



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@sbcglobal.net](mailto:KathyeRussell@sbcglobal.net)

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

### **MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

Navy SEAL training would be ideal preparation for business ownership. Everything begins with commitment and attitude. The concept of failure is not an option for SEALs. To promote this mindset they are trained to eliminate the words "I can't" from their vocabulary and from their minds. They know their capacity to perform at high levels drops substantially the *minute* they let doubt enter their minds.

In reading this, and in following the US government shutdown theatrics, I thought of local efforts to better plan for growth in El Dorado County (EDC). It's been a very difficult process to bring diverse "visions" together into one united effort to reform EDC's regulatory functions. The Land Use Policy Programmatic Update (LUPPU) process has succeeded so far by opening the door to include all visions for discussion and consideration. I believe it's also succeeded because it has been based on facts. What can be reasonably changed? What are legal realities EDC must embrace? What are practical goals for the area? All these things were considered as this process was refined.

However the real reason that Regulatory Reform, now a team under the Community and Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC), and the LUPPU process have progressed so far is fundamentally because several participants simply refused to entertain the thought "*We can't*". These individuals not only strongly embraced the concept of "*Yes we can*" implement the General Plan (GP), but they went one step further and seemed to know what SEALs are further trained to believe, that they could "*Make It Happen*".

To be successful, SEALs are also taught they must fully commit and make things happen. For the LUPPU process the goal was simple: **Proponents committed to implementing the adopted GP**. That was and remains the overriding LUPPU goal. Yet there are factions of the community that never liked or accepted the GP as adopted. A few groups are now working to overturn the GP and discredit the LUPPU process, or change it to their preferred vision. The process being used is to discredit the LUPPU process and support new interpretations of Measure Y to stop residential growth from going forward.

We remain strong believers that with factual data as the LUPPU foundation the GP can be fairly implemented. With the soon-to-be-released Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Targeted General Plan Amendment-Zoning Ordinance Update (TGPA-ZOU) process due soon, we hope the community will adopt the SEALs' motto to just ***Make It Happen!***

### **DRAFT LUPPU EIR RELEASED SOON**

On 4/4/11 and 11/14/11 the BOS adopted **Resolutions of Intention (ROI)** in support of fundamental objectives for the Targeted General Plan Amendments (TGPA) and the subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR) review. These ROIs ultimately became the focus of the environmental review that will be released soon. (**Note:** *The BOS will make final decisions following the environmental analysis of each action*). The BOS also cited the need to keep the proposed GP amendments narrowly focused on these objectives to minimize time and costs:

- Increase community jobs and sales tax revenue;
- Increase moderate-priced housing availability;
- Promote and Protect the EDC's Agriculture and Natural Resources lands;
- No proposed changes to the current General Plan Land Use Designations except as follows:
  - ⇒ Limited clean-up language as identified through the Zoning Ordinance Update process;
  - ⇒ Consideration of change to Camino/Pollock Pines from Community Region (CR) to Rural Center (RC);
  - ⇒ Agriculture District boundaries adjustments, including adding new areas as previously decided.

The focus and precise targeting of the above BOS action as originally voted for, seemed to anticipate some controversy over land-use designations and/or future attempts to use the LUPPU process to significantly alter – not just implement – the existing General Plan. However they also allowed flexibility for the BOS to consider factual information that would result from the environmental review. The release of the DEIR will disclose any factual data that warrants changes to this original focused targeting.

## **BOS MAKES TRAFFIC FEES EASIER TO PAY**

A coalition of residents and churches primarily located on the Divide (Georgetown,) previously determined that one obstacle to rebounding from the “2008 economic crash” was the high cost of fees. The solution developed by the group was a reduction in building fees and more flexibility and relief in how the Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) fees are funded by individuals. This area is highly dependent on a healthy, vibrant local construction industry that has been negatively affected by the loss of many construction jobs. So they developed a plan and sought EDC leaders’ support.

As a result, and at the urging of Supervisor Brian Veerkamp at the Board of Supervisors (BOS) October 1, 2013 public meeting, the BOS voted to direct staff to take the following actions:

- 1) Reinstate the Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) Fee Deferral Program for Residential projects (Policy B-15) with a change to the language that would require a repayment period of 15 years instead of the current 5 years; and
- 2) Develop a new policy to be enacted by January 1, 2014 that would reduce the Building Department fees by 25% for the following project types: Garages, Granny Flats, Decks, Additions and Remodels. The policy is to be evaluated annually.

Congratulations to all who worked towards this positive outcome. They too know how to make it happen!

## **LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LDR) LAND-USE DESIGNATION EXAMINED**

“Low Density Residential (LDR)” is a General Plan (GP) land use designation. As such it is a significant piece of an intricate puzzle that forms the land use vision for El Dorado County as set forth in the General Plan (GP). In short, the overriding Plan is to “*protect rural agricultural lands while planning for growth in areas that have (or have access to) infrastructure*” or, by directing future growth to the Community Regions. LDR is an intricate and significant tool to accomplish these goals. Changing or eliminating this tool/planning concept would have major repercussions to the overall GP. LDR lands are clearly defined in the General Plan, as follows:

**Low-Density Residential (LDR):** *This land use designation establishes areas for single-family residential development in a rural setting. In Rural Regions, this designation shall provide a transition from Community Regions and Rural Centers into the agricultural, timber, and more rural areas of the County and shall be applied to those areas where infrastructure such as arterial roadways, public water, and public sewer are generally not available. This land use designation is also appropriate within Community Regions and Rural Centers where higher density serving infrastructure is not yet available.*

*The maximum allowable density shall be one dwelling unit per 5.0 acres. Parcel size shall range from 5.0 to 10.0 acres. Within Community Regions and Rural Centers, the LDR designation shall remain in effect until a specific project is proposed that applies the appropriate level of analysis and planning and yields the necessary expansion of infrastructure.*

The GP was adopted 2004 and ratified by voters in 2005 after more than ten years in development, millions of dollars spent and lawsuits settled. LDR is clearly not a “new” planning concept; LDR lands have received focused public attention, because several proposed new residential development projects such as San Stino and Dixon Ranch are currently designated LDR. LDR lands may be within the CR boundaries or within more rurally-designated areas.

In reviewing the GP definition for LDR lands, the Plan clearly anticipated that residential development would be proposed and be appropriate on LDR sites. It further anticipated that all infrastructures might not be in place when a development came along. It also defined LDR lands in Community Regions to be appropriate, albeit at densities of one home per 5-10 acre parcels. As with some of the new proposed developments, if the project is proposing higher densities than 5-10 acre parcels, a GPA (General Plan Amendment) process is available and will ultimately require a majority of the Board of Supervisors’ approval.

However newly proposed projects have already attracted opposition as neighbors of the specific projects learned of the possibility that residential development might occur in the Community Regions in which they live – in some cases right next door. But the “process” is in place to individually address each development proposal, and proposed projects should be allowed to submit all the studies and known environmental impacts they discover at the time the projects are judged by the BOS.

To stop these projects *prior* to the completion of the specific GPA project review process and BOS hearing, some members of the public are requesting that LDR lands be removed from Community Regions (CRs), citing the fact that the “current GP inventory projections are adequate”. The GP inventory is currently under analysis as part of the TGPA-ZOU EIR. We caution against any action that could make a widespread and far-reaching impact on the fine balance of policies and goals contained in the GP. **There would be significant impacts to the entire county - and in particular to the rural lands and agricultural areas - that the GP land uses seek to meld together and protect.** It makes more sense to allow the established process to evolve and judge each project on its own merits, studies and findings, rather than to make short-sighted changes to the entire county’s land-use planning roadmap.

# General Plan Rural Region Concept

