



The *Business Alliance...Update* is a bi-monthly publication of the El Dorado Business Alliance (BA). The BA is made up of the following organizations: El Dorado Builders' Exchange, El Dorado County Association of Realtors (EDCAR), El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, North State Building Industry Association (NSBIA) and Shingle Springs-Cameron Park Chamber of Commerce. Web Address for Subscription Info: KathyeRussell@gmail.com

"Developing Mutual Support on Community-Wide Issues"

BROADBAND EFFORTS ALIVE IN EL DORADO COUNTY

Efforts to bring Broadband access to densely populated rural counties, including El Dorado County, continue as the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and Sierra Economic Development Corporation (SEDCorp) join with El Dorado County (EDC) in offering public meetings. Your input is solicited at the following:

February 18, 2014 @ the Hoiday Market Meeting Room in Pilot Hill from 6:00 to 7:00 pm.

February 23, 2014 @ Cool Community Church in Cool from 12:15 to 1:15 pm.

The Gold Country Broadband Consortium (GCBC) is also looking for neighborhood advocates to contact their neighbors about additional upcoming community meetings. To get in touch send an email to sandy@sedcorp.biz SED-Corp is the facilitator of the CPUC grant to launch a public/private partnership aimed at increasing digital access and use in this area. Go to: <http://goldcountryconsortium.wordpress.com/instructions/> for more information or call Randy Wagner at (530) 823-4703.

COUNTY APPOINTS NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

EDC continues to move forward in developing a team of experts to assist the county in economic development activities. On March 17, 2014 a new Community Development Director, Steve Pedretti takes the reins of this position. Mr. Pedretti comes from Sacramento County where he spent 28 years in multiple leadership management positions including Deputy Administrator in Municipal Department of County Engineering Building and Code Enforcement, Deputy Administrator of Municipal Services Agency and Director of County Engineering. Welcome aboard Steve: We stand ready to help you succeed in your new position.

NEW POLICY ADOPTED TO ATTRACT LOCAL BUSINESSES

The EDC Board of Supervisors (BOS) has adopted a new policy aimed at helping the county attract businesses that can provide more good-paying local jobs. Called Policy J-7 for Economic Development Incentives it was created by the county's CAO as authorized by the General Plan. The use of financial and procedural incentives is a common tool used by various jurisdictions seeking to improve and increase local economic conditions.

The policy would use public funds and rewards as encouragements to private companies that "benefit the greater public" and would be monitored. The policy suggests that "particular business sectors" be targeted and included examples such as "Advanced Manufacturing", "Research and Development", "Alternative Energy/Green Technology" and "Health and Wellness" sectors. "Advanced Manufacturing" was described more as to what it is not, rather than what it is! According to Jim Claybaugh, Economic and Business Relations Manager, "*We're not going after large old time manufacturing...it involves 'high-value products' and also may feature 'green' applications.*"

Financial incentives being considered are sale tax reductions and deferred or reduced property taxes for a specific number of years. Other incentives include consideration of assistance with EDC's permitting process and/or reduction of impact or permit fees.

Since good paying jobs in "clean" and "green energy" sectors are highly sought after by every jurisdiction across the country, one has to wonder if this area might also be willing to view any manufacturing firms as assets to the local economy. Historically such jobs filled a void in lower-to-moderate education levels with good salaries that supported many middle-class families. It might also be a good idea to remove the El Dorado Hills Business Park caps on the number of employees allowed in that location as well. Tracking available lands zoned for manufacturing ventures might also prove valuable to avoid undergoing an extensive rezone process.

Upon Board of Supervisors' approval of J-7, as recommended by the Community Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC), staff will now craft the details of the procedures that eventually will implement the policy.

LOCAL ACTIVISTS NOW UP TO FOUR LAND-USE INITIATIVES

When the original Regulatory Reform group got started several years ago, it quickly became apparent that some members of county staff were not pleased with the public effort to implement the 2004 General Plan (GP). Since the Board of Supervisors (BOS) was not engaged, for the most part, in implementing or defining policies directed by the GP, it left a void that staff planners were filling, with little or no oversight, and with little unified direction between various county departments. Reg Reform's effort eventually gained traction and the BOS subsequently endorsed the effort via the Land Use Policy Programmatic Update (LUPPU) process. This process engaged the BOS in critical decision making that allowed the GP implementation to move forward.

It quickly became apparent that both sides of the ongoing local "growth wars" were also annoyed with Reg Reformers: both anti-growth advocates and a few developers. The anti-growth advocates wanted Reg Reform to stand with them and oppose projects; a few developers wanted the group to support projects. So to make the process work, Reg Reformers set a couple of rules: First, they defined their overriding "goal" to simply implement the *existing* GP, which worked without recommending major/widespread GP land use changes. The second rule was that they would not take positions on projects: pro or con! So after irritating both sides of the growth battles, Reg Reformers stood firm. The result has been that some projects have moved forward on their own outside of the LUPPU process, and the anti-growth advocates have brought forth four voter initiatives, all of which essentially invalidate the 2004 General Plan, including Measure Y, that LUPPU would more fully implement.

Many are justifiably confused about the intent or results of each of these ballot measures: The numbers don't make sense according to research and the end results are unclear, judging by the conflicting nature of the initiatives. For example: Bill Center, Measure Y creator who participated in the re-interpretation of Measure Y in 2008, is now attempting to nullify Measure Y altogether with his initiative titled "**Fix Highway 50 First/Keep Us Rural**": Yet Sue Taylor, author of two of the other initiatives, is advocating a ballot measure that restores the "original" Measure Y, but not the version that Bill Center helped to interpret. So which version of Measure Y, if any, should voters support? If both were to qualify for public vote and pass, which one, if either, would stand?

Sue Taylor created two of the four ballot measures and misrepresents numerous facts. In her Measure Y initiative called "**Reinstate Measure Y's Original Intent- No More Paper Roads**" Taylor states that the BOS has "*used the power of their 4/5 vote to facilitate developers favored projects*". However, no new segments of road allowed to operate at LOS F, have been approved with a 4/5 vote since the 2008 *re-interpretation* of Measure Y was approved. In fact very few projects have been approved at all in the past 10 years.

Taylor also declares "*No More Paper Roads*" when in fact, Highway 50 has had on-the-ground paved improvements during the past ten years that total just short of one half BILLION dollars, including the very visible new HOV commuter lanes. There have been numerous improvements made to Highway 50 and they are documented and accounted for in county records and the budget processes. Improvement went to Highway 50 because that is where the GP planned for growth to occur, specifically not in rural areas.

Bill Center states that county supervisors are being lobbied hard by developers to "*build 33,000 more homes in RURAL areas of this county.*" But even adding in projects proposed outside of the LUPPU/GP process, the factual data simply doesn't indicate plans to build 33,000 more homes. The projects we are aware of and have researched are centered on the Highway 50 Community Region (CR) corridor exactly where the GP directed that they go, near infrastructure. The original GP included **a total of 32,000 homes projected over the GP's 20-year time frame at a mere 1% historical growth rate.** This GP has been in effect for ten years and currently **there remains to be built approximately 18,000 residential units of the 32,000 original units, within the LUPPU/GP process.** After that number is reached a new GP must be created. It's simply untrue that there are "plans for 33,000 new homes in rural areas", unless activists consider Highway 50 to be rural, and some actually do.

Another Taylor initiative is titled: "**Initiative to Retain El Dorado County's Current Zoning**". This one is just plain weird: State law requires each county to have a "General Plan" and requires that the county's zoning be consistent with that GP. The zoning **MUST** be consistent with the GP and not visa-versa. As one judge noted in a local court case specifically regarding this issue: "*The tail does not wag the dog!*"

Finally the fourth initiative is titled "**Protect Rural Communities – Fix Community Region Line Flaws.**" Another odd one since the BOS has already included Taylor's area of Camino/Pollock Pines Community Region to be analyzed to change it to a Rural Center, as requested a year ago by local Camino /Pollock Pines residents and the agricultural community. Now activists in Shingle Springs and El Dorado Hills also want to change their Community Region boundaries, which would crumble the GP foundational structure that preserves EDCs rural areas. Center claims we can accommodate future growth within existing rural lands and rural roads *without a financing plan to maintain the rural roads.*

Next Issue: We will disclose researched data/actual numbers for the past ten years under this GP, and statistical data regarding exactly what *has actually* been built under this GP.