

ShastaFORWARD>>
Phase I Community Engagement:
Values & Priorities Assessment

October 2008



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

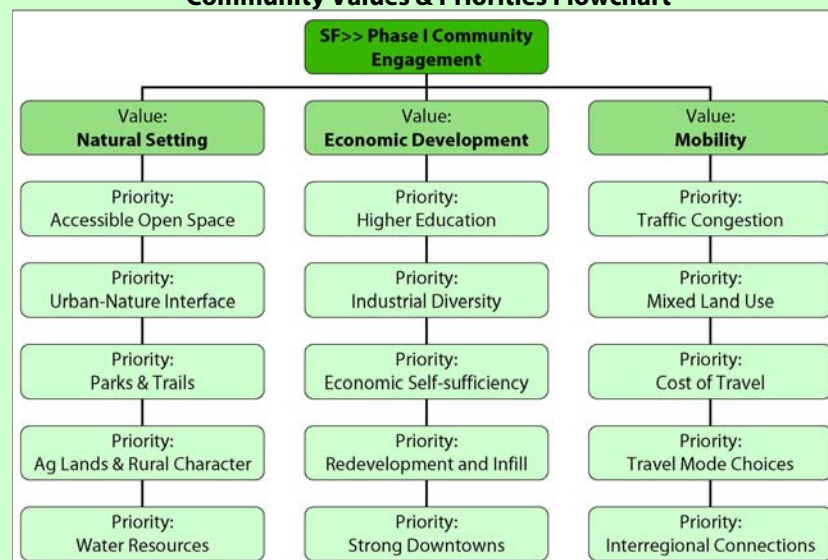
The Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency (SCRTPA) is lead agency for the ShastaFORWARD>> Regional Blueprint project. The purpose of ShastaFORWARD>> is to plan for Shasta County’s growing population in a manner that best reflects local values, priorities, and available resources. In collaboration with Shasta County residents and partner agencies, the SCRTPA seeks dialogue and consensus on a long-range regional growth vision. This report provides a summary and preliminary analysis of the first phase of public outreach, or ‘Community Values & Priorities Assessment’.

In general, residents were in agreement that planning should be done cooperatively between local agencies for the benefit of region. Residents were also clear on several key objectives, namely:

- Preserve and capitalize on Shasta County’s unique strengths and points of local pride, and
- Learn from the choices made by other communities in California who have already experienced growth and development.

Core values overwhelmingly discussed or cited by Shasta County residents in response to public outreach efforts are: 1) natural setting, 2) economic development, and 3) mobility. Shasta County residents perceived and expressed these values through fifteen priorities. While some priorities clearly stood out from the others – such as Accessible Open Space, Higher Education, and Strong Downtowns – the priorities are not arranged in rank order of importance. Ultimately, the relative importance or emphasis placed on individual priorities will be determined by the public through the scenario development strategies are better understood.

Community Values & Priorities Flowchart





Other concerns critical to the future of Shasta County were mentioned, including but not limited to public safety, public health, and a variety of social issues. While in no way diminishing the importance of such issues, they simply were not consistently discussed or identified to the same degree as the fifteen priorities described within this report. While not all issues could be included in the results, the ShastaFORWARD>> Steering Committee largely agreed that progress in the fifteen priority areas would have a positive net effect on a myriad of other issues.

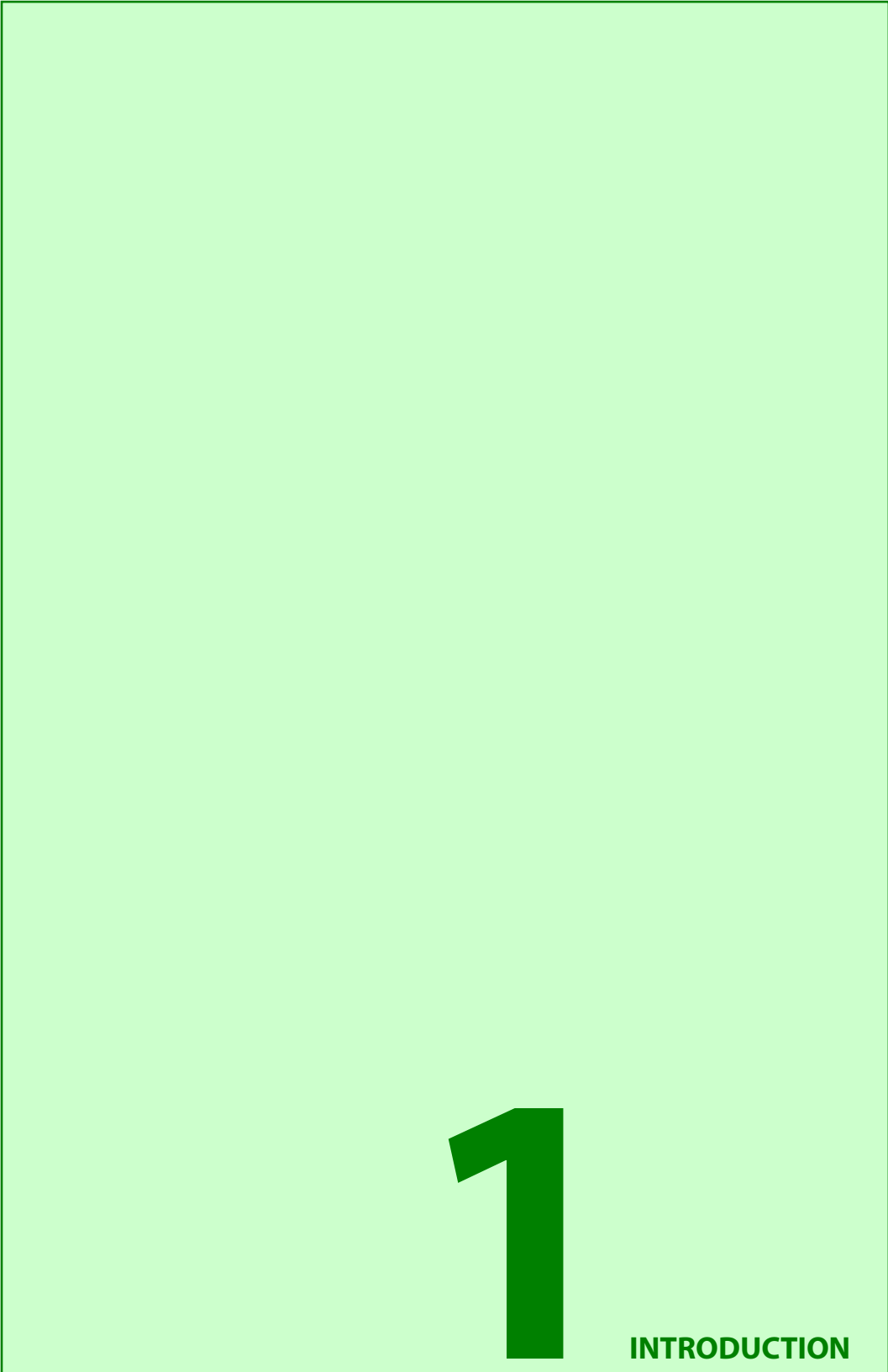
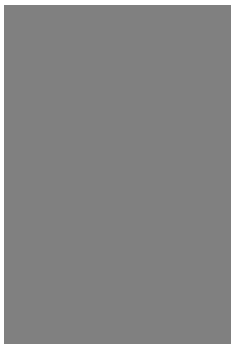
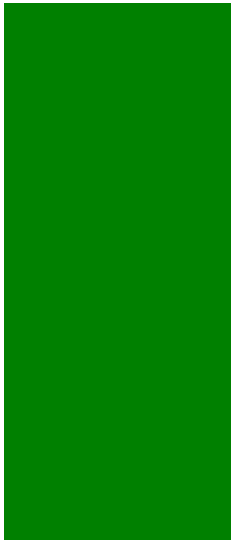
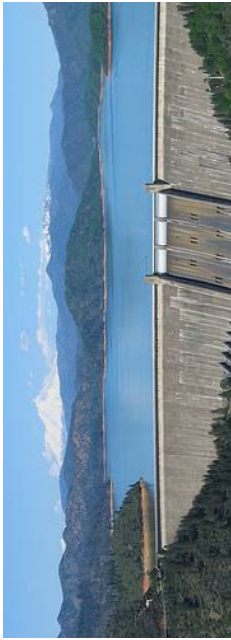
It should also be noted that other priorities exist that are unique to certain portions of Shasta County. This was particularly apparent in urban versus rural areas. Where appropriate, these difference are highlighted within this report. During subsequent portions of the ShastaFORWARD>> planning process, different assumptions will be utilized in different areas of the county to prevent a 'one size fits all' approach.

It is estimated upwards of 1,700 residents directly contributed during the community values and priorities phase of public outreach. Put another way, approximately 1 out of every 80 Shasta County residents age 16 and older voiced their thoughts and opinions.

It is anticipated that all phases of the ShastaFORWARD>> regional blueprint will be completed by June 2009. End products of this effort will include the following:

- A final report describing the ShastaFORWARD>> planning process, project findings, and general strategies for implementation of the preferred regional growth vision,
- Scenario modeling output, including land use maps and projected progress toward regional goals and performance measures, and
- A regional growth modeling platform and accompanying datasets for use by local agencies.

A multi-step vetting process is currently underway to help insure the ShastaFORWARD>> process is community-driven and reflects local best interests. At key decision points – such as publication of this report – the general public, the ShastaFORWARD>> Steering Committee, and city and county planning commissions are asked to review and provide feedback and direction. Project findings and recommendations will be presented to local governing councils and boards responsible for land use planning for their consideration.



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INTRODUCTION



I. INTRODUCTION>>

The Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency (SCRTPA) is lead agency for the ShastaFORWARD>> Regional Blueprint project. Partner agencies within the planning area are Shasta County, Redding, Anderson, and City of Shasta Lake. Utilizing new planning tools, technologies, and public engagement strategies, the SCRTPA seeks to attain regional consensus on a preferred regional growth vision for Shasta County through the year 2050; a vision that best reflects the values and priorities of local residents and accounts for available resources. More detailed information about the Regional Blueprint Planning Program and this project is available at www.shastafoward.com or by contacting project staff.

Blueprint studies are intended to provide a comprehensive view of growth-related issues from a regional, long-term perspective. Computer modeling and visualizations are employed to assist residents, stakeholders, and decision-makers in assessing potential growth scenarios and analyzing their relative merits when viewed against long-term outcomes and stated community values and priorities.

In collaboration with Shasta County residents and partner agencies, a community vision – and accompanying strategies in the pursuit of that vision – will be generated. At the heart of ShastaFORWARD>> is a community-driven process comprised of the following two phases:

Phase I: Community Values & Priorities Assessment

Phase II: Generation & Selection of Preferred Regional Growth Alternative

This report summarizes and presents a preliminary analysis of all public input gathered throughout Phase I. More specifically, this report is divided into the following sections:

- Public Engagement Methods and Participation Results
- Community Values & Priorities Assessment
- Next Steps: Community-Based Scenario Development
- Appendices/Source Documentation

The goal of Phase I is not to advocate a particular scenario or direction for the future growth and development of Shasta County; rather it is intended to accurately and faithfully consolidate the results from all public engagement efforts needed to begin the scenario development process. The following is intended to provide an unfettered view of community values and priorities



prior to consideration of tradeoffs and funding realities that must eventually be worked out.

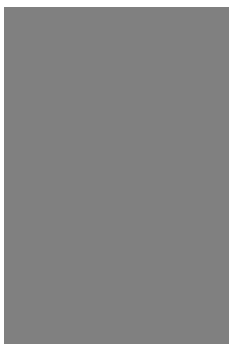
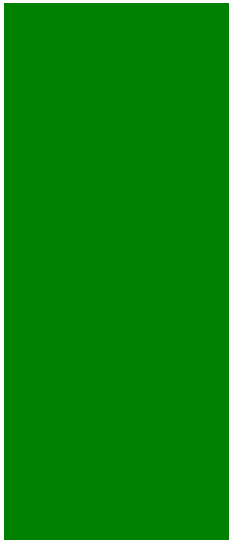
A key feature and benefit of the scenario planning process is the inclusion and consideration of a wide range of public input, including those recommendations which may fall outside mainstream thought. Good ideas are good ideas, regardless of how frequently they are voiced. All input is relevant to the process, as it permits the juxtaposition and evaluation of different and sometimes opposing perspectives on growth.

Rather than marginalizing such ideas or opinions, they are viewed as an essential component of the process. Whether conservative or radical, local residents' ideas can be explored with equal attention and serve to put accepted notions and common assumptions to the test. Where relevant, comments from ShastaFORWARD>> participants have been included within the summary. A full chronicling of all public input – over 150 pages worth – is provided by appendices.

The exploration of new ideas and the generation of potential growth scenarios are designed to enhance the decision-making process by connecting actual or potential policies with their long-term outcomes. Similarly, it permits the exploration of status quo policies under different assumptions for future conditions. Regardless of how one feels about the direction of current development trends, the environment in which Shasta County residents live and work is ever-changing. ShastaFORWARD>> provides the tools and the forum for local residents to test new ideas and generate outcome-based strategies that local agencies may incorporate into existing planning processes.



The RTPA's regional blueprint effort includes development of performance measures to quantify progress toward the region's preferred regional growth vision as well as those performance measures of statewide interest.



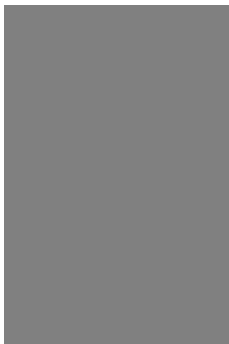
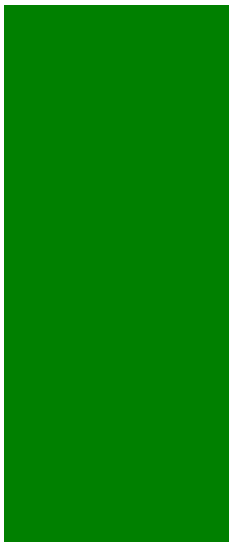
Within the framework of expressed local community values and priorities documented in this report, the SCRTPA will work to meet the following California Regional Blueprint Planning Program goals¹:

- Foster a more efficient land-use pattern that (a) supports improved mobility, (b) accommodates an adequate supply of housing for all incomes, (c) reduces impacts on valuable habitat, prime farmland, and air quality, (d) increases resource use efficiency, and (e) results in safe and vibrant neighborhoods.
- Provide consumers more housing and transportation choices.
- Improve California's economic competitiveness and quality of life.
- Reduce costs and time needed to deliver transportation projects through informed early public and resource agency involvement.
- Secure local government and community support, including that of under-represented groups, to achieve the resulting comprehensive vision through including innovative computer models and public involvement activities.
- Establish a process for public and stakeholder engagement that can be replicated to build awareness of, and support for, critical infrastructure and housing needs.

Next steps in the Shasta*FORWARD*>> process includes the following:

- Community workshops will be held to facilitate the translation of public input from abstract views and commentary to specific growth strategies.
- Shasta*FORWARD*>> Steering Committee meetings will be held to examine community input and validate the analysis performed on this data. The Steering Committee will also assist in organizing and extracting up to three of the community's scenarios for recommendation to planning commissions in the region.
- Respective planning commissions will be asked to review and give direction on the proposed scenarios to ensure each could reasonably and feasibly be implemented within their jurisdiction.
- The Shasta*FORWARD*>> Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will assist in the technical adaptation of scenario themes to computer modeling

¹ www.calblueprint.dot.ca.gov/



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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METHODS & PARTICIPATION RESULTS



II. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METHODS AND PARTICIPATION RESULTS>>

During Phase I, community values and priorities were solicited regarding the current state of the region, quality of life indicators, and how growth and development projections through the year 2050 may affect these perceptions. Multiple outreach methods were utilized to ensure a diverse and representative cross-section of the community was sampled. All public input received was combined and cross-tabulated in order to address potential biases attributable to employment sector, age, ethnicity, tenure of residence, and other demographic characteristics. Phase I was completed in June 2008. Only Shasta County residents over the age of 16 were included in the survey results.

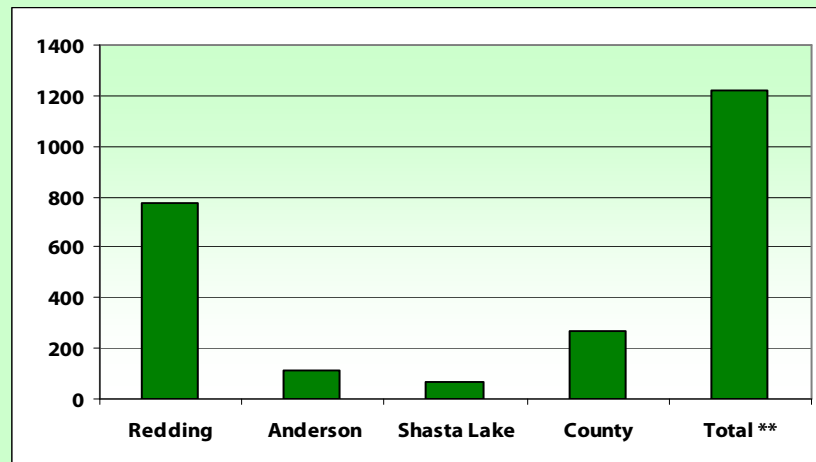
ORIGIN OF PUBLIC INPUT

An initial survey, conducted by telephone in November 2007, queried 384 residents. An additional 1,071 surveys were returned between March and July 2008 via an electronic survey posted on the project website and hard-copy surveys distributed at libraries, community centers, and at various outreach meetings throughout the region. Collectively, 1,455 residents responded to the community survey.

Source of Survey Responses

Telephone survey	384
Online survey	653
Mail survey	418
Total	1,455

Survey Responses by Area of Residents*



* Does not include small group outreach session participant

** Not all respondents indicated their place of residence



In addition to survey responses, 306 individuals participated in ‘small-group outreach sessions’ conducted throughout Shasta County. Sessions featured a brief introduction to the Blueprint Planning process and the ‘Current Trend’ 2050 scenario, followed by a facilitated discussion of growth-related issues and concerns. Sessions were held in private homes, community centers, or places of business. In all, twenty-five sessions were held, each session typically lasting 90 minutes. These small-group sessions allowed for more detailed discussions and opportunity for clarification than could be obtained by the survey tool alone.

Small-Group Outreach Sessions

Date	Session	Participants
03/19/08	Neighborhood association	13
04/01/08	Western Shasta Natural resources conservation district	8
04/24/08	Fall River Mills residents/landowners	17
04/28/08	Regional residents/employees	6
04/28/08	Regional residents/employees	8
04/29/08	Western Shasta County landowners	16
05/02/08	Public health professionals	7
05/06/08	Real estate professionals	14
05/06/08	Downtown Redding merchants & smart growth advocates	11
05/08/08	Palo Cedro residents/land owners	9
05/13/08	Non-profit land conservation organization	7
05/13/08	Happy Valley residents/landowners	8
05/14/08	Public health and safety professionals	12
05/15/08	Public sector transportation professionals (staff)	2
05/15/08	Development and local business professionals	20
05/15/08	Faith-based community group	11
05/19/08	Public sector transportation professionals (executive)	9
05/19/08	Public sector transportation professionals (staff)	12
05/20/08	Public safety professionals	12
05/20/08	Senior citizens	14
06/04/08	Bicycling advocacy organization	29
06/05/08	Millville Residents and landowners	13
06/10/08	Public education executives	12
06/24/08	Burney residents, landowners, business owners	14
06/25/08	Economic development organization	22
		306



OUTCOME OF COMBINED PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

The sum total of all community data and input covered a wide range of topics. Once all public input was compiled, tallied, analyzed, and categorized, a snapshot of community wants, needs, and expectations came into focus. Common threads of shared values and priorities emerged and residents' thoughts and opinions fell readily into a handful of categories. These are summarized and discussed in the 'Community Values & Priorities Assessment' portion of this report.

Taking into account potential overlap of individual participation between outreach methods, it is estimated upwards of 1,700 residents directly contributed during Phase I of the ShastaFORWARD>>> public engagement effort. In other words, approximately 1 out of every 80 Shasta County residents age 16 and older voiced their thoughts and opinions. By comparison, a survey sample of minimum statistical validity for the population of Shasta County (+/- 5%) would require 384 participants.

In addition to those individuals who directly participated during Phase I, thousands more Shasta County residents were exposed to ShastaFORWARD>>> and the scenario planning process through the following activities:

- PBS Special Production:

Produced in conjunction with KIXE-TV, this 30-minute program introduced the public to ShastaFORWARD>>> and explained how to participate in the visioning process. The program was broadcast eleven times between April 17 and May 26, 2008 during prime time viewing hours.



- Website:

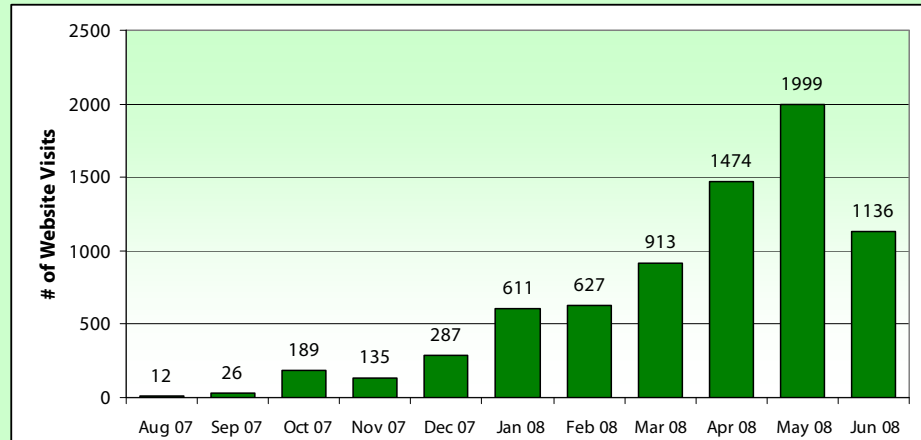
Public and media communication efforts were designed to direct residents to the ShastaFORWARD.com website, where ongoing project information is posted and the electronic survey and online community forum could be accessed. Website visits were tracked to gauge the effectiveness of communication efforts. As illustrated below, website





activity increased each month during Phase I of the public engagement process, peaking in synch with programmed public engagement efforts carried out through the month of May. Altogether, 9,361 visits were made by 4,560 unique visitors between August 2007 and June 2008.

Website Activity on www.shastaforward.com



- Media Coverage:** Regional radio, television, and newspapers provided widespread coverage of ShastaFORWARD>> as Phase I of the public engagement process unfolded. The following in-kind media opportunities played a critical role in public communication and greatly expanded the number and diversity of individuals with access to the planning process.



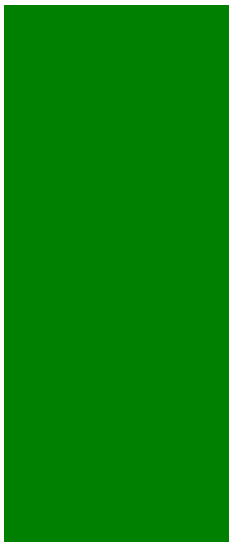
- KIXE-TV broadcast a 30-second television spot throughout the community values and priorities assessment period
- KCRC-TV News 7 produced a news segment (aired March 3, 2008 plus reruns)
- KCHO Radio featured ShastaFORWARD>> on the 60-minute 'I-5 Live' program (aired March 10, 2008)



- Record Searchlight published a front-page article outlining the project and introducing the 'Current Trend' scenario (published March 23, 2008)
- KCRC-TV News 7 produced a news segment (aired April 15 plus reruns)
- Record Searchlight published an invitation to participate in small-group outreach session (published May 6)
- KQMS Radio featured ShastaFORWARD>> on the 'Ken Murray in the Morning' program (broadcast June 5, 2008)

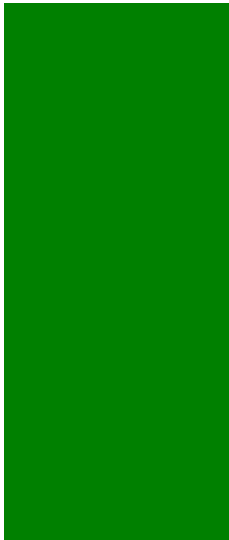
A more detailed overview of all public outreach and communication efforts is included in report appendices. Future activities will be directed at moving individuals from project familiarity to active participation in the process. More specifically, residents will be invited to comment on the findings and recommendations found in this report, participate in the generation of potential alternative growth scenarios, and play an active role during Phase II of the public engagement process.

Public input and preliminary analysis will be made available for public review. The ShastaFORWARD>> Steering Committee will help determine if data gathered from the participant sample accurately reflects overall community sentiment. Feedback received will be incorporated into this draft document as appropriate. Direction and recommendations from each Planning Commission will likewise be incorporated into the document and presented to the RTPA Board in its final form for consideration. The ShastaFORWARD>> Technical Advisory Committee will guide the adaptation of selected scenarios during the computer modeling process.



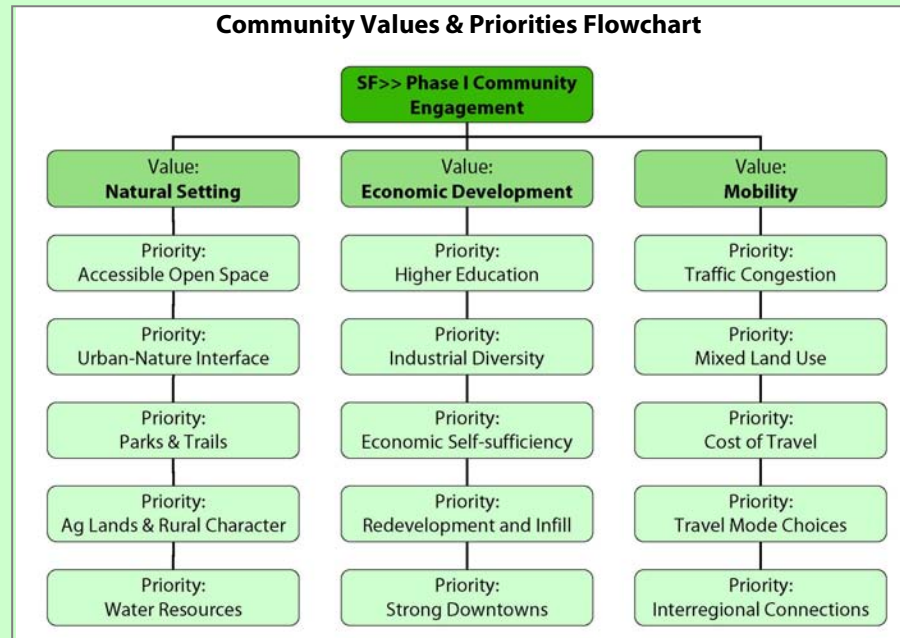
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**COMMUNITY VALUES &
PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT**



III. COMMUNITY VALUES & PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT

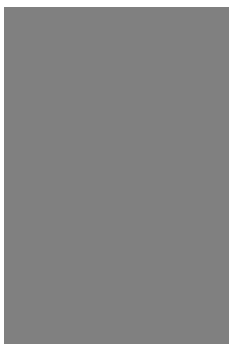
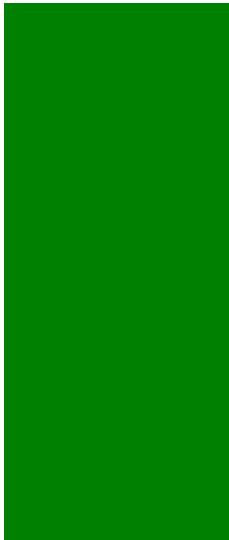
The core values overwhelmingly discussed or cited by Shasta County residents in response to engagement efforts are: 1) natural setting, 2) economic development, and 3) mobility. Most public input could be assigned to one of these three core values. In no particular order, the priorities listed under each value indicate how the value was perceived and expressed by Shasta County residents. A general overview and a discussion of each priority are provided below.



Overall, residents indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the current state of Shasta County and feel fortunate to live in the region. Small-group discussions held throughout the county support this conclusion. Residents' opinions were conflicted, however, with regard to the individual and overall regional impacts of projected growth and development.

Many wondered how this growth and development would fit into existing plans, policies, and practices. More specifically, will the region continue to enjoy the same quality of life decades into

// ...this way of doing things may not always be relevant to changing conditions. //



the future, or will the region suffer from incremental adaptations to change, becoming no different than other, more-populated cities and regions in California? “The direction that we’re heading as a region is good for now,” noted one resident, “but this way of doing things may not always be relevant to changing conditions.” Another commented that “Shasta County is like an adolescent in its growth – we’re neither a child nor a mature adult. We’re making rash decisions without much thought about the long-term future.” “If we do not prepare in advance,” added another resident, “we will have a hard time catching up to the influx of new residents.”

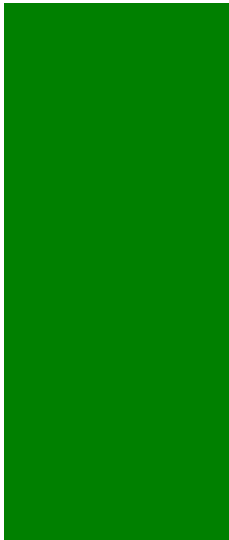
“Shasta County is like an adolescent in its growth; we’re neither a child nor a mature adult.”

There is a clear understanding among residents, however, that new development will also bring opportunities – changes that will impact the region’s quality of life in positive ways. Many residents expressed confidence that a happy balance could be struck between growth and quality of life; some referenced their favorite benchmark city as proof positive that it can be done.

On the other hand, a few ‘pot shots’ were made at individual politicians, government in general, or “outsiders” bent on spoiling the region’s quality of life. “There seems to be many negative feelings and attitudes that permeate the culture here,” explained one resident, “but I think some people are witnessing change in our community and over-simplifying the situation by blaming an influx of new residents.” On the whole, the vast majority of residents kept the quick-fire quips at bay in favor of more thoughtful or constructive input.

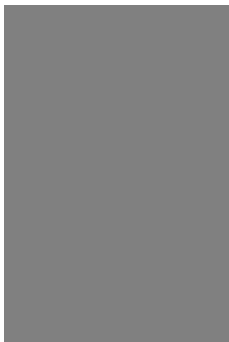
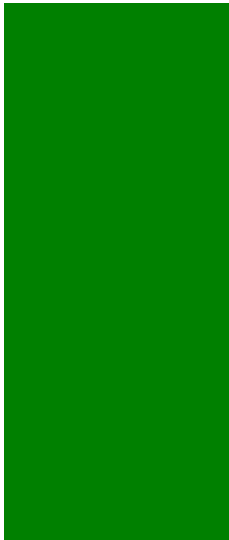
Despite different opinions about the source of Shasta County’s growing pains and potential solutions, residents’ comments focused in on fifteen priorities near and dear to their hearts.

Other concerns were mentioned, including but not limited to public safety, public health, and a variety of social issues. While in no way diminishing the importance of such issues, they simply were not consistently discussed or identified by the public as one of their top growth and development related priorities. Although not all possible issues could be included in the results, it is clear that progress in the fifteen priority areas will have a positive net effect on a myriad of other issues.



It should also be noted that certain portions of Shasta County have unique other priorities apart from the region as a whole. This was particularly apparent in urban versus rural areas. Where appropriate, these difference are highlighted within this report. During subsequent portions of the Shasta*FORWARD*>> planning process, different assumptions will be utilized in different areas of the county to prevent a 'one size fits all' approach.

The following discussion provides a detailed description of those priorities listed in the 'Community Values & Priorities Flowchart'.



A. Natural Setting

By an overwhelming margin, the single most frequent value put forward by Shasta County residents is an appreciation for the beauty, proximity, and accessibility of our natural surroundings; the unique combination of mountains, vistas, lakes, rivers, and authentic rural landscapes that define the Shasta County experience. It is how locals identify and ‘connect’ with their home. Praise was heaped on local cities and towns for their small town feel – even Redding, which one participant referred to as a “mid-size city with a small-town heart.” A fellow resident echoed the sentiment, “Redding is a big town, not a small city. It’s the right mix of city and country.”

“ Redding... is the right mix of city and country. ”

When telephone survey participants were asked what they most valued about Shasta County, over 35% described the region’s natural environment – more than double the mention of any other attribute. Participants in small-group outreach sessions supported this finding, indicating that Shasta County’s top issue/challenge will be the loss of open space.

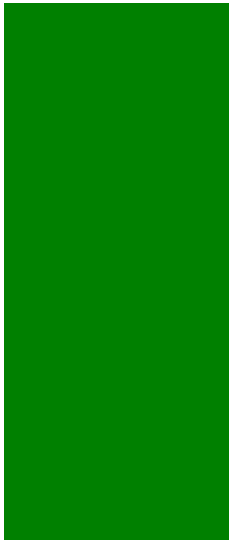


Most surveyed residents have lived in Shasta County for at least 15 years, many of which relocated (or “escaped” as some described) from large urban areas such as the Bay Area or Southern California. “Shasta County is a return to the area in which I grew up; my hometown 20 years ago,” noted one resident. “I love the slower pace of life, the friendliness of the residents, the recreational opportunities, and rural feel of the surroundings.” Another resident appreciated the welcoming

“ Shasta County is a return to the area in which I grew up; my hometown 20 years ago. ”

landscape when traveling northbound on Interstate 5; “When I see that first view of Shasta Mountain, the Sacramento River, Anderson, and Redding, I can feel my whole body relax.”

Residents feel rooted to the area and are not willing to flee this home for the next new frontier. “Many residents are active in civic participation,” believed one resident, “because they have a commitment and connection to the region;



they're not willing to move to another small town." For such residents, it is preferable to stay and work to maintain the regional qualities they've built their lives and family around. Residents understand Shasta County will grow, but hope to preserve the attributes that drew them here and to avoid the mistakes of their former hometown.

Shasta County's natural setting is also the area in which residents feel the greatest angst as they consider projected growth and development. Over 57% of electronic and mail-in survey participants believe the region's environment will be negatively affected by population growth and current development trends.

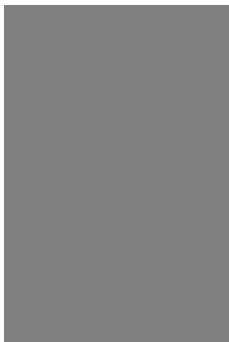
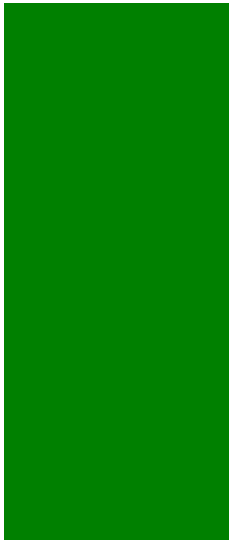
While some fear the worst, residents are not resolved to defeat. "What I like most about Shasta County," commented one resident, "is that it has potential to be great if we acknowledge and preserve the host of great features that set us apart from more drab regions." Stated another resident, "I have spent most of my life in the north state. We live in a wonderful part of the state and should take great care in planning how we grow over the years to come. We can't stop the growth, but we can make sure it happens in the right way." One resident's favorite Shasta County attribute is "the unspoiled environment...for now. I know it will change, but the county can address growth now before it loses control."

“ I know Shasta County will change, but the county can address growth now before it loses control. ”

In essence, Residents hope that their progeny and other future generations of Shasta County residents will be able to experience, appreciate, and enjoy all the area has to offer – just as they themselves have done. One resident worried that Shasta County "is growing too fast and that my children aren't going to get to experience a small town feel."

Collectively, residents' communicated the value of Shasta County's natural setting through the following priorities:

- 1) **Accessible open space:** Residents spoke of nature and open spaces in pragmatic and functional terms rather than as untouchable; a place for enjoyment and recreation, tourism, hunting, agriculture, and the natural resources they provide. Over 85% of all survey respondents rated open space as one of the highest regional priorities and believed that it should definitely be included when planning for future growth and development.



While other regions may have one or two prominent natural features, Shasta County possesses the confluence of many within reach of all. “We live in the center” noted one resident, “of the ‘Golden Circle’ of outdoor recreational opportunities.” Even long-time residents marveled at the closeness of nature – that the Sacramento River, bald eagles, and salmon could be found mere steps from Downtown Redding. Many appreciated the ability to escape the city without having to leave town by visiting one of the area’s many nature trails. Beyond town – yet just a short drive away noted residents – are several National Recreation Areas and Lassen Volcanic National Park.

- 2) Urban/nature interface: The interaction between natural and built environments was identified by residents as an area in need of attention. At the neighborhood level, for example, one resident said, “I envision open spaces left between developments so children can go into nature.” At the community level, many residents highlighted the underutilization of river frontage in Downtown Redding. “The waterfront is an unrealized piece of the puzzle in Downtown Redding.”

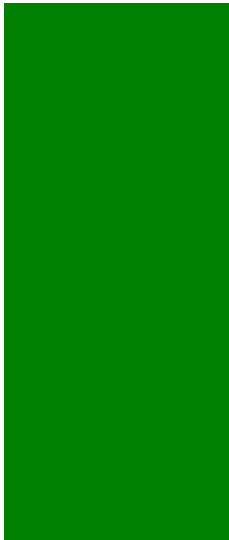
// The waterfront is an unrealized piece of the puzzle in Downtown Redding. //

“The waterfront is an unrealized piece of the puzzle in Downtown Redding,” noted one resident, “what a great resource to waste!” Throughout the region, residents wished to stay connected to nature; to live in – not on top of – Shasta County’s natural assets and resources.



Residents expressed a desire to maintain and enhance individual community identities instead of growing together. “We should play up our individual cities – including their individual strengths and unique character – rather than develop into a single large metro area,” said one resident. In doing so, residents recommended the use of agricultural lands and open space corridors as possible “buffers” between neighborhoods and urbanized areas. “Agriculture and green belt areas should be identified between communities,” recommended one resident. “Cities and towns can and should stay

“buffers” between neighborhoods and urbanized areas. “Agriculture and green belt areas should be identified between communities,” recommended one resident. “Cities and towns can and should stay



distinct,” remarked another. “We need to preserve the rural landscape in the Valley through open space and attention to natural corridors.”

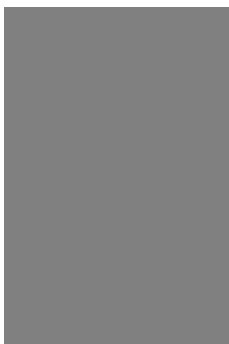
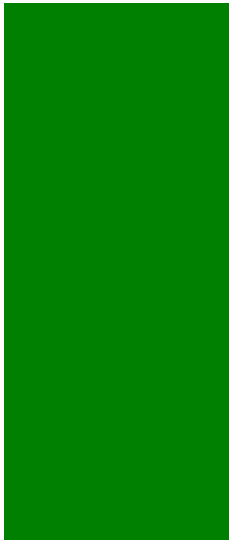
- 3) **Parks & trails:** Residents described neighborhoods designed in conjunction with ample parks and access to an interconnected network of trails – not as a luxury or afterthought, but as part of basic infrastructure standards. “If there’s going to be housing development,” said one resident, “we’re going to need more green space, trails, and play areas.” “Experience has taught us that trails and parks need to be in place before the lots are sold or they will never get built” added another resident. Other residents agreed, “There doesn't seem to be a commitment to follow current plans for parks and open areas. We need more open space and parks and trails that actually go somewhere”.



- 4) **Agricultural & rural character:** Residents acknowledged that the best lands for agriculture are often the easiest and the most economical to convert to other uses. Although these lands may provide greater short-term payoff if developed into residential, commercial, or industrial land, residents believed agriculture is the best and highest use based on the land’s unique suitability and susceptibility to disturbances. “Rezoning of agricultural lands is an issue; we’re not giving it enough thought. Rather it is incrementally eating away at an irreplaceable resource,” one resident warned. “Commercial and residential development should stay on hardpan and other areas; once we develop farmland, it never comes back,” added another resident.

“Rezoning of agricultural lands is...incrementally eating away at an irreplaceable resource.”

Several rural residents described a one-size fits all mentality and recommended that different models be used for urban and outlying areas. Some believed that County officials are out of touch with individuals who live or own land in rural Shasta County. “There needs to be TWO models for Shasta County: one that addresses the I-5 corridor issues and one that maintains the rural nature and balance of the county's communities” suggested a rural resident. “Nowadays,”



lamented a small-farm owner, “newcomers are building mansions in the farmlands who don’t use the land for agricultural purposes.”

City dwellers had opinions too. Some felt new development must be rural in order for the region to remain rural, while others believed the only way to maintain Shasta County’s rural character and natural beauty is to concentrate new development within existing cities and towns while setting aside open spaces. “I would like to see more compact development with more open and agricultural space saved” noted one. Another believed small lots should be prohibited in order to keep a rural feeling all over Shasta County. Regardless of their city/urban status, there existed internal conflicts between the preservation of rural and agricultural lands and the rights of property owners to define what is in their best interest.

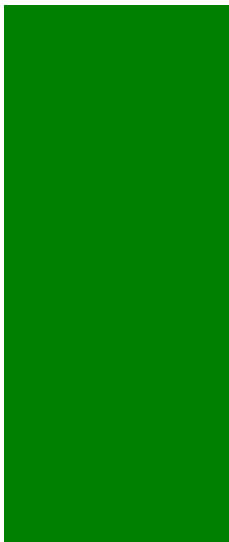


Most residents agreed, however, that agriculture offers many direct and indirect benefits, including its role in the local economy, as a key component of economic self-sufficiency, as a way of preserving open space, and its inherent aesthetic value.

- 5) Water resources: When provided a list of growth related issues and asked what – if anything – is missing, residents suggested Shasta County’s water resources are at or near the top of the list. “We are selling off our water. What is Shasta County without water? It is what attracts people here and is our greatest natural asset,” asserted one resident.



Residents believed that rivers, streams, watersheds, lakes, reservoirs, wetlands, vernal pools, and other water resources are an inseparable part of Shasta County’s natural environment, agricultural feasibility, and cherished outdoor lifestyle. Residents were, however, very



much aware of the enormous growth and development occurring in Central and Southern California and their increasing thirst for North State water. Residents' comments focused on the preservation of our region's water rights as well as the wise and judicious use of water within our region.



B. Economic Development

Also of near universal interest is Shasta County's economy (or lack thereof). Although survey participants voted economic development as middle-of-the-pack among a range of possible issues, it was one of the most discussed topics during small-group outreach sessions and was cited most frequently in response to open-ended survey questions. Furthermore, mini-surveys administered during these sessions placed economic development at a very close second to issues related to nature and the environment as described above. "Shasta County has what a family needs," observed one resident. "The good parts – nature, lakes, mountains, etc – are still so much a part of the area. But it's hard to find good work here; not everyone can live well here."

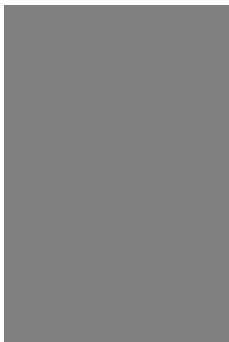
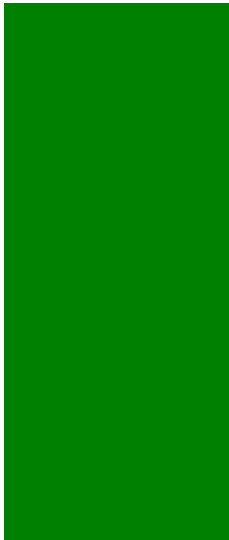
// It's hard to find good work [in Shasta County]. Not everyone can live well here. //

There was much discussion about poor job opportunities, lack of industrial diversity, low wages, and generally challenging economic times. Residents believe population growth is key to economic development, but registered more interest and concern with 'growing up' as a region rather than simply growing bigger.

There was notable diversity of opinion regarding government's current and potential role in economic development. Some believed government's role should be minimal and that recent efforts by local agencies to encourage new or expanding businesses in the region are misguided. Others felt local agency decision-making has been inconsistent and frequently bows to special interest groups. In outlying areas, some claimed economic decision-making is consistently biased toward the urban areas.

Others simply longed for more clarity in a vision and the courage to develop a strategy and stick to it. "We have too many short-term goals that aren't going anywhere long-term," noted one resident. "I have confidence in elected officials' ability to plan for the future," stated another, "but I do not have confidence they will effectively manage that plan and consider it

// We have too many short-term goals that aren't going anywhere long-term. //



when making high-revenue decisions.” A number of residents urged public agencies to have “more faith and consistency in ‘the plan’ than in special interest groups, who are sometimes given more attention than their actions merit.”

While some degree of negativity permeated the discussion of economy, residents overwhelmingly encouraged local agencies to take on challenges collectively as a region. “We need key players to buy into the concept of regional planning,” commented one resident.

// The three cities should be like the Three Musketeers – one for all, all for one! //

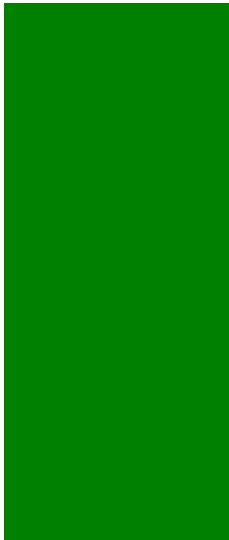
“The three cities should be like the Three Musketeers – one for all, all for one!” “We need a regional vision,” stated another. “Otherwise, where’s it (growth) all going? What’s it heading toward? There’s no larger context that we’re now

operating in.” “We’re on the slow track”, regretted one resident who blamed inconsistent decision-making for the “one step forward, one step back cycle.” “Decisions are based on short-term and localized benefits,” added another. “We need more regional cooperation – we’re all in this together – our economies are interrelated.”

Despite the region’s economic challenges, many residents looked for bright spots and offered constructive direction on how local agencies could work together with the public and business community to grow, expand, and prosper the regional economy. Residents identified what they believe are Shasta County’s economic goblins and recommended strategies for moving forward.

- 1) Higher education: With rare exception, limited access to higher education was identified as the number-one culprit and highest priority for improving Shasta County’s economy. Shasta College was openly praised and appreciated for their longstanding commitment to the region – particularly the recent opening of the downtown Health Sciences facility – but this could not overcome the glaring absence of a four-year public university.





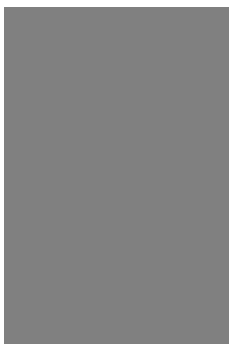
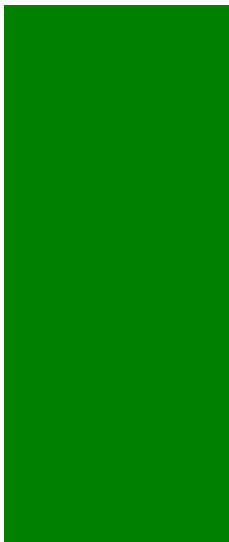
Residents lamented that their children must leave the area to attend a public university and also the bleeding of human capital with its resulting impacts on the regional economy. “Too often”, lamented one parent, “we ship our best and brightest away and they don’t or can’t return. This ‘brain-drain’ affects the whole North State”. “The lack of a four year University hurts our city, our children, and our future,” concluded one resident. “Struggling families continue their low-educated, low-income cycles because there are not enough higher paying jobs in town to aspire to,” added another.

The sort of employers local agencies and residents want (i.e. clean industry in need of skilled labor) is often attracted by the expertise, research prowess, and constant flow of educated people that a university provides. “It would be great to have a four-year public university here,” commented one resident, “so we could provide educational opportunities for young people and those looking to change careers.” “The Shasta County area would be an excellent place to live,” remarked another resident, “if it could draw a four-year university. The recently-built city hall, county offices, sports complex, etc. are all great things to have, but none are ever going to be as important to the potential ‘growing up’ of our community.”

// A four-year university is important to the ‘growing up’ of our community. //

- 2) Industrial diversity: Despite public and private sector efforts to diversify the region’s industrial mix, residents believe Shasta County’s economy is too closely tied to service and retail sales. Better jobs are needed, “Something where one can start at a descent wage and work their way up with full-time hours and some health benefits,” stated on resident. Even those who are gainfully employed and financially secure lamented the lack of opportunities for youth and professionals to remain in the region.

Residents would like to see more opportunities in new and expanded sectors. Areas of economic interest specifically mentioned include:



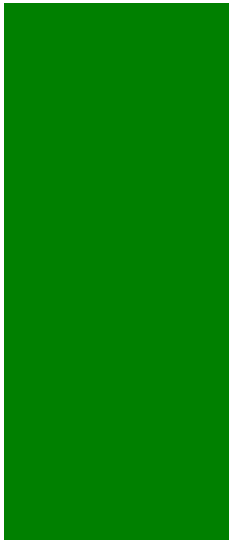
- Industrial and manufacturing – Skilled/vocational jobs that do not require a university education.
- Resource extraction – A revival of industries such as timber and mining - if consistent with natural resource values and if products are not exported from the region without first creating additional jobs and gaining further economic value.
- Medical/healthcare – Expand existing cluster of healthcare-related services and continue to support the education of local residents for employment in this sector.

3) Economic self-sufficiency: Shasta County is the only metropolitan area in California which does not share borders with another metropolitan area. Residents recognized this unique autonomy and see it as an economic opportunity. “We’re not a bedroom community to some big city; we can and should be more self-reliant and self-sustainable,” asserted one resident.

Residents described a local-centric economy that is more resilient to negative outside forces. “We should stop allowing franchises into our community,” commented one resident, “they are destroying our local economy.” Instead, offered another resident, “We should recognize and capitalize on our inherent strengths – including outdoor recreation and ranching – that help to sustain our local economy. We should focus on having a more self-reliant economy in order to insulate against rising energy costs.”

“ We should recognize and capitalize on our inherent strengths that help to sustain our local economy. ”

Some recommended economic incentives to grow small businesses and attract large employers. One resident observed, however, “We have a hard time keeping/holding on to good businesses once incentives dry up.” Although there was no ‘silver bullet’ put forth that would remedy the region’s economic woes, residents believed the region need not compete toe-to-toe with other larger regions; rather the region should identify and focus attention and effort on the unique local assets and strengths that other regions can not buy or manufacture.



- 4) Redevelopment & infill: Residents were alarmed at recent development trends favoring new areas over older, existing ones. Despite their patronage, newer retail centers were widely disparaged by residents. Many expressed disappointment and irritation with the vacancy and blight left behind by the migration of business to new regional retail centers. “We’re passing over older areas, leaving vacancies and blight in order to build on new land,” commented one resident.

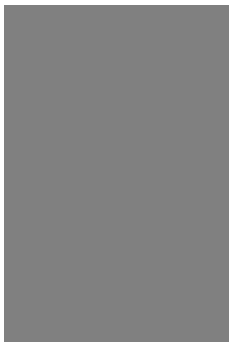
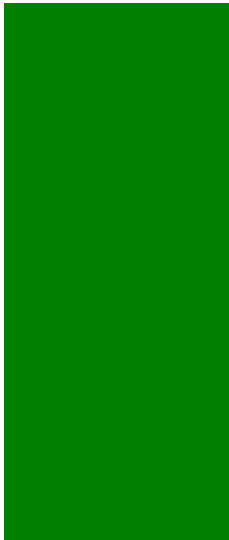
// We’re passing over older areas, leaving vacancies and blight in order to build on new land. //

Some residents believed existing urbanized areas should be the highest priority. “I think the blighted areas need to be addressed and rebuilt BEFORE more development is allowed on undeveloped land.” Many more agreed. “New growth should be encouraged to use existing vacant facilities rather than keep spreading asphalt” said one resident. “I would like to see existing areas improved and modernized before too much additional growth occurs” said another. We should “fill in and develop already quasi-developed areas before expanding outward more” suggested another resident. “Businesses should be strongly encouraged to use/remodel the old buildings before they decide to build a new one further out of town,” recommended one resident. “There’s no reason there should be vacant, underutilized land in the city. It’s better for them (city dwellers) and it’s better for us (rural dwellers),” added another.



- 5) Strong Downtowns: Residents were extraordinarily outspoken in regard to Downtown Redding’s unrealized potential. Generous praise was offered for strategic improvements downtown, including the Cascade Theatre restoration and the Shasta College Health Center.

// Downtown is getting better, but there’s a missed opportunity for it to be a community gathering place. //



"Downtown is getting better," said one resident, "but there's a missed opportunity for it to be a community gathering place. Redding "lacks of a true central downtown type area," echoed another.

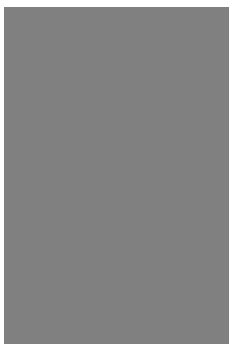
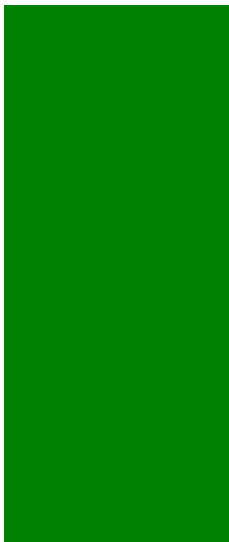
"Downtown Redding's scale is appropriate and neighborhoods are nearby, but we need to fix trouble spots such as the seedy motels." "In order to have a good downtown," stated another, "we need to get folks on-board and excited. We need to help folks visualize



what it could be." Many residents believe the focus should be on unique marquee businesses and local shops and businesses that serve the evening and weekend crowd, more residential opportunities, and support for existing economic pillars such as medical and professional services.

Many were greatly encouraged by the removal of the Downtown Mall's roof and feel this is great leap in the right direction. "All great cities have a nice downtown that is the centerpiece and pride of a successfully growing city," concluded one resident.

In addition, downtowns in Anderson and the City of Shasta Lake were discussed by residents in each respective city. Residents believe that additional employment and commerce, public spaces, and residential opportunities within each city core area is critical to each city's identity and economic sustainability.



C. Mobility

Not lost on residents was the difference between congestion and mobility. While the mere discussion of congestion elevated the blood pressure of some residents, talk of mobility was more closely tied with residents' ability to enjoy their surroundings and feel more in control of their quality of life.

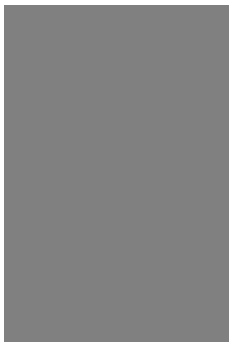
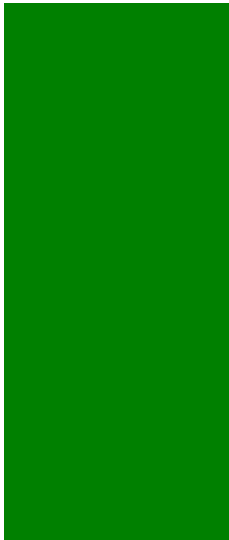
Although residents voiced complaint about wasted hours stuck in traffic and a few traffic bottlenecks, few recommended bigger and wider roads beyond a handful of critical locations. Instead, residents spoke of their need for viable walking and biking routes, access to adequate and responsive public transportation, and more destinations closer to their homes. All such components of mobility were voiced frequently and fervently by Shasta County residents.

Residents expressed themselves in regard to transportation and mobility through the following priorities:

- 1) **Traffic Congestion:** By a near 2 to 1 margin over any other issue, traffic congestion was the least valued trait of residents who participated in the county-wide random-sample telephone survey. Residents' definition of congestion, however, offered substantial differences depending on the point of reference or yardstick each individual used. Whether or not, in other words, they had lived in and experienced traffic in a large metropolitan area.

While many residents jumped at the opportunity to vent frustrations with growing congestion in Shasta County, a great majority expressed satisfaction with the overall lack of congestion and simplified commuting. "We enjoy living in a community this size," commented one resident, "and not having to deal with commutes and intense rush-hour traffic." With the exception of a few bottlenecks and traffic routing issues, congestion levels were generally within acceptable limits. In those instances where problems do exist, new projects currently underway will provide relief.





Why congestion registered so strongly among priorities is attributed to a shared understanding that this relative lack of congestion will undoubtedly fall by the wayside if urbanization occurs here as it has throughout much of California.

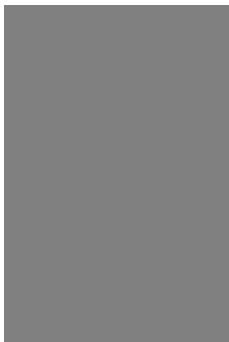
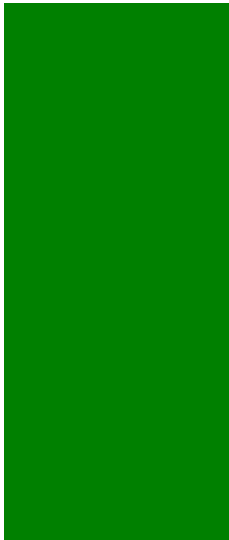
- 2) **Mixed land use:** Many residents felt their neighborhoods did not relate well to the community as a whole. They desired less segregation between land uses and communities that aren't "chopped up" and "segmented" from everyday destinations. One resident explained, "We are not self-contained within each area; rather we have to criss-cross all over the place for shopping, jobs, etc." "There should be "more basic amenities located closer to homes," added another resident.

Several residents described "complete neighborhoods" designed for a wide range of residents; neighborhoods that better accommodate different transportation choices, changing demographics, and updated assumptions about the rising cost of living. Another resident believed the "concept of the neighborhood – the places where you live, work, and shop – is totally absent in Redding." "Everything is soooo spread out, requiring too much driving time" lamented another.

// ...there should be more 'complete' neighborhoods //

A local realtor encouraged the removal of barriers to higher density and infill, including secondary units (i.e., granny flats) and the redevelopment of underutilized parcels – but not without good design. Other residents agreed, believing that higher density development should improve upon its surroundings, link to open space, and capitalize on the key benefits of density, including easy access to amenities, employment, public transportation, and trails.





Even in rural areas, such comments were not out of place. Stated one resident, “Shasta County needs better public transportation and amenities like stores, restaurants, parks, and community spaces in outlying areas near Shasta College, Bella Vista, etc. in order to cut down on driving distance for rural residents and college students.”

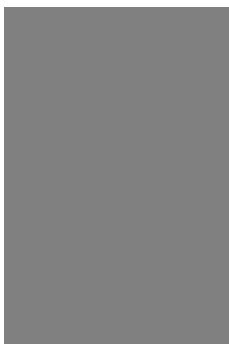
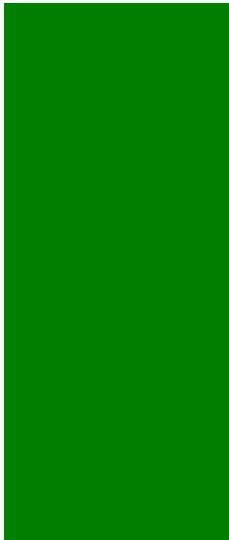
When asked what would improve the outlook for Shasta County’s future, one resident recommended the region “adopt neighborhood plans that would allow a small market, pub, and/or other local businesses so people do not have to drive to the big box stores, malls, or elsewhere for all of their needs.” Many more residents shared concerns regarding the proliferation of big box stores and strip malls. Commented one resident, “I fear that we will look like all of the other areas in the state; we will lose what makes us special.” Another resident encouraged “restrictions on big box outlets in order to preserve the character of the area.”

- 3) Cost of travel: Many residents are looking ahead with trepidation at a future characterized by high fuel prices and the impact this could have on transportation habits and assumptions. Stated one resident, “I work in town and relish going home to the ‘country’, but to do so with the current gas prices means I need to rethink whether or not I can afford to go to work every day.”

“...current gas prices means I need to rethink whether or not I can afford to go to work...”

Many residents are looking for ways to deal with high fuel prices and the cost of travel, but felt that current conditions limited their options. “Now that gas prices are ridiculous – we need better public transportation,” recommended one resident. “Walking needs to be more easily done as a way to get to work for health and saving gas,” added another.

When residents were surveyed about what issues are most important in a long-range vision for Shasta County, energy affordability was rated higher than any other. “I feel a consciousness is beginning to be asserted about the need to



develop our community around people and not so much around the automobile,” concluded one resident. Many simply wished prices would go down so they could return to their normal routines.

4) Travel mode choices: In areas where walking, bicycling, and public transportation are more practicable and convenient, residents wished transportation investments better reflected the community’s broader sense of mobility. “Transportation is the main area I see that is



stifling people’s ability to enjoy what this region has to offer,” commented on resident. “We need to connect the places we live to community activities, whether it is bike trails, better routes to get places, public transportation, and so forth...”

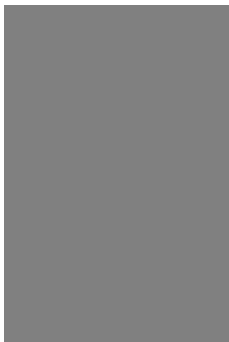
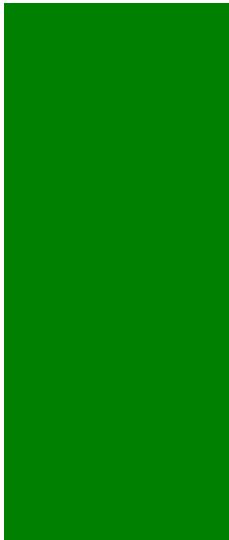
There was generous praise for the local trail system, but residents felt that extensions and connections to the system are necessary to make it useful for transportation, whereas now they are primarily used for recreational purposes. “Transportation is difficult” noted one resident.

“Even though I live near downtown Redding, I have to drive to buy groceries. By car, the town is chopped up. By bicycle, well that is pretty scary. We need more bike

“My house is near one of the busiest roads in Redding, yet there are no sidewalks...to walk the kids to school.”

lanes and sidewalks.” Another resident noted, “My house is near one of the busiest roads in Redding, yet there are no sidewalks or bike lanes to get around the area without a car or to walk the kids to school.”

5) Interregional connections: Residents wished for improved connections to the outside world, with particular attention to air travel, passenger rail service, and the removal of bottlenecks from interregional corridors and regional arterials.

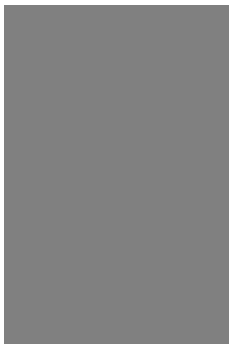
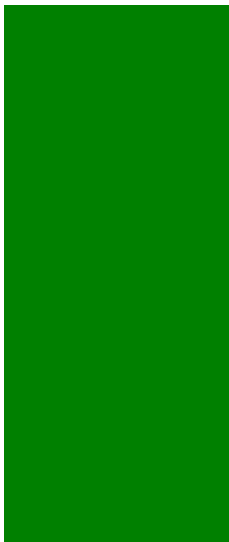


The same geographic separation that contributes to Shasta County's rural character in many ways works against the region economically, by limiting opportunities for commerce and exchange. "We lack good air transportation needed to fuel and support job growth," commented one resident. Others simply wished for more frequent and lower cost options in and out of the region in order to visit extended family or for other personal trips.

Several residents noted Shasta County's location at the cross-roads and transportation hub of the North State. Because Shasta County's interregional travel

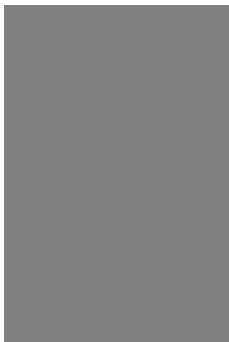
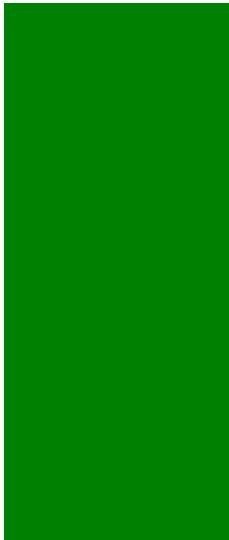


market extends well beyond its political boundaries, residents identified the growth and expansion of interregional transportation services and support infrastructure as one of Shasta County's key long-range opportunities.



4

NEXT STEPS: COMMUNITY-BASED SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT



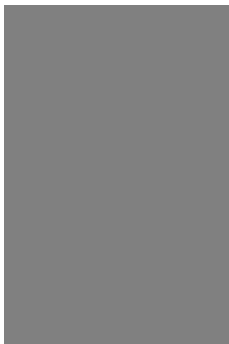
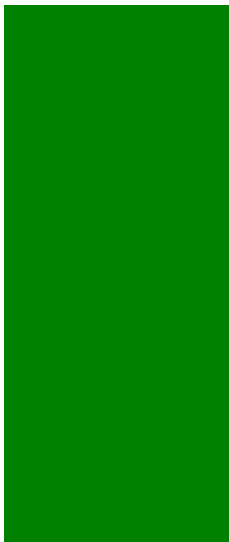
IV. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNITY-BASED SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT>>

As part of the ongoing effort to ensure a community-driven outcome, community workshops are planned to facilitate the translation of public input from abstract views and commentary to specific growth strategies. With documentation of public input in hand, workshop participants will break out into small groups to craft individual scenario outlines.

The Shasta*FORWARD>>* Steering Committee will assist in organizing and extracting three of the community's scenarios for recommendation to planning commissions within the region. Commissions will in turn be asked to review and give direction on the proposed scenarios based on the following criteria:

- 1) It is feasible and realistic to implement within participating jurisdictions,
- 2) It addresses at least one of the critical issues identified during the public outreach process, and
- 3) It seeks to improvement upon the 'Current Trend' performance measures.

The technical adaptation of scenario themes to computer modeling will then be completed in consultation with the Shasta*FORWARD>>* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).



5 CONCLUSIONS/WRAP-UP



V. CONCLUSIONS/WRAP-UP>>

While residents' priorities varied considerably, several core values dominated the discussion. Residents were also in agreement that planning must be done cooperatively as a region. When asked whether local government agencies should work independently of each other to maximize benefits to each individual community or work collectively to design a regional strategy/vision, 91% of online and mail survey respondents believed local agencies should work together for the regional good. Cross-tabulation of survey data revealed that this sentiment was shared, regardless of age, income, or geography.

Regardless of how the region's most desired values are sought after, residents were clear and consistent on several points: 1) preserve and capitalize on the unique strengths and points of local pride and 2) learn from the choices made by other communities in California. Noted one resident, "If we squander or diminish what makes us special, then we have to compete at everyone else's level; we've lost our natural advantage." Rather, suggested another resident, "Let us learn from the mistakes made by other communities in California and elsewhere."

Some residents were completely unaware of any planning efforts by local governments. One resident asked "What actions are being taken by our local government and community to move growth and development in the right directions?" Another commented that "I'm not aware of any planning direction or action being pursued. Perhaps better communication would clear up this perception of no planning at all being done."

ShastaFORWARD>> seeks to improve this perception by providing the resources, the forum, and an open invitation to residents of Shasta County to play an integral role in the evaluative and decision making processes which ultimately guide growth and development. The successful outcome of ShastaFORWARD>> depends on a community vision reflective of community wants, needs, and expectations, tempered by the practical realities faced by the region as a whole.