

G Street Project a winner



The City's G Street Railroad Underpass Project received an Engineering Excellence Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies. The award was given because the City hired the contractor, Biggs Cardosa Associates, to design the underpass to Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway standards so that the railroad could serve as contractor. The design eliminated the need for a temporary track to bypass the construction and saved millions of dollars and shortened the length of the project by six months.

Cruickshank, Peterson, Rivera and Weaver Schools receive grant funds to improve routes

The City of Merced has been awarded \$980,900 in federal Safe Routes to Schools grants that will be used for lighted crosswalks, flashing beacons, curbs, gutters and other safety improvements at four local schools attended by more than 3,200 students.

"Protecting our children is our top priority," said City Engineer Daryl Jordan. "These grant funds will continue to make it safer for our students to walk to and from school."

The four schools included in the funding are Cruickshank Middle School, Rivera Middle School, Peterson Elementary School and Weaver Middle School.

Cruickshank Middle School will receive \$42,800 for an in-road lighted crosswalk system, plus a flashing school sign on Mercy Avenue for a total of \$72,800.

Rivera Middle School will have an in-road lighted cross-

Projects make it safer for students to walk to school

walk at San Felipe Court and another at San Luis Rey Court at an estimated cost of \$83,600.

The total project at Rivera will cost \$181,100 and includes flashing school signs and new sidewalks and 20 handicapped access ramps along Buena Vista Drive.

Peterson School will have extensive curb, gutter, sidewalk and roadway work done on Paulson Road as part of the \$137,350 project. An \$11,000 solar-powered flashing school sign also will be installed.

Weaver Middle School will have extensive curb, gutter, sidewalk and roadway work done on Coffee Street as part of its \$302,500 project.

No matching funds from the City are required for these construction projects.

Merced Regional Enterprise Zone turns taxes into profits

Did your business hire employees within the past six months or purchase new manufacturing equipment?

If the answer is YES, then your business may be eligible for California tax credits through the Merced Regional Enterprise Zone.

The purpose of the program is to stimulate development by providing tax incentives to businesses and allow private sector market forces to revive the local economy.

The employees your business hired may qualify the business for \$37,000 in tax credits and that's per worker.

Qualified manufacturing equipment and machinery purchases may be eligible for credits equal to the amount of sales/use tax paid on qualified purchases.

These California tax credits and more are available through the Enterprise Zone Program.

Now, the next question: Do you know if

your business located in the Merced Regional Enterprise Zone?

Many areas in Merced qualify.

To learn more about the Enterprise Zone Program visit www.mercedregionalez.com. Or, you can call Enterprise Zone Manager David Heyer at 209 724-2027.

A little time learning about the Enterprise Zone Program can save you a lot of money.

Check out the Zone where you can turn taxes into profits.

Merced City Council

Mayor Stan Thurston

Council Members:

Bill Blake

Tony Dossetti

Noah Lor

Mike Murphy

Josh Pedrozo

Mary-Michal Rawling

Contact the City Council by email at Citycouncil@cityofmerced.org, by calling 385-6834 or writing to Council members at the Civic Center address below.

Council meetings

The Council meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center, 678 W. 18th St. When Monday is a holiday, Council meets the next day. The agenda is posted online at www.CityofMerced.org.

Contacting us

The Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council information, the Muni Code, General Plan and other information. Contact the Newsletter at newsletter@CityofMerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write:

Merced Civic Center

Attn: Public Information Office

678 W. 18th St.

Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., except holidays.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk	388-7100
Airport	385-6873
Code Enforcement.....	385-6861
Finance	388-7900
Inspection Services	385-6861
Personnel.....	388-7100
Planning Department.....	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Recreation	385-6855
Utility payments.....	388-7289

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department.....385-6891

Police Department385-6912

Ask the City: Spring Cleanup is coming in April

Ask the City is an ongoing column answering questions that have been submitted to us by mail, email or phone. Readers can submit their questions to the addresses in the column on the left.

When is the Spring Cleanup? I have a lot of stuff in my backyard that I need to throw out and I want to know the dates.

A call to the City Manager's Office

First off, if it is a health hazard, do yourself and your neighbors a favor and get rid of it immediately. And don't start collecting so much stuff or you might end up on one of those hoarders shows on cable TV.

We will be having our Spring Cleanup on the weekends of April 14/15 and April 21/22. A flier will be mailed to every utility customer with details about what kinds of



materials will be accepted, the drop off locations and hours of operation.

This is only for Merced residents or people who can show a utility bill. This service is paid for by refuse rate payers, so they are the only ones who get to use this service. The County has similar programs in the unincorporated areas.

Neighborhood Watch may be a good fit for you

Neighborhood Watch is a program designed to build relationships among neighbors in order to make Merced a stronger and safer community. The City's reorganized Merced Neighborhood Watch Program assists neighbors uniting to improve the quality of life in their neighbor-

hoods by improving safety and building a sense of community. The program includes participation from the Police Department, Fire Department, Code Enforcement and is coordinated by the Office of Recreation.

For more information on Neighborhood Watch leave a message at 385-6835.

Old water towers on Facebook

Look for the City's newest Facebook page, "City of Merced: Water Conservation" with lots of tips and tools on saving water and going green. It also has some cool old photos dug up from our archives of a water tower under construction.

One photo that will attract some interest is an aerial shot looking north towards Merced High. In the distance is Merced College and... cow pastures. No homes, no restaurants, no offices. In fact, there is nothing between the high school and the college except pasture land.

The Facebook page has other cool features worth checking out and refers you to some interesting things on the City website, www.cityofmerced.org. A sampling from the Water Conservation website includes:

What is xeriscaping?

Xeriscaping refers to landscaping in ways that reduce or eliminate the need for



supplemental water from irrigation. Changing from traditional turf centered landscaping with sprinkler systems to water conscious xeriscaping with drip irrigation systems can help reduce pollutant carrying run-off.

If you live north of Bear Creek, all of the storm drain/gutter run-off along your streets goes directly into the creeks. Any water (or trash and debris) that is in the gutters in the north side of town flows to the creeks. This becomes a problem when lawns are overwatered. Lawn water run-off contains chemical contaminants from fertilizers and that material

pollutes our beautiful urban waterways.

Do your part to help keep our creeks pollution-free by not overwatering and sweeping up any trash in the gutter. Our city street sweeping program helps, but between sweepings keep a broom handy to take care of any trash, especially during a rain storm (not that we've seen much rain).

Think Green