

Monday, December 5, 2005 Last modified: [Saturday, December 3, 2005 12:11 AM PST](#)

Downtown visioning moves ahead

By: *Jason Probst, The Press-Tribune*

There is no lack of opinion concerning the 158-acre redevelopment area in Roseville comprising the downtown area along Vernon Street and Old Town.

Joe Velky is owner of Managed Health Care Information Systems, a business on the southwest end of the downtown Roseville corridor.

"Right now you almost have to walk to go to lunch," said Velky, who feels the downtown parking is insufficient.

In addition to being a business owner, he walks his dog each morning in the area, and gets coffee at nearby Cup-A-Joe. "But it's nice to see more people there."

Kari Hagensmith, who lives in historic Roseville, was also among the people who checked out the downtown redevelopment project with its latest concepts factored in as part of Wednesday's open house, which showed off the latest iteration of the city redevelopment agency's Downtown Roseville Visioning Project.

It will be presented to the city council Jan. 13 for approval. The second phase will follow, with specific planning and implementation timelines to be established. Hagensmith participated in similar public input and comment processes during the city's last downtown redevelopment effort.

With her proximity to the area, she's interested in nearby commercial and nightlife offerings - and potential tweaks - as the redevelopment project moves forward.

"I grew up in Santa Clara," Hagensmith said, adding that her former hometown did a downtown redevelopment but "ruined it" by making it too commercialized and generic. "I'd like to see them keep it eclectic downtown here."

Roseville resident Vic Maiello has plenty of concerns. He still remembers when J.C. Penney, located downtown, was the heart of the city's shopping, and how its departure signaled the downward turn for merchants, who now have to compete with big box retail stores and the Galleria at Roseville.

"The fees they're charging (downtown) are exorbitant. The hookup (charges for businesses) are just outrageous. I still haven't got an idea (of the final vision)," Maiello said. "I'm worried the developers will cut and slash it. If it's gonna be like downtown Sacramento I wouldn't want to go down there. You've got the stores and the bars. But you're not going to get old people down there with that."

City redevelopment manager Jan Shellito said during the three-day series of workshops in October, citizens viewed an array of different architectural slides to gauge what styles and



jason probst/THE PRESS-TRIBUNE Lisa Hagensmith and Joe Velky check out a map of the 158-acre area to be redeveloped in the coming years. Wednesday's "Open House" at the Civic Center was the last chance for residents to furnish input on the project.

aesthetic approaches they liked, 124 in all in six different categories.

There were different storefronts, facades, and textures displayed and public votes will play a part in what's delivered as part of the final product.

"It's the last formal public opportunity to weigh in on the vision of the downtown," Shellito said while attendees milled in the City Council Rotunda, checking out displays and an overhead slide show. "Did we hit the mark, did we capture it? Tonight's comments will be factored into the final design."

A veteran of the real estate industry, Michele Parry is an investment agent and was taking notes at a display of a potential downtown design. She said mixed-use facilities combining residential and commercial are an essential element she hopes to see in the final product.

"They have to figure out how to utilize parking, and to bring in more vibrant businesses in Roseville. Without it, bigger businesses won't come here," Parry said.

Cities like Austin, Texas, Portland and Seattle have employed mixed-use development in their downtown areas to increase residential density while creating an appealing commercial and retail area, she said. Because of that, Parry hopes Roseville will increase the limit on buildings - currently three stories high in the area - to five or six.

"They are wonderful. The cool thing about Austin is it's so funky and eclectic down there. You've got awesome bars and restaurants, and all these (differently styled) buildings," said Parry, who works for Bella Tierra Properties and Investments in Roseville "It's alive and it's vibrant. It feels very safe. The marketing would go to young professionals, and families that would be able to afford the housing."

However, the Old Town area would probably need the most changes, Parry said, to conform to that concept.

"With the nicer companies, it does turn out to be a safer environment. So as the downtown area starts to gentrify it is an automatic happening, and the phenomenon happens, that the people who aren't interested in that leave," she said.

Another popular approach in urban renewal is taking old storefronts and keeping them attached to newer outlets, to retain the historical feel while bringing in new businesses, she said.

To learn more about the Downtown Roseville Visioning Project, go to http://www.roseville.ca.us/planning/redevelopment/downtown_roseville/default.asp.

Jason Probst can be reached at jasonp@goldcountrymedia.com