

December 3, 2007

Message From the Chair Emeritus—Richard Johanson

The President of my Rotary Club recently shared a message with us that I would like to paraphrase and pass along to you. It concerns the tightrope walker who pushed a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls many times. One day he asked if anyone would like to ride across in the wheelbarrow. The NEWS that needs to be shared is that we in this region are crossing our own abyss. Our wheelbarrow is being pushed by scores of collaborating agencies and individuals. All have but one focus—insuring that the approaching shoreline will be better than the receding one. The GOOD NEWS is that our wheelbarrow is filled with projects and initiatives. Education, health care, human resources, job creation, public safety, leadership training, community values—all are in the wheelbarrow. The BEST NEWS is that there is still room behind the wheelbarrow for more partners and in the wheelbarrow for more initiatives. The Fresno Business Council is proud to be a part of this inspirational assemblage.

“Linking, Aligning & Leveraging”—Mantra of the Human Investment Initiative (HII)

Kudos to the *City of Fresno* and *Fresno Unified* for their continued exploration and actions to leverage resources. As a community, we need our public institutions working together behind shared strategies to accomplish the primary goals shared by all—prosperity, safety and wellbeing. The HII is intended to provide a scaffolding and container to help organize and focus the myriad activities aimed at human development. As taxpayers and residents, we are responsible for holding a vision, crafting a community agenda and working together to accomplish what is impossible through isolation and competition. Work is underway to establish a “CEO function” to guide specific issue areas and the overall effort. The plan is available on the FBC website.

UC School of Medicine in the San Joaquin Valley—Moving Forward

At a recent forum on the status of the UC Medical School, familiar themes were espoused—networked, leveraged, distributed, prevention oriented, culturally aware. Rather than a traditional model, instruction model will be founded on a community-base distributed model tapping into existing health care facilities throughout the region. There is a critical need for more physicians and other health care professionals in the Valley due to existing shortages and expected population increases. The development of a UC medical school in the Valley is endorsed by the *California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley*, a regional platform that is addressing critical issues in the region. Presenters at the forum included **Chancellor Steve Kang**, **Luisa Medina** (Partnership Board & Co-convener of the Health and Human Services Work Group) and **John Capitman**, executive director of the Central Valley Health Policy Institute at Fresno State. Like so many other important projects, the Med School will take a barn raising effort aligning resources across sectors.

San Joaquin Valley Blueprint—Next Steps

“The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Process is a chance to plan for the future of transportation and land use in the San Joaquin Valley.” While this statement seems simple enough, what it suggests is not. Time’s passage extinguishes possibilities as process and planning preclude action. Balancing a bias for action with the importance of inclusion and comprehensive thinking is an art we must get skilled at if we are to create a livable, prosperous Valley. The Fresno Blueprint Roundtable has determined seven preliminary growth options based upon a 2050 footprint with a single focus. The next step is looking at hybrids. The options are:

- Status Quo—based upon existing development patterns (Would we look like LA?)
- High Density Urban Core—development focused in Fresno/Clovis Metro
- High Density Urban Core—development mainly in smaller cities
- Corridor development—development along major transportation routes
- New Cities—development directed to three “new towns”
- Environmental Resources Protection—focusing on protecting environmental resources
- Agricultural Land Protection—focus on protecting farmland