



City of Placerville

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April 1, 2021

John Hidahl, Chair
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
RE: Disposition of Buildings at 515 and 525 Main Street

Dear Chair Hidahl:

Over the past two years the City of Placerville has been in communication with you regarding the disposition of County Buildings located at 515 and 525 Main Street. These buildings originally housed the Placerville branch of the U.S. Postal Service and the Phone Company and are located in the heart of Historic Downtown Placerville. Due to these facts they have historic significance in the City. With this understanding, it is with extreme disappointment that we learned of the County's plan to sell these buildings to a group known as El Dorado Gold 1848 (1848). We are gravely concerned what the future holds for these buildings, given the proposed direction of the Board. The City Council met in open session to receive public comment on this issue on Wednesday, March 31, 2021. At that meeting we heard varying views on the proposed action of the County. However one common theme seemed to be that the buildings should remain as a public asset to the Community and the surrounding El Dorado County. For this reason alone, we feel that the decision of the Board is in error, and not in the best interest of the Citizens of Placerville or El Dorado County.

Over the past year, we have all experienced unprecedented events from the pandemic to social unrest to economic concerns. The City of Placerville has not been spared any of these events. In fact, in many ways the issues have been heightened in Placerville. All of these events have divided our community, and continue to create an us against them mentality in many areas. The issue before us now, the disposition of these buildings, has also fallen victim to this phenomenon. Rather than sitting down together to discuss ways we can work together, we find ourselves not talking and disagreeing on what should be positive events in our community.

With this said, the City Council of the City of Placerville is once again imploring you to reconsider your decision to sell the buildings to 1848. We strongly request that you sell the Buildings to the City of Placerville, and allow us to work with two groups that are interested in restoring and making the buildings available to the public. By giving the buildings to one of the interested parties, you close that door on potential collaboration between the interested parties. By providing the buildings to the City of Placerville, you open up that avenue for collaboration. The City of Placerville has already begun that process to explore collaboration. We have made some progress with Arts and Culture El Dorado, and we have meetings scheduled with 1848 to explore potential collaboration efforts. We are willing and able see this happen. At

the writing of this letter, meetings are scheduled with 1848 for Friday, April 2, 2021, in advance of your scheduled Board Meeting to hear this item. We are anxious to share the results of that meeting with you at your meeting on April 6, 2021, if given the opportunity.

In conclusion, we cannot say whether or not the proposal of 1848 is one that the City and our citizens will embrace, because we do not know what that proposal is. The City has been open and transparent with what we propose for the buildings. We have shared that information with the public and your Board. As recent as Wednesday, March 31, 2021, we asked representatives of 1848 if we could see their proposal, not the funding, but the proposed uses. We were told no.

In early 2015, the City and County jointly established:

**Guiding Principles for
Court House and Surrounding Buildings Reuse**
(El Dorado Court House, Placerville Old City Hall, DA Building)

These principles were used both to recruit the committee and to set the parameters for review of reuse of the buildings. Principle #4 states the following:

4. The Public Process for Reuse shall be Open and Dynamic

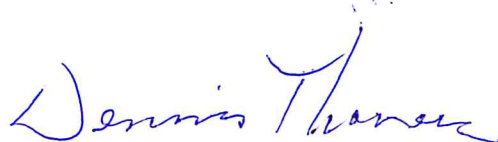
You have the commitment of the City of Placerville to work with both of the interested parties to find a collaborative project that is best for them and for the citizens of our communities. We are willing to put that commitment into an agreement that could be entered into with the County, if given the opportunity. Please give us the opportunity to make this a positive project for the City of Placerville and El Dorado County by selling these buildings to the City of Placerville, and allow us to be the mediator to bring the two groups together. Although this may appear as a simple real estate transaction to the County, it is much more than that to the parties involved.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further, either in public or through negotiations.

Sincerely,



M. Cleve Morris
City Manager



Dennis Thomas
Mayor

cc: John Hidahl, Chair, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
Lori Parlin, First Vice Chair, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
Wendy Thomas, Second Vice Chair, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
George Turnboo, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
Sue Novasel, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
Dennis Thomas, Mayor, City of Placerville
Kara Taylor, Vice Mayor, City of Placerville
Patty Borelli, City Councilmember, City of Placerville
Jackie Neau, City Councilmember, City of Placerville
Michael Saragosa, City Councilmember, City of Placerville