

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Upstairs Conference Room - Above Police Facility

303 North Mt. Shasta Boulevard

Tuesday, December 13, 2016; 2:30 p.m.

“Our mission is to maintain the character of our “small town” community while striking an appropriate balance between economic development and preservation of our quality of life. We help create a dynamic and vital City by providing quality, cost-effective municipal services and by forming partnerships with residents and organizations in the constant pursuit of excellence.”

Item
1. Call to Order
2. Roll call
3. Public Comment: Members of the public may address the Committee on items within the jurisdiction of the Committee and not listed on the agenda. The public will have an opportunity to comment on any agenda item during Committee discussion of that item. The Committee may ask questions but may take no formal action on items addressed during the Public Comment period. The Committee reserves the right to limit the length of individual comments. If you desire a written response, please provide your mailing address.
4. Approval of Minutes:
5. Results of Conversation with Educators on How to Attract Businesses to Mt. Shasta – Tim Stearns, Councilmember
6. Business Walkabout Report – Juliana Lucchesi, City Planner
7. Downtown Economic Assessment – Juliana Lucchesi, City Planner
8. Member Comments Advisory Members will have the opportunity to bring before the Committee current clients and projects that might benefit from Committee involvement.
9. Future Agenda Items/Comments by Committee Members Members of the Committee may ask questions of staff, request reports be made at a later date, or ask to place an item on the agenda, on any subject within the Committee’s jurisdiction. In addition, the members may take this opportunity to make comments on any topic which is not on this agenda, provided however, that no deliberation may be conducted, and no decision may be made on such topics.
10. Adjourn Availability of Public Records: All public records related to an open session item on this agenda, which are not exempt from disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act, that are distributed to a majority of the legislative body will be available for public inspection at City Hall located at 305 North Mt. Shasta Blvd., Mt. Shasta, CA at the same time the public records are distributed or made available to the members of the legislative body. Agenda related writings or documents provided to a majority of the legislative body after distribution of the Agenda packet will be

available for public review within a separate binder at City Hall at the same time as they are made available to the members of the legislative body.

The City of Mt. Shasta does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons requiring accommodations for a disability at a public meeting should notify the City Clerk or Deputy City Clerk at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at (530) 926-7510 in order to allow the City sufficient time to make reasonable arrangements to accommodate participation in this meeting

Planning Department Staff Report

November 14, 2016

Project Title: Business Walkabout Results

Prepared by: Juliana Lucchesi, City Planner

Background:

The City of Mt. Shasta has engaged in an annual business walkabout since 2014. The business walkabout gives City employees and volunteers the opportunity to engage with downtown business owners in a dialogue about their needs.

The business walkabout survey consists of six questions on a range of topics from business conditions to how the city can improve the business environment. The survey prompts the businesses to share additional comments related to anything they feel needs to be addressed in the community.

2016 Results

The 2016 walkabout collected 25 total respondents; the lowest amount of responses since the beginning of the walkabout program. A lack of response could be due to the poor weather conditions the day of interviewing and the change in event date. In previous years, the business walkabout occurred in late summer rather than early fall. Some businesses may have already moved to their winter hours and were unavailable for the survey.

Overall, the responses to survey questions were positive and indicated businesses are doing well in the downtown area. Since 2014, the feeling that business was better than last year has

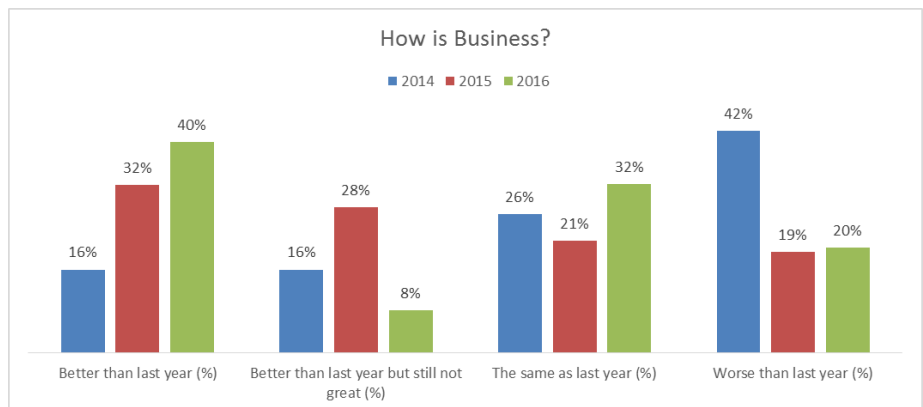


Table 1: Question 1 of the Business Walkabout

increased but the feelings that business has gotten worse stayed the same.

The feelings of success and failure by businesses in the downtown could be associated with the characteristics polled in question 2 (Table 2). In 2016, “Small Town Atmosphere” and “Quality of Life” were still ranked the highest characteristics which attracts businesses. “Quality of Labor Force” and “Convenience to Freeway” continue to be two of the lowest scoring characteristics. Additional characteristics listed were location to family and strong sense of community.

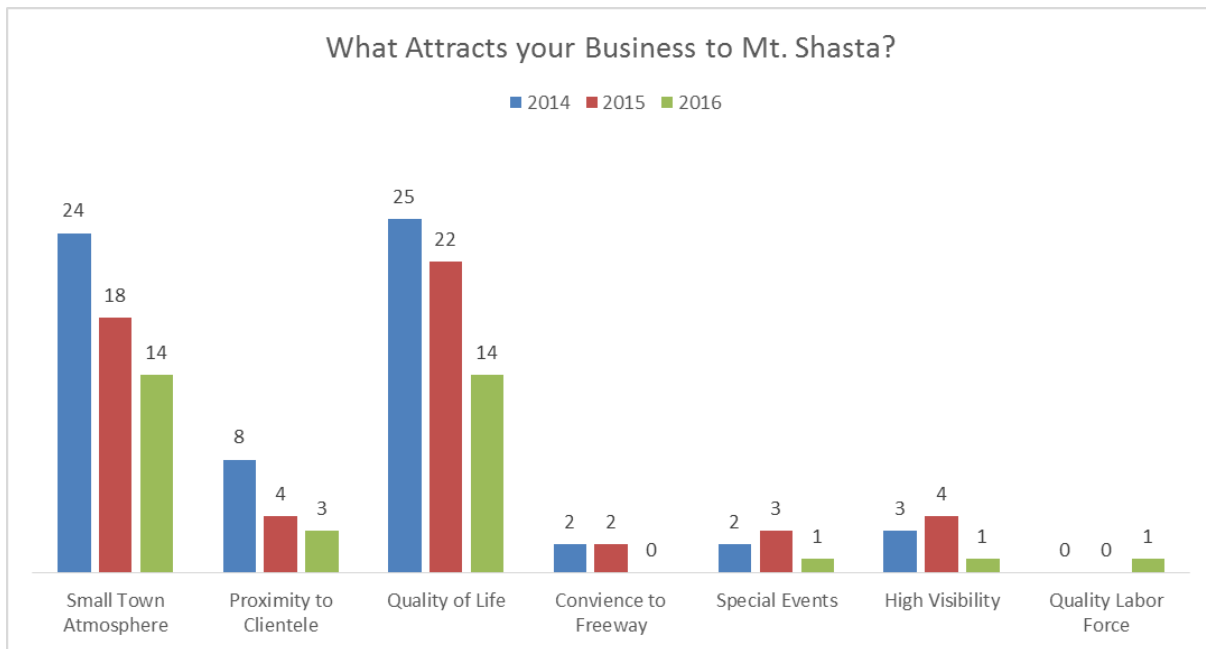


Table 2: Characteristics Associated with Mt. Shasta

Businesses offered a number of suggestions for how to improve the business environment. “Cooperative marketing of the community” and “cross promotions with other businesses” were the highest ranked options, which have been consistently high since 2014. Other suggestions for improvements include access to affordable internet, more special events downtown, and more city interest in business environment. Many of the businesses commented that the City can be difficult to work with in terms of finding information, costs of permits, and supporting special events in the downtown area.

Special events were a main focus of the 2016 responses. Businesses commented that they were satisfied with the Fourth of July event. The Farmers’ Market received mixed input. Some business like the increased traffic on Monday from the market, but other feel

it takes away valuable parking space and causes traffic. Businesses expressed interest in seeing more events downtown like the City of McCloud and Dunsmuir on weekends.

Organization engagement and interest was lower than previous years for the Chamber of Commerce (2015, 52%; 2016, 28%) and Jefferson Economic Development Institute (2015, 26%; 2016, 21%). Siskiyou County Economic Development Council (SCEDC) promotions and Siskiyou Training and Employment Program (STEP) increased in interest. Comments made related to business resources and other organization engagement were that it was too difficult to get ahold of organizations and navigate their websites.

Finally, the business survey collected information related to “seasonal travelers”. The definition of a “seasonal traveler” was misinterpreted by many businesses, which will be discussed later in this report, and for the purposes of this section “seasonal traveler” will be defined as a transient individual.

Businesses complimented the recent efforts of the Mt. Shasta Police Department to control the number of transient in the downtown area. The movement of the benches and picnic table from Parker Plaza has reduced the number of transients in the plaza. Some businesses associated the reduction of the transient population with a cleaner downtown. No suggestions were made to improve the current conditions.

Survey Limitations

The business walkabout survey has a number of inconsistencies and response issues. It can be difficult for businesses to understand the purpose of a question, and results can be difficult to analyze by City Staff.

Question 1 simple asks “How is Business”. It is difficult for the city to collect valuable information related to business needs and environment when there are no specific prompts made. It is recommended to add subcategories to the question to gather information on cost to do business, annual gross sales, and type of business or products sold. Adding more detail to the first question could give the City better insight into why business is good or bad.

Question 4 asks two questions in one which makes it difficult to understand if businesses have heard about an agency or if they require more information from that organization. It would be advantageous to separate both questions in the future to better identify who would like more information.

Question 6 caused confusion in the participants and data recorders. The questions aims to address “seasonal travelers” which is not defined in the survey or databook. Some businesses thought of the seasonal tourists that frequent the city and others thought of the transient population. Both are distinctly different groups which elicit different feelings from businesses. It is recommended to clarify what “seasonal travelers” means to gather more meaningful responses.

Finally, the survey is limited to only qualitative type data. The survey would be more meaningful to the city if it were to also include questions pertaining to rent prices, annual sales, and ranking qualities of the downtown from most to least important. The ranking system would help the City Staff and City Council prioritize the needs of the business owners.