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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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