

# BUSINESS WALK SERIES

A METRO PULSE PROGRAM



a METRO  CHAMBER production

## Shingle Springs–Cameron Park | April 20, 2011 POST-EVENT REPORT

The Sacramento Metro Chamber and Metro Pulse partners—the El Dorado County Office of Economic Development and the Shingle Springs–Cameron Park Chamber of Commerce—hosted the second Shingle Springs–Cameron Park Business Walk on Wednesday, April 20, 2011. A group of 24 volunteer business and civic leaders walked the streets to get a pulse of the business climate. Business walks are helpful in the exchange of information over several fronts. First, they help local leaders from the county and chamber conduct follow-up visits with companies who need help. Second, the businesses visited receive information on helpful resources for efficiently managing their operations. And third, civic leaders gain insight on how they can help advocate for the business community. In three hours, 147 businesses were visited—of which 136 took the opportunity to speak with the volunteer walkers.

Their conversation focused on three basic questions:

- How is business?
- What do you like about doing business in the area?
- What should be done to improve business?

### Summary Results

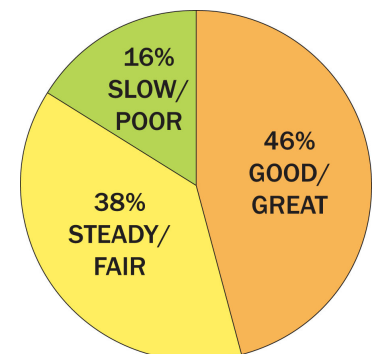
The responses were overall optimistic about the Shingle Springs–Cameron Park business climate. Of the businesses who were contacted, over three fourths (84 percent) said that business was at least steady/fair, if not good/great. When asked what they like most about doing business in the area, three things rose to the top: 1) community/clients, 2) location and 3) sense of history.

When asked what could be done to improve doing business in Shingle Springs–Cameron Park, the most frequent responses were: 1) events/marketing, 2) economy and 3) government regulations. Although the community is facing challenges only, a small number of businesses spoke about having to close, relocate and/or layoff employees. The remainder of this report provides additional detail on the responses to each of the interview questions, as well as steps the El Dorado County Office of Economic Development and the Shingle Springs–Cameron Park Chamber of Commerce are taking to further improve the local business climate. Follow-up visits of over 30 businesses with specific needs were conducted shortly after the walk.

### Question 1: How Is Business?

When the volunteers walk into a business, the first question they ask is “How’s business?” This question generated a variety of answers, from “we are expanding” to “steady but not like it used to be” to “going down slowly.” Forty-six percent of businesses expressed to the walkers that their business was “good/great.” This high number was due to weather conditions helping their business, established clientele and/or new marketing techniques.

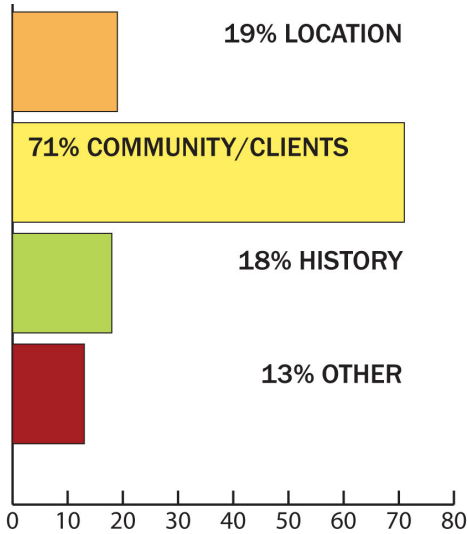
Thirty-eight percent of businesses said that business was “steady/fair.” They expressed that business trends have been unpredictable, acknowledging that just because they have one month of growth doesn’t mean the next month will be the same. Other businesses are seasonal, so they are used to the fluctuation in sales trends.



Sixteen percent of businesses expressed that they are “slow/poor” due to their tie to the housing market, the economy (high unemployment rate) and a lack of marketing options. Companies provided mixed reactions when talking about chain stores either coming into the area or staying out. A few respondents feel that keeping that money in the area is positive for everyone while others view chain stores as a direct negative impact on their company. A problem the area is facing is people shopping “down the hill” and not locally. Several acknowledged that the first step is to create a “shop local” mindset through a marketing campaign, which will be imperative to the area’s economy. However, despite the setbacks reported, very few businesses reported that they plan to relocate; many are working very hard to keep their company in business.

**Question 2: What do you like about doing business in the area?**

When businesses develop a strong bond with a community it lowers the chances of the company closing and/or relocating. Almost



three fourths (71 percent) expressed that their “community/clients” are what they like best about doing business in the area. Numerous people said the reason they enjoy coming to work everyday is because of their “grateful” and “friendly” clientele. Some contribute their success to a wide variety of customers and the tight-knit community of local businesses. The small town allows for strong word-of-mouth referrals between businesses and clients to help keep marketing costs lower. A good number of business owners know many of their clients personally and are able to both live and work in the community. The clients are known as being trustworthy and loyal; some even suggested that their clients are part of their family.

The second most frequent response was “location” (19 percent). The central location and proximity to major cities like Folsom, Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe makes this location ideal for businesses looking to do business outside of the area. The respondents also enjoy the beautiful scenery.

“History” was the third most frequent response (18 percent); respondents said they have stayed in the area because they have strong ties to it. People acknowledged that the cost of doing business may be lower in some areas, but they want to stay in Shingle

Springs–Cameron Park because of the “deep roots” they have created. A few cited they have started multiple businesses in the area over years because they want to raise their family here.

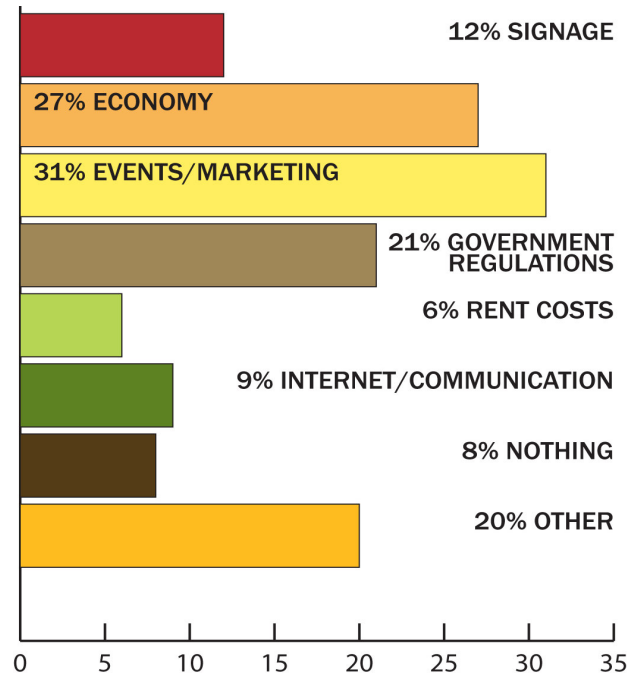
In addition, some respondents provided several “other” reasons for liking Shingle Springs–Cameron Park, including:

- El Dorado County programs for business assistance
- Community events
- Safe community

**Question 3: What should be done to improve business?**

Eight percent of the surveyed businesses said “nothing” in Shingle Springs–Cameron Park needs improvement. “Marketing/events” were the top concern in the area (31 percent). Many businesses want to promote their company but in the current economy can’t afford to do so. Not only do they need more cost-effective marketing techniques but also more flexibility on marketing options. The business community would also like more planned events to help spotlight specific industries (i.e. manufacturing, housing, retail, etc). Businesses want to have events that target both customers who tend to shop locally and those who don’t know their company is in business. Respondents stated they wanted the local chamber to be more inclusive in having events with all types of businesses.

Twenty-seven percent of companies feel that if the “economy” would turn around, so would their company. Helping to fill the vacant stores and bring new companies to the area to create jobs will have a major effect on the local



community. The problem many companies are facing is a decrease in the amount of foot traffic and that customers that are still shopping tend to spend less.

“Government regulations/permits” was the third most frequent response (21 percent). People are frustrated with the county and feel it tends to demonstrate an anti-business attitude. Many want the local government regulators to stop preventing businesses from doing business. Compliance with all of the federal, state and county regulations can be time-consuming and “hindering.” Businesses also want to see a decrease in the number of permits; they feel like the amount of time it takes to obtain a permit is very taxing. Due to the high fees and number of permits, people are unable to expand and unable to build.

Business owners also noted that “signage” regulations are also an issue in Shingle Springs–Cameron Park. A few stated that the lack of visibility on the freeways and highways has become a problem not only for their business but for the whole community. Businesses want Shingle Springs–Cameron Park to be viewed as a place to stop and shop and not just pass by. Companies have tried to put up signs but are either being fined or told they have to take them down. Respondents understand there is a fine line between staying professional and more visibility but feel a common ground needs to be found.

The lack of “Internet/Communication” (9 percent) is also a minor issue businesses are facing. In today’s world, businesses rely heavily on the Internet to conduct business. Respondents are looking for an increase in access to wireless technology and more training on how to use the Internet to help their businesses succeed.

High “rent” rates (6 percent) and overhead costs are also preventing businesses from realizing profits. The businesses interviewed would like to see lower rent rates and a decrease in overhead costs to help keep the costs lower for their customers.

Other ideas for improving the business climate include:

- Better roads
- Acceptance of all types of businesses in town
- More security for stolen signs
- Support for recycling programs in the area (E-Waste)

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## Recent Activities

The Shingle Springs–Cameron Park Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with El Dorado County Office of Economic Development and other stakeholders have been instrumental in building local coalitions in support of the following business improvements:

**Buxton Consumer Analytics Workshop** with local partners (El Dorado Hills Chamber, El Dorado County Chamber, Marshall Medical, Placerville City and El Dorado County), to provide existing businesses in all of El Dorado County with a better understanding of their market and to identify and attract complementary businesses to the area.

**Business Showcase** hosted over 75 local businesses exhibiting at the Cameron Park Community Services District. This was an excellent opportunity for local business owners to disseminate information about their businesses to the public and network with other proprietors.

**Launched a Cameron Park Visitor Website—[www.visitcpss.com](http://www.visitcpss.com)**—where general information and business directories are posted in an effort to provide relevant information to tourists about the communities of Cameron Park and Shingle Springs. It is designed to showcase local events, history and businesses.

**The following workshops** were offered in Shingle Springs–Cameron Park to local businesses:

- Balancing Work
- Time and Relationships
- Cameron Park Commercial Design Guidelines
- Helping Small Business Owners Survive and Help Each Other
- Tough Times Don’t Last—Cameron Park Tough People Do
- What Every Small Business Person Needs to Know About Bookkeeping
- Marketing to the Government
- Sharpening Your Focus: Defining Your Values and Purpose
- Sharpening Your Focus: Developing and Implementing Mission and Vision

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## Participating Businesses

- 49er Termite & Pest Control
- A Classy Touch
- Accentuate Hair Design
- Advanced Garden Supply
- Airport Pet Clinic
- Alternative Structural Technologies Inc.
- American Plastic Lumber Inc.
- Arnolds for Awards
- Automotive Services Unlimited, Inc.
- Autosense Auto Exchange
- Autotronics
- Azna Gluten Free
- Back Forty Texas BBQ
- Bank of America/Cameron Park
- Becky's Pet Hotel and Grooming
- Bio-Design
- Brothers Vacuum
- Cafe Mira Loma
- Caffe Santoro
- Cal.net
- Cambridge Chiropractic
- Cambridge Hardware
- Camerado Glass
- Cameron Airpark Liquor & Deli
- Cameron Park Auto Body
- Cameron Park Automotive
- Cameron Park Cleaners
- Cameron Park Eyecare/Dr. Winnie Lei
- Cameron Park Health Foods
- Cameron Park Liquors
- Carlos Ramirez, Jr. M.D.
- Cellular Plus/Cameron Park
- Choices for Children
- City Nails & Spa
- Classic Cleaners
- Classy Clips
- Comfort King Inc.
- Commonwealth Financial Services, Inc.
- Companion Animal Hospital
- Complementary Medical Technologies
- Craft Castle/Cameron Park
- Dave's Rent-A-Car
- DaVine Coffee House
- Davita/Cameron Park
- Decann's European
- Delta Family Chiropractic
- Designs by Nancy
- Discount Food & Liquor
- Dollar Tree/Cameron Park
- Edward Jones/Cameron Park
- El Dorado Builders Exchange
- El Dorado Lube Express
- El Dorado Nursery and Garden
- El Dorado Pet Club
- El Dorado Wellness Center
- Elegant Nails
- European Performance
- Farmers Insurance Group/Cameron Park (2 locations)
- Food 4 Less/Cameron Park
- Foothill Auto Service, Inc.
- Foothill Sign & Graphics
- Forrest R. Boozer, DDS
- Fresh Cleaners/Cameron Park
- GNC/Cameron Park
- Gold Country Equipment Center
- Gold Hill Glass
- Goldorado Family Chiropractic
- Goodwill Industries/Cameron Park
- Government Technology Solutions, Inc.
- Great Clips/Cameron Park
- H&R Block/Cameron Park
- Heart & Soul
- Heavenly Donuts
- Highlander Pest Control
- Horizon Roofing Inc.
- Inchworm Rock Walkin' Gear
- J&K Consignments
- J.J.'s Hair Designers
- Jenni Lynn Boutique
- Jenny Craig/Cameron Park
- Jiffy Lube/Cameron Park (2 locations)
- Jim's Custom Doors & Millwork
- Joanie's Cafe
- Jon Bate Jewelry Studio
- Kobe Sushi Grill
- Landstar Agent
- Law Offices of Zitomer & Roberts
- Leah Marie Fashions
- Lebeck Young Engineering, Inc.
- Lees' Feed and Western Store
- Lyon Real Estate/Cameron Park
- Magnolia's
- Mon Bijou Jewelers
- Motel 6/Cameron Park
- Mother Lode Insurance Services
- Nails & More
- Norman Financial Mortgage
- Northwestern Insurance Agency
- O'Reilly Auto Parts/Cameron Park
- Optometrists/Cameron Park
- Orient Massage
- Papa Gianni's Ristorante
- Papa Murphy's/Cameron Park
- Pawed
- PC Sense
- Prospector Insurance Agency
- Puroclean Fire & Water Damage
- Quality Freight Inc.
- Quality Inn & Suites/Cameron Park
- Que Viva
- Quest Diagnostics
- R & S Haybarn & Feed
- RE/MAX Gold/Cameron Park
- Restek West
- Round Table Pizza/Cameron Park
- Rumsey-Lang Well Drilling & Pumps, Inc.
- Safeway/Cameron Park
- Second Hand Rose
- Serenity Salon
- Shingle Springs Coffee Company
- Shred Biz
- Sierra Vista Bank
- Sierra Wealth Management
- Snowline Engineering
- Snowline Hospice
- Solis Collision Center
- Starbucks/Cameron Park
- State Farm Insurance/Cameron Park
- Suburban Propane/Cameron Park
- Subway/Cameron Park (2 locations)
- Sundance Spas
- Sundance Uniforms
- Susan Becker & Associates
- Taqueria Tepa
- The Door & Window Stop
- The Sam Gordon Family Limited Partnership
- Thompsons Auto & Truck Certified Center
- Tile Outlet/Shingle Springs
- Togo's Baskin Robins/Cameron Park
- UPS Store/Cameron Park
- US Bank/Cameron Park
- Verizon Wireless/Cameron Park
- Village Concepts, Inc.
- Vitek Mortgage Group
- Wells Fargo/Cameron Park
- Weston & Tuttle Wealth Advisors, LLC

The Sacramento Metro Chamber is the largest and oldest voice of business in the greater Sacramento area. Representing nearly 2,000 member businesses and business organizations in the six-county Sacramento region, the Metro Chamber serves as the region's leading proponent of regional cooperation and primary advocate on issues affecting business, strengthening the regional economy and quality of life. As a founding member of Partnership for Prosperity<sup>1</sup> and in its role as managing partner of Metro Pulse<sup>2</sup>, the Metro Chamber executes the Business Walk Series in cooperation with its local chamber and public sector partners. The Metro Chamber has partnered with 17 other regional jurisdictions and economic development organizations to provide one-on-one support for county businesses and throughout the Sacramento metropolitan region. These organizations, through Metro Pulse, are meeting one-on-one with businesses throughout the six-county Sacramento region to identify and address individual business needs and ensure continued growth and economic prosperity. For additional information concerning Metro Pulse, visit [metropulse.org](http://metropulse.org).

<sup>1</sup> Partnership for Prosperity is the Sacramento region's economic development strategy, which focuses on developing people, place and business.

<sup>2</sup> Metro Pulse is a coalition of 18 public and private sector partners focused on ensuring that the Sacramento metropolitan region is the best place to do business in California.