

Agencies, Special Districts, Utilities Interview on Growth Alternatives - July 9, 2008

Attendees: Jenny Marr (DFG), Doug Fogel (Butte County Environmental Health), Glenda Morse (CSUC), Sadie Smith and Randy Evans (CalTrans), Michael Weissenborn (CUSD), Les Jauron (Butte College), Gail Williams and Armen Kamian (BCAQMD), Steve Visconti (CARD), Pia Sevelius (BC-RCD)

Land Use/Growth Alternative Comments

- prefer a denser, less auto-centric community
- Smaller homes and lots will be better for aging population and rising energy costs.
- Housing needs to be close to jobs; link planning to economic development strategy. For example, attract unique employers that don't necessarily grow the population, green industry for example. Encourage creativity.
- Fuel prices will have a huge impact on shopping choices.
- Neighborhood cores with local services and retail are important to include.
- Habitat areas on Alt B aren't viable for development because DFG will be making a jeopardy finding for BCM. DFG is concerned that Nance Canyon will have too many vernal pools to be viable. In addition, Schuster may be too expensive to develop given environmental res on site (VP). BCM takes west of airport off the table. NCSP area needs to be surveyed for BCM because of vernal pools onsite.
- CARD says regularly spaced parks need to be available for community physical and mental health. Will be a need for 1 to 2 additional community parks (25 acres minimum, 45 ac is better) within access for bicyclists and pedestrians in SE and maybe Diamond Match. Mini-parks (pocket) too small for CARD to maintain; they encourage HOAs to maintain.
- CalTrans says 99 will be updated w/in 20-30 years (into Interstate). CT would rather not manage 32.
- CSUC says don't limit land supply so much that the community stagnates and rejects new students, but Alternative C is also good in that it uses less new vacant land. Visuals would help the community understand the aesthetic impacts of C. A transect approach to the ag interface (working with the County) would make a better buffer than a hard line.
- BC soil survey is much higher resolution than earlier one. Use it as a basis for deciding where to move Greenline.
- Open space isn't only parks, but the ag land acts as open space as well which is a vote for the more compact option C or a smaller B. There must be a buffer though.
- Incorporate the protection of our watershed and drainage in our planning; it becomes important when considering 20 years of development.
- Encourage redevelopment of opportunity sites within Chico. Find visual examples of before & after sites in similar cities.
- We should acknowledge the resources on the east with a "gold" line.

Additional Comments for General Plan(ning)

- Planning must consider public health and air quality

- Must consider rising energy costs and plan for that with public transportation, and carpooling, plan for narrower streets and small garages if any garage.
- The key to solving our air quality problem is transportation...we must work with BCAG!
- Public transit (buses) are good for a healthy community and brings potential shoppers downtown (transit center). Also needed to/from airport.
- Shared cars too.
- Chico is ripe for these changes. New Urban Builders are a good example that is attractive to many people.
- Chico needs more bike and alt. transportation paths, especially in fringe areas of the city. Also, make complete streets allowing different uses beyond autos, even for markets and parades. They are key to environmental and public health, and this is the #1 request from the County GP CAC.
- Create incentives and polices that are within the control of the City to accomplish our goals.
- Public education is needed to get people away from their cars. Why not consider light rail and riding/vanpooling. People are willing to pay for quality public transit (light rail) when they feel safe. Follow example of progressive cities: Berkeley, Davis. Transit must make connections the public wants. CT can help with grants. CT values our nexus study & our partnership, wants to cooperate.
- CSUC intends to be collaborative w/ City. They're using Fehr & Peers for their traffic study. Many students want a sustainable community including alternative transportation routes.
- There needs to be more communication between BC cities for shared opportunities (e.g., bus and rail connections, affordable housing and jobs sharing).
- Include design measures for new constructions that considers water & energy conservation, including planting indigenous trees. Make it a requirement for the developers...it will also be a cost-savings mitigation (air quality).
- We can best implement our ideas by considering the cost for the developer...will it pencil out? Use incentives to get what we want. Public education regarding alternate methods that actually cost less!
- Parking lot trees are terrific. Enforce those lots that aren't growing.
- We need to be very careful with our aquifer – water quality & quantity.