

*These proposed design guidelines provide a valuable tool to ensure new development takes into consideration the unique qualities and context of the Southwest Chico Neighborhood. They provide commercial and residential property owners, builders, architects, designers and the general public with information and assistance in the planning of new construction and rehabilitation/renovation of existing commercial and residential buildings. Many of the guidelines and illustrative materials provided here are based on design guidelines developed by Mogavero Notestine Associates for the Avenues Neighborhood.*

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Southwest Chico Neighborhood includes residential areas bordered by commercial corridors and creeks as well as light industrial areas. The residential areas generally follow a traditional pattern, with front doors and porches facing the street and garages and second units accessed via alleys. Multi-family structures are intermixed with single-family dwellings, ranging from converted manors to simple apartment buildings. The residential blocks have a fine-grained urban pattern and a true diversity of architectural styles, eclectic gardens and a mature and diverse urban forest.

The light industrial areas are vehicular-oriented, and many existing buildings are set back from streets with minimal landscaping. The commercial corridors, Park Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Street and East 20<sup>th</sup> Street are primarily auto-oriented strip commercial developments, but some traditional storefronts exist along with a few notable and unique buildings.



*Southwest Chico cottage.*

Little Chico and Comanche Creeks mark the north and south edges of the Southwest Chico Neighborhood. These are currently hidden from view with safety and dumping a concern, but they are poised to become a stronger asset to the community.

## 1. Purpose

These guidelines are intended to accomplish the following:

- ◆ Establish a high standard of design quality for buildings and facades.
- ◆ Provide visual continuity along street frontages.
- ◆ Encourage commercial development in patterns which are more pedestrian-friendly.
- ◆ Ensure new development relates to nearby structures.
- ◆ Encourage corporate and franchise designs to adapt to the unique character of the Southwest Chico Neighborhood.
- ◆ Reinforce the historic aspects of the neighborhood where applicable.
- ◆ Encourage additional housing and mixed-use development.
- ◆ Convey design expectations to property owners and developers.
- ◆ Protect property owner investments by discouraging inappropriate adjacent development.
- ◆ Streamline the development review process by more clearly communicating community expectations to property owners and developers.

These guidelines are not intended to establish or prescribe a particular design theme or style; nor do they force uniformity in the Southwest Chico Neighborhood. The purpose of these guidelines is to encourage good design, with respect to both tradition and innovation, and to prevent bad design.

## 2. Basic Principles

The design guidelines in this document are based on the following basic principles. For projects which are not specifically addressed by these guidelines, they will be used to evaluate whether plans and designs are appropriate and consistent with the overall intent of these design guidelines.

- ◆ Projects should reflect the uniqueness of their specific sites and neighboring development.
- ◆ Projects should emphasize the visual prominence of buildings, and facades, enhance landscaping where possible and minimize the visual impacts of parking.
- ◆ Commercial building designs should emphasize variety and avoid large box-like structures.
- ◆ Projects should be pedestrian-friendly.
- ◆ Signage should be restrained and offer the minimum needed to identify the business.
- ◆ Commercial buildings located near street frontages should be encouraged in order to enliven the visual environment and encourage pedestrian movement.
- ◆ Manage stormwater runoff.
- ◆ New development should recognize the creeks as assets.

## 3. Where Design Guidelines Apply

These design guidelines apply to the entire Southwest Chico Neighborhood Plan Area, shown in Figure 6-1.

#### 4. Design Review and Approval

In most cases, Chico’s design review and approval of commercial and multi-family developments is conducted by the Architectural Review Board and can be appealed to the City Council. In other cases, design review is conducted by the Planning Commission and can be appealed to the City Council. In these cases, Architectural Review Board or Planning Commission review is supported by a review and recommendation from City staff.

Unless a land use entitlement is required, single-family homes are normally reviewed by staff as part of the building permit plan check process coordinated through the Building and Development Services Department. Extensive design review, however, is not currently required by the City. For that reason adopting these guidelines will require changes to the municipal zoning code and additional staff resources to ensure proper review.

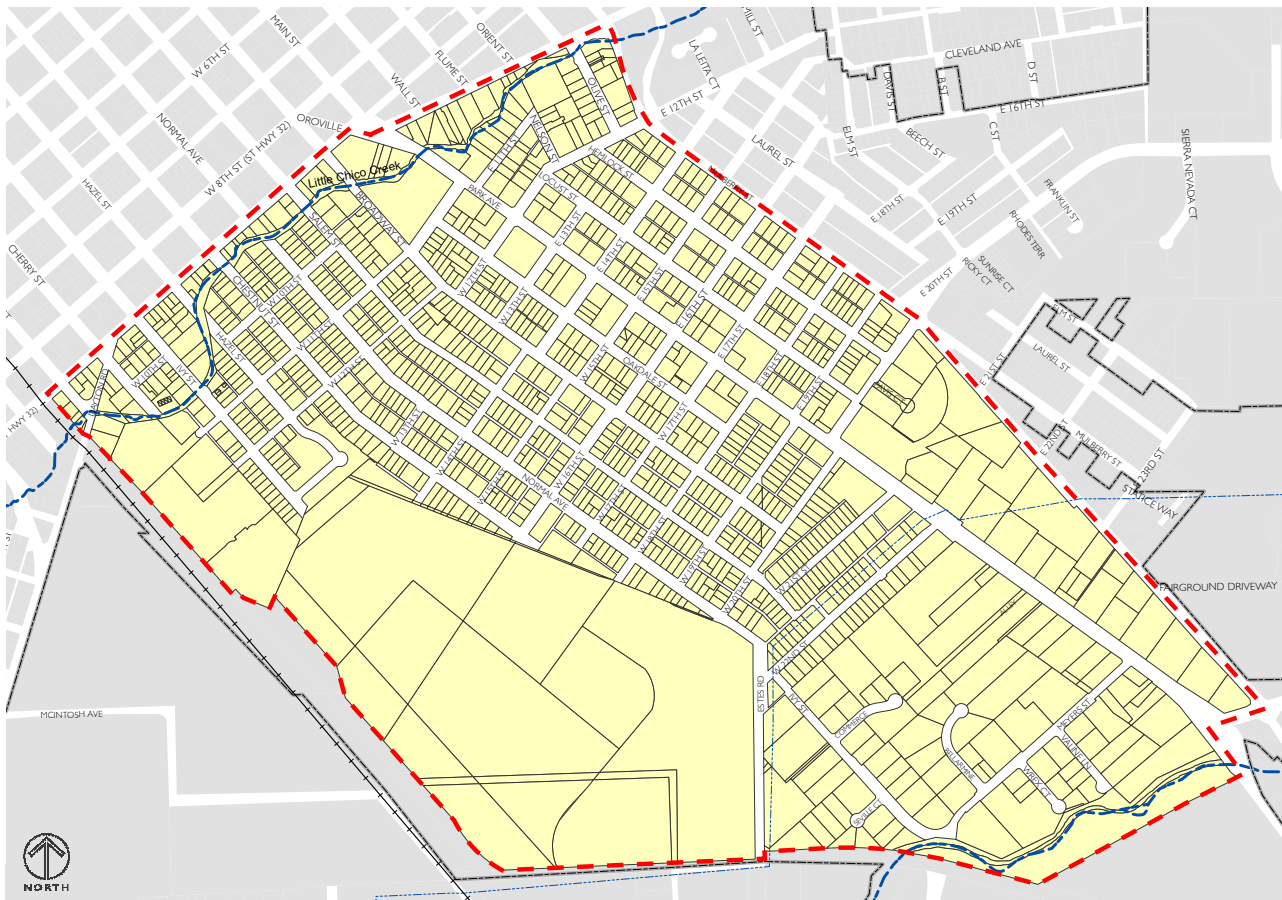


Figure 6-1. The Southwest Neighborhood.

## B. CREEK CORRIDOR GUIDELINES

Little Chico Creek and Comanche Creek bound the north and south edges of Southwest Chico Neighborhood. Additionally, part of Crouch Ditch, a historic irrigation canal, is exposed between Normal Avenue (formerly Estes Road) and the Meyers Industrial Area. The ditch flows periodically and provides habitat to wild animals.



Little Chico Creek at Chesnut Street, Chico, CA.



Educational signage on storm drains.

Typically, buildings have turned blank walls to the creeks, thus creating public blind-spots—places prone to illegal dumping, camping, and illicit activities. To transform these spaces from liabilities to community assets, the guidelines described below aim to implement the following principles, which are discussed and illustrated at length in Chapter 4 of this Plan:

- ◆ Increase visual access and passive surveillance.
- ◆ Orient activity toward the creek as to activate the creek edge.
- ◆ Incorporate the creeks into a network of open space.
- ◆ Improve water quality by reducing site runoff.

These guidelines apply to all development and redevelopment on parcels adjacent to these waterways, with the exception of single-family residential which is strongly encouraged to implement these factors in the design.

### I. Site Design

#### a. Location and Orientation

- ◆ Consistent with the current Zoning Code and the 1994 General Plan as amended, Little Chico Creek should have a 25-foot setback from top of bank to building structures. Planning for this setback with respect to commercial and multi-family residential properties should accommodate a public access trail as discussed in Chapter 4 of this Plan. Other uses such as patio seating and open space for employees are encouraged adjacent to creek setbacks.

- ◆ Comanche Creek should have a 50- to 100-foot setback from top-of-bank to building structures. No public access is required as the public access trail will be on the south side of Comanche Creek.
- ◆ No setback is required adjacent to Crouch Ditch, but site grading and roof drainage should be engineered to divert and process stormwater on site through landscaping and retention.

**b. Parking**

- ◆ Development adjacent to creeks should minimize impervious surfaces on the site by keeping roof, driveway and parking areas to a minimum. Pervious paving materials should be used when possible.

**c. Landscaping and Stormwater Retention**

- ◆ New development should maximize opportunities for stormwater retention and infiltration. Sites should be graded to drain toward vegetated swales, permeable paving, or infiltration trenches.
- ◆ Minimize impervious surfaces. Roof tops, driveways and parking area coverage should be kept to a minimum.
- ◆ New development along the creeks should use plantings that require minimal water. Pesticide use should be kept to a minimum.
- ◆ Native trees, shrubs and groundcover should be used.

**2. Architecture**

**a. Building Form and Landscape**

- ◆ Windows and public areas of buildings should be oriented toward creeks.
- ◆ Along creeks, fencing should be at least 50 percent open or transparent.



Public access to creek, Ashland, OR.



Grassy bio-swale to increase stormwater retention.



Mixed-use buildings in downtown Burlingame, CA.



Mixed-use buildings incorporating housing and retail.



Existing 3-story senior housing in SW Chico, CA.

### C. COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE BUILDINGS

Retail commercial uses within the Southwest Chico Neighborhood are concentrated along Park Avenue, Broadway Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Humboldt Avenue and East 20<sup>th</sup> Street. These include restaurants, retail establishments, car dealerships and other small-scale local businesses. Additionally, the existing zoning allows for mixed-use retail/residential development along Park Avenue.

Some of the existing commercial uses abut residential areas, others abut light industrial uses. The different contexts and uses warrant different design approaches, but all projects should:

- ◆ Reinforce the street’s existing context and sense of place.
- ◆ Enhance the pedestrian experience and accommodate automobiles in a non-obtrusive manner.
- ◆ Define the street as a public space through the design of buildings as integral components of the public realm, as “street walls.”

**I. Site Design**

**a. Use**

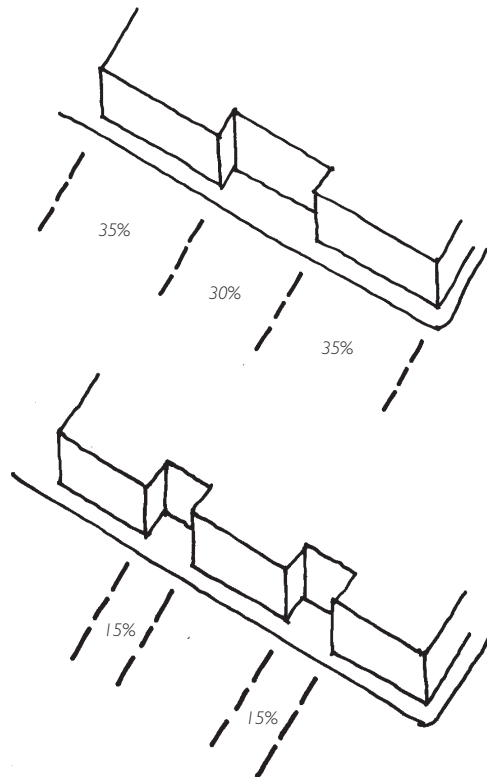
- ◆ At Park Avenue, new development should provide ground floor retail frontages at nodes as discussed in Chapter 4. These locations are: the blocks between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street, the blocks from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to 17<sup>th</sup> Street and the blocks between 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Street. On Park Avenue outside of the focal nodes office and residential uses are allowed at the ground floor.
- ◆ In locations other than Park Avenue, buildings should follow the pattern of existing buildings. Buildings should not be set back further than existing adjacent buildings. Development applicants must provide drawings and photographs showing locations of existing buildings along a minimum of one block in either direction of the project site. At these locations retail is encouraged.

**b. Location**

- ◆ At Park Avenue focal point locations, retail commercial buildings should be built up to the front property line, and should make up at minimum 70 percent of the front property line. Areas of setback should be used to provide access for parking or public spaces for building entries or outdoor seating.
- ◆ In locations along the east side of Park Avenue in the Wedge, where there is an existing pattern of parallel frontage roads with parking, this frontage road pattern should be emulated.



Mixed-use building helping to define the street as a public space, Adams Point, Oakland, CA.



Setbacks on portions of buildings create opportunities for activities on the sidewalk and increase visual interest



Mixed-use building in Rockridge neighborhood, Oakland, CA.



Retail addressing the corner in downtown Burlingame, CA.

- ◆ In an industrial context such as the Wedge or on Park Avenue south of West 21<sup>st</sup> Street, retail and front office operations are encouraged to face Park Avenue, with associated warehouse or light industrial operations set behind. Figure 6-2 illustrates conceptual site configuration.

c. Orientation

- ◆ Building entries should be oriented to street frontages; the primary building façade should face a public street and be accessible by pedestrian walkways to a public sidewalk. Primary entries should be accented with features such as overhangs or awnings.
- ◆ At corner retail lots, buildings are strongly encouraged to address the corner by locating the entry at the corner. Additional site features such as benches, small plazas, lighting and landscaping can also accentuate street corners and are encouraged.



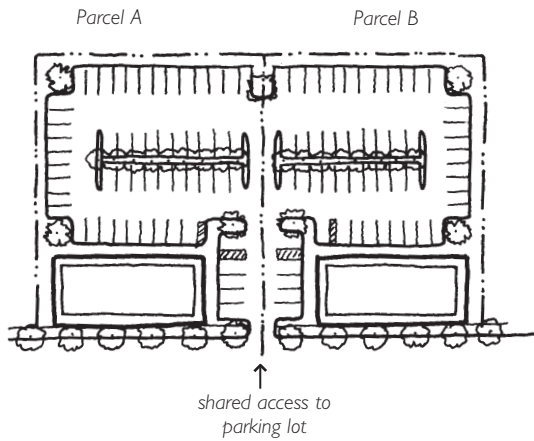
Figure 6-2. Office/retail uses fronting Park Avenue and the bikeway, with industrial uses behind.



d. *Parking*

- ◆ In all locations along main streets, parking should be in lots behind or to the side of buildings. On corner lots, parking lots should be tucked behind buildings, so that pedestrians walk next to building facades rather than open parking lots. Alley access to parking should be utilized whenever feasible.
- ◆ Curb cuts to Park Avenue should be minimized to alleviate breaks in the existing pedestrian/bike path. Shared access to parking should be considered to minimize curb cuts, providing an improved pedestrian environment.

- ◆ Parking should be provided and appropriately shaded by trees or shade structures as required by City zoning. Edges of surface parking lots should be well landscaped with low walls, shrubs and planting up to the height of a car hood.
- ◆ Include adjacent on-street parking spaces to meet City on-site parking requirements for the retail portion of the building.
- ◆ The use of porous paving should be considered in outdoor parking lots.



Permeable concrete paver units add texture



Parking lots should be located behind buildings to enhance the pedestrian character of the street.



Landscaped parking lots reduce heat island effect and provide aesthetic relief.



Landscaping at the rear of 1200 Park Avenue in Chico, CA.



Attractive landscaping providing shade.



Hardscape delineating the pedestrian realm.

e. *Landscape*

- ◆ In commercial areas of the Plan Area, high branching street trees should be provided at 25-foot intervals.
- ◆ Where buildings are partially setback from the street right-of-way, provide landscaping and paved areas to create an attractive and usable environment for building users and pedestrians.
- ◆ Hardscape design should use high quality materials for paving. Parking and driveway areas should be distinguished from pedestrian walkways. Pedestrian paving should be continuous across driveways to give priority to pedestrians.
- ◆ The use of native trees, shrubs, and ground-cover is strongly encouraged.

f. *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*

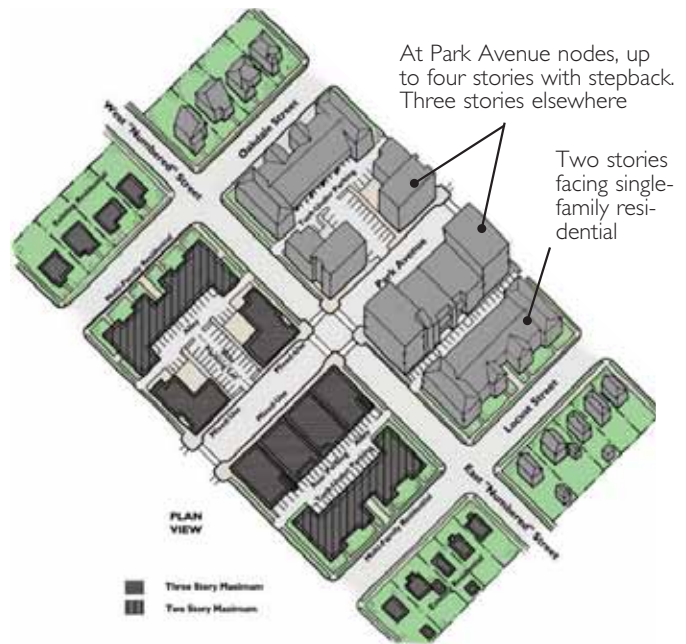
- ◆ All building designs, orientation, lighting, details and finishes should comply with the crime prevention guidelines presented in Section J.

**2. Architecture**

a. *Building Form*

- ◆ Building heights should be compatible with existing neighborhood form. Generally, buildings should not be allowed to exceed three stories. However, at focal points along Park Avenue, building heights up to four stories could be allowed, as shown in Figure 6-3. Buildings facing residential homes should be limited to two stories to reflect the smaller scale of the residential neighborhood.

- ◆ Create a pattern of 2- to 4-story facades along Park Avenue. Above three stories, buildings should step back from the property line or first floor footprint by a minimum of 8 feet.
- ◆ For mixed-use buildings with residential units above, each residential unit facing the street should be provided with an accessible balcony facing the street. Where a full balcony is not feasible, French balconies may be provided. Residential balconies may be allowed to protrude up to 4 feet from the property line over the public sidewalk.
- ◆ Buildings should be designed to address intersection corners with towers, special signage, indented entries and other architectural features.



Drawing showing taller buildings on Park Avenue with smaller buildings facing residential.

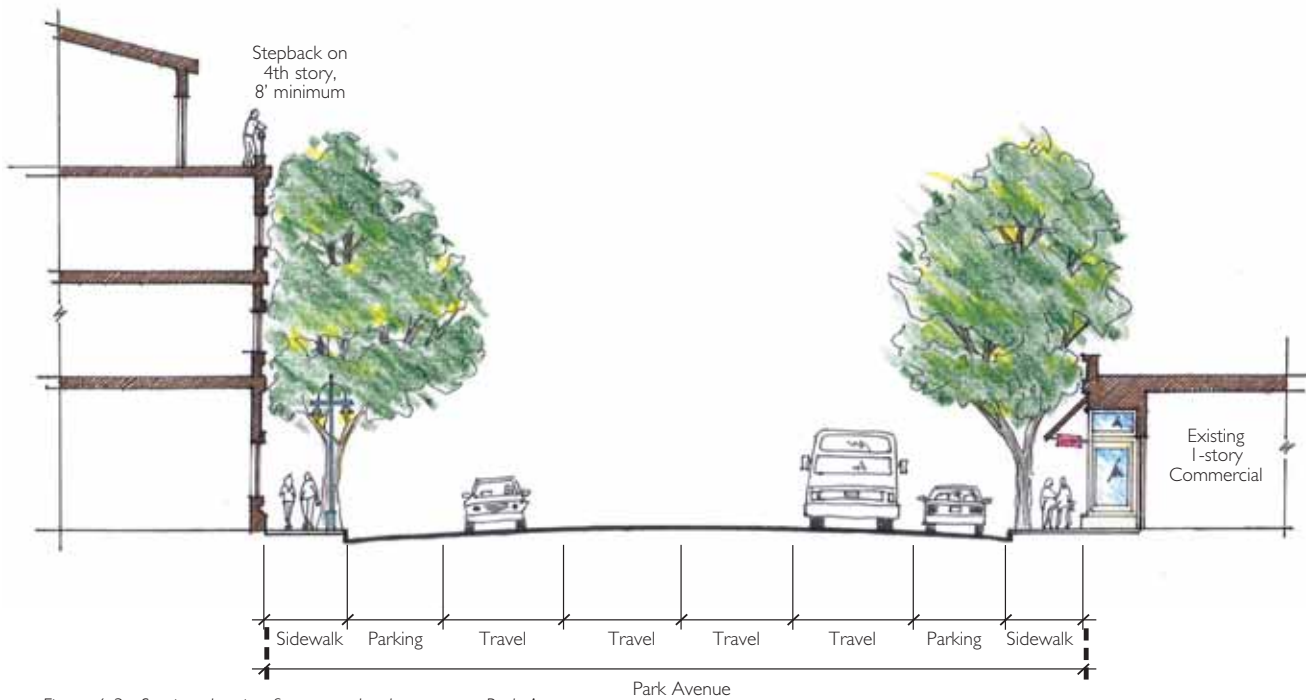


Figure 6-3. Section showing four-story development on Park Avenue.



Storefronts of shops along College Avenue in Oakland, CA.



Awnings and facades of mixed-use buildings in Burlingame, CA.



Awnings accentuate street entries.

b. *Detail and Character*

- ◆ Facades should create a diverse yet continuous environment that encourages pedestrian interest and activity. Entryways, storefront windows and cornices, eaves and other architectural details that cast shadows are examples of façade elements that contribute to pedestrian interest.
- ◆ Ensure that the ground floor facing public streets is as transparent as possible. At least 75 percent of the ground-level façade should be fenestrated to provide eyes on the street and visual interest for pedestrians. Highly reflective and dark tinted glazing or other interior coverings that block the view of the interior are prohibited; vertical or horizontal window blinds are discouraged.
- ◆ Building facades should incorporate awnings to protect pedestrians from sun and rain, as well as shading devices to protect windows from heat gain.
- ◆ Building masses should be broken down into smaller rhythms of building bays. Horizontal bays should not exceed 25 to 50 feet. This can be accomplished by shifting the building façade forward or back, by changing materials, or by carefully locating material scoring patterns.
- ◆ Awnings should be designed to reflect the 25- to 50-foot building rhythm, with separate awnings over each storefront.
- ◆ Security grills may be used, but should be located inside building fenestration.

- ◆ For commercial or office uses in historic residences, any alterations to buildings should complement the existing historical context and should not obscure significant architectural features of the structure.

c. *Materials and Color*

- ◆ Only high-quality materials should be used in building construction. Appropriate materials include brick, stone, stucco, and wood siding. Inappropriate materials, including scored plywood (T-111) or vinyl siding, are prohibited.
- ◆ Materials, colors and paints should complement the palette of existing building colors. Blandness is discouraged.

d. *Signage*

- ◆ Signs should be appropriately integrated into their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color, texture and lighting in order to complement the architecture of the building and the immediate neighborhood context. Significant architectural features of the building should not be obscured by signage.

- ◆ Permitted signs include wall signs, awning signs, projecting signs, hanging signs, window signs, tenant directory signs, A-frame signs and monument signs under 5 feet in height. Pole signs are prohibited.

- ◆ Repetitious signage on the same building frontage should be avoided.

- ◆ Where multiple uses occupy the same building, the design and alignment of signs should create a unified appearance.

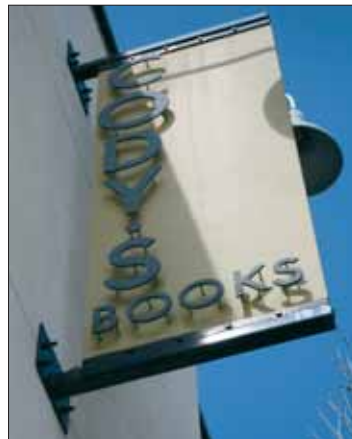
- ◆ Signs should be professionally constructed of durable high-quality materials such as metal, stone, hardwood, brass plated and exposed or channel neon.

- ◆ Materials, finishes and colors should be the same or similar to those of the building or structures on the site.

- ◆ Painted signs and individual letters are encouraged. Such signs should be lit by separate spot lighting. Interior lit “cabinet signs” are highly discouraged.



Signage with appropriate lighting.



Artistic signage.



Awnings and signage.



*Pedestrian lighting on Fourth Street in Berkeley, CA.*



*Pedestrian scaled lighting incorporating banners.*



*Architecturally appropriate building lighting.*

- ◆ Sign lighting should be directed onto the sign and should not shine into adjacent properties or cause glare for motorists or pedestrians. Backlit, halo lit, or reverse channel letters with halo illumination are strongly encouraged. Signs that flash or blink are not permitted.
- ◆ Electrical conduit and transformers should be concealed from sight.

e. *Lighting*

- ◆ Building entryways, sidewalks and landscaped areas should be lit to enhance safety and comfort.
- ◆ Shielded light fixtures focused on building elements are encouraged. Unshielded lights mounted on walls (“wall-paks”) are strongly discouraged.
- ◆ Pole-mounted fixtures should not exceed 12 feet in height along street frontages.
- ◆ Building lighting should complement the architectural character of the building and the neighborhood. Light fixtures should not be a source of glare; avoid hot spots by shielding fixtures and by lighting surfaces rather than spaces. Direct light should not extend beyond the property line, except to light sidewalks.
- ◆ Surface parking lots should be lit with pedestrian scaled lighting, with standards not more than 18 feet tall.

**D. MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS**

Multi-family buildings can benefit a community by adding a density that supports transit and community retail and contributes to vitality by adding people to the street. However, poorly designed multi-family units can also contribute to a community’s deterioration. In order to realize the potential and limit the negative effects of multi family housing, all new multi-family projects and major renovations should adhere to the following principles:

- ◆ Reinforce the neighborhood’s existing context and sense of place.
- ◆ Enhance the experience for pedestrians and accommodate automobiles in a non-obtrusive manner.

- ◆ Respect the existing and historic pattern of houses.
- ◆ Clearly distinguish between public spaces and individual private spaces, and encourage individual spaces to provide “eyes on the street” over public spaces.
- ◆ Provide measures that contribute to the overall security of residents and visitors.

**I. Site Design**

a. *Location and Orientation*

- ◆ Along Park Avenue, buildings should adhere to location and orientation guidelines described in the Commercial and Mixed-Use guidelines.



*Multi-family housing reinforcing neighborhood sense of place.*



*Multi-family housing encouraging “eyes on the street” with porches.*



*Multi-family residence respecting pattern of existing homes.*

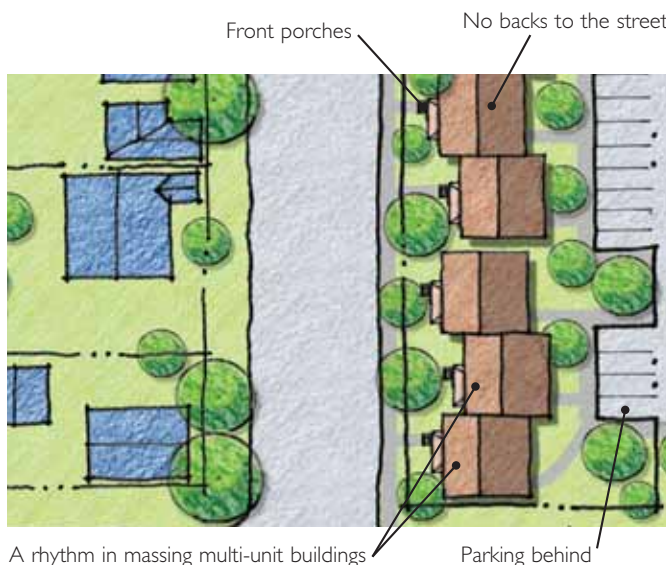


*Multi-family housing at 1200 Park Avenue, Chico CA.*

- ◆ For projects on residential streets, new buildings should follow the pattern of existing building footprints and locations along the street, and deviate from existing footprints no less than 15 feet or greater than 30 feet. Development applicants should provide drawings and photographs showing locations of existing buildings along a minimum of one block in either direction of the project site. Where adjacent newer buildings do not conform to traditional setbacks, buildings are strongly encouraged to follow traditional patterns.



Multi-family housing site design of Metro Walk in Richmond, CA.



- ◆ Orient building entries to face the principal street; individual units fronting the public street should have their front doors accessible from the public sidewalk.
- ◆ Locate multi-family buildings within a residential context to limit intrusiveness to adjacent properties. Shield adjacent properties from views from units located on upper floors by locating exterior windows above head height, by using obscured glazing, or by the placement of landscaping.
- ◆ Common outdoor space for residents should be located to the interior of the site; individual units should have balconies, windows, doors and patios that allow residents to see and access the common space.
- ◆ Common facilities such as mail service and laundry rooms should be located adjacent to common outdoor areas to encourage use of the outdoor space.
- ◆ Duplexes are permitted by the city of Chico on corner lots within single-family residential districts. Such units should orient one entryway and driveway to each street to increase the sense residential, human-scale neighborhood.



b. *Parking and Driveways*

- ◆ Adequate off-street parking should be provided for residents and guests, in accordance with City of Chico standards. This requirement should be balanced by the need to avoid unnecessary paved areas. Required paved areas should be limited to the minimum necessary to accommodate the required spaces, and the use of pervious paving is strongly encouraged.
- ◆ Parking areas should be screened from the view of adjacent properties, preferably using landscaping or fencing. Where at all possible, surface parking lots and garages should not be between the street and the building.
- ◆ Where garages are used, they should be designed to avoid the appearance of a “wall” of garage doors.
- ◆ Driveways and curb-cuts should be kept to a minimum, both in number and width.
- ◆ The use of covered parking is encouraged to provide shading, reduce the heat island effect and provide a potential location for photovoltaic panels.
- ◆ Bicycle parking should be provided. The total number of spaces should be at least 30 percent of the required automobile spaces. Bicycle racks should be located along a principal access route and be visible from publicly accessible spaces and should be lighted at night to provide security.



*Screened residential parking.*



*Residential pervious paving.*



*Covered parking.*



Continuous pedestrian paving identifying clear pedestrian walkway.



Native plant garden.



Low residential fencing providing privacy and visibility.

*c. Landscape*

- ◆ Hardscape design should use high quality materials for paving. Parking and driveway areas should be distinguished from pedestrian walkways. Pedestrian paving should be continuous across driveways to give priority to pedestrians.
- ◆ Encourage the use of native trees, shrubs, and groundcover in order to reduce water consumption.
- ◆ Fencing should be used selectively to enhance the privacy of residents and neighbors. Within multi-family developments, the use of fencing should carefully consider safety; tall fences surrounding small private patios limit visibility and surveillance and should be avoided. Walls less than 36 inches or fencing that is at least 50 percent transparent is preferred.
- ◆ Street trees at no more than 25-foot spacing should be provided. Trees should be from the City-approved list.

*d. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*

- ◆ All building designs, orientation, lighting, details and finishes should comply with the crime prevention guidelines presented in Section J.

**2. Architecture**

**a. Building Form**

- ◆ Building heights should step down to two stories next to single-family homes.
- ◆ Multi-unit buildings should be articulated to reflect a rhythm of 25- to 50-foot divisions to better relate to the single-family residential scale.
- ◆ Trash and recycling should be in enclosures, not visible from street. Alley access is preferred.



*Attractive multi-family housing in Oroville, CA.*

**b. Detail and Character**

- ◆ Composition and detailing of doorways and fenestrations should relate to human scale. Use existing historical residences as guides.
- ◆ Front porches are encouraged; porches should be a minimum of 6 feet deep and should be one floor in height only. The scale and style of the porch should be compatible with the rest of the building; its columns and railings should be detailed using materials and stylistic elements similar to that of the unit.



*Residential building addressing the corner with appropriately scaled porch.*

**c. Lighting**

- ◆ Uplighting in porches (filling the porch with indirect light) is encouraged.
- ◆ Shielded lighting highlighting building features, landscape elements and trees is encouraged. Unshielded lighting is discouraged.
- ◆ Lighting fixtures in surface parking areas should be no more than 12 feet high and should be shielded so as to minimize light spilling onto neighboring property.

**E. SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES**

The Southwest Chico Neighborhood was historically a single-family dominated community and its character reflects this with the historic pattern still present throughout the neighborhood. In order to preserve the valuable character of the housing stock, new single-family construction should adhere to the following principles:

- ◆ Enhance the rich context of existing houses and the historical patterns of development.
- ◆ Continue the existing relationship between public and private through the use of porches, doors, windows and other architectural and landscape features.

- ◆ Minimize the presence of driveways, parking and garages.
- ◆ Use landscaping to enhance the aesthetics and security of the street.

**I. Site Design**

**a. Location and Orientation**

- ◆ New buildings should follow the traditional pattern of building footprints and locations along the street. Setbacks should be no less than 15 feet or greater than 30 feet. Applications for Architectural Review Board or Planning Commission review should include drawings and photographs showing locations of existing buildings along a minimum of one block in either direction of the project site.



*Residence with minimal presence of driveway or garage, SW Chico, CA.*



*Residence with appropriate setback.*



*Residence with entryway and windows facing the street., Chico CA.*



*Residence with minimal presence of driveway, SW Chio, CA.*

- ◆ Entryways to homes should be clearly defined with orientation to the street.
- ◆ Corner lots should address both streets with windows and architectural treatment.

**b. Parking and Driveways**

- ◆ Garages or parking spaces should be accessed via an alley, if an alley is present. Where alley access is not feasible, a garage should not dominate the front façade of the house. For this reason, the garage should not occupy more than 40 percent of the building frontage. Garages should be designed to hold a maximum of two vehicles. Garages should be set back from the front door of the house a minimum of 3 feet, and should preferably be located at the rear of the lot.
- ◆ Carports should be designed with respect to the character of the houses to which they are attached, and should be made of materials that complement the building style.
- ◆ Uncovered parking should be located at the side or rear of the lot, whenever the lot is large enough to develop the required parking to the rear. This minimizes parking along the façade facing the street and affords an unobstructed and attractive view of the home.
- ◆ Driveways should be subordinate to the home and the landscaping. They should be minimized where possible. Driveways and uncovered parking spaces should be pavers or other pervious material.



*Garage set back from front facade of home.*



*Carport designed with respect to character of building.*



*Garage set into the house with driveway subordinate to landscaping.*

c. *Landscape*

- ◆ Hardscape materials should enhance the overall appearance of the home and the yard. Impervious surfaces add to water runoff and should be minimized, limited to the driveway, walkways and small patios.



*Lanscaping reflecting character, SW Chico, CA.*



*Transparent fence.*



*Native plant landscaping to reduce water consumption.*

- ◆ Encourage the use of native trees, shrubs and groundcover in order to reduce water consumption.
- ◆ Fences and walls should reflect the style, materials, colors and architectural character of the building and the neighborhood. They should be of high quality materials and should not obstruct views from the street to the front entrance. Stone, stucco, decorative iron and wood fences are examples of appropriate materials. Chain-link and vinyl fencing is not allowed.
- ◆ Fences and walls located along sidewalks should be set back from the sidewalk at a minimum of 12 inches to provide a more accessible walking environment for pedestrians and to provide a location for plantings which enhance the streetscape. Fences within the front yard setback should be no taller than 36 inches in height and should be at least 50 percent transparent. Solid walls within the front yard setback should be no taller than 24 inches in height.
- ◆ Every residence should have a minimum of one street tree from the City-approved list.
- ◆ Native or drought tolerant landscape should be considered over turf.

d. *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*

- ◆ All building designs, orientation, lighting, details and finishes should comply with the crime prevention guidelines presented in Section J.

**2. Architecture**

**a. Building Form**

- ◆ Building massing should be complementary to the adjacent context of the neighborhood. Where traditional single-family residences exist, new buildings should appear similar in mass and scale to single-family residences. This may be accomplished by reducing the building mass toward the street or by breaking up the mass of the building into smaller parts.
- ◆ Buildings larger than one story should be designed so that their masses are broken into smaller parts; all sides of the building should be considered. Changes in materials, shifts in the plane of the building exterior and changes in color are all tools that can be used to accomplish this requirement.
- ◆ For additions, new construction should respect the original dwelling and the scale of existing homes on the street. It should be visually subordinate to the original structure, either in size or through the use of color and materials. New construction should typically be located to the rear of the home to minimize its visibility from the street.
- ◆ Two-story buildings and additions should respect adjacent properties by limiting intrusiveness to adjacent properties. Shield adjacent properties from views from upper floors by locating exterior windows above head height, by using obscured glazing or by the placement of landscaping.



*Appropriately massed neighborhood residence.*



*Two story building with masses broken by porches, SW Chico, CA.*



*New construction respecting the original dwelling.*

b. *Detail and Character*

- ◆ The architectural character of new homes should complement the existing context of the street. Where no single architectural style predominates, homes may have more freedom of stylistic expression.



*Residence with visual interest and architectural articulation, SW Chico, CA.*



*New residence designed with door visible to street and to match neighborhood character.*

- ◆ Whether contemporary or traditional, the detailing of new homes should provide variety and interest at the pedestrian scale.
- ◆ Front porches are encouraged; porches should be a minimum of 6 feet deep and should be one-story in height only. The scale and style of the porch should be compatible with the rest of the house; its columns and railings should be detailed using materials and stylistic elements that are similar to that of the house.
- ◆ All sides of a home should be given visual interest through the careful placement of windows, while also respecting the privacy of adjacent homes.
- ◆ Architectural elements such as dormers, vent louvers, exposed roof eaves, and roof brackets should be used when appropriate to the architectural style.
- ◆ Additions should be designed with architectural details that are similar to those of the existing home.
- ◆ Doors should be visible from the street and should be designed to enhance the overall composition of the house; they should not be flat surfaces, but rather should include recessed panels, glass, or some other form of detailing or articulation.
- ◆ Composition of building openings should relate to human scale and should use historic residences as a guide.

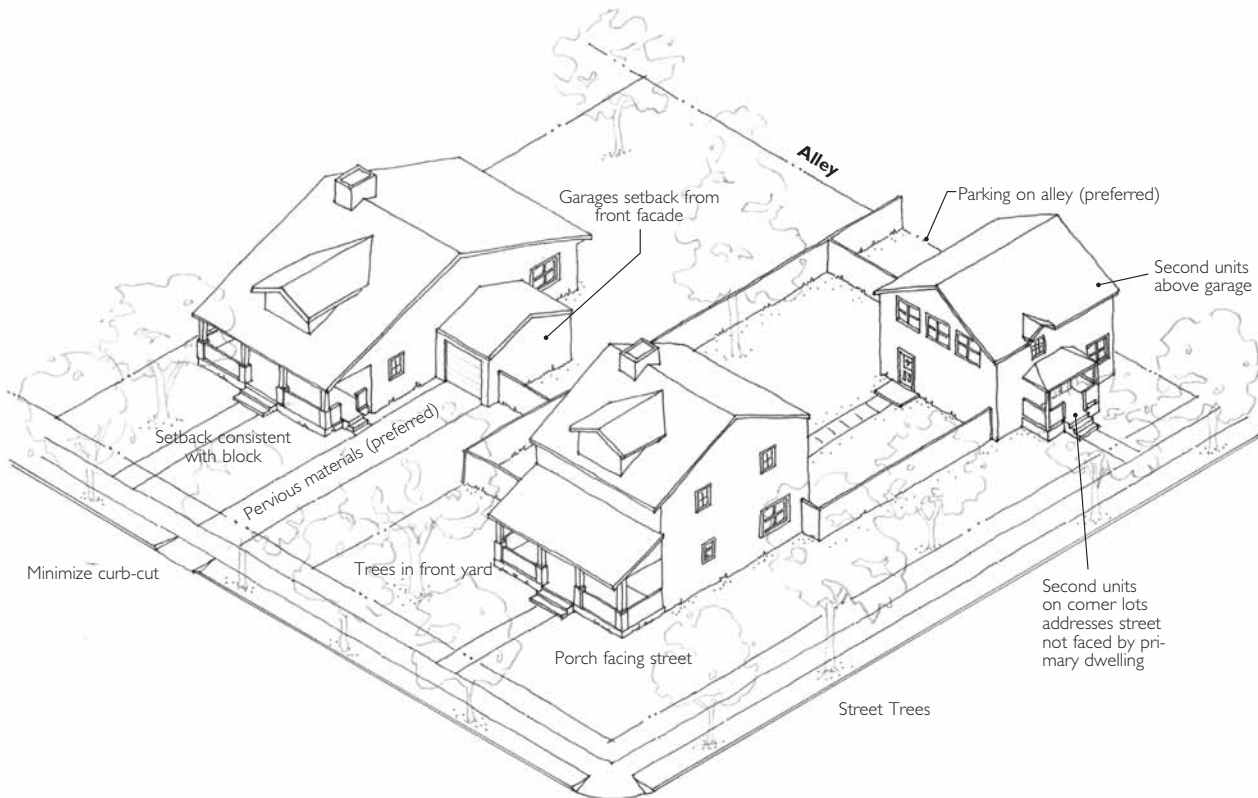


c. *Materials and Color*

- ◆ Only high-quality materials should be used in building construction. Appropriate materials include brick, stone, stucco and wood siding. Inappropriate materials, including scored plywood (T-111) or vinyl siding, are prohibited.
- ◆ Use simple material finishes; limit the use of highly reflective and intense colors to accent features.
- ◆ Windows should be constructed of high quality materials such as wood, vinyl, or wood clad; unpainted metal windows are not allowed.
- ◆ Colors should complement the palette of colors of the existing neighborhood.

d. *Lighting*

- ◆ Building lighting should be integrated with the building and should be complementary to the architectural character of the building and the neighborhood.
- ◆ Lighting should be shielded such that light is directed at building surfaces, travel surfaces, and landscape elements only; direct light should be designed to not extend beyond the property line or to the sky. Shielded light fixtures illuminating building walls, porches or fences are encouraged. Unshielded lighting facing the street is discouraged.
- ◆ Uplighting in porches (filling the porch with indirect light) is encouraged.



Drawing showing site orientation for residential buildings.

**F. ACCESSORY DWELLINGS – SECOND UNITS**

**I. Use of the Units**

- ◆ Minimum lot size should be 4,500 square feet, or 75 percent of the primary unit size (up to 650 square feet).
- ◆ One of the two units on the lot should be owner-occupied.
- ◆ The second dwelling should consist of a single unit having no more than one bedroom.
- ◆ No more than two occupants per bedroom should reside in the second dwelling.



*Second dwelling unit to the rear of the primary dwelling.*

**2. Size, Location and Orientation**

- ◆ The second dwelling unit should be placed to the rear of the primary dwelling.
- ◆ Side and rear lot setbacks, separation between buildings, maximum gross floor area and minimum lot size are governed by the Zoning Ordinance.
- ◆ For dwelling units created in or added to existing garages, the front façade, if visible from the street, should be rebuilt to reflect its residential use.
- ◆ All second dwellings should have the front door and at least one window facing toward the street, unless built on an alley. Where built on an alley, vehicle access to the alley should be provided and some windows should face the alley.
- ◆ The height of the second dwelling is established by Zoning Ordinance.
- ◆ Where a two-story building is allowed, the structure should give the appearance of being two stories tall even if the interior space is one story or a loft-type space.
- ◆ Privacy landscaping (i.e. trees or tall shrubs) should be planted along side and rear property lines if the second unit is taller than one story, or 15 feet.
- ◆ Private open space should be provided for use of the second dwelling unit.
- ◆ Open space may be on or above ground level.

- ◆ Second dwelling units on corner lots should face the street not faced by the main residence with windows and architectural treatment. If the unit is also adjacent to an alley, the unit should also have alley access, windows and garage parking on the alley.

### 3. Parking and Driveways

- ◆ The number of additional parking spaces should comply with the Zoning Ordinance.
- ◆ Parking spaces should be located to the rear of the front yard setback or behind the front of the primary dwelling, whichever is farther from the street.
- ◆ Permeable paving material (gravel, concrete tire strips, concrete/grass grid, etc.) should be used wherever feasible to improve percolation of rainwater, reduce run-off and minimize visual impact of the driveway.
- ◆ Driveways in the front yard setback should be no more than one car width or a maximum of 9 feet. Driveways on the alley should be no more than two car width or a maximum of 18 feet.
- ◆ Where alleys exist, vehicular access to parking for the second dwelling unit should be from the alley.

### 4. Building Materials and Detailing

- ◆ Siding materials and color should match the primary dwelling unit. Traditional materials, locally available (wood or wood-look clapboards, board and batten, cedar shake shingles, stucco or stone) are preferred.
- ◆ Windows of an accessory building should match the primary dwelling unit (or the majority of homes on that block) in at least three of the following ways:
  - Type of window (double hung, awning, transom, casement, etc.)
  - Number of panes into which the window is divided
  - Trim style (width, depth, ornamental qualities)
  - Proportions (height to width)
  - Location of the windows on the wall
  - Floor-to-sill height
  - Percentage of wall space that windows occupy



*Narrow driveway to the side of residence.*

- ◆ Windows should not invade the privacy of the neighboring properties. Where windows are needed on walls facing neighbors to provide for light or air, they should use a frosted glazing material. Clerestory windows placed 5 feet or higher or skylights are preferred.
- ◆ Roof type (i.e. hip, gable, etc.) and material should match the primary dwelling unit. Roof pitch should not be less than 6 inches of rise in 12 inches of run or it should match the primary dwelling unit.
- ◆ Check post office mailbox mounting requirements and comply with all regulations. Where secondary unit mailbox is not mounted on the building, mount mailbox for second dwelling at or near the front setback line on fence, wall or other structure rather than on a free-standing post. If primary dwelling unit mailbox is mounted on a post, add secondary dwelling mailbox to post.
- ◆ Exterior lighting should be provided at the main entry in a manner that lights the entryway for a distance of 10 feet without creating a nuisance to neighbors or directing light skyward.
- ◆ Mechanical equipment and garbage carts shall be located where it cannot be seen from the public right-of-way or adjacent properties. If equipment can be seen from these vantage points, it should be screened from view.
- ◆ The applicant should consider the use of permeable paving materials in lieu of concrete or asphalt for drives, walks, patios, etc.
- ◆ Tree protection should comply with the existing Chico standards.
- ◆ Street address numerals should be mounted on the second dwelling unit so as to be readily visible from the public right-of-way, for use by emergency services personnel.

**G. ALLEY GUIDELINES**

Most residences and some businesses within the Southwest Chico Neighborhood are serviced by alleys. These design guidelines apply to parcels that back onto alleys and serve to improve the appearance and safety of alleys.

**I. Site Design**

**a. Orientation**

- ◆ Garage structures and second units should be allowed on the property line fronting the alley.
- ◆ Storage areas for trash and recycling containers on alleys should be enclosed and lockable.

**b. Parking**

- ◆ Uncovered parking areas next to alleys in residential areas should use permeable paving (decomposed granite or pavers).

**c. Landscape**

- ◆ Fences should be allowed on property line.
- ◆ Fences that are at least 50 percent transparent are preferred to ensure “eyes on the alley.”
- ◆ The use of native trees, shrubs, and ground-cover is strongly encouraged. Colorful shrubs and flowering trees are also encouraged in alleys.



Entry facing alley and transparent fencing.

Trash and recycling enclosure



Alley Site Design with hidden trash enclosures, lighting and windows of secondary dwelling unit facing alley.



Windows of second dwelling unit facing alley.



Doors and windows of second dwelling unit facing alley.



Doors and windows of second dwelling unit facing alley.

## 2. Architecture

### a. Building Form

- ◆ Buildings should have windows and entries facing the alley. Commercial alleys should not have blank walls. Doors and windows facing alleys are encouraged.
- ◆ Floor plans of two-story dwellings should place windows such that views into adjacent backyards are minimized.

### b. Detail and Character

- ◆ Fences should have a minimum of 50 percent visibility to ensure “eyes on the alley.”
- ◆ Locking enclosures for trash and recycling are encouraged.

### c. Signage

- ◆ Properties at ends of alleys should provide signage indicating cross street to facilitate location finding by Chico Police and Fire Departments.

### d. Lighting

- ◆ Shielded light fixtures illuminating building walls, porches or fences are encouraged. Unshielded light fixtures facing the alley are discouraged.
- ◆ Motion-activated lights should be considered for entries and parking areas. These lights should be shielded so that glare onto public right-of ways and neighboring properties is avoided.

**H. LIVE/WORK DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Live/work housing is an innovative housing type that offers opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurs and artisans who require work and production space. The first floor layout is designed to accommodate several possible uses, including living, office, or retail space, which occupants can configure for their specific needs, while upper floors serve as residential space. This housing type can be appropriate in the context of and near other light industrial uses. The following design guidelines aim to:

- ◆ Minimize potential conflicts between residents and work uses.
- ◆ Enhance the pedestrian character of the neighborhood.

**I. Site Design**

**a. Location and Orientation**

- ◆ Live/work development is encouraged in the Wedge area, particularly in the northern portion. Access should be provided from new streets extending from Park Avenue to Fair Street if possible.
- ◆ Each live/work unit with street level frontage should have a pedestrian oriented frontage that can publicly display the interior of the nonresidential areas of the structure.
- ◆ Where light industrial or commercial properties abut residential properties, impacts from noise should be minimized by moving noise generating activities inside buildings and limiting hours of noise generation to working hours.

- ◆ The occupant of a live/work space should be made aware of and accept the conditions found in the area including noise, pollutions, fumes, dirt and traffic to the extent that they are currently allowed in this district.



*Office/Flex condos in Davis, CA.*



*Live/Work in Davis, CA.*

b. *Parking*

- ◆ There should be a minimum of one parking space per live/work unit. Parking should not occupy street frontages but rather be located at the side or rear of the property.

c. *Landscape*

- ◆ Where buildings are partially setback from the street right-of-way, provide landscaping and paved areas to create an attractive and usable environment for building users and pedestrians.
- ◆ High branching street trees should be provided at 25-foot intervals.
- ◆ The use of native trees, shrubs, and ground-cover is strongly encouraged.



*Live/Work in Santa Cruz, CA.*



*Office/Flex in Davis, CA.*

d. *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*

- ◆ All building designs, orientation, lighting, details and finishes should comply with the crime prevention guidelines presented in Section J.

**2. Architecture**

a. *Building Form*

- ◆ All residential units should be provided with a ground floor work space.
- ◆ One live/work unit should be permitted for each 2,000 square feet of parcel area.
- ◆ The minimum floor area of each live/work unit should be 1,000 square feet.

b. *Detailing and Character*

- ◆ Industrial character of massing, building materials, and details is encouraged. This includes roll-up or fold-up garage doors, metal windows, and metal roofing.

c. *Lighting*

- ◆ Where live-work properties abut residential properties, impacts from nighttime light sources should be minimized by using shielded light fixtures and minimizing the number and height of fixtures. Wherever possible, fixtures should be on timers to turn off when not needed.



**I. LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Significant existing light industrial operations exist in Meyers Industrial Area, the Wedge and along Park Avenue south of East 20<sup>th</sup> Street. These design guidelines aim to foster increased economic activity, maximize potential utilization and provide additional compatible forms of housing. New construction should adhere to the following principles:

- ◆ Create an aesthetic and active street edge for passing motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.
- ◆ Minimize the environmental impacts of light industrial uses on the public realm and adjacent neighbors.

**I. Site Design**

**a. Location and Orientation**

- ◆ Locate retail and front office operations near the front of the lot facing street, with associated warehouse or light industrial operations set behind.
- ◆ New building development should be oriented towards main streets, with entries facing them.
- ◆ Continue and extend the existing parallel frontage road with parking along the east side of Park Avenue in the Wedge.
- ◆ In all other locations along main streets, parking should be in lots to the side or behind buildings. Curb cuts to Park Avenue should be minimized to alleviate breaks in the existing pedestrian/bike path.

- ◆ Where light industrial or commercial properties abut residential properties, impacts from noise should be minimized by containing noise generating activities inside buildings and limiting hours of noise generation to working hours.



*Orient & Flume, Chico CA..*



*Diagram showing retail/office uses facing Park Avenue with manufacturing/warehouse uses behind.*

b. *Landscape*

- ◆ Where buildings are partially setback from the street right-of-way, provide landscaping and paved areas to create an attractive and usable environment for building users and pedestrians.
- ◆ High branching street trees should be provided at 25-foot intervals.
- ◆ The use of native trees, shrubs and ground-cover is strongly encouraged.
- ◆ Solid fencing should not be allowed at streets or public right-of-ways. Fencing at abutting residential should be solid and 6- to 8-foot high and made from sound absorbing materials such as wood or concrete block.

**2. Architecture**

a. *Building Form*

- ◆ Two-story buildings are encouraged along commercial corridors. Three-story buildings should be considered if they are not out of scale with abutting residential development.

b. *Lighting*

- ◆ Where light industrial or commercial properties abut residential properties, impacts from nighttime light sources should be minimized by using shielded light fixtures and minimizing the number and height of fixtures. Wherever possible, fixtures should be on timers to turn off when not needed.

**J. CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN**

Development projects should employ the following strategies for preventing crime via initial design.

**I. Residential**

a. *Natural Access Control*

- ◆ Paving treatments, plantings and architectural design features such as columned gateways should guide visitors toward public areas and away from private areas.
- ◆ All doorways open to the outside should be well lit.
- ◆ Front doors should be visible from the street.
- ◆ Windows on all sides of a home should provide full visibility of property; at least one active room such as a kitchen or living space should face the street.
- ◆ Sidewalks and all areas of the yard should be well lit.
- ◆ Driveways should be visible from either the front or back door and at least one window.

b. *Natural Surveillance*

- ◆ Landscaping should not create blind spots or hiding spots.
- ◆ Windows and public areas of buildings should be oriented toward creeks.

- ◆ Open green spaces and recreational areas should be located so they can be clearly observed from neighboring homes.
- ◆ Pedestrian-scale street lighting should be used in high pedestrian traffic areas.

**c. Territorial Reinforcement**

- ◆ Lots, streets and houses should be designed to encourage interaction between neighbors.
- ◆ Front porches or stoops are encouraged; they should create a transitional area between the street and the home.
- ◆ Entrances should be accentuated with different paving materials, changes in elevation, and architectural or landscape design.
- ◆ Residences should be clearly identified by street address numbers that are a minimum of 5 inches high; all street address numbers should be well lit at night.
- ◆ Property lines should be defined with fencing, gates and plantings to direct pedestrian traffic.
- ◆ Residents should be assigned their own parking spaces.

**d. Doors and Windows**

- ◆ Interior doors that connect to a garage to a building should have a single cylinder dead bolt lock.
- ◆ Wherever possible, door locks should be located a minimum of 40 inches from adjacent windows.

- ◆ Exterior doors should be hinged on the inside and should have a single cylinder deadbolt lock with a minimum 1-inch throw.
- ◆ All windows should have locks.
- ◆ Sliding glass doors should have one permanent door on the outside; the inside moving door should have a locking device and a pin.

**2. Commercial**

**a. Natural Access Control**

- ◆ Cash registers should be located in front of stores near main entrances.
- ◆ Public paths should be clearly marked.
- ◆ Signs should direct patrons to parking and entrances.
- ◆ There should be no easy access to the roof.
- ◆ Rear access to shops should be provided from rear parking lots.

**b. Natural Surveillance**

- ◆ Windows should face rear parking lots for increased visibility.
- ◆ Windows and public areas of buildings should be oriented toward creeks.
- ◆ Window signs should cover no more than 15 percent of any window.
- ◆ Exteriors of all buildings should be well lit.
- ◆ Loading areas should not create secluded hiding places.

- ◆ Clear visibility should be maintained from the store to the street, sidewalk, parking area and passing vehicles.
- ◆ All entrances should be under visual surveillance or monitored electronically.
- ◆ Dumpsters should not create blind spots or hiding areas.

c. *Territorial Reinforcement*

- ◆ Property boundaries should be marked with hedges, low fences or low walls.
- ◆ Private areas should be easily distinguishable from public areas.
- ◆ Shops should be identified by wall signs for those parking in the rear.
- ◆ Parking should be clearly visible from the building or street.

*This document provides an overview of stakeholder group interviews held on April 14, 2007 in Chico City Hall. The stakeholders groups included business owners, property owners, residents, schools affiliates, service providers and environmental and transit advocates, all with interest in the future of the Southwest Chico Neighborhood Plan Area. The summary below organizes stakeholder comments into categories: traffic and connectivity, economics, development, infrastructure, social, creeks and other information. Parks and schools are included as categories under Schools Affiliates and Recreation. Redundant and parallel comments from separate interviews are included as recorded and indicate parallel concerns. Note that participant comments are recorded here without any verification of their veracity.*

## **A. BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS**

This group includes landowners and business owners in the Plan Area as well as representatives from Hagen Lane, located south of the Plan Area.

### **I. Traffic & Connectivity**

- ◆ Traffic circulation is a substantial issue
  - Diamond Match site and Meyers area are key unknowns
- ◆ How will traffic infrastructure handle in the future?
- ◆ Traffic congestion is increasing at lunch/pm commutes
- ◆ Time to complete trips is increasing (city-wide, due to population growth)
- ◆ Connectivity to other areas is an issue
- ◆ There is congestion at Park/East Park
- ◆ There is congestion at 20<sup>th</sup>/Park
- ◆ Meyers back-ups
- ◆ Offset of 20<sup>th</sup> St at Park is an issue for through-traffic
- ◆ Diamond Match will require good solutions for circulation
- ◆ Meyers and Hegan will require good circulation
- ◆ Southgate overpass of 99: what are implications on the Plan Area?
- ◆ Stakeholder doesn't want this plan to preclude possibility of Otterson connecting through to East Park
- ◆ Participant asks: what is the official City stance on extension of Ivy Street?
- ◆ Could Meyers cut through to Fair?
- ◆ Could 16<sup>th</sup> Street be a boulevard/primary access to Diamond Match?
- ◆ Bike path from Midway ends at 20<sup>th</sup>: the network connections need to be improved
- ◆ +/- 2 weeks ago there were traffic counts on Midway
- ◆ Business owners said that the City is pushing too hard on pedestrian environment on Park Ave - people don't want to walk along Park Avenue

**2. Economics**

- ◆ Retailers are not attracted to area presently
- ◆ Not enough “rooftops” or minimum aesthetic quality
- ◆ Economic studies: what is the amount of TIF to-date?
- ◆ Basic shopping center is needed for area
- ◆ In the Fair Street industrial triangle “things are good” as is but could use a little cosmetic improvements
- ◆ Fair Street industrial triangle: Not a great interest in becoming a district of businesses
- ◆ Previous improvements to Park were positive – they encouraged business growth/development

**3. Development**

- ◆ Ordinance/enforcement is needed
- ◆ Consider SOMA (in San Francisco) as a live/work/retail model
- ◆ Light industrial uses work well in the Fair Street industrial triangle
- ◆ 20<sup>th</sup>/Park potential change of zoning to broaden allowed uses in the Fair Street industrial triangle
- ◆ Owner Participation Agreement is used by City now
- ◆ Opportunity for better use of site of County Corp Yard at 20<sup>th</sup>/Locust after it moves
  - What are plans for this parcel?
- ◆ The County Corp Yard will be moved to site in Meyers Industrial Area
- ◆ Examine parking regulations (for businesses on Park; on-street/off-street)
- ◆ Fair Street industrial triangle: Not a whole lot of investment/renovation to commercial properties

- ◆ Participant likes public improvements on Park (though not the private)
- ◆ Investigate flexibility of allowing uses in the Fair Street industrial triangle including appropriate types of residential
- ◆ Industrial businesses will continue to grow
- ◆ There was a Meyers Street Assessment District (from many years ago)
- ◆ Chico Country Day School has been an improvement to the Area
- ◆ Do not reduce or eliminate parking on Park Avenue
- ◆ Can there be a time limit on unmaintained property?

**4. Infrastructure**

- ◆ Public infrastructure improvements are needed in the area
- ◆ Public improvements need to be brought up to standards
- ◆ Infrastructure is required for greater intensity in the Fair Street industrial triangle (curb, gutter, sidewalk, pipes)
- ◆ Fair Street sidewalks are intermittent and non-existent
- ◆ Street and sidewalk improvements are needed
- ◆ Eastbound Hegan Lane is very broken up paving

**5. Social**

- ◆ Homelessness is an issue/squatters
- ◆ Skateboarding park causes unwanted youth pedestrian traffic
- ◆ There is vandalism between railroad tracks and Dayton Road
- ◆ Built/maintained public restrooms could be a solution to public urination by homeless

- ◆ Business owners feel there is a homeless problem in alleys parallel to Park Ave
- ◆ Big issue with homeless at liquor stores along Park Ave
- ◆ Some businesses are not well maintained – Duke’s liquor needs improvement
- ◆ Graffiti is an issue but the “Stars” volunteer cleaning program works well

**6. Creeks**

- ◆ Continuing acquisition of land along creeks should happen
- ◆ There is no creek maintenance; too much trash dumping
- ◆ Creek could be an amenity to business
- ◆ Comanche Creek improvements need to happen
- ◆ PG&E owns land south of City’s Comanche Creek land

**7. Other Information**

- ◆ Edgar Slough was original name of Comanche Creek
- ◆ Orient and Flume is located in Fair Street industrial triangle
- ◆ Better neighborhood services are needed
- ◆ Neighborhood has transitioned from primarily student-oriented population to more presence of low income either older or young families
- ◆ A lot of local businesses own rental housing in the area
- ◆ Still a good place to start up these kinds of businesses in Chico today
- ◆ Hasn’t been a change in types of businesses
- ◆ “College kids are starting to come back to this neighborhood”

- ◆ A lot of improvements have been made to residences
- ◆ Too many regulatory impediments to making improvements (onerous approval and permitting process)
- ◆ There are toxic issues at Victor Industries
- ◆ 66 acres of business connect off Meyers +/- 60 parcels

**B. RESIDENTS**

This group includes current residents from the Plan Area.

**1. Traffic & Connectivity**

- ◆ Difference of opinion on traffic circles as traffic improvements
- ◆ Connect under/over tracks from Dayton Road to Diamond Match
- ◆ Don’t punch through Ivy from Meyers
- ◆ Locust at 20<sup>th</sup> has excessive congestion
- ◆ 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> couplet provides a barrier to the north
- ◆ Traffic noise impact is an issue
- ◆ Signal timing does not allow adequate time for crossing Park
- ◆ Traffic from the Diamond Match site would ruin the neighborhood

**2. Economics**

- ◆ Neighborhood-serving retail is needed
- ◆ Neighborhood-serving retail/grocery is needed
- ◆ A grocery store would be nice
- ◆ Chico Country Day School is an attractor to the area – some families have moved here because of the school

- ◆ Chico Natural Store is the closest shopping – nice store
- ◆ The Corner Market on Normal will become a daycare, which is better than what it is now but not as good as when it was a grocery serving the neighborhood – a real center to that part of the neighborhood
- ◆ Southwest Chico is one of the key neighborhoods surrounding Downtown. These areas need to be made good, safe places. These neighborhoods are key to the success of Downtown, and vice-versa.

### 3. Development

- ◆ Design guidelines to better control density issues (blend into existing)
- ◆ Low to medium, not high density neighborhood
- ◆ Diamond Match development is inevitable, so this planning process presents an opportunity to guide that
- ◆ Lots of single family parcels are vacant/opportunity sites
- ◆ 12<sup>th</sup> Street south on both sides of Park tend to be very similar architecturally
- ◆ 60's – 80's multifamily development tends to stick out most
- ◆ Enhance character but remain true to original
- ◆ Infill needs to model on existing architectural and landscape character of residential prototype
- ◆ Infill density needs to match existing
- ◆ Homelessness and congregation in alleys (Is there a design solution to eliminate “nooks and crannies”?)
- ◆ Residents love the historic character

- ◆ Residents would like more certainty about the style/kind of development. There are some good examples of new development in a couple of places
- ◆ Solar farm at Diamond Match is a good use for the site. Other neighbors think some low density housing would be okay there
- ◆ Owner occupied houses with second units are good
- ◆ No Starbucks or Chain stores in the area
- ◆ Neighbors would like an improvements incentive program to fix up rental houses. Outside owners are a problem because of lack of care and maintenance
- ◆ Some residents want no more apartments in the neighborhood
- ◆ Resident thinks it would be great to do a mural on the Jesus Center

### 4. Infrastructure

- ◆ Comprehensive approach to improvements for curbs, gutters, and storm drains is needed
- ◆ Difference of opinion about needing street lights
- ◆ Hemlock Street as a good model for streetscape improvements
- ◆ Broadway/Normal very wide: bike lanes, wider sidewalks could be installed
- ◆ Need to address crumbling sanitary sewer infrastructure/replacement of laterals needed
- ◆ Incorporating green swales into the storm system is an option
- ◆ Better maintenance of alleys is needed
- ◆ Street Cleaning needs coordination so cars move off street before cleaners come through



- ◆ Sidewalks and lighting are poor in the Barber neighborhood – affects walkability

## 5. Social

- ◆ Landlords' lack of maintenance of properties is an issue
- ◆ Need better rules for landlords maintaining property
- ◆ Property management firms' heavy representation leads to lack of neighborhood stability
- ◆ Between Park-Mulberry: rental to owner ratio is too high
- ◆ Investigate less expensive approach to rousting homeless (instead of police officers)
- ◆ Identify who homeless are (sex offenders/mental/criminals)
- ◆ Barber Cottages along an alley near Diamond Match are a historic asset
- ◆ Community Garden is an asset
- ◆ Drugs are a problem – someone mentioned there is a Meth camp on RR right of way
- ◆ Although the diversity of the neighborhood is great, noise and domestic violence are issues from neighbors that are lower income
- ◆ One hangout is really good in the neighborhood: the taco place, Crazy Taco
- ◆ Vision: Senior center and kids could make art together
- ◆ There are not enough venues for art/performance music
- ◆ Artists working on mural projects at Chapman School, could perhaps work on murals at CCDS along Park Avenue

## 6. Creeks

- ◆ There should be public access to the creek
- ◆ The creeks need to be restored
- ◆ What is the homeowner vs. city responsibility for cleaning creeks and homeless?

## 7. Other Information

- ◆ Student population drops off south of 16<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ There is a historic area at Chapman House Nelson/Locust/12<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ Too much debris in less-traveled areas (abandoned rail areas)
- ◆ Re-use principles and ideas from the Park Avenue Visioning Study
- ◆ The noise from Fairgrounds impacts neighborhoods
- ◆ Two garbage pick-up providers adds to trips through the neighborhood
- ◆ There is a recycling center on Fair
- ◆ Opportunities for revitalizing properties to help stabilize the residents
- ◆ Quality of life in neighborhood is good: lots of “flower and color”
- ◆ Lots of artists live in the neighborhood
- ◆ Crux gallery is in the neighborhood, on Park Ave. It is having a show and could be incorporated into walking tours

**C. SCHOOL AFFILIATES AND RECREATION**

This group includes representatives and students from the Chico Country Day School, the Chico Unified School District, and the Chico Area Recreation District.

**1. Transit & Connectivity**

- ◆ Pick-up and Drop-off impacting traffic is identified as a major issue
  - Drop-off traffic on 11<sup>th</sup> Street backs onto Park, particularly on rainy days
  - Morning drop-off (8am) is worse than afternoon pickup (3pm) as it conflicts with rush hour
- ◆ CCDS Students do frequent school trips to walk to Chico State
- ◆ Other school trips include walks to ceramics studio – “All Fired Up”
- ◆ Often bike to upper park and Locust Park
- ◆ A dance studio used by the school is walkable from CCDS
- ◆ Connections – walking/bikes are important
- ◆ The school is a gateway along Park Ave, but the appearance on that side is not good. There are small Art Block Grants for 7-8<sup>th</sup> Graders for possible upgrade
- ◆ It was noted that drivers are rewarded for speeding up heading south past the school on Park Ave to get timed signals
- ◆ If the school becomes CUSD then school buses will need to be accommodated
- ◆ Butte County Transit line on 11<sup>th</sup> Street conflicts with drop-off and pick-up

**2. Parks Issues**

- ◆ One park in study area: Rotary Park, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> acre
- ◆ Existing Skate park is City of Chico run
- ◆ Homeless is not identified as an issue at Rotary Park
- ◆ CARD could consider park facilities at creeks
- ◆ There is a precedent for joint School/Park use: Chapman School
- ◆ Current parks master plan update is in process
- ◆ Youth enjoy weekends at the Skate Park
- ◆ Diamond Match site – would be nice if a park included track and field, soccer and football
- ◆ If there was a park in Diamond Match others wouldn’t use the school playground on weekends, which would be good

**3. Schools**

- ◆ Chico Country Day School leases from Chico Unified School District CCDS has no assurance from CUSD that they will be able to stay
- ◆ CUSD says there will be a school regardless – they cannot use the site for anything else
- ◆ This location is the site of Chico’s first school – Oakdale
- ◆ The school site is 3 acres
- ◆ CCDS has a preschool and K-7 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be added next year. There is a 39 space parking lot for staff
- ◆ CUSD does annual updates on their 20 year master plan. Recent trends are declining enrollment citywide, starting back up, growth in elementary classes
- ◆ Students like the CCDS a lot

- ◆ Too much garbage at houses around the school

#### 4. Development

- ◆ CUSD has looked at the Diamond Match site as a potential High School or elementary school site. Arsenic clean up appears to be an issue
- ◆ CCDS has also looked at Diamond Match as a potential site if they need to move from the existing site. They may be able to build more easily than CUSD due to requirements for site clean-up
- ◆ Students from new residential units in Diamond Match will need to be accommodated somewhere

#### 5. Creeks

- ◆ The creek needs improvement, homeless are living there and this is a conflict with the students. It would be great if students could use the creek for research, etc. Butte Environmental Council has applied for a creek cleanup grant
- ◆ Creek needs to be cleaned up; lots of debris and junk: shopping carts, mattresses, cats and dogs, homeless people, guys with 40's

#### D. SERVICE PROVIDERS

Service providers includes representatives from social services organizations and non-profits, government housing agencies, and City of Chico Fire and Code Enforcement Departments.

##### I. Traffic & Connectivity

- ◆ Neal Dow Road E. 1<sup>st</sup>/E 5<sup>th</sup>: grooved speed bumps are used
- ◆ 32' curb-to-curb w/ parking both sides is minimum standard (28' with one-sided parking)
- ◆ Traffic concerns
- ◆ Congestion issues
  - Signals not timed
  - No left turn lanes on Park
- ◆ There are narrow streets in Barber Neighborhood
- ◆ 12<sup>th</sup> Street is used as cut-through
- ◆ Could there be a free transit program?
- ◆ Policy in place for parking structure on Salem (in Downtown) and free transportation tokens to shoppers, students
- ◆ Limited bus service impacts traffic: better headways needed
- ◆ For Diamond Match: multiple access/internal design will be needed

**2. Economics**

- ◆ Loan program is being developed for small scale code issues
- ◆ Lack of grocery store
- ◆ There are retail opportunities

**3. Development**

- ◆ Housing needs to be rehabilitated
- ◆ Alley improvements required for granny flats
- ◆ Conditional use permit process for overlay district
- ◆ 16<sup>th</sup> as a mixed corridor because of width
- ◆ County Corp Yard site has potential for affordable housing
- ◆ The grid system important
- ◆ Some residents would like to see historic Diamond Match buildings restored

**4. Infrastructure**

- ◆ No school/no parks except Rotary are in the Plan Area
- ◆ Fire route south of 16<sup>th</sup> only accessed via Park (speed bumps)
- ◆ Street lights are needed
- ◆ 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> particularly need improvements
- ◆ Garbage is dumped in alleys
- ◆ Drainage issues where most parcels are lower than streets- it is a serious issue (along Little Chico Creek)
- ◆ Need lighting on Park Ave. where appropriate. Any lighting should be shielded adequately so as not to impact residences on adjoining streets
- ◆ Utilities in the neighborhood should be under-grounded

**5. Social**

- ◆ Plan area is rich in services
- ◆ There is drug related activity on 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup>
- ◆ Lack of police presence is an issue
- ◆ Jesus Center is trying to expand hours and activities to assist in keeping their clients from loitering downtown
- ◆ Restaurant use generates litter on the surrounding streets. The restaurants should be responsible for picking this up
- ◆ The entire neighborhood needs to feel safer from transients. Homes between Park and Mulberry are affected by transients, who leave garbage and sometimes sleep on their lawns. The speaker emphasized that the Jesus Center itself is not a problem, but it does draw others who associate with Jesus Center clients but who do not sleep or stay there (but sleep in the creek area or on lawns instead)

**6. Creeks**

- ◆ Annual creek cleanup – Butte Environmental Council (in October)
- ◆ No camping ordinances in process
- ◆ Creek should be cleaned up to alleviate homeless issues
- ◆ The issue of transients in the creek-way should be dealt with

**7. Other Information**

- ◆ Smaller scale of housing is from Diamond Match era
- ◆ Upcoming 28 adults + 7 toddlers at Catalyst; current shelter site has up to 17 residents
- ◆ Salem at 9<sup>th</sup> is the Fire Department

**E. ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSIT ADVOCATES**

This group includes representatives from environmental groups, transit agencies, bicycling advocates, and citizens concerned with environmental safety and hazard issues.

**1. Transit & Connectivity**

- ◆ There is a need for transit demand studies
- ◆ Transit ridership goes up when gas prices go up
- ◆ Diamond Match is huge issue for the bicycling community – how to maximize bicycling
- ◆ A long time dream of the bicycling community is to continue the bike path from the south along the abandoned Railroad ROW next to Comanche Creek and then following the existing active Railroad ROW north towards the CSUC campus
- ◆ Neighborhood Plan is an opportunity for alternative modes: bike, walk, transit
- ◆ Road Improvements are needed for walking, bicycles
- ◆ Salem at 9<sup>th</sup> is a difficult crossing for bikes at Little Chico Creek
- ◆ CSUC safe bike route to campus is an ongoing program and there may be resources to capitalize on. Another program is the “don’t use your car” program
- ◆ Drivers on 16<sup>th</sup> treat it as a drag strip, it is wide, and generates lots of noise
- ◆ Transit system is free to students of the CSUC system
- ◆ The bike and pedestrian crossings at Olive Street work well
- ◆ Estes is rough and is difficult for pedestrians/bikes

- ◆ The abandoned railroad right of way could be used as a transit link
- ◆ The Plan should increase bicycle connections
- ◆ Getting across Park Avenue is difficult and important to fix
- ◆ Bike paths have broken glass, maintenance issues
- ◆ Bike corridor

**2. Development**

- ◆ A mix of retail on Park Avenue could take pressure off traffic
- ◆ Diamond Match issues – some participants feel that the remediation study by a CSUC student showed that the original testing and cleanup were “shoddy”. Neighbors are very concerned about the potential for toxics on this site and cited the student study. Specifically their concerns are:
  - Construction will uncover toxics and create problems for neighbors
  - Residents of new development in the Diamond Match site will be subject to risk. Better uses on the site would be office, commercial, or a research center for CSUC
  - Louisiana Pacific had done a shoddy job of testing for toxics, and the Diamond Match site has undiscovered and unmitigated toxics locations
  - Existing toxic (mitigation) caps are in poor condition
  - There is also a concern about the potential effect of the cell phone tower
  - Neighbors feel that the Diamond Match site needs third party testing for toxics

- ◆ Jesse Lane has underground plumes, contaminated soil, old railroad ties
- ◆ At Little Chico creek, development turns backside to the creek – only one or two businesses have patios facing the creek
- ◆ Narrow streets and wide trees strips are nicer – similar to Hemlock Street
- ◆ One idea was to move the Neighborhood Plan study area line to include RR ROW

### 3. Creeks

- ◆ The riparian corridor at Comanche Creek is pretty healthy but need removal of non-native vegetation
- ◆ Little Chico Creek has more non-natives
- ◆ Comanche Creek issues –
  - neighbors oppose Otterson Creek crossing
  - neighbors claim there are a lot of toxics along the creek, especially in lots to the south. Kinder-Morgan and PG&E lots were mentioned
- ◆ Little Chico Creek flood zone is a burden on landowners in that area
- ◆ Trash in the Creeks is a big issue, although there is a creek cleanup every year in Little Chico Creek
- ◆ There are loose dogs in the creek sometimes

### 4. Social

- ◆ In Chico, creeks are a homeless attractor. Little Chico creek also has a conflict between the homeless and the School
- ◆ Community gardens were mentioned as an asset

### 5. Other Information

- ◆ Other noise issues:
  - The motorcycle shop is noisy
  - Fairgrounds/State/Racetrack generate a lot of noise
  - Fireworks from CSUC during games
- ◆ Participant says to be careful about mentioning Berkeley, Davis, Santa Cruz as models for bicycling – some have a negative view of them
- ◆ There are other toxic issues along the Southern Pacific Railroad ROW
- ◆ Black walnuts are dropping branches; pruning and urban forestry are important in this area
- ◆ The racetrack creates lots of noise pollution - 6:30-11:30 Friday, Saturday, Sunday
- ◆ There is noise leakage from industrial sites

*A background Economics Memo to support the Southwest Chico Neighborhood Plan was created during the Spring and Summer of 2007, for the purpose of recording the research and findings on economic conditions and future development potential within the Southwest Neighborhood. The memo was created for use by the DC&E project team, the City of Chico, and members of the public who participated in the process of developing the Neighborhood Plan. This research included a review of background materials, a study area tour, a series of key informant interviews, review of information regarding currently leasing and for-sale properties in the area, and the compilation and review of limited demographic information.*

## **A. NEIGHBORHOOD RECONNAISSANCE**

### **I. Review of Land Utilization**

BAE conducted a brief assessment of the land utilization patterns within the Southwest Neighborhood and found that, generally, the residential areas are quite well developed at their zoned densities and there are relatively few vacant parcels. In the non-residential areas, particularly along Park Avenue and Fair Streets, there are greater incidences of vacant and under-developed property. Aerial photos of the area depicting significant parcels of vacant land or parcels with relatively small building footprints relative to their size provide initial evidence of this.

Quantification of this situation is possible using data from the County Assessor's office regarding the assessed valuation of property in the Southwest Neighborhood. For each parcel that is on the tax rolls (i.e., not exempt from taxation for some reason, such as government ownership), the Assessor makes a calculation of the portion of assessed value that is attributable to the land and the portion that is attributable to improvements (e.g., buildings and other structures on the property). By dividing the assessed value of improvements by the assessed value of the land, it is possible to calculate the improvement to

land value ratio, or I/L ratio. Properties with exceptionally low I/L ratios are likely under-developed. In order to assist with visualizing this information, mapped the I/L ratio for each property within the Southwest Neighborhood for which data was available. DC&E prepared one map for commercial properties and one map for industrial properties (see Figure 2-9 and 2-10 in Chapter 2 of this Plan).

In addition to whether property is developed to an appropriate level of intensity, it is also possible to evaluate whether properties are developed to their "highest and best" uses. BAE did not make an exhaustive survey of the uses on each parcel within the area; however, from a limited amount of on-the-ground surveying, it is clear that there are a number of examples of property along the commercial corridors in the Southwest Neighborhood that are not developed to their highest and best uses. The most typical examples are older uses that are of an industrial or heavy commercial nature but located along Park Avenue. Businesses that want to have a retail presence – in other words, businesses that want to be visible to their customers and who place a

premium on maintaining high quality building facades and signage and exterior improvements in order to project a positive image to public – should be attracted to Park Avenue because of the good visibility to passers-by. Industrial users or heavy commercial users who do not put an emphasis on visibility could more appropriately be located in a business park setting. Within the Southwest Neighborhood, the Meyers Street industrial area is an example.

## **2. For Sale or For Lease Properties**

As part of their area reconnaissance, DC&E staff conducted a block-by-block windshield survey of the Southwest Neighborhood. Among other things, DC&E staff noted any real estate for-sale or for-lease signs on property within the area. Overall, there were not many properties offered for lease or for sale, indicating that there is solid demand for the residential and commercial space that is available within the area.

### *Key Informant Interviews*

To quickly develop an understanding of the real estate conditions and trends in the Southwest Neighborhood, BAE conducted a series of telephone interviews with a number of local real estate professionals who are active in the area. Staff from the City of Chico provided an initial list of contacts and BAE identified other contacts through the first set of interviews and through other research. Additionally, BAE was able to participate in the stakeholder interview session involving business owners from the “Triangle” area bounded by Park Avenue and Fair Street. The list of those individuals interviewed is included as Appendix A to this memo. Finally, BAE also consulted with Martha Westcoat-Andes, the

City’s Economic Development/Redevelopment Manager and with Claudia Stuart, the City’s project manager for the Southwest Neighborhood Plan project as part of our research.

Overall, the interviewees expressed positive feelings about the conditions in the area and the prospects for continuing enhancement of the area through additional private investment and development. A number of interviewees acknowledged that they felt the City Council has done a good job of limiting the outward expansion of the City, and that this policy has the effect of putting a focus on more fully developing older areas like the Southwest Neighborhood and the areas near Enloe Hospital. A growing Smart Growth/Sustainable Development ethos locally also appears to be focusing household and business location decisions on areas like the Southwest Neighborhood, where residents and employees can use walking and bicycling as viable transportation modes.

## **3. Residential Market Conditions**

Concerning residential development potential, interviewees felt that the Southwest Neighborhood was well-located, due to its proximity to downtown and the University and that its historic character and traditional neighborhood layout was attractive. A number of key informants referred to the “Chico Charmer” factor, which encourages buyers to pay a premium for older homes that have character and style that sets them apart from newer, more “cookie cutter” developments. Many also felt that new residential development, if properly designed to fit into the neighborhood could also command a premium. While many used local new



urbanist projects Doe Mill and Merriam Park as examples of the types of new residential development that would be successful in the Southwest Neighborhood, they felt that ultimately, the historic authenticity and location of the Southwest Neighborhood would make it a more attractive location.

#### **4. Commercial Market Conditions**

In regard to commercial development, interviewees also felt positive about the area, with a general feeling that the area works for the businesses that are located there, and that general market forces are working to slowly enhance the area as underutilized properties receive new investment. Park Avenue and 20<sup>th</sup> Street were most commonly identified as the key commercial corridors in the area, due to their relatively high vehicle traffic, and connections to the freeway and other parts of the City. There is recognition that, other than restaurants, the commercial corridors do not offer a good range of everyday retail and services for residents who live in the immediate area, with the lack of a full-service supermarket a particular concern. A number of people mentioned the streetscape improvements on Park Avenue as an effective enhancement for the area, but there were also comments that the overall “look and feel” of Park Avenue was not appropriate for a major gateway to the City.

#### **5. Industrial Market Conditions**

The Southwest Neighborhood includes two distinct industrial areas: the Meyers Street industrial area and South Park Avenue/Fair Street. Other competitive areas in Chico include the Hegan Lane industrial area just south of the Southwest Neighborhood Study Area, and the airport busi-

ness park area. The Meyers Street industrial area is home to a range of industrial users and, due to the limited access via Meyers Street, it has the feel of a business park. This area may compete most directly with the Hegan Lane area and the airport area. The south end of Park Avenue, below 20<sup>th</sup> Street and Fair Street house other industrial users. This area is distinct from the other areas mentioned because of the street visibility available to many tenants. Although the frontages along these streets give the image of a linear industrial district, there are also a number of users located at the rear of parcels and lacking visibility from the street. Individuals contacted as part of this study indicated that the industrial areas within the Southwest Neighborhood are stable with limited turnover of tenants. Vacancies in functional spaces are limited; however, older sub-standard structures or structures configured for specific user types may require longer periods of time to fill if vacated. Generally, the demand for industrial space in the Chico market was characterized as modest but steady.

#### **6. Office Market Conditions**

The Southwest Neighborhood does not appear to have any distinct concentrations of office uses, as it does with retail, residential and industrial uses; thus, there is not an identifiable market for office space in this area. In this area, office space may be more common as a use ancillary to a primary industrial/manufacturing use, as opposed to space housing establishments that are primarily office tenants. At any rate, key informants indicated to BAE that there are office concentrations elsewhere in the City, including smaller professional offices in the downtown area, medical offices near the Enloe Hospital,

and larger call center or back office facilities in the airport area, as well as scattered small professional offices/office park developments throughout the City.

For the Southwest Area, rather than a lack of demand, the low visibility of office uses may be attributable to a lack of suitable space. One opportunity that the City could explore in the context of Citywide economic development strategies is to encourage the use of the southern part of downtown Chico (e.g., south of 5<sup>th</sup> Street) and the Park Avenue corridor as an office location, for small- to mid-sized office users who cannot be accommodated in the downtown core area (north of 5<sup>th</sup> Street), but who would still value a location that is convenient to the core. Current limitations on the use of ground floor space for office uses along Park Avenue are a constraint; however, should the Southwest Neighborhood Plan adopt a strategy of focusing retail activity at key nodes along the Corridor, there may be a need to allow other uses such as office and residential on the ground floor in the spaces in between the retail nodes.

## **B. NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW**

During the course of the key informant interviews, a number of people identified a full-service supermarket as a key neighborhood amenity that is missing from the Southwest Neighborhood. Although there are some small “mom and pop” type grocery stores located in the area, along with Chico Natural Foods just to the north of

the Study Area, neighborhood residents do not have convenient access to a major supermarket carrying the full line of groceries and related items.

In order to develop a general sense of the demographics of the Southwest Neighborhood and make a preliminary evaluation of the potential for the area to support a full-service supermarket (e.g., Raley’s, Safeway), BAE utilized current estimates of household and population characteristics from Claritas, Inc., a national demographic data provider. In order to obtain this information, it was necessary to define a “study area” using Block Groups defined by the U.S. Census to represent an area from which a supermarket located in the middle portion of the Southwest Neighborhood might expect to draw its primary customer base. Considerations include location of other nearby supermarkets and travel patterns. As shown in Figure C-1, the result was an area that does not strictly conform to the boundaries of the Southwest Neighborhood as defined by the City. The primary difference is that it includes areas north of the Southwest Neighborhood extending as far as 5<sup>th</sup> Street and east of Mulberry to Boucher St. and C Street. The area also excludes population living south of 20<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side of Park Avenue and south of 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the west side of Park Avenue; however, this area serves as a reasonable proxy for the magnitude of the population living in the area and the prevailing shopper demographics for a potential supermarket. Key demographic variables for the Area along with a comparison with the City of Chico as a whole are provided in Table 1.

APPENDIX C - ECONOMICS BACKGROUND STUDY

	<i>Southwest Area</i>	<i>Chico</i>
Population	7,944	66,139
Households	3,275	25,907
Median Household Income	\$25,128	\$34,562
Household Tenure:		
Renter	77.1%	58.8%
Owner	22.9%	44.2%

Table I. 2006 Grocery Market Area Demographics. *Source: Claritas, Inc.*



Figure C-1. Census Tracts defining the supermarket-draw study area for a centrally located supermarket in the Southwest Neighborhood.

As shown, the Block Groups chosen include approximately 12 percent of the City's population, and almost 13 percent of the City's housing units. It is acknowledged that the "Chico Urban Area" actually includes a greater population than that residing strictly within the City limits. At just over \$25,000 per year, median household income within the demographic study area is significantly (about 27 percent) lower than in the City of Chico. Additionally, there is a greater concentration of renters in the demographic study area than in the City, which is consistent with the fact that households with lower incomes tend to be less able to afford homeownership than households with higher incomes. Additionally, anecdotal information suggests that this area (particularly the areas between 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets, is home to many students, who for different reasons related to their stage in life are less likely to be interested in homeownership.

Based on past BAE supermarket market analysis, a general guideline for required market support is a population of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 people. This is for a full-sized (50,000 to 60,000 square feet) conventional supermarket. The actual trade area requirements will vary depending on factors including the particular store features, competitive conditions elsewhere in the surrounding community, and household demographics. Nevertheless, the initial review of demographic information suggests that while the Southwest Neighborhood is currently underserved for groceries, it is probably lacking in population to be particularly attractive to a supermarket; however, further analysis of the potential to capture shoppers from the Durham area at a Southwest Neighborhood area supermarket

may reveal additional potential. Additionally, there are emerging options to develop grocery stores other than full-sized supermarkets.

Previously, many independent retailers operated supermarkets in the range of 25,000 to 35,000 square feet, requiring smaller weekly sales figures and thus, requiring smaller trade area populations; however, these independent retailers have found it increasingly hard to compete as all of the major chains have phased out their smaller stores and offered the larger stores with the greater range of products and services. There are very few examples of independent grocery chains that are expanding with small-format stores. For example, one of northern California's most successful independent grocers, Nugget Markets, is only expanding with large-format stores. However, Tesco, a very large UK-based grocery retailer is aggressively entering the U.S. market, beginning in the Southwest, according to news sources. They intend to open approximately 100 stores in the next year, and it appears that they are concentrating on small-format stores that will range from 10,000 to 30,000 square feet in size. Some of their initial sites include reuse of some closed Albertson's stores, which tend to be in the 25,000 to 30,000 square foot range. If this operation proves successful, the development of a smaller store like these in the Southwest Neighborhood might be a viable strategy in place of a full-size supermarket.

**C. CONCLUSIONS**

Following are conclusions regarding development opportunities in the Southwest Neighborhood Area, based on the information that BAE was able to collect for this exercise. These conclusions should be taken as general indicators for the area, but they are not definitive as to the development potential of any particular parcel.

**1. Residential Market**

- ◆ Property values somewhat below the City overall; increases in value have followed City trends
- ◆ There is a market for both “Chico Charmers” as well as more utilitarian housing
- ◆ Area is attractive to students; young families in search of starter homes; others attracted to neighborhood charm and proximity to University and downtown
- ◆ Area has felt the exit of investors from the market – most buyers are now owner-occupants
- ◆ Significant disparity between rental residential property prices and income potential now, but situation may be correcting
- ◆ New single-family residential feasible at this time
- ◆ 1200 Park Avenue is recently constructed multifamily, but built using subsidized financing

**2. Retail/Service Market**

- ◆ Population for a full-size conventional supermarket appears to be too small at this time – additional growth could tip this. Additionally, new supermarket players are rolling out smaller store prototypes that might fill the gap

- ◆ Limited retail/service availability at this time – lack of supermarket commonly cited shortcoming
- ◆ Restaurants are most common
- ◆ Area feels pull of retail to east of Hwy 99
- ◆ Additional retail would be amenity for residential uses, but area requires more “rooftops” to be attractive
- ◆ Plans for the Diamond Match site call for approximately 1,200 additional homes
- ◆ New retail can be feasible in the right locations, but unlikely to see continuous retail along commercial corridors
- ◆ Retail placement needs to be strategic in order to gain synergy – the best scenario is a retail district that combines visibility from Park Avenue along with walkability from adjacent residential areas

**3. Manufacturing/Industrial Market**

- ◆ Park Avenue/Fair Street provide a unique niche – heavy commercial/industrial/flex with retail frontage
- ◆ Manufacturing/industrial uses not dependent on visibility may be more appropriately located in Meyers Street area or other business/industrial park areas
- ◆ Demand for industrial is steady, but modest to mid-sized spaces are most demanded
- ◆ New industrial/flex space condos can be feasible if affordable land is available
- ◆ Industrial-Flex space may be a product to target as a strategy to upgrade the look of the “Triangle” area over time, while retaining an industrial/heavy commercial feel
- ◆ Traffic congestion a concern

**4. Office Market**

- ◆ Office market is limited at this time
- ◆ Professional offices clustered in other parts of town
- ◆ Large floor-plate call center market has pulled back considerably as Bay Area market has eased and more operations go overseas
- ◆ Area has potential for small-scale office as component of mixed use projects
- ◆ Improved retail/services availability should help to make area more marketable for offices
- ◆ Possible opportunity to accommodate larger office users who cannot locate/afford space in downtown core along Park Avenue, between retail nodes; however, this may require modifications to zoning regulations

**D. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES**

- ◆ Carol Denning, Sol Building (developer)
- ◆ Jeff Greening, Barber Land Company
- ◆ Frank Ross, Real Estate Broker, The Group
- ◆ Bill Carter, Carter Realty
- ◆ Peter Tichinin, Realtor, Prudential Real Estate
- ◆ Adam Fedeli, Realtor and area resident
- ◆ Bill Brouhard, Real Estate Broker/Developer, Guillon-Brouhard
- ◆ Mary Holliday, Winn Residential (1200 Park Avenue)
- ◆ Craig Almaguer, Contractor/Developer, Craig Construction
- ◆ Robin Trenda, Contractor/Developer
- ◆ Doug Boyd, Orient and Flume Art Glass\*
- ◆ Kenneth Zetterquist, Z-Man Machining\*
- ◆ Timothy “Woody” Sjostrom, Woody’s Bar and Grill\*
- ◆ \*Interviewed as part of 4/11/2007 Stakeholder Interview sessions

**2006 Grocery Market Area Demographics**

	<b>SW Area</b>	<b>City of Chico</b>
<b>Population</b>	7,944	66,139
<b>Households</b>	3,275	25,907
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$25,128	\$34,562
<b>Household Tenure:</b>		
Renter	77.1%	58.8%
Owner	22.9%	44.2%

Source: Claritas, Inc.