

Committee to Elect  
Ron Smith

Chairman  
**Rex Moen**

Treasurer  
**Jamie Smith**

Finance Chair  
**Rita Burleson**

Members

**Steve Baker**

**Mary Faux**

**Lynn Harrison**

**Barbara Little**

**Fran Marroquin**

**Hernando Marroquin**

**Sethu Madhavan**

**Steve Milar**

**Tom Pigott**

**Bill Rourke**

# RON SMITH

**Lancaster City Council**

## WORKSHOP BRINGS DEVELOPERS, CITY TOGETHER

**Julie Drake**  
**Antelope Valley Press**  
**May 10, 2005**

LANCASTER - Irvine-based RBF Consulting conducted an intense workshop Saturday as part of its efforts to develop a plan to enhance the aesthetics for the Lowtree neighborhood near Antelope Valley Hospital.

The boundaries of the Lowtree neighborhood include property generally bordered by 15th Street West, Avenue J to Avenue J-8, Kingtree Avenue and 12th Street West.

A diverse crowd of about 30 people that included about 15 residents, developers, property owners, business owners, Planning Commission Chairman Ron Smith and RBF representatives attended the event.

The overriding concern was the desire to have the activities in the area be more integrated, or to create an integrated community where residents can walk in a safe environment.

Ultimately, what the area's stakeholders wanted was to make their neighborhood more neighborly rather than being concerned about individual property, said Al Zelinka, principal of RBF Consulting's Urban Design Studio.

Redevelopment Agency directors awarded RBF a \$121,668 contract in February to develop the aesthetics plan.

The agency has used RBF Consulting previously to develop the design and vision plans for the North Downtown Transit Village revitalization project and the Northeast Gateway Corridors Project.

"This was a great opportunity to communicate with citizens in a positive way. As a community, we can not move ahead unless we have a clear vision, a goal to strive for," Smith said.

## **WORKSHOP BRINGS DEVELOPERS, CITY TOGETHER**

### ***Continued***

“This is one of the many steps we are taking to make this a reality,” he added.

RBF sent out about 1,000 fliers to property owners within the community informing them of the charrette, or workshop. Sunnydale Elementary School Principal Jean Youngquist sent notification to families with schoolchildren.

Redevelopment Director Mark Bozigian praised RBF’s efforts.

“They’re a very good company when it comes to getting public participation,” he said.

Zelinka said RBF prefers to involve community members with design projects like the Lowtree Neighborhood and the North Downtown Transit Village because their involvement means the ideas will be owned and shared by the community, property owners and developers. Thus, the plan has a greater chance of being accepted because there is a groundswell of support.

Three ideas emerged at the charrette, though two are similar. RBF will spend the next few weeks developing a draft plan that will refine two alternatives. Zelinka expects to have a community open house in late June to review the plan. He expects to bring it before planning commissioners in July for their scrutiny and recommendations, and to the City Council by the end of summer.

“I can’t say enough about it,” Smith said. “What a wonderful opportunity to be able to sit down and listen.”

