

**Stakeholder Meeting Notes
Mayor's Business Advisory Group
February 20, 2008**



GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

This group was comprised of representatives of various Chico businesses and educational institutions, who expressed overall concern for the future vitality of the business environment. As stakeholder participants these individuals expressed interest in enhancing Chico's economy, providing job opportunities, and striving to maintain and improve the business climate.

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES FOR CHICO IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS

The group was very concerned about enhancement of Chico's business environment. Overall priorities included:

- Expansion of Airport infrastructure and flight services
- Creation of a business friendly and "open" environment
- Define clear base employment sectors or niches, while providing opportunities for start-up entrepreneurial enterprises.
- Slow and environmental sensitive, well planned, sustainable growth while enhancing quality of life.
- Increased tourism draw; convention center, statues, festivals, sustainability and art themes.

WHAT SHOULD NOT CHANGE IN TERMS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

As stakeholder participants these individual expressed an interest in keeping with the overall vision for what the City should be. The City should continue to develop and enhance business in the Downtown area by building up, while providing opportunities for housing at the City's edges at lower densities. These stakeholders also recommend city-wide wi-fi should not be a priority.

CRITICAL AREAS THE GENERAL PLAN SHOULD ADDRESS

- Recognize that it is people that make a viable community. Ensure accessibility of the Downtown area, including a residential component.
- Endorse one agency for economic development, consolidate groups.
- Reduce the complications related to relocating businesses to Chico, while attracting high value business and executives through improved air service.
- The City should endorse specific groups for targeted economic development and clustering purposes to funnel efforts, rather than diffusing energy and resources.
- Match University and Community College course offerings to local business needs.
- Construction of a "loop road" around Chico.
- Develop and opportunities for an Auto-mall to concentrate auto lots in one location.

- Increase transit options to Downtown area to get people out of cars.
- Create new industrial sites, south of Chico to support accessibility of commuting employees, and freeway transport.
- Enhance cycling opportunities throughout Chico.
- New construction and streets should be branded with a “Chico-feel” with emphasis on sustainability.

WHAT BARRIERS DOES THE CITY FACE FOR SUCCESS

- No growth attitude.
- Confusing regulatory and entitlement process that result in losses for business community.
- Disconnected groups doing economic development so new projects and businesses do not know who to work with.
- Lack of unifying community vision and follow through for implementation.
- Need to cultivate risk-taking behavior in the city organization, and bold decision making.
- Lack of consensus among the community, if Chico waits too long regulatory environment will become more problematic.
- Need political will to decide what Chico needs and stick with it, take risks.