

LOMA VISTA ROUND 1 - COMMUNITY WORKSHOP AND OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

*Reagan Elementary School, Clovis, CA
May 14, 2014 – 6:30pm-8:30pm*



SUMMARY

On Wednesday, May 14, 2014, staff from the City of Clovis and PlaceWorks facilitated a community workshop aimed at introducing the City's Urban Greening Plan process and getting feedback from participants on their concerns and interest in developing the Plan in Loma Vista. Approximately 30 (16 signed in) members of the public, including approximately 10 youth from a local boy scout troop, attended the meeting, which began with a brief overview introducing the Urban Greening Plan, including the Proposition 84 funding provided to develop the Plan, common features found in greening plans in other areas, and draft goals and strategies identified for the Urban Greening Plan in Clovis.

Following the presentation, participants independently visited four urban greening stations facilitated by staff from the City of Clovis and PlaceWorks. The interactive stations were developed to gain feedback on preliminary urban greening features and community concerns. These stations included:

- **GOALS AND STRATEGIES** presented the draft goals and strategies developed by the City as guidelines for the Urban Greening Plan. Participants were encouraged to read through the goals and provide feedback by writing directly on the list or highlighting components that they agreed or disagreed with.

The station also included an interactive board where participants used stickers to vote on the environmental issues that they considered most important to themselves or their community.

The final interactive board of the station presented urban greening strategies from other areas. Using stickers, participants voted on which features they wanted to see in their community.

- **CIRCULATION** invited participants to mark a series of maps showing how they move through their neighborhood. The exercise involved three identical maps of the neighborhood, showing streets, schools, community amenities, and major landmarks. On the first map, participants marked areas that they considered dangerous or unsafe in red. On the second map, participants marked the areas where they currently walk or travel to in green. On the third map, participants marked the places where they would like to see improved connections in orange.



This station additionally included a board intended to gauge preference for trail design. Loma Vista was designed to include a large number of pedestrian routes and paseos to travel within the residential neighborhoods within the larger Loma Vista community. As the community grows, the plan calls for new trails and this board presented three types of trails that could be incorporated into new development: an open-air trail traveling along an irrigation canal; an enclosed, concrete paseo with lawn and trees; and a semi-enclosed concrete paseo with increased groundcover, shrubs and openings for residences along the trail.

- **URBAN GREENING NEEDS ASSESSMENT** displayed a draft map of greening opportunities in Loma Vista, as well as a separate board of greening precedents corresponding to the types of potential opportunities in the neighborhood. Participants were asked to mark the sites that they liked or disliked, as well as mark any sites that were not presented but should be considered for greening opportunities.

A second interactive feature at this station asked participants to brainstorm words that they considered to represent their neighborhood and write them inside a blank map of the community. Since implementing urban greening efforts requires community support and endorsement, each neighborhood within the Urban Greening Plan will have a unique character tailored to the community it represents. This free-form activity was intended to provide a way for Loma Vista residents to start to define their neighborhood in their own terms and provide City Staff with a better understanding of how to shape the plan to match the character of the community.

- **PLANT PALETTE** encouraged participants to think about the style of plant features they wanted to include in their neighborhood, as well as the layout of their streets. The station included one board representing qualities of different tree types. The exercise did not present specific trees, but rather the general shape and look that the participants wanted to see in the area. Using stickers, participants voted on the qualities that they preferred.

The station also included a second board presenting different views of streets trees and asking participants to vote on their preferred look, including large trees versus small trees and consistent plantings versus diverse species.

The final board at this station presented different configuration of a conceptual four-lane street in the neighborhood, such as Gettysburg or Ashlan Avenue. The new configurations presented opportunities for new plantings and bike lanes. Participants used stickers to vote for their preferred street layout.

In addition to completing the scripted exercises listed above, facilitators at each station also encouraged participants to write comments directly on the boards or recorded their feedback on the exercise. In some situations, participants' responses fell beyond the scope of the exercise; however, this input was recorded as a means of tailoring future workshops to residents' concerns.



Since Loma Vista is in the midst of development, many residents were curious about future growth and development plans. The City brought the final land use map for the area, as well as some conceptual renderings of future green space, including the Central Green, to discuss with the residents.

RESULTS FROM INTERACTIVE STATIONS

Goals and Strategies

On the board outlining the City's draft goals and strategies, participants only added one additional comment: lights should be added to the public picnic shelter in Los Arbolitos Park.

At the environmental issues board, participants voted that air quality was the issue that most concerned them, while water was the second highest concern. Climate change and public health received very few votes.

Participants voted significantly for "Parks and Open Space" as potential urban greening strategies that they preferred; however participants pointed out that many of the existing parks were turning brown from lack of water and were not valuable open spaces. Additionally, participants noted that they would like to see a mix of park sizes and that it would be nice if some of the parks emphasized fitness or provided opportunities for exercise. "Alternative Transit" received the second highest vote, with one resident noting that the City should build on the momentum for alternative transit that they have built through the bike lane program and another resident recommending a "Bike Buddies" program.

Circulation

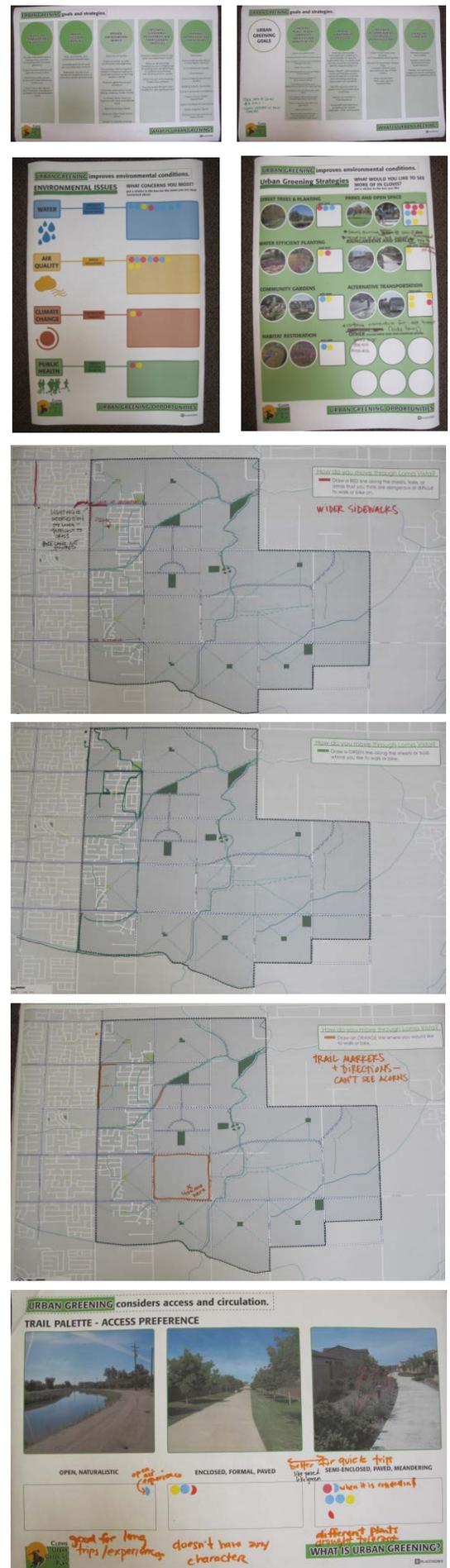
At the board indicating dangerous streets and areas, participants identified major concerns as: need for wider sidewalks, lack of crosswalks across major streets, traffic light timing not providing enough time to cross large streets, and bike lane right-of-way not being honored by motorists.

Major areas of concern included the intersection of North Locan Avenue and East Barstow Avenue, as well as the lengths of East Barstow and Ashlan Avenues.

Participants indicated where they liked to walk in green marker and identified most of the internal paseos and sidewalk trails within the developed residential areas, suggesting that they are happy with this system. Participants also identified De Wolf Avenue as a street that they walk on, as well as the trail along the irrigation canal to the south of the neighborhood.

Participants used orange to show the areas where they would like to walk or areas that could be enhanced to improve the pedestrian experience. Participants marked some sidewalk areas that have not yet been completed in the development, as well as sections of the irrigation canal outside of the areas where residential development has been constructed.

On the trail preferences board, the majority of participants selected the semi-enclosed paseo, stating that it allows more opportunity to get on and off the trail and also provides a more interesting view for the trail user. One participant did indicate that she would enjoy the open trail if it were not in a



residential area and that it might be an opportunity for a park located adjacent to an irrigation canal.

Urban Greening Needs Assessment

Participants did not identify any projects that they supported on the urban greening needs assessment map nor any new projects to explore. They did use the map to discuss future development needs and maintenance they would like to see in the neighborhood, including:

- Well planned neighborhoods
- Bigger parks
- Curvilinear streets
- Quality development and quality apartments
- Elementary schools should have higher basketball hoops so that older youth and adults can play after hours
- Trees are too close to median and sides along Temperance Avenue

One participant suggested that the City look at examples of low water-use plant palettes in developing the landscape schemes for Loma Vista. They suggested looking at the cacti garden at “Ethel M” Chocolate factory in Henderson, NV, a publically accessible desert-style botanial garden.

Only one person participated in the brainstorming exercise for words that represent Loma Vista. They wrote the following:

My neighborhood is Loma Vista. I really like the bike trails. I often find myself wanting to go outside and bike, although in summertime, because of the heat, it is hard because not many trees are quite large enough to keep cool.

- Braden Pope.

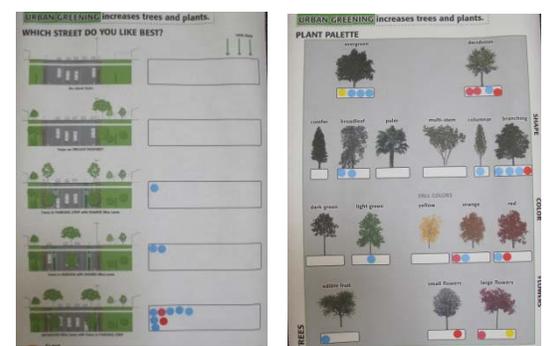
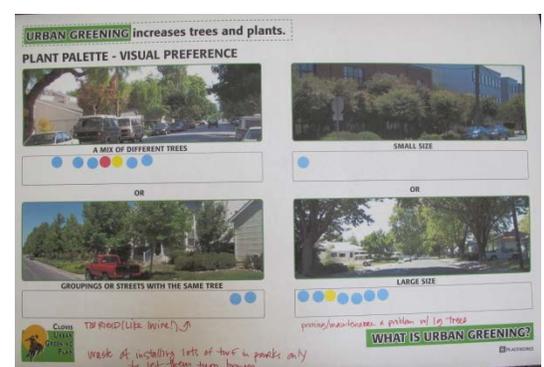
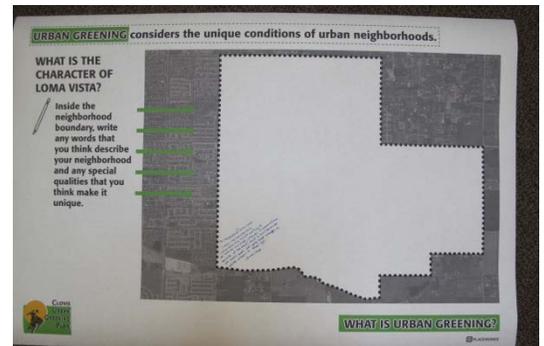
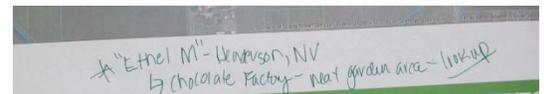
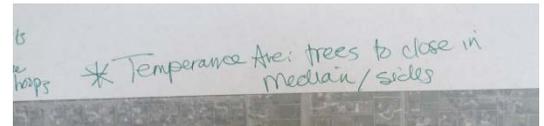
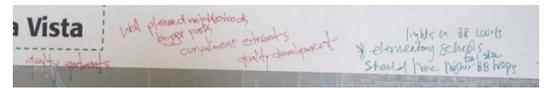
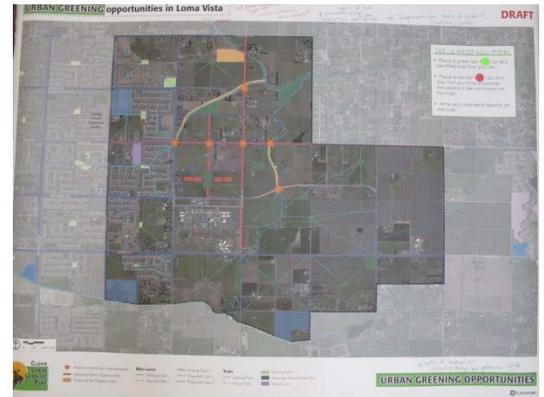
Plant Palette

Most of the participants indicated a strong preference for larger trees on the streets in Loma Vista, although some participant emphasized the extra need for maintenance and pruning on larger trees. Participants also indicated a strong preference for using a variety of different tree types, indicating that using too many of the same tree makes a neighborhood look “rigid.”

One participant additionally made a note on the visual preference board that is a waste of resources to install “lots of turf in parks only to let them turn brown.”

In terms of tree style and form, participants showed equal support for evergreen trees and deciduous ones. Participants did not bring up the issue that trees that grow all the way to the ground produce safety concerns, although they did indicate that they preferred broadleaf evergreen trees rather than conifers, suggesting that this could be an issue. Participants showed some preference for branching forms and trees with red or orange fall foliage, edible fruit and small or large flowers.

Many participants expressed strong preference for streetscapes with bike lanes separated from traffic with a planted buffer. The designs with no bike lanes



received no votes, while the planted center median was slightly preferred to the planted median at the edge of the street.