

**Stakeholder Meeting Notes
Department Heads/City of Chico
January 23, 2008**

GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

This group is made up of the City Manager and the respective heads of each of the City's Departments. The primary focus of this group was the creation of a sustainable and healthy City – economically, socially, and environmentally. Key issues included providing a range of housing for a variety of income groups, ensuring adequate infrastructure for the community, and maintaining a leadership role as a commercial center in the north state.

Thoughtful handwritten responses were also provided by many of the participants that further expand or add to the interview discussion summarized below.

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES FOR CHICO IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS

The group was very concerned about housing, transportation, and financial stability. Overall priorities included:

- Creating a sustainable and healthy City - economically, socially, and environmentally.
- Providing infrastructure throughout the City to meet quality of life needs.
- Providing a wide range of housing for variety of income groups – one benefit is that individuals have more disposable income to spend in the community.
- All urban areas need to be in City limits so land uses, design, and infrastructure can be to City standards. Need to have consistent land use coordination with County within Sphere and adjacent to Sphere.
- There needs to be defined and agreed upon City service levels, as well as a clear understanding of the cost associated with those service levels. Staffing and services need to grow commensurate with community growth. This would benefit the City by clarifying achievable phased growth, rather than catching up after growth has occurred.
- To create a healthy community and to finance services, we need to have a balance between residential and commercial.
- The City must maintain its leadership role in economic development and jobs/housing balance.
- Important to have good connectivity for commerce (e.g., airport, etc.).
- Enhance parks, increase recreation opportunities, and provide additional open space and habitat via the HCP process.

Department Head Notes
2 of 2

WHAT SHOULD NOT CHANGE IN TERMS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

- Maintain vibrant downtown and keep it as a focal point.
- Continue to emphasize public and community input.
- Maintain compact physical form and community identity. Discourage sprawl development which has implications for service provision/cost.
- Need to consider new paradigms for development to pay for infrastructure and services earlier.
- Infill opportunities – need to educate to build tolerance, acceptance and understanding about what higher density means. A good example is the 1200 Park Avenue project.

CRITICAL AREAS THE GENERAL PLAN SHOULD ADDRESS

- The City is not perceived as business friendly. Need to change that perception. There would need to be a commitment from the top down. Need to improve transparency and predictability.
- Education regarding how services and infrastructure are provided.
- Need to keep our workforce in working in the community.
- Need better coordination on growth and other issues with CSU, Chico.
- Focus on being the most livable small city in California, the West, the U.S. (art, culture, CSUC, multi-modal transportation, jobs, safety and health, open space, recreation).
- Look for more opportunities for public/private sector partnerships to provide services.
- Retaining our regional position --- if we lose our economic position, we will suffer from less revenue/economic vitality. Consider other models or niche sectors we can grow --- don't only focus on retail.
- Comprehensive encouragement of economic vitality --- capitalize on the unique characteristics of Chico.

WHAT BARRIERS DOES THE CITY FACE FOR SUCCESS

- Fiscal constraints and the ability to provide quality of life services.
- Not fully understanding Chico's changing demographics --- need think of what the City's population will look like in the future
- Divisiveness in the community makes it difficult to go in a clear direction.
- County cooperation, Agreement on a growth strategy, and tax-sharing.
- Environmental constraints.
- Energy and climate change.
- Regulatory and legislative constraints affect feasibility and cost of development and capital infrastructure.