

Instructions to Candidates: ***Please provide your written responses before the end of the Sunday before the scheduled Zoom call for your District.*** Your responses will be posted on our website and on YouTube for voters to review. The forum moderators will select one of your responses and ask for additional detail during the forum. Thanks in advance for your participation!

- **With the County's on-going struggle to fund its budget, how would you propose to either reduce the County's expenditures and/or increase the County's revenues? What services could be reduced or cut, to reduce expenditures? Where and how might revenues be increased?**

The County will experience diminishing returns due to an inability to innovate, utilize modern funding models or wrap their heads around true, sustainable economic development. We can't, and shouldn't, simply depend on property tax revenue (limited to 2%/year). For property tax to sustain us we would need to see major development, beyond our Housing Element Goals. The County has applied the classic "government solution" of leveraging fees and layers of costs at every opportunity, passing the buck to residents- particularly in the permitting process- unduly burdening mom and pop endeavors.

In recent decades our economic development has been unremarkable. I have a plan to form a mutually beneficial relationship with the County and our rural and working-landscape industries to increase options, profitability and revenue for business while contributing sales tax dollars for focused mitigations- such as rural road maintenance and fire resilience. The beautiful thing here is it's funded by our well-heeled tourists, not residents, and will allow our businesses to grow. Agriculture alone is responsible for \$750 million total annual economic impact. The "opportunity costs" to the County from decades of inaction has left a mass of money on the table and tied the hands of our rural industries.

This is not to be confused with a "Fee Assessment District" which is the government solution of simply laying a fee on the industry to offset impacts. Ag needs to wake up to the fact that this has been talked about, with support of the public and elected officials. It's imperative that we be proactive with the type of model I referred to where we have a win-win situation for all. Because if we don't, this will happen anyhow and without benefit to your business.

- **What is your position on the proposed Costco development in EDH and why? What benefits & drawbacks do you see this project having on EDC?**

As a discretionary project that will come before the Planning Commission, I cannot speak to it (I'm the current District 3 appointee). But my general approach to all proposed

projects is to assess compliance with the General Plan, hear and balance stakeholder and public feedback and make sure issues such as traffic, safety, etc. are all adequately addressed and mitigated and proper conditions applied if necessary.

- **In the last couple of years, the Planning and Building Dept has come under scrutiny to the point of there even being a Grand Jury investigation. What are your thoughts on the results of this investigation, the current BOS' response to this, and what would you do to improve the shortcomings of this department?**

This issue is a primary motivator for my decision to run for Supervisor. The bottlenecks in the permitting process are compounding our housing crisis, stifling rural economic development and costing regular people time, money and hope that they can enjoy their properties and build their dreams big or small.

I think the response to the investigation didn't match the seriousness of the situation. I would like to see more concern and a sense of urgency in addressing it, but then again a lack of urgency is the cultural norm of bureaucracy and the fundamental problem.

I believe the Director's proposed restructuring in the department and the creation of a new position with a Senior Planner focused on working from within to identify system and process issues is a great start.

But ultimately we need foundational culture change. The department should also be a customer-service organization whereas currently it sees itself as primarily regulatory. They also need to modernize their thinking, their approach and their execution. Efficiency, transparency and practical implementation must be prioritized. This is culture change from the top. Staff, as well as applicants, deserve a clear, logical process. Staff should be empowered and trusted to make judgment calls and supported by a clear mission and process.

Lastly, El Dorado County is addicted to making complex, overly prescriptive and conflicting ordinances when simple policies will suffice. Trying to cross reference our stratified layers of multiple and convoluted land-use policies predictably makes processing simple requests an onerous, circular and painful experience for all involved. Cleaning up, simplifying and streamlining these documents will have immediate positive results going forward.

- **Would you support the building of the proposed Alder Creek Dam? What are the benefits or deterrents of this project as you see it?**

I do not have enough information on the proposed funding mechanism for this project to fully endorse it or not. But in concept, building more water storage near the source is good. We're going to need it. I would want to know that adequate water rights are secured, that there is established demand/relationships for the sale of excess and that

an undue financial burden is not passed on to local ratepayers and that all applicable agencies and providers are on-board to best maximize the effort. I would want to be assured that El Dorado County is served first and foremost.

- **Wildfires are an ongoing concern for the citizens of EDC. CalFire has implemented what some might consider very restrictive and even intrusive regulations. The County is also looking at codifying its own set of fire prevention regulations. Do you feel this is appropriate, or not, and why?**

The County already codified the Vegetation Management Ordinance in 2019. It is currently open for revision with additional enforcement being proposed and is going well beyond the state's minimum. Everyone agrees on the goal: we want a fire-resilient landscape. But creating a local unfunded mandate with no hardship clause is all stick and no carrot. Let's be creative and try and find a way to get the results we want by incentivising- a tax rebate for properties that meet the goal, for example.

This ordinance has language that gives me real heartburn. Developed and undeveloped properties "on roads" may be required to clear 10 feet back and 15 feet up, measured from the edge of the pavement. Last I checked that was the County's easement. Sacramento and LA are now requiring homeowners to fix and maintain the public sidewalks on city streets for public use and safety. It's legal. And with this language in the ordinance all the Supervisors have to do is approve having landowners take over responsibility for clearing County public roads for fire access. Do I think this is their intention? That's not the right question. The language is there and we don't know what the future will bring, particularly if the state mandates counties keep all public roads accessible for fire vehicle access. They do not have the funding for that.

For me it's about cost. If a fire-safe council or the county gets funding to clear hazards, I do not believe a property owner should be able to refuse. But I do not think that public safety should fall solely on the shoulders of private individual landowners either. Let's look for an incentive, education-based way to get the community where we need to be.

And let's not forget the elephant in the room: our biggest unmanaged, fire hazard neighbor is the State and Federal government lands. The largest landowner in the County and not held to any standards even though the major, catastrophic fires we are worried about start on public lands not in neighborhoods.

- **Do you support the concept of a 'constitutional' sheriff? Why or why not?**

No. I believe in the Constitution and I believe in Sheriffs. But Sheriffs are nowhere mentioned in the Constitution, so I do not recognize additional powers not expressly granted therein. This would be my position regardless of what person or entity tries to

claim unilateral power. The Constitutional Sheriffs believe that a Sheriff has ultimate authority, above the President or Courts, in their own County. The founding fathers knew well the dangers of concentrated power and the Constitution, if followed, disallows this. I believe in the wisdom of our government's structure based on a check-and-balance of power between our three branches of government. I did, however, read Sheriff Mack's book. I understand why movements like this happen. I think people have lost faith in government and not without good reason. Local communities, especially rural ones, feel disenfranchised and this must be taken seriously. I support any effort to resolve the rural/urban, local/national disconnect.

- **Recently, the Ranch Marketing Ordinance has been under scrutiny because of the accessory uses allowed to ranchers and farmers "by right" such as non-agriculture events. In some circumstances land owners were taking advantage of the fact that specific use definitions were not defined. Do you feel that the matter is covered appropriately now or do you feel it needs to be explored more?**

The Ranch Marketing Ordinance was opened to respond to complaints about amplified music and sound. This was misguided from the start, because the ordinance that needed to be revisited is the Sound Ordinance itself. All they needed to do was define an appropriate sound level and operating hours for rural and agricultural lands. Simple, done deal. But what they did was open our regulatory scheme for the Ag industry and start analyzing every right, micromanaging and questioning operations, adding oversight and compliance measures around our activities and none of it directly addresses the original issue. The events still allowed are still allowed to be amplified, and the sound level was never addressed.

We need logic in leadership. And we need to protect the Ag Industry at a time when we are being hit by natural disasters and unstable markets.