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Economic Feasibility Survey Results In

By Cathy Tyson

In order to get a better handle on potential monetary impacts of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan (DSP), Seifel Consulting was contracted to provide an analysis to compare key economic and fiscal impacts of the alternatives listed in the DSP Environmental Impact Report. These alternatives represent a range of options to guide future development over the next twenty years. Currently Lafayette's General Plan, adopted in 2002, dictates the community's vision of the future by spelling out physical development via land use, circulation and environmental goals and policies.

The four scenarios are: the proposed Downtown Specific Plan project, Alternative 1 - keeping the existing General Plan, Alternative 2 - the Planning Commission version with slightly less residential and commercial development, and Alternative 3 - a high density version. In almost all instances the proposed Downtown Strategic Plan and the Planning Commission version had very similar results.

"We looked at employment generation, revenue generation and cost of capital improvements and maintenance," said Libby Seifel, President of Seifel Consulting, Inc.

Unlike Goldilocks sampling porridge, it's hard to know which one will be "just right" and therefore adopted by the City Council but the



Chart of: Downtown Lafayette Specific Plan Draft Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis by Seifel Consulting

Feasibility Survey at least clarifies in dollars and cents the differences between the proposed plans.

The survey found, not surprisingly, that more growth and development equals greater tax revenue and employment for the city. However it should be noted that this is just one measure that the Council will be looking at in evaluating the various plans - quality of life, traffic impacts and resident input will all play a role in the final decision.

"This Council has not fiscalized land use. This is a tool for financial planning. We look at a lot of other things - quality of life and environmental concerns," said Council Member Don Tatzin.

The Draft EIR is available online at www.lovelafayette.com; public comments are welcome through 5:00 p.m. on March 16, 2010 - the end of the review period. The very thorough 38-page "Downtown Lafayette Specific Plan Draft Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis" report is also available at www.lovelafayette.org by clicking on Agendas, Staff Reports & Minutes, then click on 2010 City Council Agendas, then click on the agenda for the February 8 meeting, and finally click on agenda item 2.1 "Seifel Powerpoint."

Reach the reporter at: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com

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