



# THE WEEKLY COUNCIL INFORMATION REPORT

November 4, 2022

## Thank you, Officer Justin Saldivar

Each year the Merced County Gang Investigators Association recognizes an individual for their excellence in gang investigations. This year Officer Justin Saldivar with the Merced Police Departments Gang Violence Suppression Unit was recognized as the Gang Investigator of the year. Officer Saldivar joined the GVSU in September 2021.

Officer Saldivar has provided gang awareness trainings to various youth groups, private organizations, and Merced City organizations. Officer Saldivar has remained proactive in his duties identifying gang members and helping to suppress gang crime in the City and County of Merced. We thank Officer Justin Saldivar for his hard work and dedication to the GVSU and the Merced Police Department. We congratulate Officer Saldivar on receiving this year's MCGIA award for Gang Investigator of the year.

Pictured below, Sergeant Salyers, Officers Centeno, Saldivar, and Rocha



This week, Officer Erick Perez visited Mrs. Quiralte's AM Class at Sheehy Preschool to talk about the Police Department and keeping the community safe.

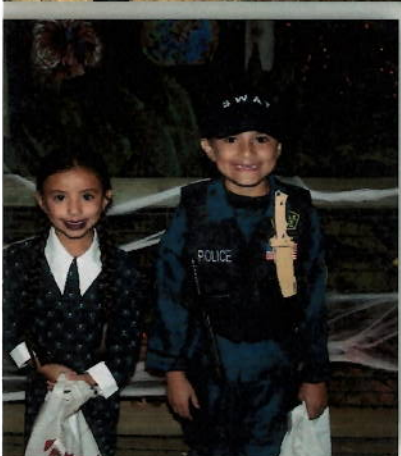


### That's a wrap!

The Parks & Recreation Department's NFL Flag Football has come to an end. Coaches and referees were dedicated to a safe, successful, and fun season. Thank you to parents and participants for your commitment to team spirit. For more Parks & Recreation Department programming information, visit <https://www.cityofmerced.org/departments/parks-community-services/parks-and-facilities>, or visit their Facebook site.



Scenes from Zpooky Nights, Cops for Critters, Tiny Tots Halloween Pumpkin Party, and Halloween Street Bash



### Public Works in Action

The City-hired contractor, Park Planet, continued work this week; playground equipment has been installed at the Love Veasley Park, as well as removal of old equipment at the 12<sup>th</sup> & G Street Park as part of a Measure Y funded project to replace park playground equipment at Little Angels Park, 12th & G Street Park, the Love Veasley Family Park, Benjamin Tanager Park, Frederick Douglas Park, Hansen Park, and Santa Fe Strip Park 3.

Love Veasley Park



12<sup>th</sup> & G Street Park



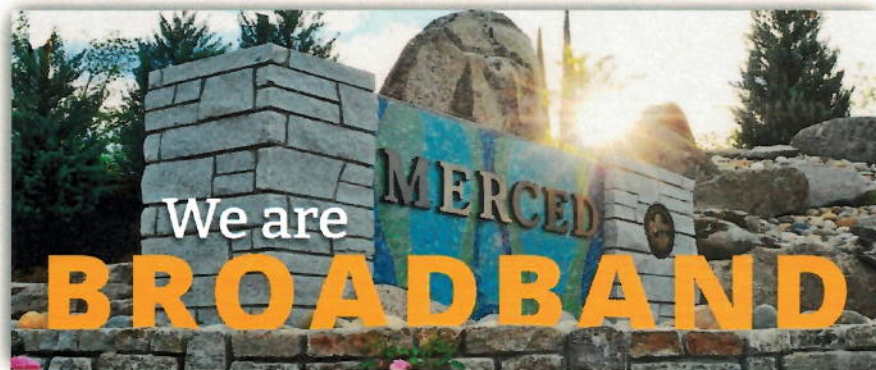
Sewer/Storm Crews clearing a drain inlet due to the rain this week.



This week, Merced Fire Department trained new Water and Sewer Crews to prepare them to make entry into confined spaces or perform a trench rescue as part of Public Works operations.



Sewer Crews repaired a damaged 2 1/2” sewer line that services a MID facility electrical substation on Cooper Avenue.



### Access Merced Broadband Project

Recently, the City partnered with the County of Merced for a broadband Internet study. Broadband is an essential, critical infrastructure for the economic growth of the region and the advancement of technology and infrastructure associated with broadband will play a key role in the economic future and quality of life of the county.

The County of Merced entered into an agreement with Magellan Advisors, in partnership with the City of Merced, to work alongside the six incorporated cities and the unincorporated communities to prepare a broadband strategic plan for the county.

The broadband strategic plan will include key policy directions for broadband expansion and development and will aim to enhance public and private investment in technology infrastructure to improve overall access to broadband and strengthen the economic competitiveness of the region.

For more information, visit <https://www.countyofmerced.com/3850/AccessMerced-Broadband-Project>.

## North Transit Hub Nears Completion

**Merced, Calif. November 1, 2022** - The City of Merced announced today it is in the final construction phase of the North Transit Hub, located at the eastern half of M Street Circle and Bellevue Road in Merced.

Federally funded by \$1.6 million from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, which provides funds to States for transportation projects designed to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality, the City expects the Hub to be operational and available for use in January 2023.

“Developing a strong and well-connected public transportation infrastructure will benefit all community stakeholders,” said Merced Mayor Matthew Serratto. “Supporting our partners at MCAAG, Merced County Transit, and UC Merced will allow the community’s modes of public transportation to provide an affordable means of mobility. Additionally, it is a key link to jobs and educational institutions for members of our community with limited transportation options.”

The North Transit Hub will connect with the community’s overall transportation system and serve as a central location for rider parking, bus pickup, transfer and drop off, and ride share parking and will allow coordinated bus routes with Merced County Transit, known as “The Bus,” which is administered and operated by the Transit Joint Powers Authority for Merced County, and CatTracks, part of the UC Merced transit services. Additionally, The Bus will provide connections to the Merced Amtrak Station at 324 W. 24<sup>th</sup> Street and the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS), managed by the Merced County Association of Governments.

“This is another great example of UC Merced and the City of Merced working together and coming up with a solution that will benefit the entire community as we grow together,” said UC Merced Chancellor Juan Sánchez Muñoz. “I look forward to even more projects that will further strengthen our partnership and contribute to the prosperity and wellbeing of Merced.”

As the public transportation infrastructure continues to develop, the North Transit Hub will augment the existing South Merced serving Transit Hub (Transpo Center) to increase citywide mobility. The Hub will be a convenient location for accessing transportation options and switching between modes. When complete, the facility will include lighted bus loading and parking areas with 350 parking stalls.

“The location of the transportation hub is designed to reduce traffic congestion in neighborhoods,” stated City Engineer Michael Beltran. “The hub will serve as a sustainable transportation resource to help people safely travel to and from their desired destination.”



City Engineer, Mike Beltran talks with ABC 30 reporters Brittany Jacob and Alex Ruiz.

## Inspection Services Bi-weekly report for October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 through October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### Single Family Dwelling (SFD) permits:

- SFD Permits Issued: **10**
- SFD Permits in Plan Review: **192**
- SFD Certificates of Occupancy: **4**

### Multi-Family Dwelling (MFD) permits in review:

- Gateway Terrace Apartments located at 405 W 12th St; one office/lounge and six two-story apartments: two buildings have 16 units, three buildings have 30 units, and one building has four units for a total of 126 units.
- Compass Pointe phase II: 112 units in 12, 8-plex buildings, plus a clubhouse.
- Gateway Commons Apartments located at 3130 E. Gerard Ave.; one community building, five buildings with 16 units, and five buildings with 24 units for 200 units, plus 31 garage structures.
- Homekey Project located at 1213 V St.; conversion of 4 existing 2 story hotel buildings into 96 studio apartments, including both affordable and accessible housing.  
(no change since last report)

### MFD permits issued:

- There were 0 MFD permits issued during this period.  
(no change since last report)

### Commercial & Industrial permits issued:

- There were 0 new construction commercial permits issued during this period.
- There were 2 new tenant improvement permits issued during this period; one for a 1,507 SF office addition to an existing warehouse for Lawler Excavation located at 2266 Cessna Wy., and one for a 1,345 SF restaurant for West Coast Sourdough located at 125 E. Yosemite Ave.

### Commercial & Industrial permits submitted:

- There were 5 new construction commercial permits submitted during this period; for 5 buildings at a mini storage facility with a 2-story office and combined total of 43,544 SF of storage space located on the 2200 block of Cessna Ct.
- There was 1 new tenant improvement permit submitted during this period; for 1,342 SF located at 3630 G St.

### Commercial & Industrial Certificates of Occupancy (CofOs)

- There was 1 commercial and industrial CofO issued for this period; for a 1,348 SF tenant improvement for 2 retail spaces on the ground floor of the Tioga Apartment building located at 1719 and 1723 N St.



## Letter to the Editor

### Reframing Community Conversations about Housing

Housing has been a robust topic of conversation at Merced City Council meetings. During the past 18 months, Council has heard from community members about the critical need for affordable housing and the need for creating amenity-rich sustainable neighborhoods throughout the City of Merced.

As State policy makers continue to change legislation to boost housing production and remove barriers to construction, this City Council has followed the State's leadership to enact affordable housing policies that alleviate barriers and spur housing production locally.

The following legislation expedites housing approvals, ends single-family-only zoning, and creates opportunities for small neighborhood multifamily developments. These are three of 58 housing-related bills signed by Governor Newsom since 2021 to address California's housing crisis.

- Senate Bill 6 – Senator Anna Caballero – SB 6 allows residential development on property zoned for retail and office space without needing rezoning.
- Assembly Bill 2011 – Assembly member Buffy Wicks – AB 2011 creates new housing opportunities and allows housing to be built by right in infill areas currently zoned for office, retail, and parking uses.
- Senate Bill 35 – Senator Scott Wiener – SB 35 changed the local review process and established a streamlined, ministerial approval process for multifamily affordable housing and mixed-use commercial projects to streamline the production of affordable housing units.

To further advance Merced in removing barriers to affordable housing, this Council enacted a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Production Program requiring private development in certain circumstances to construct or contribute funds to support affordable housing. This program will provide units towards the RHNA goal established by the State, which is approximately two times the growth rate the City has experienced over several years, well over 10,000 new units over eight years. The City is only required to demonstrate adequately zoned sites to meet the RHNA goals. Still, this program takes it further, leading to the construction of units that will provide more opportunities for our citizens to find affordable housing.

Additionally, Council provided direction on a multi-jurisdictional housing element update, and a two-part Zoning Code update. Part one of the Zoning update addresses immediate needs; grant-funded consultants will handle the second. This will address the Density Bonus Section, review current code for "objective standards" and make other recommendations that may support the City's potential "Pro Housing Community" designation by the State. This helps affordable housing builders leverage additional funding.

Past code requirements allowed for the units in certain zones but did not specify a density. This highlighted an inconsistency between the City's General Plan and Zoning Code. Updates include adding a density for multi-family units in several commercial zoning districts to ensure consistency. Code language that went into effect in October 2022 did not change how units are considered, as they were already processed through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process. These changes provide the same community notice and opportunity for public comment and involvement.


Through the annual budget process, the Council set aside funds for a local Housing Trust Fund to provide support towards affordable housing projects. This will help leverage additional state funding and tax credits further supporting affordable housing.

Throughout California, commercial development encourages housing integration within a project to support a close customer base. These complement each other and reflect the State's shift in how it views traditional traffic levels of service (LOS) to vehicles miles traveled (VMT). In addition, commercial developers focus on lifestyle by integrating entrainment, retail, office, service uses, and other business types within a project area. Supporting changes to codes that fit these trends will advance our community.

During the annual General Plan review and update, analyzing best practices and local market needs in terms of land zoned for commercial – retail uses will be part of the process. Traditional brick-and-mortar retail storefronts have had a difficult time over the past few years, given the changing consumer preferences and the COVID pandemic. There has been a shift toward virtual shopping and interest in home or cottage-type businesses. Commercial development requires certain types of access, pass-by trips, and other factors determining location. The City is modernizing its Sign Code content to encourage commercial investment. Existing traditional commercial-zoned locations may not meet the current commercial retail development requirements. However, those locations supporting mixed-use development and stand-alone housing create opportunities to add units.

Recently, the City provided an update on \$49 million in funding for affordable housing projects in development that will offer 623 affordable units. Additional funding includes \$1.125 million for first-time mortgage assistance, and \$1.375 million supporting owner-occupied rehabilitation assistance. To read the press release, visit <https://www.cityofmerced.org/Home/Components/News/News/1504/17>

The City's General Plan and Multi-Jurisdiction Housing Element Updates address housing needs such as limited inventory challenges and supporting affordable units' production. There is also a need for balance supporting commercial-retail development and its changing trends. These policy documents require code changes. The Council and community should adapt to change and actively engage in policy updates. These new codes and standards should be objective. Community input and involvement is critical and welcomed as the City seeks to adopt policies that fit the needs of the community.



Mayor  
City of Merced

## Reports and Correspondence

1. Basketball Clinic Flyer Pg. 12
2. Adult Basketball League Flyer Pg. 13
3. Planning Commission Agenda Pg. 14

*Free*  
**BASKETBALL  
CLINIC**

**EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY  
6PM - 8PM  
NOV. 8 - DEC. 15**

*Coach Courtney Stee*

**MCCOMBS YOUTH CENTER  
615 W. 15TH STREET  
MERCED, CA**

**TUESDAY**

**1st-5th Grade**

**THURSDAY**

**6th- 10th Grade**

**For information  
call (209)385-6235**

*Sponsored by*



CITY OF MERCED PARKS & RECREATION

# ADULT BASKETBALL LEAGUE 2023

Men's League Now Forming:  
18 and older and out of High School

Season runs January- April 2023  
Games played on Sundays only

**Registration Period:**

October 31st, 2022 - December 9th, 2022

**Team entry fee:**

\$500

**Format:**

10 games guaranteed plus playoffs

Location: El Capitan or Merced High  
School Gymnasium

Registration forms are available at our  
Parks & Recreation Office

Parks & Recreation

632 W. 18th St, Merced

Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM (Closed 12:00 PM- 1:00 PM)

For more information call (209) 385-6235 or  
email [Kindavongl@cityofmerced.org](mailto:Kindavongl@cityofmerced.org)





# CITY OF MERCED

City Council Chamber  
Merced Civic Center  
678 W. 18th Street  
Merced, CA 95340

## Meeting Agenda

### Planning Commission

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Wednesday, November 9, 2022

7:00 PM

City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Merced Civic  
Center, 678 W. 18th Street, Merced, CA 95340

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#### NOTICE TO PUBLIC

##### WELCOME TO THE MEETING OF THE MERCED PLANNING COMMISSION

At least 72 hours prior to each regular Planning Commission meeting, a complete agenda packet is available for review on the City's website at [www.cityofmerced.org](http://www.cityofmerced.org) or at the Planning Division Office, 678 W. 18th Street, Merced, CA 95340. All public records relating to an open session item that are distributed to a majority of the Commission will be available for public inspection at the Planning Division Office during regular business hours. The Planning Commission also serves as the Board of Zoning Adjustment and the Design Review/Historic Preservation Commission.

##### PUBLIC COMMENT: OBTAIN SPEAKER CARD FROM THE CLERK

Members of the audience who wish to address the Planning Commission are requested to complete a speaker card available at the podium against the right-hand side of the Council Chamber. Please submit the completed card to the Clerk before the item is called, preferably before the meeting begins. Speakers will be called up, 3 to 5 at a time, in the order in which the forms are received. Please use the microphone and state your name and city of residence for the record. For permits, licenses, and other entitlements, the applicant will be allowed 15 minutes (including rebuttal), the appellant/leader of the opposition will be allowed 15 minutes (including rebuttal), and all other speakers shall have 5 minutes each, unless the number of speakers is over 3, which in that case, comments shall be limited to 3 minutes each. For all other issues, for 3 or less speakers, 5 minutes each and for over 3 speakers, 3 minutes each shall be allotted. A timer clock is located above the City Council dais illuminating the remaining time. Once the buzzer sounds, please be courteous and conclude your remarks.

Material may be emailed to [planning@web.org](mailto:planning@web.org) and should be limited to 300 words or less. Please specify which portion of the agenda you are commenting on, for example, Item # or Oral Communications. Your comments will be presented to the Planning Commission at the appropriate time. Any correspondence received after 1 PM will be distributed to the Planning Commission and retained for the official record.

You may provide telephonic comments via voicemail by calling (209) 388-7390 by no later than 1 PM on the day of the meeting to be added to the public comment. Voicemails will be limited to a time limit of one (1) minute. Please specify which portion of the agenda you are commenting on, for example, Item #, Consent item #, or Oral Communications. Your comments will be played during the Planning Commission meeting at the appropriate time.

## INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Accommodation for individuals with disabilities may be arranged by contacting the Planning Division at (209) 385-6858. Assisted hearing devices are available for meetings held in the Council Chamber.

### A. CALL TO ORDER

A.1. Moment of Silence

A.2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

### B. ROLL CALL

### C. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public who wish to speak on any matter not listed on the agenda may speak during this portion of the meeting and will be allotted 5 minutes. The Chairperson may, at their discretion, reduce the time to 3 minutes if there are more than 3 speakers, in order to accommodate as many speakers as possible. State law prohibits the Planning Commission from acting at this meeting on any matter raised during the public comment period. Members of the public who wish to speak on a matter that is listed on the agenda will be called upon to speak during discussion of that item. Please submit a Request to Speak card prior to the item being called.

### D. CONSENT CALENDAR

Adoption of the Consent Calendar may be made with one motion of the Planning Commission provided that any Planning Commission member, individual, or organization may request removal of an item from the Consent Calendar for separate consideration. If a request for removal of an item from the Consent Calendar has been received, the item will be discussed and voted on separately. With Consent items, there is generally no staff presentation but staff is available for questions.

D.1 [22-882](#)      **SUBJECT:** Planning Commission Minutes of October 19, 2022

**ACTION:**

Approving and filing the Planning Commission Minutes of October 19, 2022

### E. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ACTION ITEMS

Members of the public who wish to speak on public hearings listed on the agenda will be heard when the Public Hearing is opened, except on Public Hearing items previously heard and closed to public comment. After the public has commented, the item is closed to further public comment and brought to the Commission for discussion and action. Further comment will not be received unless requested by the Commission.

**E.1** [22-840](#)

**SUBJECT:** Commercial Cannabis Business Permit #22-02R, initiated by Devon Julian for Culture Merced on Motel Drive, Inc. (Culture Cannabis Club), on behalf of KWP Consulting, property owner. This application is to permit the operation of a retail dispensary, including delivery services, for both medicinal and adult-use cannabis in an existing 3,520-square-foot building located at 1111 Motel Drive. The property is zoned Thoroughfare Commercial (C-T), with a General Plan designation of Thoroughfare Commercial (CT). \*\*PUBLIC HEARING\*\*

**ACTION:**

Approve/Disapprove/Modify

- 1) Environmental Review #22-04 (*Categorical Exemption*)
- 2) Commercial Cannabis Business Permit #22-02R

**SUMMARY**

This application is for a permit to utilize the property at 1111 Motel Drive for cannabis-related business activities. The permit seeks to allow the Applicant to operate a Retail Dispensary for medicinal and adult-use cannabis and cannabis-related products, including delivery services. The project proposes to use and modify an existing building, which has existing access to utilities. Staff is recommending approval with conditions.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Environmental Review #22-04 (*Categorical Exemption*), and Commercial Cannabis Business Permit (CCBP) #22-02R, including the draft Resolution at Attachment A, subject to the conditions in Exhibit A and the findings/considerations in Exhibit B.

**E.2** [22-768](#)

**SUBJECT:** General Plan Amendment #22-03, initiated by Eric Pluim on behalf of Gateway Park Development Partners, LLC, property owners. This application involves a request to change the General Plan roadway classification from Divided Arterial to Collector for a portion of Mission Avenue from Coffee Street to the east side of Pluim Drive (extended). \*\*PUBLIC HEARING\*\*

**ACTION:**

PLANNING COMMISSION:



## Recommendation to City Council

1) Environmental Review #22-25 (*Addendum to General Plan EIR*)

2) General Plan Amendment #22-03

## CITY COUNCIL:

## Approve/Disapprove/Modify

1) Environmental Review #22-25 (*Addendum to General Plan EIR*)

2) General Plan Amendment #22-03

**SUMMARY**

This is a request to amend the General Plan Circulation Element by changing the roadway classification from Divided Arterial to Collector for a portion of Mission Avenue from Coffee Street to the east side of Plum Drive (extended). This change is requested to improve the circulation for future development in the area. Staff is recommending approval.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council of Environmental Review #22-25 (*Addendum to the General Plan EIR*) and General Plan Amendment #22-03 (including the adoption of the Draft Resolution at Attachment A) subject to the conditions in Exhibit A and the findings/considerations in Exhibit B of the Draft Resolution.

**E.3**     [22-889](#)

**SUBJECT:** Appeal the Site Plan Review Committee's approval of a one-year extension for Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map (VTSM) #1291 for Bright Development which would allow for the subdivision of approximately 39.8 acres of land into 161 single-family lots, generally located on the east side of G Street at Merrill Place (extended).  
\*\*PUBLIC HEARING\*\*

**ACTION:**             Grant/Deny

- 1) Appeal of the one-year extension granted for VTSM #1291 (Bright Development).

**SUMMARY**

On June 16, 2022, the Site Plan Review Committee granted a one-year extension to Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map (VTSM) #1291, extending the expiration date to July 16, 2023. On June 22, 2022, an appeal of this decision was filed by Rick Telegan on behalf of Regency Court II, LLC. This matter has been continued five times in an effort to allow the parties to reach an agreement on the issues resulting in this appeal. Although the parties are continuing to work together, a resolution has not yet been

reached.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission Deny the appeal of the Site Plan Review Committee’s approval of a one-year extension for Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map #1291.

E.4 [22-888](#)

**SUBJECT:** Cancellation of November 23, 2022, and December 21, 2022, Planning Commission Meeting due to the holidays

**ACTION:**

Cancel the Planning Commission Meeting of November 23, 2022, and December 21, 2022

**F. INFORMATION ITEMS**

F.1 [22-883](#)

**SUBJECT:** Report by Planning Manager of Upcoming Agenda Items

**ACTION**

Information only.

F.2 [22-884](#)

**SUBJECT:** Calendar of Meetings/Events

- Nov. 7 City Council, 6:00 p.m.
- 9 Planning Commission, 7:00 p.m.
- 21 City Council, 6:00 p.m.
- 23 Planning Commission, 7:00 p.m. **(To be Cancelled)**
- Dec. 5 City Council, 6:00 p.m.
- 7 Planning Commission, 7:00 p.m.
- 13 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, 4:00 p.m.
- 19 City Council, 6:00 p.m.
- 21 Planning Commission, 7:00 p.m. **(To be Cancelled)**

**G. ADJOURNMENT**