

Y-S residents plot future growth

Groups share vision of Sutter County in 2050

By Daniel Witter
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Four men and a woman gathered around Table 14, intently looking at the bottom of a large Sutter County map in a place that was blotted out for commercial development.

Within a few minutes, the group transformed the commercial area into a city with more than 80,000 people, commercial and retail space, parks and schools.

“This is realistic because you’re not going to be able to contain the growth,” said Devin Barber, as he looked at the map. “The pressures from the south are going to happen. We just want to steer it.”

That was a common theme among some of the 100 people who turned out to Yuba City Senior Center for a Sacramento Region Blueprint Transportation and Land Use Study Workshop.

The workshop, the 35th to be held in the Sacramento region, allowed residents to give their input on how they want their communities to grow between now and 2050. Participants were broken into 14 small groups, with each group developing their own blueprint for the future.

A number of organizations, including the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, sponsored the event.

By 2050, 67 percent of new households in the Sacramento region will be of people 55 years or older, according to the Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy.

The organization also predicts that the population will grow by 1.7 million people. Some of that growth will occur in Sutter County, organizers said.

The information gathered at the workshop will be compiled and presented April 30 in Sacramento.

There was quick agreement at Table 14 that south Sutter County is going to grow, whether residents want it to or not.

We wanted to be realistic in our exercises,” said Tejinder Maan, Yuba County Environmental Health Director, but a Yuba City resident.

As the Natomas area of Sacramento fills out, it will push developers further north into Sutter County, said Larry Ozeran, a physician with Sutter North Medical Group.

Although he gained some knowledge from the workshop, he said there was not enough information to know for certain how growth patterns will occur. He wanted more figures on transportation times -- already an important issue because of congestion in Yuba City, he said.

The group sifted through four options and decided to create a place with medium-density residential and missed-use retail and residential areas to fill out part of south Sutter County. But it was only a guess.

“All we can do here is what we think is best,” said Michelle Milette, who is a transportation planner.