



CITY OF MERCED

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

Meeting Agenda

Citizen Advisory Focus Group

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

6:00 PM

City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Merced Civic
Center, 678 W. 18th Street, Merced, CA 95340

NOTICE TO PUBLIC

WELCOME

At least 72 hours prior to each regular Citizen Advisory Focus Group meeting, a complete agenda packet is available for review on the City's website at www.cityofmerced.gov or at the City Clerk's Office, 678 W. 18th Street, Merced, CA 95340. All public records in relation to an open session item that are distributed to a majority of the Commission will be available for public inspection at the City Clerk's Office during regular business hours. Assisted hearing devices are available for meetings held in the Council Chamber.

PUBLIC COMMENT: OBTAIN SPEAKER CARD FROM THE BOARD/COMMISSION CLERK

Members of the audience who wish to address the Citizen Advisory Focus Group (CAFG) are requested to complete a speaker card available at the podium against the back of the Council Chamber. Please submit the completed card to the Clerk before the item is called, preferably before the meeting begins.

Material may be emailed to planningweb@cityofmerced.gov no later than 1 PM on the day of the meeting. Please specify which portion of the agenda you are commenting on, for example, Report item # or Public Comment. Your comments will be presented to the CAFG at the appropriate time. Any correspondence received after 1 PM will be distributed to the CAFG and retained for the official record.

To view video (if available) or listen to the CAFG meeting live, go to the City's website www.cityofmerced.gov, YouTube, or Comcast Public Access Channel 96.

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public who wish to speak on any matter not listed on the agenda may speak during this portion of the meeting and will be allotted 3 minutes. State law prohibits the CAFG from acting at this meeting on any matter raised during the public comment period. Members of the public who wish to speak on a matter that is listed on the agenda will be called upon to speak during discussion of that item.

E. CONSENT CALENDAR

Adoption of the Consent Calendar may be made by one motion of the CAFG, provided that any Member, individual, or organization may request removal of an item from the Consent Calendar for separate consideration. If a request for removal of an item from the Consent Calendar has been received, the item will be discussed and voted on separately.

E.1. [26-474](#) **SUBJECT:** Citizen Advisory Focus Group Minutes of February 25, 2026

ACTION:

Approving and filing the Citizen Advisory Focus Group Minutes of February 25, 2026

F. REPORTS

F.1. [26-455](#) **SUBJECT:** Report and Discussion on Visioning Exercise

REPORT IN BRIEF

Report For Information Only and Discussion of Visioning

DISCUSSION

Guided discussion to start the exercise of Visioning for the Comprehensive General Plan Update.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Presentation

F.2. [26-475](#) **SUBJECT:** Citizen Advisory Focus Group Annual Attendance Report

ACTION:

Reviewing and approving the Annual Attendance Report.

G. BUSINESS

H. ADJOURNMENT



CITY OF MERCED

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

File #: 26-474

Meeting Date: 5/27/2026

Report Prepared by: Leah Brown, Senior Planner, Development Services

SUBJECT: Citizen Advisory Focus Group Minutes of February 25, 2026

ACTION:

Approving and filing the Citizen Advisory Focus Group Minutes of February 25, 2026

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes of Citizen Advisory Focus Group - February 25, 2026

CITY OF MERCED

*Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340*



Minutes

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

6:00 PM

**City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Merced Civic Center, 678 W.
18th Street, Merced, CA 95340**

Citizen Advisory Focus Group

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor SERRATTO called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tempore BOYLE led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

C. ROLL CALL

Clerk's Note: Committee Members GONZALEZ, LEWIS, HIRSCH, and JOHNSON were absent.

Present: 10 - Member Colton Dennis, Matthew Serratto, Sarah Boyle, Member April Holloway, Member Jeremiah Greggains, Member Curtis Thomas, Member Humberto Sandoval Jr., Member Steve Maxey, Member Cynthia Kelly, and Member Keith Ensminger

Absent: 4 - Member Anthony Gonzalez, Member Cheryl Hirsch, Member Tammy Johnson, and Member Marisa Lewis

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

E. CONSENT CALENDAR

E.1. SUBJECT: Citizen Advisory Focus Group Minutes of October 8, 2025

ACTION:

Approving and filing the Citizen Advisory Focus Group Minutes of October 8, 2025.

A motion was made by Member Ensminger, seconded by Member Holloway and carried by the following vote, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

Aye: 10 - Member Dennis, Serratto, Boyle, Member Holloway, Member Greggains, Member Thomas, Member Sandoval, Member Maxey, Member Kelly, and Member Ensminger

No: 0

Absent: 4 - Member Gonzalez, Member Hirsch, Member Johnson, and Member Lewis

F. REPORTS

F.1. SUBJECT: Existing Conditions

REPORT IN BRIEF

Final Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook

DISCUSSION

The Citizens Advisory Focus Group (CAFG) will continue the discussion centered on community Assets, Issues, and Opportunities. Extending this dialogue will allow a better understanding the specific priorities and interests, which will directly inform the development of a comprehensive vision statement and guiding principles. Continuing this discussion also ensures alignment with the ongoing digital community survey, which will remain open through the end of the month.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Presentation

Board members focused on improving infrastructure, transportation, and housing while preserving livability. Members KELLY and SANDOVAL highlighted major infrastructure issues like failing sewer systems and damaged sidewalks, with Member SANDOVAL also calling for stronger developer accountability, while Member HOLLOWAY linked poor sidewalks to public health and youth activity. On transportation, Member THOMAS and others emphasized reducing car and truck traffic and improving walkability and cycling, while Members JOHNSON and ENSMINGER stressed road safety, better transit service, and regional coordination, including concerns about high-speed rail impacts.

Members DENNIS, ENSMINGER, and Mayor SERRATTO supported more affordable, higher-density development near transit, with Members KELLY and MAXEY advocating for building up rather than out. Members SANDOVAL and JOHNSON pushed for mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods. Members HOLLOWAY and ENSMINGER also raised public safety concerns, while several members overall highlighted community strengths --such as downtown and UC Merced.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Clerk's Note: The Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM.

BY:



LEAH BROWN, SECRETARY
CITIZEN ADVISORY FOCUS GROUP

APPROVED:

MATTHEW SERRATTO, CHAIRPERSON
CITIZEN ADVISORY FOCUS GROUP



CITY OF MERCED

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

File #: 26-455

Meeting Date: 5/27/2026

Report Prepared by: Leah Brown, Senior Planner, Development Services

SUBJECT: Report and Discussion on Visioning Exercise

REPORT IN BRIEF

Report For Information Only and Discussion of Visioning

DISCUSSION

Guided discussion to start the exercise of Visioning for the Comprehensive General Plan Update.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Presentation



CITY OF MERCED
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND
DOWNTOWN STATION AREA PLAN

**Citizens Advisory Focus Group (CAFG)
Meeting #4**
MAY 27, 2026



1

Meeting Objectives

Meeting Purpose

- To review and discuss the draft Vision Statement and receive feedback and suggested edits from the CAFG.

Agenda

- Overview of the Visioning Process and Draft Vision Statement
- CAFG discussion of the Draft Vision Statement
- Next Steps

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Meeting Objectives

- Ideal future aspirations to work towards
- Inspiration for decision-makers and the community
- Unique to the community
- Comprehensive, long-term, visionary, and positive
- Paint a picture of the future
- Remember, we're looking 25 years into the future!



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Vision Statement

- Community feedback as it relates to the visioning

"People care about Merced - We can be mobilized for change!"

"Status quo won't improve our city"

"Small businesses provide character to the community"

"A connected city"

"Thriving Downtown that is safe, beautiful, and supportive of community"

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Vision Statement

"Merced has tremendous untapped potential"

"The city's location is genuinely exceptional - sitting at the gateway to Yosemite National Park with sweeping, unobstructed views of the Sierra Nevada mountains"

"Downtown's Main Street demonstrates that Merced residents and visitors respond enthusiastically to walkable, human-scaled streetscapes"

"Merced is also one of the fastest-growing cities in California, and UC Merced continues to attract a young, educated population that actively seeks out vibrant, connected urban neighborhoods. That growth [...] gives Merced a rare window to shape its future before patterns become locked in."

"Merced punches above its weight in terms of its standard of living"

"Merced has more ingredients for a great outcome than most cities its size"

"There are people passionate and tenacious about engaging to make a difference"

"I care about this city's future, and I believe the people writing this plan do too. Let's build something worth being proud of."

"I hope we're seen as a shining example of what America can be. Rural, agricultural, urbanist, with rich culture, abundant opportunity, educated, middle class, hard working; a city that eagerly tackles problems with both hope and effectiveness. [...] I want us to be the city everyone who nerds out about cities wants to be."

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Vision Statement

"Merced isn't a place where we meet strangers - no matter how large we get, we still have that attractive environment for businesses, homeowners, and entrepreneurs"

"Downtown is the jewel"

"Modesto and Fresno's stories have been told; [Merced's] has not"

"[Merced and its arts and culture scene] is a gem of the central valley"

"Merced is in the sweet spot where there's still enough going on, so most of the things you do day-to-day can be done in town."

"The people in Merced make the community "

"The educational pillars of the colleges"

"Allow people to develop and be creative"

"A city that supports all neighborhoods"

"The city skyline of the future captures the eyes of passersby"

"Rather than modeling after every other city, Merced finds its own way to be its own unique success story that prioritizes its community and people"

"Uses, amenities, creativity, and the arts, interwoven into the fabric of the city"

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Draft Vision Statement

Merced will continue to stand at the forefront of a new era in Central California—confident in its identity, ambitious in its vision, and deeply rooted in the people who will shape its future. The city's evolving skyline will continue to rise as a recognizable landmark across the San Joaquin Valley, signaling opportunity, innovation, and a vibrant sense of place. At the heart of the community, Downtown Merced will continue to thrive as the cultural and economic jewel of the city: walkable, and alive with energy at all hours of the day. Historic character will continue to blend seamlessly with contemporary architecture, local creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit as restaurants, entertainment venues, public spaces, arts, and community-serving businesses will further enhance the streetscape.

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Draft Vision Statement

Merced will continue to push the boundaries of what will be possible for a modern California city. Anchored by Merced College and UC Merced, strong agricultural roots, and expanding industrial and technological sectors, the city will continue to emerge as a premier destination for talent and investment. Strategic access to economic centers, air terminals, inland ports, and regional transportation corridors will continue to strengthen Merced's role as a dynamic hub for commerce and connection while preserving the values that will continue to define its community.

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Draft Vision Statement

Growth will continue to be intentional, balanced, sustainable, and inclusive—providing housing opportunities for residents of all incomes, backgrounds, and lifestyles through diverse neighborhoods that will continue to foster belonging, stability, and that hometown feel residents cherish. Parks, trails, public gathering spaces, and thriving local businesses will continue to contribute to a superior quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Merced will continue to recognize its tremendous untapped potential and will boldly transform it into reality, becoming a statewide model for innovation, fiscal responsibility, sustainable growth, high-quality transportation, and community-centered planning—a city where people will not only choose to live, but where they will continue to be inspired to build their future.

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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

File #: 26-475

Meeting Date: 5/27/2026

Report Prepared by: Leah Brown, Senior Planner, Planning Division

SUBJECT: Citizen Advisory Focus Group Annual Attendance Report

ACTION:

Reviewing and approving the Annual Attendance Report.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve, as recommended by staff; or,
2. Deny; or,
3. Continue to a future meeting.

DISCUSSION

Attached for your review are the annual Attendance Record, Attendance Policy, and Roster. Please remember that the attendance record is not based on the fiscal year, but rather from April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026. Most members have met the 70% attendance requirement. Be sure to communicate with staff if you are not able to attend a meeting.

Questions or comments can be addressed at the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Roster
2. Attendance Record
3. Board and Commission Attendance Policy

Citizens Advisory Focus Group

Board Roster

Keith A Ensminger

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Position Commissioner

Category District 2

Joseph Bauer

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category Recreation and Parks Commission Representative

Anthony Gonzalez

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category Planning Commission Representative

Matthew Serratto

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category City Council Representative

Colton E Dennis

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category Arts and Culture Advisory Commission Representative

□ **Sarah E Boyle**
1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council
Position Member
Category City Council Representative

□ **April P Holloway**
1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council
Position Member
Category District 5

□ **Curtis Thomas**
1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council
Position Member
Category Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Representative

□ **Cheryl S Hirsch**
1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council
Position Member
Category Regional Airport Authority Representative

□ **Humberto Sandoval Jr**
1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council
Position Member
Category District 6

□ **Tammy Johnson**
1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council
Position Member
Category District 4

□

Cynthia Kelly

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category District 3

□

Jeremiah Greggains

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category District 1

□

Steve Maxey

1st Term Jul 01, 2025 - Jul 01, 2027

Appointing Authority City Council

Position Member

Category At-Large

CITIZEN ADVISORY FOCUS GROUP

ATTENDANCE RECORD

April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026

Total # of Meetings Held During Reporting Year: 3

| <u>NAME</u> | <u># of Mtgs Attended</u> * | <u># of Mtgs Held</u> * | <u># of Mtgs Absent</u> ** | <u># of Mtgs Excused</u> | <u>% of Mtgs Attended</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| SERRATTO, MATTHEW (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| BOYLE, SARAH (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| DENNIS, COLTON (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| ENSMINGER, KEITH (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| GONZALEZ, ANTHONY (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0% |
| GREGGAINS, JEREMIAH (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 66% |
| HIRSCH, CHERYL (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 66% |
| HOLLOWAY, APRIL (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 66% |
| JOHNSON, TAMMY (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 66% |
| KELLY, CYNTHIA (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| MAXEY, STEVE (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| SANDOVAL JR., HUMBERTO (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| THOMAS, CURTIS (Appointed 8/18/2025) | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| LEWIS, MARISA (Appointed 12/1/2025) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 100% |

* If a member less than full year, please indicate # of meetings held since appointment.

** This # includes excused meetings.

Formulas for computing percentage of meetings attended:

- a. Member for full year - # of meetings attended (include excused) divided by total total # of meetings held
- b. Member for partial year - # of meetings attended (include excused) divided by total # of meetings held since appointment.

Appointed Commission, Committee, and Board Member Attendance Policy

The City Council, at its July 15, 1996, August 4, 1997, August 20, 2007, and September 20, 2021 meetings, adopted motions amending the original policy adopted October 3, 1994, regarding attendance, absences, and excused absences for City Council appointed commissions, committee, and board members:

1. If a member of a board or commission is absent from three regularly scheduled meetings of such board or commission, consecutively, or is convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, or ceases to be a qualified elector of the City, the office shall become vacant and shall be declared by the City Council.
2. A commission, committee, or board member shall be required to attend 70 percent of scheduled meetings during a fiscal year. When attending other City of Merced business meetings and subcommittee meetings as a Board representative, absence shall be recorded as being present at the meeting.
3. Excused absences shall be recognized for illness, family emergencies, business conflicts and one vacation per each one-year period.
4. Department Heads or staff liaisons to appointed commissions, committees, or boards shall monitor attendance requirements for non-compliance. Upon notification of such non-compliance, the City Clerk may submit a recommendation to the City Council for appropriate action.
5. The City Clerk shall prepare a report annually to the City Council of an attendance report for every commission, committee, and board. The report shall include number of meetings attended, meetings missed (excused or unexcused), and a delineation of three consecutive absences or less than 70 percent attendance.
6. Prior to the annual report being submitted for City Council review, the City Clerk shall provide the report to each committee/board/commission for review and comment. Staff shall notify those Committee Members whose attendance is below 70 percent of the need for improvement.
7. The City Council may remove those commission, committee, or board members who do not meet the requirement of appointment.
8. All applicants for commissions, committees, and boards shall be notified prior to City Council appointment regarding time requirements for serving and the policy regarding removal.