

## Community Workshop Once Again Wows Residents

By Cathy Tyson



Map shows Option 1 of 2 Land Use options presented at the Workshop. It is part of the "Community Workshop #2: Presentation Materials" which can be downloaded from the City website. You also can find related documents: <http://www.lovelafayette.com> scroll down to "The Strategie for Downtown Lafayette"

Last week Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT) held the second of three Lafayette Downtown Strategy Community Workshops. The United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall was full of concerned residents, many of whom had been to the first workshop, community movers and shakers, along with important City staffers and City Council Members.

An audience member commented, "I'm going to give them 15 minutes to get my attention." An hour and a half later he was still at the meeting.

After being welcomed by Jim Stickley, a Principal of WRT, and hearing presentations from experts on transportation and parking, sustainability, and economics, audience members were asked to rotate between five workstations where more detailed information was given and individual questions were answered.

Attendees were inundated with important information on the nuts and bolts of the Plan and were asked their opinion on a three-page questionnaire. Stations included Transportation & Parking, Public Space, Market & Economics, Opportunity Sites, and finally Climate Protection.

"The workshop was very successful. We hope the attendees got a sense of the possibilities for our downtown over the next 20 - 30 years. In addition, we also hope that people understand that all of the options being explored by WRT are consistent with existing policies," said Ann Merideth, Community Development Director for the City of Lafayette.

She continued, "The final Strategy will also show how land use and circulation decisions can affect greenhouse gas emissions. The City is very fortunate to receive a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to include climate change modeling in the Strategy."

There was more than one concept of what downtown Lafayette could look like if certain private and public redevelopment activities occur over the next 30 years. Because the strategy is only half way through the planning process, the final vision may be very different than what was shown

at the Workshop

This particular meeting is just part of a multi-faceted process. The first phase was about defining the issues and visions and taking a look at opportunities and constraints. Phase two, what WRT is currently working on, is exploring the alternatives. Phase three examines preferred concepts and phase four deals with preparing a strategy and developing a specific plan.

The upshot of "exploring the alternatives" is two preliminary concepts. Concept One includes minimal parcel consolidation which is easier to develop, key parks and creeks enhanced, and finally limited structure parking.

Concept Two is similar. In a nutshell it includes more reliance on parcel consolidation, expanded parks and creeks, multi-level parking structures.

Information to come to the conclusions that help form these two concepts was drawn from many areas. The responses showed clear priorities, the first being parking and traffic, the second was the need for public spaces, parks and plazas, the third focused on a need for cultural and entertainment venues.

According to Stickley these goals led to a series of framework layers to deliver the goal. For example, parking and traffic was determined to be the most pressing concern of residents. To that end the urban planners used all the data gleaned and distilled it into a "park once" strategy. The idea being that if convenient parking was available, residents would park once and choose to walk to shops, restaurants within a five minute walking radius, thereby easing traffic congestion.

For more information, go to [www.lovelafayette.com](http://www.lovelafayette.com) and scroll down to "The Strategy for Downtown Lafayette" for all of the materials from the workshop.