

From: Benjamin Green [mailto:benjamingreen@suddenlink.net]
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To: Richardson, Michael
Subject: Public Comment on the GPU

The Board of Supervisors is scheduling budget talks simultaneously with GPU meetings. It should be pointed out that there is a link between the two. It is obvious that the county is not in good shape budget-wise. The services citizenry expect are not being provided.

Drive down county roads, make a service call to the sheriff's office, watch arrestees immediately released because of jail overcrowding, witness the never-ending GPU process. With a budget in poor shape for the near future, it seems especially unwise to be preparing a GP that encourages development in areas without infrastructure. Development will not produce revenue needed for county services; development will continue to degrade the public commons (rivers, forests, drinking water, etc). Specifically, the budget should contain additional funds to rewrite the GPU EIR. Changes the Board has tentatively approved have substantially altered the document; as a result the environmental impacts have also been substantially altered. No matter what GP is finally adopted, the Board should also be setting aside funds to defend it in court because one "side" or another (and perhaps more than one) is going to file a lawsuit challenging the EIR or the GP itself. More funds may actually be spent defending the GP in court than have been spent developing the GPU.

Expect another round of costs as the document undergoes forced legal revisions. Ironically, while the Board is seeking ways to cut costs and balance the budget it is also setting policies that are guaranteed to cost the county a lot of money in the near and long terms. You should recognize this and see the link between budgets and planning.

Benjamin Green