

DOWNTOWN FIRST!

20 December 2017

As we approach the end of 2017, we note significant signs of new economic activity and population growth in our area over the past year: the progression of new housing construction with more on the way, sales of parcels in the business park, and increasing interest in Rio Vista as a place to locate businesses. In the very near future, Rio Vista is likely to reach a population of 10,000.

Our small and growing city has had three major studies done by urban professionals over the years, with a cost of nearly a million dollars: Rio Vista General Plan, the recent PDA study (Priority Development Area), and the R/UDAT Study in 2014. Each of these studies supports the same goal: Focus on core Rio Vista. The same theme is repeated over and over in all three: Encourage development and activities here in the core. Do not fragment. Strengthen the central focus with cultural, civic, entertainment and retail uses located in the downtown and nearby areas.

It is worth reiterating the primary mission of RioVision: to revitalize and energize Rio Vista into a thriving community. We strive to preserve the best of what makes our town unique and to support development that provides opportunities for future generations to continue to call Rio Vista home. Adopting a ***Downtown First*** policy is the recommended direction from those who have planned and developed other thriving communities. “Develop the core as the center of civic life, entertainment and commercial activity” “Establish the core of the city as its cultural and civic center, and increase visitors to the area”

RioVision urges our community to resist developmental sprawl. Some services will eventually be needed as housing expands beyond Trilogy -- fire and police services, a convenience store, and so on. But new businesses and activities that attract people to the core downtown area to work and play are essential to keeping our town vibrant. Many vacant and buildable properties exist in the core Rio Vista area, suitable for civic and cultural development. RioVision will continue to explore and support development in these areas.

Know anyone who could reopen a local cinema in town? The old Vista Theater on Main Street is for lease. RioVision explored the possibility of a cinema/live theater/conference/arts center at this location and is willing to help with that endeavor. The inside has 20 ft. ceilings, classic art deco wall paintings, plenty of electrical outlets, an entry/reception area, and is structurally up to date. There is about a 20' x 12' space that could be used for simply staged live theater or other performances. It is a prize worth claiming. What is needed is a person or a group with skills, experience and above all, a passion for reviving a fine old theater to show movies and partner with other groups to hold events or performances. RioVision will share what we have learned and will support this project in many other ways. Contact RioVision at: 707-360-5244 or at info@riovistavision.com.
