

Online survey raises questions, here are some answers

Since September the City of Merced has been asking people to fill out an online survey. We asked people to rate various City services and programs, and we received so-so grades that would probably equal Cs.

Those who filled out the survey had a lot to say, and that information was passed on to the appropriate departments for action.

There were even some compliments, but we're focusing on some of the questions.

The older neighborhoods need improved street lighting. The new subdivisions have much better street lighting. Why?

The homes in the new subdivisions cost more because they have more improvements, including street lighting. Those subdivisions have requirements that may not have been in place years ago that result in more amenities, such as more streetlights per block. They also may be in a special district that pay the ongoing costs of the streetlights.

A similar question was raised regarding sidewalks and gutters. Years ago, sidewalks and gutters weren't always required when a house was built. Now they are, and the cost of the improvements is reflected in the home prices paid by the owner. A house that doesn't have curbs and gutters may not cost as much because it doesn't have those amenities.

The overall condition of the streets is deplorable. More money must be spent on our streets. What happened to the Measure

C money, did it all go for cops? When is something going to be done to relieve the north/south traffic situation?

Measure C was the 1/2 cent sales tax approved by voters and implemented in April 2006 intended to address public safety issues.



The G Street Bridge is one of the main arteries carrying north-south traffic.

It did not all go to police, but it was used in the 2006-07 budget year to hire 19 new officers and staff. It also was used to hire 13 more people in the Fire Department. In addition, \$1.1 million of Measure C money is go-

ing for street improvement projects. Another \$1.6 million is recommended for 2007-08.

The north-south travel situations are compounded by the creeks crossing the City. Most vehicles travel on R, M and G streets because of the creeks. One proposal is to connect Parsons Avenue, creating a fourth path. The City is purchasing land to widen Highway 59 and make it more user-friendly for people heading north and south.

I often see traffic problems or traffic lights that could be changed to improve flow, but I don't know where to report such things.

Most traffic issues, such as traffic light timing, are handled by the Engineering Department. Call 385-6846 to report traffic problems. If the light is out, call Public Works at 385-6800.

If it is an emergency situation, such as a disabled car, a tree branch in the roadway or an accident, call the police at 911.

Not a formal complaint process, all you want to know is what you do well???
(From the Police survey)

People can make a formal complaint against a police officer, or any other City employee, just not online. To file a complaint against a police officer, go to the Central Stations, 611 W. 22nd St. or call 386-6912.

To file a complaint against other employees, go to the Personnel Office on the first floor of the Civic Center, 678 W. 18th St.

Possible pandemic flu outbreak requires City planning, preparation

Public health experts say it's not a matter of "if" a pandemic flu hits the United States, it's "when".

In May, the City of Merced, and Merced County officials conducted a drill to practice dealing with the effects pandemic flu could have on City operations.

A pandemic flu is a major outbreak of influenza across a huge region, or the entire globe.

It is not the seasonal flu that comes around every year.

Because normal services could be disrupted, the CDC advises people to be prepared with two weeks of food, medicine, water and supplies.

The last major pandemic flu was the 1918 Spanish flu outbreak that killed at least 50 mil-

lion people around the world, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Currently, scientists are concerned that an Avian flu, or bird flu virus, will mutate and become easily transmitted to humans.

The fear is that a pandemic flu could infect one-third of the population, seriously disrupting normal life as the virus spreads.

Regular services could be

temporarily affected, along with food supplies and transportation.

People may be sent home from work and school, and church meetings could be cancelled because the virus is spread through person-to-person contact.

For more information on pandemic flu and how to prepare for it, go to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Web site, www.pandemicflu.gov.

The 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

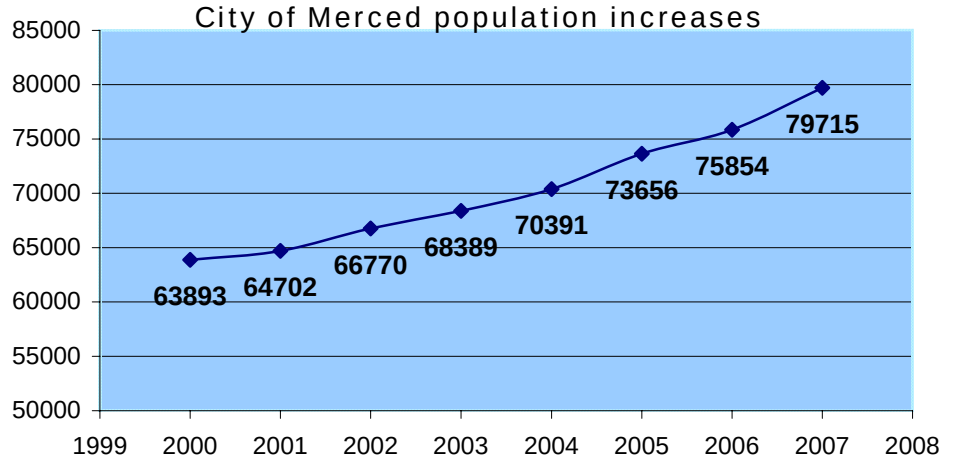
The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., except holidays.

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



In May the State of California Department of Finance estimated the population for the City of Merced at 79,715 residents.

Job Listings are popular items

Our Job Listings pages are the most popular feature on our Web site, www.CityofMerced.org.

Every day scores of people go online scoping out what jobs are available at the City.

Job listings also are posted at the front counter of the Personnel Office on the first floor of the Civic Center, 678 W. 18th St.

This summer, the Personnel Department is plan-

ning a jobs workshop where people can learn what it takes to get a City job.

The workshop will explain the hiring process, from filling out an application to what to expect in the job interview.

The City is expecting at least 27 employees to retire in the next year. Additional retirements are forecast in the coming years as the Baby Boom generation leaves the workforce.

Proposed budget ready for review

The City's 2007-2008 preliminary draft budget is completed and available to the public online and at the front counter of the Civic Center.

The budget includes 10 additional positions, including 5 in the Police Department.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on the budget in June and consider revisions. The final budget must be approved by the Council no later than June 30.

Bounce houses in parks need permit



Bounce houses are allowed in several City parks, but only with a permit. The bounce houses are allowed in designated places in four City parks to preserve the landscaping and allow other visitors to have a good park experience. To obtain a permit, call Parks and Community Services at 385-6855 or visit their new offices at 690 W. 16th St.

Is it time to renew the dog licenses for Spot and Fido?

All dogs older than four months must be licensed by the City Animal Control.

Licenses can be obtained between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at the Central Station of the Police Department, 611 W. 22nd St. Licenses can be for up to 3 years, depending on the rabies vaccination.

Cats do not require a license, but there is a limit to the total number of dogs and cats allowed on a property.

For information on Animal Control issues, visit our Web site or call 385-4751.