

**Public Opinion Concerning  
Medium- and High-rise Development  
in the City of El Lago**

*Report on a Community Survey*

Conducted for  
**Long Range Planning Commission**  
City of El Lago, Texas  
John Tully, Chair

Conducted by  
**Strategic Forecasting and Development, LLC**  
Dr. Peter Bishop, President

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## **Background**

The City of El Lago is one of the municipalities in the Clear Lake area to the Southeast of Houston. It contains about 3,000 residents and a small commercial sector along NASA Road One, the main artery through the southern part of the City. El Lago is bounded on the east by Seabrook and on the west by Pasadena and Taylor Lake Village.

El Lago contains some multi-family complexes (condominiums, townhouses and apartments) in the strip between NASA Road One and Clear Lake. According to existing zoning requirements, however, none of the complexes is more than four stories. Recently developers have approached the City for zoning variances or changes to the zoning ordinance that would permit taller structures—so-called medium- to high-rise developments.

None of these projects has been approved, but the City expects the requests to continue. As a result, the City Council has established a Long Range Planning Commission to make recommendations on the future direction of the City. In addition to consulting with urban planners and architects, Mr. John Tully, a Member of the City Council and the Chair of the Planning Commission, approached Dr. Peter Bishop, President of Strategic Forecasting and Development (SFD) and Chair of the graduate program in Studies of the Future at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, to assist in involving citizens in the planning process. Dr. Bishop facilitates scenario development and strategic planning sessions for enterprises around Texas and throughout the Southwest.

SFD believes that effective citizen participation is essential for a successful community-wide initiative of this type. Citizens are not professional planners so they need to participate at a level and in a manner that is consistent with their experience and their needs. SFD believes that a carefully crafted community survey would not only benefit the work of the Commission, but also give citizens a greater stake in the ultimate direction the City chooses to take.

To that end, Dr. Bishop submitted a proposal to the Long Range Planning Commission in April 2005. The objective of the survey was to gauge citizen sentiment and perspectives on the proposed developments. The Commission considered and approved the proposal at its meeting on June 16. The El Lago City Council approved the proposal a week later.

## **Methodology**

The survey consisted of seven questions on three sheets. (Cf. Appendix I for the complete survey.) Four of the items were “open-ended,” (Nos. 1 - 4) requiring respondents to write their answer(s) in the spaces provided. Three of the items were “closed-ended,” (Nos. 5a – 5c) allowing respondents to express their overall position on the proposed developments on a 5-point scale and to rank the perceived advantages and disadvantages for the developments. The list of advantages and disadvantages was received from Bret Keast, a consultant with Lane Kendig, Inc., another contractor on this project.

Individuals could respond to the survey in two ways:

1. Fill out the paper survey and return it to Dr. Bishop in a business reply envelope.
2. Fill out an online survey (at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=260201180330>)

One thousand and three surveys were mailed on Friday, July 15, along with a cover letter describing the reason for the survey and urging citizens to respond. (Cf. Appendix II for the cover letter.) Citizens had until Monday, August 1 to complete and return the survey. All mailed returns were received by Monday, August 8. Those envelopes with postmarks showed that all but two were mailed on or before August 1. The two that were postmarked August 4 were included in the results for completeness. The online returns were cut off at Midnight, August 1.

During the survey development, some Commission members and a number of citizens were concerned with the integrity of the survey. The development issue had caused considerable controversy in the community, and some were afraid that some respondents might send in multiple responses in order to skew the results. A number of measures were taken to prevent that from happening –

1. The mailed surveys were printed on ivory colored 11x17 paper folded to create a four-page fold out. Individuals who wanted to send in multiple items would have had to secure that paper and answer the survey that way. Only three surveys were received on regular bond paper. One was a copy of the online survey and excluded for that reason. Two others were identified as spouses of the original respondent.
2. The mailed packet contained only one business reply envelope. Respondents who wanted to submit multiple responses would have had to copy the envelope in addition to the survey.
3. Most of the responses were open-ended so that individuals who just wanted to skew the statistical results would have had to make up non-duplicating open-ended responses. No overall duplication of this type was observed in the mailed surveys.
4. The online survey also reported the date and time that the survey was submitted and the IP address of the computer that submitted it. Individuals duplicating the survey on the same computer would have shown similar IP addresses, and doing it one sitting would have shown times close together. In the end, one IP address appeared five times, and four IP addresses appeared twice. The five addresses were spread over six days (the first two were only two minutes apart, the second two 45 minutes apart two days later, and the last one nine days later). Of the four pairs of IP addresses, one was clearly a duplicate and eliminated. The rest of the duplicates, including the IP address that was used five times, all had different responses, clearly from different respondents, so they were retained in the analysis.

The conclusion, therefore, is that it is highly unlikely, if not impossible, that one person submitted many responses that significantly skewed the results. They would have to go to enormous effort to do so, and no evidence exists that anyone did.

## **Results**

### **Response rate**

In the end, a total of 318 responses were received. About three-quarters of the returns were mailed in (233, 73%), and about one-quarter were answered online (85, 27%). The overall response rate was just under one-third (31.7%) of the surveys mailed. While not a majority of the residences, the returns do represent a substantial proportion, so much so that more returns probably would not have changed the overall interpretation of the findings. As will become clear below, those who had strong feelings about the development issue responded, and those who were neutral generally did not. In fact, only six respondents answered, “I am neutral or have no opinion about such development.”

### **Time in residence**

The only demographic item on the survey was Item 1, “In what year did you move to El Lago?” The overall pattern in Table 1 showed that individuals from all five decades responded to the survey, with the most responses coming from people who came to El Lago in the 1990s, the most recent complete decade. The 2000s decade is only five and a half years old so far, yet they are well represented nevertheless. In the end, no decade had much less than 20% of the responses, and none had more than 25%--a uniform distribution indeed.

| <b>Decade</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>1960s</b>  | 57            | 18%            |
| <b>1970s</b>  | 57            | 18%            |
| <b>1980s</b>  | 63            | 20%            |
| <b>1990s</b>  | 75            | 24%            |
| <b>2000s</b>  | 62            | 19%            |
| <b>Blank</b>  | 4             | 1%             |
| <b>Total</b>  | 318           | 100%           |

***Table 1***

*“1. In what year did you come to El Lago?”*

### **Attractions on arrival**

The first substantive question was, “What most attracted you to El Lago?” Individuals were to enter their responses by hand or on the computer. The purpose of this question was to discover the values that people used to choose to live in El Lago. Residents would presumably want to preserve those values, and prospective residents might continue to be attracted to El Lago for those same reasons.

A number of overall attractive items appeared again and again, as shown in Table 2. Overall, the 318 respondents provided 928 attractive features for an average of more than 2.9 features per respondent. Obviously the residents have a clear idea of what brought them to this community and they are enthusiastic about its good qualities.

|   | <i>Mentions</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Trees, parks, nature</b>   | 107             | 12%            |
| <b>Water</b>  | 89              | 10%            |
| <b>Schools (quality and proximity)</b>  | 97              | 11%            |
| <b>Small town, country-like atmosphere, tucked away feeling, secluded, private, low density</b> | 86              | 10%            |
| <b>Proximity to work</b>  | 66              | 8%             |
| <b>Quiet, tranquil, peaceful, relaxed</b>   | 65              | 7%             |
| <b>Safe, secure, good police department/protection</b>  | 61              | 7%             |
| <b>Clean, well kept, nice neighborhoods, attractive, beautiful</b>                              | 54              | 6%             |
| <b>Large lots, varied property/house types, good construction</b>                               | 49              | 6%             |
| <b>Reasonably priced, high value, affordable</b>  | 37              | 4%             |
| <b>Established, mature, older</b>   | 35              | 4%             |
| <b>Amenities (clubs, parks, recreation), convenient to other amenities</b>                      | 31              | 4%             |
| <b>Light traffic, few entries</b>   | 28              | 3%             |
| <b>Family, children</b>   | 27              | 3%             |
| <b>Far from Houston, incorporated</b>   | 20              | 2%             |
| <b>Sidewalks, paved streets, covered gutters</b>  | 15              | 2%             |
| <b><i>Total—high frequency</i></b>  | <b>867</b>      |                |
| <b><i>Total—low frequency (2 to 11 mentions, cf Appendix III)</i></b>                           | <b>61</b>       |                |
| <b><i>Total—single items (cf Appendix III)</i></b>  | <b>8</b>        |                |
| <b><i>Total items mentioned</i></b>   | <b>930</b>      |                |

**Table 2**  
“2. What most attracted you to El Lago?”

The first category of four responses (with more 80 responses each) leaned heavily toward physical features (trees and water), the proximity and quality of the school(s), and the small town feel of the community. Other items related to these top items as well: quiet, safe, and clean—an overall appearance of “a good neighborhood,” mature, well kept. El Lago looked like a good place to raise children, with light traffic (few entrances) and sidewalks (on which children could walk or ride their bikes to school)

The next most important item is El Lago’s proximity to major work centers. NASA and the ship channel industries were mentioned most often. Third on the overall list would be the

construction of the homes themselves, with interesting variations (not a cookie cutter plan), and yet affordable and reasonably priced.

People appreciated the amenities that El Lago offered, both in the City itself (parks, pool) and in the surrounding Clear Lake area. Finally, many respondents were glad that El Lago was not Houston or any of the surrounding communities. As its own incorporated city, it could not be annexed by any of them.

Incorporation was valued most by those who arrived during the late 1950s and 1960s when annexation and incorporation were active topics. The only other difference in responses was the newer residents mentioned that the community was older and more established than many other subdivisions they looked. Of course, it was not that old for those who came in the 1960s! Other than those two, there was no discernable difference in attractions either by time in residence or by form of the survey (mail or online), meaning that the values that first attracted people to this community in the 1960s are still the values that attract them today.

A number of other attractions were also mentioned less frequently. They are reported in Appendix III. Some were mentioned more than once, some only once; but since respondents took the time to mention them, it is important that they be included in this report.

The Planning Commission obviously would want to preserve and even enhance these values as it recommends how the City deal with its development in the future.

### **Attractions since arrival**

Item #3 asked, “Now that you have lived here, what do you most like about the community?” As expected, the responses to this item were almost identical to Item #2.

- Friendly people (*most commonly mentioned*)
- Children moving back (*between 5 and 10 respondents chose El Lago for that reason*)
- Community involvement
- Fire station in El Lago
- Good mayor’s leadership
- Opportunities to serve on committees
- Low population turnover
- Stable property values

Two differences do stand out. One was that people more often mentioned the people in the community as an attraction only after living in El Lago for a while. That response would be expected, however, because it is difficult to meet and to judge the people in a community when purchasing or moving into a new home.

The second notable mention were the number of people who had left and moved back or, even more frequently, children who had been raised in El Lago and were now adult residents themselves. It is difficult to tell the turnover in El Lago or how it compares to other communities, but it would be hard to imagine many people moving back into most other communities.

### Improvements and changes

Despite the many attractions that El Lago offers, respondents were not shy about suggesting improvements. The major improvements are listed in Table 3. Though fewer than the number of attractions, the list of suggested improvements is much more varied.

|  | <i>Mentions</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Enforce codes and deed restrictions on residential property</b> | 51              | 22%            |
| <b>Turn Keys Club over to the City</b>                             | 33              | 14%            |
| <b>Improve commercial property on NASA Road One</b>                | 32              | 14%            |
| <b>Improve and expand sidewalks, repair streets</b>                | 32              | 14%            |
| <b>Improve traffic flow at Repsdorph and 146</b>                   | 20              | 8%             |
| <b>Better drainage</b>   | 18              | 8%             |
| <b>Improve look on NASA Road One (and entrance)</b>                | 16              | 7%             |
| <b>More community activities</b>                                   | 12              | 5%             |
| <b>More parks and greenspace</b>                                   | 12              | 5%             |
| <b>Lower taxes</b>   | 11              | 5%             |
| <i>Total—high frequency</i>  | 237             |                |
| <i>Total—low frequency (2 to 9 mentions, cf Appendix IV)</i>       | 123             |                |
| <i>Total—single items (cf Appendix IV)</i>                         | 67              |                |
| <i>Total items mentioned</i>                                       | 427             |                |

**Table 3**

*“4. What changes or improvements, if any, would you like to see in the community over the next 10 to 20 years?”*

The list of suggested improvements is fairly self-explanatory. Three of the items relate to improving the appearance of the City, the most important of which is to enforce deed restrictions on home and yard maintenance, with almost one-quarter of the respondents mentioning that item. The second improvement (to the commercial property on NASA Road One) also came up repeatedly as an advantage to allowing a better quality development than the marina and boat storage yard on that property.

A number of respondents (1 in 7) also want to turn the Keys Club and swimming pool into a public facility rather than by membership. The rest of the items were mentioned often, but they formed no particular pattern.

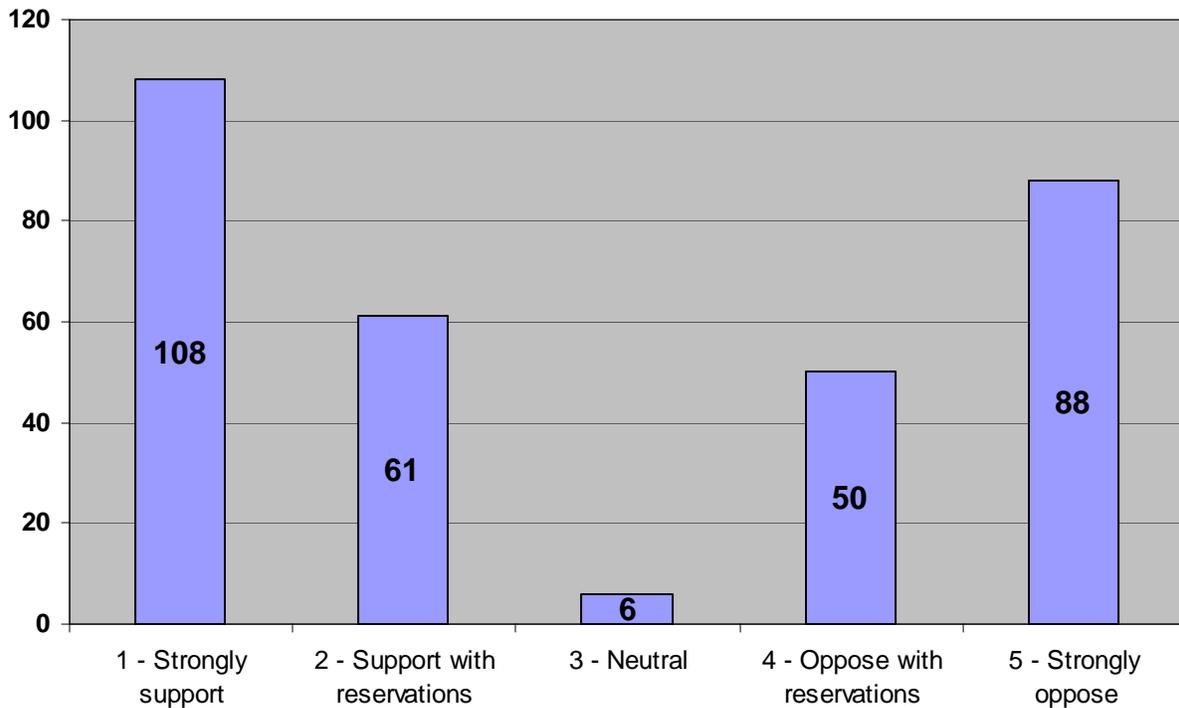
Many of these suggestions, of course, require funding. While the City maintains a debt-free budget and considerable reserves, some residents are concerned that the City is not keeping up with the infrastructure of streets and other improvements. That will take money, something that the proponents of increased development cite as a reason for making better use of the land now being considered for new development. Whether the City can meet its current and future obligations without new sources of revenue is a consideration for the Planning Commission.

**Advisability of the development projects**

So much for the background on the City, its attractions and need improvements. Item #5 was a three part item that allowed individuals to express their position on the advisability of allowing medium- to high-rise development and the advantages and/or disadvantages for doing so.

After reiterating that the purpose of the survey was to respond to requests for “medium- to high-rise development, Item #5a asked, “What is your position about the advisability of such development?” Respondents were given a 5-point scale, ranging from “strongly support” to “strongly oppose.” The results are displayed in Figure 1.

**Advisability of "medium- and high-rise" development projects**



**Figure 1**  
*“5a. What is your position about the advisability of such [medium- or high-rise] development?”*

The results could hardly be more evenly distributed between those who support such development and those who oppose it. What is more, as displayed in Table 4, each sector of the community, by time in residence, was just as divided, with no sector either overwhelmingly supportive or opposed to the development.

| <b>Decade</b> | <b>1 - Strongly support</b> | <b>2 - Support with reservations</b> | <b>4 - Oppose with reservations</b> | <b>5 - Strongly oppose</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>1960s</b>  | 35%                         | 19%                                  | 12%                                 | 35%                        | 100%         |
| <b>1970s</b>  | 38%                         | 14%                                  | 18%                                 | 30%                        | 100%         |
| <b>1980s</b>  | 43%                         | 14%                                  | 17%                                 | 25%                        | 100%         |
| <b>1990s</b>  | 33%                         | 28%                                  | 15%                                 | 24%                        | 100%         |
| <b>2000s</b>  | 28%                         | 20%                                  | 20%                                 | 32%                        | 100%         |
| <b>Total</b>  | 35%                         | 20%                                  | 16%                                 | 29%                        | 100%         |

N= 307[Not including missing data (5) or neutral (6)]

**Table 4**

*“5a. What is your position about the advisability of such [medium- or high-rise] development?”*

Given these results, the Planning Commission and the City Council have their work cut out for them since they cannot point to a consensus in the community as a reason for recommending one way or the other.

**Advantages and Disadvantages**

Rather if there is to be a generally accepted outcome in this decision, it will have to argued on the merits, not on the citizens’ overall position. Therefore, the last two questions that asked respondents to rank a list of advantages and disadvantages are doubly important. Even then, not everyone is going to be satisfied since the community is not only divided, but polarized on this issue.

Table 5 shows the number of people who ranked no advantages or disadvantages at all.<sup>1</sup>

|                         | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>No advantages</b>    | 72            | 23%            |
| <b>No disadvantages</b> | 42            | 13%            |
| <b>Total</b>            | 114           | 36%            |

**Table 5**

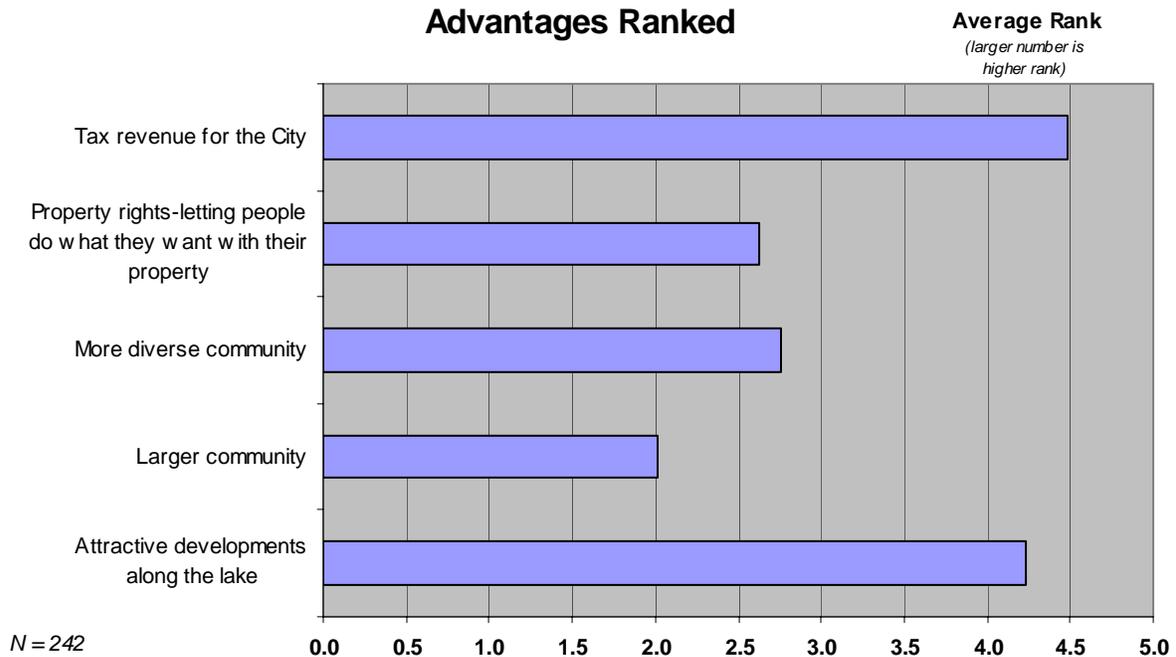
*Respondents who saw no advantages or no disadvantages*

This portion of the community, 36% of respondents, but only a little more than 10% of residences, will undoubtedly be displeased if the decision goes against their position. The Commission and the Council, therefore, must address the rest of the community who, even though they may strongly support or oppose medium- or high-rise development, at least see some advantage to the other side.

<sup>1</sup>A few respondents who did not rank any of the listed items did offer one or two advantages of their own.

## Advantages

The advantages submitted by Lane Kendig were ranked as displayed in Figure 2.



**Figure 2**

*“5b. What do you believe are the advantages for such development?”<sup>2</sup>*

Two advantages of medium- and high-rise development clearly stand out: increased tax revenue for the City and a more attractive development along the lake. Some mentioned that the increased tax revenue might have to be used in whole or in part to offset possible increased expenditures so the new taxes would not be a pure windfall. The overwhelming sentiment on the second advantage (more attractive development) was that almost anything was better than the marina now occupying the land at the mouth of Taylor Lake. While some residents were afraid that the new development could become an eyesore itself, most who commented clearly preferred a residential development on that piece of land.

As with the attractions and improvements, respondents also offered advantages that were not on the list:

- Improve property value (Mentioned 24 times)
- Eliminating eyesores along the lakefront (12)
- Local commerce; jobs (12)

<sup>2</sup> The ranks in the survey ranged from 1 = most important to 5 = least important. These ranks were reversed to show the more important items as the larger numbers.

- More prestige for city; provide model to other cities (6)
- Opportunity to live in same area with different options to home ownership (6)
- Bringing in better services; upscale retail, restaurants, etc (5)
- Higher level socio-economic residents; attract more professionals (5)
- Hurricane refuge and command station (4)
- El Lago retirees may move there when they get tired of taking care of their own houses (3)
- Do it before other cities outpace/modernize first; choose how our development happens (2)
- If possible a point of public access to clear lake (2)

None of these were mentioned as often nor did they rank as high as any of the items on the list, but that is because not everyone thought of them.

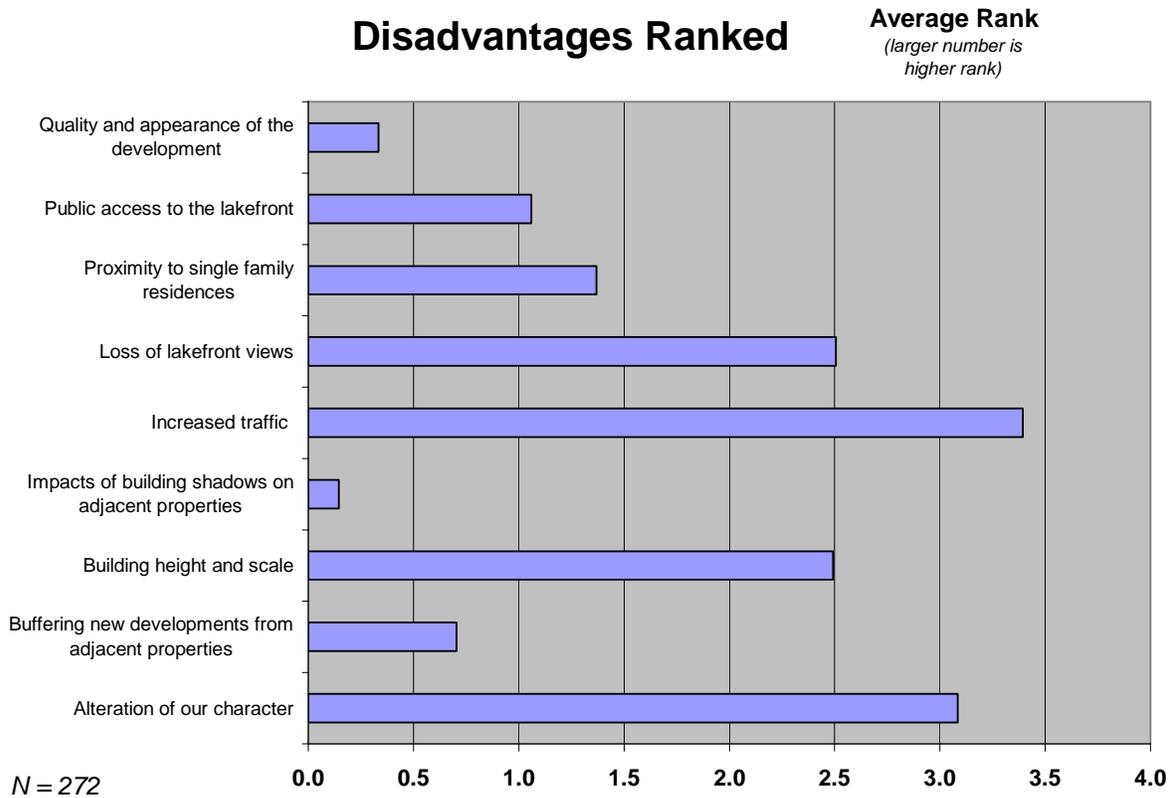
The most frequently mentioned additional item, nevertheless, was increased property values, an item that could have achieved a significant rank had it been on the original list. We will see below that those who oppose these developments saw property values going in the other direction.

The second item, improving the eyesore on the lake, is really the negative of one of the listed items, more attractive development. The third item, however, is new—a boost to the local economy by bringing in services and jobs that currently do not exist.

Other advantages were listed with less frequency, both in the list and as single items in Appendix V. Overall, those who support development, and even some who oppose it, see some significant advantages to allowing medium- or high-rise development to go forward.

**Disadvantages**

The list of disadvantages was longer than the advantages. Nevertheless, respondents saw a few disadvantages as more important than the rest, as displayed in Figure 3.



**Figure 3**  
“5c. What do you believe are the disadvantages for such development?”<sup>3</sup>

Two disadvantages were ranked highest in this survey: increased traffic and alteration of our character. Two others were also identified as important: loss of lakefront views and building height and scale.

The first two relate to the quality of the City that attracted residents here to begin with – light traffic with few entrances and exits and the small-town feel of the community. Respondents were afraid of losing those two features that were rated highly in the first half of the survey.

<sup>3</sup> The ranks in the survey ranged from 1 = most important to 5 = least important. These ranks were reversed to show the more important items as the larger numbers.

Respondents also offered disadvantages that were not on the list. Those that were mentioned by two or respondents were:

- Crime increase (15)
- Cost of police and fire departments (13)
- Inability of city to provide services rise (13)[
- City taxes may go up if the concept is not successful; increase in land taxes (10)
- High density in a low density community; increase in population (7)
- Loss of small town atmosphere, neighborhood identify (7)
- Noise (6)
- Pollution (5)
- The safety of these buildings in a hurricane; danger from debris from high elevations during hurricanes (5)
- Inconvenience during construction (4)
- Increased ground coverage with concrete affects heating, water drainage (4)
- Introduction of undesirables; lower class/transient group (4)
- Lower Property Values (3)
- Older residents pushed out unless wealthy; promoting upper class agendas (3)
- Serious concern that the soil will not support such structures for a long duration (3)
- We could support a mid-rise development but worry that once the nose is under the tent, it will be only a matter of time before there will be real skyscrapers (3)
- Default of property (or down scaling) before completion (2)
- Hurricane Evacuation (2)
- If development fails, we will be left with a worse eyesore than what was replaced (2)
- Low quality appearance and construction (2)
- Set precedent to build more high rise buildings around the lakes (TLV) (2)
- School crowding, quality (2)
- Water capacity allowance has reportedly been exceeded on occasion; can El Lago support the water and waste needs of these developments? (2)

And, as with the advantages, two or three items were mentioned fairly frequently given they were not on the original list. Most frequently was the fear that the medium- or high-rise developments would lead to an increase in crime, the reversal of another value listed earlier—the safe feeling people have about living in El Lago.

A second disadvantage was that the City could not handle the increased population and its needs, particularly for police, fire, water and other city services. Those who mentioned those items were afraid that the City would not realize any net income from these developments, and they might even end up paying more to serve them in the end.

Many of the rest of the disadvantages relate to the cozy, secluded feeling people have about El Lago—that these developments will increase noise and pollution and present even more hazard in the event of a hurricane. Single disadvantages, by time in residence, are listed in Appendix VI.

### ***Researcher's interpretation***

So much for the data. In this researcher's opinion, the data also reveal some crucial underlying patterns that explain, to him at least, the huge division between those who support medium- and high-rise development and those who oppose it. In short, each group is dealing with a different image of what such a development would look like and with some different assumptions about what impact it would have.

### **Images of the future**

The first big difference is the image that each group has of the proposed development. The supporters see a tasteful structure that brings pride to the City of El Lago. Most of all, it replaces the “eyesore” of the marina that currently occupies that land. It is forward-looking and shows El Lago to be a city on the move, a city not afraid to change or even to be a leader. The development brings in the same type of people as the residents themselves. Even though it's no longer a “small town,” at least the newcomers don't disrupt the friendly ambiance that residents have come to value in their community. The development is an upper-class addition to an upper-class community.

The opponents see a radically different type of development, one that could be described as “down-scale” compared to the supporters' “up-scale.” The opponents do not like the marina either, but they do not see medium- or high-rise development as the way to solve that problem. Indeed, it will bring problems of its own, perhaps even more of them. It will house people that don't fit in, that bring crime and pollution to the City, that stress City services to the breaking point. Small town life will disappear, and big city life will begin.

While these developments will increase the population of the City dramatically, the issue between supporters and the opponents comes down to what type of development it is, and that depends on the real estate value of the units. If their value is high and remains high over time, then only people like those who already live in El Lago will be able to afford to live there. While they will be different (living in condominiums rather than single family homes), they will not be so different as to fundamentally change the character of the community. People will mix at the pool, in the park, and in the City Hall, without much thought of whether one lives North or South of NASA Road One. Properties in the residential section will retain their value and might even increase if the development does the same. In fact, a number of supporters envisioned current residents retiring to these developments, retaining their friends and their community even while giving up the burdens of maintaining a large home.

Inexpensive units, on the other hand, could lead to the opponents' worst nightmare—people who are different enough to change the character of their beloved community. Crime, traffic, noise and all manner of social ills would descend on the City, and the community of forty years will change forever. Property values will decline as El Lago loses its small-town character. In their minds, better to have an eyesore marina than a city radically changed for the worse.

The crux is the value (and fundamentally the size) of the units in the new development. Can the City influence that? Could proper zoning ordinances require a minimum unit size for these developments the way it requires minimum lot sizes for the rest of residential portion of the City? Would those minimums attract the right kind of people?

On the other hand, the City cannot require more than the market will bear. Forcing developers to build larger units beyond what a Clear Lake consumer would want or could afford will only drive the development into bankruptcy and produce an even bigger eyesore than currently exists. Zoning ordinances are beyond the scope of this study, but the size and market value of such units might give the Planning Commission something to study. If the market can bear expensive units, then the City might be able to realize the image of the supporters rather than that of the opponents.

### **Economics of the future**

The other major division between the supporters and the opponents is the economic effect on the City itself. No one disputed the fact that the City and the school district would realize significantly increased revenues from this development compared to what is already there. That revenue could be put to good use in better maintenance of streets and sidewalks, a community pool open to all citizens, and more community activities. The dispute, however, is not over revenue, but rather over net income. Would the increased services required of the City eat up those increased revenues or worse, drain the City of its reserves? Opponents fear that the development would require more police, a larger fire department, and greater expenditures on water and wastewater treatment.

As with the images of the future, this report cannot answer these questions nor resolve these differences. But the Planning Commission, with the assistance of suitable experts, empirical data, and perhaps the experience of other communities, might be able to provide a reasonable expectation of its effect on City finances. Forecasts are never certain, but the Commission must make a recommendation one way or the other, and better to base that recommendation on a reasonable forecast based on solid data and analysis.

These conclusions are the researcher's own. They are implied in the data collected although they are not strict conclusions from that data. Nevertheless, if this survey does nothing else, it might give the Planning Commission an avenue to study this issue and make a recommendation that will appeal to the broad middle of this community who see both sides of this issue. Two of those avenues to study would be 1) the market value for units of this type in this area and 2) the costs of these developments to the City compared to the expected financial return.

## **Summary**

The objective of this study was to give the citizens a chance to express their positions and perspectives on the upcoming decisions concerning development in a systematic and objective way and to give the Planning Commission and the City Council some basis for making those decisions.

The researcher takes full responsibility for the data collection, analysis and interpretation contained in this report. He is eager, furthermore, to discuss the findings with citizens, with other contractors, with the Planning Commission and even with the City Council, if they would wish to.

He hopes that this effort has thrown some light on this difficult and contentious issue, leading to a decision that most citizens will respect and to the maintenance or even to the enhancement of a truly unique community.