

Avoiding urgency

Efforts to preserve the over 100-year-old train station in Valley Springs moved forward at the most recent Board of Supervisors meeting, where the Board approved an urgency ordinance to protect historic structures. In addition to preserving the train station at the intersection of 12 and 26, the urgency ordinance would also protect buildings like the Old Murphys Schoolhouse from being demolished. It is commendable that the BOS took urgent action to protect historic buildings in Calaveras County.

However, an urgency ordinance is a haphazard and reactionary approach that takes staff time away from other important work. The County could've avoided the need for an urgency ordinance if it had made more progress in implementing the 2019 General Plan Update. If the County would commit to a timeline for implementing the 193 measures laid out in the General Plan update, then the need for urgency ordinances would be greatly reduced.

The County could work on groups of similar implementation measures to improve efficiency. For one example, the County could promptly address urgent community issues, like the lack of workforce housing and issues with short term rentals, while reinstating and updating community plans for the upper Highway 4 corridor communities like Arnold and Hathaway Pines. For another example, the County could first identify adequate levels of fire and emergency services, and then find the necessary funding sources to achieve those levels.

The County's refusal to commit to timely implement these measures is just one of the reasons why CAP filed a lawsuit against the County's insufficient General Plan. In the meantime, folks who want to help preserve the County's character and improve residents' quality of life can learn how on the CAP website here: www.calaverascap.com/action Each one of us can act separately to make a difference together.

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