

## A TOWN TO TREASURE

February 14, 2018

Happy Valentine's Day, Rio Vista! Jim Wheeler of the Chamber of Commerce presented a vision for celebrating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our town's incorporation to the City Council on February 6<sup>th</sup>. Prior to his presentation, citizens spoke of their love for this town...why families moved here or stayed over multiple generations to raise their children here. "While you have been out searching the world....the treasure you sought was buried in your own garden." (Rumi) This valentine is for you.

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Jim began his presentation by recounting the 2014 R/UDAT study, accepted by the City, which included input at town hall gatherings of over 500 citizens. Highlighting the partnership between the Chamber, RioVision, and the City, he reviewed progress to-date toward realizing the R/UDAT recommendations. All last year, we wrote about these accomplishments in this article. He and RioVision's Economic Development Committee chairman, Edwin Okumura who followed Jim's presentation, both called for a renewal of commitment to the R/UDAT recommendations in this milestone anniversary year.

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The R/UDAT recommendations revolve around these goals:

- Bring and keep viable business downtown.
- Revitalize the downtown core and waterfront.
- Create a sense of place and shared community, connecting outlying neighborhoods with RV core

Making the areas surrounding Main St, Front St, and Highway 12 an economic and community focal point is important: a hub for non-profit, civil, and business activity, the cultural heart of our city - a place we love, take pride in, and would invest/work/fight to strengthen. The city's General Plan and Waterfront-specific Plan also support these goals.

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During 2018, the Chamber plans to showcase our downtown area as an historical asset and use it to "brand" our town....the unique offering by which we want to be known and recognized. Specific initiatives include:

- Seasonal programs/promotions by merchants and others to create excitement and draw to the downtown core. Forums where merchants can identify issues and help each other
- Creating and organizing of downtown historical tours led by trained docents
- Labelling historic buildings; erecting historic interpretative signs/markers
- Showcasing memorabilia of our past in City Hall, the Visitors Center, and Solano City Board of Supervisors
- Adding an informational kiosk at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Main
- Raising celebratory anniversary banners on Main, Front, and Hwy 12; holding a special mid-year event as well as the year-end celebration
- Recommending safety improvements in downtown core
- Creating Rio Vista Ambassadors from our citizenry
- Promoting Rio Vista with booths at regional fairs and events (e.g. the January Sacramento Sportsmen's Expo where our ambassadors spoke to over 500 people, and the Dixon May Fair)

Working with RioVision in:

- Designing/erecting an inviting archway entrance to downtown at Main St., near Hwy 12.
- Redo landscaping and monument sign at Hillside and Hwy. 12 intersection

All this work will be complemented by the new western entrance sign by the Rio Vista Lions at Cattey Lane.

When we join in the big anniversary celebration on December 30<sup>th</sup>, we will bring our fascinating past to meet a future that enriches the best in us and our city.