

Community Profile

MODESTO • CALIFORNIA

A City of Water, Wealth, Contentment, Health

Meet our City Council

Most California cities are governed in one of two ways: the council-manager or mayor-council system. Modesto's charter provided for the council-manager form of government in which the voters elect the city council to serve as the policy-making board of the city. The council, in turn, appoints a city manager to administer these policies.

The Modesto City Council consists of seven members, including the mayor, elected at large on a nonpartisan basis for four year terms. Their terms of office expire in alternate odd numbered years, with a maximum of four council seats up for election at any one time.

The city council serves as the legislative body, enacting ordinances, orders and resolutions necessary for governing Modesto as outlined in the City Charter and deemed important by the public. In addition to their representation of the citizens of Modesto and their vote at city council meetings, council members are appointed to various sub-committees and given other assignments by the mayor during their terms in office.

The Modesto City Council meets at 5:15pm on the first, second, third and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Meetings are not held on the fifth Tuesday, unless a special meeting is called by City Council.



The Modesto City Council from left to right: Councilmember Tim Fisher, Councilmember Janice Keating, Councilmember Bruce Frohman, Mayor Carmen Sabatino, Councilmember Will O'Bryant, Councilmember Denny Jackman and Vice-Mayor Bill Conrad.

A City of Progress

From its earliest days, Modesto has been a community dedicated to growth, progress and the quality of community life. Proud of its vibrant citizenry, great traditions, educational opportunities, and multicultural lifestyles, Modesto has twice—in 1954 and again in 1972—been named an All-American City, a distinction given by the National Municipal League to recognize citizen action in community affairs, along with elected officials, to make their city a better place to live.

By 1910, Modesto's population was estimated at 4,500. City fathers referred to the young community as the “most metropolitan and classy of its size in California.” Emphasis was placed on education and cultural amenities—schools, theaters and music received priority treatment. The local media boasted of the academic achievements of the city's students, and of the first-rate theatrical productions and entertainers.

Today, nearly 128 years since its establishment, Modesto has reached a population of nearly 194,000 and is a city filled with young, growing families with increasingly diverse backgrounds.

The City of Modesto maintains and operates three golf courses and over 70 parks—360 acres of developed and partially developed parks. Additionally, the city shares with the City of Ceres and Stanislaus County the Tuolumne River Regional Park, an area consisting of 120 acres of developed and 350 acres of undeveloped land.

There is still an emphasis on education, music programs continue to flourish here, and the community's theater arts and dance groups are kept busy with active performance schedules. The city's own performing opera company, Townsend Opera Players, presents a full season each year. Modesto also has its own tribute to the city's history and art with the McHenry Museum and the McHenry Mansion, a preserved residence from the past, which are operated by the city.



Great traditions are still alive and well in Modesto. Six weeks during June and July, Modesto residents are treated to Thursday Night Concerts in the Park at Mancini Bowl, featuring Mo-Band (Modesto Band), a band earlier recognized as the Modesto Brass Band. And, every year there is as much spirit to the Fourth of July Parade as there was for the first one back in 1874.

Today agribusiness remains an important element in Modesto's economic mix, but attracting new business—from retail to manufacturing to the services industry—and keeping up with the demands of future technology and innovation are vital to the growth of Modesto—a well-established community filled with civic pride and grand plans for the future.

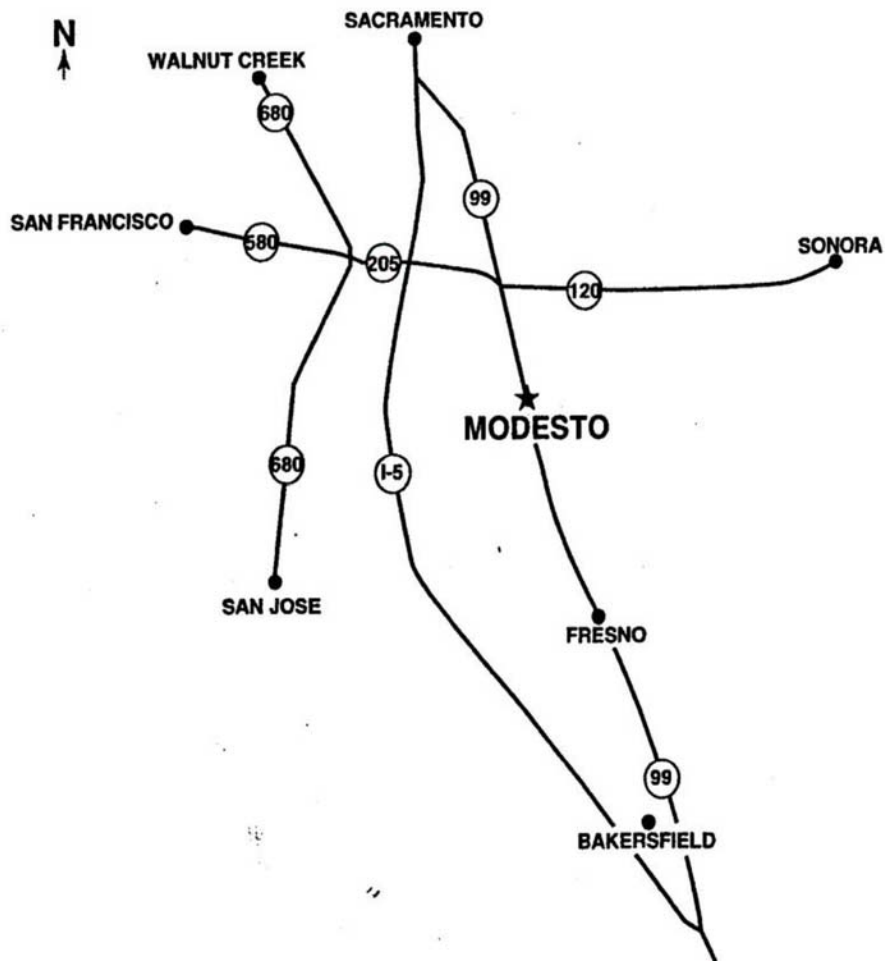
In the Heart of the Central Valley

Location

The City of Modesto is a dynamic city located in California's San Joaquin Valley. Just a two-hour drive from San Francisco, the Sierra Nevada, and the Pacific Coast, Modesto is in the heart of California.

The City lies 77 miles south of Sacramento, 75 miles east of San Jose and the Silicon Valley, 91 miles southeast of San Francisco, and north 316 miles of Los Angeles. Modesto is the County seat of Stanislaus County and it's largest city.

To the West is the Diablo Mountain range and to the east are the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Three major rivers flow through the area: Tuolumne, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin. Dry summers and mild winters are the norm, with a moderate overall climate.



Modesto History

NAMING THE TOWN

The city's name, according to popular legend, came from the word "modest" which described Mr. William C. Ralston, founder and late President of the Bank of California. It was because Ralston declined to have the new railroad town named after him that his modesty was noted, and thus the town's name was coined. "Modesto" is simply the Spanish word for modest.

THE ARCH

Modesto's arch, located across "I" Street intersecting with Ninth, also has a story behind its name.

In 1911, "I" Street was the main gateway to the little City of Modesto. Sol P. Elias, who later became mayor, presented the City Council with a petition on behalf of the Modesto Business Men's Association to allow the building of this "ornamental and electric arch." At the same time, a contest was held in hopes of finding a slogan and seal for the city. The winning slogan, submitted by James Hanscom, was "Nobody's Got Modesto's Goat". Elias and the Modesto Business Men's Association were outraged over the judges' choice and lobbied for S. R. Harbaugh's runner-up suggestion, "Water Wealth Contentment Health", which won out and was placed on the arch. It still exists today. The height of the arch from the center is 25 feet. Its width is 75 feet and it has 668 lights.



1920 Photo of the Arch

In 2001, the Arch remains the icon of Modesto



Our Vision and *Strategic Plan*

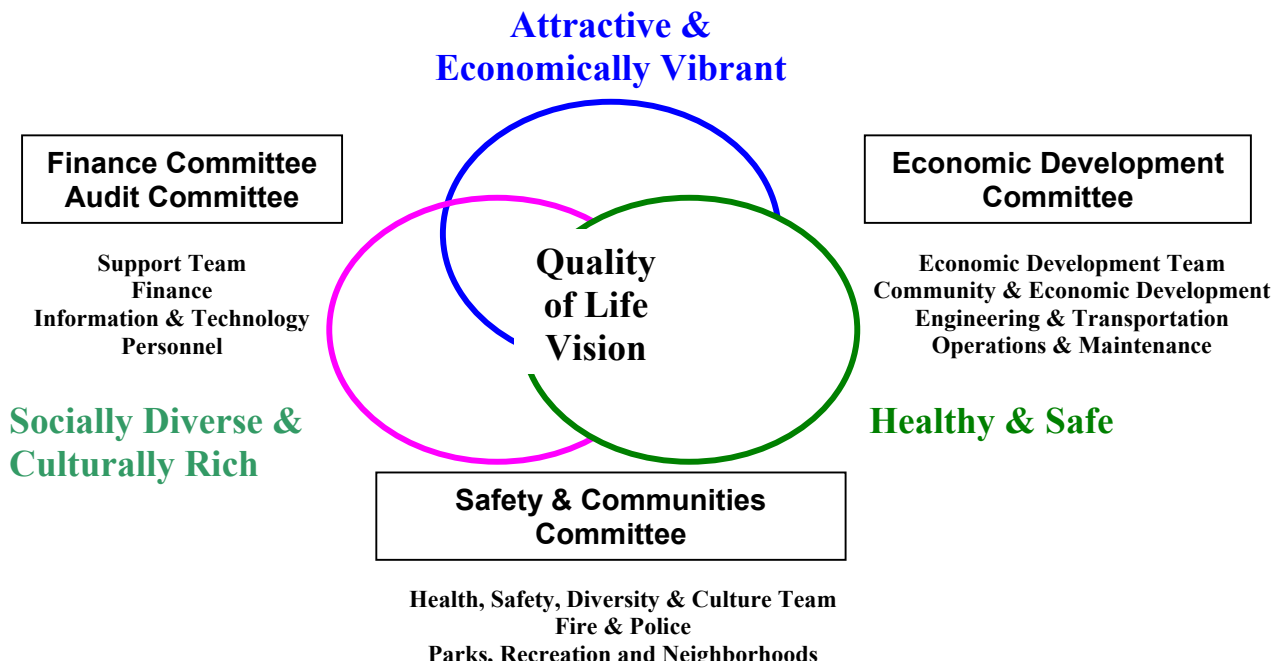
In October 2001, Council adopted a vision and *Strategic Plan* to serve as our roadmap for the future. The Vision:

Modesto is a healthy, safe, attractive, economically vibrant, socially diverse and culturally rich city with a strong sense of identity and pride -- a community engaged in the practice of citizenship with governance based on the principle of stewardship.

The *Strategic Plan* sets fifty Council goals, which work in concert to accomplish our Vision. Our action-oriented *Strategic Plan* strives to achieve these Council goals through implementation of more than 460 individual action items. Each of the Plan's action items includes a specific project manager and definitive timelines.

Strategic Plan progress is tracked via an inter-departmental database. The database facilitates *Strategic Plan* implementation and offers a variety of reporting and query options, including Quarterly Progress Reports to Council.

To further enhance our success in reaching the Vision, we have established inter-departmental teams (or business clusters) to focus on the component parts of the Plan and Vision. Council has also realigned the Council Committee system to reflect the City's Vision. The diagram below depicts the relationships between the Business Clusters, City Departments, Council Committees and Vision.



City Services

The City of Modesto provides a wide range of services to the community. The city operates its own water and sewer plant, police and fire departments, takes care of over 100,000 trees and over 70 park sites (approximately 360 acres of developed and undeveloped), has three golf courses, a Class A baseball field, operates a public transportation system and manages a full-service convention center. These services are provided by 11 city departments and approximately 1,100 city employees.



TENTH STREET PLACE: THE FOUNDATION FOR COLLABORATION

One of the greatest challenges faced by the city over past years has been the revitalization of downtown. In 1999, that challenge was met with the culmination of a long-planned downtown project that includes a seven-story joint City-County Public Administration Center, 18-screen cinema, and 44,000 square feet of retail space. Tenth Street Place is an example of how private and public partnerships can revitalize a community. The project partners are the City of Modesto, the County of Stanislaus, the Modesto Redevelopment Agency, and Civic Partners Modesto, a private development firm building and managing the retail/restaurant and cinema. The \$73 million project is breathing new life into a downtown area that has struggled to survive after years of decline. In addition to the retail/restaurant, cinema, and Public Administration Center the project adds more than 700 parking spaces and a plaza that can act as a public meeting and gathering place.



AIRPORT

On September 14, 1910, Modesto made headlines in the national news for its enterprise and foresight in establishing one of the first (if not the very first) municipally owned airports. Since then, Modesto's only airport progressed into an auxiliary airport turned over to the military in conjunction with the base at Stockton. After World War II, Modesto's airport history moved from preparatory work to 25 future years of development. Originally, the airport occupied land, which constitutes one of the three present golf courses, Modesto Municipal.

In 1946, United Airlines constructed a passenger terminal and began offering daily service to the community residents. United advised city officials in 1953 that they planned on using Convairs for passenger service, and the aircraft would require a 5000-foot runway. To fund the new runway construction, the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County formed a Joint Powers Authority, which still exists today, after which the airport's name was changed to Modesto City-County Airport. An extension of 1000 feet of runway was constructed in the 1960's to accommodate Boeing 737's. After, Modesto's residents enjoyed daily B-737's service until the deregulation of the airlines in 1978. Scheduled service today is provided by United Express Airlines using the 30 passenger Brasilia aircraft.

Modesto City-County Airport provides more to the community than just a plane ride to San Francisco International Airport. After arriving in San Francisco on a United Express flight, an air traveler can make a connection to any destination in the United States or many international points. In 2001, there were more than 89,800 aircraft take-offs and landings by commercial, government, and private aircraft. During the year, there were 3,082 United Express arrivals and departures, and 43,574 passengers who took advantage of the airline service between Modesto and San Francisco.



The airport is also vital to the city's economic, emergency, and medical programs. It is estimated that annually the airport generates many millions of dollars in economic stimulus to the community. This is accomplished through the direct payroll of employees working at Modesto Airport, dollars spent in the community by arriving visitors, and the number of times a dollar turns over in the community before it is spent somewhere else. The Modesto City/County Airport is utilized by the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department as a base for several aircraft used in search and rescue operations, and by medical teams involved in transporting accident victims or seriously ill persons to medical facilities in the event of an emergency.

Corporate aviation has grown rapidly at Modesto Airport during the last few years. The growth in corporate aviation has resulted in the construction of large corporate hangars that are used by modern corporate jet aircraft. In 2001, the appraised value of aircraft using Modesto City-County Airport rose by approximately \$90.0 million dollars, which generated over \$900,000 dollars in additional aircraft tax revenue for the community.

In 1998, the City of Modesto committed to an active effort to market the airport and increase passenger service by adding direct service to Los Angeles International Airport. The City efforts were well underway in 2001, but have been slowed due to the events of September 11th. Future plans are to continue the efforts to market the airport for additional airline service, attract more corporate aircraft, and complete the Master Plan that is now underway.

RECREATION

Modesto's recreation program and parks system is recognized regionally and statewide. Recreation programs include youth, adult and senior activities, three municipal golf courses, sports fields, and a baseball/community events stadium. The city offered basketball, soccer and softball league play to over 300 teams. Tennis tournaments and track meets attracted over 1,075 participants.



The city continued to provide services to all neighborhood park recreational programs and to many community events, such as the International Festival, Juneteenth, the Celebration of Lights, Cinco de Mayo, and the Fourth of July Parade, Picnic and Fireworks.

The city's Park Partners Program pairs interested service clubs, neighborhood organizations and involved citizens with renovation and improvement projects in the city's parks. Playgrounds have been renovated and constructed, soccer goals have been installed, trees, shrubs and flowers have been planted, and trails have been improved through the cooperation gained in this program.

MODESTO CENTRE PLAZA

The Modesto Centre Plaza is a highly successful municipal convention center with 43,000 square feet of space that supports both community and visitor meeting and convention needs. The Centre Plaza has successfully served the citizens of Modesto over fourteen years, offering the community a place to hold concerts, meetings, conventions, tradeshows and banquets. Recent infrastructure improvements include the installation of high speed Internet and renovation of the 16,000 square foot Harvest Hall. The Centre Plaza hosts over 600 events a year and welcomes over 240,000 attendees to those events. Working closely with local hotels, the Chamber of Commerce and the Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Modesto Centre Plaza helps to attract visitors to our community to enjoy all the Modesto has to offer.



JOHN THURMAN FIELD

It was the bottom of the ninth, the bases were loaded and the City Council delivered the game winning hit on December 16, 1997 with approval to renovate John Thurman Field, the city's 42 year old baseball stadium. It became a first-of-its-kind accomplishment when the field and stadium were completely renovated within 140 days. The renovation was approved to keep baseball alive and active in Modesto and to meet new minor league baseball standards. The stadium opened on schedule to a sell-out crowd. Staff is continually working to expand programs and activities offered at John Thurman Field. Although the Modesto A's are the major tenant during the baseball season, the field is also geared



for concerts, ethnic festivals, and other community events.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

Since 1972 recycling has been an essential part of life in Modesto. The two-can system offers residents an expanded recycling program, as more residents are able to help meet state requirements to cut our waste in half. Modesto pioneered recycling in 1972. You can get information on city programs from the Solid Waste Management Office, 1010 Tenth Street, Suite 4100, Modesto, CA 95354 (209) 577-5494. We offer the following:



- Bulky Item Pick-up Program
 - Food Composting Program
 - Rechargeable Battery Recycling Program
 - Community Recycling Bins
 - Curbside Yard Waste Collection
 - FREE curbside oil recycling and replacement jugs
 - Information on Used Oil Certified Collection Centers
 - FREE household hazardous waste drop-off
 - Household Hazardous Waste Hotline — 525-4123
 - FREE backyard composting workshops
 - Information on worm composting
- Telephone book recycling roundups
 - Holiday tree recycling
 - Information on drop-off and buy-back center
 - Waste Reduction and Recycling Workshops for businesses
 - Low-interest loans and technical assistance for recycling businesses
 - Participation in the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Recycling
 - Earth Day in the park and other community events
 - Information for school curriculums, materials, books and supplies

MODESTO AMTRAK STATION

Citizens of Modesto and the surrounding communities reap the many benefits of the Modesto Amtrak Station located at the corner of East Briggsmore Avenue and Held Drive. The station features a 3,000 square-foot waiting area and ticket office complete with baggage claim, restrooms and bicycle lockers, a 700-foot lighted platform, and parking for 150 automobiles.

The Amtrak San Joaquin Corridor features trains from such cities as Bakersfield, Hanford, Fresno, Merced, Stockton, Martinez, Emeryville and Vallejo. With connections, travelers can reach Yosemite, Napa, San Francisco and Los Angeles.



Additionally, the City of Modesto provides transit service to and from the station. Modesto Area Express (MAX) Bus Route 34 originates at the Downtown Transportation Center providing for excellent connections with both MAX and Stanislaus Regional Transit buses. Monday through Friday, Route 34 operates hourly and serves seven to eight of Amtrak's 10 scheduled stops. On Saturday, it serves six trains.



POLICE

The Modesto Police Department is charged with maintaining law and order, and protecting life and property. The Department's activities include prevention and detection of criminal activity, apprehension of criminal offenders, recovery of property; prevention of juvenile delinquency, enforcement of laws, participation in court proceedings, protection of constitutional guarantees, assisting those who cannot care for themselves or who are in danger of physical harm, prevention of traffic accidents and the regulation of traffic flow throughout the city, and animal control within the city limits.



The Year 2000 brought the completion of the new 40,000 square foot Gerald McKinsey Police Administration Facility at 600 Tenth Street. The facility was built to accommodate the Chief of Police and his staff, the Support Division and the Investigative Services Division.

The old police building at 601 Eleventh Street is being remodeled into a Field Operations Division headquarters and is scheduled to be finished in late 2002.

FIRE

The mission of the Modesto Fire Department is to provide efficient and effective fire and life safety protection to the community through control of hostile fire, fire prevention services, emergency medical services, emergency preparedness, and mitigation of hazardous materials incidents. This commitment is intended to safeguard the general economy and welfare of Modesto, and is provided through the availability of personnel and equipment 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The department currently staffs 10 fire stations, which are strategically located throughout the city. We are now preparing to build a new Fire Station to serve new development in the Northern section of the City. It is intended to specifically serve Pelendale-Synder, Carver Bangs, Kiernan Business Park and other existing new development in that area. It will be the eleventh Fire Station in the City. Fire Station 11 will be located on Carver Road and Pelendale Avenue, and is expected to open in January 2004.

