

# Geyserville Planning Committee

## Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Community Surveys

February 2019

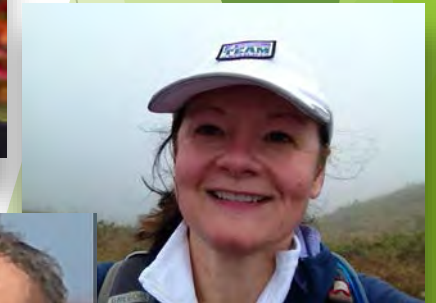
# Purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee

- ▶ In March 2018, the Geyserville Planning Committee (GPC) completed two surveys
- ▶ An Ad Hoc Committee (AHC) was appointed in June of 2018
  - ▶ Refine the two existing surveys
  - ▶ Increase the amount and specificity of data from the community



# Membership of the AHC

- ▶ **Bryce Jones**, co-chair, GPC member, real estate development consultant and former wine industry professional
- ▶ **John Cash**, Ph.D., co-chair, a Geyserville resident and Senior Consultant to non-profit, mission-driven organizations
- ▶ **Jessica Heiges**, UC Berkeley grad student; part-time Geyserville resident; Geyserville Community Foundation member; fascinated & disturbed by waste generation
- ▶ **Hal Hinkle**, Geyserville resident, GPC member
- ▶ **Lorie Loe**, Geyserville resident, marketing & brand specialist, and SRJC adjunct faculty
- ▶ **Gene Schnair**, architect (recently retired from international practice) avid cyclist, and part-time Geyserville resident for past 15 years



# Goals of the AHC

- ▶ Amplify findings of initial surveys
  - ▶ Refine and deepen community input
  - ▶ Provide actionable recommendations to GPC
- ▶ The AHC created:
  - ▶ An additional short, 12-question paper survey designed to be handed out and completed in real time
  - ▶ A set of more detailed, conversational questions to be asked by AHC members as live, “man-on-the street” interviews

The AHC collected 147 completed short surveys and conducted 23 long-form interviews.





# Survey Analysis: Common Takeaways

- ▶ Deep community engagement by Geyserville residents
- ▶ Desire to retain Geyserville's small-town, rural, agricultural feel while simultaneously building a much more active, lively downtown core
- ▶ Preservation of historic structures while diversifying businesses and services offered in the community
- ▶ Concern about the variety of housing, and especially affordable housing
- ▶ A wish for even greater community engagement





All surveys reveal a vibrant community that cares about Geyserville and its future.

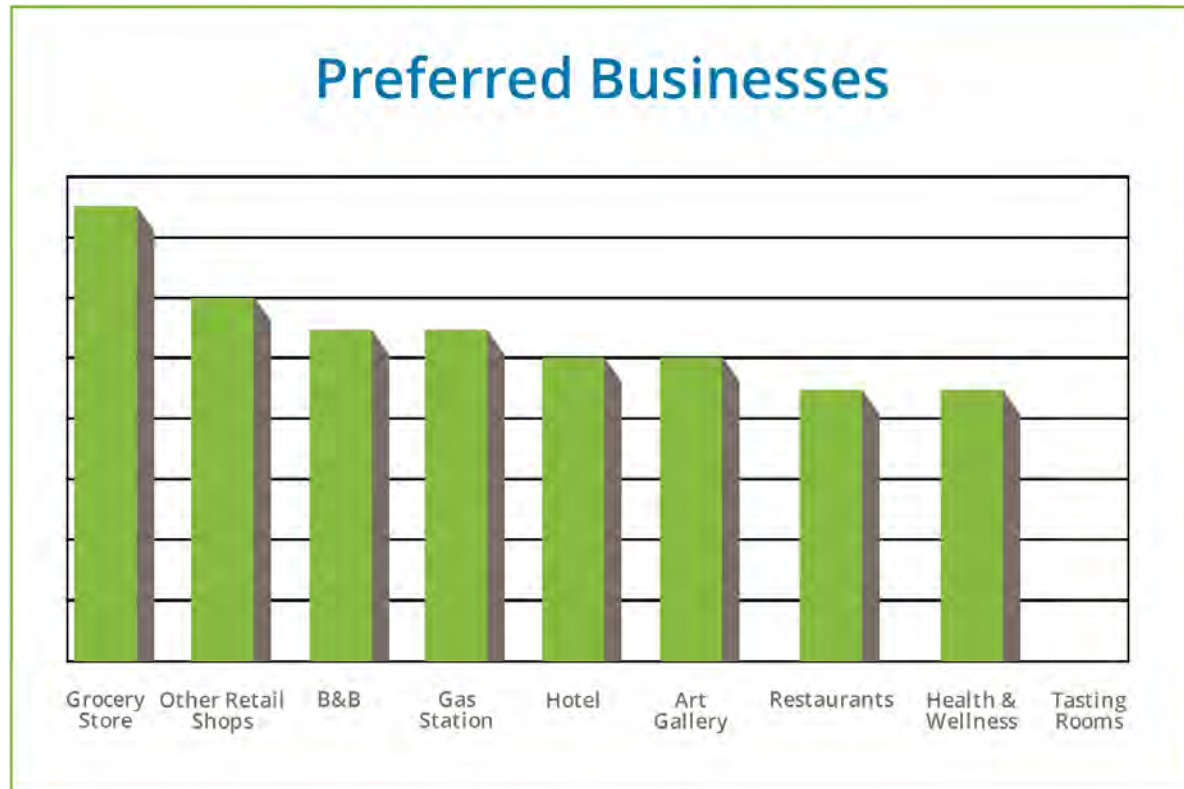


# Survey Results & Analysis



# Interview Question #1: Preferred Businesses

In the Geyserville (online) Community Survey, the majority of respondents said that they highly valued the small-town, rural/agricultural character of the community and would like to see it in the future in the downtown core. If you agree with this perspective, which of the following businesses would you like to see in town?

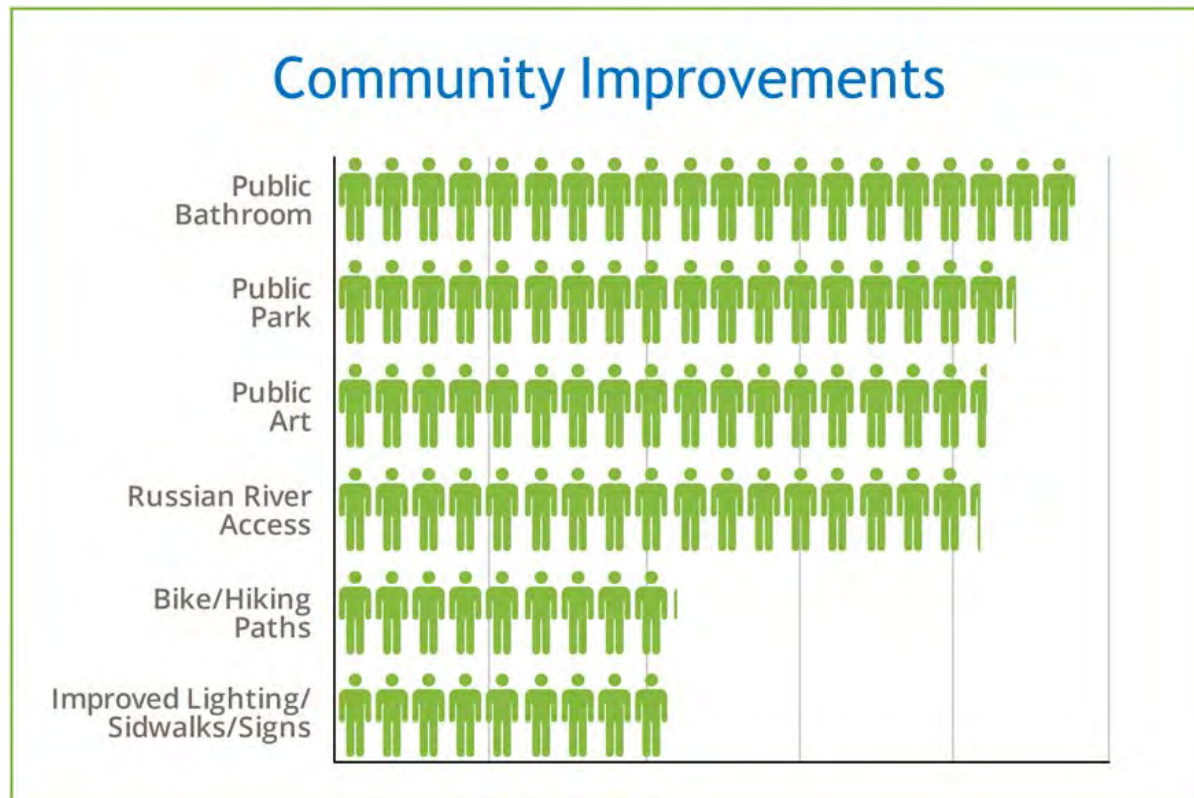


- ▶ Desire for a local grocery store; no chains or convenience stores
- ▶ Showcase for local products
- ▶ Variety in retail shops:
  - ▶ Bakery
  - ▶ Bank/atm
  - ▶ Hardware store
  - ▶ Gift shop
  - ▶ Clothing store
  - ▶ Mexican restaurant



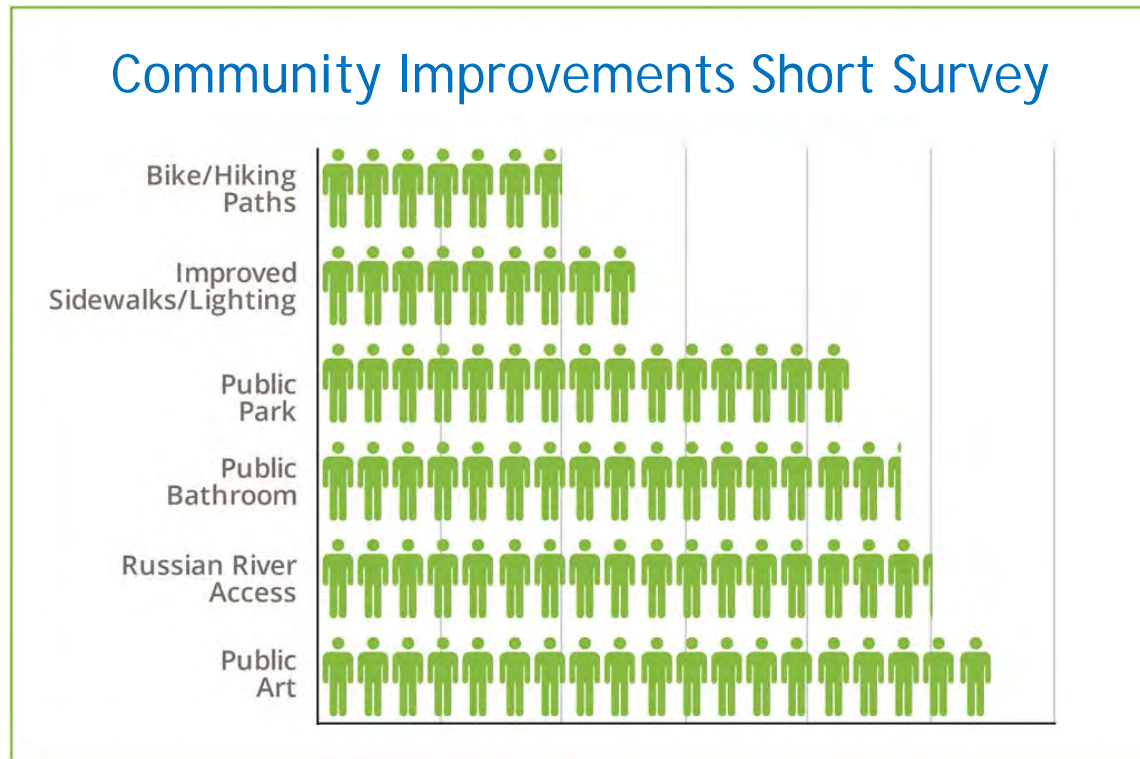
# Interview Question #2: Community Improvements

In the original online survey last March, several needs were identified. Which of the following do you think would be important for the future of the town? (*choose at least one answer*).



# Short Survey: Community Improvements

In the original online survey last March, several needs were identified. Which of the following do you think would be important for the future of the town? (*choose at least one answer*).

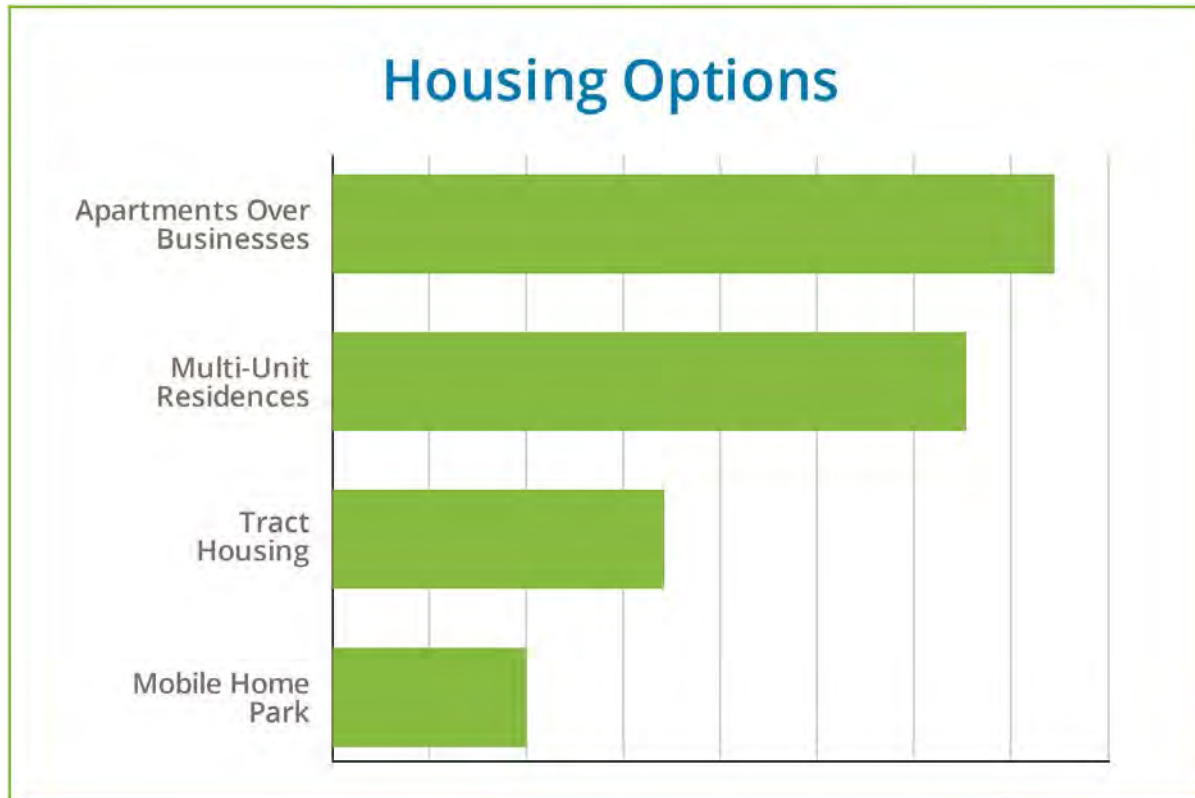


► Both the short survey and the interviews saw similar responses

- The desire for a public park, a public bathroom and access to the Russian River were broadly supported
- Continued expansion of public art and sculpture were strongly supported in the short survey
- Some concern about ongoing maintenance for a river park

# Interview Question #3: Housing

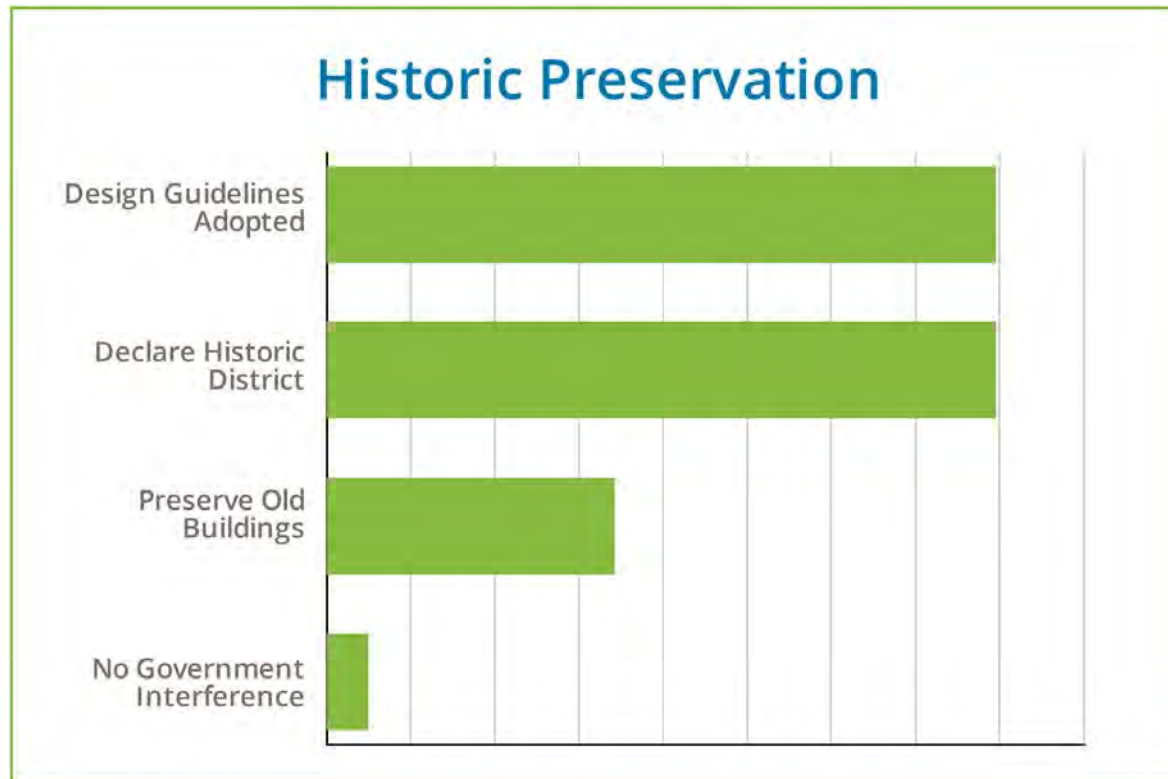
Affordable housing is a serious problem in Sonoma County and any plan for the future of the town has to take into account the need for housing. Which of the following options would you support for Geyserville? (*choose at least one answer*)



- ▶ In the short survey, nearly equal numbers of respondents (104 and 106) felt that both variety and affordability were important for the future of Geyserville
- ▶ Overall significant interest in both affordable housing and for housing that is higher density
- ▶ Strong support for multiple use structures to ensure that new businesses in the downtown core include a residential component

# Interview Question #4: Historic Character

Geyserville is an old community with a number of buildings that are more than 75 years old in the downtown core. Which of the following statements do you agree/disagree with (*choose at least one answer*):



- ▶ 140 respondents to short survey said it is important for Geyserville to preserve and enhance its agricultural heritage and identity
- ▶ Preservation of historic Geyserville and its rural character are important to the community
  - ▶ Develop building design guidelines
  - ▶ Investigate declaring parts of Geyserville an historic district



# Interview Question #5: Beautification

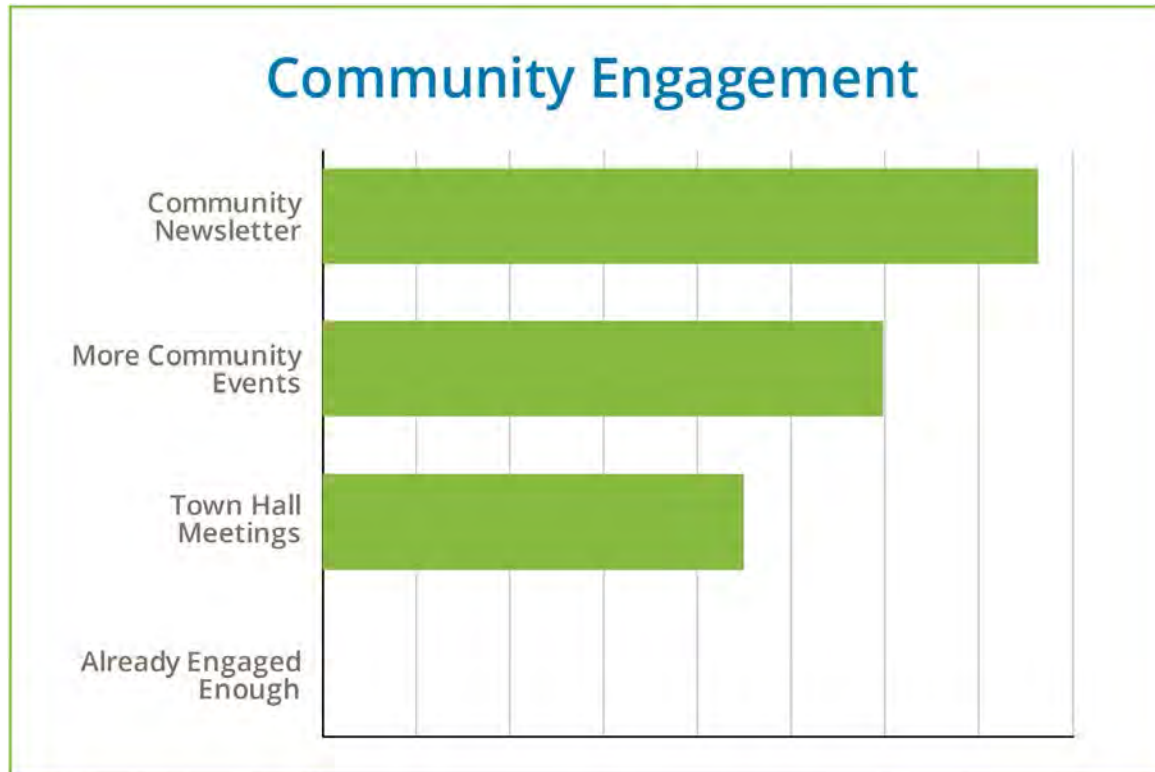
Beautification of the town was also raised as a priority by some in the online survey last March. Which of the following do you think would be important to pursue?



- ▶ Some unhappiness over the condition of some downtown buildings especially vacant storefronts
- ▶ Businesses should be encouraged to help beautify the town by adding flower boxes or landscaping
- ▶ Strong support for improvement of southern entrance to the town and for the sculpture garden
- ▶ Interest in improving the northern entrance into town

# Interview Question #5: Community Engagement

A number of the original online survey respondents expressed a wish for greater community engagement. Which of the following do you think would be of value?



- ▶ Geyserville residents value their community and seek additional opportunities for community engagement.
- ▶ People would like to see some kind of community newsletter.
- ▶ Community events were highly rated in the interviews and in addition, 131 respondents to the short survey said they would like to see more community events.

# Additional Short Survey Responses

The short written survey included three additional questions that were not in the live interviews. The short survey asked if the following were wanted for Geyserville:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ▶ SMARTrain stop                        | 106 positive responses <sup>1</sup> |
| ▶ More jobs/business opportunities      | 97 positive responses <sup>2</sup>  |
| ▶ Preserve town's agricultural heritage | 140 positive responses              |

<sup>1</sup> Although 106 respondents to short survey support a SMARTrain stop, it also received the highest number of "NO" answers on the same survey

<sup>2</sup> Above is true for additional jobs; demographic data shows high percentage of residents are self-employed, and most others do not work in town

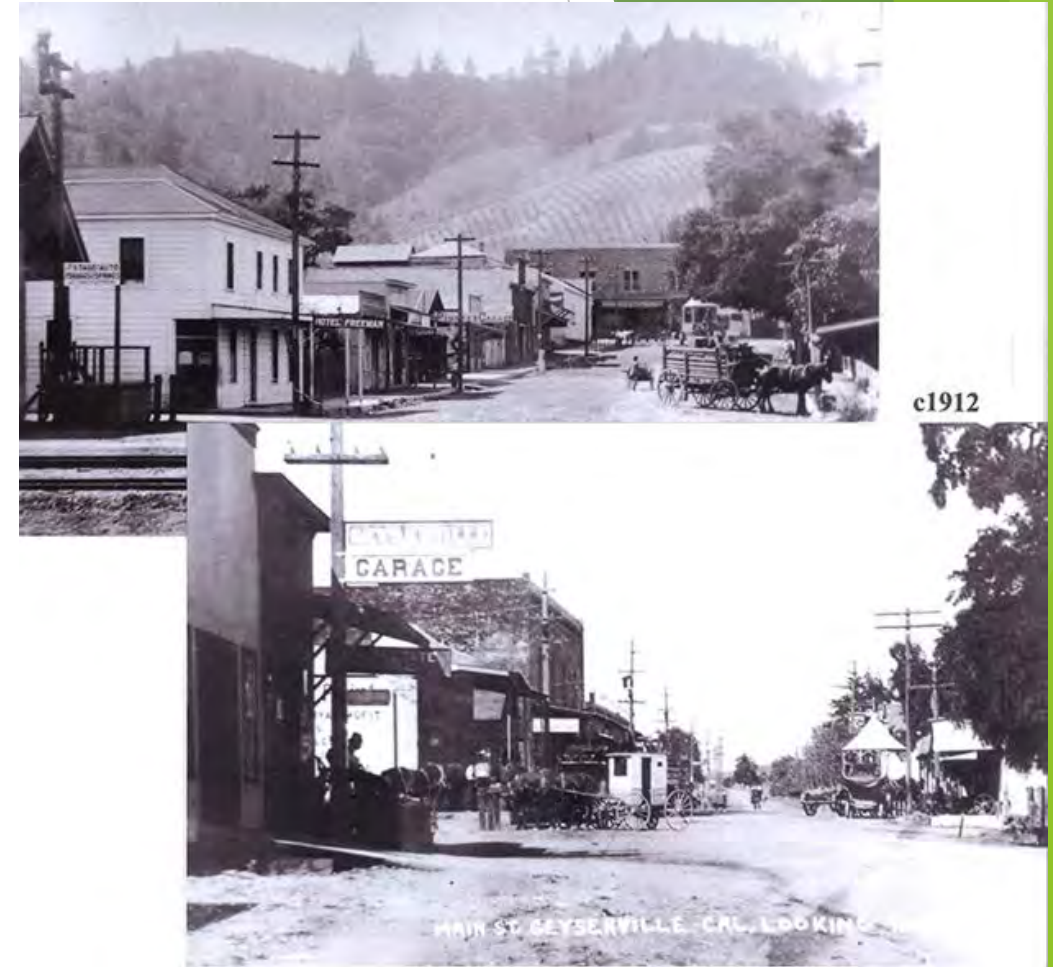


# AHC Recommendations



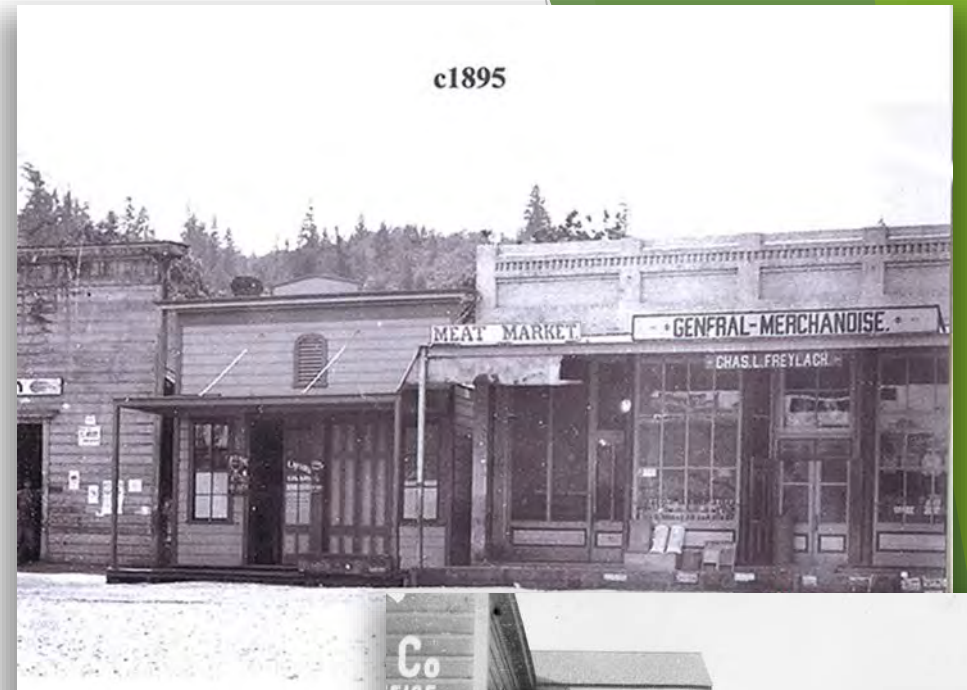
# Our Caveat

- ▶ The following findings and recommendations should be fully evaluated in the context of:
  - ▶ Local demographics
  - ▶ Economics
  - ▶ Land use
  - ▶ Zoning regulations
  - ▶ Other relevant factors present in the community or the County.
- ▶ We also suggest that the Committee look for synergies with other existing or planned County projects that affect the Geyserville community



# Recommendation #1

- ▶ The GPC should commit itself to the preservation of Geyserville as a rural, small-town community with an agricultural heritage
- ▶ The community, as represented by the GPC, should actively engage in county planning and general plan updates
- ▶ This philosophy should guide the GPC's decisions going forward and be a core contribution to the Geyserville Master Plan



# Recommendation #2

- ▶ The GPC should include in its recommendations to the County for the Geyserville Master Plan update:
  - ▶ A public park
  - ▶ A public bathroom
  - ▶ Plans for public access to the Russian River
  - ▶ Sidewalk improvements and enhanced lighting in the downtown core
  - ▶ Variety of housing

# Recommendation #3

- ▶ The GPC to consider the following:
  - ▶ Development and adoption of design guidelines for new construction in the downtown core
  - ▶ Investigate the possibility of having the Geyserville downtown core declared a California Historic District





# Recommendation #4

- ▶ In support of affordable housing in the community, we ask that the Geyserville Planning Committee consider the following:
  - ▶ Encourage new business construction in the downtown core be multi-use and include one or more residential units
  - ▶ Encourage the development of multiple unit residences as a solution to the housing crisis
  - ▶ Actively promote opportunities for development of affordable housing to potential developers and investors

# Recommendation #5

- ▶ While the Geyserville Planning Committee cannot mandate new business in the community, survey respondents expressed interest in encouraging the following types of new businesses:
  - ▶ A local grocery store (not a chain store and not a convenience store)
  - ▶ A selection of small variety stores that would serve both the community and visitors
  - ▶ An ATM or bank branch
  - ▶ A small gas station in keeping with the agrarian, rural character of the town



# Recommendation #6

- ▶ Town beautification was a priority for many survey participants and we ask the Committee to consider the following:
  - ▶ Encouragement of new and existing businesses to beautify their properties with flower boxes and other landscaping
  - ▶ Planting more native trees on Geyserville Avenue
  - ▶ Encourage development at the northern entrance to the town to enhance the quality of the visitor experience
  - ▶ Review any applicable zoning requirements related to maintaining a clean and tended landscape in the downtown core, with an eye toward enforcement of these requirements
  - ▶ Encourage the Chamber of Commerce and other groups to continue to expand the presence of public art and sculpture

# Recommendation #7

- ▶ There is real interest in further community engagement and while the Geyserville Planning Committee has limited influence in this area, we recommend the following:
  - ▶ With the Chamber of Commerce or other community partner, explore the possibility of one or more additional community events
  - ▶ With the Chamber of Commerce or other community partner, explore the possibility of producing a regular town newsletter





# Questions