

Levesque, Jennifer

From: DIANA ODOM GUNN [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2021 3:42 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: Council Special Meeting comments

D.1 Council Goals and Priorities

I am Diana Odom Gunn on behalf of the Merced Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA):

Continued downtown revitalization is critical to maintain the historic core as Merced grows outward.

The Downtown Arts District will distinguish Merced from surrounding communities and inspire residents and visitors to come downtown. More importantly, it will give Merced an identity to feel proud about.

Public art brings character to otherwise empty spaces and touches observers emotionally and intellectually. We encourage the City to invest in one piece of public art per year to improve the mood of Merced life.

The redesign of Bob Hart Square will accommodate bigger and better community events to unify residents throughout the City. We have outgrown the Square. The crowd cannot get close enough to see Santa after the Christmas Parades, for example.

Laura Fountain is a distinguished and artful symbol of Merced's history and needs restoration. We hope to find funding opportunities for this project.

The downtown neighborhoods should be recognized for their historic significance to Merced.

Litter abatement, animal control and code enforcement need attention. Downtown is overrun by stray animals, covered with trash, and sometimes blighted.

Railroad safety improvements are critical to reducing violations and accidents at train crossings. We want to move toward railroad quiet zones between G Street and V Street along the BNSF. It is a quality-of-life concern and a factor in downtown property values.

Local streets in downtown residential areas beg for brighter lighting and traffic calming measures to encourage walkability, bicycling, and outdoor youth activity.

City Staffing should aim for public accessibility rather than staff convenience. To participate in government, working residents must conduct business over lunch, in the evenings, and/or weekends.

Thank you.

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