

**Stakeholder Meeting Notes
Sustainability Task Force
January 7, 2007**



GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

This Sustainability Task Force was formed by the City Council in December of 2006 to make recommendations to the City Council on initiatives to implement the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while simultaneously meeting environmental, economic and community needs now and in the future.. The 15 members are a diverse community group (e.g. CSU Chico, Sierra Club, developers, etc.).

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES FOR CHICO IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS

- Effective use of the Climate Action Report by the Planning Department.
- Incentivize and equitize sustainable building practices that drive efficiency (e.g., loans, reduced fees for multifamily and compact housing).
- Economic sustainability – how can we save money.
- Educate the public.
- Mixed use, compact, walkable, bike-able neighborhoods in existing and growth areas.
- Develop growth areas that reflect sustainability principles and community needs.
- Promote the use of green building standards and solar power.
- Reduce GHG emissions 7% below 1990 levels by 2012.
- Enhance environmental, economic and social issues within City.
- Make Chico a leader in sustainability efforts.
- More energy efficiency and use of alternative energy.
- More transportation options.
- Protecting water table – learn where water recharge areas exist and protect them as open space.
- Incentives for more compact housing – this promotes efficiency. Low income affordable housing – partner with inclusionary ordinance.

WHAT SHOULD NOT CHANGE IN TERMS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Most of the group responses focused on what should change in terms of the General Plan with the exception of the comment that the RDA set aside is working well.

- City has tried to diffuse 'density' concerns over the last few years, but the existing GP needs to be crystal clear with text and images to ensure greater consistency in the interpretation and implementation.
- Describe/define compact form is for Chico.
- Need a working definition of sustainability.
- City has done a good job at incorporating flexibility into zoning districts (ranges) but right now developers are being told where their projects are to fit within these ranges so it isn't working well. Need more clarity, consistency, and transparency in the process to improve predictability.

- Better define 'compatible' – show visual examples.

CRITICAL AREAS THE GENERAL PLAN SHOULD ADDRESS IMMEDIATELY

- Economic sustainability.
- Keep college students in town.
- Define a growth area and determine where we're not going to build.
- Maintain open space.
- Process growth areas faster.
- Infrastructure and transportation are key (sewer, surface streets, power/alternative energy sources) – link infrastructure internally and to the rest of the City.
- Plan business development to match City needs for income – the economic plan needs to meet the City's financial objectives.

WHAT BARRIERS DOES THE CITY FACE FOR SUCCESS? HOW CAN THEY BE ADDRESSED?

- There is a significant difference of opinion in the City in terms of climate action.
- \$ will be a barrier to implementing ideas and prioritizing projects.
- Consensus in the community is difficult - Sharpening differences and having active debate may not be a bad process – consensus is not always the best path to define the vision of the future.
- The City needs to decide what they want to be and convey it – are they pro-growth or not?
- Educating the public will be difficult – the City is disconnected.
- Neighborhood outreach has been successful and this is a good vehicle for education.
- Media should be used to educate the public, and keep updates going over time.
- Use incentives and voluntary programs to get people involved.