



City Council Agenda Report

Meeting Date: 03/18/08

TO: City Council and Planning Commission

File: General Plan Update

FROM: Holly Keeler, Principal Planner (879-6803)
Pam Johns, PMC General Plan Project Manager

RE: General Plan Update - Imagine Chico 2030 Vision Book and Existing Conditions Report

REPORT IN BRIEF

At critical points in the General Plan Update process, staff and the General Plan consultant, PMC, (the Project Team), are scheduled to check-in with the City Council and Planning Commission to allow for public comment and to discuss key points in this significant planning effort. The first of these critical benchmarks has arrived.

Perhaps the most important component of the City's General Plan Update process is a comprehensive community outreach program. The first charge for the outreach effort is the development of a community "vision" --- ideas and dreams about the future of the City as seen through the eyes of Chico residents. To get at that vision, the Project Team conducted a telephone survey, designed an interactive website, hosted community workshops, and met with multiple stakeholder groups. In all, more than 20 meetings were held to get a broad perspective of future visions. At the joint Council/Planning Commission meeting, the Project Team will present an overview of the outreach effort to date, and summarize the culminating product of that effort --- the Imagine Chico 2030 Vision Book (see **Attachment A**). At its February 27th meeting, the General Plan Advisory Committee reviewed and provided comments to the Project Team on the Vision Book.

Another key component of the General Plan Update is the development of an Existing Conditions Report (see **Attachment C**). The Existing Conditions Report provides a "snapshot" of existing conditions in the City and is a technical resource for the General Plan Update and associated environmental document. This document will serve as a resource document with information regarding the demographics, physical form, land use patterns, transportation systems, economic characteristics, infrastructure and services, and environmental conditions within the City's designated Planning Area. At the meeting, the Project Team will provide a general overview of the Existing Conditions Report and highlight key conclusions.

Recommendation:

The Planning Services Director recommends that the City Council and Planning Commission:

- 1) Consider the Imagine Chico 2030 Vision Book and General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report and provide feedback as appropriate to the Project Team. No formal action is needed during this phase of the project.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with Council's action.

SUMMARY

Chico 2030 Vision Book

A vision for a General Plan is used to set the framework for achieving change within the planning horizon of the document. It is intended to inspire decision makers and the public about the future of their community. It is based on idealistic thinking and community preferences. It is about looking forward into the future and coming up with broad and long-range changes and improvements in form, character, and function for the community. A vision covers all aspects of a city including, but not limited to, its land uses, urban form, and circulation patterns, as well as its social, environmental, and economic character.

As part of the General Plan Update visioning process, the City conducted several forms of public outreach from November 2007 through February 2008 in order to hear what the people of Chico wanted their community to look and feel like in the year 2030. Specifically, the public outreach efforts included a phone survey, visioning workshops with live polling and small group discussions, and stakeholder meetings as described below.

Phone Survey. In November 2007, the City worked with a professional surveying consultant to conduct a statistically valid telephone survey of 400 residents. Participants were asked about quality of life, the relative importance of a variety of local issues, travel patterns and behavior, housing preferences, and communication style.

Visioning Workshops. In December 2007, the City conducted two workshops to understand local issues and ideas for the future. More than 160 residents participated in a live polling exercise parallel to the telephone survey. They also completed small group exercises to identify what they want to preserve, improve, and add to Chico in the future. Ultimately, each small group told their collective story about the ideal Chico in the year 2030.

Stakeholder Meetings. From November 2007 through February 2008, the Project Team conducted more than a dozen meetings with City stakeholder groups (e.g., environmentalists, developers, economic interests, neighborhood associations, etc.) to understand their priorities for Chico in the next 20 years, what should change, what should stay the same, and what they might identify as obstacles or barriers to make their desired changes.

The Imagine Chico 2030 Vision book (**Attachment A**) was developed to be a guiding tool for the City's General Plan Update by summarizing the future ideas and visions of Chico residents captured during the initial public outreach. Its purpose is to give residents, staff, and leaders of Chico insight into what the community wants as we move forward developing the goals, policies, and actions that will achieve the vision through the General Plan. All of the supporting material that was utilized to develop the Vision book, including the phone survey results, visioning workshop materials and notes, and summaries from the stakeholder interviews, are provided as **Attachment B**.

General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report

The Existing Conditions Report (**Attachment C**) is a resource document to inform and support preparation of the General Plan Update. The report will also be used to prepare the "Existing

Setting” section of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Information contained in the report reflects current data and conditions as of December 2007. It is expected that additional information will become available or will be developed over the two-year course of the General Plan Update to inform and update these existing conditions. Any such subsequent data will supplement this report to better inform the General Plan Update.

Major subject areas covered in this technical background report include population, demographics and land use, economic development, infrastructure, storm water drainage, energy and communications, community facilities and services, transportation and circulation, recreation, open space and scenic resources, air quality, noise, cultural and archaeological resources, biological resources, agricultural resources, surface and ground water, geologic resources, mineral resources, and physical hazards.

The Existing Conditions Report is organized into twelve chapters, which mirror the City’s identified General Plan Elements as follows:

- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. Community Design
- Chapter 3. Land Use
- Chapter 4. Transportation
- Chapter 5. Parks, Public Facilities, and Services
- Chapter 6. Economic Development
- Chapter 7. Open Space and Environmental Conservation
- Chapter 8. Safety and Safety Services
- Chapter 9. Noise
- Chapter 10. Housing
- Chapter 11. Sustainability
- Chapter 12. Downtown

An Executive Summary has been prepared that highlights information presented in the Existing Conditions Report (see **Attachment D**). This document is intended to help the reader quickly understand the conclusions of the background analysis for the General Plan update. The conclusions are statements of fact that will serve as the basis for subsequent research and analysis in the next phases of the General Plan Update process.

Reviewed by:



Steve Peterson, Planning Director

Approved by:



David Burkland, City Manager

DISTRIBUTION:

City Clerk (18)
Planning Commission (8)
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Butte County Chief Administrative Officer
Tim Snellings, Director, Department of Development Services, Butte County

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Imagine Chico 2030 Vision
- B. Supporting Material for the Imagine Chico 2030 Vision
- C. General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report
- D. Executive Summary - Existing Condition Report

Please note this attachment is not available on the web page due to the size of the document. A hard copy is available for review in the Public Review Binder on the third floor of City Hall, 411 Main Street.