

**From:** [Ashley Marie Suarez](#)  
**To:** [planningweb](#)  
**Subject:** Written Comment E.1 + E.2  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 3, 2024 12:58:31 PM

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Good afternoon,

I left a voicemail that cut me off mid-sentence. I ask that this email be considered as my comments rather than my VMs or that this email be considered for the record.

**E.1:** (word count 249) I'm commenting to raise concerns that the development of these subdivisions, which require the establishment of a CFD and the development of water and sewer main lines, will affect the limited capacity of the City's water and sewer system. If the City continues to extend services to new development without first addressing the need of existing neighborhoods, you will further leave behind the existing communities within the City's Sphere of Influence that have been advocating to connect their communities to city water and sewer services. The City must work proactively now to move forward an extension of water and sewer project to existing neighborhoods in South Merced before continuing to extend to new neighborhoods, to avoid existing communities (1) being asked to keep waiting for services they already should have had, and (2) being told down the line that the City must first increase its capacity before allowing them to connect. That is a concern that we are trying to avoid.

In respect to housing, the city is failing to ensure that deed-restricted affordable units are getting built because council weakened an already weak resolution. Given that the City of Merced is woefully behind on your RHNA for all low-income categories and yet ahead on above moderate housing production, projects that eliminate higher density lots from being efficiently used is a blatant failure on the part of the City to meet the housing needs of the people who call Merced home, and a failure to affirmatively further fair housing.

**E.2:** (word count 270) I'm commenting to raise the same concerns I stated for E.1, that the development of these subdivisions, which require the establishment of a CFD and the development of water and sewer main lines, will affect the limited capacity of the City's water and sewer system. The City must work proactively now to move forward an extension of water and sewer project to existing neighborhoods in South Merced before continuing to extend to new neighborhoods, to avoid existing communities (1) being asked to keep waiting for services they already should have had, and (2) being told down the line that the City must first increase its capacity before allowing them to connect.

The main concern with the recommendation and approval of this subdivision is the missed opportunity to develop affordable housing and higher density housing. Regarding density, this land has a designation of Low-Medium Density, but the plans indicate the development of single family lots only. If the City continues to approve low-density sprawl development, the impact will be more traffic, more emissions, and more long-term road maintenance costs years down the line that will continue to draw City resources to new areas when existing roadways in South Merced still have many unmet needs. To reiterate, given that the City of Merced is woefully behind on your RHNA for all low-income categories and yet ahead on above moderate housing production, projects that eliminate higher density lots from being efficiently used is a blatant failure on the part of the City to meet the housing needs of the people who call Merced home, and a failure to affirmatively further fair housing.

Please direct any questions to this email address. Thank you.

Best,  
**Ashley Marie Suarez** (She/Her/Ella)  
Policy Advocate (City of Merced)  
Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability



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