

Trampled by Growth

Our electeds are doing it the hard way. Truly.

Bailing out an overflowing bathtub with a Dixie cup, without first turning off the faucet, is really tough. Tackling the valley's housing issues needs to be more than piecemeal, Band-Aided stabs in the dark.

Here's how things are progressing in town. Planners are busy approving 13 spaces carved out of a public parking lot to ease our summer crunch.

Town officials are ribbon-cutting one massive hotel this week, after approving another massive hotel last week, while town staff tries to figure out where those campers will go potty instead of addressing the real impacts of their decisions to grow and grow some more.

Good grief. Maybe we're growing too fast.

What needs to be addressed immediately is land development regulations in the town and county. LDRs are simply the rules that govern land use. They are what give weight to the Comp Plan. Remember that document?

The Comp Plan is now five years old and the LDRs are still not done. Maybe we've lost track of what matters in the hundreds of pages of the Plan.

The three areas of concern the Plan focuses on are **ecosystem stewardship, growth management, and quality of life**. What part of those critical community passions does the new 121-suite Marriott hotel speak to?

Since the Comp Plan was finalized, **quality of life** for most has plummeted. If **growth is being managed**, it's hard to tell. And **stewardship of the ecosystem** is routinely cast to the wayside while the construction crane brings "progress."

LDR revisions must include housing mitigation. When a developer proposes anything that is not affordable housing (particularly if it is going to create more jobs) they should get whacked. Hard.

Large commercial projects have for years burdened this community with their impact. It's time they come much closer toward easing local pressures rather than adding to them.

Requiring developers to provide housing for just 25% of the jobs created by a new hotel or restaurant or bank is not nearly good enough. Mitigating all of the new employees they will generate should be the goal. Every one of them. Because those workers will bring their spouses and a kid or two. They will need new schools, they will strain our services, and add to our road congestion.

Politicians, won't you please get busy with writing the LDR rulebook, and laying the new law of the land?

Our community is being trampled by growth while we wait for clearer, stricter rules that reflect the values expressed time and again (1994, 2012) in our guiding documents.

What part of this community's needs does the new Marriott hotel speak to?
