

City of Merced *Your City Connection* CityofMerced.org

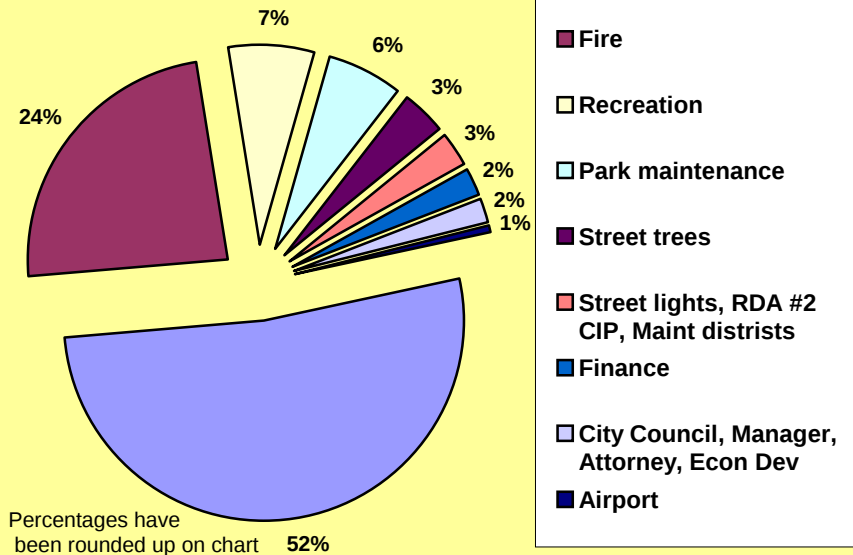
JULY 2007 Volume 2, Issue 7

City budget overview: no cuts, some staff added, housing starts down, regional sales drop expected

Proposed 2007 General Fund Details

Police	\$19,708,470	51.97%
Fire	\$9,093,779	23.98%
Recreation	\$2,599,120	6.85%
Park Maintenance	\$2,334,484	6.16%
Street Trees	\$1,298,337	3.42%
Finance	\$801,372	2.11%
Streets/Street Lights	\$648,873	1.72%
RDA Area 2 CIP	\$438,406	1.16%
City Council	\$261,526	0.69%
City Manager	\$224,248	0.59%
Airport	\$199,333	0.53%
City Attorney	\$178,337	0.47%
Economic Development	\$113,229	0.30%
Maintenance Districts	\$26,840	0.07%
Total	\$37,926,354	100%

City of Merced General Fund



City's budget holding steady as growth levels off

The 2007-2008 budget proposed for Merced is one of transition. The City is moving from a high growth community to one with a slower pace of development as the national economy also slows down.

Merced used to be the retail hub for places like Atwater and Los Banos, but those cities are seeing more retail development, which means a smaller share of sales tax revenues for Merced in the future.

And the budget reflects a basic fact of life in America — the Baby Boomers are retiring.

So far, 27 City employees have announced plans to retire next year.

The budget is available online at the City's web site, www.CityofMerced.org. It is also available at the City Clerk's Office on the first floor of the Civic Center.

This year there are plans to add 10 additional positions to the budget, including three recreation coordinators with the goal of expanding recreation programs in the City.

The City's General Fund is up approximately \$2.7 million from last year. The General Fund comes from taxes and fees paid by residents. It also is the portion of the budget that the Council has discretion in spending. The so-called Enterprise Funds, such as water and sewer, can only be used to pay for items directly connected to those services.

The above chart shows where the City Manager recommended that the Council spend the General Funds. Budget approval was expected in mid-June.

Online survey is gone, but we are seeking comments in other ways

As of June 30, the Online Survey was eliminated, replaced by a comment button on the City's home page.

There people can ask questions, raise issues, make suggestions or complain anonymously. The new form allows people to include contact information so they can get a direct response.

All of the comments will be forwarded to the appropriate department for action.

The survey was discontinued because it seemed residents wanted to share their views, rather than their demographics. We were making people go through too many clicks just to share their views and that ap-

peared to be discouraging people. Another problem — each survey was supposed to take 5 minutes, but it would take 30 minutes to fill out all of the surveys.

We also knew we weren't reaching all of our residents. Many people don't have home computers or fast Internet connections. And not everyone in

Merced is fluent in English.

Comment cards in English and Spanish will be put at office counters throughout the City.

And people should feel free to call or write to us to share their views. Contact information is listed on the next page.

We will use the newsletter to answer questions and comments.

Merced City Council

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

City Council meetings are held on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center.

Contacting us

The City of Merced Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council agendas and minutes, the Municipal Code, the General Plan, news releases, department listings, street closures, e-mail addresses, phone numbers and information on officials.

To contact the Newsletter, e-mail newsletter@cityofmerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write to Newsletter at the address below.

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th St.
Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., except holidays.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk	385-6866
Airport	385-6873
Code Enforcement	385-6855
Finance	385-4718
Inspection Services	385-6861
Personnel	385-6839
Planning Department	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Recreation/Parks	385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department	385-6891
Police Department	385-6912

Get a license for that bicycle, it's the law

With warm weather and lots of bike paths Merced is perfect for cycling. Grab your helmet, your lock if you plan to stop, and make sure you have a bicycle license.

Bike licenses are required for all bicycles ridden on public roads, paths, parks and other property. And, the license helps identify the owner if a bike is stolen or lost.

A bike license costs \$5 and is valid for 3

years. Licenses are issued at the Central Police Station, 611 W. 22nd St., from 8 a.m. to noon and 1- 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Bikes don't have to be brought in to the station, but the license form, available online at the City web site, requires the serial number, frame and wheel size. Employees can help you measure the parts.

For information, call 385-6912.

Keep on truckin' to the semi parking lot



Merced's residential neighborhoods are getting clogged with parked big rigs. Additional police enforcement of parking laws is on the way, but so is a special parking lot for Merced's truckers. Located at the Airport Industrial Park at West and Riggs Avenue, the lot is expected to open in mid-July. There is parking for 23 truck-trailers, along with trash containers, a restroom and running water. The lot is located on a hazardous waste site that has been capped with asphalt.

New City park will be named after Dwight Amey

Dwight Amey Neighborhood Park has opened on the corner of Blix Avenue and Albert Drive in southeastern Merced.

Named for the civic leader, local minister and longtime City resident, Dwight Amey Park was dedicated in June.

Currently a member of the Planning Commission, Amey is a former member of the City Council and also the Parks and Recreation Commission.

He has been active in numerous youth-oriented activities over the years through his

church, the City, the Kiwanis Club and Lions Club.

He is the chairman of the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee, which organizes an annual march and community festival honoring the civil rights leader.

Lately, the City has been overseeing the development of numerous parks. Last year the City Council named nine new parks that are in various stages of construction. This April, Carol Gabriault Park on Willowbrook Drive was dedicated.

Get involved, apply for a City board or commission

As of July 1, 21 vacancies were created on the City's boards and commissions, most when members were termed out.

The turnover only emphasized how much the City relies on the public to help formulate its plans and policies. Most positions require that a person be a registered voter in the City, but there are some that don't have age or residency restrictions.

A person can turn in an application to the City Clerk and it will be held for a year. Ap-

plications are available online or at the City Clerk's Office. The groups are:

Building and Housing Board of Appeals, Design Review Board/Historic Preservation Commission, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Municipal Airport Authority, Personnel Board, Planning Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, Youth Advisory Board, Redevelopment Advisory Commission and Measure C Citizens Oversight Commission.