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District 1
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The past year saw some measurable economic recovery to Placer County. As many of you are probably aware, home values tanked a few years ago and took the regional economy with them. It's been a slow climb back up, but we have seen the property values rise, tax revenues increase and consumer confidence rebound. All these indicators spell for a positive future.

Placer County was able to weather this economic storm due to excellent planning, coupled with being fiscally conservative. We made do and looked inward on how we could improve employee productivity and truly get more from less. We've emerged leaner and will continue with that momentum.

There were many projects approved and actions taken by the Board of Supervisors in the past 12 months that have begun to carve our path as a county.

When property values fell, almost all of the redevelopment projects stopped. In the past year, we have revisited West Placer land use and now three important projects are again moving forward. They are Placer Vineyards, Riolo Vineyards and Regional University. While there are many details that are in need of work, it is promising to see investors taking a renewed look at our area. In June we opened the Dry Creek Community Park in West Roseville. We will ensure Placer County residents have the necessities they need, and the amenities they deserve, such as parks, trails and open space. Both of these make for a higher quality of life.

The University project has been in the works for some time and got a big boost when a Placer County contingent visited the University of Warwick in Great Britain in December. That highly regarded school is considering an international expansion and is seriously looking at Placer County for a new campus. Additionally, Sacramento State University is talking about a satellite campus in Western Placer County. Both of these institutions of higher learning could easily coexist and add to the already successful William Jessup University in Rocklin.

While having colleges and universities in Placer County would be beneficial in terms of our local economy, Placer County continues to promote our economic base by expanding the Sunset Industrial Park. This area, located on unincorporated county land between Roseville and Lincoln, remains an integral part of a local economy with well-paying jobs.

After a long delay, the new South Placer Adult Correctional Facility will open in 2014. It took a lot of hard work by the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office and the County Sheriff to develop a financing plan for the opening and continued operation of this state-of-the-art detention facility. The state sending criminals back to the counties to serve their prison sentences has presented a multitude of challenges to local jurisdictions. Public safety has always been paramount in Placer County and we will continue to maintain that standard, even in the face of a more sophisticated and violent inmate. Working with the Sheriff and the Probation Department, we have developed numerous programs and plans to successfully deal with criminals not only while they are incarcerated, but also when they are released.

I want to also mention a few major projects that continue to move forward. While these are not in my district and do not directly affect the residents, I think they are worthy of mention as they speak to the overall high quality of life in Placer County.

There have been multiple agreements reached between the county and the cities of Auburn and Lincoln on building a Regional Sewer system to allow local jurisdictions to meet more stringent wastewater treatment standards. That project will build much needed infrastructure in Placer County.

In December, the Board approved a plan to seek proposals for a new animal shelter on county-owned land in Auburn. The existing facility is old and inefficient and does not meet standards for animal care, treatment and disease control.

In the eastern end of the county, we have begun work to build the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project. This major Public Works effort will, when completed, transform a 1.1-mile stretch of the state highway through this North Lake Tahoe community. Kings Beach is a diamond in the rough and in addition to improving the economic health of the community, the project will improve the environmental health of Lake Tahoe and provide for a safer, walkable community.

I have recently communicated with you about the California Department of Water Resources' Bay Delta Conservation Plan. This multi-billion dollar project proposes to build tunnels around the Bay Delta to ensure central and Southern California water users have an uninterrupted water supply, while proposing to improve the environmental health of the Delta. The environmental documents for this water grab have been released and the public comment period is open. I would encourage you to look at the Plan and offer your opinion. While the steady supply and environmental improvement aspects of the plan are perhaps laudable, the threat to water supplies for Northern California water users is very real. Southern California, which is essentially an irrigated desert, would get its water supplies at the expense of northern users. Please follow this plan as it progresses through the review process and let the state know your views.

As always, it is an honor and a privilege to serve you. I always welcome your feedback and can be reached by e-mail at jduran@placer.ca.gov or by phone at 916-787-8950.