

Dear Editor,

Each year tens of millions of dollars of capital are taken out of the Calaveras County economy in the form of state and federal taxes. It is important to return, at least, a portion of that money to the local economy.

Applying for and receiving state and federal grant funds is one way of returning tax dollars to our communities and leveraging additional investment from the private sector, both of which are critical to Calaveras County's future economic prospects.

Grants are also one way of funding implementation of the 2019 General Plan Update (GPU) which includes measures to improve forest health and fire safety, to strengthen the agricultural sector of the economy, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to produce workforce housing, and to conserve energy. Each type of GPU measure just mentioned is eligible for grant funds, and such funding has been awarded to other rural counties.

The Calaveras Planning Coalition recommends that county officials prioritize competitive grant applications to help fund GPU implementation which will, in turn, result in more jobs and the growth of local businesses. Though local government may need to secure and administer the funds, the actual work in the field can often be done by the private sector.

Please visit [calaverascap.com/opinion](http://calaverascap.com/opinion) to read the Coalition's full comment letter addressed to the Economic and Community Development Department regarding a comprehensive economic development strategy for Calaveras and four neighboring counties. You may also visit [grants.ca.gov](http://grants.ca.gov) to view an easily searchable database of all state grant opportunities.

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