

DEVELOPMENT CODE INDEX

The Development Code Index identifies specific code additions, changes or deletions recommended for consideration in future code amendments to implement CAP objectives. Below, this index is organized by thirteen (13) general CAP issue and topic areas. Within each topic area, the Development Index: 1) states the relevant CAP measures; 2) summarizes how the existing City Zoning Code and Draft Zoning Code address the topic; and 3) identifies new code opportunities and recommendations for each CAP measure. As a whole, the Development Code Index provides guidance specifying how city codes can be created, streamlined or updated to better support CAP objectives.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

DENSITY AND CONNECTIONS

- 1. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Develop higher-density and mixed-use development to support alternative travel in downtown Merced and appropriate neighborhood centers.**

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: Existing and draft zoning code include a mixed use district and mixed use allowances (D-COR, C-V), higher density housing, density bonuses, and limited requirements for pedestrian and bicycle connections and circulation.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The zoning code could expand pedestrian and bicycle connections and circulation standards and include infill compatibility standards. The zoning code could also establish new incentives (e.g., flexibility for certain development standards) and/or increase density bonuses for construction of non-vehicular trails (e.g., bicycle, pedestrian, multi-use).

- 2. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Support a 30% increase in per-person intracity and intercity transit use by 2020.**

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: New mixed use zoning districts in the draft zoning code support transit. Additionally, draft zoning code parking reductions offers incentives for new development near transit and requirements for proximity to bus service.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: Existing zoning supports transit through parking reductions incentives and requirements for proximity to bus. Less stringent parking requirements may be allowed in areas where bicycle, pedestrian and transit use is high. Additional standards could be provided for loading and unloading areas, waiting areas, and transition areas for pedestrians and cyclists using transit. Examples include dedicated passenger loading/unloading areas adjoining transit stops, enhanced/enlarged transit shelters, secure bicycle parking/lockers, and allowances for information and/or retail kiosks (e.g., newsstand, coffee).

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3. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Promote carpool and car share systems.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: This topic is not addressed in the existing or draft zoning code.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The municipal code could include incentives for carpool and car share systems, such as allowing zip car parking spaces on street parking.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS

4. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Support the use of neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs, such as lower-speed, street-safe golf carts) by 3% of households by 2020.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: Existing and draft zoning code include compact parking spaces are in the zoning code 20.38.070, but does not specify NEVs.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The zoning code could specify NEV parking spaces and/or allow a higher number of compact parking spaces to be utilized in new developments.

5. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Support the increased use of passenger plug-in electric vehicles (EV) and other alternative fuels to 5% by 2020.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: This topic is not addressed in the existing or draft zoning code.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The City's Standard Design Manual could provide design standards for location of EV charging stations and stalls, and the municipal code could identify locations and/or development types and sizes where such improvements may be encouraged through incentives or satisfy existing "public benefit" requirements.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

NEW CONSTRUCTION

6. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Encourage new buildings to exceed the minimum energy efficiency requirements under the state CALGreen standards.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: This topic is not addressed in the existing or draft zoning code.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The municipal code could offer incentives to exceed CALGreen standards for energy efficiency (e.g., flexibility in certain development standards, additional density bonus options).

7. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Site new buildings to take advantage of natural solar resources for heating and cooling.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: This topic is not addressed in the existing or draft zoning code.

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Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The municipal code could offer incentives to adopt voluntary CALGreen recommendations for new residential and/or non-residential development. Examples of incentives could include flexibility in certain development standards and/or additional density bonus options.

EXISTING BUILDINGS

- 8. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Support improved energy efficiency in existing multifamily units, rental units, and affordable households through voluntary retrofits.**

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: This topic is not addressed in the existing or draft zoning code.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The municipal code could offer incentives for improved energy efficiency retrofits in existing multifamily units, rental units and/or affordable households. Examples of incentives could include flexibility in certain development standards (e.g., landscape or parking requirements).

- 9. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Use cool roofs and shade trees to reduce the urban heat island effect in Merced.**

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: The existing and draft zoning code require shade trees in parking lots.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The zoning code could include language or incentives for cool roofs consistent with CALGreen recommendations. Examples of incentives could include flexibility in certain development standards and/or additional density bonus options. The zoning code could also include shade tree requirements for areas near buildings where such feature can reduce its energy consumption, or in areas frequented by pedestrians, cyclists or transit riders..

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 10. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Increase the amount of renewable electricity generation for on-site residential use.**

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: The draft zoning code addresses roof and ground-mounted solar energy facilities.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The zoning code could include language for other renewable energy facilities such as wind turbines. The zoning code could also include modifications to requirements for ground mounted Solar PVs when used as parking lot shade structures to be allowed when visible from public streets if they meet minimum aesthetic design standards. Finally, the zoning code could offer incentives in building code to pre-wire for solar consistent with CALGreen. Examples of incentives could include flexibility in certain development standards.

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11. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Facilitate renewable energy for on-site commercial and industrial uses.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: The draft zoning code addresses roof and ground-mounted solar energy facilities.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The zoning code could include language for renewable energy facilities that are located and designed to be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and uses. The zoning code could also include modifications to requirements for ground mounted Solar PVs when used as parking lot shade structures to be allowed when visible from public streets if they meet minimum aesthetic design standards.

WATER AND WASTEWATER

ALTERNATIVE WATER SOURCES

12. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Reduce the amount of water used for landscaping, while continuing to allow lawn and turf installations.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: The existing and draft zoning code include regulations for drought tolerant landscaping, amount of turf, and water efficient irrigation through the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. The City also adopted a "watering schedule" limiting the days and hours that people may irrigate.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The municipal code and/or City Standards Manual could modify requirements for continuous curbs to allow for stormwater curb cuts to allow rainwater to irrigate landscaped areas in parking lots and along streets. The municipal code could update maximum turf requirements and clarify locations to maximize efficiencies (e.g., slopes, medians).

SOLID WASTE

INCREASED DIVERSION

13. CAP Issue and Topic Area: Increase recycling in Merced with a goal of improving diversion of recyclables by 25%.

Existing/Draft Zoning Code: The draft zoning code addresses recycling collection facilities, but not smaller scale recycling within commercial or multi-family developments.

Additional Opportunities/Recommendations: The zoning code could add standards for locating and operating small-scale recycling facilities (e.g., collection facilities).