

Letter: General Plan imperative: Protect Chico

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The heart and soul of the General Plan must be the preservation and protection of Chico's unique way of life, its environment and old neighborhoods. Realize, too, that Chico can not be improved upon. We have reached a point of overgrowth where traffic congestion, serious crime, gray skies, old neighborhood destruction, water quality, big-box dominance, noise pollution, Bidwell Park degradation, etc., can only get worse. Just keeping the status quo would be a victory for Chico. That will require a no-growth or slow-growth initiative as in Petaluma, Davis and San Luis Obispo. Until the above overgrowth residues are erased, they can't be mitigated.

Stop the speculation created when developers buy into a neighborhood and then change the zoning, making their development more dense and incompatible with the established zoning and way of life of the neighborhood. It's speculative and unjust.

We have been forced past our ideal size, one that is out of sync with our sensitive environment and economic equilibrium. Profitable greed has been allowed to control our community's evolution. Our chamber continues to over-recruit people with the charms of Chico that are eradicated when overgrowth results.

— Jerry Olio, Chico

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