

CHAPTER 8: LOCALIZING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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The following chapter outlines potential opportunities for economic growth and community development within Laytonville and offers strategies for capitalizing on its existing assets. Additionally, the recommendations and strategies provided throughout Chapters 3-7 actively promote community development by fostering a more pedestrian-friendly, attractive, accessible and active environment within the Town Center.

Building on the planning principles approved by the Laytonville Area Municipal Advisory Council for the County's General Plan Update, the community development strategies reflect the desire for locally-owned and -operated businesses within Laytonville's Town Center. Additionally, all of the recommendations and strategies provided below are intended to capitalize on and celebrate Laytonville's greatest asset, its residents and stakeholders.

The spirit, enthusiasm, diversity and resources that exist within Laytonville provide a unique and important foundation for economic and community development. Healthy Start's Community Autumn



Figure 8-1 & 8-2 Laytonville High School's art students create beautiful place-based public art.



Figure 8-3 A kiosk built by the High School's very-capable woodshop class.

Fair, Harwood Park's Christmas Craft Fair, Mendocino County Herb Association's Annual Herb Fair at the Garden Club, Old-Timer's Baseball Game, Art Openings at Mollywogs, and local music events are excellent examples of Laytonville's enormous community spirit. The incorporation of local craftsmanship, artisanry, materials and

resources, as well as continued collaboration with local student groups, clubs and associations will be essential components of each of the following recommendations.

A. Local Business, Agriculture & Food

Contrary to dominant American economic trends, Laytonville businesses are predominately locally-owned and locally-operated. To keep their doors open, "mom and pop" shops depend on patronage from area residents, businesses and from travelers on the Highway 101 corridor. Laytonville business owners contribute to their community by providing important goods and services, as well as by keeping dollars in circulation locally. Studies show that local merchants generate substantially greater economic impact than chain retailers. One analysis by Civic Economics indicates that \$13 of every \$100 spent at chain retailers yields a local economic impact as compared to at least \$40 when spent at a local business.

Recommendations Include:



Figure 8-4 Locally-painted signs contribute to the unique character of Laytonville.



Figure 8-5 Laytonville Farmers' Market

1. Support the Farmer's Market.

The Laytonville Farmer's Market is a small market that brings farmers and consumers together on Sunday afternoons from June – October. It is the smallest certified farmers market in California, yet it is an important social event in Laytonville, reminiscent of the village marketplace. Started in 1988, the Laytonville Farmer's market is the only certified venue within a 20+ mile radius for local growers to market and sell the fruits of their labor. Strengthening the Market through programs, patronage, and a more ideal location helps to incubate small local businesses by providing a central

venue for commerce for farmers, cottage industries, and producers of value-added local products. This plan identifies Town Circle and Town Square concepts that provide a central and sheltered place for community gathering and commerce.

In 2006, the Laytonville Farmer's Market partnered with Healthy Start, Harwood Park Association, and the Laytonville Community Garden to initiate a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. This is a method of local agriculture whereby consumers purchase CSA memberships in advance of the growing season, providing a guaranteed market for farmers, helping them to make their farms more economically viable. Through grant funding, subsidized memberships were available to families in need in exchange for hours worked in the community garden. An example of a successful food localization program, the result was a 30% increase in sales over the previous



Figure 8-6 Laytonville Community Garden



Figure 8-7 Revive the Laytonville Chamber of Commerce

year.

2. Support Laytonville Community Garden

The Laytonville Community Garden is located adjacent to Harwood Park on Harwood Road. Initially a project of Healthy Start, it was founded in 2002 and has been supported

through grant funding as well as community volunteer labor. Food grown in the garden is contributed to the local Food Bank, churches, school lunch programs, and through Healthy Start. Workshops on soil fertility, food production, permaculture, and other agricultural methods are conducted at the garden.

3. Revive the Long Valley Chamber of Commerce

The implementation of simple programs, such as delivery consolidation, beautification, and “local first” campaigns are important functions that could be provided by the Long Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce in neighboring Willits, CA has worked with their membership, the City of Willits and

localization experts to initiate a “local first” campaign that encourages consumers to source goods and services locally first, before driving to larger urban centers. Advertisements in local print media, banners and posters have been successful in increasing local sales.

- Consolidate deliveries to Laytonville businesses to mitigate transportation-related expenses and fuel consumption, and reduce traffic congestion.
- Initiate a “local-first” campaign within Laytonville to support area businesses and resources.

B. Rural Character & Family Farm Identity

The history of inhabitants of Long Valley is intertwined with the area’s natural resource base. In the beginning, the Cahto people lived from the land as hunters, gatherers and fishers. Early white settlers made their livelihoods from trapping, fur trading, logging and ranching. Still today, land-based livelihoods in Laytonville go against modern trends of globalized corporate agriculture, mega-scale feedlots, and forest resource liquidation. Small family farms, selective log-

ging and sustainable forestry, and family-scale animal husbandry prevail.

Recommendations Include:

1. Establish Equestrian Focused Amenities and Awareness

The Laytonville community has a strong equestrian culture, with several ranches located in the area, the annual Laytonville Rodeo and a significant number of local riders. With the proposed Caltrans improvements, including hitching posts along Highway 101 and improved crosswalks, as well as the trail recommendations provided in Chapter 3 of this report, the equestrian community has an opportunity to expand its presence in and access to Laytonville's Town Center.

- Encourage partnerships with the revived Chamber of Commerce and equestrian community to increase equestrian-appropriate amenities.
- Work with Caltrans to improve signage alerting traffic to equestrian activity within the Town Center.
- Work with school groups to review safety and access issues for students riding to and from local schools.



Figure 8-8 There is an active equestrian culture in Laytonville

2. Capitalize on the Rodeo and the Family Farm Identity

The annual Laytonville Rodeo is an extremely successful event, attracting visitors from throughout the region and beyond to Long Valley every June. As such, the Laytonville Rodeo represents an important source of community pride and generates significant tourist traffic for the greater Laytonville area. Additionally, this unique event offers residents of every age and background the opportunity to celebrate Laytonville's history and identity and to reinforce its strong sense of community.

- Encourage the Laytonville Chamber of Commerce and the Laytonville Rodeo Association



Figure 8-9 Local resident supports “Keepin’ it Rural”

to work together to maximize tourism dollars within the Town Center during the Rodeo.

- Partner with the equestrian community, school groups and the Laytonville Rodeo Association to develop additional programs to promote community involvement and awareness of the Rodeo year-round.
- Encourage the inclusion of artwork and signage that features rodeo and family farm themes within the Town Center to foster Laytonville’s unique character and identity.

C. Sustainable Lifestyle

Due to limited county resources, most efforts to promote sustainability within Laytonville are community-driven and organized. The enormous support and interest from community members should be leveraged where possible to further Laytonville’s sustainability goals, and opportunities for grants and agency support should be explored. For additional recommendations regarding sustainable building techniques and design, refer to Chapter 7, Design Guidelines.

Recommendations Include:

1. Develop Education Programs and Green Community Events

Laytonville has an opportunity to promote sustainable living through existing events by encouraging new collaborations within the community. To maximize resources and encourage a comprehensive approach to sustainable living, green practices and education programs should be incorporated into Laytonville’s existing and successful community events. Community fairs, local music and art events, school programs and other organized activities should incorporate and reflect Laytonville’s focus on sustainability.



Figure 8-10 With abundant solar exposure, Laytonville could strive for energy-independence.

2. Create Program to Promote Green Businesses

The revived Long Valley Chamber of Commerce should work with local businesses to develop a green business program and encourage sustainable business practices.

3. Adopt Policies to Encourage Adaptive Reuse of Existing Buildings

LAMAC should work with local agencies to pursue and develop County policies or ordinances that encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings within Laytonville.

4. Adopt Policies to Encourage Sustainable Building Techniques

LAMAC should work with local agencies to pursue and develop County policies or ordinances that encourage sustainable building techniques within Laytonville.

- Encourage & support installation of on-site renewable energy systems on public and private facilities.