

## Concurrent Session 1.2

### Solution Roundtable: Surviving Enterprise Zone & Redevelopment Changes

Wednesday, April 27, 2011, 10:00 AM – 11:00AM

California Ballroom 2

**John Shirey**, Executive Director, California Redevelopment Association

**Craig Johnson**, *Executive Director, California Association for Enterprise Zones & Enterprise Zone Manager, City of Long Beach*

Mr. Shirey -

- Redevelopment agencies are okay for now – we’re on hold for the moment, but the threat is not over
- California budget May revise – we’ll see what happens
- CRA is not on hold – we are on a reform track
- We have to address issues we have brought upon ourselves
- SB 450 (Lowenthal) – reforms in affordable housing development
  - Cleared first committee
  - CRA in negotiations w/ the author to turn into a bill CRA can support
  - CRA agrees with the subjects the bill addresses, but needs to change its approach
- SB 286 (Wright) – not to close RDAs?
- Core issue: the state needs long-term revenue, but that won’t be achieved by closing RDAs.

Mr. Johnson –

- RDAs and EZs remain under threat – what have you done about it?
- No one will work to keep these programs except us
- Be sure to argue the merits of the EZ program:
  - EZs save the state money
  - We help put folks to work who would otherwise have more difficulty finding employment, such as persons released from jail or parole, and those on public assistance
  - We help put folks with the greatest barriers to employment to work
- If we don’t lead the discussions – politicians will!
- Governor Brown continues to call for elimination, not negotiation
- Show people that 110,000 jobs have been created through the EZ program
  - How many are now off public assistance because they have jobs?
  - How many former prisoners and parolees are no longer out committing crime?
  - People are looking for work
  - Without the EZ program, there will be greater unemployment in California – “I can guarantee it”
  - Tell the politicians!
- CAEZ is at the forefront of reform
  - Assist folks who need assistance
  - Bring money back to the treasury

- What you need to do
  - Talk to your businesses and document the benefits of the program
  - What do businesses do with the savings? That is key!
    - Employ more people? Yes!
    - Purchase more? Yes!
  - Tax savings are not “lost”
- EZs target distressed communities
- EZs provide an incentive to remain in California
  - Existing businesses
  - Start-up businesses
  - Growth businesses
- We have the data that tells us it works
- You have to act – talk about progress you’ve made, including
  - Hurdles
  - Pitfalls
  - What you’ve done that works
  - Tell us!

Session became an open forum for audience members to give their ideas about what RDA and EZ managers can do to help save their programs. Suggestions were noted on the big paperboard for everyone to see. Below are the comments from the audience:

- Focus on politicians we can convert back
- Make sure redevelopment is an open process so it can be defended
- Workshops in neighborhoods
- Communicate success stories
- How can counties be engaged?
- Work with legislators
- Redevelopment needs to do better P.R. in communities
- Education of local board members
- Get legislators to buy-in on success
- Now, what do we do before 5/18?
- Get businesses allies to put pressure on legislature
- Who contributes to legislators?
- “Amend, don’t end”
- Get good stories out and information out
- Redevelopment critical in small-city environment and for small business
- How do we get the word out when some don’t seem to listen?
- Use public access TV
- Use social media

Notetaker:

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