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Coming Soon:

Petaluma City Council Elections – 2004
Santa Rosa City Council Elections – 2004
Local Hiring Preference Ordinances
Institute for Ecology and the Economy: Training Future Leaders
Early Endorsements in Political Races

What We Do:

The mission of the Coalition for a Better Sonoma County is to elect candidates who agree with, and will abide by, our Statement of Principles. For a full copy of our Statement of Principles, see www.bettersonoma.com.

Who We Are:

COPE of the North Bay, AFL-CIO
Sonoma County Conservation Action
Petaluma Tomorrow
IBEW, Local 551
Operating Engineers, Local 3
Sonoma County Latino Democratic Club
SEIU Local 707
Housing Advocacy Group
Concerned Citizens for Santa Rosa
World Stewardship Institute
Sheetmetal Workers, Local 104
Let the Voters Decide Coalition
UA Local 38, Plumbers and Pipefitters
UFCW, Local 101
Direct Action Network

BREAKING NEWS!

District Election Petitions Circulating in Santa Rosa

After the Santa Rosa City Council, for the second time, turned down allowing the voters to decide about District Elections, the Let the Voters Decide Coalition was formed, an ordinance was drafted, and signatures are now being gathered. **Volunteers Needed!**

Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance Qualifies for Ballot in Petaluma

Petaluma Tomorrow gathered more than 4000 signatures and has successfully ensured that its Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance will be on the November ballot in Petaluma. **Volunteers Needed!**

To Our Readers:

At the time of publication of this Newsletter, The Coalition for a Better Sonoma County is gearing up for the November 2004 elections. We will be supporting the Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance in Petaluma, and will also support the District Elections Ordinance in Santa Rosa. Additionally, we plan to be involved in City Council elections throughout the County, supporting candidates who believe in our statement of principles and will be guided by them in making public policy decisions.

As part of our planning for this fall's elections, we recently had one fundraiser, and will be having another before the elections are upon us, so that we will have adequate funds to run independent expenditure campaigns to the extent we are able. You can help the Coalition's efforts by ensuring that your membership is up to date (\$25/year for an individual; \$100/year for an organization) – see form on page 3. Of course, we will gratefully accept any

amounts above the membership fee you are inclined to contribute.

Volunteer Needed! For the last year, the Coalition has had an Executive Committee consisting of Michael Allen (SEIU Local 707), Rick Meechan (Concerned Citizens for Santa Rosa) and Caroline Bañuelos (Latino Democratic Club), who make day-to-day decisions for the Coalition (all Coalition members are welcome to attend Ex Com meetings and participate). Now, since Caroline Bañuelos has declared her candidacy for the Santa Rosa City Council, she must step down as an Ex Com member. **We urgently need a new permanent member on the Ex Com, and would prefer a woman and/or minority who works for the community at large, for social justice, etc. to provide needed balance on the Ex Com. Of course, all are welcome to volunteer!** Please email us at mail@bettersonoma.com if you are interested.

Volunteer!

FIRST: The Coalition for a Better Sonoma County will be doing pre-election polling in Santa Rosa very soon, and needs volunteers to help. Please contact Guy Conner at guyc@sonic.net if you can help by making phone calls in Santa Rosa. **Thanks!**

SECOND: We also have need for volunteers to do office work at our new offices, donated to the Coalition by the Sonoma

County Building Trades. Contact Guy Conner at guyc@sonic.net to volunteer. **Thanks!**

THIRD: We can save money by not mailing our Newsletters to you. If you are willing to download a pdf version of this Newsletter from our website, instead of getting a paper copy, please let us know at mail@bettersonoma.com. **Thanks!**

Campaign Finance Reform in Petaluma

Stan Gold, Petaluma Tomorrow

A grassroots effort by volunteers organized by Petaluma Tomorrow was successful in qualifying a Campaign Finance Reform Initiative for the November ballot in Petaluma. The Initiative proposes to partially restore some of the provisions of a model Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance that had been in effect since December of 2000, but was gutted by a majority of the current City Council. The Initiative also prevents the City Council from changing the provisions of the Initiative, except by a vote of the people, or a unanimous vote of the Council.

The Background

The necessity for a CFR Ordinance became spectacularly apparent after the election of November 2000. In 1996, the biggest campaign

money raiser was David Keller, who spent a little over \$12,000 on his campaign. Of the funds raised, about 11% came from out of town. In 1998 Clark Thompson became the new Mayor with a campaign funded at a little over \$27,000. About 13% of those funds came from out of town. Just two years later in November 2000, Bryant Moynihan broke the record with over \$41,000 in campaign contributions, with 43% of that money coming from builders, developers, and their allies, much of it from out of town.

In the four years between 1996 and 2000, neither population increase nor inflation could be used to rationalize the huge increase in campaign spending, – from \$12,000 to \$41,000 plus. The outgoing 2000 City Council has been strongly criticized by narrow interests for acting “in haste” in passing the CFR Ordinance. For the outgoing City Council to not have

acted on the information at hand would clearly have been an act of negligence and a dereliction of duty.

Both the Sonoma County League of Women Voters and California Common Cause supported the passing of the original ordinance, and pled, in vain, with the Council not to change it. The Petaluma CFR Ordinance contained all of the elements of a model CFR ordinance. The source of ALL campaign contributions had to be identified, individual entities could not contribute more than \$200 to a candidate, timely reporting of contributions was required, and there was a public funding component. This last item made it possible for competent, qualified candidates with limited financial resources to run for elective office.

In the 2002 election, Mayor David Glass and council candidate Cindy Thomas both participated in the public funding. Cindy Thomas came within 76 votes of winning a Council seat, and David Glass won a squeaker to become the new mayor. Without the public assistance, both Glass and Thomas said they could not afford to run for office. Glass’s close winning campaign spent a total of a little over \$17,000. In contrast, Clark Thompson, the ex-Mayor who ran against David Glass, raised close to \$50,000, with a lot of that being out-of-town special interest money.

The Developers’ Candidates Scuttle the Ordinance

The four city council members who received substantial support from developers, – Bryant Moynihan, Mike Harris (former Chairman of Sonoma County Republican Central Committee), Mike O’Brien (who works for the company where Mike Harris is a Vice President), and Keith Canevaro, endeavored to destroy Petaluma’s CFR Ordinance. As the discussion began in the City Council, Bryant Moynihan stood up and walked

out. He did not participate in the deliberations. The other 6 Council Members instructed the City Attorney to prepare a draft of a compromise CFR Ordinance that would water down the existing Ordinance, e.g., by eliminating all public financing, but retaining some of its provisions, e.g., the \$200 contribution limit.

At the next City Council meeting, the City attorney never had a chance to discuss the draft that he had prepared. Bryant Moynihan distributed a wholly new ordinance that he had prepared, and asked for a vote on it, with practically no discussion. Moynihan’s ordinance passed 4 to 3. It did away with public financing, it exempted reporting the source of all campaign contributions under \$100, and it increased the limit of individual contributions from \$200 to \$500. Since campaigns were already rolling in money at the \$200 limit, an increase in the limit to \$500 showed the true colors of Moynihan and his allies on the Council, again.

Petaluma Tomorrow Acts

The new ballot Initiative goes only part way in correcting what was gutted in the original CFR ordinance. The individual contribution limit is rolled back to its original \$200, and the source of all campaign contributions over \$25 must be reported. Although the City Council was presented with a calculation showing that it would cost each citizen in Petaluma only 42 cents per year to finance the public financing component of the CFR Ordinance, it was decided to omit the public financing provision for now. It will need to be addressed in the future.

If the Petaluma City Council acts now to give the Initiative the force of law, then its provisions will apply to the Council elections in November. Otherwise, the voters of Petaluma will vote on the Initiative at that time. Visit www.petaluma-tomorrow.org/cfr.htm for more information.



Join the Coalition for a Better Sonoma County – make a difference!

YES, I want to become a member of the Coalition for a Better Sonoma County.

Enclosed are my annual individual dues: \$25 (Annual Individual Dues)
Enclosed are our annual organizational dues: \$100 (Annual Organizational Dues)
I want to really help the Coalition. Enclosed is: Other Amount _____

YES, I want to be notified of the Coalition's Meetings and Action Alerts.

For more information, call the Coalition offices at 576-9675, or email to mail@betersonoma.com

Print Name(s) 1) _____ 2) _____

Address _____ City/State/ZIP Code _____

Phone: _____ FAX #: _____ Email: _____

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Signature(s) 1) _____ 2) _____

Please make checks payable to: the Coalition for a Better Sonoma County

Please clip and return this form in an envelope to Coalition for a Better Sonoma County • 1700 C Corby Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95407.

Preventing Sprawl in Sonoma County

Kelly Brown, Greenbelt Alliance, Sonoma-Marin Field Representative

Greenbelt Alliance is very excited to announce the release of a new report that examines the past, present, and future of land use in Sonoma County. The report, *Preventing Sprawl: Farmers and Environmentalists Working Together*, is the result of a joint effort by Greenbelt Alliance and the Sonoma County Farm Bureau.

For the last two years, Greenbelt Alliance and the Sonoma County Farm Bureau led a committee of agricultural and environmental leaders in an unprecedented collaboration to survey land-use patterns in an effort to prescribe strategies for preventing sprawl and protecting agriculture.

This project arose out of a contentious campaign over Measure I, the "Rural Heritage Initiative" that appeared on the November 2000 ballot. Measure I, which was defeated at the polls, would have required voter approval for certain County General Plan amendments. In 2002, the two organizations helped to bring together the two traditional adversaries farmers and environmentalists to seek common ground for the benefit of Sonoma County's future. A generous grant from the James Irvine Foundation funded the two-year study.

"Farmers and environmentalists have overcome past differences to work together for Sonoma County's future,"

says Lex McCorvey, Executive Director of the Sonoma County Farm Bureau.

"*Preventing Sprawl* provides solid, practical recommendations to ensure that Sonoma County can accommodate future growth, protect its unique landscapes, and preserve productive farmlands," says Kelly Brown, Sonoma-Marin Field Representative for Greenbelt Alliance.

Preventing Sprawl is the result of a collaborative process involving leaders from Sonoma County's environmental and agricultural communities. The report provides an overview of the history of land use and agriculture in Sonoma County, plus a look ahead at population and land use projections for 2025 and 2040. The report includes four full-color maps illustrating land uses and land use trends in Sonoma County.

The report makes four key recommendations to address the challenges of future growth and development in Sonoma County:

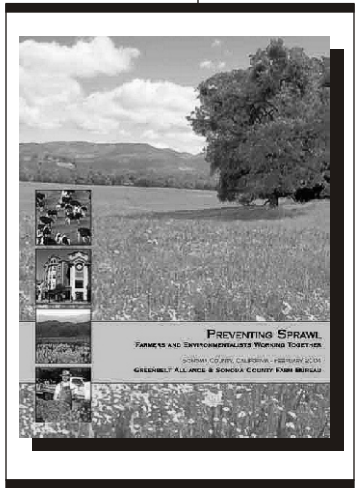
1. Maintain a strong County General Plan.
2. Support policies that achieve higher densities within existing urban boundaries.
3. Encourage Cloverdale to adopt an Urban Growth Boundary.

4. Extend funding for the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

On March 25, we kicked off a campaign to implement our policy recommendations by hosting an event for community leaders at the Kendall-Jackson Wine Center in Sonoma County. Over 100 County Supervisors, City Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, Agency Directors and community leaders attended the event.

In the coming year, we will be working with our partners to implement the report's recommendations. We intend to conduct outreach to key decision makers and inject our recommendations into land use planning processes around the County.

To download a copy of the report, visit our website at www.greenbelt.org. For more information, contact Sonoma-Marin Field Representative, Kelly Brown at (707) 575-3661 or kbrown@greenbelt.org.



Coalition for a
Better Sonoma County

1700 C Corby Ave. • Santa Rosa, CA 95407
707-576-9675

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN
SONOMA COUNTY!**

Join your friends and colleagues at
our regular monthly meetings on the
Second Monday of every month.

Check www.bettersonoma.com
for the date and location.

**DON'T MISS CONCERNED
CITIZENS FOR SANTA ROSA'S
PARTY ON JUNE 6TH
3:30-6:00 P.M.**

WWW.CONCERNEDCITIZENSFOR SANTAROSA.COM

Petition Gathering Comes to a Close for District Elections

Caroline Bañuelos, Let the Voters Decide Coalition

As the Let the Voters Decide Coalition (LTVD) enters the final weeks of its petition drive, it seems fitting to update CBSC members on what we have accomplished together.

Most members remember what prompted this movement but just for a quick summary, the majority of the Santa Rosa City Council, following six months of Charter Review Committee meetings decided, for the second time, not to allow the voters to decide what their form of local government should be. Following this decision, the LTVD Coalition was born, along with a strong determination to change the makeup of the Santa Rosa City Council, including the way they are elected.

In December of 2003, after much debate on the content of the initiative, we felt ready to file our Notice of Intent. This was a huge step because

once we published our Notice the clock started to run on the signature gathering process.

Admittedly, we got off to a slow start with the finalizing of our actual petition (that had to meet the requirements of the election code) and some of our members were involved with the March primary. After the primary, it was evident that time was of the essence and we had to focus on gathering signatures. It was apparent that we would need to hire staff to gather the bulk of our signatures as well. The grassroots could not do it alone. This is where the support of the CBSC and many groups who belong to the Coalition became critical.

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of Concerned Citizens of Santa Rosa (Anne Seeley), the Building Trades of Sonoma, Lake & Mendocino Counties

(Bill Scott), the Santa Rosa Democratic Club (and individuals on their executive board), the Sonoma County Democratic Central Committee, and the Sonoma County Latino Democratic Club, we have been raising the funds needed to obtain our signature goals. The support and action of CBSC groups has been and will continue to be the key to our success. If we are able to qualify for the November ballot, this will be a tremendous accomplishment for all of us.

It's not too late to get involved; we still need volunteers in this effort. At this writing we have just a little over 3 weeks left to achieve our goal of 10,000 signatures. If you wish to get involved please call Caroline Bañuelos at 578-9971 or send e-mail to: district.election@att.net.