

CITY OF CHICO
DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE NOTES
REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 24, 2008
Municipal Center - 421 Main Street - Conference Room 1 from 3 to 5 p.m.

1.0 Overview of Stakeholder Interviews (15 Minutes, Brodeur)

- Community was well represented with a diverse group of interviewees
- Emphasized sense of community, interest in mixed-use, authenticity, diversity of design and historic buildings, activities
- Summarized negative themes from interviews; they didn't like: homeless, dirtiness, traffic, chain restaurants, development process, nighttime character
- Listed uses and design that interviewees wanted to see (convention center, outdoor dining, etc)
- What they want removed: homeless, bars, parking problems, traffic, student-oriented uses, tattoo parlors
- Wanted coordinated parking & loading zones, mixed-use, coordination with CSUC, incentives for developers, senior center, clean public spaces, more housing, biking facilities, art with a message, non-auto oriented events, etc...
- A summary of all responses is available from the Planning Services Department

2.0 Review Downtown Vision Book/Existing Conditions Report (10 Minutes, Peterson)

- Steve summarized page 12 from the GP Vision Book, the executive summary and Downtown Chapter of the Existing Conditions Report
- Mark clarified that the committee's work will be on principles and goals for the General Plan, not on creating implementation strategies. A specific plan would be needed for that.
- A member of the public asked which other cities have a downtown element and if those cities have Downtown Specific Plans.
- Steve mentioned the concurrent economic study of retail sales
- A committee member mentioned that we should be considering a larger area when planning for a 2030 downtown

3.0 Review and Comment on Proposed Principles (50 Minutes, Brodeur)

3.1 Land Use

- Committee Comments on the overall guiding principles
 - Include Transit Oriented Development
 - Marketing of downtown with help from the City
 - A member of the public suggested an ongoing Downtown Committee to keep the vision active and on the City staff's radar
 - Principles should be functional, not aspirations – they should include leadership, patrons, and operational components
- Comments On Land Use/Community Design
 - #6, Differentiate between locally-owned franchises and national-chains w/o local owners; only write it in a way that keeps the local sense of community and keeps out more "pattern" restaurants (fast-food, chains); focus on quality more than quantity when addressing franchises

- Or focus on preferences for local businesses to help them out-complete new pattern restaurants
- Include a principle about using the historic building code
- Include a goal for reduced blight and building upkeep
- Include a principle keep the historic structure inventory updated
- #10(3) should mention quality and design in addition
- Include principles that help the city remove the “dead” spaces/uses to make it more pedestrian and retail friendly

3.2 Circulation/Parking

- #5 some thought streets should be closed to vehicles, others think they should be closed. Mark suggested an option that is a convertible street (may be closed with bollards or driven as a one-lane road), so this principle should be revised to not say “shall not”; maybe use the language “in limited circumstances”; build in flexibility for moving traffic
- Include something addressing the conversion of Main & Broadway to two-way streets to divert some traffic elsewhere and make these into “great” streets: including bike lanes, diagonal parking, and fewer lanes
- The Committee was instructed to provide comments to Meredith by Friday, 3/28/08

4.0 Vision Plan Examples and Definition (25 Minutes, Brodeur)

- Mark explained the vision/design plan to the committee, using San Luis Obispo as an example. The document would be shared and posted widely, and used by decision-making bodies for future decisions. It wouldn't be a Master Plan.

5.0 Discuss Field Trip and Public Workshop (5 Minutes, Williams)

- Reviewed itinerary for field trip

6.0 Business from the Floor (10 Minutes)

The Chair will invite persons in the audience wishing to address the Committee to identify themselves and address any matter not appearing on the current posted agenda that they may wish to discuss. Although the Committee may discuss items brought forward at this time, no action can be taken. Should the Committee determine that action is required, the item or items may be included for action on a subsequent posted agenda.

7.0 Adjournment