

656 Douglas Ave.
Oxnard, CA 93030
Jan. 22, 1995

Mayor Manuel Lopez and Councilmen:

We want to take back our City from the bureaucrats. We do not want our Councilmen to further delegate their powers to the staff. This Streamlining Development Processing; Creation of Community Development Commission and Land Use Policy Commission proposal does just that. This is a power grab by your charming City Manager and his appointees. They are not only usurping citizen participation in planning they are usurping your duties. This is the same power structure that urged you to bring in big time gambling; suggested moving city hall out near Camarillo; had you waive fees and sales taxes for certain businesses that were needed for freeway overpasses and other congested roads; proposed blending the fire department with the police; urged very limited hours for the library to be open, while spending a fortune to push putting most of Oxnard in a Redevelopment agency despite the opposition of the neighborhoods; urged you to have fewer matters brought to the Council so that more decisions can be made behind closed doors and now has a new version for more decisions behind closed doors tonite.

It is time that you start listening to the residents instead of just the staff and the developers, many of whom are not even residents of Oxnard. Under this power structure you have reduced the number of Council meetings from 44 to 34 a year. The Council meetings are so overloaded with serious issues you cannot adequately address each of them and take in consideration the views of the residents. Often your motions are so vague that you leave it up to the staff to interpret them. The staff is usurping the Council's duties by these manipulations of the agenda and schedule. Most of you are too new to realize that.

It is no wonder your motions are vague when you are presented with a proposal like this. As a councilmember I would never have tolerated such an inadequate presentation of a proposal. It does not tell you or the public what you are amending, repealing, deleting, and adopting. It refers to Sections, Articles, Codes. You have no idea what you are doing as you dismantle the City. It does tell you what the staff thinks of you, that you want to delegate all your authority to them. You trust the staff, we do not. As our trusted representatives you must know the specific changes you are making. Most of you are new on the Council and none of you except Mayor Lopez has any experience on serving on a planning commission. Two of you have had bad experiences with the Planning Commission or Planning staff. This proposal could destroy our City. If you will be patient and watch the work of a regular planning commission for a longer period of time and see what comes from this opportunity for the residents to present their views on how our City develops, you will find that the end result is better.