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Public Voices Final Input On Tyler 21

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Staff Writer

More than 140 citizens, city officials and planning specialists gathered Monday night to go over the final draft of the Tyler 21 comprehensive development plan.

The plan, broken into 10 major sections, outlines goals and visions for city growth, and names possible plans of action to help Tyler grow in the direction its citizens want to see.

"This is something we are doing to shape the future of Tyler. We hit the 100,000 mark recently, and we are all experiencing the symptoms of growth," Mayor Joey Seeber said. "At that benchmark, we decided to take a look at the things we love about Tyler as well as the things we might want to change."

Seeber said developing the plan over the past 16 months has been a community based process, beginning with a public opinion survey, community envisioning retreat, neighborhood open house events, downtown and north-end revitalization workshops, hundreds of participants getting involved in working groups and the final review of the steering committee.

The plan includes sections outlining the revitalization of downtown and Tyler's north end, and six sections about general growth, specifically, historic preservation; parks, open spaces, recreation and lakes; housing, neighborhoods and community identity; business and economy; transportation and

circulation; and public facilities and services. The 520-page plan concludes with a section talking about future land use, inside and outside the city limits, and a section about ways to actually implement the overall plan.

The focus of the Tyler 21 downtown revitalization plan is to develop more housing in the downtown area.

"If you look at downtown, it has the potential to be a lot of things. It has the potential to be whatever we make it," Downtown Taskforce Chair Mike Butler said.

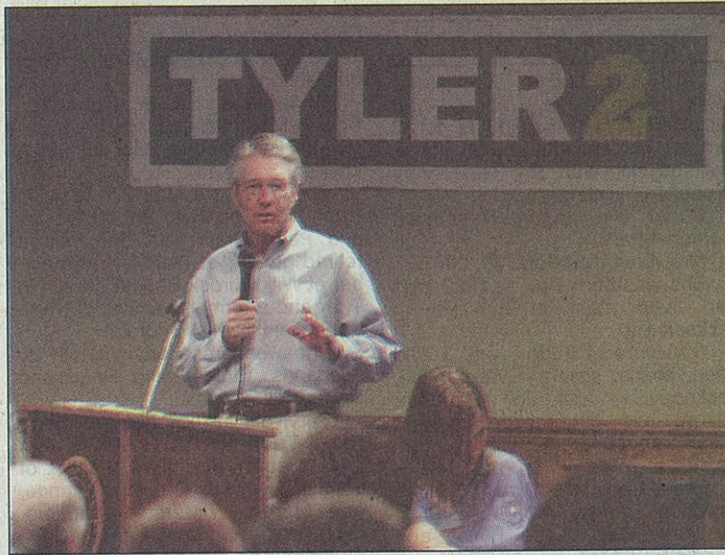
A recent study suggested there

are more than 700 opportunities for housing development in the downtown area, which officially covers about 500 acres, Butler said.

Councilman Donald Sanders spoke on the north end revitalization plan, emphasizing a need to promote an environment that will encourage new housing developments.

"Tyler's historic north end has not recently seen as much growth as other parts of the city. This is a plan to encourage growth," he

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— Staff Photo By Mark Roberts

TOWN MEETING: Bob Garrett speaks to members of the community about the Tyler 21 comprehensive development plan on Monday at a town meeting on the UT Tyler campus.