

## RUDG Educational Forum

In the afternoon of February 2, 2015, an Educational Forum was held focusing on the benefits of urban design for beauty, function, and economic vitality. The session began with a charrette process overview, including the scheduled dates for the multiple hands-on design sessions, the open house and Work-in-Progress presentations.

- **Victor Dover** provided background information on traditional town building, delving into the possibilities and goals of urban design in a Food-for-Thought presentation designed to inspire stakeholders to envision participants about what gateways, centers, corridors and trails could become in the future.
- **Peter Katz**, Strategic Consultant, addressed the implications of design on the economic vitality of the region and the importance of developing an environment that will help attract and retain college students, entrepreneurs and provide jobs for the region.

## Hands-on Design Sessions

Five separate Hands-on Design Sessions were held during the first week of the charrette:

- [Kick-off Event, Carpenter's Hall, February 2, 2015](#)
- [Seaside Charrette #1, Soper Community Center, February 4, 2015](#)
- [CSUMB Charrette, Student Center, February 5, 2015](#)
- [Seaside Charrette #2, Soper Community Center, February 4, 2015](#)
- [Marina Charrette, Marina Library, February 7, 2015](#)

The first, on Monday, February 2, focused on all of the jurisdictions within the former Fort Ord, while subsequent meetings concentrated on the immediate vicinity where the hands-on sessions were occurring. Between 50 to 100 members of the community attended each of the meetings. Each session began with an introduction provided by Senior Planner Josh Metz, explaining the planning process and the importance of public involvement to the development of design guidelines.

Jason King followed up at each session with a presentation about a range of urban design principles intended to get members of the audience thinking about what type of design characteristics could enhance the region. The audience was polled using keypad devices to

gauge participant priorities, with real-time results displayed on the screen. Questions began with a demographic query to find out who was in the room, in terms of tenure, age and occupation.

A community image survey showing images of peer communities around the country, was also a part of the polling process. People were asked to rank each image as “Love it”, “Hate it”, or “No Opinion”. The results of the survey helped to gauge the types of places residents preferred. Following the presentation the event transitioned to the group table sessions starting with a briefing by Jason King to explain the goals and objectives, introduce participants to the base maps, and set ground rules. Working in small groups of eight to ten people, participants gathered around tables to draw and share their varied ideas for the future of the region overall as well as for the specific area where the meeting was being held. A member of the design team or FORA staff was at each table to hear discussions and help facilitate the conversation.

At the end of the session, a spokesperson from each table presented their table’s map and five big ideas. Numerous ideas emerged. Some of the big ideas mentioned repeatedly were the need for increased connectivity and the development of a town center near Second Avenue. In addition to the table maps and group presentations, participants were asked to fill out an exit survey and “one word” cards as an additional way to express their ideas, hopes, and vision for the former Fort Ord. In addition to the Hands-on design session, Aditi Sharma, Town Planner with DKP, operated a mobile station inside the CSUMB University Center to capture input from busy students rushing to or from classes.

### **City Council Briefings**

Victor Dover and Jason King briefed City Council members of Marina, Seaside and Monterey on the Charrette process, its purpose and timeline. Council members were invited to participate in the many scheduled hands-on design opportunities or to drop into the studio to see what the team was working on and provide their input.