

For Immediate Release

February 11, 2009

Valley Springs. Rural Smart Growth: A Community-Based Plan for Valley Springs is moving forward with the selection of EDAW, Inc., as the community design consultant firm for the project. EDAW will join the Calaveras Council of Governments (CCOG), and the project partners: the Calaveras County Community Development Agency, the Local Government Commission, and MyValleySprings.com, in helping the community craft a plan with a strong traffic and circulation component relative to future land use.

The Valley Springs project has been funded by a Caltrans Community-Based Transportation Planning grant. The project budget is \$255,810, and the grant award is \$204,648. The CCOG, which is responsible for the administration of the grant project, is providing the local match. Caltrans has executed a contract with the CCOG, and due to the project funding allocation being granted in the previous fiscal year, it will likely be unaffected by the current budget stalemate in Sacramento.

EDAW offers an experienced and interdisciplinary team to help the project partners and the community create a realistic and forward thinking vision for Valley Springs. Founded in 1939, EDAW has successfully integrated planning, design, and environmental compliance under one roof. Their planning and design projects evolve from a strong understanding of site resources and emphasize appropriate site-specific solutions. Their foothill experience includes the Amador County and Sutter Creek General Plans.

EDAW has partnered with Omni-Means, Ltd., an engineering and transportation planning firm, which also brings substantial experience throughout the Sierra Nevada foothills to the project having worked for Angels Camp, Sonora, Jackson, and Amador County. For over 27 years, Omni-Means has provided professional design and consulting services in central and northern California, always striving to balance economic, environmental, and social responsibilities in order to provide sustainable transportation solutions.

Another member of the EDAW team is renowned author and planner Randall Arendt, of Greener Prospects. Arendt is co-author of Rural by Design, which is considered by many to be the seminal work in its field. First published in 1994 and currently in its second printing, this book is listed among 39 volumes recommended by the American Planning Association for "the essential planning library." He is the country's most sought after speaker on the topic of creative development design as a conservation tool and will assist with open space conservation techniques within the context of the two community design workshops proposed for the Valley Springs planning project.

One of the components of the Valley Springs planning process is a Stakeholders Advisory Committee. The function of this committee is important to public participation and overall

planning. The Committee is comprised of about twenty representatives from local agencies, organizations, and the community to help identify important issues or additional planning data needs. The Advisory Committee will also determine strategies to engage all segments of the community and maximize participation in two design workshops. The heart of the community planning process will be the charrettes (a planning term), which are essentially interactive community workshops to draw upon the community's intimate knowledge and understanding of the place in which they live, work, or own property. The first Stakeholders Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for early March.

Community events will take place in two stages over ten days to: 1) establish the vision for a coordinated land use and transportation plan; and 2) establish the basis for zoning, subdivision and development standards to direct revitalization of the town center and to direct the form and character of new neighborhoods, streets, and corridors. Plan concepts and components will be discussed with the community at each workshop to ensure the design team of planning professionals is meeting community expectations.

For additional information, meeting notices, and updates on Rural Smart Growth: A Community-Based Plan for Valley Springs, please visit the CCOG website, www.calacog.org and click on "projects," then "Valley Springs CBTP," or call Tyler Summersett, Project Manager, CCOG, 754-2094.