



Chester, California

A TOWN PLAZA

For Year Round Activities

www.OurTownPlaza.org



Town Plaza Project Leadership

Development Committee

Voting Members

Susan Bryner, President Chamber of Commerce

Katherine Sansone, Vice Chair Lake Almanor Community Foundation

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Mary Austin, Farmers Market Research

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Committee Chairs

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Project Coordination

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Lake Almanor Community Foundation

Lake Almanor Area Chamber of Commerce

Feather River Tourism Association

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Need

The economy of the Lake Almanor Basin has struggled since the decline of the timber industry. The Basin and Plumas County as a whole are one of a handful of counties in California to have a declining population and an aging demographic with a rise in those over age 60 and a decline in those under. Many families complain of not enough to do for their children, especially during the winter months, and, due to the lack of employment and cultural opportunities, many youth graduate, go off to college, and do not return.

Chester, as the main service area for the Basin, has many empty buildings on Main Street with many retail and hospitality businesses choosing to close or dramatically decrease hours during the off-season, October – April.

The Lake Almanor Basin and the town of Chester have no civic space. We are in need of a place to meet, celebrate and recreate. Towns with thriving civic spaces bring locals and visitors into town, create a strong sense of community, give residents a sense of place, provide a forum for public activities and energize the local economy.

The Town Plaza Initiative

The Town Plaza is an initiative for the advancement of community health, education, and cultural and recreational opportunities. The Town Plaza will be a community destination that will feature educational events, music, festivals, craft fairs, children’s activities, cultural performances, and public art.

As an economic development driver, it will contain a public market space that will create opportunities for various food and retail entrepreneurs to start and grow businesses. As an event and activities location it will become a regional destination that will bring local residents as well as travelers into the Town of Chester, stimulating the economy of the town.

All of this will happen in a unique setting located in the center of Chester, near existing shops, restaurants and services and adjacent to Chester Park on the Feather River, the Collins Pine Trail, Truman Collins Sports Complex, the Almanor Recreation building and future build-outs planned by the Almanor Recreation and Parks District.

Business Plan Purpose

The intent of this Business Plan is to guide decisions by the project leadership in its implementation. It is also intended to provide information to potential project investors about how the Town Plaza will be built and operated.

Project Background

For the past decade, leaders of the Lake Almanor and Chester communities have explored plans for town beautification, streetscapes, façade improvements, big events, and marketing in order to stimulate the economy and improve community opportunities and health. In doing so it became evident that one of the most cost effective and catalyzing things a community could do in this regard was to develop a place for a public market and plaza, and develop on-going activities near where people shop, eat, and look for entertainment.

Research on destination marketing also indicates that when deciding on a place to visit, the top things the traveling population looks for in a destination are shopping, dining, recreation, and entertainment in a pedestrian friendly environment.

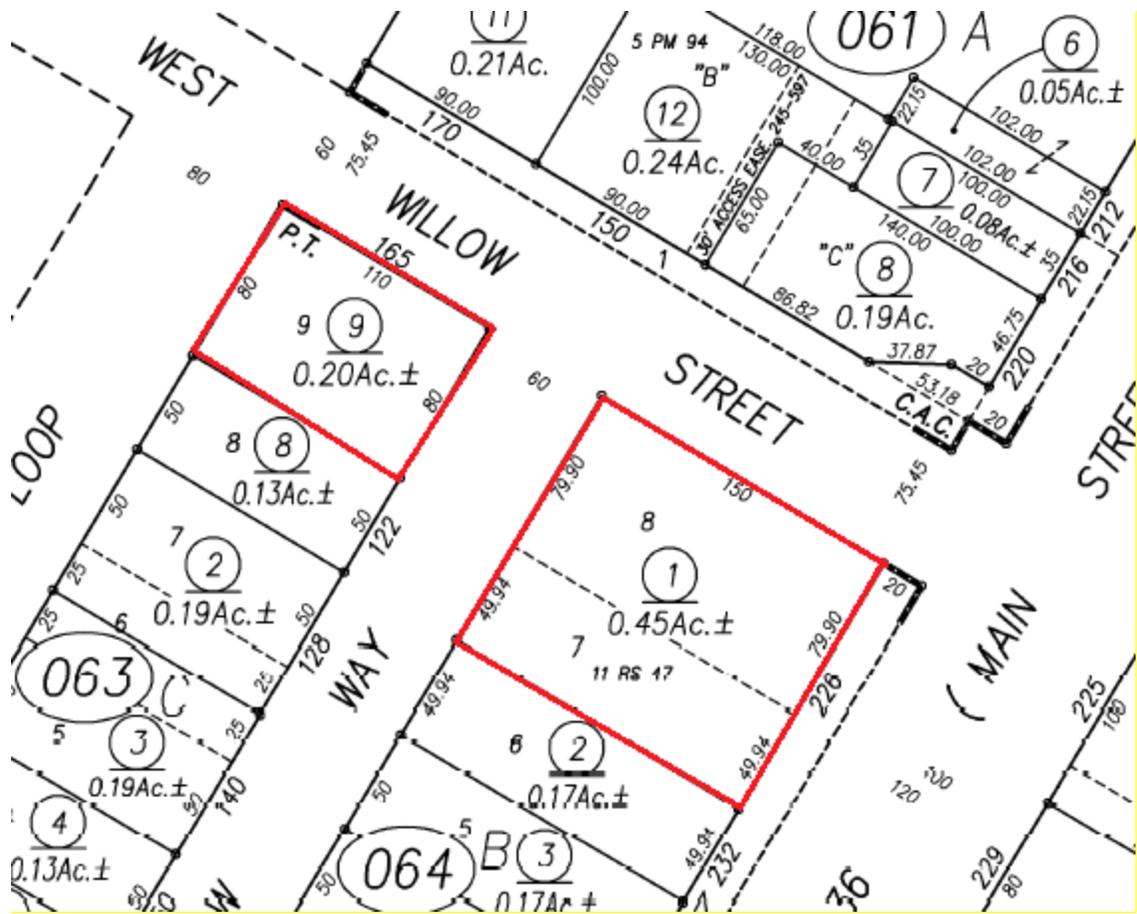
To explore and develop this concept, members of the Lake Almanor Basin met with public and private leaders to discuss, research, and plan a Town Plaza for year-round activities for the Basin.

The plan, as described below, is the result of the collaboration of these community meetings.

Part 2: Project Location

The Town Plaza will be located at the corner of Main Street and Willow Street encompassing APN #100-064-001, #100-064-002 and #100-063-009. This site was selected based on several factors:

- **Opportunity for Private & Public Partnership** – Current plans call for the Plaza to be built as part of a multi-use development that will be responsive to community input and needs and in close proximity to other community spaces, i.e., Chester Park, Truman Collins Complex and the Almanor Recreation building, as well as retail, hospitality, and commercial businesses.
- **Visibility and Access** – The site is located on one of the highest visibility commercial corners in Chester, at the crossroads of banks, post office, library and public offices as well as retail outlets and restaurants. It lies along Highway 36, a main thoroughfare for



Part 3: Building Program

Market Building

The public market building will have a mix of uses within the plaza. The market building will be a large, open-span, flexible, space that can expand as needed and be used for farmers markets, special events, craft fairs and other community uses. The market building will house indoor, temporary stalls that vendors can use for a daily rate and will be designed to be easily reconfigured for events. The building will offer space for small (10' X 10') and larger (20' X 10') vending stalls. Stall areas will be designed for flexibility with full utility access. Overall, the building will consist of approximately 3,600 square feet of leasable space for events and vendors of various sizes.

Outdoor Plaza

The outdoor plaza areas will provide spaces for different experiences and opportunities such as events, outdoor markets, music, performances and ice skating. The design plan for the site is designed to encourage people to wander around and through the plaza and into the adjacent shops, restaurants, theatre, park, trail and recreational facilities. The outdoor spaces will include charging stations for our traveling populations (Pacific Coast Trail hikers), amenities such as moveable seating and tables, attractive eco-friendly landscaping, a variety of play features for children and a water feature to play in for warmer months.

Parking

Parking will be provided on parcel 100-063-009-000 across Willow Way as well as on the west side of the property on parcel 100-064-002.

Support Spaces

A future design phase will detail the structure and location of public restrooms and storage spaces.



Part 4: Site Plan & Architecture

The site plan and conceptual architectural plan for the Town Plaza is being developed and will become more detailed as the project moves forward. The goal of the design is to create a Town Plaza that is financially viable and fulfills the overall objectives of the project. Several key principles and philosophies are guiding the design.

Design Principles:

Simple, Affordable and Modest – The vision for the plaza is for an authentic, grassroots, community-oriented market and plaza. The vision is to create a “working market” and recreation area that is accessible to the community and affordable to vendors. The design will avoid excessive adornment, or expensive materials. The building and plaza areas will be designed with affordable, durable materials designed to last.

Vendors, Products and Activities are the Main Attraction – Related to the first item, the market building should have sufficient signage and architectural interest to invite visitors. However, the building will also be designed to fade into the background as the products, vendors, the people and overall activity of the space form the main event. The heart and soul of the plaza will be the vendors, customers, and the ever-changing bustle of the place. Buildings and other structures will simply be the vessels for this activity.

Mix of Indoor/Outdoor Spaces – The outdoor plaza area and market building will blend and flow well depending on the season and activity.

Flexibility – The plaza and public market building will need to evolve over time. The design emphasizes flexibility and adaptability to allow for changes to occur.

Part 5: Capital Sources & Uses

The Town Plaza project consists of several components – the land, the public market building, the outdoor plaza elements, programmable activities, and support structures.

- .83-acre parcel of land
- Programmable activities, Phase I, II and III.

- Covered building, 2,160 Sq. Ft. Main Section and 1,440 Sq. Ft. of side/lean-to covered area, with support structures, Phase II.
- 8,033 Sq. Ft. of outdoor plaza area improvements, Phase II.
- Parking, Phase II.
- Build-out to enclose public market building, Phase III.

Total Project Costs

BUDGET CATEGORIES	
Project Costs:	
Land Purchase	\$300,000
Land Clean-up and Improvements, Phase I	\$15,000
Project Management, Phase I	\$ 40,000
Architectural Design, Phase I	\$2,500
Power & Water, Phase I	\$5,000
Market Building, Phase II	\$130,000
Outdoor Plaza Improvements, Phase II	\$30,000
Security, Phase II	\$3,000
Activities Start-Up Costs, Phase I, II and III	\$92,000
TOTAL:	\$ 617,500

Funding Sources for Development

Crowdfunding:

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the Internet. It is a form of crowdsourcing and alternative finance.

Brick Fundraising Campaign:

The plaza will need a people friendly surface. The use of pavers or bricks opens the opportunity to raise funds in the following manner. 100 engraved bricks of 4" x 8" for sold \$100, 100 8" x 8" bricks sold for \$250, and 100 12" x 12" bricks sold for \$500 will net \$53,375.

Sponsors and Foundations

The Plaza committee is currently looking into funding from corporate and business sponsors who will be recognized on permanent signage and on-going activity boards.

Private foundations are being identified.

Grants:

Prop 68 Funds. There are several opportunities for Grants from Proposition 68 funding. The Almanor Recreation and Parks District has just received a large grant and is ready to submit for another that dove-tails with the infrastructure and activities of a Town Plaza.

The Feather River Tourism Association, once the Tourism District is funded in June of 2020, will be a source of grant funding for operations in 2021.

The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council) is a private, nonprofit foundation that was established in 2004 as part of a Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) settlement. They have two goals: to ensure that over 140,000 acres of California's pristine watershed lands are conserved for the public good through a Land Conservation Program, and to invest in outdoor programs that serve California's young people through a Youth Investment Program.

Fundraising Events/Projects:

The following fundraising activities for development are underway:

- "Ask" Campaign for Sponsors – Letters 2020
- Inaugural Cook Book Project – July 2020

- White Picnic at Twilight - September, September 2020

Activities Revenues After Land Purchase

With the intention of developing the plaza in phases, the initial phase will include preparing the ground for warm weather public markets and fund-raising events. Revenues produced from these early markets, fairs and activities will be used for operations and to fund the development of subsequent phases. See Part 7. Operations and Proforma

Part 6: Governance & Development Phases

The Chester Town Plaza project requires an adept and flexible structure that is focused on financial viability while safeguarding the public mission of the project.

Visioning, Phase I

The Lake Almanor Community Foundation, the Lake Almanor Area Chamber of Commerce and the Feather River Tourism Association have been managing the initial visioning phase of project development.

The Lake Almanor Community Foundation is a 501c3 corporation in 2001 for the purpose of lessening the burdens of government, for the communities located in the vicinity of Lake Almanor, providing education opportunities with respect to such community activities as recreational programs, performing arts, local libraries, civic and cultural programs, the monitoring of water quality in Lake Almanor and support of other initiatives to promote the health and welfare of the Lake Almanor community.

The Lake Almanor Area Chamber of Commerce (LAAC) is a 501c6 corporation serving the business and community needs of Lake Almanor since the 1950's. The primary objectives of the Chamber are: 1) To serve the general public and the members of the area business community through planned educational programs and services that have social and recreational potential for development of the Chamber's Lake Almanor Basin service area. 2) To inform the general public about the residential, recreational and economic advantages of the area as a place to live, work, visit and invest, and 3) To be a collaborative partner in matters of regional planning, economic development, civic enterprise, education and cultural enrichment of the area served. LAAC has an executive board of 5 and a paid executive director.

The Feather River Tourism Association (FRTA) is a 501 c6 in the final stages of forming a Tourism Investment District (TID) that will assist the realization of the full potential of

the Lake Almanor area as a travel destination. The TID will be responsible for increasing visitation to lodging businesses in the area by providing results-oriented marketing, advertising, and tourism resource development. The TID is in the final stage of formation. Once in operation FRTA will receive a stable source of funding to act as the destination marketing organization for the region. A percentage of these funds will be funneled back to local jurisdictions to assist with the development and operation of tourism resources such as the Town Plaza.

Land Acquisition, Fund Raising, and Development, Phase II and III

It is anticipated that land acquisition will occur through investors in a limited liability corporation that will lease the property to the Town Plaza Operator.

A Charitable Project Fund is being developed through the North Valley Community Foundation to manage the funds raised for the Town Plaza during Phase II.

Simultaneously the Development Team will apply for 501c3 status. Once 501c3 status is obtained, funds remaining in the Charitable Project Fund will be transferred to the new entity and the Board of Directors of the new entity will become responsible for the governance of the Plaza through on-going phases and operations.

Part 7: Operations & Proforma

Below is a proforma budget for the first 12 months of operations. The first 12 months of Plaza operations will be executed on bare land with minimal improvement.

Year 1	Budget
Cash on hand	
Cash Receipts	
Corporate Sponsorships	\$10,000
Operation Grant-FRTA	\$10,000
Event Revenues	\$40,000
Fundraising Event/Projects	\$20,000
Public Market Revenues	\$8,000
Interest Income	
TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS	\$88,000
Total cash available	\$88,000
CASH PAID OUT-EXPENSES	
Advertising/Sales/PR	\$5,000
Liability Insurance	\$4,000
Property Lease	\$14,400
Miscellaneous	
Office expense	\$800
Rent or lease: equipment	
Repairs and maintenance	\$12,000
Taxes and licenses	\$3,000
Utilities	\$4,500
Wages	\$36,000
Payroll Expenses	\$5,400
Web Expenses	\$500
SUBTOTAL OF EXPENSES PAID OUT	\$85,600
CASH PAID OUT	
Construction Costs	
Program Start-Up Costs	
1% Reserve/Contingency Fund	\$880
TOTAL CASH PAID OUT	\$86,480
Cash on hand	\$1,520
OTHER OPERATING DATA	
Revenue Producing Events	16
Fundraising Events	1
Annual Cook Book Fund Raiser	1

Annual Event/Public Market Revenues

Planned event and project revenues for operations:

- Weekly Public or Farmers Markets - June – Mid September
- Battle of the Mountain, Beer Fest
- Oktoberfest
- Rent and/or Event Planning Revenues for other organizations
- Yearly Flea Market
- Others under review – Fall Street Rod/Motorcycle Show, Winter Activities such as Ice Skating, Christmas Village and Spring Auction Market

Annual Fund Raising

- White Picnic at Twilight – Pre-Labor Day
- Annual Cook Book Project – on-going local and online sales

Corporate Sponsorships

- “Ask” Campaigns

Part 8: Summary Timeline

PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Land Purchase	May 2020
Plaza Design	June – December 2021
Project Build – Phase 1: Lot clean-up, utility hook-ups.	May 2020
Project Build - Phase 2: Outdoor area improvements	May 2021
Project Build – Phase 3: Market Building	May 2022
Public Market & Warm Season Activities Programming	June-September 2020 and on-going
Fall and Winter & Cold Season Activities Programming	October – December 2020 and on-going
Estimated Project Completion Date	

Part 9: Contact Information

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