CHALFANT: A COMMUNITY GROWING TOGETHER

chalfant

chalfant community visioning

NOVEMBER 2007

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Caltrans District 9

CHALFANT: A COMMUNITY GROWING TOGETHER

chalfant community visioning final report

DECEMBER 2007

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vision for chalfant 2030

Residents envision Chalfant as a community that:

- **Maintains its rural residential character and small population**
- **Protects its natural resources to ensure its water supply, air quality and open space views**
- **Supports and enhances its existing community facilities and services to improve the quality of life for Chalfant residents**

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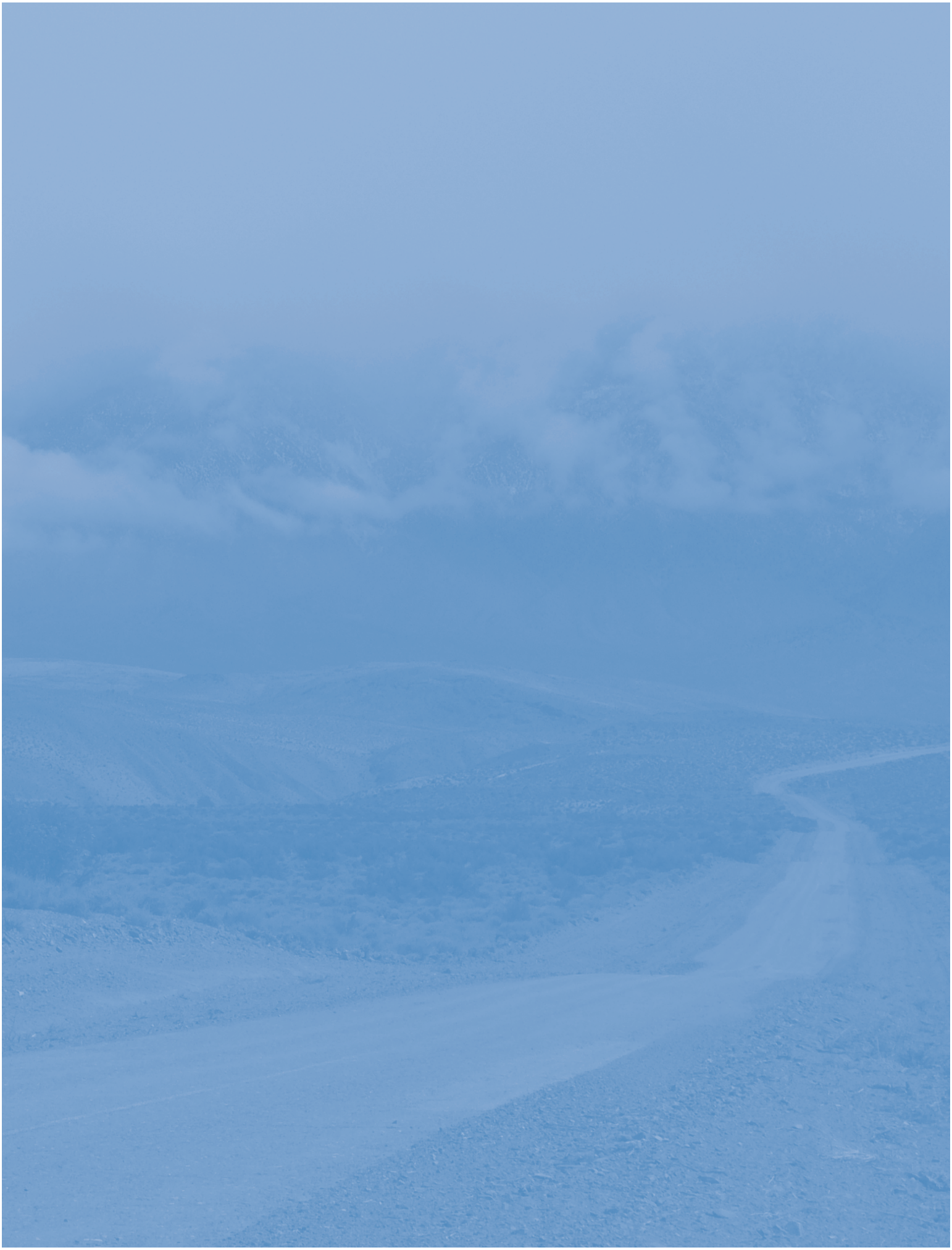
executive summary

CALTRANS DISTRICT 9, in partnership with the Mono County Planning Department, worked with MIG, Inc., a consulting firm based in Berkeley, CA, to design and facilitate a public involvement process for the community of Chalfant. Chalfant is a small community located 15 miles north of Bishop. Highway 6 divides the community, creating potential safety challenges as new development is proposed on either side of the highway. With limited resources to engage in an extensive planning process, Caltrans utilized an existing contract with MIG and partnered with Mono County to develop a public outreach process designed to help community members discuss the future of Chalfant. The public outreach process resulted in a community vision statement and series of guiding principles that can help guide County land use planning decisions through 2030. The community vision statement and guiding principles will help guide decision-making about where and how future growth should occur and to anticipate the related highway and safety improvements and access management needed on Highway 6.

A proposed elementary school in Chalfant and the recent approval of the Mize Property subdivision have raised community interest in discussing future growth. While questions regarding water quantity and quality in the area have limited opportunities for large developments in the area, incremental growth consistent with current zoning will continue to occur. The information developed through this planning outreach process would be incorporated into an update of Mono County's General Plan. Caltrans would also gain information that would help to update the development of the Transportation Corridor Report for Highway 6.

A related goal of the process was to gauge community interest in the release of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) agency and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) lands to facilitate development in the area. The BLM and LADWP were interested in the process as through the agencies' land tenure process, agencies may sell, trade or transfer surplus lands to public or private interests for future development. The BLM could potentially release more than 1,000 acres to the immediate north and south of Chalfant for development if there was interest in these lands. LADWP may be able to release smaller parcels that might be used for a community facility such as a school if a suitable water supply could be found for the property since LADWP retains the water rights to any property is sells or trades. These agencies are one of the few sources of developable land in the County.



project background

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In February of 2007, Joan Chaplick of MIG, accompanied by Greg Newbry, Mono County Planning, conducted interviews in-person and by phone with about 16 local residents and agency representatives. The interviews were conducted to help gain insight into the issues facing the community, potential impacts of growth and community perspectives that would impact the development and implementation of a successful community planning process. Potential interviewees were identified by Caltrans and County planning staff. The interview findings proved invaluable to the overall success of the project and helped the project team plan and design the community outreach process. Key findings from the interviews included learning about:

Issues Facing the Community

- Access and safety issues on Highway 6
- Water supply
- Limited developable land
- Proposed school
- Impact of growth on existing services

Potential Impacts of Future Growth

- Highway 6
- Water supply
- Incremental development
- Conflicting land uses

Community Perspectives

- Differing expectations for service levels
- East/West divide
- Minimum lot size
- Demographic shifts
- Newer residents/long-time residents
- Land tenure issues

Strategies for a Successful Visioning process

- Be authentic
- Be inclusive
- Help people feel listened to
- Clearly define topics
- Solicit proactive participation
- Encourage recent arrivals to participate

PUBLIC OUTREACH PROCESS

MIG, Caltrans and the County used the input generated during the stakeholder interview process to inform the design of community outreach process that included a series of three community meetings. The planning team identified the end product of the process to be a vision statement for Chalfant 2030 and a set of guiding principles for future land and transportation planning decisions. The project team agreed to test several scenarios throughout the process to collect community opinion on the desired size and scale of the community, the types of services the community desired and the types of growth the community might be willing to accept in exchange for additional services and transportation improvements. The process also collected opinion about the community's interest in growing in a manner that helped create a defined community center or "main street". This information could help inform Caltrans future efforts regarding the need for a bypass, highway crossing or overpass or other improvements that could help unite the east and west sides of Chalfant. The community was also asked its opinion about the proposed school location and improvements that might encourage walkability and community connectivity.

The meetings were held in April, June and October and attracted more than 120 Chalfant residents in total. About 10% of the participants attended all three public meetings to provide input about the future of their community.

The April meeting was designed to provide participants an opportu-

nity to identify what they liked best about Chalfant and the qualities they wanted retained in their community into the future. They were also asked to share their issues and concerns and discuss potential opportunities. This information would be used to shape a draft vision statement for the community 25 years into the future. It would also provide the basis for a set of draft Guiding Principles. The draft principles were presented for review and discussion at the June meeting. Guiding principles are advisory statements that provide a framework for future planning decisions. The statements focus on describing the community characteristics and quality of development the community desires. The statements can be applied as consistent with current zoning or as zoning is modified to meet the growth needs of the community.

Each community meeting featured brief presentations by Caltrans and Mono County and large group discussion. Meeting comments were recorded on large wallgraphic paper so that participants could see that their comments were recorded. Participants also received a comment card and were encouraged to provide additional comments in writing. Cards could be turned in at the end of the meeting or mailed to the consulting team within a week of the meeting.

Below: Community Meeting Flyer
Bottom: Wallgraphic

Participants were also encouraged to discuss the meeting results with neighbors who were unable to attend and provide copies of the comment card for their neighbors to share their opinions. Compared to other communities, the number of comment cards received by mail following the meeting was significant and responses indicate that a reasonable percentage came from participants who were unable to attend. Comment cards were submitted directly at meetings or mailed to the MIG office in Berkeley for inclusion in meeting summaries and analysis.

At the June meeting, 17 draft Guiding Principles were presented to the community. Each participant received a set of red, yellow, and green cards. As each principle was reviewed, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the principle by raising a colored card. A green card indicated agreement with the principle and a red card indicated disagreement. Participants were encouraged to raise a yellow card if they needed clarification on the principle or if they would support the principle with modifications. This technique allowed the facilitator to quickly go through the 17 principles and gain immediate feedback. The cards also allowed the facilitator to suggest modifications and determine if the modifications sufficiently addressed the group's concerns.

Several principles were easily accepted by the group and were approved with little or no discussion. Others required discussion and multiple color votes to determine their status. When a number of participants raised red cards, the facilitator asked these participants to share their reasons for disagreeing with the principle. The facilitator also asked those with green cards to share their opinions about why they agreed with the principle.

These comments helped the group clarify its opinions. The discussion helped to encourage refinements or modifications that were accepted by the group. By the end of the meeting, eleven principles were approved by the community as they were written. Four others were approved with modifications and two were rejected by the community. The consulting team offered to redraft the rejected principles based on feedback from the meeting and provided through the comment cards.

Following the discussion of the principles, participants were asked to share their opinion on the scale of community they hoped Chalfant would become in 2030. Participants discussed three scenarios. In the first scenario, Chalfant's current zoning allowed incremental growth. This scenario did not encourage additional services, highway improvements or business opportunities in the community. Chalfant's population would slowly grow to about 700 – 1,000 people. In the second scenario, Chalfant would encourage development that would increase its population to about 1,200 – 1,500 people along with commercial opportunities, and enhanced community facilities and services including a school. The

City of Big Pine was used as a reference. In the third scenario, Chalfant would more than triple in size to more than 3,500 people. In this scenario, residents would have commercial and employment opportunities and other services that would reduce or eliminate the need for residents to drive to larger communities such as Bishop for these services.

Most participants strongly opposed the third scenario so it was eliminated from discussion. The facilitator asked the group to discuss the scale of community they desired and the types of services they wanted in their immediate community. A significant number of participants responded that they

FIGURE 1: AREA PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

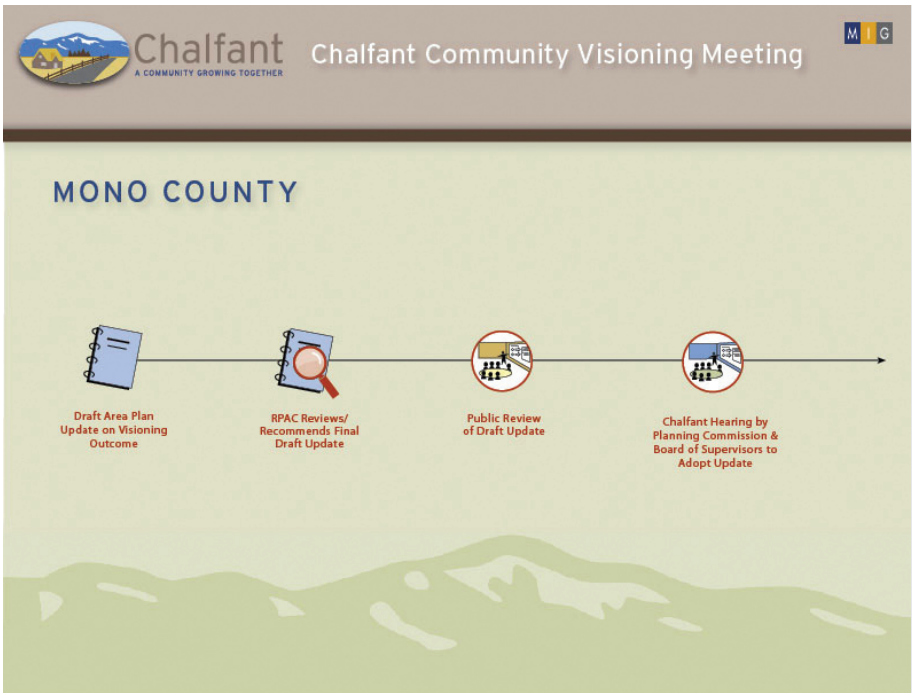
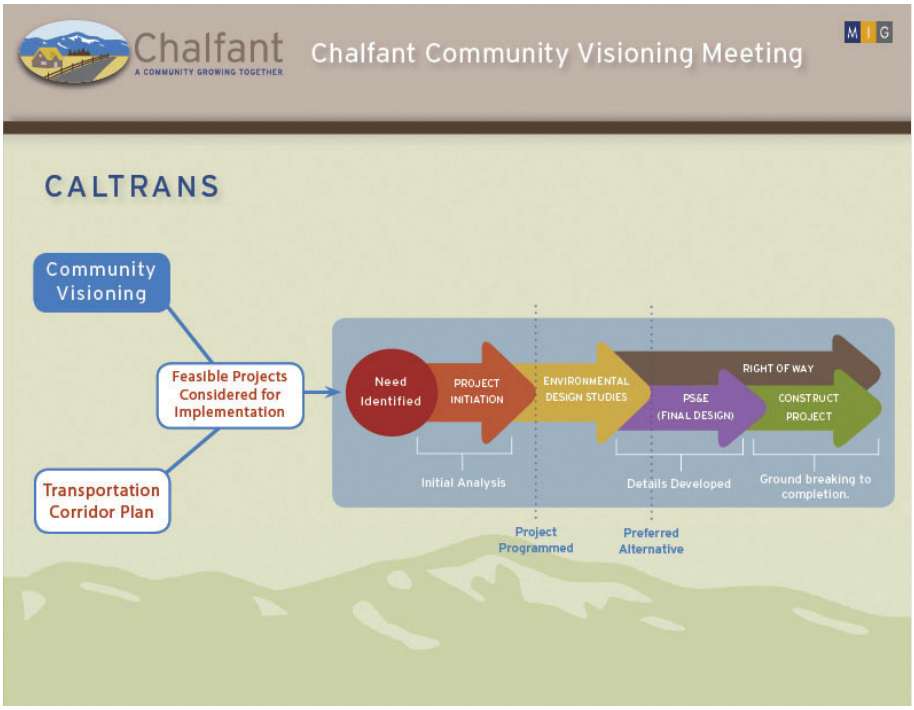


FIGURE 2: HIGHWAY 6 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLAN PROCESS



had moved to Chalfant specifically because of the current scale and they fully expected they would need to drive to Bishop or other communities for employment opportunities and services. Few desired substantial change and most were unwilling to accept new growth even if it brought additional services. Most participants were protective of their community's rural character and preferred that growth be redirected to other areas.

At the final meeting in September, participants were given an additional opportunity to review the principles. They were also provided the opportunity to review and comment on a revision of a principle rejected at the June meeting. The final results of these discussions are presented later in this report.

CALTRANS AND COUNTY ENGAGEMENT

The Chalfant Community Visioning process was a successful collaboration between Caltrans, Mono County and MIG, Inc.

Community input generated during the process will be used by Mono County in an Area Plan Update that will be reviewed by the RPAC and adopted by County Planning Commissioners and Board of Supervisors.

This process is depicted in figure 1.

Caltrans will utilize input generated during the process to guide decision-making processes regarding projects identified in the Highway 6 Transportation Corridor Plan. This process is depicted in figure 2.

In addition to the resulting community planning principles, and community vision statement, the process created a meaningful forum for dialogue between Chalfant residents and local agency representatives. Mono County Supervisor, Hap Hazard, used the opportunity to emphasize recent Mono County projects that have been undertaken or completed in response to resident concern. The process encouraged the development of guiding principals, but also fostered an ongoing conversation about issues related to the future of the area.

community issues and concerns

THE OPPORTUNITIES, ISSUES AND CONCERNS discussion was designed to address resident attitudes towards future growth in the area, identify the community's current assets and help shape where potential growth should be directed to maximize benefit for the existing community. There was recognition that development pressure in the area may provide an opportunity for the community to address long-standing safety issues and concerns by exacting requirements of developers. Increased development and the resulting tax-base could provide the necessary funding stream to support additional amenities and services for the community. Despite this opportunity, community residents clearly expressed a desire to retain Chalfant's rural character and keep the community at its current scale. Many participants also concluded that the community needs to limit its growth and stay at its current size to limit impacts on natural resources and the water supply.

Using the results of the opportunities, issues and concerns discussion, MIG drafted a series of Guiding Principles for Chalfant. They covered three main areas: Community Character, Natural Resources and Amenities, and Physical Development and Infrastructure. The Planning Principles are designed to provide direction to decision makers to address these issues. The highlights of the discussion for each of the principles are discussed below by topic. A complete table of the Planning Principles is listed on page 25.

CHALFANT COMMUNITY CHARACTER

CC1 Retain Chalfant's rural character

Chalfant community members expressed a strong desire to retain a similar community scale into the future. Many community members explained that they moved to the Chalfant area to enjoy a rural community and did not mind driving 15

miles to Bishop for services. Furthermore, they stated a strong desire to see their community stay the same size and to not see a proliferation of commercial businesses.

Community members support basic infrastructure and public safety improvements that will serve the existing community into the future.

In response to the question, "What do you like most about living in Chalfant?" there were repeated mentions of rural character, surrounding open space and access to nature and the flexibility to have horses, pets and other animals on their property. One resident explained that he liked:

> *"The rural feel—no noise, no traffic congestion, little or no crime, clean air. I like living among people and animals such as horses, goats, rabbits, dogs, cats, etc. I like not feeling like I live in a housing track area—more "elbow" room—less population density."*

Another explained that:

> *"We love the quiet, though it's getting noisier from the highway. We love the ever amazing views of the Sierras and the Whites. When coming home from a late school board meeting, I love the skies and stars. It's true country living and we love it. Chalfant is a very safe, warm community."*

CC2 Develop within the existing community and adjacent lands where possible

CC2 was originally written as Promote Community Cohesion and strongly rejected by the community at the June meeting. The original principle was written to provide direction to County and Caltrans staff regarding development opportunities especially between Chalfant and the White Mountain Estates to the south. Chalfant residents did not want to encourage policies that might connect development with White Mountain Estates.

Current County policy encourages the concentration of development in existing areas. However, checkerboard parcels of undeveloped lands owned by the BLM and LADPW sometimes discourage this logical development pattern and residents were not willing to encourage development outside of the existing community footprint. If approved as originally written, the principle would have provided a clear indication to County Planning staff to focus on the development of properties contiguous with the existing Chalfant community. However, residents clearly expressed that White Moun-

tain Estates is a separate community with a distinct identity that should be maintained.

At the October meeting, a revised principle was presented and accepted. The revised principle gives priority to development activities within the existing Chalfant community.

The principle further reinforces community preferences expressed in relation to community amenities and scale. At the June meeting, Chalfant's current scale and amenities were compared to those of Big Pine and Bishop and residents were asked if they were interested in seeing Chalfant growing to the scale of either of these towns. The scale and size of these communities were not preferred by most residents.

> *"Rural, rural, rural; no more commercial development – i.e. – the one market is sufficient – Bishop and its stores are only 12.5 miles away; 'Chalfant ain't broke, don't fix it.'"*

CC3 Establish and protect view sheds and corridors

Residents enjoy wide-open vistas of natural open space lands and agricultural areas and expressed a clear preference that new development including residential, commercial, retail and utilities preserve the views that Chalfant residents value and enjoy.

"WE LOVE THE QUIET, THOUGH IT'S GETTING NOISIER FROM THE HIGHWAY. WE LOVE THE EVER AMAZING VIEWS OF THE SIERRAS AND THE WHITES. WHEN COMING HOME FROM A LATE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, I LOVE THE SKIES AND STARS. IT'S TRUE COUNTRY LIVING AND WE LOVE IT. CHALFANT IS A VERY SAFE, WARM COMMUNITY."

"NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD STICK TO THE RURAL ATMOSPHERE, RURAL DESIGN. NEEP IT 'COUNTRY...'"

"The open land is what I like most. I chose Chalfant over Bishop because I like the high desert. Its appeal has to do with its lack of people, cars and businesses."

CC4 Protect night sky visibility

The clear night sky is a defining element of life in Chalfant. County staff recognized this by passing a "Night Sky Ordinance" that requires safety lighting and illumination for new and existing development to be installed in a manner that protects visibility.

CC5 Encourage policies and practices that support existing agricultural uses to the north of Chalfant

Agricultural uses surround the Chalfant community, particularly to the north. Existing community support for open space and agriculture was a common theme throughout the Chalfant Community Visioning process including the stakeholder interviews and community meetings and this community support was captured in the draft guiding principle CC5 that was presented for community consideration at the June 13 meeting. The draft principle originally read:

Encourage policies and practices that support agriculture

When presented to the community, concern was expressed that agriculture is inconsistent with the residential character of Chalfant and a suggestion was made to modify the guiding principle as follows:

Encourage policies and practices that support existing agricultural uses

Following review of comment cards and conversations with Mono County planning staff, the principle was modified further to read:

Encourage policies and practices that support existing agricultural uses to the north of the Chalfant community.

This clarification was added to eliminate any confusion about the intent of the guiding principle. The guiding principle is not designed to promote the continued 2.5 acre agricultural zoning within the Chalfant Community. Numerous resident comments reflected the fact that while there is support for area agriculture, this does not equal support for agriculture in Chalfant proper. Residents explained in comment cards that there currently is no agriculture taking place on the 2.5 acre lots in Chalfant and that these lot sizes cannot support economically viable agriculture without compromising natural resources or creating other nuisances for neighbors. One resident explained that "I

can't farm 2.5 acres…and I can't afford to water it for dust mitigation either. Seems logical to change zoning, reduce lot size to one acre, thus make more affordable property that someone else can efficiently maintain"

In the future, it is more likely that the zoning for these parcels will be changed to accommodate increased housing rather than stay the same. According to Mono County Planner Greg Newbry, some residents have expressed support for this change in the 2.5 acre zoning, while the community visioning process did surface a favorable attitude towards agriculture; this was generally aimed at agricultural uses to the north of Chalfant.

As one resident explained, "2.5 acre agricultural lots are too small to promote agriculture and too large to water for grass."

CC6 Develop new residential properties in a manner that encourages year-round residences

The workshops revealed a strong desire on the part of Chalfant residents to maintain the existing look and feel of the community. Current residents value having year-round neighbors and do not want to encourage development of second homes. While they recognize it may be hard to limit the use of a property as a vacation home, some participants believe the limited services and amenities may discourage the second home market.

"WE DON'T NEED INDUSTRIAL PARKS OUT HERE—AND NOT MUCH MORE COMMERCIAL—A SLIGHTLY LARGER, BETTER RUN GAS STATION/MARKET WOULD BE GOOD…"

NATURAL RESOURCES AND AMENITIES

NR1: Protect and enhance environmental, cultural and historic resources

Chalfant's surrounding publicly owned lands include significant natural, cultural and historic features. Community policies and practices should support the protection of these resources. Participants readily supported this principle.

"QUIET, VIEWS, LACK OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT. COMMUNITY CENTER MAY NEED TO BE ENLARGED AND MAYBE ADD A LIBRARY..."

NR2: Encourage drought-resistant plantings that serve as natural windbreaks and dust barriers

Periodic dust storms were mentioned as a major safety concern. Residents expressed interest in developing strategies to address this problem. One resident explained that:

> *"Wind/dust mitigation should not only be encouraged—but required."*

In response to these concerns, drought-resistant plantings were identified as a tangible and effective strategy that should be included in new and existing development.

NR3: Provide strategic access to public open space

Residents enjoy access to public lands and highly value this opportunity. Some recent development activities have eliminated historic entry points and residents expressed a strong desire to maintain strategic access to public lands surrounding the community. Equestrians who could previously ride through the community and gain access to thousands of acres of land now have to trailer their horses and drive to established access points.

A related issues is the type of activities taking place on public lands, as highlighted by the following resident comment:

> *"I do not want to see Chalfant and its surrounding desert turn into a lifeless dustbowl! Quads and ATVs need to be educated about staying on the road."*

Another resident had some more specific opinions:

> *"Access for dirt bikes, quads, 4WD, ATVs should be channeled into one access for east and one for west side, and that access should be improved to include hard surfacing impervious to wind and dust erosion"*

The once informal system may need to be formalized in some manner to maintain the quality of experience that Chalfant residents have come to expect. As one resident explained:

> *"Historically used access to public lands through private land should be continued by easements laid out in development plans."*

However, the value that residents place on open space access does not translate into a willingness to pay for a formalized or improved system.

A related principle, PD3: Plan and develop a system of multi-use pathways and trails that connect the community was strongly rejected by the community at the June meeting. Residents expressed concern about the potential costs required to formalize and maintain a trail system. The principle was originally suggested as a means to encourage movement through the community by pedestrians and bicyclists. If a school were constructed, the pathways could also help encourage children walking to school. The reluctance to accept this principle was consistent with the unwillingness to encourage any activities that might be used to encourage development or formal infrastructure like that found in the urban communities from which many of them moved away.

NR4: Improve and enhance existing amenities such as the park and community center

The Chalfant Community Park and Community Center are assets that Chalfant residents would like to see maintained and improved for future use. Residents expressed a clear desire to invest in these facilities to provide an improved gathering place for the community and to provide recreation opportunities for children.

NR5: Provide residents with sufficient essential health and safety services

Chalfant residents need updated fire prevention equipment and adequate emergency medical services. Several residents expressed concern that Chalfant does not have emergency medical services. While there is a community fire protection service, the desire for a dedicated medical emergency response service was expressed numerous times.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PD1: Ensure adequate water quality and supply for current and proposed land uses

Chalfant's underlying aquifer system is

"IF CHALFANT MUST GROW AND IT WILL, WATER IS A VERY MAJOR ITEM. THERE ARE NO STREAMS TO REPLENISH ANY WATER USED."

complex and estimates of its capacity vary greatly. Residents recognize that water is not an unlimited resource and the community must plan for current and future domestic and agricultural water needs. Water studies completed to date have only validated the complexity of the system and the need for further study. During the process, maintaining adequate water supplies was identified as a top priority for the community and there was fear that additional development in the area would impact supplies and require deeper wells.

As some community residents explained

> *"If Chalfant must grow and it will, water is a very major item. There are no streams to replenish any water used."*
>
> *"Development should be planned with consideration to water quality—small parcels with individual septic systems should not be condoned"*

PD2: Manage access to and from Highway 6 to ensure safety of local residents

Chalfant is split by Highway 6, a regionally significant transportation corridor and truck route that supports high-volume, high-speed traffic. As properties develop along Highway 6, the need for access management will increase. Community members called out a need to reduce traffic speeds and allow for pedestrian crossing. However, these measures are inconsistent with the purpose of the roadway and the limited population of the community. Residents also requested measures such as a left turn lane for northbound traffic on Highway 6 turning into the west side of Chalfant.

Ideas for improved pedestrian access and crossing became less relevant and tangible as it became clear that most Chalfant residents do not support the growth and related development opportunities that might pay for these types of improvements.

PD3: Provide safer pedestrian/ bicycle connections across Highway 6

Highway 6 connects east and west Chalfant. As the community grows and current and new community amenities are available on only one side of the highway, the need for safer pedestrian and bicycle crossings will become paramount. Community residents expressed general support for this idea but also explained that there is currently little bicycle and pedestrian activity on Highway 6. Some residents commented on the perceived dan-

gers of using the existing bike lane on Highway 6 and they commented that it was unlikely that additional improvements would encourage greater use of the bike lane. This topic may become a higher priority if a new school is located on either side of the community.

PD4: Encourage use of alternative energy, water and energy conservation

Residents are generally satisfied with their existing community infrastructure though several comments were received regarding inconsistent electrical service. While there is a desire to ensure that basic infrastructure and safety services meet standards, Chalfant residents are not interested in paying for expanded infrastructure to support a growing population. In order to minimize the impact of any new development on local natural resources, residents expressed a desire to see future development be done in an environmentally friendly manner. The principle was also modified so that they language referenced existing development as well.

PD5: Consider and evaluate proposals for land transfers, exchanges and sales of property from the City of Los Angeles and Bureau of Land Management

The BLM owns over 40,000 acres of land in the Chalfant Valley. The BLM

classifies some of this land as "surplus" and has proposed disposing of the property by selling the land to an appropriate entity. There is also an opportunity for these surplus lands to be exchanged with other acreage to acquire property adjacent to Chalfant. BLM representatives attended the community visioning meeting to inquire about what BLM properties were of strategic interest to the community. They described the general location and number of acres that could be made available for development or possible exchange. Supervisor Hazard tested a scenario with the community and inquired if the community would be supportive of a land exchange that would facilitate the availability of a

small parcel for a facility that provided County services and the responses was mixed. In general, residents expressed support for the idea of land transfers for specific community facilities such as a school, but they do not want this support misinterpreted to encourage development of facilities that have a much broader definition of community benefit. Residents want to be active participants in the review and discussion of any potential transfers. The principle as originally drafted and presented to the community read:

> *Support land transfers, exchanges and sales of property from the City of Los Angeles and Bureau of Land Management that are consistent with these principles*

Several meeting participants were vocal in their concerns that the proposed principle as written included the word "support" and implied the community was willing to support all types of proposals. Participants suggested language that gave them "a seat at the table" especially during early stages in the review and evaluation process. The principle was modified to acknowledge that the community is willing to consider these opportunities on a project by project basis and participate in a discussion about these possibilities. It does not imply any level of assumed support.

TABLE 1: GUIDING PRINCIPLE SUMMARY

Chalfant Community Character

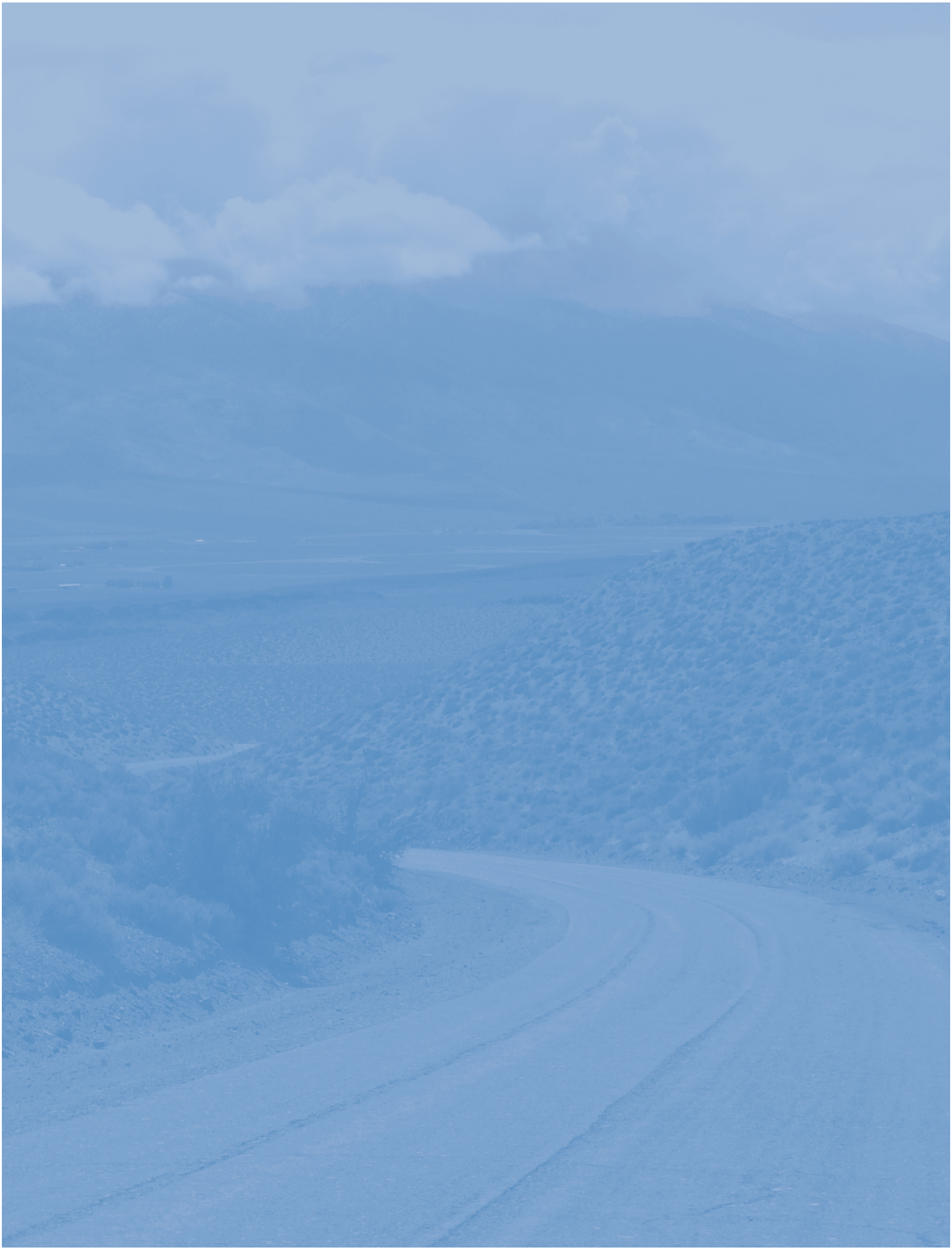
CC1	Retain Chalfant's rural character
CC2	Develop within the existing community and adjacent lands where possible
CC3	Establish and protect view sheds and corridors
CC4	Protect night sky visibility
CC5	Encourage policies and practices that support existing agricultural uses to the north of Chalfant
CC6	Develop new residential properties in a manner that encourage year-round residences

Natural Resources and Amenities

NR1	Protect and enhance environmental, cultural and historic resources
NR2	Encourage drought-resistant plantings that serve as natural windbreaks and dust barriers
NR3	Provide strategic access to public open space
NR4	Improve and enhance existing amenities such as the park and community center
NR5	Provide residents with sufficient essential health and safety services

Physical Development and Infrastructure

PD1	Ensure adequate water quality and supply for current and proposed land uses
PD2	Manage access to and from Highway 6 to ensure safety of local residents
PD3	Provide safer pedestrian/ bicycle connections across Highway 6
PD4	Encourage use of alternative energy, water and energy conservation
PD5	Consider and evaluate proposals for land transfers, exchanges and sales of property from the City of Los Angeles and Bureau of Land Management



SECTION FOUR

other issues

PROPOSED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The proposed elementary school in Chalfant was identified as a strategic opportunity during the project planning phase to locate not only an educational institution, but a community hub and resource as well. This process would also provide an opportunity for Caltrans to identify potential improvements to Highway 6 that might be needed to ensure student safety.

With recently approved bond funds earmarked for school construction, the planning team expected the siting of the school to provide a focal point for the community visioning process. However, due to staffing issues, the Mono County School District was not able to coordinate the school siting discussions with this visioning process. Also, the siting process prioritizes factors such as geologic and seismic conditions. These factors often eliminate what appear to be obvious sites from practical consideration.

Community opinion on the need and desire for a school was mixed. While some residents acknowledged that a properly sited school could serve as the focal point in Chalfant, others questioned the practicality of building a school in a community with no employment base. While the Chalfant students might be close to home, most working parents would be at least 15 miles away. A new school may not have resources to offer quality after school activities. Other residents commented that it might be more practical to direct the funds towards the existing school in Benton.

When this opportunity comes into greater focus in the future, these planning principles should provide some meaningful guidance to decision-makers.

SECTION FIVE

conclusion

Chalfant residents were clear in their desire to maintain a rural community with a remote, small town feel. While they desire additional services, most are unwilling to encourage the type and quantity of development that might make these services feasible. Given the limited developable land in the area and limited availability of water in the area, many residents are confident that they can maintain the community qualities they value. Residents will continue to persist in their desire for safety improvements on Highway 6, however, based on the preferences of current residents; it is unlikely that future growth scenarios for Chalfant will merit significant changes to Highway 6. As the population of Chalfant ages and more families with children move to the area, resident perception and need for services may change. Future residents may be willing to evaluate new development scenarios to have these needs met.