

LUCERNE VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (LVEDA)

Chuck Bell, Pres. chuckb@sisp.net 760 964 3118

ACTIONS FOR THE LUCERNE VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

Submittal to County Planning for July 20, 2016 LV meeting.

Our current Community Plan has goals and policies specific to LV – don't want them lost in the General Plan.

RURAL STANDARDS/DEVELOPMENT CODE:

We want to participate in injecting rural standards into the County Development Code. Lucerne Valley needs no more Dollar Stores with concrete sidewalks to nowhere. Rural standards language in our current Plan needs to be reinforced and expanded. This needs a meeting with Planning.

COUNTY PERMIT PROCESS:

The Plan needs to reflect our past and pending efforts to streamline the process for residential and commercial – discretionary and ministerial - permitting and permits. High permit fees are making it extremely onerous to build a residence in this “Severely Economically Disadvantaged Community”.

HOUSING ELEMENT:

The Housing Element (with specific mention in our Plan) needs to reflect our work in developing an affordable, senior housing project (emphasis on veterans) on donated land adjacent to the shopping center, Community Center, Senior Center, Park, fire stations, etc. Include a policy of direct County assistance (political/economic/grants/etc.).

Need to factor in reduction of Rancho Lucerne Planned Development's potential # of homes.

RENEWABLE ENERGY:

Industrial scale wind power generation is totally unacceptable within our Plan area.

Need specific language and action re: LV's strong position supporting "point of use" solar PV (rooftops/parking lots/backyards/etc.) – which we have done at the shopping center – and which are pending at Pioneer Park/library/High School parking lots.

Need specific language and action opposing any further industrial/commercial scale commercial solar PV in Lucerne Valley EXCEPT for the 4-6 square mile area we have mapped and proposed via SPARC, etc. for large-scale RE zoning – (the only place suitable for any solar project over 1 MW?? not solely intended for on-site 'point of use'). The Plan needs to reflect said "Solar PV Zone/District" that will be (better be) established via SPARC (County's Renewable Energy Element).

Work with SANBAG/County/Joint Power Authority/SCE/local solar firms, etc. to determine best options for local community benefit within said zone/district –and help establish ie: Community Choice Aggregate (CCA) and/or Micro Grid/etc. projects.

County actions need to reflect our opposition to elements of BLM's DRECP, its ACEC's, DFA's and State land exchanges that adversely affect Lucerne Valley. When SPARC is complete – per the standing agreement between County and BLM – we work with County/BLM/State Lands Commission to determine 'acceptable' locations for RE (PV Solar only) projects.

Lucerne Valley's general opposition to industrial scale RE projects includes lack of any local, economic benefit. Non-local union workers are employed – no local motels to accommodate them – minimal if any local purchases - operation requires minimal full-time employment and usually not local – under current policies the solar 'improvements' can't be added to assessed value – thus no increase in property tax revenue (except maybe for the fence) – PLUS – said projects can consume tremendous amount of acreage that could be put to more economically beneficial uses (ie: local industry and jobs).

LAND USE:

The current Plan's statement of County support for land exchange along the rail spur with BLM and proposed Industrial zoning of said parcels when become privatized must remain in our Plan. County works with us, BLM, Cushenbury Mine Trust, private parties, etc. to implement this plan – help determine exchanges – provide tax write-offs for willing participants, etc.

Our current Plan's Conservation Element language is good – citing Development Code sections - but the Element needs to be updated to emphasize the need for education and enforcement re: illegal land clearing/scraping/disturbance – the need to have a well and irrigation system on-site before any ag. practice is initiated, etc. Wind erosion of disturbed soil is becoming a major problem for our community and downwind residents.

We/County Ag. Dept./Code Enforcement need to include in an ordinance (reviving one that the County recently was drafting but dropped) what green waste mulch is “acceptable” and how to apply it to tree and other crop farms that are rapidly increasing here and throughout other desert communities. Action is to work with Natural Resource Conservation Service of the USDA to determine the best ingredients for good soil health and agronomic application rates of said material – whether disked in or ground cover for tree crops. Needs to include benefits/detriments of chopped green waste (which can include trash) – compost – bio solids – and their combinations.

Lucerne Valley and Newberry Springs help County draft and resurrect a raven dispersal/propane cannon/noise impact ordinance that the County initiated and dropped. Cannon noise has been a long-term major problem for residents and which doesn't deter raven predation on crops.

The Open Space Element needs to include our new County Park (Russell Park) on Visalia Ave. – administered by CSA 29.

The “trail” language is good – but need to put more emphasis on mountain bike trails – both on private and BLM lands.

County assist us in working with BLM re: the West Mojave Plan Route Network designations for our region.

Designate portions of Rabbit and Lucerne Dry Lakes for passive recreation such as para-sailing, land sailing, etc. (Will require fencing to keep OHV's from disturbing the smooth dry lake surfaces necessary for such uses). Find a party to administer such events and use.

WATER/WASTEWATER:

Table 6 needs to reflect increases in annual water production.

If not resolved before the Plan is approved – definitely need the County to revert to its previous allowance of hauled water to any new development not able to be served by a central water system - with the policy enshrined in the Dev. Code and our Plan: “Hauled water allowed to any parcel or resident not able to be served by a centralized water purveyor – by a licensed hauler from an approved source”.

Need reference to the Mojave Basin Groundwater Adjudication (Judgment) – with increasing influx of agriculture (mostly orchards) pumping more than the “Minimal Producer’s” allowance of 10 acre’/year – thus ‘pumping outside the Judgment’ - not obtaining water rights which the adjudication requires. Need policies for educating realtors, well drillers, land-owners, etc. re: requirements of the Judgment – and where and how to obtain pumping/water rights. Need policy requiring the County to record the Judgment on certain larger parcels within the Mojave Basin Adjudication not served by a water purveyor.

Work with Mojave Water Agency to construct a recharge basin to percolate State Water from the Morongo Pipeline on the north side of the Helendale Fault (area with the most significant groundwater decline).

Question: Do the Col. WQCB’s septic tank/parcel/density standards in the current Plan still apply?

Acknowledge the “Lucerne Valley Water/Sewer Study” funded by County and Mojave Water Agency.

Work with Cal Rural Water to promote the consolidation of certain town mutual water companies to provide more reliable service to their commercial and residential customers.

Promote the wastewater project included in said study in order to preempt high nitrate concentrations from septic tanks upstream from the high groundwater levels created by the damming effect of the Helendale Fault. County Dept. of EHS and Mojave Water Agency continue testing specific wells for groundwater levels of nitrate and other harmful constituents.

Create new or utilize an existing entity to administer water/wastewater grants – obtained with County assistance.

Continue to work with Mojave Water Agency – possibly with County Flood Control District if necessary – re: long-standing request for retention/detention basins to collect natural runoff along the upper reaches of the Cushenbury Wash to allow percolation to groundwater in that coarse alluvium area that otherwise flows downstream, flooding out houses, Hwy 247 – numerous County roads – and evaporates in Lucerne Dry Lake. Said project would benefit recharge to the over-drafted, major groundwater aquifer north of the Helendale Fault. Pursue transfer of the BLM parcel within this critical flow area to MWA or LVEDA under BLM’s “Public Purpose Act” – the best locations for said basins/low levees/etc. to be placed.

Incorporate goals and policies for retention basins for groundwater recharge in association with FC projects – not just moving water faster toward the dry lakes to evaporate.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Major focus on parcels/structures along Hwy 18 in the commercial area, plus other main roads for rehab. or removal of unused, vacant, deteriorated structures.

Lucerne Valley (via a LVEDA or Chamber committee) to continue to work with County Code Enforcement and Cal Recycle re: cleaning up illegal dumps (tires, trash, etc.) throughout the area.

County Code Enforcement and the community establish a map/list of the most significant project locations – timeframes for action – local volunteer work forces to assist, etc.

Initiate/support Cal Recycle and other programs and grants that will provide for an increase in CE desert staffing – an absolute necessity.

County CE assist community in periodic town clean-ups – where residents bring tires, etc. – including volunteers cleaning up illegal dumps - in volumes that cannot be accommodated at our Solid Waste Transfer Station. Continue hauling tires to Mitsubishi Cement Plant as the best and cleanest method of tire recycling.

HEALTH/SAFETY/FIRE/LAW ENFORCEMENT

(NOTE: CDF is now “CalFire”).

Retain current Plan’s language eliminating the SRA from our Plan area – no real fire-prone vegetation on the north slope of the SB Mts. until reach BLM and USFS boundaries to the south.

Table 7: Needs revision. The SRA is not just USFS land “area served”. It currently includes private lands as well – but which we want to eliminate from the SRA.

Need County support for eliminating the SRA “fire tax”.

Work with County Sheriff’s Department to assure there are sufficient deputies on duty to cover our large area – and establish “Neighborhood Watch” programs.

Work with St. Mary’s Hospital, Victor Valley Transit Authority, local foundations, etc. to implement the health and medical transportation needs determined from our local Health Survey (ie: local clinic – St. Mary’s medical van visits at the Shopping Center utilizing the part-time Dr. office – pay local drivers to take people to doctor appointments, shopping, etc.).

ECONOMICS

County help LVEDA create some type of “Enterprise Zone” – or equivalent – to protect us (to the max extent possible) from continued federal/state/County dictates/rules that significantly dilute our independence and ability to function as a rural community – especially with our status as a “Disadvantaged Community”. One of our disadvantages is having to deal with the onslaught of onerous and senseless requirements that don’t work in our environment – diluting our custom and culture - that the County should help protect us and other communities from. The County has federal and state consultants/lobbyists – so use them more effectively for your constituents. (Good example is the minimum wage increase and the mandatory sick pay law that was passed. Both significantly increase the cost of employees, and economists who know the High Desert say that they spell disaster for our low income area. It has been suggested that the law should exclude areas such as ours).

County join the Small Business Council (SBC) is dealing with the State on economically damaging legislation – get exemptions for hospitality and retail businesses. County also implement “Regionalization”, which would carve out areas where the effect of those laws would be deleterious to particular areas. We expect the County would be aware of the necessity of regionalization in harmful legislation coming out of Sacramento that would damage the County’s, the High Desert’s and Lucerne Valley’s economies. We expect the County to be our advocate and protector to maintain economic health of the community and region.

Determine if our cement/limestone/aggregate plants should be within a “Mineral District” to protect them and our mineral resources from conflicting land-uses. Determine suitable boundaries for said District.

County Economic Development Agency/Departments take a greater role in helping our “Severely Economically Disadvantaged Community” write and obtain grants for community improvements, etc.

Cottage industries. Well suited to LV. The County needs to not only remove road-blocks, but also to encourage and facilitate cottage industries to increase the attractiveness of living/working here. Same for home-based businesses which are important for our economy.

ZONING

(QUESTION): How much of any zone/district changes will be available in this update? Do we need any zone changes or land-use additions/deletions within our zones – especially in town? Extension of AG. District boundaries that we discussed at one of the meetings?

RECREATION:

(See Land-Use section).

ROADS/TRANSPORTATION:

GENERAL:

ADT numbers need to be revised – are increasing. Need new survey. Especially Rabbit Springs Rd. due to being heavily used on weekends as access to the western part of the BLM Johnson Valley OHV Area. Need goal and policy re: designating Rabbit Springs Rd. “local use only” – and route OHV-related traffic through Hwy 18 commercial area in town – generate more business - with left turn lane on east bound Hwy 247 onto Camprock Rd. County Trans. apply for State OHV Commission grants – funded by its OHV license fees - for certain road work to accommodate OHV users.

NOTE: ADT for Hwy’s 18 and 247 will show a definite increase over 2007 data. (Best locations for ADT checks have been provided to Planning).

Need specific action re: road maintenance funding to compensate for little if any Measure I revenue – especially since numerous and heavy truckloads of cement, limestone and aggregates generated within and hauled out of LV don’t constitute a “sale” until turned into a ‘product’ elsewhere – thus we get no sales tax nor

Measure I \$ from it. We generate this sales tax 'wealth' for other communities and states – and need to be compensated for deteriorating road surfaces.

Must retain "County support" of including us in the High Desert Corridor (HDC) project/budget so we get funding for road improvements through our community to accommodate the definite increase in traffic resulting from the HDC – especially long-haul trucking – expanding use of this major trade route, etc.

Service Level "D" for Highway 18 is absolutely not acceptable – and must start a program of increasing lanes and turn pockets. Same for other road improvements mentioned in the current Plan.

Add to "Scenic Routes" section – our current drive for State 'Scenic' status for Hwy 247 (both Old Woman Springs Rd. and Barstow Rd. sections).

SPECIFIC PROJECTS: (Note: We have documents explaining these projects in much more detail if you need them. Some of these projects are on County and Caltrans' lists – some are in our "Road Fee Plan" – but not budgeted due to lack of revenue).

Should Granite Rd. remain as a proposed "major highway"?

HWY 18 - 4 LANE PASSING SEGMENT BETWEEN Lucerne and Apple Valleys.

More "no passing" striping at curves, etc. west of BV turnoff".

"No passing" striping from Buena Vista Rd. on the west part of town to past CDF station on the east.

Town's commercial strip needs continuous L/T center lane. Ultimately 4 lanes plus said turning lane.

RESURFACE HWY 18 BETWEEN LV AND AV.

L/T POCKET AT KENDALL.

PAVE MIDWAY RD. BETWEEN HWYs 247 AND 18: County Trans. re-apply for MDAQMD air quality grant to reduce ambient dust (includes PM 10) from increasing road use.

OBTAIN EASEMENTS AND PAVE FOOTHILL RD. BETWEEN TRADEPOST AND BAKER. Long-term project should be paving further west into Apple Valley and east to Hwy 18 or to Camrock Rd. – as alternative route due to emergencies and for routing increasing truck traffic away from the town center (Hwy 18). (Especially important if and when the Apple Valley section of the High Desert Corridor is constructed and linked to Hwy 18 at Bear Valley Rd.).

PAVE LADERA RD. BETWEEN 247 AND 18. Short segment and relatively simple project which would greatly shorten Fire Dept's response times to emergencies on the Hwy 18 segment to Mitsubishi Cement and Big Bear.

R/L TURN POCKETS ON MILPAS RD.

ALONG WITH NO PASSING STRIPING FROM EAST OF 4 WAY STOP PAST FIRE STATIONS/CHANGE TO 45 MPH LIMIT.

EASTBOUND HWY 247 L/T POCKETS AT POST OFFICE – MIDWAY - MEDANOS RDS.

EASTBOUND HWY 247 R/T LANE AT VISALIA.

INSTALL FLASHERS ON WEST AND SOUTHBOUND APPROACHES TO HWY 247/247 4 WAY STOP.

R/L TURN POCKETS – NORTH AND SOUTHBOUND LANES AT HWY 247 (Barstow Rd.) AND RABBIT SPRINGS RD. INTERSECTION. (Northbound right turn most important now).

UPDATE STATUS OF COUNTY/LV "TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES FEE PLAN".

ELIMINATE "RIGHT TURN ONLY" AT EXISTING STORAGE FACILITY ENTERING HWY 18 – ALLOW LEFT TURNS.

