

December 17, 2007

**Message From the Chair Emeritus—Richard Johanson**

Another year is drawing to a close. It is time to express gratitude for all of the accomplishments in this region during the concluding year because of the "stay the course" dedication of so many community-oriented organizations and individuals. Best of all, this region is poised to continue and expand upon these accomplishments during the upcoming months. Therefore, rather than wishing each person who reads our Weekly Bulletin "Good Wishes for 2008", I extend to each of you "Great Accomplishments for 2008". We are beyond the wishing business! ***Merry Christmas, -- Happy Hannukah -- Joyful Holidays***

**SJV Partnership Spearheads Request For Transportation Funds**

The *California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley* plays many roles. It convenes leadership teams to address critical issues, builds important relationships across a geographically dispersed region and serves as a platform to advocate for regional needs. When LA launched a powerful bid to secure the vast majority of the money from Prop. 1 B for trade corridor funding, the Partnership worked with 8 COGs on a strategy to get unanimity on a "hot list" of cross regional priorities and to form an alliance with the Bay Area to strengthen the advocacy position. The result--the *California Transportation Commission* approved a much fairer division that may result in the Bay Area/Central Valley corridor receiving a substantial amount once the final decisions are made.

**State Center Steps Up to Support Career Technical Education (CTE)**

A shift from an industrial model of education where for efficiency sake most students have been routed through one primary pathway is underway. Reality has taught us that natural aptitudes, different learning styles, individual passions and customized opportunities are critical to inspiring students to remain engaged and excel. As state law requires that CTE classes must meet A-G requirements--those needed to qualify for a University of California campus--State Center has developed a hands-on workshop to teach instructors, administrators and counselors how to get career technical classes approved. For more information call 241.6530.

**Parks, Public Greenspace & Smarter Growth = Economic Development**

The *Funders Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities* has issued a white paper to demonstrate how comprehensive strategies, rather than piecemeal projects, bring life back to cities, leverage new economic development and improve health, youth development, water quality and neighborhood revitalization. Given the number of critical issues that can be addressed through a comprehensive strategy and the opportunity to attract and align funding streams by doing so, the importance of collaboration in this arena is compelling. *Metro Rural Loop*, the *Blueprint*, and the *El Dorado Park Neighborhood Specific Plan* are examples of our growing ability to craft comprehensive strategies regionally and locally. For more information and to access related white papers go to the [www.fundersnetwork.org](http://www.fundersnetwork.org).

**State Medicaid Programs Testing Wellness Strategies**

Over and over we hear the obvious—life style is the major contributor to levels of health. Across the country communities are restoring the *context* where healthy choices are possible--insuring access to recreation, quality food and preventive medical care along with insuring that neighborhoods are safe, schools are effective and jobs are available. According to December's issue of *Governing*, some states are taking aim at prevention, rather than simply providing health care to those that are sick. Researchers are trying to determine if incentives or disincentives are more effective. [www.Governing.com](http://www.Governing.com)