



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](mailto:KathyeRussell@gmail.com)

## *"Developing Mutual Support on Community-Wide Issues"*

### TID-BITS

**Good Bye and God Bless: Virginia Crespo**, a prominent and positive local activist in political and civic groups, died April 26 of a heart attack caused by heart disease. She was 62.

Virginia had a strong interest in public affairs and served as a legislative intern at the state Capitol in 1968. She was founding president of the Placerville Area League of Women Voters and president of the El Dorado West Republican Women Federated club. As chairwoman of a citizens' advisory group, she played a key role in funding and construction of the Bass Lake truck lane on Highway 50, and was the first woman president of the Taxpayers Association of El Dorado County (EDC). Shortly after settling in locally in 1986, she worked successfully with others to build a new public library in Cameron Park. She was a secretary for the Affordable Housing Coalition of EDC and helped organize United Outreach, a faith-based group assisting homeless families to obtain housing, food and social services.

Although politics and activism has long been a local blood sport, Virginia was not cut from that cloth. She was honest and open in seeking truth. She had a lovely, kind personality that opened others to hear her, never abrasive and mean. Many of us in the Business Alliance years ago, worked with Virginia on a variety of issues. Rest in peace Virginia – you and your well-reasoned kindness will be missed. She is survived by her husband of 38 years, Dave.

### TAKING THE "FEAR" OUT OF "FEAR-MONGERING"

One of the things voters have come to adamantly dislike about election season is fear-mongering and sorting the truth from the lies being propagated by candidates. Locally such lies are targeted at the current General Plan and housing development growth, because that's what sells in these foothills. In reality the candidates character is easily researched online and from what we've seen it's worth your time to review as all are not who they portray themselves to be. Similarly, as we've examined the reality of the growth numbers being claimed, it's clear that it's as much about public perception as it is about reality.

We're in a time where so much information is quickly available online, yet we need to be more responsible than ever to do our own research. **Voting for individuals based on single-issues in common hasn't served our country or community well. This local election is a great example as online research will "out" the character of many candidates.** We still believe character counts! We've spent many millions in taxpayer funds, and over ten years developing and finally obtaining public support, for the current General Plan. But those who didn't get what they wanted continue to disrupt its implementation and foster community discontent. Unfortunately that can only be accomplished by misleading information and hype.

Fortunately, there is now an active "middle" in the voting pool. It's been said one-third of this County is anti-growth; one-third are pro-growth; and one-third are in the "middle". The middle folks are open to facts and education. It is to this middle group that we offer the following facts about the current General Plan, growth in general, and recent claims by candidates and land use initiatives.

#### **The #1 Big Lie: "The Board of Supervisors is amending the General Plan to allow 33,000 more homes in El Dorado County..."**

The 2004 General Plan (GP), using a 1999 base year, provides for approximately 27,000 total new single family homes. 14,000 new single family homes *have already been built since 1999*, most in El Dorado Hills, leaving approximately 13,000 additional single family homes to be accommodated over the next 20 years (2036) or beyond. That is four decades! This is represented by a 1.03% annual growth rate, adopted by this Board of Supervisors (BOS), to be accommodated over almost 40 years.

To be clear, **the "fear" in the mongering by candidates and activists is accomplished not only by changing the numbers, but by changing the definition of "rural" lands.** A few El Dorado Hills and Shingle Springs activists have re-defined "rural" to include their Community Regions of Shingle Springs, Diamond Springs and El Dorado Hills. So again we ask: If future growth is not accommodated in the Community Regions, where will it go: To our rural and agricultural lands? That is unacceptable to the majority of voters.

## **TRAFFIC INITIATIVES: REALITY VS HYPE**

As we've stated for months now, the Community Region boundaries/lines, were originally drafted based on State law (s) and existing development patterns based on access to water, sewer and transportation, which is not available in our rural and agricultural lands.

**The #2 Big Lie: "El Dorado Hills' traffic on Highway 50 is at gridlock Level of Service F".** Ah – so many lies – so little time.

As we reported in our last issues: *"According to Caltrans, the only actual issue on Highway 50 is an approximate 1/4 mile strip whereby 'congestion' lasts about 45 minutes during commute time, therefore folks are forced to slow down to about 45 miles per hour. The solution to this congestion is now under construction and again, per Caltrans, it will fix the problem."*

The bottom line for road improvements is simple: Measure Y is working. It's not working for many as it's expensive, but it is doing what voters asked: The 15,000 new homeowners (since 1999) paid \$200,000,000 for improvements made to EDC roads, including Highway 50. With Measure Y remaining in place as part of the General Plan, those 13,000 remaining new homes will generate another estimated \$250,000,000 in new fees for additional road improvements.

The Center/Moore initiative, co-authored by candidate Penn, would have existing residents pay for those road improvements by killing Measure Y requirements in GP that require new development pay. We consider this a lie because Center was the original 1998 Measure Y creator and he negotiated with a committee for its extension in 2008. Penn was a regular participant at Regulatory Reform meetings and never challenged the current data or Measure Y's effectiveness at those meetings/hearings.

Center/Moore/Penn and pseudo traffic engineer activists have challenged county staff on the new Traffic Demand Model (TDM) now used and controlled by EDC's DOT staff. Their "fix roads" voter initiative requires that Cal Trans' criteria be used for local land use planning. Yet Cal Trans' documents in question serve a single purpose: To aggressively compete nationally for limited federal dollars as part of a statewide system. They are NOT adequate as a basis for calculating local land use based on a few feet of slow traffic on Highway 50 at the County line. To take away local control of such data, and defer to a statewide bureaucracy to handle, is close to insanity, and asking for so many problems it's inconceivable.

**The #3 Big Lie: "The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors is being controlled by developer influence."**

This lie seeks to foment public outrage and push the Board of Supervisors (BOS) into abandoning many years of work to implement the General Plan. Again, we find the same coalition of anti-growth activists who never liked this General Plan at the heart of this lie. To discover the facts one only has to go as far as checking the public record as well as the voting records of supervisors.

We took the time to do that BOS research and this is what we found:

Since the 1999 base year, and under the current General Plan, less than 200 single family parcels have been approved and created outside of the existing Specific Plans (most Specific Plans are located in El Dorado Hills) and passed by the BOS in the late 1980s and 1990s. Ironically there is general consensus that, in fact, heavy developer influence peddling was occurring throughout the 1990s, when a substantial amount of new residential parcels were created and, of note, Bill Center was on the Board of Supervisors for four of those years.

The new "middle" that has surfaced in the past few years has been singularly focused on relieving our area of burdensome regulations that stifle growth and instead have been focusing on ways to spawn more economic development and assure fair policy implementation for all development. Their interests seek to eliminate favoritism by any one group - development or anti-growth interests - in favor of strengthening the GP policies to allow for its full implementation, one step at a time. Under the guidance of those in the middle and of the Community and Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC), staff and the public are making progress.

The Board of Supervisors will soon consider a wide range of General Plan land use decisions, including: Adding 20,000 acres to Agricultural Districts; Revising allowed home occupations; Alternative uses for private timberlands; Expanded economic uses of rural lands as alternatives to land splits; Neighborhood commercial zones; Pollock Pines/Camino revision to a Rural Center as requested by that community years ago; Community commercial architectural designs, and much more. With so much progress involving so many "average citizens" the only conclusions we can draw regarding voter initiatives, is that there is a segment of local citizens who simply do not want the General Plan implemented, and economic development to take place.

Each of the voter initiatives provides bad solutions to complex problems, often with over-simplified answers. They are not plans, they are not strategy, they are not policy, and they are not good government. It is time to work together *with the middle majority!*