

REDEVELOPMENT  
UPDATE:  
October 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: Financing had been stalled due to soil contamination, however, the Agency has received a notice of closure on the site. The plans for the building have been complete and building permits are ready to be issued. 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 final renovation plans have been reviewed by the building department. The Agency's architect is now reviewing the comments and updating the plans. The Agency is working to finalize a Historic Tax Credit deal and a New Market Tax Credit deal with new potential investors. Construction should begin early next year. 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. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, 927 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 195 S. "T" Street: Habitat for Humanity has merged their two single family home sites into one lot at 512 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Building permits and development fees have also been paid. Habitat for Humanity is in the process of arranging volunteers for constructing the single family home. Lead Staff: Ewen.

Way Finding Signs: A total of 63 signs have been installed. Staff applied for an encroachment permit with Caltrans for 16 signs to be placed in the state right of way. Caltrans initially objected to the signs, but an exception was granted by the Caltrans Headquarters. Staff is awaiting comments on the design and placement locations. 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. The site at 33 Parsons Avenue is being demolished at this time. 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 16<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 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 all comments from its encroachment permit application and are working to complete a resubmittal. 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 16<sup>th</sup> Street Beautification:* The project's scope calls for the beautification of East 16<sup>th</sup> Street from G Street to Motel Drive. Engineering staff has completed a design plan set and is currently working with Heacox Associates to complete the landscaping design. Once completed, the project will be presented to the Design Review commission and then sent on to Caltrans for an encroachment permit. Lead staff: Ewen.

*Underground Utility District #9 & East 13<sup>th</sup> 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, has since completed the project. The lights will be energized by the end of the month. Staff is coordinating with the Inspection Services Department to ensure the PG&E Rule 20A project is finished correctly. 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. Total project cost committed from the City's UUD Rule 20A allowance is \$1,028,000. 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 recently opened escrow on the 8 unit property neighboring the NW corner of 18<sup>th</sup> & I Street at 211 W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street. Staff is in the process of gaining tenant information for future relocations. There are two developers still interested in the future housing project. Additional properties are being sought for purchase and demolition including the burnt out structure on W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

Staff has also begun to market the Residential Façade Improvement Grant Program to select properties in the Midtown District. Approximately 10-12 notices have been sent to properties in need of an aesthetic revitalization. Applicants will be brought before the committee for review of the project.

Redevelopment and engineering staff have also performed preliminary research for the improvement of public amenities in the district. These improvements may include streetlights, sidewalks, ADA accessible ramps and parking. The project will go into development some time later in the quarter. 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. 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. Staff will begin to compile the documents needed for the December 2009 housing units assisted verifications. Past 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**

October 5, 2009

City Council/Redevelopment Agency

October 19, 2009

City Council/Redevelopment Agency

October 20, 2009

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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