

REDEVELOPMENT  
UPDATE:  
April 2009

ATTACHMENT G-1  
Merced Redevelopment Agency

678 West 18th Street, Merced, CA 95340  
209/385-6827 FAX 209/723-1780

**UNDER CONSTRUCTION NOW:**

Merced Center (Hotel-Office Complex): This project, located on the block bounded by 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, M and N Streets, updates are as follows:

Hotel: Atman Hospitality Group has obtained building permits and will start construction once an environmental clearance is issued. The County is initiating action to close the hotel site. If this is completed, the hotel should be able to obtain the necessary financing to begin construction. Lead staff: Cahill/Ainslie/Angulo.

Parking Structure: The Agency is continuing to market the structure. Negotiations are being finalized with the first tenant. The lease should be presented to the City Council next month. Lead staff: Ainslie

Merced Theatre: The Foundation and staff are continuing fundraising efforts including pursuing Historic Tax Credits for the restoration. Staff is completing additional grant requests for funding. The Agency's architect is completing the final plans for the restoration. Lead staff: Cahill, Mendoza, Ainslie.

The Playa Merced Shopping Center (Parsons Avenue at Highway 140): Redevelopment staff has received the appraisal concerning the parcel located on the southwest corner of Parsons Avenue and Yosemite Parkway, and is working with property owners to acquire the parcel. As part of the OPA with The Playa Merced, staff is to make best efforts to acquire the property to incorporate the site into the newly constructed shopping center. Lead staff: Quintero.

Former Texaco Station (Costco Area): Provost & Pritchard of Clovis is now the consultant for the remediation on the sites. Due to a former consultant billing error, delays are being experienced in receiving cost reimbursements from the State. The project is moving forward to meet the deadlines established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Staff is reviewing alternate funding sources including EPA Grants. Lead staff: Angulo.

512 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, 927 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 195 S. "T" Street: The Agency purchased three dilapidated homes in 2007. The homes were successfully demolished during training operations with the Merced Fire Department. The remaining lots have been sold to Habitat for Humanity for affordable owner occupied housing. Habitat is now completing the entitlements necessary to begin construction. Lead Staff: Ewen.

33 Parsons Avenue: The Agency has purchased the single-family residence on the site and will partner with the Housing Department to use the home until construction on Parsons begins. After construction, the remaining lot will be used for an affordable housing partnership yet to be determined. Lead Staff: TBD

Way Finding Signs: A total of 63 signs have been installed. Staff has applied for encroachment permits with Caltrans for the installation of 16 signs within the State right of way. Caltrans has initially objected to the signs. Staff is coordinating with Caltrans to allow the signs to be placed in their right of way. Bid packets will be sent out within the coming months for the installation remaining directional signs. Lead Staff: Ewen.

## **IN DEVELOPMENT:**

*Childs and Canal:* The Agency repurchased a 4.7 acre parcel from the Housing Authority. The Agency has started marketing the site for a new development with various developers. A temporary fence has been installed. Lead staff: Quintero/Ainslie.

*Downtown Street Resurfacing, Public Improvements:* The City is receiving \$3.1 million in federal stimulus funds. These funds will be combined with City and Agency funds to complete road reconstruction, sidewalk repairs and streetlight upgrades throughout the Downtown and Midtown area. Construction is scheduled to begin this summer. Lead staff: Ainslie.

*Highway 59 & Cooper Avenue Signalization:* Staff is responding to the third set of comments received from Caltrans. Upon completion of the comments, staff hopes to receive a final approval from Caltrans. Staff is working to relocate 12 families from the project area. Portions of the properties purchased will be used for affordable housing. The City was awarded a \$1 million grant from the state for the construction of this project. Lead staff: Ainslie.

*East 16<sup>th</sup> Street Beautification:* Staff is preparing a detailed plan set for the beautification. The project's scope calls for the beautification of East 16<sup>th</sup> Street from G Street to Motel Drive. Staff met with Caltrans to discuss improvements within the state right of way and will apply for encroachment permits by May 2009. Staff is also designing a plan and coordinating with Union Pacific Railroad to eliminate pedestrian crossing of the railroad lines along East 16<sup>th</sup> street. Lead staff: Ewen.

*Underground Utility District #9 & East 13<sup>th</sup> Street Streetlights:* PG&E provided a cost estimate that was approximately 200% higher than the Agency's estimate to complete the streetlight installation. Due to this immense cost the Agency will complete the street lighting project independent of PG&E's project. The Agency has bid the streetlight project in April with construction estimated to begin in mid-May. PG&E held a pre-construction meeting with all utilities involved in the Rule 20A UUD #9 project. PG&E is expected to begin their independent project by mid-summer. Lead staff: Ewen.

*Underground Utility District #10 Phase II:* PG&E has designed Phase II of their Rule 20A UUD #10 project. It will include an area along Yosemite Ave. from Edwards Ave. to the City limits. Plans have been submitted to Caltrans but there has not been final approval given. Caltrans will install Sternberg lights from the Bradley Overhead Bridge to Edwards Ave. The Agency will not have to install lighting for this project. Lead staff: Ewen.

*Simpson's Cleaners Site Investigation:* The Agency received a \$200,000 Brownfields Grant from the U.S. EPA for site investigation at 618 W. Main Street. Kleinfelder has completed the investigative work, and has submitted a report to the Regional Water Quality Control Board and U.S. EPA for review. The report recommends closure of the site and staff is awaiting a response from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Lead Staff: Angulo.

*73 South R Street:* The site has been cleared and is available for future development. The project will improve the aesthetics and safety of the neighborhood and provide additional affordable housing. Lead Staff: Ewen.

### *Midtown Residential District:*

Staff is developing a Plan for the revitalization of a 3-block area bordered by Martin Luther King Way to the west, "G" Street to the south, 19<sup>th</sup> Street to the north and 18<sup>th</sup> Street to the south. The plan calls for the development of row housing at the intersection of 18<sup>th</sup> & I Streets. The development, which is still in the planning stage, will include a mix of affordable and market rate owner occupied units. The Agency has purchased properties in respect to its revitalization efforts in the district. At this time the Redevelopment Advisory Committee (RDAC) is being presented with properties that will complement any newly constructed units as well as eliminate blight in the district and add quality housing that is

within walking range of the City Center district. Staff has also developed a Façade Improvement Program for residential units and is looking to partner with local property owners for the creation of Owner Participation Agreements (OPA) for the rehabilitation of their properties. Lead Staff: Ewen/Ainslie.

## **PROGRAMS, PROMOTION AND PLANNING:**

Visitor Services: The staff continues to assist visitors and reply to inquiries regarding traveling to Merced. Lead staff: Baker

Downtown Steering Committee: The Committee met last month to review progress made to date on the Strategy. Ideas were discussed in relation to a new large downtown entertainment anchor. Lead staff: Ainslie.

Downtown Advertising and Business Services: The focus of the marketing is print advertising, a rotating billboard, and an overall message via different avenues showing Downtown as the “Heart of the City”. The focus of the Downtown Fund is to continue to build Downtown as an entertainment, shopping, and business destination. Lead staff: Quintero.

Merced Theatre Property Management: Tenant improvements have begun in space #319 for Forte Yogurt at the Merced Theatre. Staff is also working with other potential retail tenants to guide them through the application process. The apartment units are fully occupied. Lead Staff: Ewen.

Downtown Design Guidelines: Agency staff is working to complete a draft version to present to committees later this quarter. The guidelines will establish façade, sign and public improvement design throughout the downtown area. Lead Staff: Ewen.

Affordable Housing Monitoring: Staff is working to develop a complete record of all covenants for the properties. The housing monitoring database has been posted on the Redevelopment Agency webpage under the Housing tab. Mailings for the verification of the affordability rates were sent to property managers, developers and property owners in the month of December. Staff has received a majority of the monitoring documents back. These documents are on file at the Agency office. Lead Staff: Ewen.

### **AVAILABLE**

Façade Improvement Program: Approximately \$34,102 is available in the Gateways Project Area. Lead staff: Mendoza.

### **Calendar**

### **City Council/Agency Commission Meetings – 2009**

April 6, 2009  
April 20, 2009  
April 21, 2009

City Council/Redevelopment Agency  
City Council/Redevelopment Agency  
Redevelopment Advisory Committee

*This report is prepared monthly and distributed to the Executive Director, Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Economic Development Advisory Committee, City Council, department heads and others.*

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