

EAST MODESTO FORUM

[KEY FINDINGS]

Segment Definition

Geographic classification of community members who live in zip codes 95355 and 95351 (East Modesto/Airport Neighborhood) and have a vested interest in their neighborhood's health, well-being, advancement, and success.

Meeting Context

Location: Casa Cultural - 202 S Santa Cruz Ave, Modesto, CA 95354

Date: October 5, 2022

Time: 10:30am - 12:00pm

Attendees: 18 Total (2 English; 16 Spanish)

Topline Findings

Question 1:

What do you like most about Modesto?

The most popular responses shared by community members were:

- (1) The city's outdoor amenities. Community members appreciate the city's parks, baseball fields, the river, parking access, and other outdoor areas.
- (2) Job opportunities. Attendees in East Modesto, predominantly Spanish speaking with an immigrant base, value access to livable wage job opportunities.
- (3) Robust support services. Access to donations (e.g., food and clothing) in East Modesto and the rest of the city is plentiful and something that some families in the community have come to depend heavily on. Some participants described how residents in Modesto have more access to these services than in other cities in Northern California.

Question 2:

What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?

Most responses were related to three critical improvements:

- (1) Safety concerns. Community members highlighted three safety concerns for this neighborhood: (a) homelessness in public parks; (b) gang members and unsafe drivers that make being outside at night dangerous; and (c) slow response times and aggressive behavior from police.

(2) Quality of infrastructure. East Modesto residents are concerned about the poor road quality and the lack of sidewalks, sewers, and speed bumps in their community. The inadequate infrastructure in East Modesto is a critical quality of life and safety issue for the community.

(3) Cost of living. Higher costs for gas, public transportation, rent, and leisure are affecting the community members' ability to thrive. They feel that there is no other place for them to move if costs continue to increase, so they hope that prices will go down or income could increase.

Question 3:

Senate Bill 1000 requires the City to improve a range of conditions in disadvantaged communities. Specifically, we need to develop policies to address the topics listed below. What do you see as the key issues related to these six topics in Modesto? Are there other aspects to environmental justice you would like to see the General Plan address?

Pollution Exposure and Air Quality: Yosemite Avenue and Mitchell Road are home to many industrial companies; community members feel that living close to them may cause health issues (e.g., worsening asthma) and noise pollution. They also stated that abandoned warehouses bring in more homeless people.

Public Facilities and Services: Community members would like to see more lighting on roads to make walking at night safer. They would also like the "Power that Be" to make a plan to remove homeless camps from parks, so children and families feel safe to use them.

Food Access: Community members desire more grocery store options near Kerr Avenue. The lack of a pharmacy in the area also makes managing health difficult, especially with an aging population.

Safe and Sanitary Homes: Community members feel that there are many dilapidated houses that create a negative perception of the area. They believe this problem has gotten worse throughout the years, even before the pandemic. They also feel there is a garbage problem in the neighborhood, with residents using front lawns as dumps and people littering throughout the streets.

Physical Activity: Parents would like to see more walking and biking trails for students attending Orville Wright Elementary. The area currently lacks sidewalks, which is a safety concern.

Community Engagement: Community members requested that City and County representatives be more present in the neighborhood. They feel there is a lack of communication and relationship between governmental leaders and community members.

Question 4:

Rank issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address.

See individual rankings in the attached spreadsheet.

Question 5:

Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?

Community members discussed both housing and commercial expansion:

Most community members would like the City to annex the unincorporated areas of Airport Neighborhood because they view it as a way to get critical infrastructure updates in the area. They think more housing could be built in West and South Modesto, preferring infill development over building in undeveloped land in the City's Sphere of Influence. The priority for community members is using vacant land, such as the abandoned warehouses by the airport and deteriorated lots that have gone unused for years.

Additional Insights from Debrief's East Modesto Partners

This section provides additional contextual understanding from Debrief's community-based relationships and current project engagements.

- 1. Modesto City Schools' parent resource center is under new leadership in East Modesto.** The parent resource center, near Orville Wright Elementary, hired a new lead administrator this year and is in the process of building relationships with the community.
- 2. Large nonprofit organizations in Airport Neighborhood bring in people who live outside of the neighborhood.** The Modesto Gospel Mission and Golden Valley Health Centers are two large nonprofit organizations located in Airport Neighborhood. The services they provide bring in people from outside of the area, which can deter community members from taking advantage of services and is viewed as exacerbating the homelessness problem.

RAW MEETING RESPONSES

GROUP 1 - English and Spanish (Translated)

Question #1	What do you like most about Modesto?		
Response	Smaller Town Less Vandalism	Beautiful parks Graceda park La Loma park	Charasmatic People
	The Parks that are in the Downtown Area	Good Climate	Lots of Activities
	Some of the Schools	Baseball Field and growth plans	Parking everywhere
	Free Stuff (Food Donations)	Crows Landing Area	Not a Big or Busy City
	Agriculture	Neighbors	Because it is Calm
	Job opportunities	We have a Beautiful River	

Question #2	What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?		
Response	City and county work together	Homeless regulations	Sewer everywhere
	Clean Streets	Better police treatment	Parks for the families
	More Outdoor Recreation Areas that are Safe for Families	Low income housing need more regulations	Your missing personas
	Fix some of the parks Homeless and safety for Children	Sidewalks	Youth Centers
	Adult Recreation Areas	Fix some of the parks	Sidewalks and Sewer
	Affordable public Transportation	More Playground Equipment	Equal Access for Water for Gardening
	Lower the Price of Gas	More adult workout equipment	More frequent police patrols
	Mono Park (Homeless)	Use Empty Lots	Better paying jobs locally
	The Crime	The Homeless	The Garbage

Garbage	Gangsters	Crazy Drivers
Homeless	No Sidewalks	Stray Dogs
More Trees	More Tech Jobs	Improvements
More employment opportunities for high school kids		

Question #3 **Senate Bill 1000 requires the City to improve a range of conditions in disadvantaged communities. Specifically, we need to develop policies to address the topics listed below. What do you see as the key issues related to these six topics in Modesto? Are there other aspects to environmental justice you would like to see the General**

Response	<i>Pollution exposure and air quality</i>
	Industrial businesses leave the community
	Businesses in the Community Need to Leave
	Businesses inside the City need to be Outside the City
	Gas leak in Airport Community
	Factory Polluting
	More trees are needed
	<u>Public Facilities / Services</u>
	More Lighting
	Improve Parks (Remove the Homeless)
	<u>Food Access</u>
	More Grocery Stores
	Pharmacy is Needed
	<u>Safety</u>
	Lots of houses in Disrepair
	Garbage Problem
	More Police Patrolling the Parks
	Homeless population
	Dogs Prevent us From Using the Park
	<u>Physical Activity</u>
Walk and Bike Trails for Students	
<u>Community engagement</u>	
Need more Community Leadership	
More City and County Reps to Visit	

Need reps to hear Us Out

Question #4 Rank issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address.

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
Participant #1	
1	Job creation
2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
4	Connections to open space
5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
6	Housing availability and affordability
7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
Participant #2	
1	Job creation
2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
4	Connections to open space
5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
6	Housing availability and affordability
7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
Participant #3	
1	Job creation
2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)

	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>		<i>Issue</i>
Participant #4		
	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>		<i>Issue</i>
Participant #5		
	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>		<i>Issue</i>
Participant #6		
	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)

	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety
	8	[BLANK]
<i>Ranking</i>		<i>Issue</i>
Participant #7		
	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>		<i>Issue</i>
Participant #8		
	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety
<i>Ranking</i>		<i>Issue</i>
Participant #9		

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<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
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Participant #10	
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	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	Housing availability and affordability
	7	Community services and public safety

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
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Participant #11	
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	1	Job creation
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
	4	Connections to open space
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
	6	[BLANK]
	7	Community services and public safety

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
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Participant #12	
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1	Job creation
2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
4	Connections to open space
5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
6	Housing availability and affordability
7	Community services and public safety

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
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Participant #13	
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1	Job creation
2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
4	Connections to open space
5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
6	Housing availability and affordability
7	Community services and public safety

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
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Participant #14	
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1	Job creation
2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
4	Connections to open space
5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
6	Housing availability and affordability
7	Community services and public safety

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Issue</i>
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	Participant #15			
	1	Job creation		
	2	Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)		
	3	Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)		
	4	Connections to open space		
	5	Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails		
	6	Housing availability and affordability		
	7	Police Presence		
Question #5	Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?			
Response	Incorporate those that are unincorporated areas into Modesto			
	Further Housing Developments in South West and Airport			
	Incorporate the county into the city South West and airport			
	Infill with Housing	Inward Development	Infill Empty Lots	Use the Empty Lots
	Fix Deteriorated parts	Use buildings empty lots	Use lands that are vacant	Use Empty Lots

Small Group Discussion Questions

1 What do you like most about Modesto?

2 What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?

Senate Bill 1000 requires the City to improve a range of conditions in disadvantaged communities.

3 Specifically, we need to develop policies to address the topics listed below. What do you see as the key issues related to these six topics in Modesto? Are there other aspects to environmental justice you would like to see the General Plan address?

Pollution exposure and air quality

Public facilities and services

Food access

Safe and sanitary homes

Physical activity

Community engagement

4 Rank the following issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address:

Job creation

Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)

Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)

Connections to open space

Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails

Housing availability and affordability

Community services and public safety

Other _____

5 Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?