

Choose your vision: Envision Cache Valley presents scenarios

By Karen Lambert

Residents tweaked their schedules this week to turn out for Envision Cache Valley meetings across the valley, albeit in slightly smaller numbers than for meetings earlier this year.

At the 14 meetings Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, planners presented three scenarios showing alternative plans for Cache Valley's growth based on earlier resident feedback, in addition to a baseline prediction of what would happen if current trends continue.

Logan resident Pete Brunson said Wednesday either he or his son have been at every meeting so far to film the proceedings. Attendance had ranged from three in Dayton to 30 in North Logan, he said.

Eight showed up at the Richmond meeting Wednesday, in addition to planning staff and those like Brunson, who were monitoring the process.

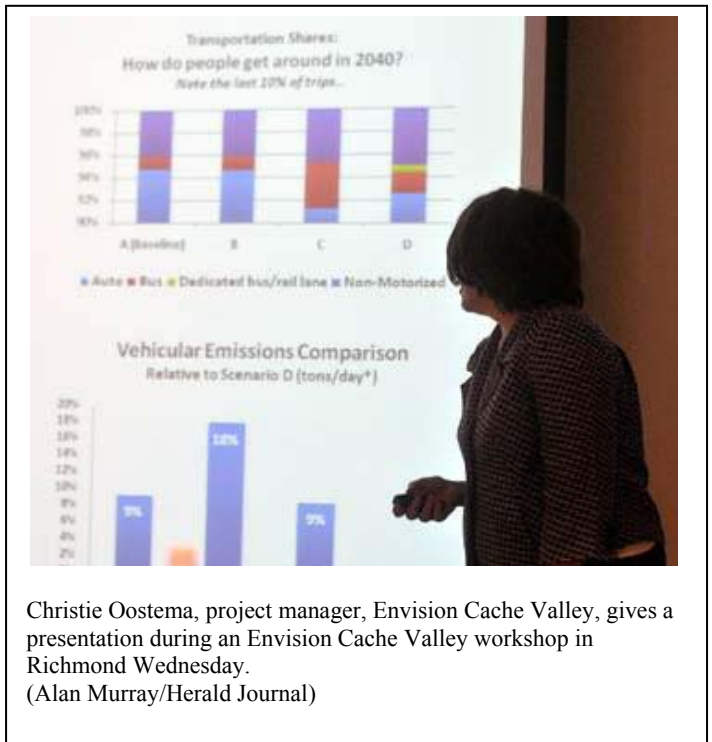
Christie Oostema, project manager, summarized the process so far and then gave residents another opportunity to vote for which of the scenarios they preferred. The new maps showed urban sprawl, along with greater and lesser degrees of mixed use development. That option involves mixing business and residential homes together as opposed to zoning to separate the different uses. The various scenarios also showed a range of reliance on cars versus mass transit or walking.

Cheryl Peck of Richmond said she came because she was involved earlier in the planning process and is interested. She's not yet sure how effective it would be, although she's also tried to involve her son and Scouts in the process.

"It seemed a little bit last time like, 'Give us your input, but this is what we want you to say,'" she said at the meeting's beginning.

By the end some said they were unsure what direction they wanted to go, although they believed in the process.

Lewiston resident Dennis Jackson sits on the steering committee for Envision Cache Valley. He said he also chairs the economic development committee in Lewiston and the members are waiting on Envision Cache Valley to wrap up to inform their planning.



Christie Oostema, project manager, Envision Cache Valley, gives a presentation during an Envision Cache Valley workshop in Richmond Wednesday.
(Alan Murray/Herald Journal)

“I’m fully supportive of this effort,” he said. “I think the planning we do should be very be compatible between communities in the valley. Any effort we make to plan individually will fail.”

However, he said he was not yet certain which scenario he preferred and asked to submit his feedback via the online survey.

Cove resident Eric Sadler, who works as a project manager at Architectural Nexxus, said he also does not yet know which scenario he favors.

“I’m more interested in doing the right thing for the right community,” he said. Sadler said while he believes the regional planning effort is valuable to get communities to look at the bigger picture, it’s OK for different cities to adopt different approaches.

However, North Logan resident Russ Goodwin said he favored map D, which emphasizes mixed residential housing and businesses.

“It’s the only one that really represents sustainability, which is what we have to get to,” Goodwin said.

While the 14 meetings wrapped up Thursday evening, residents can still submit their comments online at www.envisioncachevalley.com through June 12.

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- Residents can still submit their comments on the four scenarios via an online survey at www.envisioncachevalley.com through June 12.

Four scenarios created from participant feedback:

- Scenario A: Baseline: Conservative estimates predict that by 2040 Cache Valley’s present population of about 125,000 people will double to reach a quarter million residents. Most growth is internal as residents continue to have children and are living longer. This scenario tends to show urban sprawl across the valley.
- Scenario B: Eastside/Westside Benches: New growth occurs primarily along the benches, especially near major transportation corridors. Many lots are typical in size to recent development trends, and many have large back yards. Land uses tend to be separated, though some communities create new neighborhood or town centers that integrate shopping, employment and housing.
- Scenario C: Town Centers/Clustering: Communities across the valley grow into traditional towns and small cities. Most feature neighborhood or town centers that provide for day-to-day needs and some employment. The centers have a range of housing choices, including living spaces above retail and commercial businesses. Overall, houses tend to be closer together.
- Scenario D: Urban Centers/Rural Edge: Existing east-side communities assume a compact pattern and absorb most of the population. Distinct city and town centers emerge. Most growth occurs within city limits by filling in vacant developable land and through land recycling, particularly in commercial areas. Westside/central communities experience some growth, perhaps in the form of small neighborhood centers providing for day-to-day needs and more housing choices. This growth pattern places a mix of jobs, shopping, townhouses and condos at the center of larger cities and towns with single-family housing nearby.