

Dear honorable Planning Commissioners and City Council,

Our entire group is proud to bring to you this project inspired by Merced's desire to increase affordable housing through more infill supply. As you all are aware, we are in the midst of an extremely limited housing supply, which is further compounding the issues of affordability in our community. As is widely recognized by state economists and the governor's office, the only way to get out of this situation is to build more homes and to build a diverse set of homes for people that do not need or want the neo-90s "large home with a big back yard." In support of this effort, and to match with the City Council's recently stated alignment with affordable housing during the City Council meeting on 4/19/2021, we have designed this infill project to increase the housing supply in a socially and economically responsible way.

Careful attention was paid to ensure design standards that conform and exceed city requires and the existing multifamily and multi-unit single family properties that adjoin and/or surround the subject property. We are using a diversity of exterior textures and colors to create housing that is not just another "stucco box." The roofs are flat to ensure easy solar installation, in support of the State's energy efficiency standards as we move away from a carbon-based energy footprint. The overall density proposed is an increase of one unit (total of 4 per lot) over the already permissible density (3 per lot) for the existing zoning, which we feel is appropriate given the nearby multifamily uses in place and the forever increasing needs of the community for more dense housing.

The principals of this project have either lived in Merced all our lives or for most of them. As local citizens who want to continue to invest in the future of Merced, we hope to propose many more projects of this type. We look forward to working towards more appropriate levels of housing supply and affordability for our community with your help.

In consideration of the objections of a neighbor, whom we will note did not contact us for any information, we would state the following:

1. The project has the appropriate and necessary onsite parking as determined to be sufficient by city and state standards. Additionally, during all of our site visits during numerous hours of the day there was never a lack of street parking available in the surrounding area.
2. Impacts to city services are addresses through impact fees. We are prepared to pay, as does every developer, the appropriate impact fees listed on the city website.
3. The third point of objection asks the commission and council to set aside applicable city standards and to ignore the needs of the community. We would ask the opposite. Further,

the lots in discussion have been a vacant and often a blight on the subject neighborhood for decades, acting as a collector for trash and other issues as vacant infill land tends to do.

4. The leader of the opposition's presumption that it will be low-income housing is simultaneously incorrect and insensitive to many other community residents. The units in question will be market rate housing that we hope will contribute to the overall supply of housing, thus eventually helping rents to stabilize instead of the massive increases we see happening today. The lots are also zoned and site planned in such a way that they may be individually owned/financed by a primary occupant via FHA and Fannie Mae's current lending guidelines.

We do not envy those of you in either elected or appointment positions; Council or Commission. No matter how good or appropriate a project may be, there will always be detractors who don't want projects built in "their back yard". This will be a position that will be thrust upon you far into the foreseeable future as Merced inherits the pains/benefits of a growing college town.

Sincerely,

MCP, LLC