

Mike Reagan REFLECTIONS

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YOUR ADVOCATE FOR SOLANO COUNTY'S 5TH DISTRICT

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"With growth coming at Solano County from both directions on Interstate 80, we need to clearly define our future, or it will be defined for us."

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We're into a new year with a big agenda

This year promises to bring lots of interesting discussions to the table. A new County General Plan, a transportation sales tax initiative and a lot more emphasis on our seniors. This is in addition to the efforts started last year to rethink how we look at compensation in the County; to get more quality jobs located in the County; and to ensure we have enough water, housing, and roadways to meet the needs of our growing population. None of these issues come with easy answers, and I'll need your inputs from time to time as we work together to come up with solutions.

New General Plan critical to ensuring our high quality of life

As I start my second year, I see the General Plan for the County as the big ticket item. This document will take almost three years to complete, but it will serve as the road map for how this County will grow for the next 20 years and beyond. There are differing views on how this County will look in the future, but one thing is clear for all of us: more people. Over the life of the General Plan, Solano County will add enough people to equal another Vacaville and Dixon. In the 10 years beyond this General Plan, we will add enough people to equal another Vallejo and Suisun City. These are staggering statistics, so we need to prepare to meet the challenge. We need to work together to determine how and where we can absorb our projected growth. This could necessitate a discussion of where to locate a new town as one of the possible solutions. Jobs, housing, water, sewage, transportation, robust agriculture and other industries, protection of the environment and recreation are all linked in a successful General Plan.

Superb flood response is not good flood management

First, I think the emergency response teams at the County and our cities did an awesome job responding to the raging flood waters over the New Year's holiday. But, as we start to dry out and fully understand the damage, we have to honestly assess our flood management practices. The Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) was formed, in part, to address flood control issues; however, its attention has been diverted elsewhere. We need to reestablish flood control as a major priority for SCWA because flood waters do not understand jurisdictional boundaries.

Business approach: profitability study, targeted marketing

Cultivating our ag industry is high on our list of economic development. The timing of the Agriculture Profitability Study with the General Plan update will go a long way toward ensuring we have the infrastructure in place to keep farmers in business for many more generations. At the same time, I am working to get existing economic development and tourism promotions working in the same direction. A quarterly meeting will allow the fertile ideas to cross-pollinate. Then, we can focus our marketing toward external decision makers.

Thank you for stepping up and serving Solano County

- Appointment of **Dr. John Howard** of Vacaville to the Animal Care Advisory Commission
- Reappointment of **Alan Freese** of Birds Landing and **Russell Lester** of rural Winters to the Agriculture Advisory Committee
- Appointment of **John Reeb** of Dixon to the Silveyville Cemetery District
- **MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE:** Go to www.mikereagan.net for a list of current committee and commission openings.

Serving You on These Committees

Board of Supervisors

- BRAC Subcommittee
- Personnel Subcommittee
- Military and Veteran Affairs Subcommittee
- Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee

Delta Protection Commission

Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management Board

ABAG Bay Area Hazardous Waste Management Facility Allocation Committee

Fouts Springs Youth Facility Board of Directors

Solano County Water Agency Board of Directors

Remote Access Network Board

Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission

Solano Economic Development Corp. Executive Committee & Board of Directors

City-County Coordinating Committee

Travis Regional Armed Forces Committee

Travis Community Consortium

Children's Policy and Planning Council

Partnership Health Plan of California

Winters Branch Library Financing Authority

Travis AFB Environmental Restoration Advisory Board

Tools of Learning Foundation Board of Directors

Vacaville Sunrise Rotary Board of Directors

LEAD, FOLLOW OR GET OUT OF THE WAY

Quality jobs need investment to attract quality employers

In business, having a great product is not enough. You have to market it. Solano County is a great place to live and a great place to locate manufacturing and other get-us-out-of-the-commute jobs. As part of the Board's new Economic Development and Tourism Committee, we are trying to tackle this issue. Two examples you may have seen: the ad in the special section on Solano County in *Comstocks*, and the county contracting with the Federal Technology Center to help our existing companies learn how to win federal contracts. I've been advocating the County do even more to increase its investment in attracting quality employers. Let me know what you think the County can do to attract more quality jobs.

Road fix: Bonds, sales tax measure and private investment

To get our roads in Solano County safe and moving again we need infrastructure to be a priority here and in California. We should carefully monitor the governor's proposed bond measure to see how it evolves in the coming months. The Solano County transportation sales tax measure will make us a self-help county, which enables us to compete for a greater share of state and federal resources. We also need to explore how partnering with private investment will help reduce our growing list of mobility barriers. Just in the 5th district, the list includes:

- Highway 12 is congested with traffic, accidents and a problematic bridge
- I-80 is a parking lot in sore need of repair and expansion.
- Truck traffic on Highway 113 through Dixon is getting worse.

To learn more about my road fix ideas, go to www.mikereagan.net.

Senior Coalition on horizon as baby boomers start retiring

Some very dedicated folks have come together in the last few months to help figure how we can bring more attention to senior issues. The details are still being hammered out, but a Senior Coalition is on the horizon. I hope the Board will appoint a Senior Issues Committee and that my peers will join me in creating an official advisory board on senior matters. We have many outstanding groups already working on senior issues, but we lack a forum for them to collaborate.

Legislation, cemeteries top list of vet issues being worked

This time last year there was not a forum for all of Solano County's veterans groups to work together. Now, the Military and Veterans Affairs Council has just about worked through a strategy for shared legislative advocacy. We are trying to come up with solutions to ensure the military cemeteries in Benicia and Mare Island left to us after base closures are maintained properly. We are also addressing how we can meet the expected demand for ceremonial services at the new federal Solano Veterans' Cemetery in Dixon.

More jail space coming; on to Homeland Security grants

Plans are under way to design and fund needed pre-sentencing and adult detention facilities. However, public safety needs more than just more jail space. I am challenging the County Administrator's Office to aggressively go after more Homeland Security and other grants so our Sheriff's Department and the Office of Emergency Services have the resources we need.

Workshops will help us rethink County compensation

The consultant did a great job of assessing our County compensation practices. However, he also left us with a several questions to answer before we can implement his recommendations. The HR staff is breaking them down into discrete topics, and we'll conduct workshops with interested stakeholders.

Watch Board of Supervisor meetings via the internet

I know you can't always come down to the Supervisors Chambers, but you can still see firsthand how the issues are being debated. Just go the County web site at http://solano.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2 and watch us live. You can also view past board meetings in the video archive.