



## **TOOLEVILLE**

### **Community Location**

Tooleville is an unincorporated community in Tulare County just one mile east of the city of Exeter and at the base of the Southern Sierra foothills. Homes in Tooleville are located along Alfred Avenue on the north and Morgan Avenue on the south, with a few homes fronting Spruce Road. The Friant Kern Canal borders the east side of the community.

**Tooleville is being nominated for both emission reduction plans and emission reduction plans.**

### **Brief description of the community**

About 82% of Tooleville's 340 residents are Hispanic or Latino, and about a quarter of the population live below the poverty level. Tooleville's median household income was \$29,455, compared to \$42,031 for Tulare County and \$61,818 for the State of California (Tooleville Legacy Plan, 2017). According to the 2016 American Community Survey, only about 18% of the community have received a high school education or higher. Tooleville is mainly surrounded by agricultural lands and for decades, has been dealing with contaminated drinking water and limited groundwater quantity. Because households use swamp coolers to cool their homes, the drought coupled with extreme heat poses severe health risks to residents.

Tooleville is a severely disadvantaged community and ranks in the top 9% for ozone, top 6% for PM2.5, and top 11% for pesticides according to CalEnviroScreen.

The lack of basic infrastructure such as drainage result in frequent flooding of the community during the rainy months. There is no bus in Tooleville and residents are also concerned with pedestrian safety walking to Exeter along Firebaugh Ave and Spruce Ave, a major rural corridor.

In addition to advocating for transportation infrastructure improvements in their community, several community partners, led by the Tooleville Mutual Water Association, are working on securing access to clean and safe drinking water by consolidating water services with Exeter.

### **Air Pollution Concerns**

Residents of Tooleville are concerned with a variety of pollution sources, including dust and pesticide drift from over use in the adjacent agricultural fields and localized traffic pollution from the heavily-used Spruce Ave.

# **MATHENY TRACT**

## **Community Location**

Matheny Tract is an unincorporated community of about 1,200 residents in Tulare County. The 99 freeway marks the community's eastern border, and Matheny is surrounded by farmland and industrial development.

**Matheny Tract is being nominated for both community air monitors and emission reduction plans.**

## **Brief description of the community**

73% of Matheny Tract are Hispanic or Latino, with 33% of residents living below the poverty level. According to the most recent Legacy Plan, Matheny Tract's median household income is \$30,565, half of the State of California's median household income. The Plan also found that approximately 55% of the severely disadvantaged community's housing units were deteriorated and 32% were dilapidated. Matheny Tract ranks in the top 15% most overburdened communities according to CalEnviroScreen, and is also in the top 15% most pollution burdened communities. Matheny Tract's scores in the top 9% for ozone and top 1% for PM2.5. The community also scores in approximately the top 20% for asthma and pesticides.

In 2010, residents organized into the Matheny Tract Committee to address the lack of basic infrastructure such as sidewalks, streetlights, safe drinking water, and sewage systems. Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability works closely with the Matheny Tract Committee and in 2016, through grassroots organizing and legal advocacy, the community became the beneficiary of the State Water Board's first mandated drinking water system consolidation. The community continues to organize for wastewater treatment, parks, protection from industrial pollution, street lights, and active transportation infrastructure.

Palo Verde Elementary is a K-8 school located less than two miles from Matheny Tract and serves roughly 600 students including the children in the community.

## **Air Pollution Concerns**

Local air pollution sources within the general vicinity of Matheny Tract include agricultural activities. Residents of Matheny Tract are concerned with a variety of pollution sources, including contamination from pesticide use in the agricultural fields around the community. The community also borders State Route 99 and a Union Pacific Railroad which are responsible for many emissions. Industrial zoning also is located near Matheny's northern border with the City of Tulare. Matheny Tract's Legacy Plan also identifies that because Matheny Tract is located near the central portion of the Valley with prevailing winds from the northwest, it is in a vulnerable position for the accumulation of adversely modified air, particularly when a temperature inversion occurs which holds down surface air along with its pollutants.

## **FAIRMEAD**

### **Community Location**

The main cluster of homes are between Avenue 21 1/2 and Avenue 24. This cluster of 178 homes are connected to the county well, have natural gas connection and all have septic tanks. All other property homes within Fairmead are a mix of larger acreage of almond orchards and smaller 3-5 acre ranchettes.

**The community leaders of Fairmead are nominating their community for both community air monitors and emission reduction plans.**

### **Brief description of the community**

Fairmead is an unincorporated community in Madera County between the cities of Madera and Chowchilla. CA State Route Highway 99 splits the 8 square mile community of Fairmead. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Hispanic or Latino residents make up almost 70% of Fairmead's demographics, 6% black with approximately 11% residents identifying as Black or African American. Fairmead is in the top 9% most overburdened communities on CalEnviroScreen, and the top 12% most pollution burdened specifically. The community ranks in the top 15% for ozone pollution, top 16% for PM 2.5, and top 14% for pesticides.

There is only one school in Fairmead which only accommodates 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, all other school aged children are bussed to Chowchilla and Madera. There is a significant lack of infrastructure; no commercial businesses, no parks, no sewer services, no community center, no sidewalks and many road issues and flooding. With only one bus stop with no more than 3 routes a day. Nearest grocery store is 5 miles away.

Fairmead Community and Friends is a non-profit founded in 2007 to advocate for the community and ensure that residents' voices are being heard at the county and state level. They advocate for basic infrastructure and investments in Fairmead and host community building activities such as annual dinners, food distribution, and children's activities.

### **Air Pollution Concern**

Residents of Fairmead are concerned with a variety of possible pollution sources; The Fairmead Landfill pollutants on the Westside of Fairmead with homes in close proximity. The nitrates and pesticides used for the hundreds of acres of planted almond orchards that are in close proximity of homes are major concerns. The pollution from the BNSF and Union Pacific trains that run daily right along highway 99 which travel very close to the cluster of homes. Without any commerce in Fairmead there are many necessary vehicle trips for purchases and to go to work. There is one dairy in Fairmead. The clouds of dust brought on to work and harvest the multitude of almond orchards that are surrounding Fairmead homes. With the lack of road repairs and due to the previous years' drought, there is more road dust.

## **LA VINA**

### **Community Location**

Along Avenue 9 home to parcels with various types of housing, a SHE multi-family development with 56 units, and about 60 Self Help homes.

### **Brief description of the community**

La Vina is an unincorporated community in Madera County located about 7 miles south and southwest from the city of Madera. There is a small market that provides some groceries and hot food. One bus stop that has 1 round trip to the City of Madera available only two days out of the week. The majority of residents are farm workers and folks who are employed outside of the community. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Hispanic or Latino residents make up 95% of La Vina's demographics. La Vina is in the top 14% most overburdened communities on CalEnviroScreen, and ranks in the top 2% most pollution burdened. The community ranks in the top 5% for PM 2.5 pollution, top 9% for pesticides, and top 15% for ozone.

There is a K-8 school one mile from the main tract of homes, but due to the lack of infrastructure and the danger of speeding diesels and tractors, children are forbidden from and to school and face suspension if caught by the school staff. There is one small market in the community, but the groceries are expensive. There is no public park, no community center, a significant lack of basic infrastructure, and severe road issues due to the agricultural surroundings. There is one bus stop, with two routes to Madera, two times a week. The majority of residents are farmworkers and drive long distances to get to work and access to basic amenities.

### **Air Pollution Concern**

Residents of La Vina are concerned with a variety of possible pollution sources. Because of the lack of transit and transportation options, as well as lack of job opportunities in the community itself, residents must drive long distances for work and other services. Pollution from passenger vehicles as well as diesel emissions from tractors and freight are large contributors to the area's poor air quality. Truck traffic is particularly increased during the harvesting seasons.

Additionally, residents are concerned with pesticides and dust from agricultural operations as the community is completely surrounded by various crops. A nearby winery (Mission Bell) on the northern end of the community as well as the Ardagh Glass manufacturing facility also contribute negative localized impacts. According to CARB's Pollution Mapping Tool, Ardagh Glass is a significant emitter of not only carbon dioxide, but also nitrous and sulfur oxides.

# **DELHI**

## **Community Location**

Delhi is an unincorporated community in Merced County, located off the 99 Highway and 18 miles west-northwest of Merced. The boundaries of the community are defined as August Ave to Merced Ave, Flower and Letteau Ave to Shanks and Vincent Rd, to El Capitan Way and Palm St, and South and 4<sup>th</sup> St.

**Delhi is self-nominating for both community air monitors and emission reduction plans.**

## **Brief description of the community**

Delhi is the largest unincorporated community in Merced County, with a population of around 11,000 people. Additionally, diversity, thriving agricultural sector, and active community engagement characterize the community of Delhi. Delhi neighbors the nearby city of Turlock and relies on many of their resources due to proximity and accessibility. Furthermore, the major highway corridor (HWY 99), primarily used for goods movement, cuts through the community, with no pedestrian access between the west and east sides. Delhi resident leaders through various community meetings, have identified several air quality issues in their community and want to develop and implement solutions to address these concerns.

## **Air Pollution Concern**

- Proximity to major HWY 99 leads to high levels of transportation-related pollution (smog, Greenhouse Gases, particulate matter, carbon monoxide)
- Due to high levels of air pollution, Delhi is among the top 25% of CalEnviroScreen.
- Proximity to dairies and agricultural businesses has resulted in high levels of pesticide, fertilizer use, and methane contamination.
- Sandy Soil infrastructure results in dust storms resulting in high levels of particulate matter and other contaminants.
- Nearby industrial businesses continue to emit harmful pollutants into the atmosphere.

# **PLANADA**

## **Community Location**

Planada is an unincorporated community in Merced County, approximately 10 miles east of the City of Merced. The community is defined as Whelan Road to the West, Gerard Ave to the South, S Ivett Rd to the east, & the unnamed backroad directly north of the 140 (Central Yosemite Hwy).

**Planada is being nominated for both community air monitors and emission reduction plans.**

## **Brief Description of the Community**

The community of Planada, established in 1910, is now home to approximately 5,000 residents. Resident leaders have focused on advocating for increased investment in their community's park and active transportation infrastructure. Residents are currently advocating for approval of a community plan that would support an affordable housing development. Planada has a community center attached to the Senior Center where residents can hold meetings and access computers and printers.

According to the 2010 Census, Hispanic or Latino residents make up approximately 95% of Planada's demographics. Around 29% of individuals live below the poverty level. The community ranks in the top 14% overburdened on CalEnviroScreen, and in the top 7% for PM 2.5 specifically and 18% for ozone pollution.

## **Air Pollution Concern**

Planada is mainly surrounded by agricultural operations, making pesticide contamination and pollution a major concern for residents. Additionally, there are multiple dairies located in and nearby the community, contributing to the area's poor air quality.

## **SOUTH MERCED**

### **Community Location**

South Merced is a neighborhood that spans across various Census Tracts and is marked by the 99 freeway as its northern boundary. The community spans from West Ave to Martin Luther King Jr Way, and West Childs to the 99 Freeway.

**South Merced is self-nominating for both community air monitors and an emission reduction plan.**

### **Brief Description of the Community**

Neighbors United for a Better South Merced is a community group that has advocated for decades for increased transportation investments in their community, community and pedestrian safety, and for a grocery store. They work very closely with their local government in the City of Merced to secure investments and improvements in their neighborhood. Recently, they were successful in securing a four way stop in a heavily trafficked intersection that posed a threat to schoolchildren and families. The group holds regular meetings at the Golden Valley Health Center clinic on W Childs Ave.

According to CalEnviroScreen, parts of South Merced ranks in the top 9% most overburdened communities, the top 7% for PM 2.5 pollution, and the top 12% for asthma rates.

Despite its location in one of the most agriculturally rich areas of the state, South Merced is a food desert and does not have a grocery store in the neighborhood where residents can buy fresh produce. There is a middle school and an elementary school in the community.

### **Air Pollution Concern**

As the community is partially bordered by the 99 freeway, a major freight and vehicle corridor, air pollution from diesel emissions impacts South Merced. There is also an airport nearby that could potentially contribute harmful emissions to the community. Additionally, agricultural operations and new industrial parks located along highway 140 and Childs and 59 also contribute negatively to the air quality.

# **LANARE**

## **Community Location**

Lanare is an unincorporated community located approximately 24 miles south of the city of Fresno in Fresno County and 8 miles west of the 41 freeway. Mt. Whitney is the southern boundary of the community, with residential houses on Chateau Ave, Fresno, Garfield, Grantland, and Bryan. The Census tract in which Lanare is located is much larger than the boundaries of the community.

**Lanare is being nominated for both community air monitors and emission reduction plans.**

## **Brief description of the community**

Lanare is mainly surrounded by agricultural lands and large-scale dairies. According to the 2010 Census, 40% of the community's population age 25 years and older have achieved an education level below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. 88% of residents are Hispanic or Latino, and about 62% live below the poverty level. The Census tract in which Lanare is located is in the top 19% most disadvantaged communities on CalEnviroScreen, and ranks in the top 9% for ozone pollution and the top 3% for PM 2.5. The community also ranks in the top 9% for pesticides.

Lanare's water is contaminated with arsenic, and resident leaders have been embroiled in a fight for clean drinking water for more than a decade. Although an arsenic treatment plant was built in their community, the engineering study for the plant did not accurately consider residents' low-income status or water usage, so residents were not able to afford the fees to operate and maintain it. After only 6 months, the facility went idle after only 6 months, and the system was put into receivership because of its mismanagement. Since then, the community has been advocating for a permanent drinking water solution, and they have successfully procured state funding for a new water system with two new wells. The new Community Services District has been training to take back control of the water system.

Much of Lanare is situated along a fast-paced two-lane county road called Mt. Whitney. Several years ago, community leaders were able to advocate for state funding to construct a sidewalk along Mt. Whitney so that residents could walk to neighbors' homes, the small shop, or the community center more safely. The community as a whole is severely lacking in infrastructure; most streets do not have sidewalks or street lights, roads are poorly maintained, there is no public transit for accessing healthy stores and resources in nearby cities, and poor wastewater infrastructure makes the community prone to flooding during the rainy season.

Lanare has a community center where the community group meets once a month to discuss state legislation, transportation, and make decisions regarding their water services. The group meets with state legislators, district supervisors, and state agency representatives and partners with Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability on these decision-making processes.

## **Air Pollution Concern**

Residents of Lanare are concerned with a variety of possible pollution sources, including contamination from pesticide use in the agricultural fields surrounding the community, dust from the dry fields surrounding their homes, and the many dairies located in and nearby the community. Many of these dairies have been permitted to construct dairy digesters on their sites, which poses localized air pollution risks. Additionally, because of the lack of transit options and basic services in the community, residents are forced to drive outside of Lanare for work, medical services, school, or other essentials, thereby increasing air pollution from passenger vehicles.



