

2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 First-Year Action Plan Citizen Participation and Input Process Timeline

Following Council's approval of a professional services contract in October 2019 with TDA Consulting, Inc., community work began on the Consolidated Plan/Annual Plan (CP/AP) process, as follows:

- A series of four focus group meetings were conducted by the consultant and Housing staff on December 9-10, 2019, in the Merced Civic Center's Sam Pipes Room, to gather feedback and guidance from residents and community stakeholders regarding issues that are of most importance to the community. An open letter to the community was published for four days between both the Merced Sun-Star and Merced County Times, and letters were mailed to over 100 area non-profit community service organizations inviting their participation. Spanish interpretation was available at all four focus group meetings.
- An online survey in both English and Spanish, and easily accessed with smartphone QR code technology, was developed to see additional feedback from community members and residents, asking a range of questions from public improvement needs to those regarding the survey-taker's experiences with access to fair housing. Staff attended City Council Town Hall meetings on February 19, 20, and 26, 2020, to distribute flyers with City website and QR code links to the survey, as well as note resident speakers' comments during the meeting. City Councilmembers were provided flyers in English and Spanish to distribute to their district residents. Additionally, emails were sent to Merced City Schools District, Merced Community College, and UC Merced officials, among others, to solicit additional survey responses.
- On February 20, 2020, a Notice of Funding Availability was published in the Merced Sun-Star and Merced County Times, inviting requests for project funding applications and attendance at three public informational meetings held on March 2-3, 2020, in the 3rd Floor Conference Room at City Hall. One meeting was held during evening hours, and Spanish interpretation was available. Housing staff gave a presentation that explained the process and the types of projects that were being sought this funding year. Additional input regarding community needs was solicited at these meetings, and community needs assessment survey flyers were distributed.
- A Public Hearing Notice was published in both the Merced Sun-Star and the Merced County Times on June 4, 2020, notifying interested parties about the public hearing on July 6, 2020, where their participation and input on the draft plans would be welcomed.
- The Draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and First-Year Annual Plan was posted for public viewing and downloading on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, to open the required 30-day public comment period, which closed on Friday, July 10, 2020.
- A Public Hearing was held on July 6, 2020. The City Council accepted comments from the public, and agreed to add an additional public hearing dates by extending the public hearing to July 20, 2020, and August 3, 2020.

- The continued Public Hearing was held on July 20, 2020, and additional public input was accepted from the community.

Next steps:

- Housing staff is currently working with TDA Consulting, Inc. to include public comments received on the plan documents thus far.
- Additional public comments will be accepted at the August 3, 2020, meeting. Approval of the Final Draft of the Consolidated Plan, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, and First-Year Annual Plan and permission by resolution to submit the final plans will be sought.
- Submission to HUD of all plans, resolutions, and certification documents is expected to be made by Friday, August 14, 2020. HUD's normal regulatory deadline for submission of Consolidated Plans is August 15 of each plan cycle.