



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-0987, **Version:** 1

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Community Development Services, Administration and Finance, recommending the Board:

- 1) Receive a presentation detailing El Dorado County cemetery program operations, trends, legal questions, and benchmark information on other California counties' cemetery operations; and
- 2) Provide direction regarding the cemetery program service level. (Est. Time: 50 Min.)

**FUNDING:** Cemetery fees, Zone of Benefit tax, and General Fund.

### **DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION**

Community Development Services, Administration and Finance, recommending the Board:

- 1) Receive a presentation detailing El Dorado County cemetery program operations, trends, legal questions, and benchmark information on other California counties' cemetery operations; and
- 2) Provide direction regarding the cemetery program service level. (Est. Time: 1 Hr.)

### **DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

The County of El Dorado oversees the maintenance and operation of 19 cemeteries, three of which are located in Georgetown and funded by special zone taxes. In addition to the County-operated cemeteries, there are privately operated, fraternal, religious, and two District cemeteries (Happy Homestead and Kelsey Pioneer Cemetery) within the County. It is estimated that there are around 90 cemeteries (where there are six or more burials) and 120 burial sites (where there are five or less burials) located in the County.

Plot sales are offered at some County-operated cemeteries. They include Georgetown-Renke Annex, Georgia Slide, Pilot Hill, and Placerville Union. The County recently installed Veterans' and public niches at Renke Annex; and Placerville Union has crypts and niches available for sale. The following is a list of cemeteries that the County currently operates or assists with the operation; the County has title to twelve of these.

- 1) Bryant (*Without Title*)
- 2) County Hospital/Pest House
- 3) Diamond Springs-Public (*Without Title*)
- 4) Fairplay (*Without Title*)
- 5) Grizzly Flat - Public (*Without Title*)
- 6) Georgetown Pioneer
- 7) Georgetown Renke Annex
- 8) Georgetown Georgia Slide
- 9) Greenwood (*Without Title*)

- 10)Latrobe
- 11)Middletown
- 12)Mormon Island
- 13)Pilot Hill
- 14)Placerville Union
- 15)Shingle Springs
- 16)Smith Flat
- 17)Spanish Dry Diggins
- 18)St. Michael's (*Without Title*)
- 19)Uniontown (*Without Title*)

The County is studying its options on cemeteries that it helps manage or manages and does not have title, except for St. Michael's. The County is obligated by Court action to maintain St. Michael's because the County allowed development to occur which impinged on the cemetery (e.g. allowing cell tower and roadway). The cemetery is owned by the Diocese of Sacramento.

Further background on County cemeteries and their operation is included in the attached staff report and presentation slides.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The Board could choose the following:

- 1) Continue to maintain its own cemeteries. However, County staffing levels are lower than comparable cemetery districts. With the possibility of new cemeteries' operations being taken over by the County, service levels would decrease if current staffing levels are maintained; or
- 2) Direct staff to bring back to the Board the plans to create a cemetery district and propose a possible ballot measure with a parcel tax for County cemeteries; or
- 3) Explore completing a Request for Proposal for a private cemetery operator to take over the cemeteries.

### **OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

N/A

### **CAO RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board provide direction for the future of County-operated cemeteries.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is a potential increase to Net County Cost with the addition of any new staff for the cemeteries. The contracting out of County cemetery operations could decrease costs, keep the cost at a comparable level or increase costs. If a district is created and a parcel tax is approved by the voters, the County could save at least \$150,000 in Net County Cost.

### **CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

N/A

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Cemeteries are not included in the strategic plan.

**CONTACT**

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