

Fairmead Community & Friends History

Fairmead is a small unincorporated low-income community that lies at a key intersection in Central California just south of the intersection of Highway 99 and Highway 152.

Fairmead was originally constructed next to the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1912. A dirt road upgraded to State Highway status that ran parallel to this railroad corridor. Once boasting a population of 1,500 around this date and predicted to be the largest city between Stockton and Los Angeles. Fairmead's business district included a 30-guest room hotel, post office, cheese factory, a general store, four grocery stores, a barbershop, a garage, a three-room schoolhouse, an organized baseball team and the Fairmead Enterprise and Fairmead Herald newspapers.

The 2010 census reported Fairmead with a population of 1,447. Although, sadly today the population is roughly the same as in 1912 but now the community doesn't have any commerce of any kind. The only public structures left are two churches and the Fairmead Elementary School. Long time Fairmead resident, Barbara Nelson was once quoted in the Madera Tribune,



describing Fairmead, California as "...overlooked... I look back in the past and see no change in the present. It's the same: no store, no park, no community center, no sidewalks, no street lights..."

In 2007 the grassroots community group of Fairmead Community and Friends was established by four co-founders Barbara Nelson, Nettie Amey, Lawyer Cooper and Annie Cooper. The group's mission was and still is to make Fairmead a better place for families to live by advocating for health justice, safer environments and community resources.

Today in 2017, Fairmead Community & Friends is a 501c3 nonprofit that has had many challenges but continues to be "the voice" of the Fairmead community.

*Fairmead Community
& Friends*



Fairmead, CA

For the past ten (10) years Fairmead Community & Friends has:

- Provided monthly community meetings for residents to ask questions and to get updates of projects and community improvements.
- Attended numerous county meetings including; Madera County Board of Supervisors, City Council, Water Resource Board and High Speed Rail Authority meetings.
- Worked closely with the Madera County Departments; the Road Dept., Planning Dept., Environmental Health, Engineer Dept. and Code Enforcement.
- Provided annual Thanksgiving Feasts, Christmas Gatherings, Toys giveaway and community fundraisers.
- Continually encouraged resident families to be involved to help improve their community.

The greatest challenges facing the community is the infrastructure, the need for new water and sewer systems, safe paved roads, sidewalks and adequate streetlights for public safety. The necessity of a public park for residents to enjoy time with their families and for their children to safely play. And the healthy requirement of a multicultural center for residents to meet, work together and socialize with one another.

Fairmead Community & Friends is up to the challenges and is at a moment in time to Change Lives, Empower People and to Build a Better Community.