

Name this newsletter

City of Merced

AUGUST 2006 Volume 1, Issue 2

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This is the second edition of the City's new monthly newsletter keeping residents informed about events and projects in the City.

Utility customers will receive the newsletter with their bill on the first and 15th of the month. The newsletter also will be available at counters in the Civic Center, other City buildings and online.

We need your help selecting a name for this newsletter. The name must be concise, creative and family-friendly. In case of duplicate entries, the first entry received will be the winner.

All entries must be received by Aug. 30 and the winner will be announced in the October issue. The winner will receive a variety of gifts, souvenirs and other cool stuff from the City of Merced, along with a certificate of appreciation.

Send your entry to: Newsletter, 678 W. 18th St. Merced or e-mail it to newsletter@cityofmerced.org.

For more information, call 385-6232.

Report train delays

Stuck in traffic waiting for a train? Worse yet, gridlocked while the train remains still? The City is keeping track of train delays so it can make its case on the need for a railroad underpass or overpass.

To report a delay caused by a train go to cityofmerced.org and on the home page look under "I want to... report a Railroad delay." A form allows you to fill in the details of the delay. Documenting the delays is essential to helping the City obtain grant funding.

Cans, carts and tagging

'Good Neighbor Ordinances' help improve our community

The City of Merced has a number of "Good Neighbor Ordinances" on the books to improve the quality of life in the community.

The ordinances help ensure people get the City services they are paying for and remind people about good neighborhood etiquette.

Here are several "Good Neighbor Ordinances."

REFUSE CANS

The big plastic bins shouldn't be left curbside, or in the middle of the street, 24-7. They are supposed to be rolled out after 4 p.m. the night before trash pick up and put away out of view by 9 p.m. the next night. But some people regularly leave them out in the streets for days. This obstructs the roadway, takes up parking spaces and gets in the way of street sweeping vehicles.

BOUNCE HOUSES

You must have a permit from the Parks and Community Services Department to put up a bounce house in a City park. Call 385-6855 for permit information. There are no rules against erecting a bounce house on private property.

BASKETBALL HOOPS

It's unsafe to have kids shooting hoops in the street, even if you live on a cul-de-sac. People do speed into courts, so use the neighborhood parks and schools nearby.

The basketball hoops can be safely and legally used on driveways. Remember that not everyone in your neighborhood may think having a hoop in

the street is a thing of beauty.

When the hoops are left curbside, they get in the way of refuse collection and street sweeping operations, take up parking spaces and block the roadway.

And if the hoops are left on the sidewalk, they block pedestrians and the handicapped.

SHOPPING CARTS

Carts don't belong in creeks, parks, apartment parking lots or in streets, they belong in stores or store parking lots.

Carts should have the store phone number displayed in a prominent spot so people can call to have them collected.

If the phone number is not visible, or the carts don't get collected promptly, call Code Enforcement at 385-6855.

YARD SALE SIGNS

Don't post them on utility poles or street signs. It's illegal and it's an eyesore. All yard sale signs must be removed within 24 hours after the sale ends.

GRAFFITI

This is not really a "Good Neighbor Ordinance," but it will improve the community. If everyone reports graffiti as soon as they spot it, it will be removed quickly and that will help discourage the vandalism that is a visual blight on our landscape.

Graffiti vandals can face felony charges, and parents can be held responsible for the damage caused by their underage children.

The City contracts with the Merced Community Action Network to remove graffiti. To report graffiti call 385-8807.



Fly Merced



While new air carriers are bidding to serve the Merced Municipal Airport, Scenic Airlines continues to have daily flights to Las Vegas, with connections available to other airports.

City developing plan for South Merced area

The Planning Department is in the process of developing the South Merced Specific Plan to be used as a blueprint for the future of the area. Neighbors, residents, business owners and other people with an interest in South Merced have participated in workshops and planning sessions.

The plan will be a map for the growth and development of the area bounded by West Avenue and Highway 99 and Childs

Avenue and Mission Avenue/Dickenson Ferry Road.

The work will result in a land use map, circulation plan and development of policies on land use, mobility, open space, housing and infrastructure, such as sidewalks and streetlights. Ideas discussed for the area include a neighborhood shopping center, a regional park and an industrial and business park. Call Bill King at 385-4768 for details.

Treatment plant needs upgrades

City Council to study options for wastewater facility

The City Council will be holding a study session Aug. 21 to review options to upgrade and expand the wastewater treatment plant.

The Council also will review proposed rate increases for water, wastewater and connection fees.

Built in 1977, the Gove Road plant was designed to handle 10 million gallons a day of discharge. The plant needs to be upgraded to provide tertiary treatment of the wastewater, according to new federal and state regulations.

Once upgraded, the effluent from the plant will be considered recycled water suitable for unrestricted use which means that the recycled water could be used to irrigate any type of crop or be used to irrigate City parks and median strips.

In order to meet the anticipated growth in the City within the next ten years, the facility will need to be expanded to 15 million gallons per day.

The total cost for this project, the largest public works project in the City's history, could reach \$145 million. New residents and new businesses would pay for the expansion of the plant, not



City residents. However, the current users of the plant would have to pay to upgrade the existing facilities, which would be about \$40 million.

The Council also will consider an increase in the rates charged for water users.

The study session will be held at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers on the second floor of the Civic Center, 678 W. 18th St.

Wal-Mart project enters environmental review stage

Wal-Mart has proposed a 1.2 million square-foot warehouse and distribution center on Childs Avenue at the University Industrial Park.

The center would initially employ about 600 people and generate an estimated 450 truck trips into the facility each day and another 450 truck trips out. The center would operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Before a project of this size is considered for approval, it must go through the Environmental Impact Report process.

A session was held in July to get comments from the public on what environmental issues need to be addressed in the

EIR. Once the comments from the public and other government agencies are received, work will begin on the draft EIR.

The draft EIR is tentatively expected to be completed by Jan. 1, 2007, according to the proposed timetable, although it could take longer. The draft EIR will be released for a 45-day public review and comment period ending in mid-February, 2007.

The comments will be addressed and a Final EIR will be released by the end of April 2007. The Planning Commission and the City Council are expected to hold public hearings on the EIR and the project in May and June 2007.

The City Council

- Mayor Ellie Wooten
Mayor Pro Tem Joe Cortez
Councilmember Michele Gabriault-Acosta
Councilmember Rick Osorio
Councilmember Carl Pollard
Councilmember Jim Sanders
Councilmember Bill Spriggs

Contacting us

The City of Merced wants the site www.cityofmerced.org to be a one-stop source for information on the City. It contains City Council agendas and minutes, the Municipal Code, the General Plan, news releases from the City, department listings e-mail addresses and information on local officials. We also want to hear from people in person or on the phone.

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th St.
Merced CA 95340
Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m., except holidays

- City Council..... 385-6834
City Manager..... 385-6834
City Attorney..... 385-6868
Code Enforcement..... 385-6855
Finance..... 385-4718
Personnel..... 385-6839
Planning Department..... 385-6858
Public Works..... 385-6800
Recreation/Parks..... 385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY
DIAL 911

- Fire Department..... 385-6891
Police Department..... 385-6912