

Appendix a: Public Planning Process Records

Introduction

On these pages are the complete records of the input received in the initial public planning meeting for the City Plaza design update project, and the review and feedback received at the follow-up public presentation of the proposed design alternatives

'Visions' from Initial Public Meeting (3/02/02)

Each participant first wrote a single phrase or sentence describing their overall vision for the Plaza to be collected and reviewed by the design team as they began the design process.

- A reflection of Chico's past, present, and future--dedicated to Chico and its children.
- I hope to see no building tops towering above the tree line.
- 1) Large trees providing shade for most of the Plaza; 2) facility for public gatherings--concerts, etc., 3) public restrooms, and 4) benches or other areas for sitting/relaxing.
- I would like to see healthy, big shading trees, and lush grass. Update the gazebo. I love the diagonal walkway - colorful - two tone? Transfer the old fountain design to replace the one outside this building--not the spitting fish.
- 1) A solid and sound structure in the design of the Plaza. No randomness or placement of trees, sidewalks, or structures. 2) Signs the trees are continually replaced. 3) Larger trees on the periphery to better shade the surrounding streets and to distinguish a block that is different from the other trees on the other blocks.
- Would like City Plaza to be fundamentally unchanged in its layout with the deep shade that makes it a refuge during Chico's summer heat. I'd especially like it to be welcoming and safe for families and people who work Downtown.
- City Plaza would be the real heart of Downtown and the activity center of Chico. Several major events every week and lots of people doing lots of things every day--picnic, chess, other games, lots of benches.
- Native trees and shrubs (other than Oak), play areas, seating for concerts, removal of porta-potties.
- No looking over shoulder at questionable gatherings.
- Significantly preserved in general appearance.
- Clean, well-maintained, healthy gathering space. No more mismatched concrete. Vibrant community frame.
- An active space during the day, above and beyond planned events; where people choose to eat lunch, pass through, read books, etc.
- Continue tradition of Plaza Plaza being the city's gathering place and create nice hardscape areas at the four corners tied into "building" of sidewalks. Use these areas for Downtown support functions, mobile vendors, etc.
- I envision City Plaza surrounded by unique (historic, restored, and new) buildings -thriving with business and civic purposes. I envision a safe, secure environment that is covered by a canopy of trees, lined with a carpet of grass. I see people, concerts, people, picnics, children, gatherings, people, and community. I see the center hub of our Downtown that looks cared for, appreciated and used.
- I would hope to see a "family atmosphere"--picnics, etc. I would love to see business people Downtown using the Plaza for breaks/lunches/even meetings. The Plaza would provide a venue for community events and gatherings and be able to maintain a clean, well-groomed appearance.
- Center of community activity, crossroads of our city life, able to withstand and accommodate large groups of citizens partaking in civic events.
- A space where people could comfortably congregate for conversation, post-shopping rests -- smaller, subdivided areas for sitting, reading, talking, etc. Decorative additional pavement - more clearly defined corners (i.e. mild enclosure at corners).
- The lush green active heart of Chico -- constantly used.
- A place of reception.
- A summer-shaded, winter-sunned city commons. An open space, welcoming foot-borne people to stroll or pause and relax.
- A gathering locale for community social events and activities.
- A place of brief shady refuge while passing through the city retail blocks. A place that reflects the cultural identity of a historic location.
- Used by everybody -- all ages, economic strata, race, etc. Welcoming, graceful, restful; vibrant with community activity, of all corners of the community.

'Values' from Initial Public Meeting

Then participants were asked to write one- or two-word values they held for the Plaza, each on a separate adhesive note. Taking turns, they posted these on the walls of the meeting room, grouping their notes with others that were similar, so that it would be visually apparent which values were most widely shared in the community.

Value # Similar

Active/Planned Community Use: 19

Community Gathering Place / Center	6
User/event friendly	5
(Exciting) Activity Space	3
Funcional/Utility	2
Conduct Business	1
Performing Arts	1
Recreation	1

Safety: 16

Safety	13
High Visibility	2
Lighting	1

Everyday Use: 14

Encountering People/People Watching	4
24 Hour/Well-used	2
Conversation	1
Playground	1
Multi-Use	1
Family-Oriented	1
Leading Lives	1
Best Use of Space	1
Picnic	1
Activities that Draw Positives	1

Attracting/Welcoming: 12

Inviting/Welcoming	8
Comfort	3
Accessible	1

Expressing History and Tradition: 11

Historic	2
Respect Tradition/Responsibility	2
Diverse Cultural History of Chico	1
Farm History	1
Natural History	1
Traditional	1
Veteran History	1
Chico's Foundation	1
Pioneer Days Style	1

Value # Similar

Elements: 10

Fountain/Water	2
Shaded	3
Durable/Hardened	2
Lots of Nice Seating	1
Sunny Places	2

Landscape: 10

Greenery / Natural	4
Native Landscape	2
Seasonal & More Color	2
Landscape Orientation	1
Birds	1

Local character: 9

Local Culture/Character/identity	4
Sense of Community/Civic Ownership	4
Uniqueness of Place	1

Character: 9

Artistic Flair, Design, Value	3
Playful & Fun	1
Urban Respect	1
Romantic Refuge	1
Open Space	1
Balance	1
Whimsy	1
Soft	1

Beauty: 7

Beauty/Aesthetics	3
Clean/Fresh	2
Well Designed/Beautiful	1
Pleasant Outdoor Community Space	1

Sanctuary: 6

Respite/Sanctuary	2
Personal Space	1
Meditate	1
Peaceful Nature	1
Peaceful Reflection	1

Other/Misc: 3

NOT Taco Bell/Jack in the Box	1
Zero Tolerance for Deviant Behavior	1
Environmentally Friendly	1

Appendix a: Public Planning Process Records (cont.)

Brainstorming and Priorities from Initial Meeting

Finally, the microphones were opened for a 'brainstorm' session, where participants identified the problems and solutions they saw for the Plaza, and design team members recorded these on large sheets of paper tacked to the walls. After everyone had a chance to say whatever they wanted to say, each participant was given 7 dot stickers which they could use to 'vote' for their priority problems and solutions by sticking it next to the recorded item on the wall. This enable the community's priorities for the plaza to become immediately visually apparent, as well.

List of Problems and Solution Brainstorms and Priority Votes:

Problems	Number of Priority Votes
Curb/ sidewalk seam is just mud	7
Turf is a problem (functions as ashtray, attracts bees)	6
Existing landscaping is a hodge-podge of greenery - pull together	5
Too many 'dead spaces' surrounding Plaza: parking lots, drive-through food places	1
Problems/concern with unintended use of covered structure	-

Solutions	Number of Priority Votes
Need bathrooms or porta-potty storage area	11
Install better lighting	10
Keep line of sight into Plaza	10
Provide more hardscape for large groups	9
Traditional design but modern function	9
Sculpture art for kids to play on instead of trees	8
Water/fountain	8
Not wood benches (perhaps stone?)	8
Small curbs to delineate walkways / Level changes in the ground plane	8
New Gazebo	7
Encourage pedestrian access & attractions; pedestrian signals at all adjacent intersections	7
Traffic-calming along Broadway and Main	6
Brick inlay in walkways	5
Public Safety; Perimeter is problem - need security & activity	5
Keep bandstand covered (roof)	4
Durable material for band/gazebo structure	4
Circular steps around round platform/stage for seating	4
Sub/ area into smaller zones for smaller gatherings	3
Interactive art and games for various ages (chess example)	3
Dance floor designed into floor of plaza	3
More formal/consistent (cohesive) tree planting	3
More beautiful garbage receptacles	2
Tie to fountain across the street (reconsider design)	2
Permanent seating for concerts	2
Feature like at One-Mile - Grass slope w/ cement platform at top	2
Insist Post Office remain downtown	2
Plan/design to encourage & create use/traverse of Plaza by city employees	2

Solutions (cont.)

Solutions	Number of Priority Votes
Relocate / replace 2 cheap fast food places w/ family friendly businesses	1
Extend Plaza Watch	1
Gazebo works well where it is	1
Place an additional stage in another quadrant	1
More electricity near Christmas Tree for more lights	-
Possible band shell	-
Need access into Plaza for vehicles but don't allow access to be too easy	-
Consider moving Yule tree to original location	-
Spark curiosity	-

Input and Feedback from Follow-up Presentation (4/10/02)

The design team took all of this recorded input from the community and added their own design expertise and experience to develop and propose three updated plan alternatives. These new alternatives were presented at a subsequent, 'follow-up' public meeting for participants' review and feedback.

There seemed to be more consensus at the initial public meeting about the goals and vision for the Plaza than at the follow-up meeting. At this second meeting, input ranged from a desire to leave the Plaza exactly as it is (or even go back 150 years to restore it as a sort of Victorian park museum piece), all the way to scraping most of the site to install an amphitheater-type performance venue -- and many more moderate points between.

(Subsequently, the design team used the public comment, staff input, and what seemed to be the most well-received features of the existing proposals to developed the 4th, 'composite'-type alternative presented in this report.)

Follow-up Presentation Input:

- Fountain noise - turn off for events?
- Restrooms – San Luis Obispo trailer restrooms - \$20,000; but no ADA access
- Provide more power outlets for events
- Need to keep people out of fountains?
- Christmas tree retained?
- *Yes...leave in significant trees (let them 'interrupt' design)*
- Introduce playful anomalies to plan
- Add more 'clean' hardscape
- Provide for new elements to be added over time (e.g. public art/expression)
- Provide enough space for audience facing event area (e.g. performance area in corner with diagonal pathways diverting around.)
- Keep traditional design (keep it as-is & just refurbish)
- Move large events to Children's Plaza
- Add Victorian fountain in center
- Use lighting to add beauty & emphasis (creative lighting heights, orientations, etc.)
- Is this the right place to have events?
- Central Business District does not have enough parking
- Have other venues (use these for events)
- Make it the most beautiful space in the community (use as a pattern of beautification, especially of the Central Business District)

- Create demonstration garden
- Community gathering place for: 1) Informal meetings/uses, 2) Events
- Make it inviting for "living", comfortable
- What is process? How is it going to look during that process?
- *Use phasing (e.g. perimeter first)*
- *Disruption of construction necessary even with restoration*
- Maintenance concerns: lowest bidder chosen; realities of implementation
- Propose design that is not so expensive
- 'Front porch' rather than living room
- Don't make people hike to next block for restrooms
- Can you 'landscape in' public restrooms? (Example: Pioneer Square in Portland)
- Events are becoming new tradition
- Both Plaza and plaza events can co-exist
- Turf idea (re-constructed and slightly raised) is good
- Keep it more plain & open (less discreet/individual plantings)
- Would comfortable gathering/sitting places work at corners?
- It is worth paying for larger trees
- For funding, ask City to increase development fees
- The community values trees and green space, also loves gatherings - can have both
- Also can have tradition & modern function
- Due to elm disease, almost have blank canvas
- Use grade changes & terraces to create amphitheatre (10' change corner to corner, below and above grade)
- Can break with tradition to create new traditions
- Have 'plaza'/events in one corner & 'Plaza' in other three
- Keep traditional look (e.g. oranges) - use innovation elsewhere
- Need parking (and toilets) downtown - how about under City Plaza?
- Close street(s) on multiple sides of City Plaza
- Close off adjacent street(s) to use for events (to preserve City Plaza from use impacts)
- Designate diagonal parking (on Main and Broadway)
- Neighbors around Children's Plaza will not allow amplified sound (the precluding having events there)
- Downtown bathrooms already exist near Children's Plaza
- Shuttles could help bring people in for events, instead adding parking for each car
- Design should have no straight lines
- Nothing wrong with what is there
- Keep greenness, tradition (it adapts well to events)
- Keep it the way it is, it adapts well, is multi-purpose
- Orange trees need water system
- Reclaim space from street lanes for planter strips
- Why not move sidewalks in?
- *Continuity of sidewalks from surrounding blocks/downtown*
- How long will implementation take? What about the interim?
- If restored to original, what prevents same problems from coming back?
- *Upgrade*
- *Tree roots are a problem (with original spacing of such large trees)*
- Maintenance is key – find private funding / creative financing