

# Planners present ideas on south Schertz development



By David DeKunder, *Northeast Herald* Staff Writer

Based on feedback received from residents, a group of planners have come up with a framework to deal with future development in south Schertz.

Hundreds of residents, several of whom live in Schertz between FM 78 and Interstate 10, gathered Aug. 31 at the Schertz Civic Center for the last of two planning sessions put on by Gateway Planning Group, a Fort Worth-based consulting firm hired by the city to carry out the planning process.

Gateway Planning consultants presented their ideas on future development in the area based on ideas and concerns brought forth by residents on Aug. 29, during the first planning session.

Scott Polikov, president of Gateway Planning, said the plan presented to residents was "not set in stone." He said a final version of the plan will be brought before the Schertz City Council, the city's Planning and Zoning Commission and residents during a future joint workshop.

Polikov said the planners also gathered input from other stakeholders, including developers, governmental entities and Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City School District officials.

"There is a lot of refinement we still need to do (to the plan)," he said.

Michael Huston, urban designer for Gateway Planning, said the plan breaks south Schertz into "character zones," which would be based on the type of development for that particular area.

Huston said the intersection of Lower Seguin Road and FM 1518 would be a good location for some commercial development because it is in the center of south Schertz and would be easily accessible. He said that intersection could become "a hub of activity" because of

its location, making it an ideal site for a community center, a branch library or a police substation.

Other character zones on the planning map were "countryside" and "green campus." Huston said a countryside zone would promote development that preserves the rural setting of south Schertz, which many residents and property owners say they want to maintain.

A green campus concept, he said, would include professional office or college campus with trails that would fit within the natural surroundings. This type of development would be situated in the western edge of south Schertz, near I-10.

One unidentified property owner said he was worried whether the city would follow through on the plan proposed by the consultants or let it sit on a shelf.

"I was wondering if this is much ado about nothing," he said. "I am concerned that the city hasn't really said we are going to work with you and follow this plan...and say we are going to take this under consideration and grow as you (consultants) have suggested."

City Manager John Kessel assured residents that city officials will follow through with the plan and ideas recommended by Gateway Planning.

"The city is committed to implementing the plan," Kessel said. "The plan is not decided on yet. What you have before you is a rough sketch that is not fine tuned. What you see here is what we heard the citizens say. I feel very comfortable saying that this is a plan I will put my name on."

Polikov said a final version of the plan will be put on the city's website.