

# Elk Grove Citizen ONLINE

## NEWS

### Transportation, jobs fuel city council's annual trip to D.C.

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City of Elk Grove officials said last week after returning from the annual Cap-to-Cap trip to Washington, D.C., that they felt encouraged that their recent visit could result in federal funding for big projects.

"The trip provided the opportunity to meet with our congressional delegation and other agency representatives to share and discuss Elk Grove's priority projects," said City Manager Laura Gill, noting the Capital SouthEast Connector and the city's bus replacement needs.

City Council Member Pat Hume, who represents Elk Grove on the connector's board of directors, said he and others on the Sacramento transportation team met with federal employees to discuss the Kammerer Road extension out to Interstate 5 along with the work being done on Grant Line Road.

The city and Sacramento County are using Measure A funding for both projects, which are being branded as part of the connector that will run from Interstate 5 east along Kammerer and Grant Line roads and end in El Dorado County.

Hume said the hope is that U.S. Department of Transportation officials will be able to secure another round of grants with about \$525 million in discretionary funding and financially match what the city and county are doing to help get the connector built.

"We're getting our own skin in the game," Hume said.

Elk Grove Mayor Steve Detrick said part of the benefit of getting to meet with federal officials face to face is so both sides can discuss matters instead of simply exchanging documents.

"They want to know what we need so we can craft the best package," Detrick said, adding that the competition is generally fairly fierce as only the top 3 percent of projects receive funding.

One difference this year, Elk Grove officials noted, is that the Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives and President Barack Obama have said they will not move money through earmarks.

Rep. Dan Lungren (R-Gold River) said that for him to even call a federal agency to ask that a project be funded goes against the spirit of rejecting earmarks.

"They come with some depth and information sheets, and they have spent the time prioritizing the issues," Lungren said of the Sacramento contingent of 262 delegates. "They do a good job of organizing themselves into subject matters."

Lungren said he had 14 separate meetings with Sacramento's delegates, which included discussing policy and how to go after grants.

"One of the biggest arguments I have made and continue to make is that our region, including Elk Grove, has done a better job with planning than any other region in the country," Lungren said. "So agencies have to look at this."

Detrick echoed Lungren's words.

"We have positioned ourselves to understand how to make us stand out from the rest of the country, and we are already on the radar for when funds become available," he said.

Detrick and City Council Member Gary Davis said another focus of the Sacramento team was on bringing

jobs to the region and specifically Elk Grove.

Detrick said he had eight meetings on job and business growth for the region and another six for Elk Grove. The mayor said he started networking on the flight to D.C. and did not stop until he returned to Elk Grove.

"The main value of Cap-to-Cap is joining with business leaders and elected officials from the greater Sacramento region to advocate for regional priorities," Davis said. "Congress often moves slow and, by going back every year, the region can continue to push on these priorities until they are finally achieved. Elk Grove is working really hard to grow more quality jobs in Elk Grove."

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