

APPENDIX D: Economic Centers

Introduction	2
Herndon Avenue & Highway 99	4
Blackstone Corridor.....	6
Tower District	8
Downtown/Chinatown.....	9
Kings Canyon/Ventura Corridor	11
South Van Ness Industrial Area.....	13
South Central Specific Plan (SCSP) Area.....	15
Fresno Yosemite International Airport Area	17
Southeast Development Area (SEDA)	19
Shaw Avenue.....	21

Introduction

The City of Fresno has ten distinct economic opportunity areas or centers (Centers) that are or can be developed or further developed to retain and create jobs and significantly increase economic activity. The business activity in the Centers generates millions in revenue for the City through sales, property, and lodging taxes and provides diverse employment options for Fresno area workers.

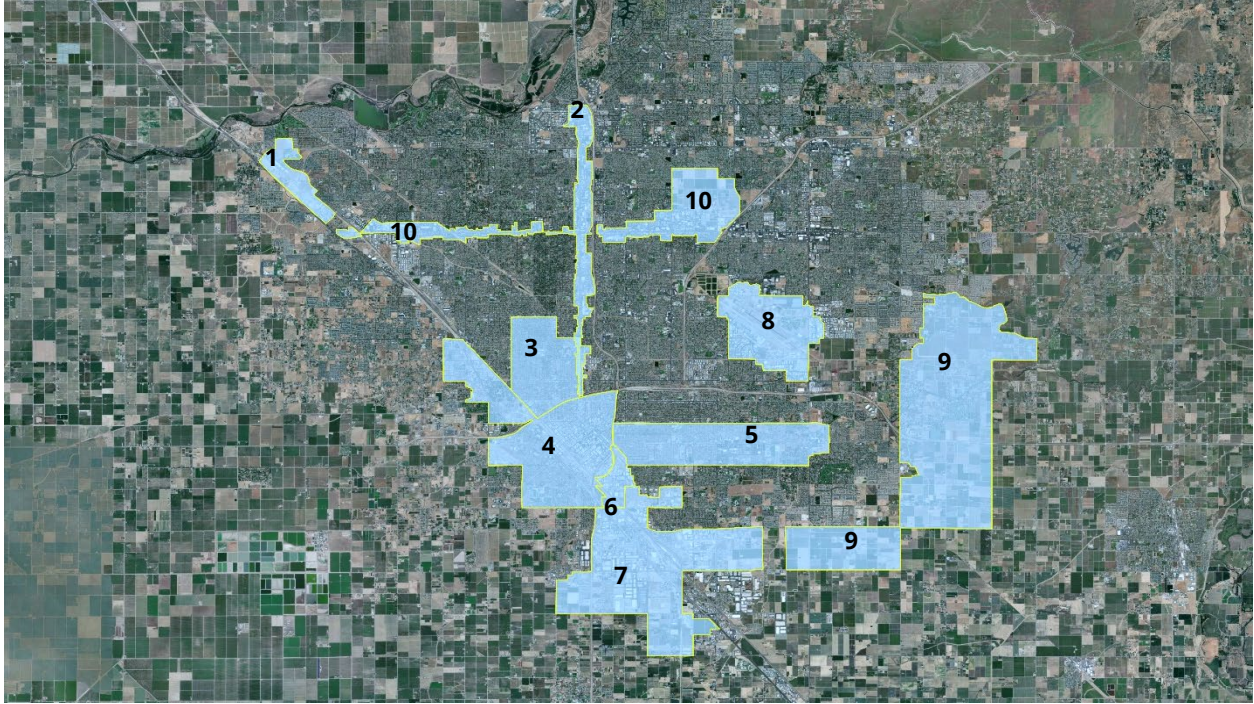
The economic health of these Centers is essential to improving and sustaining Fresno as a healthy community, one with balanced economic, physical, and social environments. Also, understanding how each Center functions from an economic development perspective is important to understanding and planning for future economic and job growth, diversification, and resiliency.

The Centers profiled here include potential opportunities for new and in-fill development, renovation and enhancement of space and use.

Improvements to the Centers will make them and the City more competitive and attractive to employers, help to diversify the economy and provide jobs for a range of skilled workers.

Starting from the City’s most northern boundary and moving southeast, the Centers are summarized and mapped on the next page and further described on the following pages.



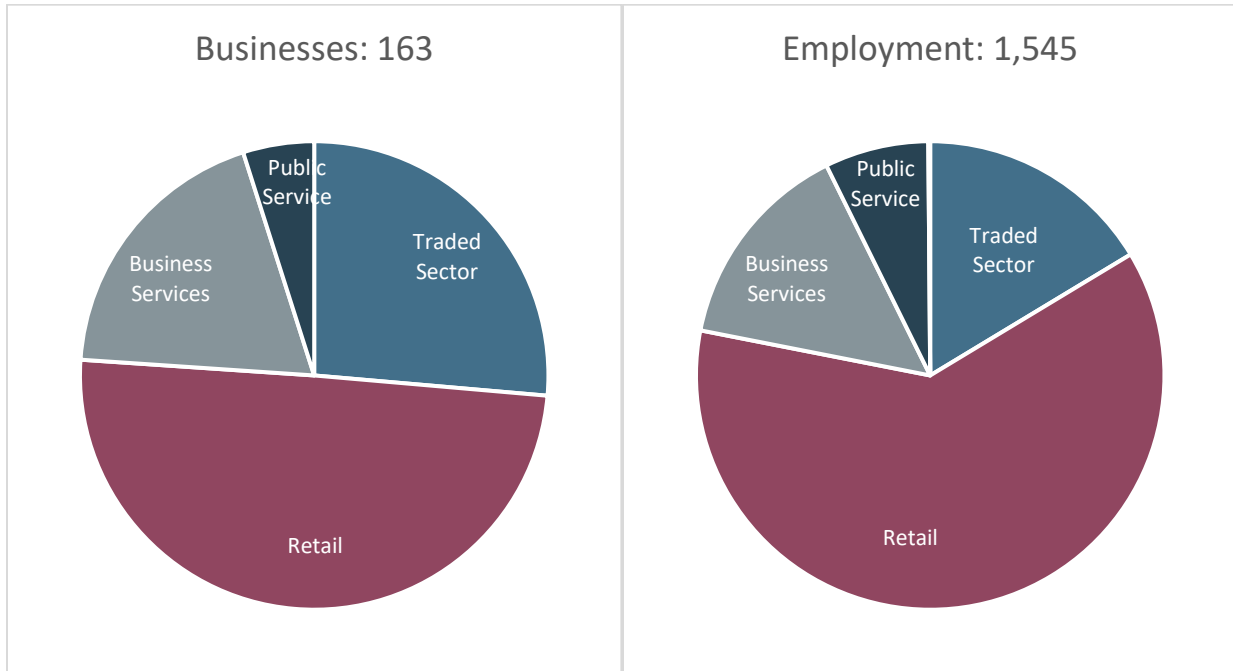


ECONOMIC CENTER	ACRES	BUSINESSES	EMPLOYMENT	REVENUE ¹ (\$MILLION)	OPPORTUNITIES
1 Herndon-Highway 99	678	163	1,545	\$2.5	Light industrial and commercial
2 Blackstone Corridor	1,286	1,270	15,070	\$25.8	Primarily retail
3 Tower District	1,850	721	6,551	\$1.2	Residential, limited retail or commercial
4 Downtown-Chinatown	4,474	2,325	38,265	\$5.1	Retail, commercial, possible residential
5 Kings Canyon-Ventura Corridor (Hwy 180)	2,893	755	7,145	\$4.7	Retail, commercial, and transit-oriented uses
6 South Van Ness Industrial Area	416	148	1,701	\$1.2	Industrial
7 South Central Specific Plan Area	5,562	642	18,539	\$31.7	Industrial and distribution
8 Fresno Yosemite International Airport	2,259	848	11,650	\$5.4	Light industrial
9 Southeast Development Area (SEDA)	8,621	73	474	\$0.0	Long-term industrial
10 Shaw Avenue	2,580	2,104	23,637	\$12.2	Retail and commercial
TOTAL	30,619	9,049	124,577	\$89.8	

¹ Most recent four quarters sales tax revenue (3Q2022 to 2Q2023) in \$millions. Source: MuniServices, City

Herndon Avenue & Highway 99

The 678-acre Herndon Avenue and Highway 99 Economic Center is a mix of primarily retail, business and professional services and some light industrial uses. The Center’s northern boundary is Herndon Avenue and extends to just north of Market Street. The east/west boundary includes the area between Highway 99 and Riverside Avenue.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- Veterans Boulevard Interchange and Corridor Improvement Project was a \$140 million investment that improved accessibility, circulation, traffic flow, reduced congestion in northwest Fresno and will accommodate light industrial development. Veterans Boulevard is partially open.
- Marketplace at El Paseo is a 650,000 square foot regional retail and commercial center located south of W. Herndon Avenue between Golden State Blvd and N. Riverside Drive. The center is anchored by several big box stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues (Target, Burlington, Old Navy, Ulta, Olive Garden, Regal Cinemas) and includes a Tesla charging station.
- Riverside Drive and Herndon Avenue intersection is the expected location for the world’s largest Costco. The 22-acre, 241,000 square foot center will double as an e-commerce fulfillment center. Jobs will be a mix of entry level, management, and professional (pharmacy, etc.).
- There are early-stage plans for a 17-acre residential development (single family homes and luxury apartments) with elements of mixed-use.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Veterans Boulevard—about 100 acres in the area between Golden State and Highway 99 is zoned light industrial. Once the interchange improvements are fully completed in early 2024 this area will

be ready and suitable for light industrial development. Primary infrastructure (sewer, water, etc.) is in place and will support light industrial uses. The City is currently completing off-site improvements e.g. streets, sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping. There are early-stage plans by a landowner within this Center to develop 60 acres for commercial and light industrial uses.

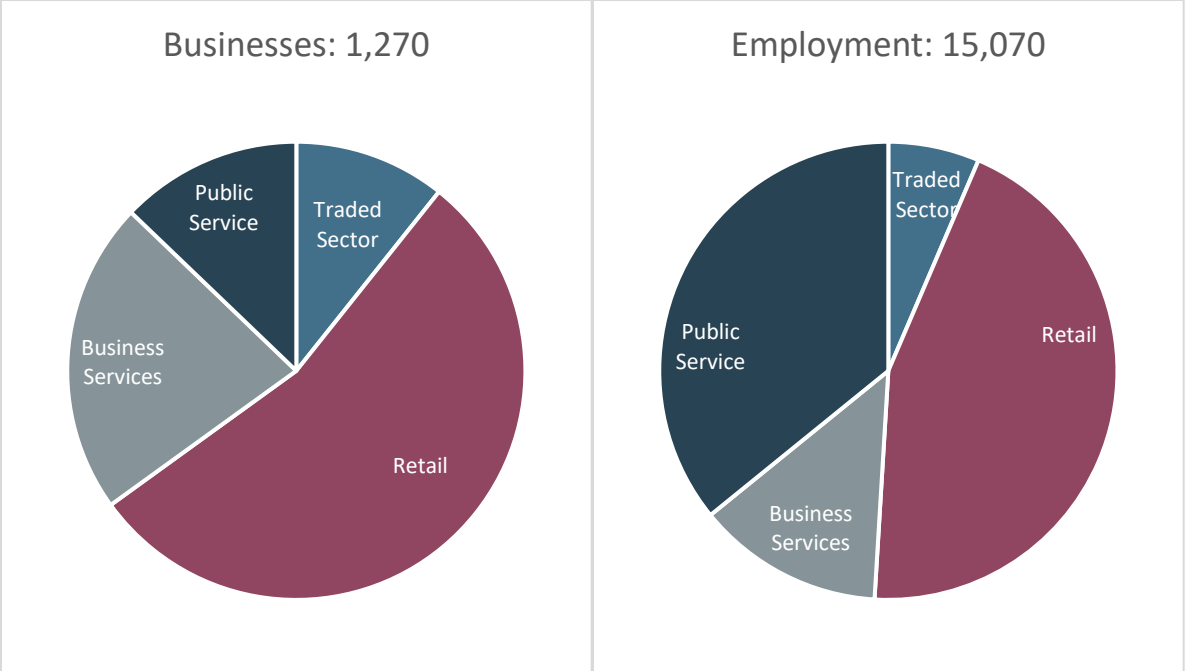
- A Union Pacific rail line runs along the east side of Golden State Highway, a competitive advantage when marketing to industrial users.
- The site will be served by high speed rail.

CHALLENGES

- Lead time of 18 to 24 months for installation of PG&E infrastructure.
- Potential environmental justice challenges.

Blackstone Corridor

Historically, an important retail area in Fresno, the 1,286-acre Blackstone Corridor is developing into strong mixed-use neighborhoods. This approximately eight-mile Corridor spans from Nees Avenue (north) to Highway 180; east to Highway 41 and west several blocks abutting residential areas.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- The Fresno Area Express’ (FAX) a federal- and state-funded rapid transit line named “Q-Line” began service in 2018. The route spans 16 miles on Blackstone from N. Fresno St. to downtown and then east on Kings Canyon Road to Clovis Avenue. The Q serves Fresno’s major shopping centers, hospitals, and employment centers.
- Blackstone and McKinley Avenues (intersection) is the site of an \$85 million dollar grade separation project funded by the state’s Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program and Measure C. The project includes raising a BNSF track over the avenues which will help to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders in the Fresno City College area. Construction is expected to occur from 2024 to 2027. Besides the expected traffic impacts during construction, some businesses will be relocated; mostly small businesses including some franchises. A multi-disciplinary group in the City’s Capital Improvements Department is providing relocation assistance to the businesses.
- Façade Grant Program funded by \$1.5 million in American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds supports repairing and modernizing buildings throughout the City of Fresno. Areas identified as priority for the funds were Chinatown, Downtown, Tower District, and Bus Rapid Transit and Transit Oriented Development areas around Blackstone and Kings Canyon.
- Manchester Center (Blackstone and Shields Avenue), an important anchor of Blackstone Avenue, is slated to be refurbished to mixed use which will include approximately 1 million square feet of

ground floor retail, office, dining, and entertainment, and nearly 600 second-story housing units (about 400,000 square feet of housing).

- The Link (Blackstone and East McKinley Avenue) near Fresno City College is a mixed-use development made possible with a variety of funding sources including state funding for offsite infrastructure. The Link includes 88 units of affordable housing, retail, commercial, and entertainment options. The development helps to connect the Fresno City College area to downtown Fresno, provides residents access to transportation, jobs, retail, entertainment, schools, and community services.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

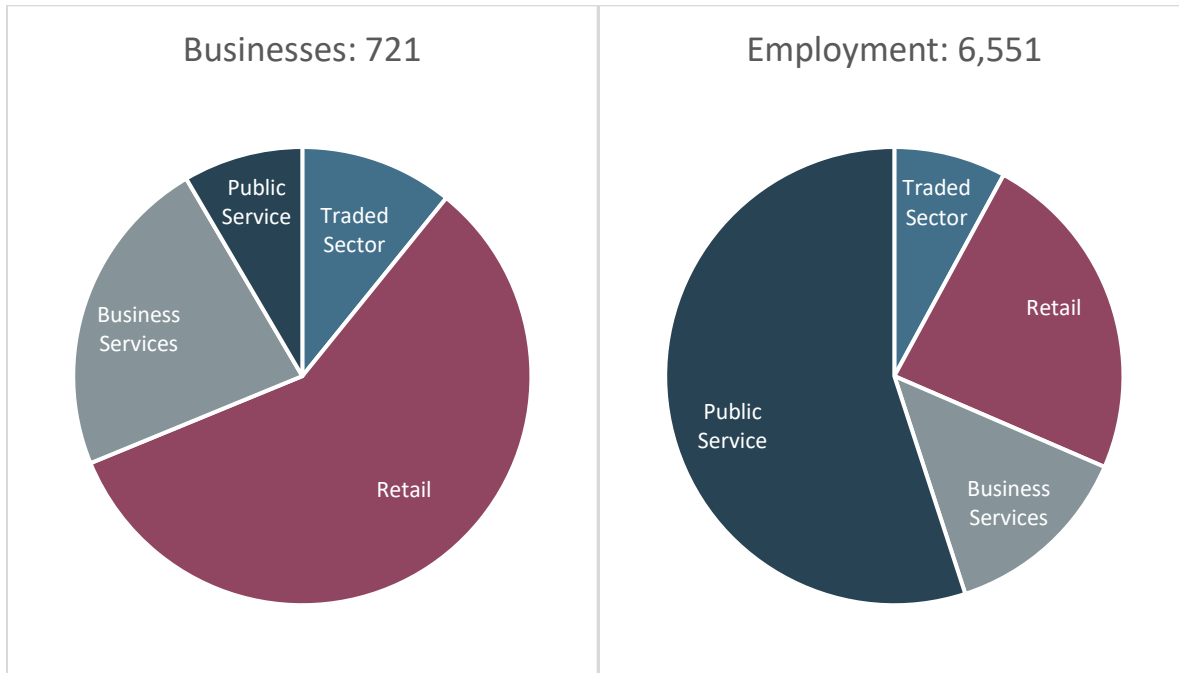
- Senior Center opening in 2025 will be the City's first activity center dedicated to the City's senior population. This 30,000 square foot facility will be located on Blackstone and Holland Avenue and will include an affordable housing development nearby.
- Retail and commercial development opportunities exist throughout the Center.

CHALLENGES

- Securing funding for off-site improvements, revitalization, and pedestrian amenities.

Tower District

Fresno’s Tower District, surrounded by Downtown and the Blackstone Corridor is an eclectic pedestrian-oriented area with retail, restaurants, bars, and a diverse mix of housing options. The 1,850-acre District spans from Shields Avenue (north) to North Fruit avenue (west), Marioa Avenue (east) out to Blackstone, and down to Kings Canyon/Highway 180 (south). Zoning is primarily residential with some commercial along the major arterials (Blackstone, Olive, Van Ness, Belmont).



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- **Community events** are popular in the Tower District including Thursday Farmer’s Markets, Rainbow Pride Parade/Festival, and a Street Vendor Program.
- **Façade Improvement Program** of \$1 million was established for Council Districts 1 (Tower District) and 4 (Airport Area) for underserved and minority small businesses. This program supplements a current \$100,000 façade program available to businesses in the Tower District and Kings Canyon/Ventura Corridor.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

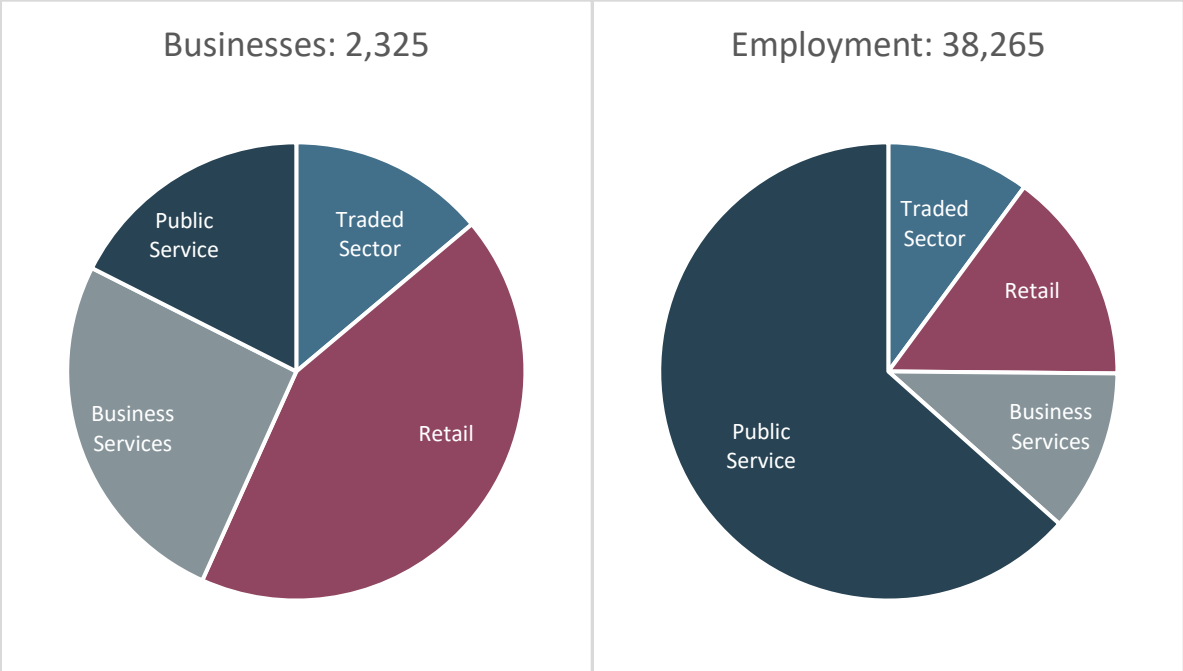
- Potential for additional community events that would generate traffic for local businesses.
- Fill vacancies.
- Site and buildings for new development and revitalization.

CHALLENGES

- Securing funding for improvements, revitalization, and pedestrian amenities.

Downtown/Chinatown

Downtown Fresno is a major employment and entertainment center. The area spans from W. Clinton Avenue (north) to Marks Avenue (west) to West Olive (south) and over to Weber Avenue (east). The first High Speed Rail (HSR) station (Fresno Station) will be in the heart of downtown Fresno and Chinatown between H and G Streets and Fresno and Tulare Streets.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- The City received a total of \$250 million for downtown infrastructure from a variety of state and federal funding sources. Additionally, \$6.2 million is already budgeted by the public works and public utilities departments for downtown infrastructure improvements. This investment is expected to catalyze private investment in residential and mixed-use development, thereby delivering high-density and walkable neighborhoods with equitable housing options.
- Chukchansi Park is the City-owned home of the Fresno Grizzlies, the single-A affiliate of the Colorado Rockies. Stadium capacity is approximately 10,500. A 2019 stadium renovation provides new fan amenities and social spaces.
- Several student programs were able to expand in Downtown when the Fresno Unified School District acquired space in downtown Fresno (Fresno and Fulton Streets). Among the programs housed in the newly renovated building is the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program and the Prevention and Intervention Department.
- Free trolleys to connect Downtown and the Tower District to Fresno City College and Fresno State campuses are planned which will make the businesses and entertainment hubs in these areas more accessible to students, and ease potential traffic and parking challenges.

- Fulton Street (formerly Fulton Pedestrian Mall) reopened to traffic in 2017. The City's \$20 million investment is beginning to see a revival of this section of downtown.
- Brewery District in the Fulton Street area has grown into a popular destination after the first brewery (Tioga-Sequoia Brewing Company) was established here in 2014. Private investment in tenant improvements and transforming warehouses into retail and restaurant space has spurred additional entertainment and dining establishments that attract city-wide residents and visitors.
- Façade Grant Program funded by \$1.5 million from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and managed by the Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation was dedicated to repairing and modernizing building facades throughout the City of Fresno, specifically prioritizing minority-owned businesses and businesses in prioritized areas of the Tower District, Chinatown, Downtown, Bus Rapid Transit and Transit Oriented Development areas around Blackstone and Kings Canyon, and areas around the Fresno Yosemite International Airport.
- Special Events attract both residents and visitors into Downtown for: Fulton Street Party, Art Hop, Vamos! Food Truck Event ("Taco Truck Throwdown"), Fres-Yes Fest, Market on Kern (farmer's market), Oktoberfest, Tequila Fest, various parades, Convention Center concerts and events.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

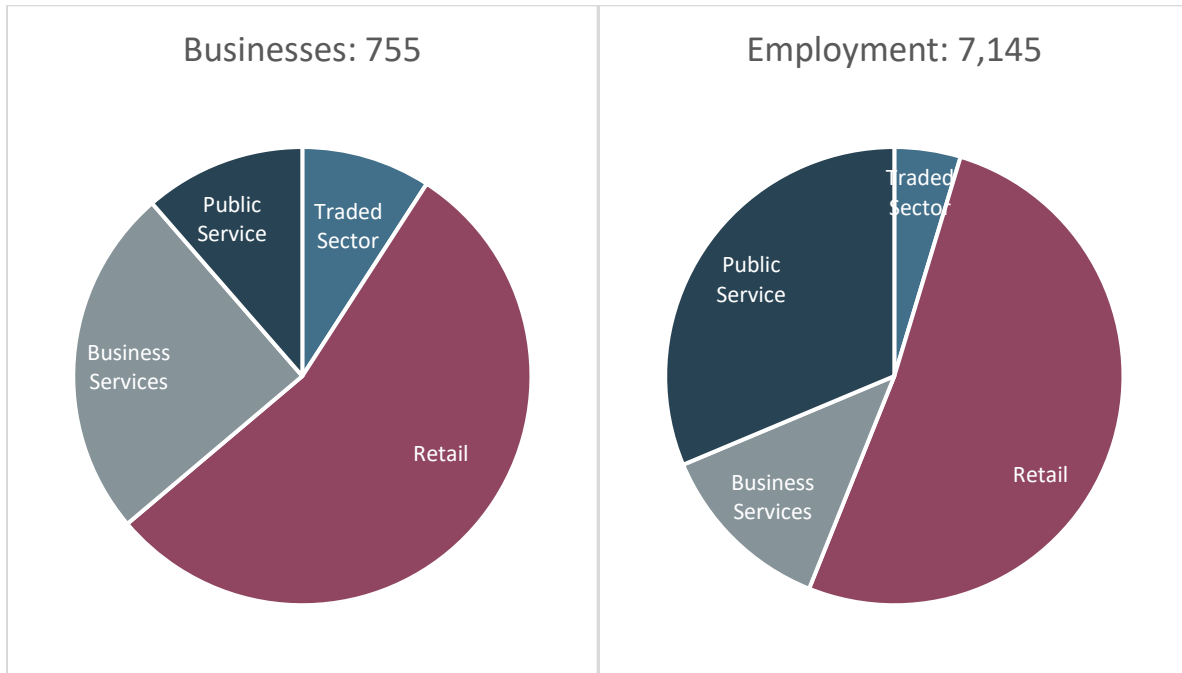
- The first High Speed Rail (HSR) station serves as a catalyst project that will further revitalize downtown Fresno and the Downtown/Chinatown economic center with new retail, restaurants, and offices. Riders will have easy access to Chukchansi Park, Fresno City Hall, County and Federal courthouses, and the Fresno Area Express (FAX) Bus Rapid Transit service. Fresno State University is about six miles north of the station and is easily accessed using FAX.
- Along Kings Canyon Road is about 600 acres of rail-served heavy industrial property.
- Three vacant/available buildings that once housed Bitwise Industries provide an opportunity for office, educational, and similar uses.
- Demand is strong for downtown housing. The City has a six-month waiting list of people who are interested in living downtown.
- A former 153,000-square foot JC Penney building is slated for reuse to apartments and ground floor retail by 2026.
- There is potential for additional community events that would generate traffic for local businesses.

CHALLENGES

- Securing funding for improvements, revitalization, pedestrian amenities, tenant improvements, and residential development.

Kings Canyon/Ventura Corridor

Bounded by Tulare Street (north), Butler Avenue (south), Yosemite Freeway (west), and Los Arbolitos (east). Primary land uses in this 2,893-acre Center are a mix of commercial, residential (single and multi-family) and several public facilities. Amenities include rapid transit running every ten minutes connecting Clovis Avenue to downtown and Blackstone. Rezoning of this Center in 2015 permitted more mixed use and multi-family development.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- Fancher Creek Town Center is a +/-200 acre planned development that includes housing, retail, entertainment, commercial and light industrial uses in a live-work environment.
- Ground was broken on Sarah’s Court in 2023. This is a 120-unit affordable housing complex on Salma Avenue in the Fancher Creek Town Center. The \$33 million project is supported by a \$6.2 million loan from the City of Fresno, state housing tax credits. Construction is expected to be completed in 2025.
- Brandhaven Senior Living is also located in Fancher Creek Town Center, opened March 2023. The 180-unit facility offers affordable apartments for those aged 62 and over. Additional housing units will be built over time.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The Kings Canyon Corridor Transit Oriented Development (KCCTOD) covers 4.5 square miles bounded by East Tulare Avenue (north), East Butler Avenue (south), South Argyle Avenue (east), and the 41 or Yosemite Freeway (west). The City is working to identify the best locations for housing, retail, offices, and public space development centered around the Q-line bus stations on

the Kings Canyon / Ventura Corridor. This work will also include development of up to three station area templates that can be used on properties along transit corridors citywide.

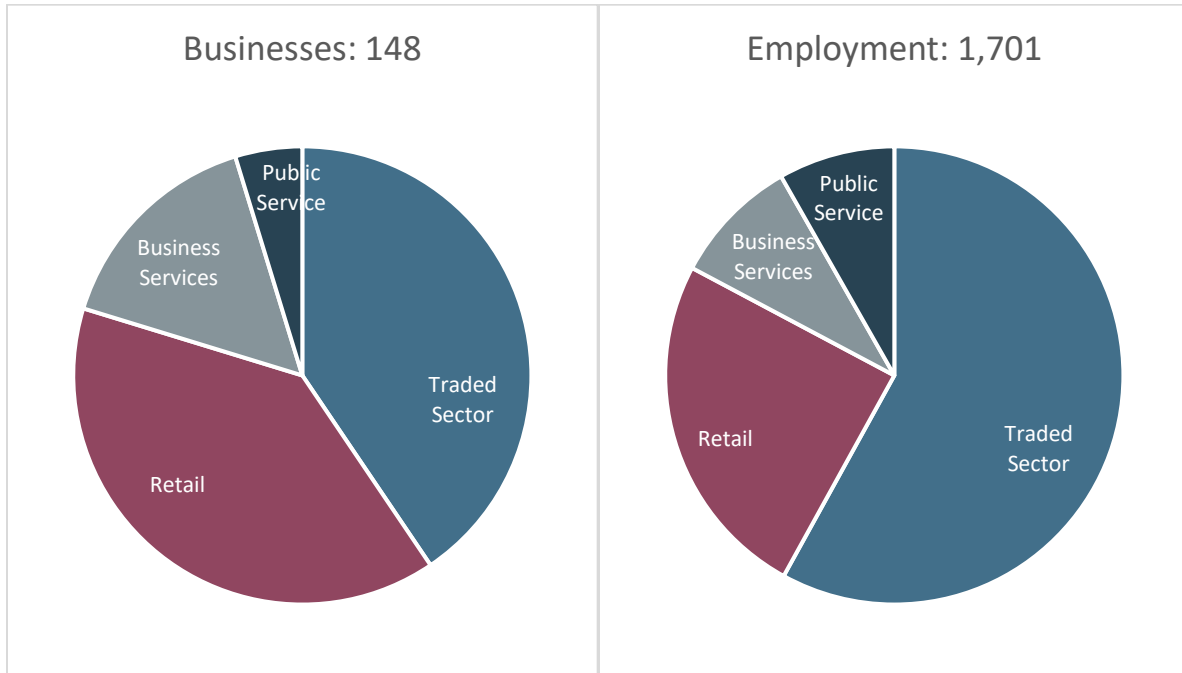
- The former University Medical Center (UMC) building located at Kings Canyon and Cedar Avenue is on the market for \$6 million. City officials and residents have identified affordable housing as the best reuse. The building has been vacant since the hospital closed in 2007.
- The former IRS Building located at Butler and Peach was closed in 2021 as part of the Internal Revenue Service’s consolidation of processing centers across the US. Employees affected by the closing of the Fresno facility received job search and skills training assistance from the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board’s Rapid Response Team. The 531,976-square foot facility consists of five buildings on 48.46 acres and includes offices and warehouse space, loading docks, a fully equipped commercial kitchen and 2,641 parking stalls. The facility has easy access to four major highways and the Fresno Yosemite International Airport.

CHALLENGES

- Securing funding for improvements, revitalization, pedestrian amenities, tenant improvements, residential and mixed-use development.

South Van Ness Industrial Area

One of the oldest industrial areas in Fresno, this 416-acre area suffers from badly degraded streets, inadequate street lighting, lack of landscaping/buffers and under-utilized parcels. This Center spans from Butler/Ventura (north) to East Church Avenue (south), and west to Downtown. The Center is home to employers that serve the agriculture, food, and packaging industries.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- In 2016 the City of Fresno received a \$3.04 million grant from EDA for infrastructure improvements in the South Van Ness Industrial Area. The federal grant was matched with City funding of \$1.3 million for a total investment of \$4.35 million. The grant included funding for improvements to roadways, sidewalks, and intersections on East, Pearl, California, and Hamilton Avenues.
- OK Produce is a long-established (1950) family-owned produce wholesaler located in the Center. This local employer serves supermarkets across California and southern Oregon and is currently undergoing expansion and implementing Phase I of electrifying their fleet. The facility currently has 12,000 solar panels installed on the rooftop and parking lot that produces 6.5 to 7 million kWh.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

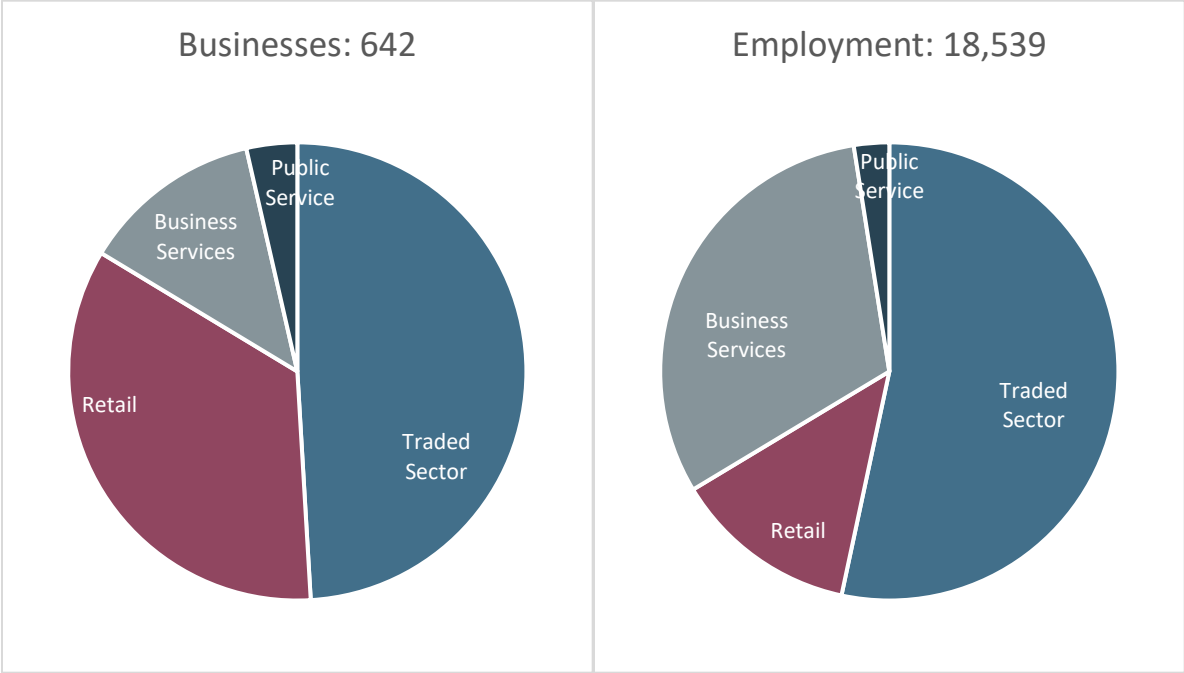
- Good highway access.
- Rail served sites are available within the Center.
- Several vacant sites suitable for industrial operations.
- The Center is underperforming relative to its potential

CHALLENGES

- A significant amount of work and investment is needed to improve aging infrastructure and make sites more marketable and attractive to new employers and to retain existing employers that may be expanding.
- Funding for missing public infrastructure, badly degraded streets, deferred street maintenance, lighting, paving, landscaping, and streetscapes.
- Code enforcement to clean up site and outdoor storage areas.
- Several short, narrow streets traverse the Center, a re-design would make the Center more attractive to new and current employers and workers.

South Central Specific Plan (SCSP) Area

This substantial area (5,562 acres) is the main industrial area in the City of Fresno which, according to a 2023 study completed by Invest Fresno, generates \$13 billion in economic output. The Center’s northern boundary is South Van Ness, south to E. Center and American Avenues, west to Yosemite Freeway and east to Highway 99.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- Amazon FAT 1 Fulfillment Center is a 1 million+ square foot facility located on 64 acres in the South Central Specific Plan Area (SCSP), south of the Fresno Yosemite International Airport. The Center employs approximately 5,000 full- and part-time employees. Another 470,000 square foot facility (QXY8) supports the fulfillment center with overflow storage. This facility employs approximately 165 full- and part-time workers.
- Ulta Fulfillment Center is located just one mile southwest of Amazon facilities. This is the company’s western e-commerce fulfillment center, and its first in California. The 670,000 square foot facility opened in Fresno in 2018 and employs about 500 workers.
- Coca Cola Distribution, in 2023, initiated an expansion to a 206,800 square foot facility on 14.78 acres in the SCSP area, about two miles west of its current 65,000 square foot facility in Fresno. The distribution center employs approximately 200 workers.
- Other employers located in this Center include Valley Wide Beverage, Scelzi, Keiser Corporation, Caro Nut, JD Food, and Betts Company.
- Approved in December 2023 are plans to improve North Avenue freeway intersection in the middle of the Center over the next two years; includes upgrades to 60-year old interchange to relieve

Highway 99 traffic congestion. Improvements are funded by state, transportation, development fees, and Measure C.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

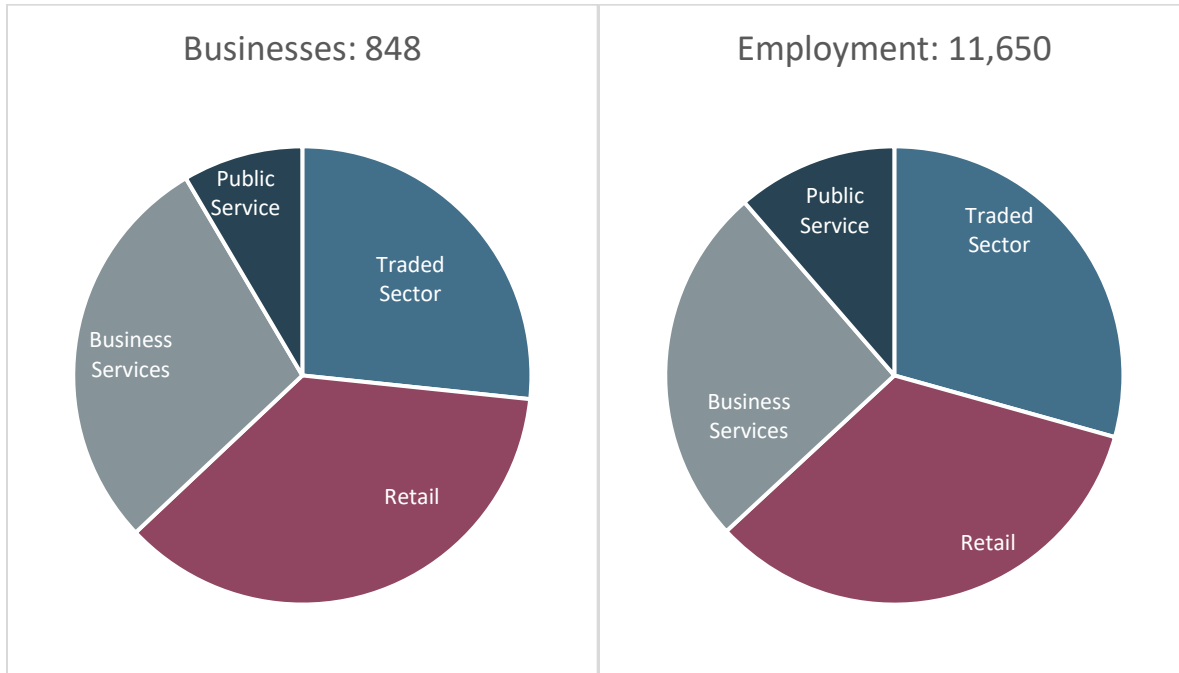
- BNSF Rail serves sites along Highway 99 and further east to Peach Avenue.
- Vacant sites with infrastructure in place.

CHALLENGES

- Litigation initiated by adjacent Fresno County residents and existing/expanding/new industrial operations in the Center have increased over the past several years. Environmental Justice litigation adds to the cost, time, and ease of development.
- Lead time of 18 to 24 months to bring PG&E infrastructure into a specific site and confirm capacity.

Fresno Yosemite International Airport Area

The airport area is a 2,259-acre Economic Center important to the entire region for commercial and industrial trade as well as for the tourism industry. The Airport Center is bounded by Dakota Avenue (north), McKinley Avenue (south), Argyle (east), and Chestnut and Winery Avenues (west). Besides airport use, zoning is primarily light industrial.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- Palm Lakes Business Park is located on the northeast corner of Dakota and Willows Avenues, just four miles north of the Fresno Yosemite International Airport; tenants include Speed Engineering, Universal Coatings, and others.
- The Fresno City Council recently approved a \$1 million Façade Improvement Program for Council Districts 1 (Tower) and 4 which includes the Airport Area. The program is aimed at underserved and minority small businesses.
- The GAP Pacific Distribution Center is located east of the airport along Dakota Avenue. The development includes two buildings and a solar field.
- East of the airport is the long-established and popular Airways Golf Club.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Several hundred acres east and north of the airport are zoned for light industrial development including an 11-acre parcel in the Palm Lakes Business Park.
- No known constraints to further development.
- Outside the City limits and east of the airport is land zoned for light industrial development.

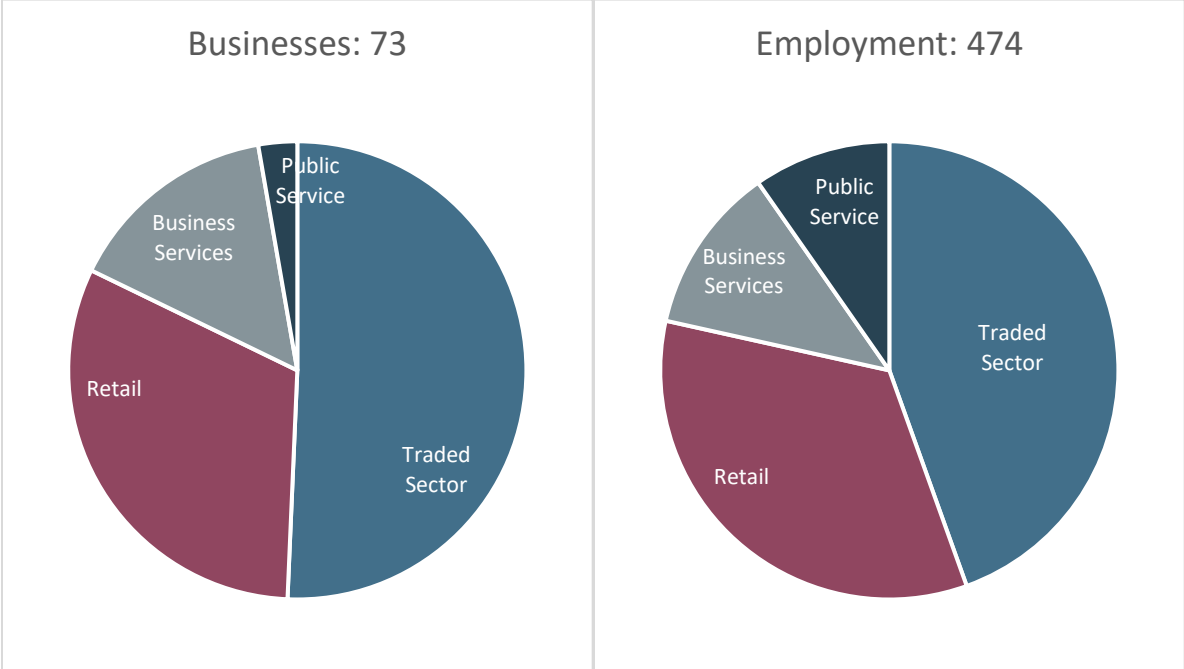
- There is interest in designating space in and around the airport for commercial transportation of agriculture products, manufacturing and supporting industries.

CHALLENGES

- Securing funding to make available parcels market-ready e.g., install or upgrade infrastructure, streets, lighting, paving, landscaping, and streetscapes.

Southeast Development Area (SEDA)

Bounded by Minnewawa, Temperance and Locan Avenues (west), McCall, Highland and Temperance Avenues (east), the Gould Canal (north), and North and Jensen Avenues (south), this 8,621-acre planned development area is located in the southeast area of Fresno’s Sphere of Influence. Currently home to an estimated 73 businesses, the Fresno General Plan includes this as one of the City’s primary growth areas for 2035 to 2050. SEDA aligns with the General Plan’s policy of balancing growth with infill development, includes diverse residential districts, employment districts, open space, agricultural uses, and green infrastructure.



ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Future development will provide for increased housing density, adding 45,000 diverse housing units for all income levels which will accommodate 130,000 residents at buildout (a 23% increase in population). Phase I calls for 15,000 housing units to be built beginning in 2035.
- The area is currently rural/agricultural land. To accommodate the population growth forecasted for Fresno while protecting productive farmland, the SEDA specific plan: 1) proposes to cluster homes and jobs at more than twice the density of current development; 2) adheres to the Fresno County Right-to-Farm Ordinance which requires new subdivisions within 300 feet of an agricultural zone to record a covenant which requires residents of the subdivision to accept the inconveniences and discomfort associated with normal farm activities; 3) calls for the establishment of a Farmland Preservation Program to help mitigate the loss of agricultural land and support for the viability of small farming; and 4) creates spaces for agricultural training programs, farmers’ markets, community gardens, agricultural education, small farms, entrepreneurship, agricultural research and innovation.

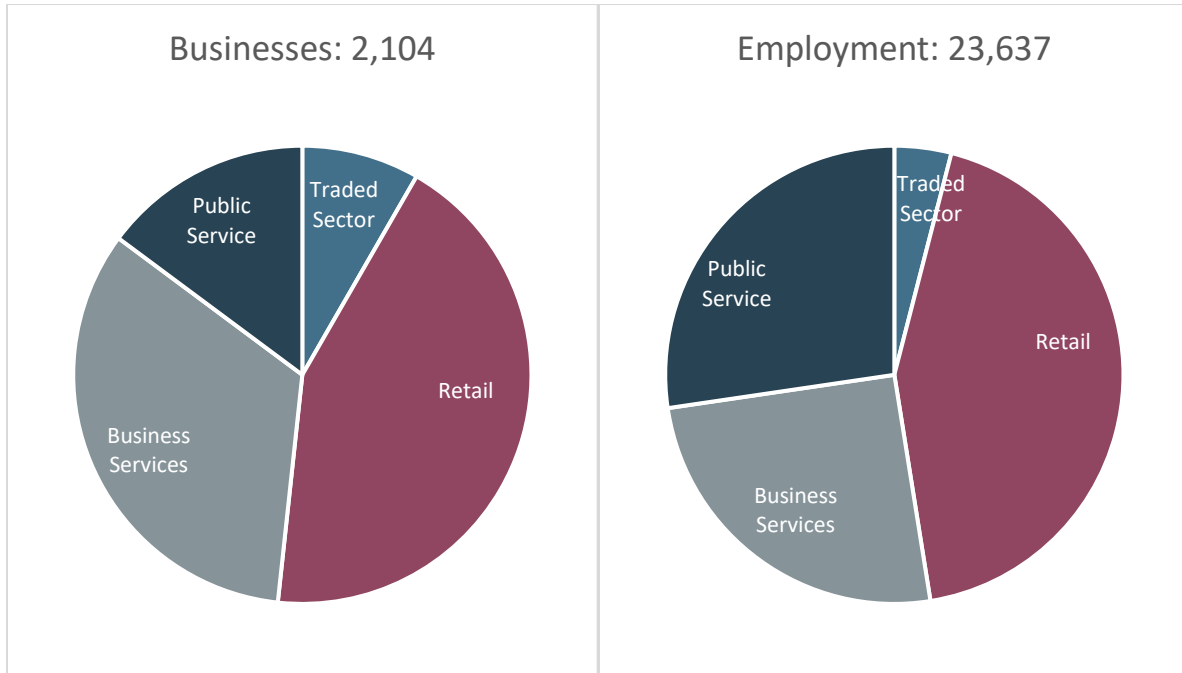
- The City of Fresno adopted its Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan (GHG Plan) in 2014 and updated it in 2021 to comply with new targets set by the State of California and align with California’s 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan. The SEDA specific plan includes high-density and mixed use development to provide more housing while reducing travel; focus on pedestrian-oriented amenities, walkable neighborhoods with schools, shops and parks; transit-oriented development; and energy conserving development.
- Development in the SEDA is expected to realize up to 37,000 jobs in mixed-use and flex spaces and ultimately become a significant economic center. The goals of the SEDA are to acknowledge and build on Fresno’s current strengths to create economic opportunity in an environmentally responsible way and attract investment from industries that are a best fit for Fresno (agriculture technologies, advanced manufacturing, clean energy, construction, food processing, healthcare, information processing and software development, logistics and distribution, and tourism).

CHALLENGES

- The City is currently experiencing resistance from county residents who do not want to be annexed into the City and are opposed to the development of agriculture land.
- Funding for infrastructure to support development.

Shaw Avenue

A strong commercial and retail area that is home to over 23,000 businesses, Shaw Avenue includes commercial areas along the north and south sides of Shaw Avenue from Highway 99 (west), crosses Blackstone and runs east to Sierra Freeway.



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECENT INVESTMENT

- Employers and development in and around the Shaw Avenue area include Fresno State University, Fig Garden Village Shopping Center, Fashion Fair Mall, West Acre Shopping Center, Arbor Faire Shopping Center, Walmart Supercenter, and dozens of other retail chains and independent small businesses.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- A walkable area.
- Further commercial development including the reuse of the Costco facility that is planning an expansion and move to Herndon Avenue Center.

CHALLENGES

- Funding for infrastructure upgrades, pedestrian amenities, streetscaping, etc.