

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE 2015-2019 FIVE-YEAR CONSOLIDATED AND 2019 ANNUAL ACTION PLANS AND NOTICE OF HUD WAIVERS TO THE ADOPTED CITY OF MERCED CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

This Notice serves to notify Merced City Residents of their opportunity to comment on the below proposed actions and processes and to inform residents of the changes to the public comment process permitted by HUD during the 2019 and 2020 Program Years due to COVID-19.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE 2015-2019 FIVE-YEAR CONSOLIDATED AND 2019 ANNUAL ACTION PLANS:

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has notified the City of Merced, as a HUD Entitlement Grantee, that the City has been allocated \$661,246 of additional Community Development Block Grant funds (CDBG-CV) to be used specifically towards public service and economic development programs and activities that help to protect, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 Coronavirus outbreak. The allocation was authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Public Law 116-136, which was signed by President Trump on March 27, 2020, to respond to the growing effects of this public health crisis.

Accordingly, the City of Merced is recommending revisions to both its 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and its 2019 Annual Action Plan in order to use the CDBG-CV funds during the current program year that runs from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020, to address the urgent needs related to the coronavirus for low-moderate income households in the city community:

- Public Service programs that address the immediate needs of food and retention of housing for city residents; and,
- Economic Development programs to new and existing businesses that support the retention of jobs.

Additionally, the City is also recommending the following substantial and technical amendments to its 2015-2019 Consolidated and 2019 Annual Action Plans – some amendments will also be directed towards immediate coronavirus assistance:

- Reallocate funding of 2019 Fair Housing services from CDBG Public Services to HOME Administration activities;
- Reallocate funding of 2019 First Time Home Buyer Classes to 2019 CDBG Public Service activities;

- Reallocate funding of 2019 CDBG HUD Loan Payment to 2019 CDBG Public Service activities;
- Allocation of unanticipated 2019 Program Income to 2019 CDBG Public Service activities;
- Addition of Intent to Open a HUD 108 Loan Guarantee Application Process activity to the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan/2019 Annual Action Plan CDBG Program Activities, Goals, and Objectives, for the Childs and B Affordable Housing Project.

The Public may view and provide comment on the above proposed amendments during the following period: 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 4, 2020, through 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 8, 2020, by following the below-noticed procedures. A City Council meeting to review and approve the above items is scheduled to be held at 6:00 p.m., Monday, May 18, 2020. The meeting will be held via teleconference only. As City offices are currently closed, there will be no physical public access to the meeting. Please see the City Clerk's website at www.cityofmerced.org/departments/city-clerk for details and agendas.

NOTICE OF HUD WAIVERS TO THE ADOPTED CITY OF MERCED CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

On April 1, 2020, HUD released the memorandum entitled "Availability of Waivers of Community Planning and Development (CPD) Grant Program and Consolidated Plan Requirements to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 and Mitigate Economic Impacts Caused by COVID-19." The memorandum grants certain waivers to CPD Grantees, such as the City of Merced, with regards to its regulatory Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) requirements specifically required under Citation 24 CFR 91.105(c)(2) and (k). Those certain waivers are: 1) an immediate reduction in the required 30-day comment period to no less than five (5) days, with the requirement to provide reasonable notice and opportunity for citizens to comment on substantial amendments concerning the proposed uses of CDBG and HOME funds; and 2) a waiver regarding "reasonable notice and opportunity to comment" requirements of the CPP, to allow a grantee to determine what constitutes reasonable notice and opportunity to comment. The City of Merced intends to implement both waivers on April 30, 2020, and they will remain valid through the end of the 2020 Program Year (through June 30, 2021), per HUD, for any further COVID-19 related amendments.

Accordingly, as long as City Offices remain physically closed to public access, the City of Merced plans to vary from its Adopted CPP and will instead follow the below reasonable notice and public comment procedures:

- Public notices will be published in the "Public Notices" sections of the Merced County Times and the Merced Sun-Star newspaper publications approximately 15 days before a scheduled meeting to decide on any required actions related to the City's HUD Plans.

- The Public notices will note the specific comment period and the meeting date on which the item(s) will be reviewed and action taken.
- Proposed amendments to Plans will be made available for viewing from our website: www.cityofmerced.org, or can be emailed upon request by emailing: housing@cityofmerced.org on any day prior to 2:00 p.m. on the last day of the posted comment period.
- The City will make an effort to post any small (1 to 10 pages) documents in a locked, see-through case that is located outside the Merced Civic Center, 678 W. 18th Street, Merced, California, during the entire comment period. Documents may not otherwise be viewable in person.
- Members of the public may submit comments during the five-day comment period specified in the section above via: 1) by email of 500 words or less to housing@cityofmerced.org, or, 2) by leaving a voicemail no longer than three minutes in length to [209-385-6863](tel:209-385-6863).
- Comments received may be read or received at the scheduled City Council meeting. Technology permitting, members of the public who have submitted comments may be called during the scheduled teleconferenced City Council meeting to provide additional comments during the meeting in real time.
- The teleconferenced City Council meetings will be broadcast on Comcast Public Access Channel 96, through website livestream, and via a live social media feed on Facebook. Please see the City Clerks webpage (www.cityofmerced.org/departments/city-clerk) for more City Council Meeting information, including livestream links, procedures, and agendas.

Attention: City Clerk

CITY CLERK
CITY OF MERCED

Publish: April 30, 2020

/s/ Kim Nutt

Kim Nutt, Housing Program Specialist