



SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION



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SWOT ANALYSIS

What is it?

A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the key factors that influence an organization, project, or region by identifying its **Strengths**, **Weaknesses**, **Opportunities**, and **Threats**. Strengths and weaknesses focus on internal factors, such as resources, capabilities, or challenges within the organization or area being analyzed. Opportunities and threats, on the other hand, examine external factors, such as market trends, economic conditions, or competitive pressures that could positively or negatively impact growth. By systematically assessing these four areas, a SWOT analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the current situation, enabling stakeholders to make informed decisions, prioritize efforts, and develop strategies that build on strengths, address weaknesses, seize opportunities, and mitigate threats.

The following are questions that were used to facilitate the SWOT Analysis:

Questions for Strength Analysis

1. What do we do well in Tuolumne?
2. What do people say appeals to them about Tuolumne?
3. What do we do better than other areas?
4. What's unique about our area?
5. What do we have that we can use to our advantage?

Questions for Weaknesses Analysis

1. What areas do we need improvement on?
2. What are things we should avoid more?
3. Where are we lacking in knowledge?
4. Do we have skilled enough labor? Where do we have difficulty?
5. Where do we have challenges in our population?
6. Where are we behind other counties like us?



Questions for Opportunities Analysis

1. What external changes will bring us opportunities?
2. What are some current ongoing trends?
3. Will these trends affect us positively?
4. Can we take advantage of the local market?
5. What is the economy in need of that we can offer?
6. How can our image help us?

Questions for Threats Analysis

1. Do you see trends in the population that is concerning?
2. Do you see changes in our social behavior that will negatively affect us?
3. What government regulations are negatively affecting us?
4. What natural disasters are we vulnerable to?
5. What are other negative aspects in our current environment?
6. What obstacles are we facing in our efforts for economic development?



Analysis Performed in August and September of 2023

STRENGTHS

POPULATION AND CULTURE OF TUOLUMNE

- Tuolumne has strong social relationships.
- Area appeal to older individuals
- Many collaborate and combine resources.
- Many long-time residence/multi-generations
- Strong relationship between K – 12 and college

GENERAL APPEAL OF THE LOCATION

- Cost of living, including housing, is relatively lower.
- The air quality is better.
- Proximity to attractions and recreation
- Short commute to work

ATTRACTIVE TO THOSE WANTING A LESS BUSY LIFE

- Traffic is lighter.
- The pace of life is slower.
- Finding parking is easier.
- More time to connect to others.
- Smaller groups and organizations

TOURISM

- Diverse attractions for visitors
- Natural resources for recreation and site seeing.
- Historical locations with rich stories
- Visit Tuolumne County is an asset to the tourist economy.
- Visitors who enjoy their visit, can often become residents.

ARTS, MUSIC, AND EVENTS

- Sierra Repertory Theater
- Many events both during the week and weekend to attend.
- The Maker's Lab exposes individuals to the arts.
- Local Fair and Rodeo

WEAKNESSES

POPULATION AND ATTITUDES

- Many people in the community do not want to see growth.
- The benefit of a better economy is not recognized.
- The younger population is not recognized for their necessity.
- Difference of opinion on the goals of the county between ages.
- Do not have a support network that encourages new projects.

AREA, ENVIRONMENT, TERRAIN

- Only 2% more of county can be developed, with many topographical and environmental constraints.
- Financially difficult to implement large scale transportation.
- We are heavily reliant on cars due to distance between areas.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Aging water and sewer lines that are in need of replacement.
- Utilities do not have enough revenue to upgrade or expand. They are cautious of burdening rate payers as many are tax adverse and there is a high poverty rate.
- Low availability of internet deters and restricts development.
- The availability and type internet services are different in areas.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

- Many are not familiar with growing a small business and are not utilizing available services.
- Little root cause analysis. In addition, many groups discuss the same issues separately, becoming siloed and not aligned.
- No formulation a unified message and difficulty disseminating.

LEGACY ISSUES

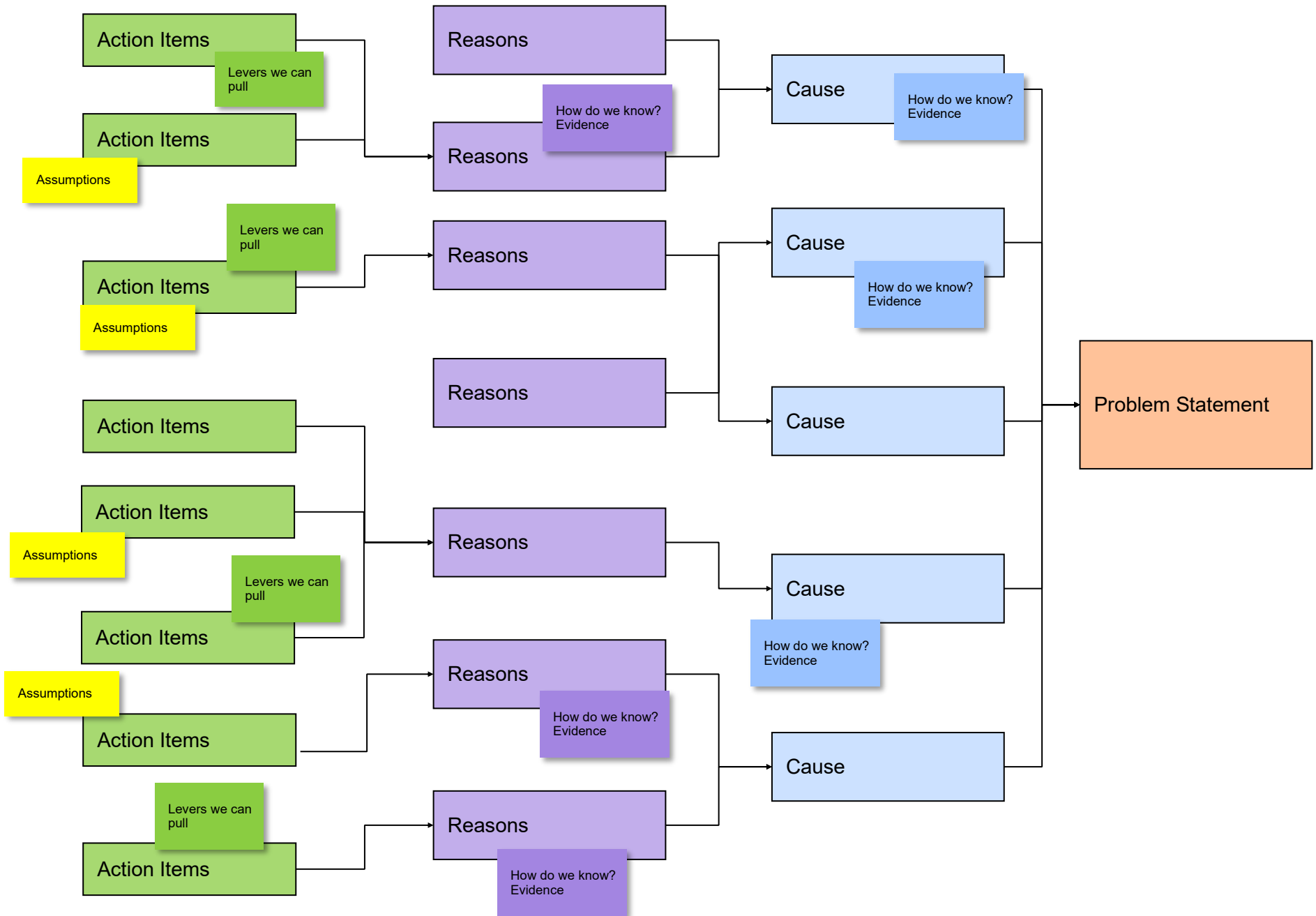
- Limited housing, low wages, and few childcare options
- Project criteria, ordinances, and legacy issues that are causing projects to fail.

OPPORTUNITY

- Electronic Permit System: Implementation would streamline permitting processes for construction.
- CERF (now Ca Jobs Firsts) Initiative: Apply funds to projects identified in strategic planning.
- Development of Infrastructure.
- Investment in existing housing, updating housing guidelines to promote expansion.
- Improve roads to encourage further development.
- Understand and capitalize on state influences and resources.
- Focus on development of southern part of County
- Facilitate discussions to set clear goals and develop actionable plans.
- Attraction of companies and individuals from the Bay Area seeking a work-life balance close to nature.
- Marketing to attract new residents, encouraging grandchildren to visit, and promote intergenerational activities through initiatives like Blue Zones.
- Market to second-home owners and renovate existing homes with infrastructure in place.
- Revitalize town centers to attract businesses and visitors.
- Foster collaboration between institutions for growth.
- Increase exposure to trade careers through internships, developing a talent pipeline.

THREATS

- Homes are sold in other counties and expensive homes bought here, raising the medium home cost.
- Threat of fires effects tourism
- Cost of insurance is high and rising.
- External populations are becoming more aware of area as well as the opportunities.
- Baby boomers are moving up here, however not as many from younger populations.
- Growing homeless population have become a threat to safety, and a nuisance.
- Lack of path for youth to continue living here, few jobs available.
- Lack of message of why we need to grow and how it benefits us.
- Lack of change in our social behavior is not favorable to growth.



Columbia Community Economic Development MEETING

Tuesday, August 27, 2024
at 5:30 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Church of the 49ers
11155 Jackson St, Columbia, CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or **rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us**



Local Perspective on Economic Development

Columbia Community

Characteristics of the Community

The Columbia community, founded in 1850 as a boomtown during the California Gold Rush, is characterized by its rich history, and unique atmosphere with its beginnings in the gold extraction industry between 1850-1860. In 1853, it was one of California's largest cities and stands as one of the few historic areas of the Gold Rush period to survive. Prior to Columbia's founding, the area was under Mexican authority as the State of Alta and for thousands of years prior to that home to the native Me-Wuk people.

It maintains the charm with a preserved Old West town and is proud to be a "living park" featuring concessionaire businesses serving both tourists and locals. The small businesses in Columbia offer a friendly and personal level of service, contributing to the community's welcoming feel.

Columbia Historic State Park (established in 1945) serves as a central anchor, reinforcing the town's identity, preserving buildings, managing concessionaire operations, supporting events, and offering interpretive programming. The local Columbia Chamber of Commerce puts significant time and effort into providing a wide variety of events in town.

The park is a place where docent volunteers and concessionaires dress in period attire and continues to be a popular destination for tourists, including school children on field trips. Fostering good memories for locals and those visiting from out of town, with tens of thousands of children visiting annually. It remains a safe family-friendly attraction that boasts a vibrant cultural scene with theater, street music, historical exhibits, and a museum.

Outside of main street and the State Park exist several small suburbs, mobile home parks, private business such as Blue Mountain Mineral (a producer of dolomite and limestone), a county airport, the CALFIRE Air Attack Base, Columbia Elementary School, a historic cemetery and schoolhouse, nearby access to Highway 49, and Columbia College, the local Sierra Nevada region's only institute of higher education.

Needs and Challenges of the Community

Columbia faces several challenges hindering its economic progress and development. The town's population is characterized by resistance to growth due to stringent design protections and past civic opposition, coupled with an insufficient local population to support economic vitality. The reliance on seasonal tourism creates a feast-famine cycle, especially with the loss of local services for basic needs.

Some expressed worry that growth would conflict with preservation of Columbia's heritage. However, it was pointed out that economic development does not necessarily mean expansion, but can focus on improving and revitalizing existing assets.

Infrastructure issues include frequent power outages that disrupt businesses, lack of connected and shaded pathways for pedestrians and cyclists, deferred road maintenance, incomplete public utility extensions, limited broadband access, and insufficient public restrooms for tourists.

Housing scarcity limits the available workforce and customer base, while the loss of traditional small businesses and aging population exacerbate the issue. Inadequate commercial properties, costly building regulations, further constrain new business development. A lack of local lodging options discourages tourists from extending their stay in the area. Economic constraints limit business-to-business support, and there is reduced interest among youth in starting businesses in the park due to a slow and complex approval process, leaving several buildings vacant or repurposed for state park staff.

Vision for the Future

The vision for the future of this community is one that embraces healthy growth and change while preserving its character look and feel.

Envisioned is the development of an environment inside and outside of the State Park, which is welcoming to both locals and visitors. An area which has a unified look, signage, pathways, and parking will not only draw more visitors but also motivate them to stay longer and support the local economy.

Within the Park, an expedited approval processes and increased marketing of the area in digital, events, and physical signage, would assist concessionaires. More regular events (including the off season) that draw visitors, and more lodging which provides for longer stays and hours of operation would result in longer stays.

Outside the park, additional commercial, industrial, and housing for local residents, workers, and businesses that fits the community's character This would lead to working-age Columbia residents finding places to live in the area and having local employment opportunities.

Ongoing Projects

Several positive developments and ongoing activities are already taking place in the Columbia community.

- Columbia College offers significant educational opportunities including recent efforts in establishing the Forestry Corps program, investing in fire service training, applying for housing grants, and partnerships with technology companies, and existing strengths in music, food, and childcare.
- Establishing a professionally staffed hybrid fire station with CALFIRE.

- The development of the Gold Rush Trail through the Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC) which will connect Jamestown, Sonora, and Columbia with multi-modal pedestrian lanes.
- Continual efforts to expand Broadband for Main Street, as well as Yankee Hill area.
- The State Park has invested in hookup capabilities to allow businesses to connect generators, enhancing resilience during power outages.
- A “Clean California” grant has recently installed a welcome sign along Highway 49 marking the entrance to the area.
- A proposed lodging/glamping/housing mini resort is in the planning process for off Sawmill Flat near the Columbia College entrance.
- The creation of a five-mile trail route near the school and Columbia Airport between the community and CalFire.
- Numerous events, including the Los Posades, the “Glorious 4th of July” Celebration, the Big Band Street Dance, Easter, and as the birthplace of Cinco de Mayo, and recently the Little House on the Prairie event, along with many other activities in the park.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Support Additional Lodging

As a tourism driven area, Columbia needs additional lodging. This takes varied forms. Firstly, supporting a joint operation concession for existing historic lodging and the expedited approval by State Parks with County Support. Secondly, retaining existing lodging such as RV Parks and Inns by connecting them with business support resources. Thirdly, soliciting new lodging developments near Columbia which includes technical support. And last, encourages short-term rentals and the development of campsites.

2. Infrastructure Improvements Are Necessary

Improvements are necessary to encourage visitors and locals to stay as well as see needed development in commercial and housing. This includes building adequate parking facilities, creating shaded and well-lit sidewalks and trails connected to Sonora, identifying growth areas near Columbia for development, and assisting development with financing and approvals. Exploring a reliable backup power supply will ensure the town can continue to function during power outages.

3. Fostering a Sense of Arrival and Place is Essential

A powerful sense of place is achieved by developing a distinctive look and feel. This will help serve to balance growth with Columbia’s historic identity. Improving structures and enforcing guidelines along the Columbia Core and historic corridor viewshed will help maintain community consistency and increase economic vitality.

4. Increasing Physical Signage and Marketing

Additionally, highway signage on major corridors in Calaveras and Tuolumne County should clearly identify Columbia and match the more historic standard brown signs used for historic districts (as opposed to Caltrans green). The State Park's mission could be revised to serve not just as a tourist attraction but as a functional part of the community, such as revitalizing the butcher shop as a working business. A "Sierra Nevada Made" campaign, a regional brand, could also be launched to promote local products and commerce.

Additional Marketing could be done for other attractions like horseback riding, gold panning tours, Old West black powder shootouts, drag racing at the Columbia Airport, and private recreational pilot attractions.

5. Growing Partnerships is Vital for Sustainable Development

Building cooperative relationships with other government agencies and improving communication between state and county officials will help identify issues and develop effective solutions. This is of particular importance between the State Historic Park, Chamber of Commerce and concessionaires, and the County of Tuolumne where there is a shared desire to reduce barriers and encourage more business concessionaire development appropriate for the Park. A dedicated group should be formed to address legislative matters and discuss potential projects and programs that could benefit the community. These collaborative efforts will drive progress and ensure the successful realization of Columbia's vision.

Groveland/Big Oak Flat Community
Economic Development
MEETING

Monday, February 5, 2024
at 3 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Groveland Community Resiliency Center
18986 Ferretti Road, Groveland CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us

Tuolumne County
Economic Development

Local Perspective on Economic Development

Groveland/Big Oak Flat Community

Characteristics and Values of the Community

The location of Groveland/Big Oak Flat area is a rural community, adjacent to or within the forest, yet close to some conveniences. For many, the community reaches from the top of the two grades, past Buck Meadows, all the way up to the entrance to Yosemite on Highway 120.

It stands out as one of the 2% of communities in the country that house a national park within its borders, providing a “sense of arrival” to this popular destination. The region enjoys a rich history, including the development of Big Oak Flat due to gold mining and Groveland's growth linked to Hetch Hetchy and the establishment of Yosemite National Park.

The area is recognized for having a small-town charm with a great sense of community. It's argued that it is not over or under-developed, lending to its quaintness. The population is primarily a retirement community and considered a safe environment with a different feeling from the Bay Area. Historically, there has been robust volunteerism in the community, however, this declined greatly during the pandemic, and now is gradually returning.

An entrepreneurial spirit exists with a distinctive absence of chain businesses, the majority of businesses being privately owned. Notably, it achieved the highest number of female entrepreneurs in 2019. Tourism is a significant part of the economy, with various outdoor recreation activities and a substantial transient use of residential properties, often geared towards visiting the nearby national park. Most who visit arrive by car, and some arrive at the local airport. Many visitors become future neighbors. It's believed those from abroad form their opinions about the US based on their impressions here.

However, for the Groveland/Big Oak Flat area, there are challenges, including a 55% poverty level. It has an aging population and a declining youth demographic. There is a perceived separation between the Pine Mountain Lake (PML) community and the towns of Groveland and Big Oak Flat. In addition, there is a divergence of opinions on growth, with a strong desire to preserve the peace and quiet that attracted many residents to the area. A universal concern exists about fire risk and emergency preparedness.

Vision for the Future

The community's vision for the future of Groveland/Big Oak Flat includes developing the area to be a more enticing tourist destination, moving away from it being a pass-through location. Achieving this necessitates both infrastructure enhancements and the expansion of the business community and community relationships.

The overarching goal is to foster a cultural shift towards becoming an "outdoor" community that prioritizes preservation while promoting community engagement, leveraging existing recreational destinations, and highlighting the region's rich history tied to gold mining and the railroad.

An emphasis must be placed on developing a diversity of businesses, fostering a more permanent resident base to support local businesses. There's a keen interest in improving the availability of family-friendly dining options, managing overcrowding during peak summer months, and boosting business prospects in the winter season. One venture may be establishing a camping and RV facility near downtown.

There is a call for upgrades to infrastructure such as sidewalks, increased parking availability, and possible implementation of a shuttle service from the Community Resilience Center (CRC) to downtown. A more reliable electrical grid and the installation of generators at key locations like schools and the airport to ensure safety are critical. There is a recognized need for more affordable housing options to accommodate workers. However, all this requires a commitment to maintaining a billboard-free environment, and a focus on maintaining a small-town feel.

There is a strong desire for the County to listen to the community's input regarding development, as decisions are largely influenced by the County Board of Supervisors and the Groveland Community Service District (GCSD). Maintaining a small-scale, common-sense approach is emphasized, with a focus on preserving the community's intrinsic value. There's also a call for County policies to be updated to reflect current needs, and for improved education and communication between the County, residents, and visitors.

Needs of the Community

The Community needs encompass a wide range of areas, including affordable housing, affordable fire insurance, emergency and long-term medical care, affordable childcare and youth activities, acknowledging the challenges of staffing and sustainability. Also beneficial would be improved coordination between community groups, and a stronger presence by social services to address issues of poverty, drug use, and mental health. Currently they staff the CRC one day a week.

In terms of promoting business, improved signage, technology for visitor information (potentially through an app), winter attractions, and the establishment of a local recreation department. The community also seeks more businesses that actively engage with and integrate into the community, a more active Chamber of Commerce, more diverse events, and historical education opportunities.

Ongoing Projects

There are a number of ongoing infrastructure efforts within the community, such as initiatives by the Groveland Community Service District (GCSD) focusing on fuel reduction, recreation, and improvements in public facilities. These efforts include projects funded by "Clean California," grants from CalTrans for new restrooms, bus stops, picnic areas, and expanding our trail system, such as the Hetch Hetchy Railroad Trail. In addition, there is movement to develop an RV Park. GCSD and Chamber are looking into options to improve electrical reliability. The Chamber has requested Yonder Yosemite owner consider cleaning up "the Scar" property ahead of the development schedule. And Southside Community Connections and Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC) are working to provide more transportation to the area by expanding services into the valley.

Recreation businesses are flourishing. There is a focus on accommodating visitors to Yosemite, especially those without reservations. Groveland Trail Heads is working to expand mountain biking trails which is beneficial for tourism. GCSD often holds "Movies in the Park." And the Tioga Baseball team, established since 2016, has also contributed to the community's vibrancy.

Emergency services are actively working on securing funding for expansion, while water projects that increase fire-flow for Big Oak Flat are in progress. CalTrans has also agreed to sidewalk projects for improvements of the downtown area. And PML has already started on their evacuation planning which can be expanded out into the community.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Create a More Inviting Destination for Visitors

Comprehensive planning and active engagement with visitors are essential components to increase our customer base. This initiative involves enhancing visitor experiences through improved signage, sidewalks, restrooms, and increased parking facilities while being cautious not to exacerbate overcrowding issues. Additionally, leveraging historical education opportunities can enrich the visitor's understanding of the area. This may also involve the establishment of a local recreation department and the integration of technology, such as a dedicated app, for streamlined visitor information.

2. Improve the Business Culture

A proactive dedicated approach is needed to bring potential investors here. This should also involve establishing objectives and metrics to evaluate if progress is being made. In a bid to diversify the local business landscape, the community may introduce an array of offerings. This includes expanding family-friendly dining options, increasing the variety of lodging facilities, such as the addition of an RV park, and enhancing the appeal of the destination during the winter season by introducing more reasons to visit and stay. Regular bus trips from the other parts of the county, such as Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) to the area will assist in bring people to the area.

3. Fostering Community Engagement

Fostering community engagement is a vital aspect of this endeavor. Establishing a dedicated community hub will serve as a catalyst for collaboration among local organizations and improve communication within this network. Key to this effort is identifying a representative who will play a pivotal role in ensuring that the community's voice is not only heard but also effectively addressed. Collaborative support from both the community and county government is crucial to shape future of this inviting tourist destination.

Jamestown Community Economic Development MEETING

Wednesday, February 5, 2025
at 5:00 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Jamestown Community Hall
18250 Main St, Jamestown, CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us



Local Perspective on Economic Development

Jamestown Community

Characteristics and Values of the Community

Jamestown, an entry community into Tuolumne County, embodies a blue-collar ethos with affordable housing that attracts younger families. This small town boasts a rich history rooted in the California Gold Rush of the mid 1800's. Its identity further shaped by the Railtown 1897 State Park. Known as "The Movie Railroad," the park preserves the historic core of the Sierra Railway and serves as a major tourist attraction, highlighting the area's logging history and its role in the film industry. However, Jamestown's historical narrative also includes the challenging legacy of the Gold Rush's impact on Native American tribes, who faced displacement and upheaval during that era.

The rural charm of Jamestown is a defining characteristic, with its green landscapes, ranches, and unique small-town feel. Jamestown was once a dining and nightlife destination but has seen a decline in visitors and local engagement. Efforts in beautification have enhanced the town's aesthetic, instilling a strong sense of pride and ownership among its residents. Its walkable downtown, picturesque architecture, and engaged community foster a welcoming environment where people genuinely care for one another.

Despite these strengths, the town has faced challenges. Tourism has declined since its peak in the 1980's and in the wake of COVID-19, including a decrease in stores and restaurants. And the closing of the hotels has meant fewer tourists are staying overnight. Some suggest that individuals' retail habits are also contributing to a decrease in foot traffic. Still, Jamestown's sense of community and historical allure remain central to its identity and appeal.

Vision for the Future

The vision for Jamestown's future focuses on strengthening its community and economic vitality by addressing key challenges and capitalizing on its unique attributes. A primary goal is to better understand and leverage visitation patterns to the area. By analyzing why people visit Jamestown, what draws them back, and what inspires them to share their experiences with others, the community can refine its appeal and ensure it continues to attract and retain visitors. This also includes studying the reasons behind the loss of businesses and events in recent years and fostering better organization among groups that can plan and run activities, creating a more vibrant calendar of events.

Another vital component of Jamestown's vision is revitalizing its business landscape. Programs designed to incentivize landlords to rent or sell vacant properties, particularly to support new startups, are seen as essential. Offering support and encouraging

improvements to the local environment can make Jamestown more appealing to entrepreneurs. These efforts aim to fill storefronts and create opportunities for small businesses to flourish, ultimately enriching the local economy and enhancing the town's character.

Developing a stronger food scene is another interest, with aspirations to make Jamestown a destination for both locals and tourists seeking unique dining experiences. Past efforts to grow the local farmer's market face challenges due to county permitting and regulation, but overcoming these obstacles could further enhance the town's culinary appeal. Additionally, the community recognizes the importance of modern infrastructure, such as high-speed internet, to attract higher-paying jobs and stimulate economic growth. With these strategies in place, Jamestown seeks to embrace its potential as a dynamic, welcoming community that preserves its heritage while fostering innovation and opportunity.

Needs of the Community

Jamestown faces several challenges that hinder its development and the well-being of its community. Leadership is a significant issue, with limited organized community groups and few elected representatives or districts to champion initiatives. Many local organizations rely heavily on older volunteers, with minimal involvement from youth, who often lack the time due to the need for dual incomes. While there is a willingness to volunteer, the absence of younger generations in leadership and civic participation poses a challenge for long-term sustainability.

The town, like the rest of the county, is also grappling with a loss of youth, as many young people leave for urban areas due to limited opportunities. This is reflected in the decline in participation in youth organizations. A recent chamber survey identified "brain drain", the loss of educated and skilled individuals. However, Jamestown does benefit from "generational visitation," where tourists and residents return due to childhood experiences in the area.

Housing and construction in Jamestown, like other areas in California, face significant obstacles. Rising housing costs, a utility moratorium by the Jamestown Sanitary District, and limited developable land restrict growth. With much of Tuolumne County's land tied up in government or Williamson Act agreements, only a small percentage remains available for private development, often encumbered by issues like infrastructure costs, topography, and water supply. The high cost of fire insurance further complicates development, leading projects down the corridor toward Jamestown, but then they encounter these challenges.

In addition, the County of Tuolumne strained budget threatens essential services, including recreation. The growing homeless population and the town's experiences with drug-related issues further affect its image.

Ongoing Projects

- **Arts in the Area:** A recent grant from the California Arts Council to Tuolumne County Arts will keep funds within the community, supporting local art initiatives. Residents express interest in creative placemaking, commenting on ideas such as "artist-led regeneration" or "cultural regeneration." These theories suggest artists often revitalize neglected neighborhoods by fostering creativity and cultural activities. An example art in the area is the popular Hand-Made Parade, which celebrates local creativity and community spirit.
- **Bazaar/Farmer's Market:** This brings fresh food and vibrant activities to the area, enhancing community engagement and foot traffic.
- **Opening of Chicken Ranch Casino:** The casino has become a major local attraction, boosting tourism and economic activity in the area.
- **Future Development Opportunities:** Projects under consideration include a racetrack, solar energy facilities, and manufacturing developments.
- **Homelessness Reduction Efforts:** Ongoing initiatives are effectively assisting a significant portion of the homeless population. However, challenges remain with those residing on Main Street.
- **Gold Rush Trail:** The Tuolumne County Transportation Council is planning a Gold Rush Trail to attract tourists and highlight the area's rich history. This project will serve as a "Non-Motorized Highway", or the backbone of active transportation travel, in Tuolumne County. The completed path will stretch over 14 miles to continuously connect the major, and historical, Tuolumne County communities of Jamestown, Sonora, and Columbia as well as the Chicken Ranch Tribal Lands.
- **Railtown 1897 State Historic Park:** Railtown continues to draw visitors, particularly during the Polar Express event in winter. Discussions are ongoing about potential private ownership or operational changes to expand activities and rejuvenate the park.
- **Sierra Sourced Initiative:** This co-branding and co-marketing effort aims to increase visibility and promote local products and businesses across the Sierra region.
- **Jamestown Beautification:** Project includes sidewalk improvements, street trees, drainage improvements, multiple improvements to Rocca Park, Town entry signage, and a mural.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Creative Placemaking and the Arts

Plan and construct a network of trails connecting key areas, including tribal lands, public spaces, and town centers. This project will enhance recreational opportunities, improve connectivity, and attract both residents and tourists to the area. In addition, leverage grants, such as those from the California Arts Council, to fund local art projects that encourage creative placemaking. This could include developing initiatives like a Creative Reuse Store to promote sustainable art practices and community engagement. Establish Jamestown's brand by developing a cohesive theme, visuals, and marketing campaign for promotional materials, signage, social media, or when promoting events.

2. Develop Amenities for Visitors and Residents

Improve infrastructure with projects like sidewalk construction and combined parking solutions to enhance accessibility and convenience. Repair and improve the existing Walk of Fame. The previously mentioned trail system will foster outdoor recreation and connectivity. Focus on enhancing amenities such as signage and tourist attractions that benefit both residents and visitors, bringing more foot traffic to the area.

3. Revitalize the Business Landscape

Facilitate mixed-use development projects to create dynamic spaces that integrate retail, residential, and highlight the local culture and history. Encourage partnerships to explore private management models for attractions like Railtown, ensuring year-round activities to boost economic growth. Support local businesses through initiatives like the Sierra Sourced co-branding and co-marketing program to increase visibility. Explore reasons for the growing number of vacant properties and the loss of tourism in the area and develop cohesive strategies to attract new businesses and year-round visitors. And explore how regulations and permitting can be streamlined and eased in order to make starting a business faster.

4. Develop a Stronger Food Scene

Strengthen the local food scene by enhancing the activities which showcase regional produce and food vendors. Partner with local chefs, farmers, and entrepreneurs to host food festivals or events that highlight the area's culinary offerings. Possibly incorporate food-based activities into community events like cleanups and trail openings to further attract and engage residents and visitors.

Sonora Community

Economic Development

MEETING

Thursday, December 19, 2024
at 5:30 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors Board Room
2 S. Green Street, 4th Floor, Sonora, CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or **rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us**



Local Perspective on Economic Development

Sonora Community

Characteristics and Values of the Community

Sonora, both the City and unincorporated area, is the economic and cultural hub of Tuolumne County, characterized by a close-knit, community-driven spirit. Residents value the small-town atmosphere, historical significance, and abundant outdoor recreational opportunities. The area has a strong tradition of supporting local businesses and fostering loyalty among community members. Sonora's community is distinguished by its readiness to help one another and its active participation in local events, fundraisers, and civic activities. These attributes create a "stickiness" that draws people to Sonora and encourages them to stay.

Tourism and recreation serve as cornerstones of Sonora's economy, with the town benefiting from its proximity to natural attractions and its historical charm. Community members however recognize the challenges of relying heavily on tourism, such as the seasonality of foot traffic and the infrastructure demands of hosting large numbers of travelers. While tourism remains vital, many residents emphasize the need to balance this with efforts to attract diverse industries and cultivate year-round economic activity. Additionally, Sonora's aging population, combined with the limited availability of obtainable housing, underscores the importance of fostering a younger, skilled workforce. These factors, paired with the community's commitment to preserving its unique identity, highlight the importance of planning for sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

Vision for the Future

The community envisions Sonora as a dynamic and modern hub that preserves its historic charm while fostering sustainable economic growth, with a strong emphasis on attracting and retaining a younger, skilled population. Part of this vision is the development of obtainable housing options designed to meet the needs of young families, professionals, and seasonal workers. Enhanced educational and vocational training programs are also prioritized to prepare residents for high-paying careers in forestry, healthcare, technology, and the trades, ensuring opportunities for growth and stability. Columbia College, with its strong programs such as fire and forestry training, is seen as a key asset, with plans to position it as a regional and national leader in education and workforce development.

A robust tourism strategy complements these efforts, focusing on cultural events while strengthening infrastructure to support small businesses and visitors. Although town center revitalization remains an important goal, particularly as a means to enhance quality of life and attract younger demographics, the overarching priority is creating a community that offers the economic and social opportunities necessary to retain a skilled and diverse workforce. By addressing housing, education, and job opportunities, Sonora aims to build a sustainable future while maintaining its unique identity and charm.

Needs of the Community

Sonora faces several key challenges and opportunities that must be addressed to create a sustainable and thriving community. Tourism can greatly fluctuate based on threats such as the economy and natural disasters such as fire and a pandemic. Some businesses are currently reporting a drop in sales. Another difficulty is attracting and retaining a younger, skilled population. This is compounded by another significant barrier throughout all of California, the lack of obtainable and workforce housing, which affects not only new talent but also existing residents. Seasonal and short-term housing shortages further strain industries like healthcare and tourism, underscoring the need for targeted solutions. Limited childcare access also presents a hurdle, particularly for young families, as it restricts workforce participation. Expanding childcare facilities and training more providers are vital steps toward supporting working families.

Infrastructure improvements are another priority, with investments in broadband, water, sewer, and energy systems needed to sustain residential and business growth. These upgrades are essential for modernizing the community and positioning Sonora as an attractive place for both residents and businesses. To ensure long-term economic stability, the community seeks to diversify beyond its dependence on tourism by fostering industries such as forestry, healthcare, trades, and technology, creating a broader range of high-paying jobs.

Ongoing Projects

- **Columbia College Initiatives:** Programs in fire and forestry training, healthcare, and culinary arts are expanding. A proposed regional training center and tiny-home village will provide housing and state-of-the-art training opportunities.
- **Tourism Marketing:** Efforts to market Sonora as a cultural and recreational destination continue, despite challenges posed by funding constraints.
- **Town Center Revitalization:** The Vision Sonora Project for City of Sonora recommends actions to enhance Sonora's unique identity by celebrating its history, improving downtown appeal, and creating vibrant, welcoming spaces for both visitors and residents. Much of this has already been implemented with sidewalk improvements, efforts to increase parking options, and beautification projects.
- **Hospital Residency Program:** Adventist Health's rural residency program aims to reduce turnover among medical staff by fostering stronger community ties.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Strengthen Tourism Infrastructure

Develop targeted off-season marketing campaigns to attract visitors during slower periods, emphasizing unique local experiences such as arts festivals, and outdoor recreation. Collaborate with local stakeholders to identify opportunities for increasing hotel and lodging capacity, including alternative accommodations like vacation rentals and boutique stays. Provide resources and incentives for small businesses to enhance their offerings and meet visitor needs, such as extended hours, local product showcases, and customer service training. Strengthen partnerships with organizations like Visit Tuolumne County to ensure cohesive branding and promotional efforts that highlight Sonora's attractions. These actions aim to sustain visitor spending throughout the year, bolstering the local economy and supporting long-term growth.

2. Support Education and Workforce Development

Invest in vocational training initiatives to prepare residents for careers in high-demand fields such as trades, technology, and healthcare. Partner with Columbia College and local schools to expand hands-on training, certifications, and apprenticeship opportunities tailored to industry needs. Strengthen entrepreneurship programs by collaborating with educational institutions, local businesses, and economic development organizations to provide mentorship, funding resources, and business planning support. Focus on aligning training programs with regional workforce demands to ensure graduates are equipped with the skills needed to thrive locally. Promote these opportunities through targeted outreach to attract and retain younger, skilled workers who can contribute to Sonora's long-term economic vitality.

3. Develop Obtainable Housing

Collaborate with developers to streamline permitting processes and offer incentives such as tax breaks, grants, and reduced fees to accelerate the construction of obtainable housing. Prioritize diverse housing options, including short-term accommodations like tiny homes and workforce housing to meet the needs of young families, seasonal workers, and local industries. Implement strategies that ensure housing accessibility while preserving Sonora's community character and supporting sustainable economic growth.

4. Create Signature Events to Showcase Local Talent and Attract Visitors

Develop high-profile, annual events that celebrate Sonora's unique culture and talent, such as a culinary competition in partnership with Columbia College's acclaimed culinary programs. Highlight regional specialties and local food artisans, turning the event into a must-see attraction for both residents and visitors. Integrate complementary activities, such as live music, art exhibits, and craft fairs, to create a dynamic, family-friendly experience. Leverage targeted marketing to promote the event as a regional draw, boosting tourism and visitor spending while reinforcing Sonora's reputation as a hub for creativity and excellence. Such events will provide opportunities for local businesses to participate and thrive while building a stronger community identity.

Soulsbyville Community Economic Development MEETING

Thursday, June 27, 2024
at 5:30 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Moose Lodge
20921 Longeway Rd Sonora, CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or **rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us**



Local Perspective on Economic Development

Soulsbyville Community

Characteristics and Values of the Community

The community of Soulsbyville exhibits a distinct set of characteristics and values. Initially established during the gold rush, it flourished due to the mine and gold mill. Eventually growing into a bedroom community, it has seen a notable shift, as vacation homes have transitioned to affordable permanent residential properties. The population centers, notably Willow Springs and Sierra Vista, have experienced a gradual transformation, with a demographic shift towards retirees. A number of industrial businesses exist in the center of the community.

Several concerns have developed by local residences. The community is split by the 108 Highway, which discourages individuals, particularly those on foot, to visit the other side. In addition, there has been increased traffic along 108 and a rise in commercial residences. Affordable housing has emerged as a pressing concern, in particular for middle-class housing options. It has been noted many long-standing families are departing in the process. There remains a palpable desire among newcomers for access to city amenities, underscoring the community's desire for both comfort and convenience.

Vision for the Future

The envisioned future for the community is one of balanced development, improved infrastructure, and a strong sense of identity. It's crucial to pursue development initiatives with careful consideration, ensuring they align with the community's needs and values.

A focus on improvements to traffic and accessibility, as well as development barriers, is a paramount. Due to congestion along Soulsbyville Road, strategic planning and infrastructure upgrades are needed. Improvement of bus stops and the creation of sidewalks and bike lanes will ensure safe and accessible passage throughout the area. A comprehensive review of Title 17 will streamline the development process, making it more efficient and responsive to community needs.

As this area is one of the last stops before climbing up into the mountains, this area is ideal to creating a stop along the way. Wayfinding and information efforts will help boost commerce in the area. Installing signage along Route 108 to showcase available restaurants and stores will not only benefit businesses but also enhance the overall experience for residents and visitors alike.

More attractions in the area will encourage visitors to stop and enjoy the area. A tour of the area or a "treasure hunt", emphasizing the mining history, boosted by historical photos, would highlight key points, would be a fun addition to the community. Other approaches to honor the rich history of Soulsbyville, would be an initiative to create landmarks and exhibits reminiscent of its past, such as the Silver Legacy Resort in Reno, Nevada. Establishing a visitors' bureau for Soulsbyville will promote tourism and provide valuable information about local amenities. This will once again realize a prior slogan, "Life's a Thrill in Soulsbyville!"

Needs of the Community

The community faces several challenges that impact its progress and well-being, alongside identified needs for improvement.

There's a pressing need for additional commercial and industrial developments. Its perceived however, the existing general plan doesn't actively support increased construction, raising concerns about the area's ability to accommodate growth. Other challenges include the skill level required for industrial field positions, the need for training facilities, and infrastructure limitations such as the absence of natural gas. All of which impact the attractiveness of Soulsbyville as a business location.

Collaboration with the county and other groups in the community is seen as crucial to facilitating workforce housing construction, addressing concerns about affordability and accessibility. The dilemma over utilizing available properties for short-term rentals versus long-term occupancy underscores broader discussions on housing stability and community cohesion.

Moreover, fears about intensified development exacerbating traffic congestion highlight the importance of infrastructure improvements. Such improvements would include signage, lighting, road improvements, and sidewalks.

And finally, access to essential emergency services and regular medical care, including pharmacies, clinics, doctors, and ambulance services, and full-time fire station, remains a priority for the community's well-being.

Ongoing Projects

The community is already witnessing several developments and activities that contribute to its vibrancy and convenience. Renowned for its desirable location free from heavy snowfall and rich historical heritage, it remains an ideal residential spot.

Infrastructure improvements include the installation of a cell tower near the Moose Lodge and the coming repairs to Crystal Falls Drive, reflect efforts to maintain infrastructure and enhance connectivity for residents and visitors.

The planned establishment of an AutoZone near Dollar Tree, the brewery near Papa's New Roost, as well as the opening of the Divine Market in Willow Springs, will add to the convenience of local shopping and dining options.

Housing developments like the proposed project like the condominiums on the corner of Mono and Standard suggest a growing interest in expanding residential offerings.

And a recent plan has been developed to have regular meetings to discuss local issues and projects, which would lead to more involvement and a more cohesive community.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure improvements include the establishment of additional and enhanced bus stops to cater to children's transportation needs, as well as the creation of lighting, road improvements, sidewalks and bike lanes to ensure safe passage throughout the area. In the future, a walking bridge over 108 would serve to join the two sides of the community together. Additional improvements, such as park-and-rides, charging stations, and public transportation stops will encourage more visitors to the area.

2. Fostering business growth

Take steps to improve Soulsbyville's visibility as a rest stop for visitors and a local business hub. Implementing signage along Route 108 to highlight available restaurants and other services. Moreover, this entails conducting an inventory of available commercial and residential spaces to attract entrepreneurs and developers, alongside rezoning efforts to facilitate more development opportunities.

3. Growing the Community's Identity

A welcome sign when entering the area will serve to identify the community. Additional landmarks and attractions that honor Soulsbyville's history will enhance navigation. And an app which explains the history, and list historical landmarks and services in the area, will serve locals and visitors alike.

4. Securing adequate funding

By actively seeking financial support from various sources, the community can ensure the necessary resources are available to bring its vision to fruition.

Tuolumne City Community Economic Development **MEETING**

Tuesday, September 17, 2024
at 5:30 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Tuolumne Community Center
18411 Bay Ave, Tuolumne, CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or **rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us**



Local Perspective on Economic Development

Tuolumne City Community

Characteristics and Values of the Community

The area's history is rooted in the growth spurred by the mining and lumber industries. Initially, the population resided in the town, with boarding houses accommodating seasonal workers. The community was not a “pop-up”, but had planned growth. In the past, the community flourished, boasting a larger presence with 21 churches and a vibrant dining scene featuring 18 bars and restaurants. Many still remember the train whistle as a familiar sound of the town.

Presently, there are notable attributes such as well-maintained park facilities, public pool, halls, community resilience center, horseshoe pit, baseball field, and the Big Dreams Universally Accessible Parks and Playground, as well as the nearby Black Oak Casino and the West Side Trail. It is a town which evokes a sense of the Midwest charm. There is a general belief the condition of the town’s infrastructure is doing well and is available for expansion. A noticeable trend is the increased presence of people out walking during the day, reflecting a diverse mix of ages engaging with the community. Community events have been on the rise in terms of attendance, drawing participants from outside the immediate vicinity, including some who occasionally travel from widespread areas.

Those who relocate to the community often do so due to the affordability, look and feel of the town, existing connections, and a sense of trust in the community. This influx of newcomers is reflected in the increasing enrollment at the elementary school, which currently accommodates 459 students, the highest number to date, suggesting a growing population within the school system. Notably, approximately 18% of the school population comprises individuals who have transferred in from elsewhere, underscoring the community's appeal to newcomers. Additionally, the Christian school in the area boasts a student body of 800, further indicating the attractiveness of the community to families seeking educational opportunities.

Several concerns loom over the area's current state. Notably, there has been a dearth of significant development in recent times, with only three single-family homes added within a span of three years. The median household income stands at \$ 56,429, indicating potential financial strain for many residents. Compounding the housing situation, families are forced to cohabitate due to a shortage of available homes. Many argue the shopping center's emergence on Tuolumne Road drove businesses away from the town center and hindered westside development, adding to the community's concerns about its economic vitality and future prospects.

Vision for the Future

The goal is to create a well-organized community where living and workspaces are strategically integrated to optimize land usage, while preserving the historic theme. Using history to guide development, the Community Plan serves as a unifying design element. There is room for expansion, including energy and utility infrastructure. Key priorities include a faster, cheaper process for road repairs, connecting trails to amenities, and creating jobs to attract new residents. This vision seeks to transform the community into a desirable destination, prompting questions about the necessary steps to achieve this goal.

Needs of the Community

The community faces a range of challenges and pressing needs that demand attention. Resources for development are scarce, exacerbated by the conversion of commercial spaces into living areas and the persistence of sub-standard housing.

The lack of available land for building homes further compounds this scarcity. In addition, existing structures are aging, and potential developers are uncertain with their current condition. Infrastructure concerns persist, with unpaved streets and the unavailability of trust land for taxation or public development posing barriers to growth. There is worry among some that annexation into trust areas could lead to a loss of tax revenue, adversely affecting school funding and modernization efforts. However, the Tribe plans to use some of the donated fees to mitigate this as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Expanding clinics and providing basic amenities are crucial to encourage people to settle here. There's a need to capture the business of visitors, particularly those drawn by the casinos. It has been mentioned that there is not retail or restaurants available to serve customers later in the day. There is a belief that county regulations have hindered expansion, although recent changes are seen as progress. Overall, the community must address these challenges collectively to foster growth and development.

Ongoing Projects

Several initiatives are already underway within the community.

The Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians have been making efforts to energize the area, appointing a board for Economic Development (ED) to explore revenue and growth options. They have undertaken civil work to develop a shopping center near Cherry Valley and are working on building a subdivision in Tuolumne City. They are currently seeking funding for these projects. The ultimate goal is to establish basic amenities, such as a supermarket, bank, shopping center, and restaurants. The current supermarket location and surrounding area will be evaluated for a potential 80-unit housing facility. The projects will be on a mix of fee land and trust land. In addition, the Tribe is creating a conservation corps, which may assist in constructing trails.

Tuolumne Sanitary District received three construction grants totaling \$9.5M through the Clean Water Small Community Grant, State Revolving Fund, Prop 1 Program. The WWTP Phase I Construction Improvement Project (1.6M) was completed in August 2022, WWCS Phase I Construction Improvement Project (5.7M) completed in March 2024, and a WWTP Phase II Construction Improvement Project (2.2M) currently in construction and expected to be completed the end of 2025.

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) is examining processes to improve roads treatment more quickly, possibly including purchasing new equipment.

Tuolumne City has a exceptional museum and cemetery which may be attractive to genealogical groups if advertised effectively.

Tuolumne Parks and Recreation has acquired the Turzich and Wilson Funeral Home through a lease arrangement and transformed it into a community center. This facility, managed by the district, serves as a hub for community engagement and activities. They are also in the process of constructing an outdoor theater and a bike park, with assessments underway for repurposing additional lots. Future plans include installing outdoor exercise equipment, pickleball, bocce ball, and disc golf courts. In addition, their list of events and activities continues to expand.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Implement Infrastructure and Beautification Projects

Initiate general infrastructure projects, including undergrounding utilities with PG&E, enhancing sidewalks, bike paths improving lighting, and boosting overall curb appeal. Focus on beautifying the town center and various other areas to make the town more attractive to residents, visitors, and potential investors. Ensure these projects prioritize walkability and reduce travel times within the town.

2. Revitalize the Local Economy Through Business Attraction and Community Events

Attract businesses back into town by examining zoning regulations for the downtown area, encouraging the establishment of cafes, restaurants, and other local businesses. Utilize community events and effective signage to draw individuals to the area, fostering a sense of connection and community. Explore the consolidation of special districts to better utilize resources and support the development of ancillary businesses that offer recreational activities and other amenities to visitors.

3. Establish an Economic Development Board in Tuolumne City

Form a dedicated board to oversee and drive economic development initiatives, focusing on attracting and supporting local businesses. This board will work to understand the needs of the area, promote businesses that align with those needs, and explore funding alternatives to support business growth and infrastructure projects.

4. Develop Assisted Living Facilities and a Community Center

Create assisted living facilities alongside a community center to provide dedicated spaces for seniors to socialize, engage in activities, and receive support services. These facilities will also bring new jobs to the area, contributing to local employment. Partner with local Parks and Recreation to assist in the planning and development process, ensuring the facilities meet the needs of the senior community.

5. Run a Monthly Art Gallery

A monthly art gallery event designed to showcase the exceptional talent of local artists may draw in individuals to the area which would then be directed to local businesses. In the interim, until a permanent gallery space can be established, the Tuolumne Community Center may serve as a temporary "Local Collective" venue. Initial steps would include reaching out to local artists to gauge interest and curate potential exhibits, coordinating with the Community Center management to secure scheduling and necessary resources, and developing promotional materials along with a marketing plan to ensure robust community engagement.

Twain Harte Community Economic Development **MEETING**

Thursday, January 18, 2024
at 5:30 pm

PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Twain Harte Community Center
18775 Manzanita Drive, Twain Harte, CA



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information contact Robbie Bergstrom
(209) 533-5532 or **rbergstrom@co.tuolumne.ca.us**

Tuolumne County
Economic Development

Local Perspective on Economic Development

Twain Harte Community

Characteristics and Values of the Community

The town of Twain Harte embraces diversity, with a mix of full-time residents, and part-time residents accounting for 30-40% of the population. It developed as a 4-season mountain resort community with homes, vacation cabins, and lodging options which encouraged families to come to visit and vacation in the area. Those with second homes remain connected and supportive, while renters may have a somewhat lesser degree of engagement. Twain Harte has an older retired demographic, with many eventually moving full-time into their vacation cabins. The COVID-19 pandemic saw a resurgence of people returning to their family cabins. Historically, the community is fiercely independent, cherishing freedom and a tranquil atmosphere. It's felt neighbors look out for one another and help when they can. Some visitors view Twain Harte as a starting point for adventures elsewhere. A common sentiment is that Murphys and Twain Harte businesses are similar but branded differently.

However, the size of the population has remained static for many years. Twain Harte has seen the shrinking of the business community and departure of families. School attendance has dwindled significantly. And the rise of short-term rentals has led to a perception of a separation between full-time and part-time residents, as well as concerns about noise, light disturbances, traffic, and a housing shortage.

Needs and Challenges of the Community

Many argue some fundamental issues need to be addressed before bigger projects can be planned.

The general infrastructure of the downtown area is aging and requires attention. This includes pedestrian pathways and lighting, and traffic management. Many roads are in urgent need of repair. Ensuring safety for residents and visitors is paramount. Reliable electrical, internet, and technology services, as well as 911 service, are essential.

While recognizing their economic contribution, the surge in short-term rentals has created issues. While many use the short-term rental model to retain their vacation home, it is felt they have encroached on neighborhoods and reduce the number of full-time and part-time residents. It has been argued the short-term rental industry has led to income leaving the area and not contributing as strongly to the local economy. Some restrictions on short-term rentals may be necessary to address noise, light, safety, and housing concerns.

Concerns over blight of both neglected homes and commercial buildings have been expressed. Some concern has been expressed over safety issues as well, noting the danger of residents trying to lessen the disturbances. And some worry the look of new developments will not be consistent with the rest of the community. This may affect the overall impression visitors have of the area. Some state additional planning and regulation are necessary for building aesthetics and zoning, as well as stricter enforcement of ordinances.

There is a request for more support for local entrepreneurs, making it easier for individuals to start and run business. Much emphasis has been put on addressing housing challenges, which includes increasing the number of full-time residents.

Enhanced communication among residents is a pressing requirement for the community's well-being. Within the community, there is a divergence of preferences; some residents seek increased activities, opportunities, and action for themselves and their children, while others prefer a quiet, serene town where the tranquil summer nights are undisturbed by community events. In this context, local support and unity hold a pivotal role in driving the success of community initiatives, bridging the gap between differing aspirations and ensuring collective progress.

Ongoing Projects

Twain Harte Community Services District is building a new 1-acre project, Meadows Park, as well as expanding and rehabbing pickleball courts, and reconstructing the tennis courts with a clay surface.

Current community engagement efforts involve groups like Twain Harte Partners, who coordinate activities in the community.

The Twain Harte Homeowners are addressing issues related to trails, lighting, signage, community maintenance, and litter removal. Discussions are underway regarding solar-powered downtown lighting, walking paths, signage, and charging stations. They are also initiating a beautification program.

There is currently a project to renovate the Twain Harte Shopping Village with condos and apartments which will increase the number of housing units in the area.

Visions of the Future

In envisioning the future, the community aims to preserve its unique charm and character as a mountain resort community and restore the area as a vibrant center of activity throughout all four seasons. This ensures residents and visitors can enjoy Twain Harte year-round.

With a focus on families and children, the vision includes ensuring a safe environment for families to live and visit, along with creating more opportunities for youth employment.

Moreover, there is a commitment to fostering an environment that encourages youth to remain and establish their lives within the area. It is recognized that many frequent visitors become future residents.

Regarding businesses and developments, there is a recognized need for new projects to contribute to the community's infrastructure. Additionally, the importance of retaining commercial space is highlighted, ensuring the economic vitality and diversity of the community. There was also mention of promoting the growth of wine and gin industries to encourage a community center similar to Murphy's.

Action Items to Bring Progress

1. Develop Local Support and Planning

The success of community initiatives strongly relies on the growth of local support, and cohesiveness within the community is considered integral for progress. The community's collective desire is to foster the local economy while preserving the picturesque, natural, and tranquil lifestyle that initially drew many here. A community group must be formed to review the design guidelines for Twain Harte, form ideas for a focused growth objective, and discuss projects to achieve this. Then develop plans for marketing to effectively showcase and promote the unique appeal of Twain Harte to a broader audience.

2. Infrastructure Improvements

Critical infrastructure enhancements must occur. A primary focus is ensuring residence and visitor safety, addressing traffic concerns, and maintaining public spaces like parks. This includes improving lighting and pedestrian pathways, as well as signage and parking. A possible solution is road improvements with an emphasis on traffic control.

3. Consideration of Local Regulation for Short-Term Rentals

The county will need to assess short-term rentals by quantifying the issues and studying similar ordinances in other communities and their effects when considering any changes to regulations. This must be in an effort to maintain the economic benefits of short-term rentals, while encouraging landlord accountability. This may include creating a permitting process, and implementing and enforcing noise, trash, safety, and light ordinances to maintain the community's peaceful atmosphere.

4. Business Growth

To enhance the business area, an essential focus is implementing incentives to attract and retain businesses within the vicinity. This may involve the introduction of programs designed to incentivize improvements to building facades, aiming to enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of the commercial area. Additionally, there must be an emphasis on encouraging property owners who rent out spaces to play a more active role in contributing to the betterment of the community, thereby fostering a sense of collective responsibility and investment in the area's growth and prosperity.