

**Stakeholder Meeting Notes  
Economic Development Committee  
February 14, 2008**



**ATTENDANCE**

Approximately 20 persons attended the Economic Development Committee meeting to discuss the vision for the City's General Plan. The sign-in sheet is attached.

**WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES FOR CHICO IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS**

- Public safety.
- Well planned growth (downtown, mixed-use).
- Better private sector economy (big public sector job market here, but more private sector and more business opportunities).
- Premier center of commerce for this area of northern California.
- Preserve and enhance Chico's historic role.
- We have knowledge – we should keep knowledge resources, export knowledge.
- Chico become a haven for innovation and entrepreneurial (start up companies that will help fuel the economy).
- Not growing as fast for the sake of growing fast.
- Enhancement and stabilization of downtown – more mixed use and more attractive to growing and big business.
- CC adopted strategy for expanding the economic base and don't think that we're focused on implementing (too difficult to get through the entitlement process from cradle to grave).
- Not a sustainable economy in the mix – it's too dependent upon residential development.
- Chico lacks commercial and industrial property that is ready to go. Need more ready inventory now. Reluctance in the City to extend too far north or south, but the existing and future inventory is a real concern.
- Wholesale company on the south side of town – not enough of it and it's too difficult to access. When the locations are so remote, it impacts the success of the business.
- Need to be attracting incubator businesses but also a full service community.
- We need to be attracting businesses that can offer good opportunities.
- No cultural amenities plan – need to look at it comprehensively. Need to figure out how to use the culture and the arts.
- Infrastructure to tie our modes of transportation together. We need to be able to sell the fact that you don't need to use your car.
- Big gap between lower and higher level jobs.
- Need to address partnerships to get the venture capital to the ideas/small business to make the successful business happen.
- "Total livability" defines Chico's character.
- Need to prioritize the updating of our aging infrastructure. This should be the City Government first priority. City needs to take a leadership role in identifying where infrastructure

## **WHAT SHOULD NOT CHANGE IN TERMS OF THE GENERAL PLAN**

- Plan needs to embrace that we need all of this in our economy and we need the land use to accommodate it. Tendency in our community is to want everything, but not realizing what it takes to have it.
- University is land locked – there is a need for a long term strategy/collaboration about moving forward because it is a significant part of our economic engine.
- Parking is a problem that needs to be fixed. Get rid of fee for parking and provide the parking. Need to solve this problem if we're going to get parking Downtown.
- Infrastructure is needed first to develop any enterprise – and to flourish. First step is to do an inventory of infrastructure.
- Things to encourage a more vital downtown – eliminate in-lieu fee and increase the height limit. Many of the existing properties are held in trust – divested – ground leases are not currently well received – City needs to help prove that ground leases can pencil.
- We're overlooking our youth population – particularly the disadvantaged youth population.
- Expectation for students is that they have to leave because there are not good job opportunities.
- Need to improve connectivity between uses (e.g., Southwest Chico Plan with reluctance to connect to the industrial area to the south). Housing close to jobs needs to be a priority.
- Transit should be invested in because it's a huge benefit to our local economy (e.g., just one Downtown Loop) – we need to make it a priority. Three miles in both directions from Downtown along Esplanade and park – back and forth transit options.
- Concern is that we as a City need to figure out how to do all of these things ourselves. There needs to be a discussion about how to leverage public and private investment maintain control over what and how these things are done/developed. Need to avoid the regulation and restrictions that come with this.
- Protect land around the airport

## **THINGS TO ADD TO THE COMMUNITY**

- Performing arts center for downtown. Lots of activity to
- Competitive swimming pool.
- Easier air travel.
- Better coordination of transportation in and out of the City.
- Need to address the need to export services.
- If we want to grow, we need more multi-use facilities for convention and visitors.
- Need to maintain our trails and open space with our economic growth.
- Need to help define consumer – allow the market to define the need.
- Signature architectural feature/iconic symbol (something magnificent downtown) – we're open for business
- Capacity to do net metering.
- Chico needs better branding as a community.
- Electric car share facility.

## **THINGS TO CHANGE TO THE COMMUNITY**

- City's infill policy.
- More engaged in green development.
- Developer incentives.
- More services for areas.

## **VISION – WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN 2030**

- Chico has a strong sense of place – entrance/gateway.
- Seamless collaboration throughout the City (e.g., no barriers between City and CSUC)
- Mom and pop business can thrive.
- More downtowns around town – thriving commercial center in the middle of the Avenues.
- Children can walk to the park and there is something to do when they get there.
- High speed rail to Sacramento.
- Not auto dependent.
- Light rail from Eaton to Park Avenue.
- “Just as easy for a company of 1000 to open and thrive in the City as a company of 1”
- We've gone north, south, and infill, but not to the east or west.
- Interchange at Southgate to accommodate growth.
- Cattle grazing on the hills.
- Diamond Mach is a thriving, hip, historical place – connected by a job center directly to the south of it.
- Tourism draw for signature events and nationwide cultural events.
- Revitalized land in existing areas.
- Enhance creeks and creek corridors throughout the community.
- Annexed land to avoid.
- Machupta tribe have built a beautiful casino and historic museum.
- Mangrove Boulevard looks like Esplanade.
- Rehabilitated all of our neighborhoods.
- Chico is sustainable.
- Chico is generating its own electricity.
- More north south arteries (with synchronized lights).
- Lots of parks like Bidwell Park celebrated for their special features.
- Lower Bidwell Park is fully developed.
- Disc golf course.