

 PLACEWORKS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Honor the agricultural heritage of the San Joaquin Valley region while communicating the Harris Farms values of quality, pride, and trust.
2. Promote land stewardship by setting aside agricultural conservation zones in areas most favorable for crop production to assure robust continuity of food production.
3. Preserve areas adjacent to King's River as an ecological asset. Create broad natural habitats areas through a conservancy that supports wildlife, native plants and recreation.
4. Create a "River Ranch" lifestyle promoting lifelong learning and a harmonious balance between the natural and built environments. Celebrate and honor the legacy of the Harris family while protecting the natural beauty of the setting.
5. Provide a pedestrian-oriented village atmosphere that offerings a variety of living experiences and will meet the needs of diverse lifestyles and income levels.
6. Optimize open space relationships through multi-modal trail connections. Recreation, water resource management, and wildlife corridor uses occur within contiguous areas winding throughout.
7. Enhance the local economy through job creation by encouraging a full range of research, educational, and high-tech employment opportunities. Create a financial structure that will ensure ongoing support and growth to benefit future generations.

EXHIBIT B

Ben Ewell

To: Bernard Jimenez - Fresno Co. Dept. of Public Works & Planning
(bjimenez@co.fresno.ca.us)

Subject: REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF POLICY IN THE COUNTY
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE REGARDING CONDITIONAL UISE
PERMITS ISSUED WITHIN THE MILLERTON SPECIFIC PLAN

FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
% BERNARD JIMENEZ
FRESNO COUNTY DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS & PLANNING

DEAR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

I AM BRINGING TO YOUR ATTENTION A REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OR MODIFICATION OF THE COUNTY TREATMENT OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS (CUPS) ISSUED ON PROJECTS WITHIN AN ADOPTED SPECIFIC PLAN.

I WILL SPEAK TO THE ADOPTED MILLERTON SPECIFIC PLAN IN THIS COMMUNICATION AS THAT IS WHERE I OWN PROPERTY AND ALSO HAVE OBTAINED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPROVALS.

THE CUPS UNDER CURRENT RULES HAVE A LIMITED LIFE IN THAT THEY EXPIRE IF THE APPROVED CUP PROJECT IS NOT COMPLETED WITHIN A SPECIFIED TIME FRAME. IN THE CASE OF PROJECTS WITHIN AN ADOPTED SPECIFIC PLAN OFTEN TIMES EVEN AFTER THE CUP'S ARE APPROVED THE APPROVED PROJECT CANNOT BE COMPLETED BECAUSE THEY ARE TIED TO THE ADOPTED SPECIFIC PLAN WATER AND WASTEWATER, AND CIRCULATION SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE. THIS IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT THEN A CUP APPROVED PROJECT IN A STAND ALONE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

BY INITIALLY ADOPTING THE SPECIFIC PLAN THE INFRASTRUCTURE DETAILS HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERED THAT ARE RELATED TO THE LATER CUP NEEDS.

MY REQUEST TO THE BOARD IS TO ALLOW THE LIFE OF CUPS ISSUED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF AN ADOPTED SPECIFIC PLAN TO CONTINUE IN EFFECT AS LONG AS THE ADOPTED SPECIFIC PLAN IS BEING PURSUED.

THERE COULD HOWEVER BE A FIXED TERMINATION DATE FOR THE CUPS AFTER ISSUANCE OF SAY 7 TO 10 YEARS.

THANKS YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION OF THIS MATTER.



A. Ben Ewell Jr.
Attorney At Law
Chairman
Ewell Group of Companies
735 W. Alluvial Ave Suite 103
Fresno, California 93711
Email ben@ewellgroup.com
Tel. (559) 4371990
Fax (559) 4371992

EXHIBIT C

Attention:

Fresno County Dept. of Public Works and Planning
Bernard Jimenez, Assistant Director

Squaw Valley/Dunlap Community Plan Proposal

June 7, 2021

As the Fresno County General Plan is undergoing revisions, the East 180 Corridor Development Committee is proposing that a more specific, Community Plan be implemented for the communities of Squaw Valley and Dunlap, which includes zip code regions 93675 and 93621. This Community Plan would identify Squaw Valley and Dunlap as unique locations with unique opportunities and challenges. The Sierra South Regional Plan covers a large area. By Squaw Valley and Dunlap having a separate Community Plan, the County would benefit by having two smaller, more specific plans (Sierra South and Squaw Valley). A Squaw Valley Community Plan would enable Fresno County to focus on the unique attributes of the Squaw Valley region.

Reasons for a Squaw Valley/Dunlap Community Plan

Help facilitate development and improve the economy as well as quality of life.

Provide an opportunity for responsible development, while preserving the aesthetic qualities of the region.

Address difficulties in regard to local residents starting a business.

Improve economic opportunities while also improving quality of life.

Improve mental health of residents by creating public areas where residents and visitors can socialize, forge new friendships, and enjoy nature.

Divide the large area of the Sierra South Regional Plan into more specific areas.

Incorporate the Marketek Economic Development Study of Jan. 2019

The unique qualities of the proposed area include:

- A California State Scenic Highway (Highway 180)
- Adjacent to Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Park
- Tourism opportunities
- Scenic region
- Squaw Valley-Miramonte American Viticultural Area (emerging wine trail)

Goals for a Squaw Valley/Dunlap Community Plan

- Provide an area (local park) where events can be held, such as farmers' markets, music festivals, art festivals; and that also includes BBQ's, picnic areas, and a playground for children.
- Set aside open space(s) for fire protection that could also be utilized for extra-curricular activities, such as walking, biking, and other outdoor activities.
- Provide architectural/development guidelines that harmonize with the unique qualities of the area, and also preserves the Highway 180 State Scenic Highway status.
- Preserve the State Scenic Highway status of Highway 180.
- Build a bicycle/pedestrian pathway along Highway 180 from George Smith to Indian Guide Road for safety and health reasons.

In Summary:

As people continue working from home, and the commute from Squaw Valley to Clovis and Fresno takes less time, we should be prepared for increased population in our Squaw Valley/Dunlap communities. A place to meet neighbors, make friends, ride a bike, have a family picnic, and one that provides a safe place for children to play makes a community a much better place to live. A well thought out plan that enhances the local area's characteristics and beauty creates pride in a community. We believe that a well-planned, proactive approach to community design is key to a community where people are proud to live and where visitors want to return, not only to visit Kings Canyon/Sequoia National Parks but to also spend time in Squaw Valley and Dunlap.

Respectfully submitted by:

The East 180 Corridor Development Committee

Attachments:

Marketek Economic Development Study
E 180 Corridor Development Committee Mission and Goals



FRESNO COUNTY **OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS**

**HWY 180 /
SQUAW VALLEY**

SQUAW VALLEY

[MAY 2019]

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Lee Ann Eager, *President/CEO*
Will Oliver, *Director of Business Services*
Tracy Tosta, *Economic Development Specialist*
Amanda Bosland, *Retail Business Development Specialist*

Fresno County
Economic Development Corporation
906 N. Street, Ste. 120
Fresno, CA 93721
Tel: (559) 476-2500
www.fresnoedc.com

Community stakeholders interviewed during the project

BEAR MOUNTAIN PIZZA – Kim Castillo

CAT HAVEN – Dale Anderson

CLINGANS JUNCTION COFFEE AND CABINS – Mimi Dysart

CSU FRESNO – Mark Salwasser

DUNLAP SCHOOL – Keith Merrihew

FRESNO COUNTY – Chris Motta, Kristi Johnson

FRESCO COUNTY SUPERVISOR – Nathan Magsig

FRESNO COUNTY CVB – Layla Forstedt, Gay Fontana

FRESNO STATE WINERY DEPARTMENT-
VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY – Kevin Smith

FRESNO YOSEMITE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT –
Claudia Arguelles-Miller

GENA'S SIERRA INN – Gena Bulman

GINGER AND BOB'S VINEYARD AND DESCHUTES
BREWERY – Bob and Ginger Clingan

KINGS RIVER PACKING – Brad Bishel

KIPER AND KIPER TRUE VALUE HARDWARE

LOVEWELL'S PROPANE

MODERN BROKER REALTY – Josh Morrison

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE – Woody Smeck

SANGER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE – Karen Pearson

SIERRA GATEWAY TRUST – BJ Spitze

SIERRA PEAKS WINERY – Christine and Chuck Flannigan

SIERRA RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT –
Steve Haze

SQUAW VALLEY REALTY/MOTEL – Lonnie Work

VINTNERS – Tammy and Raymond Ahumada;
Stacy Denbow; Sheryl and Ken Mercier

WONDER VALLEY RESORT AND CONFERENCE
CENTER – Ray Oken, Stan Oken, Kalene Ramirez

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HIGHWAY 180 / SQUAW VALLEY

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation (Fresno EDC) is to market Fresno County as the premier location for business prosperity. The EDC facilitates both site selection for new businesses and assists in the retention and expansion of businesses through alliances with collaborative partners. It is within the spirit of this mission that an Opportunity Analysis of selected county communities and properties is undertaken.

Opportunity Analysis objectives are twofold: 1) Identify sites in each community that can support job creating investments that will catalyze investments on other area properties, and 2) Compile a list of community and property assets that offer a value proposition each community can use to pursue development opportunities. The ultimate goal is to attract projects that put each community on a trajectory for continuous growth.

Project Study Area

The countywide initiative includes areas with markedly different social, economic, infrastructure, and development characteristics. Consequently, **Highway 180 / Squaw Valley** was deemed a stand-alone area in the region with unique assets and challenges. Separate reports in this series are available for these regional groupings:

- **99 Corridor Communities** – Selma, Kingsburg, Fowler
- **Westside Communities** – Kerman, Firebaugh, Mendota, San Joaquin
- **East Fresno County Communities** – Sanger, Reedley

Goals – Hwy 180 / Squaw Valley

To strengthen and diversify commercial development and better serve visitors and local residents alike:

- Define market opportunities/gaps for commercial development.
- Identify 'best bet' opportunity sites/areas for near-term development.
- Provide user-friendly marketing facts and a game plan to attract development.

Process – Hwy 180 / Squaw Valley

1. **Market review/overview** of the Highway 180 corridor's retail potential.
2. **First impressions visitor assessment** of the Highway 180 corridor to evaluate visitor experience, tourism infrastructure and opportunities to increase visitor spending before reaching Kings Canyon (on-site).
3. **Hubs/clusters and amenities** evaluation to leverage for development areas (sites and buildings) and potential for lodging and other visitor-related amenities (on-site).
4. **Action plan** with steps for generating quick results and developing amenities/projects for longer-term economic impact (after site visit).

Outcomes – Hwy 180 / Squaw Valley

The remainder of this report facilitates to these desired outcomes:

- Realistic picture of retail/commercial development potential.
- Authentic reflection of the visitor experience and climate for attracting and retaining visitor spending.
- List of priority development sites and projects to bring to fruition.
- Key market facts and messages targeting development community.
- Game plan with clear next steps, initiatives at the community and county level and defined roles to succeed in having a positive economic impact.

HIGHWAY 180 / SQUAW VALLEY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Hwy 180 / Squaw Valley: Kings Canyon – on the path to success

Fresno County's Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway 180 together with the Squaw Valley area has three key areas of opportunities: **1.** Large, growing visitor market; **2.** Significant untapped retail potential; and **3.** Development sites ready for investment. Squaw Valley is emerging as the visitor gateway and "base camp" to the Kings Canyon National Park for travel and adventure. The area also offers opportunities to capture more visitor stops and stays vs. drive-through traffic to the park and to serve both visitor and local residents with expanded retail offerings.

Why is Hwy 180 / Squaw Valley an Opportunity Area for visitors to Fresno County and Kings Canyon National Park?

- 1. With Highway 180 as the scenic draw to Kings National Park, Squaw Valley is poised to be the base camp for visitors**

Highway 180 east is a designated California Scenic Highway (the Sierra Gateway Highway) and provides easy access to a recreational paradise

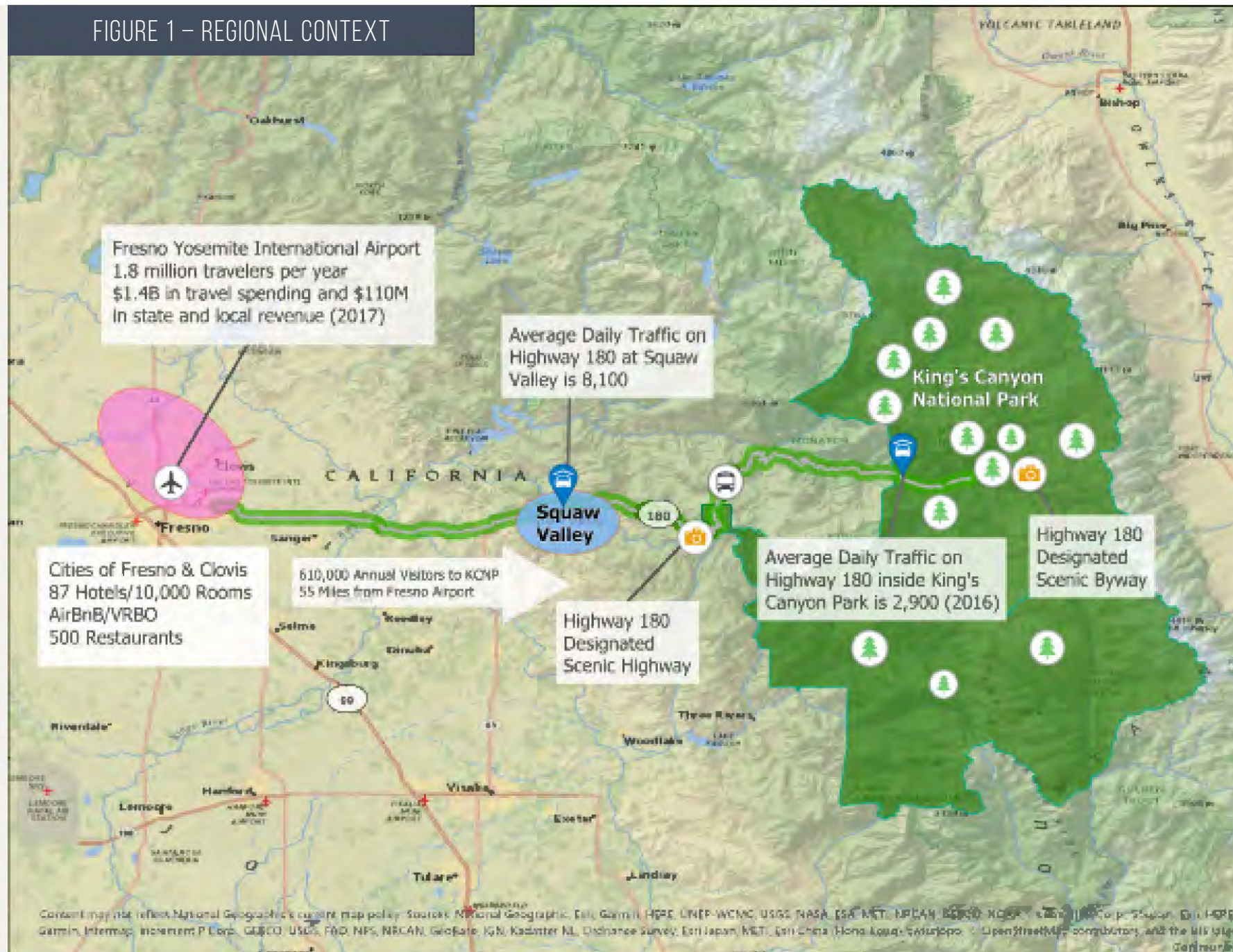
for Central Valley and Fresno visitors. From Fresno to the entrance of Kings Canyon National Park is an 80-minute drive rising from the valley floor to over 5,000 feet at the park entrance—all the while beckoned by the majestic beauty of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Just off the highway is a rich diversity of recreation adventures from hiking and kayaking to hang gliding and cycling (see **Figure 1**).

Squaw Valley is situated on scenic Highway 180, just 20 miles from the entryway to Kings Canyon National Park. With the greatest concentration of services on this road, Squaw Valley is well-positioned to be the launch point/base camp for travelers through the area. Average daily traffic on Highway 180 at Squaw Valley is 8,100 vehicles. The Squaw Valley area is eager to capitalize on visitor traffic and to leverage the many area attractions through expansion of commercial goods and services.

Visitor counts to Kings Canyon National Park are at record levels in recent years at over 600,000, with an estimated 21% being international travelers. The National Park Service surveys reveal that in 2016, 607.5K visitors to Kings Canyon spent nearly \$53M in local gateway regions. These expenditures supported 793 jobs, \$22.7M in value added services, and \$67M in economic output in local economies surrounding the Park.

Over 8,000 vehicles per
day travel on Hwy 180 in
Squaw Valley

FIGURE 1 – REGIONAL CONTEXT



2. Fast Growing Fresno County Visitor Market bring Customers to Squaw Valley's Doorstep

Fresno-Yosemite International Airport recorded 1.8M travelers in 2018, up 36% from 2010. About 50% visit for recreation and play. International visitors total about 13%, with the top groups from Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom. Fresno County visitor research shows the easily accessible national parks (Kings Canyon, Sequoia and Yosemite) are the main draws to the area. Fresno-Clovis hotel occupancies in 2018 were consistently over 70% year-round. The Convention and Visitors Bureau reports there are 87 hotel properties (a dozen under construction), 10,000 rooms and 500 restaurants.

Tourism spending in Fresno County (\$1.4B/year) has been growing steadily over the last decade, with 2017 seeing an even higher bump in visitor direct spending. Half of the spending was generated by food service (restaurants) or local transportation and/or gas stations. Retail sales account for \$154M (see **Figure 2**).

3. Ag-Tourism is fast growing

With the Farm to Table movement and consumer interest in knowing where food comes from, Fresno County's Blossom and Fruit Trails are bringing thousands of visitors (cyclists and vehicles) including bus tours to the east Highway 180/east Fresno area every spring. The Fruit Trail farm stands are open several months a year. The 62-mile self-guided tour features dozens of enterprises from fruit orchards and citrus groves to vineyards and historical points of interest. The Fruit Trail emphasizes beauty, fresh fruit and the agriculture of the region. It includes numerous farm stands, farmers markets and related attractions from May through September. (See **Figure 3**)

FIGURE 2 – VISITOR SPENDING (FRESNO COUNTY, 2017)

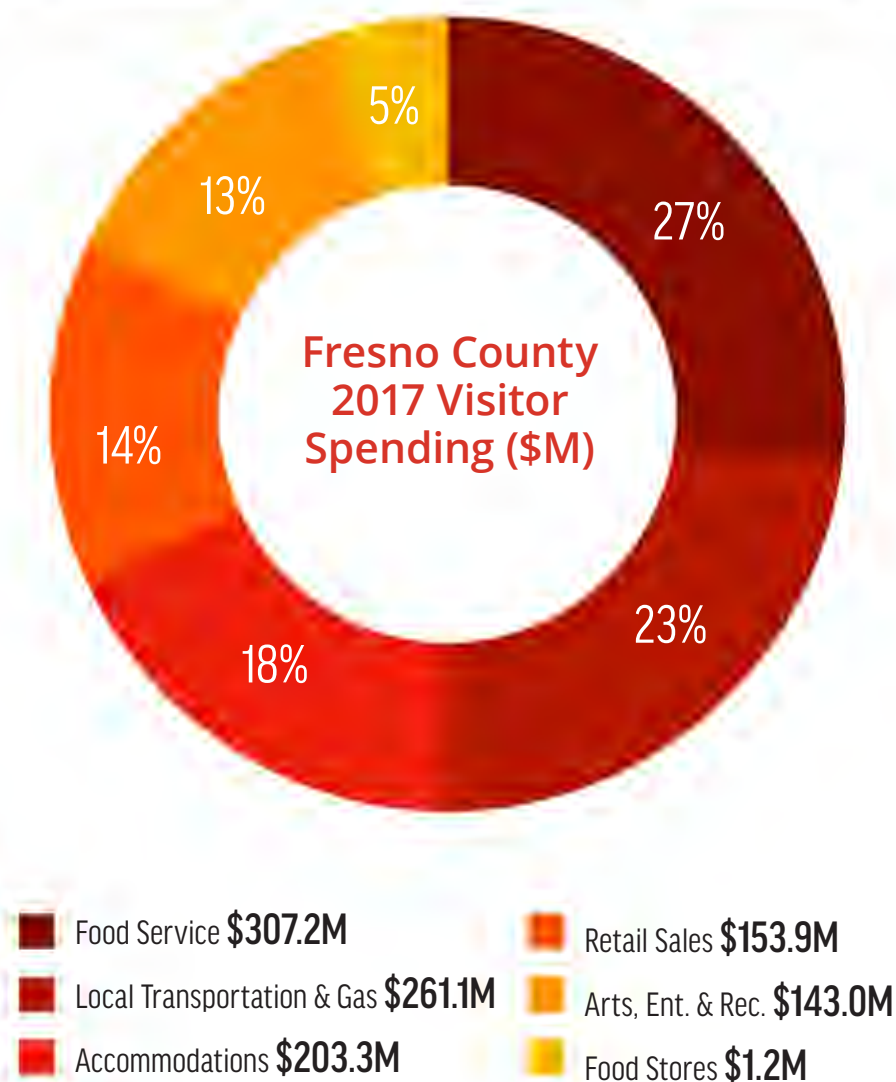
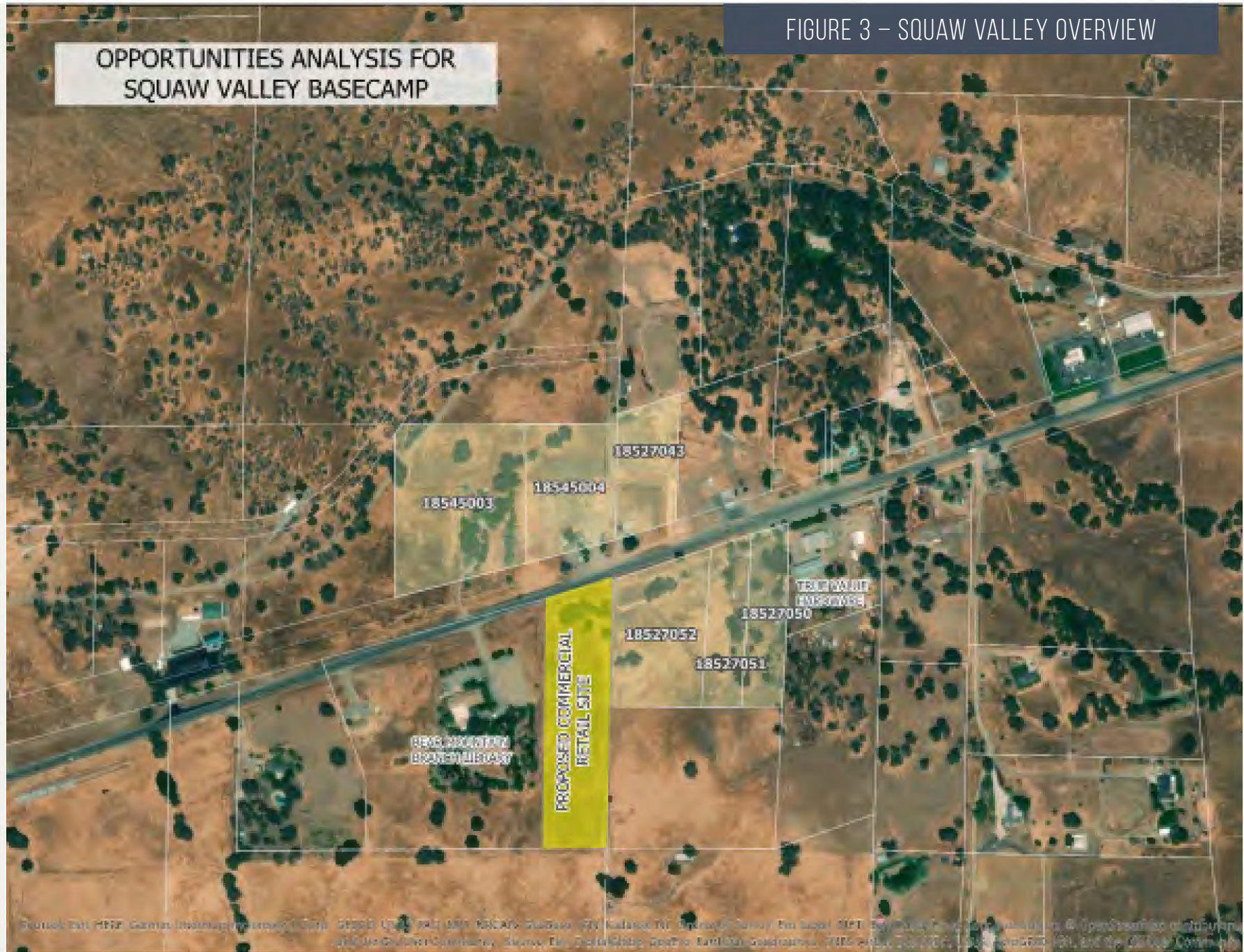


FIGURE 3 – SQUAW VALLEY OVERVIEW

OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS FOR
SQUAW VALLEY BASECAMP



4. Emerging wine region – Fresno County

Grape growers and wineries are poised to grow with the newly designated Squaw Valley-Miramonte American Viticultural Area (AVA) and recently adopted business-friendly code to encourage small winery development. Ag-tourism includes 13 operating wineries — two wineries in Squaw Valley and six vineyards are operating to date.

5. Unique “hidden” assets

A wide array of unique assets exist to attract visitors for day trips and overnight excursions (see **Figure 4**). If combined as a marketing destination, they could generate 1- or 2-day visits. Among the many nearby attractions are:

- **Project Survival Cat Haven** – 7 miles from Squaw Valley – hosts 55,000 visitors annually for tours and educational programs.
- **Wonder Valley Resort and Conference Center** – Less than 7 miles to Squaw Valley – hosts destination weddings, group tours throughout the area, conferences and youth camps. Largest employer in east Fresno County (220 peak season) with 73 rooms, 500 beds and \$8M tourism dollars annually, visitors from 20 countries.
- **Lodging** – Diverse, mid-priced lodging in the area ranges from modern Clingan Cabins and over a dozen quality Airbnb options to Sequoia RV Park and Squaw Valley Motel. No transient occupancy tax (TOT) is appealing to tourists.
- **Hang gliding** – In nearby Dunlap.
- **Pine Flat Lake** – Popular boating destination off Highway 180.
- **Kings River** – Overnight canoe trips, white water rapids.
- **Rodeo** – Squaw Valley hosts 4 rodeos/year at the local rodeo grounds.

Why is Hwy 180/Squaw Valley a critical retail market opportunity?

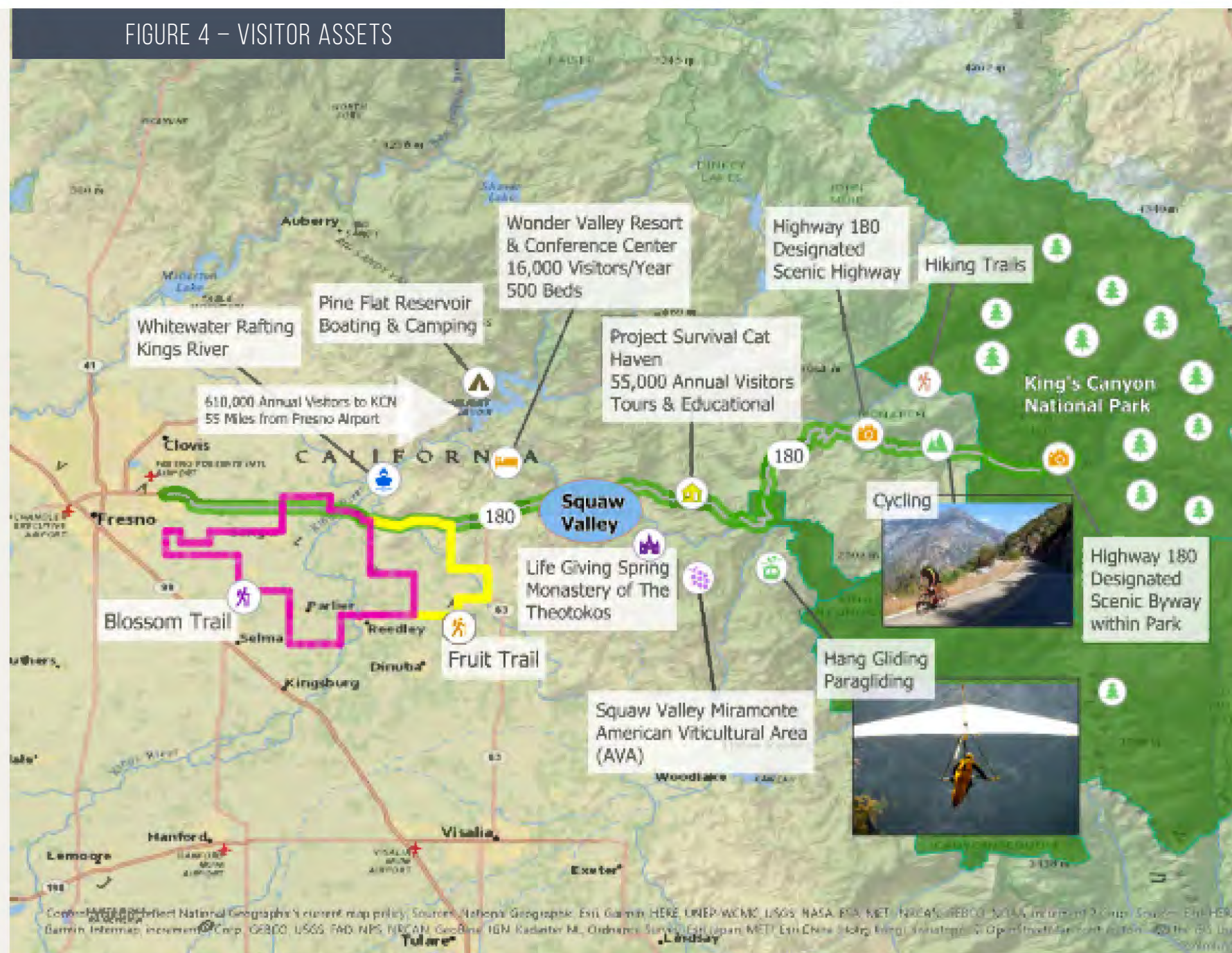
Beyond meeting visitor needs, local market opportunities are strong. Squaw Valley area residents are significantly under-served in most retail categories, with a retail gap of \$56.6M out of potential spending of \$70M. As one example, the nearest full-service grocery and drugstore are 45 minutes away. Restaurant and entertainment options, of high importance to both residents and visitors, are also extremely limited (see **Figure 5**).

What are the development opportunities?

- Highway 180 locations offer excellent access and visibility for retailers, especially in the Squaw Valley/Clingan Junction areas.
- The Squaw Valley section of the Highway 180 corridor offers an existing development cluster of highway commercial and services including the post office, a small hardware store, gas station, restaurant, motel, realtor offices, medical clinic and more.

The Retail Gap is \$56.6M.
Less than 20% of potential local
spending is being captured by
local businesses.

FIGURE 4 – VISITOR ASSETS



Development Opportunities (continued)

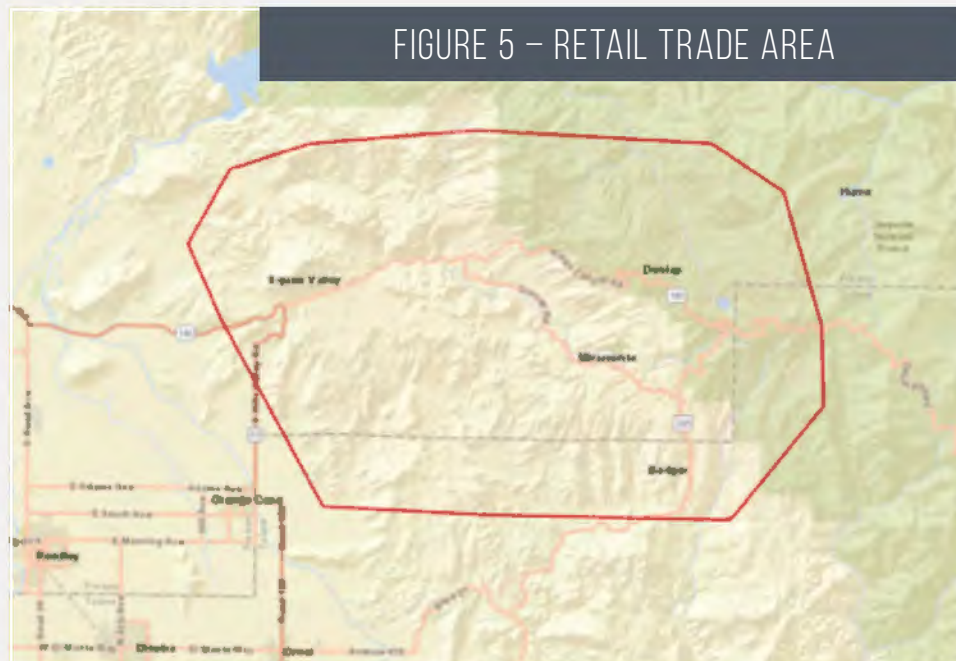
- On the south side of Highway 180, at the entrance to Squaw Valley is Bear Mountain Library and the adjacent walking trail/arboretum. These two recreation/cultural uses attract community members throughout the day. Dollar General is proposed for the adjacent property to the east and the potential exists for a civic and shopping center development.
- On the eastern edge of the proposed Dollar General is a 7.9 acre prime retail site (Kiper site), with highway frontage offering strong development advantage, especially if access and parking can be shared with other commercial.

(See **Figures 6 and 7.**)



Highway 180 at entrance to Squaw Valley, Bear Mountain Library on right (Google Streetview).

FIGURE 5 – RETAIL TRADE AREA



HIGHWAY 180

Squaw Valley Market Profile, 2018

Area	284 sq. miles
Population	5,766 (2018) growing to 5,870 (2023) >1M Fresno County residents in 2018
Median Age & Income	47 years & \$53,287
Top Lifestyle Segments	42% Rooted Rural; 27% The Great Outdoors
Businesses & Employment	130 businesses and 1,277 employees
Unmet Retail Demand	\$56.6M Retail Gap or Leakage
Key Retail Gaps	\$5.4M Food & Drink \$4.6M Drugstore \$1M Auto Supplies \$10M General Merchandise (stores selling variety of goods, usually not grocery)

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions

FIGURE 6 – SQUAW VALLEY HUB



FIGURE 7- KIPER PROPERTY



SQUAW VALLEY COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY SITE

Building A: 5,000 SF Retail

Building B: 10,000 SF Grocery

Building C: 14,000 SF Retail

Building D: 24,000 SF Retail

Parking Stalls: 550 (18' x 8.5' per stall)

E Coffee Kiosk and Food Carts

F Recreation/Rest Area and Dog Park

G Multi-Tenant Monument Sign at Entry

HIGHWAY 180 / SQUAW VALLEY

CONSULTANT OBSERVATIONS

Opportunity analysis observations and recommended next steps

While no clear community vision or plan exists for the Highway 180 visitor economy or the Squaw Valley area, focus groups, interviews and comments at Supervisor Magsig's public meeting, January 15, 2019, revealed strong interest in:

- Local employment opportunities
- Increased visitor stops and overnight stays
- Focus on new economy (beyond hospitality) and retaining youth in the area
- Meet basic shopping needs locally (e.g., grocery) and reduce driving great distances for convenience goods/services

During the Chabin/Marketek team site visit, January 14-16, many of the above themes were reinforced in the business focus groups and numerous one-on-one interviews. Local business owners also identified several constraints to business/community development and opportunities to address that are woven into the consultant observations and recommendations that follow.

Constraints to opportunities

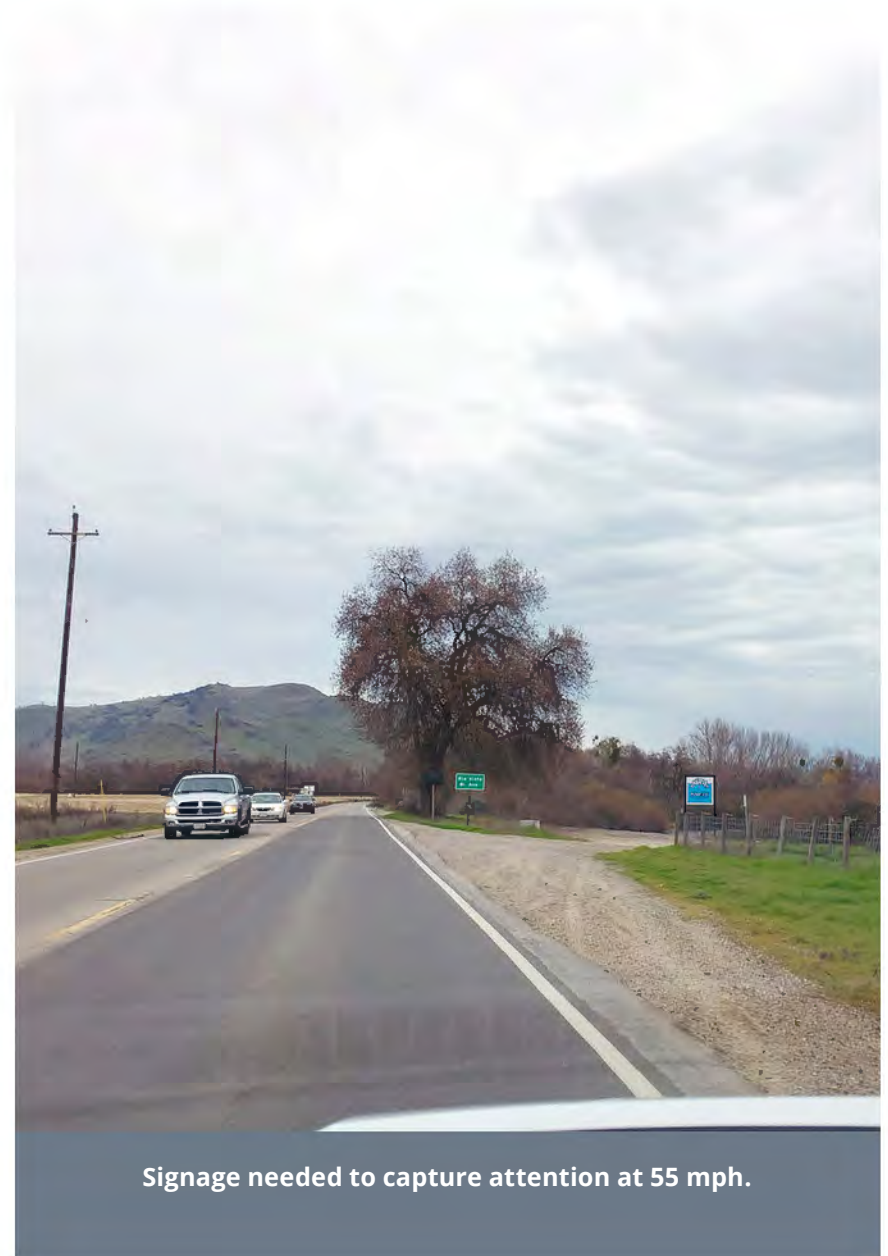
1. Absence of streamlined business development process for the area, a single point of contact at the County and consistent direction on specific development plans. Frustration with County on enterprise development—rules, regs, fees, requirements are complex and irregular (perception). Follow-through falls short (reportedly).
2. Prohibitive costs of Cal Fire water storage requirements. (Potential solution: readiness by local businesses to consider a community water storage system.)
3. High development costs and fees to address regulation contribute, in part, to the lack of properties and sites publicly known to be for sale or lease. Yet, many properties are “reportedly available.”
4. Businesses report that the Caltrans right-of-way (for future Highway 180 expansion) takes up nearly 150 feet from the edge of the highway into their property. There is no edge to the road or the commercial area. It's a wide swath of asphalt/gravel and curb cuts.

Challenges for attracting visitors

1. Limited Highway 180 signage to Squaw Valley, Kings Canyon and identifying the scenic byway and key recreation assets.
2. No one is responsible for actively marketing the area. Absence of welcoming signage, visitor information, restrooms, wayfinding signage and other key amenities to encourage visitor stops. Posted highway speed limit is 55. Signage and amenities are critical to slowing traffic and getting people out of cars, exploring and spending money.
3. Squaw Valley corridor is disconnected with properties and businesses spread out through the approximately 1-mile corridor. There is a mix of disconnected commercial and retail uses. No streetscape,

sidewalks, walkability, bike lanes/amenities or pedestrian crossings. Contributing to the absence of a sense of place are several vacant-looking, tired and underutilized properties. TLC, a fresh coat of paint and good signage would go a long way to improving the image of businesses.

4. No brand identity or coordinated marketing to capture more visitors. Businesses commented there is significant visitor confusion over the Squaw Valley name which competes with Squaw Valley-Tahoe for any attention on the web. Basic marketing tools are lacking, including a visitor website, marketing brochure/rack card of restaurants/lodging/services, etc. With over a dozen different attractions or proprietors promoting their businesses and the area independently, a coordinated effort is greatly needed.
5. Lodging and dining choices are especially limited along the highway. While there are a variety of options for overnighting outside the park (from motel to cabins and an RV Park), visitors are left to their own devices to locate them. Overnight stays produce 3-4 times the economic impact for local economies, and most agree Squaw Valley could put more heads in beds with an attractive lodging and restaurant mix. (See **Appendix** of existing lodging facilities.)



Moving forward

The stakeholders interviewed fully understand the constraints, challenges and opportunities and have a willingness to come together to begin charting the future to realize enhanced economic opportunities. Given the constraints and challenges, three key steps are recommended:

1. **Organization**
2. **Brand Identity and Marketing**
3. **Placemaking and Beautification**

1. Organization

a. Leverage the interest and build the capacity of local leadership with a County-designated local community coalition. Community members repeatedly turn to the County for help in the absence of local government, an organization or a specific plan to guide progress. Interest was expressed in a *Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)*. Request Supervisor Magsig to appointment an MAC and empower the MAC to be the conduit to the County to address enterprise development and regulatory barriers.

A simple action plan (see **Example A**) could be presented to the Supervisor, showing how the MAC would organize and what actions they would undertake.

b. Define MAC Role: Help address business concerns and work through options with the County to demonstrate how development can be cost effective in the era of strict Cal Fire and Caltrans requirements and lead organizing for action.

c. Prioritize areas of concern/constraints relating to “doing business” (e.g., water) to work on with the County.

d. Prioritize marketing and placemaking actions. Form a few organized action teams.

e. Build consensus among the businesses on areas and steps forward.

f. Identity resources/needs to leverage resources where other organizations could assist/support the MAC with implementation.

Potential Organizational Challenges

There are always potential challenges that should be considered before organizing for action, such as:

1. Busy sole practitioners without any local models of how to work collaboratively across the community (review other MACs and models).
2. There appears to be a lack of communication within the community and with visitor and economic development partners (need partner building).
3. Chamber of Commerce exists but does not function as a business/community promotion organization.
4. Residents are divided on prospective Dollar General location as evident by debate on Facebook (is this a symptom for all proposed developments?).
5. Lack of funding, resources and staffing to support actions.

Example A: Simple Action Plan for MAC

QUICK WINS

- Organize a community clean-up campaign to get ready for summer visitor season. Make it fun and promote it widely: "Rally for Squaw Valley!"
- In conjunction with the clean-up, develop a Business Beautification program on private property. Gardening/ arts partners and schools may be of assistance to plant native flowers/greenery, add banners and paint, clean up signage, etc.
- Create a rack card for visitors of restaurants, stores and adventures in the area (from wine tasting to river rafting) .
- Form a visitor marketing group and action plan to begin sharing goals, ideas for joint marketing and engaging partner organizations. Invite Fresno CVB to share their knowledge, experience and best practices.
- Encourage and support the development of more small vineyards and wineries as a key hook for enticing visitors to stop.
- Visit the Three Rivers community or invite representatives to Squaw Valley to share how that town became a gateway community (threeriversvillage.com).



BIG IDEAS

- Form an MAC or other community-based coalition and multiple community action teams to move projects forward.
- Position Squaw Valley as the Base camp/Gateway to Kings Canyon Park (see case study examples in Appendix B) with website, visitor collateral, social media, placemaking strategies, etc.
- Implement a Highway 180 signage and beautification plan with Caltrans assistance. Incorporate directional, wayfinding and business signage.
- Organize targeted business development to locate a full-service grocer, a bank, more dining options, a laundromat, pharmacy and other key businesses identified by local residents. Cluster businesses in close proximity to Bear Mountain Library.
- Inventory existing properties suitable for lodging (e.g., former camps/resorts off the highway) and promote lodging opportunities. Clingan's Junction Cabins are an excellent example of a successful redevelopment.
- Explore the formation of a community water storage system partnership to meet water storage requirements of Cal Fire. Prather, CA was noted as an example.
- Seek seed funding for plan development through community or economic development.

2. Brand Identify and Marketing

Creating a brand identity and collaborative marketing is one of the most logical next steps in bringing the community together to create synergies for promoting the area. There are over 20 other organizations as well as the local businesses that could join in collaborative marketing for the area.

a. Define the Squaw Valley community brand identity and key hospitality messages. *Examples: "the Secret Sequoia," "Three Mountains-Three Days."* Research other small-town brands, especially those adjacent to recreation and nature-based attractions. Form a work team, identify a local project champion and bring together visitor marketing partners for a planning and doing event.

b. Adopt an Overarching Concept such as positioning Squaw Valley as the "base camp" to Kings Canyon National Park, providing diverse mountain recreation. See case studies of basecamp communities outside national parks in Appendix B, including: Springdale-Zion National, Estes Park-Rocky Mountain National, Tusayan-Grand Canyon. To launch the marketing, prepare a 90-day, 6-month and 1-year action strategy using the sample outline.

c. Inventory all existing promotional campaigns and events where the area can be featured and/or leverage opportunities.

d. Form a local cooperative marketing organization. Include, leverage and build on the excellent professional marketing of area partners such as Wonder Valley, Cat Haven, National Park Service and more. Over 20 organizations (mostly nonprofit) are promoting various assets along

Visitor Marketing Partners & Collaborators

- Audubon Society
- California Scenic Byways
- Caltrans – signage
- CA Office of Tourism
- Cat Haven
- Central Valley Community Foundation
- Central Valley Hang gliding and Paragliding Assoc.
- Dunlap Band of Mono Indians
- Fresno County CVB
- Kings Canyon National Park (NPS)
- Kings River Conservancy
- Sanger Chamber
- Sanger Art Station – east Fresno County artists
- Sierra Business Alliance
- Sierra Conservancy
- Sierra Gateway Trust, Inc.
- U.S. Forest Service- Sequoia National Forest, Dunlap
- Viticulture and Enology Association of Squaw Valley-Miramonte
- Wonder Valley Resort
- Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation Development

Visitor Marketing Roadmap Outline

- a. Goals and Strategic Focus
- b. Partners and Sponsors
- c. Target Market Profile
- d. Communication Channels (Social media, collateral, word of mouth)
- e. Brand Campaigns
- f. Annual Events, Experiences, Campaign Calendar
- g. Campaign Themes by Season
- h. Project Action Programs
- i. Evaluation, Measurement, Reporting
- j. Business Plan/Organization

Highway 180 and in the Squaw Valley area—all are potential partners and contributors to the Highway 180/Squaw Valley story. Bring everyone together for a half-day visioning/education forum and to begin building the Highway 180 marketing roadmap.

e. Link all local business, attractions and visitor-related organizations to one website and visitor Facebook page and through collateral material.

f. To grow the business base, build an authentic message and story of being development-friendly. This may include local businesses who can be positive ambassadors for the community, a single point of contact at the County, market information and helpful resources to find a successful location. Locals noted that Three Rivers and Madera County are models for Squaw Valley/Fresno.

g. Review the Visitor Marketing Roadmap Outline. (See **Appendix.**)

3. Placemaking and Beautification

Squaw Valley/Highway 180 greatly needs a “there there” – some impression of a town center or sense of place to signal to passers-by this is the place to stop and learn about where they are, stretch their legs, use the restroom, have a bite to eat, get provisions, walk the dog and more. Ideally, clustering all of these activities together to form a “critical mass” is fundamental to developing an identifiable and desirable community place. (See Project for Public Spaces’ *11 Guiding Principles* in the **Appendix.**)

a. Build on the existing Squaw Valley anchors of the Bear Mountain Library and adjacent County-owned walking trail/arboretum and create a high-level site or concept plan depicting how a variety of uses can co-locate to create a vibrant center that both local residents and visitors

can utilize and enjoy. Adjacent to the Library parking lot is a paved area and adjoining “greenfield” under site plan review for potential Dollar General. Leverage any new development there with a goal to create a cohesive retail development with grocer and services.

Ideas generated by local business leaders combine a visitor welcome center/rest stop and public plaza and include:

- Public bathrooms
- Dog walk area
- Electric charging station
- Information kiosk/interpretative signs
- Picnic area
- Food trucks
- Farmer’s market

b. Beautification of the ½ to 1-mile Squaw Valley stretch of Highway 180 corridor is an essential strategy to slow traffic down and portray Squaw Valley as a destination, with landscaping, banners, flower baskets, appropriate welcome signage, lighting and more. Caltrans has published at least two helpful booklets: a *Scenic Highways Guideline* booklet that provides do’s and don’ts and another on *Landscape Architecture Program* with many links to visual aesthetics.

- www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/guidelines/scenic_hwy_guidelines_04-12-2012.pdf
- www.dot.ca.gov/design/lap/

In the near term, pilot a demonstration section of the highway—beginning at the library and heading east. Native landscaping and wild flowers may be the place to start, but given Caltrans’ right-of-way is so large, this agency should be a first point of contact. This project is a good example

FIGURE 8 – HIGHWAY EDGE “BEFORE”

Before...



of a way to bring local and state partners together to demonstrate the visual impact throughout the corridor. Baker, CA was identified as having created exemplary highway improvements. Fresno County Master Gardeners and Fresno County Extension Service are examples of usually willing partners when it comes to appropriate planting. (See **Figures 8 and 9.**)

c. Enhancement of existing commercial properties as noted under *Challenges* is another key step toward civic pride and self-improvement. This can occur as part of a community clean-up and include community volunteers that can help businesses power wash, paint doorways, add color and simple greenery and more. The community can vote on “most improved” business façade and find other ways to recognize business improvements.

... and After

HIGHWAY 180: DESIGN SUGGESTIONS FOR SCENIC ROUTES



What might deter community progress? What are possible risks to success?

1. Lagging or limited County support
2. Lack of communication within the community and with partners
3. Follow-through falls short among community and government leaders
4. Continued absence of streamlined business development process at county level
5. No representative organization to vet issues and map out positive approaches for change
6. Lack of resources and support

Where Supervisor Magsig can have an immediate impact

1. Appointment of a coordinating committee (MAC)
2. Identifying a County department or entity that could assist the coordinating committee with organization, plan and accessing resources , i.e., where resources could be leveraged (time and financial)
3. Find resources at the County to begin planning for water storage
4. Form a Task Force with CalTrans regarding use of Caltrans large right-of-way for beautification and signage
5. Convene meetings to deal with the development frustrations; identify methods for streamlining and approaches to a community water storage solution
6. Connect to regional and state agency partners (Cal Fire) that might have programs, technical assistance and other resources to help Squaw Valley/180 move forward on key issues.



This report was prepared
for **Fresno County EDC**
by the following consultant team



Chabin Concepts
Audrey Taylor • www.chabinconcepts.com



DSG Advisors
Putting your tilt on the world

DSG Advisors
Don Schjeldahl • dsg-advisors.com



marketek

Marketek
Mary Bosch • marketekinc.com



KEYSER MARSTON ASSOCIATES

Keyser Marston Associates (KMA)
Debbie Kern • keysermarston.com

URBAN SCENARIOS

Urban Scenarios
Thatch Moyle • urban-scenarios.com

“Our Mission is to offer guidance to the community and Fresno County in regard to development along the eastern Highway 180 corridor.”

Goals of East 180 Corridor Development Committee including goals Compatible with Sierra South Regional Plan (Plan section in blue):

- 1) Beautification and retention of scenic qualities along roadways. **SSRP Section 406-1 (8.0) (a)(e)**
- 2) Preserve environmental and aesthetic qualities of the area. **SSRP Section 406-1: (8.00)(e), SSRP Section 406-03: (1.01)(a)**
- 3) Preserve historical and archeological resources of the area.
- 4) Preserve the State Scenic Highway status of Highway 180. **SSRP 406.03: (7.00)**
- 5) Encourage a California Rustic theme for the area.
- 6) Facilitate communication with community through local clubs, newsletters, and social media.
- 7) Encourage economic development that is beneficial to the community as a whole.
- 8) Provide local information to visitors.
- 9) Brand and distinguish “Squaw Valley, the Original”.

Goals of East 180 Development Corridor Committee Consistent with 2019 Opportunity Analysis:

- Leverage the interest and build the capacity of local leadership
- Implement a Highway 180 signage and beautification plan with Cal Trans’ assistance.
- Provide signage/kiosk to attract and educate visitors on area.
- Brand identity and marketing
- Placemaking and beautification

EXHIBIT D

Shaver Lake Citizens Advisory Committee CSA 31 and WWD 41

April 26, 2019

Fresno County Board of Supervisors
2281 Tulare St Room 301
Fresno, CA 93721

RE: Fresno County General Plan Update

Dear Chairman Magsig and Honorable Board Members:

County Service Area 31 was formed in 1978 to provide fire protection and recreation facilities to a significant portion of the Shaver Lake community. Waterworks District No. 41, formed in 1972, provides domestic water, wastewater treatment and water for fire suppression to developments south of Shaver Lake. WWD 41 owns 15 water wells, storage tanks, and a distribution system for water, aeration ponds for wastewater, and fire hydrants. The Fresno County Department of Public Works & Planning has responsibility for the operation and maintenance of CSA 31 and WWD 41 facilities.

A 7-member Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was established to advise your Board regarding issues related to both CSA 31 and WWD 41. CAC members are elected by property owners within the districts and serve without compensation.

The County is currently in the process of updating the General Plan, which establishes the County's long-range policy to guide land use and development in unincorporated areas. The General Plan includes both over-arching development policies that apply countywide and more detailed plans for portions of the county. The Shaver Lake Community Plan, first adopted in 1978 and last amended in 1986, establishes detailed policies, assumptions and standards for the Shaver Lake area. The County has also adopted other plans and regulations that are required by State law to be consistent with the General Plan. For example, according to Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) the Shaver Lake Specific Plan is utilized for growth and population projections.¹

General Plans usually have a time horizon of 20-25 years. The current General Plan update proposes to establish policies extending to the year 2040. General Plans typically quantify the projected level of growth so that development can be effectively correlated with long-range plans for public services and infrastructure (such as roads and water supply) and the protection of public health and safety (such as fire protection and emergency response).

The Draft General Plan assumes a population increase of 358,000 for the unincorporated area by 2040 (p. 1-2) although neither the draft General Plan nor the Shaver Lake Community Plan identifies the total number of housing units that are proposed in the Shaver Lake area. The Shaver Lake Sewer and Water Master Plan (1985) was based on a total of 6,200 "equivalent dwelling units" in Shaver Lake. According to the U.S Census Bureau² there are currently about 2,168 homes in the Shaver Lake Census Designated Place.

¹ Fresno LAFCO, Waterworks District 41 Municipal Service Review, 2011 (p. 2)

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey Table DP-04, Shaver Lake CDP

One of the primary purposes of a General Plan update is to review current and projected trends and assumptions so that local governments can effectively address infrastructure and public safety issues in the future. Land use policies for the Shaver Lake area are established in documents such as the Shaver Lake Community Plan and the Sewer and Water Master Plan, both of which were adopted or last updated over 30 years ago.

Circumstances related to land use, infrastructure and public safety have changed significantly in the past 30 years. For example, according to CalFire³ four of the five largest wildfires in recorded California history have occurred in the last seven years. Last year's Camp fire alone killed 86 people and destroyed over 18,000 buildings. A recent academic study found that between 1990 and 2010, an estimated 45 percent of all new housing units built in California were constructed in the "wildland-urban interface" which creates a much larger and challenging front for firefighters to defend.⁴ The entire Shaver Lake area is within CalFire's designated *Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone*, the highest risk rating.⁵

The General Plan is comprised of several "elements" that address various topics. The Transportation and Circulation Element establishes the network of roads and highways needed to provide for general mobility as well as emergency access. Fire protection officials recommend that multiple emergency access and evacuation routes be provided in developed areas. There is currently only one all-weather road (SR-168) providing access to Shaver Lake above the SR-168/Tollhouse Road/Auberry Road intersection. Anyone who has spent time in Shaver Lake on a busy summer weekend or holiday knows the level of congestion that occurs on 168 during peak periods. In the event of a major wildfire during such times, access and evacuation would be difficult and potentially life-threatening.

For many years the General Plan has proposed the extension of SR-168 from the top of the current "4-lane" highway around the southern and eastern parts of the Shaver Lake area, which would provide an alternative emergency access route into and out of Shaver Lake; however, neither the County nor CalTrans have active plans for constructing that highway. The General Plan update should include a realistic review of circulation and emergency access requirements to serve the public safety of residents and visitors in Shaver Lake.

Our CAC is charged with advising your Board regarding issues related to the services and facilities provided by CSA 31 and WWD 41. Helping the County to identify long-term infrastructure needs in Shaver Lake and the necessary facility improvements is the primary purpose our committee. County staff time and private studies, funded primarily through assessments on Shaver Lake property owners, are continuing to facilitate the expansion of public facilities based on plans prepared more than 30 years ago. For these reasons and those outlined above, our CAC respectfully recommends that your Board take the following actions:

1. Direct County staff to conduct a review of planning documents relevant to Shaver Lake at the earliest possible time, with particular attention to the level of growth and development that is reasonable in consideration of current and projected conditions related to public health and safety, including wildland fire hazards and emergency access.

³ https://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/downloads/fact_sheets/Top20_Acres.pdf

⁴ <https://www.pnas.org/content/115/13/3314>

⁵ http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fhsz_maps_fresno

2. Request that Fresno LAFCO undertake updates to the 2011 Municipal Service Reviews for CSA 31 and WWD 41 as soon as possible after Board of Supervisors review and adoption of the portions of the General Plan related to Shaver Lake.

Approved by the Shaver Lake Citizens Advisory Committee at its regular meeting of April 26, 2019 by a vote of 5-0

Peter L. Christ
Chair