

REDEVELOPMENT
UPDATE:
September 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 18th, 19th, M and N Streets, updates are as follows:

Hotel: Atman Hospitality Group has obtained building permits and is still pursuing construction once financing can be finalized. Financing had been stalled due to soil contamination, however, the Agency recently received a notice of closure on the site. Lead staff: Cahill/Ainslie/Angulo.

Parking Structure: The Agency is continuing to market the structure. Westamerica is the first tenant to move into the space. Westamerica is leasing 6,110 sq. ft. Approximately 4,000 square feet remain available for lease. Lead staff: Ainslie

Merced Theatre: The Foundation and staff are continuing fundraising efforts including pursuing Historic Tax Credits for the restoration. Last month, staff had a productive meeting with a potential tax credit investor. The Plans are currently being reviewed by the City's Building Department. Construction should begin this winter. Lead staff: Cahill, Mendoza, Ainslie.

Former Texaco Station (Costco Area): The Agency is proceeding with remediation efforts at the site in accordance with the DDA with Costco. The contamination originated from former gas stations that once surrounded the site. The Agency has exhausted an Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Grant from the state and is now using Agency funds and a US EPA grant to proceed with the remediation. The project is moving forward to meet the deadlines imposed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Lead staff: Angulo.

512 W. 11th Street, 927 W. 8th Street, 195 S. "T" Street: Habitat for Humanity will be merging their previous lot split of 512 W. 11th. This is due to the high costs of impact fees it would be required to pay for the second home. Habitat will begin constructing a single family home on the newly merged lot soon. It will then proceed with constructing the remaining two homes. Lead Staff: Ewen.

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. Staff met with Caltrans on August 10, 2009 regarding the design of the signs. Caltrans should respond with an approval or disapproval of the signs in the coming month. Lead Staff: Ewen.

IN DEVELOPMENT:

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

Parsons Avenue: The City received a \$1,000,000 grant from the state to complete the Parsons Avenue road widening between Highway 140 and Childs Avenue. Staff has prepared the necessary paperwork to receive the funds from this grant and is awaiting comments from Caltrans. Meanwhile staff is completing the design of the project and the right of way acquisition that remains. Lead Staff: 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 on 16th, 18th, N, M and G Streets in the Downtown and Midtown area. The project will be divided into two phases. Plans for the first phase are complete, construction will begin once the City receives funding through the Federal Government. Lead staff: Ainslie.

Highway 59 & Cooper Avenue Signalization: Staff has received partial comments from its encroachment permit application. A resubmittal is expected once Caltrans provides a complete set of comments. Staff has prepared the necessary submittals to Caltrans to receive a funding allocation for the \$1,000,000 grant the City recently received for this project. Staff is working with two potential developers on developing the remaining land for a quality affordable housing project. Lead staff: Ainslie.

East 16th Street Beautification: The project's scope calls for the beautification of East 16th Street from G Street to Motel Drive. Engineering staff has completed a design plan set and is working on the selection of plant species and locations. Plans and specifications should be submitted to Caltrans by September 2009. Lead staff: Ewen.

Underground Utility District #9 & East 13th Street Streetlights: PG&E is in construction for the Rule 20A project since Mid-July 2009. The Agency has bid the separate streetlight project in May with construction beginning back in July 2009. The selected firm, Collins Electrical Group, is approximately half-way through the two month construction project. Streetlight foundations are already laid. Staff is coordinating with the building and engineering departments to make sure both projects are completed properly. 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:

The development of 18th & I streets is moving along steadily. The sites were cleared and fenced in. Staff is working with two developers to reach agreement on a mix of affordable and market rate historically sensitive housing units. Escrow on 150 W. 19th Street was closed in July 2009. The site will be demolished within the next few weeks and marketed as a package deal to the developer of 18th & I street. The Residential Façade Improvement Grant Program is being marketed on a selective basis to properties identified by the Redevelopment Advisory Committee.

A scoping project was held to consider improvements to the roadway and public infrastructure of Midtown. Staff has created an inventory of repairs needed in the district including curb and gutter, sidewalks and streetlights. The project will tie in the goals and objectives of the 2007 Downtown Strategy to make the Midtown district a premier residential neighborhood. Further project details will be developed in the coming months. Lead Staff: Ewen/Ainslie.

PROGRAMS, PROMOTION AND PLANNING:

Downtown Summerfest: Summerfest completed its final celebration of the year on August 20th with more than 3,000 people in attendance. Themed events have included a health & wellness fair, agriculture week and a car show. The program will be reviewed during the off-season with the Advisory Committee and Downtown Steering Committee. Lead staff: Mendoza, Ewen.

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

Downtown Steering Committee: The Committee will meet this month to review progress made to date on the Strategy. Further discussion will be made on streetscape improvements. Lead staff: Ainslie.

Downtown Advertising and Business Services: The focus of the marketing is print advertising. A trial joint advertising buy with Valley Values will begin next month. This will be combined with a six issue add in the new downtown newspaper entitled The D Life. 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: Staff is working with new potential retail tenants to join Forte Yogurt. Commercial lease rates are competitive with other downtown spaces. 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 has developed a complete inventory of all housing units assisted in Agency history. 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 December 2008. Staff has received a majority of the monitoring documents back and will continue the program for reporting purposes during FY 2009-2010. 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.

Residential Façade Improvement Grant Program: \$180,000.00 is available for residential property owners seeking improvements to the exterior's of their structures. Restrictions do apply.

Calendar

City Council/Agency Commission Meetings – 2009

September 8, 2009
September 15, 2009
September 21, 2009

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

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

RDA Update 9/2009