

Redevelopment

Community Comment
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Sam Pennisi

This won't come as a shock to most of you that I voted for Governor Brown in the last state election. I am not a great party player in that I will not march in lock step to support bad ideas from the party in which I am registered. But I recognize the way our two party system works and I know that compromise in legislation begins in the party. If one wants to have input, you have to be part of the process. Suffice it to say that I do not always agree with the democratic party or any single elected official within the party.

Of the many things I disagree with Governor Brown about, one of the most significant was his idea to abolish redevelopment agencies. I know there have been some blatant and unfortunate abuses of these agencies throughout the state. But in Humboldt County, these agencies have been used to some very good outcomes. Often, rural counties like ours have used the power of focusing property taxes to fix a problem and\ or satisfy a state mandated requirement of the general plan. Blight, low income housing and business or industrial parks are among the projects that have been made possible through redevelopment.

That opportunity was eliminated by this Governor. We read in reports that some redevelopment projects were in process when the plug was pulled on the redevelopment agency idea. This has left some agencies owing the state large sums of money because a project is started but not finished. This is government at it's worst. The state allows counties and cities to exist. They are corporations allowed by the state. They are governed by state law. If the state wants to end redevelopment agencies, they can; it's that simple. But how they do it will bear the mark of either good or bad management. Cities must be allowed to end their projects in a reasonable and business like way. If this was not done, the state is responsible for a mess of half done projects and a lot of wasted money.

On the other hand, if the cities had adequate warning and chose to not take it seriously, then the city can and should be held responsible for the waste or uncompleted projects. The local agencies need to get this fixed or you and I, the taxpayer will end up paying for dropping the ball.

On a lighter note, it seems we are now discussing changing the name of the airport. We've raised a lot of money to bribe a private business to come in and compete with United Express. I know; everyone is doing it. So right in the middle of that effort we want to change what little brand we have? Surely we have better things to focus our attention on.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.